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Veterans Day Essay

The story of Douglas MacArthur, a general of the United States Army, has inspired me ever since my mother told me how he helped South Koreans during the Korean War. It was a typical day in the car going home from school and I told my mother about this essay I was writing. When she heard this, she recommended I write about Douglas MacArthur. When she told me how he protected us from being controlled by North Korea, I could not help but feel goosebumps. My parents who are from South Korea, did not introduce me to a lot of Korean history ever since they came to the United States. However, listening to my mother being so proud of his story, his legacy, her emotion established my interest in Korean history and the interest of wanting to be involved in my community. As if I did not want to contribute to my community enough, his story gives me a new and proud reason to continue down that path. His story shows me how he helped my people avoid control from North Korea and how it personally connects to my parents and ancestors.

During the time of the Korean War, Douglas MacArthur, was selected by President Truman to lead the United States troops in South Korea. According to Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, MacArthur successfully lead multiple troops in World War II and was highly praised in the United States (Harry S. Truman Library and Museum). This made him reliable enough for Truman to be confident in his decision. Based off information from the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum, and Boyhood Home, The Korean War occurred because North Korean Forces invaded South Korea along the 38th parallel. The 38th parallel is

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the line or border separating North Korea and South Korea (Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum, and Boyhood Home). According to A. J. Orlikoff, “MacArthur successfully counterattacked North Korean forces at Inchon and pushed the enemy back to the Yalu River, (Orlikoff). MacArthur took his troops to South Korea and accomplished the task of pushing back the North Korean forces from the 38th parallel. This prevented North Korea from taking over South Korea with its communist ideals. This gave my country freedom, and it is all thanks to Douglas MacArthur.

As stated before, it is not every day that my parents bring up Korean history and talk about it to me. However, this story stands a purpose not only in my parents’ lives but also the walking feet of those in South Korea. My parents’ origins are from South Korea and then later in life they moved to the United States. I do not understand why they did not introduce much Korean history to me. Maybe because of the hardships of Korean immigrants or maybe they did not know themselves. However, I am slightly disappointed they did not bring it up during the years of my childhood. History plays a huge part in someone’s societies or cultures, and I wish I knew more. I wish I could educate myself earlier on about who I was and the events that led up to how things came to be. It must have meant a lot to my mother bringing up this story because I rarely hear her talk about our history, but I am glad she did. It must have been personal to her, as it is personal to me. My great grandfathers volunteered to be a part of the Korean War and fight for their country, and it gives me great pride. This personal tie to the war brings me more of a longing to investigate the history of not only Korea but also myself and family.

Researching Douglas MacArthur not only taught me about a courteous United States Army general, but also gave me a reason to look into my country's history. Identity is something I have learned a lot about throughout my years in school, and although it has been surrounding me constantly, I never took the time to explore it. However, after writing this essay I have a better understanding of myself, my country, and my country's history. MacArthur played a huge role in this war, and after reading about him I understand how he helped my people from North Korea and how it personally connects me, all thanks to this essay prompt.

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Works Cited

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