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Japan surrendered on 15 August, 1945. According to the relevant agreements, Japanese troops in Korea north of the 38th parallel should surrender to the Soviet troops and those south of the 38th parallel should surrender to the US troops. In May 1948, the Republic of Korea was set up in the southern part of Korea with the support of the United States and Syngman Ree became its president. In September 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in northern part of Korea and Kim Il Sung became the Premier of the Cabinet. At this juncture, Korea was officially split into north and south, but both sides did not give up the goal of reunification. There were conflicts every now and then in areas near the 38th parallel which eventually led to the outbreak of the Korean War on 25 June, 1950.

After the outbreak of the Korean War, the United States immediately dispatched its troops to invade Korea. It instigated and manipulated the Security Council of the United Nations to adopt a resolution on dispatching a "UN Force" with U.S. troops as the mainstay in the absence of the Soviet representative so as to expand the war in Korea. At the same time, the United States sent its Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait and U.S. military aircraft intruded into China's airspace, bombed and strafed areas along the Sino-Korean border. The U.S. navy undermined the normal navigation of Chinese commercial vessels on the high seas and attacked Chinese fishing boats.

The Chinese Government and people resolutely opposed the U.S. armed intervention in Korea and armed aggression against China's Taiwan Province. Chairman Mao Zedong solemnly pointed out on 28 June 1950 that "the affairs of each country in the world should be administered by the people of that particular country, and the affairs of Asia should be administered by the Asian people and not by the United States". He called upon the "people all over the world to unite, be fully prepared and defeat the provocation by U.S. imperialism". On 30 September 1950, Premier Zhou Enlai solemnly declared that "the Chinese People can not tolerate foreign aggression against China, nor will they stand by idly when the people of their neighboring country are subjected to wanton aggression by the imperialists". And he warned the United States that if U.S. troops should cross the 38th parallel, "we would not sit idly by, we would definitely intervene". But the U.S. ignored China's warning and the U.S. troops landed in Inchon on 15 September, crossed the 38th parallel on 7 October and pressed on towards the Sino-Korea border.

At a time when its security was under a most serious threat and after receiving Kim Il Sung's urgent request for aid, the Chinese Government made the momentous decision of sending Chinese People's Volunteers to fight in Korea in order to aid Korean people and to protect New China.

Led by Commander-in-chief Peng Dehuai, the Chinese People's Volunteers crossed the Yalu River on 19 October 1950 and this marked the beginning of the Chinese people's efforts to aid Korea and resist U.S. aggression. After entering Korea, the Chinese People's Volunteers worked alongside the Korean People's Army, quickly drove the U.S. troops from the Sino-Korean border back to the south of the 38th parallel. After 5 campaigns, the two opposing sides found themselves locked in a stalemate roughly along the 38th parallel. The U.S. Administration saw no hope in unifying Korea by armed force and proposed talks on a cease-fire. The Korean Armistice talks formally got underway on 10 July 1951. The U.S. could not come to terms with the prospect of the Korean War becoming the first war in U.S. history it failed to win.