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TC 1950: North Korea Invades South

Korea, June 25, 1950

Lead: In an attempt to unite a Korea divided along ideological lines, in June 1950, forces of the People's Democratic Republic invaded the south. At first, they were nearly everywhere successful.

Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: At the Yalta and Potsdam Peace Conferences near the conclusion of World War II, the allied powers divided the world into spheres of influence. Though its participation in the Pacific theater had been minor, the

Soviet Union demanded a say in the future disposition of the Korean peninsula. Korea was divided along the 38th parallel. Initially, the west anticipated that there would be national elections, but in 1948 the powers established rival governments in North and South Korea.

Increasing tensions between the two countries were intensified by growing confidence on the communist side. By the spring of 1950, the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic bomb and the forces of Mao Zedong had emerged triumphant in the long Chinese Civil War. China and Russia began to help North Korea prepare for an invasion of the south to force re-unification on communist terms.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean massed forces, moved south across the 38th parallel, and invaded. The United Nations condemned the invasion and called on its member states to come to the aid of South Korea. Because it had the advantages of surprise and superior numbers, North Korea was nearly everywhere victorious, quickly pushing the South Korean Army and a small American expeditionary force into a tiny perimeter around the southeastern port of Pusan. After the brilliant Inchon landings in September the tide began to turn against North Korea and U.N. forces held the initiative until China entered the war the following winter. The Korean War ended in stalemate along the 38th

parallel, roughly where it had begun, and remains into the 21st century.

Research by Ben Morano at the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

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