

## Chapter 25

# The United States in the Cold War

(1945–1963)

### What You Will Learn

After World War II, the United States faced new challenges in the world as well as economic and social changes at home. Conflict with the Soviet Union developed into a Cold War.

### Chapter 25 Focus Question

As you read this chapter, keep this question in mind: **What key foreign and domestic issues affected the United States after World War II?**

## Section 1

### Roots of the Cold War

#### Section 1 Focus Question

How did the United States respond to the early stages of the Cold War? To begin answering this question,

- Learn about the growing distrust of Russia after the war.
- Discover how the United States tried to limit communism.
- Find out about three new international organizations.
- Read how the events of 1949 shook America's confidence.

#### Section 1 Summary

A new conflict developed immediately after World War II. A Cold War of tension grew as the United States and its allies faced off with the Soviet Union and other Communist nations.

#### Growing Distrust

Soviet troops occupied most of Eastern Europe at the end of World War II. Stalin agreed to allow free elections in those countries. Then he broke his promise. He wanted Communist governments in Eastern Europe to help his goal of making the Soviet Union the chief world power. Churchill described the result as an "iron curtain," or barrier to understanding and information, across Europe. By 1948, Eastern Europe was filled with Communist satellites, or countries ruled by another nation. The dispute between the Communist and non-Communist nations became known as the Cold War.

Democracy  
(UNITED STATES)  
VS.

Communism → "REDS"  
(SOVIET UNION) .....

### Key Events

1947

The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan change U.S. foreign policy.

1950

The Korean War begins.  
• ENDS 1953

1962

The United States faces the Soviet Union in the Cuban missile crisis.

★ close call

### ✓ Checkpoint

State the term Churchill used to describe Soviet expansion.

"Don't let Communism spread" = Containment

## Containing Soviet Expansion

President Truman outlined the "Truman Doctrine," which opposed the spread of communism. He began the policy of containment, or limiting Soviet expansion. In 1947, the Marshall Plan gave \$12 billion to European nations to rebuild from the war and weaken Communist influence.

The next standoff was in Germany. It was divided into four zones after the war. The Soviets controlled the eastern zone. It included the German capital, Berlin. Berlin was also divided, with the Soviets controlling East Berlin. When the Western powers wanted to reunify Germany in 1948, Stalin chose to confront the Allies. He set up a blockade to control West Berlin. The Allies responded with a huge airlift sending cargo planes to deliver tons of supplies to West Berliners. In 1949, the Allies combined their zones to form West Germany. The Soviet zone became East Germany, with Berlin still divided. In 1961, the Communists began building a wall to keep East Berliners from escaping to the West. The Berlin Wall became a symbol of the Cold War. ✓

## International Organizations

The United States turned from isolationism by leading the creation of the United Nations (UN). This was an international organization to maintain peace and to settle disputes. The United States also joined a military alliance. The Western powers formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Soviets and Eastern Europeans created the Warsaw Pact. ✓

NATO vs. Warsaw Pact

## The Shocks of 1949

In 1949, U.S. security was shaken by two events. First, the Soviet Union exploded its own atomic bomb. Second, Communists in China came to power under Mao Zedong. Mao established the People's Republic of China. The Chinese Nationalists, America's allies in World War II, retreated to Taiwan. The United States viewed them as the legal Chinese government. ✓

## Check Your Progress

1. What was the purpose of the Truman Doctrine?

2. What two organizations turned the United States from isolationism?

1.

2.

## BERLIN WALL

symbol of the Cold War

## Vocabulary Builder

To *confront* is "to challenge face to face." Identify what Stalin did in 1948 to confront the Allies.

## ✓ Checkpoint

List two purposes of the Marshall Plan.

1.

2.

## ✓ Checkpoint

List two goals of the UN when it was founded.

1.

2.

## ✓ Checkpoint

Identify the two events in 1949 that shocked Americans.

1.

2.

1949 China - Communism

## Section 2

## A Time of Prosperity

## Section 2 Focus Question

How did the American economy and society change after World War II? To begin answering this question,

- Identify the problems of the postwar economy.
- Explain the effects of a changing society during the 1950s.
- Contrast life in the suburbs with life in the cities.

## Section 2 Summary

The postwar years saw changes as the country adjusted to peacetime. By the 1950s the economy was booming. Television had an impact on family life. Growing suburbs sent cities into decline.

## Adjusting to Peacetime

With peace came significant changes on the home front. Millions of soldiers returned. Congress passed the GI Bill of Rights, which gave soldiers money to start businesses, buy homes, and pay for college. U.S. industry switched from producing military goods to consumer goods. After the sacrifices of the war years, people wanted consumer goods. Demand for these goods soon exceeded the supply. Inflation resulted, which caused prices to rise. This caused workers to demand higher pay, and labor unrest followed. President Truman at first backed employers, fearing that higher wages would lead to more inflation. That made the unions angry. When he supported higher wages, prices rose. Then consumers became angry.

Truman's Democrats lost the 1946 mid-term election, and Republicans gained control of Congress. The Republicans wanted to undo many New Deal labor reforms. Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act, which cracked down on strikes. The act also banned the closed shop, a workplace in which only union members can be hired.

By the presidential election of 1948, Truman seemed unlikely to win. The Republicans nominated New York's governor, Thomas Dewey. Truman's party, the Democrats, was divided. Truman campaigned hard, however. He focused Americans on the problem of the "do-nothing"

## Key Events

1947

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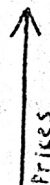
1950

The Korean War begins.

1962

The United States faces the Soviet Union in the Cuban missile crisis.

INFLATION



## Reading Strategy

Reread the bracketed paragraph.



Underline the sentence that gives the main idea. Circle phrases that support the main idea.

Truman is  
REELECTED !!

What a shock



Eisenhower  
becomes President in

1956

### ✓ Checkpoint

Name the act that helped returning soldiers.

### Vocabulary Builder

One meaning of *prosper* is "to be successful in a financial way." Use clues in the bracketed paragraphs to identify four types of purchases that reveal how Americans were prospering in the 1950s.

Late 1950s

vast system of highways

### ✓ Checkpoint

Identify two urban problems that resulted from the growth of suburbs.

1.

2.

Rock-and-Roll

Elvis Presley

Republican Congress. In a surprise victory, Truman was reelected. The Democrats regained control of Congress. Truman passed some of his "Fair Deal" proposals, such as a higher minimum wage and low-income housing.

In 1952, Truman chose not to run again. The presidency went to World War II General Dwight Eisenhower. He was more conservative. Eisenhower won again in 1956 on a campaign promise of "peace, progress, and prosperity." His achievements included the Interstate Highway Act of 1956, which provided funds for a vast system of highways. ✓

### A Changing Society

The 1950s were good times for much of America. Inflation fell as more goods became available. New technologies helped increase productivity. This meant that workers were able to work more efficiently and produce more goods. Many Americans prospered and purchased homes. They bought freezers, clothes dryers, and air conditioners. The standard of living rose, which is the measure of how comfortable life is for a person, group, or country. The postwar birthrate soared, a phenomenon called the baby boom. People lived longer thanks to new vaccines.

More families had cars. With the new highway system, more people had the freedom to live outside of cities. Suburbs grew rapidly, especially in western states.

Television replaced the radio as the focus of family entertainment. By the early 1960s, most homes had at least one television. Young people also enjoyed rock-and-roll. This music was a blend of blues and country music. The most popular rock-and-roll singer was Elvis Presley.

In many cities, life became worse. The tax base eroded as people moved to the suburbs. Without the money to make repairs and ensure city services, urban areas deteriorated. Crime rose. Those left in the inner cities, or centers of older cities, tended to be poor and less educated. ✓

### Check Your Progress

1. What were three effects of inflation after the war?

2. What changes did families experience in the 1950s?

BABY BOOM

— postwar (WWII)  
birthrate soared



24-3

**Section 3****The Korean War Period****Key Events****1947**

The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan change U.S. foreign policy.

**1950**

The Korean War begins.

**1962**

The United States faces the Soviet Union in the Cuban missile crisis.

38<sup>TH</sup>**Vocabulary Builder**

Which of the following words is a synonym for the underlined word retreating: advancing, withdrawing, or repeating?

Communist — North  
Non-Communist — South

**Section 3 Focus Question**

How did the United States respond to the invasion of Korea and its aftermath? To begin answering this question,

- Read how the Korean War became the first Cold War conflict.
- Describe how the Korean War ended.
- Explain how the Cold War led to a Red Scare in the United States.

**Section 3 Summary**

In 1950, the United States led United Nations troops in the Korean War. Spy cases and a U.S. senator fueled fear of Communists inside America.

**Conflict in Korea**

After World War II, Korea was divided into two countries along the 38<sup>th</sup> line of latitude. Communists took control in North Korea. On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops invaded South Korea. They reached Seoul (sole), South Korea's capital, within three days. President Truman urged the UN to rush military aid to South Korea. The UN force included soldiers from 16 different countries. It was mostly made up of American troops, however, General MacArthur, the former World War II commander, led the force.

At first the war went badly for the UN troops. Then more soldiers and supplies arrived. They pushed the North Koreans back over the 38th parallel. MacArthur sent his forces after the retreating North Koreans. The UN troops almost reached the Yalu River, the border between North Korea and Communist China. The Chinese were threatened and attacked with a large force. They pushed the UN troops back to the South Korean border and into a military stalemate, a situation in which neither side wins.

MacArthur was frustrated at this outcome. He said he could win the war by bombing bases in China that were supplying the North Koreans. Truman wanted to avoid war with China. He warned MacArthur to stop making these statements. When MacArthur complained that politicians were preventing him from winning, Truman fired him.

Why did China attack U.N. forces?

The Korean conflict remained a stalemate for two years. The killing continued while peace talks were held. Finally, in July 1953, a cease-fire was reached. Each side agreed to a demilitarized zone, an area that neither side controls. This zone still separates North and South Korea today. About two million Koreans died in the war. More than 30,000 Americans died, and another 100,000 were wounded. ✓

### Fears at Home

With Cold War tensions high, fear of communism increased in the United States. Americans worried that the country could not defeat communism. Worse, they thought that Communists inside the United States might overthrow the government. Those fears were fueled by two famous spy cases. In 1948, a former Communist named Whittaker Chambers accused a former State Department employee named Alger Hiss of being a spy. Chambers said that Hiss passed secrets to the Soviets in the 1930s. To prove it, Chambers produced copies of papers that Hiss had given him. The second case made headlines in 1950. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were found guilty of passing secret information to the Soviets. They were executed in 1953. At the time, many people were outraged by the executions. Years later, however, the U.S. government released messages that proved the guilt of the Rosenbergs and Hiss.

In this fear of the 1950s, a U.S. senator from Wisconsin, Joseph McCarthy, gained fame for hunting down Communists. He made sensational charges against people in government and other fields, often with no evidence. Many lives were ruined. After four years, he lost popularity. In televised Senate hearings, he made false charges against U.S. Army leaders. Congress voted to censure or condemn him for his behavior. Since that time, McCarthyism has come to mean accusing someone of disloyalty without evidence. ✓

### Check Your Progress

1. How did the Korean War end?

2. What did many Americans fear most about the idea of having Communists in the United States?

### ✓ Checkpoint

Name the country that MacArthur wanted to bomb in order to win the Korean War.

### Reading Strategy

Circle three words or phrases in the underlined text that describe American society during the Cold War.



### Two famous spy cases

1. Alger Hiss
2. Rosenbergs

### ✓ Checkpoint

Name the person who led the hunt for Communists in America in the 1950s.

► What is McCarthyism?

## Global Concerns in the Cold War

**Section 4 Focus Question**

How did the Cold War increase tensions around the world?

To begin answering this question,

- Learn how the Cold War turned into an arms race.
- Understand why emerging countries became targets.
- Read how communism gained influence in Latin America.
- Explain why Cuba became a crisis during the Cold War.

**Section 4 Summary**

- ★ In the 1950s and 1960s, the United States and Soviet Union competed to have the most nuclear arms and influence. The Cold War nearly exploded into a nuclear war over Cuba.

**The Arms Race**

The death of Stalin in 1953 brought Nikita Khrushchev (KROO shawf) to power. New leadership did not improve relations with the United States. By then, both countries had exploded the hydrogen bomb. Both were on their way to becoming superpowers, or countries whose military, economic, and political strength are so great that they can influence events worldwide. The two countries began an arms race—a contest in which nations compete to build more and more powerful weapons. China, France, and Britain joined the arms race when they developed nuclear weapons. No country wanted to use the weapons, so they stockpiled or collected them. The United States and Soviet Union had enough missiles stockpiled to destroy each other many times.

Space also became an area of competition between the two countries. In October 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik, a satellite, into Earth's orbit. Congress then created NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, to begin a U.S. space program. It also passed the National Defense Education Act to train scientists and teachers.

**Emerging Nations**

After World War II, many colonies gained independence.

- ★ The Soviet Union aimed to spread communism to these new countries, and the United States continued its efforts at containment. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy proposed

**Key Events**

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**SPACE RACE**

- sputnik
- NASA

**Checkpoint**

Name the first satellite launched into space.

**Reading Strategy**

Recall the U.S. policy for limiting the spread of communism. Circle the name of the policy where it appears in the underlined sentence.

Then, on the next page, circle an example of how the United States was following that policy.





the Peace Corps to build friendships with developing countries. The Peace Corps sent skilled American volunteers to help in villages throughout Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

In Africa, the Congo was one area of conflict. Soon after Congo gained independence from Belgium, a civil war erupted. (The United States backed one side, and the Soviet Union supported the other.) The war became more violent with the weapons supplied by the two superpowers.

The United States gave the Philippines their independence in 1946. Communist rebels began fighting there but were defeated. In the French colony of Indochina, the United States supported France in its battle with Ho Chi Minh. He was a Soviet-backed Communist who sought independence for Vietnam. In 1954, Ho's forces gained control of what would become North Vietnam.

### Latin America and the Cold War

Poverty and corrupt leaders created unrest in many Latin American countries. In 1959, Fidel Castro staged a successful revolution in Cuba and set up a Communist government. The Soviet Union promised aid. Two years later, Cubans who had left the country tried to retake control by invading with the support of the United States. Known as the "Bay of Pigs," the invasion failed and made tensions higher.

The Soviet Union backed Castro with aid and arms. This led to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. The United States gained evidence of nuclear missiles in Cuba. President Kennedy demanded that the missiles be removed. He also ordered a naval blockade of Cuba to stop Soviet ships from delivering more missiles. The potential for nuclear war grew as Soviet ships steamed toward Cuba. The world watched in fear. Finally, the ships turned back, and a compromise was reached. The Soviet Union agreed to withdraw the missiles, and the United States pledged not to invade Cuba.

### Check Your Progress

- What are two reasons the arms race increased tensions?
  - 
  -
- What agreement ended the Cuban missile crisis?

### ✓ Checkpoint

List three countries in which forces supported by the United States fought Communist-backed forces.

- 
- 
- 

### Vocabulary Builder

*Potential* refers to the possibility or capability of something happening. In the bracketed paragraph, identify one action by the United States and one by the Soviet Union that caused the potential for nuclear war to increase.

### ✓ Checkpoint

Name the failed invasion of Cuba.

CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

VIETNAM

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