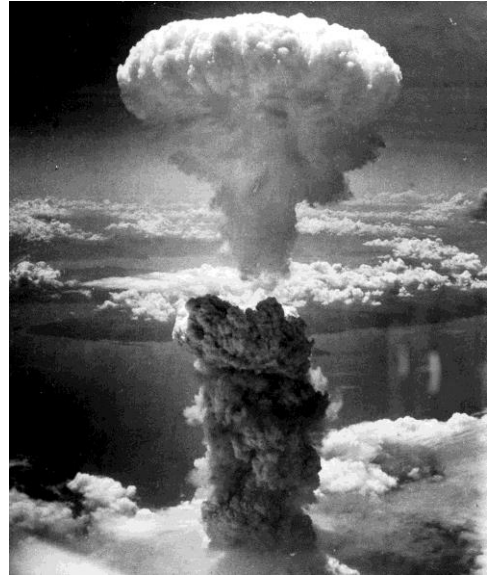


East Vs West: The Cold War



Content

This booklet contains an overview of the 4 topics. This is a minimum amount of information you need to know. Use this alongside your exercise book when you revise.

End of the Wartime Alliance - 1945

A: The Wartime Alliance:

The Wartime Alliance (the Allies) was made up of Britain, Russia and the USA. Britain was led by Winston Churchill, Russia (also known as the USSR/Soviet Union) by Josef Stalin and the USA by Roosevelt (FDR). Although the countries had fought together during the war, clear differences were becoming more obvious towards the end of the war. There was also mistrust between the leaders, especially between Churchill and Stalin. There was mistrust because Russia had initially supported Germany in the war, until Hitler had turned on Russia in 1941 and so Churchill didn't fully trust someone who had been allies with Germany.

B: Communism and Capitalism:

Russia's ideology (belief in how to run a country) was entirely different from Britain and America's ideology. Russia believed in communism: the belief in equality and fairness, no profits, equality of ownership and wealth was shared equally. However, there was also no freedom of speech and no right to vote in Russia: Stalin ran Russia as a dictatorship. Britain and the USA were capitalist countries. They believed in freedom of speech, free elections, and private ownership of businesses, wealth is not shared equally.

C: The Yalta Conference

The first meeting of the Allies was at Yalta, in Ukraine. This took place during the war (Feb, 1945) when it was clear they would defeat Germany in the next few months. The leaders (Stalin/FDR/Churchill) met to discuss post-war Europe. The leaders got on very well at this conference. They agreed: that Poland should have free elections, the UN (United Nations) should be set up, that Germany would be divided into zones (each to be ruled by the allies), and that Eastern Europe should become a 'soviet sphere of influence', but allowed to have elections.

D: The Potsdam Conference

By July 1945 the war in Europe had ended, and the Allies met again. Stalin was still in charge of the USSR, but Churchill had been replaced as British PM by Clement Atlee. FDR had died in April 1945, he was replaced by Harry Truman. Truman took a much 'harder line' stance against Stalin than FDR had, resulting in further tensions at the meeting. Truman disliked Stalin, and disagreed with the idea that Eastern Europe should automatically become a 'soviet sphere of influence'. Stalin had not stuck to the agreement for free elections in Poland (ensuring that a Communist government came to power) and Truman did not like this. There were also disagreements over how to treat Germany: Russia wanted to cripple Germany financially, but Truman rejected this idea. As the meeting moved into August, the USA dropped the atomic bomb on Japan. They did this without telling the Russians, which caused mistrust to develop between them.

The 1940s - The Cold War Begins

A: Reasons for the Soviet take-over of Eastern Europe

Stalin decided to go against the Yalta Agreement and take over countries within Eastern Europe in order to create a 'Soviet sphere of influence' and 'buffer zones' that would protect the Soviet Union. The USSR had previously been invaded by Nazi Germany through Eastern Europe (Poland) and Stalin wanted to ensure that this would not happen again.



Stalin and the communists used a method called 'slicing the salami', where step by step, communists would take power by removing opposition, murdering or forcing opponents out of the country, and seizing control of the army. In Czechoslovakia a politician, Jan Masaryk, was murdered by being defenestrated (thrown out a window!). The 7 countries that were taken over by the Soviets were: Albania (1945), Bulgaria (1945), East Germany (1945), Hungary (1947), Poland (1947), Czechoslovakia (1948), Romania (1948). Yugoslavia, led by Tito, turned Communist without Stalin's help, so were free from Russia's control.

B: Truman Doctrine & Marshall Plan

Truman feared the 'domino theory' where communism would spread between countries. He wanted to push a policy of 'containment' to stop the spread of communism. This idea of containing communism, and protecting capitalist countries, is called the Truman Doctrine, which was created in 1947. Because of the Truman Doctrine the Americans created the Marshall Plan in 1948; the plan gave financial support to countries at risk from Communism. As a consequence of this \$13 billion was invested in European countries. Truman offered financial support to Turkey and Greece when it looked likely they may be taken over by the Communists. The Marshall Plan was, in theory, to provide 'aid' to rebuild Europe after WWII. The Russian's thought it was a method to gain more control in Europe. They nicknamed it 'Dollar Imperialism', and banned Communist countries from receiving the 'aid'.

C: Cominform & Comecon

As a result of the Marshall Plan, Stalin set up Cominform, an organisation that helped control the governments of Eastern Europe. He also set up Comecon in 1949, which was the USSR's version of the Marshall Plan. This promoted trade between all Communist countries, but favoured the USSR by pushing countries to buy products off the USSR and sell their products to the USSR cheaply.

D: Berlin Blockade, 1947-49

At Yalta, Germany had been split into an eastern zone (controlled by the Soviets) and 3 western zones (controlled by USA, Britain and France). Berlin (in the eastern zone) had also been split into Soviet controlled east, and USA controlled west. Stalin believed that the USA would want to turn the whole of Germany into a capitalist country. Therefore, in June 1948, he shut all road, canal and train routes into the western sector of Berlin, preventing all supplies getting into western Berlin. West Berlin only had 36 days of food left. As a result, the allies started the 'Berlin Airlift' where they flew food, fuel and medicine into West Berlin to keep it going. At its most busy, one plane landed in West Berlin every minute, and the USA spent \$350 million keeping West Berlin supplies. By May 1949, Stalin realised the airlift was making him look weak, and he called off the Blockade. As a consequence of this event two separate German states were created: East Germany and West Germany.



E: NATO formed & USSR get the Atomic Bomb - 1949

In response to the Berlin Blockade, the capitalist countries feared the USSR may invade or attack another country. As a result, they created NATO – the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The members of this group were capitalist, and all agreed to defend each other if attacked. West Germany didn't join NATO at first, but would do later in 1955. A few months after NATO was created, Russia successfully got their own atomic bomb. This meant both sides had nuclear weapons, and tension between the countries increased.

F: Chinese Revolution

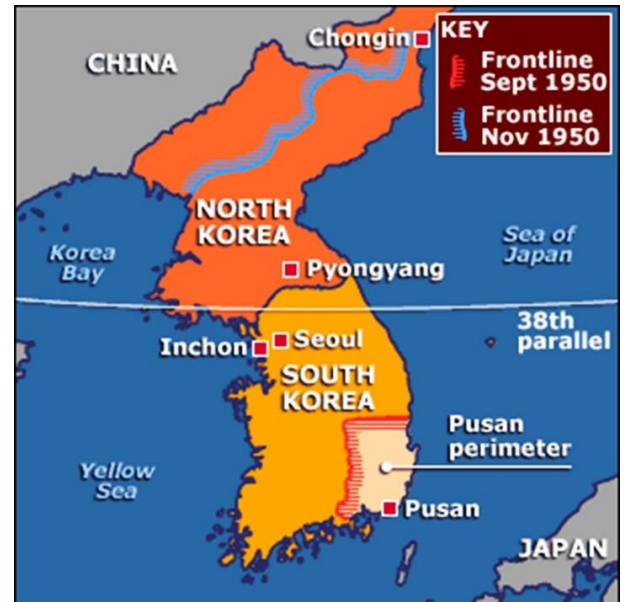
In 1949 China, led by Chairman Mao, turned Communist. This was a major victory for the communists as China had a population of 450 million, and could now influence events in Asia. Truman, because of Domino Theory, believed that the USA would have to take action against any other countries in Asia that wanted to follow China into Communism. Russia signed the Treaty of Friendship with China in 1950.

Developing hostilities 1950s

A: The Korean War

In 1950 Communist North Korea invaded the Capitalist South. The North were encouraged by Russia and backed by China – which had turned communist the year before.

The USA, fearing the spread of communism, pressurised the UN into agreeing to support capitalist South Korea. At first, the North pushed the South all the way down the Pusan on the south coast, but then America and the UN forces managed to ‘roll back’ the communists all the way up Korea to its border with China. China then sent 250,000 troops to support the northern forces.



The USA's troops were led by General MacArthur, who **wanted President Truman** to drop the atomic bomb on China. The President refused, fearing nuclear war with the communists, and sacked MacArthur in 1951. The war eventually ended in a stalemate in 1953, when both sides realised that neither could win. The border was agreed at the 38th parallel.

B: The Arms and Space Race 1950s

After both sides had developed atomic bombs in the 40s, the so called ‘arms’ and ‘space’ races began between the two superpowers. In the Arms Race, the next step was Hydrogen bombs, which were 1000 times more powerful than atomic bombs. The USA tested the first H bomb in 1952, with the USSR testing theirs only a year later. In 1957, the USSR took the lead in the Space Race launching the first ICBM (Inter-continental ballistic missile).

In the Space Race, the Soviets shocked America by launching the first man made satellite into space (Sputnik) in 1957, followed shortly in the same year by Sputnik II, which took Laika the dog into space. Both ‘races’ would continue into the 1960s.

C: West Germany join NATO and the Warsaw Pact

In 1955, West Germany was allowed to join NATO; Russia saw this as an aggressive move which broke the Yalta Agreement on Germany. In 1955 a similar agreement had been made between eastern, communist countries called the Warsaw Pact. After Stalin's death in 1953, the new leader of the USSR, Khrushchev, (though very different from Stalin in many ways) wanted to continue the policy of the creating protective ‘buffer’ states that would support each other in the event of a military attack.

D: Hungarian Uprising, 1956

Throughout the 1950s Hungary had been run by the hard line Communist, Rakosi, whose leadership had led to increasing unrest amongst the population. Following Stalin's death there was increasing opposition to Rakosi's rule, especially following Khrushchev's description of Stalin as a 'wicked tyrant'. Khrushchev replaced Rakosi with Erno Gero, but this plan failed, leading to the placement of Imre Nagy, who was highly respected by the Hungarian public. Nagy immediately announced his plans to reform and soften communism in Hungary, including his desire to remove Hungary from the Warsaw Pact. Khrushchev refused to allow this to happen and, in November ordered Soviet troops into Hungary to 'restore order'. Nagy was eventually executed, and Kadar was placed as leader of Hungary, by Khrushchev, who had signalled his intent to refuse to allow the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact.

The Cold War heats up! - 1960s

A: The U2 spy plane crisis

The USA had been flying spy plane missions over Russia throughout the 1950s. Khrushchev was furious when he found out. In May 1960, just two weeks before the Four Powers meeting in Paris, the Soviets shot down an American U2 spy plane, and capture the pilot Gary Powers. At first, America refused to apologise, and claimed the plane was flying in order to check weather conditions. Khrushchev refused to attend the meeting in Paris, which was going to solve the issue of the Cuban Revolution (1959), solve tension over weapons, and resolve problems in Berlin. Powers was sentenced to 10 years in prison but he was released when the USA agreed to free Soviet prisoners in exchange. Eventually the USA admitted to spying on USSR's military bases, but this crisis meant that lots of other issues went unsolved.

B: The Berlin Wall, 1961

By the 1960s, West Germany (and West Berlin) had become a thriving economy, with all the benefits of capitalist culture for the population: such as supermarkets and the latest technology. Many East Germans decided to move to the West as better jobs and pay were available. This was called the 'brain drain'. Meanwhile in the East jobs were decreasing and citizens had no freedom of speech. There was also concerns that Berlin was an easy location for spies to enter communist Europe. As a result of these issue, the USSR responded by constructing the Berlin Wall in August 1961. Overnight, families had been divided. No East Germans were permitted to cross over into the west.

A big flashpoint of tension occurred in October 1961, when Soviet and American tanks met each other at the newly created border (Checkpoint Charlie) until eventually they began to draw back, metre by metre. The two superpowers had come close to out and out war; Kennedy (USA President) commented (on the wall) that 'it's not a nice solution, but it's better than a war'.

C: Cuban Missile Crisis, 1959-62

Cuba was (an island 90 miles off the coast of America). In 1959, Fidel Castro led a Communist revolution, and managed to turn Cuba into a communist country. This alarmed America. So, in 1961, they launched an attack on Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The American attack failed, and Cuba continued as a Communist country. In early 1962 America placed missiles in Turkey within range of Russia. The Soviets decided to exploit the situation by placing missiles in Cuba; however, U2 spy planes managed to take pictures of the missile site in Cuba. Khrushchev denied any knowledge of the missile site, so the Americans set up a quarantine around Cuba that allowed them to stop and search Russian ships entering Cuba.

Both Kennedy and Khrushchev were urged to use their nuclear missile by their advisors. Instead, Khrushchev wrote a letter to the Kennedy stating that the Soviets would remove their nuclear weapons from Cuba if the USA did not attack Cuba. He then sent a second letter stating that they would remove their missiles from Cuba, if America removed theirs from Turkey. Kennedy responded and agreed to the first letter, and (at a later meeting) it was agreed that the missiles from Turkey would also be removed. Nuclear war had been avoided, and both leaders were alarmed at how close the superpowers had come to nuclear war.



D: The Space and Arms Race 1960s

The Arms Race continued into the 1960s, with the USSR conducting a test of the Tsar Bomba (type of H bomb), the most powerful bomb ever detonated, in 1961. Through the decade both sides would build up their supply of weapons. In 1961, the USSR also managed to put the first man into space, Yuri Gagarin. As a result of Russia taking the lead in the Space Race, the Americans began to pour money into space research; they created the Apollo mission which resulted in the first moon landing in 1969.

E: Prague Spring - 1968

In 1968 Alexander Dubcek was the leader of Czechoslovakia: a strong, communist country within the Warsaw Pact. Dubcek proposed a 'reform' of communism with less restrictions to be placed on the public and the creation of new political parties. This was called 'socialism with a human face'. Because of these new ideas the period was given the nickname the 'Prague Spring'. The new Soviet leader, Brezhnev, attempted to intimidate Dubcek into slowing down his reforms by placing Soviet troops on the border with Czechoslovakia. However, on the 20th August Soviet troops arrived in Prague, and Dubcek was removed from his position. Brezhnev had (like Khrushchev before him) signalled his intention to refuse to allow the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact, leading to the 'poisoning' of relations between East and West. The USA had again showed they wouldn't act to help in the soviet part of Europe, as they were busy in the Vietnam War.

F: Vietnam War - 1960s

During the 1960s, America became involved in the Vietnam War. The country had descended into civil war between the communist North (led by Ho Chi Minh) and capitalist South (led by Ngo Dinh Diem). The Communist forces (the Vietcong) were provided with weapons and supplied by the USSR. In 1964, The first US troops arrived, with numbers peaking at just over 500,000 in 1969. They used advanced weapons and planes such as B-52s, and also deployed chemicals liked napalm and Agent Orange to help them fight in the jungle. However, these tactics failed, and the Vietcong inflicted heavy losses using guerrilla tactics (surprise attacks and traps). In 1968 the Vietcong launched the Tet Offensive, where they attacked all over south Vietnam. By then, it was clear the US would not win. President Nixon began to cut troop numbers down from 1969. The USA were defeated in the 1970s.

The Cold War Thaws - 1970s

A: Détente and SALT

In the late 60s and early 70s the word 'détente' (meaning an easing of tensions) became used to describe relations between the USA and Soviets. The USA President Nixon and USSR President Brezhnev were the two leaders at time and have become associated with the idea of 'détente' and the creation of a 'thaw' in relations. Both Presidents had come to realise that the ongoing cost of the Cold War, including the Asian conflicts and Arms Race, could not carry on forever. In 1972 SALT (strategic arms limitations talks) began and the deal, SALT I was signed in that year. This limited the number of weapons each side could have. This signalled an improving relationship between the East and West, and the move to more peaceful relations, based on trade and boosting their economies.

B: US Withdraw from Vietnam

President Nixon began the process of Vietnamisation in the 1970s, which is where they planned to slowly withdraw troops and let South Vietnam defend themselves. The US continued to take heavy losses, and the South were unable to stand up to the communist North. In 1975, the last US troops and diplomats fled Saigon, the capital of the south. 58,000 US soldiers had died, and between 1-4 million North Vietnamese were killed in the conflict.

C: Sino-Soviet Split

China and Russia had begun to drift apart, and the USA become closer to China. In the early 1970s the USA Ping-Pong Team visited Beijing and played the Chinese team. This 'Ping-Pong Diplomacy' paved the way from a visit from the US President. President Nixon made a historic visit to Beijing, the capital of China in 1972, and dropped their opposition to them joining the UN. After this, tension was further reduced when, later in 1972, Nixon visited the Russian leader Brezhnev in Moscow. Tensions were easing in the Cold War.