

**Read and Understand**

1. Why did the United States and the Soviet Union become bitter rivals?
2. How did Europe become divided after the war?
3. How did the Common Market aid recovery in Western Europe?
4. What was the relationship between the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe?

**VOCABULARY** Cold War, superpower, buffer zone, nuclear weapon, occupation zone, satellite, iron curtain, containment, gross national product, Common Market, dissident, martial law

Two nations, the United States and the Soviet Union, emerged from World War II so powerful that they dominated world politics. The postwar years marked the start of tension—the **Cold War**—between these two rivals that lasted for four decades. The Cold War also represented a clash between economic systems: free-enterprise capitalism in the United States and centralized state control in the Soviet Union. In Western Europe, democratic governments came to power and allied themselves with the United States. Eastern European nations, however, came under Soviet domination.

**Two superpowers arose after the war.**

In 1945, two great wartime allies, the United States and the Soviet Union, stood alone as world **superpowers**. The United States emerged from the war as the most powerful and prosperous nation in the world. The Soviet Union had suffered widespread destruction during the war. Millions of Soviet citizens perished defending their country against Nazi armies.

The Soviet government thus was determined to protect itself from future invasions. Joseph Stalin wanted to create in Eastern Europe a **buffer zone**, a region along the border to reduce the threat of conflict.

The United States, on the other hand, saw the newly created United Nations as the best hope for a peaceful future. The real power in the UN rested with the 15-member Security Council. It was in charge of investigating disputes, peacekeeping, and emergency action. Five countries—Britain, France, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China—were to be permanent members of the Security Council. The United States and the Soviet Union insisted that they

have veto power over the Security Council's decisions.

Rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union grew after 1949, when the Soviets tested their first atom bomb. During the 1950's, both Soviet and American scientists developed more powerful **nuclear weapons**, bombs that derived their power from reactions involving the nucleus of the atom.

**The war left Europe divided.**

Even before World War II ended, the three Allied wartime leaders—Joseph Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill—met at Yalta in the Soviet Union to decide the future of Germany. Because of Stalin's fears, they agreed to divide Germany into four **occupation zones**, or regions controlled by foreign military forces (map, page 746).

Germany was in ruins in 1945. Most of the country's factories had been destroyed, and millions of civilians had perished. Britain, France, and the United States encouraged the growth of democratic ideas in their three sectors. In 1949, they allowed their sectors to unite to form the Federal Republic of Germany, known as West Germany. The Soviet zone, which became known as East Germany, installed a Communist government.

In spite of Stalin's promise to Roosevelt that there would be free elections, Communist governments came to power in other countries of Eastern Europe. They were Soviet **satellites**, countries whose policies were heavily influenced by their powerful neighbor to the east. The result was that Europe became divided into two regions, one democratic and one communist. As Churchill described it, "An **iron curtain** [imaginary barrier] has descended across the continent."

As communism became stronger in Eastern Europe, it also threatened to spread to the West. To deal with this problem, President Harry Truman, who succeeded Roosevelt, developed the policy of **containment** known as the Truman Doctrine. It called for using maximum economic support and military aid to keep other countries from falling under Soviet control. This assistance helped prevent a Communist takeover in Greece in 1947.

In 1948, Truman began another program, the Marshall Plan, named after George Marshall, his Secretary of State. In order to help restore the economy of European countries devastated by the war, the United States gave billions of dollars in food, fuel, and

manufactured goods. Truman's belief that this assistance would speed recovery and ensure stable, democratic governments was correct.

By 1955, Europe was divided into two rival alliances—the Warsaw Pact (which linked the Soviet Union with its seven East European satellites) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, the military pact formed by the United States and Canada with ten West European countries) (map, page 745).

A crisis arose in 1948 in relation to Berlin. Although the former German capital lay within the Soviet occupation zone, the Allies had agreed that the city be placed under their joint control (map, page 746). East Berlin became part of Communist East Germany, but the three zones that made up West Berlin remained free under the supervision of the United States, Britain, and France. In June 1948, however, Stalin decided to eliminate this non-Communist island. All roads to the city were blocked as the Soviets attempted to starve West Berlin into submission.

The Western powers, however, refused to budge. President Truman ordered a massive airlift to bring food and supplies into the besieged city. For a time, war seemed imminent. Soviet leaders eventually decided that Berlin was not worth another war. After nearly a year, they abandoned the Berlin blockade.

### ***Western Europe sought cooperation.***

The nations of Western Europe (map, page 745), aided by the Marshall Plan, made a remarkable economic recovery. Besides its economic assistance, the United States encouraged democratic institutions, private enterprise, and a revival of commerce. The effect was not only recovery but also renewed stability and new economic development.

**West Germany** The most dramatic political and economic transformation in postwar Europe took place in West Germany. This state was created in 1949 by the uniting of the British, French, and American occupation zones. Its government was headed by a chancellor who was responsible to a democratically elected legislature.

Led by its first chancellor Konrad Adenauer, West Germany developed strong democratic institutions as well as Europe's most prosperous economy. A strong industrial base, rich resources, and a skilled work force contributed to the economic miracle that made West Germany a major industrial power. Between 1950 and 1980, the nation's **gross national product**, or total value of goods and services each year, grew from \$48 billion to \$828 billion.

**France** France emerged from World War II with only limited destruction, but it was severely divided politically. In addition, prolonged wars in Indochina and Algeria forced it to abandon its overseas possessions. The major figure in French politics during this

period was Charles de Gaulle, who became president in 1958. De Gaulle was a military hero who had commanded the French forces in exile during World War II. During the 1960's, he charted an independent course for France by withdrawing from NATO, developing nuclear weapons, and building good relations with the Soviet Union and China.

During the 1980's, the Socialist party—led by François Mitterand—dominated French politics. Mitterand sought to establish closer relations with West Germany. He and Chancellor Helmut Kohl became strong supporters of a new West European organization, the European Economic Community, or **Common Market**. In 1957, six European nations—France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg—had formed the organization to strengthen their economic ties and to move toward greater European unity.

The growing prosperity of the Common Market countries in time led other nations—including Britain, Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Spain, and Portugal—to join the organization. The Common Market thus became a powerful economic unit in world trade. The twelve Common Market nations agreed to end virtually all barriers to trade within their borders in 1992. They also established a parliament with representatives from member countries to deal with matters of common interest.

**Southern Europe** After 1970, the countries of southern Europe began to play a bigger role in European affairs. The pace of industrial development quickened, particularly in Italy. In 1975, democratic governments replaced autocratic ones in Greece, Portugal, and Spain.

**United Kingdom** Of all the nations of Western Europe, the postwar recovery moved most slowly in the United Kingdom. World War II had left the once-great power economically weak due to wartime destruction, outdated factories, and greatly reduced trade. The nation was also weakened by the loss of most overseas possessions soon after the war and party rivalries at home. The Labour party, which came to power in 1945, introduced a program of social insurance that improved conditions for workers but proved costly to maintain.

During the 1980's, the Conservative party, led by Margaret Thatcher, dominated British politics. Her government encouraged free enterprise and modernized British industry. The development of oil reserves located under the North Sea also contributed to economic improvement.

### ***The USSR dominated Eastern Europe.***

Joseph Stalin ruled the Soviet Union as absolute dictator until his death in 1953. Under Stalin, Soviet Union had become an industrial and military superpower. Such progress was achieved, however,

at the expense of people's freedom and a decent standard of living. Under Nikita Khrushchev, who ruled the Soviet Union during the early 1960's, the government made modest reforms. These proved too threatening to Communist party leaders, who in 1964 removed Khrushchev from power.

Over the next 20 years, Leonid Brezhnev dominated Soviet politics. Brezhnev tolerated no opposition at home. The Soviet Union remained a police state in which **dissidents**, or people who protested government policies, were arrested, jailed, sent to camps in Siberia, or exiled. The Soviet leader also followed a policy called the Brezhnev Doctrine. It claimed the Soviet Union's right to use force to ensure Communist control of East European satellites.

Force was often necessary to keep those nations in line. The pace of postwar economic recovery in Eastern Europe was slow. The Soviet Union insisted that satellite nations build industries that fit Soviet needs. It also demanded that satellite governments remain under Communist party control. Not surprisingly, these governments were unpopular.

**East Germany** People's living and working conditions in East Germany were much inferior to those in West Germany. As a result, during the 1950's millions of East Germans moved west—many by crossing from East Berlin to non-Communist West Berlin. So many people left East Germany that the Communist government in 1961 built a concrete barrier to keep East Berliners from fleeing west. The Berlin Wall became a symbol of Communist repression.

**Hungary** Violent protest against Communist rule had actually flared earlier in Hungary when in 1956 a reform government had come to power. Imre Nagy, the new leader, promised free elections and demanded an end to Soviet control. The Soviet Union responded with violence. Tanks and troops ruthlessly crushed the new government, executed Nagy, and restored Soviet control. NATO leaders were reluctant to intervene, knowing that the Soviet Union would risk war to maintain its control over Eastern Europe.

**Czechoslovakia** Again, in 1968, the Soviets clamped down, this time in Czechoslovakia. There a reforming government led by Alexander Dubcek gave new freedoms to its people, trying to create what Dubcek called "socialism with a human face." The Soviets were not prepared to tolerate even limited reforms in one of their satellites. Soviet troops took control of Czechoslovakia, replacing Dubcek with leaders who agreed to do Moscow's bidding.

**Poland** In spite of Soviet strong-arm methods, resistance continued, particularly in Poland. Throughout the 1970's, Polish workers staged strikes and demanded reforms. In 1980, an independent national trade union—Solidarity—was formed under the leadership of Lech Walesa, a shipyard worker. In

staunchly Catholic Poland, the Church was also a powerful force for change.

During the 1980's, Poland's Communist government made several attempts to crush Solidarity. **Martial law**, putting the country under direct military control, was declared in 1981. Labor unrest still continued as the Polish economy slumped badly. Meanwhile, Solidarity gained broad popular support, even from members of the government and the army.

## Chapter Review

**Define** Cold War, superpower, buffer zone, nuclear weapon, occupation zone, satellite, iron curtain, containment, gross national product, Common Market, dissident, martial law

**Identify** United Nations, Yalta Conference, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Warsaw Pact, NATO, Berlin blockade, Konrad Adenauer, Charles de Gaulle, François Mitterand, Margaret Thatcher, Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, Brezhnev Doctrine, Berlin Wall, Imre Nagy, Alexander Dubcek, Solidarity, Lech Walesa

### Answer

1. What factors led to the start of the Cold War?
2. (a) What plans for peace were made at Yalta? (b) How did their effects differ in Eastern and Western Europe?
3. What role did each of the following people have in Western Europe? (a) Konrad Adenauer, (b) Charles de Gaulle, (c) Margaret Thatcher
4. What role did each of the following individuals play in Eastern European affairs? (a) Imre Nagy, (b) Alexander Dubcek, (c) Lech Walesa

### Critical Thinking

5. To what extent was the Cold War inevitable? In what ways, if any, could it have been avoided?

## Connecting Past and Present

At their meeting at Yalta in 1944, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin agreed on the military occupation of Germany in place of a peace treaty like the Versailles Treaty. For 45 years, Germany remained divided and Eastern Europe stayed Communist.

For the people of Eastern Europe, that situation changed with the uprisings in the autumn of 1989. For the people of Germany, the change began with the opening of the Berlin Wall in November. It continued in February 1990, when the era of occupation ended and the United States, the Soviet Union, and East and West Germany agreed on reunification. For both Eastern Europe and Germany, the war and its aftermath were finally over and a new era could begin.

