



A History of
RESISTANCE

The Origins of the North Korean
Anti-Communist Guerrillas,
1945-1950

by Michael E. Krivdo

The sudden reversal of fortunes brought on by the allied amphibious operation at Inch'on in September 1950 did not go unnoticed by North Korean citizens, particularly those who had long opposed Communist rule. Now in shambles, the once-powerful North Korean People's Army (NKPA) retreated rapidly to the north to escape pursuing United Nations (UN) forces. In October 1950, longtime anti-Communist rebel Kim Chang Song listened to the sounds of approaching artillery and contemplated ways to seize control of his village. From their hidden camp in the rugged mountains, Kim and his like-minded neighbors planned attacks against the Communist Party members, North Korean police, and the local militia troops that had taxed and persecuted them for the past five years.²

Earlier, Kim's band had stolen five North Korean military uniforms, some weapons, and ammunition. Disguised as soldiers the small group set up a roadblock and ambushed an NKPA vehicle, killing the enemy soldiers before they could react. The truck yielded a treasure: 108 well-used Russian rifles with ammunition that Kim quickly distributed to his other partisans. He also provided them with detailed plans for a coordinated attack on multiple enemy positions to commence at 0900 hours on 13 October. Once those actions were finished, Kim's guerrillas focused on larger targets. By noon on 15 October Kim's *ad hoc* band had rid their township of every Communist soldier, policeman, and Party member, proudly restoring freedom to the area for the first time since September 1945.³ Although the size of the resistance movement varied from place to place, in areas like Kim's Hwanghae Province the groups achieved significant results for a short period of time.

What circumstances could compel tens of thousands of North Koreans to risk everything and fight alongside Americans against the Communist forces during the Korean War? This article argues that some elements of the

... a number of remote little islands in the Yellow Sea, unnoticed before ... suddenly had become last-stand strongholds of North Korean antagonists to the Communist regime."¹

North Korean population resisted Communism between 1945 and 1950, and that their opposition established a nascent resistance movement before the war began. In many cases, these early protesters became the leaders for the several community-based paramilitary groups that fought to rid their townships and districts of Communist influence when the North Korean government was most vulnerable. These irregulars continued to engage their enemy when the military situation again favored the NKPA when the Chinese intervened. The article focuses on the key events between 1945 and 1950 that produced the guerrilla forces of 1951 through 1953: how Korea was divided following the surrender of Japan to the Allies, how changing social and political conditions within the North generated dissent, and how the gradual tightening of Communist control over North Koreans after 1945 helped spawn a grass roots resistance movement that fought to free its members from a repressive regime. It also details how the changing tides of the Korean War affected those partisans who continued to fight Communism.

The Allied victory over Japan in August 1945 ended World War II, yet left hundreds of thousands of Japanese soldiers still occupying large portions of mainland Asia, from China to Burma. The sheer scale of the task of disarming them and reestablishing local government functions over such a wide expanse challenged American military and political planners. To complicate matters, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), by declaring war against Japan on 8 August 1945, insisted on being involved in the disarmament process.⁴ Although there would be no combined occupation and administration of Japan as there had been in Germany, it became practically impossible to keep the USSR out of postwar reconstruction efforts in Asia. And, after its last-minute invasion of neighboring China's industry and resource-rich Manchurian Province in early August, the Soviets used their disarming of Japanese troops in North Korea as a toehold to influence events there, further insisting on taking part in that country's restoration to sovereignty, preferably under Communist leadership. At that time, North Korea held most of the industrial capacity and power generation capability in the peninsula, thereby making it a prize to whomever controlled that region. Additionally, because the USSR shared a common boundary with Korea, Soviet leaders considered that region to have strategic significance as a buffer from the West.⁵ Complicating Korea's internal governmental restoration was the fact that it had been administered as a Japanese dependency since 1910. Because of their association with the hated Japanese, most Korean citizens were distrustful of the native Korean civil servants and believed they needed to be replaced by persons not tainted by colonialism.⁶ The Soviet occupiers exploited this point to their advantage.

In an effort to resolve the problems of restoring sovereignty to the Korean people, the United States and the Soviet Union



Soviet soldiers march through North Korea as occupying force, October, 1945.

CHINA



1945: Dividing Korea along 38th Parallel.

agreed to a temporary division of the peninsula along the 38th Parallel: the U.S. would disarm Japanese troops south of that arbitrarily designated line, while the Soviets did the same for Korea north of it.⁷ Although never intended to serve as a functional boundary between two sovereign entities, Soviet intransigence about creating a friendly buffer state linked to industrial and mineral production in the USSR led to installing a Communist government in North Korea. Meanwhile, the United States, United Kingdom (UK), and the United Nations' newly created Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) supported a democratic government in the south.⁸ The conditions were set for a clash of ideological differences between the two Korean states.

Following UN-supervised elections in the south and the establishment of the Republic of Korea (ROK) on 15 August 1948 under President Syngman Rhee, most American forces departed. They left behind a small Provisional Military Advisory Group (PMAG) of only one hundred soldiers to train the new nation's lightly armed military. With U.S. national interests focused more on demobilization and disarmament after its victory in the World War, PMAG personnel focused their efforts on

training and equipping a small constabulary force to serve as the ROK Army. By design, the ROK's military had no tanks, no offensive aircraft, only light artillery and little anti-air capability.⁹ In the north, however, increasingly authoritarian and aggressive Communist rule took hold and its military developed along quite different lines.

With the full support and assistance of the USSR, new Communist-trained North Korean leaders like Kim Il Sung instituted radical changes designed to strengthen their military power and tighten the dominant Communist Party's grip on the population. Large quantities of Soviet military equipment, supplies, and advisers poured in, and tens of thousands of Koreans who had fought alongside Mao Zedong's Red Army in China constituted the combat-hardened core of the powerful NKPA. With Soviet backing and prompting, Kim Il Sung and other contenders for power began implementing Communist policies that had already proven effective in Eastern Europe. On 5 March 1946 Kim's Provisional People's Committee passed a Land Reform Act that "completely dissolved" the traditional Korean ruling class, the landowners and local governing officials, and placed them at the mercy of peasant farmers.¹⁰

That legislation constituted the first step of a social restructuring within the north and the initial phase in the later forming of collective farms. Increased agricultural 'taxes' and inflated assessments then tied the rural farmers to support of government policies by forcing them to pay up to 70 percent of their crops to the government. Furthermore, in 1947, nationalization placed "over 90 percent of industry's 1,034 important factories and businesses" under direct control of the government. A succession of national conscription acts then inducted most young men into either the highly regimented NKPA or in forced labor projects. Religious organizations and oppositional political parties were persecuted through widespread extra-judicial jailing or executing of anti-Communist or pro-democracy leaders and supporters. All of these policies elevated trusted Korean peasants to positions of authority while demeaning the educated and/or skilled middle and upper-classes. As power began to concentrate around charismatic Koreans like Kim Il Sung, they employed their popularity to further purge rivals, punish protesters, and hold tightly the reins of power.¹¹



Communist leader Kim Il Sung lectures farmers from Kangso Gun (County), South Pyongan Province in North Korea, October 1945.

Key Leaders at a Glance



Syngman Rhee

Born: 26 April 1875, Korea
Died: 19 July 1965, Hawaii

- Ultra-Conservative, anti-Communist Korean Nationalist.
- Educated in U.S., received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Princeton, socially/politically active with U.S. Presidents, politicians, military leaders.
- MacArthur's choice to run post-WWII Korea. Used anti-Communist stance to persecute leftist rivals to his candidacy to lead the new Korean nation. Won a 1948 UN-sponsored election as first President of the Republic of Korea (ROK).
- Built a weak, constabulary Army with limited support of U.S. No armor or air support.
- Wanted a reunified Korea under his ideological rule.
- During Korean War, he turned the ROK military over to GEN MacArthur and the UN Command. Used U.S. Psywar capabilities to push his message during the war.
- Opposed negotiations that divided Korea, and refused to sign the Armistice.
- Post-Armistice, Rhee consolidated power, held ROK presidency until large-scale protests in 1960.



Kim Il Sung

Born: 15 April 1912, Korea
Died: 8 July 1994, N. Korea

- Marxist, Communist Korean Nationalist.
- Educated in Communist Chinese schools and Soviet Academies. Trusted by prominent Communist Chinese and Soviet leaders. Led Communist Party in Korea.
- Stalin's pick to run post-WWII Korea. Soviet advisors selected him as chairman of People's Committee. Used land reform, taxation, business seizures, and purges as a means of tightening his control over North Koreans.
- Created a strong, capable, combat-tested Army. Soviets provided armor and air support.
- Wanted a reunified Korea under his ideological rule.
- Convinced Stalin he could win a quick war to reunify Korea. Initially very successful, but U.S. and UN support pushed his army back. Chinese intervention led to stalemate in the war.
- Initially opposed Armistice negotiations, but signed. Then supported insurgency in ROK.
- Forged absolute control over the people and culture. Created a cult of personality now in its 3rd generation of family rule.



Mao Zedong

Born: 26 Dec. 1893, China
Died: 9 Sept. 1976, China

- Developed his own Communist philosophy, known as Maoism.
- Educated at Marxist Beijing University. Led the 'Long March.' Fought Chiang Kai Shek and Japan. Led the Communist Party in China.
- Helped organize the Red Army and promoted guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. Forged close ties with the Soviet Union. After WWII, Mao's Army defeated the Nationalists and founded the People's Republic of China.
- Distrustful of the West, Mao maintained his People's Liberation Army.
- Desired a non-threatening Korean buffer state.
- Kim Il Sung convinced Mao that Stalin wanted his NKPA to attack the ROK. When the situation turned bad for North Korea, Mao attempted to warn off the UN, but then intervened.
- Wanted to maintain North Korea as a buffer state. Guided the Armistice to achieve that.
- Mao initiated his 'Great Leap Forward,' and the Cultural Revolution. Both were costly failures resulting in many deaths.



Soviet-North Korean military cooperation - Kim Il Sung pins a decoration on Soviet General Nikolai G. Lebedev, P'yongyang, North Korea, 1948.

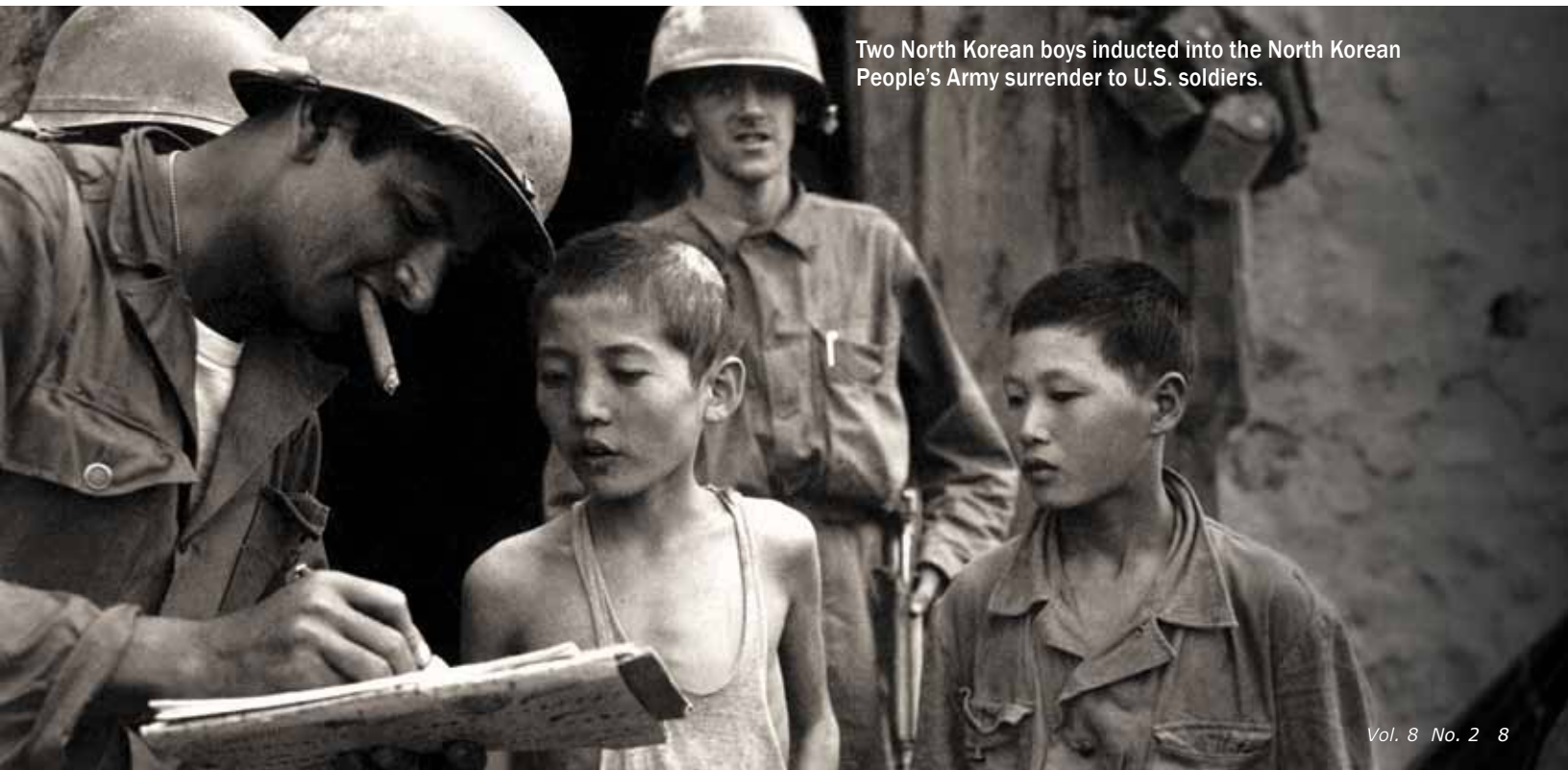
The North Korean government harshly suppressed dissent and further tightened controls over its citizens. These measures in turn prompted some to challenge governmental authority. The more the Communists clamped down, the more these dissenters pushed back. Millions 'voted with their feet.' One American official reported that "Russian Occupation is forcing thousands of Koreans and Japanese to flee southward toward the American zone."¹² By "allowing the exodus of those who opposed Soviet occupation policies (primarily large landowners, Christians, and Koreans who had collaborated with the Japanese) [this simplified] the process of establishing political control" in North Korea, even though the resultant 'brain drain' reduced the numbers of skilled persons.¹³

However, not everyone who stayed complied with the escalating authoritarianism of the Communist government; many refused to leave and decided instead to *resist*. Some viewed the imposition of Communist ideals as another form of foreign influence in Korean affairs, like the despised Japanese occupation.¹⁴ The Soviet presence in Korea only reinforced that perception. In some of the more remote

regions of the north, anti-Communist movements formed around religious, educational, and trade organizations. And the more the groups resisted, the harder the local Communist leaders cracked down causing a vicious cycle of oppression. Some of the more hardened protesters and draft evaders fled to the remote, rugged mountains to avoid arrest, imprisonment, or injury.¹⁵ Pak Choll, a future guerrilla leader, "kept up [his] anti-Communist uprisings and was put in jail for 3-1/2 months," causing him to be more clandestine in his activities afterward.¹⁶ A small core of resisters took a more direct approach by physically attacking tax collectors, police, government officials, and draft enforcers. These early anti-Communist resistance elements became the heart of the guerrilla organizations that would later fight under the United Nations flag.

The sudden surge of the NKPA's full-scale assault on the south in the wake of Kim Il Sung's invasion on 25 June 1950 left Communist officials in rural areas without the full protection of military forces. By the end of September, with the NKPA in full retreat as a result of General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur's decisive amphibious assault at Inch'on and the breakout of UN forces from Pusan, many opponents of Communism believed that an opportunity to take action had arrived. In areas of the north outside of the NKPA's retreat routes, few military forces remained to support Communist Party agendas. Boys and men who had been forced into NKPA service surrendered to the first UN soldiers they encountered and the remainder of the North's army retreated toward China and the Soviet Union. As a result, some local Party leaders were left exposed for the first time to the direct wrath of the people who suffered under their rule.¹⁷

As the Allied forces surged north, some military leaders were surprised to discover that anti-Communist North Koreans had already taken matters into their own hands and liberated their districts. Pockets of disaffected North Koreans formed paramilitary units and chased Kim



Two North Korean boys inducted into the North Korean People's Army surrender to U.S. soldiers.

“Why I Fought the Communists”

The American advisor to one partisan group characterized the guerrillas as hard fighting and fiercely independent people. He noted that “they have had personal experiences of life under Communist rule and have a lot to fight for, since their homes are in North Korea in the hands of the enemy.” He observed that their ages ranged from 17 to 26 years old, and that most of the partisan leaders were older, and that many had been community leaders before becoming full-time resistance fighters.¹ Their stories give insight into what motivated them to fight the Communists.

Teacher and schoolmaster Lee Jung Hok related how he and his entire class of eighty [North Korean] High School students were “not enjoying ‘good’ social status from the Communist viewpoint.” The police kept Lee under constant surveillance and jailed him for a month for educating youth. To complicate matters, his home district in the Ongjin Peninsula sat astride the 38th Parallel and was jointly occupied by both the North and South Korean military before the war. Some of Lee’s class had received training by the ROK 17th Regiment and after the war started the NKPA took particular vengeance on them, causing many to flee the Communists. Eventually the class formed a guerrilla unit under Lee’s command that later operated from one of the partisan-held islands off Korea’s west coast.²

Kim Ung Soo, a teacher at a Catholic school, reported that the police jailed him frequently because of his religion and his position as an educator, eventually forcing him to flee south in April 1947 to avoid persecution. He made his way home when the war started and became a guerrilla leader intent on freeing his family and farm.³

The North Korean Communist Party imprisoned Kim Chang Song for three years for organizing protest movements. After his release he hid in the mountains with several others to avoid the draft. In addition to feeding and supporting the fugitives, Kim formed an underground militia unit and



North Korean guerrilla leader, 1953.



Guerrilla leader oversees weapons training on one of the western islands.

convinced village doctors and town officials to exempt fellow anti-Communists from the draft by certifying them unfit for service. He also became a guerrilla leader.⁴

In late 1945, Lim Jong Duk joined a North Korean anti-Communist opposition party and “went underground . . . under the Communist regime.” Along with members of the North Korean Youth Group, they “resisted the Communist government in every way.” Working clandestinely, Lim and others hoarded weapons and ambushed police and Communist Party officials. They organized student groups in schools, distributed anti-Communist propaganda, and helped draft evaders seek refuge in remote camps. They also facilitated the escape of fugitives to the south and communicated with pro-democracy organizations there.⁵

Although individual motivations for opposing Communism varied, by the end of 1950 those feelings brought most resisters together so that they were united in their fight against Kim Il Sung’s forces. Always on their mind was the forlorn hope that a renewal of the UN offensive would provide them with the opportunity to again free their homeland.



Three North Korean guerrillas on one of the western islands. The coast of North Korea’s Hwanghae Peninsula is visible in the background.

Endnotes

- 1 “Project SPOOK,” Interview of 2d Lt. (2LT) William O. Watson, Jr., 2 November 1952, by LTC A. S. Daley and MAJ B. C. Mossman, included in 8086th Army Unit, (AFFE) Military History Detachment-3, “UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict, 1951-1952,” Project MHD-3, Center of Military History, Fort Belvoir, VA, (hereafter “UN Partisan Forces”), 128-39, quote from 133.
- 2 “The Narrative of Mr. Lee Jung Hok, Leader of Donkey 11, ‘The Students,’” interviewed by LTC A.S. Daley and MAJ B.C. Mossman, 3 November 1952, in “UN Partisan Forces,” 73-86, quote from 74; Lee Jung Hok, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and Douglas C. Dillard, 5 November 2003, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 3 “The Narrative of Mr. Kim Ung Soo, Leader of Donkey 15,” in “UN Partisan Forces,” 97-109.
- 4 “The Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song, Leader of Donkey 13,” in “UN Partisan Forces,” 87-96.
- 5 “The Narrative of Mr. Lim Jong Duk, Sub-Leader, and Mr. Lee Byong Gun, Chief of Staff, Donkey 20,” in “UN Partisan Forces,” 110-14, quotes from 110.

Il Sung's police and military forces away. These anti-Communist partisans welcomed the UN troops and even helped them locate, attack, and harass retreating NKPA elements.¹⁸ Guerrillas like Kim Chang Song recalled that he contemplated "about what we should do to meet [the UN troops and join the] fight against Communism."¹⁹ Making his move, "I had my people ambush each important [enemy] place." They burned police stations to the ground with Molotov cocktails and destroyed several other military outposts.²⁰ "We killed every Communist we found" and seized control of the district.²¹

By liberating themselves, the guerrillas inadvertently joined the Allied fight, but did so *conditionally*. Although the irregulars expressed contempt for Kim Il Sung's Communists, they felt equal disdain for Syngman Rhee and his ROK government. Most wanted nothing more than to consolidate their newly regained freedom and enjoy some autonomy over their affairs without interference from both the North and South Korean governments. In areas like the mountainous Hwanghae region in the west, many of these rebels had fought long and hard to restore their control over their communities and lives.²²

Unfortunately for the resistance members, the massive Chinese intervention in November 1950 ended their hopes for autonomy. Chinese formations quickly pushed the Allied troops out of North Korea. Faced with an untenable situation, tens of thousands of peasants chose to leave for the south; yet some decided to remain in the north and fight as guerrillas. In the more remote regions like Hwanghae and Pyongan, these anti-Communist fighters still controlled sizeable areas behind the lines of battle. In other locales, "semi-organized and partly armed" civilians fled to the numerous western islands off North Korea to continue their fight.²³

The Allied naval blockade, its air superiority, and a lack of enemy landing craft made the islands safe for guerrillas and refugees alike. According to a contemporary study, "an exodus [of guerrillas] began in December [1950], reached the proportions of a mass flight, and ended on January 1951 when the Communists managed to gain the upper hand and close the [land] exits." Left with few options, more than 10,000 lightly-armed irregulars and their families continued the fight from the islands. Refugees not interested in fighting hoped that the UN would return to free their villages and enable them to go home.²⁴

In the winter of 1950/51, UN forces blunted the combined Communist Chinese and North Korean offensive. Allied planners began considering options to reunify the peninsula and factored the potential combat power of the partisan North Koreans behind the enemy lines into their plans. As one contemporary study noted, "a number of remote little islands in the Yellow Sea, unnoticed before . . . suddenly had become last-stand strongholds of North Korean antagonists to the Communist regime."²⁵ One EUSA officer concluded: "These volunteers have organized themselves, appointed leaders and, by virtue of their own initiative, have overcome numerous hardships while effectively combating [the enemy] and securing intelligence." He also asserted that "These groups possess



Map depicting the location of the Hwanghae region in North Korea.



North Korean refugees in P'yongyang await evacuation to South Korea.

the will to resist, and if supplied, organized, and properly employed, would form the nucleus of an ever-growing liability to the Communist Forces."²⁶ How to get them committed to the UN effort remained to be seen.

That recaps the partisan situation at the end of 1950. Soon, EUSA received reports that large numbers of armed North Korean civilians occupied many of the offshore islands to the north and west. The same sources said they were engaging Communist forces and wanted UN support. The ROK Army and Navy did not trust the North Koreans and asked the U.S. Army to take charge of the situation. The EUSA G3 accepted the mission to train and direct the guerrilla war effort. "The problem was how to convert these untrained and [largely] unarmed volunteers into an effective fighting force and adapt their capabilities to missions advantageous to the over-all operations against the enemy."²⁷

EUSA had to create a guerrilla command to logistically support the partisan units, to provide basic infantry training, to support their operations with air and naval power, and to integrate their activities with the UNC. Fortunately, Colonel (COL) John H. McGee was an experienced guerrilla and special operations leader. He was capable of organizing and leading such a command. How COL McGee accomplished this mission is addressed in the following article. ♣

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Endnotes

- 1 8086th Army Unit, (AFFE) Military History Detachment-3, "UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict, 1951-1952," Project MHD-3, Center of Military History, Fort McNair, DC, (hereafter "UN Partisan Forces"), 10.
- 2 Roy E. Appleman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1961), 488-514, 607-09, 614-21; Billy C. Mossman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: Ebb and Flow, November 1950 – July 1951*. ([1990]; Reprinted, Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2000), 229-30; "The Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song, Leader of Donkey 13," Interview, 3 November 1952, by LTC A. S. Daley and MAJ B[jilly]. C. Mossman, included in "UN Partisan Forces," 87-96.
- 3 "The Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song," in "UN Partisan Forces," 87-96.
- 4 See Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), "Soviet Declaration of War on Japan," London, United Kingdom, 8 August 1945, available on the Internet at: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/s4.asp>, last accessed on 21 February 2012. During the Yalta Conference (4-11 February 1945), President Franklin D. Roosevelt and United Kingdom Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed the "pre-eminent interests of the Soviet Union shall be safeguarded" with respect to the key harbors of Port Arthur and Darien in China and the Chinese-Eastern and South Manchurian Railroads, giving the Soviet Union major advantages over other allied nations in that region. In return, the Soviets promised they would declare war against Japan no more than 90 days after the surrender of Germany. The USSR also gained control over the Kurile Islands in Northern Japan (the USSR ceded those islands to Japan in 1904 following its defeat in the Russo-Japanese War). "Protocol of the Proceedings of the Crimean Conference," February 1945, reprinted at: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/yalta.asp>, accessed on 8 July 2012, quote from text.
- 5 "General Order No. 1" and "Revision of General Order No. 1," Washington, DC, 11 August 1945, reprinted in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, Vol. 6, 1945, *The British Commonwealth, The Far East* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1969) (hereafter *FRUS*), 507-12, 635-39.
- 6 With the forced signing by Korean Emperor Sunjong of the "Japan-Korea Treaty of 1910," the Japanese annexed Korea and administered it as a dependent colony until September 1945, when Japanese troops surrendered to forces of the United States and the Soviet Union. In the absence of a viable national government, the occupying nations performed those functions until a new Korean-led government could be established.
- 7 "Revision of General Order No. 1," Washington, DC, 11 August 1945, reprinted in *FRUS* 6, 1945, 636; and Charles W. McCarthy, Secretary, "Memorandum by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee to Brigadier General Andrew J. McFarland, Secretary of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Washington, DC, 24 August 1945, *FRUS* 6, 1945, 1040.
- 8 During the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the United Kingdom and United States agreed to grant certain concessions ("Agreement Regarding Japan," 11 February 1945) to the USSR should it enter the war against Japan. However, unlike the division of Germany (also agreed at Yalta), the USSR would not administer any portion of a divided Japan. Instead, the three parties accepted the temporary division and also established a joint commission "to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government" (Agreement, "Interim Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," Moscow, December 16-26). Rather than reunify, the governments of both North and South Korea moved further from one another politically, each hoping to eventually reunite the peninsula under their own particular political system.
- 9 United Nations, "The Problem of the Independence of Korea," December 12, 1948, A/RES/195 (III), *Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly during its Third Session*, 25-27, available on the Internet at: <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r3.htm>, last accessed on 21 February 2012. That same resolution declares the Republic of Korea a "lawful government," and also the "only such Government in Korea" by virtue of the results of the UN supervised elections held earlier that year (A/RES/195 [III]), quotes from 25). For information on PMAG and its successor unit, the Korean Military Advisor Group (KMAG), see Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, 8, 18, 35; Robert Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in War and Peace* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1962), 8-45; and John D. Tabb, "The Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG): A Model for Success?," School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 17-28. Although PMAG later grew in numbers and even became the more robust KMAG, the few U.S. military that were authorized in PMAG when the ROK became independent illustrates how small the US military presence had become by the Fall of 1948.
- 10 United Nations, "Report of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK)," (A/1881) (Supp) (hereafter UNCURK A/1881 Report), 27-28; Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea: From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 91-92, 94-97; Jae Jean Suh, "The Transformation of Class Structure and Class Conflict in North Korea," *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* 14:2 (2005), 52-84, quote from 56.
- 11 Seth, *A Concise History of Modern Korea*, 94-97; Suh, "Class Structure and Class Conflict in North Korea," 52-84, quote from 56.
- 12 John Carter Vincent, "Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to the Under Secretary of State," Washington, DC, 1 October 1945, in *FRUS* 6, 1945, 1066-67, quote from 1067; *FRUS* 6, 1945, 1144-48; Charles K. Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 45-47; Kathryn Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence from Russian Archives," Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), Woodrow Wilson Center, Working Paper No. 8 (November 1993), 13; United Nations, "Report of the United Nations Commission on Korea [UNCOK]," Vol. 2, Annexes, (A/939/Add. 1), 7-8. The historical record reveals that the numbers of Koreans relocating to the south increased rapidly with the tightening of Communist control. Armstrong notes that "by December 1945, the U.S. occupation authorities had recorded nearly half a million Koreans entering the American zone," (Armstrong, 47). Another source asserts that by mid-December "Entry into our Zone of an additional 1,600,000 refugees" meant that "Three-quarters of the population of Korea is now in our hands" ("The Acting Political Adviser in Korea to the Secretary of State," Seoul, [Republic of Korea,] 14 December 1945, in *FRUS* 6, 1945, 1142-44, quotes from 1142 and 1143, respectively). Not all were fleeing Communist oppression, but significant numbers were and the population shift remained predominantly north to south for the next five years.
- 13 Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950," 13.
- 14 According to the UNCURK A/1881 Report, 28: "Although land reform in North Korea may have been enthusiastically welcomed at the time of its inauguration, disillusionment among the farmers quickly followed. There is a difference of opinion whether the conditions of the former tenants were better following the land reform than under the Japanese regime. For the most part, it would appear that there was merely a substitution of the Communist authorities for the former landlords" (emphasis added).
- 15 For example, see Kim Jae Seol, *War History of the Kuwolsan Guerrilla Unit* (Seoul: Kuwolsan Guerrilla Unit Comrade Association, 2002), 39-42 (copy in History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC), for personal accounts of the hardships imposed by Communist officials between 1945 and 1950. Another good source is the aforementioned "UN Partisan Forces," and Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, et al., "UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954," AFFE Group Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, Johns Hopkins University, Operations Research Office, June 1956 (hereafter ORO Study), *passim*.
- 16 "The Narrative of Mr. Pak Choll, Leader of Donkey 4," interviewed by LTC A.S. Daley and MAJ B. C. Mossman, 3 November 1952, in "UN Partisan Forces," 56-72, quote from 56.
- 17 ORO Study, 29.
- 18 Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, 488-514, 607-09, 614-21; ORO Study, 29.
- 19 "Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song, Leader of Donkey 13," interviewed by LTC A.S. Daley and MAJ B.C. Mossman, 3 November 1952, in "UN Partisan Forces," 87-93, quotes from 87.
- 20 "Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song," in "UN Partisan Forces," 87-93, quote from 90.
- 21 "Narrative of Mr. Kim Chang Song," in "UN Partisan Forces," 87-93, quote from 92.
- 22 "UN Partisan Forces," 87-93; Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 229-30. For much of the war, Syngman Rhee and his officers viewed most of the partisans with suspicion. Being mostly citizens of North Korea, ROK leaders were content to allow the EUSA and UNC to administer and care for the partisans rather than risk inducting them wholesale into the ROK Army. For their part, the partisans felt the same way; few expressed any interest in serving in the ROK military until it became apparent late in the war that there was little chance of a renewed UN offensive that would allow them to return to their homes.
- 23 ORO Study, 7-8, 29-31, quote from 29; Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 229-30.
- 24 "UN Partisan Forces," 3-5, quote from 4.
- 25 ORO Study, 30-31; Quote from "UN Partisan Forces," 10.
- 26 Major William A. Burke, "Report on Korean Volunteer Groups Operating on the Hwanghae Peninsula," 20 January 1951, copy in "UN Partisan Forces," 31-32, quotes from 31.
- 27 ORO Study, 30-31; Quote from "UN Partisan Forces," 10.