

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY



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The North Korean People's Army. There is some evidence that the North Koreans were confident they could capture all of South Korea before any outside power could intervene effectively. Their confidence was based largely on the strength of the North Korean People's Army, formed around a hard core of veterans who had fought with Soviet and Chinese forces during World War II, and afterward, as a part of Chinese Communist armies, against Nationalist China. Equipped and carefully trained by the Soviets during and after the occupation of Korea, the North Korean Army was, except in air and naval support, an efficient fighting force; and the nine infantry divisions and one armored division that crossed the parallel in the initial attack constituted some of its best units.

The South Korean Army. By contrast, the South Korean Army of 95,000 ill-equipped and poorly trained men was a highly ineffective force. Actually it represented more a constabulary than an army. During and after the American occupation of southern Korea, an American military staff assisted the South Koreans in organizing, equipping, and training a small army. But limited equipment, restricted command authority, and a policy that allowed the South Korean Military Establishment to become no more than an internal security force made it impossible for the Americans to create an army capable of meeting a well-armed and well-trained foe.

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