



# The Korean War and General MacArthur's Firing

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## Abstract

On April 11, 1951, President Harry S. Truman relieved General Douglas MacArthur of his command during the Korean War. Many Americans, including Republican politicians, supported MacArthur after his firing and viewed him as a national hero. Many historians speculate that MacArthur was fired because he wanted total war and President Truman wanted a limited war. Other historians argue that MacArthur was fired simply because he did not obey Truman. Research shows that even after MacArthur's firing, the U.S. still considered waging a total war, and actually shipped nuclear warheads east, despite Truman's public support for a limited war. This research explores the many questions surrounding MacArthur's firing, as well as the disconnect between U.S. action and intent during the Korean War. Through this, we are able to find commonalities between the Korean War, The Vietnam War, and the Cold War, where public sentiment often differed greatly from the actions that the U.S. military took.

**Keywords:** history, The Korean War, General MacArthur, President Harry Truman, military, nuclear warfare, total war, limited war