



## Canada's Forgotten War Remembering Korea (1950 – 1953)

On June 25, 1950 the forces of North Korea crossed the 38th Parallel into the Republic of Korea. The magnitude of the assault made it clear that this was a full-scale invasion, and marked the beginning of fierce hostilities that would rage for more than three years.

The invasion was the first major act of military aggression of the Cold War, following the establishment of the United Nations in 1945. The UN's response to this act of aggression was of great significance to its perceived effectiveness and credibility in the world. The UN Security Council declared the North Korean invasion to be a breach of international peace, and sixteen member nations agreed to join forces to rebuff and repel this aggression.

Although often referred to as our forgotten war, Canada made a larger contribution -- in proportion to our population -- than most of the nations that provided troops for this international force. We also demonstrated our willingness to uphold the United Nations ideals, and when necessary, to take-up arms in defence of international peace and security. Canadian action in Korea was followed by other military operations, which have seen our Canadian troops deployed around the world in efforts to preserve, or make possible, greater freedom and justice in the world.

In total, 26,791 Canadians served in the Korean War, from various Canadian Army regiments and corps, and including sailors from eight destroyers and airmen who took part in many combat and transport missions. Among the UN force's casualties, were 1,558 Canadians killed

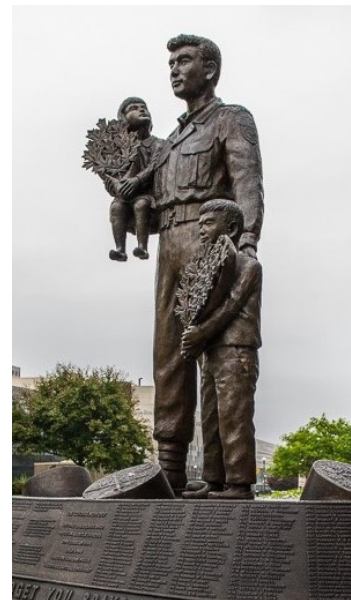
or wounded, including 516 Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice, and whose names are inscribed in the Korea Book of Remembrance that is kept in the Peace Tower at our Parliament.

We remember these brave Canadians, today and we remember all who served, and those who died, on both sides, or were innocent victims of this of this horrific conflict. Nearly five million people were killed in the Korean War, and more than half of them were civilians.

After three years of fierce fighting, and following a long stalemate, on July 17, 1953, the two sides signed a cease-fire agreement, formally bringing an end to the conflict. Although the invasion that precipitated the war was successfully rebuffed and repelled by the UN forces, neither side can really claim a victory. The Korean peninsula remains, to this day, in a technical state of war, and a two-mile wide demilitarized zone now runs along the border at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, to act as a buffer to prevent renewed hostilities.

*Most Holy God, hear our prayers  
for all who strive for peace, and all who yearn for justice.  
Help us, who today remember the costs of war,  
to always work for a better tomorrow;  
and as we commend to you the lives lost in war and conflict,  
bring us all, in the end, to the peace of your presence;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

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## Monument to Canadian Fallen

It's easy to walk all around Centretown and to not even notice this monument located on the Mackenzie-King Bridge, which is a replica of the Monument to our Canadian Fallen that stands in the UN Cemetery in Busan, South Korea.

It depicts an unarmed Canadian soldier holding a young Korean girl and guiding a Korean boy. The children represent the generations of Koreans who live in freedom thanks to those Canadians who served and sacrificed so much in the Korean War.