

*The National Executive of the Australian Peace Council, voicing the policy unanimously adopted at the Australian Peace Congress, April, 1950, by representatives of 550,000 Australians, declares—*

# The Truth About Korea

The war in Korea has placed Australia in a situation of extreme danger. This war can be ended speedily and justly or it can spread like a fire through Asia until the whole world is ablaze with atomic explosions. The threats already made to use the atom bomb in Korea emphasise the gravity and imminence of the danger.

In this critical hour, we consider it our patriotic duty, whatever the consequences for ourselves, to tell the people the truth about Korea and urge them to oppose with all their strength and courage, before it is too late, the present illegal, aggressive policies of their government.

It is beyond question that the security and independence of Australia depend, above all, on peace in the Pacific and on correct friendly relations with hundreds of millions of Asian neighbours.

Peace in the Pacific can only be secured by the full and free recognition of the rights of all Asian peoples, including the Korean and Malayan peoples, to national independence and a free choice of government and social system, as promised them in the United Nations Charter.

In contravention of these principles, fundamental to the safety of Australia, the war in Korea has been caused by the forcible denial of independence and self-government to the people of Korea and the continued, unjust partition of their country. The same is true of the wars in Malaya, Viet-Nam, and the Philippines.

Responsibility for these wars rests therefore primarily upon the Governments of the United States of America (Korea and the Philippines), Britain (Korea and Malaya),

France (Viet-Nam), and Australia (Malaya and Korea).

The Australian Peace Council believes that the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of fighting in Korea, the issues involved, indeed the whole nature of the war, have been deliberately and systematically misrepresented to the Australian people by the Government, the Parliamentary Opposition and the daily newspapers.

Holding, as we do, differing opinions on the social system of the Soviet Union, we wholly reject the idea that the deep and legitimate desire for independence and social change which is stirring the peoples of Asia represents either "Soviet aggression" or a threat to the proper national interests of America, Britain, or Australia.

We call attention to the simple and eloquent fact that while British, American and Australian forces are bombing

\* A fuller and thoroughly documented analysis of the Korean war is in course of publication and will be available in pamphlet form at an early date.

*Victorian Peace Council Collection*

and slaughtering the Korean people, not one Soviet soldier, sailor or airman is so engaged. Nor are there Soviet troops in Malaya, Burma, Viet-Nam or the Philippines.

Clearly, the position of the Soviet Union in relation to the Korean war has been consistent with its obligations under the United Nations Charter and with its stated policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries and opposition to war.

In short, the conduct of the Soviet Union over Korea, in the face of considerable provocation, has made complete nonsense of the propaganda about "Soviet Aggression" in Asia.

We also reject the claim that American, Australian and allied forces are defending the cause of "freedom and democracy" in Korea. According to most British, American and Australian sources, the minority Government of Syngman Rhee in South Korea, which won only 25 out of 191 seats contested at the elections in May, 1950, was corrupt, ineffective, unpopular and brutal in its repressions of democratic movements.

It is a fact, again according to American and allied despatches, that the great majority of "South Koreans" are either taking no part in the fighting or have joined their northern countrymen in armed resistance to foreign invasion.

We reject and denounce as dangerous hypocrisy the

American, British, and Australian Governments' claims to be fighting to uphold the United Nations Charter or acting in pursuance of a lawful order of the Security Council, since

(1) The American forces invaded Korea before the alleged second meeting of the "Security Council" which called upon member nations to render aid to the "South Koreans."

(2) The resolution adopted by this rump of the Security Council was illegal, without the concurrence of all five Great Power permanent members.

(3) The United States Government, without any pretence of reference to the United Nations, has invaded Chinese territorial waters at Formosa and is rushing troops and arms to Indo-China and the Philippines.

(4) All matters relating to the Korean war have been and are being, in fact, decided by the U.S. military command, not by the United Nations.

The United Nations placed responsibility for decisions affecting peace and the use of force in the hands of the Security Council and required unanimity of its five permanent members (Britain, China, Russia, France and the U.S.A.) precisely for the purpose of preventing any Great Power or combination of powers from using force, and thereby risking world war, without the consent of all five Great Powers.

We are convinced that the U.S. Government, far from upholding the United Nations Charter, has been guilty of these, among other, fundamental breaches of the Charter.

- (1) Unilateral armed intervention in the internal affairs of Korea;
- (2) Armed aggression against Chinese territory and intervention in the internal affairs of China;
- (3) Refusal to admit the Government of China to the United Nations and thereby rendering that organisation ineffective;
- (4) The creation in fact of a military Pacific Pact in direct contravention of Articles 52 and 53 of the Charter.

**Despite all propoganda to the contrary, we therefore describe the fighting in Korea as an international war being fought between Koreans on the one side and American, Australian and allied forces on the other.**

We cannot doubt that the real purpose of this armed assault on the people and territory of Korea was either to impose a certain type of government and social system on the Korean people or to secure the occupation and control of Korea by America for military and economic reasons.

United States armed intervention in China and Indo-China is strong corroborative evidence of this judgment.

We believe that the independence movements in Asia, can never be suppressed or halted for long by force. American arms, no matter how heavily reinforced, can now neither win the war they started in Korea nor end it, but only lead to its spreading.

**We warn the Australian people that, surrounded as we are by hundreds of millions of Asian people struggling for their independence, terrible consequences will flow for us from this policy of vainly attempting to prevent social change by war.**

The Korean war, with all its menace to the security and future of Australia, can only be ended by the application of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

This means:—

- (1) **Immediate cessation of armed intervention in Korea by foreign powers;**
- (2) **Recognition of the actual Government of China and admission of its representatives to the United Nations;**
- (3) **The negotiation of a truce in Korea by the properly constituted Security Council of the United Nations on the basis of—**
  - (a) **Recognition of the right of the Korean people to self-government and national independence;**
  - (b) **The holding of free elections for a united government for the whole of Korea.**

Any move for mediation in the Korean war on this basis should have the wholehearted support of all peace-loving peoples. We demand that the Australian government make such a move immediately.

Failing implementation of such a policy, it is the imperative duty of all foreign nations to withdraw their forces immediately and leave the question of Korea's future to the Korean people themselves to settle as best they can.

**Nothing which has been said on behalf of the invading powers can possibly justify their presence in Korea to-day or their slaughter of the Korean people.**

The war now raging in Korea must be seen as an urgent warning, perhaps a final warning, that, unless we act now with wisdom and courage to end it, we too will experience all the horrors of war in Australia.

In the name of peace and humanity and with a full sense of our responsibilities we call the Australian people to action.

**ACT NOW!**

To tell the truth about Korea.

To force the withdrawal of Australian troops from Korea.

To resolutely oppose the further involvement of Australia in war against the independence movements of the Korean and other Asian peoples.

To force acceptance of the United Nations Charter by the Australian Government.

To oppose the conscription of Australian manhood for aggressive wars against the peoples of Asia.

To fight courageously for peace and to defend our democratic rights and liberties.

**DEMAND NOW—**

**THE TOTAL ABOLITION OF THE ATOMIC BOMB**

Next week, or the week after, if the war in Korea continues, desperate men may drop an atom bomb, signal for a third world war.

**AS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH  
SIGN THIS PETITION**

**IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY**

*We declare that no nation has the right to use the atomic bomb.*

*The atomic bomb is not a weapon of war but a means of exterminating whole populations.*

*We demand its unconditional prohibition under strict international control.*

*We brand now, in advance, as a war criminal, that Government which first uses the atomic weapon.*

*We call on all Australians to sign this declaration.*

**PETITION FORMS AVAILABLE FROM AUSTRALIAN PEACE COUNCIL**

**Support World Peace Congress,  
Poland, October 16-21, 1950**

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