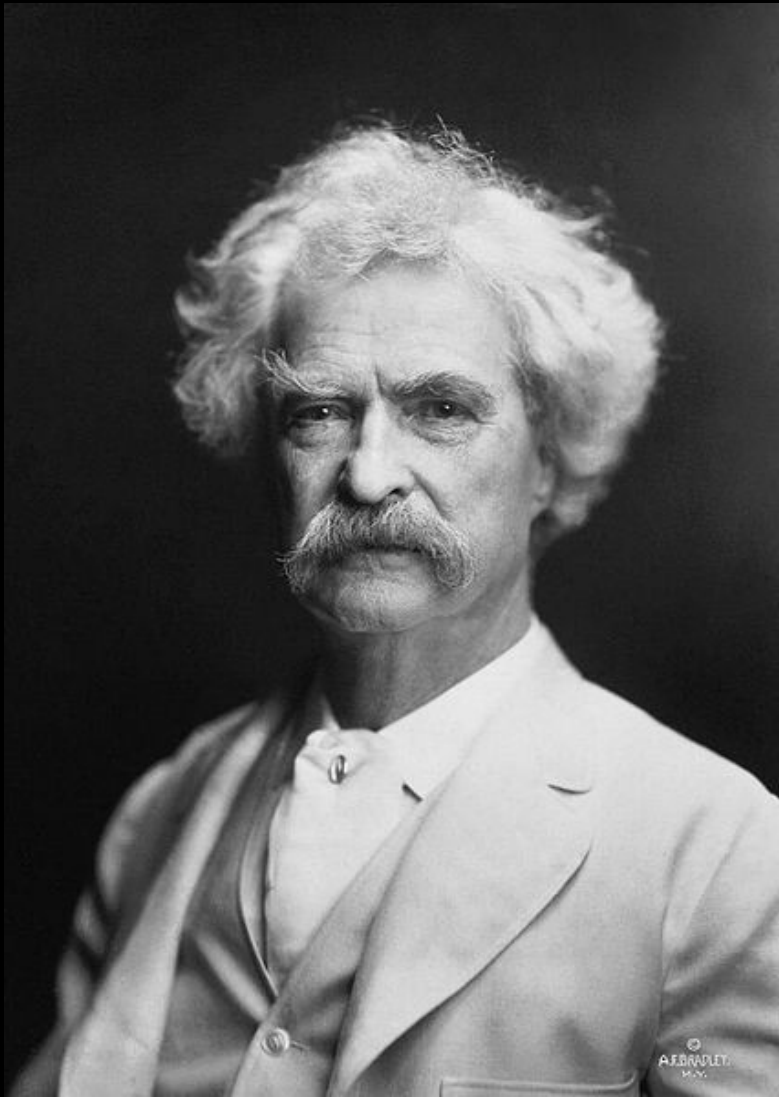


# THE KOREAN WAR





**“History never  
repeats itself.**

**But it often  
rhymes.”**

# THE HISTORY RHYME



Consider the following:

An army – fresh from years of war elsewhere – lands by sea in Korea to deal with what is considered an unacceptable situation.

After initial set backs, it defeats its Korean adversary and drives north to the Yalu River whereupon the Chinese launch a massive counteroffensive that drives them south almost to where they started and then the war devolves into a stalemate.

Sound familiar?



# THE HISTORY RHYME



**This was the Imjin War – fought between the Japanese, Joseon (Korea) and the Ming Dynasty between 1592 and 1598.**

**Japan invaded Korea to conquer – or so the armies were told. The Shogun – Toyotomi Hideyoshi – had recently unified Japan ending centuries of civil war but had a nation in arms with a large group of soldiers who knew of no other livelihood – so he sent them abroad lest they cause problems at home.**

**They were successful – right up until when the Chinese intervened...**

# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953

(just to be sure there is no confusion regarding the subject matter)



**Called “The Forgotten War” since even before it ended.**

**Called a “Police Action” by President Truman (although in the interests of accuracy, a reporter suggested the term and he chose not to disagree.)**

**It was America’s first Hot War of the Cold War.**

**It began less than 5 years after the end of WWII.**

**But it also began with a U.S. Army and military that was less prepared for war than it had been in 1939.**

**Add to that it seemed to come out of nowhere and the initial results may have been predictable.**

# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953



**Called a limited war, a term which annoyed many Americans at the time, all that was limited were the goals.**

**The war lasted 37 months yet in that time the U.S. expended more ordinance (artillery and bombs) than it had in the entirety of WWII.**

**About 1.6 million Americans served in Korea at some point during the war – most for less than a year.**

**About 38,000 died – the majority in the first 10 months of the war.**

**The enemy casualties are not clear but in excess of 600,000 dead and probably closer to 1,000,000. About 2,000,000 Korean civilians died as well.**



# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953



**It is arguably the least understood war of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.**

**It was unpopular, but not in the way Vietnam would be.**

**Few movies were made about it. Few books were written about it. That includes histories.**

**It had become a historical orphan – often relegated to a few chapters in works on the Cold War.**

**It does not help that it is also, perhaps, the poorest documented – the archival materials are not as voluminous, as detailed, nor as well organized as those for WWII or Vietnam.**



# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953



**40 years ago it was well known – but only because of a TV show.**

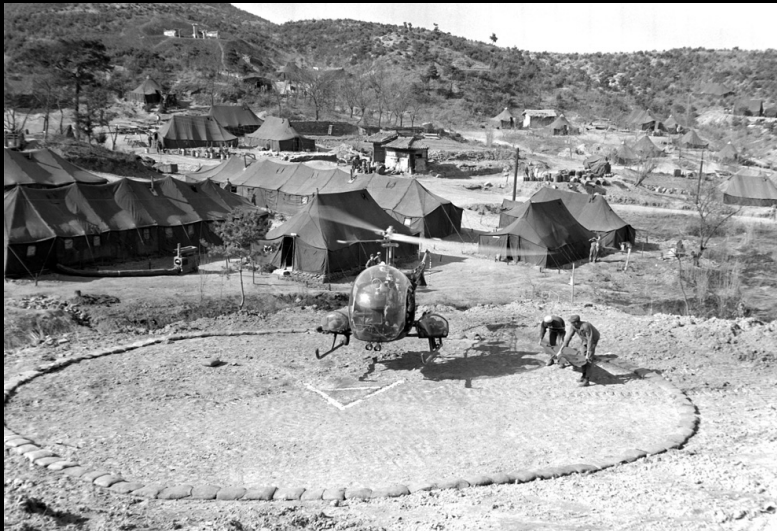
**The show was based off a movie which was based off a book by a doctor about his time in Korea (below, a MASH unit in 1951.)**

**However, that was as far as accuracy went.**

**The attitudes were contemporary (1970's).**

**The show made little attempt to track with the history – and given it was on the air almost four times longer than the war – little surprise there.**

**(The war lasted 37 months. The show lasted 11 years.)**





# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953



**What lessons were learned?**

**The truth is most of the lessons learned should not have been given that it was reinventing the wheel into the same wheel.**

**The road to Korea and subsequent combat was more a list of lessons forgotten only to be relearned at terrible cost than new insight.**

**Policy makers assumed WWII had changed things when in fact it had not.**

**However, it did solidify (for better or worse) the concept that in the U.S. civilian authority controls the military and conduct of policy.**



# THE KOREAN WAR 1950 – 1953(?)



It is also a war that technically is still ongoing – although the major players have mostly moved on.

There was no surrender, no peace treaty, no normalization of relations between the initial belligerent parties. All that exists is a “cease fire.”

The lines are still manned and at least one of the sides refuses to concede that it is over.

U.S. Military personnel who serve in Korea at least 60 days receive a campaign medal.



# THE COLD WAR



**In general, almost every geopolitical crisis from the end of WWII through August 1991 (the fall of the Soviet Union), needs to be viewed in light of the “Cold War.”**

**But, there is considerable debate as to when this began.**

**It is generally agreed it was recognized as a conflict when Winston Churchill made his famous “Iron Curtain” speech at Westminster College, Fulton MO on March 5<sup>th</sup> 1946.**



**It is argued it truly began earlier – the Yalta Conference of February 1945, for example. (At Yalta and against the wishes of Churchill, Stalin effectively gained control over eastern Europe.)**

# THE COLD WAR

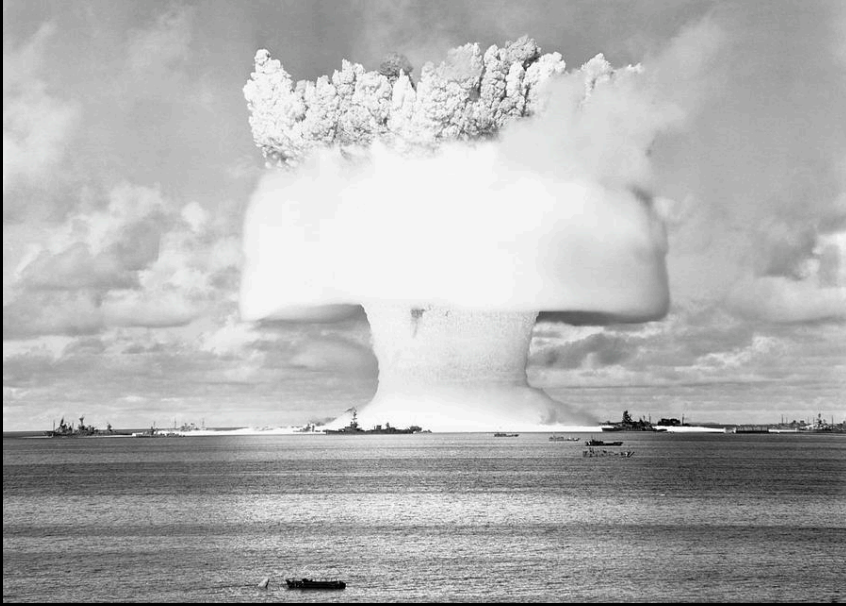


The U.S. Congress has defined the Cold War as the period from September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1945 (Japan's formal surrender) until December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1991 (the demise of the Soviet Union.)

It made the definition as part of the Defense Appropriations Act of 1998 when it authorized the Department of Defense to issue (at their discretion) the Cold War Service Medal to any who served honorably during that time frame.

The Department of Defense declined to issue the medal. Three of the 55 National Guards have issued it as part of their separate decorations: Alaska, Louisiana and Texas.

# THE COLD WAR



The Cold War has been variously described as a “stand off,” a “conflict,” a(n) (ongoing) “crisis,” and many other terms.

It clearly had two sides: the Soviet Union and the United States (and their allies of the day.)

It purported to be a struggle between two opposed if not irreconcilable ideologies: Communism and Capitalism.

It was quite real and at times quite tense.

But it was nothing truly new nor was it the cause of everything.

It is at its most consistent if seen as a struggle for influence.



# THE COLD WAR



The Cold War of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was, arguably, a continuation of an earlier cold war – but it was called something different (“The Great Game”).

From the 1840’s until 1907, Russia and Great Britain were at each other diplomatically over control in Central Asia. Aside from the Crimea, there was no hot war between the two rivals but there were proxy wars.

Most notably, there were the wars in Afghanistan from 1842 into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century which went about as well as we have come to expect.

The two powers nearly came to blows in 1878 when Russia attempted to gain influence over the Dardanelles in what is now Turkey.



# THE COLD WAR

There were, of course, notable differences.



The Great Game was regional – focused entirely on competing interests in Central Asia (although Britain was concerned about what might happen were Russia to gain an upper hand in that region.)

There was no ideological component.

And neither side in that earlier confrontation was capable of wiping the other off the face of the earth.



But otherwise it was similar. Russia was trying to expand its influence and control and Britain was trying to prevent it.

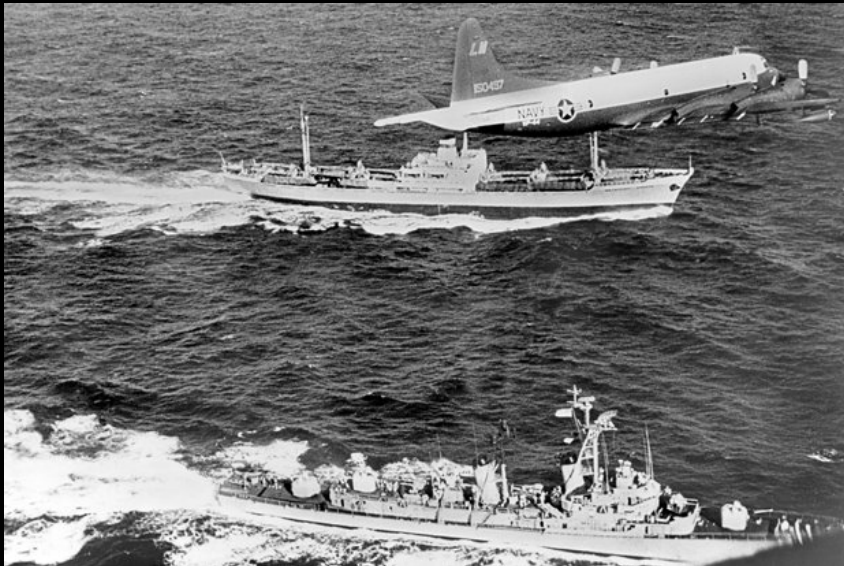
# THE COLD WAR



**From 1945 until 1991, the Cold War affected most geopolitical events in some way.**

**Few, however, were truly caused by it.**

**In other words, there were few events that happened in that timeframe that could only have happened because of the rivalry between the United States and Soviet Union.**



**The most notable truly Cold War events (meaning but for that rivalry, they would not have happened) are the Berlin Crisis in 1948 (airlift) and 1961 (wall) and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1982.**



# THE COLD WAR



There were also conflicts that had practically no connection to the Cold War. The Falklands war between Great Britain and Argentina in 1982 is one example.

Argentina was anti-Soviet and anti-communist. They invaded the Falklands to shore up support for the military junta expecting little or no response from Britain (the Falklands being British territory.)



The USSR stayed out of it as there were no allies in the region. The U.S. offered to help but were rejected (aside from intelligence).

**Most events fell somewhere in between. They were not caused by the Cold War, most having causes either mostly or entirely independent of the rivalry between the East and the West and often having origins dating back to years if not decades or more before there was a Cold War or even a Second World War.**

**The most common cause of these conflicts was the collapse of colonialism. This collapse began following the First World War and accelerated following the Second. With the exception of the Dutch, the First World War had bankrupted the major European colonial powers, although they managed a tenuous hold on their colonies.**

**The Second World War saw many colonies overrun (mostly in the Far East) and others gain increasing autonomy by default. The local inhabitants were reluctant to lose that autonomy or return to colonial status at the end of the war.**

**What followed was decades of civil wars or wars of independence, a process not recognized at the time – except by the Chinese communists.**

**Most of these events had a connection with the Cold War as one side or the other supported one faction or another either with military supplies or advisors or combat troops.**

**The situation in Korea in 1950 falls into this middle ground.**

# MAP OF KOREA

Durs is a single nation with 5,000 years of history; it is a valorous, ambitious nation that has been vigorously fighting against foreign invaders and successive reactionary rulers from olden times; and it is a talented nation that has contributed greatly to mankind's development of science and culture.

KIM IL SUNG



Korea is a peninsula. It borders Manchuria in the North – mostly along the Yalu River and shares a small border with Russia in the extreme Northeast along the Tumen River.

The Yellow Sea it to the west, the Sea of Japan to the east. To the South is the Sea of Japan which separates the Korean Peninsula from Japan.

The current boundaries of Korea (North and South) have remained fairly constant since the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

Its total land area is 84,616 square miles, roughly the size of Utah. This total includes numerous islands surrounding the peninsula.

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Its northern most point, on a bend in the Tumen River is at roughly the same latitude as Madison WI.

The southern most point of the peninsula is at roughly the same latitude as Pasadena CA.

Its southern most point is on Jeju Island and is roughly at the same latitude as Tuscaloosa AL (the University of Alabama).

Its climate is temperate – four seasons. That being said the summers are hot and humid in the lowlands and the winters are generally frigid and dry due to the location of the jet stream.

It is also mountainous. Over 80% of the country is at least 600 ft above sea level and its mountains exceed 6,000.



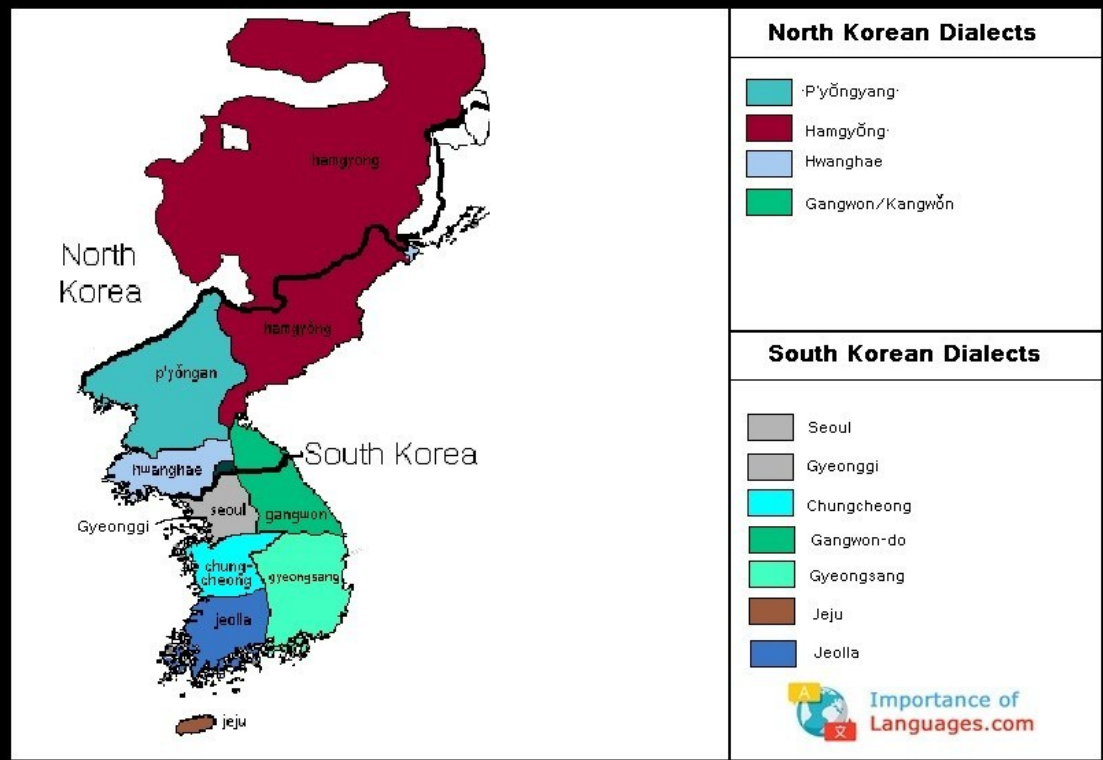
**While not as tall or rugged as the Rocky Mountains, the Taebek Mountains of Korea are not foothills (and barely have any). They are steep and rocky and between them the valleys are narrow.**

**Through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, what little flat ground there was, was dedicated to the production of rice. Terraced farming was all but non-existent.**



**(Then again, throughout most of its history, Korea was a major exporter of rice thus there was no need for such engineering.)**

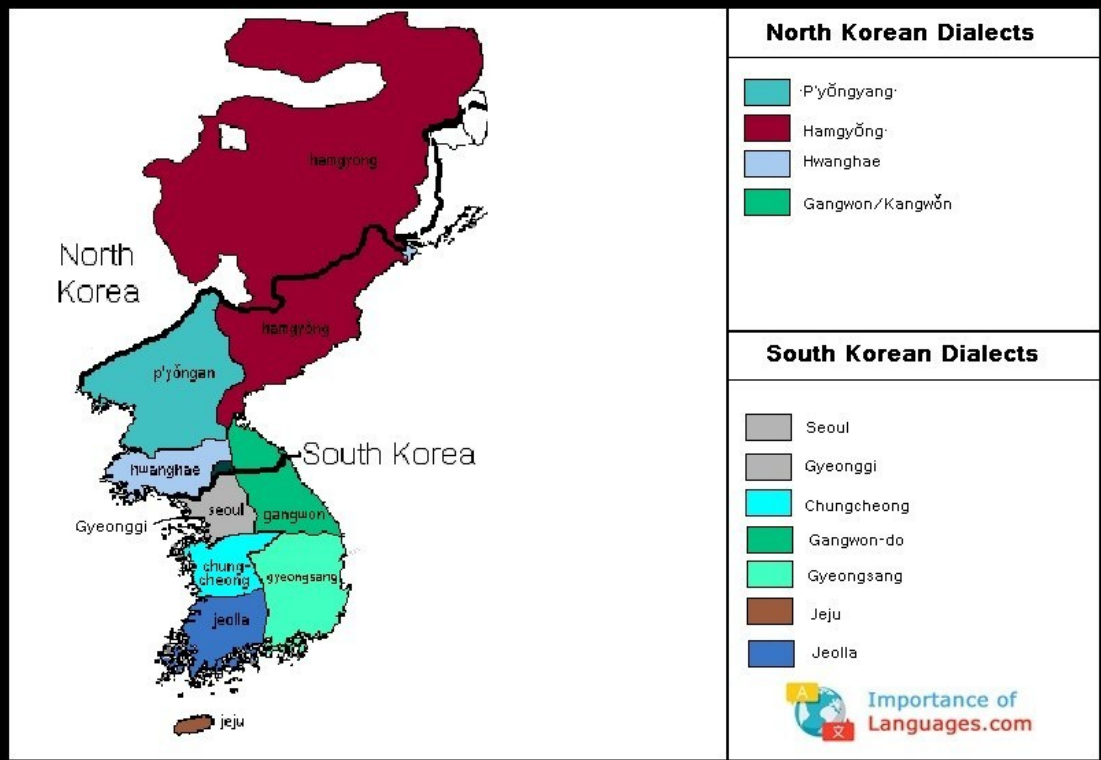
**The pictures are from South Korea. North Korea is even more mountainous.**



**The Korean language is an isolate. This means it is not part of any larger language groups.**

**English, for example, is Germanic in origin and is part of the much larger Indo-European group. Chinese is part of the much larger Sino-Tibetan group. Korean is part of no group. In Europe, Basque is an isolate – in fact the second largest after Korean in terms of native speakers. That being said, Korean is supposedly easier to learn than Basque.**

**Perhaps this explains one aspect of Korean history.**



**Today's Korea is what was historically southern Korea. Northern Korea lay north of the Yalu and Tumen rivers in what is now Manchuria, China. The Korean people have been pushed eastward over the recent centuries but the Korean language still dominates a significant portion of eastern Manchuria and into Russia. (In fact both North and South Korea still claim those lands – although not officially – meaning not to anyone outside of Korea.)**

**However, historically Korea has never been keen on expansion which distinguishes it from its many neighbors over the millennia.**



**The Korean people have lived on the Korean peninsula and in the lands to the immediate north for over 3,000 years and probably much longer. Aspects of their art, architecture and culture have significant Chinese influence, although that is much more recent.**

**Korea has not been an expansionist culture. While its lands north of the Yalu have altered over the centuries, those alterations were either by displacement of their own people or by depopulation of non-Korean peoples.**

**Historically, they have had no interest in ruling over non Koreans. They have been willing to trade with foreigners, but otherwise preferred to be left alone and to have as little to do with foreign cultures as possible.**

**Currently, North Korea is called the Hermit Kingdom. That appellation was applied to all Korea for centuries.**







**But, while ancient Korea was not an aggressive culture, this does not mean they were peaceful. Through much of its history it was divided into two or more kingdoms who were at odds with one another from time to time.**

**They would, however, ignore such differences whenever anyone else decided to invade. Korea has been invaded several times but southern Korea (the peninsula) has never been conquered.**

**Most notably, the Mongols invaded seven times and each invasion was unsuccessful south of the Yalu River.**





**The Koreans were effective soldiers for much of their history. They lacked what their enemies to the north had – numbers – but made up for it through both skill and favorable terrain, especially on the peninsula.**

**The first recorded failed invasion was in 108 B.C. The Chinese Han Dynasty tried to conquer them and failed (although it did succeed somewhat north of the Yalu where the terrain is more open. The Han held much of that region for four centuries.)**

**This contact introduced Buddhism and the Chinese style of writing. (There are earlier writings but they remain untranslatable.)**

**The Chinese style is called Hanja in Korean. It is not truly suited for the Korean language (just as it is not suited for Japanese.) The result was it proved difficult to adapt and literacy was low.**



**The mountainous terrain and the nature of the mountains (steep with narrow valleys) favored small armies and defense. The much larger armies from the west found movement difficult and were easily ambushed and defeated in detail.**

**This was by no means always the case but it was usually so. Competent generalship and effective weapons and tactics still could affect the outcome but where there was no significant difference in such skills, the Koreans held the advantage on their home ground.**



**It also helped that the Korean kingdoms were effective at forging alliances with more powerful neighbors. After the failed Han invasion, they allied with the Han and every Chinese dynasty that followed.**



When the Han dynasty collapsed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century, Korea regained its former northern territories. From the 3<sup>rd</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup> Century it was divided into three major kingdoms, the largest being in the north.

The southern kingdoms would unify (through war and marriage) and the northern one would be replaced by a different Korean dynasty in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century. This divided Korea would be the one that would resist the Mongol invasions in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century – although the Northern kingdom would lose lands north of the Yalu.



The Koreans would buy off the Mongols through tribute (they were and would be very good at that) and marriage. Most Mongol Khans and nobles had Korean wives and Korean nobles Mongol wives. In fact, the last Yuan ruler (Mongol rulers of China) was an Empress who herself was Korean.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, Korea unified into a single “Empire” under the Joseong dynasty south of the Yalu. This “empire” could last into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

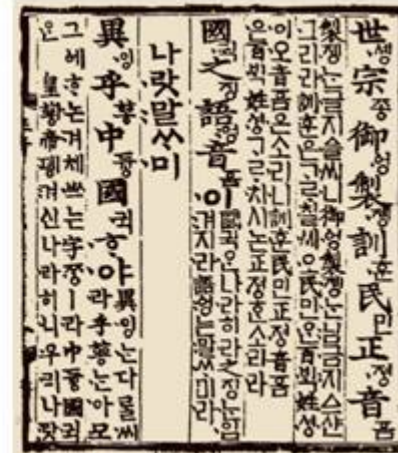
한글

• Consonants:

|        |       |        |        |      |        |         |      |         |
|--------|-------|--------|--------|------|--------|---------|------|---------|
| ㄱ      | ㄴ     | ㄷ      | ㄹ      | ㅁ    | ㅂ      | ㅅ       | ㅇ    | ㅈ       |
| \k, g\ | \n\   | \t, d\ | \r, l\ | \m\  | \p, b\ | \s, sh\ | \ng\ | \ch, j\ |
| kiyok  | niun  | tikut  | riul   | mium | piup   | siot    | iung | chiut   |
| ㅋ      | ㆁ     | ㆅ      | ㆆ      | ㆇ    |        |         |      |         |
| \ch\   | \k\   | \t\    | \p, f\ | \h\  |        |         |      |         |
| ch'iut | k'iuk | t'iut  | p'iup  | hiut |        |         |      |         |

• Vowels

|     |      |      |       |     |      |     |      |      |      |
|-----|------|------|-------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
| ㅏ   | ㅑ    | ㅓ    | ㅕ     | ㅗ   | ㅛ    | ㅜ   | ㅠ    | ㅡ    | ㅣ    |
| la\ | lyal | leol | lyeol | lol | lyol | lu\ | lyul | leul | leel |



The unification of Korea under a single government in 1392 triggered a flowering of culture and technologies that would transform the country into perhaps the most advanced in Asia (if not the world) by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. An early Joseong Emperor invented a new writing style (Hangul) in the mid 1400's that would turn Korea into the most literate in the world within a century.

Hangul is a phonetic alphabet. While it resembles characters or ideograms, it was actually a combination of merely 30 characters (now 24 due to changes in pronunciation over the centuries.) Hanja (Chinese characters) were still used but only as a means to distinguish between homonyms.

There was pushback at first from the scholars and scribes who saw this simple writing as a threat to their jobs, but the new writing expanded through popular writings such as poetry and novels. It was said a smart person could learn to read in hours and the least bright in a few weeks. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, over 98% were literate.

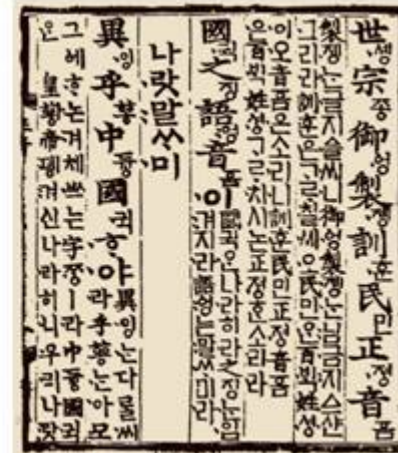
한글

• Consonants:

|        |       |        |        |      |        |         |      |         |
|--------|-------|--------|--------|------|--------|---------|------|---------|
| ㄱ      | ㄴ     | ㄷ      | ㄹ      | ㅁ    | ㅂ      | ㅅ       | ㅇ    | ㅈ       |
| \k, g\ | \n\   | \t, d\ | \r, l\ | \m\  | \p, b\ | \s, sh\ | \ng\ | \ch, j\ |
| kiyok  | niun  | tikut  | riul   | mium | piup   | siot    | iung | chiut   |
| ㅊ      | ㅋ     | ㅌ      | ㅍ      | ㅎ    |        |         |      |         |
| \ch\   | \k\   | \t\    | \p, f\ | \h\  |        |         |      |         |
| ch'iut | k'iuk | t'iut  | p'iup  | hiut |        |         |      |         |

• Vowels

|     |      |      |       |     |      |     |      |      |      |
|-----|------|------|-------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|
| ㅏ   | ㅑ    | ㅓ    | ㅕ     | ㅗ   | ㅛ    | ㅜ   | ㅠ    | ㅡ    | ㅣ    |
| la\ | lyal | leol | lyeol | lol | lyol | lu\ | lyul | leul | leel |



The 1450's saw not just the invention of Hangu but also Korea's first contact with the West in the form of Portuguese traders – roughly at the same time as Japan. Unlike Japan which initially encouraged trade, Korea chose to bar such trade with the strange foreigners.

It helped that they lacked what the traders sought: spices, tea, silks, porcelain. (These did exist in Korea but were largely imported from elsewhere in Asia.) As neither Korea nor the western traders seemed at all interested, Korea was able to maintain isolation from the West for centuries.

It was not until the 1870's that Korea opened up to global trade – under pressure from the Japanese to do so.



**In the 1400's and 1500's, Korea was more than able to ignore the foreigners. They had developed a capable navy that was arguably one of the most advanced in the world technologically. It was small but professional and had vessels designed specifically for mounting efficient (for the time) naval artillery.**

**By professional, it was a career, unlike the army which was more like a militia. Promotion was largely through merit rather than by virtue of nobility and favor at court (as was the case with the army). It was small, but efficient and effective.**

**During the Imjin War with Japan, while Korea struggled on land, it was almost undefeated at sea despite being desperately outnumbered. This was due to the quality of their ships, their guns, their tactics and the genius of their commander Admiral Yi who some naval historians consider the greatest naval commander in world history.**





**The Imjin War and a subsequent war with the Manchu in the 1670's devastated the economy. (The Manchu failed to subdue or conquer Korea but secured an agreement that Korea would not attack them. China was the Manchu's objective and they did not need a threat to their rear.)**



**The economy would recover and Korea would continue on in its isolation allied to China. Korea paid a heavy tribute faithfully and in return China (under the Manchu) guaranteed its independence and borders.**

**This would finally change in 1876. Korea was pressured by Japan to open its ports to trade and was then in no position to object. Japan also "encouraged" Korea to enter into trade agreements with the West.**





**The most notable won would be signed the same year with the United States. The treaty of friendship opened Korea to trade and missionaries in exchange the U.S. agreed to protect its sovereignty.**

**Korea did not have the problems with missionaries or Christianity that China and Japan would have. It was less concerned about religion than those two countries as its only religion at the time was imported.**

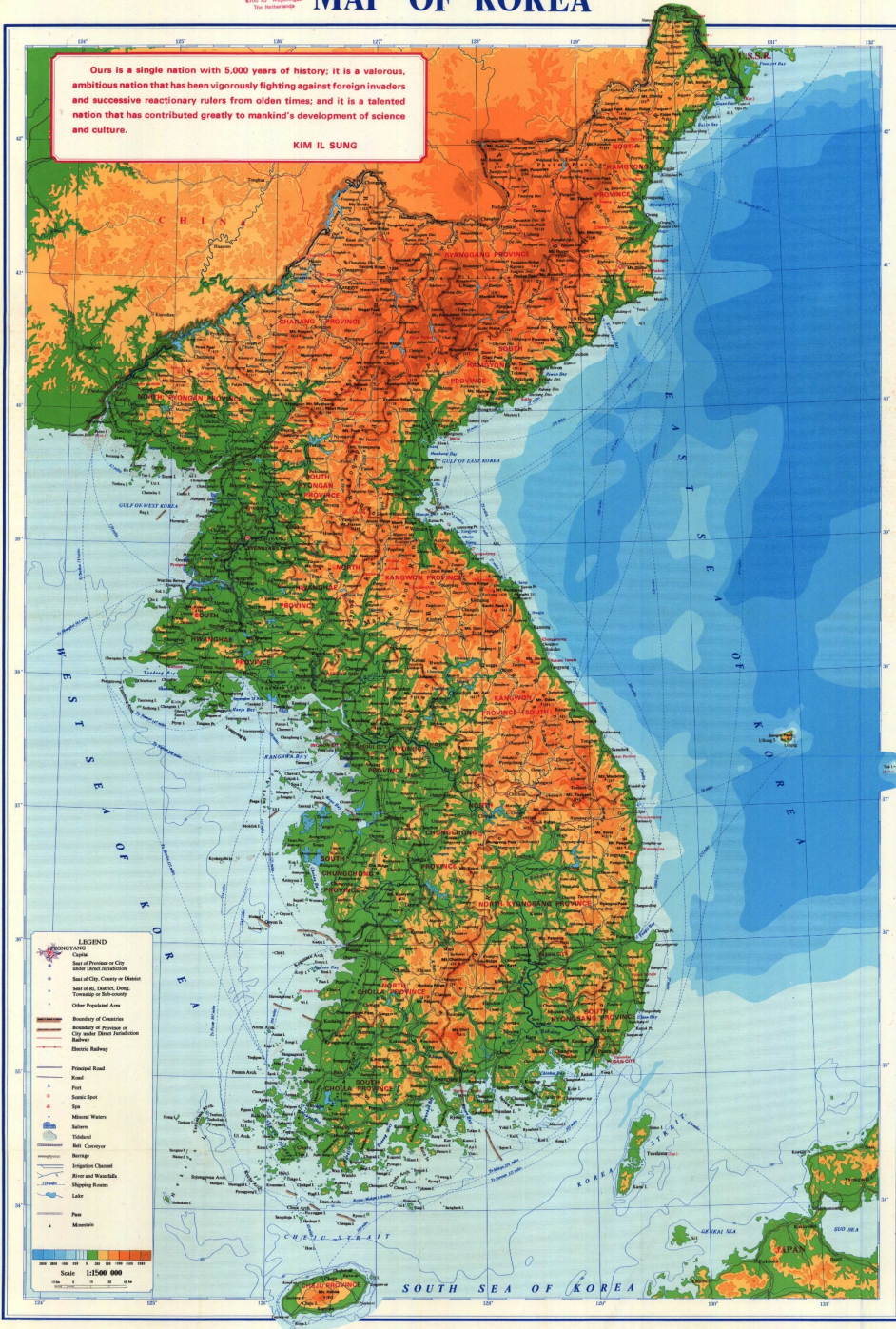


**As a result, Korea developed a large Christian population by the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. That being said, the missionaries in Korea were not nearly as enamored with Korea as their counterparts were with China and, to a lesser extent, Japan.**

# MAP OF KOREA

Ours is a single nation with 5,000 years of history; it is a valorous, ambitious nation that has been vigorously fighting against foreign invaders and successive reactionary rulers from olden times; and it is a talented nation that has contributed greatly to mankind's development of science and culture.

KIM IL SUNG



The origins of the Korean War date back years – decades. The immediate cause can be dated to August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1945 (discussed later), but the underlying cause dates back at least to around 1910 and possibly back to 1894 if not sooner.

The 1945 date defined the specific nature of the war, not whether a war would have happened.

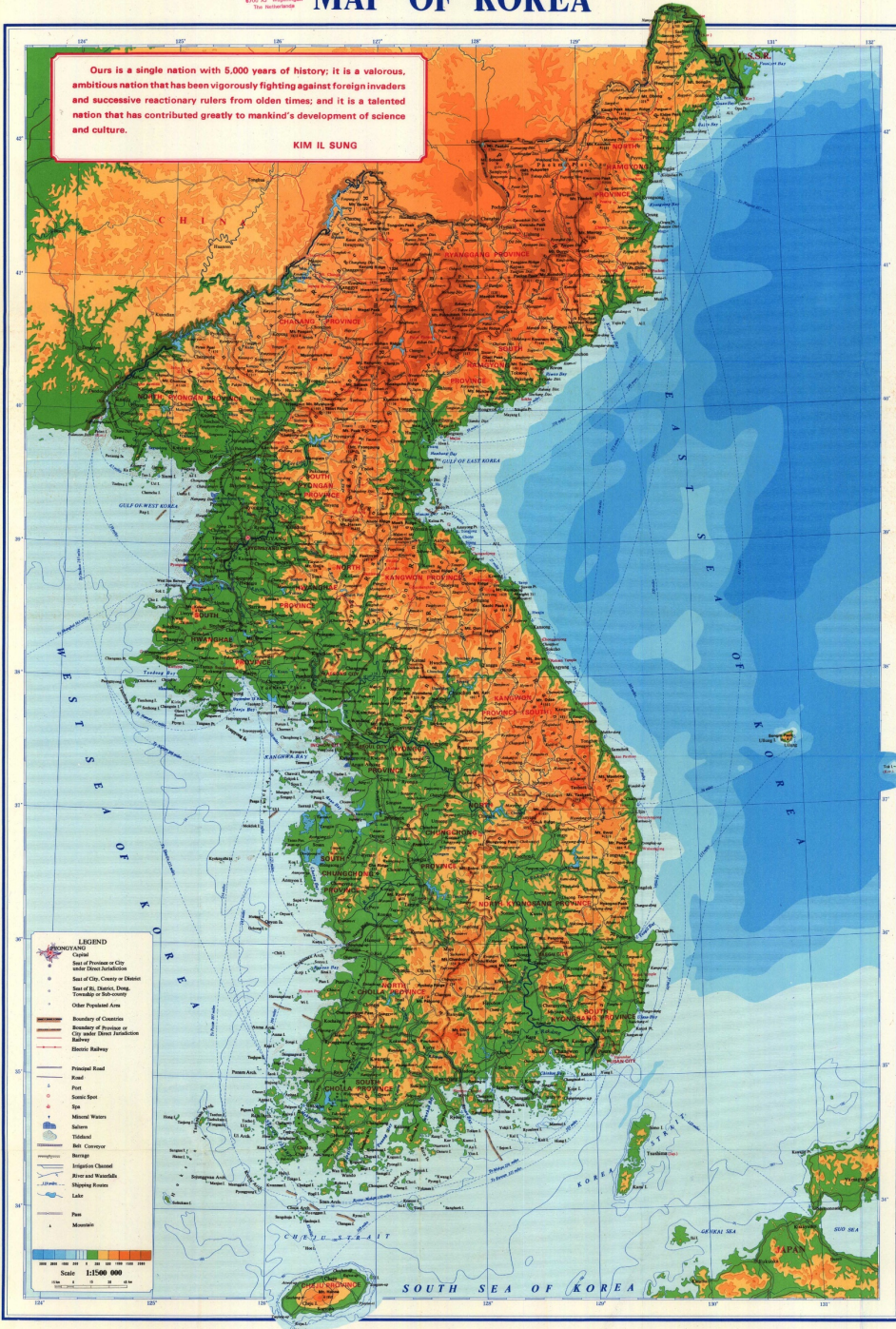
The Korean War was a civil war and like most such wars it was the result of years of tension within the subject society and not solely the result of external influences.

The first domino to fall leading to the Korean War arguably was the opening of the Hermit Kingdom to trade in the 1870's.

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The Emperor was not as politically powerful as the traditional Chinese Emperors but more so than the pre-Meiji Restoration Japanese Emperors. They ruled through the nobility and had held most of the wealth and most certainly did not want that to change.

Trade led to three things:

First, the rise of an educated merchant class – who were gaining wealth unavailable to the nobility.

Second, the enlightenment of an educate peasantry that perhaps their situation was not ideal and maybe they should own the land they worked.

Third, a realization throughout that trade with the West had unacceptable consequences as they saw what was happening in China.

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The nobility felt the foreigners could be handled provided their society remained as it had been, after all they believed they could count on the Chinese to help if any foreigners became too pushy.

The mercantile class favored the Japanese example. The best way to keep their independence would be to modernize and industrialize so that the West would not see them as vulnerable to colonization. This class generally developed close ties with Japan.

The peasants wanted an end to what remain of the feudal system, land reform and a greater say in government and economy, and they wanted it yesterday.

It would come to a head in 1894.



**JAPAN AND KOREA**  
 Compiled and Drawn in the Cartographic Section of  
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**THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE**  
 Gilbert Grosvenor, Editor  
 Published by www.nationalgeographic.com  
 National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.  
 Revised 1945

SCALE 1:600,000 ON 45°N TO THE TROPIC

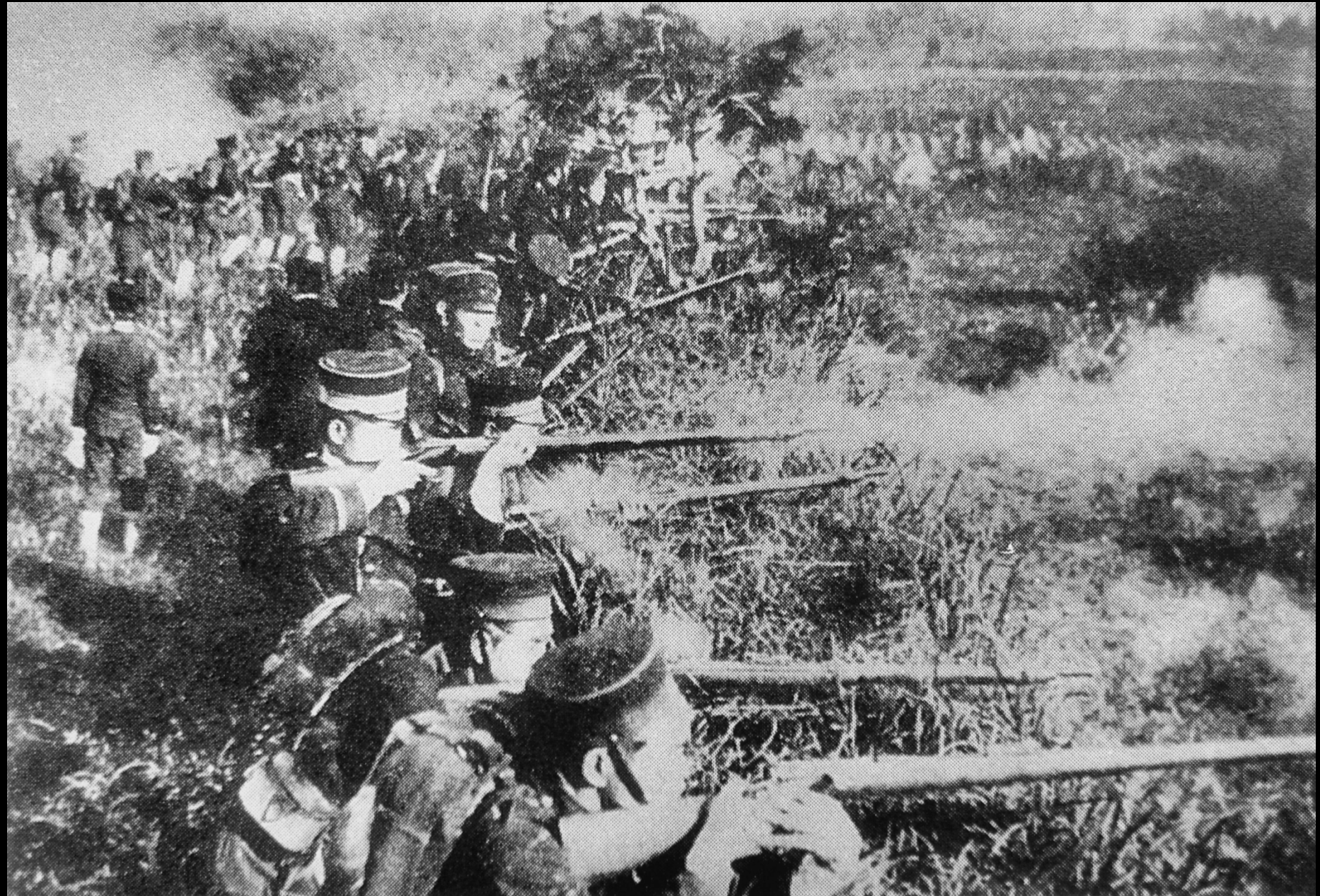
Principal Settlements ———— District Capitals  
 National Capitals & Provincial Capitals ———— District Capitals  
 Boundaries and Districts ————  
 WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 1945

| Country | Province | Capital     | Other Cities  |   |
|---------|----------|-------------|---|---|
| JAPAN   | Hokkaido | Sapporo     | Asahikawa, Nemuro, Kushiro, Ishikari, Sorachi, Sorachi-Kita, Sorachi-Minami, Sorachi-Shirane, Sorachi-Tomamae, Sorachi-Tsurumi, Sorachi-Utsunomiya, Sorachi-Yamanashi, Sorachi-Yuzawa, Sorachi-Kita, Sorachi-Minami, Sorachi-Shirane, Sorachi-Tomamae, Sorachi-Tsurumi, Sorachi-Utsunomiya, Sorachi-Yamanashi, Sorachi-Yuzawa |   |
|         | Honshu   | Tokyo       | Yokohama, Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Kobe, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, Aichi, Gifu, Shizuoka, Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, Hyogo, Nara, Wakayama, Tottori, Shimane, Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kochi, Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima  |   |
|         | Shikoku  | Tokushima   | Matsuyama, Takamatsu, Kochi, Ehime, Kochi   |   |
|         | Kyushu   | Fukuoka     | Kyushu, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima   |   |
|         | KOREA    | North Korea | Pyongyang   | Hamhung, Wonsan, Chongju, Haeju, Sariwon, Kaesong, Pyongyang, Hamhung, Wonsan, Chongju, Haeju, Sariwon, Kaesong                       |
|         |          | South Korea | Seoul   | Pusan, Taegu, Daegu, Gwangju, Busan, Ulsan, Daejeon, Incheon, Seoul, Suwon, Gyeongju, Ulsan, Daejeon, Incheon, Seoul, Suwon, Gyeongju |

James M. Doolittle, chief cartographer  
 Promoters in Japan: H. H. G. O'Brien, R. G. S. Wilson and R. C. Brown  
 Editor in Charge: Gilbert Grosvenor

LOCATION OF JAPAN IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

# FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895



# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**For centuries, Korea had been a vassal kingdom of China. It had its own Emperor and government but paid tribute to the Chinese Empire and its foreign policy was subject to Chinese oversight and approval.**

**For Japan, it had been a principal trade partner during the Tokugawa era.**

**With the Meiji Restoration Korea became a strategic interest. The Koreans were not a threat to Japan but economically they were a net exporter of food (Japan a net importer) and a source of coal and iron that Japan needed for its industrial expansion.**

**But it was politically weak and had become of interest to European dominated China and Russia, both of which were viewed as potentially hostile by the Japanese.**

**Control of the Korean Peninsula by a hostile power posed a real and present threat. As one diplomat observed in the early 1970's – "Korea is the dagger aimed at the heart of Japan." (The phrase would be used about 80 years later by Douglas MacArthur.)**

# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**1875: Japan signed treaties with the United States and Great Britain wherein both guarantee Japanese independence and would oppose any attempts by other European powers to intervene or interfere in Japan. The treaty with Britain included a military alliance to that effect.**

**1876: Korea had thus far resisted all attempts by Europeans to open its ports to trade. Korea became known as the Hermit Kingdom by the West following the opening of Japan two decades earlier.**

**Korea was an independent country in name only. It had a king, a government and an army, but all were effectively controlled by China and had been for 200 years. But China was not what it once was.**

**Japan managed to force a trade treaty with Korea opening its ports to trade and allowing Japanese business into the country. Similar treaties with the west followed.**

**(One with the U.S. in 1882 was a trade agreement in which the U.S. agreed to guarantee Korean sovereignty.)**



# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**Politically, Korea soon fractured.**

**The king, government and army were conservative seeking to preserve old customs, prevent modernization or foreign influences. China backed this faction.**

**Reformers were those who wished to emulate Japan and become a modern nation state. This group was encouraged by foreign (mostly U.S.) missionaries and was backed by Japan.**

**1882: a drought and crop failure led to food shortages and economic collapse. The Korean Army mutinied against the King. Riots broke out. The palace was attacked as was the Japanese legation which was forced to flee. Japanese business were also attacked.**

**Japan intervened with troops to safeguard Japanese interests and demand reparation. China intervened to counter the Japanese. Tensions remained high until a treaty was signed between the two countries. (Korea was not a party).**

# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**China agreed to turn over all Korean “rebels” to the Japanese or ensure they were punished (executed) and make Korea pay for loss of property and life. Japan was allowed a permanent (small) garrison in Seoul to safeguard its legation and interests. The expeditionary troops were then withdrawn.**

**1884: a pro-Japanese coup overthrew the pro-Chinese Korean government. More riots and the Japanese legation was burned and many guards and officials killed. China and Japan again intervened.**

**1885: Convention of Tientsin: both sides agreed to withdraw from Korea. Neither side would supply or train the Koreans (China had been the only one doing so.) Both sides agreed not to intervene in Korea without prior notice to the other.**

**China, however, continued to attempt to control Korean affairs and hinder continued Korean trade with Japan much to the annoyance of Japan.**

**Japan continued to encourage anti-Chinese reformers.**

# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**Tensions continued to mount, but it was hostility by proxy. China and Japan acted against Koreans supporting the other side or encouraged their Koreans to do so.**

**1894: The Dongbak Rebellion. A peasant revolt against the Korean government. Its goals included land reform and ending both Chinese and Japanese influence. It quickly began to overwhelm the Korean Army sent to quell it.**

**The Korean government called on China to intervene which it did sending ~35,000 troops. Japan sent troops in response but claimed it was solely to protect Japanese interests.**

**European observers were convinced that the European equipped, trained and advised Chinese would make short work of the self made Japanese forces should war break out.**

**When the Korean government (still fighting the rebellion) ordered Japan to withdraw its troops, those troops overthrew the government and installed pro-Japanese reformers (July 23, 1894).**

# **FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR: 1894 - 1895**

**China announced it was withdrawing its troops as the crisis had passed. (It had not. The Donghak Rebellion would continue until wiped out by a Japanese battalion armed with new Maxim machine guns and modern artillery in 1895.) But it made no move to withdraw some 4,000 troops outside of Seoul and sent reinforcements by sea.**

**On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1894 a Japanese naval squadron under Capt. Heihachiro Togo fired on the convoy, crippling one escort and driving the others away. The British flagged troop ship stopped, the Chinese troops mutinied and the ship was sunk.**

**On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1894, the Japanese troops attacked the remaining Chinese and routed them forcing them to flee north. Japan declared war August 1<sup>st</sup> while pursuing the retreating Chinese.**

**A Chinese force from Manchuria along with survivors from the defeat south of Seoul was defeated at Pyongyang by two Japanese columns, one from Seoul and the other which had landed at Wonsan across the peninsula to the east.**



The day after Pyonggyang fell to the Japanese (September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1894), the Japanese Navy destroyed the Chinese Navy at the Battle of the Yalu. The Chinese had just landed more troops to support its Korean expedition. What was left from Pyonggyang and the new troops were routed at Dandong on the Yalu and Japan pursued into Manchuria.

The European experts were right. The war was a rout. But it was the Japanese that crushed the Chinese.

# TREATY OF SHIMONOSEKI 1895

**Signed April 17, 1895 after China sued for peace having lost every engagement and with the Japanese in total control of Korea, the Liaodung Peninsula, and with troops on the Shantung Peninsula and Formosa.**

- Korea would be independent in fact with no further relationship with China.**
- Japan would gain control “in perpetuity” over the Liaodung Peninsula and Formosa.**
- Japan would gain most favored nation treatment in China.**
- Japan would gain access to ports on the Yangtze River for trade and access for Japanese business.**
- China would pay Japan reparations equal to about what the war had cost Japan. (~\$5 billion in current value).**

# **TRIPLE INTERVENTION 1895**

**Six days after Japan and China signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki, France, Germany and Russia protested demanding that the treaty be vacated or modified to their satisfaction and implying that they would take unspecified action if their demands were not met.**

**France and Germany considered the trade provisions as threatening their own trade interests in China. The two countries had also lost a small fortune arming and supplying the Chinese who had been crushed in the war.**

**Russia consider Japanese possession of the Liaodung Peninsula both a threat to their territorial interests and to their planned Trans-Siberian Railroad.**

**In November 1895, Japan signed a convention with the three powers. They did not give up their trade concessions with China, but lost the monopoly on ports. Japan agreed to give up the Liaodung Peninsula to control by the three powers. Japan was not asked to make any concessions regarding Formosa or Korea.**

# TRIPLE INTERVENTION 1895

Japan – and other western observers – assumed that the three powers (France, Germany and Russia) would occupy and administer the Liaodung Peninsula.

They were mistaken.

Russia had concluded a separate agreement with China obtaining a large concession to build railways through and across Manchuria, ultimately from Lake Baikal in Siberia to Vladivostock and to Beijing.

The concession placed much of Manchuria under Russian control.

It was only Russia that would occupy the Liaodung. Russia would further fortify key cities and turn Port Arthur into a major base for its Pacific Fleet.

Japan objected.

**The United States and Great Britain who Japan expected would support her position, stayed out of the controversy.**





# KOREA

The three powers had not demanded any revision of the terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki regarding Korea. That treaty all but made Korea a protectorate of Japan and in that age, protectorate meant hands off to anyone else.

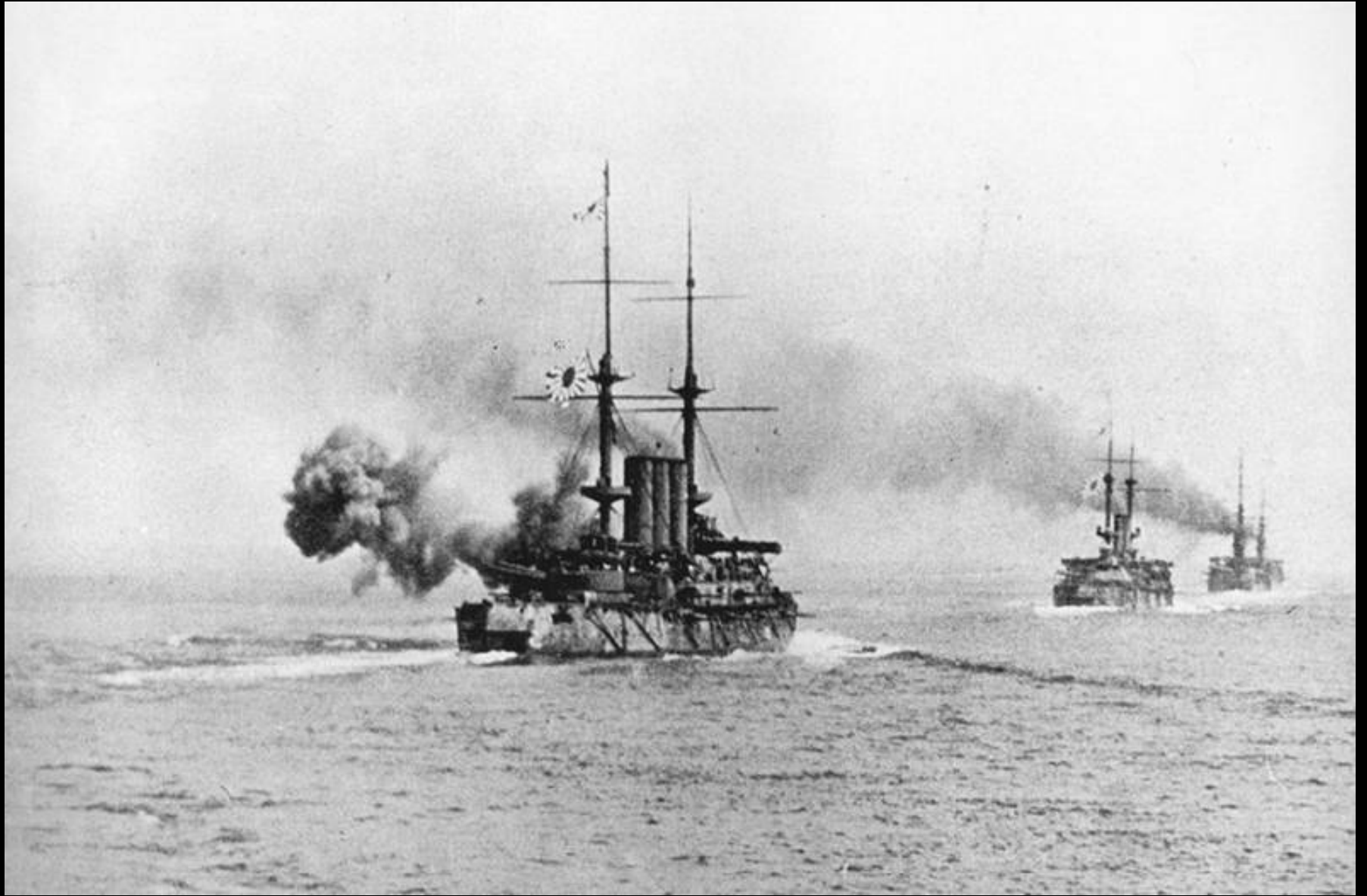
Russia began interfering in Korea almost from the start.

Specifically, it underbid the Japanese on railway contracts and Russian companies began mining and other operations in the north. Russia believed it had negotiated sole right to build a railroad from Harbin (Manchuria) to Pusan Korea, a project Japanese companies believed rightfully theirs.

Japan entered into a series of diplomatic negotiations with Russia with the goal of getting the Russians to stay out of Korea.

Russia stalled, suspended and otherwise continuously frustrated any efforts to reach any agreement that would limit Russian interests in Korea.

# RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904 - 1905



# **RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904 - 1905**



**Tsar Nicholas II of Russia was an undisputed autocrat in 1904. He could and often did override the decisions of his Ministers. Manchuria and Korea were Russia's by divine right and no pathetic country of "yellow skinned monkeys" would dare stand in the way.**

**He was convinced the Japanese would do as he expected. They would accept his terms because they were, in his opinion, too pathetic to resist the might of the Russian Empire.**

**Japan had a very different opinion of the entire situation.**

# **RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904 - 1905**



**Left: Japanese Troops near Mukden 1905.**

**Right: Russian 1<sup>st</sup> Army on the march, 1904.**

**The collective wisdom of Western military observers was different from the Tsar in that they did not see Japan backing down from a fight.**

**But they generally agreed with the Tsar that while Japan had been impressive against the Chinese ten years earlier, that was China and not a modern, European Army.**

# **RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR: 1904-1905**

**Russia conceded nothing to Japan in the negotiations regarding Korea and Manchuria. Russia was drawing out the negotiations to allow time for troops to reach the Far East. On February 6, 1904 after another Japanese proposal was ignored, Japan severed diplomatic relations.**

**On February 8, Japan declared war on Russia to the shock of the Tsar. Even more shocking was that three hours before the declaration was delivered to his foreign Ministry, the Japanese had attacked the Russian Pacific Fleet at Port Arthur with torpedo boats.**

**Two Russian battleships and a cruiser were damaged.**

**The Japanese Navy then sought to blockade the port. Block ships (old merchant ships filled with concrete and deliberately sunk) failed to close the port. The Japanese then mined the approaches.**

**On April 12, 1904, two Russian battleships attempted to slip out and struck mines. One was sunk carrying the fleet commander to his death, the other was crippled and towed back to port.**

# RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR: 1904-1905



The Russians also laid mines around Port Arthur and two Japanese battleships were sunk a month later.

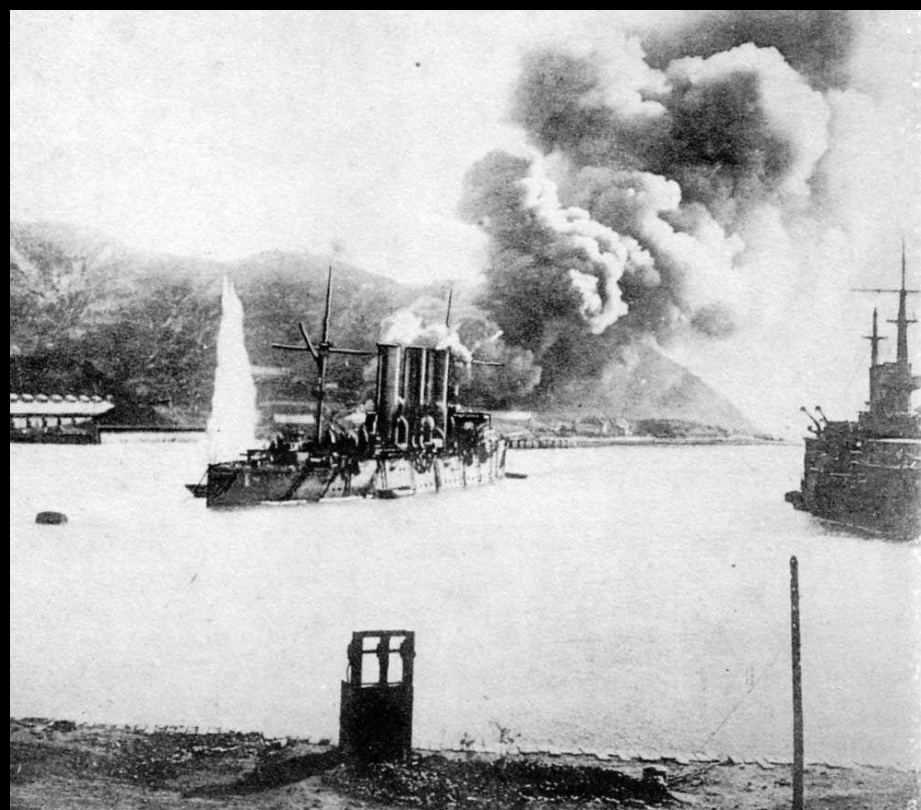
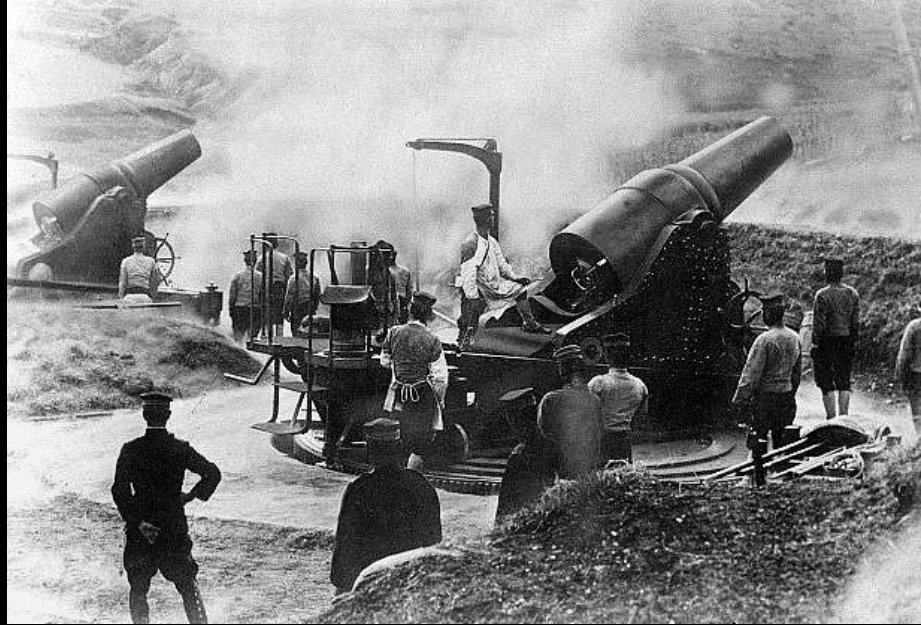
On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1904, the Japanese Army crossed the Yalu River and outflanked and defeated the Russian defenders driving north to cut off Russian reinforcement of Port Arthur. A separate force landed on the coast in June and advanced on the Port against another Russian army.

# **RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR: 1904-1905**

**Unlike the prior war, the Russians did not break and run and fought from prepared entrenchments supported with machine guns (a foreshadowing of WWI that would be largely ignored) inflicting heavy casualties on the advancing Japanese.**

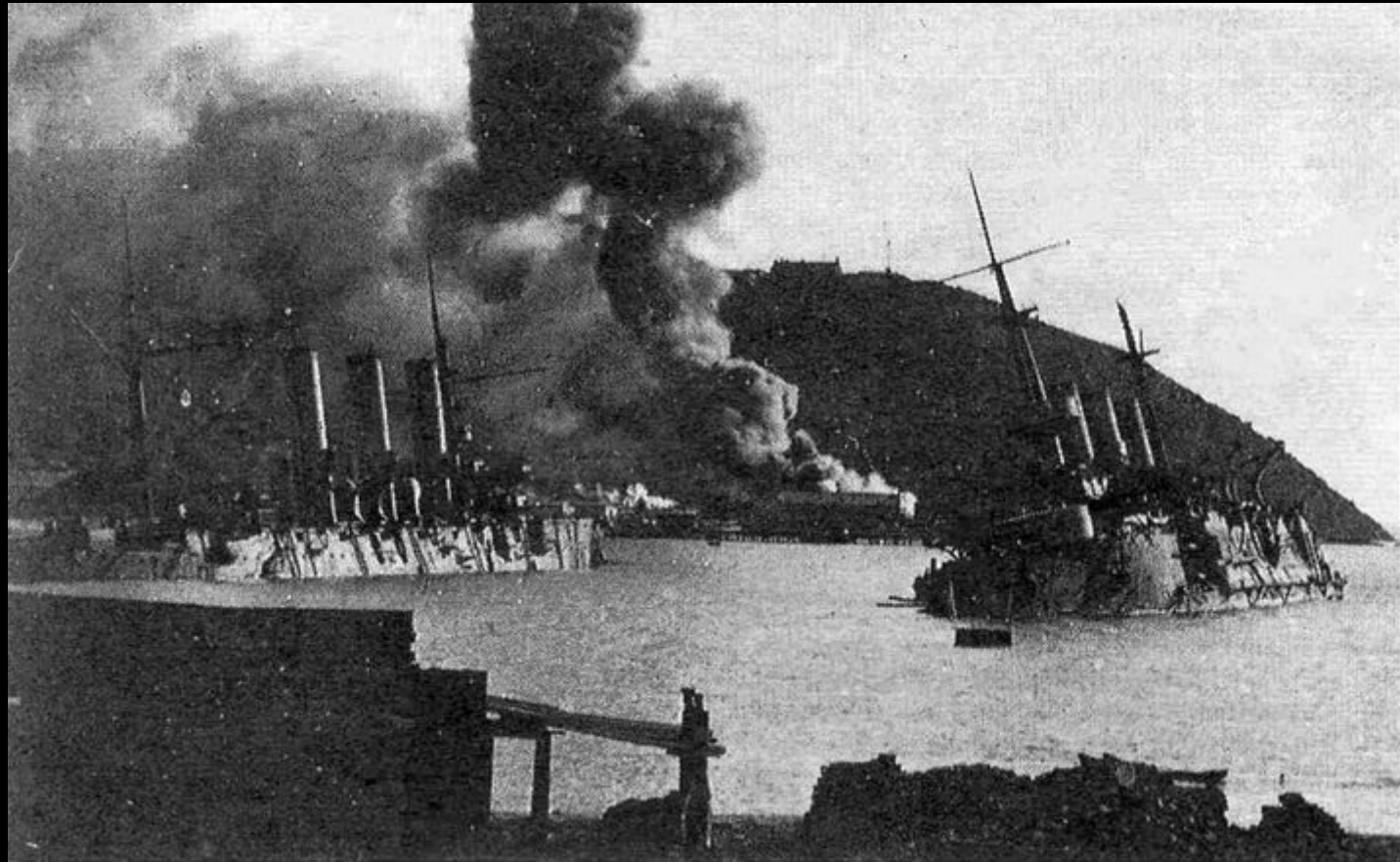
**By August, the Russians were pinned into positions around Port Arthur at the far tip of the Peninsula.**

**Soon, Japanese artillery was in range of the port and the trapped Pacific Fleet. On August 10, the fleet tried to break out and head for Vladivostock only to be met by the Japanese and driven back after an otherwise indecisive battle.**





# **RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904 - 1905**



**Blockaded by sea and under siege and artillery fire by land, the bulk of the Russian Pacific Fleet was sunk at Port Arthur following their retreat after the Battle of the Yellow Sea. The Russian garrison would surrender in January 1905. The bulk of the Russian Army would be defeated at the Battle of Mukden in March 1905 and retreated to Russia. Casualties on both sides were astronomical for the time.**

# Battle of Tsushima: May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1905

Even before the Russian Pacific Fleet was finally bottled up at Port Arthur following the Battle of the Yellow sea in August, 1904, the Russians had decided to reinforce with ships from their Baltic and Black Seas Fleets. It would be no easy task. Britain was allied with Japan which meant major warships could not use British ports or the Suez Canal.

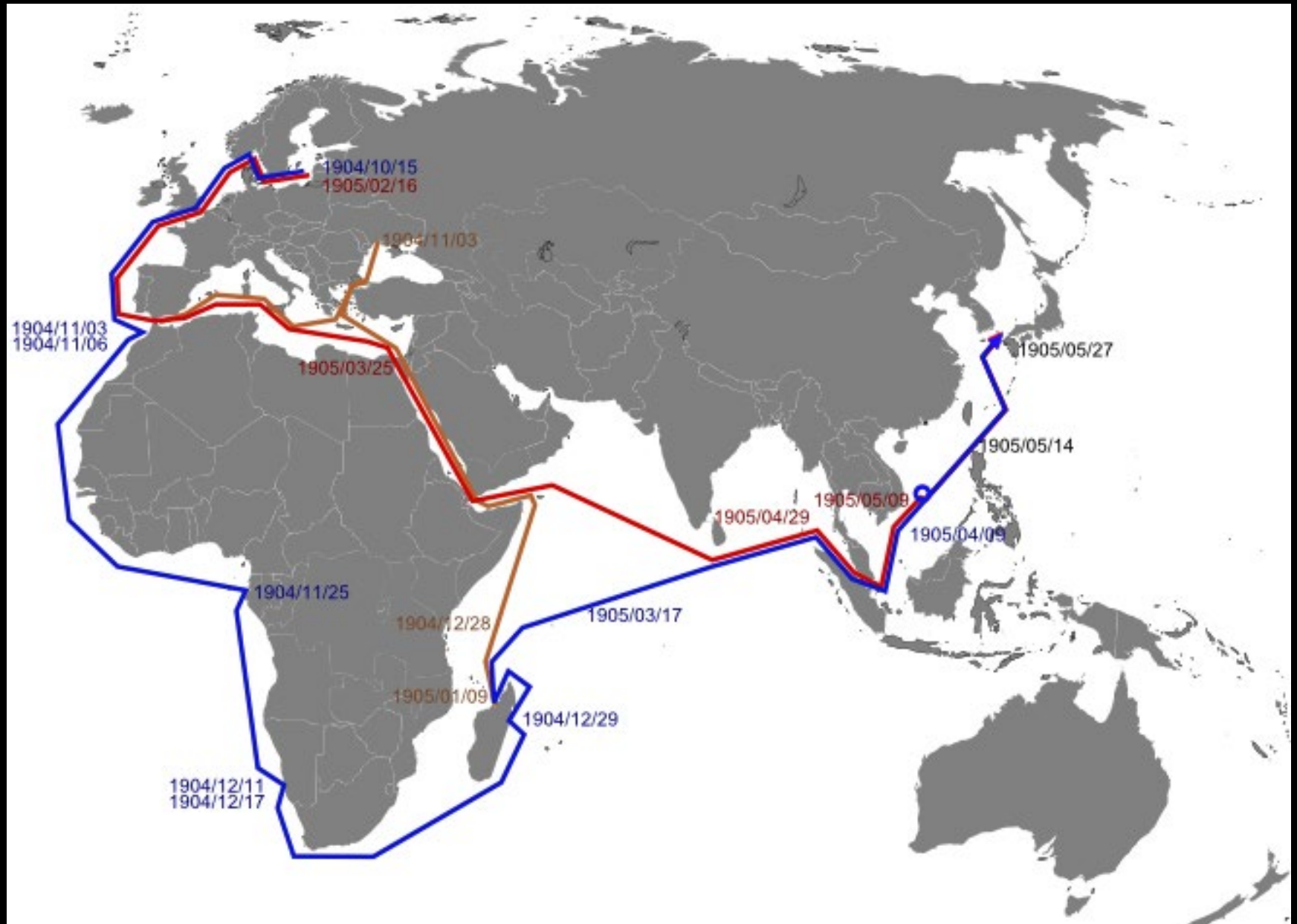
This would mean that the main fighting force of the fleet would have to travel over 18,000 miles – 8,000 miles further than if they could use the Suez Canal.

Moreover, the two fleets capital ships were either brand new with untrained crews or so old and obsolete as to be all but useless. The Russians had a man who might get the Fleet to Port Arthur:



**ADM Zinovy Rozhdestvensky**  
**Capable, but was convinced from the beginning he was on a fool's errand...**

# RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904 - 1905



# Battle of Tsushima: May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1905

The Japanese fleet was modern, well maintained with seasoned and highly trained crews and knew where the Russians were. They were led by ADM Heihachiro Togo. As a Captain, Togo had fired the first shots of the Sino-Japanese War. As a Vice Admiral, his squadrons had fired the first shots of the Russo-Japanese War. He had also commanded the fleet at the Yellow Sea.

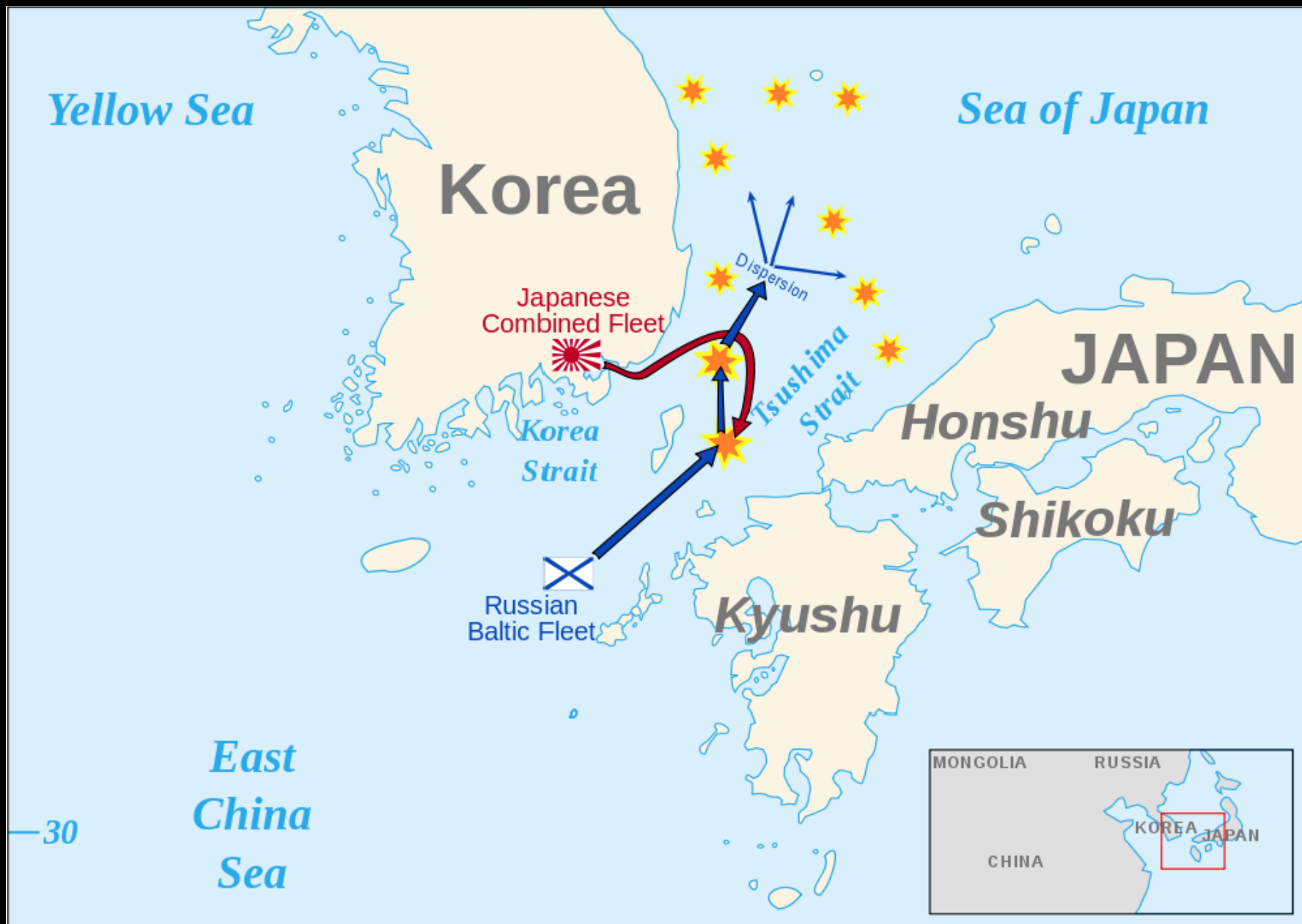


Above: Admiral Togo in 1903.



Left: The Japanese Combined Fleet sortie from Chinhae Korea to engage the Russian Fleet at the Tsushima Straits, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1905. It would be the last battle of the war...

# Battle of Tsushima: May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1905



# TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH (Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, 1905)

The war was immensely popular in Japan. After all, as far as the average Japanese knew their military always won and won easily.

The first part was true. The second was misleading. The land war had been very costly. The naval war had not been cheap either. 1/3 of the Japanese brand new battleships had been sunk by mines. Japan was in debt and could not sustain a prolonged war effort. This was not known to the public.

Japan first approached the U.S. in late 1904 about a possible brokered peace. It made its formal request following the Battle of Mukden in March 1905.



# TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH (Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, 1905)

In contrast, the war was hugely unpopular in Russia even before the people learned how poorly their military fared. Coupled with a crippled economy and lack of any political voice, in January 1905 spontaneous protests in St. Petersburg, Moscow and elsewhere became a revolt against the old order.

Russia did not agree to mediation until after it lost its fleet at Tsushima and the Tsar was informed that success was no longer possible.



Above: St. Petersburg Russia. “Bloody Sunday” January 22, 1905.

A protest principally about the war and poor food distribution (in background) is met by Imperial cavalry. Photo is moments before the cavalry attacked. In this and other encounters that day, hundreds of unarmed protesters were killed.

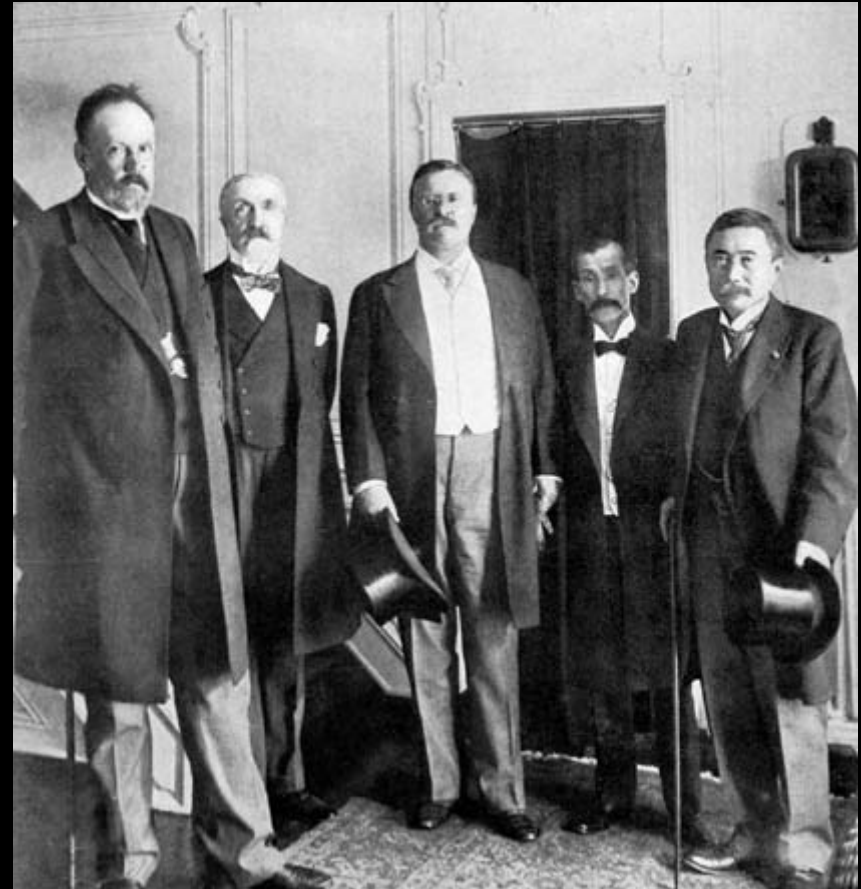
# TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH (Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, 1905)

Negotiations almost broke down over reparations. The Tsar absolutely refused and had sent 4 divisions to the east to resume the war. Japan was almost broke.

And because it was almost broke was in a poor position to resume the war.

Japan gave up its demand for reparations.

Russia would vacate Manchuria and make no further effort to expand in the East. Japan gained half of Sakhalin Island. The Liaodung Peninsula would revert to China.





# TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH (Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, 1905)

Japan would also gain all Russian mining concessions in Korea and Manchuria as well as control of the Southern Manchurian Railway (Harbin – Dailan) and Manchuria-Korean Railway (Shenyang-Pyongyang) including right to operate, maintain and defend.

Russia would retain the Trans-Manchurian Railway without a right to defend (Chita-Vladivostok).

Japan would gain this in the Treaty of Versailles in 1918.



# THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND PEACE 1904-1905



0 200 Miles  
0 200 Kms



- Extent of Russian control before the War
- Japanese territory before the War
- Article II (Demand I) Japanese control of Korea recognized by Russia
- Article III (Demand II) Russian frontier defined by the Treaty
- Article V (Demand VI) Chinese territory evacuated by Russia Lease of Port Arthur & Talien to Japan
- Article VI & VII (Demand VII & VIII) Railroads controlled by Russia
- Railroads controlled by Japan
- Article IX (Demand V) Russian Sakhalin Island territory ceded to Japan
- Article XI Coastal Fishing Rights granted to Japan in the Bering Sea & Seas of Japan and Okhotsk

- 1904 Japanese landing
- Land or Sea Battle

# TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH (Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, 1905)

The Japanese public felt it had been robbed by the West in general and the United States in particular. In their mind, they had won a major war and gained nothing. There were riots. And then their economy collapsed.

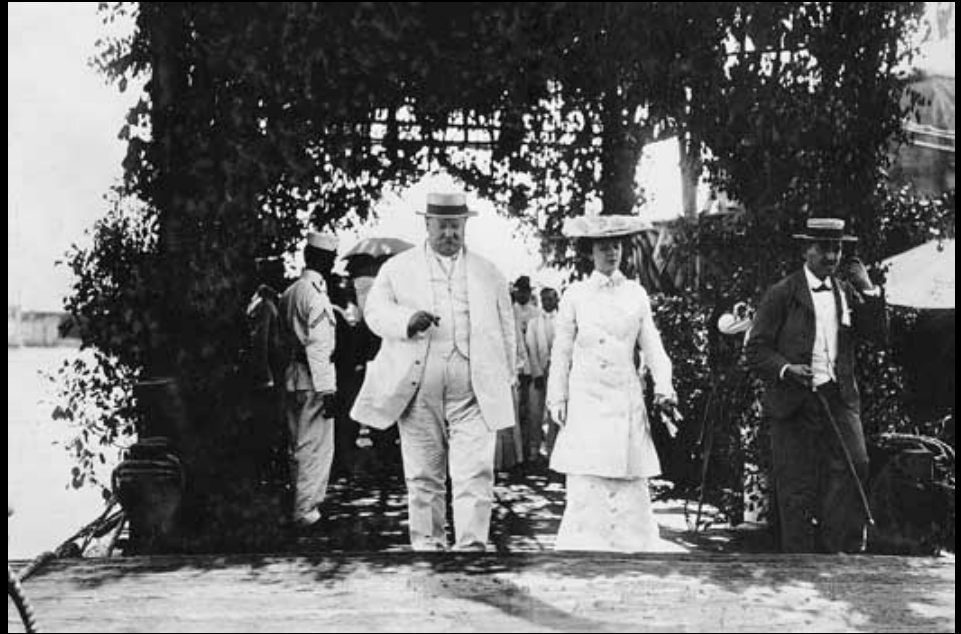
It did not help that:

- Roosevelt had said the Japanese were “honorary white men.”
- The State of California in response to a wave of Japanese emigration decided that Japanese children should attend segregated schools “like other people of color.”

The Japanese military was less concerned about most of the concessions save the lack of reparations. They had rebuilt and modernized following the Sino-Japanese War on Chinese reparations. They could not rearm or replace losses without reparations.

**In the summer of 1905, before the peace conference had even been agreed upon by Russia, President Roosevelt sent his Secretary of War, William Howard Taft and his eldest daughter Alice to the Far East.**

**He sent Alice to get her out of town. He would say “I can either run the country or deal with Alice. I can’t do both at the same time.”**



**Taft was his principal legal advisor and troubleshooter and was seen as an expert on Asian affairs having served as Governor General of the Philippines before becoming Secretary of War. While Alice was touring China, Taft slipped off to Japan for talks with the Japanese Foreign Minister. This trip was not secret, but it was not publicized. He concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Japanese. Japan stated they had no designs on the Philippines and the U.S. would not object to Japanese annexation of Korea.**

**Although this was not classified, it was not disclosed in any way until 1922 when a historian came across the memorandum in the National Archives.**

# MAP OF KOREA

Ours is a single nation with 5,000 years of history; it is a valorous, ambitious nation that has been vigorously fighting against foreign invaders and successive reactionary rulers from olden times; and it is a talented nation that has contributed greatly to mankind's development of science and culture.

KIM IL SUNG



In 1910, Japan formally annexed Korea. The U.S. was one of the first countries to recognize the annexation. Even though the informal agreement from 1905 would not be known for over a decade, Koreans were already upset. In their mind, the 1882 treaty required the U.S. to prevent the annexation, not recognize it.

Upon annexation, all Koreans became Japanese citizens. However, they were second class citizens. Complaints of Koreans against Japanese were at best ignored (at worst the Korean was charged with a crime for complaining.) Complaints of Japanese against Koreans usually saw the Japanese prevail.

The Korean language was banned and only Japanese was used in schools.

**The annexation of Korea exacerbated the divisions within the Korean people and can be exemplified by looking at three of the personalities that would have significant roles in the lead up to the Korean War.**

**The first is Singman Rhee. Rhee was born in 1875 to a family of modest**



**means but one that also had ancestral roots with the Jeoson dynasty and the nobility. He received a traditional Korean education geared towards those preparing to enter the imperial civil service but this ended when the system changed in 1894. He then became “radicalized” in response to the Russian and Japanese machinations that led to Japanese domination during and in the wake of the Sino-Japanese war.**

**It was during this time that he completed his education at a Methodist missionary school, converted to Christianity and learned English.**

**By 1898, his ire expanded to include the Korean government which he (and many others) felt had handed Korea over to the Japanese. He was implicated in an attempted coup and imprisoned – ultimately for life although that changed in 1904 when missionary friends managed to gain his release.**



**He then went to the U.S. as part of a small delegation to present Korea's position during the peace negotiations between Japan and Russia. His delegation argued for autonomy, a Korea free of influence from any foreign power and Russian and Japan in particular. He would speak to both President Roosevelt and Sec. State John Hay but knew they were merely humoring him and his delegation.**

**(It was a Korean position, but not the one of the recognized Korean government or Emperor who were largely under the thumb of the Japanese.)**

**Rather than return to Korea in disgrace, he enrolled at Harvard and would attain degrees from George Washington University, Harvard and Princeton completing his PhD in 1910. He then returned to Korea to teach secondary school just after the Japanese annexation but was soon implicated in anti-Japanese riots. He fled back to the U.S. before the Japanese could arrest him.**



**There, he became involved with Korean nationalist organizations and would be appointed as Prime Minister (1919) and later President (1920) of the Korean Nationalist Provisional Government based in Shanghai. He had never been to Shanghai but went there after his appointment.**

**The Provisional Government was modeled on Sun Yat-sen's Chinese nationalists – which was a party that included a broad political spectrum from right wing nationalists to communists.**



**What united the party was hatred of the Japanese and Japanese occupation. What kept the Chinese nationalists together for a time was the personality of Sun Yat-sen. Rhee was no Sun and was at the right of his party and it soon splintered. He returned to the U.S. in 1922 to attend the Washington Naval Conference to advocate Korean independence. (He had tried to do the same in 1919 at the Paris peace talks following the German Armistice but had been denied a visa.)**



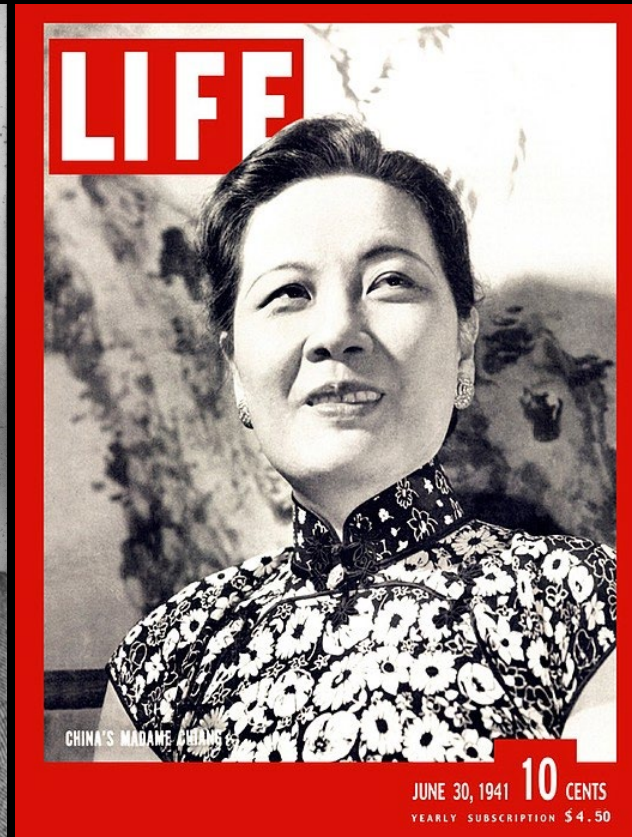
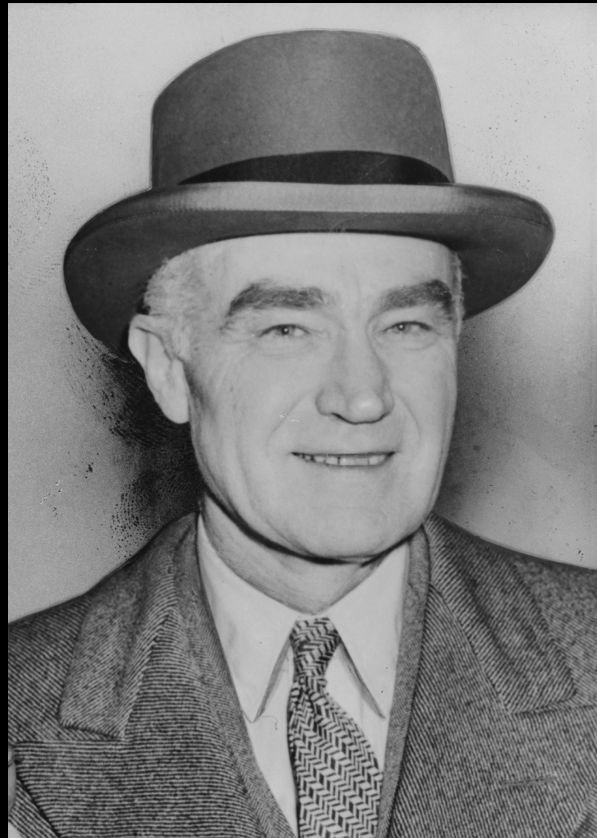
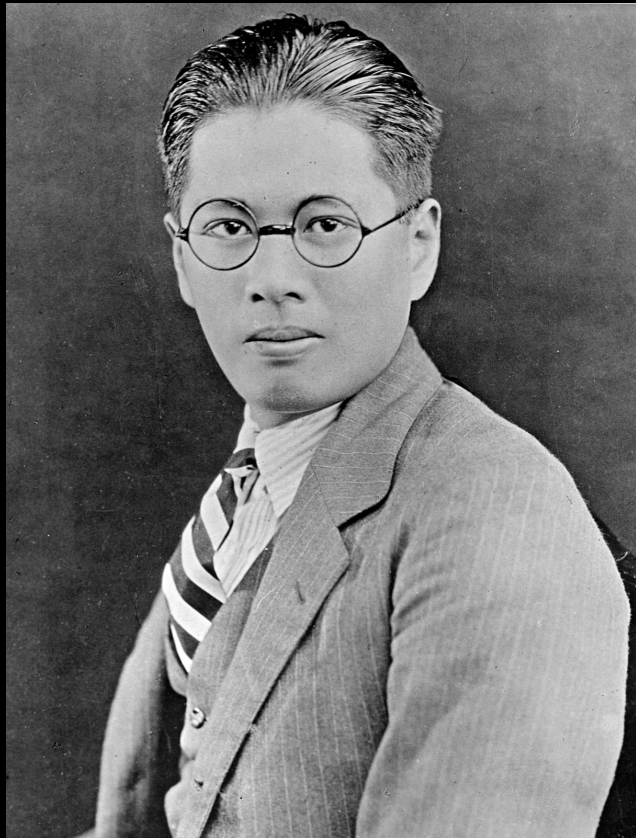
**While he managed to meet with diplomats attending the conference (aside from the Japanese), his efforts were as effective as they had been in Paris – meaning not at all. He remained in the U.S. and would so remain until 1945 lobbying for an independent Korea.**

**In 1925, the Shanghai provisional government impeached him and removed him from office for abuse of power – specifically for lobbying without consulting them or seeking their authority.**

**He claimed it was invalid and continued as before.**

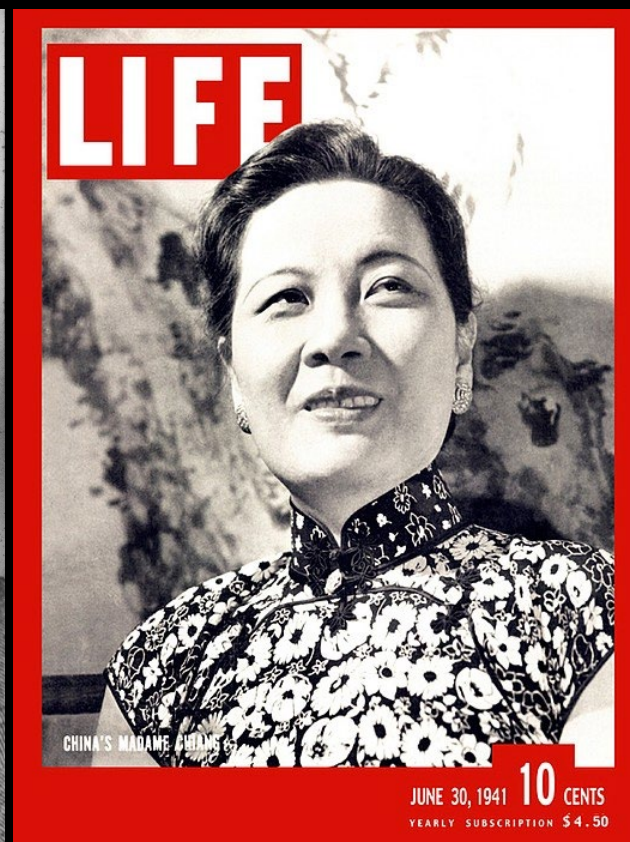
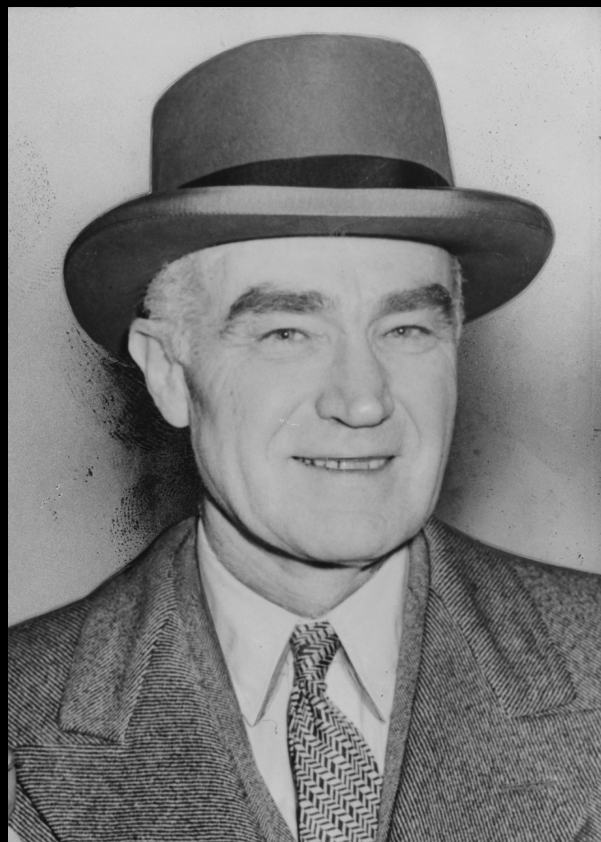
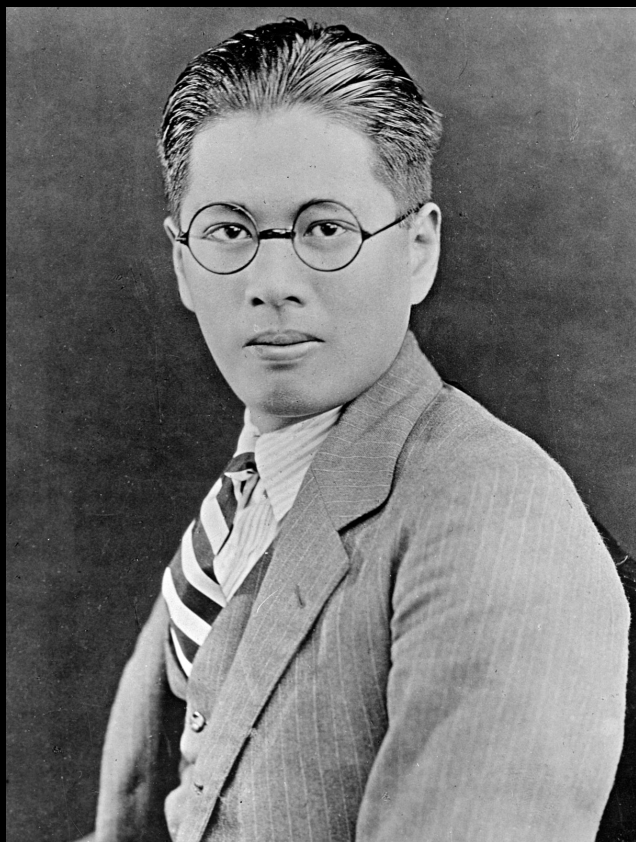
**The Chinese Nationalists would also lobby Washington. They would start much later than Rhee and the Koreans (beginning around 1935) but would be far more successful. Their principal lobbyist was the Soong family. The family was Christian and had been educated in the U.S.. All had degrees from U.S. colleges and Universities.**

**T.V. Soong would be the Nationalist Ambassador to the U.S. for the better part of over a decade. His sister Ming-Lei was even more of a force.**

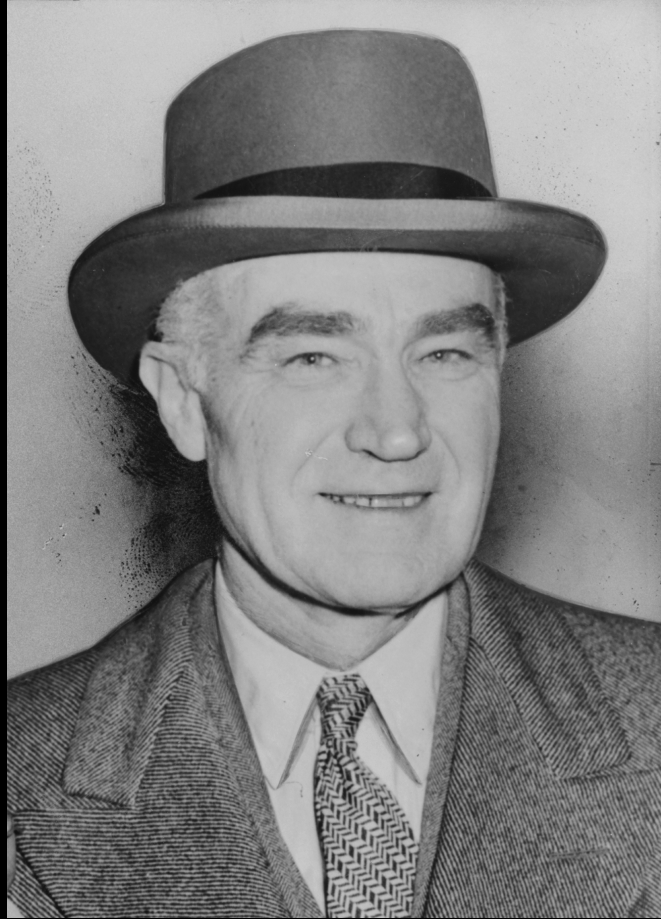


**Ming-Lei was the wife of the Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-Shek. The Soong family was the wealthiest in China and among the wealthiest in the world by the 1940's. They had a virtual monopoly on banking and publications in China.**

**They were backed by the son of American missionaries in China Henry Luce who owned the most popular magazines of the age. He came by his wealth and success honestly. The Soong's ... not so much.**



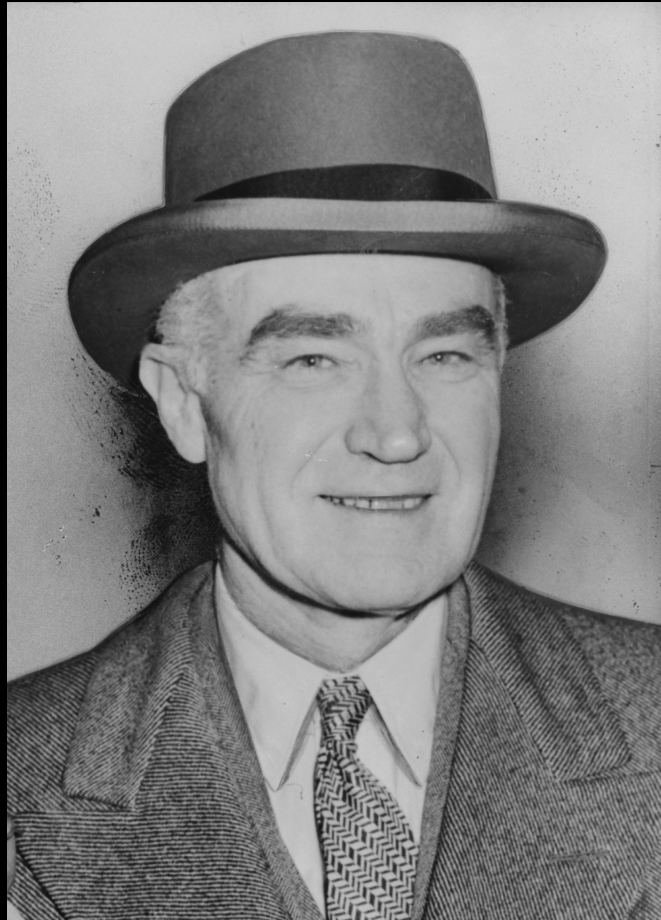
**Henry Luce and his wife would be enormously influential in U.S. Asia policy from the 1930's into the 1960's. They, their supporters and their politicians would become known as "The China Lobby."**



**Luce had been born in China to American Missionaries but had left at the age of 15 to attend prep school and college in the U.S. He would not return until WWII and even then only briefly. He was supported by other children of American Missionaries who spent their formative years in China. They had a very skewed, idealistic and romanticized recollection of the China of their youth.**

**This view was not shared by the Missionaries – or others who actually worked in China as adults. To many missionaries, China was a failure. To others, it was merely a good place for making money.**

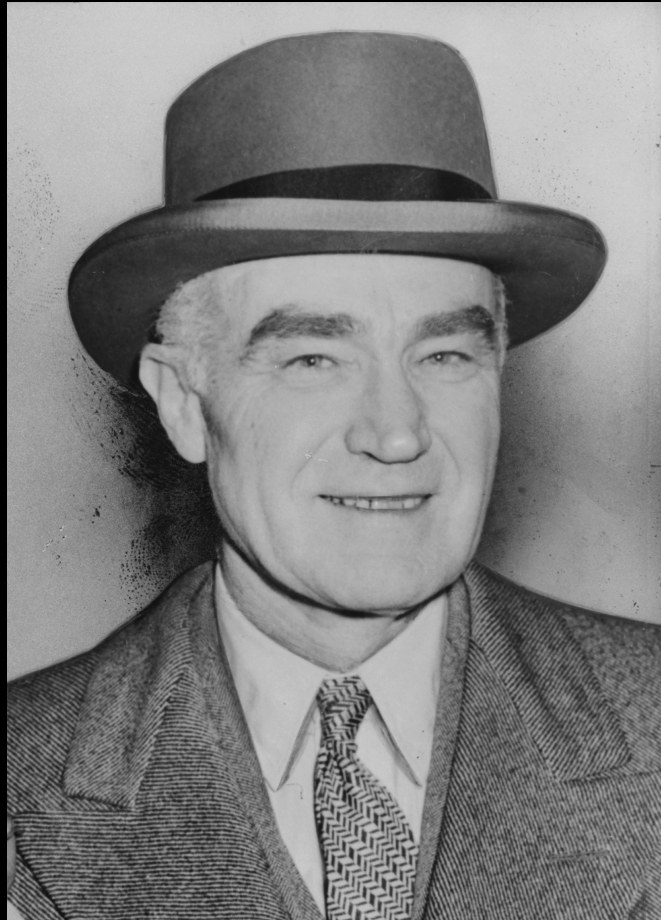
**This pessimistic view did not filter down to the children who remember growing up in luxury with scores of servants who treated them as little princes or princesses. They also lived in western conclaves, largely isolated from the chaos on the other side of the walls.**



**The adult “China Hands” had respect for the history and culture of China and generally held individual Chinese in high regard. They had no respect for China as a nation – in part because it was not one. From the 1890’s through 1949 for certain and probably into the 1970’s, China was in a perpetual state of civil war. The sides changed almost with the season, but the constant was war.**

**Luce, the Soongs and the China Lobby glossed over the chaos or ignored it altogether. They believed China was just like them and democratic (no and not at all.) (It is also rather interesting that despite these beliefs, the China Lobby was silent on U.S. policy barring most travel and immigration of Chinese to the U.S.)**

**The China Lobby would succeed in acquiring billions of dollars in military aid to the Nationalist Chinese – most of which being squandered. They would cry havoc when their Nationalist friends lost China to the communists and back politicians like Sen. Joseph Macarthy and others willing to blame this on political opposition to them in the U.S. rather than the Chinese themselves. They would oppose the Korean War – until China intervened and then again when it was clear the U.S. had no interest in ending the Chinese Communists. And they were a driving force behind the U.S. later adventures in Southeast Asia.**



**A “Jonny Come Lately” in the Asia policy market – The China Lobby did little or nothing before 1931 and really not much until 1940. In comparison, the Korea Lobby was active in the U.S. continuously from 1920 onward. The China Lobby proved far more successful for better or worse (mostly worse).**

**Why?**

**After all, there were U.S. missionaries in Korea, albeit far fewer. Moreover those missionaries were far more successful in Korea than were those in China. And the children of Korean missionaries were raised in Korea until about the same age (13 – 15). But, unlike China, the children in Korea were not isolated in compounds separated from the locals and the standard of living for Korean missions was not nearly as luxurious – few if any servants meaning plenty of mundane chores. While Korea was exotic – it lacked the nostalgic romance.**

**And none of those children grew up to control the most influential media empire of the age.**

**That and the Koreans like Rhee were not rich – not even close. The Soong family would make Trump look like a pauper and would spend liberally.**

**Rhee lacked the bottomless bag of cash of the Soong family and the support of any media mogul. What he had was pure doggedness – for better or worse. He was respected but not well liked for there was only one topic of interest to him: Korean independence. In that he was not uncommon but his fluent English and U.S. education set him apart.**



**That being said, for years while he might garner sympathy he could not gain much if any support and certainly not from the U.S. government. As noted he met Teddy Roosevelt in 1904. He would not gain similar access until 1942 after the U.S. and Japan were at war. Most of his access during the war was with the War Department about bombing strategy.**

**But this would pay dividends as he was practically the only Korean politician who was known to more than a handful of Americans.**

**He was largely unknown in Korea, however, and local independence leaders who knew of him did not like him**

**Cho Man-Sik was born in 1883 near Pyongyang. He and his family converted to Christianity when he was little and he would espouse such beliefs for the rest of his life. He attended Meiji University in Tokyo Japan beginning immediately after the Japanese Annexation. While at the University, he read the writings of Gandhi and became a devotee of Gandhi's non-violent protests. He also became enamored with Socialist thinking (but not Marx or later Bolshevism).**



**He returned to Korea and became one of the leaders in the local independence movement. He advocated no violent protest and refused to support or praise the more violent elements. (there were groups that advocated terrorism and murder to drive Japan out.) Arrested and imprisoned by the Japanese many times, he never gave in.**

**By 1945, he was the best known and most admired politician in all of Korea and considered as Korea's Gandhi. But, although he might well have been named leader by acclamation, he wanted nothing to do with ruling the country.**

**He believed Korea could and should be a socialist country but not with the help of any foreigners. (He did not trust any foreigners.)**



**Kim Song-ju was born in 1912 in a small town in what is now North Korea. His family was Presbyterian – his Grandfather having been a Presbyterian Minister. His family was anti-Japanese and involved in the more violent resistance although whether this was religious, ideological or both is not known. They fled to Manchuria when he was little. His education was Chinese as was his primary language. As a teenager, he joined the Communist Party because it was anti-Japanese but was denied admission to the youth league because he was**

**deemed too nationalist in ideology. Around this time he changed his name to Kim Il Sung because it sounded more impressive.**

**When the Japanese occupied Manchuria in 1931 he joined the Communist guerrillas eventually rising to the level of a platoon or company commander. He had modest success but mainly because his unit attacked small, isolated outposts or patrols rather than anything that might actually hurt the Japanese as a whole.**

**To his Chinese superiors, he was seen as successful in what he would do but considered overly cautious and unimaginative – unsuited for greater responsibility.**



**He was also one of the few Communist leaders operating in Manchuria known to the Japanese by name. There was thus a price on his head and the Japanese actively sought to hunt him down resulting in heavy casualties and losses for his unit. By 1940 he led what was left across the Amur River into the Soviet Union where they were promptly rounded up and interred. He would be sent to a re-education camp (as the Soviets had little respect for the Chinese Communists) where he excelled in their eyes. Enough so that he was made an officer in the Red Army and allowed to attend a staff college in Moscow.**

**While in Moscow, he ingratiated himself to members of the Politburo, in particular Lavrenti Beria, head of State Security. (Beria had been head of the NKVD – forerunner of the KGB – but had been “promoted” to head all security and intelligence during WWII.) Kim would serve with the Red Army during its invasion of Manchuria in the final days of WWII.**

**The Soviets considered him politically reliable and loyal. He was also the only Korean known to the Soviet leadership. But no one in Korea knew him or even of him moreover while he spoke Russian and Chinese fluently, he knew very little Korean and spoke what little he knew with a heavy, foreign (to Koreans) accent.**



**There was a fourth group – the collaborators.**

**Korea was a part of Japan. Its men were subject to conscription into the Army. And proving to be loyal to Japan meant opportunity in business and within the local government that was not available to anyone else. Critical fields such as transportation, law enforcement and security and power plant operations were restricted to loyal Koreans. This was a minority of the population and the majority hated that minority with a passion.**

**The country was polarized and violently so. The four groups mentioned was as divided internally as they were from each other. Arguably the only thing keeping any kind of a lid on the situation was the Japanese – and that was not a good thing given how the Japanese exploited the Koreans at every turn.**

**Cho was the only leader a Korean majority might rally behind but he wanted nothing to do with it except under his terms which meant without any external support. He would alienate almost everyone within a year of the end of Japanese occupation.**

**Rhee and Kim would rise to lead their nations not through popularity – they had little internal support – but through the patronage of the two superpowers. But the truth is, chaos of some kind or civil war would be the natural outcome of the end of Japanese control as it was already the state of affairs.**

**But while the divisions in Korean society were quite real, the Korean War as we know it was not inevitable. The divisions were not geographic in nature. The situation in August 1945 in the North was identical in the South.**

**There were differences between these two regions. In 1945 the population of the peninsula was around 30 million. Nine million lived in what is now North Korea and the rest in the south. Over 70% of the industry was in the North – close to the raw materials of Manchuria. Much of it had been built by the Japanese.**

**80% of the agriculture was in the south. The south had far more arable land and produced a sizable surplus and nearby Japan needed that surplus. The north, by comparison could not feed itself (and that has not changed.) Despite this, the political divisions were not North vs. South. There were ultra-nationalists in the North as well as capitalists and prodemocratic elements. There were socialists, anarchists and communists in the south. The problems in the south would appear more extreme but that was because there were far more people who could not stand each other in the more densely populated south.**

**The immediate cause of the Korean war was an arguably arbitrary and unnecessary decision made half a world away by people who had no idea what was going on.**

# THE ASIA QUESTION



In the final months of WWII, the principal allied powers (U.S., U.K. and USSR) held two major conferences to discuss the aftermath of the war.

The first was held at Yalta in the Crimea in February 1945. The latter was in Potsdam, Germany in July 1945 after Germany surrendered.



The bulk of the discussions centered on Europe in general and the occupation of Germany (and creation of Poland) in particular.

Asia was barely mentioned.

# THE ASIA QUESTION



At Yalta, the USSR agreed to enter the war against Japan within 90 days of Germany's defeat. The USSR was expected to recognize Nationalist China and enter into a military alliance with Chaing Kai-Shek (arguably at the expense of the Chinese communists.)



In return, the USSR would regain territories lost to Japan.

The wording was somewhat ambiguous.

# THE ASIA QUESTION

There was no discussion as to the rest of Asia and the Pacific. At Yalta, it was clear that Germany's days were numbered.

While the final defeat of Japan was certain at this point, when remained a question. U.S. Marines were in route for the invasion of Iwo Jima. The Chinese Nationalists were ineffective against the Japanese and Japan had an army of more than 3,000,000 in China.



**Yalta Conference: 4 – 11 Feb 1945**

**Iwo Jima: 19 Feb – 25 Mar 1945**

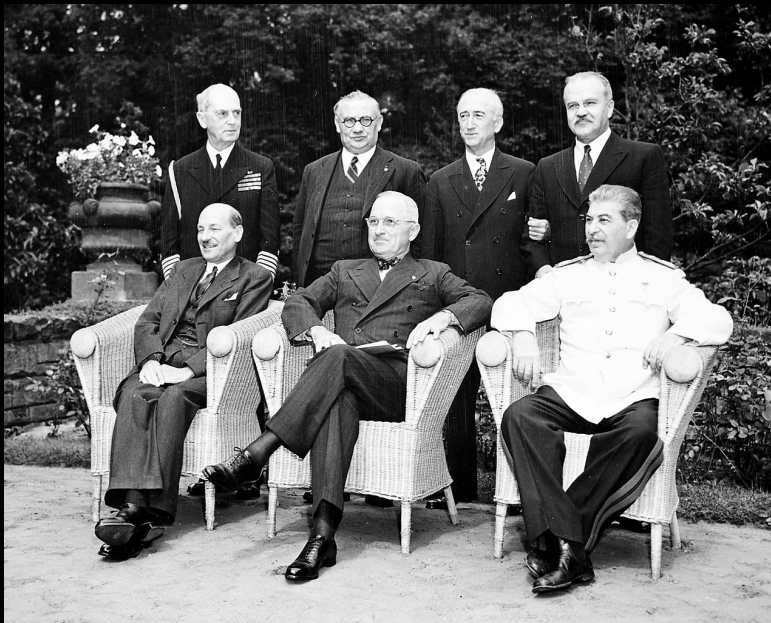
Best estimate was that victory over Japan was at least 18 months away (mid 1946).

# THE ASIA QUESTION



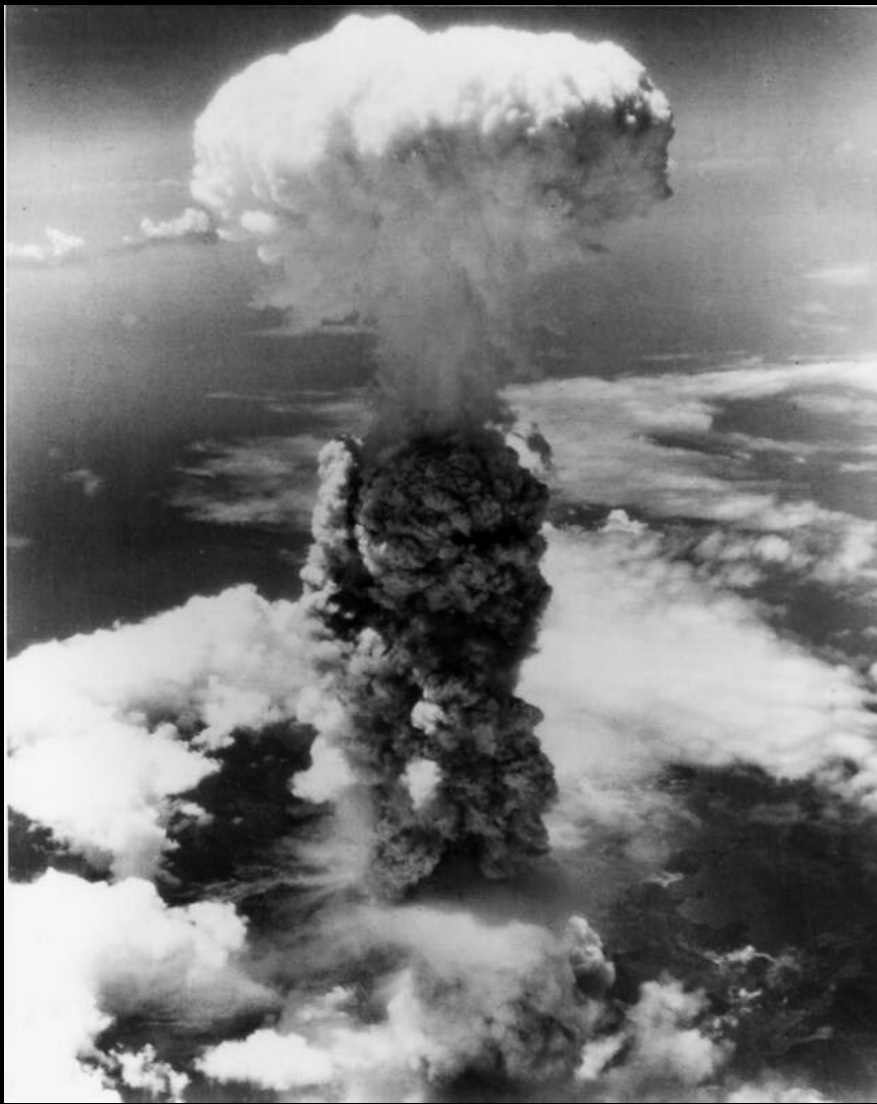
**The Potsdam Conference did not address Asia beyond confirming that the Soviet Union would invade Manchuria.**

**While it was still uncertain when the war would end in Asia, it was during this conference that President Truman learned that the Atomic Bomb test had been successful.**



**By this point, the U.S. wanted to avoid a partition in Asia and Japan like the one that had occurred in Europe and Germany.**





**Nagasaki – August 9<sup>th</sup> 1945.**

Immediately following the Potsdam conference, President Truman called for the immediate unconditional surrender of Japan or else it would suffer “a rain of ruin from the air the likes of which the world has never seen before.”

The 21<sup>st</sup> Air Force received orders to begin the atomic bombing as soon as possible after August 1<sup>st</sup>.

On August 6<sup>th</sup>, Hiroshima was bombed. That was the first day weather conditions were deemed favorable. With no word from the Japanese, Nagasaki was bombed on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

Plans would see additional bombs dropped beginning after August 20<sup>th</sup> and about one per week after that unless Japan surrendered unless Japan surrendered first.



On August 9<sup>th</sup> 1945, the Soviet Union launched a massive offensive into Manchuria with four Army Groups and well over 1 million men. Opposing them was the Japanese Kwantung Army of almost 1 million men and considered as the best trained and equipped of the Japanese armies of the time.

The objective was deep penetration into Manchuria to cut off and then annihilate the Japanese and secure the major

cities of Manchuria and the Liaotung Peninsula and Dailan (Port Artur). The northeast corner of Korea was invaded to allow the army to deploy into Manchuria.

Korea itself was not an objective.

To the surprise of everyone, the Japanese Army collapsed, fleeing or surrendering.



The collapse of the Japanese army in Manchuria took everyone by surprise. The Russians were overwhelmed with over 500,000 prisoners and could not move fast enough. For the Japanese, while the atomic bombs convinced the civilians the war was lost, the collapse of their best army convinced most of the military.



# MAP OF KOREA

Korea is a single nation with 5,000 years of history; it is a valorous, ambitious nation that has been vigorously fighting against foreign invaders and successive reactionary rulers from olden times; and it is a talented nation that has contributed greatly to mankind's development of science and culture.

KIM IL SUNG



The Americans were caught as flat footed as everyone. While they foresaw a need to occupy Korea once the war was over, they had not planned on it any time soon. They were still planning for the invasion of Japan itself (which would help with the rapid arrival of the occupation force once Japan surrendered.)

They did not know exactly what was happening in Manchuria and Korea but officials were convinced the Soviets aim was to occupy all of Korea and were already moving in to do just that (the Soviets were not.)

The Department of War and Department of State wanted to get the Soviets to agree to a stop line in Korea. Two Colonels in the Pentagon were tasked to come up with one. One was named Dean Rusk.

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It took the two Colonels about an hour to come up with a line, much of that time spent just trying to find a map of Korea. Using a National Geographic map from before the war, they chose the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel because it divided the country roughly in half but left Seoul in the southern, American zone.

They consulted no experts on Asia or Korea.

Their line was approved by the White House within a couple of hours and the proposal was wired to Moscow. The Soviets agreed within a day. The Soviets had not planned on it but they were not about to look a gift horse in the mouth.

Soviet troops would enter Pyongyang on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The Americans would not land until October.



