

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

STALIN AND THE ORIGIN OF THE KOREAN WAR:
A RECONSIDERATION

YUN YOUNG KIM

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the
Requirements of Anglia Ruskin University
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Resubmitted: September 2019

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

STALIN AND THE ORIGIN OF THE KOREAN WAR:

A RECONSIDERATION

YUN YOUNG KIM

SEPTEMBER 2019

This thesis examines the origins of the Korean War by means of underused historical documents from the warring parties such as Russia, China, North Korea, and the US. The reason for having different views on the origin of the war on conventional scholarly works came from the lack of information due to the limits on the access towards it. With support of various documentations obtained by all warring parties in South Korea, this thesis contributes to some of the contrasting issues over the war.

It argues that the key point to investigating Stalin's policy is to link it chronologically with other important international events and understand how it related to the outbreak of the Korean War. Initially, Soviet occupation in the northern part of Korea in August 1945 had no clear plan, but gradually Stalin became suspicious of the US attitude towards Japan, which led him to secretly order the establishment of a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea in September 1945. Nevertheless, Stalin did not show his intention to launch an attack against South Korea until the end of 1949. Instead, Stalin sought to deal with Korean issues within a cooperation framework with the US. In January 1950, however, Stalin sent a secret telegram to Kim to give a green light on his war plan.

This thesis focuses on what changed Stalin's policy towards Korea from a wider context and concludes that it was an international security environment in the Far East led Stalin to decide upon the Korean War. Washington introduced NSC 61 in January 1950 to revive Japan as an US ally, which included supporting South Korea as a main trading partner with Japan. Also, the US made a conciliatory approach towards Communist China by Truman's statement not to involve in the Taiwan issue. In addition, Stalin became suspicious of Mao due to his request on amending the Sino-Soviet Treaty and his approach to the US for economic aids to China. These circumstances were certainly challenging for Stalin, and led to decide to approve Kim's war plan with the condition of Chinese involvement.

During the process of the war, there were ongoing disagreements among Stalin, Mao, and Kim over the issues on the amount of military supply, air cover, military strategy, the armistice, and so on. This is because Stalin's aim in the war was not to win to expand communism but prolong it to weaken the US not enough to launch a Third World War in the near future.

Key words: Korean War, Stalin, Mao, Kim Il Sung, North Korea, South Korea.

Tables of Contents

Abbreviations	1
Introduction	2
Chapter I. A Hastily Constructed Plan: The USSR and Korea in 1945.....	18
The Lack of Preparation towards Korea in 1945.....	22
Stalin's Secret Order towards North Korea on 20 September 1945	29
Stalin's Appointment of Kim Il Sung as the Leader of North Korea.....	35
Introducing a New Political Structure in North Korea.....	39
International Background of Stalin's Order on 20 September 1945.....	43
Conclusion	48
Chapter II. Moscow Agreement: Stalin's Strategic Choice within Cooperative Framework with the US	50
US and Japanese Factors.....	56
Opeka: Stalin's Plan to Establish a Soviet Friendly Regime in North Korea through Domestic Power Groups.....	60
The Elimination of Nationalists within North Korea.....	63
Conclusion.....	66
Chapter III. Stalin's Goal to Sovietise North Korea between 1946 and 1948.....	68
The Soviet Style of Democratisation in North Korea.....	74
Relations between Moscow and Washington.....	82
The Japanese Factor.....	85
The Change in the Soviet Way to Control Nation Building Process in North Korea	88
Conclusion.....	94

Chapter IV. Stalin's Strategic Choice in Korea to Create Two Different Regimes	97
The Chinese Factor.....	106
Did Stalin truly Want Revolution in Asia?.....	118
Stalin's Confidence in the Acheson Announcement?.....	125
The Question about Absence of Soviet Representative in UNSC.....	126
Conclusion	131
Chapter V. Different Opinions on Stalin and Mao's Involvement	135
Mao in the Early Stage of the Korean War.....	147
The Change in Stalin and Mao's Attitude after the US Incheon Landing Operation	154
Why did Mao Decide to Send Troops to Korea?.....	158
Conclusion.....	166
Chapter VI. Did the US Policy towards Korea Lure Stalin into the War?	171
Why did the US Armed Forces Withdraw from South Korea?.....	177
The US Intelligence Failure on the Outbreak of the Korean War.....	194
Conclusion.....	205
Conclusion	208
Bibliography.....	213

COPYRIGHT

“Attention is drawn to the fact that copyright of this Thesis rests with:

- (i) Anglia Ruskin University for one year and thereafter with
- (ii) Yun Young Kim

This copy of the Thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is bound by copyright.”

Abbreviations

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPC	Communist Party of China
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EUSA	The Eighth United States Army
GNP	Gross National Product
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee of State Security)
KMT	Kuomintang
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
SWNCC	The Department of State War and Navy Coordination Committee
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USAMGIK	United States Army Military Government in Korea
USGASK	Upravlenie Grazhdanskoy Administratsiy v Severnoy Koree
USPACOM	The United States Pacific Command
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VOKS	Vsesoyuznoe Obschestvo Kul'turnoy Svyazi s zagranitsey (The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries)
AVPRF	The Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation
APRF	The Russian Presidential Archives
RGASPI	The Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History
TSAMO	The Russian Central Archive of Department of Defense

Introduction

The Korean War has significantly impacted on both Korea and world history. More than one million people died and it devastated almost all Korean territory in about three years.¹ It also left millions of people separated from their families across the borders. The war has not technically ended yet, as the parties in the war concluded a truce in 1953 and have not signed a peace agreement. This situation has created political as well as military tensions between the two Koreas over several decades. Moreover, North Korea's nuclear programmes have made the matter worse in domestic as well as international affairs. However, the two Korean leaders in the historic inter-Korean summit on 27 April 2018 agreed to declare the formal end of the war soon, and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and the U.S President Trump met three times between June 2018 and June 2019 to discuss denuclearisation in North Korea and possible security measures to ease tension in the Korean Peninsula, and President Trump mentioned a few days ago that he would like to have a Third summit with Kim Jong Un within this year.

In this historic moment, the study of the origin of the Korean War has a deep significance in that there have been various different approaches to explain why the war happened and who was most responsible for it. By clarifying the origin of the Korean War in depth with underused historical resources released from Russia, China, North Korea and the US government, this thesis will help historians, as well as the Korean public, to resolve their misunderstanding of this war that has created tensions in the Korean Peninsula over the past six decades.

Internationally, the Korean War played a significant role in accelerating the development of the Cold War between Washington and Moscow. During the early post-war period, the wartime alliance had been eroded by turning points such as the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, Sovietisation of Eastern Europe, the civil war in Greece, the Berlin blockade and the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution. The Korean War, in this context, can be considered as the first hot war, which contributed to introducing a new phase of the Cold War. Dean Acheson mentioned 'Korea saved us' meaning that the Korean War revived NSC-68, which became a

¹ The Defense Ministry of South Korea, *The Korean War*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1954.

catalyst to changing US policy towards communism.² Previously, George Kennan's containment policy towards the Soviets did not aim for military confrontation. Instead, its goal was to support industrial development in Europe and Japan to protect the Western world. With the military offensive launched by the North Korean forces, however, the US policy makers as well as its public began to consider it as Communist expansionism and therefore reacted more aggressively to protect their strategic interests. Consequently, the Korean War accelerated the militarisation of the NATO and in response, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation was created, which aggravated East-West tensions in Europe. In the Asian theatre, it took a couple of decades for the US and Communist China to normalise relations due to direct military confrontation in the war. In addition, the US signed the Treaty of San Francisco and the Security Treaty with Japan without the Soviets' presence during the Korean War. As a result, the Korean War served as a catalyst to intensify the confrontation of the Cold War.

The importance of the Korean War in world history, therefore, has attracted many scholars to attempt to explain the origins of the war in various ways; the so-called orthodox, revisionists and post-revisionists approaches. These views can range widely from arguing that the Korean War was due to Moscow's direct order to claiming that South Korea launched the initial attack against the North. This obvious contrast seems to be caused by limited materials and resources that scholars were able to use in their study. In this context, this thesis is an attempt to elaborate on the conventional arguments over the origins of the Korean War and therefore contribute to clarifying it more accurately with the support of underused declassified documents from Russia, China, North Korea, and the US government. The documents which were used in this thesis were obtained in various ways; Firstly, the Russian Federation Presidential Archives and Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' External Policy Archives decided to provide Russian government's historical documents, 548 pages for 216 cases, related to the Korean War to the Republic of Korea in June 1994, and those documents were stored in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the ROK. Secondly, as marking the 45th anniversary of the Korean War in 1995, the undisclosed historical documents, 3,000 pages for 950 cases, in the Russian Federation Presidential Archives, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, the Soviet Communist

² Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My years in the State Department*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969, p.363; David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter, America and the Korean War*, New York: the Amateurs Ltd, 2007, p.201.

Party's Central Committee Archives, and the Russian Ministry of Defense Archives were given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the ROK. Thirdly, in 2003, the historical documents related to the Korean War were obtained from the Russian Federation Far East History Archives. Since 2006, the Military Compilation Institute under the Ministry of Defense in the ROK reached an agreement with the Russian Military History Institute on exchanging historical documents related to the Korean War. Since then, the Central Archives under the Russian Ministry of Defense and the Russian Military History Institute have provided the historical documents related to Korea between 1950 and 1953. Some declassified Russian documents can be found at Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars (<http://www.digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org>) to be accessed via the internet. As for Chinese documents, they are mostly obtained from the Chinese government including the Chinese Central Literature Research Centre. Chinese news articles and other documents were found in the national library and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the ROK. With regards to North Korean historical documents, they were possessed in the North Korea Information Centre in the Ministry of Unification in the ROK, and interviews with North Korean defectors. Mostly they were about Kim Il Sung's directives to North Korean cadres, which have been underused in an academic field. The U.S documents mostly written by CIA have been declassified and can be accessed via internet (<http://www.cia.gov/library>). Foreign documents possessed in the ROK have been translated into Korean. There is still limitation to access to all relevant information related to the Korean War, which needs to be resolved in the future to clarify the whole story about the Korean War.

This thesis will focus on Stalin's policy towards Korea during the early post-war period between 1945 and 1950, and will argue that Stalin did not intend to occupy the whole of Korea from the time of the Red Army's occupation of the northern part of Korea in August 1945. The conclusion is that Stalin reacted to US policy and took defensive measures to protect Soviet strategic interests, so Korean issues need to be viewed in the wider context of the Cold War to reveal exactly what caused the war. This approach will offer an alternative explanation of its origin. After examining underused declassified documents from all the major warring parties, it concludes that Stalin was the main actor in the process of the Korean War. Stalin's involvement in the Korean War was as follows; firstly, North Korean military forces were fully armed with Soviet armaments and equipment with Stalin's directives. Secondly, military

operation planning and action was guided under active participation of Stalin and Soviet military personnel. Thirdly, Stalin's directives and advice towards China as well as North Korea's leadership were a major part of conducting the war, although Stalin's involvement was carried out confidentially. Fourthly, both Mao and Kim were not successful in persuading Stalin for a swift victory - early participation of the Chinese People's army in the war for Mao, and punctual and sufficient military procurement for both Chinese and North Korean forces. Stalin's objectives were not to expand Communism in Asia but to extend the war in Korea. In other words, Stalin did not want China backed North Korea or the U.S backed South Korea to win the war. So what was Stalin's objective in the Korean War? It can be referred from the letter written by Stalin to Klement Gottwald, the President of Czechoslovakia, on 27 August 1950.³ In the letter, Stalin said "America cannot deal with China, and therefore, it would not be in a position to partake in a third world war." The Korean War could serve Stalin's objectives to hold the U.S in Far East Asia for a few years by means of confronting against Communist China. Stalin was partially successful in achieving his objectives, despite the fact that there was not a third world war but tensions from the Cold War were escalated between the two sides. More importantly, this thesis focuses on the timing of Stalin's decision to support Kim's military plan against South Korea in early 1950. Stalin kept rejecting Kim's request on military offensive plan to unify Korea until the end of 1949. It seemed a sudden change that Stalin gave the green light to Kim's request via telegram on 30 January 1950. In the telegram, Stalin said "if Kim wants to discuss the matter in regard to South Korea with me, I will always be ready to receive him and discuss with him. Tell him that I am ready to help him in this matter."⁴ Until the end of 1949, Stalin seemed satisfied with status quo situation in the Korean Peninsula having two different regimes between the North and the South. However, Stalin's change in his attitude on January 1950 towards Korea has to be explained in order to find out the origin of the Korean War. What happened in early 1950 to change Stalin's strategy in Korea? There was a movement in terms of possible change in the fundamental relations between the USSR,

³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Letter from Stalin to Gottwald, 27 Aug 1950. (Korean version); RGASPI, Font.558, Opis.11, Delo.62, Listy 71-72.

⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Kim, 30 Jan 1950. (Korean version); RGASPI, Font.558, Opis.11, Delo.346. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/122136>.

China, Japan and the U.S. On 5 January, Truman stated “the U.S will not provide military aid in Formosa (Taiwan).”⁵ On 12 January, right after Truman’s statement, Secretary Acheson announced that Taiwan would be outside the U.S. defensive perimeter. This U.S. policy was surely a conciliatory approach to Communist China, which would make Stalin feel concerned about the balance of power in Asia between the USSR and the U.S. More importantly, in January 1950 Washington introduced NSC 61, the programme for reviving Japanese economy as an US ally, which included supporting South Korea as a main trading partner with Japan. Stalin’s main concern in this region was to prevent Japan from being a threat to the Soviets again, but under this circumstance, it seemed certain that Washington would win the game in the post war Japanese issue.

Furthermore, in January 1950, there was an ongoing discussion with Mao on a new Sino-Soviet treaty, in which Stalin reluctantly agreed to Mao’s requests, including returning all the Soviet privilege in Manchuria. Under these circumstances, from the viewpoints of Stalin who believed the inevitability of breaking out a Third World War in the future, the Korean War with Mao’s military involvement against the U.S seemed to be the perfect solution for Stalin to fulfill his objectives; delaying the outbreak of a Third World War, maintaining the status of the world leader of Communist nations, and nullifying a new Sino-Soviet treaty by keeping Soviet privilege in Manchuria. This thesis offers a new angle on the origin of the Korean War. It can be called a post-orthodox approach in that Stalin coordinated the war from the planning stage throughout the process of the war. In fact, the Korean War ceased after Stalin’s sudden death as Stalin’s intention was not to win the war but to prolong it in Korea.

The orthodox approaches attempted to explain the origin of the Korean War by examining Stalin’s aim of expanding communism in Asia. In this hypothesis, Stalin utilised the internal disputes between the North and the South to achieve his goal to communise the whole of Korea. The positive circumstances such as the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution, the successful Soviet nuclear test and Kim Il Sung’s strong wish to unify Korea by force convinced

⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Editorial Note,” FRUS, East Asia & the Pacific, Vol.6, 1950, p.264.

Stalin that he could accomplish his intended goal.⁶ In this approach, it is assumed that “Stalin intended a swift victory by the North Korean forces in the Cold War confrontation against the US” and, it is claimed that “due to unexpected American military intervention, Stalin’s plan failed and the war lasted three years ending with an armistice.”⁷ According to G. Roberts, “the Korean War was a costly miscalculation by Stalin in that Soviet absence in the UNSC meeting gave a legal basis for US military intervention in the war and consequently encouraged the massive programmes of rearmament to contain the Soviets.” In addition, it was argued that “Stalin’s decision to militarily intervene in Korea was influenced by his fear of Japan. With the breakdown of the negotiation with the US regarding the formation of post-war Japan, it was an alternative option for Stalin to choose the whole of Korea to protect Soviet national security and this was blessed by the Acheson announcement on 12 January 1950 that the US defence line in the Pacific region would not include the Korean Peninsula.”⁸

The international situation was used to explain the origin of the Korean War to some extent. R. Garthoff argued that “the international situation was in favour of Stalin in that US armed forces were withdrawn from South Korea by June 1949, the Soviets succeeded in their nuclear test in August 1949 and signed the new Sino-Soviet treaty in February 1950. These series of events were believed to contribute to Stalin’s confidence in the likely success of warfare in Korea and therefore he finally approved Kim’s launching of the military operation.”⁹ Similarly, some Korean historians including M. Park and Y. Kim who specialised in the research on the Korean War in the 1990s claimed that “the communisation of China had a significant impact on the break-out of war on the grounds that Stalin judged a new change in the Far East as a chance to make a triangular communist alliance among the USSR, the PRC and North Korea.” With the support of a triangular alliance it was believed that “Stalin attempted to separate Korea

⁶ Barton J. Bernstein, “The Week We Went to War: American Intervention in the Korean Civil War,” *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol.54, No.1, Jan 1977, p.9; Kathryn Weathersby, “Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence from Russian Archives,” *CWHP Working Paper*, No.8, Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, November 1993.

⁷ David J. Dallin, *Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1961; Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970*, Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970.

⁸ Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars from World War to Cold War, 1939-1953*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006, pp.364-371.

⁹ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age*, New York: Praeger Publisher, 1965.

from the US sphere of influence in order to seize power over this region in the confrontation of the Cold War with the US.”¹⁰ In line with this interpretation, there was an attempt to explain the Korean War within Stalin’s overall plan in the Cold War. B. Catchpole argued that “Stalin aimed for a swift victory to occupy the whole of Korea within two weeks and this, as a communist expansion in Asia, would trigger the US to take on expensive defence commitments in which the US might face public opposition or it might result in reducing the US commitment to the NATO.”¹¹

Among the orthodox approaches, there was an attempt to explain the origin of the Korean War as Stalin’s reaction towards US policy towards Japan.¹² A. Whiting argued that “during the early post-war era, the US decided to use Japan to contain Soviet expansionism. Therefore, a communist victory in the Korean War would influence Japanese politics in order to prevent its pro-American attitude.”¹³ This argument is not fully convincing in that the Communist Party in Japan was not successful enough to secure Soviet security strategy. Nevertheless, Japan was the most important Soviet strategic issue in this region, and therefore Stalin tried to ensure that a post war Japan would not threaten Moscow again. In this regard, NSC 61, introduced by Washington in January 1950, certainly impacted Stalin and his concern for the Soviet security strategy in this region.

There is another attempt to focus on the Soviet unilateral role in the outbreak of the Korean War, the so-called wedge theory; Scholars including A. Ulam and S. Goncharov argued that “the Korean War broke out in the process of Stalin’s communist world strategy in which Stalin intended to hold a newly born Communist China under his leadership and prevent it from being like Tito’s Yugoslavia.”¹⁴ In line with this argument, it was claimed that “Stalin intended to prevent possible rapprochement between the PRC and the US through the Korean War and consequently to hold a new Chinese regime under Soviet control.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Myong Rim Park, *The Origin of the Korean War 2*, Seoul: Nanam Press, 1996; Young Ho Kim, *The Origin of the Korean War and its Process of Development*, Seoul: Durea, 1998.

¹¹ Brian Catchpole, *The Korean War, 1950-1953*, London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2000.

¹² George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1967.

¹³ Allen S. Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

¹⁴ Adam Ulam, *The Communists*, New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1992; Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

¹⁵ Edgar Snow, *The Other Side of the River: Red China Today*, New York: Random House, 1962.

This argument, however, seems to have a limited scope in terms of analysing the origin of the war. Stalin's concern in this region was not just China but more complex to include the U.S and Japan as well. January 1950 was a kind of turmoil for reshaping the relations among one another; the leader of newly born Communist China, Mao, requested the amendment of Sino-Soviet treaty. U.S President Truman and Acheson expressed conciliatory approach to Mao, announcing that the US would not involve in the Taiwan issue, which gave a free hand to Mao to unify China by military means. Mao also tried to secure economic aid from Washington for China's recovery from the war. Regarding Japan, the US created NSC 61 to revive Japanese economy to prevent the expansion of Communism, which also included supporting other Asian nations including South Korea, Indonesia, Philippines, and India. In South Korea, a pro-American leader, Rhee, hoped to unify Korea by military means. All these aspects had a significant impact on Stalin as a decision-maker, as he needed a breakthrough to prevent the US expansionism in Asia. Stalin tried to show the strong bond between the Soviets and newly born Communist China to the world, with regards to the issue of being a member of UNSC. Moscow acted with a great passion in order to keep Communist China under Soviet influence, but US conciliatory measures seemed appealing to Mao for China's strategic concern - the unification of China. This new game was not optimistic to Stalin in terms of competition with the U.S. As Stalin was seriously concerned about a possible Third World War in the near future, there had to be a way out to resolve this issue; that was the Korean War.

Since the Soviet occupation of the northern part of Korea in August 1945, Stalin's policy towards Korea was closely linked to the Soviet situation in the negotiation with the US regarding post-war Japan. Stalin's disappointment with the US deepened his distrust of it and therefore he took a defensive action to establish a Soviet friendly regime in North Korea as a buffer zone by his secret order in September 1945. During the years between 1946 and 1948, the establishment of a pro-Soviet North Korea had been successfully achieved, but there was not enough evidence to prove Stalin's intention to control the whole of Korea at that time. Instead, Stalin seemed to be content with the status quo of having two different regimes in the Korean Peninsula, as the Soviets were able to avoid direct confrontation with the US in this region. His cautious attitude to preventing any kind of confrontation with the US continued throughout 1949. For example, Stalin rejected Kim's suggestion to unify Korea by force at the meeting in March 1949 and warned him not to provoke any military action against South Korea

even after the withdrawal of the US forces. However, Stalin showed his changed attitude towards Kim's war plan in his secret telegram to Kim on 30 January 1950, which gave the green light to unify Korea by force.

This change of mind is explained in this thesis as being strongly related to other international events. In January 1950, there had been new movement in world politics between the USSR, Communist China, and the U.S. The U.S. tried to improve a possible rapprochement with Communist China by Truman and Acheson's statement, and introduced NSC-61 to revive Japan and other related Asian nations including South Korea. In addition, there had been the negotiation with Mao to revise the previous Sino-Soviet treaty that Stalin had made with Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomintang (KMT) government in 1945. With the creation of a new Communist regime in China, Mao requested the return of Soviet privileges over Changchun railways, Port Arthur and Dalian harbour and he was told on 28 January that Stalin had decided to accept his demand.

Having economic hardship to recover from, because of damage by the Second World War, Stalin seemed to consider the Korean War as an opportunity to achieve "the balance of power" between the USSR and the U.S. Stalin used the expression of "the balance of power" twice in his letter to K. Gottwald saying that "U.S military involvement in Korea gives us an advantage in the global balance of power."¹⁶ From Stalin's perspective, it seems that the Korean War would serve various benefits for him; Firstly, if the U.S involves in a warfare against Communist China, it would cause a great amount of expenses as well as military resources, and this would lead to delay a possible outbreak of a Third World War. Secondly, the Korean War would serve a role for Stalin to keep in control of Mao as the leader of new born Communist China. Mao had tried to approach the U.S during a civil warfare in China, and the U.S. also intended to make a possible rapprochement with Communist China. This caused Stalin to be concerned with Mao, who might become an Asian Tito. In fact, the Korean War triggered Mao's desire to protect Chinese security from possible threat by the US. Mao requested Stalin to approve the Red Army to be stationed in Manchuria and guaranteed Soviet

¹⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Letter from Stalin to Gottwald, 27 Aug 1950. (Korean version); RGASPI, Font.558, Opis.11, Delo.62, Listy 71-72.

privilege to use all the facilities there. It meant Stalin recovered what he could have lost in the new Sino-Soviet Treaty.

It was not until May 1950 that Mao was informed of the result of the meeting between Stalin and Kim that both agreed with launching military operations towards South Korea. Later Mao explained his decision to enter the war by mentioning that “it would have been no use in opposing the war plan, as two parties out of three already agreed with it.” Mao also said that “the widespread social unrest and rumours about possible US attack on China and changing the leadership led to decide on Chinese military intervention in Korea.”¹⁷ It was not Mao but Stalin who chose the time for Chinese military intervention. It has been proven by declassified secret telegrams that Mao requested Stalin to approve Chinese military intervention in the early stages of the war when North Korean forces were superior to their opponents. However, Stalin continued to neglect Mao’s suggestion and waited until the American led UN forces marched north of the 38th parallel line in October 1950. Under this new adverse condition, Mao initially refused Stalin’s request as it seemed unlikely North Korea would win the war and more importantly Chinese military intervention could cause so much damage to the Chinese economy as well as Mao’s leadership. In this situation, Stalin took an extreme measure to recommend Kim to retreat his regime to China and this scenario was even more dangerous for Mao to accept, as Chinese territory could be the battlefield between North Korea and the US. This became the crucial moment for Mao to decide to dispatch Chinese armed forces to Korea. Thus, Stalin was the main director manipulating the war from the initial planning stage and throughout the duration of the war. Mao and Kim were just actors forced to follow Stalin’s instructions, irrespective of their own will.

The revisionist approaches attempted to focus on the domestic situation in Korea to explain the origin of the Korean War. It questioned the orthodox hypothesis on the Soviet role in the outbreak of the war. I. F. Stone argued that “the war resulted from joint plots by General MacArthur, Syngman Rhee – the first President of South Korea between 1948 and 1960, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and the US Department of State advisor J.F. Dulles for the

¹⁷ Yeomhwang Chunchu, “The report on the meeting with Mao and Mikoyan in 1956 & 1957,” *Yellow Flames in the Spring & Autumn*, Vol. 12, 2013.

purpose of solving domestic problems in each nation.”¹⁸ D. F. Fleming also claimed that “Rhee’s regime was politically at risk in the late 1940s and therefore the war served as a breakthrough to escape from its domestic crisis.”¹⁹ In this context, J & G. Kolko argued that “Rhee purposely ignored the information of the possibility of a North Korean attack, which induced Kim to launch the war.”²⁰ From the revisionists’ viewpoint including J. Gittings, “the Korean War started as a civil war but escalated into an international one due to American intervention. Therefore, it was not Moscow’s conspiracy but Washington’s reaction to take the threat in East Asia as seriously as it did in the West. Washington’s intervention in the civil war in Asia escalated the war into an international one bringing about Chinese military engagement.” It also argued that “the Acheson announcement convinced Mao to expect a US non-intervention policy towards the civil war in Korea, but President Truman used the Korean War as a pretext to intervene in the Formosa area for the purpose of actively engaging in preventing Mao from winning the Chinese civil war.”²¹

In this situation, E. Friedman argued that “Chinese military intervention seemed inevitable, as Mao considered the US forces’ advance near to the Yalu River as a serious threat to Chinese security and this was the reason why it was not until November 1950 that the Chinese forces began to launch a counteroffensive against the US.”²² This argument can be challenged by newly declassified documents that Mao was aware of Kim’s wish to unify Korea by force from early 1949 and advised Kim to prepare for it militarily. In fact, Mao warned Kim that “General MacArthur might order Japanese troops to intervene in a war in Korea and therefore it would be better for Kim to wait until the Chinese Communist forces won the civil war against Chiang Kai Shek’s regime.”²³ In this regard, Mao reported to Stalin about the meeting with Kim’s delegation on 17 May 1949 that “the Korean War could be launched during 1950, once the

¹⁸ I.F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952.

¹⁹ D.F. Fleming, *The Cold War and its Origins, 1917-1960*, Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1961.

²⁰ Joyce & Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954*, New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

²¹ John Gittings, “The Great Asian Conspiracy,” in the ed., Edward Friedman & Mark Selden, ed., *America’s Asia: Dissenting Essays of Asian-American Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1971, pp.108-145.

²² Edward Friedman, “Problems in Dealing with an Irrational Power,” in the ed., Edward Friedman & Mark Selden, ed., *America’s Asia: Dissenting Essays of Asian-American Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1971, pp.207-252.

²³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret Telegram from Mao to Kim, May 1949.

Chinese Communist forces became ready to support North Korea.”²⁴ In addition, Mao predicted possible US intervention in the war during the meeting with Kim on 15 May 1950 after Stalin approved Kim’s war plot in Moscow and advised “not spending too much time on occupying big cities but focusing on a swift victory to prevent a long-term war.” As for Mao’s advice, Kim showed confidence by mentioning that “the US would not intervene in a war in the Far East.”²⁵ It demonstrates that Mao was roughly aware of Kim’s war plan although he did not have detailed information on when Kim would begin to launch an attack. The interesting point is that Mao warned Kim of possible US intervention and advised a war strategy to achieve a swift victory. It was Kim who was overconfident about possible US intervention, as the other two parties – Mao and Stalin – expected or even intended the US engagement in a conflict in Korea.

In the 1980s, one of the New Left scholars, Bruce Cumings established the hypothesis that “the Korean War started from a border clash as a form of civil war, but with the US’s intervention in the war, it expanded into international warfare.”²⁶ Interestingly, he argued that the war was strongly related to the negative legacy of the Japanese colonial era. For example, it was believed that the land reform issue was one of the factors to cause the war. North Korea, which successfully accomplished its land reform, intended to occupy the whole of Korea to complete land reform on the whole peninsula to remove the legacy of Japanese colonisation. In addition, Cumings emphasised that “there were ongoing small-scale border conflicts between the North and the South and the Korean War emerged from one of these minor incidents on the border area.” He argued that “there was the military provocation by South Korea at Ongjin peninsular between 24 June and 25 June 1950, which caused the North’s counter-attack and this resulted in a chain reaction between the two Koreas.” In this hypothesis, it was believed that North Korea decided its counter-attack independently; therefore the Soviets would not have known

²⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret Telegram from Kovalyov to Stalin about the results of the meeting between Mao and North Korean delegation, 18 May 1949.

²⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Roshchin’s report on the meeting between Mao and Kim, 15 May 1950.

²⁶ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War : Liberation and the Establishment of Separate Regimes 1945-1947, The Roaring of the Cataract 1947-1950*, 2 Vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981/1990.

its military plan in advance.

The flaw in this argument lies in the fact that land reform in South Korea had been completed by April 1950 before the outbreak of the Korean War. This has been proved by the North Korean report obtained by the US forces during the Korean War that the North Korean regime was also aware of the fact that land reform in South Korea had been accomplished before the war.²⁷ The other misunderstanding of Cumings' argument is that it overlooked the period of time from October 1949 when Stalin told North Korea not to provoke military conflict near the border against the South. This has been proved by Russian documentation that Stalin warned Kim to avoid any kind of military confrontation which would possibly provoke warfare against the US and ordered Terenti Fomitch Shtykov - the Soviet ambassador in Pyongyang - to make an active attempt to control Kim's aggressive attitude towards South Korea throughout 1949. In this context, the North Korean report showed that "a large scale of border disputes between the North and the South had completely ceased alongside the 38th parallel line by March 1950."²⁸ In addition, the other flaw in Cumings' hypothesis called 'Second Mosaic' was that it assumed that the North Korean regime had independent decision-making authority to counteract any South Korean forces' provocation. This argument was also raised by Wilbur W. Hitchcock in 1951 as well.²⁹ This is proven incorrect by Russian documents that Kim had been loyal to Stalin from his appointment as a leader of North Korea by Stalin throughout the entire process of the war in Korea and as a result, he was fully under the control of Stalin. Kim mentioned to Shtykov in the meeting on 17 January 1950 that "Comrade Stalin's order is the law to me", which reveals that Kim himself admitted Stalin's dominant position relating to all the issues in Korea.³⁰

There was another revisionist's hypothesis called 'limited occupation theory' which was raised by Joyce and Gabriel Kolko in the 1970s and influenced another revisionist in the 1990s as

²⁷ The Statistical Report by Lee Sun Woo, the Head of Land Reform Committee in Boun Province in South Korea, about Land Reform in South Korea, SA 2010, Item 4/87, RG 242.

²⁸ Secret Operation Report by General Staff Department of Public Security Bureau in Home Office of North Korea, SA 2009, Item 9/69, RG 242.

²⁹ Wilbur W. Hitchcock, "North Korea Jumps the Gun," *Current History*, March 1951, pp.136-144.

³⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The report from Shtykov to Vyshinsky, 19 Jan 1950.

well. This argued that “the aim of North Korea at the beginning of the war was to occupy only Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, not the whole of South Korea, in order for Kim to have a better position in political negotiations with Rhee’s regime.”³¹ B. Shin also claimed that “the original plan by North Korea was to only control Seoul, but after 1 July 1950, when US military intervention became clear, Kim changed his plan to occupy the whole of South Korea, so it was the US that escalated the war to the international level.”³² This argument came from the fact that the North Korean forces stayed in Seoul for a few days, even after occupying it, without going further down to the South. Its assumption was that once Seoul was occupied by the North Korean forces, it would lead to the revolt of the Korean people in the South and therefore the whole of Korea would easily be under the North Korean communist regime.

This argument is also proven to be incorrect by Russian sources which show that the original war plan was to occupy all major cities and ports throughout South Korea. More importantly, Kim blamed Stalin for not supplying enough military equipment on time, which caused the North Korean forces to stay in Seoul for a few days and became the fatal reason for not being able to win the war.³³ In addition, the report by the North Korean forces has revealed that “it was delayed crossing the Han River in Seoul to advance southwards and therefore this became the main reason for failing to break through the South Korean forces defence line around the Busan area.”³⁴ Regarding the assumption of raising revolts among the South Korean people once North Korea launched the attack, it was not correct in that guerrilla forces within South Korea had been almost swept away before June 1950 by Rhee’s regime, as the major punitive forces to suppress Communist guerrillas around Jiri Mountain in South Korea completed their mission and returned to their own military units by early May 1950. Therefore, this cannot be a condition to support the limited occupation theory. In contrast to these approaches, this thesis will show that Stalin manipulated the war in Korea for the purpose of inducing the U.S in Korea with direct military confrontation against PRC, which Stalin thought would delay a possible Third World War and keep Mao in control.

³¹ Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954*

³² Bok Ryong Shin, “The Origin of the Korean War: Focusing on Kim Il Sung’s willingness to start the war,” *The Journal of Korean Political Science Association*, Vol. 30, 1996, pp.168-175.

³³ Institute of Social Science History Research, *The History of the Korean War*, p.577.

³⁴ US Daily Intelligence Summary, The Report by North Korean forces to Kim Il Sung, May 1951, No. 3170, FEC, RG 338.

Chapter I will examine Moscow's lack of preparation in terms of its policy towards Korea in 1945 and its change by Stalin's secret order to establish a Soviet-friendly regime in the northern part of Korea in September 1945. In addition, it will reveal Stalin's plan to create a new regime in favour of Soviet interests by selecting Kim as the leader of North Korea as well as actively engaging in the creation of a new political and social structure within North Korea.

Chapter II will analyse the Moscow Agreement as Stalin's strategic choice to deal with Korean issues within the cooperative framework with the US. Stalin seemed confident in having the support of the North Korean people due to its political and economic policies including land reform, which would guarantee a pro-Soviet provisional Korean government under trusteeship and play an important role in protecting the Soviets from the possible threat of Japan, turning Korea into a buffer zone in the Far East to ensure Soviet national security. This plan, however, encountered an unexpected difficulty through an anti-trusteeship movement followed by an anti-Soviet movement among the Korean public. This was a serious challenge to Stalin's plan to establish a Soviet friendly Korean government in the future and therefore he decided to take more active measures to remove nationalists within North Korea and consolidate pro-Soviet communists' power.

Chapter III will examine Stalin's goal of the Sovietisation of North Korea between 1946 and 1948. Through the process of the Joint Soviet-American Commission, it became clear that it would not be possible to create a Soviet friendly provisional Korean government in the negotiation with the US. However, the reason why Soviet delegates continued to participate in the Joint Commission was to maintain cooperative relations with the US in order to cooperate with the formation of post-war Japan. During this period, therefore, the formation of the North Korean regime as Soviet satellite nation was developed and Stalin seemed to plan a two-Korea policy in this region as a realistic option to protect the USSR.

Chapter IV will address Stalin's strategic choice to approve Kim's war plot in early 1950. Stalin was opposed to any kind of military provocation especially alongside the 38th parallel until the end of 1949, as it might cause military confrontation with the US. However, he changed his mind in early 1950 to approve Kim's war plan. In order to reveal the reasons for Stalin's new policy towards Korea, it is necessary to examine the possible influence of international events such as the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution, the possible rapprochement between the U.S and Communist China including the announcement of the

Acheson line that the US defence in the Pacific region would not include the Korean Peninsula, and NSC-61, Washington's programme for Japan's economic recovery to keep communism out of Southeast Asia, which included economic development of South Korea as the main trading partner with Japan. In addition, it analyses why Soviet delegates did not attend the UNSC meeting in which the US had a legal base to get involved in the Korean War.

Chapter V will focus on different opinions between Stalin and Mao in terms of the Chinese military intervention in the Korean War. This will reveal that Mao intended to participate in the war more actively from an early stage in order to obtain a swift victory by North Korea. However, it was Stalin who waited until the American-led UN forces advanced across the 38th parallel to request Mao to enter the war, which he finally accepted due to domestic unrest as well as possible damage of his leadership within China.

Chapter VI will examine external factors claimed by conventional scholars which encouraged Stalin and Kim to take military action against South Korea. This includes the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea and the Acheson announcement. In addition, with recently declassified documents from the US intelligence and governmental body, it reveals that the US failed to expect a North Korean attack as well as Chinese military intervention in the war. In summary, this thesis will challenge existing scholarly works in terms of the origins of the Korean War, and argue that Stalin was the main coordinator for the purpose of securing the balance of power in world politics in order to prevent a possible Third World War by weakening the US in the Far East and maintaining his position as a leader of communists. Due to Stalin's grand plan over the war, neither Kim nor Mao could achieve what they aimed for in the war. They were just actors playing in the Korean theatre to fulfil Stalin's objective.

I. A hastily constructed plan: the USSR and Korea in 1945

Although the Korean War did not break out until June 1950 the revisionist historian Bruce Cumings regards the period from 1945 to 1950 as one of continuous development, as it was here that Korea was divided by Soviet as well as American occupation forces. This was a time of continuing activity which led to the outbreak of the war, and was aided by the small-scale border disputes which escalated into full-scale war in the end.¹ However, declassified documents from Russia, China and the US show that Stalin approved of Kim launching a military operation against the South under the condition of Chinese Communist support. This chapter, therefore, examines Stalin's policy towards Korea to see if there was any grand plan by Stalin towards Korea, which helps understand the origins of the war more clearly.

On 10 August 1945 the Soviet Red Army landed in the northern part of Korea after the defeat of Japan in the Second World War. The main purpose of dispatching the Soviet army in the North and the US force in the South respectively - in the Korean Peninsula - was to support the disarmament of the Japanese forces and to maintain social order within Korea. This resulted from a series of discussions between the US and the USSR, such as the wartime meeting in March 1943; conferences in Cairo and Teheran in 1944 and Yalta in 1945. It was hard to understand exactly what Stalin's idea towards Korea was at this stage mainly due to the lack of historical documentation. Some scholars including R. Herrmann and E. Hoffman seem to simplify the intention of Moscow's approach to North Korea as a part of 'Socialisation' and define its diplomatic motive as 'Expansionism' or 'Defence'.² Therefore, H. Yang argued that "the Soviet policy towards Korea was carefully planned to lead to communisation of the whole Korean Peninsula."³

According to Erik Van Ree, Stalin's post-war diplomatic policy was regarded as 'Socialism in

¹ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, 2 Vols.

² Richard K. Herrmann, *Perceptions and Behaviour in Soviet Foreign Policy*, Series in Russian and East European Studies No.7, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985; Erik P. Hoffmann & Fredrick J. Flero, Jr., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, New York: Aldine, 1980.

³ Ho Min Yang, *Rethinking of Division of Korea 1945-1980*, Seoul: Nanam Press, 1993.

one zone', in which Moscow tried to consolidate Socialism and as a part of this approach, its policy towards Korea could be defined as 'cautious expansionism' meaning that the Soviet government wanted to expand its influence over Korea.⁴ Others including I. Yeo and D. Seo, however, asserted that Soviet foreign policy was mainly defensive and therefore its aim in the Korean Peninsula was to communise North Korea due to realistic constraints.⁵ This was because the initial goal to establish a united Korean government was not successful and therefore the communisation of North Korea was the only possible option for Moscow.⁶ According to Kathryn Weathersby, Moscow did not have a clear plan at first when the Red Army marched into North Korea, but it changed its foreign policy to divide the Korean Peninsula into two parts between South and North in December 1945, as a pro-Soviet Korean regime would not be possible due to the US. It was claimed that Moscow came to the conclusion that the creation of a Soviet-friendly regime within North Korea would still provide strategic and economic benefits to the USSR.⁷ In this argument, however, there is a lack of explanation about how Moscow could make a decision on dividing Korea within only a couple of months after its occupation in North Korea.

This chapter will argue that Stalin did not have a specific plan over Korea right after the defeat of Japan in August 1945. His main concern in this region was to be involved in the formation of post-war Japan in to make sure that Japan would not threaten Soviet security again in the future. Therefore Stalin's policy towards Korea was reactive to the US's policy on Japan. So, although there was no masterplan towards Korea right after the Red Army's occupation of the northern part of Korea in August 1945, Stalin began to think about using North Korea as a buffer zone to protect Soviet security from Japan due to his discontent with the process of establishing post-war Japan, which the US mainly took the lead in. This encouraged Stalin to doubt the US's intentions in the Far East and his distrust of US foreign policy led him to establish a new Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea.

There will be various approaches to analysing the Soviet policy towards Korea in 1945. For

⁴ Erik Van Ree, *Socialism in One Zone: Stalin's Policy in Korea 1945-47*, Oxford: Bery Publishers, 1989.

⁵ In Gon Yeo, *The Soviet Policy towards Korea between 1945 and 1948*, Asia Culture, Vol.8, 1992, pp.131-52.

⁶ Dae Sook Seo, Soviet Military Government, *Asian Culture*, Vol.8, 1992, pp.113-129.

⁷ Weathersby, "Soviet aim in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War," *Working Paper* NO.8, Cold War International History Project, Nov 1993.

fair and objective analysis, it is essential to have reliable documents from all of the participants related to an event – the USSR, China, the US, South Korea and North Korea. Although it is not currently possible to access all information from North Korea, other participants declassified secret documents related to the Korean War and this helps to clarify the existing disagreements among scholars. This chapter, therefore, examines how much value Korea had in Soviet diplomatic policy in 1945, what Stalin's role was in appointing Kim Il Sung as the leader of North Korea and how much Moscow was involved in founding North Korea as a new regime. This will be based on various documentation given to the ROK government by several archives in Russia including the Russian Presidential Archive (APRF), the Russian Central Archive of Department of Defense (TSAMO), the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation (AVPRF), and the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) as a part of intergovernmental agreement on the exchange of the information on the Korean War.

This will show that Moscow did not have a clear plan on the Korean Peninsula in the first place when the Red Army entered the northern part of Korea in August 1945, as its main concern was to eliminate a possible threat from post-war Japan. Therefore, it can be argued that Soviet policy towards Korea changed over time depending on the process of diplomatic negotiations with other Western allies - mainly the US and this can explain the background that Stalin ordered to select possible Korean candidate to become the leader of North Korea and interviewed Kim Il Sung in early September 1945 and chose him as the leader of North Korea. Moreover, Stalin sent out a secret telegram to order the establishment of a new Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea on 20 September 1945. It will be argued that Stalin's decision to create a new regime in North Korea was the expression of his concern and disappointment caused by the first meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London between 11 September 1945 and 2 October 1945. In this meeting, Stalin could not achieve his goal to be involved in the formation of post-war Japan and began to be suspicious about US foreign policy in the Far East region and concerned that Japan might be a possible threat against Soviet security in the future. During the Second World War, Moscow considered Korea as one of Japan's colonies and the main reason for the Soviet involvement in the war against Japan was not to liberate Korea but to acquire lost Russian territory from Japan.⁸ For example, on 23 August 1945 Stalin suggested

⁸ E.M. Zhukov, *Krizis kolonial'noy sistemy*, Moskva: Tikhookeanskiy Institut, Akademiya Nauk SSSR, 1949.

liberating Manchuria, Southern Sakhalin and parts of the Kuril Islands in return for the Red Army's victory against Japan but Korea was not included within 'lost Russian territory' and therefore H. Wada and B. Cumings argued that the liberation of Korea was not part of the initial reason for the Soviet army entering the war against Japan.⁹ Ivan Mikhailovich Chistiakov, the Commander of the 25th Army, mentioned later at the convention of five provinces in North Korea that "the main purpose of the Red Army joining the war against Japan was to regain Russian territories occupied by Japan since 1905 and also to revenge Japan's brutality between 1918 and 1922 at Khasan and Khalkhin-Gol battle and eventually to protect the Soviet border from Japan's threat."¹⁰ Moreover, according to the report received by Colonel General Ioshiv Vasiyevich Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, it pointed out that "the purpose of the Soviet involvement in the Second World War was to reclaim the Soviet territory acquired by Japan after the Russo-Japanese War and the Soviet government should protect its border from the Japanese threat."¹¹ From Moscow's perspective, Korea was not a part of its lost territory and therefore there was no direct relation with the victory of the Red Army. Japan was a clear threat towards the USSR in the Far East and therefore Moscow would try to secure its safety after the defeat of Japan. Consequently, it can be assumed that the Korean issue would be treated in line with the Soviet fundamental strategic purpose within this region rather than any direct interest between Moscow and Korea.

The liberation of Korea was not the original strategic purpose for Moscow but the by-product of defeating Japan in Far East Asia. However, Korea under Japanese colonial rule threatened Soviet security, as Japan used Korea as a military base for invading the continent, by establishing transportation and communications systems. Also, there was the possibility of the Japanese army using ports in northern Korea as retreat routes.¹² This implies that there could be a certain strategic value in Korea for the Kremlin. Another characteristic of the Soviet policy towards Korea is that the Korean issue was dealt within the international framework. The dispatch of the Red Army into the northern part of Korea was the outcome of a discussion with

⁹ Haruki Wada, Bruce Cumings (eds.), *The Modern History on before and after the division*, Seoul: Ilwolsa, 1982, p.244.

¹⁰ I.M. Chistiakov, *Boevoy put' 25-y armii*, Institut Vostokovedeniya, 1976, p.22.

¹¹ The Report from Vabikov, the vice director of Political Department at Primorsky Military District, to Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, 8 Oct 1945, No. 02027.

¹² Wada, Cumings (eds.), *The Modern History*, p.237.

the US, which means that the Korean issue was initially started as a result of international negotiation. According to the report by the Civil Administration Office - the Soviet authority in northern Korea - the Korean issue was part of overall post-war plans, which implied that Moscow would take consideration of Korea in compliance with reorganising a new international order. The outline of establishing the People's government in Korea, which was announced on 14 September 1945, described the blueprint of the future Korean government as a worker and peasant regime under the guarantee of the major four powers.¹³ This means that Moscow's initial purpose for the Soviet policy towards Korea was to prevent Korea from being anti-Soviet and therefore its policy would be dependent upon the negotiation process on post-war Japan.

The lack of preparation towards Korea in 1945

It is interesting to see that there have been few studies examining the period right after the Red Army was stationed in Korea, especially considering how much Moscow had prepared for it and what the Soviet military government actually did in North Korea. Many Soviet scholars including P. Kraynov, I.L. Kravtsov focused on Korea under the Japanese colonial period or the role of the Soviet army as a liberator. Regarding the political situation in North Korea at this period, they dealt with Korean people's work to create political bodies such as the People's Committee, the 10th Administration Bureau and the Communist Party, as well as the Soviet support to help North Koreans to resolve current political and economic issues within North Korea.¹⁴ This is mainly due to the limited access to historical documents within the Soviet government and North Korea. Thanks to the release of historical documents by the Russian government, it became possible to examine what was happening within North Korea at the

¹³ Democratic People's Front, *The Liberation of Korea I – History of establishing the independent unified national state*, Seoul: Science&Idea, 1988, pp.118-9.

¹⁴ P. Kraynov, *Strany Vostochnoy Azii (Mir, Kitay, Yaponiya, Koreya)*, Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, Ministerstvo Vooruzhennykh Sil Soyuza CCR, 1947; I.L. Kravtsov, *Agressiya Amerikanskogo Imperializma v Koree (1945-1951)*, Moskva, 1951; G.E. Samsonov, *Bor'ba Sovetskogo Soyuzza za Demokratischeskoe Reshenie Koreyskogo Voproca (1945-1948)*, Moskva, 1952; A.Ya. Sakhnin, *Koreyskiy Narod V Bor'be za Edinstvo i Nezavisimost'*, Moskva, 1950.

beginning of the Soviet military government. The study of this period will show if there was a masterplan for Moscow towards either the whole Korean Peninsula or the northern part of Korea to some extent. Moreover, this will be an important starting point to examining the Korean War in a wider context. From the traditional scholarly point of view, it was argued that Stalin had a grand plan to expand Communism over the world and therefore the Korean War was planned in advance.¹⁵ On the other hand, revisionists claimed that the Korean War was the outcome of civil war between South and North Korea and it expanded into international warfare because of the US's intervention.¹⁶ Thus, this study over the first period of the Soviet occupation in northern Korea will provide insight into how Moscow considered Korea in its foreign policy.

There was a gap between Soviet ideas and reality in terms of achieving Moscow's goal to prevent a new anti-Soviet regime in Korea. This was mainly caused by a lack of preparation for the Soviet government during the process of occupying the northern part of Korea. To begin with, it can be assumed that the Soviet occupation of northern Korea was accomplished at an unexpected timing. It was in June 1945 that Moscow established the war plan against Japan in the Far East. According to Aleksei Innokentievich Antonov, the Chief of General Staff in the Red Army, the plan was to dispatch the Soviet forces in Manchuria during July 1945 and launch the attack on Japan from mid-August 1945. However, Moscow acknowledged at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945 that it would be possible for Japan to surrender during August. This led Moscow to decide to launch an attack against Japan on 9 August 1945, which was earlier than the initial plan. On the following day, Kirill Afanasievich Meretskov, the Commander of the first Far East Army, ordered Chistiakov, the 25th Army Commander, to occupy Chungjin and Wonsan port in northern Korea. According to Erik Van Ree, the Soviet military operation in Korea was in the second stage after that of Manchuria. Considering the fact that Moscow entered the war against Japan earlier than planned, it can be assumed that the Kremlin did not have enough time to establish a masterplan on Korea. From the Soviet point of view, entering

¹⁵ David J. Dallin, *Soviet Foreign Policy after Stalin*, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1961; Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970; Alexander Dallin, "The Use of International Movement," *Russian Foreign Policy: Essay in Historical Perspective*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962; Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1967*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968.

¹⁶ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, 2 Vols.

the war against Japan was the most important matter, as there was a possibility of the Second World War ending before the Red Army joined it.

It has been revealed that after occupying the northern part of Korea, the Red Army confronted various problems resulting from its lack of preparation. The basic but main problem was that the Soviet military government did not have enough translators in order to communicate with Korean people. By contrast, Y. Oh argued that there was no problem for the Soviet army to deliver the order from its headquarters.¹⁷ However, this argument is not convincing in that according to the report by A.M Ignatiev, the Soviet colonel general, there was a lack of translators in Korea which meant that the Soviet army could not effectively deliver its order to the North Korean local authority and therefore it could not have complete control of North Korea in its political as well as economic sectors.¹⁸ In addition, there was the lack of an efficient administrative body. According to the report 'the situation of northern Korea in December 1945' written by Andrei Alekseevich Romanenko, the first director of the Soviet Civil Administration established on 3 October 1945, it analysed that "there was a lack of experienced Korean people at almost all administration sectors such as security, trade, education, health, communication, finance, industry and agriculture. Also, poor relations between the central and local institutes was another serious problem in North Korea."¹⁹ As seen above, the Soviet military government did not have a masterplan on Korea before or right after its occupation of northern Korea. Having communication problems due to a lack of translators is a simple example that shows Moscow did not consider Korea as an important part of its foreign policy. Another example to show the lack of preparation of the Soviet government was that Moscow did not examine the economic situation in North Korea before its landing on North Korean territory and therefore it was not possible to establish a masterplan for developing economy in North Korea, but to manage to maintain its station. The financial situation in North Korea was not promising for the Soviet military government. The central bank of Korea was located in Seoul and the establishment of the central bank of northern Korea was delayed, which resulted in opening it in January 1946 causing a problem with dealing with the financial plan.²⁰

¹⁷ Yong Jin Oh, *The One Testimony*, Seoul: The Institute of People's Thought, 1952, p.129.

¹⁸ The Report by Ignatiev on 12 Nov 1945; The Report by Ilatovskiy in Nov 1945.

¹⁹ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report on 10th Administration in North Korea, Dec 1945.

²⁰ George M. McCune & Arthur L. Grey Jr, *Korea Today*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, p.192.

Considering the Soviet financial situation during this period, it did not seem possible to establish a masterplan for Korea.

During the Second World War, almost one fourth of the Soviet economy was destroyed. Compared to 1940, the economic index in 1945 clearly showed that the Soviet economy was still undergoing serious difficulties. The gross national product (GNP) had declined by 17% and other economic sectors had decreased during the war; mining and manufacturing industrial production were down by 8%, agricultural production was down by 40%, customer product manufacturing was down by 41%.²¹ There is evidence to show that the Soviet army covered the expense of stationing from local sources within Korea. According to the report by N.A. Zotov, the Soviet military official, in September 1945, there was an instruction for the Commander of the garrison headquarters to use Japanese assets within Korea for the Soviet army. Therefore, the main mission of the garrison headquarters in Korea was to take over warehouses and to assure use of them for the Soviet forces.²² Furthermore, according to Romanenko, the first director of the Soviet Civil Administration, his report on the budget expenditure of northern Korea's administration bureau between November 1945 and April 1946 revealed that "the payment for the Soviet military officials stationed in Korea was covered by the budget in Korea."²³ The financial problem caused a negative impact on the Soviet policy in Korea. For example, Moscow had to approve capitalistic elements within North Korea temporarily in order to secure finances including the approval of free sale of food and building parts by private entrepreneurs. Another Soviet financial policy, which caused discontent among the Korean people, was to commandeer the military provisions within Korea and the Soviet army headquarters actually decided the quotas for each province and village.²⁴

According to Chistiakov's report on the bank of Korea, it proved that "the Soviet forces used Korean finances to buy food from Manchuria."²⁵ In addition, Chistiakov suggested sending

²¹ Harry Schwartz, *Russia's Soviet Economy*, 2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1954.

²² TSAMO, Fond 23, Opis' 11318, Delo 196, p.95.

²³ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report by A.A. Romanenko 'expenditure budget of North Korea Administration between 1 Nov 1945 and 1 April 1946'.

²⁴ Chang Soon Kim, *The History of North Korea between August 1945 and January 1961*, Seoul: Jimoon Gak, 1961, p.53

²⁵ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report on Korean Bank by I.M. Chistiakov.

banknotes from Korea Bank to Vladivostok branch of the Soviet national bank.²⁶ It can be assumed that the Soviet military government used money from Korea Bank to cover its occupation costs. Regarding rice, the Soviet military government asked North Korea to provide one million four hundred seom – one seom is equivalent to 144 kg – in 1945 and it took out two-thirds of food from Pyongyang during the first week of its occupation.²⁷ Considering this circumstance, it implies that the lack of financial ability and masterplan by the Soviet military government at the beginning of its occupation resulted in dissatisfying the Korean people and it led to a negative impact on maintaining social order within Korea.

With regards to industrial materials, there are two different approaches amongst scholars; D. Dallin and Y. Oh asserted that “the Soviet military government took out thirty to forty percent of industrial equipment from North Korea, which reached approximately seven or eight hundred million dollars.”²⁸ Therefore, it caused political opposition among North Korean politicians. For example, Yong Kyu Seo, the former high ranking official in the North Korea Workers’ Party mentioned that “the reason for confrontation between Man Sik Cho, the chairman of the Korea Nation Building Preparatory Committee in South Pyongan Province and the Soviet military government was due to Soviet depredation of main industrial sites such as Pyongyang rubber plants in September 1945 and generators from Soopung hydropower plant in October 1945.”²⁹ Some scholars including E. Ree and G. McCune, however, admitted the Soviet military government’s depredation of industrial materials or equipment but also asserted that some facilities were moved to other industrial sites within North Korea.³⁰ According to findings from the declassified documentation from Russian Archives, it can be argued that the policy of the Soviet military government in North Korea had changed over time. In November 1945, there was a report written by a Soviet officer to suggest moving some equipment from

²⁶ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis’ 343253, Delo 9, The Report by Yakov Malik on 30 Oct 1945.

²⁷ Korea Bureau of Public Information, *The Beginning and End of the Soviet Military Government*, 1950, p.12; Ree, *Socialism*, pp.95-97.

²⁸ Kim, *The History of North Korea*, p.46; Oh, *The One Testimony*, pp.124-126; David J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948, p.285.

²⁹ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea*, Seoul: Joongang Ilbo, 1994, p.97.

³⁰ Ree, *Socialism*, p.119; McCune & Grey Jr, *Korea Today*, pp.214-216.

munitions factories to other industrial sites.³¹ Moreover, there was an order from the Primorsky Military District to “distribute fuel or equipment in the Soviet military warehouse to North Korean factories to help run them properly.”³² This can be compared with Soviet policy towards Manchuria and Silesia in Poland. The Soviet forces in Manchuria focused on incapacitating military and economic potential by demolishing wartime industry and therefore the Soviet forces during the temporary occupation period tried to take as many resources as possible from Manchuria.³³ Regarding Poland, however, Stalin ordered Konev, the Soviet military commander, “not to destroy industrial facilities in Silesia”, as Stalin had a plan to establish a Soviet friendly regime in Poland.³⁴ In the case of North Korea, it seems that Stalin came to rethink the value of North Korea as the process was going on with the US over the post-war Japan issue. Therefore, the Soviet policy towards introducing a new political structure within North Korea including the selection of the national leader, Kim Il Sung, was gradually created after its occupation to establish a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea.

Ree analysed that as for the political structure, the Soviet forces established the general garrison headquarters in Pyongyang on 26 August 1945 and created its branches all over the region in northern Korea. Its main role was to support the smooth process of surrender by Japan, which included taking over weapons left by Japanese military forces and protecting social, as well as industrial structures such as administrative institutions, police stations, railways, communication facilities, factories and so on.³⁵ However, it has been revealed that Soviet forces did not have effective control across the whole of northern Korea partly due to the lack of manpower. That is because the general garrison headquarters consisted of Soviet military officers, who did not have enough experience to control North Korea’s political and economic activities. This can be proved by the report written by Chistiakov, the 25th Army Commander. When Chistiakov had a meeting with members of South Pyeongan People’s Committee on 26

³¹ The Report by Galaktionov on 11 Nov 1945, p.9.

³² The Proclamation of the 25th Army in the Primorsky Military District, No. 0246, 27 Nov 1945.

³³ Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, pp.241-255.

³⁴ Robert M. Slusser (Yonosuke Nagai & Akira Iriye eds.), “Soviet Far Eastern Policy 1945-1950: Stalin’s Goals in Korea,” *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977, pp.123-146.

³⁵ Ree, *Socialism*, p.91

August 1945 in Pyongyang to discuss current issues including police organisation, he realised that it was not possible to deal with all kinds of issues within North Korea with the current Soviet military forces. Chistiakov, therefore, sent a telegram saying that “it is needed to have urgent support from the military council in Maritime Group of Forces.”³⁶ In addition, regarding the political structure within the Soviet military government, a deputy commander for political affairs of local garrison headquarters was supposed to take responsibility for political and administrative issues in North Korea but Soviet personnel were not supplemented to meet the demand. At this stage, the main role of the Soviet military government was not to create a new regime in North Korea but to supervise the occupied territory just as it did in Manchuria. There were guidelines for the commander of the garrison headquarters stationed in Manchuria while staying for a short period of time. The 25th Army, which entered northern Korea, as well as the Soviet forces in Manchuria, all belonged to the Maritime Group of Forces. The order number one announced by the commander of the garrison headquarters in North Korea also followed the same format that the Soviet forces used in Manchuria. For example, this guideline regulated the range of the Soviet military forces’ duty for normalising ordinary people’s life and doing propaganda. Initial Soviet military reports of its occupation of North Korea usually covered general information on North Korea such as its geography, economy, existing administrative body and current political situation. “The main role of the Soviet military government in North Korea related to propagating its activity by doing broadcasts, holding rallies and showing Soviet films.”³⁷ However, the role of the Soviet military government changed after 20 September 1945, when Stalin instructed a new plan for North Korea. On 21 September 1945, the Supreme General Headquarters ordered to “support the Soviet military government by sending fifty commissioned officers to North Korea, issuing leaflets to explain orders from the general headquarters, publishing Korea Newspaper on 27 September and dispatching people who can speak Korean and Japanese for propaganda work.”³⁸ This order from the general headquarters seems to follow up measures from Stalin’s secret order on 20 September 1945 to “establish a bourgeois democratic regime in North Korea”, which was a crucial moment in

³⁶ I.M. Chistiakov, *Boevoy put’ 25-y armii*, Institut Vostokovedeniya, 1976, p.51.

³⁷ TSAMO, Fond, Opis’ 687572, Delo 2317, The Report by Major Lebedev on situation in North Korea on 19 Sep 1945.

³⁸ TSAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis’ 433847, Delo 1.

Korea being politically divided into two parts between North and South.

Stalin's secret order towards North Korea on 20 September 1945

Moscow did not have a clear plan towards North Korea until Stalin ordered the formation of a Soviet-friendly regime by a secret telegram on 20 September 1945. This leads to the question of why Stalin clarified his policy towards North Korea not in August but in September 1945. W. Haruki argued that Stalin's directives on 20 September 1945 was the evidence for establishing a single government in North Korea. However, Stalin's order was not resulted from the purpose of expanding communism but due to the reaction with the negotiation about forming the post-war Japan with the US. During the first month after the Soviet army's occupation of northern Korea, the Soviet military government tried to emphasise that the USSR liberated Korea from Japan. When the Red Army arrived in northern Korea in August 1945, Chistiakov, the 25th Army Commander, announced the declaration that "the Korean people were liberated and their happiness in the future would be dependent upon themselves." The Soviet forces promised to "protect properties belonging to entrepreneurs and provide full-scale assistance for the normal operation of factories, and encouraged North Korean workers to continue to work."³⁹ The Soviet military government used propaganda to win support from the Korean people for its occupation of northern Korean territory. In order to do so, it portrayed itself differently from the Japanese colonial masters and focused on preventing a possible anti-Soviet movement within North Korea.

Soon after the Soviet military came into northern Korea, the outline of establishing a people's government in Korea was suggested under the name of the Soviet headquarters of occupation forces.⁴⁰ This document shows that Moscow intended to establish a new regime by workers and peasants in northern Korea. It did not mention directly that the future regime in Korea needed to be a pro-Soviet nation in the outline, but it implied that the Kremlin showed its intention to have a new regime in Korea in favour of the USSR. The contents in brief are as

³⁹The Board of National Unification, *The relations between the USSR and North Korea, 1945-1980*, Seoul: the Board of National Unification, 1987, pp.31-32.

⁴⁰ Executive office in Democratic Nationalist Front, *The Chronological list of liberation in Korea*, Seoul: Munmuin Seokwan, 1946, p.118.

follows:

1. Establish complete independence including all social classes in Korea. The Soviet Union will propose the establishment of a workers and peasant regime in Korea to the four-nations meeting, (the USSR, the US, Great Britain and China).
2. Land reform is the most important issue in Korea, so the land needs to be distributed based upon the size of the population. Land will be confiscated from landowners unless they are cultivating it by themselves. Lands which formerly belonged to Japanese people will be confiscated and then distributed to Korean farmers, but this will depend on how much authority the Soviet forces have in Korea.
3. Regarding factories owned by Japanese people, all the Japanese factories need to be abolished and Japanese workers will be under supervision. If there is a need for Japanese workers' help in technical matters within a factory, it can be done over the transitional period, but fostering Korean technicians is urgent at this time.
4. Pro-Japanese people would be eliminated completely and impure elements related to Japan need to be purged.
5. Technology-based organisations run by private persons will be allowed under the condition of special surveillance. All cultural facilities, sanitary systems and educational organisations will be run by the government and need to be open to workers and peasants.

41

This declaration shows that the main purpose of the Soviet government in northern Korea was to liquidate the vestiges of Japanese imperialism. By doing so, northern Korea would be ready to establish a new regime. For this reason, it was necessary to attract Korean people's support to prevent any form of resistance against the Soviet policy and this was why the Soviet military government regarded land reform as the highest priority amongst its detailed policy within northern Korea. This declaration implied that Moscow had the intention of establishing a new pro-Soviet regime in Korea. Ironically, with regards to Stalin's secret order on 20 September 1945, it was mentioned "not to implant a Soviet style regime in northern Korea but to establish a bourgeois democratic regime." There

⁴¹ The Board of National Unification, *The relations between the USSR and North Korea*, p.39.

was no definition of a bourgeois democratic regime in Stalin's order, but considering what he mentioned within his secret order, it seems that Stalin wanted to establish a pro-Soviet regime in North Korea. The reason Stalin directly ordered the Soviet forces headquarters in Pyongyang, was not to set up Soviet-styled organisations in Korea, but to consider possible resistance by Korean people as well as the US. Here is the secret order for the policy towards Korea by Stalin on 20 September 1945:

Regarding the occupation of northern Korea by the Red army, the headquarters of the Supreme Commander orders as follows:

1. Neither set up the Soviet nor other organisations of the Soviet regime in the territory of northern Korea and do not implement a Soviet-style government.
2. Establish bourgeois democratic regime in northern Korea based on wide alliance among anti-Japanese democratic parties and organisations.
3. Not to hinder establishing anti-Japanese democratic parties and organisations but to support them.
4. Way to propagate local people in Korea
 - a) The purpose of the Red Army in northern Korea is not to covet Korean territory or implant the Soviet order but to abolish Japanese forces.
 - b) The social and individual possessions of northern Korean people will be under the protection of the Red army.
5. Promote normalisation of industry, commerce, traffic and other businesses by means of appealing to local people to continue their peaceful business and request to cooperate with the order and instruction from the Soviet military government in northern Korea, in order to maintain social order.
6. Train the Soviet troops stationed in northern Korea to abide by military discipline, to behave well and not to harass local people.
7. Do not obstruct religious ceremonies or events and do not touch temples or other

religious facilities.⁴²

Before Stalin's secret order was released with a full version, W. Haruki guessed that the order number 1 and 2 might be related with establishing a regime and the Communist Party in North Korea.⁴³ Haruki's guess was partly right in that the order number 1 and 2 was about the establishment of the North Korean regime. The meaning of bourgeois democracy seems to refer to anti-imperialism in order to remove the Japanese influence remaining inside Korea. Apparently Stalin was concerned about the possibility of Japan's revival with American support and due to the lack of success that Stalin had in shaping post-war Japan, he seemed to decide to use northern Korea as a buffer zone to protect Soviet security in this region. As pointed out earlier, according to the Soviet army's report in October 1945, it clearly mentioned that "the Soviet government should regain Russian territory occupied by Japan in 1905 and remember what Japan did to the Russians during the battle of Lake Khasan and the battle of Khalkhin Gol. Therefore, the Russian government should protect its border from Japan."⁴⁴ This implies that North Korea could serve for the Soviets to protect themselves from possible threat by Japan in the post Second World War era. Therefore, although Stalin ordered not to establish a Soviet-style regime in northern Korea, Stalin's actual intention was to introduce a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea. One week after Stalin's order, the headquarters of the Soviet army in Pyongyang announced the declaration consisted of seven clauses. These are as follows:

1. Abolish all Japanese imperialistic government organisations
2. Do not enforce a Soviet style government in Korea
3. Recognise bourgeois democratic revolutions
4. The Soviet Union has no willingness to acquire territory in Korea
5. Provide freedom for religion and speech

⁴² Cipherd telegram, Stalin and Antonov to Vasilevsky and the military councils of the Maritime Military District and the 25th army, 20 September 1945, in *Mainichi Shimbun*, 26 February 1993.

⁴³ W. Haruki, *The Modern History before and after the division of Korea*, Seoul: Il-Wol Seogak, 1983, pp.262-263.

⁴⁴ Institut Vostokovedeniia, Akademiya Nauk SSSR, ed., *Osvobozhdenie Kore- vosponimaniya I stat'i*, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1976.

6. Confiscate lands owned by Japanese or pro-Japanese groups

7. Farm rent will be fixed at the rate of 3:7 system⁴⁵

As shown above, it repeated Stalin's order but included the land reform that was most welcomed by northern Korean people. Through introducing land reform, Moscow actually achieved two different positive outcomes; one was to satisfy northern Koreans' demands and the other was to increase discontent against the US among the southern Koreans. In addition, another declaration was announced on 12 October 1945, which consisted of three clauses about accentuating the points that "Moscow would not insist on a Soviet-style regime in northern Korea and therefore all decisions would be dependent upon Korean people." Moreover, it included the statement by the Commander of the 25th Army stationed in Korea. According to this statement, "Korean people were ordered to register all anti-Japanese parties or democratic organisations that they would like to establish and to report a code of conduct, regulation and the lists of personnel to the local autonomous bodies and the military police affairs commander."⁴⁶

Furthermore, it instructed "disbanding all armed forces and returning all weapons, ammunition and military supplies to the military police affairs commander, and added allowing the establishment of a national security force to maintain social order by provisional province committees in northern Korea in consultation with the Soviet military headquarters." This resulted in dismissing all public and private armed groups within northern Korea and creating new security forces under Soviet military supervision in early November 1945.⁴⁷ This shows that the Soviet forces in Korea were able to collect all the information on newly established parties and organisations and were able to monitor them to prevent any dangerous movement against Moscow, which meant it became an actual operator in northern Korea by controlling all political organisations as well as security forces.

During the early stage of the Soviet occupation of Korea in 1945, it seemed to use the 38th parallel as a barrier to prevent northern Korea from being influenced by the US. Stalin regarded

⁴⁵ Jung Sik Lee, *The History of a communistic drive for the spread of communism in Korea II*, Seoul: Dolbegye, 1986, p.424.

⁴⁶ Kim, *The History of North Korea*, pp.50-51.

⁴⁷ Jung Sik Lee & Robert A. Scalapino, *Communism in Korea II*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972, pp.919-929

the situation in northern Korea in late 1945 as “the preparatory bourgeois democratic revolution stage and therefore the first thing that needed to be done was to eliminate the vestiges of Japanese imperialism including pro-Japanese groups and to form the national unification front in order to establish a people’s government within North Korea.” In addition, the economic policy to gain support from Korean people operated relatively well, as the private property system was maintained and land reform including reducing farm rent was also announced by the Soviet forces. Simultaneously, the semi-feudalistic task of dispossessing pro-Japanese groups’ property was undertaken, and this seemed necessary to accomplish the first stage of a people’s democratic revolution. By creating new security forces under the Soviet army’s supervision, the Soviet military forces were able to control the whole northern Korean society. The propaganda had been continued since the Red Army arrived in Korea, emphasising that “the purpose of the Soviet forces was not to establish the Soviet style regime but to support Korean people in choosing any form of government for themselves.” This propaganda certainly targeted Korean people as well as the US, which shows that Stalin was cautious in terms of establishing a pro-Soviet regime in North Korea. Although the Soviet policy towards Korea did not start with a masterplan, Stalin decided to establish a pro-Soviet regime in northern Korea. During this period of time, it was possible for Stalin to anticipate that the future Korea would be in favour of Soviet strategic interests in Far East Asia.

Stalin’s secret order towards North Korea became the turning point for the Soviet policy in Korea, as this was the first instruction from Moscow to establish a ‘bourgeoisie democratic regime’ in northern Korea. Before Stalin’s order, there were no detailed instructions for the Soviet forces stationed in Korea. It showed clearly that Moscow intended to introduce a separate regime in northern Korea. Politically, the Soviet forces supported launching a new form of administrative structure in Korea. The 10th administration bureau, local people’s committees and the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party were established under the support of Soviet military forces. These organisations accomplished the order from Soviet military headquarters in Korea. This demonstrates that Moscow actively interfered in domestic affairs within Korea. In addition, the creation of the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party on 8 October 1945 served as an introduction to the appointment of Kim Il Sung as the actual leader in North Korea.

Stalin's appointment of Kim Il Sung as a leader of North Korea

Bruce Cumings claimed that “Kim Il Sung was a nationalist politician who seized power in North Korea without Soviet support and there was no proof that he had fought in the Soviet army.”⁴⁸ This revisionist argument is revealed to be incorrect as there is some evidence to prove that Stalin appointed Kim, who used to serve within the Soviet military unit as the leader of North Korea. According to Nikolai Lebedev, the major general and the political officer of the 25th Army, the cipher telegram by Stalin was delivered just a couple of days before the end of the war against Japan.⁴⁹ Stalin ordered “the selection of a Korean person as a future leader of North Korea.” Apart from Lebedev, Kovalenko, a secretary of Vasilevsky, who was Marshal of the General Headquarters of the Far Eastern Red Army, also testified that “there was an order in late August 1945 from the Soviet Communist Party in Moscow to the Far East Command in Khabarovsk to search for possible Korean leaders to establish a North Korean National People's Congress” and this order was passed to the 25th Army headquarters in Pyongyang. The 25th Army headquarters reported to the Far Eastern headquarters that after searching for a proper candidate, who should be a member of the Communist Party within the northern part of Korea, there was no adequate candidate to recommend because Hon Yong Pak, the leader of the Korean Communist Party, stayed in Seoul in the southern part of Korea and there was no other trustworthy Korean person within the northern part of Korea to fulfil Moscow's requirement.⁵⁰

It was Lavrentiy Beria, the chief of the Soviet security and secret police apparatus, who recommended Kim to Stalin in the first place as the leader of North Korea. Beria persuaded Stalin to allow the secret police to find a candidate for the leader of North Korea. Sorkin, the Major General of the Soviet Far Eastern Front, who worked under Beria, was in charge of the 88th Brigade, which was created on the basis of partisan forces against Japan on 1 August 1942. Kim Il Sung (his name in the Soviet army was Jing Zhichen) became a member of the Soviet army from 17 July 1942 and served in the 88th Brigade as a captain until Korea was liberated from Japanese occupation.⁵¹ The Soviet army officials did not trust anti-Japanese partisan

⁴⁸ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, pp.397-403.

⁴⁹ Young Joong Kim, *Lebedev's memoir, The secrete of founding North Korea*, Jeju: Haedong Press, 2016.

⁵⁰ Kook Hoo Kim, The Interview with Ivan Ivanovich Kovalenko, Jung-ang Daily Mail, 8 May 1992.

⁵¹ Hakbong Jang, *The story of Korean people who found North Korea*, Seoul: Kyongin Munhwasa, 2006.

members within the 88th Brigade and used a secret agent to observe their behaviour and Kim gained Sorkin's trust by the activity of reporting partisans' movements within the 88th Brigade. Sorkin reported Kim's pro-Soviet activity to Beria, and Beria recommended Kim to Stalin for the future leader of North Korea. As J. Yeo pointed out, there was an issue that Kim did not have enough knowledge of Marxism and Leninism, so he had to do training to become a proper pro-Soviet Korean.⁵²

According to K. Kim, Stalin secretly invited Kim for an interview at the Kremlin in Moscow in early September 1945 about two weeks before he entered North Korea.⁵³ After the interview, Stalin appointed Kim as a candidate for the leader of North Korea. Kim's journey to Moscow was a confidential project proceeded by Vasilevsky, the Marshal of the General Headquarter of the Far Eastern Red Army, under Moscow's secret order, and therefore this was absolute secrecy within the headquarters of the Far Eastern Red Army. After Stalin's interview, Stalin ordered follow-up steps for Kim to Vasilevsky, who passed Stalin's order to Shtykov, Military Committee member of Maritime Group of Forces and this order was delivered to Lebedev, the Military Committee member of the 25th Army stationed at Pyongyang.⁵⁴ Lebedev testified in detail to the fact that Shtykov phoned him and said that "Kim, the captain of the 88th Brigade, would be sent to Pyongyang so be prepared to provide him with a house and bodyguards, appoint him the Deputy Commander of Garrison Headquarters in Pyongyang and provide him with political training including patrolling districts."⁵⁵

Before Kim was selected to have an interview with Stalin, there were a number of other candidates to be evaluated by Moscow. They were Si Woo Yang, Dong Hong Park from the Comintern group, Hon Yong Pak, Doo Bong Kim from the self-motivated Communists and Man Sik Cho from the nationalist group. Apart from them, there was the Soviet intelligence report that the US would enter South Korea with Syngman Rhee, who was living in the US, and therefore there was a suggestion within the Kremlin to select a possible leader of North

⁵² Jung Yeo, *The Rosed Daedong River*, Seoul: Donga Ilbo Ltd, 1991

⁵³ Kim, *Lebedev's memoir*; Kook Hoo Kim, The Interview with Ivan Ivanovich Kovalenko, Jung-ang Daily Mail, 8 May 1992.

⁵⁴ Kim, Interview with Kovalenko.

⁵⁵ Kook Hoo Kim, Interview with Nikolai Georgievich Lebedev, Jung-ang Daily Mail, 11 June 1991.

Korea among Russian Koreans such as Alexei Ivanovich Hegay, Il Nam, and Changok Pak. With regards to the selection of candidates, however, Stalin did not trust Korean communists saying that “they were like kittens without a mother cat so they would be scattered in case of an attack by the enemy.” Furthermore, Stalin commented that “the liberation of Korea was accomplished without a leader and therefore it was time to have a proper leader in North Korea.”⁵⁶ Stalin rejected all other candidates except Kim due to the fact that they did not have enough knowledge about the Soviet army. Stalin emphasised that “there would be a lack of preparation time for a candidate for the future leader of North Korea to be educated in military affairs. Therefore, the leader of North Korea should be loyal to Marxism and Leninism and have substantial experience in leading the army.” Ironically, according to Lebedev, Stalin preferred a former soldier to a Marxism-Leninism theorist as a leader in satellite regimes in Eastern Europe. Also, Stalin did not like a candidate having Communist activities, so that is the reason why Stalin chose Kim rather than Hon Yong Pak, who was an active communist involved in Comintern.⁵⁷

This category fits into Kim’s previous experience at the 88th Brigade where he received guerrilla warfare training and political education for three years between 1942 and 1945. Also, Kim used to be a Chinese Communist Party member in the 1930s and involved in the anti-Japanese movement. However, Kim had not been engaged in the power struggle within the Korean Communist Party. These were the main reasons why Stalin selected Kim as the leader of North Korea in September 1945. According to Ivanovich Kovalenko, after receiving Stalin’s telegram in early September 1945, “Aleksandr Vasilevsky, the Marshal of the General Headquarters of the Far Eastern Red Army, had a troop transport plane standing by at a military airport near Khabarovsk and ordered two officers from KGB Far Eastern branches to escort Kim Il Sung to Moscow.” Once Kim arrived in Moscow, he was taken to Stalin’s summer house for an interview. Stalin reviewed the report on Kim written by the Far Eastern Red Army and KGB Far Eastern branches and asked him many questions based on this report, which lasted for almost four hours. One of the high ranking officials from the Soviet Communist Party who attended this interview told Ivanovich Kovalenko later that “Kim looked so tense that he

⁵⁶ Institute on Unification Research, *The Research on myth of Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Institute on Unification Research, Nov 2006, p.278.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

could only say ‘Yes’ to Stalin.” Right after the interview, Stalin mentioned to the military officer attending the interview that “Kim was a person to be paid attention to and therefore the Soviet Army should cooperate with him.” After the interview, Stalin offered “a word of encouragement for Kim to make an effort to lead North Korea well in the future.”⁵⁸ This was the moment that Kim was appointed by Stalin as the future leader of North Korea. Since Stalin’s interview and approval for Kim to be the leader of North Korea, the Soviet military government started to make him a national hero. Jang Yup Hwang - the former secretary of Korean Workers’ Party - recalled that “Kim said he did well in the interview with Stalin and that is why he defeated Hon Yong Pak to become the leader in North Korea.”⁵⁹

According to Lebedev, the major general and the political officer of the 25th Army within the Soviet Military government in North Korea, “after Kim arrived in Wonsan port in North Korea on 19 September 1945, Kim visited me for a meeting.” Right after Kim left his office, Lebedev received a secret telegram from Terenti Fomitch Shtykov, Military Committee member of Maritime Group of Forces, ordering him “not to expose Kim to the public for a while to allow time for political training and making Kim a national hero.” Therefore, the intelligence bureau and the special propaganda bureau of the Soviet military general headquarter examined Kim’s personal and political background. As a result, it was found that his Korean name was Kim Sung Ju and there was no clear evidence for Kim having done anything in the anti-Japanese movement in Manchuria. While searching for information on Kim, it was also found that there was another person called General Kim Il Sung who did contribute to the anti-Japanese movement. Some young officers from the political headquarters suggested using the name of Kim Il Sung for the future leader of North Korea. This idea was shared with Kim and some North Korean communists, and it was finally decided to use Kim Il Sung as his official name. It was Gregori Mekler, the political officer in the 25th Army, who prepared the script of Kim’s speech on his debut as the North Korean leader at a mass rally in Pyongyang on 14 October 1945.⁶⁰ Kim wore the Soviet red flag medal on his first event in front of the North Korean

⁵⁸ Kim, Interview with Kovalenko.

⁵⁹ Gap Jae Jo, Interview with Hwang Jang Yep, Oct 2005,
http://www.chogabje.com/board/view.asp?C_IDX=56455&C_CC=BB

⁶⁰ Gil Yong Park & Kook Hoo Kim, *The Secret Diplomatic History of Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Joongang Il Bo, 1994.

public.⁶¹ This clearly proves that Kim was not prepared to become the leader in North Korea by himself or by Korean people. Moscow cautiously selected Kim as the North Korean leader for the purpose of its own strategic interest in Asia by using North Korea as a Soviet satellite regime.

Introducing a new political structure in North Korea

The Soviet power structure within North Korea was one of the main issues among scholars studying Stalin's policy in Korea. Cumings argued that "the Soviets were not able to dominate the local North Korean political sectors as North Korea was not a Soviet puppet satellite nation."⁶² By contrast, Scalapino and Lee claimed that "the Soviets made political decisions within North Korea" but they did not recognise the Soviet military government.⁶³ Ree, however, acknowledged the existence of Soviet Civil Administration in North Korea as a form of Soviet military government and tried to examine its structure.⁶⁴ This part of the chapter attempts to go into the details of the process of establishing the Soviet Civil Administration and its influence on North Korean politics with the support of underused documentation from the Russian government.

There was no effective political structure in northern Korea before Stalin's order on 20 September 1945. The Soviet military garrison headquarters played the major role in accomplishing the order from Moscow, but its main role was limited to supporting the smooth process of eliminating Japanese influence within Korea and protecting major facilities such as administrative agency, police station, and so on.⁶⁵ It was beyond the Soviet military garrison headquarters' capability either to resolve current political and economic issues or to introduce a new system in North Korea. Stalin's order on 20 September began the process of setting up a more organised political structure in Korea. For example, fifty Soviet officers were

⁶¹ Gavril Korotkov, *Stalin and Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Donga-Ilbo, 1993, pp.136-202.

⁶² Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, p.392.

⁶³ Scalapino & Lee, *Communism in Korea*, pp.380-381.

⁶⁴ Ree, *Socialism*, pp.267-277.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.89.

dispatched from the supreme general headquarters in Moscow on 21 September 1945.

At the end of November 1945, the Soviet National Defence People's Committee decided to adopt the new system of deputy commander in charge of civil government within the 25th Army inside northern Korea and, as a result, Romanenko was appointed to that position on 10 December 1945.⁶⁶ Under this deputy commander, new bodies were created to control every different sector in North Korea including administration, politics, industry, finance, trade, agriculture, public health, law, police and so on.⁶⁷ Furthermore, Moscow decided to introduce advisors in each sector in North Korea. For example, Chistiakov, the Commander of the 25th Army, and Lebedev, the Major General and the political officer of the 25th Army, requested dispatching two hundred to two hundred fifty advisors for provisional People's Committee to the military council of Maritime Group of Forces on 14 October 1945.⁶⁸ Regarding the economic sector, Moscow supplied a large number of advisors to be stationed at each major company. Meretskov, the Commander of the first Far East Army, was ordered to run heavy industry in North Korea on 20 November 1945 and there was another order to appoint Soviet special advisors at each factory on 29 November 1945.⁶⁹

In terms of the political sector, apart from the Soviet decision to dispatch political advisors in mid-October 1945, Moscow was actively involved in the creation of the 10th administration bureau.⁷⁰ The Soviet government claimed that "the 10th administration bureau was an autonomous structure that the Korean people themselves organised and operated as a result of the decision from the North Korean five province conference (8 October to 10 October)". Lebedev, the Major General and the political officer of the 25th Army, also commented that "the 10th administration bureau was the administrative organisation managed by Korean people

⁶⁶ Order no. 00263 from the military district of the Maritime Province of Siberia, 3 December 1945.

⁶⁷ Doklad ob itogakh raboty Upravleniya Sovetskoy Granzhdanskoy Administratsii v Severnoi Koree za tri goda (avgust 1945 – noyabr' 1948), Tom 1, Phkenn'yan, Oktyabrya, 1948, pp.6-7.

⁶⁸ The Report by I.M. Chistiakov and N. Lebedev on 14 October 1945, p.28.

⁶⁹ TSAMO, Fond, Opis' 687572, Delo 2317, Order no. 00187 by K.A. Meretskov on 20 Nov 1945.

⁷⁰ TSAMO, Fond 19, Opis' 266, Delo 277, The Report to I.V. Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet army on 17 Oct 1945; TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 3, Order no. 2 by the headquarter of the 25th Army on 19 Nov 1945.

with the support of Soviet specialists.”⁷¹ Moscow intended to emphasise Korean people’s independence and limit its role as a support. However, it was revealed by the Soviet internal report that “the 10th administration bureau was established under the Soviet army to accomplish its order and instruction.”⁷² In fact, the Soviet army headquarters took the lead in creating a new administrative body in North Korea. North Korea’s five provinces’ rally, where the 10th administration bureau was suggested, was convened by the Soviet Army Headquarters. During the rally, the main issues over northern Korea such as industry, electricity, communication, railway, finance, education, health, court and the creation of local governments were dealt with in five subcommittees. Also, it was the Soviet army headquarters that led the discussion within those subcommittees. Those subcommittees consisted only of Soviet personnel; Major General Lebedev in the administration subcommittee, Major General Romanenko in the industry subcommittee, Major General Khrusov in the agriculture and trade subcommittee, Lieutenant General Kartsov, the chief of the Soviet army finance department, in the finance subcommittee and Lieutenant General Zakhrov, the chief of the Soviet army VOSO (military transport service) department, in the railway subcommittee. There was other evidence to prove that the 10th administration bureau was directly controlled by the Soviet military headquarters. According to the report by Major Zagruzin, the military representative of the security bureau, he sent out orders to the military headquarters in Pyongyang about basic operational guidelines and the instruction to select security personnel and investigate the personal backgrounds of major officers in security bureau in Pyongyang.⁷³

Apart from establishing the 10th administration bureau, the Soviet army headquarters played a leading role in creating the North Korean temporary People’s Committee, which was the first central authority organisation in North Korea. During the North Korean five provinces rally on 11 October 1945, the Soviet army headquarters suggested the principle and process of election and the formation of organisation to establish a unified political system to control the regional independent political bodies in northern Korea. The maritime province of Siberia military district council approved these decisions of the rally and this led to the creation of the first central political organisation in North Korea in February 1946. At first, the North Korean

⁷¹ Ree, *Socialism*, p.109.

⁷² Doklad, Tom 1, p.6; The Report by Romanenko in December 1945, p.1.

⁷³ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis’ 342213, Delo 3, The instruction by Major Zagruzin on 24 Nov 1945.

temporary People's Committee was organised under the condition that it would last until the creation of a unified government in Korea. Although it cannot be proved that the Soviet government had a masterplan over the whole Korean Peninsula at this stage, it implies that Moscow recognised the characteristics of the northern Korean government, which should be in favour of the Soviet strategic interest. It was Kim who was selected as the chairman of the North Korean temporary People's Committee, which suggested "the construction of a completely independent nation in Korea, the establishment of a democratic regime and the preservation of domestic order independently over the transitional period." There were eleven main tasks that needed to be accomplished, such as the preparation for the free distribution of land reform, the development of industrial facilities and the punishment of pro-Japanese groups. After completing these main tasks, the North Korean temporary People's Committee was deactivated and the North Korean People's Committee replaced it on February 1947, which was the supreme enforcement agency and became the matrix of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), which was established in September 1948.

Concerning political and social groups in North Korea after the defeat of Japan, communists took advantage of the support of the Soviet military government among other activist groups such as the Democratic Youth Alliance, Democratic Female Alliance, Job Union, Buddhism Society, Cultural Artists Association and so on. Every organisation was obliged to be registered at the Soviet army headquarters and therefore the Soviet forces were able to monitor and control their activities. Among all political and social groups, the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party was the main supporter of the Soviet government. It was created with the support of Romanenko, the first director of the Soviet Civil Administration, after Kim Il Sung and Hon Yong Pak's meeting on 8 October 1945. This was announced to the whole northern Korean region throughout the five provinces rally between 10 and 13 October 1945. This served as momentum for Kim to be recognised as the leader among northern Korean people. Although Moscow regarded the Communist Party as the most important partner to rule the country, it evaluated that "the Korean Communist Party did not have enough ability to support Soviet policy due to the lack of a unified central organisation and regulation, power struggles between members and existing pro-Japanese Koreans within the party."⁷⁴ Therefore, Moscow

⁷⁴ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, No.020, The Report by Ignatiev on 30 Dec 1945.

did not seem fully satisfied with the North Korean Communist Party. According to R. Scalapino & J. Lee, the lack of ability of the Communist party in the North, factions, location of the Communist central committee in Seoul were reasons for Moscow to not trust domestic communist forces in Korea.⁷⁵ Also D. Seo asserted that North Korean communists could not be successful as they focused on their activity in Seoul.⁷⁶

Colonel General Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, mentioned in his report that “the North Korean Communist Party did not comprehend the current situation and made mistakes.”⁷⁷ It seems to point out that the North Korean Communist Party’s decision on adopting radical reform and eliminating nationalists at the South Pyongan People’s Committee was unsuccessful in having the support of all classes. In other words, Shikin concluded that North Korean Communist party failed to draw cooperation from the public in Korea. This means that Stalin’s instruction was not to copy ‘Soviet style’ but to establish unification front in Korea. This shows that Moscow did not have a detailed plan in North Korea on first arrival and even after Stalin’s order on 20 September 1945, it still had various issues which prevented Moscow from controlling North Korea effectively. Therefore, this period, until the end of 1945, can be described as a preparatory period for Moscow to establish a Soviet friendly regime in North Korea.

International background of Stalin’s order on 20 September 1945

H. Baik argued that Stalin already reached the decision to communise North Korea in 1945 but the reason for attending the Moscow Conference was to maintain the relations with the US.⁷⁸ In order to understand Stalin’s objectives on his order on 20 September 1945, it is important to analyse the international background, as Stalin’s policy towards Korea seems closely related to other international issues, which can be a key point to examining why Stalin secretly ordered establishing a ‘bourgeoisie democratic regime’ in North Korea. This order was created on 20

⁷⁵ Robert A. Scalapino, Jung Sik Lee, *The History of Korea Communist movement 2: Liberation part (1945-53)*, Seoul: Dolbaegae, 1986, p.401.

⁷⁶ Dae Sook Seo, *Research on History of Communist Movement in Korea*, Seoul: Theory & Activity Press, 1990, pp.275-99.

⁷⁷ The Report by Shikin on the south Pyongan People’s Committee, on 25 Dec 1945.

⁷⁸ Hak Soon Paik, The Soviet Union’s Objectives and Policies in North Korea 1945-1950, *Korea and World Affairs*, Vol.19, No.2, Summer 1995, p.269.

September not right after the Red Army's occupation in North Korea in August 1945. In order to find an answer, it is important to take into consideration what happened in world politics during that period. The most significant event was the first meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London held between 11 September 1945 and 2 October 1945. At this meeting, Moscow strongly expressed its desire to participate in the formation of post-war Japan and acquire the northern part of Hokkaido. However, it was not successful because of the opposition of the US. Apart from this, Vyacheslav Molotov - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs - demanded the cession of Tripoli in Libya in order to obtain a harbour for Soviet merchant ships in the Mediterranean Sea, but this proposal was also opposed by the US and Britain. It was between 15 and 16 September 1945 that Molotov strongly insisted on acquiring an ice-free harbour. This seems to impact on Stalin to think about changing his policy towards Korea as well as China. Stalin sent out the secret order on 20 September to establish a 'bourgeoisie democratic regime' in North Korea and this becomes a crucial moment for Korea to be divided into two parts even before the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950.

The change of Stalin's policy towards China had a great impact on Korea as well. After the end of the war against Japan, there was competition to fill a power vacuum in China between Moscow and Washington. As H. Moore described, Stalin adopted a two-track policy towards China; he diplomatically recognised the Kuomintang (KMT) as the central government in China to maintain its privileged status in Manchuria through the Sino-Soviet treaty of friendship and alliance on 14 August 1945.⁷⁹ The contents of this treaty were to respect each other's sovereignty and to comply with the non-intervention on its internal politics. On the same day, the two sides also signed the agreement on the north eastern region of China; the Soviet Union, which disarmed Manchuko - the puppet state established by Japan - recognises three north eastern provinces in China as Chinese territory and respects the sovereignty of the Nationalist government in the region. The Chinese Nationalist party shall ensure the interests of Moscow with regard to Dalian and agree to open Dalian harbour as a free port. Furthermore, Changchun Railway shall be run by a joint operation between China and the USSR. The Soviet armed forces shall be withdrawn three months after the surrender of Japan. Stalin seems to believe that maintaining privilege over Manchuria under the politically uncertain situation in

⁷⁹ Harriet L. Moore, *Soviet Far Eastern Policy 1931-1945*, New York: Howard Fertig, 1973, pp.265-277.

China would guarantee Soviet security in the Far East region.

There was the second civil warfare in Manchuria between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist Party of China (CPC) between 1945 and 1949. As C. Bohlen mentioned, after the declaration of war against Japan on 9 August 1945, the Soviet armed forces marched into Manchuria and Stalin judged that the CPC would not be able to win against the KMT and ordered the CPC to abandon the civil war against the KMT.⁸⁰ However, it was in October 1945, after the first meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London, that Stalin seemed to change his policy towards China, and the relations between Moscow and Washington began to change as well. Stalin ordered the three-hundred thousand 8th Route Army of the CPC to advance in Manchuria. Therefore the Chinese Communists armed forces supported by Stalin warred against the Kuomintang army backed by the US.⁸¹ It was CPC forces that seemed to be superior in the civil warfare in the first place, but with the new supply of troops by the KMT, the CPC army retreated into northern Korean regions in May 1946. This meant northern Korea became the rear military base for the Chinese Communist armed forces and it was Stalin who supported the CPC to win the civil war in China.

Considering the fact that northern Korea was used as the rear base for CPC armed forces, it can be argued that Stalin did not want North Korea under US influence in any form. From Stalin's perspective, Korea under American influence would ignite the possibility of losing Manchuria or even China to the KMT supported by the US. Stalin's conception of the US had gradually changed over time during the process of the establishment of post-war Japan, which had a fundamental impact on Soviet policy towards China as well as Korea. Moscow initially intended to occupy the northern part of Hokkaido after the defeat of Japan, but this plan was rejected by the US.⁸² Moreover, Moscow showed its discontent with General MacArthur's unilateral role in the process of Japan's surrender on 2 September 1945.⁸³ Although the US wanted to create the Far Eastern Advisory Commission to deal with the post-war Japanese

⁸⁰ Charles E. Bohlen, *The Transformation of American Foreign Policy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969, p.36.

⁸¹ Jung Sik Lee, "The Soviet Secret Documents," *Shin Dong-A*, Nov.1995, pp.396-397.

⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, *Correspondence between the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the President of the USA and the Prime Minister of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, Vol.2, Correspondence with F.D. Roosevelt and H.S. Truman*, Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1957, pp.266-267.

⁸³ *Pravda*, 17 Sep 1945.

issue, Moscow requested to establish an Allied Control Council for Japan to directly control post-war Japan consisting of four nations- the USSR, the US, Great Britain and China. However, the Soviet idea was not accepted by its Western allies and eventually the Far Eastern Advisory Commission began to work on 10 October 1945 in Washington without Soviet representatives. It can be assumed that the relations between Moscow and Washington over the Japanese issue had deteriorated over time. In these circumstances, the value of Korea began to be reconsidered by Stalin as North Korea could serve as a buffer zone to secure Soviet interests in the Far East region.

Regarding the establishment of the 38th parallel line as the border between the US and the USSR in the process of military occupation of Korea after the defeat of Japan, the US was surprised by Stalin's acceptance of the US suggestion without rejection. Right after Moscow declared war against Japan, the US Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes sent an order on 10 August to the Department of State, War and Navy Coordination Committee (SWNCC) to prepare for a Soviet-American joint occupation plan in the Korean Peninsula and to make the division line to the north as much as possible.⁸⁴ Through the 38th parallel line division, the US was able to include Seoul, the capital city of Korea, and Incheon, a major port, within its occupied area. The former US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk recalled that the 38th parallel was unexpectedly north if Moscow disagreed with it.⁸⁵ On 15 August, this suggestion – SWNCC ordinary order no.1 – was delivered to Stalin. On his reply the following day, Stalin proposed to include the Kuril Islands, which the Soviets would take possession of as a result of the Yalta Conference in February 1945, as well as northern Hokkaido as a part of the Soviet-occupied area for the process of Japanese capitulation.⁸⁶ Stalin's intention of accepting the 38th parallel in Korea seems to be to maintain friendly relations with Washington in order to be actively involved in post-war Japan. Therefore, Stalin could have acquired similar privileges in Japan as the Soviets had in Manchuria. So his policy in Korea was closely related to his one to Japan. As Stalin did not seem to be successful in achieving his goal in Japan, he gave an order on 20

⁸⁴ FRUS, 1945, Vol. VI, pp.634-637.

⁸⁵ KBS Special news team, Interview with Dean Rusk, Dean Rusk Centre at University of Georgia, 6 Dec 1989.

⁸⁶ Harry S. Truman, *1945: Year of Decision*, Vol.1, New Word City, Inc., 2017, pp.440-441.

September 1945 to establish a new regime in North Korea. After Stalin's order, the Soviet attitude towards the 38th parallel changed as well. It played a role as a wall to divide Korea into two parts. Moscow completely blocked all kinds of exchange activity including non-political personal materials between southern and northern Korea.⁸⁷ With regards to this, J. L. Hodge, the Commander of US Army Military Government in Korea – USAMGIK – sent a letter to D. MacArthur – the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Tokyo – on 24 September 1945. Hodge pointed out that “it would be fatal to continue dividing Korea into two parts with different ideologies, but it had been fruitless to make an effort to negotiate with the Soviet armed forces.”⁸⁸ Hodge invited the 25th Army Commander Chistiakov to visit Seoul to discuss urgent political and economic issues caused by the division of Korea, but Chistiakov replied on 10 October that “the military meeting would not be able to be held until Moscow and Washington reached an agreement.” Moreover, Chistiakov mentioned that “the Soviet liaison detachment in the US army in Korea would be withdrawn and would not accept the US liaison detachment as well.”⁸⁹ According to Hodge's request on starting a governmental meeting between the USSR and the US, the Department of State ordered W.A. Harriman – the US ambassador in Moscow – to contact Moscow to discuss maintaining a single political, economic and social community within Korea and abolishing restrictions caused by the 38th parallel.⁹⁰ On 21 November 1945, A. Vyshinsky - the deputy foreign minister - replied that “this agenda was in progress within the Soviet authority.”⁹¹ However, this was postponed until the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1945.

As seen above, Stalin seemed to maintain the division of Korea by the 38th parallel until a new regime in favour of Moscow was established in northern Korea. Despite the division alongside the 38th parallel, Moscow was able to collect information on the situation in southern Korea from its consulate in Seoul, which was established in 1923 and closed down in 1947. As H. Kim pointed out, this helped the Kremlin to decide the best policy towards Korea in its favour.⁹²

⁸⁷ Asia cultural research institute in Hanlim Univeristy, *United States Policy regarding Korea 1834-1950*, Vol.1, Chunchun: Hanlim University press, 1987, p.591.

⁸⁸FRUS, 1945, vol. VI, pp.1055-1056.

⁸⁹FRUS, 1945, vol.VI, pp.1065-1066, 1071-1072.

⁹⁰FRUS, 1945, vol.VI, pp.1106-1109.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp.1133.

⁹² Hak Jun Kim, *The 50 years of history on North Korea*, Seoul: Donga-ilbo Press, 1995, p.70.

After the defeat of Japan, there was political turmoil in Korea and due to its administrative vacuum, ordinary Korean people's life was under severe threat. The confrontation between extreme rightist and leftist groups became serious, even under the US military government in southern Korea. As a result, discontent among southern Korean people began to increase sharply and there was a growing resistance against US military government activity. The US military government began to realise that the situation would be in favour of the leftist party in southern Korea.⁹³ On the other hand, from Moscow's viewpoint, it seemed advantageous to avoid direct contact with the US government in southern Korea. Actually, Moscow did not have direct control over the Communist Party in southern Korea since the Comintern cancelled the approval of the Korean Communist Party in 1928 due to its internal struggle among factions. Therefore, it was best for Stalin to wait until favourable conditions for Moscow were created within southern Korea.

Conclusion

When the Red Army firstly landed in northern Korea in August 1945, it seemed that Moscow had no clear plan over either North Korea or the whole Korean Peninsula. During the early stage of the Soviet occupation in northern Korea, the main goal was to eliminate all the legacy of the Japanese colonial period and to maintain social order. Due to the fact that Soviet policy towards Korea was closely related to the process of forming post-war Japan, it changed depending on relations between Moscow and Washington. After the defeat of Japan, Stalin strongly wanted to regain all the previous Russian territories occupied by Japan and take part in the formation of post-war Japan actively to guarantee Soviet security in the Far East region. The outcome of the meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers in London in September 1945 was not in favour of Soviet interest. For example, the claim to acquire the northern part of Hokkaido and the cession of Tripoli in Libya was opposed by the US. This was a moment for Stalin to reconsider the Western allies and to be concerned about the possible threat of Japan in the future. As a result, Stalin issued a secret order on 20 September 1945 to establish a pro-Soviet regime in northern Korea, which became the most important momentum for Korea to

⁹³FRUS, 1945, vol.VI, pp.1145-47.

be divided into two. After Stalin's order, the Soviet military forces rejected any type of exchange with the southern part of Korea and stimulated propaganda towards Korean public to get support from it. According to Stalin's order, it pointed out that "the Soviet forces would not establish any Soviet-style government in northern Korea", but its contents showed that Moscow actually tried to create a new regime, which would serve Soviet interests. In order to set up the Soviet-friendly regime, it introduced new political structures such as Soviet Civil Administration, advisory groups, northern branch of the Korean Communist Party and 10th administration bureau. In addition, Kim Il Sung was selected by Stalin as the leader of North Korea who would be loyal to Stalin. As for the ordinary people in North Korea, the Soviet military government operated land reform rapidly, which became extremely popular and caused discontent with the US in South Korea.

Although there was no clear evidence to prove that Stalin had a war plan against South Korea at this stage, it can be assumed that Stalin wanted to have the northern part of Korea to be in favour of Moscow. He planned to use it as a buffer zone to prevent the Soviets from any possible threat from Japan. This became even clearer in the process of the post-war negotiation between Moscow and the Western allies. This can be regarded as the first moment that Stalin became suspicious about the US in the Far East and later evolved into the Cold War in this region. Considering the fact that the Cold War means clash or tension between capitalism and communism, the time when Stalin ordered the establishment of a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea in September 1945 can be considered as the starting point of the Cold War in the Far East. So, before the outbreak of the Korean War, the political and ideological confrontation between the USSR and the US had already started and the Korean War became the peak of conflict for both sides in the form of hot war.

+

II. Moscow Agreement: Stalin's strategic choice within cooperative framework with the US

Moscow did not show its strategic purpose for Korea at the early stage of its occupation. What it did was to deliver the message to the Korean people that the Soviet forces liberated Korea from Japan. For example, the leaflet 'Why the Red Army came to Korea?' mentioned that "Eastern Europe's case that Eastern European people who were liberated with support of the Soviet forces were able to establish their own life and therefore Korea should learn from them."¹ In addition, Ignatiev, the Soviet Colonel General, made a speech at South Pyongan People's Political Committee on 26 August 1945 that "the current situation of Korea was in the revolutionary period for democracy."² However, after Stalin's secret order on 20 September 1945, Chistiakov, the Commander of the 25th Army, mentioned that "it needed to establish a bourgeois democratic regime in North Korea."³ W. Haruki also argued that Stalin's instruction on September 1945 was the main driving force to divide Korea.⁴ Although it can be implied that Moscow had the intention of creating a favourable regime in Korea, the Kremlin tried to limit its role as a supporter and stressed the independence of the Korean people. However, this vague attitude changed over time and became clear at the end of 1945. According to the report by Colonel Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army on 25 December 1945, "the Soviet objective in Korea was to establish a Soviet friendly regime to guarantee Soviet interests."⁵ This means that Korea became valuable for Soviet strategic interests in this region. In order to understand Stalin's changed policy towards Korea, it is

¹ The Editorial Department, *Collection of Comintern information 3- United Front, Colony Issues*, Seoul: Dongnuk, 1989, p.81.

² Jae Duk Han, *Denounce Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Naeyoi Moonhwa Co., 1965, p.172.

³ Institute of Nation Unification, *The relations between North Korean and the USSR 1945-1980*, Seoul: Institute of Nation Unification Press, 1987, p.32.

⁴ Wada Haruki, *The Nation building and the Soviet Military government in North Korea*, International Academic Conference marking at 50th anniversary of the establishment of ROK government, Seoul: Korean Politics & Diplomacy History Institute, 1998, p.87.

⁵ Military Compilation Institute of Ministry of Defense in ROK, *Shikin's report on 25 Dec 1945*, Seoul: Military Compilation Institute Press, p.8.

essential to examine Soviet relation with the US over Japanese issues.

Stalin had begun to doubt the US attitude towards Moscow over some period of time. At first, Stalin had been encouraged by the US that the USSR could become a Great Power. For example, the US president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, recognised the USSR as ‘one of the Great Powers’ by suggesting the idea of world policemen in May 1942. The idea of world policemen was that four nations behaved as world policemen to be able to force disarmament on other countries. Moreover, the next US president, Harry Truman, mentioned to Stalin in July 1945 that “there was no disagreement between the US and the USSR in terms of the post-war process.”⁶ This probably led Stalin to think that it would be possible for Moscow to be actively engaged in forming post-war Japan as a partner with the US.

In reality, however, the US tried to exclude the USSR in the process of the formation of post-war Japan, such as the American solo practice for ‘instrument of surrender’ signed by Japan on 2 September 1945. Moscow denounced the US attitude through the media. According to the *New Times* on 1 October 1945, it argued that “the US tried to regulate Moscow’s action in the Far East by creating Japan as a buffer state.” Furthermore, Stalin complained to the US Ambassador Harriman on 25 October 1945 that “MacArthur treated the USSR not as an ally but as a second-class nation.”⁷ It seems that Stalin became more suspicious about relations with the US, which would cause Moscow to secure its strategic interest in the Far East by means of Korea. Under these circumstances, the Moscow Agreement was reached on 27 December 1945 as a result of the Moscow Conference. The Moscow Agreement played a significant role in Soviet policy towards Korea, as the Kremlin considered it as the foundation of resolving Korean issues. Moreover, Moscow later blamed that “the US caused the division of Korea by not fulfilling the Moscow Agreement properly and colonizing South Korea.”⁸ This chapter will examine the Soviet proposal in the Moscow Agreement and its impact on its policy towards

⁶ William Taubman, *Stalin’s American Policy: From Entente to Détente to Cold War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1982, pp.107-108.

⁷ William H. McNeill, *America, Britain & Russia: Their Cooperation and Conflict 1941-46 (Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953, p.703.

⁸ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, pp.19-20; E.M. Zhukov, *Sovietskiy Soyuz v Bor’be za Demokraticeskoe Reshenie Poslevoennykh Problem Dal’nego Vostoka Movka*, Moskva: Akademiya Obschestvennykh Nauk, 1950, p.17.

Korea.

C. L. Hogue pointed out that the Moscow Agreement played a pivotal role in the Soviet occupation policy in Korea, as it was what the Kremlin suggested as a principle of resolving a Korean issue.⁹ The Moscow Agreement was based mainly upon Soviet proposals. Washington agreed to most parts of the Soviet proposals during the discussion and both sides decided to sign up for the agreement. Interestingly, it was the US that initially suggested trusteeship in terms of establishing a new form of government in Korea. However, throughout the procedure, the Soviet way of resolving the Korean issue became the basis of the Moscow Agreement. At first, the US President Roosevelt introduced the idea of trusteeship within Korea in March 1943 during the wartime meeting and through a series of conferences held in Cairo, Teheran in 1944, and Yalta in 1945, Moscow finally agreed with the US proposal on trusteeship in Korea under the supervision of four nations (the US, the USSR, Great Britain and China) on 28 May 1945. This was when Moscow and Washington mainly discussed about the Soviet participation in the war against Japan.

At first, Moscow did not raise the trusteeship issue in the Korean Peninsula. It asserted the immediate independence of Korea in case of liberation from Japanese occupation.¹⁰ From the Kremlin's viewpoint, the American proposal on trusteeship in Korea was to assist Korea in establishing a new regime by four nations under UN supervision, and it would help the US to have priority over the Korean issue.¹¹ Ironically, the final agreement was mainly based upon Moscow's proposal, and it implies that Washington and Moscow reached a sort of compromise over the Korean issue. From the US point of view, it became confident of checking Moscow by means of the other member nations during the review process. As for the Kremlin, on the other hand, the actual process of making a pro-Soviet regime in northern Korea was already underway. This seemed to lead Moscow to be certain that any outcome from the Moscow Conference related to Korea would be favourable to itself.

During the war, the trusteeship proposal was based on short-time supervision without military

⁹ C.L. Hogue, Bokryong Shin & Wonduk Kim (Translate), *The report of division in Korea*, Seoul: Pulbit, 1992, pp. 242-256.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ V. Mastny, *Russia's road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism 1941-1945*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, pp.366-376.

presence in Korea. However, the actual trusteeship in Korea after the surrender of Japan was processed with the dispatch of Soviet and US armed forces respectively in northern and southern Korea divided by the 38th parallel. As W. Stueck pointed out, this was partly because there was no authoritative political body acknowledged internationally in Korea after the defeat of Japan, and the Kremlin took advantage of occupying northern Korea throughout the Moscow Conference.¹²

The reports by the Soviet Civil Administration and Soviet scholars only seemed to point out that Korean issues should be based on the Moscow Agreement and it was Washington who violated the decision made at the Moscow Conference.¹³ Through reviewing more Soviet reports, it can be argued that the Soviet proposal was created after careful consideration on the current situation in North Korea and the post-war Japanese issues. As mentioned previously, Stalin ordered the establishment of a bourgeois democratic regime in northern Korea in September 1945, but the situation in northern Korea did not seem secure enough to guarantee the Soviet interests in Korea after the withdrawal of the Soviet military forces. This is proved by the Soviet report by Colonel General Shikin - the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army - in December 1945 to analyse the internal situation in northern Korea. The contents are as follows:

1. The bourgeois democratic revolution based upon anti-Japanese democratic parties and organisations in northern Korea has slowly proceeded so far.
2. The current economic and political situation in northern Korea does not guarantee the Soviet advantage after the withdrawal of the Red Army. The Soviet forces are not well aware of national democrats in northern Korea. Currently, the Soviet forces are using famous northern Korean communists Kim Il Sung and Hon Yong Pak. In addition, Man Sik Cho - the leader of the Democratic Party - has been used but we are not sure about him as a pro-Soviet person. According to the military council of the military district, it would take four to five months to prepare for democratic agents in northern Korea to

¹² William W. Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation: American policy toward China and Korea, 1947-1950*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981, p.22.

¹³ P. Kraynov, *Vor'ba Koreyskogo Naroda za Hezavisimost'*, Moskva: Ogiz, 1948, p.30; E. Pigulevskaya, "Koreyskiy Narod za Svobody i Nezavisimost' i Edinoe Demokraticheskoe Gosudarstvo," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, Iyul' 1950, p.2; B. Bayanov, "Koreya," *Moskovskiy propagandist*, No. 7, Iyul' 1950.

guarantee the democratisation of northern Korea in favour of the Soviet government's interests.

3. A central government organisation needs to be established in northern Korea for the Korean democratic activists to provide faster economic development and to foster Korean agents.

4. The possession of land by large landowners has prevented the growth of a democratic movement by ordinary Korean people. Due to these circumstances, agricultural reform is needed at the earliest convenience.

5. More qualified agents need to be supplied within the organisation in charge of public service under the 25th Army to support the political as well as economic life in northern Korea. The Soviet army and the Military Council of the military district should be prepared to select new democratic agents in northern Korea, who need to be friendly towards the Soviet government to guarantee Soviet political interests in Korea.¹⁴

As shown above, the situation in North Korea in December 1945 was not perfect for Stalin to feel confident in pursuing his goal in this region. There are several factors to be examined to judge Soviet power in North Korea – the policy enforcement institutions, the Korean Communist Party and public support for the Soviet military government in North Korea. Firstly, the Soviet military government established Soviet administration bodies such as garrison headquarters and advisory groups. In addition, it created the 10th administration bureau and the People's Committee, and all social groups were registered at the Soviet military headquarters and actively operated by communists. The problem, however, was that these organisations were just ready around December 1945, so they could not guarantee Soviet goals in Korea. Secondly, although the Soviet government had solid support from the Communist Party in North Korea, there was a lack of organisational power and political leverage. For example, there was the first anti-Soviet and anti-Communist incident in Sinuiju in late November 1945. Also there was a report that landowners took the lead in the higher positions in the Communist Party and some Communist Party members near the border had a close

¹⁴ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, pp.163-170.

relation with people in South Korea.¹⁵

With regards to public support, the Red Army was welcomed by the Korean people at first. As time went on, however, there were incidents protesting about the Soviet presence by North Korean people. According to the report by Ignatiev, “terrorist groups were organised at Hwanghae, North Pyongan and North Hamgyeong province to attack the Soviet army and Communist Party members.” The report analysed the reason for these incidents, saying that “it was mainly due to poor economic conditions including the rise of unemployment and delays in the operation of factories.”¹⁶ In fact, there were more than seventy thousand unemployed people within Hwanghae province and only twelve out of forty-four major companies were in operation at the end of 1945. Therefore, Colonel General Shikin’s report was written based on this internal situation within North Korea. In this report, Moscow clearly showed its intention of establishing a new regime in northern Korea for its strategic interests, and it seems to follow up measures on Stalin’s order on Korea in September 1945. Interestingly, it shows that Moscow utilised land reform to support the establishment of a pro-Soviet regime in northern Korea. In addition, it directly mentioned that “Moscow would be involved in creating a new regime in northern Korea by selecting pro-Soviet Korean people to guarantee Soviet political interests in the Korean Peninsula.”¹⁷ Considering the fact that Shikin’s report was written in December 1945, the Kremlin seemed confident to have enough numbers of Soviet-friendly Korean officials by the time of the first meeting of the joint Soviet-American commission in March 1946. Therefore, it implies that Moscow intended to resolve the Korean issue with pro-Soviet Korean people during the process of establishing a provisional government. Moreover, the central committee of the Korean Communist Party was located in southern Korea, which implied that once Moscow had secure control over the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party, it was guaranteed to have an influence on internal politics within South Korea as well.

After the Moscow Conference, the standing executive committee of the North Korean branch

¹⁵ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, p.4.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Shikin’s report on North Korea, Dec 1945.

of the Korean Communist Party decided the ratio of the participation of Korean organisations within a provisional government in Korea. It was two-thirds for Communists from both northern and southern Korea and the other one-third for the rest of the organisations within southern Korea.¹⁸ As for Moscow, it seemed reasonable to anticipate a future Korean government would be Soviet-friendly and this would secure the Soviet strategic interests in Far East Asia to prevent possible threats by Japan and the US.

US and Japanese factors

Apart from the domestic situation in the Korean Peninsula that affected the contents of Moscow's proposal on trusteeship in Korea, external factors regarding the issue of post-war Japan played a major role in the Kremlin's decision to agree with the US over trusteeship in Korea. It was the US that led the policy towards post-war Japan. Stalin also wanted to participate in forming post-war Japan, and he directly mentioned it to the US Ambassador Harriman at the meeting in October 1945.¹⁹ K. Weathersby argued that Moscow regarded the US proposal on trusteeship in Korea as a useful means to strengthen its position in Manchuria and to confront the US in the Pacific region.²⁰ However, the Kremlin seemed to hesitate in accepting the US trusteeship proposal at first during the Moscow Conference on 20 December 1945. The Soviet government reached its final proposal after revising four drafts; the first one was written by S. Lozovskii, the deputy People's Commissar for foreign affairs, the second one was by the Foreign Affairs Council of People's Commissar and this was proposed by Molotov and S. Tsarapkin, the third one was the Soviet delegation's draft written by Yakov A. Malik and the fourth one was submitted to the Moscow Conference on 20 December 1945 after the discussion on the period of trusteeship. The contents of the initial draft were as follows:

1. The committee to resolve the issue on establishing a provisional government in Korea is organised by the delegations of the US, the USSR, Great Britain and China. This committee is to cooperate with Korean democratic anti-fascist parties and social

¹⁸ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, pp.191-2.

¹⁹ Yeo, "The Soviet Policy toward the Korean Peninsula 1945-1948," *Asia Culture*, p.135.

²⁰ Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, p.9.

organisations.

2. The proposal written by the committee will be supervised by the governments of four nations.

3. After resolving the issue on establishing the Allied governing body in Japan, the governments of the US and the USSR are to appoint the delegation to discuss matters created by the divided occupation of Korea.²¹

The second draft consisted of the first and second articles of the initial draft. The third draft also included the first and second articles of the initial draft, and added the creation of the standing committee by the US and Soviet military headquarters, as well as the establishment of local administrative government based on the principles of democracy before creating a provisional Korean government. It can be seen with the acceptance of trusteeship in the fourth draft, saying that the committee is to cooperate with democratic organisations in Korea in order to create political, economic and social development for Korean people, to promote the development of democratic self-government and to search for the forms and means of trusteeship aiming for the independence of Korea.

It is noticeable from Moscow's proposal on trusteeship that it commonly included the establishment of a provisional government in Korea and cooperation with Korean democratic organisations. After the withdrawal of Japanese forces from Korea, the new political organisations were created in favour of the Soviet government. Therefore, it seems that Moscow expected to be able to establish a Soviet-friendly government in Korea if the Korean political organisations were to be involved in the process of creating a provisional government in Korea. In addition, it seems that there were not enough reasons for the Kremlin to reject the US proposal on trusteeship in Korea. As W. Haruki and H. Pak claimed, it was partly because Moscow did not want to break the wartime cooperation relations with Washington.²² However, there was another factor to influence on Moscow's decision, which was the process of post war

²¹ Hyunsu Jeon, "The Presence of the Soviet army in North Korea and the Soviet policy toward North Korea," *The Study of Korean Independence History*, Vol.9, 1995, pp.373-374.

²² Wada Haruki, *The Nation building and the Soviet Military government in North Korea*, International Academic Conference marking at 50th anniversary of the establishment of ROK government, Seoul: Korean Politics & Diplomacy History Institute, 1998, p.91; Hak Soon Pak, Kim Il Sung's autonomy issue on national building in North Korea, *Korea Politics Bulletin*, Vol.28, No.2, 1994, p.385.

Japan's formation at the Moscow Conference.

Since the collapse of the Foreign Ministers meeting in London on September 1945, the US had rejected Moscow's participation in formulating post-war Japan. Under these circumstances, there was no reason for Stalin to be proactive in resolving the Korean issue. However, when Moscow's proposal on the Allied Council for Japan was accepted on 16 December 1945, it submitted its proposal on trusteeship in Korea on 20 December 1945. For Moscow, Japan was the priority in its foreign policy in Far East Asia, and therefore, the Korean issue seems to be dependent upon the process of Moscow's engagement over post-war Japan.

As W. McNell and D. Koo pointed out, the Moscow Agreement was the result of compromise among the Great Powers.²³ The US recognised Rumania and Bulgaria in favour of the Soviet government's interest and agreed to non-intervention in China. In return, Moscow did not oppose the presence of the US armed forces in China and agreed for the UK and China's participation in the formation of post-war Japan. The Kremlin continuously showed its interests in dealing with Japan during the Second World War period as well. Even before Moscow's declaration of war against Japan, Molotov manifested dissatisfaction with the resolution of the Japan issues without Moscow's agreement in the Potsdam Conference. Molotov suggested that "Japan should surrender to the US and the Soviet joint headquarters, which needed to include two Soviet officers having the right of veto." After the US refusal, Moscow pulled back to some extent, demanding to participate in consultation and agreeing the conditions of occupation in Japan. However, Stalin insisted on the requisition of surrender by Japanese armed forces in Kuril and Hokkaido region.²⁴ In addition, Moscow suggested the organisation of occupation by four nations (the USSR, the US, Great Britain, and China) in September 1945 in response to the US proposal on the occupation of Japan in August 1945. As W. McNell and W. Taubman pointed out, there was another factor to the reason why Moscow suggested the

²³ William H. McNell, *Survey of International Affairs, America, Britain & Russia: Their Cooperation & Conflict, 1941-46*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953, p.703; Dae Yeol Koo, *Study on Korea's International Relation History 2- Liberation & Division*, Korea Study Research 10, Seoul: History Critics Press, 1995, p.199.

²⁴ US Department of Defense, *The Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan: Military Plans 1941-1945*, Washington, D.C.: US Department of Defense, 1955, p.73

organisation of occupation.²⁵ Regarding Washington's suggestion on 21 August which was delayed by Britain's request, the Kremlin sometimes showed its favour on the U.S. or Britain. In other words, Moscow tried to utilise the difference between the U.S. and Britain for its strategic interest in Europe. However, due to German issue in late 1946 and the approval of loans to Britain by the US congress, Moscow came to confront against the US and Britain again.

D. Dallin and M. Beloff argued that the relation between Washington and Moscow in terms of Japanese issue was not good from the first place.²⁶ At the Moscow Conference, the Kremlin tried to obstruct the unilateral lead by the US over the Japanese issue. According to the US proposal, the supreme headquarters would gain control over post-war Japan and the Far Eastern Committee would only be able to play a role as a consultant. This means that there would be no way for Moscow to have control over the US and therefore it would be possible for Japan to be a hostile nation again. In order to prevent this scenario, Moscow suggested the Allied Council for Japan, and this was agreed on 16 December 1945 with the creation of the Far Eastern Commission in Washington. Dallin argued that the Moscow Conference actually means the retreat of Soviet policy toward post war Japan, as Allied Council for Japan could not fully perform its function for controlling the US policy.²⁷ To some extent, it seems reasonable, as Japan became under control by Washington and eventually turned out to be one of anti-Soviet allies. However, the most important point here is that Washington accepted Moscow's suggestion. In other words, it seems that the Kremlin thought that in world politics, there would be room to influence the restructuring of Japan in favour of its interests. Therefore, in this period, Stalin decided to maintain amicable relations with the US, and this led to reaching an agreement on trusteeship between Moscow and Washington.

²⁵ William H. McNell, *Survey of International Affairs, America, Britain & Russia: Their Cooperation & Conflict, 1941-46*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953, p.652; William Taubman, *Stalin's American Policy: From Antete to Détente to Cold War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1982, p.114.

²⁶ David J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948, p.239; Max Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953, p.110.

²⁷ Ibid, p.268.

Opeka: Stalin's plan to establish a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea through domestic power groups

Moscow had insisted that there was a fundamental difference between itself and the US proposal over trusteeship in Korea. Moscow claimed that “its proposal reflected the request for independence by the Korean people and acknowledged their role, whereas the US simply treated them as administrative managers to aim for long-term trusteeship.”²⁸ Zhukov also argued that the Soviet proposal was more appropriate for adopting the international charter.²⁹ However, there is evidence to prove that Moscow considered trusteeship in Korea as a dimension of its own security purpose. According to the report by the Foreign Affairs Council for People's Commissars, “trusteeship in Korea was needed for Soviet security by preventing Japan from becoming a base to attack the USSR, and in this sense, close and friendly relations between the USSR and Korea seemed to be essential for security and therefore Moscow decided to participate in the process of trusteeship in Korea.”³⁰

Nevertheless, the idea of trusteeship triggered a strong nationalist movement in Korea and this was considered anti-Soviet activity by Stalin. As a result, it became a great chance for the North Korean branch of the Communist Party to develop as a political leader within northern Korea under Soviet supervision. Therefore, the Soviet definition of democratic groups in North Korea changed from being anti-Japanese at the beginning of its occupation to supporters for the Soviet trusteeship idea in Korea. Interestingly, as Moscow dealt with anti-trusteeship movements in North Korea, it became more suspicious of the US attitude, and eventually blamed the US for causing domestic chaos within Korea in terms of the trusteeship issue. The Soviet military report claimed that “southern Korea's broadcast mistranslated ‘trusteeship’ as the same meaning of ‘mandate’, which caused misunderstanding of North Korean people, and this is US responsibility.”³¹ Also Shtykov insisted at the press conference on 26 January 1946 that “it was

²⁸ Kraynov, *Vor'ba Koreyskogo Naroda za Nezavisimost'*, p.30.

²⁹ E.M.Zhukov, *Sovietskiy Soyuz v Bor'be za Demokraticeskoe Reshenie Poslevoennykh Problem Dal'nego Vostoka Movka*, Moskva: Akademiya Obschestvennykh Nauk, 1950, p.18.

³⁰ Sungbo Kim, “The formation of Separation process in North Korea by Soviet articles”, *Institute for History issue*, September 1996, pp.18-20.

³¹ Military Compilation Institute of Ministry of Defense in ROK, *Gromov, Ignatiev's report on 4 Jan 1946*, Seoul: Military Compilation Institute Press, p.8.

not the USSR but the US that initially raised the Korean issue at the Moscow Conference.”³² However, when the US proposed trusteeship on Korea before the Moscow Conference, the Kremlin insisted the immediate independence of Korea. In this sense, Moscow could have raised the independence issue rather than prevented demonstration through North Korean security forces. Nevertheless, Moscow became strongly supportive on trusteeship in Korea after anti-Soviet movement. Some scholars also supported Moscow’s argument in a sense that trusteeship would prevent Korea from being subordinated to imperialism again and be a process of being independent.³³ The Soviet military government did not explain the meaning of trusteeship to the Korean public, as it only said “trusteeship will protect Korean people’s self-determination.”³⁴ This shows that Moscow did not prepare for dealing with any possible negative reaction by Korean people about trusteeship.

As H. Kim pointed out, the Kremlin had not expected the announcement of the Moscow Agreement in northern Korea on 28 December 1945 to create ferocious opposition among the Korean people. This reaction was widespread from right-wing parties including nationalists and Christians to the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party.³⁵ Even within southern Korea, when the idea of trusteeship was revealed on 20 October 1945, it caused a massive demonstration all over the country. Due to the strong opposition to trusteeship, the US military officers and intelligence agents stationed in southern Korea suggested to Washington withdraw the idea of trusteeship.³⁶ According to Yong Kyu Seo - the former executive in the Labour Party in northern Korea - the Korean Communist Party expressed consent to trusteeship on 2 January 1946, because of the fact that Romanenko ordered Kim Il Sung and Hon Yong Park to agree with it on 30 December 1945. At this period of time, Moscow did not expect any

³² Military Compilation Institute of Ministry of Defense in ROK, *Shtykov’s press conference on 26 Jan 1946*, Seoul: Military Compilation Institute Press, p.1.

³³ E.M.Zhukov, *Sovietskiy Soyuz v Bor’be za Demokratischeskoe Reshenie Poslevoennykh Problem Dal’nego Vostoka Movka*, Moskva: Akademiya Obschestvennykh Nauk, 1950, p.17; G. Tavrov, *Koreyskiy vopros posle vtoroy mirovoy vony*, *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo Pravo*, No.7, Iyul 1950, p.30.

³⁴ TsAMO, Fond USGASK, Opic’ 102038, Delo2, Gromov and Ignatiev’s report on 4 Jan 1946, p.1.

³⁵ Hak Jun Kim, *The trusteeship Idea over Korea and the debate over it at the early stage, The Korea issue and World Politics*, Seoul: Parkyoungsa, 1987, pp.368-86.

³⁶ Sang Yong Choi, *The US military government in Korea and Korean Nationalism*, Seoul: Nanam, 1989, pp.187-194.

anti-trusteeship movement in Korea, as it thought that the Korean people would trust Moscow as a saviour from the Japanese occupation and therefore there was no right for Korean people to challenge its authority over the Korean issue.³⁷

Considering the anti-trusteeship movement in Korea, Moscow regarded it as a US plot against the USSR, which seemed to result in deepening Soviet distrust of the US. According to *Izvestiya* on 22 January 1946, it asserted that the US armed forces in South Korea instigated anti-trusteeship movement in Korea. In addition, Stalin also blamed the US, in the meeting with the US Ambassador Harriman on 23 January 1946 that “it purposely left this situation as it was in South Korea in which Korean public misunderstood the Soviets played the major role in deciding the trusteehip in Korea.”³⁸ Before the anti-trusteeship campaign in Korea, it seemed realistic for Moscow to form a provisional Korean government in favour of its interests due to the ratio of participants. It was two-thirds for communists from the whole of Korea and one-third for the rest of organisations in southern Korea. This calculation came from the notion that domestic political groups in northern Korea and the communist forces in southern Korea shared a common stance in favour of Soviet interests.³⁹ However, if the anti-trusteeship movements continued, the ratio that Moscow suggested would not be able to work in its favour. Furthermore, there was a possibility of establishing a pro-US and anti-Soviet provisional government in Korea and this would threaten Soviet security in this region.

Under these circumstances, Moscow had to decide which stance it should take towards the anti-trusteeship movement in Korea. If Moscow acquiesced in the anti-trusteeship demonstration in Korea, it would strengthen the nationalist movement in both northern and southern Korea, which might result in weakening Moscow’s position in the Joint Soviet-American Commission. On the other hand, if it opposed trusteehip and asserted immediate independence in Korea, this would disaffirm the agreement with the US. Moreover, this would not guarantee that the future government in Korea would be in favour of the USSR, as the nationalist movement would become more popular among Korean people over the trusteehip issue. Therefore, the Kremlin decided to impede the anti-trusteeship demonstration in Korea and tried

³⁷ Ree, *Socialism*, p.205.

³⁸ Ohnuma Hisao, “The Korea’s liberation, division, and the internal political group”, *Bulletin of the Society for Korean Historical Science* 21, 1984, p. 145.

³⁹ Ree, *Socialism*, pp.144-5.

to propagate the Moscow Agreement to the Korean people at the same time. If the trusteeship plan had happened in Korea without having resistance from the Korean people, Moscow would have achieved its goal in the Korean Peninsula. However, there was an unexpected movement against trusteeship, which became a serious challenge for Stalin in terms of the upcoming policy towards Korea.

The Elimination of Nationalists within North Korea

Moscow was faced with a serious internal challenge within northern Korea after the announcement of trusteeship. Before this happened, the relations with the US in the process of forming post-war Japan was the key factor in deciding its policy towards northern Korea. However, with the strong anti-trusteeship movement, it began to consider the internal affairs within Korea as an important issue for its security.

Throughout the period of Sovietisation in northern Korea, nationalist groups were gradually eliminated. Consequently, this became the background for the Communist forces coming into power within northern Korean politics. To some extent, it seems that the anti-trusteeship movement advanced Moscow's action to remove the nationalists from northern Korea. Moscow began to regard nationalists as the same as pro-Japanese forces in Korea. Kim Il Sung claimed, in the meeting with heads of local government in February 1946, that "nationalists as well as pro-Japanese forces were the enemy of the Korean people."⁴⁰ Thus, it seems that the condition to define democratic forces in Korea was no longer whether or not they were pro-Japanese, but whether they sympathised with the trusteeship that Moscow suggested for Korea. In this process, the Kremlin launched the plan to eliminate nationalist forces within northern Korea and removed Man Sik Cho, the head of Korean Democratic Party on 5 January 1946, and replaced his position with pro-Soviet personnel. The local offices of the Korean Democratic Party held a meeting on February 1946 to denounce Man Sik Cho, to purge reactionary central committee members and to adopt the resolution to support the Moscow Agreement.⁴¹ Man Sik Cho, who led the anti-trusteeship movement in northern Korea, was an

⁴⁰ Military Compilation Institute of Ministry of Defense in ROK, *Ignatiev's report on 28 Feb 1946*, Seoul: Military Compilation Institute Press, p.2.

⁴¹ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, p.199.

independence activist against Japan and the head of the Korean Democratic Party. After Cho refused the order from the Soviet military headquarter to support its trusteeship plan, he led the anti-trusteeship campaign through the Central Committee of the Korean Democratic Party meeting in January 1946. Due to his political position as the chairman of the People's Committee in South Pyeongan province in northern Korea, he was strongly supported by ordinary Korean people and therefore Moscow began to be concerned about the anti-trusteeship movement within northern Korea.⁴² In Moscow's view, it would be a possible scenario that political forces in southern Korea were not only organising the anti-trusteeship movement but also the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist campaign. This would have a negative effect on Moscow's leverage in the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, the Kremlin decided to eliminate the nationalist forces in Korea.

Communist forces in northern Korea were able to strengthen their position as a result of the elimination of nationalists. It seems that Moscow had to choose communist forces in northern Korea in order to prevent the anti-trusteeship movement. This allowed the Communist Party in northern Korea to gain the main political power, and also served to restructure the Communist Party in Korea. Its Central Committee was located in Seoul and Hon Yong Pak played a major role in creating the party in September 1945.⁴³ However, along with the process of eliminating nationalists from the Korean Democratic Party, it strengthened the position of the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party as well as its leader, Kim Il Sung. This provided favourable conditions for Moscow to establish a Soviet-friendly government in northern Korea.

The Moscow Agreement was a turning point in the Kremlin's perception towards the Korean issue. It became the issue for Moscow to resolve under the cooperation system with the Western allies after the end of the Second World War. This resulted in the Kremlin seemingly compromising rather than seizing the initiative in resolving the Korean issue. After the Moscow Agreement, however, the Kremlin regarded the Korean issue as itself, which could be resolved by negotiation only with the US. As a result, Moscow recognised the division of Korea into two parts as the political separation and therefore it pursued 'Democratisation' in northern

⁴² Kyuha Jo, Kyungmun Lee, Sungjae Gang, *The conversation of North and South Korea*, Koryo-one Culture Series 29, Seoul: Koryo-one, 1987, p.269.

⁴³ Scalapino & Lee, *The History of Korea Communist movement*, pp.408-10.

Korea in the Soviet style. It is important to comprehend how the Kremlin recognised the division of Korea at the time of liberating Korea from Japan in August 1945, as it would help figure out when Moscow actually decided to divide Korea into two parts. Some scholars including Wada and Cumings argued that “Moscow had already decided to separate Korea into two different political states in 1945 on the grounds that it showed a passive attitude towards exchange between southern and northern Korea after the Soviet and the US armed forces were stationed in the northern and southern part of Korea respectively.”⁴⁴ However, it can be argued that Moscow did not intend the division of Korea right after its liberation from Japan in August 1945. According to the declaration announced by Chistiakov in August 1945, “the Red Army as well as the other allies liberated Korea cooperatively.”⁴⁵ It did not mention that two external forces liberated northern and southern Korea respectively. This shows that at the time of the liberation of Korea in August 1945, Moscow took the post-war Japan issue more seriously than Korea itself. However, Stalin’s disappointment during the process of establishing post-war Japan led him to create a Soviet-friendly regime in North Korea led by Kim Il Sung on 20 September 1945. From this moment on there was a change in terms of the Soviet attitude towards its counterpart. Its passive reaction towards the US suggestion on exchange between southern and northern Korea in October 1945 can possibly be explained in a way that Moscow at that time was discussing establishing a new policy towards northern Korea, based upon Stalin’s instruction. However, Stalin still seemed positive about the future government in Korea until the Moscow Conference, as considering the popularity of the Communists within Korea, the provisional Korean government would be created by Soviet friendly groups. In the Soviet government’s report in November 1945, the term ‘the northern part of Korea’ was used to describe North Korea in which the Soviet military forces were stationed geographically.⁴⁶ This can be assumed to show Moscow did not have a clear plan to divide Korea into two parts. The anti-trusteeship movement in North Korea, however, challenged this Soviet policy, and it became the moment for Moscow to be actively engaged in domestic politics within North

⁴⁴ Wada, Cumings (eds.), *The Modern History*, pp.262-64; Ree, *Socialism*, pp.124-49; Weathersby, “Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War,” *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, p.8.

⁴⁵ Pyeonjipbu, *The Declaration by Chistiakov, The Comintern materials anthology 3 – issues on Unification Front and colony*, Seoul: Dongnook Sunseo 53, 1989, p.18

⁴⁶ TsAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis’ 433847, Delo 1, ‘The report on the current situation on Industry in northern Korea,’ 10 Nov 1945.

Korea to eliminate nationalists. In addition, this allowed Kim Il Sung to consolidate his power within North Korea.

Conclusion

The Moscow Agreement was created by both Soviet confidence and suspicion about the US. The second half of 1945 offered Stalin an important chance to examine the Western allies over the post-war issues. His objective in this region was to secure Soviet security from any possible threat. Consequently, the formation of a new Soviet-friendly regime in northern Korea as a buffer zone was in progress, as planned by Stalin's secret order. With the creation of a Soviet satellite nation in the North, Stalin believed that trusteeship under the four nations' supervision would not harm Soviet strategic interests, as he was confident in having support from northern Korean people based on its political and economic policies including land reform. If a provisional Korean government was established as Moscow suggested, it would mainly consist of pro-Soviet groups, and it would guarantee to play a significant role as a Soviet buffer zone. As Stalin's policy towards Korea was strongly linked with the situation in the Far Eastern region especially with Japan, it was reactive to the US policy to Japan in the early post-war era. The Soviet situation in participating in the formation of post-war Japan was not ideal for Stalin as the US decided to include Japan as its ally in this region, which caused him to be concerned about the future of Soviet security. Under these circumstances, Stalin decided to use Korea as political leverage to check the US and to protect Soviet interests in this region.

Unexpectedly, the Moscow Agreement brought a negative impact on the Soviet government's position in Korea. Since the announcement of the idea of trusteeship, the anti-trusteeship movement was rapidly spreading out to the entire country. From Stalin's viewpoint, the anti-trusteeship movement was considered a huge challenge in his policy towards Korea, as there was no guarantee that a provisional Korean government would be a pro-Soviet regime in such a case. This was because the majority of Korean people were strongly against the idea of trusteeship and it moved into an anti-Soviet movement as well. There were newspaper articles in the South that could cause Stalin to be suspicious that the anti-trusteeship movement was under US sufferance including 'the trusteeship is the Soviets' suggestion' on 11 January 1946, 'Pak agreed Soviet exclusive trusteeship in Korea' on 17 January 1946, and 'disclosed Yalta

Secret Agreement: the USSR required the whole of Korea' on 13 March 1946 in the Dong-A Ilbo.⁴⁷ In this respect, Moscow seemed to decide that the US acquiesced in the anti-trusteeship movement, which escalated into an anti-Soviet campaign.

As for Soviet policy towards Korea, Stalin could not tolerate the anti-trusteeship movement inside Korea, as it was believed that it would strengthen the nationalists' political power. This would lead the Soviet position to be weakened in the Joint Soviet-American Commission, which meant there was no guarantee of a Soviet friendly Korean government in the future. In this situation, Moscow decided to control the anti-trusteeship movements by force and authorised the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party to become the most powerful organisation within northern Korea. As a consequence, Kim Il Sung, who was loyal to Stalin, emerged as the leader of North Korea. The political as well as the ideological division of Korea had already started at this stage, even before the actual outbreak of the Korean War.

⁴⁷ National Central Library in ROK, Articles in Dong-A Ilbo on 11 Jan, 17 Jan, 13 Mar 1946, Seoul: Dong-A newspaper press.

III. Stalin's goal to Sovietise North Korea between 1946 and 1948

The establishment of separate regimes in Korea is the critical starting point in terms of the origins of the Korean War. Considering the formation of North Korea, Moscow insisted on preventing the colonisation of Korea by the US through the Joint Soviet-American Commission and also asserted that it supported North Korea's democratic reform.¹ The Joint Soviet-American Commission was created by the Moscow Agreement to discuss Korean issues. Throughout its process, the Soviet purpose was to create a Soviet-friendly regime in the North as a buffer zone. To begin with, Moscow propagated that "Washington denied implementing the Moscow Agreement and tried to occupy Korea by its expansionistic policy whereas the USSR supported democratic reform in North Korea."² In this chapter, Moscow's role in establishing North Korea will be analysed in depth with the support of various underused documents to prove that the Soviet policy over North Korea was to create a socialised nation. It will also assess Moscow's aim in the Joint Soviet-American Commission and the principle of negotiation with the US.

Soviet external activity towards establishing a new regime in northern Korea can be examined through its role in the Joint Soviet-American Commission between 1946 and 1947. Moscow tried to propagate its difference from the US by asserting that "Washington rejected the policy implementation decided by the Joint Commission and even tried to occupy Korea through its expansionist policy."³ Zhukov argued that Moscow discharged its duty so that Korea could be excluded from US influence.⁴ However, Moscow prioritised its national interests over the negotiation with the US at the Joint Commission, and this is to be analysed by means of examining Moscow's principles of negotiation with the US over the meetings. The first meeting was held between March and May 1946 after having preliminary talks in January

¹ Doklad, Tom 1, The Report by Soviet Civil Administration, 1948, pp.24-26.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Zhukov, *Sovietskiy Soyuz v Bor'be za Demokraticeskoe Reshenie Poslevoennykh Problem Dal'nego Vostoka* *Movka*, pp.17-19.

1946. The second meeting continued from May to October 1947, but it reached a deadlock after mid-July in 1947 when Moscow and Washington discussed the issues related to which political and social groups in Korea would be included in a provisional government in Korea.⁵

In the first meeting of the Joint Commission in March 1946, Moscow suggested three standards to select Korean political and social groups to participate in creating a provisional government in Korea.⁶ Those standards were as follows; firstly, it should advocate the Moscow Agreement. Secondly, it should be truly democratic. Thirdly, they should not be anti-Soviet groups in order to prevent a future Korea from being in a key position to invade the USSR. In this regard, the US argued that “most Korean people were against the Moscow Agreement and thus it would not be fair if any group or person was excluded due to their opposed stance on the Moscow Agreement.” In spite of this argument, the Joint Commission reached an agreement on 17 April 1946 that “people or groups in Korea should sign a declaration to promise to support the Moscow Agreement to participate in a provisional government in Korea.” This announcement was called ‘Communique No. 5’. Since this agreement, however, there had been ongoing arguments between the USSR and US over the issue about whether signing this declaration meant the acceptance of trusteeship in Korea or not. Without resolving this, the first meeting of the Joint Commission declared an indefinite recess on 6 May 1946. In spite of the rupture of negotiations between the two sides, the effort to continue the joint meeting had been undergone between Chistiakov - the Soviet military commander stationed in northern Korea - and Hodge - the US military commander in southern Korea. In addition, there had been negotiations at a government level between Marshall - the US Secretary of State - and Molotov - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs. As a result, the second Joint Commission was resumed on 21 May 1947. The Soviet and US representatives held a meeting with southern Korea’s political parties and social groups on 25 June 1947 and then met with northern Korea’s organisations on 1 July 1947. Although it seemed to make progress in the process of establishing a provisional government in Korea, the issue over selecting participants from southern and northern Korea reappeared between Moscow and Washington in August 1947. The negotiation between the two sides went back to the first stage on the grounds that Moscow

⁵ Ree, *Socialism*, pp. 125-195.

⁶ Hyunhae Park, *Perception of history over division of Korea 3*, Seoul: Hangilsa, 1987, pp.237-361.

continued to require including only Korean organisations advocating the Moscow Agreement, whereas the US claimed Koreans should have the freedom to express their own opinions. Under this deadlock, the situation between two became worse after the South Korean Labour Party members and other leftists were arrested in the South. With regard to this incident, Shtykov - the Soviet representative on the Joint Commission - protested strongly by commenting that “the suppression of leftists who supported the Moscow Agreement and the Joint Commission in the South was obstructing the work of the Joint Commission.”⁷ In response, Brown - the US representative on the Joint Commission - denounced Moscow’s argument and insisted that “the Soviet attitude was to interfere in domestic affairs in southern Korea.”⁸ Under this situation, it was not possible to make any further progress in the Joint Commission and the US renounced the idea of trusteeship in Korea and transferred this issue to the UN. Marshall - the US Secretary of State - mentioned on 17 September 1947 that “the endeavour of the Joint Soviet-American Commission over two years to resolve Korean issues lacked results and therefore the independence of Korea could be resolved through the UN general assembly.” With regards to the US action, Vyshinsky, the Soviet chief delegate to the UN general assembly, opposed it in that “the introduction of Korean issues to the UN was to violate an agreement between Moscow and Washington.” However, Marshall’s suggestion was passed to the steering committee of the UN general assembly on 21 September 1947. That was to suspend the Joint Commission meetings until Korean issues were discussed in the UN. In response, Shtykov, the Soviet chief delegate to the Joint Soviet-American Commission, announced the withdrawal of the Soviet delegation from Seoul, and it left for Pyongyang on 21 October 1947, and this was the end of the Joint Soviet-American Commission without any productive outcome over two years. As shown above, the Joint Commission did not serve its original purpose to establish a unified Korean government but was used as a tool to check each other’s strategic intentions in this region.

⁷ The War History Compilation Committee in the Ministry of Defense in Korea, *Shtykov’s diary on 26 Sep 1946*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense.

⁸ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea*, Seoul: Joongang Ilbo, 1994, p.100.

Moscow's aim in the Joint Commission was to create a Soviet-friendly regime in Korea. This was proven by Shtykov, the Soviet chief delegate to the Joint Soviet-American Commission, announcing in the first Joint meeting that "a future Korea should be favourable to the USSR and not become an attack base to threaten the USSR but a truly democratic nation."⁹ Washington was also aware of Soviet intention in Korea. According to the report by the US delegation in the Joint Commission, it analysed that "Shtykov's statement implied Moscow's goal in the Korean Peninsula."¹⁰

Regarding the Soviet objective in Korea, there is other evidence to prove it from the Soviet Ministry of Defence. According to its report to Stalin and Molotov on 12 June 1946, it mentioned clearly that "the goal of the USSR in Korea was to establish a Soviet-friendly regime in Korea."¹¹ This report was completed after the deadlock of the first Joint Soviet-American Commission. Therefore, it shows that the Soviet aim during the negotiation with the US was to consolidate its influence in Korea. Furthermore, the report added that "if the Korean government consisted of anti-Soviet forces, it would result in strengthening the US position, which obstructed Soviet benefits in Korea." As V. Sobakin described, therefore, it can be argued that the definition of a friendly government to Moscow was a socialist state that was both not hostile and also should not be a menace to the USSR.¹² At the interview with *Pravda* on 13 March 1946, Stalin revealed that "the establishment of friendly governments in Finland, Poland, Romania and Hungary, which were neighbouring countries to the USSR, was to ensure Soviet security."¹³ Stalin repeated this position to Byrnes - the US Secretary of State - in the Moscow Conference in December 1945.¹⁴ Considering the fact that the USSR had a frontier with Korea, it seemed that the Soviet policy towards creating a Soviet-friendly regime in a

⁹ *Vneshnyaya Politika Sovetskogo Soyuza*, 1946 god, Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoy Literatury, p.808.

¹⁰ C. L. Hoag, Bokryong Shin & Wonduk Kim (Trans.), *American military government in Korea war policy and the first year of occupation : 1941-1946*, Seoul: Pulbit, 1992, pp.205-262.

¹¹ The Soviet Ministry of Defense, The Report on the Joint Soviet-American Commission between 20th March 1946 and 6th May 1946.

¹² V. Sobakin, *Marksizm-Leninizm o Problemakh Voyny i Mira*, trans. by Andrei Zur, *Marxism-Leninism on War and Peace*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1983, pp.62-65.

¹³ Ree, *Socialism*, p.145.

¹⁴ Hebert Feis, *Contest over Japan*, New York: W.W.Norton & Company, Inc., 1967, p.105.

neighbouring country referred to Korea as well. Harriman - the US Ambassador in Moscow - submitted a report after meeting with Molotov that "Moscow's purpose in Korea was to maintain influence in the Korean Peninsula."¹⁵ In this regard, it can be argued that the actual meaning of acquiring influence in a new nation was to establish a Soviet-friendly government in Korea.

Moscow insisted on its condition to select Korean political groups for participation in a provisional government in Korea. Due to the gap over this issue between the two parties, it resulted in deadlock in the first as well as the second meeting of the Joint Commission. From the Soviet perspective, it was understandable to exclude political parties or groups in Korea opposed to the Moscow Agreement on the grounds that the Joint Commission was created by the agreement in the Moscow Conference. In the Moscow Agreement, however, there was no actual rule about parties or groups for a provisional government in Korea. Nevertheless, the Kremlin constantly insisted on implementing the Moscow Agreement over the Joint Commission due to realistic benefits for the Soviets by doing so. This is why McCune and Grey argued that Moscow held a dominant position at the Joint commission as all the North Korean groups as well as leftists in the South would support the Kremlin.¹⁶

Under the guidance of the Soviets, the Executive Standing Committee of the North Korean branch of the Korean Communist Party reached a decision on 31 December 1945 on the principle of creating a provisional government in Korea, which should consist of two-thirds Communists in northern and southern Korea and one-third of the remaining political organisations in southern Korea. Moscow was confident in being fully supported by northern Korean political groups, as they became actively on Moscow's side especially after eliminating anti-Japanese and nationalist forces over the anti-trusteeship movement. Moreover, Communist forces within the South swung to advocate the Moscow Agreement after Hon Yong Pak returned from Moscow on 2 January 1946.¹⁷ In this regard, Moscow seemed to judge that it

¹⁵ Jo, Lee, Gang, *The conversation of North and South Korea*, p.207.

¹⁶ McCune and Grey, Jr., *Korea Today*, p.62.

¹⁷ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, Seoul: Joongang Ilbo, 1994, p.101.

was in an advantageous position in the Korean Peninsula on the basis of support from northern Korean political groups and Communists in southern Korea.

With regards to establishing a provisional government in Korea, Moscow was concerned about right-wing forces within the South, as they were in favour of the US style of democracy and opposed the Kremlin's definition of it.¹⁸ In addition, it was the right-wing in the South who led the anti-trusteeship movement. Thus, if there was a condition for political parties or groups in Korea to fully support the Moscow Agreement to be part of a provisional government, Moscow would be able to impede right-wing participants in the process of the establishment of a new regime in Korea. This would lead Communist forces to take advantage by forming a future government in Korea. The right-wing forces in the South were regarded as the main obstacle by the Soviets, and they were blamed by Moscow for the rupture of negotiations in the Joint Soviet-American Commission.¹⁹

It has been revealed by underused Russian documents that Moscow hoped for a future Korean regime in its favour. According to its report, "there was internal conflict within right-wing forces in the South and the US tried to mediate them."²⁰ Although Syngman Rhee and Koo Kim were on the same side in opposing the Joint Commission, Koo Kim claimed to acknowledge the provisional government established in Shanghai during the Japanese colonial period. Rhee, on the other hand, insisted on holding an immediate election in any possible region of Korea to create a new government. On the contrary, Kyusik Kim advocated the Joint Commission and gathered centrists in the South. There had been tension between the US military forces and right-wing groups in the South since late 1946, and they became antagonistic by the summer of 1947.²¹ Furthermore, the US failed to obtain the Korean people's consent in terms of establishing a provisional government by being indecisive between Moscow and right-wing forces in Korea.²² It implies that there was a wide range of different reactions within right-wing political groups in the South towards the activities of the Joint Commission. Therefore, the US faced difficulty to some extent in coordinating different

¹⁸ Kraynov, *Vor'ba Koreyskogo Naroda za Nezavisimost'*, p.33.

¹⁹ Kraynov, *Strany Vostochnoy Azii*, p. 41.

²⁰ TsAMO, Fond 142, Opis' 540934, Delo 4, 'The internal Situation in southern Korea,' 19 April 1947.

²¹ Lee, *Socialism*, p.236.

²² Max Beloff, *Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953, p.296.

political groups within the South. This was a positive signal to the Soviets that if the implementation of the Moscow Agreement continued to be a key issue in the Joint Commission, right-wing forces in the South would be weakened by ongoing internal disagreement. In this regards, the Kremlin utilised the Moscow Agreement as the main issue over the joint Soviet-American Commission to turn political disputes among Korean groups to advantage to establish a Soviet-friendly provisional government in Korea.

The Soviet Style of Democratisation in North Korea

It was argued by Cumings that “the establishment of the provisional National People’s Congress in northern Korea on 8 February 1946 and the land reform on 5 March 1946 were the measures for Moscow to be ready to communise northern Korea before starting the first Joint Soviet-American Commission.”²³ It was also claimed that “Kim Il Sung led the establishment of the provisional National People’s Congress and then Moscow acknowledged it in order to hold hegemony in northern Korea in the process of the Joint Commission.” However, it has been revealed by Russian documentation that “it was in December 1945 that the Kremlin suggested creating a central authority in northern Korea.”²⁴ In other words, it was Moscow who led the creation of a provisional National People’s Congress as part of the Soviet plan for the socialisation of North Korea.

H. Yang argued that land reform was the most important innovative policy within northern Korea.²⁵ According to the statement by central organisational representatives of all political parties and social groups in northern Korea on 6 March 1946 and Kim Il Sung’s report in the first enlarged meeting of the provisional National People’s Committee on 13 April 1946, “land reform in northern Korea was to solidify the democratic front for reunification as well as to establish a unified democratic regime in Korea.”²⁶ During the process of land reform,

²³ Wada, Cumings (eds.), *The Modern History*, p.306; Jae Duk Han, *Denounce Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Naeyoi Moonhwa Co., 1965, p.215.

²⁴ AVPRF, Fond 013, Opis’ 7, Papka 4, Delo 46, 25 December 1945.

²⁵ Homin Yang, *The New Understanding of the Division of Korea 1945-1980*, Seoul: Nanam Press Ltd, 1993, p.92.

²⁶ McCune & Grey. Jr, *Korea Today*, p. 201.

landowners were forced to leave for different places and their possessions were confiscated. The organisations for forfeiting and distributing land were the Land Reform Committee in the provisional National People's Committee and local commissions of the Communist Party in northern Korea. Through land reform, the old ruling forces were eliminated and a new power structure was introduced within society.²⁷ Therefore, land reform was not only an economic policy but also a politically important measure to get support from the public. Due to the nature of the land reform policy, Moscow used it as the main source of propagating Soviet supremacy compared to the US policy in the South, as there was a widespread demand among the Koreans in the South for the US military government to implement a land reform policy like the North. Apart from land reform, Moscow carefully investigated other issues in the North to be resolved and this has been revealed by underused Russian documentation to prove that the Kremlin systematically involved itself in every aspect of North Korean society. On 12 November 1945, Ignatiev - the Soviet Colonel General - reported to Romanenko - the Soviet Major General - about a number of issues in the North. The contents of the report titled 'the tasks to be resolved in North Korea' were as follows:

1. The number of Korean translators is not sufficient, so this needs to be sorted out.
 - a) 17 translators to work for military representatives
 - b) 9 translators for military censorship
 - c) 60 translators for commanders and military representatives in the garrison headquarters in northern Korea province
2. There is a shortage of 50 deputy commanders in charge of political matters in the military headquarters so far. Although they have completed the political course before arriving, the current 61 political agents are not well prepared, and thus we need 50 better prepared political agents.
3. There has been no Soviet military representative in three provinces and no military representative of the administration in six bureaus such as the Industry Bureau, Communication Bureau, Transportation Bureau, Trade Bureau, Forest Bureau, and

²⁷ Nam Won Seo, *The economic Situation and management of production in North Korea*, Series of Research on Communist worlds 5 by Institute for Asian Studies, Seoul: Institute for Asian Studies, 1966, pp.47-57.

Security Bureau.

4. The following issues have not been resolved so far.

- a) There needs to be a local authority election. This issue has been processed without our (the Soviet government) active involvement. There needs to be detailed information on the election as well as the election period.
- b) Agricultural issues have not been resolved yet. The Land Research Committee needs to examine the idea of confiscating land belonging to Japanese and Korean landowners. The land will be distributed to farmers.
- c) Industrial control measures confiscated from Japanese people need to be examined. There needs to be research on the eight-hours working day in a factory, working restrictions for women and children and worker protection.
- d) Regarding the increase in commodity prices, this needs to be taken into consideration as follows:
- e) Wage increases for workers and office clerks
- f) Guaranteed staple food (rice) to urban residents

5. The military headquarters control the products from cities and the preparation of rice and the tasks are completed through the relevant bureau. In the case of lack of preparation in some regions, there could be strikes or intentional delays.²⁸

As shown above, the Soviet military forces stationed in northern Korea had been actively involved in restructuring the entire society there since they arrived in August 1945. Considering the fact that political agents from the central Soviet government were in charge of introducing a Soviet-style political structure as well as its thoughts to indigenous people in Korea, it can be argued that Moscow intended to create a Soviet-friendly regime in northern Korea. Moscow tried to earn the Korean people's trust through land reform as well as food distribution for urban residents, which became a consistent source for propaganda in order to emphasise the

²⁸ TsAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis' 433847, Delo 1, 'The tasks to be resolved' (Report by Ignatiev), 12 November 1945.

Soviet superiority over the US.

Kim Il Sung mentioned that “Korean people’s demand for land reform as the most needed policy. The success of land reform initially resulted from the liberation of Korea by the Red Army and the instructions of the Communist Party as well as the support of the workers and peasants, which made it easy to accomplish.”²⁹ Throughout the land reform process, Kim was able to solidify his leadership in North Korea with the support of the working class as well as the farmer’s alliance for reformation

Historically, Korea had undergone a feudal landowner-tenant relationship over a long period of time, starting long before Japanese occupation in 1910. Therefore, the dismantling of an old-style agricultural system seemed to be a meaningful turning point to introduce a new regime in Korea. Regarding the timing of land reform, it seemed relevant to complete it before the planting season in the spring. In order to secure a sufficient amount of food such as rice or potatoes, it made sense to accomplish the land reform before March when the seeding season began. Taking into account all these aspects, land reform became the first priority for Moscow to start with in terms of establishing a Soviet-friendly regime in northern Korea.

With regards to the political aspect, the National People’s Congress was established through election by 1947 in order to replace northern Korea’s provisional National People’s Congress created in February 1946. The election was held throughout the region in the North over several months. First, it was held in provinces, cities and districts on 3 November 1946, then held in large villages on 25 February 1947 and finally in small villages on 5 March 1947. In the case of the National People’s Congress members in villages, candidates from the National Democratic Unification Front won all 3,459 seats with 97 per cent of support from the electorate. Based on the election result, Moscow concluded that “the foundation of the National People’s Congress would contribute to stabilise the political situation in northern Korea.”³⁰

Regarding the economic aspect, however, there was ongoing discontent among northern Korean people. Dissatisfaction was widespread throughout all classes within the North; farmers

²⁹ Wada, Cumings (eds.), *The Modern History*, p.304.

³⁰ TsAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 578927, Delo 3, The Report on northern Korea by Ignatiev, 2 June 1947.

were not content with the tax system, some workers were opposed to nationalising factories, merchants and craftspeople were dissatisfied with the lack of products and former landowners supported right-wing parties in southern Korea.³¹ In order to resolve these issues, there were several revolutionary changes in terms of economic regulations in northern Korea; land reform early in 1946, new labour laws on 24 June 1946, a new tax system in agriculture on 27 June 1946 and nationalisation on 10 August 1946. Nevertheless, only 71 percent of factories were operated properly.³² In spite of the fact that there were ongoing economic issues needing to be resolved, the economic situation in the North seemed to make gradual progress.

In 1947, the economy in northern Korea seemed to be not only recovering from Japanese colonisation but also entering into an industrial restructuring process. For example, compared to 1946, productivity in 1947 increased by 189.3% and labour productivity increased by 160% as well. Moscow adopted various measures to help the North Korean economy recover. Apart from land reform, nationalisation and an eight-hour day were also led by the Soviets. This new system was an attempt to achieve the successful socialisation of North Korea. As McCune and Grey pointed out, all the organisations within northern Korea removed their 'provisional' title and were legally constituted as the political and economic system by the end of 1947.³³ This implies that the Sovietisation of northern Korea had proceeded as planned, and this contributed to Moscow in being confident in dealing with Korean issues with the US. With all these positive changes, the Kremlin reached a conclusion that the new regime in northern Korea had been settled by 1947.

Moscow utilised the revolutionary outcome in northern Korea as propaganda against the US. It continuously demonstrated how democratisation had been successfully undergone within northern Korea by means of direct comparison with the situation in the South. For example, Kim Il Sung compared the democratic revolution in northern Korea to the US policy in the South at northern Korea's provisional National People's Congress on 10 August 1946. In

³¹ TsAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 578927, Delo 3, The Report on northern Korea by Gromov, 29 Jan 1947.

³² Homin Sim, "The politics and ideology in North Korea 2," *Communist region research paper*, Vol. 7, Asia Cultural Institute, Seoul: Korea University Press, pp. 35-97.

³³ McCune & Grey. Jr, *Korea Today*, p.173.

addition, it was claimed that “the authority of northern Korea’s provisional National People’s Congress had been solidified within southern Korean society due to its success with land reform and the new labour law with Moscow’s support.”³⁴ In reality, however, the revolutionary measures in northern Korea had not gone smoothly to some extent. For example, during land reform, a severe class struggle was triggered within northern Korean society. This was because Communist party members or poor farmers, who played a leading role in the revolution, regarded students or young anti-Communists as relatives of landowners or part of the wealthy class and this hatred led land reform to include an aggressive class struggle among northern Korean people.³⁵

In spite of this domestic struggle, Moscow managed to control northern Korea and gained hegemony against the US. For example, when US representatives visited Pyongyang in July 1947, the northern Korean labour and farmer delegates expressed their willingness to continue the revolutionary measures introduced by Moscow and expressed their concerns over the possible changes of policies implemented within North Korea due to the second Joint Soviet-American Commission. Some northern Korean delegates even suggested maintaining the 38th parallel line and division with southern Korea to secure the revolutionary process within the North.³⁶ This reaction from Korean people led Washington to acknowledge the socialisation in northern Korea by the Soviets and realise that Moscow set up its satellite regime in the North under which the negotiation with the USSR in the second Joint Commission would be more challenging for the US.

Before resuming the second Joint Commission in May 1947, Moscow reached the conclusion that “the US would utilise the Korean Peninsula not only as an invasion basis and bridgehead for anti-Soviet activity, but also as a market for gaining cheap raw materials and selling US products.”³⁷ It seemed that there was competition between Moscow and Washington to gain hegemony in Korea over the period of the Joint Commission, as the characteristic of a provisional government in Korea would decide which side had more influence within Korea as well as in Far East Asia. From the Soviet perspective, the situation in southern Korea over the

³⁴ TsAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 578927, Delo 3, The Report on northern Korea by Gromov, 29 Jan 1947.

³⁵ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea*, p.57.

³⁶ TsAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 578927, Delo3, The Report on northern Korea by Romanenko, 29 July 1947.

³⁷ Zhukov, *Krizis kolonial’noy sistemy*, pp.269-271.

trusteeship issue did not seem ideal to hold its dominant position in the negotiation with the US. This was because there had been ongoing demonstrations within the South against the trusteeship idea and right-wing parties as well as nationalists insisted on immediate independence with the support of the majority of the Korean people. Under these circumstances, Moscow was concerned that the anti-trusteeship movement in the South might weaken the leftist faction, which was supportive of the Moscow Agreement, and create a negative image of the Soviets among the public in the South.

Moscow blamed the US for destroying the Democracy National Front in South Korea, whose launch in February 1946 to replace the Korean Communist Party caused the division of leftist factions.³⁸ After the first meeting of the Joint Commission, Moscow attempted to merge leftist factions in northern and southern Korea respectively. In July 1946, the North Korean Communist Party and the Korean New Democratic Party were merged into the North Korean Labour Party. In addition, the Korean Communist Party, the Korean People's Party and the South Korean New Democratic Party were merged into the South Korean Labour Party. In the North, the North Korean Labour Party became the unified leftist party at the end of August 1946 and became the ruling party in North Korea.

In southern Korea, however, the situation was different from what Moscow expected. To begin with, it seemed to go smoothly in terms of merging leftist groups within the South. After Hon Yong Pak, the leader of the Korean Communist Party in the South, suggested merging leftist parties in the South on 21 July 1946, Woon-hyung Lyuh, the leader of the Korean People's Party, agreed to unify leftist parties on 3 August 1946. It was on 10 November 1946 that the South Korean Labour Party launched a party convention to announce the successful merger of leftist forces in southern Korea. However, it became illegal due to its violent strategy against the US military government in the South.³⁹ Pak, the leader of the South Korean Labour Party, introduced a 'new strategy' which included violent demonstrations and strikes. Before merging leftist parties in the South, the Korean Communist Party tried to achieve a 'bourgeoisie democratic revolution' by means of cooperating with the US military government in the South.

³⁸ Sang Yong Choi, *The US army military government in Korea and Nationalism in Korea*, Nanam Sinseo 55, Seoul: Nanam, 1989, p.244.

³⁹ Ibid., pp.244-248

After merging the leftist parties, however, Pak changed the party policy and set new targets on the US military government and rightist groups in the South. Pak's policy, however, did not seem to be directly ordered from Moscow. Instead Pak decided to have a new strategy himself, which resulted in division among the leftists in southern Korea. It was revealed that Kim Il Sung opposed Pak's idea of a new strategy in the meeting with Pak at the end of July 1946.⁴⁰ Pak's new hard-line strategy was not ideal for Moscow in that there was the possibility of strengthening suppression against leftist groups by the US within the South if illegal strikes or demonstrations continued against the US military government.

This Soviet concern turned out to be true before long. In September 1946, Pak raised a general strike within the South, which resulted in strong suppression by the US military government. Three leftist newspapers were banned on 6 September 1946. In addition, on 16 September 1946, A.V. Arnold - the US military governor in Korea - told Woon-hyung "not to permit the merger of leftist parties in the South." This caused a weakening in the Communist leadership in the South and intensified internal conflict among leftist groups. As T. Park pointed out, the leftist forces in the South were split into two groups.⁴¹ As seen, it can be argued that the domestic situation in late 1946 within southern Korea was not favourable towards Moscow and it played a significant role in the Soviet policy to negotiate with the US over the second Joint Commission.

Russian archival material has revealed that Moscow was concerned about weakened leftist forces in the South. In September 1946, Romanenko ordered Gangkook Lee - the director of the National Democratic Front - "to hold protests against the US military government's suppression of leftist groups within the South."⁴² Despite Moscow's endeavour to strengthen the leftists' power within the South, it seemed clear that the leftist groups were divided due to internal conflicts. In this situation, the first meeting of the Joint Soviet-American Commission broke down in May 1946, as Moscow reached the conclusion that it would not be able to establish a Soviet-friendly provisional government in Korea without strong and unified Communists groups both in the North and the South.

⁴⁰ Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, pp.115-24.

⁴¹ Tae Gyun Park, *The Korean War*, Seoul: Chackguahamke, 2012, pp.38-51.

⁴² TsAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, The Report to the Military Council of the 25th Army by Ignatiev on 23 September 1946.

Despite the failure of the first meeting with the US, Moscow agreed to resume the second meeting of the Joint Commission in May 1947. Why did Moscow decide to return to the negotiation table with the US? Kraynov argued that Molotov proposed the second Joint Soviet-American Commission meeting in the letter on 19 April 1947 in order for Korea's political and economic independence.⁴³ The actual reason, however, seemed that there was no other option for Moscow but to continue to utilise the Moscow Agreement for the negotiation with the US. According to Shtykov's diary, "the collapse of the Joint Commission would not only weaken the leftists' activity in the South but also strengthen the US military government's position in Korea." In addition, Shtykov insisted that "the Joint Commission itself would reinforce the Soviet friendly forces in Korea."⁴⁴ So, Moscow considered continuing the Joint Commission as a realistic alternative to preventing the South from being anti-Soviet. It can be argued that Moscow decided to return to the negotiation process with the US in order to maintain its leverage over Korean issues and to obtain hegemony in this region.

Relations between Moscow and Washington

Although Moscow decided to maintain the Joint Soviet-American Commission meeting in order not to lose its leverage inside the Korean Peninsula, there seemed to be other reasons for Moscow to continue working with the US over issues related to Korea. It has been revealed by Shtykov's diary that "the North Korean leadership was instructed not to announce any statement against the United States."⁴⁵ Molotov ordered to "remonstrate about the US repression of the left-wing forces in the South in August 1947", but at the same time he advised "the Democracy National Front in the South not to react against the United States."⁴⁶ With regard to the ambivalent Soviet attitude, the understanding of relations between Moscow and Washington in a wider context would help to explain the reasons behind it. The period in which the first Joint Commission faced difficulty seemed to coincide with the beginning of conflict between Moscow and Washington. The Soviet-American relations in March and April 1946,

⁴³ P. Kraynov, *Vor'ba za Edinuyu Demokraticheskuyu Koreyu*, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Pravda, 1948, p.40.

⁴⁴ Shtykov's diary on 30 July 1947.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 22 Jan 1947.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 29 Aug 1947.

when the first Joint Commission was underway, seemed cooperative in general. Although two sides had conflict over the Iranian issue, it seemed to be resolved after Moscow's announcement of the withdrawal of its army on 2 March 1946. In addition, Moscow announced on 23 March that "the Red Army would be withdrawn from Manchuria." Stalin emphasised 'the need to coexist with two systems' at the meeting with W.B. Smith, the US ambassador in Moscow on 4 April 1946.⁴⁷ This implies that Moscow tried not to aggravate its relations with the US. However, since mid-April 1946, there were political as well as economic issues that caused discontent for the Soviets.

Firstly, the occupation policy in Germany caused disagreements between Moscow and Washington. At the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers on 29 April 1946, the US suggested a 25-year occupation in Germany whereas Moscow insisted on a 40-year occupation. Furthermore, the Soviet side expressed deep concern over Germany's possible remilitarisation and opposed the US proposed economic plan. Over the German issue, Stalin began to be suspicious about the US as an ally. Secondly, since October 1943, Moscow had required loans from the US, but Washington set preconditions to join the IMF and the World Bank. In this respect, Stalin seemed to consider the US attitude as a form of economic attack to include the USSR under the US's leading global economic network. Regarding providing loans to its allies, Washington decided to provide 3.75 billion US dollars to Great Britain and Moscow seemed to interpret this decision as forming a common front between the US and Great Britain against the USSR.

At this time, the argument over selecting political organisations in a provisional government in Korea began in the Joint Soviet-American Commission in April 1946 and the negotiation broke down by the US request of recess. It seems reasonable to argue that reaching agreement over the Korean issue was not possible from the beginning in that Moscow had insisted on including Soviet-friendly political groups in the process of establishing a provisional Korean government. Therefore, the failure of the first Joint Commission could be expected by both parties over the process of negotiation.

The second Joint Commission resumed in May 1947, and it is interesting to examine whether

⁴⁷ Ibid., 4 April 1946.

there was any link between the Soviet-US relationship and the Korean issue. Since the rupture of negotiation at the first Joint Commission in May 1946, there had been strained relations between Moscow and Washington over other international issues. For example, the German issue still remained as one of the major parts that Moscow was concerned about, and it became more serious after the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 and the Marshall Plan in June 1947. During this tense period, the US requested to resume the second Joint Commission to discuss Korean issues and Moscow agreed with it in May 1947. Why did Moscow decide to resume the meeting with the US? It can be inferred that Stalin did not want to worsen relations with the US, as the aggravation of relations with the US would possibly result in delaying the Soviet economic recovery and threatening Soviet leverage over Eastern Europe. From the Soviet perspective, their economic and security issues were closely related to the relationship with the US. This can be proved by Stalin's reaction towards Great Britain and the US.

Regarding Churchill's statement in March 1946 that an 'Iron Curtain' divided Europe into two parts, Stalin strongly denounced it from the interview with *Pravda* commenting that "what Churchill mentioned was dangerous and intended to sew discord among allied nations." Regarding the Truman Doctrine, Stalin mentioned at the meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow in March 1947 that "I hope to remove any kind of barrier between regions." In April, Stalin stated that "the cooperation between the USSR and the US would be needed in order for there to be world peace."⁴⁸ As seen, Stalin attempted not to worsen relations with the US. In this respect, Stalin decided to agree to the US suggestion to resume the second Joint Commission for Korean issues in 1947 to avoid any conflict.

Regarding the process of the second Joint Commission, it has been revealed that it was similar to that of the relations with the US. Over time the confrontation between Moscow and Washington had worsened and eventually ended in a rupture. Thus, it can be argued that the relations between the two superpowers in Europe linked with that in Asia. As for the second Joint Commission, the Soviet side seemed conciliatory until mid-July 1947, as Moscow

⁴⁸ William Taubman, *Stalin's American Policy: From Antete to Détente to Cold War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1982, Chap. VI, VII.

submitted the lists of political groups participating in a provisional government in Korea on 10 July before the US did. However, Moscow turned to a harder position in late July on the same issue of selecting groups for a provisional government in Korea, which eventually led to the permanent breakdown of the negotiation with the US. At this time, the relations between Moscow and Washington became worse especially after the breakdown of three nations - the USSR, Great Britain, and France - Foreign Ministers meeting to discuss Marshall's proposal between 27 June and 2 July 1947. After Molotov - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs - stated that "the Soviet government rejected the Marshall Plan", Moscow started to propagate "the Marshall Plan as a US plot to subjugate Western Europe." From the Western side, Moscow's attitude towards the Marshall Plan seemed to refuse to support post-war stabilization in Europe and contributed to escalating Cold War tensions. On the Conference on European Economic Cooperation in Paris on 12 July 1947, European participants agreed to accept the reconstruction aid, namely the Marshall Plan. From the Soviets' point of view, this seemed to be a threat to its position in Europe, as Europe seemed to have been Moscow's priority in its foreign policy. In this situation, it was possible for the Soviets to lose their control over Eastern Europe, which would be a clear threat to the Soviets' national security. At this stage, Stalin's fear of the US and its allies multiplied and the Cold War between the two superpowers began to be visualized in Asia as well. Considering the US policy in Europe, Moscow seemed to conclude that there was possibility for the US to act unilaterally in the Korean Peninsula as well. Thus, it can be argued that Moscow turned to a hard-line position in the negotiation with the US in the second Joint Commission from the mid-July 1947.

The Japanese factor

The actual reason for Moscow entering the war against Japan in 1945 was to remove the threat of Japan. For this reason, the Kremlin agreed to the US proposal for trusteeship in Korea at the Moscow Conference to eliminate the Japanese forces in the Korean Peninsula. Thus, it can be argued that Moscow considered the US post-war policy towards Japan as the vital matter to secure its leverage over Japan in order to prevent it from being anti-Soviet. In this way, the Japanese issue influenced the process of the Joint Soviet-American Commission to establish a new government in Korea. According to Shtykov's diary, Stalin mentioned in December 1946 that "Koreans should be systemised if they did not want the Japanese to occupy them again."

Furthermore, Stalin pointed out that “the geographical position of Korea between the Soviet Union and Japan was similar to that of Poland between the Soviet Union and Germany.”⁴⁹ It implies that Stalin considered Korea as a possible buffer zone in Far East Asia. Stalin thought post-war Japan could be a threat again and therefore the issue to create a new government in Korea and the post-war policy towards Japan were clearly linked together in protecting the USSR. In this regard, the US congress reported that “the USSR counteracted in Korea as a response to the US exercising the occupation right in Japan.”⁵⁰ Thus, it can be argued that the value of Korea could be increased for Moscow in case the US policy towards post-war Japan became anti-Soviet. This is why Moscow had continued to solidify its influence in North Korea over the process of the Joint Commission. The examining of relations between Japanese issues and the Joint Commission will prove this assumption.

When the Second Joint Commission resumed in 1947, it was the period that Moscow expressed broadly its dissatisfaction against US policy towards Japan. It was in 1946, after the rupture of the first Joint Commission, that Moscow began to cast doubts on US policy towards Japan. This has been revealed by underused Soviet intelligence reports in September 1946 that “the US developed its policy towards Japan in order to dominate the Pacific and the Far East. Economically, the US tried to weaken the Japanese economy to annex it under the US and strategically it utilised Japan as a battlefield against the USSR. The US investment in railway construction in Japan was also a part of its plan against Soviet security.”⁵¹ It showed that Moscow already regarded the US policy towards Japan in 1946 as anti-Soviet and violating the Potsdam Declaration. However, the Soviet reaction towards the US was rather passive in 1946; Moscow expressed opposition to the second land reform measures in August and during the interview with US journalists in October 1946, Stalin expressed dissatisfaction indirectly towards the US policy in Japan by mentioning “there are some successes in the occupation of Japan, but better success could have been obtained”.⁵² In addition, Moscow proposed that Japan resume its trade in September 1946 and signed the agreement with the general

⁴⁹ Shtykov's diary on 27 December 1946.

⁵⁰ The American Assembly, *The United States and Far East*, New York: Library of Congress, 1956, p.37.

⁵¹ The Intelligence Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Intelligence Report No.16, September 1946, pp.7-15.

⁵² <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1946/10/28.htm>, Interview with H. Baillie, the president of the united press of America on 23 Oct 1946.

headquarters of the Japanese occupation about returning Japanese war prisoners and civilians in the USSR to Japan as well as returning Korean people in Japan to North Korea in December 1946.

In 1947, however, the Soviet attitude towards the US became more critical. Molotov suggested a separate peace treaty with Japan in May and November 1947. This seemed due to Moscow's failure to secure political leverage inside Japan. Moscow could not achieve its goal to check the US through the Allied Council for Japan and the Communist Party in Japan did not perform well in the general election in April 1947. Although the Communist Party in Japan exercised its influence over the labour movement until late 1947, having only four seats from the general election seemed to mean that Moscow failed to secure the foundation of public support in Japan. Considering these circumstances, it can be argued that Moscow tried to send a message through the Joint Soviet-American Commission that the USSR should not be excluded from the issue of post-war Japan. In other words, dealing with Korean issues seemed for Moscow to be an alternative way to be involved in post-war Japan.

The rupture of the second Joint Commission was also related to Japanese issues. It was in mid-July 1947 that Moscow turned to a strong position against the US during the meetings. Moscow acquired the information on the peace treaty on 11 July 1947 that "Washington decided to object to the proposal that Moscow had a veto." Alternatively, Washington requested the Far Eastern Commission to prepare the first draft of the peace treaty.⁵³ Moscow's power within the Far Eastern Commission was feeble to some extent and Japan was less amicable to the USSR compared to the US. Therefore, it can be argued that the future of Japan would most likely be decided by the US, which would trigger the Soviet fear of a confrontation with an anti-Soviet Japan again. In order to prevent the US's policy towards post-war Japan from succeeding, Moscow suggested holding the four nation's Foreign Minister meeting on 23 July as well as 27 November 1947. However it was rejected by the US and ended up with a complete rupture between Moscow and Washington in terms of the way to create the peace treaty with Japan at the end of 1947. This means that Moscow failed in seizing hegemony in the Far East as well as preventing an anti-Soviet post-war Japan. With Japan coming under US influence, it seemed that there was no reason why Moscow should adopt a conciliatory approach to handling Korean

⁵³David J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1948.

issues with the US in the Joint Commission. Therefore, it can be argued that Moscow decided to build a socialist nation in North Korea as a counterweight to the American-backed capitalist Japan, and the strategic value of North Korea was strengthened after the Soviet influence was limited in Japan. Considering the external circumstances over the period of the Joint Soviet-American Commission, the resumption of the Second Joint Commission was to prevent southern Korea being anti-Soviet and to maintain relations with the US. Therefore, a clear link is visible between the complete rupture of the Joint Commission and Moscow's relations with the US over Japanese issues.

The Change in the Soviet way of controlling the nation-building process in North Korea

The Soviet internal report mentioned that "Moscow's role was limited to being a supporter in the democratic reform in North Korea." Also Moscow claimed that "the proletariat played a central part in the nation-building process in North Korea."⁵⁴ At the North Korean provisional People's Committee meeting in August 1946, Kim Il Sung also stated that "the Red Army supported the accomplishment of the democratisation within North Korea."⁵⁵ The period between 1946 and 1948 was the time when the socialisation of North Korea had been actively accomplished and the Soviet policy implementation body had also changed from its direct control by the Soviet military government to an indirect political body. Moscow insisted that "it decided to change its political administrative body to support the independence of North Korea after the creation of the North Korean People's Committee in February 1947." In fact, however, the Soviet policy administrative body was expanded and reorganised to be deeply involved in domestic politics in North Korea.

The Soviet Civil Administration under the 25th Army was transferred to USGASK - *Upravlenie Grazhdanskoy Administratsiy v Severnoy Koree* – in May 1947, and it had approval to have thirteen departments by the National Personnel Committee under the Soviet Cabinet Meeting.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, p.20.

⁵⁵ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, The Report on the North Korean provisional People's Committee meeting on 10 Aug 1946 by Ignatiev, 12 Aug 1946, p.1.

⁵⁶ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, pp.9-11.

The role of USGASK was to supervise local advisors, Soviet garrison headquarters over six provinces and eighty-five counties in North Korea. Moscow defined “USGASK as support for creating a democratic regime and political organisation in North Korea.”⁵⁷ The thirteen departments of USGASK were divided into three sectors; propaganda & agitation, administration and all categories of North Korea such as agriculture, industry, transportation, trade, communication, public health, finance, law and police department. Compared to the Soviet Civil Administration in late 1945, USGASK was more focused on propaganda and the Soviet guidance had been expanded to the whole sector in North Korea. It became the central organisation to guide North Korea into being a Soviet satellite nation.

Another political body to get actively involved in North Korea was a military political bureau, especially the 25th Army political bureau’s seventh department. It was responsible for publications, censorship, radio broadcasting and news editing in North Korea.⁵⁸ It seemed to have similar role with USGASK, but the seventh department was mainly collecting general information on North Korea and propagating towards Soviet personnel. For example, it provided training on Marxism, the world situation and the Korean political situation.⁵⁹ Interestingly, it defined “South Korea as an enemy” in the training. This showed Moscow regarded the situation in the Korean Peninsula as a de facto division into two separate parts in this period even before the breakout of the Korean War.

Through the new Soviet political body in North Korea, Moscow controlled North Korea indirectly by guiding North Korean political leaders as well as the general public. The North Korean People’s Committee was launched in February 1948 as an official political body to run the country. Moscow, however, explained that “the North Korean people had a lack of experience in reforming the country and therefore it needed to expand its role for guidance.”⁶⁰ If the Kremlin prioritised North Korean autonomy, it should have minimised the Soviet

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.11.

⁵⁸ TSAMO, Fond 127, Opis’ 468007, Delo4, The Report on reorganization of the 25th Army military civil body, 2 Nov 1948, pp.2-3.

⁵⁹ TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 5878927, Delo 3, The Report on the 25th Army Political bureau’s seventh department Jan-July 1947.

⁶⁰ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, p.9.

political administrative body in North Korea and instead sent specialists at a nongovernmental level. In reality, however, Moscow intervened systematically in North Korean politics over the election for the North Korean People's Committee. This can be inferred by Shtykov's diary in December 1946. According to the diary, "it was Shtykov and Romanenko who decided to create the North Korean People's Committee on 19 December 1946."⁶¹ They wrote the first draft of a report on a detailed plan for the election of the People's Committee on the following day.⁶² After having an agreement with Kim Il Sung, the opening day of the North Korean People's Committee was decided on 28 February 1947. Apart from the creation of the North Korean People's Committee, Moscow decided election rules as well. It was believed that the detailed rules of election were created by the North Korean provisional People's Committee. However, it has been proven that the 25th Army military council finally approved the form of the election in North Korea. Moreover, the Soviet military government was actively involved in the election process as well. According to the report by Ignatiev, "there was an order to the chief of military headquarters in each province in North Korea to guide the election."⁶³ So it was not the National Election Commission but the Soviet military government that led the election for the North Korean People's Committee. Scalapino and Lee claimed that the election for the Korean People's Committee and the formation of transitional legislative assembly in South Korea was related to some extent.⁶⁴ There has not been enough evidence to prove this argument among declassified Russian documents. However, it is clear that Moscow finally decided upon the establishment of the Korean People's Committee, and the North Korean leadership had to get approval on the election schedule from Moscow.

Regarding the economic sector, Moscow set out a grand economic plan for North Korea. It seemed that the North Korean regime had difficulties in establishing an economic plan by itself due to the lack of experience. For example, Kim Il Sung mentioned "his hardship to develop

⁶¹ Shtykov's diary on 19 Dec 1946.

⁶² Ibid, 20 Dec 1946.

⁶³ TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 106547, Delo 10, The Report by Ignatiev about the order to the chief of the military headquarters in each province in North Korea, 8 Feb 1948.

⁶⁴ Robert A. Scalapino, Jung Sik Lee, *The History of Korea Communist movement 2: Liberation part (1945-53)*, Seoul: Dolbaegae, 1986, p.468.

economy in North Korea” at the meeting with Chistiakov and Romanenko on 3 January 1947.⁶⁵ Shtykov sent out a proposal for “North Korea’s economic plan to the Kremlin, which included the industrial as well as the agricultural production plan of 1947 and the national budget of 1948.”⁶⁶ At the meeting with Chistiakov, Romanenko, and Kim Il Sung in January 1947, Shtykov ordered “the establishment of an industrial development plan.”⁶⁷ In addition, Shtykov explained to Kim Il Sung and Hon Yong Pak that “Moscow would support the People’s Committee to manage the two-year economic development plan and it would also prepare for technical aid and the expansion of trade.”⁶⁸ G. Peige argued that Moscow gained economic benefit from North Korea by means of legal institutions including Korean Shipping Company and Korean Bank.⁶⁹ To some extent, this is right. According to the report by USGASK, Moscow admitted that “it played a major role in creating the economic development plan in North Korea.”⁷⁰ In this way, the North Korean economic plan followed the Soviet model. In 1947, 94.28% of exports and 93.4% of imports in North Korea were with the USSR. In addition, the Soviet military garrison headquarters managed the railway transportation in North Korea since its occupation. Moscow dispatched the third railway division to support normal operation in April 1946 and suggested ‘a transportation plan to North Korea’. This proves that Moscow had the right to run the railways as well as supervisory responsibilities in North Korea. Moreover, it continued to exert its influence on the coal industry. Although Moscow transferred all industrial properties to the North Korean Provisional People’s Committee in December 1946, “it was the 25th Army military council that ordered necessary measures related to the coal supply.”⁷¹ This shows that Moscow controlled all the economic activity in North Korea as it wished.

⁶⁵ Shtykov’s diary on 3 Jan 1947.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 19 Dec 1946.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 4 Jan 1947.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 30 July 1948.

⁶⁹ Glenn D. Peige, *The Korean People’s democratic republic*, Hoover Institute Series 11, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966, p.31.

⁷⁰ Doklad, Tom 2, 1948, pp.11-12.

⁷¹ TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 532092C, Delo 2, The Report to Shtykov from Fursov, the 25th Army military council member, 3 Dec 1946; TSAMO, Fond 25A, Opis’ 532092, Delo1, The Decision by the 25th Army military council on the coal supply through North Korea’s railway, 23 June 1946.

The Kremlin tried to take indirect measures to control the North Korean people. This is proved by Stalin's selection of Kim Il Sung as the leader of North Korea. This is because human resources played a significant role in establishing friendly relations with the future regime in North Korea. According to Shtykov, "he discussed the composition of the government and the appointment of its members with Kim Il Sung and Hon Yong Pak."⁷² The Soviets found it hard to get Soviet-friendly Korean people to work for its interests. Therefore, it established 'the Korean national executive training school' to resolve this matter in June 1946. Moscow had 'all rights to manage the school, select students and create the curriculum.'⁷³ It clearly shows that the Soviet reason for running this school was to train Soviet-friendly Korean personnel and foster a future generation to maintain its leverage in North Korea.

Apart from training Korean personnel, Moscow actively implemented propaganda targeting the general public in Korea. A. Inkeles claimed that Moscow used the term 'Propaganda' and 'Agitation' separately.⁷⁴ Propaganda was for leader groups whereas agitation was for workers. In North Korea, however, the Soviet government used both terms at the same time without separation.⁷⁵ It founded schools for the public including twenty-seven technical colleges, two education colleges, one medical school and a university from September 1946. The Enlightenment Bureau was responsible for dealing with the public education in Korea and it stated that "the purpose of education would be training people under Marxism and Leninism."⁷⁶ Moreover, Moscow organised propaganda groups consisting of one hundred and thirty thousand members belonging to the Korean Workers' Party, the Democratic Youth Union, the Farmer's Alliance and the Job Union. They were dispatched to different regions whenever there were issues including Soviet reformation action, elections, the Joint Soviet-American Commission and so on.⁷⁷ In addition, the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society played an important role in propagating Soviet policy. Its organisations had expanded significantly over time; thirty-four regional branches and twenty five thousand members in May 1947, and in 1948 one

⁷² Shtykov's diary on 30 July 1948, 2 Sep 1948.

⁷³ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, pp.292-310, The Report by Shikin to Bulganin about the establishment of Korean national executive training school, 13 Mar 1946.

⁷⁴ A. Inkeles, Lee Kyu Jong(trans.), Public Opinion in Soviet Russia, Seoul: University Literature Company, 1985, p.62.

⁷⁵ TsAmo, Fond 379, Opic' 578927, Delo 3, Report from Kovyshenko to Marmorshteryn, 28 Feb 1947, p.21.

⁷⁶ Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, pp.166-188.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.161.

hundred and seven regional branches and seven hundred and fifty-six thousand members. Their major activity was to provide lectures, publish magazines, teach Russian and organise the pro-Soviet assembly.

Moscow insisted that “the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society was a purely private institution to promote understanding between the two nations.” However, it has been revealed by the report written by Sorokin, the chief of Political Bureau in Primorsky Military District, in June 1947 that “the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society was used to increase friendship towards the Soviet government and the Red Army.”⁷⁸ In order to so do, the Korean members of the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society were invited to visit the USSR for training to become propagandists. It was one of the top priorities for Moscow to implement inside North Korea. For example, when the first Korean representatives of the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society returned after their training, P.F. Lagutin, the deputy chief of the 25th Army, came to the welcoming reception.⁷⁹ Moreover, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries– VOKS, *Vsesoyuznoe Obschestvo Kul’turnoy Svyazi s zagranitsey* – gave a general instruction on budgets and facilities, aid and the Seventh Department at the 25th Army led practical activities within the Soviet-Korean Cultural Society.⁸⁰

The Soviet government was also involved in publication and broadcasting in North Korea of its propaganda. It has been proven that “the Soviet Communist Party decided all the plans for publication in North Korea.”⁸¹ So, it was not the North Korean Workers’ Party but ‘the Propaganda Bureau at the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party’ that decided all publication issues in North Korea. Furthermore, Moscow controlled the North Korean media including newspapers and radio broadcasting. The North Korean News was established in December 1946 to provide the same information throughout the entire country under an

⁷⁸ TSAMO, Fond, Opis’ 687572, Delo 2317, The Report from Sorokin, the chief of Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, to Shikin, the head of Political Bureau of the General Political Bureau, 16 June 1947, p.1.

⁷⁹ TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis’ 578927, Delo 3, The Report from Gromov, the chief of Political Bureau at the 25th Army, to Sorokin, the chief of Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, 6 Feb 1947, p.4.

⁸⁰ Sorokin’s Report on 16 June 1947, pp.1-3.

⁸¹ TSAMO, Fond 17, Opis’ 128, Delo 205, The Report on publishing a book about Marxism-Leninism in North Korea, written by Kovalyov, the Central Committee member of the Soviet Communist Party, August 1946.

inspection of its work by the Seventh Bureau of the 25th Army.⁸² The role of the North Korean News was to propagate the Soviet policy to the whole of society. Regarding the radio broadcasting, it was 'the Editorial Bureau under the 25th Army' that decided its content. Moscow commented that "the North Korean Radio Committee became polluted by pro-Japanese Koreans and therefore the contents of broadcasting could be in favour of the enemy, so it recommended education for broadcasters and executive staff to resolve this issue."⁸³ Considering all the facts examined above, the Soviet objective in North Korea was to socialise North Korea in favour of its interests. The Soviet friendly North Korean leader took the lead on socialisation at the top political level, and the North Korean public was being indoctrinated by propaganda through education and media. Throughout all these policies, Moscow was able to establish a Soviet-friendly satellite nation in North Korea.

Conclusion

The second half of 1945 was the preparatory stage of socialisation in northern Korea by Moscow. After Stalin's secret order and the Moscow Agreement, the Kremlin took decisive action to form a new Soviet-friendly nation in North Korea. Externally, it focused on preventing an anti-Soviet movement in Korea over the period of the Joint Soviet-American Commission to maintain its leverage in this region. Moscow remained positive in terms of the outcome over the first Joint Commission. This was because the Korean issues were closely related with the negotiation on post-war Japan with the US. However, Moscow's hope did not last long, as it soon realised the gap with the US. According to Shtykov as the Soviet representative, "the first Joint Commission meetings with the US clarified that there was a huge difference of position between the two parties and therefore it would not be positive in terms of the possibility of reaching an agreement."⁸⁴ Therefore, Moscow anticipated that the US would not concede in the second Joint Commission over the issue of creating a provisional government in Korea. In

⁸² Doklad, Tom 1, 1948, pp.184-204.

⁸³ TSAMO, Fond 127, Opis' 468007, Delo 4, The Report of Current Situation in North Korea Radio Broadcasting written by lieutenant colonel Marmorshteyn, the Head of Seventh Department in Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, 31 May 1948.

⁸⁴ Shtykov's diary on 1 June 1946.

addition, there was no clear sign that Moscow could achieve its goal to participate actively in the formation of post-war Japan. Therefore, the establishment of the Soviet friendly regime in North Korea as a buffer zone became the best option for Stalin to secure Soviet strategic interests in this region.

Regarding the domestic situation within southern Korea, the leftist forces had been weakened and this led to not being able to form a provisional government as Moscow wished. Nevertheless, Moscow continued to attend the second Joint Commission with the US in 1947 in order to prevent southern Korea from being anti-Soviet and to maintain relations with the US for the sake of post-war Japanese policy. Concerning the political aspect in northern Korea, it has been shown that the Kremlin led the socialisation of the North through Soviet-style organisations for policy implementation and control of society. This was proved by underused Russian documents. For example, 'the Soviet Communist Party' had the right to make any final decision over all the issues in the North and 'the Military Council in the Military District of the Maritime Province' had an actual discretion and commandment to deal with them. The main role of the Military Political Bureau was for gathering information and propaganda and it seemed to play a crucial role in conducting Soviet policy in the North. Regarding the organisation of policy implementation, there were 'local garrison headquarters and the 10th Administration Bureau' established in 1945 and 'the civil administrative organisation and the Seventh Division in political bureau' introduced after 1946, which were all established and operated by the Soviet government.

Moreover, Moscow led the socialisation of northern Korea by means of indirect control. Over the preparation period in the late 1945, it exerted its influence over the North by designating personnel in charge within central administration or by providing support through Soviet advisors. Since the period of state formation in 1946, "it was the Kremlin who made the final decision on the establishment of the People's Committee in northern Korea, election rules and the national economic plan." In addition, the Soviet government trained Korean personnel who would faithfully fulfil Moscow's order. In order to do so, "the Organisation Department in the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party decided to establish a Korean officer school and the Military Council of the 25th Army had a right to resolve the financial issues related to running the school and the Seventh Division of the Political Bureau in the 25th Army had

responsibility for training and overall operation.”⁸⁵

As for the general public in northern Korea, Moscow actively involved itself in propaganda to support the smooth implementation of social reform and justification of what the Soviet military government promoted in the North. Moscow controlled publication and radio broadcasting in detail. After receiving approval from the Propaganda and Agitation Bureau of the Central Committee in the Soviet Communist Party, the Korea Publishing Supervision Committee in the Foreign Culture Press Department at Moscow decided to publish books within the North. Regarding radio broadcasting, it was also under the control of the Editorial Department of the 25th Army.

As examined above, since the Soviet military occupation in northern Korea in August 1945, socialisation had been actively promoted by Moscow to establish a Soviet-friendly nation there. North Korea was considered a buffer zone, much like Eastern Europe was, to safeguard it from post-war Japan and US influence. Once Moscow became suspicious about US policy towards Japan, the demolition of the 38th parallel and the establishment of a unified Korean regime would have only been possible under the condition that Soviet-backed North Korea took the lead in forming a provisional government. If the future Korean government was not guaranteed to be Soviet friendly, Moscow's choice, as an alternative, was to create a single new government in North Korea.

⁸⁵ Shtykov's diary on 30 July 1946.

IV. Stalin's Strategic Choice in Korea to create two different regimes

The Soviet aim in Korea became even clearer after the breakdown of the second Joint Soviet-American Commission in September 1947 to create a Soviet-friendly single regime in North Korea. Since the Soviet rejection of the UN resolution on creating a unified Korean government in November 1947, the North Korean People's Army was launched on 8 February 1948 and the North Korean government was established on 9 September 1948 with Moscow's blessing. As soon as the North Korean government was created, Moscow began to request the US to withdraw its occupation forces. This was first suggested by Shtykov, on 26 September 1947 after the rupture of the second meeting. Since then, Moscow continued to apply political pressure on the US to withdraw its armed forces from Korea on occasions such as the UN general assembly political committee on 28 October 1947, the UN general assembly plenary session on 13 November 1947, and so on. On 7 June 1948, "the Soviet military headquarters announced its withdrawal of the Red Army from North Korea." Simultaneously it ordered "Lieutenant General Kortkov to return to the USSR, and instead appointed Major General Merkulov in charge of Soviet forces remaining within North Korea."¹ As seen, the rank of the Soviet military officer responsible for its occupation in the North was lowered, which meant downsizing the scale of Soviet armed forces. At the end of 1945, the number of Soviet army personnel stationed in North Korea was approximately two hundred thousand, but it was reduced down to two divisions in October 1947.² The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially announced on 20 September 1948 that "Soviet armed forces in North Korea would be withdrawn by 1 January 1949 and hoped that the US would do that as well from South Korea within the same period."³ In fact, the Soviet armed forces in North Korea were withdrawn from 19 October to 26 December 1948.⁴ However, it was not a complete withdrawal from North

¹ The Korean News Agency, *The North Korea Central Yearbook, 1949*, Pyongyang: KCNA, 1950, p.230.

² Hanlim University, *The Information on North Korea by US Armed Forces in Korea*, Chunchun: Hanlim University Asian Cultural Research Centre, 1989.

³ The Soviet Academy of Asian Study, the Board of National Unification(trans.), *The Relations between North Korea and the USSR, 1945-1980*, Seoul: The Board of National Unification Press, 1987, pp.87-88.

⁴ HQ, USAFIK, G-2 Periodic Report, No. 1028, 4 Jan 1949, pp.5-8.

Korea. The Soviet report on stay-behind members on 18 February 1949 revealed that “there were four thousand and twenty Soviet armed forces and two hundred seventy three Soviet civilian workers remaining within the North, and they were stationed at different military camps across the country such as Pyongyang, Chungjin and Najin until June 1950.”⁵ Considering Soviet policy towards North Korea, it can be argued that Stalin adopted a two-nation policy in the Korean Peninsula at this time, as Stalin’s objective was to establish a Soviet satellite nation in the North as a buffer zone to protect Soviet security in Far East Asia.

Kim Il Sung’s confidence as a leader became clearer with Soviet support to create the North Korean People’s Army. The Soviet army had influenced every aspect of the North Korean military organisation such as its system, strategy, weapons systems and even military uniform. By the time the Soviet armed forces were withdrawn in December 1948, it was ten months after the creation of the North Korean People’s Army. Although the total number of military forces between the North and the South were similar at this time – seventy-seven thousand armed forces in North Korea, eighty-eight thousand armed forces in South Korea - the level of the South Korean army was more likely to be like a police force.⁶ Therefore, the military strength of North Korea was superior to that of the South, and there were still one hundred fifty Soviet military advisors in each North Korean army division.⁷

In December 1948, there was a strategic meeting under the chairmanship of N.A. Bulganin - the Soviet Minister of Defence - to discuss the issue of dispatching special military advisors to North Korea after the withdrawal of the Red Army. Examining the attendees and issues discussed would prove the characteristic of this meeting. The participants were R. Malinovsky, the Supreme Commander of Far Eastern Forces, A.G. Golovko, the Soviet Navy Commander, North Korean representatives and Chinese representatives. The main topic of this meeting was “how to strengthen the North Korean army including transferring Soviet weapons.” The decisions made in this meeting were as follows; 1. To reorganise six infantry divisions to

⁵ Dong-A Ilbo, “The Soviet Armed Forces stationed in North Korea,” 20 June 1995.

⁶ FRUS, Muceio telegram to the Secretary of State, 9 Nov 1948, p.1333.

⁷ US Department of State, *North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover*, Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1961, p.114.

professional attack divisions. 2. In order to create professional attack divisions, China should send its twenty to twenty five thousand Korean Chinese soldiers, Northeast Volunteer army, back to North Korea and appoint them as key personnel within the North Korean People's Army. 3. To create eight attack divisions and eight reserve divisions, and make twenty-two divisions in total. 4. To establish two armoured forces consisting of five hundred tanks. 5. Do not organise the air force for a while due to the international situation.⁸

It is interesting that Moscow did not want North Korea to have an air force. It can be argued that Moscow was concerned about Kim Il Sung's hostile attitude to unite Korea by military means, which was against Stalin's intention at this moment. According to M. Zakalov – the Soviet Deputy Chief of the General Staff – “the Kremlin did not allow North Korea to have an air force because if Kim Il Sung had strong armoured forces and an air force, it would possibly threaten South Korea as well as Japan.”⁹ This shows that Moscow was concerned about Kim Il Sung's warlike policy and the possibility of causing military conflicts which the US might get involved in. Stalin had a two-track policy towards Korea; on the one hand, it induced the pullout of the US armed forces from the South under the pretext of respecting the sovereignty of Korean people to resolve their own issues, on the other, it secretly supported North Korea to be able to be superior over the South in its military power. This would guarantee that the North Korean regime was strong enough not to be overthrown by American-backed South Korea to serve its role as a buffer zone for Soviet national security.

With regards to Stalin's policy towards North Korea in 1949, it was believed that he did not have any plan for the Korean War in 1949, as there was no treaty of friendship and alliance between the USSR and North Korea. Although there were a number of other agreements signed between Moscow and Pyongyang in terms of loans, technical aid and cultural exchanges, M. Park argued that there was no military or war-related agreement between the two nations.¹⁰ However, this argument has been proved incorrect as there was an agreement relating to the

⁸ The War History Compilation Committee in the Ministry of Defense in Korea, *The History of the Korean War*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1967, p.705.

⁹ Kyril Kalinov, “How Russian built North Korean Army?,” *North Korea*, June 1988, p.51.

¹⁰ Myong Lim Park, *The Origin of the Korean War*, Seoul: Korea University Press, 1994, p.32.

military aspect between Moscow and Pyongyang when Kim Il Sung visited Stalin in March 1949.¹¹ Interestingly, the then Soviet newspaper only mentioned that the North Koreans would be able to have all possible aid from the USSR. In fact, Moscow did not clearly state guaranteeing North Korea's security in public, therefore it did not announce whether there was a military agreement between the two nations. As for the Soviet policy towards North Korea, it seemed different from its policy to other satellite nations with which Moscow signed a mutual defence treaty. Therefore, it can be argued that this Soviet action was the result of careful consideration about any possible scenario over the Korean Peninsula. It demonstrated that Moscow wanted to justify its non-involvement policy in Korea internationally in case of a military incident.

It was only with the People's Socialist Republic of Albania that Moscow did not conclude a direct defence treaty among Soviet satellite nations. The security assurance for the People's Socialist Republic of Albania was guaranteed by Yugoslavia, in July 1946, and Bulgaria, in December 1947, with both of which Moscow had defence treaties. As for North Korea, the Soviet policy seemed to adopt a similar policy to the Albanian case, as Stalin wanted to use China to engage in Korean issues in the future, which would guarantee the Soviets not to get directly involved in confrontation with the US. In this context, the North Korean regime and the Chinese Communist forces concluded a mutual defence pact on 18 March 1949, which contributed to North Korea consolidating its army and Kim to be confident about his military plan to launch a military operation to unify Korea. The contents of the mutual defence pact were as follows; 1. Each party should work together for joint defence. If any imperialist force attacks any party, both would take joint action against it. 2. The Chinese Communist Party would supply weapon and armed forces in Manchuria to North Korea between 1 July 1949 and 31 August 1949. 3. North Korea would have the highest priority on using Japanese munitions and Japanese technicians within Manchuria. 4. North Korea and the CCP would barter in accordance with economic necessity.¹² This agreement was signed right after Kim's visit to Moscow to meet Stalin in early March 1949, and played a significant role in promoting such a high level of confidence in Kim in terms of North Korean military power. This certainly

¹¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Russian Diplomatic Documents*, 5 Mar 1949.

¹² The National Institute of War History in Ministry of Defense, *The Korean War*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1990, p.711.

escalated Kim to continue to ask for Stalin to approve his military plan to unify Korea throughout the whole of 1949.

It was Kim's New Year's address on 1 January 1949 that demonstrated his policy. He introduced his policy called 'territorial complete conquest theory' and the following action plan to achieve this goal. He stressed that "the North Korean public should unite and support the central government of North Korea in terms of its political as well as its economic policy and continue to develop its reformation, which had successfully proceeded for three years after its liberation in order to unify Korea in the near future. The priority was to unify Korea under the North Korean regime."¹³ At this time, the military means seemed to be the best idea for Kim due to North Korea's military superiority. The initial stage of pursuing Kim's idea was on his visit to meet Stalin in March 1949. According to the record of this meeting, which lasted for one hour and fifteen minutes on 5 March 1945, "Kim requested Soviet economic aid and Stalin agreed to provide forty million US dollars to North Korea as a loan." During the meeting, Stalin asked Kim "what is the number of US military forces remaining within South Korea and which army is stronger?" Stalin promised Kim to "assist in the establishment of a North Korean navy and to provide military aircraft." When Hon Yong Pak mentioned that "North Korean spies within the South had not been doing their job successfully", Stalin commented that "it was the right thing at this time and stressed that the 38th parallel should be peaceful."¹⁴ This clearly shows that Stalin did not want to have any military incident in Korea as it might encourage US forces to get involved in the conflict, which might threaten Soviet security. On 7 March, two days after the initial meeting, "Kim requested Stalin's approval to unify Korea by military means." Kim explained that "South Korean leaders would not agree with the procedure of peaceful unification as they had tried to keep the current division and to strengthen their military power enough to attack the North." Kim tried to persuade Stalin by saying that "a swift victory would be guaranteed due to the North's superior military power as well as partisan members in the South being ready to support North Korean military action." Nevertheless, Stalin rejected Kim's plan for three reasons; "firstly, North Korean army was not yet superior to that of the South. Secondly, there were still US armed forces in South Korea, so in case of

¹³ Kim Il Sung, *For Unification, Independence and Democratisation of Korea*, Vol.2, Pyongyang: National People's Press, 1949, pp.289-305.

¹⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Russian Diplomatic Documents*, 5 Mar 1949.

war, the US would participate in it. Thirdly, the agreement about the 38th parallel between the USSR and the US was still valid, therefore, there would be no reason to prevent US involvement in the war. Stalin also commented that if the South Korean regime was willing to attack North Korea, there would be a chance to counterattack.”¹⁵ As shown above, Stalin’s main concern in the Korean Peninsula was to keep the status quo.

After this meeting in March 1949, Stalin paid more attention to the situation in the Korean Peninsula, as he was concerned about possible military incidents either by Kim or the South. According to Stalin’s telegram to Shtykov on 17 April 1949, Stalin mentioned that “there was information that the US armed forces in South Korea would be withdrawn to one of the islands in Japan during May 1949 in order to give more freedom to the South to act against the North. Therefore it needs to be analysed that the South Korean army would be gathered around the 38th parallel to attack North Korea during June 1949 by August 1949.”¹⁶ At the end of this telegram, Stalin ordered Shtykov to check if this information was correct. This clearly demonstrates that Stalin was seriously concerned about possible military warfare in Korea. In response to Stalin’s request, Shtykov’s report to Stalin about the situation in Korea in April and May 1949 showed “it was not an ideal time for the North Korea to launch a military attack against the South.” Shtykov concluded that “the North Korean army was not able to operate any military action against the South at the moment.” “For example, there were only eight trained pilots in the air force, and the coast guard had yet to be established. Whereas Soviet support to help North Korea to produce arms and ammunition had not been completed, the US army continued to provide a large amount of weapons to South Korea.”¹⁷ In response to these reports, Stalin instructed Soviet army’s action guide on 13 August 1949 in case of military affairs in Korea that “the Soviet army should not engage in any kind of warfare in the Korean Peninsula.” In detail, Stalin ordered “the closure of the Soviet naval bases and air units in North Korea if the war broke out.”¹⁸ This reveals that Stalin thought about the possibility of warfare in Korea, sooner or later, by either of the two sides, but the most important goal was not for

¹⁵ Ibid., 7 Mar 1949.

¹⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Stalin to Shtykov 17 April 1949.

¹⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 20 April 1949, 2 May 1949.

¹⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 13 August 1949.

North Korea to win the war but to show the Soviet non-intervention policy to the world. At this time Stalin clearly did not want to be involved in any military conflict with the US in this region.

Some revisionists including I. Stone, D. Fleming, D. Conde, and J. Kolko denied that North Korea initially planned the Korean War. They rather focused on the domestic situation in South Korea to explain the origin of the war.¹⁹ However, it has been revealed that Kim in August 1949 set up detailed invasion plans against the South for the first time. Actually Kim challenged Stalin's idea to wait for an attack from South Korean forces on the grounds that the South Korean regime seemed to protect the 38th parallel and therefore there would not be a chance to counterattack to launch the war to unify Korea. At the meeting with Shtykov on 14 August, "Kim explained his idea to occupy Ongjin, which would serve as a bridgehead for an additional offensive."²⁰ This was the point that some scholars asserted was the beginning of the Korean War, which started from a civil war but escalated to an international conflict with US intervention.²¹ However, the assumption can be challenged with the fact that the Korean War could have not broken out without Stalin's permission and Kim changed the war plan from starting with a limited war to occupy Ongjin to a full-scale attack only four days before launching the war on 25 June 1950. According to the emergency telegram from Kim to Stalin on 21 June, Kim mentioned that "The operational plans need to be changed in that there was an intelligence report that the South Korean regime had obtained the North Korean army's initial plan. The South Korean forces began to strengthen their combat power and firmly established a line of defence by deploying additional forces near Ongjin. Therefore, Stalin's approval to change the operational plan is needed to launch a full-scale attack against South Korea."²² Stalin agreed with Kim's suggestion, so the Korean War was launched with Stalin's

¹⁹ I. F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952; D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and its Origins, 1917-1960*, Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1961; D.W. Conde, Choi Jiyeon(trans.), *The Korean War: Another perspective 1, 2*, Seoul: Four Seasons Press, 1988; J & G Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954*, New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

²⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 27 Aug 1949.

²¹ William Stueck, *The Korean War*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995; Cummings, *The Origin of the Korean War*.

²² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Emergency Telegram from Kim to Stalin, 21 June 1950.

blessing.

B. Cumings argued that the Korean War initially started from internal military conflicts, as a civil war.²³ Although there were quite a large number of limited military conflicts between the North and the South alongside the 38th parallel before the Korean War, those limited military incidents were not the actual starting point of the war but played a significant role in creating a militarily tense atmosphere near the border between the North and the South. Under these circumstances, Kim continued to ask for Stalin's approval for his war plan throughout 1949. According to a secret telegram from G. Tunkin – the Soviet diplomat in Pyongyang - to Stalin on 3 September 1949, "Kim was confident of winning the war within two weeks or at least two months."²⁴ Regarding Kim's detailed action plan, "Stalin showed interest and ordered a detailed report on the evaluation of the South Korean army, possible reaction from the South Korean public in case of war and the possibility of US intervention."²⁵ A few days later, Tunkin sent a telegram to Stalin to report the results of the meeting with Kim in terms of Stalin's query. In the meeting, "Kim explained the reasons for being confident of winning the war against South Korea; firstly, the standard of South Korean Army seemed poor from Kim's experience of having a local conflict near the 38th parallel. Secondly, there were North Korean spies in each South Korean military unit and also fifteen to twenty hundred North Korean partisans in action within South Korea. Thirdly, the South Korean public would welcome the North Korean forces once the war broke out." Interestingly, Kim mentioned that "a long-term war would not be beneficial to the North, and therefore a limited war to occupy Ongjin and Kaesong would be better to reduce the defence line across the border with South Korea."²⁶ Tunkin, however, added his own evaluation at the end of the telegram that "there were only a few supporters for launching a war within the North and the South." In addition, he mentioned that "the US would actively engage in a conflict in Korea due to its previous experience of losing in China and

²³ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War : Liberation and the Establishment of Separate Regimes 1945-1947, The Roaring of the Cataract 1947-1950*, 2 Vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981/1990.

²⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Secret Telegram from Tunkin to Stalin*, 3 Sep 1949.

²⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Telegram from Stalin to the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang*, 11 Sep 1949.

²⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Telegram from Tunkin to Stalin*, 14 Sep 1949.

therefore it would be better to support North Korean partisans' activity within the South."²⁷ A few days later, the Kremlin passed a resolution to prohibit North Korea to launch any military attack against the South under the name of Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.²⁸ In this resolution, "it was recommended to support the partisan movement in South Korea and wait for the time until the anti-government movement would be strengthened." Moreover, it commented on the plan to occupy Ongjin that "limited warfare would possibly become an early stage of total war against the South, which should not be attempted at this time." Until late 1949, Stalin did not agree with any type of military conflict between the North and the South and wanted to maintain the status quo with two nations in the Korean Peninsula.

There have been interesting points found from the first draft of this resolution, which was corrected in Stalin's own handwriting. Stalin corrected the phrase 'in case of South Korean army's attack, North Korean forces should repel an invasion and be ready to unify Korea' into 'in case of South Korean forces' military attack, North Korea should be ready to repulse its offensive and act depending on the situation'.²⁹ Stalin crossed out the words 'unification of Korea', which means that he continued to think about maintaining the status quo in Korea. This also proves that Stalin did not intend to expand communism to the entire Korean Peninsula at this time.

There is another example to demonstrate how much Moscow was concerned about maintaining stability in Korea. According to the telegram from A. Gromyko - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs - to Shtykov, "Gromyko denounced Shtykov for encouraging the North Korean regime to prepare for even small-scale military attack near the 38th parallel with support of Soviet advisors."³⁰ With regards to this issue, Stalin also gave a stark warning to Shtykov because "he had not been following Moscow's order, which was not to escalate any tension near the 38th parallel."³¹ Since Shtykov received a strict warning from Stalin, he stopped reporting about

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ The Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Politburo, The Resolution on North Korea, 24 Sep 1949.

²⁹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The first draft of the resolution by Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 23 Sep 1949.

³⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Russian Diplomatic Documents, 26 Oct 1949.

³¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 Oct 1949; The telegram to Shtykov by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, 20 Nov 1949.

Kim's military plan to Moscow. Instead, his report focused more on the situation of South Korea. As seen above, it can be argued that there was disagreement between Stalin and Kim in terms of unifying Korea by military means until 1949 and there was no clear sign that Stalin had a strong desire to control the whole Korean Peninsula under a communist regime. Initially, Stalin was more focused on Europe in his foreign policy, as the situation in Europe until 1949 had been challenging for Stalin through various events such as the announcement of the Truman Doctrine (March 1947) and the Marshall Plan (June 1947), the failure of the Berlin Blockade policy (June 1948 to May 1949) and the establishment of the NATO (April 1949). Therefore, Stalin wanted to keep the status quo in Korea in order to pay more attention to Europe and began to consider using Chinese Communist forces to secure Soviet strategic interests in Far East Asia.

The Chinese factor

Moscow traditionally prioritised in its foreign policy in Europe rather than any other region. As T. Robinson mentioned, however, it was after 1950 when Asia emerged for the Kremlin as a region to compete with the US as well as China at global and regional level respectively.³² Therefore, the origin of the Korean War needs to be analysed in context of the process of reorganising the global and regional balance of power. In other words, the relations among the USSR, the US, and China are the key to understanding the Korean War. The currently available Russian documents do not explain the exact motive for Stalin in the Korean War, and therefore, there would be difference in terms of its interpretation.

It was on 30 January 1950 that Stalin changed his policy towards Korea.³³ Stalin sent a secret telegram to Shtykov that "I understand the dissatisfaction of Comrade Kim in regards to South Korea. This matter must be organised not to take huge risk. I am ready to help Kim in this matter." This is a significant moment in the history of the Korean War, as the war plan was concretised by Kim with Stalin's blessing. A day after Stalin sent a secret telegram to Kim, Shtykov had a meeting with Kim on 31 January 1950 and wrote a report to Stalin that "As

³² Thomas W. Robinson, *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed., New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1980, p.583.

³³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The secret telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 Jan 1950.

Comrade Stalin's order, I(Shtykov) met Kim and sent a message. Kim was so impressed by it to support Kim's plan for liberation of South Korea. Kim asked to reassure if it was true for Stalin to be willing to meet him to discuss a war plan. Kim added that he was always ready to meet Stalin at any time."³⁴ After Kim received Stalin's message, Kim started to put his war plan into practice. According to Shtykov's telegram to Stalin on 4 February 1950, "Kim asked me(Shtykov) about his idea to organise additional ground forces in order to increase the North Korean forces to have ten divisions. I(Shtykov) said that it was very important matter and asked if there was any resource Kim needed. Also I(Shtykov) told Kim that it would take time to provide any advice. Kim mentioned that he would like to request Stalin to approve having a loan now for the year of 1951 in order to buy ammunition for creating three ground force divisions."³⁵ Regarding Kim's request, Stalin replied on 9 February that "I(Stalin) approved to create three divisions, and they need to be special forces having modern equipment, elite officers, and well-trained soldiers. A loan for the year 1951 can be diverted as this year's loan to create three divisions."³⁶ Stalin's message was delivered to Kim on 10 February and "Kim repeated several times to thank Stalin about Soviet aids to a war plan."³⁷ Since then, there had been exchanges of telegrams several times between Pyeongyang and Moscow about meeting with Stalin. On 20 March, Kim mentioned Shtykov that "I(Kim) would like to visit Moscow secretly in early April with Hon Yong Pak, and the agenda would be as follows; First, the method of unifying Korea. Second, the way to improve North Korea economy. Third, the North Korea Communist Party activities."³⁸ Interestingly, Shtykov sent a telegram to Stalin again on 23 March about detailed agenda at the meeting with Kim, and in this telegram, the words "the method of unifying Korea" was changed to "the method of unification of Korea. Intention is to achieve it via military means."³⁹ A day after sending this telegram, Shtykov met Kim and said that "Stalin agreed to meet Kim and Pak." "Kim said that he would depart on 30 March"⁴⁰ Kim visited Moscow between 30 March and 25 April 1950 and met Stalin three times to discuss detailed plan to launch a war in Korea. As shown, since Stalin's telegram on 30

³⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 31 Jan 1950.

³⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 4 Feb 1950.

³⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Stalin to Kim, 9 Feb 1950.

³⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 10 Feb 1950.

³⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 21 Mar 1950.

³⁹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 23 Mar 1950.

⁴⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 24 Mar 1950.

January, both Moscow and Pyongyang started to prepare for launching the war.

Another important factor is that Stalin had been meeting with Mao in Moscow at the time when this telegram was sent to Kim. At the telegram by Stalin to Shtykov on 2 February, Stalin mentioned that “it needs to be reminded that Kim should keep secret about the issue we discussed. Kim should not share this information on other North Korean leaders as well as Chinese leadership. This is in order to ensure security against the enemy. The issue to improve North Korean military forces and defence ability has been discussed with Mao who currently stays in Moscow.”⁴¹ Interestingly, Mao was not informed by Stalin about the fact that Stalin had sent a telegram to Kim to discuss Kim’s war plan. This demonstrates that Mao was excluded at the initial stage of planning the war, to some extent. This brings a reasonable assumption as Mao should have been a major player if Stalin intended to encourage Kim on launching a warfare after the success of the Chinese revolution. In reality, it was May 1950 when Mao was brought into the war plan, only a month before the actual outbreak of the war, and it was too late for Mao to reject the agreement between Stalin and Kim.

From the conventional approach, the success of the Chinese revolution finally brought Stalin’s permission for Kim’s military plan to unify Korea.⁴² In other words, Stalin’s decision to approve Kim’s war plan was based on his confidence after establishing the PRC and therefore a unified Korea under a communist regime seemed natural in these circumstances.⁴³ In this context, Stalin’s attitude towards the Chinese revolution needs to be carefully examined to understand Stalin’s goal in East Asia.

Stalin had a dual policy towards China; On the one hand, Moscow signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance with the KMT government in August 1945, which caused Mao to doubt Stalin’s intention regarding the Chinese Communist Revolution. As O. Westad pointed out, Stalin was not sure about the possibility of Mao’s success in the civil war, as he believed that “it was not possible to succeed in a communist revolution without Soviet aid in this period of imperialism.”⁴⁴ This becomes a fundamental factor of uneasy relation between Stalin and Mao. Although the KMT government seemed to become more pro-American during

⁴¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 2 Feb 1950.

⁴² Stanley Sandler, *The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished*, London: UCL Press, 1999, p.29.

⁴³ Geoffrey Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, London: Routledge, 1999, pp.32-35.

⁴⁴ Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, pp.173-174.

the Chinese civil war, Stalin apparently maintained a position of neutrality. This is because Stalin's priority in China was to retain the Yalta Agreement in this region. Stalin acquired rights from Outer Mongolia and China, but promised not to be engaged with the Chinese civil war in the Yalta Conference. He sent a telegram to Mao to recommend not beginning a civil war against the KMT in August 1945 and continued to suggest Mao negotiate with the KMT.⁴⁵ Moreover, Stalin opposed Mao's idea of crossing the Yangtze River to secure a decisive victory against the KMT because it might cause conflict between the USSR and the US. When the People's Liberation Army (PLA) ousted the KMT government from Nanjing to Guangzhou in April 1949, the Soviet Ambassador joined the KMT and moved to Guangzhou as well. In addition, Moscow agreed with the KMT to extend mining concessions within Xijiang region for another five years in May 1949. As J. Chen mentioned, it was difficult to have strategic cooperation between Moscow and the Chinese Communist Party.⁴⁶ This indicates that Stalin's purpose within China was to maximise its rights and avoid any possible confrontation with the US.

Ironically, Stalin supported the PLA over the civil war period as well. For example, the Soviet army informed the Chinese Communist armed forces on its withdrawal schedule from Manchuria to help them occupy it easily. In October 1945, Moscow ordered the Chinese Communist Party to "move three hundred thousand PLA forces to Manchuria and promised to supply them Soviet weapons as well." At the same time, the Soviet forces prohibited KMT forces landing at Dalian port to restrict their advance towards the northeast.⁴⁷ Interestingly, it was in the same period that Stalin gave a secret order to establish a Soviet-friendly new regime in North Korea, when Stalin became suspicious about Washington's policy towards post-war Japan. Stalin seemed to predict the possible aggravation of relations with the US and therefore he decided to adopt a new policy to create Soviet-friendly regimes in China as well as North Korea to gain hegemony in this region.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was also aware of Stalin's intention within China. Zhou

⁴⁵ Jian Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p.67.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.67.

⁴⁷ Jung Sik Lee, "The Soviet Secret Documents," *Sindonga*, Nov 1995, pp.396-397.

Enlai - the Chinese first Premier in the PRC - mentioned that "Moscow is fearful that the Chinese Civil War would destroy Soviet influence obtained by the Yalta Conference and bring possible American intervention in the war. There is a fundamental disagreement between Stalin and Mao in terms of viewing the international situation."⁴⁸ Stalin did not entirely support the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) over the civil war, and adopted his policy for expanding Soviet hegemony in China. For example, since the spring of 1948, Stalin had rejected Mao's suggestion to visit Moscow to discuss the creation of a new China and relations between the USSR and China. Instead, Stalin sent A. Mikoyan to meet Mao in China in January 1949 and Mao tried to dispel all doubts Stalin might have that Mao could be an 'Asian Tito' and launch an anti-Soviet movement within China.⁴⁹ After the announcement of the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, Mao denounced the Sino-Soviet treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed with KMT government on 14 August 1945 and concluded to negotiate a new treaty with Moscow. It became the important moment for Stalin to be concerned about maintaining Soviet strategic influence in East Asia.

Mao visited Moscow to meet Stalin to discuss a new relation between the two nations between 16 December 1949 and 17 February 1950. At first, the meeting about a new Sino-Soviet treaty came to a standstill. This was because the new Sino-Soviet treaty seemed to favour Mao due to his persistence as well as the Western media's expectation of new relations between Moscow and Communist China. In addition, as D. Kim pointed out, there had been rapprochement movement between Washington and Communist China at this time.⁵⁰ There had been ongoing disputes among US decision makers over future relations with Communist China. The opinion led by the US State Department prevailed as it suggested abandoning Chiang Kai-Shek's KMT and establishing new diplomatic relations with Communist China. As a result, President Truman gave a speech on 5 January 1950 that "Taiwan was a territory belonging to mainland China and if there was a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait, it would be considered as a

⁴⁸ Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War*, p.246.

⁴⁹ Do Bok Park, "The Foundation of the Chinese Foreign Policy and its Change," *Modern Society*, Vol.8 No.1, spring 1988, pp.216-220.

⁵⁰ Donggil Kim, Stalin's Korean U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011, pp.89-114.

Chinese civil war and therefore the US would not intervene in it.”⁵¹ For Stalin, this was a clear challenge from Washington. In this context, Stalin included US issues at the meeting with Mao to solidify friendly relations with China and prevent possible rapprochement between Beijing and Washington.

Moscow tried to hold a new Communist China under its sphere of influence. After agreeing to sign a new Sino-Soviet treaty, A. Vyshinsky - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs - suggested on 6 January 1950 that “Mao should submit the statement to the UNSC that it was not legal for the KMT representative to remain in the UNSC.” In addition, Vyshinsky mentioned that “Moscow would make an announcement supporting Mao’s statement and not participate in the UNSC meetings as long as the KMT representative still remained in it.”⁵² As for the Soviet request, Mao accepted it and ordered Zhou Enlai - the Chinese Foreign Minister - to send a telegram to the UN on 8 January claiming that “it was illegal to have KMT representatives within the UNSC and therefore they should be ousted from the UN.”⁵³ On 10 January, Yakov A. Malik - the Soviet representative in the UNSC - submitted the suggestion to the UN, requesting to oust the KMT representative from the UNSC. When the Soviet request was rejected on 13 January, Malik declared the withdrawal of the Soviet representative from the UNSC and announced that “any resolution passed by the UNSC without Soviet attendance would be illegal and therefore it would not have binding power on the Soviet Union.”⁵⁴ On the evening on 13 January, Vyshinsky held a second meeting with Mao and suggested “dispatching the Chinese representative to the UNSC and pressing it to include this issue in its agenda.” With regards to Mao’s concern about this plan, Vyshinsky mentioned that “this kind of action by Communist China would have great historical significance and ensured that the Soviet absence would paralyse the function of the UNSC.”⁵⁵ It indicates that Stalin attempted to show

⁵¹ Ji Wha Shim, “The Process of making a new Sino-Soviet Treaty,” *The research of History*, Vol.2, 2001, pp.39-55.

⁵² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Vyshinsky to Mao, 6 Jan 1950.

⁵³ Chinese central document research centre, *Mao since the foundation of China* No.1, Beijing: Central Document Press, 1987, pp.219-220.

⁵⁴ Tong Shun Liu & Wen Fan Gao, *The World History after World War II 1950-1951*, Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Press, 1980, pp.455-456.

⁵⁵ Memoir of meeting between Vyshinsky and Mao on 13 Jan 1950, APRF, F.3, OP.65, D.364, pp.94-97.

consolidated relations with China to the US and prevent possible rapprochement between Beijing and Washington.

The establishment of the Chinese Communist regime had a great impact on Soviet foreign policy in various ways. A new China caused pressure on maintaining Soviet privileges obtained by the Yalta Agreement, but it could also be used favourably in terms of Soviet confrontation with the Western world. Stalin commented that “I expect a new China to share a role in the international communist movement so that China should take more responsibility for East Asian issues while the Soviets focused on Europe.”⁵⁶ Interestingly, it does not mean that Stalin acknowledged Mao’s way of revolution and promote it in Asia. This seems a kind of lip service by Stalin to prevent Mao being the ‘Asian Tito’. This would be analysed in detail later in this chapter. Mao was also aware of Stalin’s perception of the Chinese Communist forces as well as himself. Mao recalled Stalin’s policy over the Chinese Civil War that “Stalin attempted to interrupt the success of the Chinese Revolution.” Mao believed that “Stalin doubted a new Communist China might become like Yugoslavia under an Asian Tito.”⁵⁷ It demonstrates that relations between Stalin and Mao were not tied up closely under the name of Communism. Instead, there had been ongoing distrust with each other over forming a new relationship.

Mao confessed later that “it was such a hard time to negotiate with Stalin to create a new Sino-Soviet treaty.”⁵⁸ As Mao mentioned, Stalin disagreed with revising the previous Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance Agreement signed with the KMT in 1945 at the meeting on 16 December 1949. Stalin’s ostensible reason was that “the existing Sino-Soviet treaty was the result of the Yalta Agreement, which the US and Britain also agreed with and therefore total revision could cause a lawful excuse for the US to raise objections to regulations about Kuril Islands and South Sakhalin.”⁵⁹ In fact, it indicates that Stalin’s priority in East Asia was to maintain Soviet privileges obtained from the Yalta Agreement. Despite Stalin’s hope, a new Sino-Soviet treaty was concluded in February 1950, and this seemed to trigger Stalin to

⁵⁶ Chen, *China’s Road to the Korean War*, p.74.

⁵⁷ Mao Zedong, “The Conversation in the 10th meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 24 Sep 1962,” *Chinese Internal Report, The Praise of Mao’s Idea*, 1962, p.432.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ APRF, “Conversation between Stalin and Mao in Moscow on 16 Dec 1949,” F.45, OP.1, D.329, pp.9-17.

reconsider the Soviet strategy in this region. Shen Zhihua claimed that the new Sino-Soviet treaty triggered Stalin to support the war plan by Kim in order to secure ice-free harbour in China.⁶⁰ By contrast, D. Kim made a counter-argument that the USSR already secured an ice-free harbour in Vladivostok as well as in North Korea, so an attempt to connect between the origin of the Korean War and the ice-free harbour issue is not convincing enough to explain why Stalin decided to support Kim's plan.⁶¹ This argument seems similar to what V. Koo - the Chinese ambassador in the US - mentioned at a conversation with W. Leahy - the US Navy Admiral - who attended the Yalta Conference, on 11 April 1945. Koo suggested to the US that "Moscow would be able to utilise ports in the Northeast part of the Korean Peninsula, as they were connected to the railways from the Northeast region in China as well as to Soviet territory such as Vladivostok and the maritime region."⁶² However, the ice-free harbour issue had been important in the Soviet policy. Nicholas II of Russia emphasised that "Russia needs ice-free harbour to be able to operate all year round. This harbour must be located in the continent and be able to connect to Russia via land."⁶³ In December 1901, Russian Foreign Minister Vladimir Lamsdorf mentioned that "if Japan constructs a fortress at coast line in the Korean Peninsula, it would block communication line between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. Russia would not accept this in order to protect its security."⁶⁴ This shows that an ice free harbour in China was still valuable for Soviet strategy in the Far East. Therefore, it can be argued that a new Sino-Soviet treaty played a part in Stalin's decision to approve Kim's military plan.

More importantly, the triangular relations among Moscow, Washington, and Communist China seem essential in understanding Stalin's approval of the war in 1950. As D. Kim explained that there were attempts by the Western world to engage China, driving a wedge into Sino-Soviet relations. In 5 January 1950, Truman made a statement that "the U.S. will not provide military

⁶⁰ Shen Zhihua, "Sino-Soviet Relations and the Origin of the Korean War: Stalin's Strategic Goals in the Far East," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2, no.2, 2000, pp.44-68.

⁶¹ Donggil Kim, Stalin's Korean U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011, pp.96-97.

⁶² V. K. Wellington Koo, "Notes of Conversation with Admiral Leahy on 11 April 1945," *Wellington Koo Papers*, New York: Butler Library, Columbia University, 1964.

⁶³ Fred H. Harrington, *God, Mammom and the Japanese*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1944, p.283.

⁶⁴ US Department of Defence, *The Entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan: Military Plans, 1941-45*, Washington D.C: Department OF Defence, 1955, p.102.

aid or advice to Chinese forces in Taiwan.”⁶⁵ Britain recognised the PRC at the same day as well.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Secretary Acheson announced that “Taiwan would lay outside the U.S. defence perimeter.”⁶⁷ This surely made Stalin concerned about a new security strategy in Asia. Stalin’s distrust of Mao can be seen from the meeting between the two from December 1949 to February 1950. It was not only to discuss revising the Sino-Soviet treaty but also to secure Soviet military and economic aid to China.⁶⁸ As for Mao’s request for Soviet aid to the Chinese navy and air forces to occupy Taiwan, Stalin replied that “Soviet military aid would not be excluded but the form of the aid needed to be carefully considered, as it should not give any pretext for US intervention.”⁶⁹ As shown, Stalin seems passive to deal with Chinese issue. In other words, Stalin’s priority was not to communise the whole China but to keep the USSR safe in Asia by avoiding any conflict with the U.S.

It is interesting to point out that Stalin sent a secret telegram to Kim on 2 February 1950 while Mao was still staying in Moscow. Although Stalin discussed how to support the North Korean army with Mao at that time, he asked Kim to “not inform Mao about Stalin’s suggestion to discuss a military plan with Kim.”⁷⁰ At Stalin’s request, Kim did not inform Mao about his plan to visit Moscow in March 1950 to meet Stalin to discuss detailed military operational plans in Korea. It was on 3 May 1950 that Stalin notified Mao that “there was a discussion with Kim in Moscow about unifying Korea by military means.” Further information about the meeting was sent to Mao by Kim on 14 May 1950, a day after Kim visited Mao in Beijing to inform him of Stalin’s approval of Kim’s military plan to unify Korea.⁷¹ This proves that Mao was excluded to some extent in the process of discussing the military plan in Korea until one month before the outbreak of the Korean War. This is challenging to a conventional approach by K. Weathersby claiming the Korean War was a collaborative plan between Stalin, Mao and Kim.⁷² Considering all the historical evidence currently available, it can be concluded that Kim

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Editorial Note,” *FRUS*, East Asia and Pacific, Vol. 6, 1950, p.264.

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS*, East Asia and Pacific, Vol. 6, 1950, p.258.

⁶⁷ U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Department of State bulletin*, 22: 551, 23 Jan 1950, pp.111-116.

⁶⁸ Vladislav Zubok, *Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997, p.59

⁶⁹ APRF, “Conversation between Stalin and Mao in Moscow on 16 Dec 1949,” F.45, OP.1, D.329, pp.9-17.

⁷⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The secret telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 2 Feb 1950.

⁷¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The telegram from Stalin to Mao, 3 May 1950, 14 May 1950, The telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 13 May 1950.

⁷² Munhwa Ilbo, Interview with Kathryn Weathersby, 17 Dec 2012

proposed the initial war plan in 1949, but it was Stalin who manipulated the whole scenario of the Korean War, as the timing of Chinese intervention was not decided by Mao but by Stalin in his favour. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Beijing also recognised that the Liaodung peninsula was considered significant by Moscow. When the contents of the Yalta Agreement including lending Port Arthur to the Soviet Union were released, the Chinese government expressed its concerns. This proves that Mao was seriously concerned about Soviet intentions on the access to infrastructure within the Northeast region in China. Moscow also seemed to be aware of China's resistance to offer its facilities. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs was seriously concerned about the possibility of China rejecting lending Port Arthur even before the Soviet declaration of war against Japan. On 29 June 1945, the second Far East Bureau of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote a report to point out that "the Korean Peninsula had a significant strategic importance for the purpose of securing Soviet interests in East Asia" and explained similar reasons to Koo's.⁷³ The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested that when the four nations – the Soviet Union, the US, China, and Britain – discussed the idea of trusteeship in Korea, "four ports – Busan, Cheju, Incheon, and Chongjin – should be controlled by Soviet forces", as these ports were crucial to secure a safe sea lane for Port Arthur which was jointly used by the Soviet Union and China.⁷⁴ However, Stalin did not follow this suggestion, as he was satisfied with the Soviet privileges obtained by the Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance Treaty with the KMT led by Chiang until Mao visited Moscow in December 1949. This can explain why Stalin warned Kim not to take any military action against the South until the end of 1949, as it might cause unnecessary problems with the US. However, when Stalin was confronted with possible strategic losses in a new treaty between Moscow and Beijing, it seemed to trigger for Stalin to re-estimate the strategic value of the Korean Peninsula. When Stalin had a meeting with Mao to discuss a new Sino-Soviet treaty on 22 January 1950, Mao asked him about the possible effect on the Yalta Agreement of this new treaty. Stalin answered cynically that "I do not care about the Yalta

⁷³ AVPRF, "Report on North Korean matter by D. Zhukov, the Director of the second Far East bureau in the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs, and by E. Zabrodin, the Deputy Director of the second Far East bureau in the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs on 29 June 1945," F.0430, OP.2, P.18, D.5, pp.1-7.

⁷⁴ AVPRF, "Report by the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs," F.0431, OP.1, P.52, D.8, pp.40-45.

Agreement anymore.”⁷⁵ From Stalin’s attitude, it can be argued that he possibly had an alternative way in his mind to maintain Soviet security in Far East Asia.

Historically, Russia seemed to use a classical way to exchange its sphere of influence in its foreign policy. For example, when Russia lost the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, it readjusted its policy towards Northeast Asia and as a result it planned the independence of Outer Mongolia and tried to exchange Mongolia with the Korean Peninsula through compromise with Japan.⁷⁶ Stalin also adopted a similar diplomatic strategy in his foreign policy to utilise surrounding nations to secure Soviet national interests. The secret negotiation with Churchill in October 1944 is a good example to show Stalin’s diplomatic style. Stalin and Churchill reached an agreement that Hungary, Rumania, and Poland would be under the Soviet controlling sphere whereas Greece would be under British influence. It seemed that Stalin tried the same strategy towards the Korean Peninsula. When the US suggested the 38th parallel as a line to divide Korea into two parts to be controlled by Soviet and American forces respectively, Stalin agreed with it. This was because Stalin had the intention of requiring Japanese territory located above the 38th parallel although General MacArthur rejected it later on. This demonstrates that Stalin tried to achieve his foreign strategic objectives by exchanging the sphere of influence with other powerful nations.

As D. Kim pointed out, Stalin would gain something despite the result of the war.⁷⁷ This can be reasoned as follows; firstly, if Dean Acheson’s announcement was activated in case of the Korean War, the US would not be involved in warfare in Korea. In this case, there was a strong possibility for Kim to win the war and unify Korea under communism. This would guarantee Soviet control of the whole Korean Peninsula and ports located in South Korea could replace Port Arthur and Dalian Port in China. In addition, it would be possible to connect railways from the Soviet territory to North Korea, as there was an agreement in March 1949 to construct railways to link Kraskino to Aoji in the northern part of North Korea.⁷⁸ Therefore, if Kim won

⁷⁵APRF, “record about the meeting between Stalin and Mao on 22 Jan 1950,” F.45, OP.1, D.329, pp.30-38.

⁷⁶ Chinese Central Department of Editing and Translation, *Liening Quanji*, Vol. 54, Beijing: People’s Publishing Ltd, 1990, p.777.

⁷⁷ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.239-254.

⁷⁸ APRF, “Record about the meeting between Stalin and North Korean representatives on 5 Mar 1949,” F.45, OP.1, D.346, pp.14-23.

the war without US intervention, it would be beneficial for Stalin to continue to be able to secure Soviet strategic interests in Far East Asia.

It can be also argued that even if North Korea lost the war, Stalin could still secure Soviet interests. In the case of increased tension in Far East Asia due to the outbreak of the war, China would probably request the Red Army to continue to be stationed in Port Arthur and Dalian Port. Moreover, on the basis of the Sino-Soviet treaty, the Soviet forces could utilise the Changchun railways as well, which would guarantee the Soviets a secure way to reach the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, regardless of the outcome of the Korean War, Stalin could achieve the Soviet strategic objectives in this region. However, it can be argued that if the war won with support from Mao, it would raise Mao's status as a communist leader in North Korea as well as Asia. This is perhaps what Stalin was concerned about, as there were ongoing issues between Mao and Stalin during the war in terms of supply of adequate military equipment, which was not provided on time due to Stalin's reluctant attitude. The details of disputes between the two will be explained in the following chapter.

When it came to the actual process of the Korean War, it was exactly what Stalin anticipated. As soon as the war broke out, China approved the continual use of the Changchun railways for the Soviet forces and requested the Red Army to remain stationed in the military base in Port Arthur. In response to the Soviet request, the Chinese Central Committee decided to open the Changchun Railways and all airways in the Northeast region in China in order to transport military materials on 11 July 1950.⁷⁹ When the time was approaching for the Soviet forces to return Port Arthur to China in September 1952, Beijing voluntarily requested that the withdrawal of the Red Army be postponed. At this time, Stalin proposed to amend the Sino-Soviet treaty.⁸⁰ As a result, an amended new treaty was created including what Stalin wanted to secure Soviet strategic interests in this region. At the beginning of the revised treaty, it stated that "this amendment was started by PRC's initial request to the Soviet Union and accomplished by the Soviet agreement." A revised treaty included the postponement of

⁷⁹ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.3, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2008, p.32.

⁸⁰ APRF, "Record about the meeting between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 5 Aug 1952," F.45, OP.1, D.329, pp.55-72.

withdrawing the Red Army from Port Arthur and guaranteed joint use of military bases in Port Arthur until both the Soviet Union and the PRC signed the peace treaty with Japan.⁸¹ With regards to the use of the Changchun railways, Molotov - the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs - mentioned that “the secret memoir was still valid to continue to utilise the Changchun railways” and Zhou Enlai confirmed this.⁸² From Stalin’s viewpoint, the Korean War served to satisfy some of his goals in this region; Stalin maintained himself as the leader of the communist world to control Mao and the possible rapprochement between China and the US was prevented as well.

Did Stalin truly want revolution in Asia?

D. Kim argued that Stalin emphasised that Kim should strengthen guerrilla efforts in the South and supported revolutionary activities in the region through Communist China.⁸³ However, there is not enough evidence to prove that Stalin actually supported Kim’s guerrilla forces as he did with the Korean War. Considering the time frame of planning the war, it seemed to be rushed. In terms of the military strategy, it was risky to start a war in June 1950. This was because during the first half of the year, guerrilla warfare within the South was not successful due to a counterattack by the US and South Korean forces and it was not clear when such tactics would be more influential in the South. Even during the war, the role of guerrilla warfare was quite crucial for Kim’s initial plan. He expected a swift victory before the US had decided whether or not to get involved in the Korean War. Kim thought that once the war broke out, the guerrilla forces would become a huge help in occupying the entire territory of South Korea. In reality, however, it was different from what Kim hoped. There was no detailed guidance on guerrilla warfare by Stalin and military equipment was transported to North Korea not long before the war was launched, meaning that there was not enough time for the North Korean army to learn how to use it. Furthermore, there were not enough pilots in the North Korean

⁸¹ Zhi Hua Shen & Dan Hui Li, “The meeting between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 15 Sep 1952,” *The Relations between China and the Soviet Union*, Vol. 9. Shanghai: International Cold War Research Centre at Hwadong Educational University, 2005, p.2184.

⁸² RGASPI, “The record on meeting between the Soviet representative and Chinese representative,” 8 Sep 1952, F.82, OP.2, D.1258, pp.60-64.

⁸³ Donggil Kim, Stalin’s Korean U-Turn: The USSR’s Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011, p.100.

Airforce. Kim was always overconfident about winning the war and eager to unify Korea as soon as possible. Therefore, it could be understandable why Kim launched an attack against South Korea without perfect preparation. However, it seemed bizarre to see Stalin approving the war at that time. Considering all the historical documents currently available, it can be argued that what was important for Stalin was not to expand communism by winning the war.

Mao, just like Kim, always dreamt of unifying Taiwan. Initially Stalin agreed with Mao to aid Communist China in its quest to resolve the Taiwan issue before the Korean one, but it completely changed from January 1950. Apart from Stalin's strategic intention to launch the Korean War, it was also a good opportunity for Stalin to prevent Mao from taking an independent way to consolidate his political power in East Asia. Stalin had been suspicious about Mao's ideology and way of communising China and therefore he thought Mao could become a second Tito in Asia. As for Stalin, maintaining his authority as the leader of communism seemed more important than expanding communism in Asia.

Regarding Stalin's change of mind towards the war plan, his comments at the meeting with Kim in April 1950 have been considered as an important guideline to understand the origin of the Korean War. The Soviet Communist Party's International Department summary of Stalin's conversation with Kim in Moscow between 30 March and 25 April 1950 is as follows;

Stalin emphasised to Kim that both international and domestic situation had changed to be able to take more active measures for unifying Korea. Internationally, CCP won against KMT, so Communist China would be able to pay more attention to support North Korea. If necessary, China would be able to dispatch its army to North Korea. Communist China's victory was also important psychologically, as it proved the energy of revolution in Asia and showed the weakness of the US and the western world. The US retreated from China, and would not be able to challenge to China militarily. China made alliance treaty with the USSR, so the US would hesitate to challenge towards communists in Asia. According to intelligence report from the US, non-engagement policy within the US was prevailing at the moment. The USSR obtained an atomic bomb and strengthen its status in Europe, so the non-intervention atmosphere within the US would be deepened. However, it needs to be carefully considered whether the US would be involved in the war. Also it can be launched with the condition of Chinese approval on the war. The complete preparation of the war is essential to set up detailed attack plan. The offensive should be consisting of three stages; First, gathering army near the

38th parallel. Second, make a new suggestion on peaceful unification measure to the south, which would be rejected by them. Third, launch the offensive after the South rejects the North's suggestion. The war should be rapid and swift to prevent the resistance and international aid. Kim should not expect direct Soviet military involvement, as Moscow faces much challenge in the west. There might be a possibility of the US dispatching its army in Korea, but the Soviet army would not interfere with it. Mao is well aware of Asian issues, so Kim needs to get advice from him.⁸⁴

In this report, Stalin agreed with Kim's military plan due to the change of international atmosphere in favour of them. This has been interpreted by scholars such as K. Weathersby and H. J. Kim that Stalin judged the balance of power more advantageous to the socialist camp after the success of the Soviet atomic bomb and the Chinese Communist Revolution.⁸⁵ According to G. Roberts, by the late 1940s, the Communist led revolutionary wave had shifted to the east through the national liberation movements to oust western colonial regimes and, especially after the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution, a communist united Korea seemed natural and inevitable in such a context.⁸⁶ As seen, it was believed that the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution stimulated Kim and Stalin towards the way of armed struggle. For example, Moscow supported the speech in November 1949 by Liu Shaoqi - the Vice Chairman of the Central People's Government in China - at the labour union convention for Asia and Oceania in the World Federation of Trade Unions in Beijing. In addition, Moscow criticised the Japanese Communist Party's peaceful approach to seizing power and encouraged developing an open struggle against the US occupying authorities. These examples were used to claim that Stalin changed his defensive policy to be more proactive in order to stimulate a communist revolution in Asia.⁸⁷

With regards to this argument, it is essential to examine whether Soviet foreign policy during this time was to raise the world revolution against imperialist nations by encouraging the

⁸⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Conversation between Stalin and Kim in Moscow between March 1950 and April 1950*.

⁸⁵ Hak Jun Kim, "The Origin and development of the Korean War," *Essays in celebration of the 50th anniversary of independence II*, Seoul: National Research Foundation of Korea, 1995, pp.65-72; Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, No.8.

⁸⁶ Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, p.34.

⁸⁷ Kyu Song Yang, "In which way did Stalin support the Korean War?" *The 21 Century*, Vol.81, 2004, pp.136-140.

Chinese style in Asia. Stalin continued to be defensive in his foreign policy in order to avoid any kind of confrontation with the US. According to the report by Olga Chechetkina - the representative of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party in World Youth League for Democracy - on 12 September 1947 during her visit to South East Asian countries, it suggested that "Moscow should support establishing an allied organisation of Communist Parties in South East Asia and create permanent trade representatives in Indonesia in order to offer aid effectively."⁸⁸ However, this report was criticised by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs with comments that "it was not carefully considered and mostly inappropriate." Soon after, Chechetkina was dismissed from her post.⁸⁹ This indicates that the Soviet leadership disagreed with adopting proactive measures to support expanding communism in Third World nations.

Another example of a careful approach by Moscow in terms of the anti-imperialism movement was when the Southeast Asian Youth Representative Conference was held in Jakarta in February 1948. At this conference, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered Soviet representatives to accept that "the anti-imperialist struggle in Southeast Asia should be done within a legal framework, including a request for the right to participate in politics, social benefits, land reform and free education."⁹⁰ In April 1948, communist parties in Pakistan, Turkey, and Iraq suggested holding an Arab nations' Communist Party Representative Conference, but the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party rejected this idea because "it might give the enemy a pretext to distort Cominform and the Soviet Union."⁹¹ This shows that Moscow was careful not to provoke any conflict with the US in Asia in the early Cold War period and more importantly it did not encourage Third World countries to adopt a radical policy using military means to expand communism in their nations.

There is another example to show Moscow's attitude towards communist activities in Asia.

⁸⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Report by O. Chechetkina, 12 Sep 1947.

⁸⁹ Larisa Efimova, "Did the Soviet Union Instruct Southeast Asian Communists to revolt? New Russian Evidence on the Calcutta Youth Conference of February 1948," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol.40, No.3, 2009, pp. 455-463.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 464-465.

⁹¹ G.M. Adibekov, *Cominform and the Post War Europe 1947-1956*, Moscow: Russia Maladaya, 1994, pp.80-81.

The Malaysian Communist Party did not receive any aid or instruction from Moscow in its armed uprising. Instead, it was Communist China that contacted the Malaysian Communist Party and offered help.⁹² In the case of the Vietnamese revolution, which was the most influential armed uprising in South East Asia, it was not the Soviet Communist Party but the Indochina Communist Party who instructed the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. In addition, Stalin did not show any reaction after receiving a report on establishing a provisional Democratic Republic of Vietnam on 2 September 1945. It was not until 1950, after recognising the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, that it was mentioned in the Soviet media in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*.⁹³ As a result of Soviet reluctance to get involved in the communist revolutionary movement, the Vietnamese revolutionists became closer to the Chinese Communists. In fact, Soviet policy towards Asia after the formation of Cominform in 1947 was limited to the basic principle of appealing to Asian nations to resist imperialism, but not to encourage an armed uprising. Although there was an ongoing armed uprising after 1948 in many Asian countries, there has been not enough evidence forthcoming to prove that it was directly related to orders from the Kremlin.

Stalin's attitude towards Asia can be examined by what happened between him and Mao in 1949. Prior to the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution, Mao suggested to Stalin that Cominform should be established in each Asian nation. Stalin's reply on 26 May 1949, however, pointed out that "if the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) approached the border of Indochina, Myanmar and India, a revolutionary atmosphere would be created in these countries and possibly expand to Indonesia and the Philippines as well, which would increase the chances for the imperialists to lose these nations. Therefore, the US or Britain might attempt to control the southern part of China and dispatch their armies to Qingdao or Tianjin port, which would be seriously dangerous to the PLA." Stalin advised Mao "not to rush to move near the border of Indochina, Myanmar, or India but to dispatch two PLA units to Qingdao and Tianjin to prepare for possible invasion by the imperialists." Stalin also commented that "it was not

⁹² Leon Comber, "The Origins of the Cold War in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Communist Party of Malaya 1948-1960 – A Special Branch Perspective," *ISEAS Working Papers on Politics and Security Issues*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Feb 2009, pp. 2-10.

⁹³ I.A. Ognetov, "The Soviet Attitude towards Vietnam," *Questions of History*, No.8, 2001, p.137.

the right time to establish the Communist Information Bureau in East Asia.”⁹⁴ This demonstrates that Stalin was reluctant to encourage the communist revolution in Asia even near the time of the successful Chinese Communist Revolution.

This raises a fundamental question about Stalin’s policy related to the Korean War. Did Stalin change his attitude to expand communism in Asia after the success of the Chinese Revolution and therefore permit Kim’s war plan to unify Korea under communism? Ironically, after the success of the Communist Revolution in China, the conflict of interests between Moscow and Beijing had been clearer and resulted in suspicion, distrust, and resentment between Stalin and Mao. An article in *Pravda* on 5 October 1949 commented that “the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution was influenced by the October Revolution and the guidance of Leninism and Stalinism.” However, it did not mention Mao’s strategy of expanding his revolution from farm villages to cities and the role of military forces. When the Asia and Oceania labour union conference was held in Beijing on 16 November 1949, Liu Shaoqi - the Chinese Vice President - announced in the opening address that “the Chinese Revolution was successful due to the victory of military struggle, so-called ‘Mao’s way’ and it should be adopted by the colonial people to achieve independence and liberation.”⁹⁵ This speech was denounced by other nations at the event, including the Soviet Union, due to Liu’s praise for Mao’s style of revolution, and they decided not to officially announce this speech.

Although Moscow criticised the peaceful transitional theory by the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), it did not encourage adopting the Chinese style of military revolution. Stalin’s objective was to participate in the process of a peace treaty with Japan after the Second World War in order to protect Soviet security in East Asia and to complete the Yalta Agreements. Due to Washington’s attitude against Moscow, Stalin attempted to resolve the Japanese issue with support of the KMT government led by Chiang Kai-shek. However, after the Chinese Revolution, the KMT government was not able to be a partner anymore. Therefore Moscow turned its attention to the JCP as a strategic partner, but the problem was that the JCP adopted a peaceful strategy to cooperate with the US. This certainly caused Stalin’s fear of post-war

⁹⁴ APRF, “telegram sent to Ivan Kovalev, who was a messenger to Mao, by Stalin on 26 May 1949,” F.45, OP.1, D.331, pp.73-75.

⁹⁵ Chinese People’s Daily News, 17 November 1949, p.1.

Japan, which was revealed in the official newspaper of Cominform; “US interests in Asia had moved from China to Japan after the success of the Chinese Communist Revolution and it attempted to legalise occupying Japan for the long term. Therefore, the Japanese should confront US imperialism.” At the same time, the JCP was criticised as an anti-democratic and anti-socialistic group.⁹⁶ Interestingly, it did not mention the example of the Chinese Communist Revolution in the article. Instead, it focused on denouncing the JCP’s peaceful policy towards the US occupation forces, but there was no clear instruction on how the revolutionary movement should proceed in Japan. It can be argued that Stalin did not want to encourage Japan to follow the Chinese style of revolution.

Stalin’s negative thoughts about the Chinese style of communist revolution also emerged from his comments at the meeting with the Indian Communist Party delegates in Moscow in February 1951. Stalin mentioned that “the guerrilla warfare, which the CCP had adopted, was not appropriate for advanced capitalist nations, so it was only for Chinese people.” Stalin added that “India could not apply the Chinese style of revolution, as it did not have an ally to rely on as China did on the Soviet Union.”⁹⁷ He emphasised that “the Chinese model of revolution was not universally applicable and would not be possible without Soviet aid.” Therefore, it can be argued that Stalin’s change in his attitude towards Kim’s war plan in early 1950 was not closely related to promoting a communist revolution in the Korean Peninsula. As examined above, Stalin did not intend to spread the Chinese style of communist revolution in Asia and attempted to ensure that Mao could have not been successful without Soviet support. It seemed that Stalin considered Mao as a competitor in Asia, so tried to hold him in check so that he didn’t become a leading figure in this region.

In this context, it was an exceptional case for Stalin to support Kim’s military plan to unify Korea under communism. As for Stalin’s support for China, it was limited to the Northeast region and was done secretly and Stalin did not even trust the Chinese communist movement until it came close to success. However, the case of North Korea was different in terms of Stalin’s support, as he was actively involved in Kim’s initial war plan and sent Soviet military

⁹⁶ Chinese People’s Daily News, 11 January 1950, p.1.

⁹⁷ RGASPI, “The record on meeting between Stalin and Indian Communist Party leader,” 9 February 1951, F.558, OP.11, D.310, pp.78-85.

advisors as well as weapons to North Korea, so Stalin's decision to support Kim was not to expand communism but to secure Soviet global security strategy.

Stalin's Confidence in the Acheson announcement?

Some scholars including W. Stueck, C. Dobbs, and K. Weathersby argued that Stalin's support for Kim's proposed war plan in Korea was significantly influenced by Acheson's declaration on 12 January 1950 that "the US defence line in the Pacific region would not include the Korean Peninsula." In this case, Korea and Taiwan would be out of US protection, meaning that Stalin thought that the US would not intervene in Korean affairs.⁹⁸ By contrast, D. Kim asserted that both Stalin and Mao were aware of that it was Washington's strategy to hide its imperialist's approach in the Far East. This is why Stalin never excluded the possible US military intervention in case of the war in Korea when he met Kim in Moscow in the spring of 1950.⁹⁹ This argument sounds more reasonable in that it was not Acheson who announced the US defence line in the Far East for the first time. During the press interview in March 1949, the US General MacArthur mentioned that "the American defence line would go through islands in Asia which started from the Philippines and continued to Okinawa, as the main military base, and to the Aleutian Islands and Alaska."¹⁰⁰ In addition, on 30 December 1949, the US National Security Council (NSC) dealt with this issue and decided to strengthen relations with the Philippines and Japan.¹⁰¹ With regards to the US defence line in the Far East, it did not include Taiwan as well.

In these circumstances, it is worth considering why Stalin did not support the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in any efforts to unify Taiwan but did agree to Kim's war plans in Korea. Actually, it would have been less risky for Stalin to support Mao rather than Kim, as it

⁹⁸ William W. Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation: American policy toward China and Korea, 1947-1950*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981, p.161; Charles M. Dobbs, *The Unwanted Symbol: American Foreign Policy, the Cold War, and Korea, 1945-1950*, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1981, pp.180-182; Kathryn Weathersby, "To Attack, or Not to Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung and the Prelude to War," *Cold War International History Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 2005.

⁹⁹ Donggil Kim, Stalin's Korean U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011, pp.95-96.

¹⁰⁰ Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p.357.

¹⁰¹ FRUS, The Far East and Australasia, Vol.7, Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1949.

could have been considered as a continuation of the civil war between mainland China and Taiwan, making it difficult for Washington to intervene in Chinese domestic affairs. Furthermore, Mao received approval from Stalin for taking military action against Taiwan earlier than Kim did for Korea. However, Stalin changed his policy and decided to support Kim to go to war against South Korea and asked Mao to support Kim. It is because Stalin made the decision in his foreign policy in Asia from a wider context to consider other competitors – the US and China.

The Question about the absence of the Soviet representative in UNSC

Historians have often questioned why the Soviet representative did not attend the UNSC meeting to discuss the Korean War. A. Gromiko emphasised that the Soviet absence of UNSC was the pivotal incident as a game changer. He asserted that the Soviet Union should have used a veto against a resolution by the UNSC led by Washington.¹⁰² P. Lowe argued that Stalin did not believe that the US would act militarily, which was Stalin's mistake.¹⁰³ During this meeting, the UN passed the resolution proposed by the US for the American military intervention in the war. Later this brought various arguments as to why the Soviet representative did not participate in such an important meeting. M. Park claimed that Stalin did not want to be considered as a supporter for North Korea and also officially avoided getting involved in the war. However, Stalin was confident Kim would have a swift victory; therefore the UN resolution would not work properly.¹⁰⁴ W. Haruki pointed out that Stalin was concerned that if the Soviet used its veto in UNSC, this would stimulate the US blaming both the USSR and North Korea, which would escalate the war.¹⁰⁵ W. Stueck made an interesting argument that UN military intervention in Korea was not what Stalin hoped. In the letter to Gottwald, Stalin just tried to assure his infallible leadership. Stalin emphasised the importance of a swift

¹⁰² Andrei Gromiko, Park Hyungkyu(trans.), *Gromiko's Memoir*, Seoul: Literature & Ideology Press, 1990, pp. 125-126.

¹⁰³ Peter Lowe, *The Korean War*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000, pp.21-23.

¹⁰⁴ Park, *The Korean War*, p.200.

¹⁰⁵ Wada Haruki, Seo Dongman(trans.), *The Korean War*, Seoul: Creation & Criticism Press, 1999, p.34.

victory to Kim, as he preferred to have no US intervention.¹⁰⁶ By contrast, D. Kim explained that Stalin purposely wanted the US to be engaged in the war in order to consolidate the Soviet power in Europe as well as to delay a possible outbreak of a Third World war. D. Kim also argued that Stalin had strong hopes for Chinese involvement in Korea even at the early stage of the war.¹⁰⁷

Another explanation was that the US under the UN flag would not declare war against China in case of Chinese intervention. In these circumstances, in spite of the Sino-Soviet treaty, there would be no responsibility for the Red Army to be involved in the Korean War to confront with the US.¹⁰⁸ With regards to this issue, there is important evidence to explain Stalin's order for the Soviet delegate not to attend the UNSC meeting. That is the secret telegram by Stalin on 27 August 1950 to Klement Gottwald, the President of Czechoslovakia. This is as follows;

We(the Soviet) left the Security Council for four reasons; first, to demonstrate solidarity of the Soviet Union with the new China. Second, to underscore the foolishness of the US policy of recognising the KMT as the representative of China to the Security Council. Third, to render decisions of UNSC illegitimate by absence of two great powers. Fourth, to give the US a free hand to commit more foolishness to show the public its true face. I(Stalin) believe that we have achieved all of these goals. The US is presently distracted from Europe in the Far East. It gives us an advantage in the global balance of power. Let us suppose that the US continues to be tied down in the Far East and also pulls China into the struggle for Korea's independence. What would happen? First, America cannot cope with China. Second, it would be incapable of a third world war in the near future, which would provide the time to strengthen socialism in Europe, not to mention that the struggle between the US and China would revolutionise the entire Far East. This would give us an advantage for the global balance of power. One might ask why we have now returned to the Security Council. It is to expose the US' aggressive policy.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Donggil Kim & William Stueck, "Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?" *North Korea International Documentation Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, June 2008.

¹⁰⁸ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, The Research Centre on the Modern Korean History in Sungkyunkwan University(trans.), *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing Co., Ltd., 2011, p.293.

¹⁰⁹ RGASPI, "A message from Stalin to K. Gottwald," F.558, OP.11, D.62, pp.71-72.

In this letter, Stalin repeated “the global balance of power” twice, and this gives a hint to assume that Stalin’s objective of the Korean War needs to be addressed in it. Let’s have a close look at what Stalin mentioned in the letter about the reasons of being absent at the UNSC meeting. Firstly, it was for demonstrating solidarity between Moscow and Beijing. Actually Moscow started to boycott since 13 January 1950 to protest the US objection against acknowledging the Communist Chinese government in the UNSC. Under the situation of this issue still remaining unsolved, the Soviet returned to the UNSC on 1 August when only a month had passed after the outbreak of the war. Stalin’s explanation to protest a huge issue on collective military intervention led by the US by reason of recognition issue does not sound enough to understand Stalin’s real intention. Rather it sounds more diplomatic rhetoric. Secondly, Stalin mentioned that “it was to underscore the US’ foolishness.” This means if the USSR attended, it could have prevented the idiocy. In other words, the Soviet veto could have prohibited the UN military intervention in the war, and Stalin connived the US to be involved in the Korean issue. Thirdly, Stalin pointed out that “the decision by the UNSC became illegitimate.” In reality, however, it became legitimate due to the Soviet absence. The UNSC declared that North Korea’s invasion was an act of aggression towards the South, and decided to dispatch the UN forces to Korea. Fourthly, Stalin mentioned that “it was for letting the US commit more foolishness.” In this situation, it needs to be proved that Stalin should have prepared for losing Korea to the US in case of that it did not want direct military confrontation with the US.

D. Kim and K. Ki argued that Stalin wanted to gain time to solidify socialism in Europe.¹¹⁰ However, they did not provide enough explanation on what Stalin meant by this. It seems rather the balance of power achieved in European theatre between Moscow and Washington. The NATO in April 1949 was established in order to prevent the Soviet from expanding its influence to the west. Moreover, the balance between the US nuclear weapon and the Soviet ground forces, the Soviet nuclear deterrent after the successful test, and rapid economic recovery in the west led the stability in Europe. Therefore, there seemed no place for Stalin to further expand the sphere of Soviet influence in Europe. This led Stalin to pay more attention to the Far East, and the possible rapprochement between the US and China, and Kim’s consistent

¹¹⁰ Donggil Kim & William Stueck, “Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?” *North Korea International Documentation Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, June 2008; Kwang Seo Ki, “Stalin’s Role in the Korean War,” *Military History*, Vol. 63, 2007, p.98.

request on unifying Korea by military action established a new frontier for Stalin against the west.

Stalin showed his perspective towards the US mentioning that “as long as the capitalism exists in this world, it is inevitable to have a war between the communists and the capitalists. It is only possible through military means to spread communism.”¹¹¹ As mentioned, Stalin was concerned about a possible Third World war. In this respect, it can be argued that Stalin wanted a prolonged war in Korea to bridge the economic gap with the US. As D. Kim pointed out, the intensified Cold War resulted in the Soviet economic drain to support its satellite nations.¹¹² Therefore, Stalin seemed to bring the balance of power with the US by its tie-up in Korea.

Interestingly, the US side had the same concern of a possible Third World war. According to George Kennan’s report in 1946, “the Soviet leadership thought a Third World war was unavoidable” and this played a pivotal role in the US decision to take active measures against the USSR including the Truman Doctrine.¹¹³ Both Moscow and Washington, which had experienced two world wars, believed that another world war was inevitable and this notion caused an unnecessary overreaction towards the counterpart’s policy. The fear of world war against each other resulted in a hot war in Korea, which aggravated the Cold War in the end.

There is good evidence to prove that Stalin considered the Korean War differently from Kim. Interestingly, there was one thing that could not be found in Stalin’s telegram to Gottwald. Stalin did not mention anything about the unification of Korea or the expansion of communism. This means that a unified Korea under communism was not Stalin’s goal in the war. Stalin’s ultimate goal in the war was that Kim should not achieve a swift victory in order to tie up the US as long as possible. This telegram was sent in late August 1950, when North Korean forces carried out a full-scale offensive at the Nakdong River front line and General MacArthur was preparing for the Incheon Landing Operation. At this time, Mao continued to ask Stalin to

¹¹¹ Young Woo Lee, *The Soviet internal and external Policy*, Seoul: Yangyoung gak, 1983, p.154.

¹¹² Donggil Kim, Stalin’s Korean U-Turn: The USSR’s Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011, p.98.

¹¹³ Dmitri Volkogonov, The Institute of Korean Strategic Research Institute (trans.), *Stalin*, Seoul: Sekyong Press, 1993, p.334.

approve Chinese military intervention in the war to ensure a swift victory by Kim. However, Stalin did not reply to Mao's request until the UN's forces advanced northward from the 38th parallel in October. This is different from D. Kim's argument that Stalin had strong hopes for China's intervention in the Korean War even at an early stage.¹¹⁴ It seems that Stalin intentionally interrupted Kim's victory and manipulated the war.

Stalin seemed to know the outcome when the Soviet representative did not attend the UNSC meeting. According to the memoir by A. Mikoyan, the Soviet Vice President of the Council of Ministers, "he advised Stalin several times to order Yakov A. Malik to return to the UNSC but Stalin commented that the Soviet representative did not need to participate in the UNSC meeting."¹¹⁵ This kind of calm reaction by Stalin meant that everything was under control. From Stalin's perspective, the UNSC meeting without Soviet representative was the best option in order to maximise Soviet strategic interests. In the case of Soviet participation in the UNSC meeting, there would be two dilemmas for Moscow to confront; if the Soviet representative did not use the right of veto or abstention, it would harm the USSR's political status as a leader of socialist nations. On the other hand, if the Soviet representative exercised the veto to block the UNSC's resolution, it would show Moscow supported Kim, which might cause confrontation with the US and the world media. Neither of these two options was ideal for Stalin, meaning that the best way was for the Soviet representative not to attend.

This proves that Stalin had been extremely careful not to be involved in any hostility with the US and this kind of prudent characteristic could be found right after the outbreak of the Korean War as well. When a Soviet warship arrived in North Korea five days before the outbreak of the war, Kim requested ten Soviet navigators to be sent, but Stalin rejected it. In addition, when North Korea launched an attack against the South, Stalin ordered the recall of all Soviet military advisors stationed at the North Korean front line unit. Regarding Stalin's decision, he explained to Nikita Khrushchev that "it was not good to leave any evidence to prove that the Soviet Union was involved in the Korean War."¹¹⁶ It shows clearly that Stalin wanted the US and the world

¹¹⁴ Donggil Kim & William Stueck, "Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?" *North Korea International Documentation Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, June 2008.

¹¹⁵ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, *Uncertain Partners*, p.161.

¹¹⁶ Nikita S. Khrushchev, Strobe Talbott (Trans), *Khrushchev remembers*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1971, p.370.

to have no suspicion of his engaging with the Korean War.

Conclusion

Stalin strictly opposed Kim's idea to unify Korea by military means until the end of 1949 to avoid any conflict with the US. However, Stalin's attitude changed to give the green light to Kim to launch a military attack against the South in January 1950. In Stalin's telegram to Kim, Stalin mentioned not telling Mao about the meeting between them to discuss the war plan. This raised a fundamental question as to why Stalin changed his foreign policy in January 1950 and also why he wanted to hide it from Mao at the early stage of planning the war.

There was a change of the global security environment in early 1950; the revision of the Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance Treaty between Stalin and Mao, conciliatory movements between Washington and Beijing, and the reconstruction plan for Japan by NSC 61. This led Stalin to rethink the value of Korea, as the outbreak of war in the Korean Peninsula would serve multiple purposes; maintaining Stalin as a key figure in the communist world, enjoying the Soviet privilege in Manchuria, preventing possible rapprochement between the US and China, and delaying the outbreak of a Third World War by weakening the US.

Stalin achieved his goals after the outbreak of the Korean War. Mao's internal leadership was threatened due to social and economic unrest, and Beijing approved the Soviet forces to use the Changchun railways and requested the Red Army to be stationed in the military base in Port Arthur to protect Chinese security. When the time came for Soviet forces to return their right to use Port Arthur to China in September 1952, the Chinese government voluntarily requested Moscow not to withdraw the Red Army from the Northeast region in China and remain stationed within Chinese territory. Under these circumstances, Stalin seized the opportunity to amend the Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance Treaty, which was concluded with Mao in February 1950.¹¹⁷ The revised Sino-Soviet treaty provided what Stalin lost from the negotiation with Mao that the Chinese government decided to open the Changchun Railways and all airways in the Northeast region for the Soviet forces. Mao voluntarily requested for Stalin to approve the Red Army being stationed in China and to use all the

¹¹⁷ APRF, "record about the meeting between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 5 Aug 1952," F.45, OP.1, D.329, pp.55-72.

facilities in the Northeast region. This saved Stalin's reputation as a leader of communist nations and also showed his superiority over Mao to the public. Furthermore, China lost a chance to unify Taiwan, which would have strengthened Mao's reputation as a communist leader in Asia. The direct conflict between China and the US damaged Chinese diplomatic relations with the US as well as other western nations for a few decades.

There are conventional approaches that the announcement of the Acheson line in January 1950 gave Kim false hope to be able to win the war in Korea.¹¹⁸ However, this argument does not seem to be persuasive in that the actual idea of the US defence line in the Far East was introduced much earlier than the announcement by Dean Acheson. Also this chapter explained why the Soviet delegate did not attend the UNSC meeting where the resolution about US military intervention was passed. This was described by G. Roberts as Stalin's mistake by boycotting the UN to protest about the exclusion of Communist China as a member, which eventually gave a free hand to the US to engage in the Korean War.¹¹⁹ According to Stalin's telegram to K. Gottwald on 27 August 1950, he explained that the reason for not attending the UNSC meeting was to let the US engage with the Korean War.¹²⁰ In this telegram, Stalin also commented that "it would prove that the US was not militarily strong as expected and the conflict between the US and China in Korea would prevent the possible outbreak of a Third World War in the near future." So, Stalin's plan for the outbreak of the Korean War was to have the US involved it and come into conflict with China militarily, which would result in consuming the US war potential as well as drawing political attention to Asia.

Stalin expected that Mao would not allow the US forces to be close to the northeast region in China, and therefore Mao would definitely become involved in the war. Stalin's analysis of Mao's policy was proved to be correct by Chinese documents. The reason that Mao decided to engage in the Korean War was to secure his political status within China, as there was serious social unrest among the Chinese public to worry about the possibility of a Third World War and rumour that Mao's regime would collapse and Chiang return to power. This had shaken

¹¹⁸ Dobbs, *The Unwanted Symbol*, pp.180-181; Stueck, *The Road to Confrontation*, p.161.

¹¹⁹ Roberts, *Stalin's Wars*, p.366.

¹²⁰ RGASPI, "A message from Stalin to Gottwald," F.558, OP.11, D.62, pp.71-72.

the foundations of Mao's political status within China and therefore Mao finally decided to engage in the war.

Regarding Stalin's motivation for supporting Kim, the Chinese Communist Revolution has often been considered as one of the most important factors to give Stalin confidence in launching the war.¹²¹ Furthermore, there was another argument that Stalin started to attack the imperialist camp by means of encouraging Asian nations' revolution after the Communist victory in China.¹²² In fact, however, Stalin did not support armed revolt in Asia. Instead, he advised Mao that "spreading the Chinese Communist forces across the region such as Indo-China, Myanmar and India would threaten imperial interests, including the US, and therefore it would be better not to advance southward but to prepare for possible attack from imperialists from the rear."¹²³ This indicates that Stalin was concerned about possible military confrontation with the US in Asia due to revolutionary movements. This is why Stalin advised Mao to take the passive option of defending itself from possible threat from the US.

Apart from this, Stalin did not trust Mao in terms of his way of achieving the Chinese revolution, and therefore Stalin did not recognise Mao's experience to complete the Communist revolution. Before the success of the Chinese Revolution by Mao, Stalin mentioned to Harry Hopkins, the US delegate, at the meeting in Moscow in 1945 that "Chiang Kai-shek was the only person who could unify China, as the Chinese Communist leaders did not have the ability to achieve it."¹²⁴ Mao was also well aware of Stalin's assessment of himself by saying that "Stalin wanted to block the success of the Chinese Revolution by advising me to cooperate with Chiang to avoid the Chinese civil war." Mao also added that "Stalin was suspicious that Communist China, after the success of its revolution, might become a Yugoslavia in Asia and I(Mao) would be the second Tito."¹²⁵ This demonstrates that Stalin did not support Mao's way of achieving the Chinese Communist Revolution. Rather Stalin seemed to consider Mao as a competitor in Asia as a leader of communists.

¹²¹ Sandler, *The Korean War*, p.29.

¹²² Kyu Song Yang, "Mao, Stalin and the Korean War," *The 21 Century*, Vol.81, 2004, pp.136-141.

¹²³ APRF, "Stalin's telegram to Mao through I. Kovalev on 26 May 1949," F.45, OP.1, D.331, pp.73-75.

¹²⁴ The US Department of State, *The China White Paper*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979, p.116.

¹²⁵ Mao, "The Conversation in the 10th meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 24 Sep 1962," *Chinese Internal Report*, p.432.

Considering all the information, Stalin made a final decision to approve Kim's initial idea to launch a military attack with the objective of securing Soviet leverage under a new global security environment.

V. Different opinions on Stalin and Mao's involvement

Chinese military involvement in the Korean War has been considered as a historical moment and a game changer. The war was escalated into the international level between Communist China and the US.¹ Regarding Mao's decision to engage in the war, there have been various arguments about it; A. Whiting argued that Mao was a reluctant participant.² S. Goncharov, J. Lewis and X. Litai claimed that Mao was manipulated to send the Chinese army to Korea by Stalin and Kim.³ K. Weathersby asserted that Stalin was afraid that Mao would become the 'Asian Tito', so he created the crisis in Korea at the doorstep of China to draw Mao into a conflict with the US.⁴ Their arguments focus on that Mao was a passive player in the war. On the other hand, M. Sheng argued that the ideology played a more important role in Mao's decision to engage in the war, as Mao considered the Korean War as a part of continuing revolution.⁵

Chinese government has not officially admitted that the Korean War begins with North Korea's invasion to the South. The book called 'the history of the Korean War' by the military science institute of PLA in 2000 still argues that the Korean War was initially started by the South.⁶ However, the report by Chinese social science institute in 2013 mentioned that North Korea began to launch a military offensive against the South under the connivance of Moscow and Beijing.⁷ Ostensibly Chinese government explained that Chinese involvement in the war

¹ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War : Liberation and the Establishment of Separate Regimes 1945-1947, The Roaring of the Cataract 1947-1950*, 2 Vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981/1990; K. Weathersby, "Soviet aim in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War," *Working Paper* NO.8, Cold War International History Project, Nov 1993.

² Allen S. Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

³ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, The Research Centre on the Modern Korean History in Sungkyunkwan University(trans.), *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing Co., Ltd., 2011, p.293.

⁴ K. Weathersby, "Should we fear this? Stalin and the danger of war with America," *Working Paper* NO.39, Cold War International History Project, July 2002.

⁵ Michael Sheng, "Beijing's Decision to enter the Korean War," *Korea and World Affairs*, Summer 1995, p.294.

⁶ Military science institute in PLA, *The history of the Korean War*, Beijing: Chinese People's Army Press, 2000.

⁷ Chinese Social science institute, *The Report of the Korean War*, Beijing: Chinese Social science Press, 2013.

contributed to its international status by equally confronting with the US. According to the underused Chinese internal government report, however, it admitted that China suffered a tremendous loss by the Korean War; the total casualties were nine hundred twenty thousand soldiers out of one million and three hundred forty thousand dispatched forces. Economic damage was huge as the defence expenditure was increased to fifty two point forty three percent out of the total government budget, which led to the failure of five year economic plan in China. Also the chance of unifying Taiwan was lost by PLA's participation in the war. Internationally, PRC was branded as an invader within the western world, which prevented it from being a member of the UN, and took a few decades to normalise the relations with the US.⁸ As shown, Mao's decision to enter the war had a huge influence on its domestic as well as international affairs. Therefore, there is a need to analyse why the PLA participated in the war even with a great risk in newly founded Communist China.

Initially Stalin decided to support Kim's war plan in January 1950 but there was a prerequisite for Kim to have Mao's approval to launch a war, as Stalin did not want to be involved in the war directly. Instead, he required Mao to take responsibility to dispatch Chinese troops to help Kim's war. Hao & Zhai argued that there would not have been Chinese military engagement unless the US broke through the 38th parallel line.⁹ However, as D. Kim pointed out, it has been proved that Mao asked for Stalin to approve dispatching Chinese troops to Korea in the early stage of the war between July and August 1950, but Stalin rejected Mao's request.¹⁰ This chapter examines why Stalin opposed Mao's suggestion of early Chinese intervention in the war when the North Korean army was superior to that of the South and the UN. If the Chinese army intervened in the war at that time, Kim could have won quickly without too much difficulty. Due to Stalin's rejection of early Chinese participation in the war, it lasted for more than three years and caused considerable loss of life and massive destruction on the Korean territories. In this context, it is important to examine why Mao asked for Stalin to approve early intervention in the war and the reason why Stalin did not approve of it.

⁸ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The Historical source of Chinese international relations*, Beijing: Chinese Central Press, 1999.

⁹ Yufan Hao & Zhihai Zhai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited," *China Quarterly*, No.121, 1990, pp.94-115.

¹⁰ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao's initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.239-254.

Before the outbreak of the war, Kim visited Moscow in spring 1950 and had three meetings with Stalin. During these meetings, Kim tried to persuade Stalin to approve his war plan, as he was confident that the US would not have enough time to send troops over to Korea. In response, Stalin mentioned that “the USSR would not be involved in the Korean issue even if there was US intervention in the war and therefore Kim should not expect the direct support of the Soviet armed forces.” Instead, Stalin suggested that “Kim should discuss this issue with Mao and get his approval to launch a war against South Korea.”¹¹ In accordance with Stalin’s directions, Kim visited Beijing between 13 May and 15 May 1950 to get Mao’s approval to launch a war.¹²

Before the outbreak of the war, Stalin advocated Chinese participation if the US got involved. In fact, Mao told Kim that “the Chinese army would support North Korea if the US interfered in the 38th parallel.”¹³ On 2 July, the day after the US ground forces arrived in Busan in South Korea, Zhou Enlai notified this kind of Chinese condition to enter the war to Stalin.¹⁴ With regards to Chinese notification, Stalin agreed with it and advised China to send nine divisions to the border area between China and North Korea to prepare for the time when the opponent broke through the 38th parallel and mentioned that “Moscow would try its best to provide an air escort for the Chinese forces.”¹⁵ Before the outbreak of the War, Kim clearly mentioned that “the unification of Korea would be accomplished with his own power and with enough military support from Moscow, it would not be necessary to ask for Mao’s help.” Kim also sent this message to Mao. When Mao told Kim about sending three corps to the region near the Yalu River in May 1950, Kim was suspicious of Mao’s intention to participate in the war.¹⁶ This indicates that there were different thoughts about China’s involvement in the war between Stalin, Mao and Kim.

¹¹ Anatoly Torkunov, “Report on Kim Il Sung’s visit to the Soviet Union between 30 March and 25 April 1950,” *The War in Korea 1950-1953: Its origin, bloodshed and conclusion*, Tokyo: ICF Publishers, 2000, pp.51-52.

¹² RGASPI, “Telegram sent to Stalin by the Soviet ambassador in China, Nikolai V. Roshchin,” 14 May 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334, p.56.

¹³ Evgeniy P. Bajanov & Natalia Bajanov, “The Korean Conflict 1950-1953: The Moscow mysterious war of the 20th century,” based on secret Soviet archives, Moscow: Russian Academy of Foreign Affairs, unpublished.

¹⁴ APRF, “Telegram to Stalin by Zhou Enlai through Roshchin, the Soviet ambassador in China,” 2 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.331, pp.75-77.

¹⁵ APRF, “Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin, the Soviet ambassador in China,” 5 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334, p.79.

¹⁶ The Chinese Communist Party’s Central International Department, “The Record on the Second meeting between Mao and the Soviet representatives,” 23 September 1956, Beijing: Chinese government.

Previous research on China's involvement in the Korean War mainly focused on the period between the Incheon Landing Operation, the so called Operation Chromite on 15 September 1950 and China's final decision to send its troops on 13 October 1950. However, there has not been enough research on what happened in the period between the outbreak of war on 25 June 1950 and late September when Washington seriously considered breaking through the 38th parallel. During this period, the outbreak of the war had a significant impact on Chinese domestic affairs. As a result, Mao asked Stalin's permission to dispatch the Chinese army to Korea, but Stalin rejected it. Right after launching the war, Kim asked Stalin to provide an air escort and approve the sending of Chinese troops to help North Korea. It was not until the end of August that Stalin showed his disagreement with Kim's suggestion.¹⁷ In fact, it was only after the breakthrough of the 38th parallel by the UN forces at the end of September 1950 that the issue of Chinese intervention in the war was discussed again among Stalin, Mao and Kim.¹⁸

With the worsening situation for North Korea, the Chinese leadership could not reach an agreement over the issue. Consequently, Mao sent a telegram to Stalin that "China could not send troops to support North Korea in this difficult time."¹⁹ As seen, Mao's attitude towards the Korean War had changed over time depending on the situation in Korea. The outcome of the Korean War would have been different if the Chinese troops had been sent earlier to support North Korea, but from Mao's perspective, it could cause more trouble to Communist China as well as his leadership by confronting the US militarily without being confident of winning the war. From the military point of view, early Chinese intervention seemed the right choice to win the war and this was why Kim also asked for Stalin's approval of Chinese military participation in the early stage of the war. It was Stalin who tried to control the war, as his objective in Korea was to prolong the war to weaken the US militarily, economically, and ideologically in Asia by means of military confrontation against China.

¹⁷ APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov about the military plan in North Korea," 28 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347, pp.5-11.

¹⁸ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Mao Zedong between 1949 and 1976*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2013, p.200; APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin about supporting North Korea by sending Chinese troops," 1 October 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334, pp.97-98.

¹⁹ RGASPI, "Telegram sent to Stalin from Mao through Roshchin," 3 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334, p.106.

Regarding the US attitude towards the Korean War, Washington decided to actively engage in it from the beginning, as it considered the conflict not as civil warfare in Korea but as a proxy war carried out by Kim to fulfil Soviet interests. The US Department of State evaluated that “North Korea was fully under Moscow’s control and therefore the invasion of the South was planned and conducted by Moscow.”²⁰ The US president, Harry Truman, also commented that “if South Korea came under the control of the North Korean regime, this would accelerate the communists’ ability to violate liberal nations and, therefore, the liberal camp should block the attack by North Korea.”²¹ Under American leadership, the UNSC passed a resolution on 27 June to support South Korea and repel North Korea’s military attack to regain international peace and security.²² This became the legal framework for the US to be involved in the war under the name of the UN. The US started to launch an air bombardment on North Korean territory from 30 June.²³ On 1 July, US ground forces, Charles Smith battalion, left the US air base in Fukuoka in Japan and arrived in Busan, moving to Gyeonggi province near Seoul to engage with the first battle against North Korean forces on 5 July. The UN Command was established on 7 July and appointed General MacArthur as its supreme commander. As seen, the US under the name of the UN was ready to get involved in the Korean War within two weeks after its outbreak.

With regards to North Korea, it achieved early successes by occupying Seoul on 28 June, just three days after launching an attack. B. Shin argued that the initial aim by Kim was to occupy Seoul only, but Kim changed the original plan due to the certainty of American involvement.²⁴ This proves incorrect that Kim and Stalin’s initial plan included the whole South Korea. Furthermore, in the telegram by Stalin to the Soviet ambassador on 1 July 1950, Stalin

²⁰ FRUS, “Resolution adopted by the UN Security Council,” 27 June 1950, p.216.

²¹ Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman: 1946-1952. Years of Trial and Hope*, Vol.2, New York: Doubleday, 1956, pp. 334-339.

²² FRUS, “Resolution adopted by the UN Security Council,” 25 June 1950, pp.155-156; FRUS, “Resolution adopted by the UN Security Council,” 27 June 1950, p.216.

²³ Dean Acheson, “Act of Aggression in Korea: Review of U.N. and US Action to restore peace,” *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol.23, No.575, 10 July 1950, pp.45-47.

²⁴ Bok Ryong Shin, “The Origin of the Korean War: Focusing on Kim Il Sung’s willingness to start to the war”, *The Journal of Korean Political Science Association*, Vol. 30, 1996, pp.168-175.

instructed that “the North Korean army should march southwards to liberate the south.”²⁵ At the same day, Roshchin, the Soviet ambassador in Beijing sent a telegram to Stalin about Beijing’s reaction about the Korean War. It said “the South Korean forces backed by the US have been defeated so far. Truman’s decision to enter the war is to reveal the US’ frustration, as the US which already had experienced failure in the Far East, began to worry about losing its status in Europe as well as Asia. The US is not ready to confront with Soviet backed democratic camp.”²⁶ This shows that Mao was positive and confident in the process of the war, as the North Korean forces were superior to the US backed South Korean forces. On 2 July, Zhou called in Soviet ambassador Roshchin to deliver Chinese government’s message about the Korean War. It said “if the US forces crossed the 38th parallel line, the PLA, having disguised as the Korean forces, would enter the war, and ask if the Soviets would provide air escort.”²⁷ Stalin replied that “if China dispatches its army to Korea, the Soviet would provide air escort.”²⁸ Until this moment, Mao and Stalin agreed the condition on the Chinese military intervention in Korea. D. Kim asserted that Mao shifted his attitude towards the Korean War soon after sending the telegram to Stalin about precondition of Chinese engagement of the war in that when Mao met North Korean envoy, Sang Jo Lee, on 12 July 1950 Mao mentioned that “if North Korea requests, China is ready to send PLA. Let me know your thoughts by 10 August.”²⁹ D. Kim argued that this was the moment that Mao changed his passive attitude as Mao wanted to enter the war even without the support of Soviet air cover. This argument, however, is not convincing by the underused historical Russian documents. On 13 July 1950, Stalin sent a telegram to Roshchin, and the contents are as follows;

To the Soviet ambassador in Beijing,

²⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Soviet ambassador in Pyongyang, 1 July 1950. (Korean version)

²⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 1 July 1950. (Korean version)

²⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 2 July 1950. (Korean version)

²⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Zhou, 5 July 1950. (Korean version)

²⁹ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.246-247.

Pass this telegram to Mao and Zhou.

We(the Soviets) still do not know whether you decided to dispatch 9 divisions of the PLA near the border with North Korea. If so, the Soviets are ready to provide one jet fighter division – one hundred twenty four combat planes- for air cover. We are also planning to train Chinese pilots for two to three months, and then would give all the equipment to Chinese pilots. We will do the same to air division in Shanghai.³⁰

As seen, Stalin tried to encourage for Mao to decide to enter the war by ensuring that the Soviets would promise to provide air escort for the Chinese forces. Ironically Stalin manipulated the timing of actual Chinese military intervention in spite of Mao and Kim's request. This is because what Stalin planned was not swift victory by early Chinese intervention but prolonged war between China and the US.

Kim, even soon after launching military offensive, continued to request Stalin to provide Soviet military support. On 3 July, Kim asked Stalin that “it is inevitable to confront with the US forces. So please approve sending two Soviet military advisors in each corps, and let Alexandre Vasiliev, the Chief of Soviet military advisor, and groups of Soviet military advisors in Seoul for a military operation plan against the US.” In this telegram, Shtykov also reported to Stalin that “Kim is complaining about slow military operation and lack of ammunition. The war situation is serious that Kim mentioned the war would be against the US from now.”³¹ On 5 July 1950, two days later when Kim asked about dispatching the Soviet military advisors, Kim requested for dispatching Soviet air forces as well as Chinese army due to the fact that the war situation was getting worse after participation of the US ground forces and air bombardment.³²

Regarding Kim's request on military aids, Stalin replied on 6 July 1950 that “it is more effective for the Chief of Soviet military advisor in Pyongyang”, and he did not mention about

³⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin, 13 July 1950. (Korean version)

³¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 4 July 1950. (Korean version)

³² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 7 July 1950. (Korean version)

dispatching the Soviet military advisor to North Korean corps.³³ While Stalin kept silent, Kim requested to Stalin on 8 July 1950 that “the North Korean military staff is not well aware of command technique in the modern military affairs, so please approve of dispatching twenty five to thirty Soviet military advisors to North Korean staff section at two front lines corps.”³⁴ With Kim’s continuous request, Stalin reluctantly agreed to send Soviet military advisors but gave a special order to disguise them as correspondents of *Pravda* and to prevent them from being war prisoners.³⁵ Stalin was well aware of that both Kim and Mao wanted Chinese military forces entering the war in this early stage, but he did not approve of it. In this situation, Mao took more active action towards Kim. Zhou sent Chinese *chargé d'affaires* to Pyongyang to send a message that “China is ready to support anything that North Korea needs in the war.”³⁶ After confirming China’s willingness to engage in the war, Kim told Shtykov that “the US and other countries are fighting for South Korea, and therefore it would be plausible for China or Czechoslovakia to dispatch their army to support North Korea.”³⁷ On 19 July, Kim complained to Shtykov that “the war operation was suspended due to the US’s air bombardment”, and mentioned that “Mao expressed his willingness to send the PLA to Korea if requested by Kim and the Korean Communist Party by mentioning that four corps – three hundred twenty thousand soldiers are ready to do so, and he emphasised that a Third World War would not be happening if China enters the war.”³⁸ At this meeting, Kim also mentioned that “China asked his reply by 10 August 1950 with regards to the issue of Chinese military participation.” However, Stalin continued to keep quiet about it. As demonstrated, Kim and Mao continuously requested Stalin’s approval to dispatch Chinese army in early July 1950, but Stalin just threw

³³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 6 July 1950. (Korean version)

³⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 8 July 1950. (Korean version)

³⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 8 July 1950. (Korean version)

³⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The report about meeting with Chinese charge d’affaires to Pyongyang, 10 July 1950. (Korean version)

³⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 15 July 1950. (Korean version)

³⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Gromyko, 19 July 1950. (Korean version)

bait to Mao promising Soviet air cover to the Chinese forces to encourage Mao to decide to engage in the war without real action to support North Korea.

According to underused North Korean historical documents, it proves that Kim complained and blamed Stalin about not winning the war due to Stalin's reluctant attitude to early Chinese intervention. In Kim's collected writings published in 1961, Kim mentioned that "the war could have been won if there were enough armaments when the US sent a large amount of armed forces. It took so long to get support on Soviet military equipment, and resulted in the retreat of the North Korea forces. Therefore, in the future, we (North Korea) should produce our own military equipment to protect ourselves."³⁹ On the book called Kim's military strategy, Kim also emphasised that "North Korean should never rely on other nations in terms of military supplies. This comes from our bitter experience at the Korean War in that there were no enough guns resulting in the retreat of North Korean forces."⁴⁰ Furthermore, Kim pointed out at the training materials for staff that "when the enemy conducted the Incheon Landing Operation on September 1950, we were short of armaments so requested to provide some military equipment to the Soviets. However, only a few guns were provided after three months. If there were enough armaments, we would not have needed to do strategic retreat."⁴¹ This kind of complaint about Stalin by Kim became a basis for North Korea to develop its own weapons programmes later, and introduced "Juche" ideology which does not lean on either Moscow or Beijing.

Stalin's reluctance to get involved led Kim to turn to Mao from the early stage of the conflict. Before the outbreak of the war, Kim was confident that North Korea would not need any aid from China as there would be sufficient military support from Stalin. However, as soon as the war broke out, Kim sent a North Korean envoy, Sang Jo Lee - the deputy chief of North Korean military staff - to China on 12 July to deliver Kim's letter to Mao asking for war materials including field guns and automatic rifles. In response, "Mao promised to supply various war

³⁹ Ministry of Unification Archive, *Kim's collected writings on 28 May 1961*, Vol.15, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1981, p.125.

⁴⁰ Ministry of Unification Archive, *Kim's military strategy on 11 May 1968*, Vol.15, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1981, p.125.

⁴¹ Ministry of Unification Archive, *The training materials for staff*, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1995.

materials such as thirty thousand rifles, two thousand light machine guns, two hundred heavy machine guns, three hundred 81mm mortars and one thousand war horses.”⁴² This is when Mao mentioned that “China was ready to dispatch its army to Korea”, which D. Kim claimed was a critical moment for Mao to change his passive attitude to be an active participants.⁴³ As seen above, Mao’s active attitude towards Chinese intervention was not only by Chinese internal situation but Kim’s strong request on Chinese support.

Although Kim continued to request Stalin to approve Chinese military support, the North Korean army was winning the ground battles against the US army in the early stages of the war. On 17 July, the North Korean army broke through the 24th US division’s Kum River defence line and on 20 July it occupied Daejeon, which was centrally located within South Korea. Then the North Korean army reached the Nakdong River by 25 July, so it almost occupied the entire southwest region of South Korea. Therefore, Walton Walker - the Commander of the Eighth US army - ordered the American and South Korean army to retreat to south of Nakdong River by 4 August, so all the areas apart from some of the southeast region in the South were under the control of North Korean forces. In addition, William F. Dean - the Chief of the 24th US division - was missing and became a war prisoner. This was partly because most of the US army were young and had no previous war experience. In this respect, General MacArthur commented that “the role of the US army in the first place was not to prevent the enemy by fighting a battle but to make the enemy aware that a large number of the US army were participating in the Korean War.”⁴⁴ This shows that the US considered the Korean War as ideological warfare against communism in which the prompt reaction to show its willingness to confront the opponent seemed as important as much as actual tactics to win the war.

Luckily Kim regained his confidence due to the success of occupying major cities in the South. After having a victory against the US ground forces on 5 and 11 July, the morale among the North Korean army became stronger than ever before. There were many North Koreans

⁴² Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Mao between 1949 and 1976*, p.55.

⁴³ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.246-247.

⁴⁴ Seoul Newspaper, *The 30 years of the US army stationed in South Korea*, Seoul: Hangrim Publishing Ltd., 1979, p. 146.

volunteering to join the army, so it seemed possible to organise a volunteer unit consisting of seven hundred forty five thousand soldiers. In addition, Shtykov analysed that “Seoul would become normalised right after the North Korean army occupied it and guerrilla warfare became active within other regions in the South.”⁴⁵ Kim announced that “the US and South Korean armies should be removed from the Korean Peninsula by 15 August and then there would be a celebration of liberating South Korean people in Seoul.”⁴⁶ After this statement, Kim stopped asking for Chinese military intervention for about a month.

Since late July 1950, however, due to US carpet-bombing, the supply routes for the North Korean army were destroyed and it suffered from huge personnel and materiel losses. Under these circumstances, Kim concluded that “Chinese or Soviet direct intervention in the war was the only hope to bring victory.” On 19 August, Kim informed Shtykov that “it is not possible to continue the war without air support and therefore it needed international air forces to be dispatched to Korea.”⁴⁷ At that time, it was only the Soviet Union within socialist nations that had the air power to be able to stand against the US. Therefore, although Kim did not directly require Soviet intervention in the war, he intended to ask for the Soviet air forces to join the war. With the response to Kim’s request, Shtykov commented that “the North Korean army is still great and would be with good guidance and therefore the US air force would not be able to prevent the North Korean army from winning the war.”⁴⁸ This was simple lip-service to morally encourage Kim to continue the war, but it was an actual rejection of Kim’s request for Soviet involvement in the war.

When there was no reaction from Moscow for a while, Kim sent his secretary, Il Moon, to Shtykov on 26 August to inform him that “the issue of Chinese intervention would be discussed within the Politburo of the Korean Workers’ Party due to the worsening war situation.” Shtykov reported to Stalin that “Kim had lost his confidence completely and often asked for approval

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp.30-40.

⁴⁶ Roddong Shinmum (Labour Newspaper in North Korea), 23. July 1950, p.1.

⁴⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 19 August 1950. (Korean version)

⁴⁸ TSAMORF, “Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinski, the Soviet Foreign Minister: Report on war front by North Korean government and its request on international air force,” 19 August 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.122, pp.622-623.

of Chinese intervention.”⁴⁹ Stalin finally replied to Kim on 28 August 1950 mentioning that “there is nothing to fear due to not having continuous victories against the enemy, as victory sometimes came with despair and partial defeat.” Stalin tried to cheer Kim up by saying that “North Korea is not isolated and has supportive friends, so if needed, Moscow would supply combat planes and bombers to North Korea.” In addition, Stalin commented that “the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party would not doubt that foreign military forces would be removed from the Korean Peninsula.”⁵⁰ Kim was so impressed by Stalin’s comments and mentioned to Shtykov that “this letter is absolutely important and therefore should be passed to members of the Politburo of the Korean Workers’ Party to let them understand the current situation.”⁵¹ As demonstrated, Stalin knew how to manage the situation in his favour. It seems clear that Stalin did not want either Moscow or Beijing to be involved in the Korean War in the early stages. As examined earlier, Stalin’s objective was to prolong the war in Korea as long as possible to ensure Moscow to recover its political as well as economic situation in the post Second World War period to delay a possible Third World War, and to establish Soviet strategic hegemony in the Far East by means of confrontation between the US and China.

After receiving the letter from Stalin, Kim did not ask for Chinese intervention. Even after the Incheon Landing Operation, Kim reacted to the request from members of the Politburo of the Korean Workers’ Party for Chinese military intervention in a way that “it would lead Moscow to blame North Korea if the North Korean leadership asked China to dispatch its army without Moscow’s approval.” Kim also added “if military units are organised promptly, there would be no need to ask for Chinese help.”⁵² It proves that the Korean War was Stalin’s war, as Kim and Mao could not make any decision against Stalin’s will. It was Stalin who planned, organised and tried to manipulate the war.

Mao in the early stages of the Korean War

⁴⁹ TSAMORF, “Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin,” 26 August 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.127, pp.667-669.

⁵⁰ APRF, “Telegram from Stalin to Kim,” 28 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347, p.6.

⁵¹ APRF, “Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin,” 30 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347, p.13.

⁵² TSAMORF, “Telegram from Shtykov to Gromyko,” 22 September 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.125, pp.90-91.

J. Chen argued that Mao aimed to win the war by driving the US forces off the Korean Peninsula long before the Incheon Landing Operation, so the 38th parallel line was not a precondition for China's military intervention.⁵³ Y. Xu also claimed that Mao evaluated the situation, which the US decided to enter the war and dispatched the 7th fleet to the Taiwan Strait, that the confrontation with the US would be inevitable.⁵⁴ On the other hand, S. Goncharov pointed out that it was when the US forces crossed the 38th parallel to lead Mao to plan the best strategy to enter the war.⁵⁵ D. Kim argued that Mao's wish to enter the war was not by ideological reasons to confront with the US and to expand communism, but rather to be originated from China's domestic issues to threaten Mao's political leadership within China. D. Kim's argument seems convincing to some extent by declassified documents proving why Mao wanted to engage in the war from an early stage.

Mao suggested the US breakthrough of the 38th parallel as a condition for Chinese military intervention before the outbreak of the Korean War. However, as soon as the war broke out, Mao began to consider it. On 27 June, two days after the start of the war, President Truman dispatched the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait in order to prevent any possible military attack on Taiwan by the Chinese Communist forces and announced that "the future status of Taiwan was not decided yet." Furthermore, the US started to strengthen military and economic support to Philippines and Vietnam.⁵⁶ This kind of US action initiated China's strong opposition. Zhou Enlai denounced Truman's statement as "it was armed aggression on Chinese territory and a demolition of UN charters."⁵⁷ Mao also criticised the US by pointing out that "Truman's statement of non-intervention in the Taiwanese issue on 5 January 1950 is a falsity and the US disclosed itself as an imperialist."⁵⁸ As a counteraction, China reinforced military support to

⁵³ Jian Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p.158.

⁵⁴ Yao Xu, *From the Yalu river to Panmunjom*, Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1985, pp.21-22.

⁵⁵ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, The Research Centre on the Modern Korean History in Sungkyunkwan University(trans.), *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing Co., Ltd., 2011, p.216.

⁵⁶ FRUS, "Statement issued by the President," 27 June 1950, p.203.

⁵⁷ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.2, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2008, p.525.

⁵⁸ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The Writing by Mao Zedong Since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 1987, p.423.

North Vietnam. Asia was on the brink of a major confrontation between China and the US over Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, which Mao described in the phrase that “China’s heart would be attacked from three different directions.”⁵⁹

Truman’s statement on 27 June dispatching the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait had a significant impact on China’s domestic affairs, as Chinese people became seriously concerned about the possibility of a Third World War escalated by the Korean War. On 28 June, many Chinese people started to withdraw cash from banks in major cities including Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin and stocks dropped by one-third or even half. At the same time, hoarding of daily necessities such as rice, cloth and penicillin became prevalent all over China and the price of gold and silver in the black market rose sharply.⁶⁰ Apart from its economic influence, Truman’s statement had a negative impact on Chinese society as well. There was a continuous rumour that “a Third World War would break out in September 1950 as the Korean War was continued with support of both the Soviets and the US and therefore it would escalate into another global war.”⁶¹ In Guangzhou, the rumour even suggested that “General MacArthur and the KMT already agreed to Chiang Kai-shek’s return to mainland China, the Japanese army would advance into Manchuria while the KMT forces would attack the southern part of China and the US army would push into the central part of China.” Moreover, there was another rumour that “the KMT declared an amnesty for KMT soldiers who surrendered to Communist China to return to the KMT.”⁶² Chinese society was in turmoil due to the war in Korea, and therefore a swift victory by Kim seemed to be the best solution for Mao to resolve domestic tension in China.

One day after the US ground force, Smith battalion, arrived in Busan on 1 July, Zhou Enlai warned Roshchin - the Soviet ambassador in Beijing - that “the US would be able to dispatch sixty thousand soldiers to Korea out of a one hundred and twenty thousand strong army

⁵⁹ Central Literature Research Centre of PRC, *The writings about Mao*, Beijing: Central Literature Research Centre Press, 1987, p.524.

⁶⁰ Xinhua News Agency, “Market situation in Shanghai after Truman’s statement,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.171, 1 July 1950, pp.1-2.

⁶¹ Xinhua News Agency, “Rumour in Tianjin about the Korean War,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.171, 1 July 1950, p.3.

⁶² Xinhua News Agency, “Taiwan’s reunification strategy by using Korea,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.172, 4 July 1950, p.12.

stationed in Japan.” In addition, Zhou pointed out that “it would be possible for American forces to land in major ports including Busan, Masan, and Mokpo in South Korea, so these areas should be occupied by North Korean forces to prevent the US army from landing there.” Furthermore, Zhou mentioned that “Chinese soldiers would disguise themselves as North Korean soldiers if the US broke through the 38th parallel. In order to do so, there are three corps consisting of one hundred twenty thousand soldiers gathered already in Shenyang.”⁶³ On 7 July, China held its first defence meeting and decided to organise the Northeast regional army consisting of four corps and three artillery divisions and gave them an order to assemble by 5 August.⁶⁴ Mao sent Chai as a *chargé d'affaires* to North Korea on 10 July to send a message that “China was ready to support North Korea.”⁶⁵ Mao also met Kim’s special envoy, Sang Jo Lee in Beijing on 12 July and promised to give the military supplies and munitions which Kim had asked for before. Mao anticipated that “the US would send more troops to Korea, so China would be able to dispatch its army on Kim’s request.”⁶⁶ It proves that Mao was ready to be involved in the Korean War in July, the early stage of the war. Although Mao referred to a condition to dispatch the Chinese army on Kim’s request, Mao seemed positive and proactive to intervene in the war. Once the Korean War broke out, Mao wanted to ensure a speedy victory by North Korea in order to protect Chinese national security. D. Kim argued that Mao’s wish for early intervention was encouraged by the North Korean forces’ superiority on the battlefield.⁶⁷ However, it is not convincing that Kim and Mao were not positive about the prospect of the war due to the US forces. This is why Kim repeatedly requested Stalin to approve the Chinese early intervention by mentioning that “the war situation was not promising.” Also Mao warned to Kim that “the war would be prolonged and therefore North

⁶³ APRF, “Telegram from Stalin to Mao,” 5 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334, p.79.

⁶⁴ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre & Chinese People’s Liberation Army Military Science Institute, *The writing by Mao Zedong since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2010, p.159.

⁶⁵ Shi & Jo, *The meeting in Panmunjeom*, p.36.

⁶⁶ TSAMORF, “Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin: report from the North Korean government that China is ready to support North Korea in the Korean War,” 15 July 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.122, pp.353-355.

⁶⁷ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.248.

Korea needs to be prepared for it.”⁶⁸ Therefore, Mao’s willingness to enter the war was not from by North Korean forces’ better performance but by careful analysis on the best option for Mao at that moment.

In early August, the war front was reduced to the southeast area of South Korea and, at the same time, the US army brought a large amount of war materials to the South. Because of this Chai also speeded up the preparation of dispatching the Chinese army. At the Politburo meeting on 4 August, Mao stated that “if the US won the Korean War, it would become a clear threat to China and therefore China had to help North Korea.” The next day, Mao ordered Gao Gang - the commander of the Northeast regional army - to be ready for operation by early September.⁶⁹ At the staff meeting of the Northeast regional army on 13 and 14 August, Gao Gang mentioned that “if the US occupied the entire Korean Peninsula, it would start to attack Northeast China first and then the whole of mainland China. Therefore, it would be better to exterminate the US outside China by helping North Korea rather than waiting until the US attacked China.”⁷⁰ Mao commented that “Gao Gang’s speech was absolutely right.”⁷¹ This indicates that a consensus had developed among the Chinese leadership that early involvement in the Korean War would be more beneficial to Chinese national interests.

In August 1950, the war reached a standstill at the Nakdong River war front and there was no guarantee that North Korea would win the war. Under these circumstances, China rushed to prepare dispatching its army. Mao issued instructions on 19 August for organising the second reserves, and Zhou predicted that “the Korean War could be a prolonged war, and therefore Chinese troops would soon be sent to Korea to ensure a swift victory.”⁷² There were a number

⁶⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Soviet embassy in Beijing to Stalin, 28 August 1950. (Korean version)

⁶⁹ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre & Chinese People’s Liberation Army Military Science Institute, *The writing by Mao since the foundation of PRC*, p.180.

⁷⁰ Military & History Research Department at Chinese People’s Liberation Army Military Science Institute, “Gao Gang’s speech at war council at Shenyang on 13 August 1950,” *The History of the Korean War*, Vol.1, Beijing: Military Science Press, 2000, p.91.

⁷¹ Chinese Central Document Research Centre, *Mao since the foundation of China*, No.1, Beijing: Central Document Press, 1987, p.468.

⁷² Chinese Central Literature Research Centre & Chinese People’s Liberation Army Military Science Institute, *The writing by Mao since the foundation of PRC*, p.185.

of reasons for the Chinese leadership to decide to be involved in the Korean War sooner than their original plan. As D. Kim pointed out, the US intervention in Korea and the possible protracted war had a negative impact on Chinese politics and economy, which threatened the fundamental basis of the Communist leadership.⁷³ Although North Korea won the ground battles against the US forces in the early stages of the war, there was a rumour spreading widely among Chinese people that “the war would result in the outbreak of a Third World War and Mao’s administration would be demolished in the end.” In addition, there was an argument to insist that “the liberation of Taiwan became impossible and therefore Communist China would give up military action against Taiwan.” Furthermore, the Chinese people began to distrust the official Chinese reports on the victory of the North Korean army against the US. Even some high-ranking officials in the Chinese government mentioned that “the US would bomb Chinese territory sooner or later, as the US was far superior to China in terms of its military capability.”⁷⁴ In addition, there was another rumour that “the US tried to arrest Mao and Hainan Island was already occupied by US forces and Chiang Kai-shek.”⁷⁵ Without doubt, Mao was seriously concerned about these rumours spreading so quickly around the entire country, which became a huge challenge for him to rule and maintain his political power.

Apart from the domestic political unease, the Korean War had a negative impact on the Chinese economy as well. Panic buying was continuously ongoing across the whole country, as the US government decided to restrict exporting steel and chemical products to China. Hong Kong, as the only window for China to import products from the Western world, also prohibited exporting strategic items including petroleum, steel and rubber to China.⁷⁶ This caused massive economic chaos in China. Therefore, Beijing wanted to solidify its leadership by early intervention in the war in order to resolve political as well as economic issues. Considering

⁷³ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.240-250.

⁷⁴ Xinhua News Agency, “The public opinions among governmental officials, workers, and students in Wuxi,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.176, 11 July 1950, pp.31-32.

⁷⁵ Xinhua News Agency, “The reactions on the Korean War among each class in Shenyang,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.178, 13 July 1950, p.40.

⁷⁶ Xinhua News Agency, “Market Situation after the US intervention in the Korean War,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.188, 28 July 1950, p.98.

cost effectiveness, early entry in the Korean War seemed to be the best option for Mao to choose. If North Korea won the war with the support of the Chinese army, China would be able to expand its political leverage in the Korean Peninsula, and possibly Mao would become a leading figure in terms of the Communist movement in Asia. Zhou recalled in his memoir that “it was regrettable that the Northeast regional army was not utilised to prevent the US forces from landing on the Korean Peninsula.”⁷⁷ This indicates that the Chinese leadership recognised that the early period of the Korean War was the best time for its military involvement. Similarly, General MacArthur also mentioned that “July or August 1950 would have been the most appropriate period for China to dispatch its army to Korea.”⁷⁸ In this context, it is evident that if Stalin wished to win the war, he could have approved early Chinese intervention when Mao and Kim requested him to do so. This clearly proves that winning the war was not what Stalin aimed for in Korea.

Z. Shen argued that Stalin was opposed to Chinese early intervention due to Stalin’s fear of Mao’s increased influence in the Korean peninsula.⁷⁹ This argument, however, seem not enough to explain about Stalin’s global strategy in the Far East. Stalin’s main concern was the US, so Stalin planned to utilise the war as a chance to weaken the US’ military and economic capability enough to prevent a Third World War for a while. Regarding Stalin’s motive, D. Kim explained the reasons why Stalin rejected Mao and Kim’s proposal on the early Chinese intervention; first, Chinese participation might have led to an escalation into a Third World War. Second, Stalin was satisfied with North Korea’s superiority on the battle fields. Third, Moscow secured a better position in its ideological propagation after the US’ involvement in the war.⁸⁰ However, it can be possible to set forth a counterargument about it. Chinese military engagement in Korea could have been justified with the mutual defence treaty between North Korea and China signed on 18 March 1949. Therefore, Beijing could have legitimised its participation to support North Korea, and it could have an option not to cross the 38th parallel and prepare for possible breakthrough of the line by the UN forces in the name of protecting

⁷⁷ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai between 1949 and 1967*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 1997, pp.44-50.

⁷⁸ FRUS, “Substance of Statements made at Wake Island Conference,” 15 October 1950, p.953.

⁷⁹ Zhihua Shen, *The Korean War between Mao and Stalin*, Kwangju: Kwangdong People’s Press, 2013, p.263.

⁸⁰ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, p.251.

its ally by the invasion of the imperialists. Another evidence is that Mao hinted to Stalin about a possible peaceful resolution with the US before Chinese military intervention. On 22 September, Mao mentioned that “when analysing the US’ military operation in Korea, it seems that they are not ready to long-term and huge warfare. Washington’s goal seems to test Moscow and Beijing’s responses as well as military ability. Therefore, the US may try to find out a pretext to arrange a compromise such as seeking for a way for Communist China to join the UN as a member.”⁸¹

Stalin, on the other hand, seemed to be pessimistic about possible resolution of the war. Zhou commented that “China is ready to join the UN once the US changes its attitude towards the issue and the western nations including the US, Britain, and France are afraid of the possible military intervention by Moscow and Beijing, as they are not ready to long-term large-scale warfare. For example, when the PLA forces moved from south to Manchuria, American and British government became panic. So, this kind of tactic needs to be more adapted in order to increase their fear.”⁸² Regarding Zhou’s comments, Stalin replied to Mao that “a peaceful resolution in Korea becomes more difficult after the Incheon Landing Operation, and the US would seem to maintain its negative attitude towards the issue on the Communist China’s joining in the UN.”⁸³ As seen, Stalin did not agree with Mao’s idea about the possibility of peaceful solution in the war. These telegrams were exchanged before PLA’s actual dispatch to Korea, and it seems that Stalin still tried to induce Mao to decide Chinese military intervention in Korea.

Unlike D. Kim’s argument, Stalin was not satisfied with the early victory by North Korean forces. Stalin was well aware of Kim’s concern about the US military involvement and the carpet bombing, which would negatively affect the war situation sooner or later. Nevertheless, Stalin was reluctant to reply to Kim about his request on more military aids from Moscow and Beijing, and did not provide ammunition on time which caused to delay to a speedy march to

⁸¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 22 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

⁸² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 18 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

⁸³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 20 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

southwards once North Korean forces occupied Seoul on 28 June 1950. D. Kim argued that Stalin's goal changed from a swift victory to a long term war to hold the US in Korea.⁸⁴ However, as described earlier, Stalin seemed to intend to draw the US and China in Korea to have a long term warfare from an initial stage. Regarding D. Kim's argument on that Moscow secured a better position in its ideological propagation by not approving Chinese military intervention in the early stage, it would have been possible to have a swift victory by the UN forces even before the Chinese military engagement. From Stalin's point of view, this seems a quite dangerous plan as the whole Korea could have been under the US sphere of influence, which would have resulted in damage of Stalin's leadership in Asia.

Although Mao suggested to Stalin that the Chinese army would disguise itself as the North Korean army, Stalin still did not approve of Mao's request. Ironically, Stalin advised Kim to advance into the South swiftly to win the war before US intervention. If Kim's victory was Stalin's true intention, it cannot be explained in terms of Stalin's disagreement with early Chinese intervention in August 1950. Stalin intended to balance the power between Kim's side and the US to guarantee a prolonged war. This explains why Stalin did not approve Mao and Kim's request for early Chinese intervention in the war.

The Change of Stalin and Mao's attitude after the US Incheon Landing Operation

It has been argued that Chinese military participants was the most important factor to describe the war as a hot war in the Cold War era, as Mao decided to send its army to Korea without resolving Soviet air cover issue, and this was resulted from determination by both Stalin and Mao to prevent the Korean peninsula from being anti-communist.⁸⁵ Was Mao's decision truly based on heroic psychology to save North Korea? Stalin's rejection of Chinese intervention in the Korean War in late August led the Chinese leadership to become pessimistic about early victory. A long-term war seemed inevitable in Korea. On 26 August, Zhou commented at the

⁸⁴ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao's initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, p.251.

⁸⁵ Kwang Seo Ki, Stalin's role in the Korean War, *Military History*, Vol.63, Seoul: Josun University Press, June 2007, p.39.

meeting of the Northeast regional army that “China should prepare for a prolonged war.”⁸⁶ Mao also mentioned to P. Yudin - the Soviet philosopher - at the meeting on 28 August that “the Korean War entered the second stage with large-scale US support to South Korea and this would lead to extending the war.”⁸⁷ In early September, Mao warned Kim of a prolonged war and the possibility of the US landing at either Incheon or Nampo port in Korea, and Mao advised Kim to secure enough reserves to defend these two ports.⁸⁸ In addition, Kim received a promise from China to send troops to support North Korea if the US landed at either Incheon, Nampo or Wonsan. China decided to expand its Northeast regional army up to eleven corps and thirty-six divisions in order to prepare for a long-term war in Korea.⁸⁹ In early September, Moscow also instructed Kim and the Soviet military advisors to dispatch four army divisions to Incheon and the southern part of Seoul in order to protect the Seoul area.⁹⁰ This shows that in early September both Beijing and Moscow already anticipated the US landing at Incheon or other ports in Korea and expected a prolonged war.

During September, US aircraft and warships often appeared in the Northeast region of China, Shanghai and the coastal area off Shandong and this increased tension between China and the US.⁹¹ Under this circumstance, UN forces landed at Incheon on 15 September, and rapidly advanced to Seoul. At the same time, the UN forces at the Nakdong River war front pushed the North Korean army northwards. Therefore, the North Korean army was surrounded by UN forces from both the southern and northern sides, and the war situation was reversed. To make matters worse for North Korea, the US air bombardment destroyed most railways and bridges from the border between China and North Korea to the war front. It seemed clear that the war situation was changing and a conflict between China and the US becoming more likely. This affected Chinese leadership on the issue of dispatching the Chinese army to support North Korea. In other words, China became more cautious about involving in the Korean War.

Mao’s attitude changed to be careful towards Chinese intervention. Gao Gang - the

⁸⁶ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai between 1949 and 1967*, Vol.1, p.46.

⁸⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Yudin to Stalin, 28 Aug 1950. (Korean version)

⁸⁸ Evgeniy Bajanov, Natalia Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict 1950-1953: The Most Mysterious War of the 20th Century*, Moscow: Russian Academy of Foreign Affairs, unpublished, pp.89-92.

⁸⁹ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai between 1949 and 1967*, Vol.1, p.54.

⁹⁰ Bajanov & Bajanova, *The Korean Conflict*, p.69.

⁹¹ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Mao between 1949 and 1976*, p.195.

Commander of the Northeast regional army - sent a telegram on 18 September to Ni Zhiliang - the Chinese ambassador in Pyongyang - as well as the Chinese Central Military Committee mentioning that “it is possible for the US air force to destroy the Yalu River bridge after dispatching the Chinese army into North Korea, which would cause enormous trouble to supply military materials. Thus, material supply should be done via road and therefore North Korea should be asked to provide detailed road maps.” Regarding this, Mao ordered not to reveal China’s intention to be involved in the Korean War and instructed Ni Zhiliang not to send this telegram to Kim.⁹²

Interestingly, Mao’s reply to Kim on 18 September, after receiving Kim’s report on the recent war situation and preparation for a prolonged war, emphasised self-reliance and advised Kim to maintain the main military force in order to adopt divide-and-rule tactics.⁹³ Mao did not mention dispatching the Chinese army to Korea in this letter. On the same day, Zhou sent a telegram to Roshchin as well as Kotov and Konnov - the Soviet military advisors – mentioning that “China believed that both the USSR and China supported a peaceful resolution on the Korean issue and this was the reason why the Chinese government would like to join the UN and would attend the UN meeting if the US changed its aggressive attitude in Korea.”⁹⁴ As seen, China changed its strategy towards the war from early intervention to peaceful resolution through the UN after the Incheon Landing Operation.

It is interesting to see that China began to inform Moscow of opposing opinions on dispatching the Chinese army into Korea since the US landing operation at Incheon. Liu Shaoqi said at a meeting with Roshchin on 21 September that “some of the proprietary classes, democratic parties’ members, and young soldiers did not agree with Chinese intervention in the Korean War.”⁹⁵ It was the first time the Chinese leadership mentioned that the public opposed its involvement. On 2 October, Mao notified Stalin about an even larger number of high-ranking officials in China’s central government insisting on being cautious about involvement in the

⁹² Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Mao between 1949 and 1976*, p.196.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.194.

⁹⁴ APRF, “Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin,” 18 September 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.331, pp.124-125.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.101.

war.⁹⁶ In fact, there was a widespread rumour about the possibility of having a war between China and the US after the Operation Chromite in September 1950. Therefore, Mao changed his strategy from direct military intervention to the avoidance of possible conflict with the US. Stalin showed dual approach in the Korean issue in that he expressed his negative opinion to Mao about peaceful resolution of the war. However, Stalin ordered the Soviet representative in the UN stating that “the USSR and China would support a peaceful resolution.”⁹⁷ Furthermore, Stalin seemed to neglect about the war and leave the responsibility to Mao. Although the war situation became more unfavourable for North Korea, Stalin did not take any action to support North Korea. Therefore, China became proactive in advising war strategy. On 20 September, Zhou sent a telegram to Kim through Ni Zhiliang - the Chinese ambassador in Pyongyang - that “the Korean War would be a long-term war and analysed that the UN forces would increase their troops near Incheon to block the supply routes of the North Korean army and push it towards the 38th parallel.”⁹⁸ Zhou also suggested “targeting the South Korean army rather than the US forces in order to win the battle.”⁹⁹ In spite of Chinese advice, Ni Zhiliang sent a report to Beijing on 27 September that “the situation in Korea was becoming critically serious as there was no defence force north of the 38th parallel, and there was the possibility of the UN force advancing to Pyongyang.”¹⁰⁰ After this report, Zhou reported to Mao that “the US officially stated that its force would march north of the 38th parallel.”¹⁰¹ Even tougher news came that General MacArthur issued an ultimatum to Kim on 1 October to request unconditional surrender. Simultaneously, Mao received a telegram from both Stalin and Kim to ask for the dispatch of the Chinese army to Korea.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ RGASPI, “Telegram from Mao to Stalin,” 2 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334, p.106.

⁹⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 20 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

⁹⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Yudin to Stalin, 20 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

⁹⁹ Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Zhou Enlai since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.2, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2008.

¹⁰⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Ni Zhiliang to Mao, 28 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

¹⁰¹ Sun Ji Bang, *The Writing of Mao Zedong 1949-1976*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2003, p.111

¹⁰² Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The Chronology of Mao's life between 1949 and 1976*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2013, p.195.

Without doubt, Mao was agitated after receiving a direct request from Stalin as well as Kim for Chinese military intervention. As D. Kim pointed out, it was unlikely China would win the war when the UN force began to be superior to that of the North.¹⁰³ Regarding Mao's reluctance, M. Sheng explained that it was due to Mao's hope to maintain a fearless revolutionary leader in Asia, which needed to be won in the war if participated.¹⁰⁴ This can be a part of reasons why Mao hesitated to decide to enter the war, but there were other factors – economic and military – that also influenced to the Chinese leadership.

Why did Mao decide to send troops to Korea?

After the UN forces crossed the 38th parallel, Mao showed his reluctant attitude by mentioning that “China could do everything except sending troops to Korea” at a meeting with the North Korean envoy, Il Woo Park, in Beijing on 3 October.¹⁰⁵ There are different arguments about it; One is Mao was initially more reluctant to participate in the war, as Stalin manipulated the war to draw Beijing into the war against the US.¹⁰⁶ R. Thornton claimed that Stalin expected that North Korea would lose in the war, and therefore he anticipated Chinese military intervention.¹⁰⁷ Another explanation is that Mao was a proactive player in the war and supported Kim in order to liberate Korea for communist revolution.¹⁰⁸ It suggests that the confrontation between China and the US in Korea was predictable, as Mao recognised it was inevitable to have a war against the US leading imperialism while Washington thought to

¹⁰³ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao's initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.252-253.

¹⁰⁴ Michael Sheng, Mao's role in the Korean conflict, *Twentieth Century China*, Vol. 39, No.3, 2014, p.279.

¹⁰⁵ TSAMORF, “Telegram to Stalin from the Chief of the Soviet General Staff Department stationed in North Korea: The result of negotiation between China and North Korea,” 7 October 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.121, p.706.

¹⁰⁶ Allen S. Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960; K. Weathersby, “Should we fear this? Stalin and the danger of war with America,” *Working Paper* NO.39, Cold War International History Project, July 2002; Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, The Research Centre on the Modern Korean History in Sungkyunkwan University(trans.), *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing Co., Ltd., 2011.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Thornton, *Odd Man Out : Truman, Stalin, Mao and the Origin of the Korean War*, Washington D.C.: Brassy's Inc, 2000.

¹⁰⁸ Jian Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994; Michael Sheng, “Beijing's Decision to enter the Korean War,” *Korea and World Affairs*, Summer 1995.

prevent the expansion of communism in order to save the Western world.¹⁰⁹

From Stalin's perspective, it seemed suspicious to see Mao's ambivalent attitude towards the West. Although Mao established anti-colonialism as an ideological foundation, Mao tried to secure more economic aid from the US rather than Moscow in the late 1930s. After the end of the Second World War in 1945 and the success of the revolution in 1949, Mao still sought to cooperate with the US.¹¹⁰ Therefore, Stalin might concern about a possible rapport between China and the US as it could threaten both his personal and political status as the leader of Communism and the Soviet national security in East Asia. Therefore, the Korean War served a role to prevent possible rapport between Beijing and Washington and even lead them to confront each other. That is why Stalin asked Mao to dispatch Chinese troops when the war situation became worse for the North Korean side. It was perfect timing for Stalin to let Mao be involved in direct conflict with the US to guarantee a long-term war in Asia. This can be partly reasonable, but in this case, Mao was treated as a passive player in the war. As discussed early, Mao voluntarily raised the issue of early Chinese intervention to Stalin due to its domestic concern. Therefore, it can be argued that Mao was a more proactive decision-maker in Chinese military intervention.

J. Chen argued that Communist China shared a revolutionary goal with Moscow and therefore it intended to strengthen its ideological relations with the Soviet Union as well as North Korea. It also claimed that there was a division in terms of responsibility for encouraging the revolutionary movement between Beijing and Moscow and it was primarily China's responsibility to support revolution occurring in East Asia, which became the reason why Mao decided to support North Korea in the Korean War.¹¹¹ Apart from this hypothesis, there was another argument to focus on the conceptual alliance between China and North Korea. K. Kim emphasised mutual assistance between Communist China and North Korea throughout the

¹⁰⁹ Michael M. Sheng, "The Psychology of the Korean War: The Role of Ideology and Perception in China's Entry into the War," *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol.22, No.1, 2002, pp.57-71.

¹¹⁰ Michael H. Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, pp.160-230.

¹¹¹ Jian Chen, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China's Entry into the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, No.1, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre, 1992, p.35.

armed struggles against Japanese imperialism and the Chinese Civil War.¹¹² In addition, I. Yeom argued that there was an attempt to link China and North Korea sharing a special identity in the Northeast region of China, making them share a so-called 'bond of brotherhood'.¹¹³ In fact, a large number of Chinese soldiers in the Korean War were ethnic Koreans living in China. Even before the outbreak of the Korean War, three armed divisions and one regiment consisted of Korean soldiers in Manchuria returning to North Korea and they were assigned to the Korean People's Army afterwards. Moreover, there were also ethnic Korean soldiers entering the Korean War as a part of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army. In this regards, it was argued that ethnic Korean soldiers entered the war for the purpose of protecting their homeland although they took part in the war through orders from the Chinese leadership. Partly it seems true for ethnic Korean Chinese to have a feeling of solidarity with North Korea and perhaps it helped mobilise the Chinese People's Volunteer Army and boost morale among soldiers. However, it has been proved that this was not the main reason for Chinese leadership to decide to be involved.

T. Christensen argued that the American threat was the main reason for Mao to decide to enter the Korean War.¹¹⁴ The military threat of a US force advancing north of the 38th parallel alarmed China and led to dispatching Chinese troops to Korea before the US force entered Chinese territory. In fact, there were widespread rumours in China that a war between China and the US was inevitable if the US entered the Korean War. Mao thought it would be possible for the US to bomb Chinese cities during it, so it was a rational decision for Mao to take part in it. This opinion explains Chinese intervention in the Korean War as Mao's defensive policy. China did not want to have a total war against the US but decided to have a limited war, which seemed unavoidable to protect Chinese national security.

There was another approach to examine Mao's involvement in the Korean War by General

¹¹² Kyong Il Kim, *The Origin of Chinese intervention in the Korean War: By focusing on historical and geographical background between China and Korea*, Seoul: Ronhyoung, 2005, p.415.

¹¹³ In Ho Yeom, *Another Korean War: Korean Chinese's homeland and the war*, Seoul: History Criticism Press, 2010, pp.54-60.

¹¹⁴ Thomas J. Christensen, "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams," *International Securities*, Vol.17, No.1, 1992, pp.127-128; Hao & Zhai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History revisited," *The China Quarterly*, p.115.

MacArthur's aggressive strategy. According to A. Mansourov, as a professional soldier, MacArthur's goal in the Korean War was total victory including the defeat of Communist China, and therefore MacArthur consistently requested the unconditional surrender of North Korea and threatened China, which drove it to the brink of the precipice and finally got them involved.¹¹⁵ This argument seems to focus on the relative passivity of China in terms of its involvement in the Korean War. However, it has been proved that the Chinese leadership discussed the issue to enter the Korean War even before the US broke through the 38th parallel.

As discussed, Mao asked for Stalin to approve Chinese intervention early on in the war. On 19 July 1950, Kim informed Shtykov of the result of a meeting between Mao and the North Korean envoy in Beijing that Mao was actively suggesting that "China was ready to dispatch the Chinese army consisting of three hundred and twenty thousand soldiers in four corps if North Korea asked for help."¹¹⁶ However, Stalin expressed reservations about this issue at first and later sent a telegram to Kim to disagree with China's early intervention. The best chance for early victory for North Korea disappeared with the UN Incheon Landing Operation and Mao began to carefully reconsider dispatching the Chinese army to Korea.

As D. Kim pointed out, it was a more practical reason for Mao's final determination on entering the war.¹¹⁷ In the early stages of the war, there was domestic unrest among Chinese people triggered by the US intervention in Korea. As for Mao, it was essential to consolidate his leadership in domestic politics. Through demonstrating a strong reaction to the Korean issue, Mao was able to overcome domestic challenge. However, when the war situation became worse after the breakthrough of the 38th parallel by US forces, Stalin requested Mao send the Chinese troops to Korea and there was disagreement on the Chinese involvement in the war within the Chinese leadership. In this situation, Mao informed Stalin that "direct military intervention in

¹¹⁵ Alexandre Y. Mansourov, "Stalin, Mao, Kim and China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, September 16 – October 15 1950: New Evidence from the Russian Archives," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue. 6-7, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre, 1995/1996, p.105.

¹¹⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 19 July 1950. (Korean version)

¹¹⁷ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao's initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.239-254.

Korea would not be possible in early October.”¹¹⁸ Not before long, Mao changed his mind all of sudden, as he finally decided to dispatch the Chinese army to Korea on 19 October 1950. It can be argued that possible instability in the Northeast region in China, without Chinese intervention in the war, was seriously considered by the Chinese leadership and this was a key for Mao to change his mind.

When the UN forces were advancing north of the 38th parallel, Kim sent an urgent telegram to both Stalin and Mao requesting Chinese military support in the Korean War.¹¹⁹ After receiving Kim’s message, Stalin suggested Mao to dispatch Chinese troops to Korea.¹²⁰ In order to encourage Mao to enter the war, Stalin sent a telegram on 5 October “promising Soviet military aid to China if it intervened in Korea.” After receiving Stalin’s telegram, Mao decided to dispatch Chinese troops to Korea and sent Zhou and Lin Biao - the General Commander of PLA - to Stalin on 8 October to discuss further details of Soviet support. When Stalin met Zhou, however, it was completely different from what Stalin promised to Mao. Stalin emphasised that “it would not be possible to provide armaments or Soviet air support to China. Instead, it is suggested withdrawing the North Korean army from Korean territory and establishing Kim’s government in exile in Shenyang, where Stalin would be able to supply military equipment.” This message was sent to Mao on 11 October 1950 and the details were as follows:

The Chinese representatives arrived in Moscow on 11 October 1950 and the Soviet Communist Party leadership discussed the current issues with them. After exchanging opinions with each other, some facts were confirmed in terms of the current situation in the Korean War.

1. The Chinese People’s Volunteer Army, which was supposed to be dispatched, was not fully ready, as the standard of military equipment was inadequate due to the lack of the numbers of artillery and no tanks. At least two months were needed for the air force to arrive for the air escort. In addition, at least six months were needed for military troops to complete training to learn how to use the military equipment.
2. If there is no direct support by well-equipped troops within a month, the North Korean

¹¹⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 3 Oct 1950. (Korean version)

¹¹⁹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 30 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

¹²⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 1 Oct 1950. (Korean version)

Army would not be able to defend north of the 38th parallel and the US force would occupy the entire Korean Peninsula.

3. Effective support to North Korea would only be possible at least half a year later, which means that Korea would be under the control of the US by that time. Therefore, military support would be ready when it would not be needed.

Considering these factors as well as Zhou's report analysing that Chinese intervention in the Korean War could have a negative impact on the domestic situation in China, this is the conclusion reached by both parties.

1. Although the current international situation is in favour of Moscow and Beijing, the Chinese People's Volunteer Army was not ready to be dispatched. In order to prevent any strategic disadvantage, the Chinese troops should not be sent to Korea.

2. If some of the Chinese army already cross the border into Korea, do not penetrate more and stay in mountainous territory near the Chinese border.

3. Some of the North Korean Army needs to organise a defense in mountainous territory north of Pyongyang and Wonsan while some armed force needs to penetrate into the rear of the enemy to launch guerrilla operations.

4. Select outstanding Korean soldiers and military officers among draftees and send them to Manchuria to organise the Korean military division in secret.

5. Disperse major bases located south of Pyongyang into mountainous territory in North Korea as soon as possible.

Based on a request by the Chinese leadership, the Soviet Union would supply enough military equipment including artillery, tanks and airplanes to rearm the Chinese army. The Soviet Union looks forward to China's decision.¹²¹

This telegram shows that Stalin manipulated the situation in favour of his purpose. When Mao informed Stalin he was not able to be involved in the Korean War by dispatching the Chinese army, Stalin persuaded Mao to enter the war by making false promises of Soviet military support. It must have been shocking for Mao when Stalin mentioned that "military support

¹²¹ RGASPI, "Telegram sent to Mao from Stalin and Zhou Enlai," 11 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334, p.135.

would be ready in six months” by the time the war would be won by the US and South Korea. This would mean China would be confronting American forces at its border, which would cause more trouble and social unrest within China. This was exactly what Stalin planned. If China decided to be involved in the war without Soviet aid, Stalin would be safe from any condemnation from the international world as there would be no evidence of Soviet involvement. It would be China who would take the whole responsibility to carry on the war against US forces. In this case, the Korean War would become a long-term war causing a large scale of losses for both China and the US.

Stalin seemed skilful to suggest another option for Mao, which was not easy for Mao to agree with. Although Mao accepted Stalin’s suggestion of withdrawing the North Korean army to Chinese territory and ordered not to move the Chinese army and recalled Gao Gang and Peng Dehuai to Beijing on 12 October, Mao finally concluded to decide Chinese military intervention in Korea on 13 October. At the urgent meeting of Politburo Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China on 13 October, there were strong objections to being involved in the Korean War, but after discussing this issue with Gao Gang and Peng Dehuai, Mao sent a telegram to Zhou in Moscow to inform him of the final decision for Chinese intervention. This was an important moment for the history of the Korean War, as due to Mao’s decision to enter the war, it became a long-term war as Stalin initially planned and ended after his death. Korea has become the centre of the Cold War in Asia ever since. The analysis of Mao’s telegram to Zhou sent at 10 p.m. on 13 October would help understand why Mao decided to be involved in the Korean War even without Soviet military support. The details of the telegram are as follows:

1. As a result of discussion with Gao Gang, Peng Dehuai and other members of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China, it is still advantageous for China to enter the Korean War. It would be possible for the Chinese army to attack primarily the South Korean army. In addition, it would reorganise the North Korean People’s Army in mountainous areas north of Pyongyang and Wonsan. There would be the Soviet air force to support China in two months and other military aid including artillery and tanks would arrive in six months. By that time, Chinese soldiers would complete training to be able to fight against the US forces. Therefore, if it destroys several South Korean military divisions in the first stage of attack, the war situation would become favourable towards

China.

2. It would be advantageous for China to adopt an active policy on the Korean issue. If China allowed the enemy to advance towards the Yalu River without dispatching the Chinese army, it would encourage counter-revolutionaries and result in adverse consequences for everyone. To begin with, this would be disadvantageous to the Northeast region in China, as the whole Northeast regional army would be involved in dealing with this situation and the military strength in southern Manchuria might be controlled by the enemy.

3. According to the telegram from Stalin on 11 October, Stalin mentioned that the Soviet Union would accept China's request for military equipment including artillery, tanks, and airplanes. It is wondering whether it would be by borrowing or purchasing. Under the current situation, only borrowing would be possible, as a two billion US dollar budget should be allocated into various fields including the economy, culture, construction and administration costs. This would allow the Chinese army to conduct a long-term operation in Korea. Also, it would help to maintain the solidarity of the Chinese people.

4. Apart from Soviet air support in combat in the Korean Peninsula, Soviet air support is needed for two or two and a half months over major cities including Beijing, Tianjin, Shenyang, Shanghai, Ningxia and Qinghai. This would guarantee high morale of the Chinese army without fear to confront the enemy. There would be no option but to endure any loss in case of enemy air raids in China.

5. After a comprehensive review, it was concluded that China should enter the Korean War. There are more advantages for the Chinese involvement compared to losses by not entering the war. Questions no. 3 and no. 4 need to be sorted out. Therefore, they should be negotiated with the Soviet counterpart while Zhou Enlai, who needs to be informed of the result of negotiation promptly, stayed in Moscow.¹²²

As seen, the security of the Northeast region in China was the key factor for Mao to decide military intervention. If Mao accepted Stalin's proposal to establish Kim's government in exile

¹²² Chinese Central Literature Research Centre, *The writing by Mao Zedong*, Vol.6, Beijing: People's Press, 1999, p.104.

in Shenyang, it might result in Soviet intervention in Manchuria and possible US entry into Chinese territory. This is because if the North Korean army withdrew to China connected with remaining forces within Korea in order to conduct guerrilla warfare, the Northeast region in China could become a battlefield between North Korea and the US. This would cause insecurity in the Northeast region as well as the rest of China. Throughout Chinese history, the Northeast region had been a battlefield in various wars such as the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Sino-Japanese War (1937), the First Chinese Civil War (1927-1936) and the Second Chinese Civil War (1946-1949). Mao probably learnt a lesson from these incidents about how important it could be to ensure national security in the Northeast region. Stalin seemed to be well aware of the importance of this region for China and therefore adopted it as a useful strategy to persuade Mao to enter the war.

In addition, in the case of US occupation of the whole of the Korean Peninsula, the Northeast region in China would become a political as well as military base for Kim to reclaim national sovereignty. At that time, there were more than one million ethnic Koreans living in the Northeast region in China supporting North Korea. This could be a serious domestic problem in the future for the Chinese leadership to deal with if Kim's government in exile settled down within China for a long period of time. It has been an important task for Chinese leadership to unify the fifty-six different ethnic groups within China. In this context, Stalin utilised Mao's dilemma, in which there was no choice for Mao but to be involved in the war to prevent even more serious issues that might happen if it did not. From this moment, the Korean War became Mao's war against the US and this is why Chinese people still recall the Korean War as the war to assist Korea against the US.

Conclusion

Regarding the Chinese intervention in the Korean War, the mainstream of existing scholarly work seems to be that the American counter-offensive such as the Incheon Landing Operation and the following breakthrough of the 38th parallel between September and early October 1950 induced China to decide to enter the war.¹²³ Underutilised Chinese and Russian documents

¹²³ Lowe, *The Korean War*, pp.36-47; Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, pp.34-35.

reveal that both Mao and Kim requested Stalin to approve Chinese military intervention in the early stages of the Korean War in July and August 1950, when the North Korean forces were superior to those of South Korea and the UN. Although Mao promised Kim that China would intervene in the war if the US broke through the 38th parallel before the war began, Mao mentioned at the meeting with the North Korean delegates on 12 July in Beijing that “China was ready to dispatch its troops to support North Korea if Kim requested it to do so.” As D. Kim pointed out as well, this indicates that the precondition for the Chinese intervention – the US breakthrough of the 38th parallel - became nominal just two weeks after the outbreak of the war.¹²⁴ In early August, when the war front was limited to the Southeast region of Korea and the US armed forces and weapons were just arriving, China was actively preparing for engaging in the war. The reason was the Chinese leadership thought that it would be the best time for China to oust the US forces from the Korean Peninsula to secure Chinese national interests. There was a fear among the Chinese leadership as well as the Chinese public that if South Korea won the war with the support of the US, the US forces would attempt to occupy the Northeast region of China and eventually the whole mainland. Therefore, having a confrontation with the US outside Chinese territory would be more beneficial for China and increase the chance of winning a war against the US. Furthermore, from Mao’s perspective, it was necessary to end the Korean War as quickly as possible, so Beijing could resolve the Taiwanese issue and complete economic reconstruction.

Stalin, however, did not approve of Chinese intervention in the war until the Incheon Landing Operation, as Stalin’s main purpose was not a swift victory but a long-term war in the Korean Peninsula. It has been proved by Stalin’s telegram to Kim on 8 October 1950 that “I(Stalin) considered the Korean War as a means to weaken the US and to delay Japan’s revival by Washington’s military and economic support in Asia in terms of the global balance of power.” The contents of the telegram are as follows;

I (Stalin) requested Mao to immediately dispatch five or six divisions to Korea on 1 Oct, but Mao rejected it with several reasons. I (Stalin) asked Mao again for Chinese military intervention and explained the reasons for it.

¹²⁴ Donggil Kim, New Insights into Mao’s initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention, *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016, pp.239-254.

First, the US is not ready to deal with a huge warfare in Korea. Second, Japan has not militarily recovered enough to support the US. Therefore, the US has no option but to make concessions with China, which is backed by the USSR. With the same reason, the US would give up Taiwan and its plan to reconstruct Japanese imperialism as a military bridgehead in the Far East.

Therefore, China should not passively wait for Washington's concession but show off its power. Although the US is not ready to carry on a huge warfare, it would do for saving its face. China should not fear about it, as it is connected with the USSR by mutual aid treaty. Therefore, if the war is inevitable, it is better to do now rather than a few years later when Japan revives its militarism and becomes an ally to the US. In this case, both the US and Japan would be able to prepare military launch pad to the continent with the support of Syngman Rhee's regime.¹²⁵

As examined above, the Korean War was carefully planned by Stalin. Throughout the process of the Korean War from its planning stage to armistice negotiation with the US, there were ongoing disputes between Stalin and Mao. When Stalin sent a telegram in January to Kim to give a signal to discuss the war plan, Stalin told Kim to keep it a secret to Mao. During the meeting in the spring of 1950, Stalin requested Kim again not to inform it to Mao until he was told to do so. Furthermore, Mao came to know the outbreak of the Korean War by the news report from Paris, and complained that "I (Mao) did not have any previous notification about the detailed plan of the Korean War."¹²⁶ Even after the Incheon Landing Operation, Zhou complained that "China has been informed about the operation by the UN with news report and Pyongyang radio broadcasting." Zhou also mentioned that "Chinese army has difficulty in maintaining contact with KPA, and China even does not know any operation plan by North Korean forces. With Chinese request to dispatch military representatives to North Korea to find out a war situation, North Korean leadership has not given any reply yet." Zhou requested that "Mao would like to request Stalin to share any information that the Soviet has about the war."¹²⁷ With regards to military strategy, Stalin was opposed to Mao's tactic to use guerrilla warfare.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Kim, 8 Oct 1950. (Korean version)

¹²⁶ Haiwen Li, "When did the CCP Central Committee decide to dispatch the Chinese troops to Korea?" *Dang de Wenxian*, p.85.

¹²⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram Roshchin to Stalin, 18 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

¹²⁸ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 20 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

Regarding the possibility of the peaceful resolution, Mao suggested that “it could be feasible in that the US might hope to find out a way to resolve it without a huge military affair.”¹²⁹ Stalin, however, emphasised that “a peaceful resolution became more difficult after the Incheon Landing Operation.”¹³⁰ Regarding ceasefire negotiation, Mao asked Stalin to take responsibility on the negotiation process, but Stalin strongly rejected it by saying that “your (Mao) request to guide ceasefire negotiation is not only impossible but also unnecessary. It is Mao who needs to lead the negotiation. We (the Soviets) are only able to give some advice. We (the Soviets) are not going to make a direct contact with Kim, and therefore you (Mao) should contact Kim directly.”¹³¹

During the war operation, Mao had difficulty in not being provided enough armaments by Stalin. Mao sent an urgent telegram to Stalin on 7 November 1950 that “Currently Chinese forces are fighting with captured weapon from the enemy. The PLA only has ammunition just enough for six divisions out of thirty six divisions dispatched in Korea. Thus, I (Mao) request Stalin to supply ammunition enough for thirty six divisions to be able to use until January or February 1951.”¹³² Stalin’s reply on 1 December 1950, however, did not include anything about the supply of military equipment. Instead, Stalin encouraged Mao with high praise and stressed that “China’s experience confronting with the US having modern equipment would be valuable for China to develop its military forces.”¹³³ With regards to Mao’s request on the supply of military weapon, Stalin replied that “as you requested, it is not possible to supply the armament for sixty divisions until the end of 1951. It can be done only for ten divisions. It would be not until the first half of 1954 to complete military supply that you requested.”¹³⁴ Furthermore, Stalin expressed his discomfort about Mao in the telegram to Kim on 13 November 1950 by mentioning that “the Soviet would provide the military weapon for thirty PLA divisions, and China should give armament for three North Korean divisions. If China

¹²⁹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 22 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

¹³⁰ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 20 Sep 1950. (Korean version)

¹³¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 30 June 1951. (Korean version)

¹³² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Mao to Stalin, 7 Nov 1950. (Korean version)

¹³³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 1 Dec 1950. (Korean version)

¹³⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 24 June 1950. (Korean version)

does not do so with any reason, just let me know.”¹³⁵ With Stalin’s information, Kim sent a telegram to Mao to request military armament on the next day. With Mao’s urgent request on air cover on 24 October 1950, Stalin replied on 14 November that “I (Stalin) was away from Moscow, so could not reply you earlier. I (Stalin) cannot comply with your request on air force supply including three jet fighter divisions with pilots and three flight technology squadrons. Also MIG 9 would not be able to be provided anymore.”¹³⁶

As seen, Mao was not an equal partner with Stalin. Although Mao was in charge of the whole military operation in the war, Stalin continuously rejected Mao’s request on the supply of Soviet military equipment. As the war was going on, the distrust between Stalin and Mao had been deepened, and Sino-Soviet split seemed already started during the war. As examined above, it was only Stalin who felt satisfied with the process of the Korean War. Mao wished to end the war as soon as possible by early Chinese intervention. As for Kim, he wanted to unify Korea by military means within a short period of time, but his plan was delayed by Stalin and resulted in a long-term war and ended in failure. Therefore, it can be argued that the Korean War was not Kim or Mao’s war but Stalin’s throughout the whole process from planning to its ceasefire after Stalin’s death in 1953.

¹³⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Kim, 13 Nov 1950. (Korean version)

¹³⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 14 Nov 1950. (Korean version)

VI. Did the US policy towards Korea lure Stalin into the war?

It was argued that the US withdrawal of its forces from South Korea and the announcement of the Acheson Line was a decisive factor for Stalin and Kim to implement their military plans under the assumption of US non-intervention in the war.¹ This chapter examines US policy towards Korea in the early post-war period and whether it actually intended to abandon the Korean Peninsula due to its lack of strategic value. The important point about the US policy in the Far East was that its military and political policies seemed not to match to some extent and this caused confusion in understanding its exact policy towards Korea. From a military point of view, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff established an island perimeter defence line that excluded the Korean Peninsula. A. Whiting and K. Weathersby argued that Korea was excluded from the US defence policy, which gave its counterpart the confidence to launch a military attack against South Korea.² The US military policy, however, was an emergency war plan in case of a general war against the USSR under its limited military budget. So, it was to protect Japan as the most strategically important region in the Far East. Therefore, the priority of American foreign policy in this region was to secure Japan from Soviet threat, and, as a result, its policy towards Korea relied on the security of Japan. NSC 49, reported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 9 June 1949, evaluated US strategic needs in Japan.³ This report clearly showed two major ways that Japan could serve US strategic interests; one was an economic factor related to its geographic location with respect to the trade routes of the North Pacific, the East China and Yellow Seas. The other was its geopolitical location that could be used as a base for aggressive action against US bases in the Western Pacific if Japan was under Soviet control. Interestingly, this report demonstrated that Washington just like Moscow was concerned about Japan as a

¹ Hak Joon Kim, *The Chinese documents about the Korean War*, *Dong-a Ilbo*, Seoul: Dong-a Ilbo press, 22 Nov 1999.

² Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*; Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu*; Munwha Daily Mail, Interview with Kathryn Weathersby, 17 Dec 2012.

³ FRUS, Top Secret: Strategic Evaluation of United States Security Needs in Japan, 9 June 1949, reported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vol. VII, pp.774-777; FRUS, Top Secret: NSC 49, 15 June 1949, noted by the Executive Secretary to the NSC, Vol. VII. p.773.

possible threat. The US analysed the ability of the Japanese to wage war proven by the last world conflict. It was believed that “Japan would be able to provide the arsenal as well as the manpower in the event of another global conflict against the US in the Pacific and to the southwest under Soviet control.”⁴ Therefore, the essential US objective was to deny Japan to the Soviets and maintain her orientation towards the Western Powers. This became the centre of the US foreign policy in the Far East and continued to be its main position towards a Japanese peace and security settlement. In this context, J. Spanier argued that Stalin’s motive to break out the Korean War was to prevent the US unilateral approach to the post war Japan, as Washington seemed to sign the peace treaty with Japan without Moscow.⁵ As Stalin mentioned, Japanese factor play an important part of the war, as Stalin was concerned about the possible warfare in the future against the US supported by remilitarised Japan.⁶ G. Kennan also pointed out that Japan issue was not the main cause of the Korean War, but it should not be ignored either in terms of the origin of the war.⁷

NSC 61 was created in January 1950 to promote Japan’s economic recovery to keep Communism out of Southeast Asia and this included other Asian nations’ economic development such as South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines and India as Japan’s principal trading partners. In other words, NSC 61 constituted a triangular arrangement for the US-Japan-South East Asia. As seen, the US policy towards Korea was a part of its main strategic concern about Japan. In this context, the cold war confrontation in the Far East between Washington and Moscow was under progress. It can be argued that this was challenging situation for Stalin and therefore influenced to his decision to support Kim’s war plan.

This is the key point to be considered when it comes to discussing the US policy to withdraw its forces from South Korea. From the US perspective, the best option was to protect Japan with its limited military budget. Its drawback, however, was that it was mainly created on the basis of military thinking. Under the restricted military expenditure and reduced numbers of troops, the US had to defend both Europe and Asia at the same time. Consequently, the US

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ John W. Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1965, pp.15-40.

⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Telegram from Stalin to Kim, 8 Oct 1950. (Korean version)

⁷ George Kennan, “Japanese Security and American Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, Oct 1964, p.15.

Joint Chiefs of Staff prioritised regions to defend and concluded that it would take an offensive strategy in Europe whereas it would focus more on defence in Asia. Under the new situation of the balance of power in the global politics, the US offensive strategy in Europe, which resulted in the fast economic recovery, seemed to influence Stalin, for him to turn his eyes to Asia as a new theatre to confront with the US.

This was reflected in its military plans such as PINCHER, MOONRISE and OFFTACKLE. The most serious problem of those operation plans, however, was that they did not prepare for a local conflict like the Korean War, which limited its battlefield to within the Korean Peninsula. Under these emergency war plans, if North Korea attacked the South, the US should have evaluated whether Moscow would see this conflict as a signal for a general war. If North Korea's military offensive was to be considered a general war along the whole US containment line, the US emergency war plan should have been invoked and therefore it should have abandoned Korea and launched a counterattack against the USSR from US air bases located within its island perimeter lines. However, this was not the case in the Korean War, as although Korea was militarily excluded from its emergency war plan, the US planned to include Korea under its influence so that it would not be under Soviet control. Its political stance towards Korea was different from its military plan. NSC 8, introduced in April 1948, clearly indicated the US political as well as economic position towards Korea and its main objectives are as follows:

1. To establish a united, self-governing and sovereign Korea as soon as possible, independent of foreign control and eligible for membership in the UN.
2. To ensure that the national government shall be fully representative of the freely expressed will of the Korean people.
3. To assist the Korean people in establishing a sound economy and educational system as an essential bases of an independent and democratic state.⁸

This paper was approved by President Truman on 8 April and sent to General Hodge via the Army's telegram on the same day and became the basis of US policy towards Korea.

⁸ FRUS, Top Secret: Report by the NSC on the Position of the US with respect to Korea, 2 April 1948, Vol. VI, pp.1164-1169.

Considering the timeline, NSC 49 was created after the breakdown of the second Joint Soviet-American Commission and it clearly demonstrated the US intention to include Korea within its power away from Soviet influence. The reason for the failure to reach an agreement in the Joint Commission was mainly due to the disagreement in their choice of political groups to participate in a provisional Korean government. With regards to the broad objectives of US policy in Korea, Washington decided not to accept Moscow's suggestion for selecting Korean political groups and, more importantly, to provide economic and educational assistance to establish a democratic state, which meant Korea became a battlefield of the Cold War between Washington and Moscow.

In this context, the US analysed that the persistent refusal of Moscow to cooperate with Washington as well as the UN to create a united Korea led to the conclusion that the Soviets' predominant aim was to achieve Soviet domination of the entire country. In addition, it pointed out that Moscow supported creating a satellite regime in North Korea which claimed authority over the whole of Korea and, more seriously, backed by a Soviet-trained and equipped army. As a result, the US concluded that the extension of Soviet control over the whole of Korea would enhance the Soviet political as well as strategic position both in China and in Japan, which would adversely affect the US position throughout the Far East. Therefore, it suggested building up sufficient indigenous military strength to enable South Korea to defend itself from any kind of threat from the Soviets or its puppet regime in the North. This clearly reveals that Korea was not abandoned by US foreign policy.

It can be argued that US intelligence failure played an important part of its engagement in the Korean War. The US made two grave mistakes in its foreign policy related to Korea; one was not to anticipate the military offensive by the North Korean forces. The other was not to expect the Chinese military intervention. These mistakes had a significant impact on the US policy towards the USSR, namely NSC 68. It was introduced in April 1950 before the outbreak of the Korean War, but passed in September 1950 right after the war began and guided the US containment policy based on large military expenditure to prevent the spread of Soviet-centred communism in the world. In this context, the Korean War served the militarisation of the Cold War, as it justified US policy to increase the national defence budget to prevent Soviet Communist expansion.

Under these circumstances, this chapter examines Stalin's intention for mentioning 'favourable

changes in the international situation' in his meeting with Kim in Moscow to discuss Kim's war plan. There was an important secret telegram on 14 May 1950 sent by Stalin to Mao informing him of the outcome of the meeting between Stalin and Kim.⁹ It contained crucial information that Stalin approved Kim launching a military offensive against South Korea. In this telegram, Stalin mentioned that "I (Stalin) agreed with Kim's suggestion to take military action against the South due to current changes in the international situation in favour of North Korea." With regards to the meaning of 'favourable international situation relating to Korea', M. Park argued that the withdrawal of the US forces from South Korea by June 1949 and the following Acheson announcement in January 1950 played a significant role in persuading Stalin to agree with Kim's war plan.¹⁰ This argument was based on the interpretation of Stalin's words during the meeting with Kim in Moscow in April 1950 that "Stalin confirmed to Kim that the international environment has sufficiently changed to permit a more active stance on the unification of Korea."¹¹ The words 'favourable changes' were attempted by H. Kim and K. Weathersby to mean that Acheson's Press Club speech encouraged Stalin to finally decide to support Kim's initial plan to invade South Korea.¹² In this respect, M. Park argued that Stalin misjudged there would be no American intervention in the Korean War.¹³ However, according to A. Mikoyan, Stalin had information reported by Soviet intelligence agency that "MacArthur reported to Washington not to involve in any conflict in the Korean peninsula."¹⁴ This means that Stalin was suspicious of Washington's policy towards the Far East Asia. In this respect, Stalin emphasised to Kim in their meeting that "it would be possible for the US to intervene in

⁹Ministry of Foreign Affairs in South Korea, "A secret Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 14 May 1950," in *The Summary of documentations about the Korean War (Jan 1949 - August 1953)*, 1996, pp.24-27.

¹⁰ Park, *The Korean War*, pp.161-168.

¹¹ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The International Department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, *The report on Kim's visit in Moscow between 30 March and 25 April 1950*(Korean version)

¹² Hak Jun Kim, "The Russian Foreign Ministry Documents of the Origin of the Korean War," at the conference on The Korean War: An Assessment of the Historical Record, Georgetown University, Washington D.C., 24-25 July 1995; Kathryn Weathersby, "To Attack, or Not to Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung and the Prelude to War," *Cold War International History Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 2005.

¹³ Park, *The Korean War*, pp.171-172; Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, p.26; Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*.

¹⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, *The Report on conversation between Mikoyan and Mao*, 23 Sep 1956 (Korean Version)

the war but Kim should not expect Soviet direct involvement.”¹⁵ According to Khrushchev’s memoir, Stalin was concerned about both possibilities of US intervention and non-intervention in the Korean War.¹⁶ In case of US intervention, there had to be measures for Stalin to prevent a swift victory by American-led South Korean forces to prolong the war and this was why Stalin established prerequisites for Kim to launch a military offensive only if Mao agreed with Kim’s idea and promised to provide military support. On the other hand, if the US decided not to intervene in Korea, the war might have ended with a rapid victory for Kim, which would not suit Stalin’s purpose as well. Under this assumption, it can be argued that Stalin wanted to ensure US intervention and this can be a reason for Stalin to order the Soviet representative not to attend the UNSC meeting.

This demonstrates that Stalin anticipated possible US involvement in the Korean. In the telegram to Gottwald, Stalin mentioned that “I(Stalin) aimed to induce the US to intervene in the war to let them fight against China.”¹⁷ Therefore, a swift victory by North Korea was not intended by Stalin in his war plan. At the meeting with Kim, Stalin mentioned that “the US would not be able to challenge a new China militarily after the success of the Chinese Revolution.” Moreover, he commented that “the Soviet possession of the atomic bomb would deter the US from intervening in any warfare in Asia.”¹⁸ Stalin’s comments seemed to assure Kim to carry out his military plan against South Korea with confidence. At this meeting, the most important point was that “Stalin established a prerequisite for Kim’s plan by obtaining Mao’s agreement for Communist China’s military support.”¹⁹ In other words, Stalin wanted to ensure Chinese involvement in the war to tie the US up within the Korean Peninsula through a long-term war.

¹⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The International Department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, *The report on Kim’s visit in Moscow between 30 March and 25 April 1950*(Korean version)

¹⁶ John Merrill, “Review of Khrushchev Remembers, Vol. 1, Strobe Talbott, trans. and ed.; The Last Testament, Vol. 2, idem,” *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol.3, 1981, p.187.

¹⁷ RGASPI, “A message from Stalin to Gottwald,” F.558, OP.11, D.62, pp.71-72.

¹⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs in South Korea, *The Summary of documentations about the Korean War (Jan 1949 - August 1953)*, “The Report on Kim’s visit to Moscow between 30 March 1950 and 25 April 1950 by the International Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party,” Moscow: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Why did the US armed forces withdraw from South Korea?

The US armed forces had been stationed in South Korea since 1945, apart for one year between the end of June 1949 and early July 1950. H. Kim argued that the absence of the US forces gave Stalin and Kim confidence to launch an offensive to the South.²⁰ Although there were around five hundred US military advisors in South Korea during this period, their main purpose was limited to training South Korean armed forces. Considering the significant change to the US strategy towards the Soviets with a strong containment policy, NSC 68, it is important to understand the US decision to withdraw its armed forces from South Korea around the same time it introduced its new policy.

With regards to the origin of the Korean War, Dallin and Garthoff argued that Stalin was an expansionist who always tried to find a loophole to expand Soviet influence in the world.²¹ Therefore, Washington's decision to withdraw its forces from South Korea by June 1949 and the Acheson announcement in January 1950 to exclude Korea from its defence line in its island perimeter strategy was considered as a weak point by Stalin to take advantage of expanding the Soviet sphere of influence in Korea. In particular, the success of the Communist Revolution in October 1949 influenced Stalin to decide that it was the right time to expand Communism in Northeast Asia. With all these favourable conditions, Stalin came to the conclusion that the US would not intervene in a war in this region.

Considering the US domestic and economic situation in the early post-war era, the withdrawal of its armed forces from Korea was a realistic choice for Washington. The US government had to adopt a new military strategy based upon domestic pressure on the reduction of military forces and armaments. Although Korea was primarily excluded from the US island perimeter defence line, it does not mean that the US would not include Korea in its containment line to deter Soviet influence. In fact, there were two other ways for the US to protect Korea; through the UN or the US forces stationed in Japan. The ROK government was established with support

²⁰ Hak Joon Kim, *The Chinese documents about the Korean War, Dong-a Ilbo*, Seoul: Dong-a Ilbo press, 22 Nov 1999.

²¹ Dallin, "The Use of International Movement," in *Russian Foreign Policy: Essay in Historical Perspective*, p.331; Garthoff, *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age*, p.72.

of the UN and was recognised as the sole legitimate government in the Korean Peninsula by UN resolution No. 195 announced on 12 December 1948. Therefore, it would be possible to defend South Korea through the UN. In addition, Korea was located near to the US military base in Japan and therefore it was feasible for US forces to be dispatched to Korea within a few hours in an emergency. Consequently, it is not persuasive enough to conclude that a new US defence strategy influenced Stalin to give the green light to Kim to launch military action against South Korea.

The main purpose of the US was to resolve Korean issues through international negotiation, especially with Moscow in the Joint Soviet-American Commission to create a normal nation. As discussed in the previous chapter, Stalin decided to establish a Soviet-friendly puppet regime in the northern part of Korea from September 1945. As a result, the negotiation between Washington and Moscow became a stalemate during the Joint Commission meeting. Although the Soviet attitude in the Joint Commission was not cooperative with the US, there was an evidence to prove that Washington believed that resolving Korean issues through negotiation with Moscow would be ideal and therefore it tried to take an advantageous position during the negotiation by providing economic aid to South Korea.²² In fact, Washington was opposed to Rhee's request to recognise the immediate independence of South Korea, as it assessed that "its recognition of South Korea as a separate regime in the Korean Peninsula without resolving economic problems in South Korea would possibly lead to the whole of Korea coming under the influence of Soviet-friendly political groups."²³ Therefore, the US planned to develop the economic situation in South Korea to get more support from the public towards American policy in Korea, as the US believed it would convince the Soviets to retreat from their intransigent position in the Joint Commission. This indicates that US policy was to resolve Korean issues through diplomatic means to avoid any confrontation with Moscow.

The establishment of the North Korean government served to help Moscow raise the issue of withdrawing the Red Army. With regards to this, Moscow put pressure on Washington to withdraw its armed forces from the South as well. J. So argued that Kim's regime was a Soviet

²² FRUS, General Political Policies of the US toward Korea, Vol. VI, 1947, pp. 608-610.

²³ Ibid., p.612.

client state to achieve the Soviet strategic goal in the region, which was the sovietisation of the whole Korean Peninsula.²⁴ Therefore, it was believed that the Soviet request for the withdrawal of the American military forces was part of Stalin's grand plan to occupy the whole of Korea through military measures based on Kim's personal desire to unify Korea. However, it seems a hasty conclusion that Stalin had a masterplan to start the Korean War in the early stages of establishing the North Korean regime. Until the end of 1949, Stalin rejected Kim's idea to launch a military offensive against the South and even gave a serious warning to Shtykov for not preventing North Korea's military provocation along the 38th parallel. Therefore, it can be argued that the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea convinced Kim rather than Stalin to consider the situation as a chance to achieve his goal to unify Korea.

It was Moscow that initially suggested withdrawing occupation forces in Korea after the breakdown of the Second Joint Soviet-American Commission. After that, Moscow took action to bring this matter forward at the international level. A. Gromyko proposed withdrawing the Soviet and the US army in Korea simultaneously at the Political Committee for Korean issues in the UN General Assembly on 28 October 1947. Furthermore, Moscow recommended detailed plans about the timeline of military withdrawal. Gromyko made a suggestion at the plenary session in the UN General Assembly on 13 November 1947 that "both Moscow and Washington should withdraw its army from Korea in early 1948."²⁵ In fact, Moscow pushed Washington by starting to scale back the Red Army stationed in North Korea. The Soviet high command ordered a reduction in military forces in the North on 7 June 1948 and therefore, the head of the Soviet forces in North Korea was lowered to major general from lieutenant general.²⁶

Regarding the actual number of Soviet occupation forces, it was estimated at around a two hundred thousand strong army at the end of 1945, but it was reduced to divisions by October

²⁴ Jin Chul So, *How to break out the Korean War*, Seoul: Korean Academic Information Press, 2008, p. 61.

²⁵ Soviet Academy of Asian Studies, The Board of National Unification (trans.), *The Relations between the USSR and North Korea, 1945-1980*, Seoul: The Board of National Unification Press, 1988, pp.66-80.

²⁶ The Korean News Agency, *The Korean Central Year Book 1949*, Pyongyang: The Korean Central News Agency, 1950, p.230.

1947.²⁷ Under these circumstances, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs made an official announcement to the US that “all the Soviet military forces would withdraw by 1 January 1949 and therefore it hoped the American forces would withdraw from the South at the same time.” In fact, Washington figured out that the Soviet forces unilaterally executed its withdrawal from 19 October 1948 to 26 December 1948.²⁸ Although the US had information on the Soviet complete withdrawal from North Korea, it has been revealed that there were still Soviet armed forces within North Korea even until June 1950. According to the North Korean report on 18 February 1949 about the remaining Soviet forces after its official withdrawal, “there were four thousand and twenty Soviet armed forces and two hundred seventy-three Soviet civilian workers in the military within North Korea deployed at major army bases across North Korea such as Pyongyang, Cheongjin and Najin until June 1950.”²⁹ In addition, the Soviet military forces had a fundamental impact on creating the North Korean army in its organisational system, tactical strategies, weapon system and even military uniform. Even after the establishment of North Korean People’s Army on 8 February 1948 and the official withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1948, there were still Soviet military forces remaining in North Korea. This led Kim to be confident in his ability to achieve his political aims in Korea through military means.

The US government, however, did not seem to analyse in depth about the standard of the North Korean army. According to American information, the number of military forces in the North and the South seemed to be similar. The US estimated that “North Korea had approximately seventy-seven thousand armed forces at the end of 1948 compared to South Korea having eighty-eight thousand forces in total including fifty thousand guards, thirty five thousand policemen and three thousand coast guards.”³⁰ This simple figure can mislead the situation in terms of military capability between the North and the South. In fact, the organisation as well as the standard of weapon systems in the South Korean army was just at the level of a police force compared to that of North Korea. This was mainly because the US severely restricted the

²⁷ HQ, USAFIK, ISNK, No.1, 1 Dec 1945, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, p.5; The US Department of State, *North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover*, Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1961, p.12.

²⁸ HQ, USAFIK, G-2 Periodic Report, No.1028, 4. Jan 1949, pp.5-8.

²⁹ Institute of Social Science History Research, *The History of the Korean War*, p.577.

³⁰ FRUS, Muceio telegram to the Secretary of State, 9 Nov 1948, p.1333.

South Korean government to expand its military capability. For example, Washington limited the total number of the South Korean army to no more than one hundred thousand, and opposed creating its own air force. It was due to President Rhee's aggressive policy to unify Korea by military means. This indicates that Washington wanted to avoid any kind of military confrontation with Moscow in Korea and this tendency had been continued from the early period of military occupation in the South. In this context, the US initially did not approve the anti-communist Rhee to return to South Korea after its liberation from Japanese occupation in August 1945, as it was concerned that "Rhee would not be helpful for the US to cooperate with the Soviets in terms of discussing Korean issues."³¹ It has been revealed that the US attempted to find a moderate politician as an alternative to promote a cooperative policy with the Soviets. During the period of the second Joint Commission in May 1947, Rhee was under house arrest by the US due to his opposition to the meeting between Washington and Moscow.³² This demonstrates that the US priority was to resolve Korean issues through the negotiation with the Kremlin based on the Moscow Agreement. The US optimistic attitude towards Korean issues as well as its incorrect analysis of the differing military capabilities of the two Koreas eventually led to its misjudgement that there would not be a war in Korea.

By the time Soviet forces withdrew from North Korea at the end of 1948, military power in the North was far superior to that of the South, and this clearly affected Kim's confidence to unify Korea by military means. The political justification by Moscow in its withdrawal from North Korea was to give the Koreans autonomy to resolve their own issues, but by that time Moscow had already ensured a future Korea would be a Soviet-friendly regime through political and military support to North Korea, which meant at least half of the Korean Peninsula could serve as a buffer zone to protect Soviet security in this region. D. Volkogonov argued that Stalin thought it was not possible to expand its sphere of influence in the whole Korean peninsula, so he took a kind of defensive measure to protect the Soviet strategic interest.³³ It seemed that Moscow tried to make sure that North Korea was strong enough not to be overthrown by South Korea or its allies. Without the military presence of the two great powers, Kim reached the

³¹ Syngman Rhee, *The Memoir*, 1 Oct 1945; Jung Sik Lee, *The Study of Rhee Syngman*, Seoul: Yeoisei University Press, 2000.

³² Chun Kun Lee, *The South Korean Leader who stood against the US*, Seoul: Kulmadang, 2012.

³³ Dmitril Volkogonov, *Triumf Tragegiia*, Moscow: Novosti, vol.2, 1989, p.108.

conclusion he could launch a military offensive against the South without US intervention.

At the time of the withdrawal of the US forces, the South Korean government did not retain enough military power to pre-empt North Korea's provocation effectively. The US forces in Korea (USFK) were the most important deterrent power for the South. Therefore, the withdrawal of the US forces could be considered as the loss of a war deterrent in South Korea, which, more importantly, stimulated Kim to give shape to his military plan to unify Korea. The US decision to withdraw its forces was based on its Japan-centred foreign policy in this region and therefore Korea was the object to fulfil its strategic goal. This meant Washington did not have constant policies for Korea, as it depended on the domestic as well as international situation at the time.

At the end of 1945, the number of US armed forces - the Twenty Fourth Corps - deployed in South Korea was approximately forty-five thousand including the Sixth, the Seventh and the Fortieth Division, while the Soviet Twenty-Fifth Army of around two hundred thousand was stationed in North Korea.³⁴ Under these circumstances, in December 1945 John R. Hodge – the military governor of South Korea under the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) – reported to Washington that “the speedy withdrawal of both the US and Soviet military forces from Korea would be the only solution to resolve political as well as economic issues in Korea and to avoid any confrontation with the Soviets.”³⁵ In spite of General Hodge's report suggesting the military withdrawal of both powers from Korea, Washington's policy was to maintain its armed forces stationed there. Its report on 6 June 1946 demonstrated that “the American military occupation of Korea was to satisfy its goal in the Korean Peninsula and therefore it would continue to keep its forces there as long as it would help US interests.”³⁶ The US policy towards Korea at this moment was to maintain the idea of trusteeship in Korea and Washington was confident it could carry out this policy successfully. President Truman mentioned that “the US policy for Korea would be to establish an independent Korean regime and, therefore, US forces would remain as long as possible to

³⁴ FRUS, MacArthur to JCS, 16 Dec 1945, Vol. IV., p.1161.

³⁵ Ibid., pp.1144-1148.

³⁶ FRUS, Policy for Korea, 6 June 1946, Vol. VIII., p.693.

supervise its independence and the process of creating a new government.” So, Truman ordered General J. Hodge to “secure sufficient human and material resources to accomplish the US goal in Korea.”³⁷ It seems that the only solution for Washington to restrain Moscow from occupying the whole of Korea was to establish an independent government through the process of trusteeship, which was agreed with Moscow, while the US military forces remained stationed in South Korea. Therefore, a hasty withdrawal of the US armed forces from South Korea was believed to lead Moscow to occupy the whole of Korea in the future. Consequently, there was resistance to the idea of US military withdrawal from South Korea among the US government. It has been also revealed by the US government report in February 1947 that “if US military withdrawal was followed by the US approval of the independence of South Korea, it would become known to the whole world that the US was politically defeated in the competition with the USSR in the only region in which they confronted each other. The growing influence of Moscow, which would result from the loss of US power would adversely affect US interests in the Pacific as well as the US global status.”³⁸

The US military plan between 1945 and 1950, however, set its first priority on Europe rather than the Pacific region. In other words, US military policy had to choose its strategic defence area in Asia to contain the possible Soviet threat.³⁹ After defeating Japan as a power in Asia as well as the Pacific, Washington and Moscow confronted each other following a front line of a few thousand miles from the Bering Sea to Asia. Therefore, the negotiation of mutual withdrawal of forces in Korea was meant to create a buffer zone between the two powers. In fact, the US seemed to have strategic limitations in the Korean Peninsula caused by geological weakness to some extent. Especially, the imbalance of land power between the US and the USSR in Korea had become a serious concern for the US side as conflict between the two powers increased. In this situation, Washington decided to establish an island perimeter strategy, which included the withdrawal of its armed forces from South Korea.⁴⁰

³⁷ FRUS, Truman to Pauley, 16 July 1949, Vol. VIII., pp.744-745.

³⁸ FRUS, Draft Report of Special Interdepartmental Committee on Korea, 25 Feb 1947, Vol. IV., p.612.

³⁹ Thomas H. Etzold & John L. Gaddis, *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1978, p.264.

⁴⁰ John C. Campbell, *The United States in World Affairs 1945- 1947*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p.45.

After the breakdown of the first Joint Commission, Washington reassessed the strategic value of Korea. According to the report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee on 29 April 1947, Korea came thirteenth out of sixteen nations in terms of strategic value for US interests. Actually, South Korea was placed fifth in the need for US aid after Greece, Turkey, Italy and Iran, but it came fifteenth out of sixteen different nations in terms of overall US security interests.⁴¹ This means that there was a difference between the economic needs and the military and strategic needs in terms of US policy towards Korea. The US-occupied part of Korea was undergoing serious economic difficulties and this situation became even worse after the Soviet policy to prevent economic exchanges between the North and the South was put into place. From a US military and strategic viewpoint, Korea could be a theatre to confront the USSR via its satellite regime in the North, as it became clear throughout the Joint Commission meetings that the Soviets did not have any intention of establishing a unified Korea with the cooperation of the US. Considering cost effectiveness, it could be burdensome for the US to maintain its military forces there with its limited budget. This analysis continued throughout the early post-war period within policy makers in Washington. As a result, the status quo became the best solution to avoid direct confrontation with Moscow.

In April 1947, Robert P. Patterson – US Secretary of War – reported to George Marshall – US Secretary of State – that the Korean Peninsula was the most difficult area with respect to the balance of power between the two different occupational forces. Therefore, there would not be much possibility to produce long-term interests for the US in Korea. So, it would be necessary for the US Armed Forces to withdraw from South Korea as soon as possible and this needed to be the first priority.⁴² This demonstrates that Moscow had changed its policy towards Korea in terms of its armed forces being stationed in the South as the conflict with the USSR had become clear over the Korean issue. In August 1947, Walter Bedell Smith - US ambassador in Moscow – claimed that “Stalin would not cooperate with the US to establish a unified government in Korea due to its strategic importance.”⁴³ In the current political situation the idea of trusteeship in Korea appeared to be impossible to achieve and military competition with Moscow seemed dangerous for US interests. Therefore, the Truman administration tried to avoid any conflict

⁴¹ Etzold & Gaddis, *Containment*, pp.71-83.

⁴² FRUS, Robert P. Patterson to G. Marshall, 1947, Vol. IV., p.626

⁴³ Ibid., The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union, 26 Aug 1947, pp.771-772.

with Moscow in Korea, and the withdrawal of the US Armed Forces became a relevant option for Washington.

It seems that Washington just like Stalin also used defensive strategy in Korea in this period. The US report in September 1947 concluded that “the US should utilise its limited military power to secure its important strategic interests and, therefore, the US should classify its national interests and strategic goals into two parts between important and less important ones.”⁴⁴ As an extension of this, the US State Department requested the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide its official opinion on the strategic value of continuing to station US forces in South Korea. Their opinion was that “there would be almost no strategic interest for the US in stationing its forces in South Korea and therefore it would highly recommended withdrawing them.” Due to the shortage of US forces at that time, it was concluded that “forty-five thousand US forces in South Korea could be better used in other places.”⁴⁵ In addition, Washington believed that “its forces would not be able to protect South Korea without an increase in the actual numbers.” Under these circumstances, the US decided that its offensive operations would be established not by land power but by air power in case of war in Korea. Washington was concerned about the possibility that the Soviets would establish a navy as well as air bases in Korea, as this would block US communications and operations in some regions such as Manchuria, East China, the Yellow Sea, the East Sea and insular areas nearby. With this evaluation, Washington concluded that “unless the Soviets established military bases within South Korea to launch an attack on Japan, the military status of the US Pacific Command would remain intact.”⁴⁶ This was an important moment for the US to change its line of defence from the Asian Continent to the Pacific. In fact, it was based on a realistic assessment that the US as a maritime power would not be able to counter the Soviets as a land power in this region. As seen, the US did not expect possible measures to unify Korea by the North in the near future, as it did not analyse the domestic situation in Korea in depth. The US seemed to overlook the Korean people’s strong wish for unification, so it believed that the status quo would be feasible in the Korean Peninsula.

⁴⁴ FRUS, Memo by the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State, 26 Sep 1947, Vol. VII., p.817.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.818.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.818.

This judgement was also found in the report by General Lieutenant Albert C. Wedemeyer in September 1947. He was a special envoy to China and South Korea in July 1947 examining the political and military situation. The report to President Truman suggested that “the US should guarantee permanent military neutrality to the Korean Peninsula, as US forces would not be able to counteract Soviet military action in Asia, which would become a burden for the US to some extent.” Interestingly, it predicted that “the Soviet forces would remain in North Korea until North Korea became militarily strong enough to accomplish the Soviet strategic purpose. Therefore, there should be cooperation in the withdrawal of both forces and it needed to be accomplished simultaneously.”⁴⁷ As an alternative way, A. C. Wedemeyer recommended “providing economic aid to South Korea and establishing military units under the command of US military officers.”⁴⁸ It seems that the US believed that Moscow would accept a neutralized Korea as a buffer zone between the two powers. Therefore, the basis of US foreign policy towards Korea was defensive to avoid confrontation with Moscow.

Regarding the Soviets’ suggestion of the withdrawal of its forces as well as US forces in Korea in late 1947, Washington assessed that “if it denied the Soviet proposal, the US would be blamed for preventing the independence of Korea.”⁴⁹ In fact, the US seemed to consider the Soviet suggestion as a golden opportunity to put the idea of General Lieutenant A.C. Wedemeyer and the Joint Chiefs of Staff into practice, as the strategic value of Korea was not high enough for the US Army to remain in the South. Therefore, the main task of the US was to withdraw its forces from South Korea without damage to its prestige. R. Sawyer argued that “there was a concern in Washington that North Korean military forces would try to occupy South Korea after the withdrawal of the US Army.”⁵⁰ In spite of this prediction, the process of withdrawing the US forces went on as planned. So, the withdrawal of the Soviet and American army in Korea was regarded as establishing a new type of military order as a buffer zone

⁴⁷ FRUS, Report to the President by General Lieutenant A. C. Wedemeyer, Sep 1947, Vol. IV., pp. 796-903.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp.801-803.

⁴⁹ Ibid., Memo by the Directive of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to the Secretary of State, 1 Oct 1947, pp.820-821.

⁵⁰ Robert K. Sawyer, *Military Advisor in Korea: KMAC in Peace and War*, Washington, D.C.: Centre of Military History United States Army, 1988, p.112.

between the two nations by maintaining the status quo with the least armaments. Considering the Soviet geographical advantage and superiority of land power, Washington, as a maritime power, decided to reach an agreement with Moscow about the Korean issue. However, the US overlooked the possible military action by North Korea after its withdrawal from the South, which gave Kim the confidence to launch a military offensive to unify Korea.

J. Matray argued that the Acheson line did not influence on Kim's military plan.⁵¹ The US documents reveals that the Acheson line can be explained by a Japan-centred US foreign policy in the Far East. B. Catchpole, on the other hand, claimed "the announcement by Dean Acheson on 12 January 1950, which included the Aleutian Islands, the mainland of Japan, Okinawa, Philippines but excluded Korea and Taiwan in the US defence perimeter in the Pacific, played a major role in leading Stalin to give the green light to Kim's military plan to unify Korea."⁵² In fact, however, the US island perimeter strategy, which became the foundation of the Acheson line, had already created by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff to prepare for a general war against the Soviets in the Far East. From the US perspective, the separate occupation by the US and the USSR alongside the 38th parallel in Korea since August 1945 was to prevent a Soviet extension of influence. Therefore, the withdrawal of US forces in a standoff with the USSR in Korea showed Washington's willingness to Moscow that the US would not maintain a military base in Korea. Furthermore, this US policy intended to prevent the construction of a Soviet military base in the Korean Peninsula, which would threaten Japan as the most important US strategic interest in the Pacific region. As a result, Washington reached the conclusion to share the East China Sea through Korea and Taiwan with Moscow, and this led to the withdrawal of the US Armed Forces from South Korea. Therefore, the confrontation between the two was not along the 38th parallel in Korea but through the coastal line from Okinawa, the mainland of Japan and the Kuril Islands. Although US military power as a nuclear state seemed superior to that of the Soviets, it was necessary for US policy makers to create a new military strategy based on the continuous reduction of US conventional military forces after the Second World War.

⁵¹ James Matray, "Dean Acheson's Press Club Speech Reexamined," *Journal of Conflict Studies*, vol. 22, no. 1 pp. 28-50.

⁵² Catchpole, *The Korean War 1950-1953*, p.11.

There is also economic reason to the withdrawal of the US forces. Before the outbreak of the war, the Truman administration imposed a ceiling on its defence expenditure, which was approximately thirteen billion dollars in 1947 and fifteen billion dollars in 1950. K. Condit explained that under these circumstances of having a lack of armaments and troops, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff had to prepare for an emergency war plan against the USSR in case of a full-scale war.⁵³ This atmosphere led Washington to decide its regional priority on its military defence plan. In March 1946, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff launched an emergency war plan, code name PINCER.⁵⁴ Under this plan, it was recommended to withdraw the US armed forces within South Korea to Japan in the near future to save its troops as well as defend Japan. In the Far East, Okinawa in Japan was introduced as a military base for the US air force to attack targets on the Asian continent and Japan became the most important nation in this region for the US economic as well as military interests. In line with this policy, on 16 June 1949, the US emergency war plan, named MOONRISE, was completed to prepare for a war in the Far East. This plan also excluded Korea from its island perimeter defence line and the basic idea towards Korea was the same as that in PINCER. It estimated that “the movement of the US forces from Japan to South Korea would possibly result in threatening the defence of Japan, which was strategically most important to US interests in this region.” As a result, the MOONRISE plan concluded that “US forces should withdraw from South Korea to Japan in case of the outbreak of a war.”⁵⁵ The US military policy to exclude Korea was approved as an emergency war plan, called OFFTACKLE, on 8 December 1949.⁵⁶ By the time that OFFTACKLE was completed as the US official military plan, the Chinese Communist Revolution succeeded and all the US forces except five hundred military advisors left South Korea.

As seen, the US employed more defensive tactics mainly relying on its air force and its priority was to protect Japan from Soviet threat. This idea was crystallised through NSC 49 in June 1949 that “Japan should not be under Soviet control to secure US economic as well as strategic

⁵³ Kenneth W. Condit, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 1947-1950*, Vol. II., Washington D.C.: M. Glazier, 1949, pp.213-214.

⁵⁴ JWPC 432/3, 27 April 1946, box 60, CCS 381 USSR (3-2-46), Sec.1, RG 218.

⁵⁵ JWPC 467/1, The Soviet Threat in the Far East and the Means to oppose it (MOONRISE), 16 June 1947, Box 71, CCS 381 USSR (3-2-46), Sec.5, RG 218.

⁵⁶ JCS 1844/46, Joint Outline Emergency War Plan, JCS 1844/46, 8 Dec 1949, box 81, CCS 381 USSSR (3-2-46), Sec.41, RG 218.

interests in the Far East.” For the purpose of fulfilling its aim, Washington had to readjust its defence strategy under the condition that there was an imbalance between the military abilities of the US and the USSR. Therefore, the new US island perimeter strategy was based on its naval and air forces to protect its interests in this region against the USSR, which implied that there was no necessity for the US forces to be stationed on the Asian continent. This became the background of withdrawing the US forces from South Korea, as the main US interests were not the Korean territory but the seas around the Korean Peninsula such as the East Sea, the East China Sea, and the Pacific Ocean. The withdrawal of the US army from South Korea created a new strategic environment in Korea resulting in Kim’s misperception and miscalculation that the US would not intervene in a war in Korea. Stalin was cautious about possible military confrontation with the US in Korea until the end of 1949, and it was Kim who continued to persuade Stalin to approve it. Thus, it can be argued that the withdrawal of the US forces influenced Kim rather than Stalin’s decision-making on the war.

The value of Korea had remained continuously low to the US even until right before the Korean War broke out. The secret memorandum written by the Ad Hoc Committee on Programs for Military Assistance under the US Joint Chiefs of Staff on 23 June 1950 stated that “the strategic value of Korea was still low and therefore it would not be reasonable for Washington to supply additional mutual defence assistance funds to South Korea from its military perspective.”⁵⁷ This report was written just two days before the outbreak of the Korean War. It shows that Washington did not consider South Korea as a strategically important area compared to Japan. The US priority in this region was to protect Japan from the Soviet threat and this was clearly revealed from NSC 61 and NSC 68 introduced in 1950. The purpose of NSC 61 was to support Japan’s economic recovery to keep Communism out of this region and it became key to revive Japanese industry. NSC 68, which was militarily focused, was the blueprint to contain Soviet-centred communist expansionism based on its acknowledgement of the Soviets as its ideological and strategic enemy. Under this notion to divide the world into two sphere of influence between two powers, Japan became the top priority to protect US strategic interests in this region. Therefore, US policy towards Korea was subordinate to security in Japan.

⁵⁷ The Ad Hoc Committee on Programs for Military Assistance, Additional military assistance to Korea, 23 June 1950, PM-1110, Washington, D.C.: The US Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Another reason for the withdrawal of the US forces was domestic pressure. After the Second World War, the US faced internal pressure to downsize its military capability, which fundamentally impacted on adopting a new defence policy in Korea. During the war against Japan in 1945, the US showed its high mobilisation capabilities.⁵⁸ By the end of the war, “the US had twelve million and five hundred thousand troops in total including its seven million and fifty hundred thousand expeditionary forces and it owned sixty-nine divisions in Europe and twenty-six divisions in Asia and the Pacific area.”⁵⁹ After the end of the Second World War, however, there was no reason for Washington to maintain large armed forces and high military expenditure. In addition, all levels of American society including its administration, parliament and the public wanted to reduce its military force and armaments.⁶⁰ The families whose members were being sent to the war front put pressure on the US government and congress to return them as soon as possible after the war. Therefore, the US congress pushed the government harder to advance its demobilisation. Furthermore, the reduction of military strength became an important aim for the US administration to minimise its military expenditure, which meant Washington was under serious pressure to get away from its previous military policy. Therefore, the dissolution of the wartime military mobilisation system in the US had proceeded simultaneously through the reduction of both troops and military expenditure.

It is noticeable that the US total strength had dramatically reduced after the Second World War. In 1945, the total number of US forces was more than twelve million, but it was reduced to one million and four hundred sixty thousand in 1950 just before the outbreak of the Korean War, which was almost one-tenth of its total strength in 1945. By contrast, the Soviet total strength in 1945 was about eleven million and three hundred sixty five thousand, which was less than that of the US at the time. However, the USSR downsized its forces gradually so that it maintained more forces than that of the US. The Soviet total strength was approximately four

⁵⁸ The US Department of Defense, *The Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan: Military plans 1941-1945 Manuscript*, Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1955, pp.64-67.

⁵⁹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1987, pp.358-359.

⁶⁰ H.S. Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, p.325.

million in 1951 and five million and seven hundred thousand in 1953.⁶¹ President Truman established military targets to reduce its armed forces in 1948, and maintained them until the compilation of its budget in the financial year of 1951. In particular, the reduction of the US forces was noticeable in the Pacific region from 1947.⁶² Therefore, it seemed natural to have an imbalance of military power between the US and the USSR in Asia and the Pacific region. The Soviets were superior to the US in terms of their land power and geographical benefits in the Korean Peninsula. As for the US, it had limitations to military supply and support to South Korea due to its military strategy based on being a maritime power and its geographical disadvantage. Furthermore, this gap in terms of conventional military power between the two had widened over time since the end of the Second World War. Therefore, a new US military strategy in Northeast Asia was introduced and resulted in excluding Korea from its defence line. The withdrawal of American forces and the exclusion of Korea from the US defence line was a realistic choice for Washington in its wider policy of protecting its sphere of influence from Soviet threat.

Although the Central Intelligence Agency in the US (CIA) estimated that “General MacArthur was strong enough to keep the Far East out of the Communist camp, he criticised Washington’s military policy on this region.”⁶³ The United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) under General MacArthur had three hundred thousand armed forces including a forty-two thousand strong air force in January 1947, but it was reduced by almost a half within a year. In particular, the scale of military force in the Eighth United States Army (EUSA) in April 1948 was around eighty-seven thousand, but the actual combat forces were only twenty-six thousand. In fact, these combat forces were scattered into five divisions. Therefore, he criticised Washington’s decision to station thirty thousand US armed forces in South Korea.⁶⁴ MacArthur thought that “stationing a large part of the US forces in South Korea would create a negative impact to supporting the US air force in the Pacific region.” As a result, he warned that “it would cause

⁶¹ William T. Lee, *The Estimate of Soviet Defense Expenditure 1955-1975*, New York: Praeger, 1977, p.272.

⁶² Campbell & the Research Staff of the Council on Foreign Relations, *The United States in World Affairs*, p.35.

⁶³ CIA, Syngman Rhee’s Defense plan for Korea, 13 Dec 1948.

⁶⁴ James F. Schnabel, *United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction, The First Year*, Washington, D.C.: The US Army, 1972, p.52.

irreversible loss to US interests without further reinforcement of military forces in USPACOM.”⁶⁵ However, the US military budget retrenchment was most noticeable to the US army in that it caused serious problem for its old style military equipment, lack of supplies and curtailed training period, which would impede military effectiveness.⁶⁶ Under these circumstances, the US had to change its military strategy from its army at the centre to using its strategic nuclear weapons and this new concept of total war put more emphasis on its air force.⁶⁷ Considering the reduction of its military budget and army strength as well as a new military strategy, it seemed necessary to downsize and rearrange the American expeditionary forces. However, this does not mean for the US to exclude South Korea from its defence strategy.

Another reason to influence the US on deciding its withdrawal was that there had been an imbalance of conventional military power between the US and the USSR in Korea. The Soviet was still the world’s mightiest military power.⁶⁸ The US, however, had undergone a larger scale of reduction of its army.⁶⁹ Apart from the size of US military power, the military supplies and training were not appropriate as well. For example, in case of the Eighth US Army, most combat units had been reduced to one third of combat military forces after the Second World War.⁷⁰ This demonstrates that the conventional military power imbalance between the US and the USSR in Far East Asia had been deepening over time. With respect to Korea, due to its geographical remoteness from the continental US and the lack of US Army strength to be able to remain in South Korea, Washington had to reach its conclusion to avoid total war against Moscow in this region. As a result, US armed forces in South Korea became a target for withdrawal according to the new US military strategy. This also proves that the US took defensive strategy in Korea to avoid confrontation with Moscow, which was what Stalin used to do until the end of 1949.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.45.

⁶⁶ Walter Millis (ed.), *The Forrestal Diaries 1944-1949*, New York: the Viking Press, Declassified and approved for release from CIA in March 2014, p.370.

⁶⁷ Louis J. Halle, *Cold War as History*, New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p.205.

⁶⁸ Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, p.364.

⁶⁹ Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: United States Army in the Korean War*, Washington, D.C. : Department of the Army, 1961, p.50

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.49.

In Washington, there was criticism about the new US military strategy, which focused on its air force. In 1947, President Truman appointed his Air Policy Committee, led by Thomas K. Finletter as chairman, to accomplish a civilian review of the question of aviation policy. The Finletter report was made public on 13 January 1948 supporting the idea of expanding the air force, and the congressional board agreed with it. However, James Forrestal – the US Secretary of Defense - criticised it because “it mainly focused on a possible future full-scale war with the USSR and, therefore, it could not solve the current military requirement. In addition, the atomic bombs would not be a substitute for ground troops to protect Korea.”⁷¹ This is interesting that the US was concerned about conventional military weakness compared to Moscow, while Stalin considered having an atomic bomb as a factor to describe the change of international environment to approve Kim’s war plan.⁷²

The US dilemma was to have the limitations of its military power to manage the various potentially explosive areas over the world.⁷³ As seen, the US had serious difficulties with being engaged in various issues around the world and it seemed rational for the US to avert a war against the USSR. According to General Alfred M. Gruenther in February 1948, “there were four possible areas in the world where a world war might break out, which were Greece, Italy, Palestine and Korea.” “If the US sent its military troops to one of these places in case of war, it would reduce its reserve military power to dangerous levels. In 1948, the US ground forces were five hundred fifty thousand in total, and they were even scattered into three major areas; six army divisions in Japan, five army divisions in Europe and five army divisions in the US.”⁷⁴ This meant the US would not be able to launch a military intervention in Asia. The US policy makers in the Department of Defence commented in 1950 that “if the USSR engaged in the Korean War, there would only be one way for the US to maintain military superiority in Korea by dropping nuclear bombs in Siberia.”⁷⁵ The reduction of the US army had a significant impact on its military strategy in Korea, which also changed the strategic value of Korea from

⁷¹ Walter Millis (ed.), *The Forrestal Diaries 1944-1949*, New York: the Viking Press, Declassified and approved for release from CIA in March 2014.

⁷² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The International Department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, *The report on Kim’s visit in Moscow between 30 March and 25 April 1950*(Korean version)

⁷³ Millis (ed.), *The Forrestal Diaries 1944-1949*, pp.373-374.

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp.374-377.

⁷⁵ Callum A. MacDonald, *Korea: The War before Vietnam*, New York: Free Press, 1986, p.33.

Washington's perspective. More importantly, it affected the military imbalance between the North and the South. North Korea had been improving its military power as planned with the support of Moscow, whereas South Korea was even struggling to maintain domestic order with its own military forces. This gap of military power between the two Koreas gave Kim huge confidence to pursue Stalin to approve his plan to attack South Korea.

The US intelligence failure on the outbreak of the Korean War

Revisionist historians have investigated the origin of the Korean War through looking at the US side. I.F. Stone argued that “the Korean War broke out because of a joint plot between Rhee, General MacArthur, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and John F. Dulles – the US Department of State advisor.”⁷⁶ It claimed that the US, South Korea and China (KMT) had their own objectives to be accomplished by a war in Korea. South Korea was politically unstable before June 1950, so, the war solved Rhee's problem in that he could suppress the domestic argument for peaceful unification and consolidate his power with the support of the UN and the US government. From the US perspective, Dulles insisted on an active role against the USSR to secure US security in Asia and General MacArthur as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in the Pacific region asserted an ‘Asia First’ strategy and put military pressure on the Soviets. In this context, the Korean War could serve to change President Truman's ‘Europe First’ policy. As for Chiang Kai-shek, he suggested the Pacific alliance to guarantee power to the KMT regime in China, but the US had adhered to a non-intervention policy. Therefore, Chiang needed to have a new impetus to attract US engagement in Far East Asia. This revisionist argument was also raised by Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, who argued “the Korean War broke out due to a joint conspiracy between General MacArthur and the ROK President Rhee.”⁷⁷ However, recently declassified and released documents from the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) show this argument to be incorrect. Shortly after the two regimes were created respectively in the South and the North in 1948, the CIA produced a comprehensive report on the newly established regime in South Korea with all the information collected from various governmental bodies. It analysed “the situation of the South Korean

⁷⁶ I.F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952.

⁷⁷ Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954*.

regime and the problems confronting it in political, military and economic areas.” In this report, the US was concerned about a possible military offensive launched by North Korea with the support of the USSR, but it concluded that “the Kremlin would not authorise aggressive action against the South as long as US armed forces remained in occupation.” However, it also emphasised that “it would be probable for the Soviets to plan to overthrow the South Korean regime immediately after the withdrawal of US forces there. It is anticipated that major civil disturbances provoked by local Communists within South Korea would aim either at the direct overthrow of Rhee’s government or at coercion into a negotiation for unification of Korea with the North Korean regime.”⁷⁸ In other words, the US was concerned about possible civil war in South Korea. However, it did not expect a full-scale war to be launched by North Korea at that time. Washington concluded that the existence of an adequate native security force in the South would serve as a deterrent to North Korean aggression, which was proved to be incorrect.

It is interesting that Washington seemed positive about having created a strong South Korean army prior to the withdrawal of US forces in that it stated that “a South Korean Army could be trained and well-equipped to be able to deal with any external threat.” Nevertheless, Washington strictly restricted the size of the South Korean army and rejected the creation of an air force.⁷⁹ This was mainly due to President Rhee’s idea of the unification of Korea by military means. In fact, Washington was concerned about a possible military offensive launched by the South. If Rhee launched an attack on North Korea with US sponsored military equipment, Washington would confront difficulties in supporting the South Korean action. Therefore, the US attempted to aid the South Korean regime just enough to defend itself from possible threat by a Soviet-backed North Korea, acting as a deterrent to Soviet-inspired subversion and aggression.

Regarding Soviet blockage on exchange goods between the two Koreas, the CIA report suggested that “the economic problems in South Korea could be resolved with multilateral trade with other Far Eastern countries including the northern zone of Korea.”⁸⁰ Washington still seemed positive about the possible normalisation of relations between the two Koreas at

⁷⁸ CIA, Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea, ORE 44-48, 28 Oct 1948, pp.3-8.

⁷⁹ Park, *The Korean War*, pp.143-146.

⁸⁰ CIA, Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea, ORE 44-48, 28 Oct 1948, p.1.

the time this report was made in October 1948. In short, Washington believed that the political and economic development in South Korea with US support was considered to be enough to deter a possible threat from a Soviet-inspired North Korean regime.

Regarding the outbreak of the war, there were critical mistakes by the CIA in that it misjudged two major points over the Korean issue; one is North Korea would not be capable of controlling the whole Korean Peninsula with the lack of the active participation of Soviet and Chinese Communist military units in a war in Korea. The other miscalculation is that Chinese Communist military forces would not intervene in the war due to a lack of air and naval support.⁸¹ In detail, according to the CIA report on 19 June 1950, less than a week before the outbreak of the war, it analysed that “North Korea, as a Soviet-satellite regime, could exercise no independent initiative. Although the North Korean regime aimed to extend its control over South Korea, there were key factors to hinder Communists attempts to do so in the whole Korean Peninsula; anti-communist attitude and the lack of popular support for a communist regime among the public in South Korea and the lack of trained administrators and technicians in North Korea.”⁸² Nevertheless, the CIA anticipated that “the North Korean regime would continue and increase its support of present propaganda, infiltration, sabotage, subversion and guerrilla operations against South Korea, but this would not be sufficient to accomplish the main objective unless US economic and military aid to South Korea were seriously reduced.” In addition, it evaluated that “the Soviet or Chinese Communist military units would not participate in a war in case of long-term military operations, and therefore it was not certain about the capability of the North to occupy the whole of Korea.”⁸³ Clearly this evaluation was proved incorrect within a week.

The CIA made the crucial mistake of not predicting Kim’s military offensive although it had examined in detail about the military situation of North Korea in terms of its armed forces as well as its artillery. Interestingly, the CIA reported that “the morale of the North Korean army

⁸¹ The CIA Conference on the outbreak of the Korean War, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, Missouri, US, 16 June 2010.

⁸² CIA, Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime, ORE 18-50, 19 June 1950, pp.1-2.

⁸³ Ibid., pp.3-4.

was such that it was psychologically prepared to fight wholeheartedly against the South to unify Korea.”⁸⁴ This demonstrates that the US did not anticipate Stalin would give his approval to Kim to launch a military offensive. In this regard, it is not surprising to see the Truman administration astounded by the outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June 1950, which has been proved by recently declassified CIA intelligence reports.

The important point is even after the armistice of the Korean War, the US evaluated that “Stalin never had any intention of participating in the Korean War even if the UN forces had succeeded in occupying all of Korea.” It also shows that “the Korean War would have been won by the South Korean regime with the support of American-led UN forces if the Chinese Communist forces had not participated in the war.”⁸⁵ The US evaluated that “the Soviets realised that active participation in the Korean War would have meant the start of the Third World War, for which they were in no sense prepared. Therefore, it was assumed that the Soviet involvement in the Korean War was limited to the operational guidance, staff planning and the provision of military supplies.”⁸⁶ This shows that the US was aware of Stalin’s concern on a possible Third World War in the Korean peninsula.

Interestingly, it evaluated that “Stalin’s decision to approve the war by Kim was due to his misjudgement that the US would not send its troops to Korea, as the Kremlin was fully aware of the fact that the American armed forces in the Far East were only two divisions in Japan, which were poorly equipped and not well-trained.” Under this assumption, the CIA concluded that “Stalin had counted on a blitzkrieg that would have won before the US could intervene effectively and, therefore, the American-led UN forces’ intervention in the Korean War vitiated Stalin’s original plan.”⁸⁷ This is similar to R. Garthoff’s argument that Stalin misjudged US non-intervention in the war.⁸⁸ As discussed in previous chapters, this US assumption was problematic in that it was not Stalin but Kim who intended to win a swift victory in the war. Stalin’s plan, by contrast, was a long-term war in Korea to induce the US to engage in the war.⁸⁹ This was the reason why Stalin did not approve Mao’s request to dispatch the Chinese

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.5.

⁸⁵ CIA, The Korean War and Sino-Soviet Relations, No. 618749, 16 April 1954.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age*, New York: Praeger Publisher, 1965.

⁸⁹ RGASPI, “A message from Stalin to Gottwald,” F.558, OP.11, D.62, pp.71-72.

forces to Korea early on in the war. If Chinese forces had intervened at the time of Mao's initial request, the result would have been different from what it was.

The unexpected outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June 1950 was so shocking for the US that President Truman ordered the CIA to report daily about the situation in Korea from the day after the war began. The Korean War was assessed as a clear-cut Soviet challenge to the US, which directly threatened US leadership of the Western world against Soviet Communism. In addition, it was interpreted in a way that the defeat of South Korea would cause unfavourable repercussions for the US position in Japan, Southeast Asia and other regions as well.

Interestingly, the CIA assessed that "the USSR probably calculated that the US would be inclined to accept neutralisation of the Korean civil war, which would lead to victory by North Korea and therefore the Soviet empire could be expanded without the use of its own military forces. As a result, this scenario would encourage the Soviets to launch similar ventures elsewhere in the Far East and therefore firm and effective countermeasures by the West would lead the Kremlin to negotiate a settlement between the two Koreas."⁹⁰ The US also assessed that "the USSR could supply material aid sufficiently long enough to prolong the war to make the US deeply involved in Korean military operations."⁹¹ This shows that the US judged the Korean War as a proxy war by a Soviet-satellite regime to expand communism in the Far East and the defeat of South Korea would have a significant impact on the rest of the world in that the Kremlin would undermine the Western position with its experience in the venture in Korea. Therefore it was inevitable for the US to intervene in the war in Korea. In this regard, it was Stalin's mistake to think that Moscow would be far from being blamed from the west as long as it did not directly engage in the war. Stalin seemed to manipulate a kind of proxy war to use Mao to confront with the US, but Stalin suffered a loss due to the war, as the US was aware that Stalin was de facto power as the Communist leader. Therefore, the US adapted NSC 68 as an active measure to counter the Soviets.

With respect to the Chinese military intervention, it was extremely surprising to the Truman

⁹⁰ CIA, The General Report on the Korean War, Top Secret No. 24930, 26 June 1950.

⁹¹ CIA, Review of the World Situation, CIA 7-50, 19 July 1950.

administration and became an important moment to enter the second phase of the war.⁹² The US assessed that “the Chinese intervention was due to the UN forces’ advance to the Yalu River.”⁹³ It also analysed that “there was a disagreement between Stalin and Mao concerning the issue of dispatching Chinese Communist troops to Korea in a way that Stalin insisted on Chinese immediate involvement in the war to save North Korea, while Mao was reluctant to do so due to major problems within China as well as its inability to supply his own troops. The US believed Mao was concerned about internal as well as external reactions and ramifications, which might result from his decision to participate.”⁹⁴ In addition, the US assessed that “Stalin initially did not expect for the UN forces to advance up to the border area between China and North Korea, so when it happened, Stalin took active measures to persuade Mao to enter the war.”⁹⁵ As a revisionist, E. Friedman argued that there was no intention for Communist China to engage in a civil war in Korea at first, as it did not expect the US to intervene in a Korean domestic issue. However, China felt threatened by the Americans’ aggressive action to advance up to the Yalu River, the border area between China and North Korea. Thus, the Chinese military intervention was inevitable to protect its own security.⁹⁶ These arguments have been prove incorrect in that it was Mao who requested early Chinese intervention while Stalin was reluctant and rejected it. Furthermore, Chinese military intervention was an essential prerequisite for Stalin to approve Kim’s initial plan to launch a military offensive from the first stage of discussing the war.

Ironically, former American officials associated with the State of Department also commented that “early Chinese intervention could have helped President Truman and his advisors check an out-of-control General MacArthur, as it could have prevented the enlarged war in Korea.”⁹⁷ It was Stalin who did not reply to Mao and Kim’s constant request for Chinese military intervention until UN forces advanced north of the 38th parallel. In this situation, Mao was reluctant to accept Stalin’s suggestion to dispatch the Chinese armed forces, as there was a high

⁹² Paul G. Pierpaoli, Jr., *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War*, Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999, pp.42-43.

⁹³ CIA, *The Korean War and Sino-Soviet Relations*, No. 618749, 16 April 1954.

⁹⁴ CIA, *Soviet Intervention in the Korean War*, 8 April 1954.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Friedman, “Problems in Dealing with an Irrational Power,” *America’s Asia: Dissenting Essays of Asian-American Relations*, pp.207-252.

⁹⁷ Halle, *The Cold War as History*, p.21.

probability of turning the Korean War into a long-term war against the US. However, due to Stalin's suggestion to Kim to withdraw his armed forces into China, which Mao was terrified of with the possible outcome of having military conflict against the US inside Chinese territory, Mao finally decided to send his troops to Korea.

Regarding the possibility of Chinese intervention in the Korean War, Washington had a lack of confidence in anticipating Mao's decision. From early on in the Korean War, the CIA continued to pay special attention to the probability of Chinese military intervention in Korea. However, it committed a grave error from the first. On 27 June, two days after the outbreak of the war, the CIA evaluated that "Communist China would not play a major role in the Korean conflict."

⁹⁸Although US intelligence was aware that Korean troops from Manchurian units of the PLA had been transferred to the North Korean army over the past few years and it expected that "additional Korean troops in Manchuria were available to be transferred if necessary, it thought regular Chinese Communist forces would not engage in the war. In addition, it added that Mao would regard the Korean War as a testing ground for determining the West's intentions, as Western support for South Korea might influence his policy towards Taiwan as well as Indochina."⁹⁹ In this report, Mao's regime was evaluated as a passive supporter or a spectator observing the situation nearby. Moreover, the US believed that "an effective counter-offensive by the West would delay Communist China's invasion of Taiwan. If Western action in Korea turned out to be ineffectual, it would encourage Mao to proceed with his plan to invade Taiwan as well as Indochina."¹⁰⁰ As shown, the US was mainly concerned not about Mao's decision to intervene in the Korean conflict but the possible change of his policy towards Taiwan and Indochina. This concern was proved by President Truman's statement on 27 June 1950 to dispatch the Seventh Fleet to the Formosa Strait to deter any kind of threat by communist forces.¹⁰¹ This indicates that the US was afraid not of the possible involvement of the Chinese Communist forces in Korea but the chance of a military offensive by Mao's regime towards

⁹⁸ CIA, Weekly Intelligence Highlights, No. 106, 27 June 1950, p.2.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p.3.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p.4.

¹⁰¹ Statement of President Truman, 27 June 1950, DSB, Vol. XXIII, No.574, 3 July 1950, p.5.

Taiwan, which would threaten US security in the Pacific region.

With regards to Communist China's attitude towards the situation in Korea, Washington considered it related to possible Soviet options in the war. It assessed that "Moscow would localise the warfare in Korea but give increasing material aid to North Korea to prolong US involvement in it. In line with this Soviet purpose, it would possibly employ the Chinese Communist troops either covertly or overtly."¹⁰² This analysis seems to be close to Stalin's plan in the Korean War. However, the US intelligence report showed its inconsistency in anticipating the possibility of Chinese intervention in Korea. On 19 July 1950, the CIA reported that "the Chinese Communist forces could be engaged in the war covertly or openly, as the primary aim of the USSR was to discredit the US containment policy towards Soviet Communism. Therefore, it predicted that the Soviet armed forces would not be directly involved in the Korean conflict."¹⁰³ At this time, the US evaluated the Korean War as a proxy war for Soviet purposes, which Kim took a major role in with the support of Chinese Communist forces if necessary.

In mid-August 1950, the US attempted to analyse more specifically about the possible reaction from Mao's regime related to the participation of UN forces in the Korean War. It assessed that "the Chinese forces would possibly take up a defensive position north of the 38th parallel as it seemed apparent that the North Korean army were being defeated in the South."¹⁰⁴ However, in early September, the US examined seriously the possibility of direct intervention by Communist China. It collected comprehensive information on the movement of Chinese Communist forces that showed approximately two hundred and ten thousand Chinese troops were being deployed in the northern Chinese area and military construction was in progress along the Yalu River. Nevertheless, the CIA concluded that "the Chinese Communist participation in the Korean War would be indirect through integrating into the North Korean forces by using Manchurian volunteers due to momentous repercussions from its overt

¹⁰² CIA, Consequences of the Korean Incident, IM-302, 8 July 1950.

¹⁰³ CIA, Review of the World Situation, CIA 7-50, 19 July 1950.

¹⁰⁴ CIA, Memorandum: Factors affecting the Desirability of a UN military conquest of all of Korea, 17 Aug 1950.

action.”¹⁰⁵ It seems that the US judged that Mao’s regime was not strong enough to deal with direct military confrontation with the US and this stance continued after the successful Incheon Landing Operation on 15 September 1950. A few days later after Operation Chromite, the CIA reported that “it was doubtful that the Soviet or Chinese Communist forces would be committed south of the 38th parallel and they would aid the North Korean regime indirectly.”¹⁰⁶ It seems that the US evaluated that “the success of Operation Chromite by the UN forces directed by General MacArthur would put the North Korean forces on the defensive.” Importantly, the US seemed to judge “the possibility of Chinese Communist intervention as low, as China did not give any direct message to engage in warfare right after the Incheon Landing Operation.”¹⁰⁷ This tendency to analyse the situation had continued even after the first battle with Chinese Communist troops in late October.

When President Truman had a meeting with General MacArthur on 15 October 1950 to discuss the warfare in Korea, MacArthur reported that “the North Korean forces would be defeated soon and therefore the Korean War would cease by Christmas.”¹⁰⁸ This comment was based on the US intelligence report on 12 October, which predicted that “a full-scale Chinese Communist intervention in Korea was not probable in 1950 barring a Soviet decision for a global war.” It also analysed that “although Chinese ground forces were capable of intervening in the Korean War effectively, it would be confined to covert assistance to North Korea.” Moreover, it examined the possible threat of Soviet intervention given that Moscow had increased its military capabilities in the Far East region. However, it concluded that “the Soviet leaders would not decide to enter the war unless they were interested in precipitating a global war at this time.”¹⁰⁹ Even until November 1950, when the Chinese Communist forces intervened in the Korean War on a large scale, the US did not apprehend the objectives of the Chinese intervention. It estimated that “the Chinese intervention was intended by Moscow to test a proxy war, and its purpose would obtain UN withdrawal from Korea, but it was not sure

¹⁰⁵ CIA, Probability of Direct Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea, IM-324, 8 Sep 1950.

¹⁰⁶ CIA, Review of the World Situation, CIA 9-50, 20 Sep 1950.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Park, *The Korean War*, p.220.

¹⁰⁹ CIA, Critical Situation in the Far East, ORE 58-50, 12 Oct 1950.

whether the Chinese Communists would be committed to a full-scale offensive against the US and UN forces.”¹¹⁰

The US attitude being suspicious about a full-scale Chinese intervention changed after the Chinese major offensive against the US forces from 25 November 1950. Since then, the war situation had been reversed against the US. In this situation, General MacArthur reported to Truman on 28 November that “the US was faced with a completely different war and therefore a new strategy was needed immediately, which led Truman to order a retreat of the US forces southward.”¹¹¹ After that, the CIA started to analyse differently, as it concluded that “the Chinese Communists accepted the risk of a general war with the US and Stalin must have estimated that a general war between the US and Communist China would be advantageous to the Soviets.”¹¹² In addition, the US anticipated that “without virtual Western surrender, the Kremlin would plan to push the Chinese forces until the military defeat of the UN. Therefore, it was recommended that a determined stand by the UN forces in Korea would be required to make the Soviets re-estimate the situation.”¹¹³ It seems that the US was able to realise Stalin’s aim in the Korean War after the Chinese military intervention. However, it decided to continue its hard-line policy to put pressure on the Kremlin, which was actually what Stalin intended. This shows the US failed to understand Stalin’s real purpose for the war in Korea.

The US analysed correctly about the political and military capabilities of both Communist China and North Korea. However, it failed to analyse Stalin’s objectives in the Far East. Furthermore, the US did not analyse correctly about the strained relations between the Kremlin and the new Chinese Communist government. The Korean War should be understood in a wider context both in the Far East and the world. Stalin judged the war as a tool to counter US power in the Far East by a proxy war against China. As for Mao, it was against his will to enter the war at such a difficult time for China. However, there was no option for him but to be involved

¹¹⁰ CIA, Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea, NIE-2, 6 Nov 1950; CIA, Soviet Capabilities and Intentions, NIE-3, 15 Nov 1950; CIA, Review of the World Situation, CIA 11-50, 15 Nov 1950; CIA, Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea, NIE-2/1, 24 Nov 1950.

¹¹¹ Il Kwon Jung, *The Memoir*, Seoul: Koryo Publisher, 1996, pp.304-307.

¹¹² CIA, Soviet Intentions in the Current Situation, NIE-11, 5 Dec 1950.

¹¹³ CIA, Probable Soviet Moves to Exploit the Present Situation, NIE-15, 11 Dec 1950.

in the war to maintain his political leadership within China. In this respect, the US failed to understand Sino-Soviet relations in depth.

The US assessed “the Korean War as a proxy war by a Soviet-led North Korea to test the Western world and to communise the whole of Korea.”¹¹⁴ As an orthodox, Dallin and Ulam argued that Stalin’s aim was to communise the whole Korean Peninsula to accomplish his strategy of world communisation.¹¹⁵ However, this argument has been proved incorrect that Stalin intentionally disapproved of early Chinese intervention to prevent a swift victory.

As a revisionist, on the other hand, A. Whiting argued that “the Chinese Communist intervention in the Korean War was not related to Sino-Soviet relations but was purely decided of its own free will.” It claims that the Chinese Communist leadership had little responsibility in the Korean War until late October 1950, as it had not engaged in the war until then. After the Incheon Landing Operation and following the UN forces advance to the 38th parallel, however, the Chinese Communist leadership changed its policy towards Korea. It argued that “the Chinese objective in the Korean War was to return to the status quo ante bellum in the Korean Peninsula, as North Korea was politically important to Chinese interests. Therefore, maintaining DPRK near the border with China and preventing the unification of Korea under the American-led UN forces was the driving force for Mao to decide to enter the war.”¹¹⁶ As discussed earlier, this argument is revealed to be problematic, as Mao requested Stalin to approve early Chinese military intervention.¹¹⁷ However, things did not go Mao’s way as Stalin did not accept Mao’s suggestion. It was after the UN forces marched past the 38th parallel that Stalin requested Mao intervene. At last, Mao inevitably came to the conclusion that he must dispatch Chinese military forces to Korea as Stalin wished. This enabled Stalin to succeed in seizing hegemony as the leading figure of the Communist world in Asia through the Korean War after Mao emerged as a new Asian leader after creating the PRC although there was downside in that the war accelerated for Washington to take more active measures to counter

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Dallin, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, p.60; A. Dallin, “The Use of International Movement,” in *Russian Foreign Policy: Essay in Historical Perspective*, p.331; Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970*, p.26; Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence*, pp.518-519.

¹¹⁶ Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu*.

¹¹⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Secret Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin about the conversation between Mao and Yudin, 20 Aug 1950.

the Soviets, which caused a great military and economic burden for Stalin after all.

Conclusion

The withdrawal of the US forces from South Korea was decided on the basis of a realistic approach to Washington's domestic and economic situation. After the end of the Second World War, the total number of the US army had significantly decreased and its military budget was insufficient to maintain overseas military bases. Consequently, Washington came to the conclusion to change its defence policy based on its naval and air forces in the Pacific region. As Japan was the strategically most important country for the US in this area, the withdrawal of the US forces from South Korea seemed a rational and realistic choice for US policy makers. The US government, however, assessed that "the Soviet-inspired North Korean forces were capable of attempting the downfall of South Korea by military means."¹¹⁸ In this context, the US concluded that creating an adequate native security force within South Korea would serve as a deterrent to such an aggression by North Korea and it showed confidence to train the South Korean army to be competent enough to deal with a possible external threat before the withdrawal of US forces. In fact, the main characteristic of US policy towards South Korea after the establishment of the two separate regimes was to maintain the present anti-Soviet political leadership in South Korea with the support of US military, economic and technical aid over a long period of time. This was because "the US was suspicious that the Soviets would not be satisfied with the current situation in Korea and therefore exert every effort to control the whole of it."¹¹⁹ This demonstrates that the US aimed to support an American-friendly regime in South Korea to ensure its survival from the external threat from the Soviet-inspired North Korean regime. Therefore, it proves that the US did not abandon Korea from its strategic defence lists.

In light of the outbreak of the Korean War, however, the US made two grave errors; not to anticipate the military offensive by North Korean forces, and the intervention of Chinese forces in the war. The US intelligence report on 19 June 1950, less than one week before the war,

¹¹⁸ CIA, Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea, ORE 44-48, 28 Oct 1948, pp.5-6.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p.8.

concluded that despite the apparent military superiority over South Korea, the North Korean regime would not be able to succeed in controlling the whole of Korea mainly due to the lack of popular support for Communism among the South Korean public. In addition, it analysed that “Soviet assistance to North Korea would not include the direct participation of Soviet or Chinese Communist armed forces in case of a military operation against South Korea.”¹²⁰ At the beginning of the war, the US evaluated that “the primary aim of the Soviets was to discredit the US containment policy of Soviet Communism through a proxy war launched by a Soviet client regime. Therefore, it was concerned about the possibility of Chinese Communist intervention and prolonged warfare in Korea as a consequence.”¹²¹ However, until the war situation took a turn favourable to the US forces after the success of the Incheon Landing Operation in mid-September 1950 and the following advance to the 38th parallel, there was no Chinese military intervention. This led the US to misjudge that there would not be a full-scale Chinese Communist military intervention in the Korean War. This was because, from the point of military tactics, it was believed that China had missed its best opportunity to intervene.

In fact, this was correct as Mao asked for Stalin’s approval for Chinese intervention during the early period of the war when the North Korean forces were superior to that of its opponents. However, Stalin did not approve Mao’s suggestion, as early victory in the Korean War was not his main goal. This led to the US side misinterpreting the war situation and led it to misjudge that “indirect support by releasing trained Chinese Communist army would be more likely to happen to support Kim, unless Moscow decided to escalate the Korean conflict into a global war.”¹²² When the war situation entered upon a new phase by a full scale intervention by the Chinese Communist forces in late November 1950, the first reaction by Washington was not to believe what it happened, and finally it came to conclusion that “the Communist China accepted the risk of a general war with the US with explicit assurance of effective Soviet support.” More importantly, it assessed that “a broadening of the Korean conflict into a general warfare between the US and Communist China would be advantageous to the Soviets, and

¹²⁰ CIA, Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime, ORE-18-50, 19 June 1950.

¹²¹ CIA, Review of the World Situation, CIA 7-50, 19 July 1950.

¹²² Ibid.

therefore the Kremlin would plan to utilise the Chinese forces until completing the military defeat of the UN forces.”¹²³

As highlighted above, Stalin was the main figure to plan as well as operate the war caused by fear about the US and possible outbreak of a Third World War. Due to Stalin’s plan over the Korean War, Kim missed an important opportunity to achieve a swift victory as the North Korean forces had to stay in Seoul for a few days after its occupation within only three days of launching the war. As for Mao, early victory by Kim was desirable as there were widely spread rumours among the Chinese public that the Korean War could escalate into a Third World War. Tactically speaking, the fact that the North Korean forces did not march southwards for a few days after its occupation of Seoul and Communist China did not enter the war during the best time to win seemed to give the wrong signals to the US. Based on currently available information released from major warring parties, misjudgement and miscalculation among one another took a lead of the war.

¹²³ CIA, Probable Soviet Moves to Exploit the Present Situation, NIE-15, 11 Dec 1950.

Conclusion

This thesis has shed new light on the origins of the Korean War; why it happened and who was the most responsible for it. Scholars having traditional point of view including D. Rees, J.L. Gaddis, T.H. Etzold, J. So, and H. Kim argued that the war was led by Stalin who had a strong desire to communise the whole world and therefore ordered Kim to launch unlawful military attack against the South. Thus, the main reason for the origin of the war is the expansionistic nature of communism. With a great amount of historical documents from the warring parties including Russia, China, North Korea and the US, it has been revealed that the main driving force on the outbreak of the war was Stalin's reaction towards a new security environment in the Far East. Stalin seemed satisfied with having the Northern part of the Korean Peninsula as a buffer zone to protect the USSR like what he did in Eastern Europe. In this respect, Moscow tried to establish a Soviet friendly regime in North Korea when the negotiation regarding the post Japan issue was not proceeded in favour of what Stalin had hoped. Until the end of 1949, Stalin was so concerned about any possible military accident between the North and the South, and rejected Kim's offensive approach to unify Korea. In other words, North Korea, as a Soviet-satellite nation, played a role as a strategic buffer zone to protect the Soviets from the possible threat of Japan and the US. In January 1950, however, Stalin showed his positive attitude towards Kim's continuous request on launching military attack to the South for the first time. This thesis focuses on why Stalin changed his mind, from a strong objector to an active sponsor on Kim's war plan. The key point is to analyse the change of the global security environment in both the Far East and the world.

In January 1950, the US policy on expanding its sphere of influence in the Far East became more proactive by means of conciliatory measures towards Communist China, Japan and South Korea. Furthermore, Stalin became suspicious of Mao's loyalty to him when it came to Mao's request on amending the Sino-Soviet treaty which Stalin agreed with Chiang, the leader of the KMT. Mao even tried to improve relations with Washington in order to recover from the damage on China through US economic aids. This was a challenging situation for Stalin in his security strategy in the Far East.

In Europe, there seemed no place for Stalin to further expand the sphere of Soviet influence due to Washington's Europe-first policy by using its economic and military power. It looked

like the balance of power had been reached there. Stalin's Europe first policy after the Second World War was counterchecked by US policy creating the NATO in 1949 to prevent Soviet expansionism. A strong resistance by the West against Soviet communism, the relative balance of power between US atomic power and Soviet ground forces, Soviet deterrent ability by the success of development of atomic bomb, and the speedy economic recovery in the West played a significant role to lead towards a stable balance of power in Europe. The concern about Soviet border area in Europe had been resolved to some extent due to the Sovietisation of neighbouring countries around the USSR. Therefore, it can be argued that a new field for competing against the US turned to the Far East, with Japan as a major factor to be concerned. Regarding Japanese issues, Stalin realised the gap with Washington was getting wider through the negotiation process, and came to believe that Japan would become an ally to the US, able to threaten Soviet security in the future. NSC 61, which was introduced in January 1950, seemed significant for Stalin to ensure that Moscow would lose its game with Washington over the Japanese issue. At the same time, US President Truman made a statement that the US would not be involved in the Taiwan issue, which officially supported Mao's wish to unify Taiwan by military means. The development of relations with Washington was what Mao tried in order to recover from China's economic damage due to a long period of the war. As for South Korea, the US decided its policy depending on its strategic priority in the Far East, which was Japan. NSC 61 included the economic aids to South Korea as a main trading partner with Japan. Although Washington decided to withdraw its forces in South Korea by 1949, it did not mean that the US abandoned Korea as its strategic security target. Actually CIA wrote a report on October 1948 before the withdrawal of the US forces that "there would be possibility for Soviet backed North Korean regime to attack the South but it could be prevented by establishing security forces within the South as a deterrent and it could be completed before the withdrawal of the US forces."¹ In this respect, Stalin became suspicious about Washington's true intention in terms of the Acheson announcement in January 1950 in that he thought it was a kind of US conciliatory approach towards Communist China, which was an offensive measure to Moscow. As described, the security situation in January 1950 was threatening to Stalin, and Mao's request on amending the previous Sino-Soviet treaty which guaranteed Soviet privilege in

¹ CIA, *The report on the situation in Korea*, Oct 1948

Manchuria seemed to trigger Stalin to decide that it was time to take an action in the Far East. Stalin seemed to induce US intervention in the war by ordering Soviet delegates not to attend the UNSC meeting. At the same time, Stalin manipulated the timing of the Chinese Communist military intervention against Mao and Kim's wish to ensure a long-term war in the Far East.

Stalin's aim throughout the military conflict was not to expand Communism in Korea but to weaken the US through a long-term war involving American military intervention as well as Chinese Communist participation. Stalin believed that a prolonged war in Korea would prevent the US from starting a possible Third World War. To support this argument, Stalin's intention on the Korean War has been revealed by the documents on the talks between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 20 August 1952 in Moscow. In this meeting, Stalin strongly agreed with Zhou by saying that "China played a pivotal role in preventing a possible Third World War for at least fifteen to twenty years by fighting the US in Korea. The US would lose its power to launch a big war after the Korean War. Although the US could rely on an atomic bomb attack, it would not be able to win the war due to its lack of ground forces." ²

Stalin's goal in the Korean War led to ongoing disagreement among Stalin, Mao and Kim throughout the war. Apart from Stalin's intentional neglect of Mao's request for early Chinese military intervention, Stalin attempted to manipulate the war to hold the US in Korea as long as possible. For example, Stalin persuaded Mao, who was hesitating to enter the war against the US after its success with the Incheon Landing Operation, to actively engage in the war by mentioning that "China should not worry about the war against the US due to the Sino-Soviet treaty."³ Once the Chinese military intervention started, however, Stalin did not supply adequate weaponry despite his promise. According to Mao's telegram to Stalin on 7 November 1950, it requested urgent supply of weapons by mentioning that "Chinese military forces only had armaments enough for six divisions out of thirty-six and even those were captured weapons

² Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Memorandum on the talks between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 20 Aug 1952 written by A. Vyshinsky & N. Pederenko, pp.54-72.

³ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret telegram from Stalin to Kim regarding Chinese military involvement in the Korean War, 8 Oct 1950.

from its opponents.”⁴ Stalin’s reply to Mao’s request, however, did not mention the Soviet aid of munitions. Instead, Stalin stated that “the Chinese army had a valuable opportunity to fight well-equipped American troops, which would contribute to modernising Chinese military forces.”⁵ These kinds of telegrams, in which Mao asked for Soviet military aid but Stalin did not provide what was requested, were ongoing throughout the whole period of the war. For example, Mao sent a secret telegram to Stalin mentioning that he was informed from the North Korean report that the Soviet Army General Staff Department only decided to transfer enough military weapons for sixteen Chinese army divisions out of sixty and the supply of the rest of the munitions would be completed during 1952 and 1953. With regard to this issue, Mao strongly requested for Stalin to supply what China asked for by the end of 1951.⁶ In response to Mao’s request, Stalin clearly mentioned that “it would not be possible to transfer all military equipment for sixty Chinese army divisions before the first half of 1954.”⁷ From these underused documents, it can be argued that Stalin attempted to prolong the war at least until 1954. As is well-known, the armistice was agreed right after the sudden death of Stalin in 1953. Therefore, the Korean War could have lasted longer if Stalin had not died unexpectedly.

In summary, the Korean War was Stalin’s war. It could not have been launched without Stalin’s approval in the first place. During the early period of the war, Stalin rejected Mao’s suggestion to dispatch Chinese troops to enter the war, which resulted in preventing a swift victory by the North Korean forces. When Stalin asked Mao to intervene in the war, it was after the success of the Incheon Landing Operation and the American-led UN forces advanced north of the 38th parallel and Mao thought Chinese forces would not be able to win the war against the US. In this context, Stalin’s decision seemed reasonable if his goal was not to win but to maintain the state of war. Without Chinese military intervention, the North Korean forces would lose the war without a doubt, and it was not what Stalin aimed for. From Stalin’s perspective, there needed to be something that could change Mao’s mind, which was Stalin’s order to Kim to

⁴ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret telegram from Mao to Stalin, 7 Nov 1950, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N26 637.

⁵ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret telegram from Stalin to Mao, 1 Dec 1950, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N97 68.

⁶ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret telegram from Mao to Stalin, 21 June 1951, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N21039.

⁷ Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Secret telegram from Stalin to Mao 24 June 1951, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N635177.

retreat his regime into China to continue to fight the US. This was an even worse option for Mao to accept, as the war could move into Chinese territory and therefore it changed his mind. For the duration of the war, there was ongoing disputes between Stalin and Mao regarding the supply of armaments, military strategy, the armistice, and so on. Due to the lack of military supply, Chinese forces could not conduct their operations successfully and, as a result, they just managed to defend against the offensive from their opponents. Stalin's fear on the US and his willingness to protect his country resulted in three years' war in Korea causing terrible losses of human lives as well as a deep-rooted hostility between the two Koreas over several decades.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korean Government)

Institute of Social Science History Research, *The History of the Korean War*, Vol.24, Pyongyang: Science Encyclopedia Press, 1981.

Kim Il Sung, "The New Year's Address in 1949," *For Unification, Independence and Democratisation of Korea*, Vol.2, Pyongyang: National People's Press, 1949.

Ministry of Unification Archive, *Kim's collected writings on 28 May 1961*, Vol.15, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1981.

Ministry of Unification Archive, *Kim's military strategy on 11 May 1968*, Vol.15, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1981.

Ministry of Unification Archive, *The training materials for staff*, Pyongyang: North Korean Communist Party Press, 1995.

Roddong Shinmum (Labour Newspaper in North Korea), 23. July 1950.

The Korean Central News Agency, *The Korean Central Year Book 1949*, Pyongyang: The Korean Central News Agency, 1950.

Republic of Korea (South Korean Government)

Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security:

The Report by I.M. Chistiakov and N. Lebedev on 14 October 1945.

The Proclamation of the 25th Army in the Primorsky Military District, No. 0246, 27 Nov 1945.

The Report by Galaktionov on 11 Nov 1945.

The Report by Ignatiev on 12 Nov 1945.

The Report by Ilatovskiy in Nov 1945.

Order no. 00263 from the military district of the Maritime Province of Siberia, 3 December 1945.

The Report by Shikin on the south Pyongan People's Committee, on 25 Dec 1945.

The Report by Romanenko in December 1945.

The Report by Gromov & Ignatiev on 4 Jan 1946.

Sorokin's Report on 16 June 1947.

The Russian Diplomatic Documents, 5 Mar 1949.

The Russian Diplomatic Documents, 7 Mar 1949.

The telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 17 April 1949.

The Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 20 April 1949, 2 May 1949.

Secret Telegram from Kovalyov to Stalin about the results of the meeting between Mao and North Korean delegation, 18 May 1949.

The Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 13 August 1949.

The Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin, 27 Aug 1949.

The Secret Telegram from Tunkin to Stalin, 3 Sep 1949.

The Telegram from Stalin to the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang, 11 Sep 1949.

The Telegram from Tunkin to Stalin, 14 Sep 1949.

The first draft of the resolution by the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Politburo, 23 Sep 1949.

The Russian Diplomatic Documents, 26 Oct 1949.

The Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 Oct 1949

The telegram to Shtykov by the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, 20 Nov 1949.

The report from Shtykov to Vyshinsky, 19 Jan 1950.

The secret telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 2 Feb 1950.

The telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 13 May 1950.

The telegram from Stalin to Mao, 3 May 1950, 14 May 1950.

The telegram from Roshchin to Stalin, 15 May 1950.

The Secret Telegram from Stykov to Stalin, 11 June 1950.

The Secret Telegram from Stykov to Stalin, 15 June 1950.

The Secret Telegram from Kim Il Sung to Stalin, 21 June 1950.

The Secret Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin about the conversation between Mao and Yudin, 20 Aug 1950.

Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin, 20 Sep 1950.

The Russian Diplomatic Documents, A telegram from Mao to Stalin, 2 October 1950.

Secret telegram from Stalin to Kim regarding Chinese military involvement in the Korean War, 8 Oct 1950.

Secret telegram from Stalin to Kim, 13 Oct 1950.

Secret telegram from Mao to Stalin, 13 Oct 1950.

Secret telegram from Mao to Stalin, 7 Nov 1950, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N26 637.

Secret telegram from Stalin to Mao, 1 Dec 1950, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N97 68.

Secret telegram from Mao to Stalin, 21 June 1951, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N21039.

Secret telegram from Stalin to Mao 24 June 1951, the 2nd general bureau of General Staff Department in Soviet Army, N635177.

Memorandum on the talks between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 20 Aug 1952 written by A. Vyshinsky & N. Pederenko.

Korean Bureau of Public Information, *The Beginning and End of the Soviet Military Government*, Seoul: Korean Bureau of Public Information, 1950.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs in South Korea, The Summary of documentations about the Korean War (Jan 1949 - August 1953), "A secret Telegram from Stalin to Mao, 14 May 1950," "The Report on Kim's visit to Moscow between 30 March 1950 and 25 April 1950 by the International Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party," Moscow: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996.

National Defense Institute:

“The NSC documents between 1948 and 1950,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 1-3*, 1996.

“The documents by the Policy Planning Department of the US Department of States, 1947-1951,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 4-13*, 1997.

“CIA reports,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 14-17*, 1997.

“Documents by the US Department of State on Korean Politics,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 18-22*, 1998.

“Documents by the Policy Research Bureau of the US Department of State,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 23-24*, 1998.

“Documents by the Chinese Affairs Office in Far Eastern Bureau, the US Department of State,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 25*, 1998.

“Documents by the Policy Research Bureau of the US Department of State,” *A series of research materials on the Korean War 26-35*, 1998.

National Institute of Korean History, *The Information on Korean Workers' Party 1, 1945-50*, Seoul: National Institute of Korean History, 1980.

Rhee, Syngman, *The Memoir*, 1 Oct 1945.

Soviet Academy of Asian Studies, The Board of National Unification (trans.), *The Relations between the USSR and North Korea, 1945-1980*, Seoul: The Board of National Unification Press, 1988.

The Board of National Unification, *The Relations between the USSR and North Korea, 1945-1980*, Seoul: the Board of National Unification, 1987.

The Defense Ministry of South Korea, *The Korean War*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1954

The National Institute of War History in Ministry of Defense:

The Korean War, Vol.1, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1977.

The Korean War, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1990.

The Research Institute of International Affairs, *The China White Paper in 1945*, Seoul: RIIA, 1990.

The War History Compilation Committee in the Ministry of Defense in Korea, *The History of the Korean War*, Seoul: Ministry of Defense, 1967.

Russian Government

Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation:

AVPRF, "Report on North Korean matter by D. Zhukov, the director of the second Far East bureau in the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs, and by E. Zabrodin, the deputy director of the second Far East bureau in the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs on 29 June 1945," F.0430, OP.2, P.18, D.5.

AVPRF, Fond 013, Opis'7, Papka 4, Delo 46, 25 December 1945.

AVPRF, "Telegram from Shtykov to A. Gromyko, the deputy minister of Soviet Foreign Affairs," F.0102, OP.6, P21, D.47/48.

AVPRF, "Report by the Soviet ministry of foreign affairs," F.0431, OP.1, P.52, D.8.

AVPRF, F.7, OP.2, P.51, D.362.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, *Correspondence between the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the President of the USA and the Prime Minister of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, Vol.2, Correspondence with F.D. Roosevelt and H.S. Truman*, Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1957.

The Intelligence Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Intelligence Report No.16, September 1946.

The Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Politburo, The Resolution on North Korea, 24 Sep 1949.

Russian Presidential Archives:

APRF, "Record about the meeting between Stalin and North Korean representatives on 5 Mar 1949," F.45, OP.1, D.346.

APRF, "Stalin's telegram to Mao through I. Kovalev on 26 May 1949," F.45, OP.1, D.331.

APRF, "Conversation between Stalin and Mao in Moscow on 16 Dec 1949," F.45, OP.1, D.329.

APPF, "Memoir of meeting between Vyshinsky and Mao on 13 Jan 1950," F.3, OP.65, D.364.

APRF, "Record about the meeting between Stalin and Mao on 22 Jan 1950," F.45, OP.1, D.329.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Kim," 28 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347.

APRF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin," 1 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.346.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov," 1 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.346.

APRF, "Telegram to Stalin by Zhou Enlai through Roshchin, the Soviet ambassador in China," 2 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.331.

APRF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin: the discussion with the North Korean Leadership on the issue of the situation of the front line," 4 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.346.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin, the Soviet ambassador in China," 5 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov: on the issue of aiding military equipment to North Korea," 6 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.140.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Mao," 5 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334.

APRF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin: on the issue of Kim's request," 8 July 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.346.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov," 8 July 1950.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Shtykov about the military plan in North Korea," 28 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347.

APRF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin," 30 August 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.347.

APRF, "Statement sent to the US government by the Soviet government," 6 September 1950, F.3, OP.65, D.827.

APRF, "Telegram from Roshchin to Stalin," 18 September 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.331.

APRF, "Telegram from Stalin to Roshchin about supporting North Korea by sending Chinese troops," 1 October 1950, F.45, OP.1, D.334.

APRF, "Record about the meeting between Stalin and Zhou Enlai on 5 Aug 1952," F.45, OP.1, D.329.

Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History:

RGASPI, "Telegram sent to Stalin by the Soviet ambassador in China, Nikolai Roshchin," 14 May 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334.

RGASPI, "A message from Stalin to Gottwald, the President of Czechoslovakia," 27 Aug 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.62.

RGASPI, "Oral Correspond from Stalin to Gottwald through the Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia," 27 August 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.62.

RGASPI, "Telegram from Mao to Stalin" 2 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334.

RGASPI, "Telegram sent to Stalin from Mao through Roshchin," 3 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334.

RGASPI, "Telegram sent to Mao from Stalin and Zhou Enlai" 11 October 1950, F.558, OP.11, D.334.

RGASPI, "The record on meeting between Stalin and Indian Communist Party leader," 9 February 1951, F.558, OP.11, D.310.

RGASPI, "The record on meeting between the Soviet representative and Chinese representative," 8 Sep 1952, F.82, OP.2, D.1258.

Russian Central Archive of Department of Defense:

TSAMO, Fond, Opis' 687572, Delo 2317, The Report by Major Lebedev on situation in North Korea on 19 Sep 1945.

TSAMO, Fond, Opis' 687572, Delo 2317, Order no. 00187 by K.A. Meretskov on 20 Nov 1945.

TSAMO, Fond, Opis' 687572, Delo 2317, The Report from Sorokin, the chief of Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, to Shikin, the head of Political Bureau of the General Political Bureau, 16 June 1947.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, no.020, The Report by Ignatiev on 30 Dec 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, The Report to the Military Council of the 25th Army by Ignatiev on 23 September 1946.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 102038, Delo 2, The Report on the North Korean provisional People's Committee meeting on 10 Aug 1946 by Ignatiev, 12 Aug 1946.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 106547, Delo 10, The Report by Ignatiev about the order to the chief of the military headquarters in each province in North Korea, 8 Feb 1948.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 342213, Delo 3, The instruction by Major Zagruzin on 24 Nov 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 3, Order no. 2 by the Headquarter of the 25th Army on 19 Nov 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report by Yakov Malik on 30 Oct 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report on 10th Administration in North Korea, Dec 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report on Korean Bank by I.M. Chistiakov, 1945.

TSAMO, Fond USGASK, Opis' 343253, Delo 9, The Report by A.A. Romanenko 'expenditure budget of North Korea Administration between 1 Nov 1945 and 1 April 1946'.

TSAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis' 433847, Delo 1.

TSAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis' 433847, Delo 1, 'The report on the current situation on Industry in northern Korea', 10 Nov 1945.

TSAMORF, Fond USGASK, Opis' 433847, Delo 1, 'The tasks to be resolved' (Report by Ignatiev), 12 Nov 1945.

TSAMO, Fond 17, Opis' 128, Delo 205, The Report on publishing a book about Marxism-Leninism in North Korea, written by Kovalyov, the Central Committee member of the Soviet Communist Party, August 1946.

TSAMO, Fond 19, Opis' 266, Delo 277, The Report to I.V. Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet army on 17 Oct 1945

TSAMO, Fond 23, Opis' 11318, Delo 196.

TSAMO, Fond 25A, Opis' 532092, Delo 1, The Decision by the 25th Army military council on the coal supply through North Korea's railway, 23 June 1946.

TSAMO, Fond 127, Opis' 468007, Delo 4, The Report of Current Situation in North Korea Radio Broadcasting written by lieutenant colonel Marmorshteyn, the Head of Seventh Department in Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, 31 May 1948.

TSAMO, Fond 127, Opis' 468007, Delo 4, The Report on reorganization of the 25th Army military civil body, 2 Nov 1948.

TSAMO, Fond 142, Opis' 540934, Delo 4, The internal Situation in southern Korea, 19 April 1947.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 532092C, Delo 2, The Report to Shtykov from Fursov, the 25th Army military council member, 3 Dec 1946.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 578927, Delo 3, The Report on northern Korea by Gromov, 29 Jan 1947.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 578927, Delo 3, The Report from Gromov, the chief of Political Bureau at the 25th Army, to Sorokin, the chief of Political Bureau at Primorsky Military District, 6 Feb 1947.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 578927, Delo 3, The Report on northern Korea by Ignatiev, 2 June 1947.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 578927, Delo3, The Report on northern Korea by Romanenko, 29 July 1947.

TSAMO, Fond 379, Opis' 5878927, Delo 3, The Report on the 25th Army Political bureau's seventh department Jan-July 1947.

TSAMORF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin: report on the reorganisation of the North Korean army," 7 July 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.122.

TSAMORF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin: report from the North Korean government that China is ready to support North Korea in the Korean War," 15 July 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.122.

TSAMORF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinski, the Soviet Foreign Minister: report on war front by North Korean government and its request on international air force," 19 August 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.122.

TSAMORF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Stalin," 26 August 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.127.

TSAMORF, "Report to Stalin from Vasilev, the Chief military advisory group," 13 September 1950, F.16, OP.3139, D.16.

TSAMORF, "Telegram from Shtykov to Gromyko," 22 September 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.125.

TSAMORF, "Telegram to Stalin from the Chief of the Soviet General Staff Department stationed in North Korea: The result of negotiation between China and North Korea," 7 October 1950, F.5, OP.918795, D.121.

Diary

Shtykov's diary (Sep 1946 – Feb 1947, July 1947 - Oct, 1947, July 1948 – Sep 1948)

Lebedev's diary (Mar- May, July – Sep 1948)

The Soviet Civil Administration Report (August 1945 – November 1948): Doklad, Tom 1, 2, 1948.

The Report from Vabikov, the vice director of Political Department at Primorsky Military District, to Shikin, the head of the Chief Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, 8 Oct 1945, No. 02027.

The Soviet Ministry of Defense, The Report on the Joint Soviet-American Commission between 20 March 1946 and 6 May 1946.

The People's Republic of China (Chinese Government)

Chinese Central Department of Editing and Translation, *Liening Quanji*, Vol. 54, Beijing: People's Publishing Ltd, 1990.

Chinese Central Literature Research Centre:

The Writing by Mao Zedong Since the foundation of PRC, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 1987.

The Writing by Mao Zedong, Vol.6, Beijing: People's Press, 1999.

The Writing by Mao Zedong between 1949 and 1976, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2013.

The Writing by Zhou Enlai between 1949 and 1967, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 1997.

The Writing by Zhou Enlai since the foundation of PRC, Vol.2, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2008.

The Writing by Zhou Enlai since the foundation of PRC, Vol.3, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2008.

The Writing of Chinese foreign relations, Vol.7, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 1999.

Chinese Central Literature Research Centre & Chinese People's Liberation Army Military Science Institute, *The Writing by Mao Zedong since the foundation of PRC*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2010.

Chinese Communist Party's Central International Department, "The Record on the Second meeting between Mao and the Soviet representatives," 23 September 1956, Beijing: Chinese government.

Chinese Internal Report, "Mao Zedong, The Conversation in the 10th meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 24 Sep 1962," *The Praise of Mao's Idea*, 1962.

Dalian City Archives in China, The letter from Muraviyov to Nikolai II on 11 Nov 1897.

Xinhua News Agency:

“Market situation in Shanghai after Truman’s statement,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.171, 1 July 1950.

“Rumour in Tianjin about the Korean War,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.171, 1 July 1950.

“Taiwan’s reunification strategy by using Korea,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.172, 4 July 1950.

“The public opinions among governmental officials, workers, and students in Wuxi,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.176, 11 July 1950.

“The reactions on the Korean War among each class in Shenyang,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.178, 13 July 1950.

“Market Situation after the US intervention in the Korean War,” *Internal Reference*, Vol.188, 28 July 1950.

Chinese People’s Daily News, 17 November 1949, p.1.

Chinese People’s Daily News, 11 January 1950, p.1.

US Government

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA):

Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea, ORE 44-48, 28 Oct 1948.

Rhee Syngman’s Defense plan for Korea, 13 Dec 1948.

The General Report on the Korean War, Top Secret No. 24930, 26 June 1950.

Review of the World Situation, CIA 7-50, 19 July 1950.

Current Capabilities of the Northern Korean Regime, ORE 18-50, 19 June 1950.

Weekly Intelligence Highlights, No. 106, 27 June 1950.

Statement of President Truman, 27 June 1950, DSB, vol. XXIII, no.574, 3 July 1950.

Consequences of the Korean Incident, IM-302, 8 July 1950.

Review of the World Situation, CIA 7-50, 19 July 1950.

Memorandum: Factors affecting the Desirability of a UN military conquest of all of Korea, 17 Aug 1950.

Probability of Direct Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea, IM-324, 8 Sep 1950.

Review of the World Situation, CIA 9-50, 20 Sep 1950.

Critical Situation in the Far East, ORE 58-50, 12 Oct 1950.

Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea, NIE-2, 6 Nov 1950.

Soviet Capabilities and Intentions, NIE-3, 15 Nov 1950.

Review of the World Situation, CIA 11-50, 15 Nov 1950.

Chinese Communist Intervention in Kore, NIE-2/1, 24 Nov 1950.

Soviet Intentions in the Current Situation, NIE-11, 5 Dec 1950.

Probable Soviet Moves to Exploit the Present Situation, NIE-15, 11 Dec 1950.

US Daily Intelligence Summary, The Report by North Korean forces to Kim Il Sung, May 1951, No. 3170, FEC, RG 338.

Soviet Intervention in the Korean War, 8 April 1954.

The Korean War and Sino-Soviet Relations, No. 618749, 16 April 1954.

The CIA Conference on the outbreak of the Korean War, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, Missouri, US, 16 June 2010.

General Staff Department of Public Security Bureau in Home Office of North Korea, Secret Operation Report, obtained by US army in Korea, SA 2009, Item 9/69, RG 242.

HQ, USAFIK, ISNK, No.1, 1 Dec 1945, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff.

HQ, USAFIK, G-2 Periodic Report, No.1028, 4. Jan 1949.

JCS 1844/46, Joint Outline Emergency War Plan, JCS 1844/46, 8 Dec 1949, box 81, CCS 381 USSR (3-2-46), Sec.41, RG 218.

JWPC 432/3, 27 April 1946, box 60, CCS 381 USSR (3-2-46), Sec.1, RG 218.

JWPC 467/1, The Soviet Threat in the Far East and the Means to oppose it (MOONRISE), 16 June 1947, Box 71, CCS 381 USSR (3-2-46), Sec.5, RG 218.

Lee, Sun Woo, The Statistical Report by the Head of Land Reform Committee in Boun Province in South Korea about Land Reform in South Korea, SA 2010, Item 4/87, RG 242.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Programs for Military Assistance, Additional military assistance to Korea, 23 June 1950, Washington D.C.: The US Joint Chiefs of Staff, PM-1110.

The US Department of Defense, *The Entry of the Soviet Union into the War against Japan: Military Plans 1941-1945*, Washington, D.C.: US Department of Defense, 1955.

The US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*:

FRUS, The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran 1943.

FRUS, 1945, Vol. VI.

MacArthur to JCS, 16 Dec 1945, Vol. IV.

The Acting Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Officers, 23 April 1946, Vol. VIII.

Policy for Korea, 6 June 1946, Vol. VIII.

Pauley to Truman on 22 June 1946, Vol. VIII

Lieutenant General J.R. Hodge to the Secretary of States, 1946, vol. VIII.

Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to the Secretary of State, 27 Jan 1947, Vol. VI.

Draft Report of Special Interdepartmental Committee on Korea, 25 Feb 1947, Vol. IV.

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union, 26 Aug 1947, Vol. IV.

Report to the President by General Lieutenant A. C. Wedemeyer, Sep 1947, Vol. IV.

Memo by the Directive of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to the Secretary of State, 1 Oct 1947, Vol. IV.

Robert P. Patterson to G. Marshall, Vol. IV., 1947.

General Political Policies of the US toward Korea, Vol. VI., 1947.

Memo by the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State, 26 Sep 1947, Vol. VII.

Top Secret: Report by the NSC on the Position of the US with respect to Korea, 2 April 1948, Vol. VI.

Muceio telegram to the Secretary of State, 9 Nov 1948.

Top Secret: Strategic Evaluation of United States Security Needs in Japan, 9 June 1949, reported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Vol. VII.

Top Secret: NSC 49, 15 June 1949, noted by the Executive Secretary to the NSC, Vol. VII.

The Far East and Australasia, Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, Vol. VII., 1949.

Truman to Pauley, 16 July 1949, Vol. VIII.

Resolution adopted by the UN Security Council, 25 June 1950

Resolution adopted by the UN Security Council, 27 June 1950.

Statement issued by the President, 27 June 1950.

Substance of Statements made at Wake Island Conference, 15 October 1950.

National Archives, "The USSR in the Far East", 18 August 1943, *Charles Bohlen Papers*, Washington, D.C.

The American Assembly, *The United States and Far East*, New York: Library of Congress, 1956.

The US Department of State, *North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover*, Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1961.

The US Department of State, *The China White Paper*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979.

Washington National Record Centre, Assistant Chief of Staff in G-2 USAFIK, "North Korea – For American Eyes only," RG 332, Box 57, N.A.

Acheson, Dean, "Act of Aggression in Korea: Review of U.N. and US Action to restore peace," *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol.23, No.575, 10 July 1950.

Millis, Walter (ed.), *The Forrestal Diaries 1944-1949*, New York: the Viking Press, Declassified and approved for release from CIA in March 2014.

Sawyer, Robert K., *Military Advisor in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, Washington D.C.: Centre of Military History United States Army, 1988.

Secondary Literature

BOOKS in English

Acheson, Dean, *Present at the Creation: My years in the State Department*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969.

Appleman, Roy E., *South to the Nakdong, North to the Yalu: United States Army in the Korean War*, Washington, D.C.: The US Army, 1961.

Bajanov, Evgeniy & Bajanova, Natalia, *The Korean Conflict 1950-1953: The Most Mysterious War of the 20th Century*, Moscow: Russian Academy of Foreign Affairs, unpublished.

Beloff, Max, *Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951*, London: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Bohlen, Charles E., *The Transformation of American Foreign Policy*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969.

Campbell, John C., & the Research Staff of the Council on Foreign Relations, *The United States in World Affairs, 1945-1947*, New York & London: Harper & Brothers, 1947.

Catchpole, Brian, *The Korean War, 1950-1953*, London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2000.

Chen, Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Churchill, Winston S., *The Gathering of Storm*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948.

Cohen, S.F., "Bolshevism and Stalinism", in R.D. Tucker (ed.), *Stalinism*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977.

Condit, Kenneth W., *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 1947-1950*, Vol. II., Washington D.C.: M. Glazier, 1949.

Cumings, Bruce, *The Origins of the Korean War : Liberation and the Establishment of Separate Regimes 1945-1947, The Roaring of the Cataract 1947-1950*, 2 Vols, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981/1990.

Dallin, Alexander "The Use of International Movement," in *Russian Foreign Policy: Essay in Historical Perspective*, ed. Ivo Lederer, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.

Dallin, David J., *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948.

Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1961.

Dobbs, Charles M., *The Unwanted Symbol: American Foreign Policy, the Cold War, and Korea, 1945-1950*, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1981.

Etzold, Thomas H., & Gaddis, John L., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1978.

- Feis, Hebert, *Contest over Japan*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967.
- Fleming, Denna F., *The Cold War and its Origins, 1917-1960*, Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1961.
- Friedman, Edward, "Problems in Dealing with an Irrational Power," in the ed., Edward Friedman & Mark Selden, ed., *America's Asia: Dissenting Essays of Asian-American Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1971
- Garthoff, Raymond L., *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age*, New York: Praeger Publisher, 1965.
- "The Soviet Intervention in Manchuria, 1945-46" in Sino-Soviet Military Relations, New York: Praeger Publisher, 1966.
- Gittings, John, "The Great Asian Conspiracy," in the ed., Edward Friedman & Mark Selden, ed., *America's Asia: Dissenting Essays of Asian-American Relations*, New York: Vintage Books, 1971
- Goncharov, Sergei N., Lewis, John W., and Xue, Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Goodman, E.R., *The Soviet Design for World State*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1960.
- Halberstam, David, *The Coldest Winter, America and the Korean War*, New York: the Amateurs Ltd., 2007.
- Halle, Louis J., *The Cold War as History*, New York: Harper & Row, 1967.
- Hart-Landsberg, Martin, *Korea: Division, Reunification, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998.
- Herrmann, Richard K. *Perceptions and Behaviour in Soviet Foreign Policy*, Series in Russian and East European Studies, No.7, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985.
- Hickey Michael, *The Korean War*, London: John Murray Ltd., 1999.
- Hoffmann, David L., *Stalinism*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2003.
- Hoffmann, Erik P., & Fleron, Jr., Fredrick J., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, New York: Aldine, 1980.
- Hunt, Michael H., *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Hunt, R. N. C., "Importance of Doctrine," in E.P. Hoffman & F.J. Fleron, Jr.(eds.), *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1980.

- Kaufman, Burton I., *The Korean Conflict*, London: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- Kennan, George F., *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1967.
- Kennedy, Paul, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1987.
- Khrushchev, Nikita S., Strobe Talbott (Trans), *Khrushchev remembers*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1971.
- Kim, Gye-Dong, *Foreign Intervention in Korea*, Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company, 1993.
- Kolko, Joyce & Gabriel, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954*, New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Koo, V. K. Wellington, "Notes of Conversation with Admiral Leahy on 11 April 1945," *Wellington Koo Papers*, New York: Butler Library, Columbia University, 1964.
- Laird, Roy D., *The Soviet Paradigm*, New York: The Free Press, 1970.
- Lee, Jung Sik & Scalapino, Robert A., *Communism in Korea II*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.
- Lee, Yur-Bok, Patterson Wayne (eds.), *Korean-American Relations, 1866-1997*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1999.
- Lee, William T., *The Estimate of Soviet Defense Expenditure 1955-1975*, New York: Praeger, 1977.
- Lowe, Peter, *The Korean War*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000.
- MacDonald, Callum A., *Korea: The War before Vietnam*, New York: Free Press, 1986.
- Mastny, Vojtech., *Russia's road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism 1941-1945*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.
- McCune, George M., & Grey Jr, Arthur L., *Korea Today*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950.
- McNeill, William H., *America, Britain & Russia: Their Cooperation and Conflict 1941-46 (Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- Monnet, Jean, *Memoirs*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978.
- Moore, Harriet L. *Soviet Far Eastern Policy 1931-1945*, New York: Howard Fertig, 1973.
- Pierpaoli, Jr., Paul G., *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War*, Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999.

Ree, Erik Van, *Socialism in One Zone: Stalin's Policy in Korea 1945-47*, Oxford: Bery Publishers, 1989.

Roberts, Geoffrey, *Stalin's Wars from World War to Cold War, 1939-1953*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006

The Soviet Union in World Politics: Coexistence, Revolution and Cold War, 1945-1991, London & New York: Routledge, 1999.

Robinson, Thomas W., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed., New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1980.

Rubinstein, A.Z., *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II: Imperial and Global*, Cambridge: Winthrop Publishers Inc., 1981.

Sandler, Stanley, *The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished*, London: UCL Press, 1999.

Schnabel, James F., *United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction, The First Year*, Washington D.C.: The US Army, 1972.

Schwartz, Harry, *Russia's Soviet Economy*, 2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1954.

Sharp, S.L., "National Interests: Key to Soviet politics," in E.P. Hoffman & F.J. Flernon, Jr.(eds.), *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1980.

Shen, Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.

Shen, Zhihua & Li, Danhui, *After Leaning to One Side*, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre, Press, 2011.

Shulman, Marshall D., *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised*, London: Westview Press, 1985.

Slusser, Robert M., (Yonosuke Nagai & Akira Iriye eds.), "Soviet Far Eastern Policy 1945-1950: Stalin's Goals in Korea," *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1977.

Snow, Edgar, *The Other Side of the River: Red China Today*, New York: Random House, 1962.

Sobakin, V., *Marksizm-Leninism o Problemakh Voyny i Mira*, trans. by Andrei Zur, *Marxism-Leninism on War and Peace*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1983.

Stone, Isidor F., *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952.

Stueck, William W., *The Road to Confrontation: American Policy toward China and Korea, 1947-1950*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981.

The Korean War, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995

Taubman, William, *Stalin's American Policy: From Entente to Détente to Cold War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1982.

Thornton, Richard C., *Odd Man Out*, Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2001.

Torkunov, Anatoly, "Report on Kim Il Sung's visit to the Soviet Union between 30 March and 25 April 1950," *The War in Korea 1950-1953: Its origin, bloodshed and conclusion*, Tokyo: ICF Publishers, 2000.

Truman, Harry S., *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman: 1946-1952. Years of Trial and Hope*, Vol.2, New York: Doubleday, 1956.

Truman, Harry S., *1945: Year of Decision, Memoirs*, Vol.1, New Word City, Inc., 2017.

Ulam, Adam B., *Expansion and Coexistence : The History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1967*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968.

The Communists, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992

Wainstock, Dennis D., *Truman, MacArthur, and the Korean War*, London: Greenwood Press, 1999.

Westad, Odd Arne, *Cold War and Revolution*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Whiting, Allen S., *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Wolfe, Thomas W., *Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970*, Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970

Zubok, Vladislav, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

BOOKS in Chinese

Bang, Sun Ji, *The Writing of Mao Zedong 1949-1976*, Vol.1, Beijing: Central Literature Press, 2003.

Shi, Sung Mun & Jo, Yong Jun, *The meeting in Panmunjeom*, Beijing: Liberation Army Publisher, 1992.

Liu, Tong Shun & Gao, Wen Fan, *The World History after World War II 1950-1951*, Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 1980.

BOOKS in Korean

Arbatov, G.A & Oltmans, W., Lee Su In(ed), *The Soviet Viewpoint*, Seoul: Shilchon publisher, 1988.

Asia cultural research institute in Hanlim Univeristy, *United States Policy regarding Korea 1834-1950*, vol.1, Chunchun: Hanlim University press, 1987.

Choi, Sang Yong, *The US military government in Korea and Korean Nationalism*, Seoul: Nanam, 1989

Democratic People's Front, *The Liberation of Korea I – History of establishing the independent unified national state*, Seoul: Science&Idea, 1988.

Executive office in Democratic Nationalist Front, *The Chronological list of liberation in Korea*, Seoul: Munmuin Seokwan, 1946.

Goncharov, Sergei N., Lewis, John W., and Xue, Litai, The Research Centre on the Modern Korean History in Sungkyunkwan University(trans.), *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*, Seoul: Ilchokak Publishing Co., Ltd., 2011.

Han, Jae Duk, *Denounce Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Naeyoi Moonhwa Co., 1965.

Hanlim University, *The Information on North Korea by US Armed Forces in Korea*, Chunchun: Hanlim University Asian Cultural Research Centre, 1989.

Hoag, C.L., Shin Bokryong & Kim wonduk(Translate), *American military government in Korea war policy and the first year of occupation : 1941-1946*, Seoul: Pulbit, 1992.

Institute of Far East Asia, “Comintern Protocols in 1 Sep 1928”, in *Communism*, Seoul: Institute of Far East Asia, 1984.

Jang, Hakbong, *The story of Korean people who found North Korea*, Seoul: Kyongin Munhwasa, 2006.

Jo, Kyuha, Lee, Kyungmun, Gang, Sungjae, *The conversation of North and South Korea*, Koryo-one Culture Series 29, Seoul: Koryo-one, 1987.

Joongang Ilbo Special News Team, *The Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, Seoul: Joongang Ilbo, 1994.

Jung, Il Kwon, *The Memoir*, Seoul: Koryo Publisher, 1996.

Kim, Chang Soon, *The History of North Korea between August 1945 and January 1961*, Seoul: Jimoon Gak, 1961.

Kim, Ki Jo, *The History of division of 38th parallel line – the strategic decision among the USSR, the US, and Japan (1941-45)*, Seoul: Dongsan Press, 1994.

Kim, Hak Jun, *The Korean Issues and the International Relations*, Seoul: Park Young

Press, 1982.

The trusteeship Idea over Korea and the debate over it at the early stage, The Korean issue and World Politics, Seoul: Parkyoungsa, 1987.

The Theory of Korean Politics, Seoul: Hangil Press, 1990.

The 50 years of history on North Korea, Seoul: Donga-ilbo Press, 1995.

Kim, Hong Myong, *United Front and Democratic Revolution I*, Seoul: Four Seasons, 1988.

Kim, Kyong Il, *The Origin of Chinese intervention in the Korean War: By focusing on historical and geographical background between China and Korea*, Seoul: Ronhyoung, 2005.

Kim, Nam Sik, *The Perception of history before and after Korean liberation – North Korea*, Seoul: Hangil Press, 1989.

Kim, Yong Gu, *The history of World Diplomacy*, Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1988.

Kim, Young Ho, *The Origin of the Korean War and its Process of Development*, Seoul: Durea, 1998.

Kim, Young Joong, *Lebedev's memoir, The secrete of founding North Korea*, Jeju: Haedong Press, 2016.

Torkunov, Anatoly, Ku, Jongseo (trans.), *The Truth and Enigma in the Korean War*, Seoul: Editor, 2003

Korotkov, Gavril, *Stalin and Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Donga-Ilbo, 1993.

Ku, Dae Yeol, *The Research of Korean-International relations 2 – liberation and division*, Seoul: Yoksa Bipeong Press, 1995.

Lee, Chun Kun, *The South Korean Leader who stood against the US*, Seoul: Kulmadang, 2012.

Lee, Jung Sik, *The History of a communistic drive for the spread of communism in Korea II*, Seoul: Dolbegye, 1986.

Lee, Jung Sik, *The Study of Rhee Syngman*, Seoul: Yeohei University Press, 2000.

Lee, Ki Tak, *The history of World Politics*, Seoul: Ilshin Publisher, 1995.

Lee, Yong Woo(ed), *The Soviet domestic and foreign policy*, Seoul: Yangyoung publisher, 1983.

Oh, Yong Jin, *The One Testimony*, Seoul: The Institute of People's Thought, 1952.

Park, Gil Yong & Kim, Kook Hoo, *The Secret Diplomatic History of Kim Il Sung*, Seoul: Joongang Il Bo, 1994.

Park, Hyunchae, *Perception of history over division of Korea 3*, Seoul: Hangilsa, 1987.

Park Myong Lim, *The Origin of the Korean War*, Seoul: Korea University Press, 1994.

The Origin of the Korean War 2, Seoul: Nanam Press, 1996.

Park, Tae Gyun, *The Korean War*, Seoul: Chackguahamke, 2012.

Pyeonjipbu, *The Declaration by Chistiakov, The Comintern materials anthology 3 – issues on Unification Front and colony*, Seoul: Dongnook Sunseo 53, 1989.

Scalapino, Robert A., Lee, Jung Sik, *The History of Korea Communist movement 2: Liberation part(1945-53)*, Seoul: Dolbaegae, 1986.

Seo, Nam Won, *The economic Situation and management of production in North Korea*, Series of Research on Communist worlds 5 by Institute for Asian Studies, Seoul: Institute for Asian Studies, 1966.

Seoul Newspaper, *The 30 years of the US army stationed in South Korea*, Seoul: Hangrim Publishing Ltd., 1979.

Sim, Ji Yeon, *The History of arguments over Korean liberation*, Vol. I, Seoul: Han Wool, 1986.

So, Jin Chul, *How to break out the Korean War*, Seoul: Korean Academic Information Press, 2008.

Song, Nam Hun, *The three year history of Korean liberation, 1945-48*, Seoul: Kachi Press, 1985.

Stalin, J.V., Yoon Sea-in(eds.), *The Foundations of Leninism*, Seoul: Dulae Press, 1990.

The Editorial Department, *Collection of Comintern information 3- United Front, Colony Issues*, Seoul: Dongnuk, 1989.

Volkogonov, Dmitri, The Institute of Korean Strategic Research Institute (trans.), *Stalin*, Seoul: Sekyong Press, 1993.

Yang, Ho Min, *Rethinking of Division of Korea 1945-1980*, Seoul: Nanam Press, 1993.

Yeo, Jung, *The Rosed Daedong River*, Seoul: Donga Ilbo Ltd, 1991.

Yeom, In Ho, *Another Korean War: Korean Chinese's homeland and the war*, Seoul: History Criticism Press, 2010.

BOOKS in Russian

Adibekov, G.M., *Cominform and the Post War Europe 1947-1956*, Moscow: Russia Maladaya, 1994.

Chistiakov, I.M., *Boevoy put' 25-y armii*, Institut Vostokovedeniya, 1976.

Institut Vostokovedeniia, Akademiya Nauk SSSR, ed., *Osvobozhdenie Kore- vosponimaniya I stat'I*, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1976.

Kravtsov, I.L., *Agressiya Amerikanskogo Imperializma v Koree(1945-1951)*, Moskva, 1951.

Kraynov, P., *Strany Vostochnoy Azii(Mir, Kitay, Yaponiya, Koreya)*, Moskva: Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, Ministerstvo Vooruzhennykh Sil Soyuza CCR, 1947.

Vor'ba Koreyskogo Naroda za Hezavisimost', Moskva: Ogiz, 1948.

Vor'ba za Edinuyu Demokraticeskuyu Koreyu, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Pravda, 1948.

Sakhnin, A.Y., *Koreyskiy Narod V Vor'be za Edinstvo i Nezavisimost'*, Moskva, 1950.

Samsonov, G.E., *Vor'ba Sovetskogo Soyuza za Demokraticeskoe Reshenie Koreyskogo Voproca (1945-1948)*, Moskva, 1952.

Vneshnyaya Politika Sovetskogo Soyuza, 1946 god, Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoy Literatury.

Zhukov, E.M., *Krizis kolonial'noy sistemy: Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'naya Vor'ba Narodov Bostotsnoy Azii*, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademiya Nauk, SSR, 1949.

Sovietskiy Soyuz v Vor'be za Demokraticeskoe Reshenie Poslevoennykh Problem Dal'nego Vostoka Movka, Moskva: Akademiya Obshchestvennykh Nauk, 1950.

JOURNAL in English

Bernstein, Barton J., "The Week We Went to War: American Intervention in the Korean Civil War," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol.54, No.1, Jan 1977.

Chen, Jian, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China's Entry into the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, No.1, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre, 1992.

Chen, Jian & Li, Dan Hui, "The meeting between Stalin and Zho Enlai on 15 Sep 1952," *The Relations between China and the Soviet Union*, Vol. 9. Shanghai: International Cold War Research Centre at Hwadong Educational University, 2005.

Christensen, Thomas J., "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams," *International Securities*, Vol.17, No.1, 1992.

Comber, Leon, "The Origins of the Cold War in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Communist Party of Malaya 1948-1960 – A Special Branch Perspective," *ISEAS Working Papers on Politics and Security Issues*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Feb 2009.

Efimova, Larisa, "Did the Soviet Union Instruct Southeast Asian Communists to revolt? New Russian Evidence on the Calcutta Youth Conference of February 1948," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 2009, Vol.40, No.3.

Hao, Yufan & Zhai, Zhihai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History revisited," *The China Quarterly*, No.121, 1990.

Hitchcock, Wilbur W., "North Korea Jumps the Gun," *Current History*, March 1951.

Kim, Donggil, "Stalin's Korean U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, No.1, June 2011.

"New Insights into Mao's initial strategic consideration towards the Korean War intervention," *Cold War History*, Vol 16, no.3, June 2016.

Kim, Donggil & Stueck, William, "Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?" *North Korea International Documentation Project*, Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, June 2008.

Mansourov, Alexandre Y., "Stalin, Mao, Kim and China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, September 16 – October 15 1950: New Evidence from the Russian Archives," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue. 6-7, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre, 1995/1996.

Merrill, John, "Review of Khrushchev Remembers, Vol. 1, Strobe Talbott, trans. and ed.; The Last Testament, Vol. 2, idem," *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol.3, 1981.

Ognetov, I.A., "The Soviet Attitude towards Vietnam," *Questions of History*, No.8, 2001.

Sheng, Michael M., "The Psychology of the Korean War: The Role of Ideology and Perception in China's Entry into the War," *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol.22, No.1, 2002.

Weathersby, Kathryn, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence from Russian Archives," *Cold War International*

History Project Working Paper, No.8, Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, Nov 1993.

“To Attack, or Not to Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung and the Prelude to War,” *Cold War International History Project*, Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 2005.

JOURNAL in Chinese

Li, Haiwen, “When did the CCP Central Committee make the decision to dispatch the Chinese People’s Army into the Korean War?” *Dang de Wenxian*, Issue 5, 1993.

Military & History Research Department at Chinese People’s Liberation Army Military Science Institute, “Gao Gang’s speech at war council at Shenyang on 13 August 1950,” *The History of the Korean War*, Vol.1, Beijing: Military Science Press, 2000.

Shim, Ji Wha, “The Process of making a new Sino-Soviet Treaty,” *The research of History*, Vol.2, 2001.

Yeomhwang Chunchu, “The report on the meeting with Mao and Mikoyan in 1956 & 1957,” *Yellow Flames in the Spring & Autumn*, Vol. 12, 2013.

JOURNAL in Korean

Baik, Hak Soon, “Soviet Objectives and policy in North Korea, 1945-1950,” *Korea and World Affairs*, Vol.19, No.2, Summer 1995.

“The Issue of Kim Il Sung’s autonomy over the formation of North Korea,” *the Korean Political Science Review*, Vol. 28, No.2, 1994.

Choi, Myong Sang, “The International systemic approach of the origin of the Korean War,” *International Affairs*, Jan-Feb 1999.

Jeon, Hyunsu, “The Presence of the Soviet army in North Korea and the Soviet policy toward North Korea,” *The Study of Korean Independence History*, Vol.9, 1995.

Kalinov, Kyrio, “How Russian built North Korean Army?” *North Korea*, June 1988.

Ki, Kwang Seo, “Stalin’s Role in the Korean War,” *Military History*, Vol. 63, 2007.

Kim, Hak Jun, “The Soviet East Asian Policy and its implication on the Korean Peninsula,” *Social Science & Policy Research*, Vol.1, No.2, 1979.

“The Soviet foreign policy during World War II and the Korean issues”, *Social Science and Policy Research*, Vol.4, No.2, March 1982.

“The Relations between the USSR and North Korea in the formative period of North Korean regime,” *East Asia Research*, Vol. 5, Feb 1985.

“The Origin and development of the Korean War”, *Essays in celebration of the 50th anniversary of independence II*, Seoul: National Research Foundation of Korea, 1995.

Kim, Sungbo, “The formation of Separation process in North Korea by Soviet articles,” *Institute for History issue*, September 1996.

Lee, Chae Jin, “The Korean War and Chinese intervention,” *Intelligence*, Vol.6, 1996.

Lee, Chun Kun, “Evaluation of documents on the Korean War,” *Unification Research*, Vol.2, No.2, Summer 1990.

Lee, Jong Suk, “The Methodology of North Korean Studies – Criticism and Alternatives,” *History Criticism*, Vol.10, Autumn 1990.

Lee, Jung Sik, “The Soviet Secret Documents,” *Sindonga*, Nov 1995.

Oh, Chung Kun, “The demarcation of 38th Parallel line and Soviet involvement in the Korean Peninsula,” *Sindonga*, Oct 1985.

Ohnuma, Hisao, “The Korea’s liberation, division, and the internal political group,” *Bulletin of the Society for Korean Historical Science* 21, 1984.

Park, Do Bok, “The Foundation of the Chinese Foreign Policy and its Change,” *Modern Society*, Vol.8, No.1, Spring 1988.

Park Myong Lim, “The nation building of Korea, 1945-1948,” *the Korean Political Science Review*, Vol.29, No.1, 1995.

Seo, Dae Sook, ‘Soviet Military Government,’ *Asian Culture*, Vol.8, 1992.

Shin, Bok Ryong, “The Origin of the Korean War: Focusing on Kim Il Sung’s willingness to start the war,” *The Journal of Korean Political Science Association*, Vol. 30, 1996.

Sim, Homin, “The politics and ideology in North Korea 2,” *Communist region research paper* Vol. 7, Asia Cultural Institute, Seoul: Korea University Press.

Wada, Haruki & Cumings, Bruce (eds.), *The Modern History on before and after the Division*, Seoul: Ilwolsa, 1982.

Yang Kyu Song, “In which way did Stalin support the Korean War?” *The 21 Century*, Vol.81, 2004.

Yeo, In Gon, "The Soviet Policy towards Korea between 1945 and 1948," *Asia Culture*, Vol.8, 1992.

JOURNAL in Russian

Bayanov, B., "Koreya," *Moskovskiy propagandist*, No. 7, Iyul' 1950.

Pigulevskaya, E., "Koreyskiy Narod za Svobody I Nezavisimost' i Edinoe Demokraticeskoe Gosudarstvo," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, Iyul' 1950.

Newspaper

Daily Mail, "The Book of Kim Il Sung's teaching by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in North Korea in 1976," 29 Oct 2010.

Dong-A Ilbo, "the Trusteeship is the Soviets' suggestion," 11 January 1946.

"Pak agreed Soviet exclusive trusteeship in Korea," 17 January 1946.

"Disclosed Yalta Secret Agreement: the USSR required the whole of Korea," 13 March 1946.

"The interview with North Korean defector by Sang Won Oh," 12 April 1983.

"The Soviet Armed Forces stationed in North Korea," 20 June 1995.

KBS Special news team, "The Interview with Dean Rusk, Dean Rusk Centre at University of Georgia," 6 Dec 1989.

Mainichi Shimbun, "Cipherd telegram, Stalin and Antonov to Vasilevskii and the military councils of the Maritime Military District and the 25th army, 20 September 1945," 26 February 1993.

Munwha Daily Mail, "Interview with Kathryn Weathersby," 17 Dec 2012.

Pravda, 17 Sep 1945, 13 Mar 1946, 5 Oct 1949.

Izvestiya, 22 Jan 1946.

Interviews

Interview with H. Baillie, the president of the united press of America on 23 Oct 1946, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1946/10/28.htm>,

Jo, Gap Jae, The Interview with Hwang Jang Yep, Oct 2005.
http://www.chogabje.com/board/view.asp?C_IDX=56455&C_CC=BB

Kim, Kook Hoo, Jung-ang Daily Mail Team, The Interview with Nokolai Georgievich Lebedev, 11. June 1991.

Kim, Kook Hoo, Jung-ang Daily Mail Team, The Interview with Ivan Ivanovich Kovalenko, 8 May 1992.

Kim, Dong Gil, Interview with Zhihua Shen, 16 Nov 2013.

Aeri Oh, Moonhwa Daily Mail Team, Interview with K. Weathersby, 17 Dec 2012.