

# MacArthur's Victory at Inchon: Defeating the British Empire

by Don Phau and Dean Andromidas

I know war as few other men now living know it, and nothing to me is more revolting. I have long advocated its complete abolition, as its very destructiveness on both friend and foe has rendered it useless as a means of settling international disputes. . . . But once war is forced upon us, there is no other alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end.

—Gen. Douglas MacArthur  
to a Joint Session of Congress, 1951

Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) rose to the rank of five-star general because, in war, and in strategy for peace, he had the ability to see the future. Over 65 years ago, MacArthur saw that the development of the atomic bomb could lead to the extinction of the human race, or, in his word, “Armageddon.”

The atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki in 1945 was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. The first hydrogen bomb, tested by the U.S. in 1952, had the equivalent explosive power 10 million tons of TNT. Lyndon LaRouche has said that a thermonuclear exchange today would take about an hour and a half to end human life on earth.

In his 1951 address to Congress, MacArthur warned that mankind must change its ways or become extinct. He questioned whether man could rise above the level of a beast and become truly human, and that

mankind now faced its “last chance.” He said to Congress:

“Military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war. The utter destructiveness of war now blots out this alternative. We have had our last chance. If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, *Armageddon will be at our door*. The problem is basically theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character

that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature, and all material and cultural developments of the past 2000 years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh” (emphasis added).

When MacArthur accepted the surrender of the Japanese on the battleship *Missouri* in September 1945, ending World War II, he said “wars were now useless.” Nonetheless, at the age of 70, he accepted President Harry S Truman’s request in 1950, to command U.S. forces in the war in Korea. The Korean War was the first U.S. military engagement called “a limited war” or “police action.” Whatever it was called, the decision to fight in Korea was based on principles that were counter to everything that MacArthur believed would justify going to war.

Today’s revisionist historians portray the conflict between MacArthur and Truman as one in which MacArthur



Naval Historical Center

Gen. Douglas MacArthur, a “genius in warfare,” shown here in Manila, Philippine Islands, August 1945.

wanted to launch nuclear war against Communist China and the Soviet Union, as opposed to the “moderation” of Truman and the State Department, which feared the outbreak of nuclear war. Nothing could be further from the truth.

### MacArthur: Anti-Imperialist

MacArthur shared Franklin D. Roosevelt’s vision for a postwar grand design, centered on the elimination of imperialism, that of the French, Dutch, and especially, the British empires. FDR sought to build on the wartime trust between the U.S. and the Soviet Union to transform the wartime alliance into a community of interest that would establish a world system of sovereign nation-states. Thus, the latent productive capacities of humanity could be unleashed through the development of great infrastructure projects in transportation and agriculture, including the construction of railroads, water-management and hydroelectricity projects that would industrialize the nation-states that would replace the colonies, and transform enslaved “colonial subjects” into productive and creative citizens.

MacArthur and Roosevelt shared these ideas. Their relationship began in 1914, when MacArthur, as a junior officer, served on the General Staff in Washington, and Roosevelt was the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. MacArthur also served as Chief of the General Staff in Roosevelt’s first Administration; FDR would invite MacArthur to the White House for consultations, which often had nothing to do with military affairs, but because he saw MacArthur as the “conscience of America” (Courtney Whitney, *MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968]; p. 124).

MacArthur’s own strategic conceptions of Asia are drawn from his father, Gen. Arthur MacArthur, who served as military governor of the Philippines. Arthur MacArthur had been considered the U.S. Army’s foremost expert on Asia, and was passionately committed to bringing the republican ideas of the American system to Asia, where he believed America’s destiny, and that of humanity, lay. His vision was not a clash of empires, but a grand design based on a community of interest among all the powers of Asia and the Pacific. Thus, the tremendous energies of the Japanese people, who had built the most highly industrialized nation in Asia, could be directed toward aiding the de-



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*Douglas’s father Arthur MacArthur, a hero of the American Civil War, presciently, had warned his son, that the “councils of war breed timidity and defeatism.”*

velopment of new sovereign nations of the region. This view was, in fact, at the center of MacArthur’s own postwar policy as leader of the occupation of Japan.

As for the Soviet Union, we will see that MacArthur, like Roosevelt, realized that while there was a deep ideological divide between the U.S and the U.S.S.R., the actual point of conflict had more to do with each other’s respective strategic interests rather than ideology. Through endeavoring to bridge those differences in a spirit of compromise and trust, FDR held out the possibility of cooperation with the Soviet Union based on a community of interest.

As we will see, for MacArthur, a swift end to war required not only a successful military effort, but a diplomatic initiative that would turn the conflict into an opportunity for bridging those strategic differences. By contrast, Truman served as the British Empire’s principal instrument for destroying any hope of a realization of Roosevelt’s grand design, and transformed it into a “Cold War,” which would thenceforth hold the

world hostage to the threat of catastrophic nuclear war. It would be in this environment of nuclear terror, that the British Empire sought to secure its continued survival.

Following the death of Franklin Roosevelt, and under the guidance of the British, Truman, step-by-step, created the Cold War, first by dropping the atomic bomb on Japan within a few weeks of the last wartime summit with Stalin, as a transparent attempt to intimidate the Soviet Union, and then inviting Winston Churchill to Fulton, Mo., to deliver the threat of nuclear war in his infamous “Iron Curtain” speech. Truman soon extinguished the spirit of hope engendered by FDR.

### **The Doctrine of ‘Limited War’**

In April 1950, two months before the outbreak of the Korean War, the Truman Administration approved National Security Council Directive NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security. Drafted under the direction of warhawk Paul Nitze, who called it an “appropriate” response to Russia’s development of its own atomic bomb, the memorandum was, in fact, the war plan of what President Dwight D. Eisenhower would later term the “military-industrial complex.” It defined the Soviet Union as an irreconcilable enemy, declaring that “cold war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake.” It called for a massive military buildup which had to be completed by 1954, the so-called “date of maximum danger.” Out of thin air, it postulated that by this date, the Soviet Union would have enough nuclear weapons to launch a first strike.

Nitze told an interviewer that, when he tried to present a preliminary version of the document to then Secretary of Defense Lewis Johnson, the latter refused to even discuss it. Instead, Johnson shouted that Nitze was leading a “conspiracy” to massively increase the defense budget. In less than two years, the defense budget increased by nearly 400%, from \$12.5 billion to more than \$40 billion, and was projected to increase by 1953 to \$65 billion, had Truman stayed in power.

The bastard child of the Cold War policy was the “limited war.”

The practice of “limited wars” was one of the chief means by which the British Empire would rule the post-war world. With the death of Franklin Roosevelt, British puppet Truman launched such a war in Korea. Under

British direction, Truman’s Korean War would not be fought to win freedom for the Korean people and establish a united Korean republic, but to establish perpetual conflict in the region (something they have succeeded in doing, as today’s events show).

After Korea, the British would continue to manipulate the United States into one “limited” war after another: There would be the longest war U.S. history, the Vietnam War, and later, the Iraq War, the Afghanistan War, and now, the conflict in Syria, etc.

### **A Genius in Warfare**

MacArthur graduated from West Point in 1903 as a second lieutenant, and was quickly promoted to the rank of general in World War I. In addition to showing exceptional courage under fire, he was promoted because he engaged enemy forces using flanking actions, which would catch his opponent by surprise.

MacArthur’s outlook was shaped by his father. He writes in his autobiography, *Reminiscences*, of his father, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in the Civil War. The senior MacArthur was promoted to the rank of colonel after leading Union troops to victory in a key battle, at the age of 19. It was through his influence that Douglas learned that wars were only to be fought in order to win total victory over your enemy. For MacArthur, wars that were fought for limited gains were wars that needlessly sacrifice those soldiers under your command.

LaRouche has called MacArthur a “genius in warfare.” MacArthur detested the “set piece” warfare which characterized World War I’s trench warfare. Then, the commanding generals of the European powers treated their soldiers like cattle to be slaughtered. World War I battles among Germany, Italy, France, and Russia, saw the deaths of millions. The soldiers were sacrificed through massed frontal battles.

The key to MacArthur’s battle successes was the art of surprise, just as one finds in a work of Beethoven or Mozart, in which the composer never writes music that is repetitious and therefore boring, but, when you least expect it, he prods your imagination, waking you up, so to speak, exciting you to look into the future for new surprises.

Douglas MacArthur’s creative spirit was first demonstrated on the field of battle in World War I. He rapidly rose to the rank of general, leading the first division



U.S. Navy

*After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt appointed MacArthur as Supreme Commander in the Pacific Area. MacArthur shared FDR's vision of a grand design for the postwar world. In this photo, MacArthur (far left), FDR, and Admiral Nimitz are briefed by Admiral Leahy, in Hawaii, in 1944.*

of American soldiers to arrive in Europe. His troops were always on the offensive; he led lightning attacks, constantly catching the German army by surprise. In one battle, he reported that the Germans were so surprised that, when the American troops arrived, the Germans' coffee was still warm. He was awarded five silver stars for bravery during the war.

## World War II and the Korean War

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt appointed MacArthur as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers Southwest Pacific Area, with the rank of a five-star general. MacArthur's job was to defeat the Japanese, although, he writes, he had at his command less than 10% of the total U.S. Army. This was less than 100,000 of 1 million U.S. soldiers stationed outside of the U.S., and even a lesser percentage of the Navy. Although he was never told so directly, it was clear that Roosevelt and the Joint Chiefs had made defeating the Nazis in Europe the primary goal. MacArthur would complain, but he did the best he could with the resources available.

When the Japanese invaded and captured the Philippines, MacArthur retreated with his 40,000 troops to

the island of Corregidor off the Philippines coast. Despite heavy daily bombing by the Japanese, who had total air superiority, MacArthur, cut off from food and supplies, maintained his forces. The Japanese commander sent him regular messages: "Surrender or die." MacArthur, his troops near starvation, refused. Roosevelt had to directly order him to retreat to Australia. He considered disobeying his Commander-in-Chief's order to remain with his troops (he even considered resigning his commission, and becoming a volunteer). He only left for Australia when his own officers convinced him that he could not defy a direct order from the President. His departing words to his troops were broadcast internationally, "I shall return." He did, on Oct. 20, 1944.

The Japanese outnumbered MacArthur's forces in men, planes, and ships. MacArthur launched his strategy of island hopping, rarely battling the Japanese head-on, and instead, outflanking them by cutting off their supplies to the islands where they were heavily entrenched. He defeated the Japanese forces by cutting off Japan's source of oil and coal in the southwest Pacific. Key was the Battle of Leyte Gulf of the Philippines, where MacArthur's military genius is shown by contrasting the number of dead on each side: The Japanese suffered 80,557 lives lost; MacArthur's forces, 3,320. Years later, the Japanese Emperor said the Leyte battle was the decisive battle of the war.

MacArthur's Air Force chief, Gen. George Kenney, wrote that once the Germans had surrendered, the Japanese would quickly follow; "their pride" would not have let them surrender first. Kenney reported that when he was in Washington, the consensus was that the Japanese would fight on for two more years. In July 1945, MacArthur told Kenney that the plan to invade Japan by Nov. 1, 1945, called "Operation Olympic," would never take place; they would surrender by September.

Kenney said that MacArthur made that prediction two weeks before they were informed that the atomic bomb would be used. He wrote that the Japanese were sending out peace feelers several months before Hiro-





U.S. Army

*MacArthur's brilliant defeat of the Japanese at Leyte prompted the Emperor to describe it, years later, as the decisive battle of the war. MacArthur is seen, center, during the invasion.*

shima, especially to the Russians, who didn't want to end the war. MacArthur saw that, cut off the oil supplies needed to wage war, Japan was finished.

On the same day that the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, before the news had reached him, MacArthur gave a press conference in Manila. He said the Japanese had no arms because their factories were not producing, and that aerial saturations were destroying their factories. The *Manila Daily Bulletin* quoted MacArthur: "The Japanese already are beaten, but their leaders hang on in the hopes of some break that will save them. . . . Their navy is impotent and their shipping destroyed. Their army is still large . . . but [is] spread out with no communications."

Years later, MacArthur said that the use of atomic bombs "was completely unnecessary from a military point of view." He had not been informed of the bomb's existence or planned use until shortly before the Hiroshima attack. If his opinion had been sought, he would have guaranteed that the Japanese would have surrendered before the bombs were dropped, and that the Emperor would be retained. He learned of the demanded terms for surrender, the Potsdam Declaration, over commercial radio.

## The North Korean Offensive

On June 14, 1950 the U.S. ambassador to Korea, John Muccio, sent a message to Washington declaring that the North Koreans had launched "an all out offensive." MacArthur, who was in Japan, immediately flew to the Korean front lines. What he saw was that the South Korean forces were in total retreat.

Even at this opening stage of the war, MacArthur was already planning a surprise counterattack. He wrote, while watching the South Korean retreat, "of the pitiful evidence of the disaster I had inherited." He said that he recognized two facts: First, U.S. troops in Japan would have to be thrown

"into the breach." And second, an amphibious envelopment, as later executed at Inchon, would be necessary to offset the North Koreans' superiority in manpower to "wrest victory from defeat." President Truman appointed him the first Supreme Commander of U.S. forces in Korea.

In his autobiography, MacArthur singles out President Truman as responsible for the Korean War. He writes that the nation's leadership, after the death of FDR was "in the short space of five years . . . frittered away." At the end of World War II, Korea had been a Japanese colony, divided in half by the victorious allied powers. The U.S. took over the South, and the Soviet Union took the North, with the division at the 38th parallel. Each country supported its own government. The U.S. backed the elected government of President Syngman Rhee in the South, and the Soviets supported Kim Il-sung in the North.

Meanwhile, MacArthur was in charge in occupied Japan. There, he had to deal with Truman's then-Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson, who later became Secretary of State. In July 1949 National Security Memorandum 13/3 which had opened a discussion of "civilianizing" the occupation of Japan. A draft plan

had been drawn up that would replace MacArthur with an ambassador who would report directly to Secretary of State Acheson. MacArthur's role as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) would be transferred out of Japan.

According to a member of his staff, MacArthur dismissed this "as the most outlandish of many crackpot ideas from those State Department loons." As Eisenhower and Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall wrote to MacArthur, Acheson's idea was to get the State Department to take over Japan. The Anglophile Acheson later played a direct role in getting Truman to fire MacArthur. (Gen. Omar Bradley claimed that he later learned about "the deep distrust with which MacArthur viewed our State Department ... and Acheson in particular.")

MacArthur writes in *Reminiscences* that it was a "fatal error" not to prepare South Korea to meet an attack from the North. On June 25, 1950, the North Koreans attacked in force, crossing the 38th parallel. Armed with the latest Soviet weaponry, which included the T-34 tank which was better armored than anything that even the U.S. had at the time, they swept through South Korea, taking the capital, Seoul, and driving the U.S. and South Korean forces south of the parallel.

MacArthur, then in Japan, where he led the postwar reconstruction, immediately brought everything he could move of U.S. troops and arms from Japan to South Korea, stopping the Communist offensive at the 38th parallel. He noted that, although the American forces were vastly outnumbered, the North Koreans hesitated when they saw that the Americans had entered the war. It was this hesitation which gave MacArthur time to move, and supply his forces in the South.

On July 6, MacArthur made his first call to Washington asking for reinforcements. In a message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he said that the U.S. was facing "an aggressive and well-trained professional army operating under excellent top level guidance and [that] demonstrated superior command of strategic and tactical principles." He asked for five full-strength divisions



National Archives

*Against the advice of virtually everyone, including the Joint Chiefs, MacArthur carried out a surprise attack at Inchon harbor, which Admiral Halsey later termed, "the most masterly and audacious strategic course in all history." Here, MacArthur observes the shelling of Inchon from the USS Mt. McKinley, Sept. 15, 1950.*

and three tank battalions. To his amazement, the response from Washington was that he would get nothing.

MacArthur would later learn that the denial of aid from Washington was because the British were controlling Truman. Three weeks later, what he did get, was a visit by Truman's personal envoy, Averell Harriman. When he met Harriman, MacArthur writes that he learned that there was no U.S. policy for the Far East, and "that foreign influences, especially those of Great Britain, were very powerful in Washington; that there was no apparent interest in mounting an offensive against the Communists, that we were content to block their moves, but not to initiate any counter-moves...."

By the end of July, the North Koreans had seized all of South Korea except for the southeast corner of the peninsula. Truman appointed MacArthur commander of all UN and international forces. MacArthur, without authorization from Washington, ordered an immediate bombing of the North Korean capital Pyongyang. Later, MacArthur wrote that he never considered himself as UN commander, but as the Supreme Commander of the Asian Pacific forces of the U.S. Army.

The press let loose with an attack on the appointment of MacArthur. The *New York Times* wrote he was acting as “a sovereign power in his own right,” and that “his planes attacked the North Korean capital before Truman authorized any such actions.” It was the beginning of an unrelenting press attack.

## Inchon

The North Koreans had taken over all of Korea, but under MacArthur’s command, the U.S. armed forces used the “art of surprise” to move on the flank. MacArthur led a surprise amphibious landing in Korea’s central western port of Inchon, behind North Korean lines, executing the plans he had devised when the war began. Inchon was a heavily fortified city in North Korea near the captured South Korean capital, Seoul.

The North Koreans never expected that MacArthur would get his troops near the city. Inchon was two miles inland, and only reachable through a narrow river passage connecting the city with the Yellow Sea. The passage to Inchon has the second-highest tides in the world, and its waters were only deep enough to float a boat for two hours in the morning. Except at high tide, the passage turned into two miles of mud. A boat that didn’t get in and out during high tide would be hopelessly stuck in mud.

MacArthur proposed to make an amphibious landing of 70,000 Marines on Sept. 17 at Inchon, during high tide. Biographer William Manchester (*American Caesar*) wrote that once they heard of MacArthur’s plan, “Every flag and general officer in Tokyo ... tried to talk him out of it.” The Joint Chiefs dispatched from Washington the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Forrest Sherman, and Army Chief of Staff Lawton Collins, who told MacArthur that a successful landing at Inchon was an “impossibility.”

MacArthur writes that at a meeting of the nine commanders of the Pacific theater, the generals spent 80 minutes explaining why the landing was impossible. Their thinking was based on the logic of past experience. MacArthur’s reaction is an example of why LaRouche has called MacArthur a “genius.” MacArthur was able to forecast his success at Inchon, because he was undeterred by the “practical” experiences of his fellow generals.

MacArthur wrote that, after the generals finished speaking, “I waited a moment or so to collect my thoughts. I could feel the tension rising in the room....

If ever a silence was pregnant, this one was. I could almost hear my father’s voice telling me as he had so many years before, ‘Doug, councils of war breed timidity and defeatism.’”

MacArthur spoke for the next 30 minutes, telling the generals: “The enemy, I am convinced, has failed to prepare Inchon properly for defense. The very arguments you have made as to the impracticabilities involved will tend to ensure for me the element of surprise. For the enemy commander will reason that no one would be so brash as to make such an attempt. Surprise is the most vital element of success in war.” He said he would “cut the enemy’s supply line and seal off the entire southern peninsula.... By seizing Seoul I would completely paralyze the enemy’s supply system—coming and going.” MacArthur concluded, “I can hear the second hand of destiny. We must act now or we will die.... Inchon will succeed and it will save 100,000 lives” (*Reminiscences*).

Seemingly convinced, General Collins and Admiral Sherman wired the Joint Chiefs that they thought MacArthur’s plan for the Inchon landing was sound. But their belief in MacArthur’s plan didn’t last long. The next day, Sherman commented to a staff officer that he didn’t share MacArthur’s “optimism.”

Even up to a week before the Inchon invasion, now named “Chromite,” Collins said that he “still had reservations,” and one author added that Collins feared the enemy might be able to reinforce the Inchon-Seoul area quickly. As Arthur MacArthur had warned his son, the “councils of war breed timidity and defeatism”; the next day six of the Navy chiefs met, convinced that they needed a safer landing area at a beach south of Inchon. They sent Sherman to plead with MacArthur, but MacArthur, according to biographer James, “would not yield.”

A week before the target date, with all the details worked out, and with all the troops having arrived from Japan, MacArthur received a message from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He writes, “The message expressed doubts of the success and implied the whole movement should be abandoned,” adding, “What could have given rise to such a query at such an hour? Had someone in authority lost his nerve? Could it be the President?” MacArthur replied to the message, “I regard the chance of success of the operation as excellent,” and explained why. MacArthur waited for a reply. He writes that “a short cryptic message arrived from the Joint Chiefs.” They approved the operation. MacArthur inferred that



PLA Daily/Lin Min

*MacArthur asked Truman for permission to cut off the Chinese from supplying the North Koreans by bombing the bridges across the Yalu River, which bordered China and North Korea. Truman ordered that MacArthur could bomb only the bridges on the North Korean side. MacArthur replied that he couldn't bomb half a bridge. In December 1950, the Chinese entered North Korea in force, with over 200,000 troops, as seen in this photo.*

he could bomb the bridges, but only on the North Korean side of the border, not the Chinese side. MacArthur replied that he couldn't bomb half a bridge.

China then entered the war, reinforcing the North Koreans. When MacArthur was criticized for wanting to counterattack and expand the war into China. He wrote that he wanted to end the war, not spread it. He stated publicly, a number of times, "Anyone in favor of sending American ground troops to fight on Chinese soil should have his head examined." His plan to retake Korea, however, was stopped by the British.

While MacArthur did not want to send ground troops into China, he did believe that Truman was ready to abandon

"it had been the President who had threatened to interfere and overrule...."

On the night of Sept. 14, 262 ships of seven nations entered the narrow inlet to land at Inchon. The landing was successful and Inchon was captured. MacArthur went on and defeated 30-40,000 North Korean troops at a cost of 536 allied killed and 2,500 wounded. Adm. William Halsey, Commander of the South Pacific fleet, called it "the most masterly and audacious strategic course in all history."

## The Chinese Enter the War

In the months that followed, the UN passed a resolution calling for the unification of Korea. Truman gave MacArthur permission to move his troops through North Korea. MacArthur succeeded in capturing all of North, as well as South Korea. At the same time, Chinese leader Mao Zedong was sending warnings that the UN troops, under MacArthur's command, would face a response by the Chinese Communists. MacArthur asked Truman for permission to cut off the Chinese from supplying the North Koreans by bombing the bridges across the Yalu River, which bordered China and North Korea. Truman's response was equivocal: He gave MacArthur orders that

all of China, including the Republic of China on Formosa, to the Communists. MacArthur formed alliances to fight against Truman's policies, which were controlled by the British. One of his allies was a young Congressman from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy. In *Reminiscences*, MacArthur quotes from a 1945 speech that Kennedy gave in Salem, Mass., criticizing Truman's policy toward China:

"During the postwar period began the great split of the minds of our diplomats over whether to support the Government of Chiang Kai-shek or force Chiang Kai-shek out as a price of our assistance, to bring Chinese Communists into his government to form a coalition...."

MacArthur writes, "What our young men have saved, our diplomats and our President have frittered away." "This is a tragic story of China whose freedom we once fought to preserve." Later, after being fired by President Truman as Supreme Commander of the United States in the Korean War, in 1951, he repeated this in an address to Congress.

## Backstory: New Guinea

Inchon was not first time that MacArthur used the strategy of hitting the enemy by surprise behind his



lines. It was a strategy he had used in defeating the Japanese in World War II.

Soon after attacking Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the Japanese proceeded to take over the South Pacific, taking over the Philippines and the Dutch Islands around New Guinea, sources of key war resources, such as oil, tin, bauxite, and rubber. The Japanese plan was to then seize Australia. MacArthur planned to stop them by upsetting their takeover of New Guinea.

MacArthur's chief of the Air Force, General Kenney, writes that "Lacking naval forces and amphibious equipment to dislodge the Japanese ... he made the first air envelopment in history. There was no precedent for his seizure by air of landing areas within a few miles of the enemy positions. There was nothing in the books that advocated or even suggested flying two divisions of infantry with their light artillery ... and landing them on the flank and in the rear of the enemy positions." His soldiers would have to depend for ammunition, food, evacuation and replacements solely on the Air Force. MacArthur's own staff was against the operation and recommended withdrawal, as they did not believe that the air resupply would work. Kenney said it was called "MacArthur's gamble." But the gamble paid off. Kenney writes that MacArthur's "spirit and leadership carried his forces along the long road back to the Philippines and placed him finally in Tokyo...."

### Truman Fires MacArthur

After MacArthur's success at Inchon, and the U.S. capture of North Korea, Truman asked to meet with MacArthur. They met on Wake Island in the Pacific on Oct. 15, 1950. MacArthur wrote about his impression of Truman after this meeting: "He seemed to take great pride in his historical knowledge, but it seemed to me that in spite of his having read much, it was of a superficial character, encompassing facts without the logic and reasoning dictating those facts. Of the Far East he knew little, presenting a strange combination of distorted history and vague hopes that somehow, some way, we could do something to help those struggling against Communism."

In December 1950, the Chinese entered North Korea in force, with over 200,000 troops. MacArthur



*MacArthur held Truman responsible for the Korean War. He wrote that, after the death of FDR, the nation's leadership was "in the short space of five years ... frittered away." The two are shown here at their (strained) meeting on Wake Island in October 1950.*

called for a naval blockade of mainland China and a bombing of Manchurian bases.

On Dec. 1, 1950, MacArthur gave an interview to *U.S. News and World Report*, which was picked up and published in many U.S. and European papers. In it, the general criticized Washington for its refusal to allow him to pursue the Chinese forces. He stated that those limitations were an enormous handicap, and without precedent in military history.

Acheson said that MacArthur, by going public with his views, "had perpetrated a major act of sabotage of a Government operation." Truman responded, saying that MacArthur "was ready to start general war. I was not." MacArthur, in his autobiography, wrote that Red China was already fully at war with the U.S.

The ostensible reason that Truman fired MacArthur, was that the general had disobeyed Truman's order that no one was to make a public statement on Korea without it first being approved by Washington. Author Courtney Whitney wrote that Acheson's State Department was following British orders to have MacArthur fired, that MacArthur's message had run afoul "of plans being hatched in the State Department to succumb to British pressure...."

Behind Truman was British Prime Minister Clement Atlee, who had just written a "position paper" on reaching a ceasefire on the basis of the 38th parallel. Immediately after Truman's response to MacArthur,



National Archives

*MacArthur was fired by Truman (on orders of the British), ostensibly for violating the President's order against any public statements about Korea. Here, back in the U.S., MacArthur addresses a crowd of 50,000 at Soldier's Field in Chicago, April 1951.*

Atlee flew to Washington to hold private meetings with Truman. From Dec. 4 to Dec. 8, Atlee, Truman, and their staffs met at the White House and on the Presidential yacht. Truman brought Acheson, Marshall, and Bradley. Atlee brought Field Marshal William Slim, Air Marshal Lord Tedder and Amb. Oliver Franks. Truman was warned to be careful of Atlee's tactics, but Truman said that their relationship was never in doubt: "Loyalty to principles and friends was the British attitude, and it was America's too."

Atlee proposed that MacArthur be removed from running the war in Korea, and instead that a UN Committee run it. On advice from Marshall and Bradley, Truman rejected Atlee's proposal. It was shortly afterward, that the Joint Chiefs rejected MacArthur's plan for a naval blockade of the Chinese mainland, claiming it would disrupt trade between Britain and Hong Kong.

On March 24, 1951, MacArthur issued a statement, which was printed in newspapers throughout the country, in which he called for negotiations with the field commanders of the enemy forces in Korea to realize the political objectives of the United Nations. In response, Truman issued directives through the Joint Chiefs that no one in the government was to make any political statements. In effect, Truman had already decided to fire MacArthur, and was now just waiting for an oppor-

tunity. That moment came when a private letter that MacArthur had written to House Minority Leader Joseph Martin, critical of the Joint Chiefs' policies, was released to the press and read on the floor of the Congress by Martin. This letter ends with MacArthur's famous words "There is no substitute for victory." Acheson called it an open declaration of war on the Administration's policy.

On April 11, the *Chicago Tribune* leaked the story that Truman had issued orders to fire MacArthur to Secretary of the Army Richard Pace. Bradley informed Truman that MacArthur knew of his planned firing, and that he was going to resign immediately. Truman's response to Bradley was: "The son of a bitch isn't going to

resign on me. I want him fired."

Thus ended MacArthur's 15 years in the Pacific.

In December of 1950, while he was commanding the UN forces in Korea, MacArthur had written that "at one o'clock in the morning, Truman summoned the press to the White House and announced his [MacArthur's] relief from command of the Far East.... [H]e was apparently of the belief I was conspiring in some underhanded way with the Republican leadership. This was completely erroneous. I had no part whatsoever in the political situation. Although nominally a Republican, probably because of my attraction to Abraham Lincoln, I had always expressed admiration for the accomplishments of the Democratic Party, and appreciation of its many leaders. Such criticisms as I have made have never been of parties, but what I regarded as concrete instances of mistakes and failures of the parties."

MacArthur continued: "I had heard much of President Truman's violent temper and paroxysms of ungovernable rage, and have noted with growing concern his increasingly indecisive handling of the Korea situation. From strength in his original decision to free and unite Korea, he had, step by step, weakened into a hesitant nervousness indicative of a state of confusion and bewilderment."



Thomas Shafer

*President Eisenhower accepted MacArthur's plan to end the Korean War by holding a conference between Ike and Stalin. In a memorandum, MacArthur wrote, "It is my own belief that the Soviet masses are just as eager for peace as are our own people." Unfortunately, Stalin died before the meeting could take place. The two U.S. leaders are shown here in Tokyo in May 1946.*

MacArthur strongly implied that Truman was on the verge of a nervous breakdown: "It was quite apparent his nerves were at the breaking point—not only his nerves, but what was far more menacing in the Chief Executive of a country at war—his nerve."

### **Postscript: MacArthur Gives Eisenhower a Plan To End the War**

After MacArthur's dismissal, the Korean War would drag on for another two years, becoming the U.S.'s most bloody "police action," as the Truman Administration called it.

MacArthur, however, had come up with another plan.

On Dec. 17 1952, he authored a memorandum, calling for a two-party conference between Eisenhower and Stalin, because the inclusion of other powers would only assure failure. The U.S. had such a mandate, since it had been designated as the agent of the UN in the conflict. Such a conference would explore the world situation as a "corollary to ending the Korean War." The goal would be to allow Germany and Korea each to unite under forms of government to be popularly determined, whereby the neutrality of the former, as well as Austria and Japan, would be guaranteed by the U.S.,

U.S.S.R., with all other nations invited to join in as co-guarantors. This would include withdrawal of all foreign troops.

In addition, he called for the U.S. and the Soviet Union to include in their constitutions a provision outlawing war as an instrument of national policy, with all other nations doing the same.

If such agreements could not be reached, the Soviets would be informed of the U.S. intention to clear North Korea of all enemy forces. This would include bombing the logistics centers in China and, if necessary, the use of nuclear weapons. MacArthur saw this intention as leverage for reaching an agreement which would, in the end, be in the mutual interest.

He concluded, "It is my own belief that the Soviet masses are just as eager for peace as are our own people. I believe they suffer the delusion that there are aggressive intentions against them on the part of the capitalistic world, and that they would welcome an imaginative approach, which would allay this false impression. The Soviet Union is not blind to the dangers which actually confront it in the present situation, and it might well settle the Korean War on equitable terms such as those herein outlined, just as soon as it realizes we have the will and the means to bring the present issues to a prompt and definitive determination."

Eisenhower adopted MacArthur's policy and took positive steps to implement it. But he lost his potential partner with Stalin's death in March of 1953. MacArthur's grand plan died with him.

Today, the actions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and its head Gen. Martin Dempsey in preventing our current mad President Barack Obama from launching nuclear war, reflect the legacy of General MacArthur's commitment to end war.

Whether there is a future for man, whether we explore the Solar System and beyond, will depend on whether people like MacArthur, and today like Lyndon LaRouche, come forward and assume the leadership of the nation.