

All preparatory measures for the operation were completed by June 24th. On June 24th divisional commanders were given orders about 'D'[day] and H'[hour]. The political order of the Minister of Defense was read to the troops, which explained that the South Korean army had provoked a military attack by violating the 38th parallel and that the government of the DPRK had given an order to the Korean People's Army to go over to the counterattack.

The order to counter-attack was met with great enthusiasm by the soldiers and officers of the Korean People's Army.

The troops went to their starting positions by 24:00 hours on June 24th. Military operations began at 4 hours 40 minutes local time. Artillery preparation was accompanied in the course of 20–40 minutes by direct fire and a ten-minute artillery barrage. The infantry rose up and went on the attack in good spirits. In the first three hours individual units and formations advanced from 3 to 5 kilometers.

The attack of the troops of the People's Army took the enemy completely by surprise (...)

Conclusions regarding the South

The first two days of military operations have shown the following:

1. The enemy is putting up resistance and while fighting is retreating deep into the territory of South Korea, mass taking of prisoners from the South Korean army has not been noted.
2. The South Korean puppet authorities have begun to throw in troops from deep in the rear and are trying to halt the advance of the People's Army.
3. In the first day the attack of the People's Army caused confusion in the South. The South Korean authorities and the ambassador of the USA personally in their radio speeches called on the people of South Korea to stay calm. The staff of the South Korean army is broadcasting false reports about the successes of the South Korean army.

6.6 Truman on Korea, June 1950

President Truman reacted swiftly to the North Korean attack. Here is his statement from 27 June 1950.

In Korea the Government forces, which were armed to prevent border raids and to preserve internal security, were attacked by invading forces from North Korea. The Security Council of the United Nations called upon the invading troops to cease hostilities and to withdraw to the 38th parallel. This they have not done, but

on the contrary have pressed the attack. The Security Council called upon all members of the United Nations to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution. In these circumstances I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support.

The attack upon Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that Communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war. It has defied the orders of the Security Council of the United Nations issued to preserve international peace and security. In these circumstances the occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area.

Accordingly I have ordered the 7th Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa. As a corollary of this action I am calling upon the Chinese Government on Formosa to cease all air and sea operations against the mainland. The 7th Fleet will see that this is done. The determination of the future status of Formosa must await the restoration of security in the Pacific, a peace settlement with Japan, or consideration by the United Nations.

I have also directed that United States Forces in the Philippines be strengthened and that military assistance to the Philippine Government be accelerated.

I have similarly directed acceleration in the furnishing of military assistance to the forces of France and the Associated States in Indochina and the dispatch of a military mission to provide close working relations with those forces.

I know that all members of the United Nations will consider carefully the consequences of this latest aggression in Korea in defiance of the Charter of the United Nations. A return to the rule of force in international affairs would have far-reaching effects. The United States will continue to uphold the rule of law.

I have instructed the Ambassador Austin, as the representative of the United States to the Security Council, to report these steps to the Council.

6.7 The Battle for Seoul, September 1950

The American journalist Marguerite Higgins was one of the best front-line reporters of the Korean War. Here is her report on the US efforts to recapture the South Korean capital from the North Korean forces in late September 1950.

A. Korean Resistance and the American Way of Breaking it

The red clay ridges and pine groves on the northwest outskirts of Seoul shuddered in the last twenty-four hours with one of this war's most sanguinary battles