

General Douglas MacArthur to the President. Released by the White House on July 20.

The President  
The White House

The following is my current estimate of the Korean situation:

With the deployment in Korea of major elements of the 8th Army now accomplished, the first phase of the campaign has ended and with it the chance for victory by the North Korean forces. The enemy's plan and great opportunity depended upon the speed with which he could overrun South Korea once he had breached the Hart River line and with overwhelming numbers and superior weapons temporarily shattered South Korean resistance. This chance he has now lost through the extraordinary speed with which the 8th Army has been deployed from Japan to stem his rush. When he crashed the Hart Line the way seemed entirely open and victory was within his grasp.

The desperate decision to throw in piecemeal American elements as they arrived by every available means of transport from Japan was the only hope to save the situation. The skill and valor thereafter displayed in successive holding actions by the ground forces in accordance with this concept, brilliantly supported in complete coordination by Air and Naval elements, forced the enemy into continued deployments, costly frontal attacks and confused logistics, which so slowed his advance and blunted his drive that we have bought the Precious time necessary to build a secure base.

I do not believe that history records a comparable operation which excelled the speed and precision with which the 8th Army, the Far East Air Force and the Seventh Fleet have been deployed to a distant land for immediate commitment to major operations. It merits highest commendation for the commanders, staffs and units concerned and attests to their superior training and high state of readiness to meet any eventuality. This finds added emphasis in the fact that the Far East Command, until the President's great pronouncement to support the epochal action of the United Nations, had no slightest responsibility for the defense of the Free Republic of Korea. With the President's decision it assumed a completely new and added mission.

It is, of course, impossible to predict with any degree of accuracy future incidents of a military campaign. Over a broad front involving continuous local struggles, there are bound to be ups and downs, losses as well as successes. Our final stabilization line will unquestionably be rectified and tactical improvement will involve planned withdrawals as well as local advances. But the issue of battle is now fully joined and will proceed along lines of action in which we will not be without choice. Our hold upon the Southern part of Korea represents a secure base. Our casualties despite overwhelming odds have been relatively light. Our strength will continually increase while that of the enemy will relatively decrease. His supply line is insecure. He has had his great chance but failed to exploit it. We are now in Korea in force, and with God's help we are there to stay until the constitutional authority of the Republic is fully restored.

MACARTHUR