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### The Cold War Starts



American President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945), and British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill (1874-1965), both Democratic leaders, decided to join forces with the Communist dictator of the USSR, Joseph Stalin (1878-1953), during World War II. America, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and China formed the core of the Allies in World War II.

This seemed bizarre. The Democracies of the world were appalled by the brutality of Russia's Communist regime. Yet, they all needed each other to defeat the Fascist regime of the Nazis and their horrific leader, Adolf Hitler (1889-1945). After the Axis Powers were defeated, that which bound the USA and Britain together with the Soviet Union, defeating Hitler, was gone.

Since the Soviet Union was Communist, a rift between the Allies seemed inevitable. At the Yalta Conference of 1945, Churchill, FDR, and Stalin met to discuss what their relationship would be like, if they were to win the war.

**#1: Why did the USA and Britain, both Democracies, team up with the Communist Soviet Union, in WW II? Who were some key leaders involved in this alliance?**

At the Yalta Conference, the Allies agreed Germany would be divided into zones controlled by different countries of the Allies. Stalin claimed Eastern Europe would be allowed to vote for leaders, a promise he never fulfilled. The Allies also agreed to create the United Nations as a venue of discussion to help nations avoid war. The League of Nations, created after World War I, was very limited in its authority. Yet, the goal was to give the United Nations more power to help stop conflict globally. The United Nations created a structure where all member nations get a vote. However, the core Allies (America, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and China) were given permanent seats on the Security Council of the UN. The UN still exists today.

The Security Council can veto anything the United Nations seeks to pursue, making them very powerful. The Allies always get a seat on the council. Yet, other nations can rotate in and out to serve on the Security Council for limited terms.



**Stalin, FDR, and Churchill**

**#2: What was the purpose of the United Nations? How could someone argue the UN was too idealistic to work? How could someone argue the UN was practical and could actually work?**

Capitalists argued Capitalism gave individuals power through owning property. It also gave citizens a chance at social mobility; one could be born poor and work hard to get rich through gaining profits off goods and services. Communists argued this did not work and only a very few got rich in Capitalism, while most were poor and suffered in factories. Capitalists asserted the power Communism gives to the state would lead to corruption and the oppression of individual rights. Capitalists asserted that the state would never truly spread all resources out equally. For instance, Communism demanded the ridicule of the freedom of religion in society in order to give radical obedience to the state. Capitalism existed largely in places that had some form of Democracy, like Britain and the USA. Many Capitalists championed Democracy and the individual rights it gave citizens. Communists rejected this and asserted that the super wealthy were the ones actually in control in the world's Democracies, not the people.

**#3: What critiques would a Communist offer toward Capitalism? What critiques would a Capitalist offer toward Communism?**

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After WW II, the Allies quickly became skeptical of the Soviet Union. Stalin ushered in stern control of Eastern Europe. Russia had experienced over 16,000,000 deaths in World War II and felt they had a right to control and rebuild Eastern Europe, due to their stark sacrifice. Yet, America, Britain, and other Democracies were concerned because Stalin's reign as a Communist dictator oppressed the people under his power.

At the Yalta Conference, Stalin said Eastern Europe could have free elections. In reality, he set up

puppet states who had to do whatever Russia wanted. Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia became Satellite Nations of the USSR. Which claiming they were independent, these nations were forced to show supreme loyalty to the USSR and embrace Communism. FDR signed the Yalta Conference agreement. Yet, he died in office. Harry Truman (1884-1972) became President. He did not get along with Stalin and did not want to see nations fall to Communism. At the Potsdam Conference, in July of 1945, Truman tried to get Stalin to allow elections in Eastern Europe to no avail. Stalin and Truman remained reluctant Allies, but their relationship kept deteriorating, due to Stalin's goals for Eastern Europe.

Winston Churchill asserted that a symbolic iron curtain had fallen down Europe. According to Churchill, those in the West were free in Democracies and those in the East were left trapped in Communism. In 1952, Stalin asserted that he saw no way that Capitalism and Communism could coexist. He believed war between Capitalistic and Communistic nations was inevitable.

**#4: Describe what Churchill meant when he said an "iron curtain" had formed across Europe.**

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Berlin was the capital city of Germany. Yet, now Western Germany was controlled by zones overseen by Britain, France, and the USA. However, Berlin was in Eastern Europe, Stalin's domain of control. Yet, due to the important symbolic nature of the capital, even though it was the East, the city was allowed to be divided into four zones, with the Western part being a Democracy and the Eastern zone being Communistic.

In 1949, Britain, France, and the USA let their zones unite and form West Germany, a Democracy. East Germany remained Communist and was massively controlled by Stalin as a Communist nation. The City of Berlin, though deep in East Germany, was allowed to be split. The Western area of the city was controlled by West Germany and the Eastern section by East Germany. Harry Truman felt an all-out war with the powerful USSR was not a path America should pursue. It would be catastrophic for both sides. Yet, he wanted to stop Communism from spreading. George Keenan (1904-2005), ambassador to the Soviet Union, suggested the policy of Containment. According to this policy, the USA would acknowledge Communism's presence in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Yet, it would resist any other nation from embracing Communism and try to convince them that Democracy was superior to Communism. Truman's determination to stop Communism's spread was called the Truman Doctrine. Fearing Greece and Turkey may fall to Communism, he called on Congress to give hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to these two nations to encourage them to resist Communism. He also initiated the Marshal Plan, which helped Western European nations get aid to rebuild from the aftermath of WW II. These steps caused America's reputation to soar around the world, which Truman felt would ensure the aid recipient nations kept resisting Communism.



**West Berliners watch as an American plane lands with supplies, during the Berlin Airlift.**

**#5: Describe Harry Truman's policy of Containment.**

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Stalin was angry that the USA was so aggressive against the spread of Communism. In response, he tried to block resources from entering Western Berlin and force them to abandon Democracy and embrace Communism. The USA responded with the Berlin Airlift. They flew in vast amounts of resources to ensure that Western Berlin had all they needed to resist Stalin's plan. They flew in medical supplies, food, and even toys for children.

**#6: Why did the Berlin Airlift take place? What did the USA hope to achieve in this endeavor?**

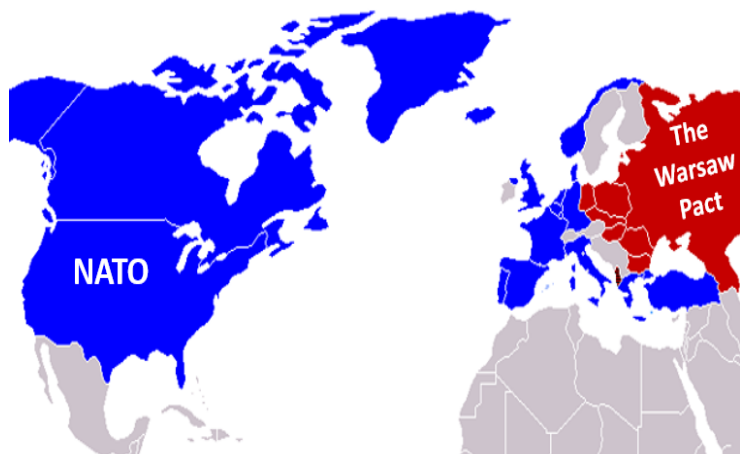
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Tension between the USA and the Russian Soviet Union grew intensely in 1949. That year, Russia detonated its first atom bomb. In 1951, Russia achieved an air dropped atom bomb test from a plane. Prior to Russia's development, only the USA had atom bombs. Now, if the Soviet Union and the USA ever went to war, it would be a nuclear war. Fearing a Communist invasion, various nations formed an alliance asserting that, were one attacked, all would defend the group. The Alliance was called the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It included Britain, France, the USA, and other nations. Stalin responded by forcing the Satellite Nations to create an Alliance with the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact. Now, before there was even a war, the teams had been decided.

**#7: Why did NATO and the Warsaw Pact form? What did the member nations hope to achieve with these alliances?**

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In the 1930s, a Civil War was brewing in China in which a Democratic faction fought against a Communist faction. Yet, when Japan invaded China and developed a strong presence in the region, in WW II, the factions put aside their differences to fight Japan. Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975) led the Democratic faction and Mao Zedong (1893-1976) led the Communist faction. When Japan was defeated, the Civil War commenced the world watched to see if China would embrace Communism. In 1949, Mao Zedong asserted absolute control of China and established a Communist government. Kai-shek and his followers left China and established a Democracy off the coast of China on the island of Taiwan. This was a humiliating defeat for Truman. His policy of containing Communism had failed, since now China had embraced the system.



**Pictured above, Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong had to put aside their differences to fight Japan in World War II.**

Initially, as two massive Communist nations, China and the USSR cooperated to a large degree. Mao was just as ruthless as Stalin. He murdered millions who resisted his land confiscations and tried to force a government controlled economy. Millions died in the famines that followed. Since both were Communist, the USSR and China were cooperative. Yet, they were also resentful toward one another. They had various arguments over land along their border and came to distrust one another.

**#8: What role did Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek have in China's history?**

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**The detonation of Ivy Mike was the first hydrogen bomb test in history. It was detonated in the Pacific Ocean.**

An arms race developed between the USA and USSR as each tried to build better nuclear weapons. The USA wanted to build a hydrogen bomb. The atom bomb is equal to 20 kilotons of TNT. A hydrogen bomb is equal to 10,000 kilotons of TNT. The USA test detonated the first hydrogen bomb, code named Ivy Mike, on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1952. The detonation of the first hydrogen bomb gave the USA an advantage in the nuclear arms race. Yet, then, in 1953, the Soviets detonated a hydrogen bomb in what was called the Joe-4 test. Now, the USA and the Soviet Union both possessed hydrogen bombs.

The massive standoff between the USSR and the USA was called the Cold War. This name, "Cold War," refers to the massive

buildup of weapons and tension that never truly became a "hot" war. It never became a "hot" war in that the USSR and the USA never entered into a direct military engagement with one another, even though their rivalry lasted into the 1990s

of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The name “Cold War” can be misleading in that it may lead one to believe that no deaths or casualties came from the Cold War. However, proxy wars directly related to the Cold War did occur. In these scenarios, the USA backed one side and the Soviets backed another. Therefore, while not directly fighting each other, these side wars led to the deaths of millions. One such conflict was the Korean War.

**#9: Why is the struggle that arose between the USA and the USSR, after WW II, considered a “Cold War”? What does this mean?**

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By 1950, a division had occurred on the Korean Peninsula. The North was backed by the USSR and established Communism. The South was supported by the USA and supported Democracy. The 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel line of latitude divided the regions and tension developed between the two sides. Armed with Soviet weaponry, Kim Sung (1912-1994) led the Communist North. In 1950, he invaded the South to try and unify the entire peninsula under Communism. South Korea, led by Syngman Rhee (1875-1965), asked the United Nations for help. The UN agreed. The USSR could have vetoed the measure. Yet, they refused to vote in protest toward the recognition of Taiwan, a country that formed by breaking away from China.



The USA, led by President Truman, was the leading nation of the UN concerning the struggle to keep South Korea independent. Communist China sent a massive amount of supplies and troops to help North Korea. Therefore, in a sense, the Korean War was very much a struggle between China and the USA for the fate of the Korean Peninsula. The Korean War was a back a forth standstill. Neither the North nor the South could bring about a victory. General Douglas MacArthur (1850-1864) felt the North Korean resistance persisted because China was giving them supplies and troops. He urged President Truman to use a nuclear attack against China. Yet, Truman refused. MacArthur openly critiqued Truman’s stance and Truman fired MacArthur as a result.

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1953, the North and South agreed to a cease fire. While not an official ending of the war, it halted military engagements. According to the agreement, the North would remain Communist and the South could be a Democracy. Millions died in the conflict including thousands of Americans and Chinese soldiers. This agreement still exists to this day. Kim Sung’s grandson, Kim Jong-Un (1984-Present), is the current Communist dictator of North Korea.

**#10: Describe the circumstances that led to the Korean War. How did the war impact the Korean Peninsula politically?**

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A World War II hero, Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969), became President after Truman, in 1953. Stalin died and Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971) became the head of the Communist Party and dictator of the USSR. Eisenhower did not follow the Containment policy of Truman, which had failed. Rather, he initiated the policy of Brinkmanship. Secretary of State John Dulles (1888-1959) asserted that the USA had to take the strongest stance it could against the USSR. His policy of

Brinkmanship meant that the USA was always ready to launch a nuclear attack. It would always remain on the brink of war. Dulles argued this intimidating policy would ensure the USSR never attacked the USA or their allies, since such a move would be met with nuclear war. Eisenhower adopted the policy and it was dubbed the “New Look” approach, as



**In 1960, the USA sent a U-2 plane, like the one pictured above, to spy on Russia. It was shot down.**

opposed to Containment. Eisenhower led a massive campaign to grow the military and invest in science education, to always keep an edge over the USSR. The Soviet Union responded with their own weapons build up. Both nations began stock piling nuclear weapons. This arms race meant each nation was growing more and more in terms of military capability and might. Eisenhower felt that the buildup would mean neither side would attack the other because it would result in the mutually assured destruction of both countries.

Eisenhower suggested that the USSR and USA allow planes to fly over each other's territory to ensure each side knew the capability of the other. The theory was that the countries could monitor one another and cooperate to avoid attacking the other. The USSR refused. However, in 1960, the USA sent a U-2 Plan pilot, Francis Gary Powers (1929-1977), to spy over Russia. His plane was shot down. Yet, he survived and the USA had to negotiate his return. He was imprisoned for two years and released back to the USA. This was called the U-2 Incident.

**#11: How as Eisenhower's policy of Brinkmanship different from Truman's policy of Containment?**

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**Answers:**

**#1: Why did the USA and Britain, both Democracies, team up with the Communist Soviet Union, in WW II? Who were some key leaders involved in this alliance?**

The USA and Britain were at war with the Axis Powers. Their chief concern was Adolf Hitler in Germany. FDR, the President of the USA, and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, agreed to unite with the Communist dictator of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, because he too was at war with Hitler too. In short, they needed each other to defeat Hitler.

**#2: What was the purpose of the United Nations? How could someone argue the UN was too idealistic to work? How could someone argue the UN was practical and could actually work?**

The United Nations was an attempt for nations to talk out their problems through diplomacy. One could argue this was too idealistic because the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone had seen two world wars. Yet, others could argue that it would provide the best opportunity possible to avoid future wars. Likewise, the most powerful nations of the Security Council were the USA and their fellow Allies of WW II. If they won the war, it appeared they had the power and capacity to see the UN be successful too.

**#3: What critiques would a Communist offer toward Capitalism? What critiques would a Capitalist offer toward Communism?**

A Communist would assert that Capitalism creates a system where few get rich and most are poor. Yet, a Capitalist could assert that there was no practical way Communism could allocate resources to all equally and that Communism would be lead to corruption for those trying to lead the system.

**#4: Describe what Churchill meant when he said an “iron curtain” had formed across Europe.**

Churchill felt that, with the USSR gaining control of pretty much all of Eastern Europe, a division of opportunity had come about. Those in the West would have access to freedom and rights. Yet, those in the East would be under the oppression of Communism. At least, this was the view of Churchill.

**#5: Describe Harry Truman’s policy of Containment.**

Truman felt all-out war with the Communist USSR would be catastrophic. Yet, he wanted to keep any nation outside of Eastern Europe and the USSR directly from embracing Communism. Therefore, he wanted Communism “contained” on the global scale and not to spread any further.

**#6: Why did the Berlin Airlift take place? What did the USA hope to achieve in this endeavor?**

The Berlin Airlift was an attempt to fly in aid to the Western portion of Berlin. Stalin had surrounded the area and was pressuring them to abandon Democracy. The USA hoped that, with the aid provided, Western Berlin would remain Democratic.

**#7: Why did NATO and the Warsaw Pact form? What did the member nations hope to achieve with these alliances?**

NATO was an alliance of various Democracies, including Britain, France, and the USA. The goal was to assert that, if one nation was attacked, they would all respond together. They wanted to be protected from a Russian invasion. The USSR responded by forcing the Satellite nations to form the Warsaw Pact as a collective security that could challenge any NATO nation, were they to experience aggression themselves.

**#8: What role did Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek have in China's history?**

Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek found themselves leading opposing sides in the Chinese Civil War. Zedong wanted Communism and Kai-shek opposed Communism. Zedong eventually won and became the first Chinese Communist Dictator of the nation.

**#9: Why is the struggle that arose between the USA and the USSR, after WW II, considered a "Cold War"? What does this mean?**

Cold War means that neither the USSR nor the USA entered into a direct war with the other throughout the Cold War. They built up a massive amounts of arms, but never had a direct war. This can be misleading though. The USSR and the USA each participated and helped with side proxy conflicts directly related to the Cold War. Yet, they never attacked each other directly.

**#10: Describe the circumstances that led to the Korean War. How did the war impact the Korean Peninsula politically?**

The Korean War was a struggle in which Kim Sung, backed by the USSR and China, tried to make the Korean Peninsula Communist. He was resisted by Syngman Rhee, who was backed by the USA and other UN members. In the end, the Northern part of the Korean peninsula became Communist and the South became Democratic. These divisions still exist today.

**#11: How as Eisenhower's policy of Brinkmanship different from Truman's policy of Containment?**

Brinkmanship was a bold endeavor. It meant the USA was constantly on the brink of war and willing to use its most powerful weapons, nuclear missiles. Yet, the goal was to intimidate the Soviet Union from ever attacking. Containment was different. In Containment, the goal was to keep Communist from spreading out of Eastern Europe and the USSR. It failed when China became a Communist nation.