

KOREA (NORTH)

The surrender of Imperial Japan in 1945, left a large number of Japanese soldiers on the Korean peninsula. These armed and leaderless men would have to be disarmed and repatriated to prevent anarchy and bloodshed in the former Japanese colony. Earlier, at the Potsdam conference, the US and Soviet governments agreed to jointly occupy Korea to effect the evacuation of these soldiers. In order to define each army's zone of occupation, an imaginary line was drawn across Korean maps at the 38th parallel. With this simple gesture, two separate Koreas came into being. While the Americans struggled to relieve the worst aspects of Japanese occupation and establish order in the south, the Red Army moved with remarkable speed to establish a Stalinist state in the area it controlled. By 1946, all opposition to their "National Democratic Front" had been eliminated, and the "Iron Curtain" slammed down on the 38th parallel. When open elections were held in May of 1947 under UN sponsorship, the Soviets simply ignored them. Therefore, Syngman Rhee and his supporters easily won control in the south, and proclaimed the founding of the "Republic of Korea" (ROK) on August 15th, 1948. Soviet reaction was predictable. On September 8th, they declared the establishment of the "Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea" (DPRK) in the north, with Kim Il-sung as its leader. The DPRK insisted that it was the sole legitimate government of Korea (as did the ROK). No sooner had American troops left the south than Kim launched a campaign of subversion and terrorism against his new neighbor.

South to the Naktong

Kim Il-sung was confident that his "Korean Peoples' Army" (KPA) would win a swift victory over the ROK. The KPA consisted of ten full-strength divisions, organized and equipped to Soviet standards. Seven of these and a tank brigade were poised along his southern border including one hundred-fifty Soviet T-34/85 tanks and an air force with one hundred-eighty assorted aircraft. Over 25,000 of his combat troops had served in Mao's "Peoples' Liberation Army" (PLA) in the Chinese Civil War, and were tough veterans with considerable combat experience. Kim believed this superbly trained and ruthless fighting force could take on the pitifully weak and partly trained ROK army, and finish them off, before outside forces could effectively intervene.

On June 25th, 1950, the KPA leaped across the 38th parallel and swept south toward Seoul, meeting little serious resistance. The ROK high command hurriedly abandoned Seoul, blowing up the Han River bridges as they fled. This left the troops still holding the city cut off and without orders. On June 28th, KPA forces secured South Korea's still smoldering capital while 44,000 ROK troops, stranded on the wrong side of the Han, scrambled to escape any way they could. The retreat had become a rout!

Meanwhile, the United Nations had been able to pass a resolution to defend South Korea, primarily due to the absence of the Soviet delegation. The Russians had been boycotting the UN, and were not there to exercise their veto. The Americans were the first allied power to commit troops to the Korean "Police Action". General Douglas MacArthur, commander of all UN forces in Korea, ordered the 24th Infantry Division transferred from garrison duty in Japan straight into the line a few miles south of Seoul.

America's first taste of combat since WWII came on July 5th at Osan. Here, two companies from the 24th Division, along with some supporting units, had set up a blocking force. "Task Force Smith", as the force was called, stood its ground for only a few minutes before being swept away by five thousand North Koreans from the KPA 4th Division. Soviet T-34s drove straight through "Task Force Smith", impervious to anything the Americans could throw at them. The first American "Bug-Out" of the war soon followed. The 24th Division was joined by the 25th a few days later, and both divisions were driven south in disarray. All attempts to stop the KPA along the Seoul-Teajon road and the upper Naktong Valley met a similar fate to that of "Task Force Smith". Around the middle of July, the 24th Division was outflanked and nearly wiped out at Taejon, while the 25th Division's 24th Regiment was torn apart near Hamchung. The arrival of the US 1st Cavalry Division on the 22nd did little to stem the tide.

Pusan

By the end of the first week in August, the remnants of the ROK army and their UN allies had been herded into a one hundred thirty-five-mile perimeter around the port of Pusan, on Korea's southeast coast. The retreat had been costly. ROK casualties were put at 70,000, the Americans at 6,000. The KPA, on the other hand had suffered 58,000 casualties (about 25% of its prewar strength), but its morale was still high and its organization sound. It already occupied the vast majority of South Korean territory and was confident that the capture of Pusan would bring final victory. The fact that the "Pusan Perimeter" now contained 80,000 South Korean and 40,000 Allied troops left them undaunted. They knew that these troops were mostly either "green" Americans or demoralized South Koreans, and were confident that neither of these constituted a serious obstacle. Their assault on the "Perimeter" came from two directions. The 1st Army, consisting of six infantry divisions and the newly created 105th "Armored" Division, attacked from the west, while the 2nd Army, with six infantry divisions, attacked from the north.

The North Koreans flung themselves at the Pusan defenses with reckless desperation. But though they came close on many occasions, they failed to break through. In the north, the fighting was along the mountainous East Coast, allowing UN naval forces to be brought to bear. KPA attacks around Pohang proved especially vulnerable. Here the coastal plain was narrow and naval gunfire (including the 16" guns of the battleship USS *Missouri*) pounded the KPA's 2nd Army mercilessly. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade landed at Pusan on August 3rd and joined the 25th Division in the southwest, which had been fighting around Masan and Chinhae since early July. These two units engaged the KPA 1st Army throughout August and eventually stopped them cold. But the most desperate fighting was in the northwest, where the ROK II Corps, the US 1st Cavalry Division, the 24th Infantry Division, and 5th RCT fought it out with five KPA divisions around Taegu. It was here that the climax came. Taegu was nearly lost, clearing the way for a KPA advance straight down to Pusan itself. However, the timely arrival of the US 2nd Infantry Division prevented this, and the front stabilized here as well. The KPA had shot its bolt.

A good portion of the credit for the victory at Pusan must also go to the UN air forces. The KPA's supply line from P'yongyang to Pusan was over two hundred-fifty miles long. The nature of Korean geography meant that it included many bottlenecks at bridges and tunnels. UN bombers took advantage of these bottlenecks, destroying virtually every bridge south of the 38th parallel. Deliveries of vital KPA supplies soon dwindled to almost nothing, making offensive action nearly impossible.

North to the Yalu

On September 15th, The ROK Marine Brigade and US 1st Marine Division landed at Inchon, not far from Seoul. These units were closely followed by the US 7th Infantry Division. Together, these units became the UN "X Corps". After a tricky landing (tides at Inchon rise and fall thirty-three feet!), The KPA reacted quickly, but it was too late. The UN 8th Army was already breaking out of Pusan. 1st Cavalry Division linked up with 7th Infantry Division near Osan on September 26th. Seoul fell to the 1st MarDiv and ROK

Marines the same day. The KPA was "in the bag". By the end of September, 125,000 had been captured. The Korean Peoples' Army had been ripped to shreds!

UN forces crossed the 38th parallel on October 1st, 1950. They then proceeded to pursue the KPA all the way to the Chinese border. By the time the Chinese "Peoples' Liberation Army" (PLA) crossed the Yalu into North Korea on October 14th, the KPA had suffered a total of 335,000 casualties and would play only a small part in the rest of the war. From then on, the PLA would shoulder the lion's share of the combat (and the casualties) in the communist cause.

The Half-Century Truce

The Korean War ended in a "temporary" truce on July 27th, 1952. The devastation wrought by it had scourged the land and the people of Korea north and south. The rebuilding process was to be slow and painful, especially in the north. Foreign aid from North Korea's allies, the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China, other than military aid, was both slow in coming and limited in scope. Korean foreign policy over the next fifty years would be remarkably consistent. Frustrated in his attempt to conquer the south by force, Kim continued to press for the "reunification" of Korea with him as dictator and, failing that, to demand the immediate withdrawal of US forces from South Korea. Aside from this, North Korea's chief aim seems to have been to cause as much discomfort to the South Koreans and their American allies as possible. Domestically, Kim continued to dominate every aspect of North Korean political, economic, and social life until his death in 1991, creating an extensive personality cult around himself as the "father and savior of his people". He personally molded North Korea into one of the most repressive and strictly regimented societies on earth, where the "Korean Workers Party" (KWP) continued to control everything, using police terror to suppress even the slightest opposition.

For the next thirty-nine years things changed little in the DPRK. North Korea remained an armed camp, constantly probing and prodding its southern rival, taking every opportunity to destabilize South Korea with only limited success. On July 8, 1991, Kim Il-sung died, leaving his son as his designated heir to the leadership of the DPRK. But, it was not until October 8th, 1994 that Kim Jong-il officially assumed the leadership of the Korean Workers Party and accepted command of the armed forces. He also did not immediately assume his father's title as General Secretary of the KWP. When he finally did, he declared the office of president to belong "eternally" to his late father, thus maintaining his symbolic leadership, even in death.

On March 5, 1997, a meeting was held in New York City between North Korea, South Korea, and the US, to negotiate a final end to the Korean War. This meeting marked the first official contact between all three nations in years, and paved the way for further talks between them and China in Geneva. Although no solid agreements were reached, the meetings represented a significant step toward replacing the armistice established in 1953 with a permanent peace agreement. The negotiations were expected to be lengthy and difficult, and no one was surprised when this turned out to be the case.

Some observers viewed North Korea's sudden willingness to talk as a sign of its desire to enhance its diplomatic standing. Others believed that the whole affair was nothing more than an elaborate show, staged to attract additional foreign aid. North Korea's state-owned economy has consistently failed to produce adequate supplies of food and other basic commodities. According to the UN World Food Program, most North Koreans have come to depend on government rations, which were down to "concentration camp" levels by 1997. UNICEF estimated that 80,000 North Korean children were in immediate danger of death from starvation. Another 800,000 were suffering from malnutrition. On May 26th, South Korea agreed to send 50,000 tons of food to the North. This was supplemented by shipments of about fifty million dollars worth of surplus US grain during the same year.

Also in 1997, the defection of two prominent North Korean officials produced a major intelligence coup for the West. In February, Hwang Jang Yop, the architect of North Korea's official ideology of "juche" (self-reliance), entered the South Korean consulate in Beijing and asked for asylum in South Korea. In August, North Korea's ambassador to Egypt, Chang Sung Gil, along with his brother and both of the men's families, defected at the US embassy in Cairo. Chang had been instrumental in North Korean missile sales to the Middle East, and he was considered by US intelligence to be a valuable source of information. The testimony of these men confirmed the CIA's worst fears concerning North Korea's intention to attack the South and perhaps even Japan with missiles and nuclear weapons in case of war. In the following weeks, the North Korean Prime Minister was suddenly replaced and the defense minister inexplicably died!

FOREIGN WEAPONS

107mm Type 63, K-63, Type 59 - CH; All other foreign weapons - RU

TABLES OF ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT

INFANTRY DIVISION: 1950

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 25, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Infantry Company:	2xTL1 Infantry(D), 1xTL1 Infantry Support(B)
Infantry Support Company:	1x82mm M37 Mortar(4)
Recon Company:	3xTL1 Infantry (R) <u>or</u> 3xTL1 Infantry (R)/Truck
Infantry Battalion:	1xTL1 Infantry(D) HQ, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company, 1x45mm ATG/Limber
Engineer Battalion:	9xTL1 Engineer
Anti-Aircraft Battalion:	9xZPU-4
Artillery Battalion:	3x76mm M42(2)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion:	3x122mm M38(2)/Truck
Infantry Regiment:	1xTL1 Infantry(D) GHQ, 3xInfantry Battalion, 1x45mm ATG, 1x76mm M-42(2)/Truck, 1x120mm M43 Mortar(3)/Truck <u>or</u> Limber
Infantry Division:	3xInfantry Regiment, 3xSU-76, 3x45mm ATG/Truck, 2xArtillery Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion, 1xEngineer Battalion, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion

Notes: 1) Non-organic truck transport may be provided at your discretion, but at double standard point cost.

2) BTR-152's may be provided as APCs at double standard point cost.

ARMORED DIVISION: 1950

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 20, Class: Professionals, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Infantry Company: 3xTL1 Infantry/SMG(B)/Truck, 1xTL1 Infantry Support(A)/Truck
Mechanized Infantry "Regiment": 1xTL1 Infantry(D) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1x82mm M37 Mortar(4)/Truck
Tank "Regiment": 1xT-34/85(HQ), 9-12xT-34/85
Tank Brigade: 1xT-34/85(GHQ), 3xTank "Regiment"
Armored Division: 1xTank Brigade, 1xMechanised Infantry "Regiment", 2xSU-76

Notes: 1) Mechanized Infantry Regiment trucks may be replaced by BTR-152s at your discretion.
2) There was one armored division in the in the North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) in 1950, the "Seoul" Division.

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units or parts thereof, may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)
Commando Company: 3xInfantry (Type "S")
Heavy Anti-Tank Battalion: 3x100mm M44/Truck
Border Guard Battalion: 1xCavalry(HQ), 9xCavalry, 1xCavalry Support
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 3x37mm M-39/Truck
Heavy Machinegun Battalion: 9xTL1 Infantry Support(A)
Motorcycle "Regiment": 1xTL1 Infantry(D) HQ/Truck, 3xTL1 Infantry(R)/Truck, 2xBa-64[R],
1xMotorcycle Infantry(B)[R]
Air Support: WWII Soviet "Yak-3", "Yak-9", and IL-10 "Sturmoviks"

INFANTRY DIVISION: 1997+

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 20, Class: Militia, Base Determination Factor: 40%

Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(B)
Tank Company: 3xT54/55
Recon Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(R)
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer
Multiple Rocket Battery: 3x107mm Type63 MRL[6]/Truck
Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1x82mm M37 Mortar(4)
Tank Battalion: 3xTank Company
Artillery Battalion: 3x122mm M38(3)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x152mm D20(3)/Truck
Engineer Battalion: 3xEngineer Company
Anti-Tank Battalion: 3x100mm M44 ATG/Truck
Anti-Aircraft Battalion: 6xZPU-4/Truck
Heavy Mortar Battalion: 3x120mm M43 Mortar(4)/Truck
Artillery Battalion: 3x76mm M-39(2)/Truck
Heavy Artillery Battalion: 3x122mm M-38(2)/Truck
Infantry Regiment: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Battalion, 1xHeavy Mortar Battalion, 1xEngineer Company,
1xTL3 Infantry(R)/Truck, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion, 1x76mm M39(3)/Truck, 1xMultiple Rocket Battery
Artillery Regiment: 3xArtillery Battalion, 1xHeavy Artillery Battalion
Infantry Division: 3xInfantry Regiment, 1xInfantry Battalion, 1xTank Battalion, 1xAnti-Tank Battalion, 1xArtillery Regiment,
1xEngineer Battalion, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battalion, 1xRecon Company

Notes: 1) One stand in each Infantry Battalion may contain an attached "AT-3" team(MP).

TANK AND COMBINED ARMS BRIGADES: 1997+

Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 25, Class: Conscript, Base Determination Factor: 30%

Light Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(R)
Mechanized Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(B)/Truck
Tank Company: 3xT-62, Type 59, or SU-100
Recon Company: 1xT-62[R], 1xAPC[R]
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer/Truck
Anti-Aircraft Battery: 2xZPU-4/Truck
Multiple Rocket Battery: 3x107mm Type63 MRL[6]/Truck
Light Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(C) HQ, 6xLight Infantry Company
Mechanized Infantry Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) HQ/Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1x82mm M37 Mortar(4)/Truck
Tank Battalion: 3xTank Company

Mortar Battalion: 3x120mm M43(3)/Truck
 Artillery Battalion(SP): 3x122mm SAU-122(3) or 152mm SAU-152(3)
 Heavy Mortar Battalion: 3x120mm M43 Mortar(4)/Truck
 Multiple Rocket Battalion: 3xMultiple Rocket Battery

Tank Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 3xTank Battalion, 1xMechanized Infantry Battalion, 1xArtillery Battalion(SP), 1xEngineer Company, 1xRecon Company, 1xAnti-Aircraft Battery
 Combined Arms Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry(B) GHQ/Truck, 3xMechanized Infantry Battalion, 1xTank Battalion, 1xMortar Battalion, 1xLight Infantry Battalion, 2xArtillery Battalion(SP), 1xEngineer Company, 1xMultiple Rocket Battalion

- Notes:
- 1) One stand in each Infantry Battalion may contain an attached "AT-3" team(MP).
 - 2) Mechanized Infantry are mostly truck mounted but are sometimes equipped with APCs listed below:
 BTR-152s, BTR-40s, BTR-50s, BTR-60s, MTLBs, M-1973s, and Chinese K-63s
 - 3) Other vehicles also available that may be substituted for those above include:
 Type 85 ATGM vehicles, M1992 APCs, and PT-76, Type-62, Type-63, PT-85, T-34/85, or Type-59 tanks

TACTICAL NOTES

North Korean tactical doctrine consists of nine basic principles:

- 1) Annihilation - We will destroy all South Korean and American forces before they can react effectively.
- 2) Surprise - We will strike secretly and suddenly, practicing night and foul weather operations to disguise our movements.
- 3) Firepower - We will use MRLs, other rocket weapons, and long range artillery in large numbers to smother all resistance.
- 4) Mobility - We will fight, resupply, and defend our armored formations on the move.
- 5) Security - We will mount a major air defense effort to protect all supply routes to our most forward elements.
- 6) Spec. Ops. - We will disrupt enemy seaports, communications, and command/control sites with raids by "Special Forces" units.
- 7) Coordination - We will combine all our resources into an integrated plan, making the fullest possible use of air and naval forces.
- 8) Depth - We will attack in three successive echelons, allowing local commanders multiple attack and defense options.
- 9) Full Support - We will mobilize the entire nation in support of the war effort. All resources will be exploited to the absolute maximum.

Another aspect of this doctrine is to minimize the usefulness of enemy air power by means of deep tunnels under the "Demilitarized Zone" (DMZ). It has been estimated that as many as twenty of these tunnels may be in operation. Four tunnels have actually been uncovered thus far; one with a capacity of over eight thousand troops per hour! They are extremely well constructed, go down as much as five hundred feet, and at least one is over two miles in length

Wargaming Possibilities

The Korean War is one of the least appreciated wargaming venues out there. I have always found this strange. The "mobile War" period, from the summer of 1950 through the winter of 1951 is filled with combat actions that would make exciting wargame scenarios. The fighting along the "Pusan Perimeter" alone should satisfy even the most avid Micro-Armour enthusiast. The biggest problem thus far seems to be the limited number of detailed accounts available. We hope you will find the TO&E information above useful in overcoming this problem.

The current state of affairs in the Korean peninsula lends itself to considerable military speculation as well. We believe the most likely scenario will involve a South Korean invasion of the North, rather than the other way around. A sudden collapse of the current regime in P'yongyang would encourage military intervention by the South, if only to restore order. Or, sensing imminent collapse, South Korea could launch a preemptive invasion to prevent widespread anarchy. This is a situation fraught with serious consequences. Would North Korea be capable of defending itself after years of poverty and starvation? Would Communist China intervene with an invasion of its own? What we have here is a situation rife with possibilities for "What-if" scenarios!

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

After finally taking the title of "General Secretary" of the KWP, Kim Jong-il widened his position as head of the North Korean armed forces in 1998 to encompass the powers of head of state. While the army remains the primary threat to Kim Jong-il, he has been careful to placate it by promoting generals over the heads of KWP members. The country's fundamental economic difficulties, its inability to feed itself, and nagging internal political instability, imply that it is no longer a question of whether the regime collapses so much as when.

However, the rapid disintegration of such a paranoid military dictatorship could have dangerous repercussions for North Korea's neighbors. A number of possible scenarios have been presented. A North Korean collapse could send huge waves of refugees into South Korea, Russia, and China. Communist China could intervene to prop up the current regime. Disaffected military or political power groups could launch an internal coup resulting in civil war. Anything is possible!

A North Korean collapse could also produce considerable friction between China and the United States. US Defense spokesmen have said that, should unification come, American troops will remain in Korea. Such a prospect causes deep unease in Beijing, as does the emergence of a strong "capitalist" Korea right on their doorstep! North Korea is also the final outpost of Stalinism, and the only nation where that defunct ideology remains strong. Hard-line Stalinists in China feel that they owe at least something to their fellow believers across the Yalu. Therefore, Communist China may try to prevent any economic collapse of the DPRK with liberal doses of foreign aid. However, there are few signs that the P'yongyang clique is ready to take on the fundamental reforms necessary for national economic survival. After all, they know what happened to the Soviet Union after "Perestroika".

Militarily, the morale of the average KPA recruit is low. Although he can expect better opportunities and more food as a soldier than as a civilian, life in the KPA is monotonous and boring, political indoctrination is endless, and discipline harsh. Troops also get little leave time, and find the long periods of isolation from family and civilian life that military service requires, demoralizing. In addition, North Korea's capacity to keep its weapons and equipment fully operational is suspect. The nation's economy is flat on its back and the ability of any nation to maintain its military power while staring starvation in the face is questionable at best.

2002 NORTH KOREAN ARSENAL

Vehicles: 3,600xT-54/-55 & T-62, 175xType-59, 300xPT-76, and 50xType-62 tanks, 140xBa-64 Scout Cars, 200-900xBMP-1, 1600xBTR-40/-50/-60/-152 APCs

AT Weapons: 100mm ATGs, 82mm B-10 & 107mm B-11 RcRs, 5,000+ AT-2, AT-3, AT-4 & AT-5 ATGMs

Artillery: (3,500+ Pieces) 100mm/122mm/130mm/152mm (Towed), 122mm/152mm (SP), 81mm/120mm/160mm/240mm Mortars, (2,000+ MRLs) 107mm/122mm/130mm/200mm types

Anti-Aircraft: (8,000+ Pieces) 23mm/37mm/57mm/85mm/100mm (Towed), ZSU-57/2 & ZSU-23/4 (SP), 800xSa-2, 30xSA-3, 24xSA-5, 2,000xSA-7

SSMs: 54xFROG-7, 100xScud-B, 36xScud-C

Combat Aircraft: 30xSu-7, 10xSu-25, 50xMiG-19, 140xMiG-21, 50xMiG-23, 40xMiG-29, 40xChinese A-5 "Fantan"

Helicopter: 20xMi-4, 70xMi-8, 27xMDH 300/500, 60xMDH-300/500 Anti-Tank, 50xMi-24

Small Arms: 7.62mm AK47, SKS, Type-49, Type-64 & Type-68 Assault Rifles, 7.62mm RPK, RPD, PK, PKB, PKS, % 12.7mm DShK Machineguns, RPG-2 & RPG-7 ATGLs

- Notes:
- 1) North Korea is presently producing its own model of the Soviet T-72, called the "Chonmaho" (Thousand-Horses Chariot).
 - 2) North Korea is currently attempting to purchase Su-27s from Russia.
 - 3) How much North Korean equipment is actually operational at this time is a subject for debate. Estimates run as low as 50%.
 - 4) North Korea claims several new SSMs to be operational, but no successful test has been observed.
 - 5) North Korea has produced over three million AK-47s over the last thirty years, and is a major supplier of these weapons.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Ministry of Peoples' Armed Forces (MPAF) - P'yongyang, Korean Democratic Peoples' Republic