#1 – MacArthur’s “Blank Check,” September 30, 1950

After the successful invasion at Inchon, MacArthur was ordered by the White House and the UN to cross the 38th parallel and take the war into North Korea. He is told to feel “unhampered” and to win the war.
Communist China enters the Korean War and begins to fight against US/UN forces at the end of October 1950. Newspapers blame MacArthur for provoking China by crossing the 38th parallel. The White House remains quiet so MacArthur defends himself publicly by noting he was ordered to cross into North Korea. In response, the White House orders that no public statements about foreign policy or military policy be released without approval from the Department of the Army.
Congressman Martin wrote to MacArthur asking his opinion on the Korean War. MacArthur responded with this letter and made some comments critical of the president’s policy on Korea. Martin made this letter public. The White House was furious and many of the president’s advisors decided it was time to remove MacArthur.
#4 – Official US Policy on War, March 21, 1951

Despite the initial “Blank Check” that MacArthur was given, China’s entrance into the war spooks the United Nations. Soon, the White House and the UN are both leaning towards a diplomatic solution to the war instead of an outright victory. They fear continued war could result in a nuclear World War III.
In contrast to the White House and the UN, MacArthur opposes a diplomatic solution. He emphasizes the success of his forces and their ability to end the conflict on the Korean Peninsula once and for all. He also expresses a fear that the diplomatic solution would reward communist China with a seat at the UN.
"These military weaknesses have been clearly and definitely revealed since Red China entered upon its undeclared war in Korea. Even under the inhibitions which now restrict the activity of the United Nations forces and the corresponding military advantages which accrue to Red China, it has shown its complete inability to accomplish by force of arms the conquest of Korea. The enemy, therefore, must by now be painfully aware that a decision of the United Nations to depart from its tolerant effort to contain the war to the area of Korea, through an expansion of our military operations to his coastal areas and interior bases, would doom Red China to the risk of imminent military collapse. These basic facts being established, there should be no insuperable difficulty in arriving at decisions on the Korean problem if the issues are resolved on their own merits, without being burdened by extraneous matters not directly related to Korea, such as Formosa or China's seat in the United Nations.

"The Korean nation and people, which have been so cruelly ravaged, must not be sacrificed. That is a paramount concern. Apart from the military area of the problem where issues are resolved in the course of combat, the fundamental questions continue to be political in nature and must find their answer in the diplomatic sphere. Within the area of my authority as the military commander, however, it should be needless to say that I stand ready at any time to confer in the field with the Commander-in-Chief of the enemy forces in the earnest effort to find any military means whereby realization of the political objectives of the United Nations in Korea, to which no nation may justly take exceptions, might be accomplished without further bloodshed.

"DOUGLAS MacARTHUR."
Truman praises MacArthur’s military service but explains that he has removed him from command because MacArthur was not supporting the policies of the US Government or the UN when it came to his official duties.
Truman has the authority to remove MacArthur from command. As President of the United States, he is Commander in Chief of the military.

“The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States…”
At the time, most American’s disagreed with Truman’s decision to fire MacArthur. There was a divide however between the elites and the general public however. Among the “Who’s Who” – business and political leaders, there was more support for Truman’s decision.

| Reactions to MacArthur’s Dismissal in 1951 Differed Along Cultural Lines |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Do you approve or disapprove of President Truman’s action in removing Gen. MacArthur? | "Who’s Who" | General public |
|                         | % |  |
| Approve                 | 51 | 25 |
| Disapprove              | 46 | 66 |
| No opinion              | 3  | 9  |

GALLUP, APRIL 16-21, 1951
MacArthur greatly feared that a limited war in Korea – one that did not bring about victory and a stable peace for the Korean Peninsula – would merely place the problem of a Korean crisis on future generations. He was also concerned about the rise of communist China as a superpower.

But once war is forced upon us, there is no other alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War’s very object is victory—not prolonged indecision. In war, indeed, there can be no substitute for victory.

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 war. It points to no single instance where the end has justified that means—where appeasement has led to more than a sham peace. Like blackmail, it lays the basis for new and successively greater demands, until, as in blackmail, violence becomes the only alternative. Why, my soldiers asked of me, surrender military advantages to an enemy in the field? I could not answer. Some may say to avoid spread of the conflict into an all-out war with China; others, to avoid Soviet intervention. Neither explanation seems valid. For China is already engaging with the maximum power it can commit and the Soviet will not necessarily mesh its actions with our moves. Like a cobra, any new enemy will more likely strike whenever it feels that the relativity in military or other potential is in its favor on a world-wide basis.

The tragedy of Korea is further heightened by the fact that as military action is confined to its territorial limits, it condemns that nation, which it is our purpose to save, to suffer the devastating impact of full naval and air bombardment, while the enemy’s sanctuaries are fully protected from such attack and devastation. Of the nations of the world, Korea alone, up to now, is the sole one which has risked its all against Communism. The magnificence of the courage and fortitude of the Korean people defies description. They have chosen to risk death rather than slavery. Their last words to me were, “Don’t scuttle the Pacific.”