

CIVIL AFFAIRS IN THE KOREAN WAR

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Description: (brief history)

The end of World War II saw Korea seize its independence from Japanese occupation and begin national unification planning. Socially, economically and politically weakened by forty years of Japanese rule, Korea's unification failed to evolve from talk to action as the North held different regime views than the South.¹ Concerned Korea's internal tensions would escalate to conflict, the WWII victors quickly opted to administratively divide the peninsula-country horizontally along the 38th parallel.

Against the backdrop of the Cold War, the division created a geopolitical vacuum as it reinforced the ideological cleavage between the North and South and transferred Korea from colonialist rule to Western power occupation.² In North Korea, the USSR allowed the regime to develop while politically guiding and militarily supporting it. In the South, the U.S. placed a formal Army Military Government (USAMGIK) to instill a basic democratic governing system³ and help defend it from the USSR-sponsored northern regime. Both superpowers supported leaders which they felt best aligned with their respective governing principles: Syngman Rhee, a U.S.-educated politician, won the elections in the South in 1948, while Kim Il Sung, backed by the Soviets, came to power in the North.⁴ Thus tensions between the two Koreas post-division, instead of abating, continued to grow and were further compounded by the increasing North-South migration (an estimated 400,000 persons)⁵ and South Korea domestic instability.

The U.S., despite providing substantial economic aid, did not wish for over-involvement with South Korea's reconstruction as its attention was prioritized elsewhere geographically (e.g. Japan's reconstruction and the Soviet threat to Central Europe). This feeling was reinforced when the USAMGIK's ill-advised reforms resulted in unexpected destabilizing consequences due to lack of preparedness and local knowledge (e.g. language, culture, socio-political situation).⁶ After the Republic of Korea's (ROK) inauguration on August 15th, 1948, the USAMGIK dissolved and was partially absorbed

¹ Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, Edward W. Wagner, "Korea Old and New: a History". Ilchokak Publishers for the Korea Institute, Harvard University. p. 327.

² Walter B. Jung, "Nation Building: The Geopolitical History of Korea". University Press of America, Inc. Lanham, NY. p. 229.

³ Walter B. Jung, "Nation Building: The Geopolitical History of Korea". University Press of America, Inc. Lanham, NY. p. 229.

⁴ Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, Edward W. Wagner, "Korea Old and New: a History". Ilchokak Publishers for the Korea Institute, Harvard University. p. 348.

⁵ Bruce Cumings, "Eighth Army". New York Times Books, 1997, p. 189/Nahm, 1996, p. 340.

⁶ Bruce Cumings, "Eighth Army". New York Times Books, 1997, p. 189.

into Civil Affairs (CA),⁷ and the U.S. left judging the political regime self-sustaining. The U.S. brushed away the fact that internally, the region was weaker than after WWII.

When Kim Il Sung crossed the 38th parallel on June 25, 1950 and invaded South Korea seeking to reunite Korea by force, the U.S. Government felt it had underestimated the strength of the North and the USSR's resolve to expand Communism throughout Northeast Asia. The Cold War had taken its first overt military advance⁸ and the U.S. returned to South Korea, intent on rescuing the newly established ROK from Communist invaders: Soviet-supported North Koreans and Chinese.⁹

At the United States' bidding, the UN Security Council was convened and UN members' military assistance requested to help South Korea repel the invasion. With the adoption of the UNSC 82 and 83 Resolution, the Korean military intervention gained the support of eighteen other Western nations¹⁰ and North Korea was almost completely overtook in the first year of the war. Once China intervened on behalf of North Korea (October 26, 1950), halting then reversing the U.S.-led UN advance, the war's progress stalemated as the line of fire seesawed back and forth over the 38th parallel, each side failing to permanently gain ground. An armistice signed July 27th, 1953 put an end to the conflict and the U.S.-USSR's proxy war. Korea remained divided and its North-South split roughly the same as before the war.¹¹

Key Actors:

Blue:¹²

- **U.S.**
Commanders:
 - Gen. Douglas MacArthur
 - Gen. Matthew Ridgeway
 - Gen. Mark Wayne Clark
 - Pres. Harry S. Truman
 - Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower

Green:

- **Republic of Korea (ROK)**
Commanders:
 - Pres. Syngman Rhee

⁷ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993.

⁸ David Seed, "Brainwashing: a Study in Cold War Demonology". Kent State University Press. p. 81.

⁹ Clay Blair, "*The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953*", An Anchor Press Book. Doubleday, NY. Forward.

¹⁰ Clay Blair, "*The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953*", An Anchor Press Book. Doubleday, NY. Forward.

¹¹ Dean Acheson, "The Korean War", W.W. Norton & Company. Inc. NY, 1969. p. 150.

¹² Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003.

- Gen. Chung Il-kwon
 - Gen. Paik Sun-yup
- **Australia**
- **Belgium**
- **Canada**
- **Colombia**
- **Ethiopia**
- **France**
- **Greece**
- **Japan (naval support and military servicing/repairs)**
- **Luxembourg**
- **Netherlands**
- **New Zealand**
- **Philippines**
- **South Africa**
- **Thailand**
- **Turkey**
- **UK**

Red:

- **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**
 Commanders:
 - Pres. Kim Il-sung
 - Gen. Choi Yung-kun
 - Gen. Kim Chaek
- **People's Republic of China**
 Commanders
 - Chairman Mao Zedong
 - Marshal Pen Dehuai (ground force)
- **Soviet Union**
 Commanders:
 - Gen. Secretary Joseph Stalin
 - Premier Georgy Malenkov

Brown:

- **United Nations (under U.S. Command)**
 - Gen. Douglas MacArthur UN Commander 1950-1951 (removed from office by President Truman April 11th, 1951)
 - Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway (April 11th, 1951 - May 12, 1952)
 - Gen. Mark Wayne Clark (May 12, 1952 – signing of Armistice with North Korea 1953)

Objectives & End States:

In July 1950, when the U.S. returned in a military capacity to Korea under the aegis and flag of the UN,¹³ its immediate focus was ‘rolling back’ the North Koreans and its overarching goal was to protect the South from North Korea and Communist ideology. Ultimately, Washington believed that beyond resisting its invaders, a unified, democratic Korea governed by Syngman Rhee from Seoul could act as an anchor of democracy in the region.¹⁴

Originally little attention was given to CA beyond its role to protect civilians because neither President Truman, nor his appointed UN Commander General MacArthur, believed that the war would last over a year at its onset. However, refugee and displaced persons rapidly became a problem as North Korean migration south accelerated after the August invasion, bringing with it the threat of social unrest and severance, economic hardship, increased probabilities of disease and starvation.¹⁵ Instead of forming another U.S. military government to meet these needs and resurrecting negative political past associational memories,¹⁶ General MacArthur assigned the mission to CA. This forced the U.S. and UN to readjust their scope of action.

A three-phase timeline was proposed under MacArthur into which CA actions, instead of another U.S. military government, would help North Korea achieve internal security and undergo free elections. The first step was to achieve peace; the second, to reestablish normal political and economic conditions (as long as they did not impede U.S. military objectives); the third was for the government of the unified Korea to take over sovereignty through free elections.¹⁷ MacArthur assured Washington that once these steps were achieved, all non-Korean UN troops could leave knowing Korea would be on a stable democratic track.

This three-phase timeline coupled with CA mission to “minimize the interference of a civilian populace with the conduct of military operations” while reducing “the impact of military operations on that populace”¹⁸ offered the Korean CA mission some direction. However, the lack of CA precedence in the country and region left the first CA Korea-specific mandates bereft of specific goals and their operational focus remained short-term for manageability’s sake.

¹³ Clay Blair, *“The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953”*, An Anchor Press Book. Doubleday, NY. Forward.

¹⁴ Dean Acheson, *“The Korean War”*, W.W. Norton & Company. Inc. NY, 1969. Intro & Chapter 1.

¹⁵ Stanley Sandler, *“Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”*, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993.

¹⁶ Gen. MacArthur, ‘MacArthur report sums up Korea’s twelve months of Military Government’, part of the Reverend Soon Hyun Collected works. USC Digital Archive.

¹⁷ Allan R. Millet, *“The Korean War”*. Korea Institute of Military History, Korea Institute of Military History. University of Nebraska Press, 2002. p. 185-186.

¹⁸ Lt. Col. Mark L. Kimmey “Transforming Civil Affairs”, US Army Magazine, March 1st, 2005: <http://www3.ausa.org/webint/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/KGRG-6CUQ GK>

Spanning the entirety of the war, the U.S. Army CA role and goals evolved as the conflict persisted though they differed slightly from South to North as they had a more stable fixed base of operations in the former. In the South, CA missions supported the military advances northwards by providing food provisions and dispersing it among the war-affected. CA was particularly adept at refugee evacuation and relief¹⁹ and made it its priority function. From transportation (sea, land and air), resettlement provisions, food, medicine and shelter, the Korean wartime civilian evacuations are listed among the most successful of the century (e.g. December 1950's UN X Corps disembarkation from the port of Hungnan).²⁰

Once the ROK had 'rolled' back the invaders and advanced into the North in October 1950, more structure was added to CA as economic, public health and civil administration divisions were formed and its overall role expanded.²¹ CA both aided to secure the military's territorial advances by establishing socio-economic threads of unification between the two Koreas and tried to stabilize the region quickly by addressing the fields of public health and welfare as well as wage and inflation. The reestablishment of civil law enforcement and industrial rehabilitation were then made possible and areas such as education, free public press and political prisoner status were attended to in order to further the U.S. ideological agenda for the nation.²²

Operational Strategies:

The U.S. Government pursued its objectives in Korea through political, military and civic action support. Via a combination of the three, it constructed a plan of attack and tried to ensure the sustainability of its success. Bearing in mind that the Korean War was unpopular domestically, the U.S. pressures to succeed were less widespread and the expectations vaguer on a general scale because the media briefings on Korea were far less extensive than they had been in WWII. In fact, the Korean War was officially referred to as a conflict so Congress could avoid making an official declaration of war.

What makes the Korean War strikingly different from the United States' previous conflicts was the rapidity of its deployment on such short notice, a capability that the United States would not have possessed pre WWII. Unlike World War I and II, the Korean conflict took the United States by surprise and its involvement had not been considered and long debated in advance. President Truman reacted to the news of the

¹⁹ Richard W. Stewart "Staff Operations: the X Corps in Korea December 1950": <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/resources/csi/Stewart/Stewart.asp#eight>

²⁰ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 331.

²¹ Stanley Sandler, "The Korean War: An Encyclopedia", UCL Press, 1999.

²² Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993.p. 334.

North's invasion by ordering General MacArthur, stationed in Japan, to 'fix' the Korea problem and within a few days air, sea and ground forces were deployed.²³

Militarily, the U.S. goal remained simple: free South Korea from Soviet-aided North Korean forces and hold reconquered territory. This goal, however straightforward became increasingly difficult to meet, particularly when China entered the war after the United States' moves to protect the Island of Formosa (Taiwan) and its crossing of the 38th parallel. China, worried that South Korea and General MacArthur's military fervor menaced its national security, chose to strike preemptively before the ROK and U.S. forces crossed the Yalu River by joining forces with North Korea.²⁴ Resource-stretched, unfamiliar with the terrain and heavily infantry-dependent, the U.S.-UN offensive was forced to retreat until both sides engaged in a trench-war along the 38th parallel which would last until the armistice was signed two years later.

Politically, the placement of Syngman Rhee in South Korea indicated the U.S. belief that he would not only appeal to the South Koreans for his policy and governing aspirations, but would eventually strike a chord of agreement with the North.²⁵ If still incapable of persuading the North to unify under the South's political regime, Washington estimated him capable of staving off Communist doctrine despite his socialist-leaning policies. However, President Rhee's dictatorial and uncooperative attitude made the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) reluctant to see the ROK assume full responsibility for the occupied areas of the DRPK which is where CA came to play a determining role.²⁶

The Civic Action support came in many forms and was almost entirely undertaken by CA. Medical and public welfare measures were prioritized from the beginning but the initial successful U.S. military advance into the North reopened Korean unification speculation and the United States wanted a hand in the shaping of the nation's potential renaissance. With this renewed perspective, CA undertook a more influential and widespread role, taking great care to nurture pre-existing capabilities instead of imposing a foreign one-size-fits-all framework of development. For example, raw or intermediate rather than finished goods were imported to Korea to encourage industry maturity.²⁷

Instead of infusing Korea with foreign material aid, CA focused on helping the ROK become self-sufficient by encouraging the procurement of local labor and supplies, the establishment of policies to regulate wages and prices to combat inflation and the promotion of public safety. Missions mushroomed nationwide to cover civil

²³ Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary", Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 5.

²⁴ Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 142.

²⁵ Robert T. Oliver, "Syngman Rhee and the American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960". Panmun Book Company Ltd, Seoul, 1978. Chapt. IV.

²⁶ Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 62.

²⁷ Stanley Sandler, "The Korean War: An Encyclopedia", UCL Press, 1999.

transportation, mining and agrarian concerns such as livestock health and farmers' access to their crops.²⁸

Operationally speaking, more extensive CA missions were developed in the South vs. the North because civil unrest could adversely affect the military operations, which were generally domestically directed from there. For example in 1951, as part of its wider mission, CA took over the land reform program initiated by the USAMGIK and the ROK Government before the war in the South. In 1952, with the stabilization of battle lines, UNCACK, the UN Civil Assistance Corps Korea, could concentrate on more long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction.²⁹ In collaboration with the ROK Ministry of Housing on the National Housing Plan, a plan was put into action to reconstruct the nation's public utilities: water, electricity and gas access.

The aid and reforms' effects which can still be seen as bedrocks to South Korea's socio-economic strength today attest to the success of CA operations. CA's operational mission was beginning to be accepted as inseparable from military command. And, the importance of a single focus of responsibility within the Army for all CA functions, and a single point of contact within the Army for relationships with governments of the operational areas became clear³⁰ as many of CA initiatives were progressively transferred to the ROK.

Qualitative "Order of Battle":

From fact-finding missions to infantry battalions the breakdown of the U.S.' military involvement in Korea was as follows:^{31 32}

Divisions	Capabilities	Forces Serving
US Army	<p>Eighth US Army: I Corps IX Corps X Corps</p> <p>Divisions and Regimental combat teams</p>	4,368,000

²⁸ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 334.

²⁹ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 329.

³⁰ Darwin C. Stolzenbach & Henry A. Kissinger, "Civil Affairs in Korea 1950-51", A Technical Memo. Aug. 1952.

³¹ This graph is compiled from information drawn from:
Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003.

³² Navy Department Library Website:
<http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/american%20war%20casualty.htm#t6>

	1 st Cavalry 2 nd , 3 rd , 7 th , 24 th , 25 th , 40 th , and 45 th Infantry Divisions 3 infantry regiments 4 artillery battalions anti-artillery battalion 1 tank battalion reconnaissance company engineer battalion medical battalion 5 th Regimental Combat Team 187 th Airborne Regimental Combat Team	
US Navy Forces	Vice Admiral Arthur D. Struble's 7 th Fleet Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy's Naval Fleet Use of US Marines	1,842,000
Marines	Provisional marine brigade (later folded into) 1 st Marine Division 1 st Marine Air Wing	794,000 ³³
US Airforce (USAF)	air operations over ROK in support of the UN ground forces operation over the DPRK to neutralize communist forces bombing campaigns against major military and industrial targets combined support of search and rescue USAF Tactical Air Control Parties (TAC)	1,740,000
Nuclear Weapons	atomic threat: for both diplomatic and political purposes	

Working in alliance with other UN members of which fourteen contributed to combat forces, the U.S. retained the leadership role in the ROK military intervention, providing 90 percent of the military aid to the ROK.³⁴ Despite the crucial role air and naval forces played, the Korean War, because of the terrain and the military capabilities of the time, was mostly an infantry war.³⁵ The ROK Army started with Eighth infantry division and

³³Navy Department Library Website:

<http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/american%20war%20casualty.htm#t6>

³⁴ Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953*, An Anchor Press Book. Doubleday, NY. Forward.

³⁵ Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 20.

added more as the war progressed, to which the U.S. provided seven divisions (six Army and one Marine).³⁶

In September, 1950, the first civil relief teams, known as the Public Health and Welfare Field Organization National Level Team, landed at Pusan.³⁷ These small, three UN civilian employees teams were the original CA representatives in Korea dealing with the invasion-caused immediate needs. Their early assessments of Korean aid areas helped direct the deployment and missions of the following teams.

Eventually CA in Korea was legitimized in the form of the military agency UNCACK, the UN Civil Assistance Corps Korea established by the Eighth US Army, and worked in conjunction with the UN Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) formed in December 1950.³⁸ The U.S.-appointed UN Commander retained the final say on all civil and military projects and shipments.³⁹

In theory the UNCACK mission was to provide assistance to the ROK National Government at all national and local levels to help with Korea's rehabilitation and reconstruction. In practice, however, the UNCACK mission was far more project-specific. Focusing primarily on the prevention of disease, starvation and unrest, the UNCACK functioned mostly along relief lines supplying food, supplies and technical assistance in cases when it was impossible to provide financial aid. In autumn 1950, X Corps, specifically organized for the Inch'on landings and invasions, established its own CA special staff section to further buttress CA initiatives.

To retain every measure of CA progress, the Field CA Mission with Corps and Division Civil Assistance Teams picked up the humanitarian efforts where UNCACK missions left off. The specific CA teams had the same personnel composition as UNCACK but benefited from greater mobility and a larger degree of flexibility.⁴⁰ Their presence relaxed the growing tensions between UNCACK and the ROK, which felt that the former was failing to adequately live up to its promises of support by limiting its actions.

In part because the Army CA in Korea remained somewhat ad-hoc until the last months of the war,⁴¹ the variety of employed CA personnel became quite large and their

³⁶ M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 29.

³⁷ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 332.

³⁸ Robert T. Oliver, "Syngman Rhee and the American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960". Panmun Book Company Ltd, Seoul, 1978. p. 455.

³⁹ M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p. 250.

⁴⁰ Paul M. Edwards, "The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary". Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil "Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003.

⁴¹ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 336.

specializations extensive. From survey teams and intelligence reporters to combat medical personnel and engineers, CA personnel were employed as jacks-of-all-trades in order to meet all the mission intricacies of the Korean conflict, its culture and landscape.⁴² UNCACK was permitted to substitute civilian for military personnel throughout the war to aid ROK, however, this measure proved far more acceptable with civilian professionals than the military.⁴³

Once the Chinese beat back U.S. troops south of the 38th parallel, many UNCACK missions were revised and reprioritized as the wounded and displaced increased drastically. Many of the burgeoning long-term socio-economic initiatives had to be set aside in hopes of re-launching them once the U.S. re-conquered the North, though it never came to pass.

Ends-Means Relationships

Apart from the often tenuous relationship entertained between UNCACK and the ROK, while striving to provide Korea with the means to peacefully and ‘successfully’ govern itself under a Western-style democracy, CA ran into a number of obstacles. Inevitably faced with logistical and externally caused hindrances to their missions, CA in Korea also suffered from internal setbacks due to poor organization, ill-adapted personnel and local government belligerency.⁴⁴ Equipped with a general set of goals to achieve and principles to adhere to, CA seems to have had a harder time establishing those goals into a long-term vision than actually implementing them.

From an organizational standpoint, CA did not necessarily have a template to start from. After the removal of the U.S. Military Government prior to the war, all pre-existing CA related forces had left or been absorbed into other institutions and programs. Furthermore, due to the surprise and rapid escalation of the war, the US was ill-prepared to set up a CA task force when it struggled to organize the adequate military force necessary to repel the Northern invaders in a timely fashion. Finally, compounding the two previous points, the U.S. had very limited knowledge of Korea, its culture, language, people and terrain. Its closest U.S. operational stronghold was in Japan and due to Korean-Japanese recent and difficult colonialist history, General MacArthur had the foresight to limit any Korean policies or actions which might seem imported or copied from Japanese measures.⁴⁵

⁴² Paul M. Edwards, “The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary”. Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil “Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003.

⁴³ Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 327.

⁴⁴ Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993.

⁴⁵ Paul M. Edwards, “The Korean War: a Historical Dictionary”. Historical Dictionaries of War, Revolution and Civil “Unrest, No. 23. The Scarecrow Press, In. Panham, Maryland and Oxford, 2003. p144.

In retrospect, the dichotomy between CA desired and achieved ends was much less striking than the Army's because North Korea remained independent from the South and Communist. However, tied to the Army's mission and based on the micro-lens of CA functioning, certain key areas could have been addressed for smoother and more successful outcomes.

First, the U.S. commanders saw CA as nothing more than disaster relief teams and so failed to implement them in 'the big picture' and utilize them at full operational capacity.⁴⁶ Only in retrospect did the U.S. realize the importance of educating commanders and other military personnel about CA operations and ways in which increased communication between the two could help attain military and political objectives more efficiently.⁴⁷

Second, CA suffered from an unwanted overlap of operations and missions due to the confusing number of organizations and supervisory bodies directing them.⁴⁸ Counting UN and U.S. civil and military agencies (i.e. the Eighth Army's Civil Assistance Section (CAS) and the Japan Logistical Command) as well as the emergence of nongovernmental relief organizations (e.g. CARE),⁴⁹ literally dozens of agencies shared CA mission and responsibility. Though mission overlap and project takeover by local authorities should have been desirable, the eventual cooperation with the ROK on mission-building only exacerbated the problem as divisions scrambled to take credit for overdrawn missions while attention-gaps formed elsewhere. The lack of coordination and general supervision necessary to tie together the port, provincial and city teams delayed project implementation and hindered the formation of a cohesive long-term plan.

Third, despite the fact that during the height of the Korean conflict the U.S. CA staff grew to number approximately 400 officers and men,⁵⁰ rapid personnel turnover (4 ½ months on average) discouraged the undertaking of long-term missions. The rotating taskforce contributed to the ROK's frustration at CA's limited capabilities and the inconsistency of their mandate implementation, ultimately undermining CA effort to build social capital through trusted relationship-building.

Fourth, mission scandals further hurt CA cause. Under UNCACK's health and welfare programs which dispensed approximately \$150million in humanitarian and economic assistance,⁵¹ CA did achieve successful outcomes in spite of ROK authorities undermining them. Though, a few mission scandals linked to corruption or poor

⁴⁶ Thomas K. Adams, "US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare". Taylor & Francis, 1998. p. 49.

⁴⁷ Darwin C. Stolzenbach & Henry A. Kissinger, "Civil Affairs in Korea 1950-51", A Technical Memo. Aug. 1952.

⁴⁸ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 327.

⁴⁹ Thomas K. Adams, "US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare". Taylor & Francis, 1998. p. 49.

⁵⁰ Truman Library website: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/stuarth.htm#transcript>

⁵¹ Truman Library website: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/stuarth.htm#transcript>

organization cost their reputation dearly as the only countering measure at their disposal was transparency (e.g. the eventual public recognition of the NDC Scandal).⁵²

As Henry A. Kissinger pointed out a year after the Korean War launch, there is a “need to negotiate civil affairs agreements during the early stages of conflict [...] to attain military and political objectives”.⁵³ A simple solution to CA inefficiency and morale could have been a standard table of organization and equipment (TO&E), if only to alert the UN Commission to the wider CA’ mission and gain its support and help. Devoid of one, CA struggled to operate beyond limiting civilian relief instead.

The lack of general coordination was in part caused by or resulted from the fact that CA personnel, military and civilian were generally of below average ability,⁵⁴ scoring much lower in terms of efficiency than the infantry. Lack of education and experience put them at a disadvantage as policy-implementers.⁵⁵ In an already delicate situation where the United States had exerted colonialist rule and now for the first time had to operate alongside a functioning, internationally recognized civil government, CA’s dependency on translators and cultural unawareness did not inspire local confidence.⁵⁶ The ROK, operating under a mask of compliance, appears to have consistently questioned CA initiatives, particularly those in which it was involved.

Regardless of CA shortcomings, it did facilitate the U.S. Army and UNC’s operations and kept the Korean civilian population’s interference at bay and relatively safe in light of the circumstances.⁵⁷ CA in the Korean War is often criticized for forgetting the lessons learned in WWII because of the mission’s delayed implementation and repeated organizational mistakes. Yet, Korea represents a turning point in CA history because of the role CA forged itself and more importantly, the promise of the role it could fulfill in future military interventions. Their actions generated reviews, analysis and a deeper understanding and appreciation of supportive military measures.

⁵² Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 333.

⁵³ Darwin C. Stolzenbach & Henry A. Kissinger, “Civil Affairs in Korea 1950-51”, A Technical Memo. Aug. 1952.

⁵⁴ Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 329.

⁵⁵ Lt. Col. Mark L. Kimmey “Transforming Civil Affairs”. US Army Magazine, March 1st, 2005: <http://www3.ausa.org/webint/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/KGRG-6CUQGK>

⁵⁶ Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 329.

⁵⁷ Stanley Sandler, “Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991”, US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p. 336.

Final Thoughts

The conditions under which the United States entered and waged war in Korea were particular to that time and era. Overshadowed by the greater Cold War, the Korean intervention represented a smaller proxy war where the United States was fighting through use of force an intangible foe: ideology. It was a pivotal war because it signaled the Kremlin's willingness to resort to overt military hostilities to achieve its ideological mission.⁵⁸

Korea represented the first clash between two nuclear powers⁵⁹ and reflected a tactical maturity never before seen in a U.S. intervention. The United States was juggling a political psychological warfare on a third continent through a proxy war involving several surrounding states, both allies and opponents. In retrospect, analysts point to the fact that Korea was subjected to an ideology clash itself had never considered.

Operationally speaking the Korean War demonstrated creativity and adaptability. The war utilized both WWI and WWII techniques, combining swift, fast-paced infantry advances with well-choreographed bombing raids from the air by American military and its UN allies. The support of the South Korean president Syngman Rhee, though tenuous because the latter supported a socialist-leaning perspective different to that favored by the United States at the time, showed cultural tact and recognized the need for Korea to govern itself. What gains to be remembered from the U.S. military intervention in Korea is the attention the United States started paying to cultural sensitivity, psychological infiltration of the enemy and careful study of the terrain, particularly in light of CA successes over the former U.S. military government's difficulties.

In addition, since the American society's perception of human loss was shifting as the concept of heroism since WWII had shifted, the human cost of war was no longer just measured by military casualties but included civilian death tolls, a cost of war measure still emphasized today. Though the division between military and civilian casualties could be blurred at times, the latter was still estimated as less justifiable and with the increased flow of news, it became more reprehensible too. Heavy casualties were beginning to be considered unacceptable even in warfare, particularly with the rise of sophisticated military technology such as air-war.

CA was the partial answer to these new warfare expectations. The missions they undertook during the three years and beyond, ushered a new degree of appreciation for civic action and the role CA played in rendering military success into sustainable stability. In fact, for decades after 1951, Civil Affairs' missions began to be researched and analyzed in order to gain a better understanding of its failures and successes and how

⁵⁸ Clay Blair, *"The Forgotten War: America in Korea 1950-1953"*, An Anchor Press Book. Doubleday, NY. p. 65.

⁵⁹ Walter B. Jung, *"Nation Building: a Geopolitical History of Korea"*, University Press of America, Inc. Lanham, NY, Oxford. 1998. Chapter 9.

they might apply in future military interventions.⁶⁰ One of the key features these studies recognized was that CA's mentality differed from that of the Army's because its role was less surgical than rehabilitating. Willing to pursue its missions beyond the signing of an armistice, CA divisions, though slow to develop, embraced a more long-term approach to their involvement and were small and adaptable enough to disband and be absorbed by other institutions over time to perpetuate the legacy of their work without hindering progress. Such was case with UNCACK whose duties were assumed by the Korean Civil Assistance Command (KCAC) of the U.S. Military.

Though CA has come a long way since Korea, these CA tools and its wider mandate scope perfected in Korea still resonate with today's U.S. CA operations worldwide. Over the course of the past century the U.S. has waged wars one every continent and refined its techniques as it grew into a military superpower. Since its crucial role in Korea the area of CA, though still relatively new, is still gaining in importance and recognition as many Brigades with historical ties to Korea are now being classified as CA (e.g. 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, Airborne).⁶¹ As the situation in the Balkans, Kosovo and Iraq have shown in the recent years, CA will be the development trend to follow in the U.S.' future military operations as the connection between civilians, military and politics becomes ever closer and greater challenges impose themselves (e.g. the Balkans large-scale violence, the increased duration of CA presence...etc).⁶²

CA represents the human side to military interventions, providing the binding link between the military and the intervention country at all domestic hierarchical levels. CA ensures not only that the military can operate with few obstacles on the ground, but that its intervention will reap positive, sustainable outcomes in the future. In the case of the Korean War, the internal infrastructure CA helped put in place contributed to South Korea's ensuing economic rise. However, CA missions' southern concentration exacerbated the socio-economic dichotomy between the North and South and weakened any chance of smooth national reunification, especially since the U.S. continued to support the South economically well after its troops had left.⁶³

⁶⁰ Stanley Sandler, "Glad to See Them Come and Sorry to See Them Go: A History of U.S. Army Tactical Civil Affairs/Military Government, 1775-1991", US Army Special Operations Command History and Archives Division, June 1993. p.336.

⁶¹ USASOC website: http://www.soc.mil/ca/ca_default.htm

⁶² Lt. Col. Mark L. Kimmey "Transforming Civil Affairs". US Army Magazine, March 1st, 2005: <http://www3.USA.org/webint/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/KGRG-6CUQ GK>

⁶³ Robert T. Oliver, "Syngman Rhee and the American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960". Panmun Book Company Ltd, Seoul, 1978. Chapt. IX.