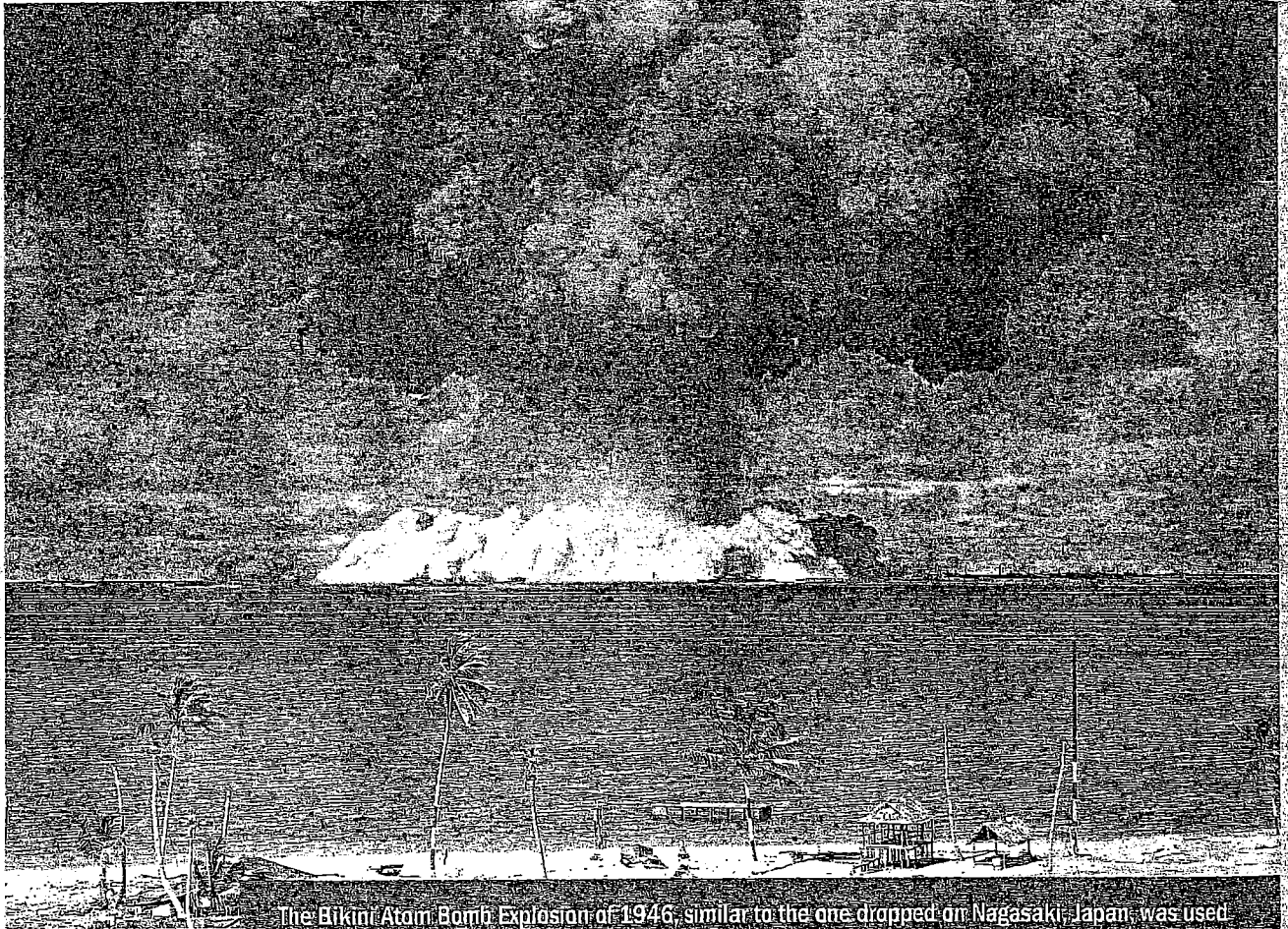


The Cold War: 1945-1990



The Bikini Atom Bomb Explosion of 1946, similar to the one dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, was used by the US navy to test its destructive power. The bomb destroyed five ships, heavily damaged nine, and caused various degrees of damage to 45 others. Apart from the two bombs dropped on Japan, were any other nuclear weapons ever used in war?

"This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own system as far as his army has power to do so. It cannot be otherwise."

— Joseph Stalin (1879-1953), Soviet leader (1929-1953)

"They've got to draw in their horns and stop their aggression, or we're going to bomb them back into the Stone Age."

— American Air Force General Curtis LeMay (1906-1990) during the Vietnam War (1965)

Overview

With the end of the Second World War, a new and even more dangerous era began—the **nuclear age**. The spotlight now focused on the fundamental differences between the two new superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The threat of an all-out nuclear war clouded the new dawn that followed the Second World War.

The hostility and tension between the two heavily armed superpowers were based on fear, rivalry, and distrust. The period became known as the Cold War, and it shaped much of the last half of the twentieth century. The term

aptly described the hostile atmosphere that developed between the superpowers following the Second World War: while they were not making war, neither were they making peace. The superpowers often played a dangerous game of **brinkmanship**, a risky practice of taking an issue to the very edge of war before turning back at the last moment. The Cold War sometimes erupted into open conflict involving third parties. These **flashpoints** brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of direct confrontation and possible nuclear war.

Focus Questions

1. What events led to the hardening of positions between the superpowers?
2. What roles did ideology and nuclear weapons play in the development of the Cold War tensions between the superpowers?
3. What were some of the major flashpoints of the Cold War?
4. How did the rivalry between the superpowers affect international conflict and co-operation in the last half of the twentieth century?

The Cold War Declared

The deterioration of Soviet-American relations in 1945 was little known outside official government circles in Moscow and Washington. The citizens of the Soviet Union were preoccupied with the enormous task of restoring their country after enduring the ravages of war. The Americans were content to return to their traditional isolationism. After their victories in two theatres of war, they felt secure in the knowledge that they possessed, in the words of President Harry S. Truman, “the greatest strength and the greatest power” the world had ever known.

Washington’s attention, however, was riveted on Moscow. Every Soviet move was viewed with suspicion, every utterance from the Kremlin analysed for hidden meaning. The countries occupied by the Soviet army were becoming increasingly entrenched in communism, and further expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence seemed likely.

Many American politicians considered the US monopoly of atomic weapons a deterrent to Soviet expansion and a lever against Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. The atomic bombs dropped on Japan ended the war. They also had the effect of demonstrating American power to the Soviet Union. Between 1945 and

1949, Truman used American atomic power as a threat against the mighty Soviet army. This contributed to deteriorating American-Soviet relations and hastened Soviet development of their own atomic weapons. By 1949, the Soviet Union evened out the playing field by exploding its own atomic bomb.

THE OPENING SHOTS OF THE COLD WAR

Two speeches in 1946 alerted the world to the mounting tensions between the West and the Soviet Union. In February 1946, Joseph Stalin addressed voters in Moscow, predicting that, because of "the unevenness of development of the capitalist countries," they would split into "two hostile camps," with war the



Figure 5.1

In a speech in Fulton, Missouri, Churchill warned that "a shadow has fallen" over the Allied victory in the Second World War. What was the effect of this speech on the American public? How did Stalin react?

inevitable result. He exhorted the Soviet people to prepare for a situation similar to that of the 1930s by sacrificing consumer goods in favour of industrial production. He warned that the future would bring neither internal nor external peace. In Washington, Stalin's words were interpreted to mean that war with the West was inevitable.

Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech

Winston Churchill had always been distrustful of Stalin's intentions. He took the threat of communist expansion seriously. At Truman's invitation, Churchill travelled to the United States to warn the Americans of the Soviet threat and the need for an "association of the English-speaking peoples" acting outside of the United Nations to re-order the world. His "Iron Curtain" speech, which received massive press coverage, had a great impact on American public opinion. It convinced many Americans that Truman's "get tough" approach to the Soviets was the right one.

Stalin reacted angrily to the speech. He accused Churchill of embracing racial theories not unlike Hitler's and of wanting English-speaking people to "rule over the remaining nations of the world." Labelling Churchill a "firebrand of war," Stalin reminded him that the Allies had agreed to the Polish settlement in Potsdam. If communism was expanding, it was because "[c]ommunists have showed themselves to be reliable, daring, and self-sacrificing fighters against Fascist regimes for the liberty of peoples."

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

A year after Churchill's Iron Curtain speech, on 12 March 1947, Truman delivered his declaration of Cold War. He called on the nation to resist communism throughout the world:

MAP STUDY

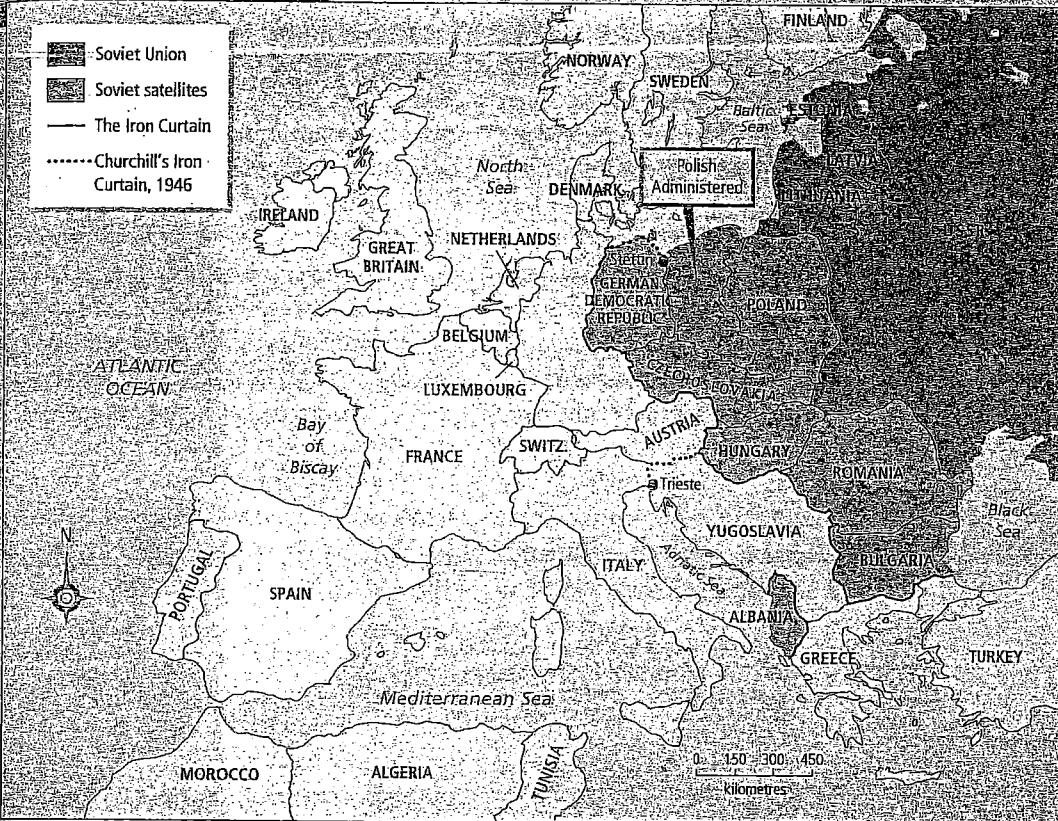


Figure 5.2
The "Iron Curtain" Dividing
Europe, 1955.

Churchill's Iron Curtain speech hardened American feelings against the Soviet Union. The phrase "Iron Curtain" was used often during the Cold War years to describe the division of Europe.

Interpreting

1. List the Eastern European countries behind the Iron Curtain.
2. Why would the Soviet Union want these countries as buffer states under its control?

"I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.... I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.... The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may

endanger the peace of the world—and we shall surely endanger the welfare of our own nation."

Truman's speech was designed to garner support for an American pledge of hundreds of millions of dollars to prevent the spread of communism in Europe. Greece was in the throes of a civil war in which rebel forces, including communists, were challenging the pro-Western

government. Britain could no longer afford to provide military aid to Greece. Although the rebels were supported by Yugoslavia, not Moscow, Truman feared that without Western military support Greece would fall to communism. In reality, however, Stalin recognized Britain's position in Greece; he went so far as to warn Yugoslavia not to provoke a confrontation with the West. For Truman, however, in order to win congressional approval for \$400 million in aid, the communist threat had to appear overwhelming.

The policy of fighting communism around the world became known as the **Truman Doctrine**. In the years that followed, American aid was extended to a host of regimes, including right-wing dictatorships, in an effort to block communist takeovers. Thus the United States committed itself to sacrificing money and lives to halt the growth of communism anywhere in the world. It was a policy that would have serious implications for the entire world.

THE POLICY OF CONTAINMENT

George Kennan, a prominent American diplomat and respected expert on Soviet affairs, warned Washington in 1946 that the combination of "the traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity" with communist ideology, secretiveness, and conspiracy would inevitably create an explosive situation. He argued that Stalin's policies were shaped by a communist ideology that called for revolution in order to overthrow capitalist governments. Since the collapse of capitalism was inevitable, according to communist theory, Moscow would be in no hurry. The Soviets would slowly chip away at the capitalist world.

Kennan believed that if the United States could contain the spread of communism, the Soviet system would eventually

crumble. He did not advocate military confrontation; his was strictly a defensive strategy. His ideas formed the basis for the new American policy of **containment**.

While Kennan was realistic about the establishment of spheres of influence by both the Soviets and the Americans, Truman's administration was not prepared to tolerate a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Consequently, Kennan's strategy of "firm" containment, when incorporated with Truman's "get tough" policy, lost its defensive character. It was replaced with an aggressive anticommunist policy that called for reducing Soviet influence around the world rather than simply containing it.

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

By 1947, and for the next 25 years, American foreign policy was founded on the fear of communism around the world and within the United States itself. Intervention in the affairs of independent nations was considered justified if the forces of communism were seen as a threat. Anyone challenging the legitimacy of such intervention could be conveniently branded a communist sympathizer.

The assumption in most of official Washington was that *any* action by the Soviet Union was aimed at expanding world communism. Yet there were some who disagreed. They believed that Soviet determination to control Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region was a traditional Russian goal aimed at ensuring national security, an objective that dated back to czarist Russia. They suggested that Stalin wanted to control the countries on the USSR's western frontier to provide a buffer zone against German aggression. But in the suspicious atmosphere of the Cold War, simplistic assumptions about superpower conduct were more readily embraced than more complex political realities.

The prevailing attitude in Washington was that the activities of all communist governments were controlled from Moscow. This was certainly true in the satellite countries of Eastern Europe, where Soviet occupation armies guaranteed that any new leaders would be favourable to Moscow. However, in other parts of the world, such as Vietnam and China, communist governments operated independently. Foreign policies in these states reflected nationalist ambitions and frequently differed from policies Moscow might have imposed.

THE MARSHALL PLAN

In 1947, Western Europe was in the midst of a postwar depression. Governments lacked the capital and resources to revive their wartorn economies. Widespread unemployment and social unrest in Europe caused concern in Washington. If Western European states were to remain outside the orbit of the Soviet Union,

they would have to regain their economic and political strength. American financial aid was the key. Yet there was another reason for placing European economic recovery on the American agenda. As an exporting nation, the United States depended on a prosperous Europe to purchase its products. There was widespread concern that if the European economies did not recover quickly, the United States might also sink into a depression.

On 5 June 1947, US Secretary of State George Marshall announced a new European recovery program that became known as the **Marshall Plan**. The plan offered American economic aid to all countries devastated by the war. The offer was not without conditions, however. Countries seeking aid had to open their economic records to American scrutiny, make their financial needs public, and present a plan for the allocation of funds. The Marshall Plan was open to all countries, including those of the Soviet bloc.



Figure 5.3

These cartoons show how the superpowers viewed each other. How does the Soviet cartoon portray the motives behind the Marshall Plan? What does the American cartoon say about Soviet intentions?

Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet foreign minister, was willing to explore the possibility of accepting aid under the Marshall Plan. He met with British and French officials, but refused to accept the joint approach to economic reconstruction that these former Allies proposed. Perceiving the plan to be an extension of the Truman Doctrine and a tool of American economic imperialism, Molotov finally rejected it. He warned Britain and France that the plan would divide Europe, create a strong Germany, and give the United States control over European affairs.

To counterbalance the Marshall Plan, Molotov created a recovery scheme for the Soviet bloc. Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, which had shown interest in the US plan, were obliged to reject it in favour of the **Molotov Plan**. Lacking the funding of the Marshall Plan, Molotov's scheme was founded on bilateral trade agreements within the Soviet bloc. Eventually, 70 per cent of all trade of the Soviet bloc nations was among the bloc.

In the fall of 1947, 16 Western European countries, including Germany, agreed to a four-year recovery plan. As a leading industrial power before the war, Germany was the key to restoring a healthy economy in Western Europe. And with its strong anticommunist tradition, Germany could provide a counterforce to Soviet expansion.

THE IMPACT OF THE MARSHALL PLAN

More than \$13 billion was allocated to the Marshall Plan between 1948 and 1952. As a result, industrial growth in Western Europe flourished. While the plan enhanced economic and political stability, it also produced tangible benefits for the United States. Millions of dollars worth of American goods were sent to Europe. This stimulus to the American

economy led to a period of unprecedented growth in the 1950s.

In response to the success of the Marshall Plan, Stalin moved to tighten his political and economic hold on Eastern Europe. In the fall of 1947, coalition governments were abandoned. All non-communist parties were dissolved, paving the way for complete communist control of Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary. Non-communist leaders fled their countries or faced imprisonment, even assassination.

Cominform

The Communist Information Bureau (**Cominform**) was established in September 1947 under Moscow's direction. Together with the Molotov Plan, the purpose of the Cominform was to help consolidate the position of the Soviet Union in Europe and bring the Soviet bloc countries closer together. The Cominform co-ordinated the work of Communist parties across Europe, including democracies like France and Italy, where communist supporters were ordered to provoke strikes and use labour unions to mount opposition to the Marshall Plan. Their efforts were unsuccessful and the Cominform was disbanded in 1956.

Comecon

In January 1949, the Soviet Union established the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (**Comecon**) as a direct economic response to the Marshall Plan. The intent of Comecon was to form an integrated economic bloc of communist nations. Joint companies were created, and trade arrangements were made to ensure economic control of the Eastern European countries. However, this control led to dissatisfaction and economic stagnation because the Eastern European countries were forced to buy Soviet products and

raw materials at high prices. They also had to provide specific products and materials at low prices set by the Soviets. Thus, while the Western European economies grew, Eastern Europe remained poor throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

Pressure from consumers within the Soviet bloc to open markets to the West finally forced the Soviet leadership to more openness in the 1970s. Under Leonid Brezhnev's leadership, Comecon became irrelevant as the doors were opened to a flood of Western products, technology, and investment into Eastern Europe.

THE COMMUNIST COUP IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

After the Second World War, Czechoslovakia returned to a democratic government under the liberal leadership of President Edvard Benes. But in elections in 1946, the Communists won 38 per cent of the vote, more than any other single party. A coalition government was formed under Communist leader Klement Gottwald.

Czechoslovakia, located along the dividing line between Eastern and Western Europe, had maintained a neutral position in the early stages of the Cold War. Stalin, however, wanted to ensure that the Czechs would be firmly positioned on the Soviet side. In December 1947, in a five-year trade deal, the Soviet Union agreed to supply Czechoslovakia with much-needed wheat and cotton. In February 1948, with active Soviet support, Gottwald and the Communist Party took control of the government, expelling all non-communists and eliminating all other parties. Czechoslovakia was now a single-party dictatorship and a firm Soviet satellite.

The takeover of Czechoslovakia shocked the West. Only 10 years earlier in Munich the Allies had handed

Czechoslovakia over to Germany. Now the country threatened to be the spark that would ignite new hostilities. Believing that war was possible, Truman called for a resumption of the military draft. In June 1948, he signed the **Selective Service Act**, which ordered all males between the ages of 18 and 25 to register for service in the armed forces. The Cold War was beginning to heat up.

THE BERLIN BLOCKADE AND AIRLIFT

Until 1948, the Cold War had not drawn the two superpowers into open conflict. There had been a war of words, and policies and promises had been made to woo or coerce individual nations into one camp or the other. Still, they had managed to avoid direct confrontation. The crisis in Germany was about to change all of that.

The partitioning of Germany and Berlin into occupied zones was supposed to be a temporary measure. But the fragile state of relations between the Soviets and the West prevented any permanent solution. The stalemate caused severe economic hardship in Germany. To spearhead an economic recovery, the United States, Britain, and France established economic co-operation and currency reform in their zones. Plans to establish a constitutional assembly that would lead to an independent West German state were set in motion. The Soviet Union responded to the West's actions by establishing a blockade of all rail, canal, and road links into and out of West Berlin and by cutting off electric power from East to West Berlin. Since Berlin was located within the Soviet sector of Germany, the 2.1 million inhabitants of West Berlin were left isolated and helpless.

Stalin's motives for blockading West Berlin puzzled the West. On the surface,

the blockade appeared to be a protest against the currency reform. But it was more than that. Stalin wanted to prevent the West from establishing a West German state. He wanted the whole of Germany eventually reunified as a communist state under Moscow's control. Stalin may also have been gambling that the West would allow West Berlin to be absorbed into the Soviet sector rather than risk armed conflict. The success of the coup in Czechoslovakia had suggested to Stalin that a gamble might pay off. But it was not to be this time.

Britain and the United States responded to the blockade with a massive airlift. Twenty-four hours a day, thousands of tonnes of supplies were flown into West Berlin. Air space over Germany was open to all the Allies. Had the Soviet

Union tried to block the airlift, it would clearly have been an act of war, and war was not what the Soviets had intended. In fact, the blockade, rather than damaging the West's ties to West Berlin, served to reinforce them. Moreover, a counter-blockade imposed by the British and Americans on Western goods being shipped to the Soviet zone severely damaged the East German economy.

The Berlin Airlift lasted 11 months. Finally, in May 1949, accepting that the blockade was futile, Stalin reopened surface access to West Berlin. As a precaution, however, the airlift continued until September.

In May, the three occupation zones of the Western Allies became the German Federal Republic (West Germany), with its capital in Bonn. The following October, the Soviet zone of occupation officially became the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), with its capital in East Berlin. Germany would remain divided until 1990.

RIVAL ALLIANCES: NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were economic strategies designed to foster the reconstruction of Europe. But events like the coup in Czechoslovakia and the Berlin Blockade suggested to the Americans that economic intervention was not enough to contain communist expansion. A greater military deterrent was needed. The policy of **deterrence** is based on the idea that a strong military force, including better nuclear weapons and other military technology, can ensure that the other side will not attack.

NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established on 4 April 1949. It brought together 12 countries—the



Figure 5.4

An American airlift plane approaches the Berlin airport in May 1949 as jubilant Berliners wave welcome. Why were American planes allowed to fly over Soviet-controlled air space?

United States, Canada, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, and Luxembourg. (Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, Spain in 1982.) The purpose of the alliance was to counter the perceived military threat from the Soviet bloc countries. It indicated the West's intent to meet Soviet expansion with collective resistance and to prevent war through collective defence. By signing the treaty, the United States agreed to rearm Western Europe and it assumed a leadership role in the defence of the Western world. NATO represented a big step for the US. Never before had the Americans joined an alliance in peacetime.

To the West, the formation of NATO seemed all the more justified when, in August 1949, the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb. This marked the beginning of the biggest threat in the Cold War—the **nuclear arms race**. Truman promptly ordered the development of a new super weapon—the hydrogen bomb.

In 1955, West Germany was allowed to join NATO. The decision was a momentous one. As a member of the alliance, it meant that Germany would be rearmed. France and Britain were especially uneasy about German rearmament. But since they did not have the military power to defend West Germany from a Soviet attack, they had little choice. As a precaution, however, German forces were placed under American control.

The Warsaw Pact, 1955

Five days after West Germany joined NATO, the Soviet Union met in Warsaw with representatives of seven Soviet satellites—Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania—to sign the **Warsaw Pact**. Modelled after NATO, it set up a military

alliance in which members pledged to assist one another in the event of attack. It also established a unified military command, with headquarters in Moscow. The military alliances of the two superpowers, created in order to maintain a **balance of power** between them, were now complete.

Other Military Alliances

NATO was only one part of the new strategy of international organizations and military alliances designed to contain communism. In 1948, the **Organization of American States** (OAS) was established to achieve "peace and justice and to promote American solidarity." Initially, however, it was an American-dominated vehicle designed to resist communism and limit relations with the Soviet Union.

Another alliance, the **Southeast Asia Treaty Organization** (SEATO), was created in 1954. This pact included the United States, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan, Britain, and France. SEATO was created to stop communist expansion in Southeast Asia and was used to justify American intervention in Vietnam. A key provision of the pact provided for mutual action in the event of an external attack or from internal subversion. Thus, the existence of any local communist group labelled "subversive" could justify US intervention as part of the American policy of containment.

In 1955, the United States and Britain engineered the Baghdad Pact, renamed the **Central Treaty Organization** (CENTO) after one of the signing members, Iraq, left the alliance in 1958. Initially, CENTO offered mutual assistance between members—Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Britain (with the US as an associate member)—in the event of aggression. But increasingly the pact sought to provide a mutual defence policy against the Soviet Union.

MAP STUDY

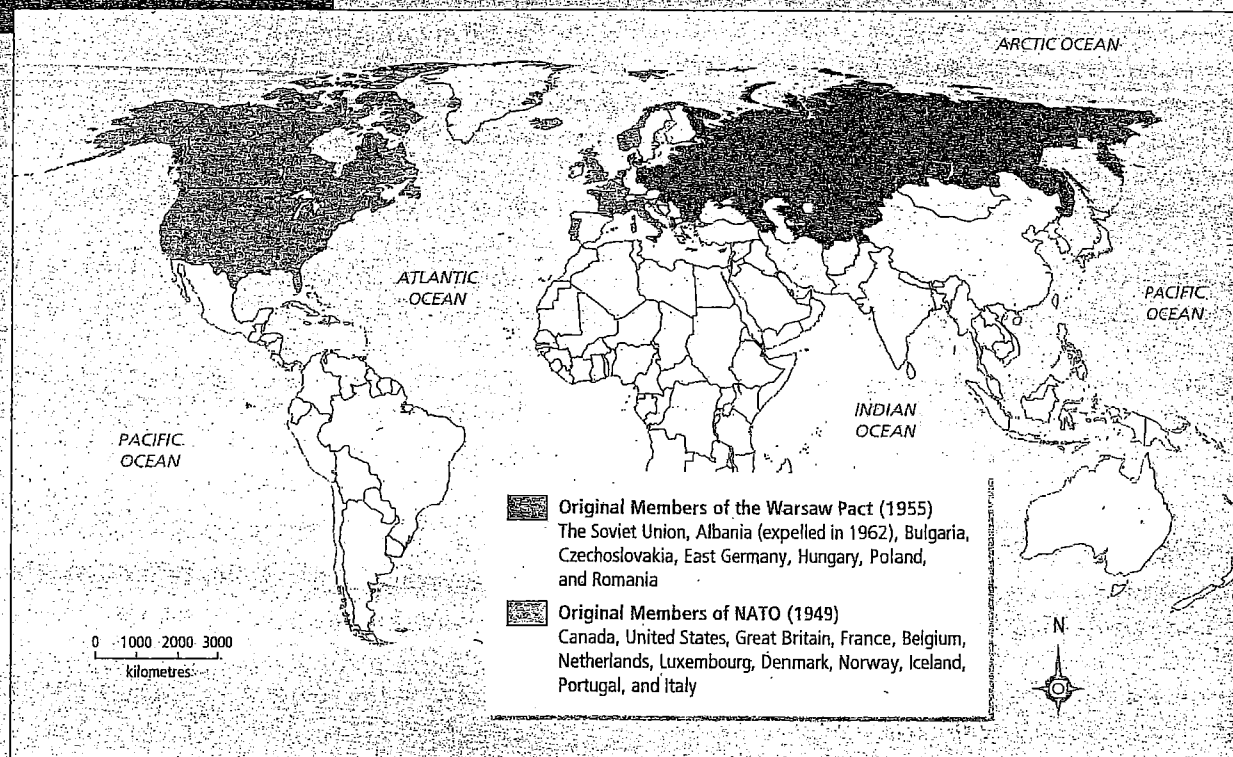


Figure 5.5
NATO and Warsaw Pact Nations

NATO was formed under US leadership to stop further Soviet expansion in Europe. The Warsaw Pact simply formalized existing Soviet military control of the Soviet bloc countries.

Interpreting

1. Why was it important for the Western European nations to include the US in NATO?
2. Why was the US interested in joining NATO?
3. What NATO action prompted the Soviet Union to form the Warsaw Pact in 1955?

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This site was developed by the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary in collaboration with the Calgary School Boards. Click on the "NATO" module. This module contains information and activities on topics such as:

- Formation of the NATO Alliance
- Cold War Methods
- Assessing NATO's Role in the Cold War
- NATO Crossword Puzzle
- Cartoon Analysis

In 1957, Canada and the United States joined together to create the **North American Air Defence Command (NORAD)**. Canada and the United States knew that Soviet bombers would likely fly over Canada's Arctic en route to their targets in the United States. It was essential that the US gain sufficient warning time of any Soviet bomber raid, since its own strategic bombers would need time to launch a strike at targets in the Soviet Union. The agreement established nuclear tracking, warning, and control stations

across the northern Arctic. Eventually, surface-to-air missiles with nuclear warheads were introduced. In 1981, NORAD changed its name to the **North American Aerospace Defence Command (NAADC)**.

The USSR and Eastern Europe were almost surrounded by military alliances or mutual defence treaties backed by American arms. The United States was now committed to the defence of 42 nations around the world.

THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM IN ASIA

Civil War in China

China had been embroiled in civil war since 1927. It began when Jiang Jie Shi (Chiang Kai-shek), the leader of the Chinese Revolutionary National Party (the **Kuomintang**) attempted to eradicate the Communist Party. In a three-year purge known as the "White Terror," communists, suspected communists, and communist sympathizers were murdered. Despite the heavy loss of life, the communists, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, continued to be a powerful force. They established a stronghold in northwest China, where they launched repeated attacks against the Kuomintang. The civil war was suspended when China was attacked by Japan in 1937. During the Second World War, the warring sides co-operated long enough to defeat the Japanese. (See Chapter Ten for a more detailed history of the Kuomintang and the Communists.)

When the Second World War ended, the United States attempted to mediate an end to the civil war by negotiating a coalition government between Jiang and Mao. But the attempt failed and civil war resumed in 1946. Substantial American aid in the form of arms, money, and military advisors was provided to Jiang to bolster his fight against communism. Between 1945 and 1949, more than

\$3.5 billion was invested in the Nationalist forces in an attempt to stop the communists. Ironically, Stalin also aided Jiang as part of an earlier agreement with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945 before the defeat of Japan. But he had other motives as well. Stalin did not want to see a strong, united China that might oppose Soviet ambitions in Asia, and Soviet leadership in the world Communist movement.

Mao's policies of land reform and peasants' rights had strong appeal for the large majority of Chinese people. The Communist army was disciplined and had gained respect for its dedicated defence of China against Japan. By 1946, Mao's policies were beginning to make steady inroads. Jiang, on the other hand, headed a corrupt regime and was seen in China as an American puppet. Jiang represented a return to the past and was uninterested in reform. Areas controlled by the Kuomintang were poorly run and



Figure 5.6

Mao and Jiang toast their success against Japan in the Second World War at a dinner held in the fall of 1945. This friendship was short-lived, since the two enemies resumed their civil war immediately after the surrender of Japan.

corrupt. Toward the end of the civil war, many Nationalist soldiers deserted to the Communist side.

By 1948, it was apparent that the Communists would win. Washington now faced a difficult decision: to withdraw support of Jiang, thereby losing face as well as the enormous Chinese market, or to embark on full-scale military intervention, creating resentment on the part of the Chinese people and condemnation by the American public. Reluctantly, Truman decided to halt the flow of aid to the Kuomintang.

In Beijing, on 1 October 1949, Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China. Jiang, along with the remnants of his Nationalist army, fled to the island of Taiwan, where he set up the Republic of China. In the years that followed, Taiwan was supported through foreign aid and was protected by the US navy. The American government recognized Taiwan as the sole legitimate government of China in the naive hope that Jiang would eventually liberate the mainland from the Communists.

The United States blocked the People's Republic of China from admission to the United Nations. It insisted that Jiang's tiny Republic of China hold the UN seat for all of China. As a result, over 25 per cent of the world's people were not represented in the UN. It was not until 1971 that the People's Republic of China (mainland China) was admitted to the UN, replacing the Republic of China in Taiwan. In 1978, the United States finally recognized the People's Republic as the sole legal government of China.

The Korean Conflict

The Cold War turned hot in 1950 with the outbreak of the Korean War. This conflict marked the first face-to-face confrontation between Communist troops

and Western forces. The Americans led a UN-sponsored army into combat against the Communist forces of North Korea, who were supported by Chinese troops. The guns fell silent in 1953, but no lasting peace was achieved. UN forces continued to patrol the border between North and South Korea. (The Korean conflict is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.)

COLD WAR POLITICS

The atmosphere of suspicion and fear escalated in the 1950s. The United States and the Soviet Union were increasingly distrustful of each other's motives and actions. This was clearly exhibited by the continual wrangling at the United Nations.

But fear and mistrust were evident within the two countries as well, not only in the totalitarian Soviet Union, but in the democratic United States. Dissent or disagreement with government policies was frequently viewed as suspicious or subversive. In the United States, this led to the anticommunist crusade of Senator Joseph McCarthy. From 1950 to 1954, McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee searched for communists everywhere in American society. Often with little or no substantial proof, they accused fellow legislators, civil servants, Hollywood actors, newspaper publishers, US army officers, and even the 1952 Democratic presidential candidate, of communist activities. **McCarthyism**, as it became known, destroyed the lives of many innocent people. By 1954, McCarthy's colleagues in the Senate had denounced him and stripped him of his power. But the anxiety and antagonism that was reflected in and intensified by McCarthyism affected American policy for decades and prevented a balanced American appraisal of Soviet aims and Communist leaders.

In Review

1. What was the Truman Doctrine? What was its impact on the Cold War?
2. Explain the policy of containment. Do you think this was an effective way to deal with the Soviet Union? Explain.
3. Briefly explain the objectives, terms, and results of the Marshall Plan.
4. What was the impact of the following events on the course of the Cold War: (a) the coup in Czechoslovakia; and (b) the Berlin Blockade and Airlift?
5. In your opinion, could the Cold War have been avoided? Explain.
6. Compare the origins, membership, and goals of (a) NATO, (b) the Warsaw Pact, and (c) NORAD.
7. Why were Mao and the Communists able to gain victory in China?
8. Explain the purpose and results of McCarthyism in the United States.