

THE WHITE HOUSE STORY:

Why We Went to War in Korea

By BEVERLY SMITH

Washington Editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*

Here, for the first time, is the full story of what happened during those first dramatic hours after the Reds struck. Who *really* made the decision to strike back? Acheson? MacArthur? Truman?

★ THE BACKGROUND ★

The Korean war has been one of the most controversial and critical ever fought. Our decision to enter the war, and the events surrounding that decision, will be debated by historians for decades to come.

The editors of the *Post* felt that the full story of those fevered days near the end of June, 1950, should be told while memories are still fresh and documents available. President Truman assented. Accordingly, our Washington Editor, Beverly Smith, was provided free access, within the limits of national security, to the persons and documents concerned.

It may be said that this is a "White House version" of the facts. In a sense that is true, but since that is where the decision was made, it is only there, and through the President's advisers, that a firsthand account can be obtained. The facts as given here, however, were not handed out on a platter, but were developed and sifted through the study of many records, and through extended, independent questioning of a great many persons.

We publish this account as a matter of major public interest, without thereby implying editorial approval or disapproval of anything that was done during those momentous hours.

—The Editors.

IN casual retrospect, our entry into the Korean war appears as a hurried, sudden plunge. Actually the United States moved into the conflict step by step, in a series of decisions spaced over the last week of June, 1950. These culminated in a dramatic exchange between MacArthur and the President, relayed via Gen. Lawton Collins and Army Secretary Frank Pace, just before daylight Friday morning, June thirtieth, followed by a final decision made at the White House five hours later.

Saturday, June twenty-fourth, was a steaming hot day in Washington, with the thermometer climbing toward ninety-six degrees. President Truman was planning to pass a restful week end with his wife and daughter, who were at the family home at Independence, Missouri. Shortly before eleven A.M. he took off from Washington in his plane, accompanied by a few members of his office staff. Ten minutes later the plane stopped off at the Friendship International Airport, near Baltimore, where Mr. Truman had promised to dedicate this huge new field. He concluded his brief address with the words:

"I dedicate this airport to the cause of peace in the world."

That peace was shattered about three hours later (3:00 P.M., EDT), while the President's plane was cruising high over the Mississippi Valley, on the way to Kansas City. On the other side of the world, in the predawn darkness along the 38th parallel, lightly armed soldiers of the Republic of Korea started up in stunned confusion under sudden heavy artillery fire from the north. Soon afterward North

Korean communist troops, in astonishing numbers, spearheaded by Russian-made tanks, swarmed across the border toward Ongjin, Chunchon and a town whose name has since become known to the world—Kaesong.

The President was not to learn anything of these events until about seven hours later. He landed at the Kansas City Municipal Airport, drove straight to Independence and walked into the welcome seclusion of his home. He was not scheduled to return to Washington until Monday afternoon.

Even in Seoul, capital of South Korea, it was some hours before the authorities woke up to the seriousness of the attack. Sporadic raids across the border were a commonplace; South Korean army communications were none too good, and the troops best able to appreciate the magnitude of the invasion were killed or overrun by the surprise and speed of the assault.

It was not until Saturday evening that the first press flashes reached Washington, followed soon afterward by a telegram from John Muccio, our ambassador in Korea, delivered to the State Department at 9:26 P.M., EDT. This, the first official word, described the opening military moves, mentioned the tank spearheads and ended with this appraisal:

It would appear from the nature of the attack and the manner in which it was launched that it constitutes an all-out offensive against the Republic of Korea.

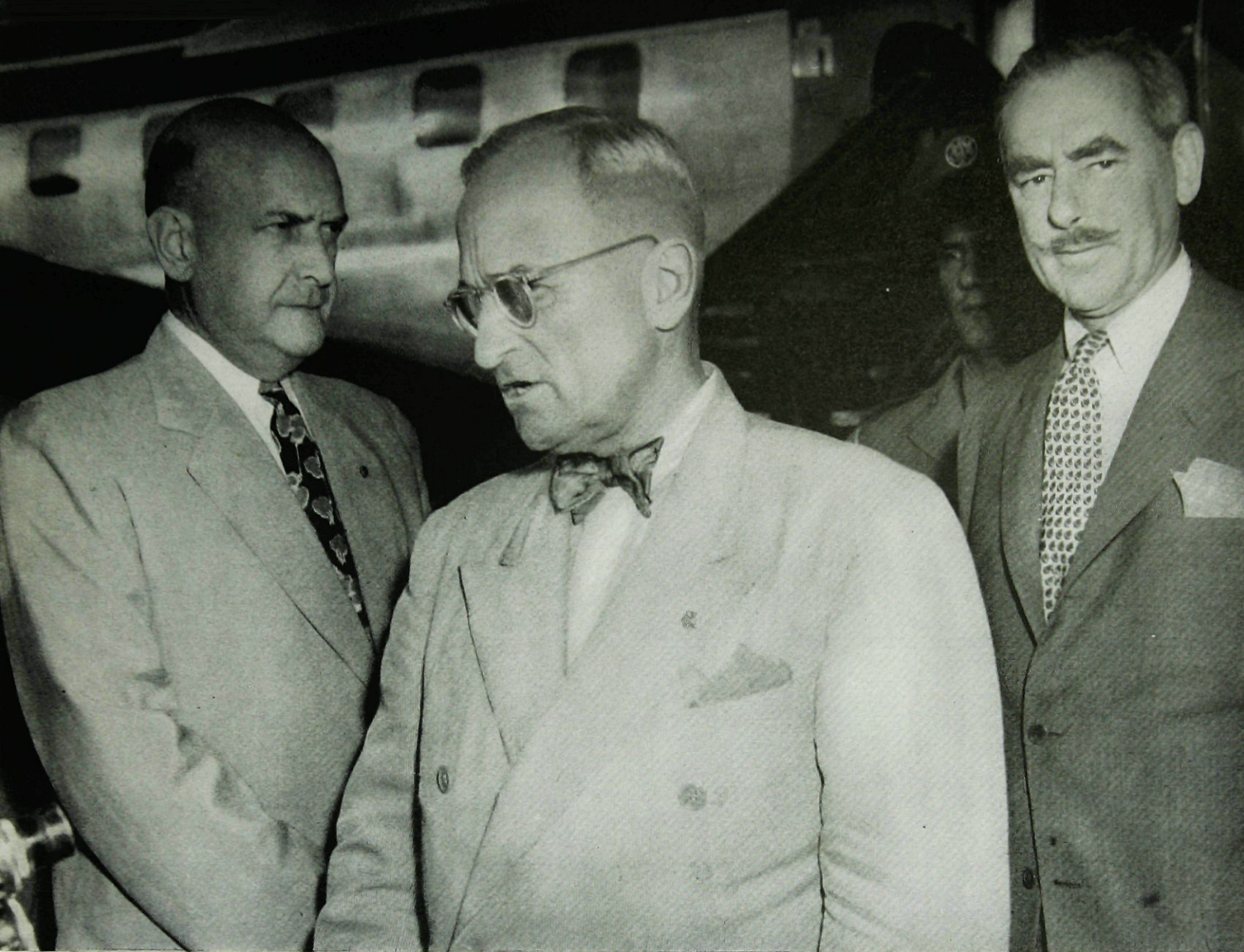
Immediately the officials directly concerned began assembling at the State Department—including



MacArthur, his pilot, Maj. Anthony Story, and 8th Army commander Lt. Gen. Walton Walker, in Korea in the early days of the war.



The President's advisers in the crisis: Gen. Vandenberg, Navy Secretary Matthews, Air Force Secretary Finletter, Gen. Collins, Army Secretary Pace, Adm. Sherman.



Louis Johnson and Dean Acheson waited at the airport in Washington for the President to arrive from Independence, Mo., the day after the Reds attacked.

Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, John D. Hickerson, Assistant Secretary for United Nations Affairs, and Philip Jessup, Ambassador-at-large. They conferred by telephone with Secretary of State Acheson, who was at his farm in nearby Sandy Spring, Maryland. The Department of Defense was notified through Frank Pace, Secretary of the Army.

In Independence, Mr. Truman had enjoyed a peaceful afternoon and a quiet dinner at home with his family. Shortly before 8:30 P.M., CST—10:30 P.M., EDT—the telephone rang—a long-distance call from the Secretary of State. Acheson told him of the press reports from Korea and gave him the gist of the Muccio telegram. The President agreed that the situation should be brought before the United Nations Security Council as quickly as possible, and authorized Acheson to take the necessary steps.

The President offered to fly back at once to Washington. Acheson advised him to get his night's rest at home and promised to call him at once if his presence was required. The conversation lasted about ten minutes.

Throughout the night and Sunday morning men worked feverishly in Washington and New York to get the cumbersome machinery of the UN into motion. Trygve Lie, UN Secretary-General, reached on Long Island by Hickerson shortly before midnight, immediately cabled the UN Commission in Korea for an independent report on the fighting, and started his own staff on the many problems involved in calling an unexpected Security Council meeting on a summer Sunday. The representatives

of eleven nations had to be tracked down and notified at their various week-end retreats. Meanwhile in the State Department the necessary papers and resolutions were being prepared, and cables were sent to our embassies all over the world, telling them of our intended action before the UN and asking them to give it all possible support.

President Truman rose early on Sunday morning, as usual. The morning papers already had bulletins on the United States request for a meeting of the Security Council on Sunday afternoon. Big headlines announced the invasion of South Korea, but the reports of the fighting were fragmentary and the momentum of the attack was by no means yet apparent.

At eight o'clock Mr. Truman drove over to his and his brother Vivian's farm at Grandview, seventeen miles south of Kansas City, where he had planned to stay for Sunday dinner. With his brother he looked about the farm for a while and examined a new milking machine, but he was worried about the situation in Korea. He decided to drive back and await further news at his home in Independence, where he arrived at 11:30.

At 12:35 P.M. came another call from Acheson. He reported that General MacArthur's intelligence officers in Tokyo, talking by telecon to General Collins at the Pentagon, agreed with Muccio's estimate that this was an all-out attack. Tokyo also said that American military advisers in South Korea were asking for emergency supplies of ammunition, and that these would be sent by MacArthur.

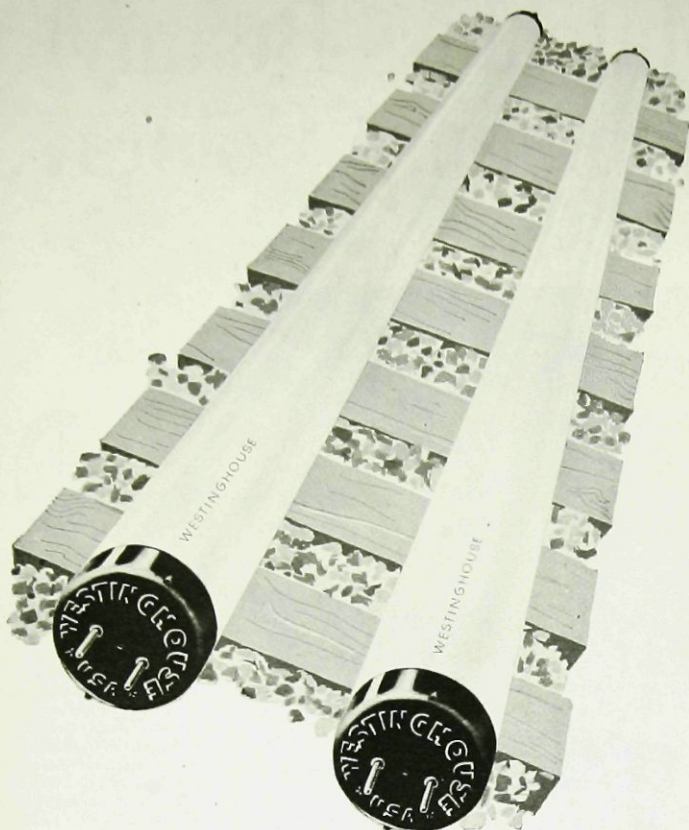
Secondly, Acheson reported that a telegram had come in at 10:35 A.M., (Continued on Page 76)



John Foster Dulles was one of the first officials to propose that we commit our troops in Korea.

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**WHY WE WENT TO WAR
IN KOREA**

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EDT, from John Foster Dulles, who had returned to Tokyo a couple of days before after a visit to Korea, in which Dulles said:

It is possible that the South Koreans may themselves contain and repulse the attack and, if so, this is the best way. If, however, it appears that they cannot do so, then we believe that United States force should be used. . . . To sit by while Korea is overrun by unprovoked armed attack would start a disastrous chain of events leading most probably to world war.

Others had undoubtedly had this thought in the back of their minds, but Dulles was apparently the first to put in writing the idea of using American military force in Korea.

Now the President decided to return at once to Washington, which he estimated he would reach shortly after seven P.M., EDT. He asked Acheson to round up the chief presidential advisers, military and diplomatic, for a dinnertime conference at Blair House. He then sent word for his plane to be made ready for departure, ate a hurried lunch and drove to the airport. Mrs. Truman and Margaret went with him to see him off.

On the flight back Mr. Truman passed most of his time in the privacy of his compartment, pondering the crisis. He had already made up his mind to one thing: the United States must do everything within its power, working as closely as possible with the United Nations, to stop and throw back this aggression. In a sense, he felt, he had made the key decision back in 1946, when he told General Eisenhower, then Army Chief of Staff, to send American troops to defend Trieste if necessary. Truman had resolved then that we must do everything we could to prevent any part of the free world from forceful subjection to Soviet communist domination. From that followed, once the course was set, such decisions as those on Greek, Turkish and Marshall Plan aid and the Berlin airlift. Czechoslovakia, behind the Iron Curtain, had been beyond our power to aid, short of certain world war.

On helping South Korea, in the President's mind, there was no question of whether, but only of when, how and how much, bearing in mind that the Korean attack might be a screen for projected aggressions elsewhere.

The President landed at Washington at 7:15 P.M., EDT, where he was met by Louis Johnson, then Secretary of Defense, Acheson and Under Secretary of State James Webb. They drove with him to Blair House. On the way they told him of the action of the UN Security Council, which in its swiftly convened meeting of that afternoon had voted 9 to 0 for the American resolution. The Yugoslav delegate abstained, and the Soviet was at that time boycotting the Council. This resolution declared that North Korea had committed a breach of the peace. It called for immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of North Korean forces to the 38th parallel. It requested all UN members to give every assistance to the UN "in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities." (Assistance to the South Koreans was not mentioned in this Sunday resolution. It was recommended by the resolution,

passed two days later, on Tuesday, June 27, 1950.)

The President reached Blair House at 7:40, went upstairs to telephone Mrs. Truman of his safe arrival, as he always does after a plane trip, and then came down to join the advisers gathered in the Blair-Lee living room. There were eight from the Defense Department: Secretary of Defense Johnson; the Secretaries of the Army (Pace), Navy (Matthews) and Air (Finletter); the Chiefs of Staff of the Army (Collins), Navy (Sherman) and Air (Vandenberg); and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs (Bradley). From State there were five: Acheson, Webb, Rusk, Hickerson and Jessup.

Thus began the first of the two historic Blair House meetings which laid out our initial steps toward entry into the Korean war. The second was held the following evening, Monday, June twenty-sixth.

Secretary Johnson and General Bradley had just returned (on Saturday) from a trip to Tokyo. They had brought with them a memorandum from General MacArthur on the strategic importance of Formosa. Now, after the President joined the group in the living room at 7:45 on Sunday, Johnson asked Bradley to read the

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A news commentator is often a man who can turn the pages of the morning newspaper so quietly that the microphone can't pick up the sound. —DAN BENNETT.

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memorandum aloud. He read it in full, without interruption.

Then, a few minutes after eight, dinner was announced by Alonzo Fields, the colored butler and maitre d'hôtel who has served Presidents since the time of Herbert Hoover. Mr. Truman had not been expected back until Monday afternoon. The Blair House staff had had to reassemble and work fast to get dinner for fourteen on time. Fortunately, there were frying chickens in the freezer. The staff were rather proud of the quickly prepared and typically American dinner: fruit cup, fried chicken, shoestring potatoes, buttered asparagus, scalloped tomatoes, hot biscuits, hearts of lettuce with Russian dressing, vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce, and coffee.

At dinner, conversation was general and no notes were taken. So far as those present remember, the talk concerned the possibilities of direct Soviet or Chinese communist intervention, the chance that Korea might be a diversion to mask larger aggressions elsewhere, and the hope that the South Koreans might rally and hold with the help of American arms and equipment.

The main theme, though, was that this looked like the pattern of aggression which had led up to World War II; the risks involved in stopping it were less, it was felt, than the dangers of the United States and the UN "taking it lying down."

After dinner the mahogany table was cleared and became the conference table. The President had earlier said he did not wish to make any decisions tonight except those immediately necessary. He now asked Secretary Acheson, as the senior Cabinet officer, to speak first.

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(Continued from Page 76)

During the preceding twenty hours staff groups from State and Defense had been working together on emergency recommendations. With notes of these before him, Acheson made three suggestions. Briefly, these were:

1. That MacArthur be told to go ahead and send all the ammunition he could spare to Korea. (MacArthur had already made a beginning on this.)
2. That MacArthur should furnish ships and planes to assist and protect the evacuation of American dependents from Korea. The ensuing discussion indicated an intention to give the ships and planes a pretty broad discretion in shooting at North Korean forces threatening to block the evacuation.
3. That the 7th Fleet be started north from the Philippines to protect and neutralize the island of Formosa.

On this last point there is a sharp conflict of memories. Louis Johnson has testified that Acheson did not make this suggestion until the second night—Monday. As he recalls it, Acheson was opposed to protection of Formosa on Sunday night, whereupon there was a "violent discussion" between Acheson and Johnson; and then, on Monday, Acheson "reversed" his position. I have not been able to find anyone else who remembers the "violent discussion." The memories of most of those present, backed by certain notes taken at the time, indicate that Acheson made the suggestion (No. 3 above) on Sunday night; that the President decided to start the fleet northward, but—on the principle of "first things first"—deferred the decision to neutralize Formosa and made it Monday night. Without trying to pass on the issue between the two men, the most important point is clear—and they agree on this—that the presidential decision on Formosa was made about 9:30 on Monday evening.

After Acheson had spoken, Louis Johnson called upon the various representatives of the Defense Department for their views and opinions, and the

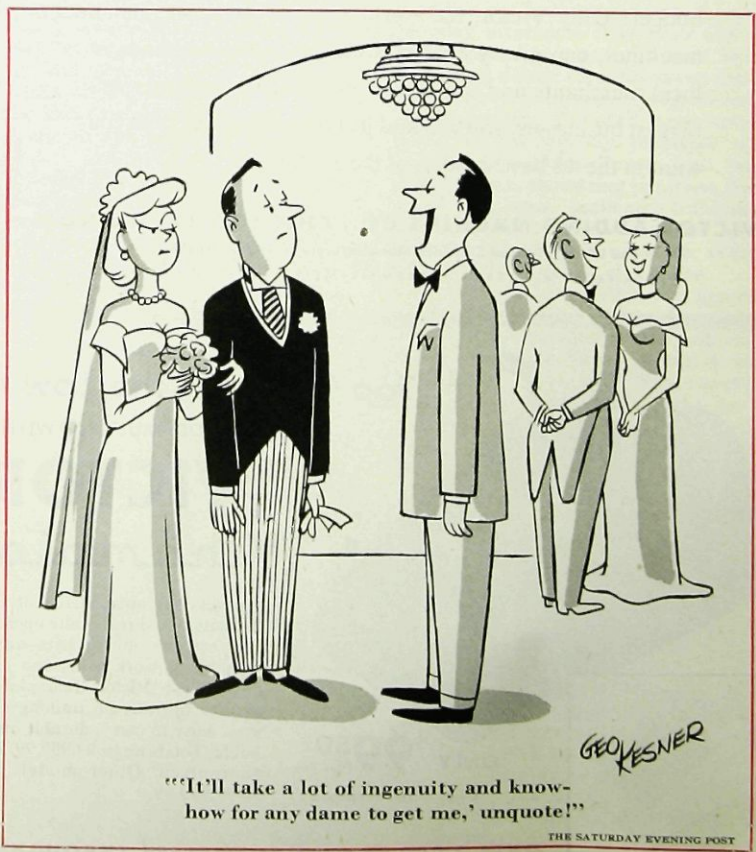
discussion became general. While the atmosphere was intensely serious, everyone felt he was expected to express freely his "honest-to-God opinion on the situation."

Three of those from Defense doubted whether ground troops should be committed "at present." Partly this reflected the hope that such troops would not be needed; partly the fear that this might be the kickoff of a new world war, in which case we would have far greater worries than Korea. President Truman asked for and was given the latest intelligence information on Soviet strength in the Far East, and on Chinese communist strength—especially in the growing build-ups opposite Formosa.

Critics have said that America entered the Korean war rashly, without serious thought of the great risks involved. The discussion that Sunday night shows that the possibility of active Russian intervention deeply concerned Mr. Truman and his advisers from the first, and Chinese intervention was also considered. The consensus of estimates was that the Soviets were not yet ready for a world war. "But if they want it," one officer remarked, "they will have it." Another said, "If we are to prevent a world war, we have to draw the line somewhere; we might as well draw it here and now." These quotations may not be exact, but are correct in substance. How gravely the President viewed the situation is best shown by two orders he then gave: first, that an intelligence recheck be made of other points around the world where Soviet aggression might strike; and second, that a military study be made of what efforts might be necessary, if the Soviets actively intervened, to destroy their bases in the Far East.

In the estimate of the problems ahead, however, there was one missing ingredient. No one realized the enormous strength of the North Korean invasion army which the communists

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(Continued from Page 78)
had secretly trained and built far to the north, and were now feeding into the assault. Each day's events revised the estimates upward. Even on the following Friday, when we entered the conflict irrevocably, those estimates, in MacArthur's headquarters as well as in Washington, were still sadly short of reality—as we shall see. Some blame this on poor intelligence; others on a failure to grasp the limitations of intelligence when pitted against Oriental and Iron Curtain secrecy. But this also may be said: If we had waited prudently until we were sure of the North Korean strength, it would have been too late.

Shortly before the Sunday-night meeting broke up at 10:55, Mr. Truman made his decisions. Others may suggest; the President is the man responsible. Besides ordering the two studies mentioned above, he endorsed the suggestions by Acheson numbered 1 and 2 above, and the first part of 3 (to start the fleet north from the Philippines). He also approved a suggestion by General Collins that MacArthur be directed to send a survey party to Korea to see what could and should be done; a Navy request to start ships, including a carrier, moving from the West Coast; and a suggestion from Louis Johnson to send jet planes to two small islands east of Formosa. Since military movements were involved, he enjoined strict secrecy. He re-emphasized that we must work closely with the United Nations.

The Joint Chiefs hurried to the Pentagon to send the orders to MacArthur by telecon. In the evacuation order, as interpreted by the Joint Chiefs, MacArthur was authorized to "engage in such air and naval action as necessary to prevent the overrunning of Seoul-Kimpo-Inchon area . . . in order to insure safe evacuation of U.S. dependents and noncombatants." MacArthur accepted the orders without comment or further immediate suggestion.

Monday the twenty-sixth was another hot day in Washington. The President rose early, breakfasted, read his regular morning papers—New York Times and Herald Tribune, Washington Post and Baltimore Sun—and was in his White House offices at 8:40. As soon as his personal secretary, Miss Rose Conway, came in, he dictated a proposed press release on the Sunday-night conference.

There was still a chance that the North Koreans might heed the warning of the UN and pull back. Mr. Truman did not want to create war hysteria, nor did he feel free to reveal the precautionary military steps under way. Consequently his statement, as released about 11:00 A.M., was brief and rather formal in tone. It praised the UN resolution and promised that the United States would vigorously support it. It expressed our concern over the lawless aggression, "and our sympathy and support for the people of Korea," as demonstrated by "the co-operative action of American personnel in Korea, as well as by steps to expedite and augment assistance of the type being furnished under the Mutual Assistance Program." It concluded:

Those responsible for this act of aggression must realize how seriously the Government of the United States views such threats to the peace of the world. Willful disregard of the obligation to keep the peace cannot be tolerated by nations that support the United Nations Charter.

Perhaps because of the depreciation of diplomatic language in recent years,

the gravity of "cannot be tolerated" was not fully grasped here or abroad. Many observers got the impression that the President and his advisers were irresolute, or divided, or were thinking in terms of "aid short of war."

One friendly foreign diplomat reported to his government: "The time has come when Uncle Sam must put up or shut up, and my guess is he will do neither." This mistaken impression was to persist for another twenty-four hours.

Such doubts were not shared by members of the President's White House staff who talked with him that Monday morning. To them his grim resolution was apparent. At one point he walked over to the big globe in his office and pointed out the various danger spots. Then he said, "This (Korea) is the Greece of the Far East. If we are tough enough now, there won't be any next step."

During the day he received a succession of reports on the situation, including a world roundup from Central Intelligence on other possible aggression points. At 4:00 P.M. Ambassador John Chang, of South Korea, came in to plead for more aid, especially in planes, tanks and artillery. Mr. Truman could do little more at the moment than tell him such aid was on the way from General MacArthur, and that the South Koreans must continue to fight bravely so that further aid could be effective. Reporters, noting Chang's long face as he left the White House, were strengthened in their impression that the United States was treading hesitantly.

The President went across to Blair House, where he had supper alone. He was interrupted at 7:29 by a phone call from Acheson, who said the Korean news was now so bad that another meeting was advisable. "Have them here at nine P.M.," the President said. At that hour the same group as the night before—minus Under Secretary of State Webb—gathered around the mahogany table.

General Vandenberg reported that the first North Korean plane—a Russian-built Yak—had been shot down. "I hope it's not the last," said Truman. General Bradley said it was apparent from MacArthur's latest dispatches that the ROK—Republic of Korea—forces could not hold Seoul. In fact, they were in danger of collapse, with heavy casualties and much of their equipment lost. Evacuation of American dependents was under way, but not completed. The President then called upon Acheson, who, speaking

from notes, advanced the most critical suggestion to date—namely, that the Navy and Air Force be ordered to provide the fullest possible cover and support to the ROK forces, south of the 38th parallel.

He also repeated his suggestion that the 7th Fleet be ordered to prevent any attack on Formosa; that Chiang's government "be called upon" to cease any military action against the Chinese mainland; and that our fleet should see to it that there was no such action. This time it was definitely approved.

His third suggestion was that United States forces in the Philippines be increased and arms aid to the Philippine Government be stepped up; his fourth, that we immediately send a military mission and speed up our military-aid program to Indo-China.

Acheson added that the UN Security Council would meet the next afternoon, Tuesday, and that we would press for a further resolution recommending assistance to the South Koreans.

The suggestions were then discussed, and no objections were raised. It was now obvious that mere arms aid would not be enough. It was still hoped that our air and naval power, plus the moral effect of their intervention, would enable (Knowledge of the true strength of the North Koreans was still the missing ingredient.) The President then made his decision, endorsing all four suggestions, and the second Blair House meeting ended—Monday evening, 9:40. As they went into the hall Mr. Truman said, "Everything I have done in the last five years has been to try to avoid making a decision such as I had to make tonight."

A few minutes after the advisers departed to put the new orders into action, the President telephoned members of his White House staff, asking them to set up a meeting for the next morning (Tuesday), at the White House, with the senior members, Democratic and Republican, of the Senate and House Committees on Foreign Relations and Armed Services. Representatives of State and Defense would also be present. During the next forty-five minutes most of the congressional leaders were notified of the meeting.

On Tuesday morning the President worked on a statement on the four decisions made Monday evening. He then went over it carefully with his advisers from State and Defense, including Johnson and Acheson, checking and revising it.

(Continued on Page 82)



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By now the fourteen congressional leaders were arriving at the White House. Vice-President Alben Barkley was out of town. Those present included Scott Lucas, then Majority Leader of the Senate; Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House; and John W. McCormack, House Majority Leader. From the Senate Foreign Relations Committee there were Chairman Connally, of Texas; Thomas, of Utah; Wiley, of Wisconsin; and Smith, of New Jersey; from Senate Armed Services, Chairman Tydings, of Maryland; and Bridges, of New Hampshire.

From House Foreign Affairs there were Chairman Kee, of West Virginia; Mansfield, of Montana; and Eaton, of New Jersey; from House Armed Services, Chairman Vinson, of Georgia; and Dewey Short, of Missouri. In all, nine Democrats and five Republicans.

The congressional leaders gathered in the Cabinet Room, along with leaders from Defense and State. President Truman came in promptly at 11:30. As he walked about to shake hands with each of the legislators his manner was solemn, with no trace of his usual banter.

He then took his place at the Cabinet table. He said he had invited this group down to tell them at first hand about the situation in the Far East and the decisions he had had to make. He then asked Acheson to give a summary of events since Saturday. Acheson did this. By Monday evening, he said, the need of stronger action was apparent for two reasons: (1) the military situation in South Korea was falling to pieces, and (2) the governments of the rest of the world, especially in Western Europe, were in a state of jitters and near panic, wondering whether the United States would take this lying down. If we let this pass, other aggressions would occur one after another, leading on to a third world war. Hence the meeting on Monday evening.

Now Truman spoke again. He discussed the United Nations at some length, and the importance of our acting through, under and in accord with the UN, rather than unilaterally. Only if the free world stuck together for collective security could a world war be prevented. He then told of his decisions of the night before. If we did not help the Koreans, he was convinced that the rest of Asia would go down, and Europe or the Near East would be next. He then invited questions and threw the meeting open for general discussion.

Wiley wanted to be sure that the orders to MacArthur were in accord with UN resolutions. The President said they were, and added later that we were pressing that afternoon for an additional UN resolution recommending "such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security to the area." We had been assured of the necessary support for the resolution.

Lucas hoped we would get a lot of support in a hurry from other countries. Connally said this was the first big test for the UN; South Korea was the UN's baby; if the UN failed to act effectively now, it was through. Senator Smith and Representative Short raised the same point as Wiley—that we must act with the UN rather than alone. No one questioned the propriety of the decisions; the general attitude was one of friendly and earnest support.

(Certain senators, recalling this meeting, have the impression that the question was raised whether congressional leaders should have been consulted in advance of the decisions, and whether those decisions would require approval by Congress. This question is not shown in a memorandum made during the meeting. Such questions were raised, however, in a similar meeting held on Friday, June thirtieth, to discuss the decision committing ground troops.)

Immediately after the meeting was over, at 12:30, the President's statement was given to the press and radio. The decision to use the Navy and Air Force was greeted by a general approval and enthusiasm which few people—after all the war's trouble and controversy—now remember. Practically every major newspaper in the country approved, with the exception of the Chicago Tribune and its affiliate, the Washington Times-Herald. When the President's statement was read in



NOVEMBER

By Cosette Middleton

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In hearth and window, and it shows

In Jonathan and Northern Spy,
In cheeks of children as they fly
Scarfed and mittened with a new
Wind as sharp as witches' brew.

November is a link or tether
Holding home and folk together;
A time for evenings to be spent
With storybook and Testament;
For faith and love to be retold
From old to young, from young
to old.



the House of Representatives, the members rose to their feet and cheered.

In the Senate, Republicans as well as Democrats praised the President's leadership and appealed for united, nonpartisan support. Two Republicans of the far right—Kem, of Missouri, and Watkins, of Utah—questioned Mr. Truman's right to act without formal approval by Congress. Curiously, this view was echoed from the far left, in the House, by Vito Marcantonio, of New York, a man usually close to the communist line.

Senator Taft made no immediate comment; later he said the President should have put his action to a congressional vote, but indicated that he (Taft) would have voted in favor of it. Governor Dewey, of New York, telegraphed Mr. Truman his "wholehearted" support of the decision.

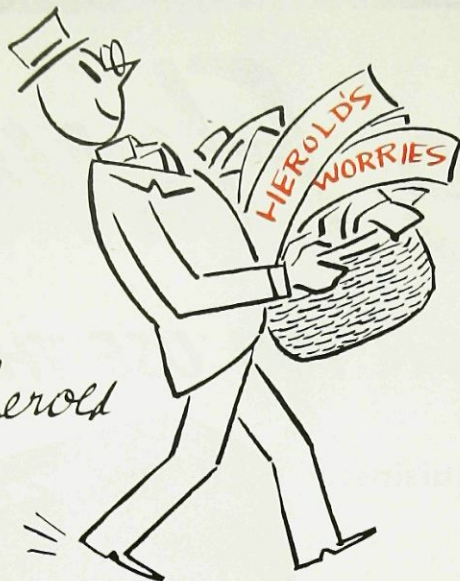
On that same afternoon, Tuesday, June twenty-seventh, the UN Security Council met again, to vote on the resolution calling on its member nations to give all necessary assistance to the South Korean Republic. The vote was seven in favor and one (Yugoslavia) against. The delegates from India and Egypt did not vote, because they were unable to reach their home governments by telephone; both countries later indicated their support of the resolution.

The Soviets again boycotted the meeting. If they had attended—they were duly notified—and used the veto, it would have put the United States

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a man who comforts me

by dou herold



THERE'S A MAN in my town who is my worry-taker-awayer. He gives me freedom from fear; he's my anti-headache man.

He's the man who looks after all my insurance.

Without his help I might wake up some morning with my home or my business property burned, or blown into the next county—and me almost ruined financially.

He saves me fear of lawsuits from any direction—from death or injury someone in my family may somehow bring to someone—with our car, a golf ball, a broken doorstep or a roller-skate on the front walk.

He removes fear of financial setbacks from our own accidental injuries. He gives us greater enjoyment from our jewelry, furs and other possessions, with insurance against their theft or loss. And with many other forms of insurance, he guards our daily life.

This fellow has to know his business. Insurance today is a complicated subject and is constantly improving—and my insurance man keeps up with it.

I ask his advice on what policies to carry and on what amounts to carry.

When I have had losses, he has been a friend indeed.

This is a man I trust and treasure—as much as I do our family doctor.



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LOOK FOR THIS SEAL ON YOUR POLICIES

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and the UN in an awkward spot. It would have taken two weeks to convene the UN General Assembly. It has been generally assumed that the failure to use the veto was a Soviet blunder; that it resulted from some mix-up or delay in orders from Moscow. But the Soviets had known for months that the Korean attack was in preparation—they had helped train and equip it—and they knew the issue would certainly come before the UN. Why, then, the abstention?

This suggests the strange possibility that the Kremlin—as of Tuesday, June twenty-seventh—was not unwilling for the United States and the UN to intervene. The Kremlin knew—as we did not—the tremendous power of the attacking army. Might it not be a good idea—from the Kremlin point of view—to have us intervene with piecemeal forces, get a bloody nose and be kicked humiliatingly out of Korea? Alternatively, if America could throw in enough strength to hold the line, a large part of our armed forces would be tied down in the Korean morass. (This view, if it was held, failed to foresee that the Korean affair would spur America to tremendous increases of its armed strength. Today the forces of America and the free world are far greater, outside of Korea, than were their total forces in June of 1950.)

On Wednesday, June twenty-eight, no new decisions were made. The President was busy most of the day with his routine and ceremonial duties, taking time out between to discuss Korean developments with his advisers. The news was still bad. Meanwhile the public waited, hopefully and rather confidently, to see what our ships and planes could do.

On Thursday morning, at seven, MacArthur's headquarters reported by telecon to the Pentagon that the ROK's had already suffered casualties of about 50 per cent. They were now trying to form a line at the Han River just south of Seoul; it was problematical whether they could. Other discouraging items came in during the morning. At 11:55 Secretary Johnson called Mr. Truman to suggest that he have another meeting with his top advisers. It was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. at the White House.

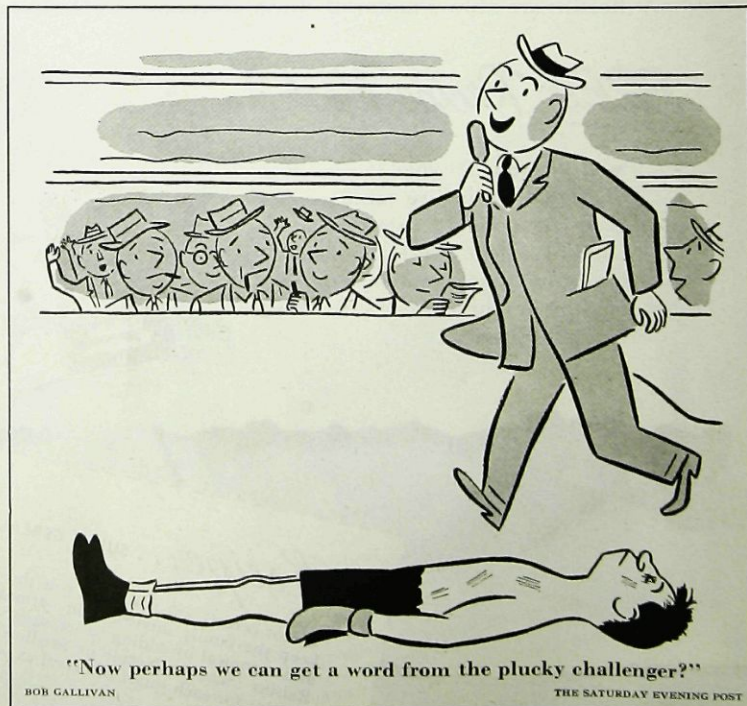
At 4:00 p.m. Mr. Truman held his regular weekly press conference, notable for the fame it gave to "police action," a term which was to plague him later. He did not himself actually utter the words. A reporter asked: "Would it be correct to call this a police action?" Mr. Truman said, "Yes, that is exactly what it amounts to." On that Thursday the description seemed appropriate. It became absurd when whole armies fought savagely up and down the Korean peninsula. But the President was stuck with it, and never afterward troubled to disavow or amend it.

The 5:00 p.m. White House meeting, besides most of those who had attended the two Blair House meetings, included John Foster Dulles, just back from Korea; Averell Harriman, hastily summoned from Paris; Stuart Symington, then chairman of the NSRB; and James Lay, executive secretary of the National Security Council.

Louis Johnson said our planes, operating from distant bases in Japan, were handicapped by having little time over the target area and by lack of clear communication with the ROK ground forces. Also, our planes and ships were hampered by their restriction to South Korea; they could not strike at communist supplies and reinforcements north of the 38th parallel. And the primitive Korean transport system made it hard for us to get supplies to the ROK troops. Therefore the Joint Chiefs believed that stronger measures were needed, not only to help the ROK's but to ensure evacuation of remaining American nationals. We must have at least an American foothold in South Korea. Johnson then read a proposed directive, which had been worked out by Defense and concurred in by State during the day.

This directive, after reaffirming Air and Navy support of the ROK's, (1) authorized our ships and planes to strike military targets in North Korea; (2) authorized the use of Army service troops in South Korea (primarily Signal Corps and transport units), and also certain combat units for the limited purpose of protecting a port and an airfield in the general area of Pusan. (Note that this did not authorize use

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"Now perhaps we can get a word from the plucky challenger?"

BOB GALLIVAN

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

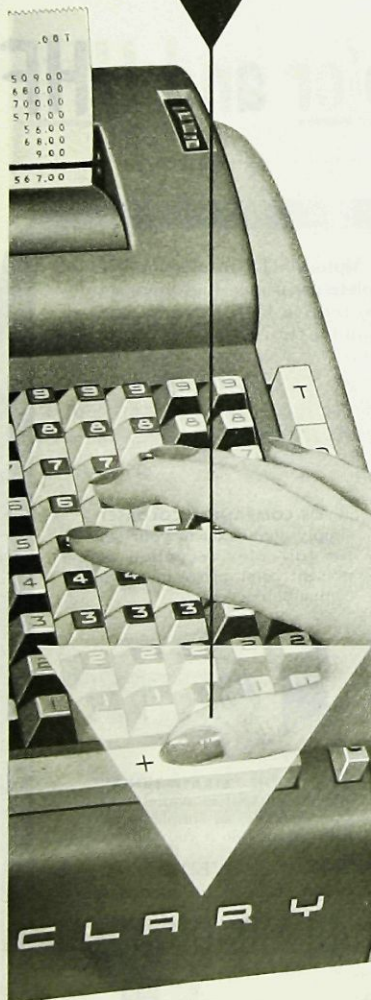
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of combat troops in the combat area—which was then nearly 200 miles north of Pusan.)

The President wanted to be sure the bombardment of North Korea was not indiscriminate. He was also troubled by the commitment of ground troops, but agreed to its necessity, as did Acheson.

Acheson then reported on a telegram just received from Admiral Kirk, our ambassador in Moscow. On Tuesday, State had sent a note to Moscow asking the Soviet Government to "use its influence with the North Korean authorities to withdraw their invading forces." Now, after two days, came the Moscow reply. As expected, it was a refusal. It said the fighting was "provoked" by a South Korean attack, and put all the blame on the South Koreans and "those who stand behind their back." Foreign interference in internal Korean affairs, it declared, was "impermissible."

The important thing was this: certain phrases in the Soviet note and in Kirk's telegram gave Acheson and his advisers a clear indication that the Kremlin did not intend to intervene directly in Korea. "That means," commented President Truman, "that the Soviets are going to let the Chinese and the North Koreans do the fighting for them." This estimate has been borne out to date. Whether the Russians intended us to divine their intention so clearly remains one of the enigmas.

The President made his decision affirming Johnson's draft directive without substantial change, and the meeting ended at 5:40 P.M. The new orders were sent off to Tokyo.

About nine hours later, shortly before 3:00 A.M. on Friday, a telegram came into the Pentagon from MacArthur. He had just returned to Tokyo from a personal reconnaissance in Korea. This was his report, and it was a grim one. The only assurance of holding the line of the Han River and regaining lost ground, MacArthur stated, lay in the use of American combat troops. Therefore it was his intention, if authorized, to move one combat regiment into the fighting area right away, as a nucleus of a possible build-up to two divisions from troops in Japan for an early counteroffensive.

General Collins at once aroused Army Secretary Pace by telephone, told him of the telegram and said he would talk with MacArthur by telecon and report back later. Soon afterward the telecon

connection was put through to MacArthur. Present with General Collins in the Pentagon end were other high officers, and Dean Rusk representing the State Department.

MacArthur repeated the substance of his telegram and urgently asked authority to go ahead. Collins said the President, in the White House meeting the previous afternoon, had shown concern on the ground-troops question. Before actually putting combat troops into the fighting zone up near Seoul, Collins thought, the President would want to confer again with his top advisers. It would be a few hours before such a conference could be arranged. Meanwhile would not the latest orders, authorizing movement of certain service and combat units to Pusan—down on the south coast—be enough to get things started?

MacArthur replied that time was of the essence, that present orders did not provide enough latitude, and that an immediate further decision was of the most vital import. Collins then said he would try, through Pace, to get immediate word to the President.

Collins stepped out of the telecon room, called Pace and explained the situation. Pace telephoned the President. The call came into Blair House at 4:57 A.M. It was Pace's impression that his call waked the President up; actually Mr. Truman was up and shaved. He took the call at the phone on his bedside table. Dawn had not yet appeared over the White House grounds across the way.

When MacArthur's urgent message was repeated to him, the President did not hesitate. He immediately authorized sending one combat regiment to the combat area, and promised he would give a decision on the additional build-up to two divisions within a few hours. Within minutes the word was relayed from Pace to Collins to MacArthur. Within an hour or two more the first American troops were landing by airlift in Pusan.

At 7:00 A.M. Col. Henry Ahalt came in from the Pentagon to brief the President more fully on the telecon talks and the military situation. Then Mr. Truman called Pace and Johnson, asking them to consider the question of the two additional divisions. At 7:30 he called Acheson to discuss the new developments.

By 8:30, Defense Secretary Johnson, the three service secretaries and the four chiefs of staff were in Johnson's office, drafting the new directive. At 9:30, accompanied by Steve Early,

then Deputy Secretary of Defense, they entered a side door of the White House, where they met with the President, Acheson and Harriman. By 10:00 A.M. they had discussed, and the President approved, two orders: (1) Authorizing the sending of two divisions from Japan, and (2) Authorizing, at the suggestion of Admiral Sherman, a naval blockade of North Korea. Note that at this hour MacArthur, President Truman, the State Department and the Joint Chiefs were all agreed upon the action to be taken. Note also that they all still underestimated the strength of the North Korean army, and thought that two American divisions might be enough to turn the tide.

At 11:00 A.M. there was a combined meeting in the White House of the congressional leaders—17 of them this time, including Vice-President Barkley—the Cabinet and the various military and other advisers to the President—46 persons in all.

The President gave a brief synopsis of the events of the week and then told of the further decisions he had had to make in the last eighteen hours. In the discussion which followed, the legislators wanted to be assured that our action was within the framework of the United Nations. Mr. Truman emphasized that it was, and said that MacArthur would be not just the United States commander but the United Nations commander, as well.

Senator Wherry said he thought the President ought to consult Congress before sending ground troops. Mr. Truman told of the urgent series of events in the last eighteen hours. In this emergency he had felt it was his responsibility to make the decisions, and he had made them. Later, when Wherry started to repeat his point, Dewey Short, ranking Republican member of the House Armed Services Committee, broke in; he said he was expressing the opinion of practically everyone in Congress in saying that Congress owed the President thanks for the quality of his leadership. The meeting was over at 11:45, Friday, June 30, 1950.

"The delegation returned to the Capitol," said The New York Times report by William S. White, "in a somber but elevated mood, in which anxiety was overmastered by a feeling of relief and expressed pride that the United States was now going the whole way in aid of the Republic of Korea."

At 1:22 P.M., almost precisely six days after the fighting started, the orders were on the way to MacArthur. We were in.

THE LEFTOVER CHILDREN

(Continued from Page 39)

"Better leave a note," Jim urged. "I ain't leaving any note, and neither are you. Come on, if you're coming." Anxious and hesitant, Jim followed. Silently, the boys walked their bicycles out of the garage. They mounted and rode planless for a while along the highway shoulder, Robin ahead. Then he made an abrupt turn into a narrow leafy road. Jim turned after him.

When Vern Hopkins rang Maggie's doorbell, a quiet, dignified gloom seeped from the house. It chilled him as he stood in the morning sunshine and he resented it.

After ringing five times, he went around back, rattled the screen door, then boldly opened it and peered in at the kitchen. From the faint melon

fragrance he surmised the boys had had their favorite breakfast.

"Jim!" he called. Louder, "Jim! Robin!" And finally, "Maggie!"

Outside again, he walked backward the depth of the small rear lawn, gazing up toward bedroom windows in the half story above. Window boxes rioted with Fire Chief petunias, but the boxes had been inexpertly constructed and put up wrong-side-to, so that water stains dribbled down the two-lap siding. That fool girl. If her dishwasher and all her gadgets worked, if her flowers bloomed and the boys' stomachs bulged, if her phone rang every five minutes—she could ignore her house paint. Now if he lived there—But he didn't, and he wasn't going to. The idea was insupportable, utterly. How did people get so attached to houses? Sentimental, ridiculous notion. Farms, now. A farm was something else again.

A mass of rich chestnut hair went by a window. Maggie. One-in-a-million Maggie, wearing something with white frills that plunged low—all maddening woman just awakened, lovely and desirable, wasting her sweetness, wasting the years. Did she expect to live forever?

Looking down, she leaned elbows on the ledge and gave him her coquette-among-the-petunias. Her yawn had absurd charm, much fluttering of long, graceful fingers. The thing about Maggie, he couldn't help grinning, the thing that saved her from being too beautiful, she never wore a frame, she clowned it. She thought being beautiful was a kind of joke. *On me?*

"Oh, hello," she said casually.

"What's on your mind?"

"You may well ask," he said.

"Why may I well ask?"

"Because you're up there and I'm down here."

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