

THE COLD WAR

Viewpoints

When President Truman relieved General MacArthur from duty, both had plenty to say on the subject. Below are excerpts from MacArthur's farewell address to Congress and from Truman's explanation of his decision. As you read, think about the different viewpoints being expressed. Read "The Korean War" in your textbook. ♦ *Answer the questions that follow on a separate sheet of paper.*

MacArthur and Truman

There are some who for varying reasons would appease Red China. They are blind to history's clear lesson, for history teaches with unmistakable emphasis that appeasement but begets new and bloodier wars . . . Like blackmail, it lays the basis for new and successively greater demands until, as in blackmail, violence becomes the only other alternative. Why, my soldiers asked me, surrender military advantages to an enemy in the field? I could not answer . . .

I have just left your fighting sons in Korea. They have met all tests there, and I can report to you without reservation that they are splendid in every way.

It was my constant effort to preserve them and end this savage conflict honorably and with the least loss of time and a minimum sacrifice of life.

—General MacArthur's
Address to Congress
April 19, 1951

If the Communist authorities realize that they cannot defeat us in Korea, if they realize it would be foolhardy to widen the hostilities beyond Korea, then they may recognize the folly of continuing their aggression. A peaceful settlement may then be possible. The door is always open . . .

I have thought long and hard about this question of extending the war in Asia. I have discussed it many times with the ablest military advisers in the country. I believe with all my heart that the course we are following is the best course.

I believe that we must try to limit war to Korea for these vital reasons: to make sure that the precious lives of our fighting men are not wasted; to see that the security of our country and the free world is not needlessly jeopardized; and to prevent a third world war.

—President Truman,
April 11, 1951

Questions to Think About

- 1. Appeasement** is the act of giving in to the demands of an aggressor. *Begets* means "gives rise to." What does MacArthur mean when he says "appeasement but begets newer and bloodier wars"?
- 2. Explain** President Truman's reasoning that a peaceful settlement may be achieved. How is his idea different from MacArthur's?
- 3. Compare** What is one thing that both MacArthur and Truman say they have been trying to do?