

**KOREA—THE 38TH  
PARALLEL NORTH**

# **KOREA—The 38th Parallel North**

**By Ryo Sung Chol**

**Foreign Languages Publishing House  
Pyongyang, Korea  
1995**



## **Introductory Remarks**

Fifty years has passed since Korea's division. Half a century of national partition after being a colony of Japanese imperialism for over forty years—this is indeed a history full of vicissitudes which one can not look back on without indignation.

Fifty years ago when people rejoiced shouting “Hurrah for liberation”, no one thought that heartless line of division, the 38th parallel North crossing the fields and villages across which people travelled through generations, would appear. Moreover, no one imagined that the division that had caused unerased wounds and pains to individuals would last so long.

In face of the bitter reality that one could not fulfill one's mother's deathbed injunction to give the cloths to one's elder brother on his return home till the hair on one's head turned gray, there naturally arises a question—how the tragedy of division started. This is an eruption of the resentment which had been pent up in the past 50 years and at the same time a natural question the people of present generation, the sufferers from division, address to their predecessors. Attempts were made by many scholars and statesmen to give answer to this question of explosive character.

However, majority of the articles on the history of the 38th parallel had been written to suit the political need of a certain superpower in the current of the Cold War or unintentionally treated the matter one-sidedly due to the lack of data.

Time has changed much.

The US-USSR confrontation came to an end and the Cold War gave way to the age of dialogue and negotiation.

The diplomatic documents of those days were declassified by both the US and the USSR and were opened to the public as historical materials. Eventually it has become possible to shed a revealing light on the historical origins of the present-day tragedy, that is, division, that has worn a nation out in the torments of confrontation for half a century.

On the earth more than ten countries are crossed by the 38 degrees north. However, the people who live in the area of this latitude are little conscious of its existence nor do they care for it either.

There is no need for it at all, but the Korean people keenly feel the existence of the 38th parallel at every step in their lives.

To the Korean people the 38th parallel North has been the line of misfortune which caused enormous manpower and material loss to them, the line of resentment and hatred.

Because the three-year sanguinary war which claimed the lives of millions of the Korean people flared up from that 38th parallel North; and the countless separated families are weeping tears, gazing up at the wild geese flying to the north or the south freely, each dying to see one's parents, husband or wife and children forced to live separated by this "38th parallel". Because the large troops armed with the latest weapons deployed on both sides of this demarcation line have their guns aimed at the hearts of their fellow countrymen amidst the choking quiet touch-and-go tension.

Who wanted Korea's 38th parallel, the most heartless, inhuman demarcation line on our planet?

Needless to argue that originally the heinous colonial rule of Japanese imperialism was the cause of Korea's split. The US proposal for the division of operational zones and the former Soviet Russia's agreement on the matter and a series of facts generally known to the public have their political and historical roots like a mammoth iceberg having a large part submerged deep in the sea.

The strife among the great powers for hegemony in the world in the complicated military and political situation towards the close of World War II forced the tragedy of national split upon the Korean people before their rejoicing over liberation subsided.

Correct understanding of history is essential for the future.

1995

The Author

## **Contents**

### **Chapter 1 “In Due Course”—A Short Phrase Making Complex Political Dynamics**

The Second World War and the Change  
in the Balance of International Political Forces  
Political Strategies of the Belligerent  
Parties—Contradiction and Duality  
The US Programme for the “Postwar  
Global Structure”  
The Cairo Declaration and Its Shadow

### **Chapter 2 The Scramble of the Big Powers for Korea**

Roosevelt—Proposer of Trusteeship  
The Memorandum of the US State Department  
The Roosevelt-Stalin “Gentlemen’s Agreement”  
Talks between Truman’s Emissary  
Hopkins and Stalin  
Avarice of Chiang Kai-shek  
The US Desperate to Find a Local Proxy  
Secret Bargain between the US and Japan  
The Proposal for Joint Occupation by the  
Four Big Powers

### **Chapter 3 Child of the US-Soviet Conflict and Compromise**

Unilateral Advance Is Not Politically  
Desirable—the US-Soviet Diplomatic Campaign  
The 38th Parallel North—the First Official Record  
A Child of US-Soviet Compromise  
What Were They after?

Chapter 4 **The “Cold War” Freezes the 38th Parallel  
as a Line of Political Division**

1945—A Year of Disappointment and Crisis  
Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Soviet  
Union, the United States and Britain—Same  
Bed but Different Dreams  
Disruption of the USSR-US  
Joint Commission  
The Korean Question and the United Nations  
Tragic Demarcation along the 38th Parallel

**Conclusion**

## Chapter 1

# **“In Due Course”—A Short Phrase Making Complex Political Dynamics**

The globe, which in the threshold of the 20th century reminded one of a boiling cauldron due to the fierce contentions and sharp contradictions between the powers, was hurled into the Second World War after an interval of only 21 years.

The unprecedented new world war radically changed the relations between the powers and realigned the world's force in line with the nature and objectives of the war.

The Pacific War destroyed the equilibrium of interests shared by the powers in Asia until then, and opened a new phase for the development of the situation there.

In the changed situation, the US and Britain were in a position to modify their former policy; until then they had held that “Korea is a part and parcel of Japan”, acting in alliance with the latter.

In other words, the US-British side, as a member of the anti-fascist alliance and swayed by animosity toward Japan, a belligerent party, had no alternative but to “recognize” Korea's independence.

However, this did not mean that they actually intended to give Korea independence.

The vague stand manifested in the expression of allowing gradual independence was the basic tenet of the US-British

policy toward Korea which they pursued for two years following the start of the Pacific War and officially announced in the “Cairo Declaration”.

### **The Second World War and the Change in the Balance of International Political Forces**

With the outbreak of World War II the imperialist states, formerly allies, were torn apart into hostile belligerent parties—Germany, Japan and Italy on one side and the US, Britain and France on the other.

Britain and France’s “Munich conspiracy” to direct fascist Germany against communism went bankrupt. Contrary to their hope, France and other European countries were occupied by the fascist invaders in succession, and Britain itself was in critical jeopardy.

Gravely alarmed by the fascist threat, Britain chose to ally with the Soviet Union, which stood firm in the East as the central anti-fascist force.

In this way, on January 1, 1942 the declaration of the anti-fascist alliance was adopted in Washington, and was signed by 26 states, including the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union.

This was the first phase of the change in international relations with the outbreak of the Second World War.

The second phase of the changed international situation was the creation of the circumstances under which the US, Britain and other imperialist states could not overtly block the national liberation movements in the colonies which were sweeping many Asian and European regions on a grand scale.

The Second World War, although it was unleashed with the aim of re-dividing the colonies based on modern monopoly capital, came to assume the character of anti-fascist liberation war, irrespective of its original motive, with the participation of the broad national liberation forces the world over.

In the Pacific War, a link in this global war, the influence of the forces fighting for national liberation against fascism gained further momentum.

The war of resistance waged by the Asian nations against the Japanese aggressors, who had forced colonial slavery upon them under the sugar-coated catchword of the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere rapidly expanded and grew stronger.

Particularly noteworthy here is the national liberation struggle waged by the Korean people against the Japanese imperialists' colonial domination.

In Korea the communists and the patriotic people waged a heroic war against Japan under the sagacious leadership of Comrade Kim Il Sung, defeating the Japanese aggressors time and again. Entering the 1940s, they made full-fledged military and political preparations to meet the great event of national liberation on their own initiative.

The anti-fascist forces of China had 910,000 regular troops and 2.2 million militia fighters already at the beginning of the 1940s. They contained the huge Japanese aggressor troops operating in China,

In Vietnam guerrilla warfare got under way led by the anti-imperialist national united front formed in May 1941. They liberated many areas from the occupation of Japanese imperialism.

In the Philippines the “Hukbalrahap” anti-Japanese guerrillas enlisted some 100,000 soldiers in their ranks to carry out the anti-Japanese national liberation struggle gaining control of the principal islands of the country.

In Malaya 10,000 patriotic youth and other people united in the ranks of the anti-Japanese people’s army and started a struggle in 1942 against the colonial rule of Japanese imperialism.

Meanwhile, more than 2.5 million citizens of India volunteered to fight in the British army.

Such a powerful onrush of the Asian people in the anti-fascist national liberation war posed the question regarding the independence and sovereignty of the oppressed nations in this part of the world as one of the cardinal issues of international politics.

The statesmen of the dominant states considered that international legal concept such as self-determination of a nation, territorial integrity and national equality was applicable only to ten or more “civilized” capitalist states in Europe, and that the absolute majority of the colonial and semicolonial countries and nations throughout the world were outside the sphere of contemporary international law and were destined to exist only as objects of domination and “enlightenment” by the “civilized nations”.

The dominant nations, which had been at pains to justify the theory of “the law of the jungle” legally and morally while perpetrating merciless plunder of the colonized races, faced the need to hold up a new slogan to cope with the upswing of new country-wide anti-imperialist struggles of the Asian peoples after the outbreak of the Second World War,

Publishing the *Atlantic Charter* (August 14, 1941) the United States and Britain noted that it was relevant not only to the Atlantic states but to all nations in other parts of the world, too.

The charter reaffirmed that the United States and Britain had no ambitions for territorial expansion, and recognized the right of all nations to establish the political system they chose and the need to provide the peoples with the power and the right to self-government which they had been deprived of by force. But to this was added a clause that this applied to the European nations that had fallen prey to fascism.

Europe had no US or British colonies within its sphere.

Later, on February 22, 1942, one year after the US had opened fire against Japan, Roosevelt declared that the Atlantic Charter was not restricted to the states on the Atlantic coasts. This was aimed at presenting the US as the “liberator” before the weak nations of the three continents by making a gesture as if the US were interested in their fate. (*US Diplomacy in the Far East, 1942-1943*, New York, p. 23.)

Roosevelt’s “declaration”, released after the US-British side had sacrificed Korea and Manchuria to fascist Japan, Austria and Czechoslovakia to fascist Germany and Ethiopia to fascist Italy, was the de facto “White” offensive against Japan’s “Black” propaganda.

In 1931 Japan mounted an all-out offensive against Manchuria by inciting the “September 18 incident”. This was done with the connivance of the US and Britain, and they took a compromising approach to it.

On October 3, 1935, when fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia without a declaration of war, the US chose the line of

“noninterference”, acquiescing in that outright aggression, and Britain and France approached Italy with a proposal for the division of Ethiopia, a member state of the League of Nations.

When Austria was occupied by Hitler’s Germany, Britain officially recognized this through diplomatic channels in April 1938, and the US sided with Hitler’s invasion by changing its embassy in Vienna into a consulate.

At the time Hitler claimed Germany’s territorial right to Czechoslovakia, Chamberlain and Daladier concluded with Hitler an agreement on leaving Czechoslovakia at the disposal of Germany in Munich on September 29 and 30, 1938.

Since then, “Munich Pact” has been used as a synonym for the policy of compromise with fascism.

The US-British side, opposing Japan’s propaganda offensive on the “liberation of the Asiatics from the domination of the Whites”, made itself known as opposing colonialism, as a lever to win support from the oppressed nations of Asia.

The US believed that this would help isolate their enemies—Japan, Germany and Italy—from the Asian races.

Similarly, the situation that followed the outbreak of the Second World War was marked by radical changes, such as the destruction of the alliance of the old colonial empires and the upswing of the national liberation struggles of the Oriental nations. This resulted in the arrival of a new situation that impelled the US-British-led allies to recognize the independence and self-determination of the colonial nations, including Korea.

This implied the beginning of a new turn in the development of international relations.

## **Political Strategies of the Belligerent Parties—Contradiction and Duality**

The new situation which emerged after the Second World War compelled the US and Britain, to reshape their former policy vis-a-vis Korea, the policy of a tie-up with Japanese imperialism.

Already back at the close of the preceding century, the US and Britain, pursuing their own interests, committed such a breach of trust as to make a sacrificial victim of the independence of Korea, a party to a mutual “protectorate treaty” with them, in conspiracy with Japan, which had entered the path of capitalism before any other country in Asia.

The US was the first Western state which set up diplomatic relations with the feudal Korean kingdom.

The Korea-US Treaty (May 22, 1882) stipulated in Article One that should one party be notified of unjustifiable humiliation to the other party caused by any other state, the former will evince profound amity by helping its counterpart faithfully and by mediating between the disputing parties successfully. (*Collection of the Treaties concerning Korea*, the University of International Affairs, 1985, p. 128.)

However, the US acted in collaboration with Japan in the scramble for colonies in Northeast Asia, renegeing on the obligations it had pledged in the Korea-US Treaty. Thus it failed to fulfil its commitments laid down in the treaty from the moment it signed it.

Alarmed by the increasing threats of Japanese imperialism, King Kojong sent emissaries to Washington twice, in 1896 and 1905, requesting American assistance for

Korea's independence, in accordance with the duty the US had assumed under the Korea-US Treaty. US President Theodore Roosevelt then reacted negatively, with an assertion that the Koreans had no ability to defend themselves independently, nor the power to bring restoration by their own efforts. (*Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, The Unbiased Traffic* 4, 1903-1905, Harvard University, 1951, pp. 1,112-1,116.)

In lieu of the execution of their pledge in the Korea-US Treaty, the Americans secretly agreed with Japan behind the screen of this treaty on the colonial seizure of Korea and the Philippines.

On July 29, 1905, Taft, Secretary of War (US President 1909-1913), and Japanese Prime Minister Katsura reached an accord, which said:

Secretary Taft observed that Japan's only interest in the Philippines would be, in his opinion, to have these islands governed by a strong and friendly nation like the United States ....

Count Katsura confirmed in the strongest terms the correctness of his views on the point and positively stated that Japan does not harbour any aggressive designs whatever on the Philippines.

Secretary Taft observed that, within the scope necessary to prevent Korea from concluding a treaty with any other country without Japan's approval, Japanese suzerainty over Korea was the logical result of the Russo-Japanese war and that this would be directly conducive to a lasting peace in Asia. (*Collection of the Treaties concerning Korea*, Korean ed., University of International Affairs, 1985, pp. 319-320.)

The secret contents of the Katsura-Taft Agreement on the assignment of Korea and the Philippines to Japan and the US,

respectively, were laid open to the public in 1924, when Japan and the US had established their complete respective control over Korea and the Philippines. (*The Records on Korean Unification*, published by the US State Department in 1960, did not even mention this treacherous act of the US government.)

Britain was the second state that concluded diplomatic relations with feudal Korea.

The Korea policy of Britain was as perfidious as that of America.

The Korea-Britain Protectorate Treaty signed on November 26, 1883 defined in Article One that, regarding disputes that arose between one party of the treaty and a third country, the other party of the treaty is naturally obliged by the conclusion of the treaty to take appropriate measures and offer good mediation between them, (*Ibid.*, p. 135.)

Britain, too, instead of executing its duty under the treaty, agreed with Japan to allot Korea to the latter and India to the former.

On August 12, 1905, Britain and Japan signed the Second Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

Article Three of this treaty, signed by Hayashi Tadasu, the Japanese ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Britain, and British Foreign Minister Lansdowne in London stated that since “Japan reserves special interests, political, military and economic, in Korea the United Kingdom acquiesces in the right of Japan to take measures in Korea for guidance, administration and protection justifiable and indispensable for the protection and promotion of these interests”. As seen above, the US and Britain did not stop at unilaterally abstaining from discharging their obligations laid

down in the treaties they had concluded with Korea but went through legal procedures in contravention of the treaties. Nevertheless, they offered not a syllable of diplomatic explanation to the Korean side, a party to the treaty.

The then feudal government of Korea had no intention to fight against the allied forces of aggression of the imperialist powers nor the diplomatic capability to divide and smash them one by one.

The impotence of King Kojong, the unavoidable corruption of the hereditary despotic system and the seclusion of the country held back Korea's social progress and made its statesmen inert and blind.

Consequently feudal Korea found it difficult to maintain its power in the world of jungle law.

With the advent of the 1930s, the US, Britain and other Western powers pursued the strategy of alliance with Japan, from the ulterior motive of backing, encouraging and using the bellicose Japanese militarist forces as a deterrent to the rapidly growing national liberation forces and the influence of communism in Asia,

However, such a tie-up between Japan, the US and Britain—an Oriental Munich Pact—was intrinsically fraught with discords among their basic interests and contradictions.

If the British and French policy of acquiescence toward fascist Germany in the West pushed Western Europe into the bog of horrible carnage perpetrated by the Nazis, the US-British colonialist league with Japan drove the Japanese imperialists with greater force to realize their infamous dream of the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

On December 8, 1941 Japan at last kindled the flames of war by abruptly attacking Pearl Harbor, the top US naval base in Hawaii, in the Pacific.

Japan made a simultaneous attack on the British colonies in the Pacific.

In the first five months following the outbreak of the Pacific War Japan occupied colonies of America, Britain, France and the Netherlands, with a total area of 9,801, 000 square kilometres and with a population of over 400 million in Asia and the Pacific.

This was 32 times the area of Japan proper,

Japan scrapped all the treaties it had concluded with the US and Britain 36 years before, taking Korea as a bait.

In January 1942 the Japanese imperialists launched offensive operations against the Philippines, which they had recognized as an American colony in the Katsura-Taft Agreement and occupied whole of its territory in the end.

Douglas MacArthur, commander of the US forces in the Far East, with headquarters in the Philippines, fled to Australia,

In January Japan invaded Malaya, a British colony which it had recognized as belonging to the sphere of British influence in the Second Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and seized Singapore, the most important base of the British fleets operating in the Pacific, in February, threatening the borders of India.

For the US-British side it became pointless to continue to regard Korea as a colony of Japan now that Japan, formerly their imperialist collaborator and ally, was at war against them, nullifying the treaties and agreements it had concluded with them.

To do so would only help increase Japan's war potential.

The US and Britain found themselves at a strategic stage of rehashing their Korean policy to fit the new situation.

Roosevelt, interviewed by Edgar Snow, a US Far Eastern expert, on February 24, 1942, stated that a prompt, new policy was desirable for the Koreans. (*The History of US Imperialists' Aggression of Korea*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1961, p. 185.)

At this time the US and Britain were not at one in their view on Korea's independence.

The US colonies in the Pacific region were all seized by Japan, while the vast and valuable British colonies like India and Myanmar were still safe.

So the US called for the "independence" of Korea, the Philippines, Myanmar and other colonies seized by Japan, whereas Britain was interested in keeping the colonial system, especially in India.

US Ambassador to China Kousse, in his report sent to Washington in March 1942, wrote that the "decision" of the Korean issue was dependent on the independence of other Asian nations, including India, and so it was not proper for the US to make its stand on Korea explicit before determining its policy toward other Asian colonies. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers*, 1942, Vol. 1, General, *The British Commonwealth, Far East*, Washington, 1960, pp. 866-867.)

The US ruling circles followed his suggestion and decided to manifest their stand on the Korean issue after watching the development of the situations in British India and Myanmar, and Dutch Indonesia.

However, it was their unflagging policy not to allow weak nations to win independence and form communist governments, and that the "independence" of colonial

nations might be justified only within the sphere of influence of monopoly capital and under the market economy system.

Notably “anti-communism” was the starting point of all their policies. The US and British policy-makers did not lose sight of “anti-communism” even when they were narrowly cornered and forced to ally with Stalin against Hitler. .

British Prime Minister Churchill, in a radio speech on June 22, 1941, declared that in the previous 25 years no one had been more active than himself in fighting communism, and he would not withdraw even one word of the statements he had made against communism until then.

The imperialists, who had to ally with communism while pursuing the ideal of anti-communism, eventually came to employ a dual strategy in the war against fascism.

The speech made by US Senator Truman at a closed hearing is a good example. He said, “If Germany is strong we should back Russia; if the latter grows strong, we should back the former.”

The aim was to eliminate both Germany and the Soviet Union. (E. Zhukov, *International Relations in the Far East, 1870-1945*, Part II, Korean ed., Pyongyang, 1953, p. 81.)

It was this Truman who, as US President later, imposed the artificial barrier, the “38th parallel”, upon Korea and perpetuated its division.

The US, Britain and Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist China, although aligned on the same front against fascism, revealed the dual character of this strategy in practice by turning away from support for the liberation struggles of the people against all manner of oppression, including fascism. Their policy towards the Korean issue, too, was cast based on their deep-rooted notion of “anti-communism”.

An American Rightist scholar, Byas, stated that it was pointless to grant Korea the right to self-government at the present stage of its development, and went to the length of insisting on Japan's mandatory rule over Korea after the American victory in the war. (Byas, *Government by Assassination*, New York, 1942, pp. 359-360.)

The US-British plan for Korea, based on the ideal of anti-communism, began to reveal its contours. In March 1943 Roosevelt and Eden agreed on one or two states (the US and Nationalist China) exercising trusteeship over Korea in the future. The US trusteeship overture originated in the US desire to substitute neo-colonialist rule for the old colonialism of Japan in liberated Korea.

The US had been waiting for a chance and a method before it made an official announcement of such a programme for Korea. The Cairo Declaration was the product of this American strategy.

### **The US Programme for the “Postwar Global Structure”**

In connection with the unleashing of the new world war by the fascist bloc—Germany, Japan and Italy—the Soviet Union entered into an anti-fascist alliance with the US and Britain, aiming to threaten Germany from behind, obtain military and material supplies, and simultaneously contain the imperialist powers' anti-Soviet campaigns by binding them with “allied obligations”. Meanwhile, the US-British side sought through the alliance with the former to defeat fascist Germany, contain the postwar advance of the Soviet Union and the forces of national liberation, and reshape the

postwar global framework into one suitable for the existence of capital.

The US-British side first used their aid to the Soviets during the world war as a lever for adding pressure to the recipient and resorted to the strategy of sapping Soviet strength, dragging on the war as long as they could, not concluding it quickly, and ducking away from decisive operations against Germany and Japan.

They defaulted for two years on the British-Soviet Treaty and the US-USSR agreement on opening the “Second Front” in the west of fascist Germany within 1942. They waged a “phony war” against Germany that was confined to aerial bombardment.

At the beginning of 1943 Britain had 45 of its 79 divisions assigned to “defensive service” in its colonies, and the US had 220,000 troops in North America, 350,000 in the Pacific region and 120,000 on British-owned islands, including bombers; thus they kept themselves away from any offensive actions to speak of.

Simultaneously the US administration used the so-called pledge of the “Atlantic Charter” to assist the “independence” of the weak colonial nations, including Korea, for the purpose of wheedling them into the “free world” and establishing its control over them after the war.

In 1942 Roosevelt formed a consultative committee for postwar foreign policy at the State Department, which was a body to study the “global structure” after the war and work out the US strategy towards it. He also set up study centres and committees specializing in the “postwar global structure”.

This consultative committee for postwar foreign policy was staffed by N. Rockefeller, M. Taylor and A. Johnson,

who were the most influential people in the US financial oligarchy, Senators Connelly and Austin, and D. Acheson, G. Fish, I. Strong and I. Kolmik, all politicians or journalists.

These institutions began making a full study of the postwar US policies towards the Far Eastern nations, following the first US air force attack on Japan proper in April 1942 and the end of Japan's "200 days of successive victories" in the south Pacific in June of the same year.

The central task of these organs was to take measures to stall the national liberation movements that were sweeping the Pacific region and keep the oppressed Asian nations outside the influence of the "principle of national self-determination" held up by the USSR. And they made a study of a variety of "postwar structure" in the East and the West considered essential for the extension of the US sphere of influence.

In this "programme" submitted by these US institutions Korea held an important place, as a strategic point and a land rich in natural resources in the East,

Directed by Roosevelt, the State Department demanded that the study groups under its control conduct a systematic study of the Korean issue. What made the US policymakers attach importance to Korea was the possibility of converting the Korean peninsula, together with China and Japan, into a powerful outpost of the "free world".

Starting from this strategic viewpoint, the US held a conference with Britain and Nationalist China in Cairo in December 1943, at which an ambiguous declaration on the "independence of Korea" was published.

## **The Cairo Declaration and Its Shadow**

The Cairo Conference took place amidst new circumstances marked by the successive victories of the Soviet army on the Soviet-German front and the surrender of fascist Italy.

In the latter half of 1943 the Allies—the USSR, the US and Britain—agreed to hold summit talks to discuss new measures to end the war as early as possible and the question of a postwar settlement in advance. Teheran, the capital of Iran, was designated as the venue of their meeting.

Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill held a preliminary parley in Cairo, from November 22 to 27, 1943, on their way to Teheran to meet Stalin.

They primarily discussed the questions of the “Second Front” and the “postwar peaceful settlement in the Far East”. They gave the meeting the code name “Sextant” borrowing a term used in astronomical observation, hoping to foresee the “postwar structure” in Asia with the farsightedness of astronomers.

President Chiang Kai-shek of Nationalist China was invited to the discussion of Far Eastern issues at the suggestion of Roosevelt.

Chiang Kai-shek had his own strategic aim for his participation in the Pacific War. Under the favourable condition when the vortex of war moved to the south Pacific, he directed his main forces to the “punitive expedition” against the Chinese Worker-Peasant Red Army active in the anti-Japanese war, only superficially fighting the Japanese.

This was unfavourable to the US, which had only 13 divisions operating on the Pacific front. Therefore, Roosevelt invited Chiang to Cairo to discuss the operations against Japan, while working covertly to lead the forces of the Nationalist Party of China to play a fuller part in the anti-Japanese fighting.

At the first round of the Cairo Conference, Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang reached an accord on the draft Cairo Declaration.

The declaration made it explicit that they would “apply merciless pressure on the barbarous enemy state (Japan)” and laid down the objectives of the anti-Japanese war, that is, to take back all the islands in the Pacific seized by Japan after the First World War and oust Japan from all other territories it had occupied by means of violence and coercion, with a view to containing Japanese aggression and punishing it.

The Big Powers touched on the issue of Korea under the colonial rule of Japanese imperialism in the declaration. At that time the US and British rulers did not announce openly their plan for “trusteeship” over Korea, but used the ambiguous expressions “freedom” and “independence” of Korea.

In the draft declaration modifications were made many times to the sections referring to Korea, owing to the particular interests of the US and Britain.

The first version of the draft declaration produced by Hopkins, Roosevelt’s special adviser, read that, recalling Japan’s treacherous plunder of Korea, they agreed that Korea should become a free, independent state “at the earliest moment” after Japan was crushed.

Checking this on November 25, Roosevelt replaced the word “earliest” with “proper”, thus making it read “at the proper moment”. The modification gave a radical change to the substance of the draft as compared with the original version on the Korean issue.

And, debating the draft declaration, Churchill suggested changing the phrase “at the proper moment” into the expression “in due course”. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, Cairo and Teheran Conferences, 1943*, Washington, 1961, pp. 402-404.)

Finally, the British version was fixed as the final decision on the Korean issue.

On November 27, 1943 the Cairo Declaration signed by Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek read as follows in reference to Korea:

“Our three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.” (*Ibid.*, p. 402.)

In Teheran Roosevelt showed this declaration to Stalin, and the latter responded, “You were right when you agreed to Korea’s independence.”

The Soviet Union respected its “nonaggression treaty” with Japan and had no mind to enter into actions against Japan until the anti-German war was over. Accordingly it did not sign the declaration.

After the conclusion of the Teheran Conference, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Cairo again to appraise the outcome of the conference, and on December 1, 1943 the declaration was published in the names of the US, China and Britain,

Now that the US pointed out the “slavish situation of the Korean people” and recognized their right to “independence”

and this view was shared by Britain and approved by the Soviet Union, no longer could the allegation that “Korea is part and parcel of the Japanese empire” be supported, nor could the statement, “the restoration of Korea to its former status is unthinkable.” (Statement made by Fork, Undersecretary of the State Department, in March 1919.)

This was an inevitable process resulting from the tremendous changes of the times.

The US-British side claimed that the Cairo Declaration on Korea was a great blessing for the Korean people.

US scholar C. Berger, dwelling on the Cairo Declaration in his book *The Korea Knot*, wrote that this declaration formally offered the US the chance to make a comeback on the Korean stage, and thus became the wheel that altered the future history of Korea in a big way. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 31.) Behind the change in the policy of the US and British rulers who supported Korea’s “freedom” and “independence”, changing their former view of Korea as a part of Japan, was a well-honed strategy of killing two birds with one stone.

Through the declaration, the US-British side pursued above all the end of isolating and unnerving Japanese imperialism, their adversary.

The Japanese imperialists, who were by this time on the defensive in the Pacific War, were bent on “political campaigns” to consolidate their position in their occupation areas to drain the manpower and material resources there to the last drop for the purpose of the war.

They were plugging the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, embellishing it as the “cause of liberation of the yellow race” from the white imperialists.

In November 1943 Japan hosted the Greater East Asia Conference in Tokyo, attended by puppet representatives of the Wang Jingwei “government” of China, the “governments” of Manchukuo, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand, and the “provisional government” of India.

The meeting adopted the declaration proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Tojo. Thus the Japanese imperialists’ plot to set up the “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” became ever more distinct in its shape, and the role of Japan as the leader of the “co-prosperity sphere” was highly vaunted. (E. Zhukov, *International Relations in the Far East (1870-1945)*, Part I, Korean ed., Pyongyang, 1953, p. 159.)

Under such circumstances, the US and Britain had to do something to expose Japan’s hypocrisy. That card was Korea’s “freedom” and “independence” which they had raised in the Cairo Declaration.

Further, the US-British side sought through the declaration to present themselves before the weak nations as “liberators”, as givers of “national self-determination” and “independence”.

At that time, the demand for national self-determination became the banner of the weak nations in their struggle against fascist oppression, and the trend towards national self-determination as the basic principle in the solution of the racial problem was winning massive support and sympathy among the oppressed nations. Under such circumstances, the US and Britain could in no way stand aside from the struggle of the people of the colonies and semi-colonies.

Needless to say, the US, Britain and other capitalist powers had no mind to present Korea with freedom and

independence at once. This was revealed clearly when the Cairo Declaration was drawn up.

The American and British authors of the declaration used very obscure expressions as to when they would give Korea “independence” and how.

From the viewpoint of method, the expression “in due course” can be interpreted as “through proper procedures” or “following a proper course”; from the viewpoint of time, it can be conceived as at the “proper moment” or at the “appropriate time”.

Formerly, translating this phrase “in due course”, some publications and documents interpreted it as “at the appropriate time”. But, viewing its etymological aspect and the then US and British approach to the Korean issue, it is more accurate to render it as “through proper procedures”. In the course of drafting the declaration, the expression “at the proper moment” written by Roosevelt in the sense of time was revised by Churchill.

The fact that they put down an ambiguous phrase that might be perceived differently according to the circumstances in the communique of an international convention clearly exposes the sinister intention of Churchill and Roosevelt to leave room for interference in the matter of Korean independence.

Reading the Cairo Declaration, the nationalists of the “Provisional Government of Korea” in Chongqing, China, felt the danger of some type of interference such as the victor powers’ “mandatory rule” over liberated Korea in the future.

But they were quite unaware—and unable to smell the plot—until then that the heads of the US and British governments were contemplating a “trusteeship” over Korea.

The “provisional government” dignitaries paid a visit to the US embassy in China on December 4, 1943, three days after the issuing of the declaration, and asked what the expression “in due course” meant. The US embassy side avoided answering, and reported this fact to the home government.

Afterwards neither the US nor Britain nor China was willing to comment on this.

The Cairo Declaration was censured as obscure by some American statesmen, too. A member of the House of Representatives, Shepherd, commented that the Cairo commitments contained the haziest expressions ever used until then, and that the “course” might be as long as 200 years. (*Minutes of the House*, Vol. 91, Washington, June 1945, p. 686.)

An official of the Far Eastern Section of the State Department, Borton, predicted that the Cairo agreement on Korea would entail unlimited intricacies in the future, since it had been adopted without consultation with experts on international law.

Ex-Secretary of State Cordell Hull, who sweated to draw up the equivocally worded Cairo Declaration, wrote that the Cairo agreement on Korea was a thoughtless act, and the Korean people hoped to win independence as soon as they were freed, instead of “in due course”. (C.Hull, *Memoirs*, Vol.II, New York, 1948, p. 1,584.)

The December 3rd, 1943, issue of *The New York Times*, two days after the issuing of the declaration, commented that this decision might not be in the interests of the Korean people, and that this was no more than a plan to paralyse Japan by taking back everything it had taken before.

What does the phrase “in due course” mean? When will this “due course” end? Who determines and executes the contents of the “due course”? Who has the say as to its implementation? The answers to a series of questions which arose regarding the essence of the Cairo Declaration were given by Roosevelt some time later.

Referring to the Korean issue when interviewed by the press after the proclamation of the Cairo Declaration, Roosevelt stated that Korea’s independence would take the same course as that of the Philippines, thus connecting the obscure wording of the Cairo Declaration with the US “experiment in the Philippines”.

The rule of the governor, or the 40-year-long “period of preparation for independence” in the Philippines, which laid the groundwork for the American-style “free world” there was to be repeated in Korea “in due course”.

Thus, the US had contradictory stands; on the one hand it had to advocate Korea’s independence because it needed to paralyse Japan, its enemy in the war, and win the favour of the anti-fascist democratic forces; it had to oppose it, on the other hand, due to its insatiable ambition for “world conquest”.

For Britain, the independence of the colonial races posed a real headache.

If the British government represented by Churchill approved of Korea’s “freedom and independence” from being a Japanese colony, this would directly lead to negating its rule over the vast colonies of the British Empire, encompassing 14 million square miles. This would imply the total ruin of the British Empire, on which “the sun never sets.”

However, Britain was in no position to come out publicly opposed to Korea’s independence. For as Britain was in a

desperate struggle against fascist Germany, it would be very dangerous for it to isolate itself from the other anti-fascist forces.

Churchill's attitude toward the Korean issue in connection with the adoption of the Cairo Declaration represented his tactic of accommodating himself to the requirements of the moment, namely, it was impossible to let go of the British colonies, but at the same time inevitable to support Korea's independence.

Nationalist China, too, was very interested in Korea, The primary concern of Chiang Kai-shek as far as Korea was concerned was to stave off a possible onrush of the communists in the area adjoining China, and thus break a link of encircling chains of "communism".

Chiang based his policy firmly on "anti-communism". He was pursuing a war against communism by virtue of his dictatorial power and enormous wealth.

From the moment of his assumption of office in 1927, he renounced the policy of "collaboration with communism and the Soviet Union" of the Nationalist government of China, initiated by Sun Yat-sen, and swung round to the US-British side following China's severance of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Some time before the Pacific War broke out in 1941 the Nationalist government of China set up an institution exclusively directed to the study of the questions regarding the postwar system of the Far Eastern nations, with Fang Changhou, Commander in Chief of the Supreme Council of National Defence, at its head. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942, China*, Washington, 1956, p. 733.)

This institution of the Nationalist Party resurrected the slogan “Korea’s independence” which the Japanese imperialists had held up 46 years previously hoping to remove the influence of the Qing dynasty from the territory of Korea.

From the beginning of 1942 the official figures in the Nationalist government of China started harping on “Korea’s independence”.

After Roosevelt’s assurance that the principles of the “Atlantic Charter” would be applicable to the Pacific nations, Chiang Kai-shek, expounding on his Korea policy at a press conference, voiced the Chinese government’s sympathy for Korea’s long-drawn-out efforts for independence. In his frequent talks with American political figures and the press, he stressed that unless Korea became independent, the independence of China could hardly be secured firmly, and it would be difficult to maintain peace in Northeast Asia. Testifying to this, he pointed to the fact that Japanese imperialism’s aggression against China originated from its occupation of Korea. (V. Vorontsov, *The US Plan for Korea in the Second World War*, Moscow, 1962.)

The then US State Secretary, Cordell Hull, who was not aware of the ulterior motive of Chiang’s Nationalist government, was anxious about its overrated concern for Korea, and so required then US ambassador to China Kousse to inform him what Chiang was after.

In his report, Kousse pointed out that the Chinese press was feverish about the independence of Korea and India, and supported “mandatory rule” over Thailand, and that the Chinese government itself had a claim for territory lost to Japan after the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese war.

He also reported to Hull about the secret talks he had had with Jo So Ang, “Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government of Korea” on February 12, 1942, when the latter warned him that the Nationalist Chinese government intended to control Korea after the collapse of Japan. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942*, Vol. 1, General, *The British Commonwealth, Far East*, Washington, 1960, p. 860.)

Speaking to the meeting of Chiefs of Staff of the US-British Military Allied Committee held during the Cairo Conference, Roosevelt said he appreciated that “the Nationalist Party has the ‘unshakable intention’ of occupying Korea.” (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, Cairo and Teheran Conferences, 1943*, Washington, 1961, p. 33.)

Then Chiang Kai-shek voiced his support for the overtures for granting independence to Korea, and often used the expression “Korea’s independence” in his talks with Roosevelt and in his public statements.

As seen above, the short phrase of the Cairo Declaration referring to the Korean issue mirrored the attitudes of the US, Britain and Nationalist China, who were pursuing differing interests around the Korean issue.

Bruce Cummings, an associate professor at Washington University, explained in reference to the Korean issue: “In December 1943 the Big Powers evinced their support for Korean independence in Cairo. The question lies in the fact it was not aimed at Korean independence.... President Roosevelt had a very clear idea of the phrase ‘in due course’. He foresaw that Japan’s fall would be followed by a certain course of ‘trusteeship’ administered by the US and other states, including the Soviet Union, on the condition of its

approval, prior to Korea's independence. However, his general idea was not to allow Korea to become independent after the war."

The US did not want Korea to be independent; it did not support Korea's independence in 1910 either, he added.

The Cairo Declaration was of great significance in that it clarified that the objective of the war was to crush Japan, but in practice revealed the veiled hostility between the Big Powers,

The attitude of Roosevelt and Churchill toward the independence of colonial nations did not go beyond the limit of dividing the plunder among the victor nations.

Then Roosevelt's overture concerning Vietnam epitomized the essence of US foreign policy.

After the close of the Cairo Conference, Roosevelt, with a flattering "smile" to Chiang Kai-shek, asked him what he would say if Vietnam were to be transferred to China. (Vietnam was then under Japanese occupation.) Embarrassed, Chiang replied that Vietnam did not belong to China, but was a French colony.

Roosevelt's suggestion for the transfer of Vietnam, a former French colony, to China derived from his thinking that it was not beneficial to the US to return it to France without an American foothold. The then Vichy government of France was a pro-German puppet government, and the pro-American Giraud was pressured by the pro-British de Gaullists. Meanwhile Roosevelt sought to place China, Britain and France at loggerheads by manipulating Chiang Kai-shek, who was wavering between Japan and the US, behind the scenes.

The Allied powers, particularly the US, assumed the pressing task of converting Korea into a bridgehead for

advance to the Asian continent, as the defeat of Japanese imperialism and the emergence of Korean independence loomed.

The Cairo Declaration on the Korean issue was an offspring of the designs of the powers to invent an excuse for their intervention in and control of Korea in the future, the manifestation of their new policy toward Korea since the start of the Pacific War.

The Soviet Union, too, could not stand aloof from Asian affairs, the Korean issue in particular. Should an anti-Soviet government backed by the Western powers appear in territory bordering the Soviet Union, it could not tolerate this.

However, the USSR was still locked in life-and-death struggle with Germany in Europe, and had to maintain neutrality with Japan for the security of its eastern border. Accordingly they were in no position to express an official stand on the question of Korea's independence from the yoke of Japanese imperialism.

Taking advantage of this, the US and Britain aimed to secure their exclusive position in Korea when it was liberated in the future.

## Chapter 2

### **The Scramble of the Big Powers for Korea**

The Second World War, which dragged on amidst unprecedented bloodbaths and destruction, reached a new turning point, with the latter half of 1943 as the watershed.

The fascist bloc started crumbling. In such a changing situation, the Soviet Union, the US and Britain, the anti-fascist Allies, were confronted in their diplomacy with such problems as joint operations to destroy the fascist bloc once and for all and the postwar settlement of world affairs.

Proceeding from this, US-UK-USSR summit conferences took place three times in the 20 months from December 1943 to July 1945.

The Soviet Union, which was fighting desperately against the German troops on the vast expanse of its territory, was intent on lessening the burden of war by the quick formation of the Second Front by the US and British troops in the rear of Germany, and the postwar settlement of Germany and Europe under its occupation. But it had neither power nor time enough to intervene in the Pacific War and Asian affairs yet.

The Nationalist government of China had greater interest in its “punitive operations” against the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, that is, the consolidation of its power at home, than in fighting against Japan. Therefore Chiang Kai-

shek was unenthusiastic and passive toward the anti-Japanese war, not to mention the European front.

Britain, dealt serious military blows by Germany and Japan, had almost lost its influence in the world. Nevertheless it was still stubborn in its claim for the interests worthy of a suzerain state in its extensive colonies in Asia and Africa, and active, together with the US in the settlement of postwar affairs.

The US, watching the flames of war spreading over the European and Asian continents and the Pacific region far from the American continent, was putting greater energy into grabbing the initiative in the settlement of postwar affairs than into intensifying joint operations to vanquish Japan and Germany.

US-British summit conferences took place nine times during the whole period of the Second World War. Almost all items of the agenda tackled by the leaders of the two countries were questions pertaining to the division of interests in the postwar settlement; discussions on military operations for ending the war were very few,

The US administration, optimistic over postwar prospects, which seemed bright with the demise of the Germany-Japan bloc and the weakening of Britain and France, was contemplating a US-led “free world” in the future.

However, the age of “gunboat diplomacy” was past. Considering this, the US proposed that after the war the “mandatory rule” of the separate victor nations over colonies be abolished, and the colonies of the vanquished nations be placed under the “joint rule” of the four Big Powers, under the leadership of the US.

The US planned to settle the postwar Korean issue in accordance with this formula.

All this time, the Soviet Union was subordinating everything to the war to win victory over fascist Germany.

For the Soviet Union had concluded a “neutrality pact” with Japan and pursued the policy of maintaining the status quo on its eastern border. As for Korea as a Japanese colony, it confined itself to manifesting its support for the principle of national self-determination.

These circumstances restricted extensive debate on the Korean issue between the Big Powers. This is the very reason why the problems of Korea and other Asian states under Japanese imperialism’s occupation were less talked about by the leaders of the Big Powers as questions of secondary importance, whereas European affairs, including Austria and Poland swallowed up by Germany, were the central topics in the parleys between the powers in the latter half of the world war.

Under such circumstances, the US pursued the settlement of the question of Japanese colonies in the Asian and Pacific areas, including the Korean issue, in accordance with its own programme.

Therefore the debate on the Korean issue at the time was swayed by the US and proceeded based on the scenario arranged by the American statesmen. This characterized the Korean issue in the latter half of the Second World War.

### **Roosevelt — Proposer of Trusteeship**

With the collapse or the breakdown of the rival powers in the course of the war, the golden opportunity for the US to stimulate its advance to the Asian and Pacific areas matured.

As Japan’s inevitable fall was clear to all, the US made a deep study of the changing situation in the Pacific region and

the questions relating to the extension of its sphere of influence.

This “study” of the US, aimed at gaining the biggest interests through the Pacific War, pursued:

First, the successful infiltration of “liberal democracy” into the nations liberated from the yoke of Japan;

Second, the maximum extension of the US sphere of influence while avoiding clashes with the former suzerain states;

Third, measures needed for the successful checking of the expansion of communism that was spreading riding the waves of independence struggles.

Certain American statesmen were even of the view that, when complete independence was granted to the colonies of fascist Japan the “Red” influence of the Soviet Union would prevail, as shown in the case of collaboration with communism and the Soviet Union advocated by Sun Yat-sen, alongside a corresponding weakening of US influence.

So the US policymakers propagated the view from the middle of 1942 that Korea and some other Asian nations lacked the ability for self-government, making that an excuse for its interference in these countries.

With the allegation that it was desirable to train Asians and instruct them in citizenship and that the Americans were under an obligation to educate Asians, the US insisted on its “trusteeship” over Asian nations. (A. Viton, *American Empire in Asia*, New York, 1943, pp. 49-53.)

This was a variety of the “mandatory rule” devised by Britain and France after the First World War to take over the colonies of the vanquished powers. Britain and France, the victor nations invented the concept of territory “mandated” by the League of Nations in order to add a legal cover to

their occupation of colonies formerly owned by vanquished Germany and Turkey, and thus establish their domination over a number of Asian, African and Latin American states. The US world strategy after the Second World War, which was to enervate Britain and France's administration and guidance disguised as "mandatory rule" over their colonies and establish American value judgments and the American style of order in the world, found expression in the "trusteeship system".

The US overture on trusteeship was Roosevelt's own invention. He contemplated trusteeship over Korea and many other regions of Asia such as British India and the French Southeast Asian states.

In his talks with the Soviet delegation in June 1942, Roosevelt proposed to examine the possibility of postwar international trusteeship over a number of islands and colonies of the vanquished powers. (R, Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 194.)

Roosevelt thought that the 40-year US "experience" in the Philippines would be helpful to the postwar introduction of the powers' international trusteeship system.

Speaking over the radio on November 15, 1942, Roosevelt described the recent 44-year history of the Philippines as a model for the future for small nations the world over, as the paragon obtainable by reasonable people in the future, a "formula" of world civilization that imparted religions, faith and tribal freedom. (*Open Papers and Speeches of Franklin Roosevelt, 1942*, New York, 1942, pp. 473-476.)

Proposing the trusteeship system, the US paid particular attention to Korea.

The August 1942 issue of the magazine *Fortune* carried an article concerning trusteeship a large portion of which was directed to Korea. It referred to Korea's position and role in international relations, and the problems regarding its postwar political system as well as the possible menace of Soviet Russia from the north.

Particular stress was laid here on the incapability of the Korean people to govern their country themselves, seen from various angles. And, since Japan had ruled Korea for decades, Korea was devoid of experience for the administration of their country, and therefore it was rational to institute a transition period for American-controlled international "assistance". (*Fortune*, Appendix to No. 2 of 1942, p. 30.)

Quite a few Rightist American scholars and political commentators exerted great energy to emphasize the "experiences" and "benefits" of the long-standing US policy toward the Philippines. They asserted that the Korean people were incapable of running their country by themselves, and accordingly that Korea be placed under "international patronage", with the central role of "patron" being played by the US, which had rich "experience" in the Philippines.

In 1943 American commentator Abend wrote, "At the moment the Korean people are in no state to run their country independently. ... They are not prepared to administer the country safely and successfully. Therefore no independence should be granted to Korea until it has been 'taught' to conduct its own affairs independently." (H. Abend, *Pacific Charter*, London, 1943, p. 47.)

They tried to convince the world public that the Korean people were little prepared for the independent

administration of their state, regarding it as a process preceding the enforcement of trusteeship.

The Americans first broached the trusteeship question at the closed-door talks with the British delegates on the settlement of postwar international affairs held at the White House between March 12-29, 1943.

On March 27 Roosevelt explained to British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden about the US intention to place Korea, a former colony of Japan, under international trusteeship in the future. He proposed the US, China and one more state as its trustees, as well as trusteeship over the Indo-Chinese states. (C. Hull, *Memoirs*, Vol. II, New York, 1948, p. 1,956.)

At first, Britain spurned the US offer on the program of trusteeship, regarding it as an attempt to rout Britain from the Asian continent. But it could not rebuff the US anti-Soviet strategy to contain a possible threat from Stalin to communize Asia.

So, the postwar trusteeship over Korea initiated by the US, or more precisely by Roosevelt himself, was first discussed between the US and Britain. Afterwards, the US conducted diplomatic activities to force this scheme upon the Soviet Union.

At the Three Foreign Ministers Conference held in Moscow from October 19 to 30, 1943 at the suggestion of the US side, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, US Secretary of State Hull and British Foreign Minister Eden discussed the matter of effectuation of the postwar trusteeship system as an “item on the question of colonies”.

The proposal noted that the United Nations Organization, to appear in the future, should take responsibility for the colonial states and prepare them for “national independence”,

and every state which was closely related with the colonial peoples ought to provide the latter with the right to self-government on a gradual basis. (S. Krylov, *UN Historical Papers*, Moscow, 1949, pp. 18-20.)

This overture which was intended to “prepare” the nations liberated from colonial status “under the auspices of the United Nations” and grant them “the right to self-government on a gradual basis”, instead of allowing their immediate independence, can be conceived as follows: through the transitional period “education” would be given concerning “citizenship” as well as democratic functions and formulae so that the colonial people could administer their country independently. Only then would they be entitled to independence.

Molotov approved the American trusteeship overture. The joint trusteeship was better as far as the Soviets were concerned than allowing the Americans’ sole administration over the colonies.

The Soviet Union clarified its stand that international trusteeship to go into effect following World War II should respect the principle of national self-government, and become a channel of support and assistance to the nations concerned.

Soviet international affairs expert V. Vorontsov wrote that the Soviet government was not opposed to short-term trusteeship over Korea after it was liberated from the colonial yoke. But the Soviet conception of trusteeship differed fundamentally from that of the Americans. The Soviet Union regarded the short-term trusteeship as an opportunity for giving all-out assistance to the colonial peoples in achieving their national independence. This kind of trusteeship would help fortify the democratic forces and

train the native cadres of the trust country. (V. Vorontsov, *The US Plan for Korea in the Second World War*, Moscow, 1962, p. 54.)

At that time, the US-advocated “trusteeship” scheme originated from the US strategy of expanding its sphere of influence while demonstrating its anti-fascist stand, as shown in the Atlantic Charter. This was clearly reflected in the “Cairo Declaration”, which was published two months after the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference, at which the US and Britain referred to Korea’s independence ambiguously.

American scholar C. Berger wrote that the Cairo Declaration totally owed this phrase and its underlying idea to Roosevelt. It was Roosevelt’s view that the liberated colonial peoples in Asia should be placed under the Big Powers’ trusteeship and educated in democratic traditions. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 36.)

The so-called democratic traditions denoted American-style democracy. Then the US set the goal of realizing Roosevelt’s plan for the US-led “new world fabric” after the war and believed the Americans could plant American democracy in the newly independent Asian states. For this reason he emphasized “education” as something indispensable to “trusteeship”, and defined it as the basic condition of trusteeship.

Roosevelt intended to test his trusteeship programme in Korea, and in fact it became the factor obstructing the reunification of Korea, which was liberated two years later. But this was a riddle to be solved in the future.

## **The Memorandum of the US State Department**

The Soviet and American leaders exchanged views briefly on Korea's future for the first time in Teheran, the venue of the first Big Power summit conference after the outbreak of the Second World War.

US Ambassador in Moscow Averill Harriman reported to Roosevelt that the Soviet government had agreed to Korea's independence under some type of trusteeship by the four Big Powers. This was contained in a memorandum Harriman submitted to Roosevelt prior to his talks with Stalin. (W. A. Harriman, *Emissary and Churchill's Diplomatic Bout with Stalin*, Pyongyang, 1986, Korean ed., p. 649.)

On the first day of the Teheran Conference, opinions were exchanged on the self-government of several Oriental nations. In the course of conversation, Stalin remarked that the Cairo Declaration on Korea's independence was correct. Roosevelt responded, saying that the Koreans needed a preparatory course lasting some 40 years to get themselves ready for independence. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, *Years of Trial and Hope*, New York, 1956, p. 316.)

At that time, Roosevelt spoke of the need for "instruction" for the peoples of Far Eastern colonies such as Indo-China, Myanmar, Malaya and the East Indies, and enumerated the US experiences in the Philippines.

Immediately after his return from Teheran, Roosevelt appeared at the "Pacific War Council" to brief the participants on the contents of his talks with Stalin, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek on the war against Japan and the postwar settlement. There he stated that the leaders of the

Big Powers had reached an accord on the enforcement of trusteeship over Korea, in addition to the return of Chinese and Soviet territories occupied by Japan since 1895. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 38.)

After the Teheran Conference the Soviet Union, the US and Britain agreed to resume their summit talks on the war and the postwar settlement at Yalta.

The memo submitted by the State Department to the President on the eve of the Yalta Conference contained detailed accounts of the trusteeship, the main content of which was the installation of a US-led Allied military administration in Korea after the war.

First, it envisaged the foundation of a new colonial military administration by the victor nations in Korea after the war. It stated that the combined representatives of the occupation forces and the military government should be present in Korea and that the military government be formed on the principle of a Korea-wide central administration in order to administer Korea as a single whole, not dividing it into different regions. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Malta and Yalta Conferences, 1945*, Washington, Government Publishing Co., 1955, p. 358.)

The US was about to deal with Korea as if it were an enemy nation which had been defeated in the act of aggression, not as a victim of Japanese imperialism's aggression, and therefore planned to occupy its territory by force of arms, keep its occupation forces there and conduct military administration there.

From the beginning of the war the US had training centres in the army for the education of officials needed for the military administration of the occupied areas, and was giving

appropriate training to the lawyers, physicians, economists, sociologists, educationists, policemen, retired government officials, and public and service organ employees whom they had conscripted for the purpose.

Second, it planned to establish a “certain type” of international administration or trusteeship machinery in Korea. And the duration of this rule would last until the Korean people were prepared for the independent administration of their country. (*Ibid.*, p. 359.)

Under the name of getting the liberated Korean people ready for self-government, the US ignored their right to direct selection of their system of government according to their will.

Third, the State Department recommended in this document the future fabric of power for effecting its trusteeship over Korea.

Pointing to the need for the missions of the Allied powers to exercise postwar trusteeship over Korea, the State Department noted that only the states which were interested in the future configuration of Korea, that is, the US, Britain and Nationalist China—including the Soviet Union when it entered the war against Japan—were eligible for membership and that the missions of the Big Powers, apart from that of the US, should never be so large as to trespass on the US occupation of Korea. (*Ibid.*, p. 359.)

In other words, the trusteeship over Korea should be directed or stage-managed at least by the US, and other participants in the trusteeship should be satisfied with the status of “observer”, not being allowed to encroach upon American interests.

In the postwar plan for Korea, the US State Department set two general targets—the question of power in liberated

Korea should be determined by the US, and this would necessitate the leading role of the US when Korea came under occupation by the Allied forces.

In order to make other powers accept US leadership in the postwar trusteeship over Korea and the enforcement of military administration indispensable to it, Roosevelt and many American politicians and scholars loudly advertised the US “experiences in the Philippines” as a “future model” and “formula for civilization”.

After the Spanish-American War of 1898, its first imperialist war, the US took over the Spanish colony of the Philippines from defeated Spain in place of an indemnity of 20 million dollars, and enforced military administration on that country.

In 1901 the US replaced military rule with the governor’s rule, which lasted 34 years. The successive American governors indiscriminately suppressed the strikes and struggles of the Philippine people, branding them as a race incapable of self-government.

In 1934 the US acquiesced in replacing the governor’s rule with “self-government”. Reacting to the statement made by Prime Minister Tojo of Japan in the spring of 1943 that he had granted “independence” to the Philippines occupied by the Japanese army, the US declared in August that the Philippine autonomous government-in-exile in America reserved the same right as exercised by any other independent national government.

Thus, the US granted “independence” to Philippine “government” pliant to the Americans after they had removed all nationalist forces from that country.

This process took the Americans more than 40 years. And this was the very “experiences of the Philippines” they were going to introduce in Korea after the war.

This was based on the calculation of the State Department that the balance of forces would turn in favour of their seizure of leadership when they organized the joint military administration of the Big Powers in Korea after the war.

Meanwhile, Britain, once the lion among the world imperialist powers, had sunk low after 1940 and the first half of 1941, exhausted in the war against Germany. The director of the American National Industry Society, one of the leading American capitalist organs, remarked in a speech on December 10, 1940 that Britain was too weak to regain the ruling position it had maintained for so long in the world political arena, and its prestige was in the dust. In the best case, Britain could remain in the Anglo-Saxon Empire as the subordinate partner of the Americans, and US economic aid and the might of the US ground and naval forces would become the central props of that empire. Hegemony would fall into the hands of the Americans. (*The Crisis of Great Britain*, 1950, pp. 70-71.)

Britain occupied the French colonies and seized the French fleet when Hitler “tore apart and ate” France in the first days of the war, and so the US, the rival of Britain, pursued a “policy of quiet delight” under the signboard of “neutrality” and set out to wrest the colonies and gold ingots from the United Kingdom.

Through the development of the war against the Axis powers, the Americans downgraded Britain from the position of equal ally to junior partner by means of aid to the latter.

They sold military equipment to Britain, which suffered a desperate shortage of arms. In return, they received from the

latter the patents for inventions of military and strategic importance, including research into nuclear weapons.

In September 1940 the US leased eight British naval and air bases in the Pacific for a period of 99 years.

In December 1940 Britain notified the US of its inability to pay for arms resulting from the drain of its gold and dollar reserves, and asked for a loan of 15,000 million dollars. This further deepened British economic and military subordination to the US. The Americans subjected the Nationalist China of Chiang Kai-shek, with the largest population and vast territory in the East, to the US by admitting it into the anti-fascist alliance. Chiang, who was the supreme commander of the “National Revolutionary Army” of the Nationalist government, concluded a secret agreement with the US ambassador to Japan while staying there after his defeat in an intra-party scramble for hegemony; in return for the US recognition of his government in future he pledged he would be the American agent in China.

Afterwards he helped the Americans elbow aside British people who had vested rights in China and allowed the Americans to get control over China.

In reward for his services, the US loaned Chiang 500 million dollars in February 1942, and in June supplied him with weapons worth 70 million dollars, following the conclusion of an agreement on military and economic aid.

The State Department was sure that so long as it had such rubber stamps as Britain and Nationalist China they would never be troubled by Soviet Russia even if it entered the Big Powers’ trusteeship and joint military administration of Korea.

In fact, after the Pacific War broke out the US intensified its ties with Britain and China, keeping them as junior Allies.

In March 1942 the US formed the Pacific Committee, comprising the US, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and China, and assumed the leading role in it.

In January 1943 Roosevelt and Churchill met in Casablanca; in these negotiations the former recognized the British “responsibility” for the Balkans and the Middle East in return for the latter’s recognition of the American military and political commitments to America and the Far East. The US honored Chiang with the title of “commander-in-chief of the anti-fascist Allied forces on the Chinese front”.

The US, an arms trader having no competitors and no creditors, aimed to outshine the Big Powers as “the master in the Pacific War” and hold the key to the settlement of postwar affairs, although it had only 13 divisions fighting in the Pacific War.

Above all, the US desire was to draw up and execute unilaterally its postwar blueprint for Korea free from “interference” by any other power. This became more apparent in its diplomatic contacts with the Soviet Union in 1945.

### **The Roosevelt-Stalin “Gentlemen’s Agreement”**

Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Yalta in the Crimea from February 4 to 12, 1945. That was the Second Three-Power Summit held during the war.

Also present were foreign ministers, chiefs of staff and advisors from three states. The US and British delegations numbered more than 700 people.

From the beginning of 1945, when the collapse of fascist Germany was imminent, the US and British side was eager to gain favourable ground for the settlement of postwar affairs.

On February 8, the fifth day of the negotiations, Roosevelt and Stalin had an unofficial talk at the Livadia Palace, the czar's summer palace, some 1.6 kilometres from Yalta for a debate of the questions concerning eastern and western affairs, and the Korean issue. Foreign Minister Molotov was on hand from the Soviet side and Ambassador Harriman from the US side. According to the short hand records released to the public more than ten years later and Harriman's *Memoirs*, Roosevelt first proposed to Stalin to discuss the question of trusteeship and raised the Korean issue for debate. Explaining the US stand, Roosevelt proposed a multi-power trusteeship or similar programme for Korea.

Naming the US, China and the Soviet Union as trustees for Korea, he added that in this case it would be proper to limit the representative of each country to one. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Malta and Yalta Conferences, 1945*, Washington, 1955, p. 770.)

Since Stalin had already heard his opinion when he first met him in Teheran and was informed of the US plan on Korea through the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and other diplomatic channels, he asked, "Is the trusteeship obligatory for Korea even when the Korean people can build a satisfactory government themselves?"

The Soviet side thought that the US-proposed trusteeship might result in the setting up of capitalism in Korea, and accordingly be harmful to the fulfilment of the USSR's conception of "world revolution".

Therefore, clarifying the stand of the Soviet government to rebuild Korea into a democratic independent state, Stalin reaffirmed the USSR's unconditional support for the complete liquidation of the long-drawn-out colonial rule over Korea and the rapid restoration of Korea to an independent state. Contrary to this, Roosevelt was stubborn in his stand that Korea needed a transitional period before independence.

Consequently both sides failed to reach a consensus of views on the basic question of guaranteeing complete independence to liberated Korea. In such a situation Stalin submitted his plan to the effect that if a transitional period of a certain duration was required for Korea's independence, as suggested by the American side, it might function temporarily on the condition that it was considered as a medium of assistance for Korea's independence and as a form of aiding it,

This was a proposal contradicting the US aim for Korea. If it were adopted, it would be impossible for the US to exercise military administration in Korea.

However, the American side could not veto efforts for assistance and cooperation oriented to independence. The US "pledged" openly that it would not pursue any profit nor cherish any territorial claim.

The American side approved the Soviet proposal. Byrnes, who accompanied the President to the Yalta Conference as the secretary of the US mobilization bureau during the war (Secretary of State afterwards), reminisced that Roosevelt reluctantly feigned his approval to Stalin's proposal on the Korean issue.

Next there was a debate on the duration of the trusteeship. Referring to this, Roosevelt said that the single experience of

the US in this respect was the case of the Philippines, and that it had taken the US nearly 50 years to prepare the Philippines for self-government. In the case of Korea, he considered that 20 to 30 years would be proper for the trusteeship duration. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Malta and Yalta Conferences, 1945*, Washington, 1955, p. 770.)

Responding to this, Stalin remarked that the shorter the period the better. By the mute response to this on the part of Roosevelt, “consensus of opinion” was reached on the conception of “shortest” duration of the trusteeship.

Then Stalin asked Roosevelt whether he was going to keep foreign troops in Korea in the future. (*Ibid.*) This was a very grave question, because the presence of foreign armed forces frequently menaces national rights to self-determination and national sovereignty. Actually the occupation of Korea by the Japanese imperialists started with the stationing of its troops. The State Department had already outlined a plan to maintain its occupation force in Korea, and Roosevelt knew this better than anyone else. But he lied to Stalin that he did not think it necessary. (*Ibid.*)

Thus the military government and the stationing of foreign troops in Korea was negated by both sides.

Roosevelt did not stand up to Stalin on this occasion; greater and more important issues lay ahead of him in his encounter with Stalin with regard to the establishment of the UN in the future.

The meeting was concluded with the nomination of the trustee nations for Korea. Roosevelt first proposed the Soviet Union, the US and China (Nationalist Party) as the trustee nations, but added that he was of the opinion that Britain had no ground to claim participation in the trusteeship over

Korea. However, if Britain was pushed aside he was afraid they would be upset. (*Ibid.*)

Considering that a three-to-one in balance of forces was more favourable to themselves than two-to-one at the conference table, Roosevelt moved that Britain should be allowed to participate.

Joking that obviously Britain would feel offended and he was afraid that Churchill might attack him, Stalin consented to British participation in the trusteeship over Korea. (*Ibid.*)

Stalin flattered the “vanity” of the British by offering to restore the “glory” of their collapsing empire, thus paving the way better for the anti-fascist alliance.

Thus, the Soviet and American leaders reached a “gentlemen’s agreement” through the exchange of views on the points that Korea should become independent and trusteeship be effected for a short time if a transitional period was required. This “agreement”, reached at a closed-door meeting, was primarily aimed at rebuilding Korea into an independent state and rendering it all possible aid.

This was the single agreement Allied summits reached on the Korean issue during the Second World War.

The Yalta Conference left records in the treaty on the status of Sakhalin and Dalian harbour and even the Manchurian railway in succession to detailed debate of them.

But the Korean issue was not raised during the official negotiations of the three Big Powers, and accordingly no mention of it was made either in the treaty or in official announcements. This was based on the mistaken appraisal of the situation that they had to wait a few more years to see the fall of Japanese imperialism. In other words, it was their conclusion that no debate was imminent on the Korean issue beside the clarification of the principles.

Accordingly, the unwritten accords between Stalin and Roosevelt on Korea's independence could not be an internationally recognized document binding on the parties concerned.

After the Yalta Conference some American ruling circles criticized Roosevelt for having taken a weak-kneed attitude and undermined their prepared plan to rule Korea by converting its whole territory into a US occupation zone. (F. Jones, H. Borton and B. Pearn, *Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946, Far East, 1942-1946*, London, 1955, p. 430.)

### **Talks between Truman's Emissary Hopkins and Stalin**

When Roosevelt, who initiated the postwar trusteeship over Korea and laid the cornerstone of the Korean policy of the US at Cairo, Teheran and Yalta, passed away two months after the Yalta Conference, and Vice-President Truman succeeded the former at the White House, the State Department was in disarray for a while.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union captured Berlin by speeding its advance on the German front and vanquished Hitler's Germany in the end.

The victory over Germany in Europe gave the US State Department another anxiety—that if they lost time in the matter of Korea the US would lose influence on the peninsula, as they had in Eastern Europe. The Americans were dismayed by the successive appearance of pro-Soviet governments in the East European states liberated from the yoke of Germany.

In the latter half of 1944 Czechoslovak and Polish national divisions were formed in the Soviet Union; they built the backbone of the new people's armed forces and seized power in their homelands.

Pro-Soviet governments appeared in Yugoslavia and Albania in 1943 and 1944, as well as in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, former German allies, in 1944.

The US and British side resorted to every means to stage the comeback of exile "governments" of these European states resident in London during the war, but all these efforts were aborted. Britain only succeeded in shoring up the pro-British regime in Greece through the suppression of the armed forces of people's liberation and the democratic forces.

After Soviet participation in the war against Japan was decided at the Yalta Conference the US State Department planned further negotiations with the Soviet Union, intending to forestall the appearance of communist governments in Korea and China, adjacent to the Soviet Union.

On May 12, 1945 the then Assistant Secretary of State Department Grew sent a document titled, *Possible Political Backwash Conceivable in Connection with Soviet Entry into the Pacific War* to the military, asking for the views of military experts on the analysis and countermeasures recommended by the State Department.

In this document the State Department put forward the following demands in the negotiations with the Soviet Union on the Korean issue:

First, the "Cairo Declaration" on the independence of Korea must be observed;

Second, trusteeship over Korea by the four Big Powers—the US, Britain, China and the Soviet Union—must

be observed as soon as Korea is liberated, without waiting for Japan's final surrender. (J. Grew, *Turbulent Era, A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945*, Vol. II, Boston, 1952, pp. 1,455-1,459.)

This document warned that the agreement on the Soviet entry into the anti-Japanese war at Yalta might push the Korean peninsula into the sphere of Soviet influence.

To summarize the US overture, it urged Soviet agreement on the point that none but the four trustee nations were authorized to make a final selection of the provisional government to be set up in Korea in the future, thus forestalling the Soviet Union's unilateral occupation of Korea.

Since US armed forces were struggling in the waters of the South Pacific at this time, this was a clever move by the US.

The Americans tried to prevent the communists from seizing power in China. In the same document the US State Department sought to oblige the Soviet government to assist in the programme of the US government to reunify China under the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek by putting pressure on the Chinese communists. (*Ibid.*, pp. 1,456-1,457.)

This strategy of the State Department originated in the strong American sense of rivalry—based on the analysis that the Soviet Union could swiftly advance into Korea and China, although it would be impossible for it to reach Japan proper. The US determined that the Soviets' unilateral setting up of governments in Europe, including Czechoslovakia and Romania, should never be repeated in Asia.

The US State Department feared that the USSR might defeat Japan militarily before the American armed forces could occupy Sakhalin, Manchuria, Korea and northern part of China. (*Ibid.*, p. 1,458.)

This view was shared by many military experts. Wedemeyer, US representative to Nationalist China and commander-in-chief of the US forces in China, advised Chiang Kai-shek to appeal to the Allies to effect a tentative trusteeship over Manchuria under the US, Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union to thwart the expansion of Soviet influence. (*A. Wedemeyer's Report*, New York, 1958, p. 346.)

Based on his study of the views of the military, Assistant Secretary of State Grew suggested to President Truman on May 15, 1945, one week after the defeat of Germany, that he should confirm when the Soviet army would enter the war against Japan and clarify the US stand on a number of problems, including China and trusteeship over Korea.

Complying with Grew's suggestion, Truman dispatched Hopkins as his emissary to Moscow to explain the American stand to the Soviets. Hopkins' mission was to give Stalin the assurance that Truman would proceed with Roosevelt's policy. As a veteran aide to Roosevelt, Hopkins was the go-between for Stalin and Roosevelt throughout the course of Soviet-American negotiations.

The Stalin-Hopkins talks were held in Moscow from May 28 to June 6. The first session dealt with the postwar trusteeship over Korea.

Hopkins inquired of Stalin about the Soviet approach to this matter.

Stalin assured him of his support for trusteeship by the US, Britain, China and the Soviet Union over Korea.

Hopkins, referring to its term, gave it as his opinion that the trusteeship over Korea should last five years at least and 25 years at the most. Stalin said nothing as to its term.

Americans regarded it as the final agreement on the Korean question which had been discussed several years between the USSR and the US.

Having received a cabled report on the results of the Soviet-American talks from Hopkins, Truman notified the US ambassador to China in early June of the fact that Stalin had agreed to the four Big Powers' trusteeship over Korea, and directed him to obtain Chiang Kai-shek's approval for this as well as for the Yalta agreements concerning the powers of the Republic of China.

The American conception of trusteeship over Korea now became an internationally accepted agreement. However, studies of the papers of the Soviet and American sides show that the two parties interpreted the meaning of trusteeship quite differently.

While the Americans regarded trusteeship as the exercise of power by the trustee nations over the trust territory and its population, the Soviet Union, Soviet scholars insisted, took it as a means of rendering aid for the self-government and self-determination of the trust country.

Such a contradictory approach of the Soviet Union and the US toward the trusteeship entailed very sharp controversies in every phase of the practical stage of drafting the UN Charter on international trusteeship.

In reference to the basic objectives of international trusteeship, the UN Charter expressed them as follows:

- a. To further international peace and security;
- b. To promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust

territories, and their development towards self-government and independence;

c. To encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all; and

d. To ensure equal treatment in the trust territories for all members of the United Nations and their nationals.

The powers contemplated the introduction of this system under the unified coordination of an international trusteeship council to be formed at the UN after the war. It stipulated that this system would apply to territories under the mandate of the League of Nations after the First World War, the colonies of the vanquished states in the Second World War and nations which required trusteeship.

The UN defined the content of the trusteeship as “assistance” and “cooperation”.

As for the ways and means for its application laid down in the UN Charter, contradictory views existed between the US and the Soviet Union owing to the difference of interests pursued by each side.

Even after the Stalin-Hopkins talks were held in Moscow, the Americans still had many “unsettled” questions relating to the Korean issue. It was agreed that the Four Big Powers’ trusteeship would last from five to 25 years, but the establishment and the activities of the trusteeship organ and its relations with the national government of Korea remained questions awaiting solution. What was more serious was the fact that there existed no written document that might serve as the legal framework for solving these problems.

Nevertheless, the Potsdam Conference, which was the last meeting of the Big Powers during the war, did not touch on the political settlement of the Korean issue because the new

President Truman thought it unfavourable to the US to raise the Korean issue at the Potsdam Conference in 1945.

Attending the Potsdam Conference, Truman and State Secretary Byrnes learned that Japan was about to surrender unconditionally through the Americans' successful deciphering of Japan's secret code. So they withheld the proposals on Korea and Manchuria the State Department had prepared for the talks with the Soviet Union at Potsdam. It was Truman's view that as the situation was turning in favour of the Americans they need not bind themselves to any obligation.

Therefore, when "regional trusteeship" was discussed at the Potsdam Conference, Molotov suggested a debate on the independence and future of Ethiopia and Korea, saying that UN trusteeship was a question restricted to special regions such as Ethiopia, formerly held by Italy, or Korea, which had been under Japan's occupation. At this, Truman and Churchill proposed shifting the question to the foreign ministers' conference, which was to be held later.

Clearly it was illogical that the postbellum settlement of the Korean issue, which had been under discussion during the war, had to be shelved just as the end of the war was in the offing.

The Americans thought it possible to get Japan to surrender before the Soviet entry in the anti-Japanese war by dint of the newly developed atomic bomb. Then they would have a monopoly in the settlement of Asian affairs by excluding the Soviet Union.

Consequently, no concrete agreement was reached on the Korean issue as part of the postwar settlement during the war, save on the principle of trusteeship over Korea.

## **Avarice of Chiang Kai-shek**

From the moment Japanese imperialism's defeat became obvious and an accord of views was reached on international trusteeship over Korea the Nationalist government of China was keen to get a political foothold in liberated Korea.

Chiang Kai-shek planned to use the bigoted Korean nationalists and anti-communists as his minions.

Active in the US and China were quite a few Korean political followers of Ri Wan Yong, a traitor to the nation, who were looking up to foreign forces to save the political future of the country and their own fate. Formerly public-spirited patriots, they were the spawn of bankrupt nationalism in Korea.

The anti-aggression, anti-feudal struggles of the Korean people during the 60 years from the '60s of the 19th century, which marked the start of the bourgeois nationalist movement in Korea, to the early days of the occupation of Korea by Japanese imperialism were primarily led by the nationalists under the ideological influence of bourgeois nationalism.

However, the leadership of the bourgeois nationalists ended with the March First Movement in 1919, when the Korean people arose against Japanese imperialism in the teeth of bayonets, and their ranks were scattered in all directions.

The progress of the March First Movement, a nationwide anti-Japanese patriotic struggle, laid bare the ideological weakness and limited character of the majority of the leaders of the bourgeois nationalist movement, who advocated nonviolence, the principle of nonresistance.

The nationalists, having once gained strength from the surging anti-Japanese eruption of the popular masses, intended to lead the March First Movement as a simple nonviolent movement for demonstrating the desire of the Korean people for independence before the world public. At that time, a “campaign of petitioning for independence” was popular among the Korean nationalists; they strove to achieve Korea’s independence by appealing to the Big Powers who had won the First World War.

Particularly, this campaign gained further momentum after US President Wilson raised the “principle of the self-determination of peoples”, which alleged mediation of colonial disputes on the principle of so-called equal respect for the demands of the colonial peoples and the claims of the suzerain states.

The Korean nationalists failed to see through this “magnanimous neutrality” policy of the Americans, who had given the green light to the Japanese occupation of Korea. They were so naive as to think that once the Koreans evinced their desire for national independence the Americans and other representatives of the victorious entente powers would decide to offer them independence at the peace conference in Paris or at the League of Nations, and that Japan would comply with the decision meekly and Korea would smoothly become independent.

But not one country was willing to comply with the petition tendered by the Korean nationalists, because they feared Japan’s disfavour.

The petition campaign of the nationalists who had neither the capability nor intention to fight a war of resistance against Japan was mere diplomatic begging, and all such attempts came to a sad end, without leaving even an echo, on

the bayonets of Japanese imperialism, since they were not backed by armed force.

These nationalist “patriots” were resurrected as pro-Japanese elements through the conciliation policy of the Japanese imperialists’ “civilian rule” that followed the March First Movement.

The changeover from the barbarous “military rule” to the artful “civilian rule”, the marriage of the Korean crown prince to a daughter of Japan’s royal family, and the like—all parts of the Japanese imperialists’ policy of appeasement and deception—hastened the political bankruptcy of the Korean nationalist movement.

A great many Korean nationalists went abroad to fight against Japan after its occupation of Korea and the March First Movement in particular. Many of them went to Manchuria determined to fight for national restoration, and joined in the anti-Japanese war led by Comrade Kim Il Sung.

Some of the nationalists exiled themselves to Shanghai to take sides with the Chinese bourgeoisie or joined the “Shanghai Provisional Government”.

Still others drifted to Hawaii, Washington, Los Angeles and the like, wandering here and there.

Thus, the Korean nationalists, guided by differing political ideas, became polarised into revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries, patriots and traitors in the course of the anti-Japanese struggle, which had veered from the nationalist movement to the communist movement.

Syngman Rhee and a handful of the exiles in the Shanghai-based “Provisional Government” took the road of depending on the Big Powers, begging them for independence.

In his letter addressed to the “Provisional Government” in 1919, Syngman Rhee insisted that efforts should be concentrated on the improvement of relations with the Americans. And he openly appealed to the 1921-1922 Washington Conference of the Big Powers for conversion of Korea into an American protectorate.

Since the Pacific War was unleashed and particularly the defeat of Japanese imperialism by the anti-fascist national liberation forces and the day of Korea’s liberation drew near, these “statesmen” in exile in the US and China tore themselves away from eating the bread of idleness and fussed about sitting at the helm when Korea was liberated.

Syngman Rhee thought he could mount the throne in Korea on the strength of the US, an anti-fascist ally and a belligerent party in the Pacific War. And Kim Ku and other dignitaries of the “Provisional Government” in China planned to elevate this body to be the legal “Korean government”, counting on the aid of Nationalist China.

The policy of dependence on outside forces pursued by the Korean bourgeois exiles naturally got blended with the interests of the US and the Nationalist government of China, intent on laying their political ground in Korea after the war.

Chiang Kai-shek dreamed of reviving the successive Korean feudalistic governments’ “traditional” servility towards China in liberated Korea under the common ideal of anti-communism.

For this reason, he protected the anti-communist Korean “Provisional Government” formed in 1919 under the Nationalist Party’s wing, shifting its seat from Nanjing to Tianjin, and later to Chongqing.

Particularly after the start of the Pacific War, the Nationalist government of China made efforts to get

recognition for Kim Ku's "Provisional Government" by the Big Powers as the sole legitimate government of Korea. This was a Chinese attempt to extend their control over the "Provisional Government" to postwar domination over the whole territory of Korea.

The Korean nationalists active in China and the US, for their part, set it as their first and foremost task to win the victor powers' recognition of the "Provisional Government", and to this end they made the most of any "goodwill", even though they had to be subservient, shown by the US and the Nationalist government of China.

Only this, they believed, would enable them to avert the possibility of the birth of another regime in Korea and come to power with the backing of the Allies when they emerged victorious in the future.

The Korean nationalists resident in the US and China were affiliated with the "Korean Committee" headed by Syngman Rhee, who declared immediately after the Pacific War was over that the objective of this organization was to press the signatories to the declarations of the Allied powers to recognize the "Korean Provisional Government".

The campaigns of the Rightist exiles to win international recognition for the Chongqing "Provisional Government" began with Roosevelt's statement that the Atlantic Charter applied not only to the Atlantic states but to all nations of the world. Roosevelt's statement created a great illusion about the intentions of the US in the bourgeois political circles of Korea.

However, no one was willing to recognize this small group of exiles as anything like a "government", without a history of struggle for national independence or a political foundation.

The American journal *Amerasia* labelled the “Korean Provisional Government” alien to and incapable of any practical action against Japanese imperialism, as they were parasites in exile who had completely forsaken the home country and looked only for crumbs from foreign tables. (The journal *Amerasia*, New York, 1945, No. 10, pp. 274-275.)

Kim Ku and his cronies in the Chongqing “Provisional Government”, together with the pro-American and anti-communist Syngman Rhee, were closely linked with Chiang Kai-shek.

At that time the Koreans in exile in the US themselves admitted that the “Korean Provisional Government” was glued to the Chinese side, and Robert T. Oliver, who later became an advisor to Syngman Rhee, noted that Chiang Kai-shek and the “Korean Provisional Government” were closely associated with each other in the struggle to check the spread of communism in China, (R. T. Oliver, *Korea: Forgotten Nation*, Washington, 1944, p. 103.)

Chiang maintained sharp surveillance over the Korean exiles in Chongqing and other areas of China under his control and used them to carry out anti-communist policy.

He did not tolerate the slightest Leftist deviation in the “Provisional Government”. This became clear in his rebuff to the proposed merger of the “Provisional Government” and the “National Revolutionary Party”,

In the middle of 1941 Kim Ku’s “Provisional Government” campaigned for a merger with the “National Revolutionary Party” (NRP), a bourgeois political party, with an eye to expanding their strength. Some of the leading members of the NRP were in favour of the merger to form a

“coalition government” by inviting even communists into it and galvanizing the struggle against Japan on this basis.

The Nationalist Party of Chiang Kai-shek, which feared the unity of progressive patriotic Koreans, obstructed their projected merger. Meanwhile, they kept them under the watch of the secret police and, hand in hand with the US intelligence office, instigated them to terrorism against Korean communists,

The secret police of the Nationalist Party, guided by an American intelligence officer, from 1942 employed Korean extremists selected from among the Koreans in exile. Ri Pom Sok, an associate of Syngman Rhee, was also on the payroll of the spy organ of the Nationalist Party.

The “Korean Provisional Government” could exist only under the “protection” of the US and Chiang Kai-shek, and was not allowed to step over the boundary of anti-communism laid down by them, because the “Provisional Government” was financed by the Nationalist government of China, American monopoly capitalists and the pro-American Korean exiles’ organization in the US. The Rightist Korean exiles affiliated with the “Provisional Government” tended toward establishing closer ties with the bourgeoisie of China. They hailed Chiang Kai-shek as the “guardian of the Provisional Government” and appreciated his monthly donation of 60,000 dollars to maintain their troops.

The small army of the “Provisional Government” was placed at the service of Chiang.

The Nationalist government’s efforts to turn the Korean “Provisional Government” into a thoroughly anti-communist and pro-Chinese government and the aim of that body to become recognized worldwide as the legitimate government

of Korea gave them a common purpose, and this brought them to conclude a so-called agreement between them.

In the “agreement” the Nationalist government of China was vested with the right to direct the foreign affairs and industry of the future Korea, and in return promised its support for the “Provisional Government” in its efforts to become the “legitimate government of Korea”. (*Korean Independence*, Los Angeles, 1946, p. 1,102.)

Jun Ko, chairman of the Legislative Committee of Nationalist China, stated in his report on the Korean issue to the Oriental Culture Society of China on March 22, 1942 that aid should be given to the “Provisional Government” of Korea, and for its early independence it was necessary to recognize it without delay.

Meanwhile, the Nationalist government of China disclosed part of its Korean programme to the Americans in advance in an attempt to present “Chinese leadership over Korea” as a *fait accompli*.

In April 1942 Chiang Kai-shek sent a memorandum to the US administration on the Nationalist Party’s scheme on the Korean issue. Outlined in it were the problems regarding the merger of the various anti-communist Korean exiles operating in China and the employment of the Korean organizations there, in accordance with the interests of the US and Chiang’s governments.

His programme also included the founding of an anti-communist Korean army in North China, the setting up of the headquarters of its underground movement in Korean territory and the organization of Chinese intelligence centres in Korea, North China and Japan. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942, Vol. 1, General,*

*The British Commonwealth, Far East*, Washington, 1960, p. 868.)

In May 1942 Chiang notified the US government once again that he deemed it rational to take measures for the recognition of the “Korean Provisional Government” and that this would be beneficial to the other Big Powers, and requested the US reaction to his suggestion. He placed the anti-communist Korean troops which were commanded by the Nationalist government of China under the umbrella of the “Provisional Government”. This was a scheme to pave the military ground for the pro-Chinese forces in Korea in the future. By winning the US ruling circles’ approval beforehand, he sought to secure the Nationalist Party’s exclusive command over Korea before other could do so.

However, the US reaction to this was lukewarm. Although they regarded Nationalist China as a postwar ally, the Americans were suspicious of the excessive increase of Chinese influence over Korea, seeing it as unfavourable to their interests.

Such was the Americans’ view of recognition of the “Korean Provisional Government”, a minority of Korean exiles controlled and directed by Nationalist China.

After May 1942, when Chiang Kai-shek approached the US administration with his proposal for a quick recognition of the “Provisional Government”, the Korean exiles too mailed letters to US Secretary of State Hull calling for US recognition of the “Korean Provisional Government” as the “sole government of Korea” and for aid to Koreans in exile.

Syngman Rhee and his associates in the US made strenuous efforts to have the “Provisional Government” recognized internationally to the very last days of the war.

On June 10, 1944 Syngman Rhee and his cronies, motivated by the need to publicize themselves, issued a memorandum titled, "The Part Played by Korea in the War against the Axis". The memo emphasized that the "Korean Provisional Government" was the only body and machinery that was capable of guiding and was actually guiding the diverse forces of the Korean independence movement overseas, and that the objective of the "Provisional Government" was to promote its relations with the Allied powers. It concluded with an appeal to the Allies for official recognition of the "Provisional Government".

In November 1944 Syngman Rhee, together with US Senator King, visited the Far Eastern Office of the US State Department, asking for US recognition of the "Provisional Government". On February 5, 1945 he addressed letters to Acting Secretary of State Grew and General MacArthur to this effect.

At the same time, the Chongqing headquarters of the "Provisional Government" cabled the Chinese, British and French governments for the same purpose.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the "Korea-US Consultative Society" addressed a letter to Secretary of State Hull, pressing him to acknowledge the "Provisional Government". In the letter, he wrote that such recognition would convince the people of the world that the Atlantic Charter was not a mere file of papers but a *de facto* basis of action. (*Korean Independence*, Los Angeles, February 13, 1946.)

In answer, Hull remarked that the US government would refrain from such an act as that would deprive the people now under the oppression of foreign powers of the right to elect their own ruling system.

The US State Department directed American Ambassador to China Kousse to notify the Nationalist government of China that the US would not acknowledge any group of Koreans active in China as the “government” of Korea at that moment.

The State Department asked him to explain the reason for the US “non-recognition” policy, pointing to the fact that the exiled groups of Koreans should promote unity and establish closer ties with their people at home. Even though the Chinese government had recognized the Korean “Provisional Government”, it should announce that its decision was only temporary. This was aimed at securing freedom of action, anticipating unforeseen developments in the situation. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, January 1942, Vol. 1 General, the British Commonwealth, Far East, Washington, 1960, p. 874.*) Chiang Kai-shek deferred his recognition of the “Korean Provisional Government” in compliance with the US stand, and Kousse reported this to Hull in May 1942. (*Ibid.*, p. 875.)

Why, then, were the Americans reluctant to recognize the “Korean Provisional Government”, which was ready to execute their policy faithfully? First, it was because they deemed this conflicted with their policy of not recognizing indigenous governments of the trust territories after the war.

The American version of trusteeship, which envisaged decades of military administration and an ensuing ten-year Americanizing process of “self-government”, could not tolerate the existence of a pro-Chinese government in a country under trusteeship.

Second, the Americans feared lest their recognition of any group of exiles divorced from the national liberation struggle entail some grave political turmoil.

In those days almost the entire anti-Japanese national liberation struggle in Korea and other Asian countries was carried on by broad nationalist forces under the influence of the communists. The bourgeois higher-ups of all countries surrendered and turned into traitors, terrified by the bayonets of Japanese imperialism, or in the best case took the path of exile, becoming alienated completely from the people of their home countries.

For this reason the US policymakers actually could not shove aside the communists active in the anti-Japanese struggle, though they were hostile to them ideologically.

Further, they thought that recognition of the anti-Soviet “Provisional Government” might alienate the Soviet Union and make it difficult to pull it into the war front against Japan.

On January 2, 1942 Hull’s spokesman Hiss interviewed by Syngman Rhee on the matter of recognition of the “Provisional Government”, told him that in the present situation recognition might incur the disfavour of the Soviet Union, which was greatly concerned about North Asia, and so it was premature to cause any political trouble in connection with this region. Since the Soviet Union was not yet ready to open fire against Japan, it was not desirable to ignore or go against their interests, (V. Vorontsov, *The US Plan for Korea in the Second World War*, Moscow, 1962, p. 33.)

### **The US Desperate to Find a Local Proxy**

When the Americans refused to recognize the “Provisional Government” they did not mean to cold-

shoulder the community of exiles represented by Syngman Rhee. Every one of them was useful to the Americans.

As the Pacific War was drawing to a close, the American press frequently carried articles demanding active enlistment of Korean exiles in the future for the expansion of the sphere of US influence over Korea.

In his book *The Future of Korea* Arthur Bunce wrote that there was a Korean government in exile in China, Korean soldiers were fighting against Japan and Korean exiles were resident in Hawaii. All these communities might serve as reserves eligible for the organization of the administrative ruling machinery and the maintenance of social order in Korea. (A. Bunce, *The Future of Korea, Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 1, Washington, 1944, p. 69.)

Andrew J. Grajdanzev, a scholar of Oriental studies and a member of the Pacific Research Committee during the Pacific War, suggested that, in order to facilitate the US domination over Korea, it was advisable to keep the officials of Japanese administrative bodies who had useful experience indispensable for the administration of the country, and that American sympathizers in the Far East should be actively employed for defending American interests from the latent “menace” of the Soviet Union and China. (A. Grajdanzev. *The Question of Korea's Independence, Asia and the Americans*, Washington, September 1944, No. 19, p. 416.)

Underlying these suggestions made by American scholars were the interests of US monopoly capitalists, who coveted the resources of Korea.

The Oriental Consolidated Mining Co. (OCMC) of the Morgan group, which had been ousted by the Japanese from running gold mines in Korea at the close of the 19th century, reactivated its efforts to regain its former position in Korea

and create more favourable conditions for the plunder of the natural resources of Korea under the direction of the former OCMC president Dool Bell, an expert on the mineral resources of Korea, once Japan's looming defeat in the Pacific War became apparent.

In 1899 the OCMC had obtained the mining rights to the Unsan Mine for a paltry 200,000 *won* from the feudal government of the Ri dynasty through the offices of Dr. Horace Alien, the American advisor resident in Korea.

Even after Japan's occupation of Korea, the OCMC continued to run four giant gold mines — Unsan, Suan, Changsong and Jiksan—maintaining close ties with the Japan Mining Co., and shipped out an aggregate of 80 tons of gold from Korea in the 40 years up to 1939.

The OCMC transferred the stocks of the Unsan Mine to the Japanese for 50 million *won* when the Japanese drove out their competitors from Korea after the outbreak of the Second World War.

With the approach of Japan's fall, the American gold miners resorted to all conceivable ways and means to recover their lost economic interests. US monopoly business groups inaugurated the "Korea-America Company" which had close connections with Syngman Rhee and his followers. When the Korea-America Company drew up its blueprint to develop the natural resources of Korea, what it paid the greatest attention to at the time was monopolizing the Unsan Gold Mine, silk raw materials, capital investment in Korea and foreign trade.

Planning US infiltration into the Korean economy after the war, the American capitalists were aided by the Korean Economic Society, set up in the US during the war. That society aimed to use Koreans in both Korea and Japan.

Syngman Rhee, for his part, used the Korean Economic Society as a medium of wresting support from the American capitalists. He was well aware that the distribution of power in the areas to be held by the American soldiers in the future would depend on who was more closely connected with American capital. So he latched onto the OCMC, which had plundered a huge amount of gold from Korea.

Syngman Rhee recommended the director of the OCMC for the post of “mining industry advisor” in the “Korean Provisional Government”. The director had played the role of advance party in paving the road for the Morgan group’s penetration into Korea, taking advantage of his responsible position in the American industrial and military fields before and during the war.

According to American press reports, he was said to have promised a loan of one million dollars to Syngman Rhee in return for the latter’s cooperation in guaranteeing the OCMC’s mining interests in Korea. (V. Smolensky, *Coveter of the Korean People’s Power, Pravda*, March 13, 1946.)

The conscientious Korean nationalists in exile in the US severed all ties with Syngman Rhee, enraged at his act of selling out the nation’s wealth in exchange for a guarantee of his political privileges, and formed an independent organization in Los Angeles. They published the newspaper, *Korean Independence*.

In this way, the biggest American monopolies were making preparations to seize the economic interests of Korea after the war through the agency of Syngman Rhee.

The interests of the American monopoly capitalists exerted a great influence on postwar US Korean policy.

In the closing period of the Second World War the US intelligence department, looking for political cat’s-paws to

gratify the demands of the American monopolies, studied the possibility of using Koreans as its tools and directed great attention to picking out suitable persons.

The US State Department relied much on the Korea-US Society in preparing the Korean exiles to be the mainstay of the trusteeship system which was to appear in Korea in the future, and local agents representing American capital on the spot.

The Korea-US Society was comprised of American administrative officials and businessmen, including Oliver, who were linked to Korea by interests, agents of the US intelligence office and several of their Korean henchmen like Syngman Rhee.

After the war was over, Oliver, the erstwhile adviser to Korean residents in Washington, reappeared before the south Korean people as Syngman Rhee's adviser.

There he played the part of mediator between Lieut. Gen. John R. Hodge, Commander-in-Chief of the US forces in south Korea, and Syngman Rhee, and was the midwife to the formation of the south Korean "government".

The "Korea-US Society", while rendering financial aid to Koreans in exile in America, supplied the State Department, the Department of Defence and the Department of the Navy with data concerning the strategic importance of Korea, and the development of raw materials and natural resources of Korea in the interests of the Americans.

On May 8, 1945, the day Germany surrendered, the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS, forerunner of the CIA) submitted a secret report on the possible postwar Korean situation to the State Department.

This report was drawn up on the basis of questions and answers provided by 23 so-called Korea experts—American

businessmen, missionaries who had been in Korea until the outbreak of the Pacific War and Korean exiles in the US.

In the questions and answers the OSS directed its efforts to the questions as to the attitude of the Korean people toward the Koreans in exile and the “Korean Provisional Government”, collaboration with the Japanese imperialists, their stance toward Japanese stooges and their reaction to the UN supervision, as well as to the US, the Soviet Union, China and Britain.

The report maintained that the respondents unanimously held that the US temporary supervision of Korea would be more welcomed by Koreans than that by any other Big Powers. (Research and Analysis Branch of US Office of Strategic Services, *Expression of the Stand of the Korean People towards Postwar Issues*, 1945, p. 1.)

They also proposed utilizing some of the Korean exiles in Korea after the war and keeping the Japanese and their collaborators in office.

This report reveals what social stratum was chosen by the Americans as their political pillar in their postwar Korean policy.

On May 16, 1945 the OSS worked out a document on questions pertaining to the politics and personalities of Korea which clarified the category of people whom they intended to employ in their future trusteeship over Korea.

The questions raised to the leaders of the Korean exiles covered the Korean people’s attitude towards the Japanese, towards those who had collaborated with the Japanese, towards anti-Japanese groups and pro-Japanese elements, towards the Koreans who had served the Japanese, and their views about the Korean situation after the defeat of Japan. (Research and Analysis Branch of US Office of Strategic

Services, *Questions on Korean Politics and Personalities*, Washington, 1945, pp. 1-2.)

These questions raised by the OSS themselves well reflect that the US sought to employ pro-Japanese forces in Korea after the war.

Similar recommendations on their employment in Korea after the war were also tendered by Oliver to the US government. He suggested that since the Koreans were enrolled in almost all government bodies, including the police, in Korea, Japan's colony, there was the possibility for the US administration to enlist the pro-Japanese figures as running dogs in their rule of Korea after the withdrawal of the Japanese. (R.T. Oliver, *Korea, the Country America Forgot—World Affairs*, Washington, June 1943, p. 687.)

The US intelligence agency studied the activities of pro-Japanese organizations and individuals on the payroll of the Japanese imperialist colonialists, to say nothing of reliable pro-American organizations and public figures. Among these, Syngman Rhee was the first to be picked up by the Americans.

Bunce proposed that, in order to strengthen the American foothold in Korea, it was advisable to choose Syngman Rhee, who had long had close contacts with the Americans while living in the US. (A.C. Bunce, *The Future of Korea, Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 1. Washington, 1944, p. 69.)

In 1943 Syngman Rhee gathered data about the Koreans working in Japanese government bodies and enterprises,

Simultaneously with the Cairo Conference, the Syngman Rhee clique, instigated by the OSS, published the book, *Korea and the Pacific War*, evincing their flunkeyist views on the system of Korea after the war. Their "suggestions" to

the OSS were divided into military, political and economic areas.

In the first part, that dealt with military problems, Syngman Rhee proposed forming a “Korean army” with Korean exiles, the small “armed forces” supported by the Chiang Kai-shek-controlled “Korean Provisional Government” as its backbone, and demanded that the Americans arm them and dispatch them to Korea following the surrender of Japan.

Second, in reference to the postwar political system of Korea, Syngman Rhee said, “We contemplate a political regime like that of the United States,” and the future provisional government or official government of Korea should invite top American advisers selected from among American officers and civilian experts.

He also suggested the so-called constitution proclaimed by the “Korean Provisional Government” in 1919 as the skeleton of the constitution of the new Korea.

Third, he advanced economic proposals notorious for their pro-American nature.

Syngman Rhee conceived the Korean economy as an appendage of the American economy.

America paid attention to the pro-Japanese “Anti-Communist League of Korea”. It investigated in what way the Japanese were stage-managing this organization, where it was most active and what its objective was. (Research and Analysis Branch of US Office of Strategic Services, *Questions on Korean politics and Personalities*, Washington, 1945, p. 3.)

Then the US intelligence agency planned to take over the Japanese spy rings in Korea. (Afterwards Japan surrendered

the documents on their spies and military organs to the US intelligence agency.)

The US registered over 20 Koreans—including Korean provincial governors under Japanese imperialist rule, pro-Japanese Diet members, comprador capitalists and landlords—as the people they could rely on in liberated Korea.

Kim Song Su, a big landlord and capitalist, was at the top of the list. He was a traitor to the nation who had appealed to the Korean youth to lay down their lives for the victory of Japan. He was a big capitalist, the textile industry king and the publisher of the newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo*.

He was the first Korean comprador capitalist whom Saito, the third Japanese governor-general in Korea, met while preparing for the changeover from “military” to “civilian” rule after the March First Movement of 1919. The document of the US intelligence agency judged this traitor to be a dependable person. This document also listed the Korean governors of Hwanghae and Kyonggi Provinces, who were concurrently members of the Japanese Diet and traitors to the nation, as persons recommendable to leading positions in Korea when Japan surrendered, despite their active collaboration with the Japanese.

The US intelligence agency also paid great attention to hiring national reformists of Korea for its purpose. That is why the OSS bought over Korean writer Ri Kwang Su.

Ri Kwang Su was in the van of the nationalist reformist campaign, which had been launched allegedly for the “promotion of national well-being and advancement”, keeping step with the Japanese imperialists’ “civilian rule” in the 1920s. Advocating the so-called theory of national reformation, he preached to the Korean people that they

should accept the fate of becoming Japan's colonial slaves, alleging that "the politics of violence was a survival of the past" and that "the principle of nonresistance based on the truth and ideology was the righteous course of human salvation."

As seen above, the US planned to employ in the future trusteeship over Korea the traitors who had rendered active assistance to the Japanese imperialists in draining the manpower and material resources of Korea for their war of aggression.

The Americans then started training their Korean stooges. To this end, the "Fund for Education of Koreans" was set up at the beginning of 1945. (*New York Times*, March 1, 1945.) The Korean students studying at American universities were granted scholarships upon the decision of the State Department. (The US State Department, *Bulletin*, June 1945, p. 1,059.)

In this way, in the closing years of the Pacific War the US made efforts to lay the political cornerstone for American hegemony in the postwar rule over Korea.

Recalling this, Grew, Acting Secretary of State, admitted that the US government had wasted much time in studying the problems regarding Korea in 1945.

### **Secret Bargain between the US and Japan**

The downfall of the fascist forces and the lessening of the danger from them entailed ever-increasing behind-the-scenes struggles among the Allied powers for wider spheres of influence in the East and the West. Europe became the stage of fierce manoeuvres focused on the problem of division of

the regions to be liberated from the yoke of the Hitlerite fascists.

At the Quebec Conference in August 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill discussed emergency operations to occupy the vast areas of Eastern Europe faster than the Soviet Union could if the Germans suddenly surrendered.

At the Three Foreign Ministers Conference of the Soviet Union, the US and Britain in Moscow in October 1943, Hull and Eden proposed to Molotov the so-called “Danube Federation”, with the aim of redividing the Eastern European states, the liberation of which by the Red Army was imminent, into several federal republics, irrespective of their former borders, and the adoption of a declaration obliging the Powers not to occupy any parts of Europe separately.

On April 21, 1945, three weeks before the defeat of Germany, Churchill suggested to Truman to occupy the greater part of German territory by advancing the US and British troops deep into the East, far beyond the Soviet occupation zone, in contravention of the 1944 British-proposed four Big Powers agreement on the division of Germany.

In Asia, the Americans and the Japanese were engaging in secret bargaining and behind-the-scenes negotiations regarding the future division of the spheres of influence in that part of the world.

Who would rule independent Korea after the war was the focus of these secret negotiations.

The US was adamant that Korea should be placed under its control. It envisaged the division of Korea’s territory prior to the imposition of trusteeship.

Japan, for its part, stuck to its guns that it would not let go of Korea disregarding the worst tide of the war, continuously

placing stumbling blocks on the road to the settlement of the Korean issue.

Timing its efforts to coincide with the announcement of the “Cairo Declaration”, Japan was intent on paving the way to reversing the tide of war in favour of itself.

In particular, as the danger of its defeat increased, Japan sought to bring the US and China into a compromise to conclude a peace agreement, instead of unconditional surrender.

The draft peace proposal produced by the Japanese government in 1944 only envisaged Japan’s return to its former “border” of 1931. (*The United States’ Strategic Bombing Survey, Japan’s Struggle to End the War*, New York, 1946, p. 5.)

In other words, Japan was ready to withdraw from China and Southeast Asia, but aimed to preserve the imperial system, the basis of militarism, and its sovereignty over its colonies Korea and Taiwan, which it had occupied before 1931. The Japanese imperialists regarded it as a cardinal condition of peace to win recognition of its “suzerainty over Korea” from the Allied powers.

The Japanese ruling circles counted on the fact that, proceeding from the necessity to revive defeated Japan and make it into an anti-Soviet bulwark, the US-British side would inevitably prefer the preservation of the Emperor system in Japan and, furthermore, might recognize Japan’s suzerainty over Korea.

Therefore, the Japanese imperialists judged that the US and British demand for Japan’s unconditional surrender referred to in the “Cairo Declaration” was a mere “declaration” but not an ultimatum.

The US had long regarded Japan as a deterrent to the southward advance of the Soviet Union in the Pacific, and therefore was prepared to forge a truce with the Japanese.

Grew, ex-US Ambassador to Japan and Undersecretary of State Department in charge of Far Eastern Affairs, held that if the US was to implement its Far Eastern policy, it was necessary to rely on Japan, and the preservation of Japan necessitated a new policy for reconciliation and mediation between the US and Japan.

Towards the close of the war and in the early years after the war, the US policy towards Japan was largely influenced by Grew, who was known as the leader of the pro-Japanese group among American political circles. Considering that Japan was worth shoring up as a barrier against communism in Asia after the war, the Grew-led group was active in its operations for the preservation of the militarist forces in Japan.

This group grew stronger with Grew's promotion to Undersecretary of State in late 1944.

Informed of such an American attitude towards Japan, Tokyo started negotiations with the Americans. Koiso, an ex-governor-general of Korea, who succeeded Tojo as Prime Minister in July 1944, considered that if Japan was to create the most favourable circumstances for the conclusion of an "honourable peace" with the United States and Britain, it was necessary in the first place to check the downfall of Germany, its ally, and drive a wedge of discord into the anti-fascist alliance of the Soviet Union, the US and Britain, and thereby maintain a balance of forces between friend and foe in the Pacific.

In September 1944 the Japanese government debated its diplomatic policy towards the Soviet Union as its neutral

neighbour, and decided to dispatch Hirota, an ex-Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, to the USSR as a special envoy to negotiate a series of questions such as the conclusion of a peace treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union, the improvement of Japanese-Soviet relations and Soviet mediation between Japan and Chiang Kai-shek.

However, informed of the proposed visit of the special envoy of Japan, the Soviet Union rejected this offer, considering that the end of the war with Germany could be realized only through the unconditional surrender of the latter, and that Japan's offer was nothing but a trick to save Germany.

In face of the Soviet rebuff, Koiso, following the advice of ex-Prime Minister Konoé, sought to have direct peace negotiations with the US-British side through Sweden.

In mid-September, the President of the newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*, met the Swedish minister to Japan, with whom he had close acquaintance, requesting that the Swedish government hand over the Japanese government's suggestions to the US side.

The Japanese cease-fire overture at the time was that she was ready to let go all other occupation regions, inclusive of even Manchuria, if Korea and Taiwan were left as Japanese territories. The greatest concern of the Japanese imperialists was their continued occupation of Korea as well as the maintenance of the imperial system.

Japan's peace offer was delivered to the US minister to Sweden, Johnson. But the US rejected it, demanding Japan's unconditional surrender. L. Kudashev, a Russian scholar, in his book quoted Johnson as having said at that time that Korea should be placed under US control. (L Kudashev, *The Political Trickery of the Japanese Ruling Circles in the*

*Closing Years of the Second World War—Problems of History*, Moscow, 1960, No. 9.)

V. Vorontsov, another Soviet scholar, said in this context that the American ruling circles were unwilling to resign Korea to other imperialist rivals because they wanted to tighten their grip on her after the war. (V. Vorontsov, *The US Plan for Korea in the Second World War*, Moscow, 1962, p. 95.)

The Japanese rulers, however, were desperate not to hand over Korea to their adversary at any cost.

Japan launched a deceptive propaganda offensive with a view to maintenance of its colonial rule over Korea. The Japanese official publications clamoured that Korea was part and parcel of Japan proper, alleging that “Japan and Korea are one community.”

A Japanese institution that specialized in “political measures” regarding Korea and Taiwan devised a “law” on the provision of “political rights” to Koreans.

The authors of the “law” proposed to improve the treatment of Koreans in Japan and lift restrictions on their exit from the country. This bespoke the Japanese ruling circles’ attempt to placate the Koreans and secure the tranquility of the “Co-Prosperity”.

Originally “the conversion of Japan and Korea into one and the same community” was the Japanese militarists’ basic policy towards Korea and to turn it into an integral part of Japan’s territory was their ultimate objective. So losing Korea would be an unbearable blow to Japan.

While preparing to continue the war on the mainland, Japan made every effort to end the war by making peace on conditions favourable to itself.

In February 1945 Konoe, another ex-prime minister and foreign minister informed the Emperor that the defeat of Japan was inevitable, and that the ending of the war and the conclusion of a peace agreement with the US and the UK were pressing matters for the maintenance of the imperial system.

They pointed out that the American and British public had not yet gone so far as to demand the change of the state system of Japan, and that her defeat in the war itself was the greatest anxiety in respect of the existence of the nation's state machinery. But no less a menace to them was the danger of communist revolution, that is, the outbreak of revolution after the war. (*The History of the War on the Pacific*, Moscow, Vol. 4, 1958, p. 183.)

US-Japan peace negotiations were again conducted in Bern and Stockholm. On April 23, 1945, Fujimura, the Japanese assistant naval attach in Bern, Switzerland, at a secret meeting with Allen Dulles, American intelligence boss, proposed direct truce negotiations between the two countries.

Considering his official position, Fujimura was too low-ranking to continue to deal with a matter of such grave importance, but this contact became the focus of the Japanese ruling circles. Some time later government-level negotiations resumed between the Japanese minister in Bern and Dulles.

The Japanese side raised to Dulles peace overtures such as the withdrawal of the American demand for "unconditional surrender", maintenance of the Emperor's rule and the Constitution, international control over Manchuria, and Japan's continued domination of Korea and Taiwan. Clarifying their stand, the US side said that the Japanese Emperor's rule might continue but Korea should be

handed over to the United States. (L. Kudashev, *The Political Trickery of the Japanese Ruling Circles in the Closing Years of the Second World War—Problems of History*, Moscow, 1960, p. 9.)

Although the US envisaged Japan's postwar role as a "bulwark" against communism, it made no concession to Japan in relation to the Korean problem. Even after Germany surrendered on May 8, the Japanese rulers were not willing to admit their defeat in the war and made every attempt to avoid the unconditional surrender demanded in the Cairo Declaration.

In May 1945 the Japanese government again approached the US for peace negotiations informally through the agency of the US ambassador to Sweden.

The Japanese had still not given up their claim to continued domination of Korea and Taiwan. The US side emphasized that there was to be no alteration to the Cairo Declaration on Korea and Taiwan, and that Korea should be transferred to US control.

The US side, however, was willing to continue the negotiations.

The Soviet government was strongly opposed to the Americans negotiating with Japan for a separate peace in contravention of the joint declaration of the Allies, and insisted on continuing the war until Japan surrendered unconditionally.

Article II of the January 1, 1942, Washington Declaration of 26 Allied states stated that no separate truce nor peace be concluded with the enemy. And this was reaffirmed at the Moscow conference of the Soviet Union, the US and Britain in October 1943.

Thus it was completely futile for the Japanese imperialists to try to wrest US approval for Japan's continued occupation of Korea and Taiwan after the war instead of unconditional surrender.

### **The Proposal for Joint Occupation by the Four Big Powers**

The US started to draw up concrete plans for the projected trusteeship over Korea.

Between 1942 and 1943, as the US floundered through repeated defeats throughout the Pacific, it regarded firming up its alliance with the anti-fascist forces, including the Soviet Union, as a matter of vital importance, and took a series of diplomatic measures to strengthen ties with them, such as the extension of the scope of application of the Atlantic Charter and the publication of the Cairo Declaration.

A letter to Chiang Kai-shek submitted to Roosevelt by the State Department on December 18, 1942 included the following proposals: that China and the US should be the only Big Powers dominating the former French Indochina, but in Siberia and Korea, and in the northern part of the Pacific including Japan, the USSR should be taken into consideration; no decision should be made without consulting the USSR on matters such as Korea's independence; and neglect of the Soviet Union in this part of the world would lead to increased tension. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942, China*, Washington, 1956, pp. 185-186.)

Since Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945 and Japan was putting out feelers for peace, the US began to pay less

attention to the duties it owed to its anti-fascist allies, in pursuit of its own policies.

This finds clear expression in the fact that, in contravention of the Yalta Agreement, the US planned its military occupation of Korea by dividing it into four sections.

The US Joint Chiefs of Staff, which exercised overwhelming power in the US during the war, worked out the plan and a secret report concerning the occupation of Japan and the Korean peninsula between June and August of 1945. (These secret papers were released to the public in 1975, 30 years after they were drawn up.)

The secret report envisaged the division and occupation of Korea by the armed forces of the four Big Powers—the US, Britain, China and the Soviet Union. This occupation was planned to be executed in three stages.

In the first stage, the US army was to advance to Seoul and then Kunsan and Pusan, the key strategic points, in the southern part of the peninsula.

The southern part of Korea was to be occupied by the US army, and the northern part by the Soviet army, with the US troops playing the central role. The roles of the other Allied forces were confined to mere mention of their intervention. The first stage was expected to take as long as three months.

The second stage was devoted to disarming the Japanese troops in Korea and organizing their repatriation.

During the period, about 270,000 troops of the surrendered Japanese army and some 35,000 policemen would be repatriated to Japan proper, and the US and the Soviet Union would facilitate the entry of British and Chinese troops into the Korean peninsula for the purpose of joint occupation by the Allies.

Soviet troops would be stationed at Chongjin, Rajin, Wonsan and Seoul; US troops at Seoul, Inchon and Pusan; British troops at Kunsan, Jeju Island and Seoul; and Chinese troops at Pyongyang and Seoul. The latter city, like Berlin, would be placed under the joint control of the troops of the Four Big Powers. The second stage would last about nine months.

In the third stage, the disarmament of the Japanese soldiers would be completed, and the Allied Control Council be formed with the US as the chairman of the council. The council would also be staffed with civilian delegates of the US, USSR, China and Britain.

In addition, the commander-in-chief of the occupation forces would come under the command of the council, and the occupation zones would remain unchanged as in the second stage, save for the reduction in the numbers of troops there.

Entering the third stage, the Koreans would be given more self-government, and Korea's political machinery would become similar to that of Japan under US military administration.

This US-devised plan was little different from the brutal occupation applicable to the vanquished states following their unconditional surrender.

Previously the US had proposed that the divided occupation of Austria by the Four Big Powers be the model for postwar settlement of colonies owned by the fascist states in Europe.

As the Soviet army advanced into Vienna at the end of the war against Germany, the US-British side initiated the divided occupation of Austria. For this, an agreement was concluded on the divided occupation of the whole territory

and the capital of Austria by the US, Britain, the Soviet Union and France, which was identical with the formula for the occupation of Germany after the war.

At that time the US and British sides pursued different ends in Austria. The Americans originally intended Austria to be the mainstay of the Catholic nations under their influence, and Britain sought to merge Austria and south Germany into a British-controlled “Danube Union”. This presupposed the entry into Austria of the US and British troops before the Soviet army. The rapid advance of the Soviet army overturned this plan. In the spring of 1945 the Americans mobilized Allen Dulles in Bern and his spy network in Europe in order to set up in Austria a pro-American government headed by an Austrian Kaltenbrunner, the Director of the General Bureau of Security of the Third Reich, prior to the entry of the Red Army, and let it consign the country to the care of the US-British troops. But already in March Russian troops had entered Vienna, and the Austrian provisional government headed by the social democrat Karl Renner had been set up. This time the US-British side recommended the separate occupation of Austria. The Soviet Union agreed to this because they had a big knot ahead of them to unravel with the US-British side in connection with the control of Germany after the war. On August 9, 1945 an agreement was signed by the Soviet Union, the US, Britain and France on the separate occupation of the territory and the capital of Austria, and a “Joint Committee” was formed for the settlement of the Austrian issue, with the resultant conclusion of the “Agreement on the Control of Austria”.

But the US-proposed divided occupation as a mode of postwar settlement in the Asian region fundamentally differed from the European version.

Whereas in Europe the Americans insisted on the divided occupation of defeated Germany and Austria with the alleged purpose of stamping out survivals of fascism, in Asia they planned to divide only Korea—and not vanquished Japan—that had been liberated from the colonial yoke of Japan.

In September 1945, when the US army occupied Japan completely, that is, in the second stage of its occupation, the Combined Operations Planning Committee of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested to Truman the German pattern of settlement including the presence of Soviet, British and Chinese troops in Japan, for fear of being blamed for neglect of the duty they owed to the anti-fascist alliance during the war. Truman turned this suggestion down, and insisted on the US sole occupation,

However, they attempted to divide Korea into four zones, advertising this as a *fait accompli*.

If the American pattern in Europe had been followed, Japan, the breeding ground of war in the Orient and the defeated state, and Tokyo, the stronghold of fascism, would have been the first to be divided by the Allied powers. Nevertheless, the US occupied Japan independently, under a favourable turn in the situation at the end of the war.

Although the US-projected divided occupation of Korea by Allied armed forces was not put into practice, as Japan surrendered earlier than the Americans had expected, the US occupation plan for Korea was more cruel than that for Austria, and Korea's independence was not even taken into account.

## Chapter 3

# **Child of the US-Soviet Conflict and Compromise**

The war and world situation had changed rapidly since the Yalta Summit Conference of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain.

With the winning back of Austria, Hitler's first victim, by the Red Army in April 1945, the whole of Europe was liberated from the fascist yoke, and at last Germany surrendered in May with the fall of Berlin.

The last stage of World War II moved to Asia. The northwest coastal areas of the Pacific, including Korea, became the anti-Japanese operations zone of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain.

In the early days, when the Soviet Union agreed to enter the war against Japan, the United States, which did not have sufficient military capability to defeat Japan single-handed, had no operational plan for Manchuria and the Korean peninsula, areas adjacent to the Soviet Union.

But after the United States got the information that Japan was about to surrender, it began to pursue the new objective of advancing its ground forces into the south of the Korean peninsula to forestall the Soviet Union's occupation of the whole peninsula.

This design of the United States was revealed in drawing up the plan of division of operations zones, which allowed the US army to land to the south of the 38th parallel north on

the Korean peninsula, including Seoul, when the Big Powers were in a diplomatic tangle concerning Japan's surrender.

**Unilateral Advance Is Not Politically  
Desirable —the US-Soviet  
Diplomatic Campaign**

Considering Japan's war potential to be still great, the United States supposed that the Pacific War would continue for several years even after Germany's defeat. Hence, the United States pursued the policy of "long-distance war" to defeat the enemy with the use of the strength of the Allied countries.

Just as the United States waged war against Germany by selling war supplies to the Soviet Union and Britain, so it intended to fight Japan with the use of the strength of China and the Soviet Union in the Pacific War.

The United States had long aimed its diplomacy towards the Soviet Union at involving it in the Pacific War against Japan.

After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour President Roosevelt proposed to M. Litvinov, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, that the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan. At that time the German army had advanced almost to the gates of Moscow, The Soviet Union refused the proposal because it had to throw all its forces into the war against Germany, the main enemy. (*Defeat of Militarist Japan and Liberation Mission of the Soviet Union in Asia*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., pp. 7-8.)

For the US and British armies, which barely maintained a military balance in the South Pacific after losing Indonesia, the Philippines and almost all other countries and islands

there to Japan it was essential to contain the Japanese Kwantung Army on the mainland of China.

At that time the Soviet Union still maintained neutrality in the Pacific War in accordance with the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact concluded with Japan in 1941. If the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact had continued in force, the commanders of the Japanese army could have thrown 30 divisions deployed along the Soviet-Manchurian frontier and a large amount of combat material and equipment into the South Pacific theatre at any time, and the United States would inevitably have suffered a heavy blow.

Concerned about this, Roosevelt expended great efforts in urging the Nationalist Chinese army to take positive military action against Japan from the beginning of the Pacific War. Hence, Roosevelt invited Chiang Kai-shek to the Cairo Conference and supplied weapons to Nationalist China for a long time.

But even after the main front of Japan moved to the South Pacific, contrary to Roosevelt's expectations, Chiang used his armed forces mainly in the effort to suppress the Chinese Communist Party and Worker-Peasant Red Army, in cooperation with Japan.

Deeming it difficult to defeat Japan single-handedly, Roosevelt promoted strategic diplomacy to put an end to Soviet-Japanese neutrality and involve the Soviet Union in the war against Japan.

At the Teheran Summit Conference, held in November 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill formally proposed to Stalin that the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan.

As the Soviet Union demanded the formation of a "Second Front" in Western Europe in the war against Germany, so the United States and Britain demanded that the

Soviet Union form a new “Second Front” on the Northeast Asian front in the war against Japan.

Stalin pointed out that the Soviet troops in the Far East were sufficient for defence but would have to be reinforced threefold for offensive operations. He also told the United States and Britain that the Soviet Union could not take part in the war against Japan while still fighting Germany. He pledged that the USSR would enter the war against Japan after reinforcing the strength of its army within six months after the defeat of Germany. (*The Soviet Union at the International Conferences in the Period of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1978, p. 95.)

At the same time Stalin explained the Soviet stand on the postwar arrangements for the Far East.

Emerging victorious in the war against Germany, the Soviet Union intended to enter the war against Japan on condition that its rights and interests in the East were safeguarded.

When the Soviet Union agreed to enter the war against Japan at the conference, Roosevelt proposed building an air base for 1,000 US bombers in the Soviet Far East.

By building an air base in the Soviet Far East, Roosevelt intended to create the possibility of bombing the mainland of Japan directly, preventing the transfer of the Japanese Kwantung Army to the South Pacific and putting an end to the neutrality of the Soviet Union towards Japan.

Stalin turned down Roosevelt’s proposal on the plea that building an air base in the Soviet Far East might incur a preemptive strike on the Soviet Union by Japan.

In the autumn of 1943 the United States stationed a military delegation headed by Major General Dean in Moscow to try to hasten the Soviet Union’s entry into the

war against Japan. But the issue was not discussed for almost a year since the Soviet Union had to put all its efforts into the war against Germany.

The problem was brought up again in the latter half of 1944, when the war situation turned for the better.

On October 4, 1944 Roosevelt again urged Stalin that the Soviet Union cooperate to rout Japan. (*Correspondence between the Soviet Premier, US President and British Prime Minister in the Period of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1976, p. 163.)

When Churchill visited the Soviet Union on October 9-12, 1944 a definite agreement was reached on this request.

Roosevelt was not present at the talks because of the presidential election in the United States, so Harriman, US Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Dean, head of the US military delegation, took part in the talks.

At the talks Dean briefed Stalin on the military operations of the US and British troops in the Pacific area and asked him to inform him after how many months following the defeat of Germany the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan and how many months were needed for reinforcement of the Soviet Far East army. Dean also put forward the following “coordinated plan of operation” which confined the action of the Soviet army to Manchuria.

First, use of the Soviet Trans-Siberian Railway as far as Vladivostok for supplying the US troops;

Second, formation of a US-Soviet strategic bombing squadron in the Maritime Province for military operations against Japan;

Third, interception of sea and air transport between the mainland of Japan and the Asian continent;

Fourth, operations against the Japanese troops in Manchuria by the Soviet Union;

Fifth, cooperation by the Soviet Union for securing the Pacific supply route for the US troops (use of Petropavlovsk port by the US troops, building of a harbour on the Amur River and acquiescence in occupation of south Sakhalin by the US troops).

Stalin said that if the Soviet Union were to enter the war against Japan a certain period of time would be required to build up the necessary military strength. He revealed that at least three months would be required following the rout of the German army to double the 30 divisions of the Soviet army in the Far East.

Referring to the use of the Trans-Siberian Railway, Stalin said that its transport capability was insufficient for the supply of 60 divisions. In addition, the Soviet Far East army would have to lay in two to three months' stock of war supplies in Siberia, and the railway would be congested, so it would be preferable for the United States to use Pacific air routes instead of using the Trans-Siberian Railway for supplying its troops.

He flatly refused to offer air or naval bases in the Maritime Province to the US army, because they were needed for the Soviet Union.

As for the operations zone of the Soviet army, it was Stalin's credo not to allow any "imperialist army" to set foot on an inch of the land of his country.

Concerning the American proposal for confining the operations zone of the Soviet army to Manchuria, he pointed out that in order to rout the Japanese army in Manchuria the operations zone of the Soviet army should not be confined to Manchuria.

Referring to his plan of operation against Japan, he explained that the Soviet army would attack the Japanese army on the northern frontier of Manchuria and, at the same time, in the northwest a large unit with high mobility would advance from the vicinity of Lake Baikal to Zhangjiakou, Beijing and Tianjin via Outer Mongolia. In the east, land and sea forces would attack and occupy ports in the northern part of the Korean peninsula, and thus envelop and annihilate the Japanese army. The Soviet Union wanted to preserve the possibility of southward advance.

The United States made no objection, considering that the plan was valid strategically.

At the talks the problem of furnishing war supplies necessary for preparation for the Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan was discussed.

The Soviet Union demanded that, apart from war materials the United States had promised in four installments, the United States furnish by June 1.06 million tons of war supplies, including food, fuel and transport facilities to keep in the field for two months 500,000 soldiers, 3,000 tanks, 7,000 lorries and 5,000 airplanes. But no agreement on this was reached at this time.

The details of the Soviet-US military strategy concerning the Soviet entry into the war against Japan were again discussed at the meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the Allied armies and examined at the Yalta Conference after three months.

At the Moscow Conference the United States attempted to prevent Soviet influence from spreading to Korea and Japan by confining the operations of the Red Army to annihilation of the Japanese ground and air forces in Manchuria in case the Soviet Union took part in the war against Japan, and to

build US military bases in the Soviet Far East instead of furnishing war supplies to the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the Soviet Union expressed in mid-December its readiness to enter the war against Japan on condition of the return to the Soviet Union of south Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, of which it had been deprived by the Japanese as a result of the war of 1904, the internationalization of Dalian port, the leasing of part of the Liaodong Peninsula, including Lushun, the joint management of the South Manchurian railway, and acknowledgement of the status quo of Outer Mongolia (the Mongolian People's Republic).

The then situation of the United States and Britain made them desperate for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan.

The Chiefs of Staff of the US and British armies considered that it would take 18 months to defeat Japan even after the surrender of Germany, and that it would be a tough process. (W.O. Leahy, *I Was There*, New York, 1950, p. 259.)

They considered that an attack on the mainland of Japan could be launched towards the end of 1946. Hence in January 1945 the US Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted to Roosevelt a memorandum to the effect that Soviet entry into the war at the earliest possible date was urgently required to give maximum support to their operations in the Pacific. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Conferences of Malta and Yalta, 1945*, Washington, 1955, p. 396.)

Ultimate agreement on the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan was reached at the Yalta Conference held in February 1945. At the conference Roosevelt again

brought up the problem and discussed it with Stalin behind closed doors.

Stalin again assured that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan after the end of the war against Germany to secure the safety of the eastern part of the Soviet Union and liquidate the hotbed of war in the Far East, as he had promised at the Teheran Conference.

At the same time, Stalin reminded Roosevelt of the demands that the Soviet Union had made in December 1944.

Stalin said that the Soviet Union was at war with Germany because the latter had directly attacked the Soviet Union, but the US-British side was demanding that the Soviet Union attack Japan without apparent hostilities of the Japanese army against the Soviet Union. So if a number of Soviet interests to justify it were not acknowledged the Supreme Soviet and the Soviet people would question why the Soviet Union should enter the war against Japan.

Roosevelt maintained that the problems relating to China among the conditions the Soviet Union had put forward would have to be solved through agreement with the government of Chiang Kai-shek.

Before the Yalta Conference the United States and Britain exchanged views on the demands of the Soviet Union and agreed upon taking a stand against them, but finally came to hold the view that they had to agree to Stalin's demands.

As a result, a secret agreement concerning the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan was concluded between the heads of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain in Yalta on February 11, 1945.

The agreement assured that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan in two-three months after the surrender of Germany, and that the United States and Britain agreed to

the demands the Soviet Union had put forward concerning its entry into the war against Japan. (*Collection of International Treaties, Wars, Part 1*, Pyongyang, 1985, p. 137.) This decided the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan.

The agreement was kept top secret and was not put on the record of the Yalta Conference. It was kept secret even from Chiang Kai-shek. The secret agreement was made known to the public by the Soviet Union on February 11, 1946, after the end of the war against Japan.

The United States made the contents of the agreement known to the public on March 16, 1954. At that time the leadership of the US Republican Party launched a vehement attack on it, saying that by the agreement Roosevelt had sold Japan and Nationalist China to the Soviet Union leading to the preponderance of the latter in the Far East. Some Right-wing figures even submitted a resolution demanding annulment of the agreement.

Following the decision of the Yalta Summit Conference, the Soviet Union pushed ahead with preparations for the war against Japan in real earnest.

On April 5, 1945 Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov conveyed to the Japanese ambassador to the Soviet Union a note which declared annulment of the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact concluded four years earlier.

In its note the Soviet Union pointed out that the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact had become void since Japan was helping Germany in the war against the Soviet Union and was waging war against the United States and Britain, Soviet allies. (*Foreign Policies of the Soviet Union in the Period of the Great Patriotic War, Documents and Materials*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1947, p. 166.)

This put an end to neutrality between the Soviet Union and Japan, and created the conditions for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan at any moment.

Even after the defeat of Germany no great change occurred on the Japanese-US front in the South Pacific. At that time the United States held a considerably pessimistic view of the prospects of the war against Japan.

In July 1945 the intelligence service of the General Staff of the US Army, estimated the total strength of the Japanese armed forces at over five million men, made up of two million men in Japan proper (with 7,000 airplanes), over two million men stationed in China, Taiwan and Korea, with the main force being the one-million-strong Kwantung Army, over 200,000 men in Indochina, Thailand and Myanmar, over 500,000 men in Indonesia and the Philippines, and 100,000 men on the Pacific islands in the rear of the US army. (D. Yefimov, *World War II and the Fortunes of the Asian and African Peoples*, Moscow, 1985, Korean ed., p. 93.)

Moreover, it was calculated that the Japanese army's numerical strength could be rapidly increased by supplementary conscription.

At that time the strength of the US navy in the South Pacific was five to ten times superior to that of Japan, but its 550,000-strong ground forces made up of 36 divisions was insufficient for large-scale landing operations. (L. Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., p. 16.)

Concentration of the US troops scattered over the vast areas in the South Pacific for the main offensive would require the raising of the blockade of the Japanese troops on other islands.

In this period Japan was enforcing total mobilization across the country in anticipation of defence of the homeland. The General Staff of the Japanese army was planning to protract the war while building strong defences in Japan, Manchuria and China, preparing for US landing operations on the mainland of Japan in mid-1945,

Japan's plan for a protracted war envisioned arming all the Japanese and full state control over the economy of the country.

Two days after the defeat of Germany, its ally, on May 10 the Japanese government issued a statement that the war objective of the Japanese Empire had not changed, although the European situation had changed.

Preparations for germ warfare constituted a major component of the plan for a protracted war. Several hundred tons of germ materials were prepared in the "factories of death" set up by the command of the Kwantung Army in 1936 on the secret orders of the Japanese Emperor and the Ministry of the Army.

In April 1945 the general headquarters of the Japanese army gave an order to the 731st Manchurian Unit, a germ warfare unit headed by Major General Ishii Shiro, and the 100th Unit to step up germ production to the utmost with a view to pushing ahead with preparations for germ warfare. These units organized a group of 3,000 specialists to start testing the effects of germs on live prisoners.

In a situation of impending catastrophe, Japanese imperialism put up desperate resistance.

The Japanese army put up particularly stubborn resistance on Okinawa. The US, with 451,860 men, 1,317 warships and 1,727 airplanes, started landing operations on the Okinawa

islands, which were defended by 80,000 Japanese troops, on March 25. It was three months before Okinawa fell.

The suicide tactics of the *kamikaze* (divine wind) pilots in the air around Okinawa inflicted considerable losses on the US troops. The Japanese suicide pilots, making 1,900 sorties, sank 26 US warships, damaged 164 other ships and inflicted 46,000 casualties.

The “human torpedoes” which were launched from submarines sank 14 US warships, including an aircraft carrier and a battle cruiser.

The US suffered 75,270 casualties and troops missing in action in the fight for Okinawa. This was the greatest loss the United States suffered during World War II (The United States suffered only 100,000 casualties in all during the war).

Bitter experience gained from the landing operations on Okinawa compelled the United States to face the prospect of a long-drawn-out war to force the Japanese to surrender. As a result, it drew up a plan of operations in anticipation that the war against Japan would last for at least another two years.

The Pacific War plan of the US army which was worked out by Marshall, the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US army, and endorsed by President Truman in June 1945 envisaged a blockade of Japanese cities from both the sea and the air, massive bombing and landing operations by the US 6th Combined Army Corps on Kyushu, the southernmost island of Japan, on November 1 in the first stage (in the summer and autumn of 1945); the second offensive and landing on Honshu Island by the main force of the 8th and 10th Combined Army Corps and the First Combined Army Corps transferred from the European front and cut off the Tokyo Plain in the second stage (in March

1946); complete military defeat of Japan by successive operations in the third stage (till the beginning of 1947). (*History of World War II, 1939-1945*, Moscow, 1980, p. 174.)

The General Headquarters of the US army estimated that an armed force at least seven million strong would be needed for future operations against Japan and that there would be over one million casualties. (L Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, 1985, A.P.N. Publishing House, Korean ed., p. 17.)

In view of such a prospect for the operations against Japan, the United States attached great significance to the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan. According to the memoirs of Averill Harriman, the then US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, in May 1945 Secretary of War Stimson is said to have told Acting Secretary of State Grew that the entry of Russia into the war would have great military significance because it would greatly shorten the war and save the lives of many Americans.

The United States concentrated its efforts on the supply of war materials to the Maritime Province to expedite the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan. In May, 781,000 tons of goods were transported, the highest wartime level.

At that time the Soviet Union, too, recognized that the time for it to enter the war against Japan had come.

In a talk with Truman's special envoy Hopkins on May 28 Stalin intimated that the Soviet Union would complete preparations for entry into the war against Japan by August 8. (*Defeat of militarist Japan and the Liberation Mission of the Soviet Union in Asia*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., p. 10.)

August 8 was precisely three months after the victory of the Soviet Union over Germany,

After the annulment of the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, the ruling circles of Japan were very nervous about what the Soviet Union intended to do. Peace advocates calling for conclusion of a peace treaty to avoid unconditional surrender prevailed over war advocates who stood for a “fight to the death”.

On June 18, 1945 the Supreme Council of War of Japan adopted a resolution to the effect that in case the enemy insisted on an unconditional surrender Japan had no choice but to continue the war, but since we have enough strength to offer resistance, we should propose peace through a neutral country, the Soviet Union in particular, and at least obtain the concession of maintenance of the present imperial monarchy.

Japan, which was unaware of the decision on the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against it adopted at the Yalta Conference, sent a special envoy to Moscow towards the end of June to propose a compromise.

Through negotiations with the Soviet Union, Japan attempted to prevent the Red Army from joining the war against it and, at the same time, tried to end the Pacific War with the conclusion of a peace treaty with the United States and Britain through the mediation of the Soviet government.

The Japanese emperor appointed former Prime Minister Konoe his special envoy and conveyed his intention to send him to the Foreign Ministry of the Soviet Union through Ambassador Sato in Moscow on July 25 and sought its agreement.

But at that time Stalin and Molotov were attending the Potsdam Summit Conference, and the next day, July 26, the

Potsdam Declaration calling for the unconditional surrender of Japan was issued.

The Soviet-US-British Summit Conference held in Potsdam in the suburbs of Berlin from July 17 to August 2, 1945 mainly discussed the problems of postwar Europe and the entry of the Soviet Union into the Pacific War.

The Soviet Union was already making energetic preparations for the war against Japan, massing enormous armed forces and equipment in the Far East, following the end of the war against Germany, in conformity with the decision of the Yalta Conference.

In this period the US-British side positively requested the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan from the military viewpoint, but politically assumed the conflicting attitude of negating it.

This was because the United States feared that the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan might increase its influence and say in the postwar settlement of Asian problems. This would be very unfavourable for the United States, which looked for an exclusive position of dominance in Japan, Korea and Manchuria.

But the United States could not defeat Japan unless the Soviet Union entered the war, because Japan still retained enormous armed forces, The then Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, Pacific, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, proposed to the government to make every effort to induce the Soviet Union to join the war against Japan, since the West and its allies did not have the ability to defeat the Japanese ground forces, which was the only way to ensure victory over Japan. (L. Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., p. 19.)

Finally, at the Potsdam Conference Truman made a positive request to the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan. Stalin reaffirmed that the Soviet Union would implement its undertaking under the Yalta Agreement on the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan.

During the Soviet-US-British Summit Conference Truman and Churchill separately discussed the question of the war against Japan and adopted the Potsdam Declaration, which called for the unconditional surrender of Japan and laid down the basic principles of the future peacetime administration of Japan. (*Collection of International Treaties, Wars: Part. 1, Pyongyang, 1985, pp. 138-140.*)

The Potsdam Declaration was issued in the name of Truman, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek on July 26, 1945. (Chiang agreed by telegraph.)

The Soviet Union did not put its signature to the declaration because it still had not declared war on Japan.

At the Potsdam Conference the Korean question was not directly discussed but indirectly treated in the manner of reaffirmation of the Cairo Declaration. But when military specialists discussed the plan of operations against Japan, the problem of military operations on the Korean peninsula became a matter of serious discussion.

In order to implement the summit agreement, the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the armies of the three Big Powers held a council of war on July 24 and 26, at which the Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet army Marshal Antonov said that the Soviet Union would mass the Red Army in the Far East to take part in operations against Japan in the latter half of August; it was to decide on the exact date of the start of hostilities against Japan later.

He remarked that the Soviet army would force the surrender of the Japanese troops in Manchuria and gave a briefing on the overall plan of operations of the Red Army, which stated that after defeating the Japanese army in Manchuria it would advance to the Liaodong Peninsula, the Kuril Islands and Korea.

According to the record of these talks, Antonov asked Marshall, Chief of the General Staff of the US army, whether the US navy could take action in the seas around the Korean peninsula in cooperation with the Red Army's advance into the Korean peninsula, and asked him for the US army's participation in coordinated operations on the Korean peninsula,

At this time Marshall refused the request of the Soviet Union on the plea that the United States did not plan joint operations with it on the Korean peninsula because the US army was concentrating all its efforts on the preparations for landing in Japan itself.

The United States had to admit that it could not fulfil its political aim of checking the influence of the Soviet Union by confining its operations zone to Manchuria, the base of the huge Japanese Kwantung Army, because of the stubborn resistance of Japan.

That was why the United States allowed the Soviet army to extend its operational zone to the Korean peninsula. But this by no means implied that the United States had given up Korea. The United States maintained the stand that it should station its army in Northeast Asia before others, in case of a new situation of early surrender by Japan. If Japan surrendered earlier than expected, alarmed at the defeat of Germany, the continued southward advance of the Red Army would cramp the sphere of influence of the United

States, and the latter was adamant that this should not happen.

At the council of war Marshall told Antonov that in case Japan surrendered before the advance of the Soviet army into Korea and the Dalian area of Manchuria, there was a strong possibility of the US army's landing in those areas. This was a part of the United States' plan of advance to the Asian mainland.

In this period the United States acquired new information which reversed their former assessment of the situation that the war would still take a long time to end. It was that Japan was attempting formal negotiations for surrender through the Soviet Union.

The intelligence service of the US navy deciphered the coded telegrams concerning the dispatch of a special envoy for peace negotiations which were exchanged between Japanese Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori and the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow on July 11 and 12, just before the beginning of the Potsdam Conference.

On July 18 Stalin conveyed to Truman copies of Togo's note and Emperor Hirohito's message.

It came as a surprise to the United States, which had expected that the war against Japan would drag on for more than another two years.

Having learned of Japan's intention to surrender soon, the Headquarters of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff immediately informed Gen. MacArthur, commander-in-chief of the US army in the Pacific area, and Admiral Nimitz, commander of the US Pacific fleet, of the need to take timely measures providing for surrender of the Japanese before the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan, and prepared the US armed forces for it beforehand.

At the same time, it planned to launch another operation going beyond the bounds of the coordinated operation agreed upon with the Soviet Union, anticipating the possibility of the US army's landing in Korea and Dalian in case Japan surrendered before the Soviet army could occupy those places. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 42.)

But the information about the surrender of Japan was not confirmed. As a result, the United States attended negotiations about coordinated operations with the Soviet Union against Japan, having no clear idea of whether Japan would wage a protracted war or surrender soon.

Faced with both possibilities, the United States decided to consider the question of coordinated operations with the Soviet Union from the standpoint of a protracted war, while internally making preparations providing for the early surrender of Japan.

The United States' standpoint on coordinated operations with the Soviet Union was to alleviate the burden by involving the Soviet Union in the war and to prevent it, as far as possible, from spreading its influence in Asia through its entry into the war against Japan.

Marshall clearly revealed the standpoint of the United States. Hinting to Antonov that in future the US army might launch an operation for advance to the coast of Korea in response to the advance of the Soviet army, he said that the operation would be decided upon after landing on Kyushu, and that the Korean peninsula might be controlled with Kyushu as the headquarters.

Much concerned about the possibility that the Soviet Union, after it joined the war against Japan, might enter Korea and Japan proper while the US army was stuck on the islands in the south Pacific, the United States was absorbed

in working out countermeasures to contain the influence of the Soviet Union in Asia after the war.

At the military talks the US side submitted a five-point proposal to the Soviet side.

In its proposal the United States requested the Soviet Union to allow the US navy (except submarines) to manoeuvre without limitation in the East Sea of Korea and the US air force to launch operations freely on the Korean peninsula south of Chongjin.

After two rounds of consultations on fixing operational zones, military specialists of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain basically agreed that the Allied armies would simultaneously launch attacks in four directions. They decided on the general course of coordinated operations against Japan which envisaged concentrated attacks on Japan, Manchuria and Korea by the Red Army in the north, by the Chinese army (Chiang Kai-shek's) in the west and by the US and British armies in the east and south, respectively.

At that time Truman considered that it would take much time as yet for the Soviet army to advance into the Korean peninsula. Hence, he did not discuss the details of the boundaries of the operational zones of the ground forces or military occupation zones of the Allied armies, and no definite agreement was reached.

Later, in his *Memoirs*, Truman wrote: when... the military summit meeting was held in Potsdam the United States and the Soviet Union concluded an agreement on drawing the boundary line of operations for the air force and navy on the Korean front. But there was no discussion about ground operations. This was because there was no probability of either the US or the Soviet ground forces advancing there in

the near future. (H. Truman, *Memoirs Vol. 2, Years of Trial and Hope*, New York, 1956, p. 317.)

The military authorities of the Soviet Union and the United States marked the boundary lines of operational zones for naval and air forces on the Korean peninsula.

According to the operational plans for naval and air forces worked out in those days, the boundary line of operational zones connecting the point latitude 40° North and longitude 135° East and the point latitude 45°45' North and longitude 140° East ran obliquely across Sakhalin in the north and through the East Sea of Korea to the Tsushima Straits in the south. This meant that the operational zone for the Soviet navy and air force covered Manchuria and the entire Korean peninsula.

The fixing of the operational zones for naval and air forces at the Potsdam Conference was not only significant for those days but also is of certain significance for today.

Some historians claim that the boundary line between operational zones for naval and air forces agreed upon by the Soviet Union and the United States was roughly along the Korean frontier. But when the Soviet Union learned that Japan intended to surrender, before any of the other Allies knew, the Soviet ground forces, which were operating near the line at the beginning of entry into the war against Japan by the USSR, advanced its First Far East Front Army into north Korea in violation of the Potsdam Agreement.

The United States attempted to justify designating 38th parallel across the waist of Korea as the demarcation line for military operations of the Soviet and US armies as designed to check the southward advance of the Soviet army in violation of the agreement.

But this does not tally with the historical facts.

Above all, the then Soviet-US Council of War proves this clearly.

At the council of war the United States side said that it was planning offensive operations only for the mainland of Japan for the time being and, to this end, asked the Soviet side to admit free manoeuvring by the US navy in the East Sea of Korea. But it refused to agree to a Soviet-US joint advance in the Korean peninsula.

This shows that the US army, which was based in the Philippines, did not have the military capability to exert influence up to the Korean peninsula beyond Japan. Consequently, the US inevitably had to recognize the area as the operational zone of the Soviet army.

Next, the military situation at the time proves that the views of certain historians are incoherent.

At that time the first objective of the Soviet army was to annihilate the main force of the Japanese Kwantung Army in Northeast China, and its first operational zone extended to the northern part of Korea and the Korean-Manchurian frontier.

Concerning this, Soviet historians affirmed that towards the end of June 1945 the Soviet Supreme Command made the final decision to attack Manchuria from the two main directions of the salient of the Mongolian People's Republic and the Maritime Province of the Soviet Union. (L. Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, 1985, Korean ed., p. 31.)

The point is that the later operational zone of the Soviet army covered Korea, south Sakhalin, the Kuril Islands and the Liaodong Peninsula.

In his *Memoirs*, Marshal Kiril Meretskov, Commander of the Soviet First Far East Front Army, which later advanced

into Korea, wrote: If our army had attacked the Kwantung Army deployed there (Manchuria—*Ed.*) from several directions, the Kwantung Army would have dragged on the defensive war, falling back and gradually moving into Korea or China. (*Ibid.*, p. 32.)

Japan had built 21 fortified zones on the continent, among them four in Korea. Hence, Japan declared Korea a “pivotal zone”.

It is logical from the viewpoint of military science that even if the Soviet army had made it its main objective to annihilate the Japanese army in Manchuria its combat action could not have been confined to Manchuria but could be extended to the Korean peninsula and the northern part of Japan.

The boundary line of the operational zones for naval and air forces that the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the armies of the Three Powers had fixed in Potsdam was based and premised on acquiescence in the operational plan of the Soviet army.

It does not stand to reason to consider that the Soviet-US council of war, which discussed the details of military operational assignment, left the Korean peninsula, the most important continental supply base of the Japanese imperialists, as a vacuum without any operational plan for it.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union tacitly considered their interests in the Korean peninsula, which is why it seems to have been a “vacuum”.

That the United States recognized the Korean peninsula as the operational zone for the Soviet naval and air forces by no means implied that it had abandoned its ambition for Korea.

This is ascribable to the United States’ intention to impose “bigger war burden on the Soviet Union on the basis

of the analysis of the situation at that time that the resistance of Japan was great and that the war against Japan would be protracted. At the same time the United States had prepared beforehand another plan of operation in case of the immediate surrender of Japan.

The general strategy of the United States in case of the immediate surrender of Japan was to occupy the important zones of the continent under Japanese occupation before the Soviet Union could do so.

During the Potsdam Conference Admiral Nimitz, commander of the US Pacific Fleet, submitted to the joint committee of the Chiefs of Staff of the United States and Britain a plan which envisaged the US Far East armed forces' occupation of Tokyo Bay, Pusan, Shanghai, Qingdao and other strategic points in the Far East. (S. Morison, *Victory in the Pacific, 1945*, London, 1960, p. 353.)

The United States informed Chiang Kai-shek of the plan secretly. In a talk with US General Wedemeyer, who came to discuss the plan, Chiang Kai-shek highly approved the plan, saying that the action of the United States might prevent the Soviet Union establishing a solid position in Korea.

In the changed situation, the original war plan of the United States, whose main objective was to annihilate the Japanese armed forces, was turned into a plan for occupying as many strategic zones on the continent as possible.

But at that time the military position of the Soviet Union in Northeast Asia was very unfavourable to the US side. If in those days the US army had wanted to deploy its armed forces in Korea and the neighbouring areas, it would have had to move north by sea for more than 15 days even if the Japanese had put up no resistance.

Therefore, the US military specialists held the view that it was urgent to effect joint occupation of Korea by the great powers, to guarantee the trusteeship system proposed by the Department of State militarily.

Hence, in the proposal to be submitted by the US military delegation to the US-Soviet conference in Potsdam, it was stated as follows: Military operations in Korea envisage landing from the sea and an attack from Siberia by land. Hence, even for political reasons it is preferable to make Korea a zone of coordinated operations and place it under unified command. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Berlin Conference, 1945, Vol. II, Washington, 1960, p. 925.*)

The United States supposed that a joint occupation of Korea would be effected and that the US army would have the “right of unified command”. The United States considered that its position would be superior to that of the USSR in the situation of those days.

Marshall ordered the chief of the OSS to prepare for an attack on the Korean peninsula by the US army, in accordance with the new strategic plan.

According to the book, *The US Army in the Korean War* by R. Appleman, former director of the Institute of Military History of the Pentagon, the chief of the OSS and his staff did research to fix the boundary of occupation for the US army and the Soviet army, and with a view to including Inchon port and Pusan port at least in the zone of operations of the US army, they drew the boundary line north of Seoul, which was not exactly along the 38th parallel North but nearly coincided with it. (Japanese journal *Juo Koron*, 1980, No. 9.)

The first attack was aimed at Pusan in the southeast and at Seoul in the west.

This secret plan of the United States in the case of the surrender of Japan, already contained the seed of the division of Korea.

At the Yalta Conference an agreement not to station foreign troops in Korea had been reached between Stalin and Roosevelt. But in the new situation the United States ignored the agreement which had been reached only five months before.

Henry L. Stimson, the US Secretary of War Department proposed to Truman to deploy part of the US ground forces and navy on and around the Korean peninsula. (*Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, the Berlin Conference, 1945*, Vol. II, 1960, p. 631.)

This became the strategic line of the US military authorities.

At Potsdam, Marshall told King, chief of US naval operations, and Harriman, US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, that he intended to land US troops on the Korean peninsula in case Japan surrendered before the occupation of Korea by the Soviet army.

The secret report the then US policymakers wrote said: Politically it is no desirable that any one of the concerned countries alone should advance into the Korean peninsula. It is planned to check the unilateral advance of the Soviet Union and apply the pattern of the occupation of Germany to Korea. Thus, the independence of Korea was never contemplated by the US policy-makers.

## **The 38th Parallel North—the First Official Record**

The 38th parallel North was a temporary demarcation line for the disarmament of the surrendered Japanese army on the Korean peninsula.

It was fixed on the agreement of the Soviet Union and the United States towards the end of World War II.

The 38th parallel North was agreed upon between the Soviet Union and the United States only as a temporary boundary of military operations, and never as a line for the division of Korea.

The plan for division of zones of operation along the 38th parallel North was initiated by the United States.

Japan was ready to put up desperate resistance under the slogan “To the last five minutes!” till the end of the war. Even after the announcement of the Potsdam Declaration the Japanese military authorities refused to consider unconditional surrender.

On July 27, two days after the announcement of the ultimatum of the United States and Britain, Japanese Prime Minister Suzuki Kantaro told a press conference, under pressure from his military bosses: “The government does not attach great significance to the declaration, and we ignore it. We will advance without any retreat for the successful ending of the war.”

The ruling circles of Japan launched a propaganda campaign to mobilize the people for the war, bragging that the Japanese army was fully prepared to wage a protracted war.

Japan increased its military forces to 7.2 million men by August 1945 by lowering the conscription age to 17. At that time Japan had over 500 ships and over 10,000 airplanes. (D. Yefimov, *World War II and the Fortunes of the Asian and African Peoples*, Moscow, 1985, Korean ed., p. 93.)

It was part of the plan for a protracted war that from December 1944 Japan pushed ahead with the construction of the “Imperial Headquarters’ Bunker” designed for the emperor, royal family, government offices and the headquarters of the ground, sea and air forces in Nagano City.

Koreans taken away forcibly to Japan to work on the underground facility project worked under the close supervision of the Japanese gendarmes and special police. (*Traces of Crime*, Pyongyang, 1985, pp. 61-67.)

Learning that Japan had rejected the Potsdam Declaration and was going to continue resistance with full preparations for a protracted war, the United States began to seek a “strategic plan” to bring Japan to its knees.

The first scheme of the United States was to try to induce Japan to surrender to the United States as early as possible by offering to allow the emperor to remain as head of state, instead of forcing unconditional surrender upon Japan.

At the same time the United States was greatly interested in using the newly developed atomic bomb against Japan.

At that time the United States had achieved success in developing the atomic bomb, research into which was conducted for five years from 1940, when Roosevelt endorsed the setting up of the Uranium Commission. On July 16, 1945 the first atomic bomb test was successfully carried out at the US air force base in New Mexico.

At this juncture Truman was discussing postwar arrangements with Stalin and Churchill at Potsdam. On July 17 Secretary of War Stimson, attending the Potsdam Conference, received a coded telegram from Washington concerning the successful test of the atomic bomb which said that "a clever boy was born."

Truman, who received the report from Stimson, decided to inform Stalin of it. He expected that the atomic bomb would form powerful backing for US-Soviet diplomacy. On July 24 Truman informed Stalin that a new type of weapon with enormous destructive force had been developed, Truman expected that Stalin would show great interest in the news, but he seemed indifferent. This surprised Truman.

As a matter of fact, Stalin had already been informed of the successful testing of the atomic bomb and its prospects for military use by the Soviet intelligence agency. On returning to his quarters, Stalin phoned Academician Kurchatov in charge of research into the A-bomb and told him to expedite the research.

Truman discussed with his military advisers the action program in the new situation in which the United States had a monopoly of atomic bombs.

They reached the conclusion that there was no need to change immediately the former military action program since the actual effect of the atomic bomb was not certain, though it was a fact that it had great power and, consequently, agreed to carry out the plan of military operations which they had decided to expedite.

But they assessed the significance of the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan otherwise than before. They maintained that now it would play a supplementary role in securing the northward advance of the

US army but was not to become a factor exerting an influence upon the ending of the war.

However, the Americans' assessment of the situation and balance of forces was purely subjective. At that time the US weekly *US News and World Report* wrote that nine atomic bombs would be required to secure the landing of the US forces on the Japanese islands; but the United States had only two.

Truman, who was attending the Potsdam Conference, gave the order to drop an atomic bomb on Japan when the meteorological conditions in the Western Pacific allowed it. On August 6 the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, which killed 257, 000 people. Three days later another A-bomb was dropped, on Nagasaki, which caused 200,000 casualties.

On his way home by sea from the Potsdam Conference Truman heard the news of the atomic bombing from Stimson. Truman is said to have said aloud: "This is the greatest event in history. Now it is the time for us to return home."

But the atomic bomb did not play the decisive role in defeating Japan as Truman had expected. Admiral William Rey, military adviser to the US President, said that the atomic bomb did not give decisive help in the war against Japan. Churchill also said that it was wrong to think that the atomic bomb sealed the fate of Japan. Even after the atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, Japan sent to the US government through Switzerland a note notifying that it refused the unconditional surrender mentioned in the Potsdam Declaration.

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan expedited the ending of the war. True to its Yalta Conference obligations, the Soviet Union transferred enormous armed

forces to the Far East, mobilizing all the transport capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railway for three months after the end of the war against Germany, and thus secured superiority in numerical strength and war materials over Japan.

The Soviet Union deployed 1,747, 000 men, 29,385 guns and mortars, 5,250 tanks and self-propelling guns, 5,171 airplanes and 93 warships on the Far Eastern front. (S. Ivanov, *Lost Victory*, Moscow, 1985.) Ivanov was the Chief of General Staff of the General Headquarters of the Soviet Far East Army.

Towards the end of July an order on the details of operations was sent down, and by the first week of August combat preparations in the units had been completed. Disposition of troops was made secretly.

The target of attack of the Soviet Far East Army was the Japanese Kwantung Army. In the last phase of the war the Kwantung Army, which had been founded in the 1930s, consisted of 42 infantry divisions, seven cavalry divisions, 22 infantry brigades, two tank brigades, one commando brigade and several independent regiments. It had two combined air corps. Altogether, it had over 1.2 million men, 1,215 tanks, 6,640 guns, 1,970 airplanes and 26 warships. (*Ibid.*) In addition, it had 27 divisions and brigades of the puppet Manchukuo army.

Being concurrently the Kwantung (Northeast China, including Manchukuo) governor, the commander of the Kwantung Army was the actual ruler with the full right to mobilize all the population and material resources of the area.

Japan had moved part of the Kwantung Army to the south after the front in South Pacific had been immobilized, but its basic fighting capacity was not greatly weakened.

The headquarters of the Japanese army was very nervous about the movements of the Soviet army, but lacked exact information about the speedy reinforcements of that army and its scale because the Soviets kept it a close secret.

Commander of the Kwantung Army Yamata and the headquarters of the Japanese army estimated the strength of the Soviet army at 30-40 divisions, and considered that it was insufficient to break through the front-line defences of the Kwantung Army.

But the Soviet Far East Army actually consisted of three front armies and had 11 infantry combined corps, three combined anti-aircraft corps, one combined tank corps and three other combined corps. In addition, to them were attached 76 divisions, four tank and mechanized army corps and 29 brigades.

Meanwhile, proceeding from its contract obligations, the United States sent one million tons of supplies, including military equipment, fuel, food and medicines, to the Soviet Far East Army by the Pacific route.

The Soviet Union was now fully prepared to launch hostilities against Japan.

At exactly 1700 hours Moscow time on August 8, 1945 Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov summoned Ambassador Sato to the Foreign Ministry. Molotov notified him that since Japan had refused the unconditional surrender demand put forward in the Potsdam Declaration the Soviet Union had accepted the proposal of its allies to join the war against Japan under the terms of the Potsdam Declaration dated July 26, 1945, and conveyed to him the Soviet declaration of war on Japan.

The declaration of war said that Japan was the only power which was continuing the war after Germany's defeat and

surrender. Therefore, the Soviet Government declared that from the next day, that is, from August 9, the Soviet Union would be in a state of war with Japan as the only means to bring about peace earlier, avoid further victims and sufferings and give the Japanese people the possibility of avoiding such calamity and destruction as Germany had suffered after its refusal of unconditional surrender. (*Defeat of Militarist Japan and the Liberation Mission of the Soviet Union in Asia*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., p. 43.)

The Soviet declaration of war received unreserved support from Korean patriots and the other anti-fascist forces in Asia.

On August 10 the Mongolian People's Republic joined the war declaration. Welcoming the Soviet government's declaration of war on Japan, the Commander-in-Chief of the People's Liberation Army of China Zhu De sent a telegram expressing its readiness to fight together with the Red Army and other Allied armies to rout the Japanese aggressors.

At zero hour on August 9, 1945 by Zabaikal local time the Soviet Far East Army under the command of Marshal Vasilevsky went over to a general offensive towards the heart of Manchuria along all fronts in the east, north and west. The Red Army crossed the frontier at zero hour ten minutes.

Around the time when the Soviet army started its offensive the Korean, Chinese and Mongolian peoples also joined in waging a fierce struggle against Japan in Northeast Asia.

The units of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army led by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung launched

operations against Japan in Manchuria, the main stronghold of the Japanese Kwantung Army.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army was waging a large-scale anti-Japanese war on the mainland of China, and the units of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army joined the offensive of the Red Army.

The anti-Japanese struggle of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army and troops of other nations in Northeast Asia enabled the Soviet army to annihilate the main force of Japan in a short time.

The main strategy of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan was to attack the Kwantung Army in Manchuria from both flanks by the Zabaikal Front Army attacking in the southeast from the southwest salient of Mongolia under the command of Marshal Malinovsky and the First Far East Front Army attacking in the west from the Ussuri region of the Maritime Province under the command of Marshal Meretskov. The Japanese were surrounded and annihilated in the vicinity of Changchun, the capital of Manchukuo. (L. Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, Korean ed., p. 32.)

In order to scatter the enemy's forces, the Second Far East Front Army under the command of General Prukayev was to advance south from the northern part of the Maritime Province and launch a supplementary attack in cooperation with the operations of the two front armies to annihilate the Kwantung Army.

The task of the Pacific Fleet was to intercept the enemy's naval forces, prevent reserves from being brought in and the Kwantung Army from retreating to the Japanese islands. The Soviet army went over to an all-out offensive. It liberated the Inner Muling on August 11 and Mudanjiang, the seat of the

Headquarters of the First Front Army of the Kwantung Army, on August 15.

The “impregnable defence line” of Japan crumbled in no time. Six days after the beginning of the war, the First Far East Front Army thrust into the interior of Manchuria, pressing the troops of the Kwantung Army back from the Soviet-Manchurian frontier, and the Second Far East Front Army reached Harbin and Qiqihar across Xiaoxing Mountains. The Zabaikal Front Army advanced deep into the rear of the Kwantung Army across the Daxingan Mountains.

Puyi, the “emperor of Manchukuo” was arrested just as he was about to fly to Japan with an escort of Japanese troops, taking a large amount of gold with him. Yamata was taken prisoner while moving his headquarters to Tonghua from Changchun. Paratroops were dropped on the Liaodong peninsula, Dalian and Lushun.

Faced with the rapid rout of the Kwantung Army, the Imperial headquarters in Japan was desperate to hold on to Korea, as the last front line in consideration of the war situation of the empire as a whole in case Japan had to abandon Manchuria. The Japanese troops in Korea were therefore regrouped in anticipation of operations to be carried out on the Korean peninsula as the field of the last decisive battle.

The Imperial headquarters placed the 17th Front Army, which had been under the mainland army, in Korea under the Kwantung Army, and hastily moved the divisions of the 17th Front Army to the north of Seoul from the southern part of Korea.

The initial plan of operations of the Soviet army did not envisage a full-scale attack on Korea.

Marshal Vasilevsky, the then commander-in-chief of the Soviet Far East Army, wrote, concerning the operations of the Soviet army: The war was to be waged in an area of 1.5 million square kilometres, with depths of 200 to 800 kilometres, and on the East Sea of Korea and Sea of Okhotsk. With the aim of scattering and annihilating the main force of the Japanese Kwantung Army, it was planned to launch simultaneously main and supplementary attacks directed at the heart of Northeast China from the direction of Zabaikal. (L. Vnotchenko, *Victory in the Far East*, Moscow, A.P.N. Publishing House, 1985, Korean ed., p. 24.)

In the first phase of the operations against Japan, the primary concern of the Soviet army was not to allow the main force of the Kwantung Army to retreat to Korea and join up with Japanese forces there, so that it could surround and annihilate the Kwantung Army without a hitch. The initial target of attack of the First Far East Front Army, which later took part in the battle to liberate Korea, was Changchun, the capital of “Manchukuo”.

The 25th Army under the command of General Chistyakov that was active along the northern frontier of Korea, the boundary of the left flank of the First Far East Front Army, later advanced into Korea.

At that time the first duty of the 25th Army, which was the supplementary attacking force of the First Far East Front Army, was to break through the defence zone of the Japanese army in East Manchuria and advance to Wangqing, Tumen and Yanji cities to cut off the retreat of the Japanese army to northern Korea. A further task the 25th Army received was to land, if necessary, some troops in Chongjin in cooperation with the Pacific Fleet. The landing of troops of the Pacific Fleet of the Red Army was carried out on the

proposal of Admiral Yumashev, Commander of the Pacific Fleet, to Commander-in-Chief Vasilevsky immediately after the beginning of the operations.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung completed preparations for operations to liberate Korea on his own initiative and, on this basis, gave the final attack order to all units of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army on August 9, 1945.

Receiving the order of the great leader, the units of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army went over to a general offensive and advanced into Korea in close cooperation with the Soviet army.

They broke through the enemy's frontier fortifications, which had been called an "impregnable defence line" and liberated a vast area of the country, exploiting successes in battle in the regions of Unggi and Hoeryong.

The troops which landed on the coast advanced to Rajin and Chongjin,

The small numbers of troops and political workers of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army that had already been dispatched to the homeland and were active there bravely launched an anti-Japanese resistance struggle to destroy the Japanese ruling machinery and harass the enemy's rear by mobilizing the people.

The Soviet army helped the Korean People's Revolutionary Army to liberate the homeland. The Soviet Pacific Fleet landed one company of marines on Unggi and Rajin in cooperation with the KPRA on August 11 and one brigade of marines on Chongjin on August 14. (*Ibid.*, p. 65.) Chistyakov threw into the Korean peninsula the 393rd Infantry Division, which had been the reserve force of the First Far East Front Army and was placed under the 25th

Army that day in support of the sea operations. The 393rd Division crossed the Tuman River on August 12 and advanced to Chongjin via Unggi and Rajin by land on August 16.

At that time the Japanese armed forces were mainly composed of the land forces, and the Kwantung Army was the main force of them. Hence, the swift rout of the Kwantung Army, which was the core of the Japanese armed forces, in fact, meant the defeat of Japan.

Japan could not but admit that its defeat was only a matter of time. The Japanese war bosses, who had shuddered at the miserable deaths the war criminals of fascist Germany had suffered, while refusing unconditional surrender, hastily chose surrender now.

Emperor Hirohito announced unconditional surrender by radio at 12 o'clock on August 15, when the 393rd Division of the Soviet army was advancing to Chongjin three days after crossing the Korean frontier.

On August 16 Truman sent Stalin a copy of the draft order on the boundaries for acceptance of the surrender of the Japanese army by the commanders of the Allied armies, which was to be sent to Japan. It was the first document which formally recorded the "38th parallel" that artificially divided the Korean nation.

### **A Child of US-Soviet Compromise**

With the entry of the Soviet army into the war against Japan, the main front of the Pacific War shifted from the South Pacific to the Asian continent, and the Kwantung Army began collapsing rapidly. Owing to this, even Japan's military jingoists inclined to hasty surrender.

What pained the Japanese militarists most at the time was not the grief of Japan's defeat itself but vexation over how to alleviate the blows of their defeat and how to maintain militarism.

The Japanese rulers were unanimous in the view that the emperor system should survive at all costs. They had heated debates about keeping the emperor system intact against the unconditional surrender demand in the Potsdam Declaration.

Although the diehards wanted to continue the war even in Japan proper, the majority leaned towards surrender.

A "Supreme War Leaders Meeting" took place in the air raid shelter of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. It lasted from the night of August 9, when the Soviet Union declared war against Japan, to the following dawn. Having analyzed the process of negotiations with the Americans, the meeting came to the conclusion that the United States had left a loophole in the Potsdam Declaration, looking forward to Japan's early surrender. Hence they finally decided to surrender.

The Japanese ruling circles calculated that if they flung themselves upon the US-British side complying with the Potsdam Declaration before the advance of the Red Army to Japan, Japan's state system could be kept intact and that surrender to the Americans was preferable to the inevitable blows from the Leftist forces which would follow their defeat in the war.

The Japanese government decided to surrender if the Potsdam Declaration was amended with the provision that "The Emperor will remain almighty in his sovereignty".

On August 10 the Japanese government requested the Swiss and Swedish governments through diplomatic channels to notify the Allies—the US, Britain and China—of

its decision to surrender. That morning Foreign Minister Togo met in a privy chamber of the Diet with Soviet Ambassador to Japan Malik, who had already been recalled by his government, to notify him of Japan's surrender.

At this meeting, suggested by Ambassador Malik to serve notice on Japan of the Soviet declaration of war upon her, the Soviet Union accepted the surrender of the Japanese government.

Foreign Minister Togo explained to Malik that this measure was aimed at letting the US-British side know of the stand of the Japanese government regarding the status of the Emperor through the USSR, a member of the Allied powers, believing that this way would be faster than the channel of a third country. Then the Japanese side handed over to him a copy of the English translation of the "Notice of acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration" which had been to Switzerland and Sweden.

That a written declaration of war and an instrument of surrender were exchanged simultaneously between the belligerents was unprecedented in history.

Malik promptly cabled Japan's surrender to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, and early in the morning of August 11 Molotov informed the US and British Ambassadors in Moscow of this. He added that, judging from Japan's concern over the status of its Emperor, its real intentions were questionable, so the advance of the Soviet army would continue, to put pressure on Japan. The surrender notice was transmitted to China as well as to the United States and Britain.

In its first notice addressed to the Allies, the Japanese government, though accepting the Potsdam Declaration, added a proviso that it took the Declaration as putting no

restrictions on the Emperor's privileges. (*Pravda*, August 11, 1945.)

This was the last attempt of the Japanese war criminals to avoid unconditional surrender and the liquidation of militarism and escape punishment.

With regard to this, on August 11 the United States gave a reply to Japan in the name of State Secretary Byrnes. America made clear its stand that after Japan's unconditional surrender the Emperor and his government should come under the control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces.

On receiving this answer from the Allied side, the Japanese rulers held a "Cabinet conference" and "Supreme War Leaders Meeting" and after marathon debates decided on August 14 to notify the Allied side of their unconditional acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, and conveyed a second surrender notice to the Allies by way of Switzerland.

Such rapid developments threw the Americans into great confusion.

While the Soviet army was already within the northern borders of Korea, the US troops were still far away in the South Pacific. On the morning of August 11, having received the notice of Japan's acceptance of surrender, Truman called Secretary of State Byrnes, Secretary of War Stimson and Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Pacific Fleet Nimitz to the White House to discuss measures to cope with the rapidly changing situation in the Far East.

The key points there were the acceptance of Japan's surrender, the favourable division of the zones for the disarmament of Japanese troops by the Allied powers and the proposals to be submitted to the Allies' conference relating to Far Eastern affairs vital to the extension of the

American sphere of influence. At that time Byrnes claimed that America should supervise the surrender of Japanese troops throughout Korea and that the sphere of its influence should be extended northward. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, *Years of Trial and Hope*, New York, 1956, p. 317.)

On August 12, anticipating the stern reaction of the Russians, Pauley, Truman's special envoy, and Harriman, US Ambassador to the USSR suggested to Truman and the State Department that US troops should land in Korea and Manchuria at once to supervise the surrender of Japanese troops there.

In his report Harriman said that the United States need not keep out of the Soviet military zones. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, *Year of Decision*, New York, 1955, pp. 433-434.)

The dizzy flow of favorable events made the US statesmen bolder in their ambition for territorial expansion.

However, the Pentagon acknowledged that they were not strong enough to push north to get hold of wider areas as recommended by Byrnes and Harriman. In his *Memoirs* Truman wrote that Byrnes' recommendations bumped against two insurmountable obstacles, that is, geographic distance and shortage of troops. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, *Years of Trial and Hope*, New York, 1956, p. 317.)

Truman ordered the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) to devise measures for the conclusion of the war against Japan and the supervision of Japan's surrender. The SWNCC met several times at the Pentagon between August 10 and 15.

The discussions focused on the question of who would disarm the Japanese troops in Korea and Japan proper.

The main topics there were whether to recognize the whole territory of Korea as part of the operations zone of the

Soviet army, and whether to occupy Japan proper separately in pursuit of the original US policy.

Since the US policy for separate occupation of Japan was already a *fait accompli* under the changing circumstance, the US policy for the Korean peninsula was the matter of primary concern. However, under the then prevailing situation the political ambition for a greater sphere of influence could hardly be gratified because the US did not have enough troops for the task.

As a matter of fact, it was absolutely impossible as of August 10 for US armed forces to take the Korean peninsula prior to the Soviet army's advance. The nearest American troops were stationed in Okinawa, 600 miles from Korea; others were in the Philippines, 1,500 to 2,000 miles away to the south.

The SWNCC consigned to the strategic policy section under the Department of War the task of finding rational countermeasures to fill the gap between the foreign policy demand of the US administration and the military capability to effect it.

Thus the "38th parallel", the line of artificial division, was midwived by Dean Rusk, a key military policymaker at this stage and later Secretary of State, Charles Bonesteel (later Commander-in-Chief of the "UN forces" in south Korea) and the like.

On the night of August 10, 1945, when Rusk and Bonesteel were drawing up the draft plan for the division of disarmament zones of the Japanese troops by the allies, looking up at a miniature map of the Far East on the wall their eyes stopped at the "38th parallel North" dividing the Korean peninsula into two parts. This was how the cursed

demarcation line came into existence as a demarcation of the US and Soviet military zones.

Their primary concern was to include Seoul, the old capital of Korea, in the American occupation area. Speaking of the reason why they had chosen the 38th parallel as the demarcation line, Rusk said later that they thought it essential to include the capital of the “Republic of Korea” in the American-controlled area. (*Who Drew the 38th Parallel North?* south Korean magazine *Shindong-A*, No. 8, 1985, p. 410.)

To the Americans the 38th parallel was the ideal demarcation line with which they could bargain with the Soviet Union, keeping Seoul under American occupation.

In this regard, Bonesteel admitted that if the occupation line of American troops was set higher up to the north the Soviet army would ignore it and continue to march southward. The 38th parallel North was the maximum northern limit acceptable to the Russians.

It was true that if the Russians had objected strongly to the “38th parallel plan” it would have been impossible to put this idea into effect using American troops alone. Fearing this, however, they raised it at the conference table, stating that the 38th parallel was to be the northernmost demarcation line attainable by them at the time. The United States proposed the “38th parallel plan” to the Russians as meaning that the zone of command over the Japanese army stationed in Korea would be divided into north and south by the 38th parallel North.

On February 11, 1945, the Imperial Headquarters of Japan rehashed the “command system for the war in Japan proper”: the “Korean army”, i.e., the Japanese troops in Korea, was

reorganized into the 17th Army Corps and the Military District of Korea was instituted.

The 17th Army Corps, a field army of the Imperial Headquarters, took charge of the “defence” of Korea; the Korean Military District undertook recruitment, education and logistics.

As the repeal of the Soviet-Japan neutrality pact and the surrender of Germany increased possibility of Soviet entry into the war against Japan, the Imperial Headquarters annexed the military district to the north of central Korea to the command of the Kwantung Army and posted the 17th Army Corps to the defence of the regions south of the middle part of Korea. This division of the operational zones was marked off basically by the 38th parallel North.

Suggesting the division of Korea into halves along the 38th parallel North, the Americans asserted that the Kwantung Army controlled the area down to the parallel. (Hodge, Commander-in-Chief of US forces in south Korea, officially announced this in 1948.)

The “38th parallel plan”, backed by the aforesaid reasoning, was examined by Bradley and other “policymakers” of the War Department and then by the secretaries of War and State before it was submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on August 13 and 14 to be discussed from the military angle. On August 14 the SWNCC passed the plan, and Truman okayed it on the same day.

The line dividing the disarmament zones ought to have been drawn on the territory of Japan proper, the vanquished, instead of the territory of Korea. The “38th parallel plan” was a product of the expansionist foreign policy of the United States to win a bridgehead to extend its influence onto the Korean peninsula and thence to the Asian continent.

Part of the history of the “38th parallel” was first revealed to the public in the minutes of the June 16-17, 1949, public hearing at the Diplomatic Committee of the House of Representatives. But it took 27 years until the full text of the minutes was opened to the public.

Wedemeyer, US military representative in China, cabled to the US Joint Chiefs of Staff urging US occupation of the main ports of Northeast China and the Far East. (M. Matloff, *American Troops in the Second World War*, Washington, 1959, p. 354.)

On August 15 the US State Department dispatched the plan on zonal division to supervise the surrender of the Japanese army to the Soviet, British and Chinese sides. The same day, transmitting this plan to MacArthur in Manila, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered him to announce it later as “General Order No. 1” of the Commander-in-Chief of the US armed forces in the Pacific.

Meanwhile, Truman declared that MacArthur would be the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces vested with plenipotentiary powers to accept Japan’s surrender. He directed MacArthur to force the Red Army to cease its military actions in Northeast China, with an eye to arresting the southward advance of the Soviet Far East Front Army.

On August 15 Dean, the head of the US military mission in Moscow, visited the General Staff of the Soviet army and handed to Chief of the General Staff Antonov a copy of MacArthur’s written order on the discontinuance of offensive actions, adding that he hoped that the order would be directed to the Soviet Far East Front Army. Antonov replied, “The Soviet army is commanded by Comrade Stalin, Supreme Commander of the Soviet army.” Acknowledging his “mistake”, Dean apologized to him later.

On August 15 the Soviet government examined the draft of the so-called “General Order No. 1” of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, i.e., the plan for the division of the Japanese army’s disarmament zones proposed by the US side.

In a letter to Truman on August 16, Stalin demanded that, though generally he had no objection to the US plan, the Kuril Islands and the northern half of Hokkaido Island should be added to the occupation area of the Soviet army, and the post of Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Japan should be filled by two persons — MacArthur and Antonov.

Truman said in his reply to Stalin that the Soviet army might occupy the southern part of the Kuril Islands, but in that case an air base in the Kuril Islands should be opened to the US side. He added that the Kuril Islands did not belong to the Soviet Union, but to Japan. He objected to the Soviet proposal for joint supreme commanders.

Regarding the air base in the Kuril Islands suggested by the United States, the Soviet Union replied that if the American side would open an airport in the Aleutian Islands to Soviet civil airliners on the principle of mutual benefit the Soviet side would reciprocate with the opening of an airport in the Kuril Islands to US civil airliners. The issue of airports was withdrawn by both sides.

The “General Order No. 1” of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, a product of the US-Soviet negotiations, stipulated that the Japanese troops in China (excluding Manchuria), Taiwan and French Indochina north of the 16th parallel North should surrender to the Commander-in-Chief of Nationalist Chinese army; those in Manchuria, Korea north of the 38th parallel, Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, to

the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Far East Front Army; those in the regions ranging from Myanmar to the Solomon Islands, to the Commander-in-Chief of the British army; and those under the Japanese Imperial Headquarters, Japan proper, the small islands around it, Korea south of the 38th parallel, the Ryukyu Islands and the Philippines, to the Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific army. (*Collection of Pacts relating to Korea*. Pyongyang, 1985, p. 352.)

Both US and Soviet armies commenced military actions in accordance with these agreed provisions.

Stalin ordered the First Far East Front Army to conduct operations according to the agreed “General Order No. 1”. The task was assigned to the 25th Combined Army Corps on the left wing of the First Far East Front Army. On August 18 Commander Chistyakov directed the spearhead of his main forces near Wangqing and Changchun to the south. Some time later its advance contingents entered the territory of Korea.

Meanwhile the US army command negotiated with the Japanese government by wireless on the problems concerning Japan’s surrender. At that time, with the surrender of Japan the Suzuki-led wartime Cabinet was replaced with a Cabinet headed by Higashikuni, a member of the royal family. The new Cabinet was waiting for punishment by the Allied side.

On August 19 a delegation headed by Lieut. Gen. Kawabe, Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Japanese army, was summoned by MacArthur to receive “General Order No. 1” and a series of directions pertaining to its execution. These directives comprised a number of detailed provisions to subordinate Japan to the US; the stationing of US troops in Japan, the treatment of the main part of the Japanese army,

the Emperor system, etc. MacArthur designated the Hodge-commanded 24th Army Corps, which was on ships in the Pacific, as the occupation army of Korea. Late in August the US troops moved into Japanese waters under the cover of 400 warships and 1,300 planes, and on August 28 began to land in Japan without meeting any resistance from the vanquished Japanese army.

The signing of the surrender document took place on the US battleship *Missouri* lying at anchor in Tokyo Bay at 10:30 local time on September 2, 1945. Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru, on behalf of the Emperor and the government of Japan, and Chief of the General Staff Umetsu Yoshijiro, on behalf of the Imperial Headquarters, signed the surrender document, respectively.

It was also signed by MacArthur, in his capacity as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, and by C.W. Nimitz, on behalf of the United States, Kuzma Zerebyanko, on behalf of the USSR, Xu Yongchang, on behalf of Nationalist China, and Bruce Prezer, on behalf of Great Britain, respectively. In addition, the representatives of France, Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand, which had also declared war on Japan, signed it. This marked the end of militarist Japan.

On September 2, when Japan signed the surrender document, MacArthur issued "General Order No. 1". On September 7, 23 days after Korea has been liberated, advance contingents of the US forces landed at Inchon. On September 8, two divisions 45,000 strong belonging to the US 24th Army Corps commanded by Hodge landed in Pusan and entered Seoul on September 9. Then the US troops proceeded to occupy the whole of Korea south of the 38th parallel.

With the occupation of north and south Korea by US and Soviet troops, Korea was divided into two regions, and this became the prelude to Korea's split, which has lasted nearly half a century up to this day.

### **What Were They after?**

No international meeting had ever dealt with the problem of the 38th parallel North as the demarcation line dividing Korea into north and south.

The "38th parallel" was the provisionally set demarcation line for separate military operations to disarm the surrendered Japanese troops in Korea. It could on no account be considered a line to split the Korean territory and people.

Ex-President Truman, who effected the "38th parallel" division of the Korean peninsula, said that it was proposed as a stopgap measure to fill the vacuum in Korea caused by the sudden collapse of Japan's war machine, and so its aim was to facilitate the acceptance of the surrender of the Japanese troops there. A changeover to joint control over the whole peninsula was envisaged after this, he added. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, *Years of Trial and Hope*, New York, 1956, p. 317.)

The "joint control" meant the trusteeship over Korea by the US, the Soviet Union, Britain and China. Truman's statement epitomized America's political ambition to extend its influence in Korea.

What the US was after when defining the "38th parallel" as the demarcation of the division of Korea was above all to extend the scope of the "free world" from the islands of the Western Pacific to the continent of Asia after the Second World War.

Regarding the three states of Northeast Asia, the US planned to occupy Japan separately and convert Nationalist China into a stronghold against communism. But Korea was actually left in a state of “vacuum”. America did not like to leave it under socialist influence and set up the “38th parallel” as a barrier to thwart its influx. Bruce Cummings, Associate Professor at the University of Washington, said that the choice of the 38th parallel was aimed at blocking the Soviet onrush to the southern part of the peninsula; setting the demarcation line to the north of Seoul by occupying Seoul, the capital of Korea, and thus seizing as wide an area of Korea as possible.

The United States calculated that if Korea was communized as a whole it would be difficult to form anti-communist “ties” between pro-US Nationalist China and Japan, a future ally of the US.

The US considered the presence of the US ground forces in the Korean peninsula would be the best recipe for averting such a dilemma in Korea.

The US then had no bridgehead in any part of the Asian continent. So, in the last years of the Second World War it tried to build a military base in the Soviet Far East but this was rejected by the Soviet side.

This is why the United States attached special importance to the Korean peninsula, because it could serve as its bridgehead in Asia.

Militarily, if the US tactical air force could take off from bases on the Korean peninsula the radius of its action would comprise the whole of the Far East and, what is more important, could contain the Soviet Pacific Fleet based at Vladivostok.

That the United States was desperate to get hold of even the southern half of Korea if it could not succeed in the conquest of the whole of the peninsula was motivated by such political, military and strategic considerations.

The United States thought that the “38th parallel” would help link Korea, China and Japan to the “free world”.

Second, the “38th parallel” was bait thrown to the Soviet Union in exchange for the American independent occupation of Japan.

In May 1944 the US State Department pointed out in an official document that the occupation of Japan proper should be undertaken by the Allies participating in the war against Japan.

In the Potsdam Declaration, too, America acknowledged that, like Germany, vanquished Japan would be occupied by the Allies.

However, the Americans did not want a joint occupation of Japan by the Allied powers. This was disclosed already at the Potsdam Conference. At that time Stalin made a meaningful remark that Tokyo should be the venue of the next summit, which was due after Japan’s defeat, intimating the Soviet intention to join in the postwar control of Japan, but Truman feigned indifference to this. This implies that Truman had made up his mind about the US independent occupation of Japan. When the Soviet Union declared war against Japan on August 9 the US hastily manifested its stand towards Japan, and made it known to the powers concerned that US troops would independently enter Japan proper and that Japan would not be divided into occupation zones as Germany had been. On August 16, the day after the proclamation of Japan’s surrender, Truman told the press

that Japan would be controlled entirely by the US, not divided into occupation zones like Germany.

The United States also rejected the Soviet proposal for a system of two commanders-in-chief of occupation forces in Japan. However, it foresaw that the Soviet Union would strongly object to the separate US occupation of Japan, because as a victor in the war against Japan the Soviet Union had the legal right to join in the occupation and postwar administration of Japan.

The US thought that if the Soviet Union stubbornly opposed the separate US occupation of Japan, they would “concede” the “38th parallel” as a reward for its acquiescence in the separate American occupation of Japan.

The plan of the “38th parallel” initiated by the US was an alternative plan to bargain for the recognition of the separate US occupation of Japan in confrontation with the USSR.

Surprisingly, the Soviet Union meekly acquiesced in the US plan.

The two political ends pursued by the United States in the “38th parallel” plan reflected the US policy of nuclear blackmail.

Gaining strength from the favorable turn of the situation towards the close of the Second World War, Truman adopted a policy of confrontation with the USSR, severing wartime relations of alliance since he did not wish to share the postwar “gains”. The pursuit of this confrontation policy coincided with the successful development of the A-bomb first by the US munitions industry in the first half of 1945.

Saying that the United States was obliged to become the global leader, Truman declared his foreign policy for domination of the world. He asserted that during the war the US-Soviet relations were characterized by America’s

unilateral concessions, but things would no longer proceed as before; if the Russians did not accede willingly to US demands they would be isolated. This was the logic of his nuclear blackmail policy. Roosevelt collaborated and negotiated with Stalin on establishing the UN and establishing its headquarters in the United States. However, Truman was determined to break away from Roosevelt's policy line.

This sharpened the contradictions between the Soviet Union and America before and after the Potsdam Conference.

Denouncing the Soviet Union for backing pro-Soviet forces in the Eastern European countries, the United States started a cold war. The cold war in Europe influenced the political theatre of Asia directly. In Asia not even a summit conference of the Allies was held.

As aforesaid, the "38th parallel" of Korea was an unhappy child of ephemeral compromise between America and the USSR in their fierce struggle for expansion of their spheres of influence in the closing years of the Second World War.

The diplomatic conflicts over Korea among the Allied powers at the time of Japan's surrender resulted in splitting our country and people into two.

## Chapter 4

### **The “Cold War” Freezes the 38th Parallel as a Line of Political Division**

The Second World War ended in the historic victory of the anti-fascist forces of the whole world. This outcome radically changed the structure of the world.

New socialist countries emerged in Europe and Asia, forming a camp in opposition to the capitalist forces.

The national liberation movements in the colonies of Asia, Africa and Latin America grew in momentum, accelerating the process of general collapse of the imperialist colonial system.

During the Second World War a drastic change took place within the imperialist system. The parallel existence of major imperialist countries came to an end.

Defeated Germany, Japan and Italy lost all the political, economic and military positions they had held before the war. During the war Britain was greatly weakened in its struggle against Germany, and found itself no longer in a position to maintain her old status as the strongest power in the world. France, which boasted of its powerful ground forces, was occupied and ruined by the German army in the initial period of the war.

Only the United States rapidly expanded its economy on the only continent free from the fighting, and gained huge wartime profits. Towards the close of the war it emerged as a

superpower in the capitalist world, producing half the total industrial products and holding 75.5 per cent of the gold in the capitalist world.

Capitalism was reorganized into a subordinate system, with the US as its head. Capitalism reorganized with the US as the centre was hostile to the socialist system, regarding the existence of the socialist system itself as a threat to capitalism and tried to blockade the latter politically and economically.

The socialist countries regarded the strategy of the US to establish a “new world order” as an attempt to crush socialism, and they waged both offensive and defensive battles against the capitalist world. This was known as the “cold war”.

Trying to attain its goal using both dollars and atomic bombs, the US aggravated the situation to the extreme with confrontations in Germany in Europe and in Korea in Asia as the main arenas.

After the Second World War the US pursued its objective of turning Korea into a bridgehead for advance into Asia, and took the course of dividing Korea instead of solving the Korean question in a coordinated manner.

Underlying the unhappy process of the division of Korea with the 38th parallel North fixed as the dividing line, were the irreconcilable conflicts of interests of the US and the USSR.

### **1945—A Year of Disappointment and Crisis**

The USSR and the US, which stationed their troops in the north and the south of Korea respectively, with the identical

“mission” of disarming the Japanese troops there, began to implement mutually conflicting policies from the start.

The contradictory stands of the USSR and the US were clearly revealed in the historic documents in which they made proclamations to the Korean people on the first day of stationing their troops in Korea.

General Chistyakov, Commander of the 25th Army of the First Far East Front Army of the Soviet Union, stationed in north Korea, proclaimed to the Korean people on August 20, 1945:

“To the Korean people, ... Korea has become a free country. But this is only the first page of Korean history. The splendid orchard is the outcome of labour and energetic efforts of the people. Thus, the happiness of Korea, too, can be achieved by the heroic struggle and strenuous efforts of the Korean people.

“Remember, Korean people, you hold your happiness in your own hand! You have attained liberty and liberation. Now, everything is up to you. The Soviet army will provide the Korean people with all the conditions for embarking on free and creative labour. Koreans must create their own happiness themselves.” (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *References to the Peaceful Solution of the Korean Question*, December 1, 1943 to June 24, 1950, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, pp. 3-6.)

On September 7, when the US army landed at Inchon, MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, Pacific, made in Yokohama, Japan, the following proclamation to the Korean people:

To the People of Korea:

By the terms of the Instrument of Surrender, signed by command and in behalf of the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese Government and by command and in behalf of the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, the victorious military forces of my command will today occupy the territory of Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude...

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific, I hereby establish military control over Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude and the inhabitants thereof, and announce the following conditions of the occupation:

#### Article I

All powers of Government over the territory of Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude and the people thereof will be for the present exercised under my authority.

#### Article II

Until further orders, all governmental, public and honorary functionaries and employees, as well as all officials and employees, paid or voluntary, of all public utilities and services, including public welfare and public health and all other persons engaged in essential services, shall continue to perform their usual functions and duties, and shall preserve and safeguard all records and property.

#### Article III

Persons will obey promptly all my orders and orders issued under my authority. Acts of resistance to the

occupying forces or any acts which may disturb public peace and safety will be punished severely.

#### Article IV

Your property rights will be respected.

#### Article V

For all purposes during the military control, English will be the official language, (*Ibid.*, p. 7.)

This was the notorious “MacArthur Proclamation No. 1”. Originally this proclamation was written on September 3 as the proclamation of the occupation army commander to defeated Japan. But overnight the plan was changed; it was issued to south Korea instead.

This proclamation shows that the US attempted to treat the Korean people not as a liberated nation but as a defeated nation.

It was a flagrant violation of the UN Charter to which two months previously the US itself had put its signature, together with 51 Allied nations which determined to “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”, and stipulates respect for “the equal rights of people and the principle of self-determination”.

C. Berger, an American military historian, regarded it as a shameful act that the American generals issued one proclamation after another which flagrantly trampled upon the right to freedom and self-determination of the Korean

people, in contravention of the principle of respect for fundamental human rights and self-determination of nations stipulated in the UN Charter. He ascribed it to their lack of political leadership. At the same time, he accused the US government of not making thoroughgoing preparations for the occupation of south Korea. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, pp. 48-49.)

One member of the Hodge Headquarters said by way of excuse that if Washington and the general headquarters had given constructive opinions concerning the Korean question they would have not been reflected in the orders the army commander issued. (The US Department of War, *The History of the US Army in Korea*, Washington, History Section of the 24th Army, Vol. 9, p. 63.)

However, in fact, the US policy in south Korea immediately after the war was a premeditated one.

In order to hold south Korea, which it regarded as strategically the most important area in the Pacific, the US State Department appointed diplomat Bening Hop as a political adviser to occupation army commander Hodge.

The task Bening Hop was assigned to was to put into effect the plan of the US State Department for Korea on the spot and bring the actions of the US occupation army in south Korea into line with the policy of the US government.

The conflicting policies of the USSR and the US in Korea manifested themselves in the tasks of clearing away the remnants of fascism and promoting democratization.

The liberated Korean people were faced with the urgent task of attaining political independence and economic and cultural revival by eliminating the remnants of Japanese imperialism at the earliest possible date and realizing democratization.

But the USSR and the US took mutually conflicting stands toward their basic mission to liquidate the barbarous fascist rule of Japanese imperialism and democratize society in Korea.

The Allied nations that participated in the Second World War defined eliminating fascism, promoting democratization, deindustrialization and demilitarization as the basic lines to be applied in the postwar settlement of problems after the defeat of the fascist forces. Particularly the elimination of fascism and the promotion of democratization as the process of sweeping away the filth of fascism were stipulated as international duties to be carried out thoroughly everywhere.

After the war the USSR thoroughly carried out its duties of liquidating the fascist remnants and effecting democratization.

In those days in north Korea the building of a new democratic Korea which would be free, rich and strong was being launched briskly under the guidance of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung.

In the northern part of Korea fascist elements and traitors to the nation were eliminated, and the democratic forces definitely prevailed. This paved the way for the democratic development of the country and provided enough prerequisites for founding a unified, sovereign and independent state.

The civil administration of the Soviet army in north Korea gave active assistance to the Korean people to liquidate the fascist ruling machinery of Japanese imperialism, eliminate pro-Japanese elements, traitors to the nation and militarist remnants in the northern half of Korea, and hasten the process of making the society democratic.

But the US did not perform its duty to eliminate the Japanese fascist forces and colonial system, and guarantee democracy in south Korea.

First of all, even after the August 15 liberation the US retained the Japanese Government-General of Korea which was the target of abhorrence and hatred of the Korean people.

On August 15, 1945 the US Joint Chiefs of Staff sent to MacArthur a confidential document. "General Order No. 1", the supplement to which contained an order to maintain temporarily the Japanese colonial ruling setup intact in the area to be occupied by the US, since there was no possibility for the US army to reach the occupation area immediately. In accordance with this, on August 20 MacArthur cabled to Governor-General Abe Nobuyuki, who was to be punished as a war criminal, a special order entrusting him with the task of maintaining public order in south Korea together with the Japanese army commander in Korea.

In his order MacArthur made it clear that he did not recognize the maintenance of public order by any other authority but the Governor-General of Korea and the Japanese army commander there.

The US 24th Army Commander Hodge and the US 7th Fleet Commander Thomas arrived in Seoul in the afternoon of September 8. Even after they had accepted the surrender of the Japanese army in south Korea in the building of the Japanese Government-General they did not detain Abe or the other top war criminals.

In a press interview following the "surrender ceremony" Hodge made it public that Governor-General of Korea Abe and other Japanese officials would temporarily stay in office for continuance of administration. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 50.)

As for Abe, he was once vice-minister of war, minister without portfolio, acting minister of war and prime minister. In July 1944 he was appointed the ninth Governor-General of Korea. He was a heinous enemy of Korea and a leading war criminal who mobilized Korea's manpower and material resources for the aggressive war.

The US allowed Abe and other Japanese fascists to lord it over the Korean people as they had before their defeat, when they should have punished these murderers of many Korean patriots and innocent people. This aroused indignation on the part of the Korean people.

The US justified its mismanagement, saying that the Department of State handed to a member of Hodge's headquarters a written directive on imprisoning the governor-general and some others, but he failed to present it, overawed by the atmosphere of the Military Government Office where the army man ruled the roost.

At the same time the US retained the emperor system in Japan and used Emperor Hirohito and other fascist war criminals for its own purposes instead of punishing them.

The US began to gather to its side the Korean officials in south Korea who had collaborated with Japan in the execution of her war policy, and regarded them as a political foundation it could rely upon.

Hodge insisted on forming a south Korean police force with Koreans who had served the Japanese in the past. (*Official Report of the 3rd Session of the UN General Assembly, Appendix No. 9, p. 172, The Report of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea on the Korean Issue.*)

In this way was formed the police setup of the US military government which was headed by Jo Pyong Ok, an underling of Syngman Rhee.

According to the watered-down data issued by the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, already in the initial period 85 per cent of the staff of the US military government's police were Koreans who had served the Japanese police. (*Ibid.*, p. 147.)

The US issued a directive on expelling from office collaborators with Japan, but none was expelled.

The US did not remove the pro-Japanese fascist elements, but disbanded the people's committees the south Korean people had formed of their own accord, and threatened those who protested with punishment. On September 7, MacArthur issued Proclamation No. 2 as follows:

Any person who:

Violates the provisions of the Instrument of Surrender, or any proclamation, order, or directive given under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific, or does any acts to the prejudice of good order or the life, safety, or security of the persons or property of the United States or its Allies, or does any act calculated to disturb public peace and order, or prevent the administration of justice, or willfully does any act hostile to the Allied Forces, shall, upon conviction by a Military Occupation Court, suffer death or such other punishment as the Court may determine. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *References to the Peaceful Solution of Korean Question*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 8.)

In south Korea the fascist policy of Japan was continued in a new form, and the pro-Japanese traitors were resurrected in the guise of pro-US elements.

Both the USSR and the US took conflicting attitudes towards the self-determination of the Korean nation.

This was clearly manifested in the problem of the political power of the Korean people.

The command of the Soviet army stationed in north Korea respected as official self-government bodies the people's committees the Korean people formed on their own initiative immediately after liberation. On August 25, the day after the Soviet army entered Pyongyang, Chistyakov issued a statement to the effect that it respected the people's committees the Korean people had founded and supported the transfer of administrative power from the Japanese government-general to the people's committees. People's committees had been formed in cities, counties, sub-counties and ri in the six provinces of north Korea by the end of November.

Under the wise guidance of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, a joint meeting of provincial people's committees in north Korea was held on November 19, 1945 and ten administration bureaus were formed to establish economic ties in all the areas of north Korea and maintain public order.

The Provisional People's Committee of North Korea headed by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung was organized on February 8, 1946. The north Korean people took power into their own hands and began to exercise the right of national self-determination.

In contrast, the US army in south Korea did not recognize the people's committees set up on the initiative of the Korean people.

On August 13, when Japan's defeat was in sight, Abe, aware that the fate of the war was already sealed and desperate to secure the safety of the Japanese, asked Ryo Un Hyong to take charge of maintenance of public order in Korea.

Drawing on the Union for the Preparation of Nation-Building formed one year before, Ryo Un Hyong accepted the responsibility for maintaining public order, requested Abe to release patriots from prisons and called for the formation of people's committees. Thus, before the US army entered south Korea the people's committees, self-government bodies, were formed by released patriots to maintain public order and establish an independent government, and were functioning. The number of the local people's committees amounted to 145 by August 30. The local people's committees disarmed the Japanese police, set up self-defence organizations, took over Japanese enterprises and expelled pro-Japanese elements.

Over 70 political organizations were formed in south Korea before the US army landed, and the people were eager for democracy.

Shortly after liberation, the Left democratic forces were dominant in the development of the political situation of south Korea, and the fascist forces and traitors to the nation were rapidly disappearing as a political force.

The US army, which entered Seoul on September 8, spurned the self-government setup of the Korean people and announced the continuance of the functioning of the

Japanese government-general, which aroused the resentment of the south Korean people.

Frightened at this, the US army announced the abolition of the rule of the Japanese government-general and the establishment of the US military government office headed by Major General Arnold.

On September 9 Arnold took office in the building of the Japanese Government-General. The Japanese officials of the government-general were dismissed on September 15, and US officers took their place. Arnold and field and company grade officers under him took over all the legislative, judicial and administrative powers of south Korea.

After the US army's landing in south Korea the United Operations Planning Commission of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff revised the former plan for four occupation zones in Korea to suit the new situation of the presence of the US army in south Korea.

The plan drawn up on September 13, 1945 envisaged the division of Korea by the United States and the Soviet Union along the 38th parallel North. Ten days later, on September 23, a revised plan was submitted to their governments, which recommended drawing the demarcation line between the USSR and the US along the administrative boundaries of Kyonggi, Hwanghae, Kangwon and Hamgyong Provinces.

However, it was clear that the plan of division by provincial boundaries was not acceptable, because it would extend northward the area under the control of the US army. The US eventually decided on the plan of division of Korea along the 38th parallel, and the US military government prepared to remain as a government-general for a long time to establish the system of reactionary colonial rule in south Korea.

That the US military government was pursuing such a political objective was clearly revealed in the “Statement concerning the Liberation of Korea” Truman made on September 18, 1945, right after the establishment of the US military government.

In his statement Truman said that the US used the Japanese troops and police as they were because it considered “their technical ability” to be “necessary” and that it would “inevitably require time and endurance” to build Korea into an independent country. (The US State Department, *Record on the Unification of Korea*, Washington, 1960, p. 46.)

The rule of the US military government in liberated Korea was illegitimate.

In order to maintain the illegitimate military government setup the US began to employ pro-Japanese elements and traitors to the nation who were trembling with fear of the judgement of the Korean people.

The US tried to establish its rule depending on Right-wing figures from the Korean Democratic Party. The Korean Democratic Party, which advocated “anti-communism”, was a den of pro-Japanese elements who attempted to evade punishment under the “patronage” of the US.

Inspired by the US army’s landing in south Korea, the Right-wing reactionary forces hastily founded the Korean Democratic Party in the Chondoist Memorial Hall in Seoul on September 16. All of them had been pro-Japanese elements.

On October 6 the US military government announced the formation of the “Military Government Advisory Council” for civil affairs, politics, economy and public order, which was composed of 11 persons and appointed Right-wing

figures affiliated with the Korean Democratic Party as its members.

Pro-Japanese element Kim Song Ju was appointed its “president” and pro-Japanese element Jo Pyong Ok, who had been an official of a Japanese central government body and a member of the All-out Mobilization Association, and had positively collaborated with Japan in the execution of the aggressive war, was made “police chief”. As a result, judicial organs and procurators’ offices under the US military government came to be occupied by men from the Korean Democratic Party.

On October 10, 1945 Arnold announced that there existed only one government south of the 38th parallel, which was the government founded to suit the proclamation of General MacArthur, the order of General Hodge and the orders of the civil administration of the military government.

The US began to bring pro-US Koreans from the United States and Nationalist China to consolidate its political foundation and weaken the influence of the democratic Left-wing forces.

On October 16, 1945 the US State Department announced that the US military government office in south Korea had decided to employ Koreans as “advisors” and seek their “advice” concerning internal affairs. (The US State Department, *Bulletin*, October 16, 1945, p. 43.)

To this end, the US State and Defence Departments brought into south Korea from the United States political exiles who were expected to serve the US faithfully.

The newspaper of the Korean nationalists in the United States, *Korean Independence*, dated December 5, 1951, wrote: Many Koreans, particularly the political exiles aspiring after the formation of a unified government of

Korea, could not return to the homeland because they did not receive passports and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation played a considerable role in selecting the persons to be sent to south Korea.

Right after the end of the Pacific War the US was hesitant about using Syngman Rhee in the United States and Kim Ku in China.

This was because they were considerably isolated from the people for their reckless and incoherent political views and, accordingly, it could impair the “prestige” of the US to support them openly.

But as the democratic forces gained in strength and the Right-wing forces weakened in south Korea the US hastened to bring them in. On October 16, 1945 Syngman Rhee flew into south Korea on a military plane MacArthur had sent, On November 4 Syngman Rhee’s underlings from the Korean Committee returned home.

Hodge wanted to appoint Syngman Rhee, who was an acknowledged anti-communist and spoke English, as a “political advisor”. On November 23 over 20 persons from the “Provisional Government of Korea”, including Kim Ku and Kim Kyu Sik, flew to Seoul on a US plane. At the same time the small “Korean Liberation Army” trained by the Chinese Nationalist militarists returned home, too.

The US military government announced that it did not recognize the Korean political exiles from abroad as representatives before they were elected but recognized them only in their individual capacities.

In its bulletin published in November 1945 the US State Department gave publicity to Syngman Rhee and his group from the US and the Koreans repatriated from China as

democrats. (The US State Department, *Bulletin*, November 8, 1945, p. 813.)

Syngman Rhee got together over 200 representatives of Right-wing political parties and formed the so-called “Central Commission for the Promotion of Independence”, which was an association of political parties. In this way he wanted to be a “supra-party leader”.

In this manner, connections between the Korean Democratic Party and Syngman Rhee and his cronies, and between Jo Pyong Ok, the “police chief” of the US military government office, and Syngman Rhee were formed.

The US intended to use Syngman Rhee and his like, who had neither trace of sincerity towards their political opponents nor intention to serve the nation nor sense of responsibility for it.

Exercising administrative right by regions, the US military government forcibly disbanded the people’s committees, which had rejected the US demand for their dissolution. On December 12 Hodge proclaimed that the occupation army would take all necessary measures against these organizations. (C. Berger, *The Korea Knot*, New York, 1957, p. 53.)

In September, when the US army landed in south Korea, there were no Japanese armed forces to be disarmed there owing to the positive activities of the people’s committees. The people’s committees maintained public order in all areas.

But the US army that entered south Korea on the plea of disarming the Japanese army disbanded the self-governing bodies of the Korean people and thwarted the expectations of the masses for independence and democracy.

Order No. 21 of the US military government announced that all laws under which Korean patriots had been hanged

under Japanese rule would remain in effect, and, in addition, enacted and proclaimed over 500 new laws.

Hodge, the US occupation army commander in south Korea, was invested with the same authority as MacArthur and Clay, the US occupation army commanders in Japan and Germany, the defeated nations, respectively.

Sovereignty over south Korean areas was held by the head of the US military government as in Japan and Germany. The orders and proclamations of Hodge were given priority over all other laws and regulations. Hodge was to obey only his superiors in Washington and MacArthur in Tokyo, and was responsible to them for his work.

During three years of military government in south Korea, Hodge trampled upon human rights without restriction—annulment of civil rights, search and arrest without warrant, punishment without trial, the wiretapping of telephones and the secret examination of mails.

The policy of winning over the pro-Japanese elements was inevitably attended with exclusion of the anti-fascist forces.

Therefore, even the nationalists who had pinned their hope on the US commitment to help Korea win sovereignty and independence began to be disgusted with the US occupation policy.

In his report dated November 19 to MacArthur, Hodge, reviewing the results of the military government over the previous two months, was compelled to admit: The Korean people want “immediate independence”. Resentment against the US is growing in Korea, and, such being the situation, the position and popularity of the US will gradually decline. (South Korean journal *Shindong-A*, 1985, No. 9, p. 305.)

The difference between north and south Korea was a direct reflection of the ideological confrontation of the USSR and the US in the international arena. With this political background, the “38th parallel” gradually became a fixed barrier between the north and the south of Korea, and made them more closed to each other.

In Japan which was a defeated state, an erstwhile bulwark of fascism and an enemy country, the US exercised indirect rule through the government of Katayama’s Socialist Party. But it enforced proclamations and military government rule in liberated Korea as if it had been an enemy country.

The year 1945, a year of great importance in human history, became the year of crisis of national division for the Korean people.

### **Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain—Same Bed but Different Dreams**

The Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain held foreign ministers’ conferences in London, Moscow and Paris to discuss the problems of postwar settlement after the Second World War in accordance with the decision of the Potsdam Conference.

The Three Foreign Ministers Conference was held on December 16-26, 1945 for the second time after the war in the Spiridonovska Palace in Moscow. The Korean question was discussed there.

Present were Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, US Secretary of State Byrnes and British Foreign Minister Bevin.

The conference debated the administration of Japan, the Korean question, the problem of formation of governments

in Rumania and Bulgaria, a plan for the management of atomic energy, and other matters.

On December 21 the United States and the USSR put forward their proposals during the debate on the Korean question.

The proposal the United States put forward at first was as follows:

1. To set up in Korea a single military government under the guidance of the commanders of both the US and Soviet occupation armies to rule Korea until the establishment of a trusteeship system. Koreans could be employed in the military government in the capacity of administrators, consultants and advisors, but they were to be placed under army commanders as far as possible;

2. During trusteeship an administration body composed of the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and China was to be established in Korea and placed under the supreme commissioner, and it was to exercise legislative, administrative and judicial rights in Korea. After five years of trusteeship rule, it was to be extended for another five years, if necessary;

3. During the above-mentioned period the problem of the establishment of a Korean government was not to be considered. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question, Appendix 2—Table of the Soviet and American Views*, Pyongyang, 1945, p. 1.)

The US proposal on Korea was shaped after the trusteeship rule of the Philippines, which was worked out by Roosevelt from 1943.

The Soviet Union opposed it. The Soviet proposal was as follows:

1. Establish a Democratic Provisional Government of Korea and carry out unification of Korea with the participation of the provisional government;

2. The trustees of Korea were to be composed of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and China. Its aim would be to take necessary prompt measures to help democratic development and the establishment of an independent state in Korea as well as the political, economic and social progress of the Korean people;

3. The proposal of trusteeship was to be adopted with the participation of the provisional government of Korea, and democratic, political parties and social organizations of Korea;

4. The four-power trusteeship was to be effected through the provisional government of Korea and bodies under it. (*Ibid.*)

As the two proposals show, both the United States and the USSR took attitudes opposed to each other on the problem of the establishment of a national government, the fundamental condition of the self-determination of a nation.

The United States at first envisaged enforcement of military government by the occupation army and introduction of trusteeship based on it, and then the establishment of a national government, while the Soviet Union proposed establishing a national government first and then assisting it by trusteeship.

The Soviet Union and the United States held entirely different views on the trusteeship of Korea.

The trusteeship insisted on by the United States was a sort of “mandatory rule” by a “supreme commissioner” who would hold the legislative, administrative and judicial rights in the trust country.

In contrast, the Soviet proposal for trusteeship envisaged transfer of the legislative, administrative and judicial rights to the national government of the trust country and then assistance to it in its progress towards independence.

The Soviet proposal stipulated that, in adopting the proposal for trusteeship, the political parties and social organizations of Korea should be consulted, and that trusteeship should be enforced through the provisional government of Korea.

As mentioned above, the United States attempted to dominate Korea, while the Soviet Union intended to assist Korea.

After debate at the conference, a decision on establishing the Democratic Provisional Government of Korea first and then assisting the independence and revival of Korea was adopted.

Concerning Korea, the decision of the Moscow Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain published on December 27, 1945 read as follows:

“... III. Korea

“1. With a view to the re-establishment of Korea as an independent state, the creation of conditions for developing the country on democratic principles and the earliest possible liquidation of the disastrous results of the protracted Japanese domination, there shall be set up a provisional Korean democratic government which shall take all the necessary steps for developing the industry, transport and agriculture of Korea, and the national culture of the Korean people.

“2. In order to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government and with a view to the preliminary

elaboration of the appropriate measures, there shall be established a Joint Commission consisting of representatives of the United States command in southern Korea and the Soviet command in northern Korea. In preparing their proposals the Commission shall consult with the Korean democratic parties and social organizations. The recommendations worked out by the Commission shall be presented for the consideration of the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, the United Kingdom and the United States prior to final decision by the two Governments represented on the Joint Commission.

“3. It shall be the task of the Joint Commission, with the participation of the provisional Korean democratic government and of the Korean democratic organizations to work out measures also for helping and assisting (trusteeship) the political, economic and social progress of the Korean people, the development of democratic self-government and the establishment of the national independence of Korea.

“The proposals of the Joint Commission shall be submitted, following consultation with the provisional Korean government for the joint consideration of the Governments of the United States, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom and China for the working out of an agreement concerning a four-power trusteeship of Korea for a period of up to five years.

“4. For the consideration of urgent problems affecting both southern and northern Korea and for the elaboration of measures establishing permanent coordination in administrative-economic matters between the United States command in southern Korea and the Soviet command in northern Korea, a conference of the representatives of the United States and Soviet commands in Korea shall be

convened within a period of two weeks.” (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question*, Vol.1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 10.)

The decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference recognized the rights of the Korean people to decide their own sovereignty on democratic principles by themselves.

The decision defined the trusteeship of Korea as the means of political, economic and social progress of the Korean people and of assistance to the “development of democratic self-government” of Korea, and as the chief means of “assistance and cooperation” for “national sovereignty” and revival. Moreover, in general, it ruled out the intervention of outside forces in Korea by stipulating that the concrete proposal of trusteeship should be worked out with the participation of Korean democratic political parties and social organizations.

The decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference received popular support in Korea.

The political parties and social organizations of north Korea made public a joint statement in support of the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference adopted on January 2, 1946.

The joint statement pointed out, “The founding of a Democratic Provisional Government of Korea referred to in the decision of the Moscow conference is the most important starting point for achieving the complete and free national sovereignty of Korea. We understand that the decision the USSR, the United States and Britain adopted on enforcing trusteeship over Korea of up to five years ... is the concrete expression of the sacred commitment the four Allied powers

made before the world's people that they would lend active assistance and cooperation for political, economic and social progress, that is, democratic political development and the establishment of a free, unified, complete sovereign state of Korea." (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *Documents on the Peaceful Reunification of the Country*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1962, pp. 2-4.)

The conference of heads of the Administrative Bureaus of North Korea and the South Phyongan Provincial People's Political Committee issued a statement which called on the entire Korean people to support the Moscow decision.

The patriotic, democratic forces of Korea recognized that there was no need to refuse the five-year trusteeship, on condition that it was conducive to the independence of Korea. In consideration of the unavoidable circumstances that armies of both the USSR and the United States were already stationed in the two regions of Korea, they decided to respect their standpoint and believed that the Big Powers would observe their commitment on the independence of Korea. It was an entirely correct attitude of the country and the people in the prevailing situation.

Chapter Twelve of the Charter of the United Nations, adopted two months before, stipulated that the principle of international trusteeship was to give "support" and "assistance".

Moreover, trouble arose from the double-dealing attitude of the United States towards the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

In south Korea, from early 1946 ultra-Rightist elements campaigned against the decision, with wirepulling by and the connivance of the US military government.

The ultra-Rightist nationalists, including Syngman Rhee, falsified the facts, as if it was on the insistence of the USSR that the “proposal for five-year trusteeship of Korea” was adopted in Moscow, and formed the “Committee for General Mobilization against Trusteeship”.

Although the United States insisted on including trusteeship in the decision of the Moscow conference, it instigated Rhee and his cohorts to “oppose trusteeship”, saying that “in case of four-power trusteeship the USSR would hold sway in the internal affairs of Korea”.

Syngman Rhee translated the ambiguous term “trusteeship” in the English original of the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference as “trusteeship rule”.

“Trusteeship” is a concept in civil law meaning, “committing the administration of property in trust”, whereas “trusteeship rule” means the “rule under which the sovereignty of one’s country is committed to another country”.

But the original wording of the decision did not mean “commitment of the sovereignty of one’s country to another country”. Therefore in the above-mentioned decision the Soviet people used the word *opeka* in the sense of guardianship.

Trusteeship in the political sense is the application of the legal concept of guardianship in the sphere of international relations.

According to Russian-English dictionaries, *opeka* is synonymous with trusteeship. “Guardianship” in Korean emphasizes the concept of projection, whereas “trusteeship rule” in Korean leans the concept of domination.

Syngman Rhee disregarded all the progressive aspects of the decision and, distorting the meaning of one word meant to denote assistance and cooperation for independence, took it as ground for making a reactionary racket. Syngman Rhee, who had requested “trusteeship” of Korea by the United States 25 years before, launched a “campaign against trusteeship”.

Syngman Rhee put up the preposterous slogan of “opposition to trusteeship” to place artificial obstacles in the way of the solution of the Korean question after the war in an attempt to sideline the democratic, political parties and social organizations in establishing the provisional government of Korea, and grasp political power for himself.

The United States portrayed Syngman Rhee’s “anti-trusteeship campaign” as a “campaign of the south Korean people themselves”. With the support of the United States, Syngman Rhee rallied anti-communist elements under the slogan of “opposition to trusteeship”. The Rightist press clamoured that trusteeship had been decided at the instance of the USSR, and that it was designed for the establishment of a Soviet regime in Korea.

The “four-power trusteeship of five years” was only part of the decision of the Three Foreign Ministers Conference on Korea. But the Rightist reactionaries took advantage of this part of the decision to oppose the general content of the decision, which guaranteed the independence and freedom of Korea.

The decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference on the postwar Korean question clearly revealed that the political forces of Korea were divided into those of progress and reaction, patriots and traitors to the nation.

The Soviet Union resented the attitude of the United States toward the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

On January 22, 1946 *TASS* reported that the Americans had incited people to reactionary demonstrations against the decision of the Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference, which the US government had participated in.

On January 23, 1946, when Stalin met US Ambassador to the USSR Harriman, who had come to pay a farewell visit, he said: I have received information that the US representative in Korea is already violating the agreement, although the plan for four-power trusteeship was worked out at the Moscow conference last December. To tell the truth, the plan was initiated by Roosevelt. Americans are said to be claiming that only the Soviets prefer the trusteeship administration of Korea. Trusteeship is not needed any more by the Soviet Government than by that of the United States. Trusteeship can be abolished if both countries deem it necessary. (A. Harriman, *Diplomatic Battle of a Special Envoy with Churchill and Stalin*, Vol. 2, Pyongyang, 1985, Korean ed., p. 619.)

In those days Hodge, falsifying the facts as if trusteeship had been proposed by the USSR, egged Syngman Rhee on to launch an anti-Soviet campaign.

In a press interview in Seoul on January 26, General Stykov disclosed the process of the Moscow conference including the American proposal for ten-year trusteeship and the Soviet proposal for shortening the trusteeship period to five years.

It came as a blow to Hodge and the US military government, who had instigated people to mount the anti-

trusteeship campaign, claiming that they alone desired the immediate independence of Korea.

Embarrassed, Hodge sent a letter to the US Department of State to the effect that Stykov's statement could make the Koreans realize that the United States had "sold" them out and throw the United States into an awkward situation. He wrote to MacArthur that he was ready to resign, if a "scapegoat" was required to keep the prestige of the United States, which had been branded as a hypocrite in Korea. (The US Department of War, *The History of the US Army in Korea*, Washington, pp. 89-92.)

The United States disbanded the Korean Military Advisory Council on February 14, 1946, and rigged up the "Democratic Chamber" of south Korea with the anti-trusteeship forces as the core. It appointed Syngman Rhee as its chairman, Kim Ku and Kim Kyu Sik as vice-chairmen and ultra-Rightist figures from the "Korean Democratic Party" as its members.

The work of the USSR-US Joint Commission for the implementation of the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference came to an impasse because of the clash of the incompatible policies of the United States and the Soviet Union.

### **Disruption of the USSR-US Joint Commission**

A conference of the representatives of the commands of the Soviet and US forces in Korea was held in Seoul from January 16 to February 5, 1946, in accordance with the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

Official meetings took place 15 times before the decision was made that the USSR-US Joint Commission was to be formed and start its work within one month, as decided at the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference. It was also decided that the staff of the Joint Commission should be composed of five members respectively from both sides, plus the required number of advisers and aides, and its permanent office was to be in Seoul.

The Soviet Union was represented at the Joint Commission by Stykov, Commissar of the Soviet Far East Front Army, and the US was represented by Arnold, US military governor in south Korea.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung proclaimed the Twenty-Point Platform on March 23, 1946, that had to be observed in the work of the USSR-US Joint Commission.

The Twenty-Point Platform was a programme for the genuine democratization of society, and the reunification and independence of the country, and the banner of struggle for building a new Korea, independent and flourishing.

The first meeting of the USSR-US Joint Commission was convened in the Toksu Palace in Seoul on March 20, 1946.

The first task of the Joint Commission was to work out the Constitution and Platform of the Provisional Government of Korea (PGK) and form the PGK through negotiations with various political parties and social organizations of Korea following the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference. The enforcement of trusteeship by the four Big Powers and aid for national development were the tasks of the following stage.

The USSR-US Joint Commission, entrusted with such a great and important mission, became deadlocked owing to

conflicting views concerning the matter of with whom it had to negotiate, that is, the first step in its work.

First, the US side proposed to form a “Negotiation Council”, and grant it the right to name Cabinet members of the PGK and draft preliminary constitution of the Korean state. They suggested that the “Negotiation Council” should be formed primarily of members of the “Democratic Chamber” as a privy council for the US military government in south Korea, with some representatives of democratic political parties of north Korea. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *Documents on the Peaceful Reunification of the Country*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1962, p. 27.)

The American intention was to establish the Korean provisional government depending on Syngman Rhee and pro-Japanese elements and traitors to the nation who belonged to the “Democratic Chamber”, and letting them play the central part in it, instead of enlisting large numbers of representatives from various political parties and social organizations.

Prior to the opening of the Joint Commission, Hodge was directed by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff that “undemocratic” political parties, organizations and personnel should be excluded from the arena of negotiations. The directive of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff noted that the communists were not qualified to represent the Korean people and, accordingly, their organizations were unwelcome. (The US Department of War, *The History of the US Army in Korea*, Washington, p. 145.)

The Soviet side objected to the American proposal, noting that it contradicted the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

The US side filed a revised list of so-called democratic political parties and social organizations eligible as partners for negotiation, including 17 political parties and six religious organizations led by pro-Japanese, treacherous and fascist elements affiliated with the “Democratic Chamber” of south Korea. They were all opposed to the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and its implementation in Korea.

The Americans included only three political parties which supported the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference under the Democratic National United Front. They excluded the representatives of the National General Council of Trade Unions of Korea (Jonphyong) with 800,000 members, the Peasant Union of Korea (Jonnong) with three million members, the Democratic Youth League with 650,000 members, and the Women’s Union representing half of the population.

The USSR side demanded that the political parties and organizations which were opposed to the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference be crossed off the name list of partners for negotiation. This was aimed at enrolling the representatives of broad democratic forces as partners for negotiation after removing the reactionary forces and pro-Japanese elements.

Proceeding from the desire not to rupture the conference, the Soviet side persuaded the US side to issue Joint Statement No. 5, which clarified the attitude of the Joint Commission toward the “anti-trusteeship” organizations. The joint statement published on April 18 made it clear that the commission would negotiate with the genuinely democratic political parties or organizations only after they had signed the appeal which called for their “support for, abidance by

and cooperation with” the decision of the Three Foreign Ministers Conference. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question*. Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 13.)

Many political parties and social organizations under the Democratic National United Front signed the appeal, pledging that they would support and abide by Joint Statement No. 5. The Soviet side insisted that, as provided in Joint Statement No. 5, only the organizations which supported and abided by the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference should be selected as parties recommendable for negotiation.

But the US side argued that to find fault with the movement against the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference was to restrict the freedom of expression and that anyone who signed the appeal mentioned in the USSR-US Joint Statement No. 5 should automatically be qualified as a partner for negotiation.

At that time Syngman Rhee instigated Jo Pyong Ok, then police chief under the US military government, to terrorism against democratic figures.

After prolonged argument the Soviet side proposed a compromise under which any political party or social organization would be qualified for negotiation if it voiced support for the Moscow decision and publicly condemned the “leaders” who had led them astray, and that these “leaders” should be excluded from the future Korean provisional government.

The US side rebuffed this, alleging that it was aimed at “purging” political parties by “order”. The US, which had dissolved the people’s committees voluntarily formed by the south Korean people themselves after the liberation, was

defending the Rightist terrorists like Syngman Rhee under the excuse of “respect” for the rights of political parties.

The work of the Joint Commission came to a deadlock. The US suggested a debate on “reunifying Korea economically” and “repeal of the 38th parallel” demarcation line, putting aside the item on the qualification for negotiation of democratic political parties and social organizations.

The USSR side rejected the American proposal. The removal of the 38th parallel demarcation line was not at all bad, but the USSR took it that in the then prevailing situation the initiative would be wrested from them by the US side, which controlled Seoul. Furthermore, the Soviet say over the tide of events would be impaired by the lifting of the 38th parallel demarcation line and an economic merger.

The Soviet side charged that the American proposal was a deviation from the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference. The USSR-US Joint Commission went into recess on May 6 after 48 days of fruitless debate, as the two sides failed to bridge their difference in their basic stands. The first session of the Joint Commission ended its work, with its last joint statement on practical matters being No. 7.

On May 9, 1946, in connection with the recess of the Joint Commission, Hodge made a statement favouring the anti-trusteeship organizations, harping on “freedom of speech”. The Americans charged the failure of the USSR-US negotiations to the lack of a concerted conception of the term “democracy” between both parties (Marshall’s letter dated April 8, 1946, to Molotov). After the recess of the Joint Commission the commander of the US armed forces in south Korea sent a letter to the commander of the Soviet army on

August 12, 1946, suggesting that the USSR-US Joint Commission should not persist in negotiations only with the political parties and social organizations that voiced full support for or were not opposed to the Moscow decision.

Chistyakov, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet army, said in his reply dated October 26 that the Soviet delegation was guided by the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference on Korea and would be steadfast in the future too, in endeavors for its implementation.

The sharpening conflict between the US and the USSR drove Korea farther along the course of division, in the opposite direction of reunification, and the 38th parallel turned from a demarcation line required to disarm the Japanese army into a political demarcation line bisecting Korea into north and south.

After the suspension of the first session of the Joint Commission the balance of political forces in south Korea turned very unfavorably to the United States.

Syngman Rhee, calling for the formation of a separate government, pressed Hodge to hand over the administrative power to him. But Hodge and Arnold did not overlook the fact that Syngman Rhee was becoming increasingly unpopular among the people, as he was engrossed in swindling, fraud and terrorism, blind with lust for power. The US, which regarded Syngman Rhee as its political cat's-paw, was compelled to reexamine its policy on south Korea. Hodge reported to his home government that it was difficult to rely on Syngman Rhee.

On May 22, 1946, two weeks after the Joint Commission adjourned indefinitely, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) discussed the Korean issue in Washington based on Hodge's report. The meeting heard the

report on the general situation in south Korea and exchanged opinions on the removal of Kim Ku and other anti-American figures in order to turn the balance of political forces in their favour in south Korea.

On June 6, 1946 the State Department sent the lengthy confidential memorandum *Policy vis-a-vis Korea* to the MacArthur Command and other concerned departments, with the concurrence of the departments of War and the Navy.

In the memorandum the US Administration noted that currently it was necessary to strengthen the ground to win the Koreans' support for US policy so that the Americans would get the upper hand in the negotiations with the USSR. For this, the nominal Democratic Chamber should be replaced by a transitional legislative body such as a "Legislature" to enlist as many Koreans as possible in it.

The memorandum urged the US military government to get the politicians, who had returned from abroad after the liberation, to "recede" from the political stage voluntarily and select as far as it could a new leader from among the people who had lived in Korea under Japanese rule. If the "old political exiles", incapable of representing Korea's political views and useless for the attainment of US objectives, "leave the scene" for the time being it would be conducive to satisfactory negotiations between the USSR and the US and greatly inspire south Korea's political forces.

This confidential fact, too, was first made known to the world after the lapse of 30 years with declassification.

The "old political exiles" in the minds of the Americans were Kim Ku and Syngman Rhee. At that time Kim Ku was inclining to the anti-American side, resenting the US occupation policy.

Why then did the Americans want to get rid of Syngman Rhee, their old pet? Because they feared that the disclosure of his true colours as a terrorist and swindler might cost America its foothold for colonial domination. Especially as the USSR refused to recognize Syngman Rhee, they had to forsake him for the benefit of negotiations with the USSR. The view regarding the Soviet Union as a wartime ally was still influential in the US Administration, and the cold war only came afterwards. The Americans informally designated Kim Kyu Sik, a pro-American figure and moderate Rightist, as the first probable candidate and thought of bringing him into a coalition with Kim Song Su, Jo Pyong Ok and others of the “Korean Democratic Party”.

They fought shy of extremists like Syngman Rhee and Kim Ku, and backed Kim Kyu Sik, a Rightist neutral, and sought to tie him with Ryo Un Hyong, a Leftist middle-roader. Pursuing such a strategy, they tried to isolate the communist forces and expand their ground by absorbing the neutral forces.

So the US dissolved the “Democratic Chamber” whose chairman was Syngman Rhee and formed the “Transitional Legislature of South Korea” as the legislative body under US military government. They appointed Kim Kyu Sik as its chairman on December 12, 1946.

The US statement concerning the politicians who had lived in Korea under Japanese rule alluded to Ryo Un Hyong, Kim Kyu Sik and the like. The US preferred Kim Kyu Sik, who was Right-wing and moderate, to Ryo Un Hyong, as they were skeptical of the latter’s stance slanted to alliance with communism.

The US officially banned “anti-trusteeship” campaigns. Meanwhile, it widely employed former pro-Japanese lackeys alongside the intense oppression of the communist party.

The UN Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) pointed out in its report to the UN that, as of December 1947, 20 per cent of high-ranking administration officials employed by the US military government were staying in the posts they had held in the Japanese ruling organs; and 83 per cent of the membership of the “legislature”, 53 per cent of the police and 79 per cent of the judges had pro-Japanese backgrounds. (*Official Report of the 3rd Session of the UN General Assembly*, Appendix 9, p. 507, *The Report of the United Nations Temporary Commission on the Korean Issue*.)

Some 6,000 who had been policemen under Japanese rule were reinstated in their former positions by the US military government.

On November 24, 1946 Hodge proposed a compromise in a letter to Chistyakov, the commander of the Soviet army, that if any personnel, political party or social organization which had signed Joint Statement No. 5 opposed the work of the U5SR-US Joint Commission and acted against any of the Allies or aided and abetted active campaigns against the implementation of the Moscow decision they could be excluded from the negotiations with the Joint Commission. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, pp. 20-21.)

Two days later, on the 26th, Chistyakov notified the US side that as the basis for the resumption of the work of the Joint Commission, they should negotiate with all democratic political parties and social organizations which actively supported the Moscow decision on Korea.

Consequently a new foundation for the resumption of the negotiations was laid as both sides had reached a consensus of opinion on the stipulation for the qualification for negotiation, i.e., the democratic political parties, social organizations and personnel who signed Joint Statement No. 5, should positively support or at least not oppose the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

But the Joint Commission did not resume. The Americans reviewed the failures of the US military government in Korea during the year 1946. During May and June 1946 Truman's envoy visited Korea to study the Korean situation. After his south Korean tour, the envoy presented to Truman the report *Opinion, Conclusion and Recommendations regarding the Political Affairs of Korea*.

In his report, Truman's envoy frankly expressed his apprehension over US Korean policy. He added that Korea was in the stage of the ideological war which would determine the US victory in Asia: in other words, it was the ground on which to test whether it was democracy or communism that would succeed the vanished feudalism. (H. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, *Year of Decisions*, New York, 1955, p. 224.)

At that time Truman himself considered Korea the ideal arena of contention apparently decisive to US success in Asia. Addressing the Congress, he declared that they were obliged to stay in Korea for a period long enough to fulfil their mission and had to appropriate an adequate number of personnel and ample funds for the attainment of that objective.

Truman pursued a hard-line foreign policy, and to this end replaced Secretary of State Byrnes, who had concluded many agreements with the USSR in wartime, with Marshall,

an extremist. Truman demanded that Korean policy be revamped with an uncompromising attitude of waging an ideological war between the two contradictory systems, not satisfied with the expansion of the US sphere of influence or the negotiations with the USSR.

From the beginning of 1947 Marshall surveyed the US policy vis-à-vis Korea and formed a high-level special committee directed by the Secretaries of State and War.

Marshall summoned Hodge to Washington through MacArthur so that the high-level special committee could hear the opinions and recommendations of the commander of the US forces in south Korea. At that time he told MacArthur that if Hodge was found to be responsible for US setbacks in Korea the Department of War had a candidate to succeed him as commander of the US forces in Korea.

But the high-level special committee concluded that the blame lay not with Hodge but with the makers of US vis-à-vis USSR policy who directed him, and decided to keep Hodge in his post. Meanwhile the special committee adopted a hard-line decision that if the USSR-US Joint Commission failed to meet the wishes of the US, the US would establish a separate pro-American government in south Korea. It decided to negotiate with the Soviet Union once again.

Marshall, present at the foreign ministers council meeting in Moscow on April 8, 1947, 11 months after the recess of the Joint Commission, proposed to Molotov to fix the date of the reopening of the Joint Commission for a debate on the issues existing between the two governments within the second half of 1947.

Molotov suggested that the Joint Commission meet again in Seoul on May 20 and submit the final proposal for the formation of a “democratic provisional government of

Korea” for the discussion of the two governments between July and August.

On May 2nd and 7th letters were exchanged between the two foreign ministers to narrow the differences of opinion concerning the democratic political parties and social organizations which supported the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference. Through this exchange of letters, Molotov and Marshall recognized the provision on the qualification for negotiation, an agreement on which was reached between the commanders of the Soviet and US forces in Korea by means of correspondence. Thus the USSR-US Joint Commission resumed at last. On May 21, 1947, one year and 11 days after the adjournment of the first session, the Joint Commission was held again in the Toksu Palace in Seoul. This was the so-called second session of the USSR-US Joint Commission. The senior delegate of the US side was replaced by Brown. During the second session some progress was registered in endorsing the general regulations on the ways and procedures of negotiations with Korean political parties and social organizations.

On June 11 and 12 the Joint Commission discussed and decided on the contents of the “Questionnaire regarding the formation and organizational principles of the Democratic Provisional Government of Korea” and the “Questionnaire concerning the platform of the Democratic Provisional Government of Korea” to solicit the opinions of the political parties and social organizations. It adopted the “regulations on negotiating with all the political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea.”

The written questionnaires were at once distributed to all democratic parties and social organizations in Korea.

For convenience's sake, 18 Tosan-ri in Pyongyang and the Toksu Palace in Seoul were designated as the contact places for the Joint Commission and social organizations. An agreement was reached on convening joint meetings of the Joint Commission and Korean political parties and social organizations respectively in Pyongyang and Seoul in accordance with the regional division of north and south Korea. The joint meetings of representatives of political parties and social organizations that had applied for attendance at the negotiations with the Soviet and US sides in connection with the effectuation of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference's decision were held on June 25 in Seoul and on June 30 in Pyongyang respectively.

In Pyongyang applications were filed by 38 political parties and organizations representing 1,330,000 people (three political parties and 35 organizations) and in Seoul by 422 "political parties" and "organizations" representing 5,200,000 people (36 political parties and 386 organizations).

However, a new obstacle appeared before the Joint Commission regarding the basic question of listing the parties for negotiations.

In south Korea many bogus organizations were rigged up by the pro-Japanese traitors and the Rightist elements who were becoming disheartened and isolated under the pressure of the excitement of national liberation and the prevailing anti-Japanese sentiments. They claimed participation in the negotiations with the Joint Commission. Some 80 per cent of the applicants for the negotiations, or about 300 so-called political parties and social organizations had been formed overnight by a few people, and, strange to say, the total of their alleged membership surpassed that of the south Korean population.

In this connection, the Soviet side demanded that only democratic political parties and social organizations whose membership surpassed 10,000 be allowed to take part in the negotiations, excluding those not qualifying as social organizations and small local bodies or unidentified bodies and those fabricated to oppose the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

The US side asserted that no definition had been given on the term “social organization” in the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and, charging the Soviet side with heaping groundless accusations on the Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee, they defended the committee, their instrument for overthrowing the Moscow decision. They maintained that any organization whose membership surpassed 1,000 should be considered as eligible for negotiations.

The Soviet side proposed beginning the negotiations with the political parties and social organizations recognized by both sides.

On July 16, in compliance with the demand of the US delegate, the Soviet delegate tendered a list of the organizations with a membership of more than 10,000. Listed were 119 political parties and social organizations of south Korea and 28 of north Korea—147 in all. Only the 20 political parties and social organizations affiliated with the “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee” were deleted from the Soviet list. Under the pretext that the Soviet delegation was trying to drag in only the affiliates with the Democratic National United Front while blocking the participation of the Rightist political parties, the US delegation turned down the Soviet proposal to start the negotiations only with the organizations clear of doubt. (Institute of International

Affairs, *Data on the Discussion of the Korean Issue at International Organizations and Meetings*, Pyongyang, 1983, p. 49.)

The Soviet side protested, stressing that they had abided by the principle of no partiality to the Right or Left in the drawing up of the list.

In fact, of 119 political parties and social organizations of south Korea, 74 were Rightist and 34 were Leftist. The remaining 11 were neutral. (*Ibid.*, p. 52.)

The Soviet delegation declared that the political parties and social organizations belonging to the “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee”, which were steadfast in opposing the Joint Commission and the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference, would be allowed into the negotiations only if they announced their withdrawal from the committee and discontinued the struggle against the Joint Commission and the Moscow decision. (*Ibid.*, p. 55.)

Going against the agreement between Molotov and Marshall that an organization would be eligible for the negotiations on condition that it supported the Moscow decision, not “instigating” or “pushing” others into opposing it, the US delegation stuck to its guns that affiliation with the “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee” did not disqualify an organization from the provisional government. Due to such conflicting attitudes of the Soviet and the US sides towards the Syngman Rhee clique, which was dead set against the Moscow decision, the Joint Commission was again stalemated.

Through the holding of the joint meetings following the distribution of the questionnaires of the Joint Commission, the democratic political parties, organizations and public figures further galvanized their activities for the

establishment of a democratic provisional government of Korea and the democratic forces rapidly grew stronger in all parts of the country. The rightist reactionaries became passive and enervated. The US could not remain indifferent to such developments.

From then on the US pursued the formation of a separate government based on a “Right-Left coalition” with Kim Kyu Sik as the pivot in south Korea.

In July 1947 the US rehashed the Provisional Legislative Council into the “Provisional Government of South Korea” and announced the “transfer of administrative power” to it. An Jae Hong stayed in the post of Civil Governor devoid of the right of personnel administration in the framework, under the supervision of the American military governor. The police were still in the grip of Jo Pyong Ok and Jang Thae Sang, associates of Syngman Rhee.

Meanwhile the US, spreading a rumour about the “menace of southward invasion”, moved towards fabricating a separate election. On August 6 they adopted the “basic law” concerning the formation of a separate government in south Korea.

In face of such American manoeuvres to hold a separate election, conscientious nationalists turned out in a struggle to save the country from the danger of national split.

Having realized the correctness of General Kim Il Sung’s policy for new nation-building and the patriotic and independent character of the changes which had taken place in north Korea, Ryo Un Hyong and his followers took the path of supporting the General. Alarmed by the adverse turn in the balance of political forces, Syngman Rhee had him assassinated on July 19, 1947.

Kim Kyu Sik, too, definitely declined the offer of becoming the first “President” and voiced opposition to a “separate election” and “separate government” advocated by the US, and, defying Hodge’s obstruction, advocated north-south negotiations.

Kim Kyu Sik was quoted as saying, “You will see two separate governments in this narrow space of a little over 85,000 square miles. This isn’t all. Once this happens it will last forever through generations to come and become perpetuated.

“Then both you and we would be held responsible for having split Korea into northern and southern halves.”

Kim Ku and his associates in the Korean Independence Party and “Provisional Government”, too, welcomed north-south negotiations.

Owing to their scheme to hold a separate election in south Korea, the Americans divorced themselves from the neutral political forces. Only the Syngman Rhee clique, the foolhardy advocate of the separate election, took sides with the US. But Syngman Rhee, the terrorist, was isolated in south Korean society. Under the impact of such a balance of political forces, the US wavered at the crossroads: whether to respect the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and depend on the USSR-US Joint Commission as the party concerned or whether to save the pro-US Syngman Rhee clique, disrupt the USSR-US parley and push through a separate election by means of force. The US chose to employ Syngman Rhee, a faithful running dog, and his reactionary force.

Reviewing the progress of the USSR-US negotiations, B.C.N. Murti, an Indian scholar, said that the American delegate, Brown, was resolutely opposed to the then

prevailing tide of events favourable to the Leftist patriotic forces in the seizure of complete administrative control over the whole of Korea. The US military command lifted the ban on mass demonstrations opposing the Moscow agreement, and actually instigated the Rightists to overtly attack the Soviet Union. (B.C.N. Murti, *India's Stand on Korea*, New Delhi, 1953, p. 11.)

The Americans withdrew even the nominal ban on the “anti-trusteeship” campaign and turned to instigating it. Syngman Rhee, who was eager to profit politically from the rupture of the Joint Commission, again raised an “anti-trusteeship” din in line with the American scenario.

And so, the Joint Commission got stranded again, leaving the negotiations to be undertaken by the two governments.

In a letter to Molotov on August 12, Marshall noted that what the Soviet Union and the US had agreed to on May 2 had been that the representatives of democratic parties and social organizations of Korea “would never be pushed aside so long as they were willing to cooperate with the USSR-US Joint Commission”. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 44, Marshall’s letter.)

On August 23 Molotov replied that only organizations which officially severed their ties with the “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee” and declared their withdrawal from it were eligible for the negotiations. (*Ibid.*, p. 48, Molotov’s letter.)

*The Records on Korean Unification* published by the US Department of State coincides with this point that at the very inception of the negotiations an agreement was reached between the two delegations as to the qualifications for

attendance at the negotiations on establishing an all-Korea provisional government, i.e. that all political parties and organizations must sign statements pledging to cooperate with the Joint Commission and observe its decision in respect to the Moscow decision.

The very name “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee” and its continued unchanged existence manifested the stand opposing the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference, and so the committee was incompatible with cooperation with the USSR-US Joint Commission; accordingly it was natural to restrict its members’ participation in the implementation of the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

The Americans, however, insisted that signing Joint Communiqué No. 5 amounted to showing full support for the Moscow decision, even though the signer did not quit the committee or discontinue organized acts opposing trusteeship.

On September 19, 1946 even Wedemeyer, who studied Korean and Chinese affairs as a Truman’s special envoy, told the President that the acts of Syngman Rhee and his ilk affiliated with the “Anti-Trusteeship Struggle Committee” were a terrorist acts of the ultra-Rightists, going far beyond the scope of the simple expression of opinion.

Thus, while clamouring about “free expression of one’s intention” and “promotion of democracy”, the US was harsh in the suppression of speech by the political parties and organizations which voiced support for the Moscow decision.

In a letter to Marshall, Molotov wrote that, contrary to his statement that the slightest restriction of freedom of speech was intolerable, an abnormal and unbearable situation prevailed in south Korea, where the political parties and

social organizations which welcomed the Moscow decision were being subjected to the most heinous restrictions and suppression by the US military authorities. (*Ibid.*, p. 49, Molotov's letter.)

In south Korea waves of arrest and suppression spread against the leaders of Left-wing forces and the representatives of democratic political parties and social organizations, active supporters of the Moscow decision, selected for participation in the negotiations with the Joint Commission.

The representatives of democratic organizations who met the Soviet delegates in Seoul were arrested in their presence. On August 20, 1947 General Stykov protested against such wholesale suppression of democratic political parties and social organizations in south Korea.

Meanwhile the US side accused the Soviet delegate to the USSR-US Joint Commission of inciting riots in US-controlled territory, and pressed the Soviet side to suspend verbal negotiations with democratic political parties and social organizations. From then on the US side took an attitude increasingly detrimental to negotiations.

These steps taken by the US during the second session of the USSR-US Joint Commission in the latter half of 1947 were the first reflection of the new US global policy of anti-communism and cold war.

For Truman, dramatic tension was required for his victory in the 1948 Presidential election.

To divert the attention of the voters elsewhere by concocting war hysteria against an imaginary "enemy" and fomenting a war atmosphere is the strategy and tactics of bourgeois politics. This also accorded with the expansionist

ambitions of American monopolies, which had grown fat in wartime.

On March 12, 1947 Truman addressed a “special message” to the joint convention of the two houses of Congress on “wiping out” communism in Greece and Turkey, and declared the policy of political and military intervention against socialism. This became known as the “Truman Doctrine” or “Proclamation of the Cold War”.

Addressing Harvard University on June 5, Secretary of State Marshall announced the so-called “European Recovery Plan” (ERP or Marshall Plan) to contain the expansion of communism in Europe, and Undersecretary of State Acheson declared that the US could not endure any further expansion of communist rule into the Asian continent or the Southeast Asian region.

The US set about forming a military alliance to blockade the sphere of Soviet influence in Europe. This gave birth to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

To counter the US and its allies, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and a number of workers’ and communist parties founded the “Communist Information Bureau” (Cominform) in Warsaw in October 1947.

In Europe, the Administration Council for Germany composed of the Soviet Union, the US, Britain and France became paralyzed and tense war atmosphere hovered between the East and West in connection with the Berlin Blockade initiated by Stalin. The “Far East Council”, the administrative body of the Allied powers over Japan, failed to reach any joint agreement.

The conflict between the two forces in Europe brought the Soviet-American parley on the Korean issue to a rupture in Asia.

Marshall formed a joint committee of the Korean specialists of the State and War Departments and authorized it to propose what was required for the Korean question under the new Cold War situation. The joint committee concluded that the withdrawal of the US armed forces from Korea at that time would help the Soviet Union to convert the Korean peninsula into its satellite, and so the US should discontinue carrying out the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and establish a provisional government in Korea through a general election under UN supervision. On August 6 Halding, the then Undersecretary of State in charge of affairs in occupied areas, assented to the proposal of the joint committee and submitted it to Marshall.

Marshall again asked the opinions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and George Kennan, head of the Policy Planning Board, who was then noted as a “specialist on the communist sphere”.

Kennan and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who knew well, through Hodge’s report dated July 9, 1947, about the difficulties caused by the failure to win the support of the Koreans, were unanimous on the point that in the situation obtaining in Korea the wisest way for the US to save face was to pull out its troops quietly, and tendered proposals on the withdrawal of US troops from Korea to the Secretary of State on both the 24th and 26th of September.

On the other hand, independently of the State Department, Truman dispatched Wedemeyer, the so-called Asian expert and a kingpin in US military circles, to Korea for a report on the Korean question.

Wedemeyer, an active supporter of Truman’s Cold War policy, studied the south Korean situation and then consulted with US military circles and monopoly business groups

before sending his lengthy special report to Truman on September 19, 1947.

The report suggested that if economic aid to south Korea were suspended south Korea would be thrown into confusion and then the US army would not be able to hold on there. If the US army withdrew, it went on, south Korea would be communized by the Soviet army or the north Korean army, and the Korean peninsula would be reduced to a Soviet satellite. In that case, US prestige would plummet in Asia, and Japan would also react to this and be exposed to the danger of turning Red, these developments eventually favouring Soviet expansionist policy.

It went on to say that if the USSR-US Joint Commission was considered hopeless, the Korean question should be consigned to the four Big Powers conference; if this was stalemated, the UN General Assembly should try to settle it; and if this was unsuccessful, the US must decide Korea's future single-handed. Under whatever circumstances the US should not abandon Korea, the report emphasized.

Wedemeyer proposed forming a Korean Volunteer Corps in sufficient strength commanded by American officers to replace the south Korean police.

Wedemeyer's recommendations that the US should on no account waive its rule over Korea and the end would justify the US violation of international agreements accorded with the interests of the US monopoly business groups and the opinions of Truman, Marshall and the US Administration. Thus, the "Wedemeyer Plan" prevailed over George Kennan and the Joint Chiefs of Staff's proposal for the US army's withdrawal from Korea, and thenceforward became the America vs. Soviet Union and Korea policy. (On May 25,

1951, State Secretary Acheson stated that the “Wedemeyer Plan” had been largely put into force by the US government.)

Facing the danger of Korea’s division, the Soviet side conceded the US suggestion for receiving only the written opinions of democratic political parties and social organizations in place of face-to-face negotiations with them. And it advanced a new proposal on setting up an advisory body, the provisional “Korean People’s Assembly” formed of the representatives of Korean democratic political parties and social organizations before August 27. That time, too, the US side objected to the Soviet proposal groundlessly.

Instead, the US proposed a “four Big Power conference”, inclusive of Britain and Nationalist China, for the settlement of the Korean issue in accordance with the “Wedemeyer Plan”. On August 26, 1947 Walter Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs sent a letter which enclosed the US proposal on Korea to Molotov, suggesting the four Big Power conference be held in Washington on September 8 attended by the US, Britain, China and the USSR, which had all approved the Moscow decision, and invited the USSR side to the conference.

The US proposal was as follows: A provisional legislative council should be formed separately on each side (north and south) of Korea through elections, and on this basis an all-Korea provisional legislative assembly should be formed of representatives selected from both areas in proportion to the respective populations. It should meet in Seoul when a unified Korean provisional government is formed, and the four Big Powers, the signatories of the Moscow agreement, should negotiate with this government and help it promulgate a temporary constitution. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People’s Republic of

Korea, *References to the Korean Question*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 50.)

The US proposal especially envisaged UN supervision over all the above-mentioned processes. In short, Robertson proposed the formation of a unified government through UN-supervised elections in proportion to the populations above and below the 38th parallel.

Robertson sent similar letters to Britain and Nationalist China, and invited their delegates to Washington, Britain and Nationalist China readily accepted the invitation.

The proposal for a “UN-supervised election” showed that the US was making arbitrary efforts to get out of its impasse in Korea.

The September 8 cable message addressed to the Secretary of State by Joseph E. Jacobs, political adviser to Hodge, is proof of this.

It said: Sooner or later the Americans and the Congress will realize that we would come to a pretty pass when the Leftist forces try to expel us and the Rightist forces rebut our one sided demand. If things come to such a pass the US would have no alternative but to let go of Korea whether it likes it or not. Unless we take counter-measures such as a new plan for a big four-nations’ conference or a plan backed by the UN the US would be spurned by Koreans from both right and left.

By substituting a four-power conference for the USSR-US Joint Commission, the US sought to contain the Soviet Union with the aid of Britain and Nationalist China.

In a letter dated September 4, 1947 to the US side Molotov opposed the US proposal on the ground that the establishment of separate provisional legislative councils in the north and south, instead of an all-Korea unitary power

organ, the Democratic Provisional Government, would only deepen Korea's division, and pressed the US to support the formation of the Soviet-proposed provisional "Korean people's assembly." (*Ibid.*, p. 53.)

The letter urged the US side not to restrict the freedom of activities of the democratic political parties and social organizations, and called its attention to the fact that the US military government was arresting and suppressing people of democratic parties and social organizations of south Korea.

The US side rejected the Soviet proposal on entering into the performance of the agreed provisions.

Now that it had become apparent that the Philippine-type trusteeship outlined by Roosevelt a few years before could hardly be realized in Korea through negotiations with the Soviet Union owing to the overpowering democratic forces, the Americans took another extreme tack. On September 17, 1947 Robertson hinted to Molotov of the end of the USSR-US Joint Commission by clarifying the stand of the US government to bring the question of Korea's independence to the coming UN General Assembly.

On September 26, 1947, in connection with the rupture of the USSR-US Joint Commission, General Stykov issued a statement in Seoul proposing that the Soviet and US troops should be withdrawn from Korea simultaneously at the beginning of 1948 and the Korean issue be settled by the Korean people themselves.

At the same time Stykov reviewed the successive steps taken by the US concerning trusteeship and declared that the best way for the Korean people to establish a unified independent state without going through trusteeship was the withdrawal of the Soviet and US troops from Korea. Only when Korea had its own government supported by its people

and when the Soviet and US troops had been withdrawn could it become a sovereign and independent state. And on behalf of the Soviet delegation he announced that if the US delegation agreed with the proposal on the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea at the beginning of 1948 the Soviet army would get ready to quit Korea simultaneously with the US army. (*Ibid.*, p. 61.)

The official stand of the Soviet side on the simultaneous withdrawal of foreign troops was reiterated in Molotov's October 9, 1947 letter to Marshall.

Marshall opposed the withdrawal of armed forces, describing it as a phase of the Korean question. Syngman Rhee called upon the US forces to stay on in Korea.

On October 11, 1947 an agreement was reached between Marshall and Molotov on the point that the USSR-US Joint Commission should take measures for the effectuation of the Moscow decision and submit a joint report on its work. But the joint report never saw the light of day owing to the fundamental differences between the two sides.

Finally the US delegate Brown officially declared the recess of the Joint Commission on October 18, 1947. On October 20 the Soviet Union made public a statement denouncing the US stand and recalled its delegation from Seoul,

With the increasing US-USSR post-World War II Cold War scramble for world supremacy, the USSR-US Joint Commission failed to carry out the most elementary tasks assigned to it in the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference and broke down totally after a short life of one year and seven months.

## **The Korean Question and the United Nations**

The United Nations, the product of the wartime cooperation of the Allies, turned into an arena of acute ideological and political confrontation between socialism and capitalism, the forum of Cold War diplomacy following World War II . From the first days of UN activity democratic forces bitterly realized that no agreement could be reached on the fundamental problems relating to world peace and the guarantee of security, the mission of the organization.

Sharp conflicts surfaced on the Korean question in particular.

The general counter-offensive of the Chinese People's Liberation Army which started in July 1947 brought Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government to the brink of collapse. Faced with the prospect of losing her base on the Asian continent, the United States attached greater strategic importance to the Korean peninsula. Thus, debate on the Korean question in the United Nations was heated from the beginning.

In his speech at the second session of the UN General Assembly on September 17, 1947 Secretary of State Marshall shifted to the Soviet Union the responsibility for delaying Korean independence for more than two years and submitted the US draft resolution on the Korean question for debate at the United Nations. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *References to the Korean Question*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1954, p. 56.)

Vshinsky, head of the Soviet delegation attending the General Assembly, refuting Marshall's statement, said that the United Nations was not entitled to adopt any measure concerning the Korean question in the light of its Charter because the Korean question was a direct product of the war.

Referring to the fact that an international agreement on the Korean question had already been concluded in Moscow in December 1945, he pointed out, "The problems of postwar settlement, such as the Korean question, cannot be agenda items of the UN General Assembly because there is an international agreement on this." (*Ibid.*, p. 58.)

On September 23, six days later, the United States carried the resolution on placing the Korean question on the agenda of the UN General Assembly with the aid of her allies, and submitted it to the First Committee for consideration.

On October 17, 1947 Austin, the US delegate to the United Nations, presented the US resolution on "the problem of the independence of Korea" (A/C, 1/218) as the basis for debate on the Korean question at the UN First Committee.

The draft resolution on "the problem of the independence of Korea" submitted by Austin was aimed at setting up the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, holding elections on the principle of representation proportionate to the number of the population in the whole area of north and south of Korea under its observation and forming a Korean government.

The US proposal for an election under UN supervision was aimed at bringing the pro-US forces into power, taking advantage of their superior "voting machine". The Soviet Union, therefore, opposed it.

On October 28 Gromyko, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, demanded that the Korean delegation be

invited to all the debates on the Korean question, including the formation of “the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea” to be discussed by the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, and declared that the Soviet Union would not take part in the debate of the question in case his demand was not met. To counter the US proposal, on October 29, he submitted to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly a draft resolution (A/C, 1/232) on withdrawing the Soviet and US troops from Korea by the end of 1948, thereby leaving to the Korean people themselves the establishment of a national government without foreign interference.

The United States had the Soviet proposal to invite the Korean delegation rejected by the First Committee.

On October 30 the Soviet side pointed out that it was unfair to have the question debated by the First Committee and the General Assembly without the participation of the delegation elected by the Korean people, and presented again the draft resolution on putting off the debate on the Korean question. The United States, however, had it also voted down.

On November 5, the First Committee rejected the Soviet proposal on troop withdrawal and adopted a resolution in support of the US proposal for elections under UN supervision, and submitted it to the plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

Both the Soviet and US draft resolutions on the Korean question were put to a vote in the UN General Assembly on November 14, 1947. At the 110th Plenary Meeting of the Second Session of the UN General Assembly the United States had the Soviet proposal on the simultaneous withdrawal of troops rejected by a vote of 34 to 7, taking advantage of the then UN composition favourable to the

United States. On the other hand, at the 112th Plenary Meeting of the Second General Assembly Session on the same day the United States had its proposal for elections under UN supervision carried by a vote of 43 to 0.

Referring to the unreasonableness of the US proposal, the Soviet Union declared that it would not take part in the debate on the US proposal. The five socialist countries in the UN, including Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, also boycotted the vote on the US draft resolution.

The United States had the voting conducted without the participation of the concerned party in the Korean question and the main concerned countries.

The adopted resolution 112 (II) on the problem of the independence of Korea which was submitted by the United States:

1. Recommends that, in order to observe that the Korean representatives are in fact duly elected by the Korean people and not appointed by military authorities in Korea, there be forthwith established a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, to be present in Korea, with the right to travel, observe and consult throughout Korea:

2. Recommends that the elections be held not later than March 31, 1948 on the basis of adult suffrage and by secret ballot to choose representatives constituting a National Assembly. The number of representatives from each voting area or zone should be proportionate to the population, and the elections should be under the observation of the Commission, consisting of nine countries. Further recommends that the National Assembly should form a National Government, and that, immediately upon the establishment of a National Government, that Government should constitute its own national security forces, take over

the functions of government from the military commands, and arrange with the occupying Powers for the complete withdrawal from Korea of their armed forces as early as practicable, and if possible within 90 days. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *UN Resolutions on the Korean Question, 1947-1957*, Pyongyang, 1958, pp. 31-35.)

The debate on the Korean question in the United Nations and the UN resolutions on it go against Article 52 of the UN Charter, which stipulates, "Nothing in the present charter, precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters... as are appropriate for regional action..." and Article 107, which stipulates, "Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action..., taken or authorized as a result of that war. ..."

The Korean question is one of the problems of postwar settlement and is outside the competence of the United Nations.

The UN Charter stipulates that the problems presented as a result of the Second World War, solution to which has already been reached by an international agreement, shall not be considered in the United Nations.

Article 107 of the UN Charter stipulates: "Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory to the present Charter, taken or authorized as a result of that war by the Government having responsibility for such action."

If this article was ignored, the United Nations should deliberate again all the actions taken by victor states, including the United States, during and after the Second World War.

Korea was not an aggressor or defeated state but won liberation from Japanese colonial rule. Proceeding from the fact that Japan, which had occupied Korea, was defeated in the war it provoked, the victor countries regarded the Korean question as one to be settled by them, and thus decided the principles of its solution at the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference.

As long as the regional arrangement taken as a result of the Second World War existed and as long as the consultative body called the USSR-US Joint Commission for its implementation existed the Korean question was clearly beyond the functions and powers of the United Nations. But the then UN composition was heavily favourable to the United States.

Trygve Lie (a Norwegian), the first Secretary General of the United Nations, oriented all UN policies to the United States.

Taking advantage of the United Nations, the United States declined mutual consultation with the Soviet Union and contained the latter by its majority in the United Nations.

“The UN Temporary Commission on Korea” consisted of delegates from Australia, China (Nationalist), Canada, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines, Syria and Ukraine. Ukraine declined to participate when the Korean question was discussed in the United Nations.

On January 12, 1948 the Commission arrived in Seoul and began preparations for holding elections on the principle of representation proportionate to the populations of the north and south of Korea. K.P.S. Menon (of India) was elected Chairman of the Commission.

Declaring the discussion itself of “the Korean question” in the United Nations to be illegal, the Soviet Union did not

take part in the vote on the US draft resolution on “the problem of the independence of Korea” nor recognize the existence of “the UN Temporary Commission on Korea”.

The UN Secretary General requested through Gromyko, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, that the Commission be allowed to pay a courtesy call on Chistyakov, the representative of the Soviet occupying forces in Korea, but the Soviet Union rejected this.

The Commission could not enter north Korea.

The danger of the division of Korea was looming.

### **Tragic Demarcation along the 38th Parallel**

When “the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea” was denied access to north Korea, the United States decided to hold elections in south Korea alone and tried to put the matter to a vote in the United Nations.

The resolution was not passed in the UN Security Council because the Soviet Union, a permanent member of the Security Council, vetoed it. Almost one year remained until the third session of the UN General Assembly.

If the situation in Korea had continued to develop for another year like it was doing in those days, a new situation would have been created with the rapid growth of the democratic forces, and then the US would have lost its opportunity.

The United States set up a “Little Assembly” called the Interim Committee of the General Assembly, a new body to deliberate the agenda, which was not envisaged in the UN Charter. The United States submitted “the Korean question” to the Little Assembly for deliberation on February 19, 1948.

The socialist countries including the Soviet Union denounced the convention of the Little Assembly for the reason that “it was not provided for in the UN Charter”, and took no part in it.

In the UN Little Assembly Secretary of State Marshall put forward a draft resolution on setting up a government by holding a separate “election” in “the area of Korea accessible to the Commission in case it is impossible for the Commission to observe the elections throughout the whole of Korea”, and requested the representatives of different countries to vote for it. This was a proposal to divide Korea.

At the meeting Sweden and Norway took a stand against the separate “election” in south Korea. The Swedish delegate said that he did not approve of it because there were no official data on the situation in Korea and because the UN Little Assembly was not designed for the discussion of the Korean question. The Norwegian delegate pointed out that it was beyond the powers of the Little Assembly given to it by the UN General Assembly for the Little Assembly to adopt the US draft resolution.

The United States, however, got the proposal for the division of Korea passed by a vote of 31 to two, with 11 abstentions, by putting its “voting machine” into action.

The resolution (A/583) “carried” at the Little Assembly reads in part, “...resolves that in its opinion it is incumbent upon the UN Temporary Commission on Korea under the terms of the General Assembly resolution of November 14, 1947, and in light of developments in the situation with respect to Korea since that date, to implement the programme as outlined in resolution 112 ( II ), in such parts of Korea as are accessible to the Commission”. (Institute of

International Affairs, *Data on the 38th Parallel*, Pyongyang, 1984, p. 81.)

The United States had the “UN resolution” adopted by the UN Little Assembly and entrusted the UN Temporary Commission on Korea with its implementation. It secured division by the force of the US army in south Korea.

The Korean people were faced with a serious menace of national division. To cope with the situation the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung led the whole people to launch a struggle against the US-sponsored separate election.

On February 20, 1948, the day after the proposition of the resolution on the separate election in the UN Little Assembly, the Central Committee of the Democratic National United Front of North Korea made public its appeal to the entire Korean people at its 24th conference.

The appeal for the first time shed light to all the activities of the Soviet and US armies during the two and a half years of their presence in Korea and made clear that the US was responsible for the decision of the Moscow Three Foreign Ministers Conference not being carried out and the breakup of the USSR-US Joint Commission.

It indicated that it was clear what kind of election would take place in south Korea, where democratic parties and organizations had been forced underground and democrats were being arrested, imprisoned, tortured and murdered, and called for a general election across the whole of Korea after the withdrawal of the foreign armies. It called for holding elections to the People’s Assembly throughout Korea by secret ballot on the principles of universal, direct and equal vote. The People’s Assembly elected in that way would approve the constitution and establish a democratic

government. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *Documents on National Reunification*, Vol. 1, Pyongyang, 1962, pp. 93-94.)

Comrade Kim Il Sung put forward the line of convening a joint conference of political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea.

On March 25 the political parties and social organizations of north Korea sent an appeal against a separate election to the political parties and social organizations of south Korea.

Faced with the serious menace of division of the nation by the United States, Kim Kyu Sik, Kim Ku and other nationalists in south Korea supported the policy of establishing a unified government of north and south Korea in order to prevent national division, and resolutely and finally parted from Syngman Rhee and the reactionaries of the "Korean Democratic Party" who advocated a separate election.

Kim Ku opposed election under UN observation, claiming that "the United Nations is an extraneous body with no right to interfere in the internal affairs of Korea". Kim Kyu Sik also opposed it for the reason that a separate election would mean "the permanent division of the country".

Thus, seven public figures, including Kim Ku and Kim Kyu Sik who led 12 political parties and social organizations including the Korean Independence Party complied with the proposal for a north-south political conference as opposed to a separate election.

In April 1948 there was held in Pyongyang a joint conference of 16 political parties and 40 social organizations of north and south Korea for the first time since liberation, with the participation of 695 representatives of the north and

the south, including Kim Kyu Sik, Hong Myong Hui and Kim Ku, who had crossed the 38th parallel to be present.

The joint conference adopted a decision calling for opposition to the separate election, the withdrawal of foreign troops and the founding of a unified democratic state, and issued a manifesto.

The representatives from the political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea also adopted a joint statement on April 30 in Pyongyang.

First, it officially called for the simultaneous withdrawal of the troops of the USSR and the United States, pointing out that “We, the Korean people, are mature enough to settle our problems by ourselves without foreign interference, and our country has many cadres prepared to settle them.”

Second, it said that complete order would be established without civil war or disorder, which was guaranteed by the indomitable desire of the people for national reunification” and the “commitment of the political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea”.

Third, that after the withdrawal of the foreign troops the political parties would convene a Korean political conference under their joint auspices and set up a temporary democratic government, which would elect a unified legislative body by secret ballot on the principle of general, direct and equal vote, which, in its turn, would establish a Korean constitution and a unified democratic government.

Fourth, that the separate election in south Korea, even if it were held, would be a deception because the political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea, involving more than ten million people, namely, the overwhelming majority of voters, were opposed to it and that they would not recognize it. (*Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.)

The manifesto was signed by 42 political parties and social organizations of north and south Korea which opposed the division of the country and people.

The United States lost all grounds for insisting on a separate election and for opposing the withdrawal of their troops.

Particularly in south Korea there arose a fierce struggle against a separate election. Two million workers staged a general strike on February 7, and 250,000 people rose in revolt on Jeju Island.

Only Syngman Rhee and some reactionaries from the Korean Democratic Party supported a separate election in south Korea.

In June 1946 Syngman Rhee asked the United States to hold a separate election in south Korea alone, and, on September 1, to submit the Korean question to the United Nations for consideration.

When the matter of a separate election in south Korea was put to the vote only four out of eight member countries of the UN Temporary Commission on Korea voted for it. Two member countries voted against it and two abstained. This was in fact tantamount to rejection.

The Australian delegate demanded that the separate election be suspended because it was clear that all the political parties in south Korea except the ultra-Right-wing party would boycott it.

The Canadian delegate warned that it had been an illegal and indiscreet act for the Little Assembly to have accepted the US draft resolution, and that it would create a new and grave situation.

The United States, however, was determined to hold a separate election in south Korea at any cost on the strength

of the resolution of the UN Little Assembly. After the meeting of the UN Little Assembly, Hodge fixed and made public the date of the election without consultation with the Temporary Commission in advance. The US military government enacted “the election law” and even drew up a “list of the ministers of the government” beforehand.

On May 10, 1948 the United States carried out the separate election under UN observation in accordance with the “election law” enacted by the US military government.

Police boss Jo Pyong Ok, of Syngman Rhee’s faction, secured the election of the reactionaries from the Korean Democratic Party by using the police force. A special correspondent of the US *UP* News Agency who covered the “election” in Seoul at that time reported as follows:

“With US reconnaissance planes in the air, polling stations were closely guarded by ‘Homeland Defence Corps’ men carrying baseball bats. Thousands of policemen and selected civilians set up barricades at places and junctions with the aid of US troops, and guards were placed at the entrances to bystreets in Seoul. Civilian guards carried axe handles, baseball bats and clubs, and south Korean security men were armed with US carbines. The atmosphere there was evocative of that in a city under martial law.” (*History of US Aggression of Korea*, Vol. II, Pyongyang, p. 78.)

Hodge turned down the south Korean people’s request for the dismissal of Jo Pyong Ok from his post as head of the police of the military government and Jang Thae Sang from his post as head of the Metropolitan Police.

Japanese scholar Terao Goro wrote about the suppression perpetrated by the United States in south Korea as follows: “The course which led to the May 10 separate election was literally a succession of terror, murder, torture, arson and

blackmail which exceeded the violence used by Japan for the annexation of Korea.” (Terao Goro, *Introduction to the Korean Question*, Tokyo, 1965, p. 31.)

According to the memoirs of the members of the UN Temporary Commission on Korea which have been made public, they said to their American companions: “The election would be a success if all did not seem to have been staged by Syngman Rhee’s troops. We know that Syngman Rhee, his police and the Korean Democratic Party stand behind the election wherever we go, How shall we account for this, when we return to the United Nations?”

Bruce Cummings, a professor at the University of Washington, described what went on behind the scenes before the election under UN observation which was manipulated by the US ruling circles as follows: “The files of the G.I.A. dated March 1948 which predicted the results of the election two months before it was held are now available, What they said was that Syngman Rhee would win the election and a tyrannical Rightist dictatorship would be established. Landlords and policemen who had served Japan would be the class foundation for the dictatorship. This is the unhappy history of the Koreans.”

The “elected delegates” got together on May 27 to form the “National Assembly of south Korea” and elected Syngman Rhee, a traitor to the nation, “acting chairman”, following the premeditated scheme of the US military government. On May 31 Syngman Rhee tried to display his legitimacy by “recommending that north Korea elect delegates as the UN resolution requires and fill the 100 seats of the assembly which are left unoccupied”.

The “elected delegates” enacted an anti-communist constitution in June, and appointed Syngman Rhee president

on July 20. On August 15 they proclaimed the “Republic of Korea” and staged a farce of “transfer of sovereign power” from the US military government.

On August 12 Truman “recognized” the “government” diplomatically and appointed John Jo Muccio as US “Ambassador” to south Korea. The United States issued a statement to the effect that it recognized the Korean government set up in south Korea as recommended in the UN General Assembly resolution of November 14, 1947, and that this was the stand of the US government. On the same day Chiang Kai-shek announced “recognition” by Nationalist China, following the United States.

With the establishment of the puppet ruling machinery in south Korea, the 38th parallel North, which had been fixed by the United States three years before as the boundary line for disarmament of Japanese troops, turned into the line of division of the Korean nation into two.

Faced with the danger of the division of the country and people, the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung convened the Conference of the Leaders of Political Parties and Social Organizations of North and South Korea in Pyongyang on June 29, 1948, and saw to it that a decision on holding a general election in north and south Korea was adopted.

The general election was held on August 25. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) was established on September 9. The DPRK is the only unified state of Korea elected across the whole Korean peninsula and by all the voters resident there.

The USSR recognized the DPRK on September 13, 1948 and all the socialist countries followed suit in succession.

The US put the Korean question on the agenda of the third session of the UN General Assembly held in Paris in

December 1948 to legitimize the south Korean “government”.

The United States qualified the “election” in south Korea and its result as the “expression of the people’s will in a stable situation”.

At the meeting of the UN Security Council held on December 6 the United States voted down Czechoslovakia’s draft resolution on inviting the DPRK delegate to the discussion of the Korean question, and had Nationalist China’s one on inviting the puppet south Korean delegate adopted.

At the session of the UN General Assembly on December 12 the United States got a resolution stating that the south Korean “government” was the “only legitimate government in Korea” passed, and put forward a new resolution on the organization of a “UN Commission on Korea” to be stationed in Korea in an attempt to extend the jurisdiction of the south Korean “government” to north Korea.

The course of events in the three years following liberation from Japanese colonial yoke resulted in the division of Korea into two regions.

American scholar Bruce Cummings, who made a comprehensive study and analysis of US policy towards Korea, pointed out that the foreign relations records of the US Department of State contain evidence of the machinations of the Americans to set up a separate government in south Korea during the period from their arrival there until 1948. He said, “Looking back upon those days, I, an American, find nothing decent in the role the United States has played in south Korea since 1943.”

The division of Korea, which has left an indelible stain on the history of the Korean nation, is a result of the Cold War

which started the bitter tragedy of division. The sad history of the national division centres on the 38th parallel, an outcome of politics.

## **Conclusion**

The Second World War ended in the extermination of fascism, a plague of our planet. It was recorded as the greatest victory for justice in human history.

The Korean patriots who fought for the rout of fascist Japanese imperialism and national liberation greeted the victory with delight.

The end of the world war, which the world's people rejoiced over, gave rise to a new tragedy of national division for the 20 million Korean people. These conflicting realities came as a shock to them.

The main anti-fascist forces which had borne the main burden of the war pursued justice and the rout of fascism, and achieved their objectives. But their victory was marred by injustice as they scrambled for the trophies of war.

“Trophies” and “expansion of influence”, these were the very causes of the injustice and confrontation which forced the tragedy of national division upon the Korean nation, which had been liberated from 41 years of colonial yoke.

The USSR and the United States needed cooperation during the war against fascism, but the ties which bound them in cooperation broke with disappearance of the common enemy after the war.

The United States wanted to make Korea the bridgehead for its advance into the Asian continent and a stronghold to contain Soviet southward expansion.

In the early period of the anti-Japanese war, when the Japanese forces were superior, the United States gave a commitment to “supporting” the independence of Korea in order to help weaken Japan and use the Korean anti-fascist forces.

When the United States became assured of victory in the war and saw the possibility of taking over Korea, it announced its scheme of applying the “Philippines’ pattern” to Korea. But when it became impossible for it to extend its influence over the whole of Korea because of the Soviet resistance it carried out a separate election in south Korea.

The Soviet Union wanted to turn Korea into a buffer zone to check the capitalist forces and form a zone of restraint in the rear of Chiang Kai-shek.

Stalin agreed to the US proposal on multi-power trusteeship in Korea on the assumption that his friendly relations with Roosevelt would be maintained after the war. He was sure that the Soviet Union would hold sway in Korea after the war, its territory being adjacent to Korea.

His plan miscarried due to the foreign policy of the new Truman government.

A compromise was needed.

The two great powers made a compromise and recognized each other’s sphere of influence divided along the 38th parallel North, The 38th parallel was the “major common measure” for the compromise of the conflicting strategic interests of the two powers.

The division of Korea was not caused by developments in the internal situation of Korea nor by the will and demand of the Korean people.

The Korean nation is now living out the 20th century, a century of sufferings checquered with colonial rule and

division after Korea was tragically frustrated by the Japanese imperialists in the efforts to revive as a modern state, shedding the thick shell of feudal seclusion in which it had been slumbering under the influence of Confucianism.

When will half a century of division hampering the unified development of the country end?

The great leader of the Korean people Comrade Kim Il Sung wrote as follows in his *Reminiscences*:

“Owing to the division, our nation has experienced all kinds of suffering for nearly half a century. This is not a tragedy caused by our nation itself, but rather one which was imposed by foreign forces. Why should we not oppose the foreign forces and advocate national reunification, building up the nation and great national unity?” (Kim Il Sung, *Reminiscences With the Century*, Part 1, *The Anti-Japanese Revolution*, Eng. ed., Vol. 5, 1992, p. 390.)

The building of a reunified Korea is congenial to the spirit of the present age.

The Korean people will definitely win back their reunified homeland by the joint efforts of north and south Korea within this century.

The countries concerned which are responsible for the division of Korea should be mindful of their obligation toward the history and help the reunification of Korea.

"The tragedy of the 38th parallel sprang up overnight. To our surprise, the birthplace of the 38th parallel, which became a death line splitting the national territory into two parts, was Room No. 866 on the fourth floor of the Pentagon. It was the night of August 10, 1945."

From the south Korean daily *Dong-A Ilbo*