

Chapter 22

8

The Cold War and the Postwar Balance of Power

Key Terms

Afrikaners*	Iron Curtain
Alliance for Progress*	Korean Conflict
apartheid*	kulaks*
ayatollah*	Marshall Plan*
Berlin Wall	May Fourth Movement*
brinkmanship*	New Economic Policy (NEP)*
coalition*	nonalignment*
Cold War*	North Atlantic Treaty Organization*
collectivization*	<i>perestroika</i> *
containment*	Prague Spring*
Cuban Missile Crisis	purges*
Cultural Revolution*	Red Guard*
Five Year Plans*	Sandinistas*
Geneva Conference*	Six-Day War*
genocide*	Solidarity*
<i>glasnost</i> *	Tiananmen Square*
Government of India Act	Truman Doctrine*
Great Leap Forward*	Warsaw Pact*
Guomindang*	

INTRODUCTION

2 The decades following World War II were dominated by the relationship between the two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. During the postwar period, the superpowers were almost always on the verge of warfare. As former colonial possessions gained independence,

many of them sought aid from the United States or the Soviet Union. As the Soviets extended their dominion throughout Eastern Europe, Asia, and Cuba, the United States attempted to contain communist expansion.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE COLD WAR

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill described the new postwar world order by stating that an “iron curtain” had fallen across Europe. In order to prevent communist-dominated nations east of the Iron Curtain from spreading totalitarianism, the United States sponsored a program of European recovery known as the Marshall Plan (1947). The program provided loans to European nations to assist them in wartime recovery. The U.S. policy of containment of communism was set forth in 1947 in the Truman Doctrine. When Greece and Turkey were threatened by communism, U.S. President Truman issued his policy, which pledged U.S. support for countries battling against communism.

In 1946, Great Britain, France, and the United States merged their occupation zones into a unified West Germany with free elections. In 1947, Western attempts to promote economic recovery by stabilizing the German currency resulted in a Soviet blockade of Berlin—the divided city located within the Russian zone of occupation. For nearly eleven months, British and U.S. planes airlifted supplies to Berlin until the Soviets lifted the blockade.

Two opposing alliances faced off during the Cold War era. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), led by the United States, was founded in 1949. NATO allied Canada, the United States, and most of Western Europe against Soviet aggression. The Soviet Union responded with an alliance of its eastern European satellites: the Warsaw Pact. U.S.-Soviet rivalry intensified in 1949, when the Soviet Union developed an atomic bomb.

The Cold War escalated to military confrontation in 1950 when North Korean forces invaded South Korea. North Korea eventually received the backing of the Soviet Union and Communist China, while a United Nations coalition led by the United States supported South Korea. The Korean Conflict ended with the establishment of the boundary between the two Koreas near the original line.

THE BEGINNINGS OF DECOLONIZATION

After the end of World War II, most European nations and the United States decided that their colonies were too expensive to maintain. Within the colonies, renewed nationalist sentiments held out hopes that their long-expected independence would become a reality. In 1946, the United States granted the Philippines their independence. France was alone in wanting to hold on to its colonies in Algeria and Indochina.

AFRICA

In 1957, Ghana became the first African colony to gain its independence. By 1960, French possessions in West Africa were freed, and the Belgian Congo was granted independence. Independence movements in the settler colonies of Algeria, Kenya, and Southern Rhodesia took on a violent nature. By 1963, Kenya was independent; in 1962 a revolt in Algeria also had ended colonial rule in that country. Southern Rhodesia became the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980, and in 1990, Namibia (German Southwest Africa, which had been made a mandate of South Africa in 1920) became the last African colony to achieve independence.

In South Africa, the white settler population was divided almost equally between Afrikaners and English settlers. Although the white settlers were a minority, by 1948 the Afrikaners had imposed upon South Africa a highly restrictive form of racial segregation known as apartheid. Apartheid prohibited people of color from voting and from having many contacts with whites. The best jobs were reserved for whites only. Apartheid continued after South Africa gained its independence from Great Britain in 1961.

Egypt won its independence in the 1930s; the British continued to maintain a presence in the Suez Canal zone, however. After Egypt's defeat in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, the Egyptian military revolted. In 1952, King Farouk was overthrown; in 1954, Gamal Abdul Nasser was installed as ruler of an independent Egypt. In 1956, Nasser, backed by the United States and the Soviet Union, ended the influence of the British and their French allies in the Suez Canal zone.

In 1967, Nasser faced a decisive defeat once again in the Six-Day War with Israel. His successor, Anwar Sadat, strove to end hostilities with Israel after a nondecisive war with Israel in 1973. Sadat's policy of accepting aid from the United States and Western Europe has been continued by his successor, Hosni Mubarak, who came to power after the assassination of Sadat by a Muslim fundamentalist.

THE EFFECTS OF DECOLONIZATION

Independence did not buy peace or prosperity to most of the new African nations. New states tended to maintain colonial boundaries, meaning that they often cut through ethnic and cultural groups. Sometimes ethnic conflicts turned violent, as in the tribal conflicts in the territories of the former Belgian Congo.

SOVIET COMMUNISM

After the Russian civil war, which lasted from 1918 to 1921, Lenin moved quickly to announce a program of land redistribution and a nationalization of basic industries. When his initial programs culminated in industrial

and agricultural decline, Lenin instituted his New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP permitted some private ownership of peasant land and small businesses; it resulted in an increase in agricultural production.

In 1923, Russia was organized into a system of socialist republics under a central government and was renamed Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The republics were under the control of the Communist Party. When Lenin died in 1924, Joseph Stalin eventually became the leader of the Soviet Union. Stalin's regime was characterized by purges, or the expulsion or execution of rivals. Especially targeted were the kulaks, wealthy peasants who refused to submit to Stalin's policy of collectivization. Collectivization consolidated private farms into huge collective farms worked in common by farmers. Farmers were to share the proceeds of the collective farms and also to submit a portion of the agricultural products to the government. Millions of kulaks were executed or deported to Siberia. Even after farmers accepted collectivization, however, lack of worker initiative prevented it from being successful.

Stalin had greater success in improving Soviet industry. He set up a series of Five Year Plans that concentrated on heavy industry. By the end of the 1930s, the Soviet Union was behind only Germany and the United States in industrial capacity.

THE EXPANSION OF SOVIET RULE

During the final weeks of World War II, the Soviet Union liberated Eastern Europe (except Yugoslavia and Greece) from Nazi rule. By 1948, these areas, except for Greece, had communist governments. Yugoslavia's communist rule under Marshall Tito did not become a part of the Soviet bloc, attempting instead to forge a style of communism more responsive to its citizens.

In 1956, a Hungarian revolt against repressive Soviet rule was put down by Soviet tanks. When large numbers of East Germans began migrating to West Berlin, the Berlin Wall was constructed in 1961 to stem the tide of refugees. In Prague Spring (1968), Czech leader Alexandr Dubcek stood up against Soviet oppression, abolishing censorship; the result of his efforts was Soviet invasion. Only in Poland was Soviet rule somewhat relaxed; religious worship was tolerated and some land ownership allowed. In the late 1970s, Solidarity, Poland's labor movement, challenged the Soviet system.

SOVIET RULE AFTER STALIN

In 1956, Nikita Khrushchev rose to power in the Soviet Union. Criticizing Stalin's ruthless dictatorship, Khrushchev eased up on political repression. In 1962, Soviet construction of nuclear missiles in Cuba brought days of tense confrontation between Khrushchev and U.S. President Kennedy. Khrushchev ultimately backed down, and the missiles were removed. The

Cuban Missile Crisis was a classic example of **brinkmanship**, or the Cold War tendency of the United States and the Soviet Union to present a constant threat of war to each other. Also during Khrushchev's regime, the rift between the Soviet Union and Communist China widened.

THE LATTER DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to support communist combatants in Afghanistan's civil war. Soviet intervention lasted until 1989 without producing a government supportive of the Soviet Union.

In the 1980s, economic setbacks and the military power of the United States produced a reform movement within the Soviet Union. The new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, reduced Soviet nuclear armaments. His reform program revolved around the concepts of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. *Glasnost*, meaning "openness," allowed Soviet citizens to discuss government policies and even criticize them. *Perestroika* was an economic reform program that permitted some private ownership and control of agriculture and industry. Foreign investments were allowed, and industry was permitted to produce more consumer goods.

LATIN AMERICA

Mexico emerged from its revolution with a one-party system. The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) dominated Mexican politics for seventy years.

In Argentina, government was under the control of military leaders who wanted to industrialize the country. Some of them were fascist sympathizers, among them Juan Perón and his wife, Evita. Although Perón raised the salaries of the working classes, his government controlled the press and denied civil liberties to its citizens. When he died in 1975, Argentina continued to be ruled by military dictators. In 1982, a short war with Great Britain over the Falkland Islands resulted in Argentine defeat.

From 1934 to 1944, and from 1952 to 1959, Cuba was ruled by dictator Fulgencio Batista. U.S. trade relations with Cuba gave it an influence over the island nation. In 1959, the Cubans revolted against the corruption of the Batista regime, replacing it with the rule of a young revolutionary lawyer named Fidel Castro. During the revolution, Batista lost the support of the United States because of his corrupt government.

Shortly after assuming power in Cuba, Castro proclaimed himself a Marxist socialist. He seized foreign property and collectivized farms. In 1961, Castro terminated relations with the United States and gradually aligned Cuba with the Soviet Union. Also in 1961, the United States sponsored an unsuccessful invasion of Cuba by Cuban exiles. Cuba's dependence on the Soviet Union led to the missile crisis of 1962.

Throughout Central America, U.S. businesses such as United Fruit invested in national economies, resulting in a U.S. presence often resented by Central Americans. In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas carried out a protest against U.S. intervention that resulted in a socialist revolution in the 1980s.

The United States attempted to contain communism in Latin America by supporting governments that professed adherence to democratic principles. It also sponsored programs such as the Alliance for Progress, begun in 1961 and intended to develop the economies of Latin American nations. By the final decades of the twentieth century, the United States changed its position to one of less intervention in Latin America. Under the Carter administration, the United States signed a treaty with Panama that eventually returned control of the Panama Canal to Panama. By the 1980s, the United States was again assuming a more direct role in Central America. In 1990, the United States helped end the Noriega government, which was known for its authoritarianism and control of the drug trade.

DECOLONIZATION OF INDIA

Indian independence from Great Britain was accomplished largely through the efforts of Mohandas Gandhi, who believed in using passive resistance to accomplish his goals. In 1935, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act, which increased suffrage and turned provincial governments over to Indian leaders. Indian independence was delayed by the insistence of some Muslims on a separate Muslim state. In 1947, the British granted India its independence; India followed a path of non-alignment with either superpower.

At the same time that India received its independence, the new nation of Pakistan was created. Pakistan was then divided into eastern and western regions separated by over 1,000 miles of Indian territory. A few years later, Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) also gained independence. Unequal distribution of wealth between the two Pakistans ended in civil war in the early 1970s; in 1972, East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

CONFLICT IN PALESTINE

The Holocaust strengthened international support for a homeland for the Jews. As the Nazis continued their policy of genocide against the Jews, immigration to Palestine increased. When Arab resistance turned to violence against Jewish communities in Palestine, the British placed restrictions on Jewish immigration. In 1948, the United Nations partitioned Palestine into Jewish and Arab countries; the independent state of Israel was proclaimed. Almost immediately, war broke out as Arabs protested the partition. A Jewish victory resulted in the eventual expansion of the Jewish state at the expense of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs who were exiled from their homes.

IRAN

In 1979, the U.S.-backed Iranian government of Reza Shah Pahlavi was overthrown by Islamic fundamentalists. The middle classes were opposed to the shah's authoritarian and repressive rule; Iran's *ayatollahs*, or religious leaders, opposed the shah's lack of concern for strict Islamic observance. Iran also was suffering from a fall in oil prices prior to the 1979 revolution.

The new Iranian ruler, the Ayatollah Khomeini, rejected Western culture as satanic, and imposed strict Islamic law, including the veiling of women, on Iran. Saddam Hussein, leader of Iraq, took advantage of Iranian weakness by annexing its oil-rich western provinces. When peace came in 1988, Iran was devastated economically.

POSTREVOLUTIONARY CHINA

One of the key leaders of the 1911–1912 revolt against the Qing dynasty was Western-educated Sun Yat-sen. He briefly ruled China's new parliamentary government until he relinquished his place to warlord rule. After World War I, the May Fourth Movement (1919) attempted to create a liberal democracy for China. In the same year, Sun Yat-sen and his followers reorganized the revolutionary movement under the Guomindang, or Nationalist Party. Marxist socialism also took hold on China, however; in 1921, the Communist Party of China was organized. Among its members was a student named Mao Zedong.

After the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) seized control of the Guomindang. A 1927 incident in which the Guomindang executed a number of communists in Shanghai so enraged the communists that civil war broke out. Except for the years during World War II, the Chinese civil war lasted until 1949, when Mao Zedong's communists, whose land reforms gained peasant support, were victorious. After their defeat, Jiang Jieshi's forces fled to the island of Taiwan (Formosa) off the coast of China, while Mao proclaimed the birth of the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland.

After gaining control of China, the communists contained secessionist attempts in Inner Mongolia and Tibet; some Tibetan opposition exists to the present. China also supported North Korea in its conflict with South Korea in the 1950s.

Once in power, Mao began organizing China along Soviet models. Farms were collectivized, leading to lack of peasant initiative and a decrease in agricultural production. Eager to increase the participation of rural peoples, Mao instituted the Great Leap Forward, which attempted to accomplish industrialization through small-scale projects in peasant communities. The Great Leap Forward proved a resounding failure.

In 1960, Mao was replaced as head of state, although he retained his position as head of the Communist Party. The new leaders, Zhou Enlai

and Deng Xiaoping, instituted some market incentives to improve the Chinese economy. In 1965, Mao launched his Cultural Revolution, a program that used student Red Guard organizations to abuse Mao's political rivals. Especially targeted were the educated and elite classes; universities were closed. Opposition from Mao's rivals led to the end of the Cultural Revolution, whereas relations were opened between China and the United States.

In 1976, both Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong died, paving the way for the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. Deng discontinued collective farming and allowed some Western influence to enter China. His government did not permit democratic reform, as shown in the government's suppression of students demonstrating for democracy in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

VIETNAM

After World War II and the end of Japanese occupation of Vietnam, France was eager to regain its former colony. During Japanese occupation, however, Vietnamese nationalism had materialized under the leadership of Marxist-educated Ho Chi Minh. In 1945, in a document whose preamble echoed that of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, Ho Chi Minh proclaimed the independence of the nation of Vietnam.

Ho Chi Minh's party, the Viet Minh, had control over only the northern part of the country. The French, aided by Great Britain, occupied most of the south and central portions. In 1954, the Vietnamese defeated the French. The Geneva Conference (1954) gave the Viet Minh control of the northern portion of the country while providing for elections throughout Vietnam in two years. With U.S. support, Ngo Dinh Diem was installed as the president of South Vietnam. The required free elections were not held, and pockets of communist resistance, the Viet Cong, continued to exist in the south.

When Diem's government proved corrupt and ineffective, the United States arranged for his overthrow. By 1968, hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops were fighting in Vietnam. In 1973, the United States negotiated an end to its involvement in Vietnam; in 1975 the government in the south fell, and all of Vietnam was under communist control. The neighboring countries of Laos and Cambodia also fell to communism.

Rapid Review



The postwar world saw the emergence of two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cold War period was one of constant threats of aggression between the superpowers as the Soviet Union sought to expand communism and the United States sought to contain it. Communism spread outside the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe, China, Southeast Asia, North Korea, and Cuba.

After World War II, most colonial possessions gradually achieved their long-awaited independence. Newly independent nations often aligned themselves with either the United States or the Soviet Union. Other nations such as India, however, chose the independence of nonalignment. New nations often experienced conflicts that continue to the present; the first Arab-Israeli war occurred immediately after the establishment of the nation of Israel, and sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a continuing history of ethnic strife.

✓ Chapter Review Questions

- Which communist leader is most often associated with purges against his rivals?
 - Lenin
 - Sun Yat-sen
 - Mao Zedong
 - Stalin
 - Deng Xiaoping
- An example of brinkmanship is found in
 - the Cuban Missile Crisis.
 - the Arab-Israeli War.
 - the Iran-Iraq War.
 - the Cultural Revolution.
 - the Korean War.
- The country that was most interested in keeping its colonies after World War II was
 - Germany.
 - France.
 - Great Britain.
 - the United States.
 - Portugal.
- Lenin's New Economic Policy
 - established collective farming.
 - resulted in decreased agricultural production.
 - forbade the ownership of private property.
 - allowed some elements of capitalism.
 - was continued by Joseph Stalin.
- The communist ruler whose economic policies were most like those of Lenin was
 - Mao Zedong.
 - Deng Xiaoping.
 - Joseph Stalin.
 - Jiang Jieshi.
 - Fidel Castro.
- Which of the following leaders would have agreed most with the policies of Benito Mussolini?
 - Fidel Castro
 - Nikita Khrushchev
 - Juan Perón
 - V. I. Lenin
 - Mohandas Gandhi
- Which of the following communist-controlled countries was allowed private land ownership and freedom of worship?
 - Czechoslovakia
 - Poland
 - East Germany
 - Hungary
 - The Soviet Union
- Mikhail Gorbachev allowed all of the following EXCEPT
 - the production of consumer goods.
 - discussion of government policies.
 - private land ownership.
 - democratic government.
 - foreign investments.

2 Answers and Explanations

1. D. Stalin was noted for his practice of exiling or executing millions of his opponents.
2. A. The Cuban Missile Crisis illustrated that the Cold War was fought through diplomacy that placed the superpowers always on the brink of war. Neither the Arab-Israeli War (B) nor the Iran-Iraq War (C) was a conflict between the superpowers. The Cultural Revolution was a repressive policy of Mao Zedong (D), and the Korean War (E) involved direct confrontation between the communist and free worlds.
3. B. France wanted to regain and maintain its colony in Indochina. Germany (A) lost its colonies during World War I, whereas Great Britain, the United States, and Portugal gradually granted independence to their colonies (C, D, E).
4. D. Lenin allowed some private ownership of land and small businesses (C) and some degree of free market economy. Collective farming was established under Stalin (A). The NEP increased agricultural production (B). The NEP ended with Lenin (E).
5. B. Deng Xiaoping allowed some elements of a market economy and some foreign investment. Mao and Stalin did not follow these policies (A, C). Castro allowed some foreign investment only in recent years after the breakup of Soviet communism (E). Jiang Jieshi was not a communist leader (D).
6. C. Perón's government followed fascist models; he was reputed to have had fascist sympathies. Castro (A), Khrushchev (B), and Lenin (D), all communists, were opposed to fascism. Mohandas Gandhi, the nonviolent leader of Indian independence, was not aligned with either philosophy (E).
7. B. Poland was the only satellite nation that was allowed to experience private land ownership and religious freedom. Neither the Soviet Union (E) nor the other satellite nations listed enjoyed such freedoms (A, C, D).
8. D. Although Gorbachev allowed a measure of free market economy, foreign investments, consumer goods, and free discussion of governmental policies, his government remained dedicated to the ultimate welfare of the state (D).