

Virginians at War

Korean War: Inchon Landing, Pusan Breakout

Resource Packet

Contains: Glossary, Timeline, Images, Discussion Questions, Additional Resources

Program Description: This Virginians at War film covers the basis of the Korean War, the first war ever fought by United Nations forces and a defining conflict of the Cold War. Veterans describe the beginning of the war and some of its earlier conflicts, the Battle of Inchon and the Battle of Pusan Perimeter, both in 1950. The Battle of Pusan was one of the first engagements of the Korean War, and the Battle of Inchon was an amphibious invasion by the UN forces that led to the successful recapture of Seoul, described by one veteran in the film as the “smartest thing MacArthur ever did.”

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Length: 17:30

Streaming link: <https://vimeo.com/367045379>

Featured Speakers:

SGT James A. Adkins, Richmond
LTC Albert F. Belbusti, Virginia Beach
CPL Curtis Neal Cook, Danville
SGT Jack Luke Cuthrell, Colonial Heights
CPL Vernon A. Good, Broadway
BG Anna Mae Hays, Arlington
COL Leo O. Johns, Midlothian
COL Alan Walter Jones, Jr., Ft. Belvoir
SFC Carl S. Lewis, Christiansburg
CPL George C. Pleasant, Danville
SGT Carl L. Powers, Dante
SFC Joseph S. Smith, Staunton
PFC Duane D. Trowbridge, Virginia Beach
COL William C. Wood, Ft. Belvoir

GLOSSARY

IMPORTANT TERMS

- **38th Parallel:** the name for latitude 38 degrees N, that separated North Korea from South Korea prior to the invasion of South Korea by North Korea in 1950.
- **Armistice:** an agreement between sides in a war to ceasefire for a certain amount of time.
- **Bird Colonel:** a member of the US Armed Forces having the rank of full colonel, as distinct from a lieutenant colonel.
- **Chesty Puller:** the most decorated Marine in US history; commander of the First Marine Regiment at the beginning of the Korea War.
- **Communism:** an economic philosophy based on the concept of community or government ownership of business; governments that took on this economic system during the Cold War era included the Soviet Union and China.
- **Democracy:** a system of government in which the people exercise the authority of government; democratic governments in the Cold War era included the United States.
- **Eighth United States Army:** the US field army that commands the United States Army forces in South Korea; established in 1944. Commanded by General Walton Walker at the start of the Korean War.
- **General Douglas MacArthur:** the commander of UN forces in Korea from 1950-1951.
- **General Walton H. Walker:** the commander of the Eighth United States Army in 1950
- **Joint Chiefs of Staff:** a group of senior leaders in the United States Department of Defense.
- **LST:** Landing Ship, Tank; the name for ships used to support amphibious operations by carrying troops, vehicles, and supplies to shore without supporting infrastructure (docks, piers, etc.)
- **LVT:** Landing Vehicle Tracked; an amphibious landing craft used by the US Navy and Marine Corps mostly used in World War II.
- **Police action:** localized military action undertaken without formal declaration of war.
- **Purple Heart:** a US military decoration awarded to those wounded or killed while serving.
- **United Nations:** an international organization formed after World War II to increase communication and cooperation between the world's countries and to promote future peace and justice.
- **UN Resolution 82:** adopted on June 25, 1950; called for North Korea to end its invasion of South Korea. This set the stage for the US and UN to take action against North Korea when the resolution was ignored.

IMPORTANT PLACES

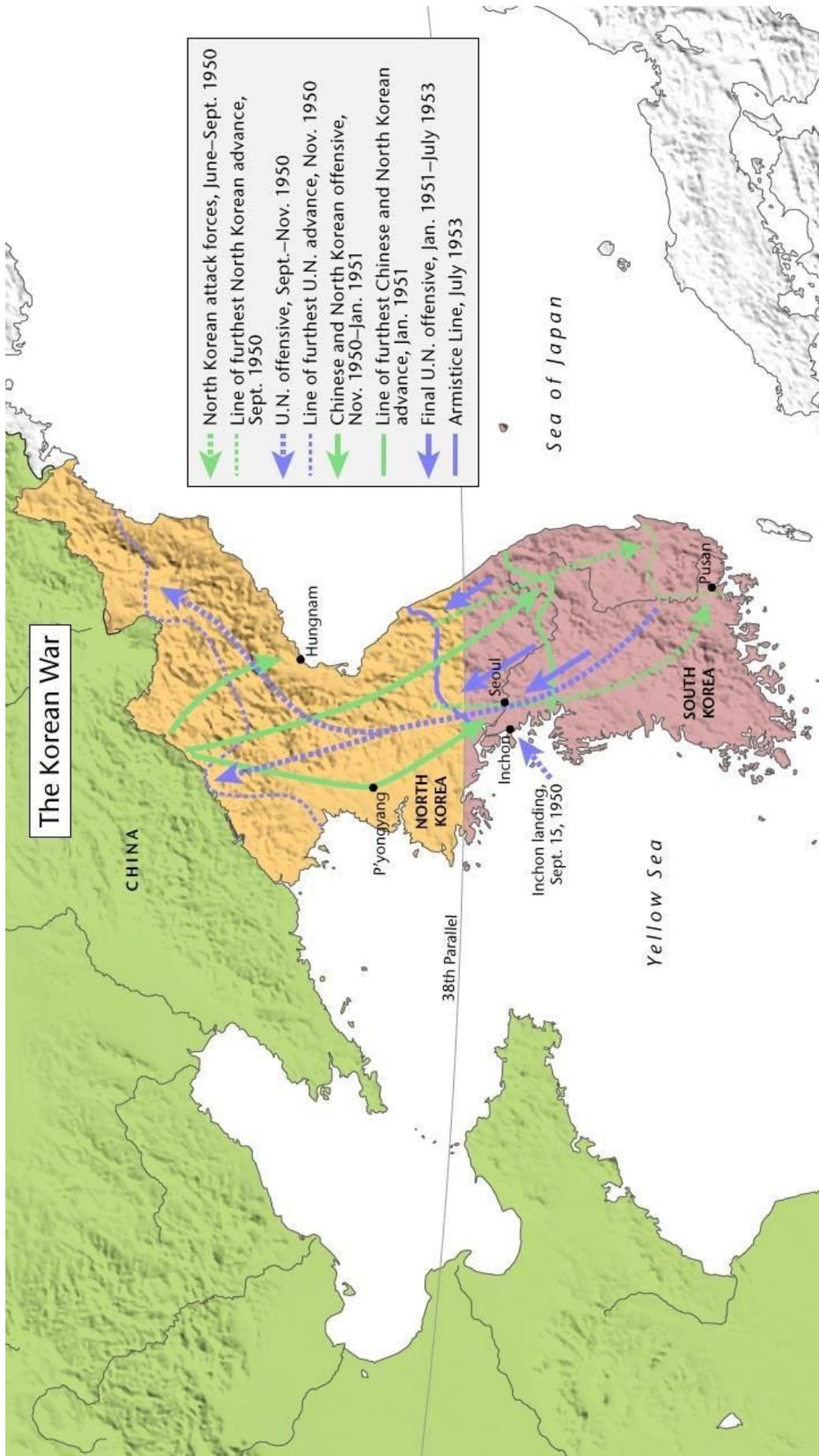
Inchon Harbor
Pusan Peninsula

Manchuria
Seoul

North Korea
South Korea

KOREAN WAR TIMELINE

- **August 14, 1945:** World War II ends with Japan's surrender
- **June 25, 1950:** North Korea crosses the 38th Parallel and invades South Korea
- **June 27, 1950:** United Nations passes Resolution 83
- **September 12, 1950:** North Korea reaches its furthest invasion point at the Pusan Perimeter
- **September 15, 1950:** UN forces land at Inchon
- **September 25, 1950:** Seoul is liberated by UN forces
- **October 25, 1950:** Chinese troops arrive in South Korea, begin pushing UN forces South
- **August 31-September 21, 1951:** Battle of the Punchbowl
- **September 13-October 15, 1951:** Battle of Heartbreak Ridge
- **October 6-15, 1952:** Battle of White Horse
- **October 14-November 25, 1952:** Battle of Triangle Hill
- **April 16-18, 1953:** Battle of Pork Chop Hill (UN victory)
- **July 6-11, 1953:** Battle of Pork Chop Hill (Chinese victory)
- **July 27, 1953:** Armistice signed by representatives of the United Nations, North Korea, and China at Panmunjom, North Korea



PBS Learning Media

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why was the Korean peninsula divided after World War II? What is significant about the participation of United Nations troops?
2. Why do you think the Korean War is called “the Forgotten War?” What is unique about the Korean War that gave it this name?
3. Compare the stories of combat in Korea to the stories of those from World War II and Vietnam. What are some things that remained consistent between each conflict? What were some things that were different?
4. What do you think it means that Chesty Puller was a “Marine’s Marine?” What qualities do you think he exemplified to be called that?
5. How does the war in Korea relate to the Cold War as a whole? Were the goals of the United States met? The United Nations? China and the Soviet Union? How does this impact the relationship between the world and North and South Korea today?
6. Did any of the speakers’ accounts of their time in Korea surprise you? Why or why not?
7. What is the role of a place like the Virginia War Memorial in helping us remember events like the Korean War? What are some other ways to remember?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To learn more about the experiences of Virginians in the Korean War, view Virginians at War: Korean War - Hill Fights at vawarmemorial.org. Looking to do more research? Check out the links below.

- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Korean-War>
- https://www.ducksters.com/history/cold_war/korean_war.php (Elementary level)
- <https://www.koreanwarvetsememorial.org/the-memorial/>
- https://www.army.mil/article/47963/combating_cold_korea
- <https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/1d561db0-05bb-4838-8048-fc045db69c14/the-korean-war/> (Grades 6-12)
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/a/the-korean-war>
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/1950s-america/v/korean-war-overview> (High School level)
- Propaganda during the Korean War:
<http://www.digitalhorizonsonline.org/digital/collection/ndsu-korea>
- Eisenhower Memo (public opinion):
<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/online-documents/korean-war/public-opinion-1953-06-02.pdf>

