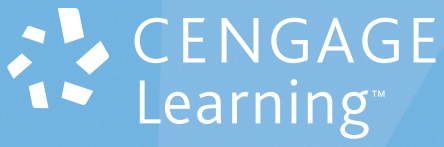
NELSON
MODERNHISTORY

THE CHANGING WORLD ORDER

BRAD KELLY, TONY TAYLOR AND ASHLEY WOOD
SERIES EDITOR: TONY TAYLOR



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NELSON
MODERNHISTORY

The Changing World Order

The Berlin Wall was erected in 1961, ostensibly to keep Western 'fascists' out of Soviet-controlled East Germany, but in reality its purpose was to prevent citizens of East Germany from defecting to the democratic West. The wall was seen as a symbol of the 'Iron Curtain' that had fallen across Europe in the wake of the Second World War and it became the defining icon of the Cold War that followed.

On 9 November 1989, the head of the East German Communist Party declared that citizens were free to cross the border into West Germany. Jubilant Berliners gathered at the wall to celebrate, and began demolishing the wall in an act that symbolically marked the end of Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe and paved the way to German reunification and the end of the Cold War.

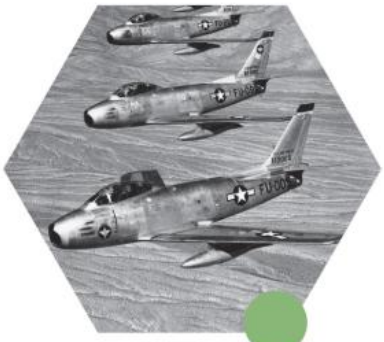
In October 1990, the reunification of East and West Germany was made official and in June 1991, Berlin once again became the capital of a unified Germany.

Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev

Ronald Reagan, President of the United States from 1981 to 1989, and Mikhail Gorbachev, the leader of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991, together played central roles in bringing about the end of the Cold War.

Learn more about Reagan and Gorbachev in Chapter 5

Timeline
1945–2003



1940

1945

February
Yalta Conference

July–August
Potsdam Conference

August
Atomic bombs dropped on Japanese cities of Hiroshima (6 August) and Nagasaki (9 August)

1946

February
Kennan sent his 'Long Telegram'

1947

March
Truman delivered his 'Containment' speech

June
Implementation of Marshall Plan commenced

1948

Berlin blockade began

1949

September
The Soviet Union completed its first successful test of an atomic bomb

October
The People's Republic of China was declared, following a Communist victory

1950

1950–1953
Korean War

1952

British commenced atomic bomb tests in Australia

1956

Polish and Hungarian uprisings

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1985

Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed leader of the Soviet Union; policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* would follow

2003

A US-led coalition invaded Iraq

1965

First US and Australian combat troops deployed to Vietnam

1979

Soviets invaded Afghanistan

1989

Berlin Wall torn down

A series of popular and peaceful uprisings led Eastern bloc nations to break from Soviet rule

1991

December

Soviet Union was dissolved

1960 2000

Cuban Missile Crisis

1962

Nixon visited China and Russia SALT I agreement signed

1972

Failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba Construction of Berlin Wall commenced

1961

Ronald Reagan was elected US president

1980

Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait; a multinational force, under US leadership, was established to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait

George HW Bush delivered his 'New World Order' speech

1990

11 September

Al Qaeda attacked New York and Washington; this triggered a US-led invasion of Afghanistan

2001

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“All treaties between great states cease to be binding when they come in conflict with the struggle for existence.”

Otto von Bismarck

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CONTENTS

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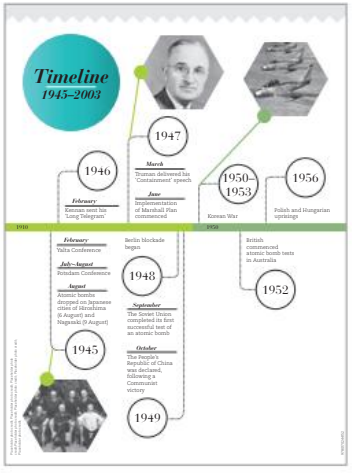
ABOUT THE SERIES

Using *The Changing World Order*

The Changing World Order has been developed especially for senior secondary students of History and is part of the Nelson Modern History series. Each book in the series is based on the understanding that History is an interpretive study of the past by which you also come to better appreciate the making of the modern world.

Developing understandings of the past and present in senior History extends on the skills you learnt in earlier years. As senior students you will use historical skills, including research, evaluation, synthesis, analysis and communication, and the historical concepts, such as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy, perspectives and contestability, to understand and interpret societies from the past. The activities and tasks in *The Changing World Order* have been written to ensure that you develop the skills and attributes you need in senior History subjects.



ILLUSTRATED TIMELINE

is a bird's-eye view of the topic and summarises the major developments of the period.

KEY FIGURES AND ORGANISATIONS, KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS, KEY DOCUMENTS

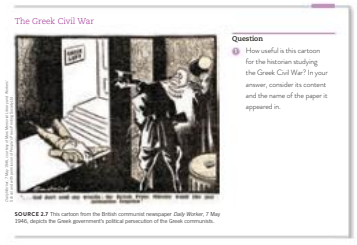
feature brief biographies, profiles, definitions and summaries of key documents as a ready reference for learning and revision.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

are listed at the start of the chapter. These questions provide a focus for you as you read each chapter.

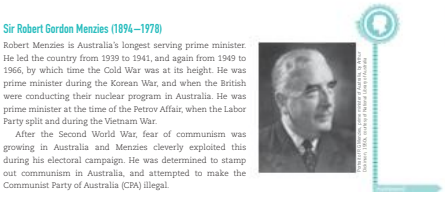
CHAPTER INTRODUCTIONS

provide a context to the issues that are addressed.



SOURCE STUDIES

of visual and text primary sources and secondary literature appear frequently throughout the text and are combined with questions and activities to aid your evaluation and interpretation of evidence from the past.



SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

are biographical profiles and assessments of key historical figures and frequently include questions and activities.

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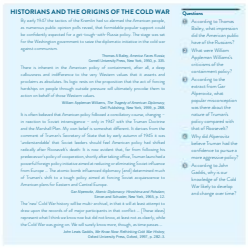
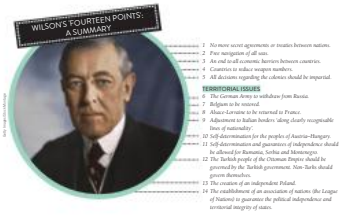
INFORMATION BOXES

contain extended discussions of key events, concepts and historical developments. Many also include questions and activities.



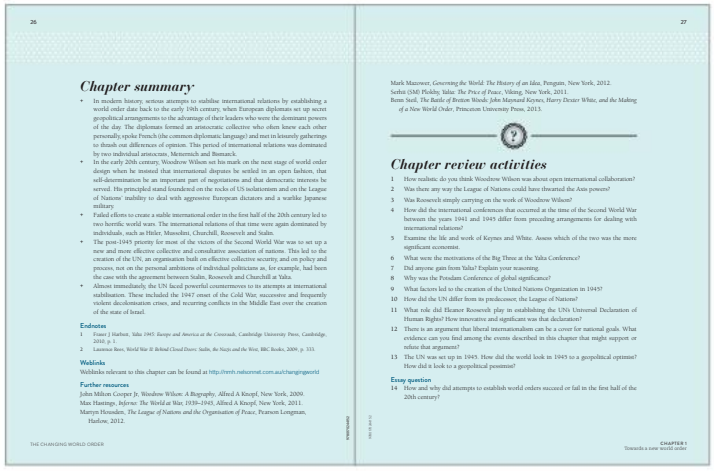
HISTORIAN BOXES

introduce key historians and schools of interpretation as a way of making historiography clearer.



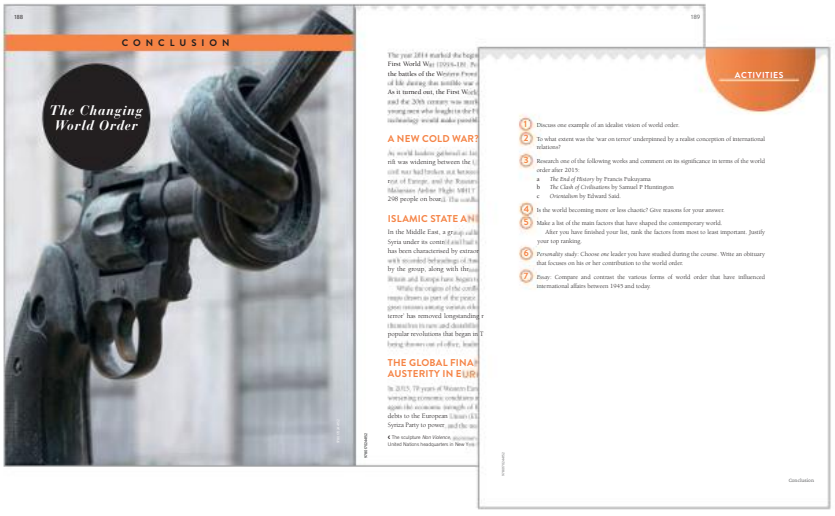
DIAGRAMS AND TALKING SOURCES

are used to visually summarise complex ideas and events.



CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CHAPTER REVIEW ACTIVITIES

conclude each chapter. They include a brief precis of the topic, suggestions for further reading, and a range of learning activities that consolidate knowledge and understanding of the chapter's content. These tasks incorporate a range of historical understandings and skills.



THE CONCLUSION

summarises the topic and includes a series of activities to consolidate your knowledge of it. More importantly, these final tasks will help you build an understanding and interpretation of this period in history.

Beyond this book

The Nelson Modern History series includes numerous titles on a range of topics covered in senior History courses around Australia. For further information about the series visit: **www.nelsonsecondary.com.au.**

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SERIES EDITOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Studying modern world history is a fascinating and exciting activity for several reasons. The first of these is our closeness to the modern past. All of us who live today are in direct contact with recent and contemporary history. For example, teachers who use this book might have had grandparents who experienced, in different ways, the events of the Second World War. Students who read this book will probably have grandparents who lived through the Swinging Sixties in Australia. Other students who come from more recently arrived migrant families will have stories to tell about significant historical events from their former homeland.

And when it comes to topicality, the study of modern history is also the study of events that directly affect the way we live today. For instance, the work of 18th-century Scottish philosopher Adam Smith is still being used by 21st-century politicians to underpin their economic policies. Further, the activities of feminist and civil rights activists in the 1960s have altered the way the international community and contemporary societies deal with their citizens. And the shadow of two world wars still impinges upon the collective memories of dozens of nations, often leading to confusion between commemoration of the past, celebration of long-ago endeavours and what this book is about, the pursuit of investigative history.

The study of the modern past is exciting too because when it comes to investigating the late 19th, the 20th and the 21st centuries we can use graphic visual and auditory evidence that brings us close to a fuller realisation of how life was lived then and how the people we are researching looked and sounded. While these new sources of evidence can and do bring a freshness to our understanding of the past, they also demand new techniques of historical investigation.

Finally, the study of modern history, which is, to use historian Pieter Geyl's term, 'an argument without end', is often more intense than other forms of history because of our closeness to the events. This means that, even though conclusions may be passionately expressed, a carefully tempered and dispassionate approach to studying controversial events needs to be employed in the formulation of an historical explanation.

Having said all of that, enjoy your study of modern history.

Tony Taylor
Series editor

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Brad Kelly

I would like to thank Cengage's hard-working editorial and publishing team, in particular Senior Editor, Robyn Beaver and Editor, Astrid Judge, as well as the diligent permissions, design and production teams, all of whom played a vital part in the production of this volume. A special vote of thanks goes to Senior Publishing Editor, Michael Spurr, for his constant encouragement, ceaseless support and all-round publishing wisdom.

Tony Taylor

Writing any book requires a collective effort on the part of many people, and that is never truer than for a History text. I am grateful to Michael Spurr at Nelson Cengage for taking the leap of faith in approaching me to write this book – I hope his faith has not been misplaced.

Tony Taylor's oversight of the entire series has been one of clarity and judiciousness; it is a pleasure to contribute to a project overseen by such a respected educator. Thanks to Astrid Judge and Robyn Beaver for their work on the manuscript. I am indebted also to the many academics, teachers and publishers who have read the drafts of the manuscript, and have helped me approach the various topics with confidence.

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Ashley Wood

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THE CHANGING WORLD ORDER

The 20th century and, indeed, the first years of the 21st century, have been characterised by conflict and by changing and competing visions of the world order. Competing ideas about how society should be organised – ranging from fascism to liberal democracy, communism and, more recently, religious fundamentalism – have shaped and influenced the relationships between nations and blocs of nations. Political leaders have repeatedly attempted to dominate the global stage in order to bring stability to an often chaotic world, albeit an order shaped by their ideological priorities.

One of the first attempts to establish a new international order in the 20th century was made after the First World War, by President Woodrow Wilson of the United States. In 1919, to avoid future wars, Wilson established the League of Nations. In many ways the Wilsonian order was an idealist's vision for the world. In it, all nations would enjoy their own sovereignty, and conflict would be averted through collective security. But Wilson's attempt to create a new world order failed. Within 20 years, a second world war had begun. Hitler's Germany and Imperial Japan unleashed a wave of destruction on the world; there were human rights atrocities and loss of life on a scale never before imagined. The Atlantic Charter of 1941, agreed to by the American president Franklin Roosevelt and the British prime minister Winston Churchill, drew on the Wilsonian model by envisaging a democratic world in which conflict was resolved in the context of international diplomacy and collective security; this ran counter to the Axis powers' new vision of world order. The trauma of the Second World War created the will to pursue a new world order led by the United Nations and shaped by the economic protocols of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement. But fundamental disagreements about how to organise the postwar world culminated in the breakdown of the relationships between the victorious powers, in particular the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States.

This breakdown, resulting from fundamental ideological differences and deep mistrust, led to the Cold War, which began to emerge in 1945 and ended in 1991. During this period the competition between the world's two superpowers, the United States and the USSR, was played out across the globe, often under a threat of nuclear confrontation.

However, signs of cooperation in other parts of the world were more encouraging and endured beyond the end of the Cold War. The Western European countries laid aside the virulent nationalism of the past and opted for greater economic and political cooperation. The European Economic Community would bring greater stability to Europe and economic prosperity for all its citizens. The United Nations was much more effective than its League of Nations predecessor and, as well as providing the institutions and processes for working towards international peace and cooperation, it was involved in peacekeeping operations in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

By the end of 2015, though, a stable and peaceful world order was still stubbornly elusive. The rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and the American-led 'war on terror' had contributed to a protracted conflict for which there was no end in sight. A new type of conflict waged along ethnic and religious lines, instead of being based on rivalries between nation states, was forcing world leaders to once again rethink their conceptions of world order.

‹ A scene from the play *A Nite at the Trojan War*, by John Drinkwater, as performed at the Great Festival of Youth in London for the League of Nations Union, an organisation established to promote the ideals of the League of Nations.

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KEY FIGURES AND ORGANISATIONS

OSAMA BIN LADEN (1957–2011)

Saudi Arabian, Islamic militant who founded Al Qaeda. Son of a building magnate born in Yemen, Bin Laden studied in Saudi Arabia and became a fierce advocate of Islamic purity. In the 1980s he financed and organised militants to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. In the 1990s he turned his attention to fighting against the US presence and influence in the Middle East and elsewhere.

LEONID BREZHNEV (1906–1982)

Leader of the Soviet Union from 1964 to 1982. He served as a political commissar in the Red Army during the Second World War, rising to become a party official after the war. He succeeded Khrushchev as General Secretary of the Communist Party, ruling the USSR until his death. During Brezhnev's rule the Soviet economy slowed to near stagnation. Many of the problems facing the USSR in the 1980s developed during Brezhnev's 18-year term.

GEORGE HW BUSH (1924–)

Born in Massachusetts, Republican president George Bush Senior served as a pilot in the Pacific theatre during the Second Word War, before founding and establishing a successful family oil business in Texas. He entered politics in the 1950s. Bush succeeded Reagan as president in 1989, serving two terms, until 1993.

GEORGE W BUSH (1946–)

Son of George HW Bush. Former governor of Texas and owner of oil businesses. He was president of the United States from 2001 to 2009. He led the US in its campaigns against Al Qaeda and Iraq.

ARTHUR CALWELL (1896–1973)

Calwell served as the Chifley government's Immigration Minister from 1945 to 1949, during the immediate postwar migration period. From 1960 to 1967 he was leader of the Australian Labor Party in opposition to Menzies. He was an outspoken opponent of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War and in 1966 became the only Australian politician to be the victim of an assassination attempt, in which he suffered only minor injuries.

WINSTON CHURCHILL (1874–1965)

British prime minister from 1940 to 1945. As Britain's main wartime prime minister, Churchill became known for his dogged leadership of Britain. He was strongly anti-Soviet in his outlook.

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DENG XIAOPING (1904–1997)

Low-key but astute leader of China during the 1980s and 1990s. Led a cautiously reformist government that changed China's economic, social and diplomatic attitudes.

DWIGHT EISENHOWER (1890–1969)

Military leader and, from 1952 to 1961, the 34th president of the United States. Eisenhower was Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe in the last years of the Second World War and the commander of NATO forces in Europe from 1950. His popularity led him to the presidency in 1952, and to re-election in 1956. He played a key role in ending the Korean War in 1953 but continued to adhere to the policy of containment and a belief in the domino theory.

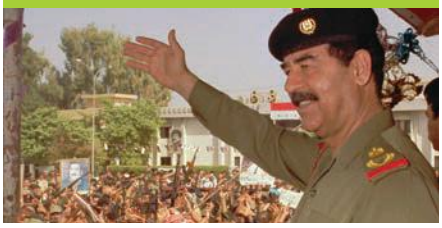
HERBERT VERE EVATT (1894–1965)

Australian judge and politician. He was a justice of the High Court of Australia for 10 years, from 1930 to 1940. He entered federal politics and served as Minister for External Affairs during the 1940s. He was appointed the third president of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and he served as leader of the Australian Labor Party from 1951 to 1960.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV (1931–)

Leader of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991. Gorbachev was a committed communist whose policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, which were designed to strengthen Soviet communism, had the unintended consequence of destroying it.

SADDAM HUSSEIN (1937–2006)



Brutal dictator of Iraq from 1979 to 2003. He organised the nationalisation of the Iraqi oil industry in 1972 and involved his nation in costly wars against Iran and Kuwait.

JOHN F KENNEDY (1917–1963)

The 35th president of the United States. Played a key role in the Cold War through his dealings with Khrushchev over Berlin and during the Cuban Missile crisis. Kennedy was concerned that the Soviets were in a strong position to gain territory in the Third World and he oversaw a build-up of armed forces. He was politically embarrassed by the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961 and took a more cautious approach during the Cuban crisis the following year. He was assassinated in November 1963.

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV (1894–1971)

Leader of the Soviet Union from 1955 to 1964. He was a member of the Communist Party from 1918 and fought in both the Russian Civil War and the Second World War. His denunciation of Stalin in 1956 led to hopes of an easing of Cold War tensions, but tensions with the US reached their peak over the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Khrushchev's failure to improve the Soviet economy led to him being deposed in 1964 and replaced by Brezhnev.

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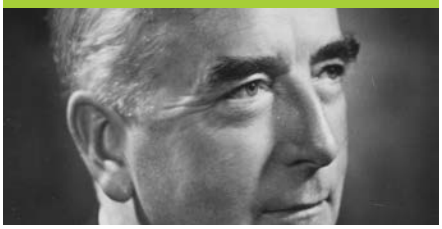
ROBERT MENZIES (1894–1978)



Australian politician and prime minister from 1939 to 1941 and from 1949 to 1966. Menzies first entered the Victorian parliament in 1928 and moved to federal politics six years later. He was strongly anti-communist and actively pursued the commitments outlined in the SEATO and ANZUS treaties to protect Australia and its region from communist insurgency. Menzies oversaw a period of economic growth and prosperity in Australia.

RICHARD NIXON (1913–1994)

The 37th president of the United States. Nixon was elected to the House of Representatives in 1946 and he played an active role in HUAC (the House Un-American Activities Committee). He served as vice president under Eisenhower for two terms and lost the 1960 presidential election to Kennedy. He won in 1968 and went on to enjoy diplomatic success with both China and the Soviet Union, but he was forced to resign after the Watergate affair in 1974.

RONALD REAGAN (1911–2004)

President of the United States from 1980 to 1988. Reagan came to power as a tough anti-communist who was determined to undermine the Soviets at every turn.

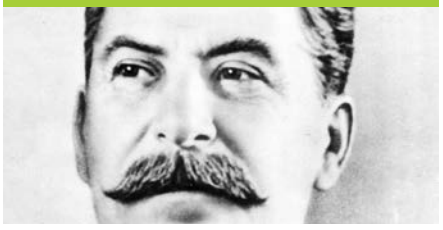
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT (1884–1962)

First Lady of the United States from 1933 to 1945; high-profile diplomat and humanitarian activist. Roosevelt was appointed as the US delegate to the UN Human Rights Commission and she was first chair of the commission from 1946 to 1951. Globally acknowledged as an influential political operator in her own right, she served as an American delegate to the UN General Assembly (1945–53), chaired the UN's Human Rights Commission, and played a key role in writing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT (1882–1945)

Served a successive four terms as US president, from 1932 to 1944. Roosevelt was president through most of the Great Depression and most of the Second World War. During the Great Depression he was the architect of the US government's interventionist New Deal program (1933–39). During the Second World War he formed a strong personal bond with imperialist British prime minister Winston Churchill, although Roosevelt was committed to ending British colonial rule after the war.

JOSEPH STALIN (1879–1953)



Leader of the USSR. He was both secretary-general of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1922–53) and premier of the Soviet state (1941–53). Stalin was a ruthless dictator and, by the 1930s, an obsessed paranoiac who distrusted his Western allies. His aim late in the war was to Sovietise eastern Europe and turn it into a Soviet-controlled buffer zone against the West.

This page, clockwise from top left: Portrait of R. G. Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia, by Arthur Dickinson, 1950s, courtesy of National Library of Australia; Alamy/GL Archive; Corbis; Alamy/MARKA

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HARRY S TRUMAN (1884–1972)

President of the United States from 1945 to 1953. Truman came to the presidency after the death of Roosevelt in April 1945. He steered the US through the final months of the war and the early stages of the Cold War.

GOUGH WHITLAM (1916–2014)

Australian prime minister from 1972 to 1975. He first entered politics in 1952 and led the Australian Labor Party from 1967 to 1977, and in 1972 to its first federal election victory since 1949. His administration recognised communist China and withdrew the last Australian troops from Vietnam. He was controversially dismissed in 1975 and later became Australia's ambassador to UNESCO.

WOODROW WILSON (1856–1924)

Born in the US state of Virginia, Wilson was an austere, principled and stubborn man. He began his career as an academic in 1888 and became president of Princeton University, in 1902. He entered politics in 1911 and was elected president of the US in 1912. It was Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' speech in 1918 that paved the way for the establishment of the League of Nations (1920–46). During Wilson's second term as president, in 1920, American women became eligible to vote.

AL QAEDA

Established by Osama bin Laden in the 1980s, as a network to support militant Islamists who were fighting against the Soviets in the Afghan war. During the 1990s Al Qaeda evolved into an international network of anti-Western Islamist terrorist organisations. Responsible for the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September 2001, Al Qaeda was identified as a key target during the 'war on terror'. With the death of Bin Laden in 2011 its influence diminished but the network was still active in 2015.

AXIS POWERS

The alliance of Germany, Japan and Italy that fought against the Allied forces during the Second World War.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA)

The main US foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence agency, set up in 1947 principally as a Cold War operation. The CIA's poor liaison with other intelligence agencies such as the FBI was criticised in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, and may have contributed to the events of that day.

'COALITION OF THE WILLING'

A coalition of nations actively supporting the US military campaign against Saddam Hussein, which was not backed by the United Nations. The expression 'coalition of the willing' was first used by George W Bush in 2002; it is generally regarded by critics as a cover term for the US's intervention in Iraq in 2003.

CONGRESS PARTY OF INDIA

Formally the Indian National Congress, this political party played a leading role in the establishment of an independent India in 1947, and remains the dominant political party in India.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Since 1993 an international organisation of European states that share common economic, security and social policies. Based in Brussels. The EU is the successor to the European Economic Community, which was also called the European Common Market.

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LEAGUE OF NATIONS (1920–1946)

A voluntary association of states that aimed to set up a collective security arrangement and avoid repetition of the kind of breakdown in international relations that had led to the First World War. American president Woodrow Wilson strongly supported the formation of the League. His ideas about international relations represented a 'New World' solution to what many in America saw as imperialist, 'Old World' problems.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

Established in April 1949 as a permanent military alliance between Western European countries, the United States and Canada. It was initially established to deter Soviet expansion. The NATO alliance has remained active since the end of the Cold War and membership has expanded to include former Warsaw Pact states. In the 1990s NATO deployed forces in the Balkans and in 2003 it deployed forces in Afghanistan.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA TREATY ORGANIZATION (SEATO)

A Cold War era alliance between Australia, Great Britain, the United States, France, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan. Established in 1954 to coordinate anti-communist responses in the South-East Asian region. Dissolved in 1977.

TALIBAN

Fundamentalist Islamic group that originated in Afghanistan. It moved into the political gap left by the USSR's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 to take over almost all of Afghanistan by 2001. Driven from power in Afghanistan after 2001 by a US-led coalition, the Taliban remains active in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

UNITED NATIONS (UN)

The term 'United Nations' initially described the 26 Allied nations fighting the Axis states during the Second World War. This military alliance evolved into the United Nations Organization in 1945. It was the successor to the League of Nations. The Charter of the UN defines the organisation's role. This encompasses peacekeeping, and also includes the promotion of human rights, economic development, humanitarian programs and international law. Today there are 193 member nations in the UN.

WARSAW PACT

A Cold War era military alliance of European communist states. Established in 1955 and dissolved in 1991. Member states included the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Albania (which withdrew in 1968).

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KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Balance of power
An arrangement in which different states have a more or less equal military capability; it acts as a deterrent to conflict by preventing more powerfully resourced nations from inflicting their will on other states.

Bipolarity
In geopolitics, an international system in which there are two dominant and competing major world powers (compare *unipolarity* and *multi-polarity*).

Brezhnev Doctrine
A principle of Soviet foreign policy in the Cold War period, outlined by Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in 1968. The doctrine stated that when there was a threat to communist unity in the Eastern bloc, the individual nation's rights were less important than those of the broader communist community, and the USSR would intervene militarily against the anti-communist force.

Capitalism
An economic system in which trade and industries are owned and controlled by private enterprise for profit.

Collective security
An agreement between states that an aggressor against any one state is an aggressor against all.

Comecon
The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, an economic organisation from 1949 to 1991. It was the Eastern bloc equivalent of the Marshall Plan.

Communism
A political ideology that emerged from the writings of Karl Marx. It proposes a social and economic system of collective, state ownership of the means of production, industry and infrastructure, in which the benefits of production are distributed among citizens.

Containment
The American policy of checking the expansion of Soviet communism through economic aid, military intervention or diplomacy.

De-Stalinisation
Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's regime during the 20th Party Congress in 1956 initiated a period of de-Stalinisation in which criticism of Stalin, the former leader, was accepted. However, criticism of the Communist Party or of communism in general was still not permitted.

Détente
From French, meaning 'relaxation'. Used in relation to the Cold War to refer to the easing of tensions between the USSR and the US between 1968 and 1979.

Disarmament
In international relations, a process in which nations reduce their nuclear and conventional weapons, often by holding high-level talks and making agreements with other countries.

Domino theory
An American and Western theory about how communism spread from nation to nation. When one nation 'fell' to communism others around it would gradually become unable to resist its influence and would also fall to communism, like dominos, one by one. The theory was prevalent during the 1950s and 1960s.

Foreign policy
A sovereign state's policy on dealings with other states and foreign entities, normally in pursuit of its national interests.

Geopolitical
Applying an analysis of geographical and economic processes to international relations and politics.

Glasnost
Russian, meaning 'publicity, openness, transparency'. Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* involved openness and the promotion of greater transparency in the Soviet government.

Great Powers
A diplomatic term, which when applied in modern history normally refers to the major imperial powers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries – such as Britain, Germany and Russia. The Great Powers were able to use military, diplomatic and economic strength to influence international affairs, generally on a regional scale. They rose and fell as their strengths in these three areas waxed and waned.

Idealism
In international relations, the striving of a nation or leader towards ideals, or ideas of how things ought to be; foreign policy that is based on ideals such as human rights or the welfare of all nations. Compare *realism*.

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Islamist
A term generally used in the West to describe Islamic militants.

Isolationist
In foreign policy, a position that favours non-involvement in international affairs; more recently categorised by some as unilateralism.

Liberal internationalism
A modern-era view that on the one hand follows classical liberal economic doctrine (free markets, limited government, human rights and the rule of law) and on the other argues that international intervention to preserve or support liberal democracies is justified.

Marshall Plan
The American program to make US$15 billion available to European nations to support economic recovery after the Second World War.

Mujahidin
Arabic, plural, meaning 'those engaged in *jihad* (frequently and controversially translated as "holy war")'. The term in the context of this book is applied to Muslim fighters funded by the US and other states to resist the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989.

Multipolarity
In geopolitics, an arrangement in which there are many competing powers and forces.

Non-alignment
During the Cold War, a doctrine by which some nations actively avoided taking sides with one or other of the superpowers.

Ostpolitik
German, meaning 'eastern policy'. The West German attempt to normalise relations with the Soviet bloc.

Peaceful coexistence
Khrushchev's Cold War era policy that stressed the need for the Soviet Union and US to avoid armed conflict.

Perestroika
Russian, meaning 'restructuring'; Gorbachev's policy of introducing limited market reforms into the Soviet economy after 1986.

Rapprochement
The attempt to normalise relations between two nations; such as that made by China and the US in the 1970s.

Reagan Doctrine
The commitment by the US to support anti-communist resistance groups, especially in Central America; formulated by President Reagan.

Realism
In international relations, a nation's acting in accordance with its own interests – economic, diplomatic or military – and in the context of geopolitical events. Sometimes referred to as *Realpolitik* (German, meaning 'practical politics') or pragmatism. Compare *idealism*.

Rollback
An aggressive US policy that aimed not merely to contain communism but also to force it to recede and retreat. The invasion of North Korea by UN troops in 1950 was an example of rollback.

'Shock and awe'
A military technique that involved applying maximum force at the opening of a campaign, in order to overpower the enemy and gain a quick victory.

Sphere of influence
The region over which a powerful state can exercise some control, for security or economic purposes.

'Star Wars'
The nickname for the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), a plan formulated by US president Ronald Reagan to launch a defensive missile shield into space.

Superpower
A nation that has the greatest capacity to influence political, economic and military affairs on a global scale. During the Cold War era, the US and the USSR were the world's two superpowers.

Terrorism
The use of extreme violence by groups or individuals, or the threat of such violence, in an attempt to gain a particular goal, such as the destabilisation and destruction of a ruling authority.

'The surge'
In 2007, during the Iraq War, a US military strategy that involved saturating key areas with large deployments of troops, in order to make non-insurgent Iraqis feel secure enough to play a part in an embryonic Iraqi democratic process.

Unipolarity
In geopolitics, an arrangement in which there is only one dominant power.

Vietnamisation
Nixon's policy by which the United States would hand over the responsibility of fighting the war in Vietnam to the South Vietnamese. This would allow the US to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, yet achieve what Nixon called 'peace with honour'.

Weapons of mass destruction
Armaments (usually nuclear, chemical or biological weapons) that can cause indiscriminate death and destruction on a massive scale.

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KEY DOCUMENTS

Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' (1918)

The US president Woodrow Wilson gave a persuasive and historically significant address to Congress on 8 January 1918, nine months after he had agreed for the US to enter the First World War. In this address he made the moral case in support of the US joining the war. He also outlined his 'Fourteen Points', which represented his proposal for a postwar peace settlement. Wilson regarded his 'Fourteen Points' as a 'New World' solution to the imperial 'Old World' problems that had begun the war. The 'Fourteen Points' would become the foundational principles of the League of Nations.

Covenant of the League of Nations (1919)

The Covenant of the League of Nations defined the role and functions of the League of Nations, an international organisation of the interwar period. Signed by member nations, it committed each to promote international cooperation in order to secure peace and security.

Charter of the United Nations (26 June 1945)

First signed by the original member nations of the United Nations in 1945. Today signed by most countries in the world. The charter defines the role and structures of the UN. Its preamble notes the aims of the UN: preventing war, affirming human rights, establishing a system of international law, and promoting social progress and improved standards of living through international cooperation. Subsequent sections of the document outline the roles of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Secretariat and other subsidiary institutions. While criticised as being too idealistic, too global in its scope and largely unenforceable, the UN Charter was designed as an improvement on the Covenant of the League of Nations (1919).

Bretton Woods Agreements Act 1945

This US Act was a follow-up to decisions made at the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944. Passed by the US Congress in July 1945, it allowed the US to enter the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank when they officially came into existence in December that year. Implementation of the Act marked the beginning of American domination of global financial arrangements.

Kennan's 'Long Telegram' (1946)

George F Kennan's 'Long Telegram' was sent from the US embassy in Moscow in 22 February 1946. It painted a picture of the Soviets as inherently aggressive and expansionist, and became an influential document within the US Department of State.

Winston Churchill's 'Sinews of Peace' speech (1946)

In this speech, given on 5 March 1946 in Missouri, Churchill reflected on the post Second World War world order; he also described his view of the Soviet threat.

The Novikov Telegram (1946)

In response to Kennan's 'Long Telegram', the Soviet ambassador in Washington, Nikolai Novikov, provided an interpretation of his own on US foreign policy aims, in a telegram sent on 27 September 1946.

Khrushchev's 'Secret Speech' (1956)

In this speech, delivered to the 20th Communist Party Congress in February 1956, Khrushchev denounced Stalin as a tyrant and recognised the right of Soviet satellite states to find their own path to socialism.

George HW Bush's 'State of the Union' address (1991)

President HW Bush delivered his 'State of the Union' address before a joint session of the US Congress on 29 January 1991. His speech reflected on the military situation in Iraq and in the wider world as well as on domestic American policy. It discusses the idea of a new world order being established after the Cold War.

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CHAPTER ONE

Towards a new world order

The term 'world order' has been loosely used since the 20th century by politicians and other commentators attempting to explain the motivations behind globally based activities through which certain nations have tried to dominate world politics, either on their own or in alliances with others. International power plays in the 20th century and in the first decade of the 21st century have had various motivations. Some players, such as Britain, have been driven by imperialist ambitions and interest in the exploitation of the natural and human resources of other lands. The actions of others, such as the Soviet Union, have been repressive, and aimed to impose totalitarian political systems within and beyond their own borders. Finally, other organisations, such as the United Nations, have had progressive motivations for influencing world order, and have attempted to support international development and hold back the advances of aggressive nations, even attempting to prevent international conflict.

This chapter introduces the concept of world order. It provides an overview of attempts to establish international systems in the first half of the 20th century and explores the challenges inherent in these attempts. More specifically it considers the establishment of the League of Nations, the Axis threat to that system of international collaboration, and the formation of new international institutions, such as the United Nations, at the end of the Second World War.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

+ What is a world order?
+ How and why did attempts to establish world orders succeed or fail in the first half of the 20th century?

‹ Dr Nagai, a medical instructor and X-ray specialist at Nagasaki Hospital, was a victim of atomic radiation caused by the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. Here, he surveys the charred ruins of the city. He died a few days after this photo was taken.

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What is a 'world order'?

geopolitical
Applying an analysis of geographical and economic processes to international relations and politics

What we call a 'world order' varies from time to time and from place to place. A world order is often seen as a grouping of nations or of **geopolitical** bodies that operates at a global rather than a national level. The grouping may have arisen for political, ideological, military, economic, social or religious reasons, or for any mixture of these. For example, the Great Powers depicted in Source 1.1 came together temporarily in 1900 to carve up a helpless China, but by 1914 most of them were at each other's throats.

'The real trouble will come with the "wake"'

Getty Images/Fotosearch

SOURCE 1.1 Joseph Keppler, 'The real trouble will come with the "wake"', *Puck*, 15 August 1900

This famous satirical image was published in the US in 1900. It depicts disorderly and ruthless Great Powers at work, and shows a Japanese leopard, a Russian bear, a British lion, a French rooster, a German eagle, an Austrian double-headed eagle and an Italian fox arguing over how to carve up the corpse of a Chinese dragon. The US eagle stands watchfully aloof. The image represents the evils of unrestrained foreign policy, nationalism and imperialism. These were underlying factors in the two world wars that followed later in the 20th century. The wars eventually led to the creation of a United Nations world order in 1945.

Questions

1. Why do you think the United States is represented in the cartoon as standing aloof from the corpse of China?
2. What does the title of the artwork mean?
3. What does this cartoon suggest about the nature of international relations?

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Historical instances of world orders include the ancient world's *Pax Romana* (Roman peace), which lasted from Augustus' reign (27 BCE – 14 CE) until Marcus Aurelius' death in 180 CE. Under the *Pax Romana*, Mediterranean, African, Middle Eastern and western European societies came under the protection of a single patron, the Roman Empire, for just over 200 years.

The powerful Ottoman or Turkish Empire is a medieval and early modern example of an enforced world order that affected North Africa, Asia and southern Europe (its peak years were 1299–1697 CE).

An early modern European order was set up by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the horrendous Thirty Years War (1618–48) in Europe. This treaty attempted to establish a balance of power arrangement in which a group of states would share a more or less equal military capability that would act as a deterrent to a more powerfully resourced nation inflicting its will on any other state.

The Concert of Europe was an informal 19th-century, multinational world order involving the major European nations at that time, the so-called 'Great Powers' of Austria, Prussia, France, Russia and Great Britain. The Great Powers had suffered as a consequence of the French Revolution and the subsequent rise of Napoleon, and they combined through the Concert of Europe and its consequent 1815 Congress of Vienna to impose an anti-radical peace settlement on European powers large and small. This period of international relations from 1814 to 1890 was dominated by two aristocrats – the Austrian diplomat Prince Klemens von Metternich and the Prussian chancellor Prince Otto von Bismarck – and each was a peacemaker, of a sort.

An objective of the Concert of Europe was to preserve respect for monarchical rule and traditional order. According to British historian Mark Mazower, these aims were given priority over equality and justice. This settlement was to be managed by keeping a balance of power through diplomatic congresses, or meetings. It worked, more or less, for more than half a century. The so-called 'Congress System', as it came to be known, is still regarded as something of a success because many of the members knew each other, they had a common goal and they took their time to reach decisions. But there were distractions at the congresses too. The US historian Fraser J Harbutt has noted that members 'wined, dined, and seduced their way through about a year of spasmodic activity'.[1]

The Congress System formed the basis of 19th-century collaboration in Europe. But it collapsed, as the Great Powers became involved in rivalries during the late 19th century. These rivalries led to toxic relations between Britain, France and Russia on the one side, and Germany and Austria–Hungary on the other, which ultimately led to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

liberal internationalism
A modern-era view that on the one hand follows classical liberal economic doctrine (free markets, limited government, human rights, and the rule of law) and on the other argues that international intervention to preserve or support liberal democracies is justified

World orders of the early 20th century

To bring the idea of a world order into the 20th century, let's consider how US president Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924), who was an early proponent of **liberal internationalism**, outlined his 'Fourteen Points' in 1918. These ideas represented a 'New World' solution to what political and popular **isolationist** opinion in the United States saw as imperialist 'Old World' problems – problems that had dragged the US into an unwanted and distant conflict in 1917. Wilson was instrumental in creating the League of Nations (1920–46),

isolationist
In foreign policy, a position that favours non-involvement in international affairs; more recently categorised by some as unilateralism. Used to describe the US's hostile position towards involvement in the two world wars being waged outside its borders

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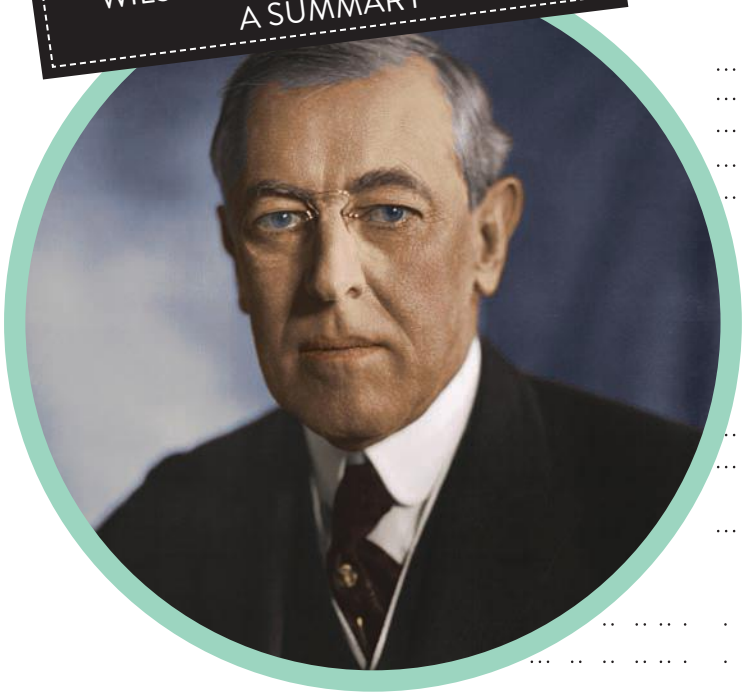
collective security
An agreement between states that an aggressor against any one state is an aggressor against all

a voluntary association of states that aimed to avoid a repetition of the kinds of breakdowns in international relations that had led to the First World War in 1914. The League planned to set up a **collective security** arrangement to further its aims. Isolationist opinion, however, blocked US membership of the League. After some initial success in the 1920s with minor international crises, the League failed in the 1930s mainly because it lacked US involvement, its sanctions policy against delinquent states was a failure, it had no way of militarily enforcing its resolutions and it came up against the ruthless militaristic and expansionist regimes of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan. After Wilson left office he died a disillusioned man.

WILSON'S 'FOURTEEN POINTS': A SUMMARY



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1. *No more secret agreements or treaties between nations.*
2. *Free navigation of all seas.*
3. *An end to all economic barriers between countries.*
4. *Countries to reduce weapon numbers.*
5. *All decisions regarding the colonies should be impartial.*

TERRITORIAL ISSUES

6. *The German Army to withdraw from Russia.*
7. *Belgium to be restored.*
8. *Alsace-Lorraine to be returned to France.*
9. *Adjustment to Italian borders 'along clearly recognisable lines of nationality'.*
10. *Self-determination for the peoples of Austria–Hungary.*
11. *Self-determination and guarantees of independence should be allowed for Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro.*
12. *The Turkish people of the Ottoman Empire should be governed by the Turkish government. Non-Turks should govern themselves.*
13. *The creation of an independent Poland.*
14. *The establishment of an association of nations (the League of Nations) to guarantee the political independence and territorial integrity of states.*

After the 1939 outbreak of the Second World War, continuing isolationist, anti-war sentiment in the US did not prevent President Franklin Delano Roosevelt from giving moral and material support to Britain's prime minister, Winston Churchill. This backing was to turn into an actual alliance when Japanese imperial forces attacked US and British naval and land forces in December 1941.

Roosevelt's armed services, Churchill's imperial forces and the armed forces of Stalin's USSR were to become the chief members of the Allied Powers (who would later found the United Nations). The Allied Powers were the bulwark of resistance against the combined Axis forces from 1941 onwards. After startlingly successful beginnings on all fronts, the Axis powers were, by 1943, facing defeat: the Allied Powers began to prepare for a postwar world.

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Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945)


Corbis

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was president of the US for an unprecedented four terms, from 1931 to 1945. Roosevelt, who came from a genteel New York family, was related to former Republican president Theodore Roosevelt, but FDR, as he became known, was a socially progressive Democrat. He entered state politics in 1910 after a conventional education for a young man of his class (Harvard College and Columbia Law School). He had married his distant cousin Eleanor Roosevelt in 1905; she would later became a world-famous social reformer in her own right. But their relationship became more of an alliance than a marriage because of FDR's intermittent but long-term relationship with Eleanor's social secretary Lucy Mercer.

Disabled after a 1921 bout of poliomyelitis, Roosevelt defied the odds by staying on in politics and was eventually elected to the presidency in late 1931 on a ticket of 'a new deal for the American people'. Roosevelt, with the collaboration of the media, carefully concealed his paralysis from the public, and his success in steering his nation through the worst years of the Great Depression ensured his mass popularity and his first three consecutive terms in office. However, his New Deal economic interventionism was not popular with the Republicans, who saw it as a form of socialism.

Roosevelt's main foreign policy aims were to change the US's role in Latin America to that of a 'Good Neighbour' (instead of a meddling big brother); to support colonial self-determination and democracy; to alter the US's isolationist policy and to consider the militaristic and anti-democratic regimes of Germany and Japan as hostile to US interests. Between 1935 and 1939, Roosevelt was hampered in that last regard after Congress passed five isolationist Neutrality Acts. As the Second World War ground on, Roosevelt took personal initiatives, such as instigating the March 1941 Lend-Lease Act, which got around the US's official policy of neutrality by allowing arms and any other war materials to be sent to the government of any country whose defence the president considered was 'vital' to the defence of the US. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and when Germany declared war on the US in late 1941, US neutrality was no longer an option.

Winston Spencer Churchill (1874–1965)


Corbis

Winston Spencer Churchill came from an aristocratic English family, though his mother was American. After a miserable childhood and an unhappy and undistinguished school career, he entered military college where he excelled, becoming a combined soldier–journalist in Britain's colonial wars of the 1890s. Churchill then entered politics as a Conservative in 1900. Switching parties, he joined the Liberals in 1904, becoming a social reformer. In 1908 he married Clementine Hozier, a clever society beauty with firm views. Their marriage, which had a few

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continued

ups and downs, was long-lasting and affectionate, with 'Clemmie' stoically supportive of a husband who was highly opinionated, as well as a drinker and a gambler.

During the First World War, as First Sea Lord (minister of the navy), Churchill supported the disastrous Dardanelles campaign. He was heavily criticised for this, and resigned in 1915, rejoining the army. But he returned to politics in 1916 to become War Minister in 1919. It was during the period from 1900 to 1919 that Churchill developed an intense and lasting hostility to German nationalism and a hatred of Bolshevism. Churchill oversaw Britain's part in the muddled and failed Allied anti-Bolshevik military intervention in northern Russia, from 1918 to 1920. During the 1920s and 1930s, Churchill was in and out of office, with a reputation as a talented, erratic, impatient Liberal (later again Conservative), anti-socialist champion of the British Empire. He took to writing, painting and bricklaying as sidelines, becoming a rich and successful author, with painting and bricklaying as his therapeutic activities. During the 1930s, Churchill adapted his loathing for German nationalism into a public hatred for Nazism; he was a lone voice warning his colleagues and the nation that Hitler's ambitions were contrary to British interests. Coming at a time when his more conservative colleagues saw Hitler as a check against Bolshevism, he received little support. This was to change in 1939 on the outbreak of war, and Conservative prime minister Neville Chamberlain appointed Churchill as First Sea Lord, much to Roosevelt's satisfaction. Roosevelt cabled Churchill his congratulations, and this was the start of a close correspondence that formed the basis of their strong personal alliance in years to come. Chamberlain resigned as prime minister in May 1940 after military setbacks in Norway and France. The popular Churchill was appointed to succeed him. In his first prime ministerial speech to the House of Commons on 13 May, Churchill famously promised the British people, 'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat'.

Although Churchill and Roosevelt got on very well, their opinions differed on colonialism and on the importance of keeping the USSR out of eastern Europe. Churchill was an adamant imperialist and a firm anti-communist. In July 1945, having neglected the internal organisation of the Conservative party during the war years and having handed over social policy to Labour politicians in the years of his wartime coalition (1940–45), Churchill was evicted from office in a landslide general election. He is generally remembered as a great wartime leader but a peacetime failure.

Facing an Allied victory, 1943 to 1944

In January 1943, Churchill, Roosevelt and the commander of the Free French Forces, General Charles de Gaulle, met in Casablanca, in French North Africa, to discuss, among other matters, the idea and terms of an unconditional surrender by the Axis powers. The Allies had come a long way from their shaky 1939–41 resistance to the Axis powers. The outcome of the Casablanca meeting was an uncompromising demand for **unconditional surrender** by the Axis powers, an idea Roosevelt had borrowed from Ulysses S Grant, a general in the American Civil War. Churchill was not so keen but went along with the idea, which absolutely cut out the possibility of anti-Hitler forces within Germany negotiating a conditional surrender.

unconditional surrender
Unqualified surrender in which no guarantees are offered by the victorious power(s)

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THE BRETTON WOODS CONFERENCE, 1944

A succession of strategic wartime meetings followed the Casablanca Conference, but it was not until the Bretton Woods Conference in the United States that serious planning about how to rearrange postwar international affairs and establish a stable postwar economic and financial system began – a new world order. The Bretton Woods Conference was held over 22 days in July 1944, at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. It was attended by representatives from 44 nations, including delegates from the anti-capitalist USSR. France, in the process of liberation, was not present.

Planning for this kind of international accord had actually started back in 1936 with a peacetime exchange of correspondence between English economist John Maynard Keynes and US Treasury official and liberal internationalist Harry Dexter White. Their exchange of ideas was followed by more intense planning from 1942–43, and by detailed agenda discussion in 1943–44.

The significance of the Bretton Woods strategy lay in its attempt to deal with the problems caused by the financial and economic meltdowns of the 1920s and the 1930s, including crises that had figured in the rise of Nazism in Germany. The League of Nations had failed in its attempts to deal with these kinds of politico-economic issues, and the Bretton Woods agreement attempted to remedy this failure by regulating global financial and economic systems. The Bretton Woods accord would, it was hoped, provide a secure platform for postwar international political, diplomatic and social stability.

The Bretton Woods document, drafted in the main by Keynes, aimed to set up a balanced economic and financial international environment, and attempted to block the early 20th-century trade restrictions and currency manipulations that had bedevilled worldwide trade, global finance and international diplomacy, particularly in the 1930s.

This agreement led first to a stabilised international system of monetary exchange linked to a US dollar that was tied to the gold standard. Second, the accord established an International Stabilisation Fund (which later became the International Monetary Fund); this would supervise exchange rates and, where necessary, provide loans to nations whose trade was in deficit. The third part of the agreement was to set up an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (later the World Bank); this would provide newly developing nations with growth capital. Each signatory to the accord was to provide a membership contribution proportionate to its economic and financial status. The Bretton Woods agreement was not perfect, nor was it lasting, nor was it universal in its application – and nor indeed was it all about principles.

Getty Images/Alfred Eisenstaedt/Time

SOURCE 1.2 John Maynard Keynes pictured (right) in discussion with US Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr, at the Mount Washington Hotel, during the Bretton Woods Conference

Corbis/Bettmann

SOURCE 1.3 Delegates in session at the Bretton Woods Conference, July 1944

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Perfect?

Keynes had wanted an international bank, to be called the International Clearing Union, which would give debtor nations an annual overdraft facility with interest charges. This system would have allowed debtor nations to avoid lasting trade imbalances, often the cause of national financial collapse. Keynes' scheme, although supported by the British government, was opposed by the American economist and treasury official Harry Dexter White. This was because the US was the world's largest creditor nation, and, under Keynes' scheme, it would have had to pay interest on a proportion of its credit balance. Instead, White argued for an International Stabilisation Fund. It would be focused mainly on opening up new markets to US trade, while Keynes' plan was based on Britain giving trade preferences to its imperial nations. The successor of the International Stabilisation Fund, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has since become a target of criticism for its allegedly coercive interference in the affairs of nations in crisis. According to Nobel prize-winning economist and former World Bank vice president Joseph Stiglitz, the IMF has, since the 1950s, created economic crises, destabilised the currencies of nations in crisis, made balance of payments problems worse, forced struggling nations into greater debt, damaged public service infrastructures and put tens of millions of people out of work.

Lasting?

Tying the US dollar to gold benefited the US economic and financial system at the expense of other nations until 1971 at least, when the US found itself in the middle of a financial and economic crisis. To protect an overvalued (gold-standard) US currency from demands by several foreign nations that their US dollar stocks should be exchanged for gold, President Richard Nixon, in what became known as his 'Nixon Shock' policy announcement, pulled the US out of the Bretton Woods system. The US then floated the dollar, forcing other nations to do the same. This effectively ended the financial platform on which the Bretton Woods agreement was based, although its other elements, the IMF and the World Bank, continue their work into the early 21st century, still with US support but enduring criticism from progressive, anti-interventionist commentators.

Universal?

As for the agreement having universal support, although the USSR was represented at the Bretton Woods Conference and it was a signatory to the draft agreement, in full Stalinist, uncooperative mode, it later opted out of both the IMF and the World Bank.

Principled?

On the face of it, the Bretton Woods agreement appeared to be an accord in which the US and Britain had combined to lead the way to help save the world from future economic and financial uncertainty. However, using recently discovered evidence, US historian Benn Steil argues that Roosevelt and his officials, including Harry Dexter White and the US delegation, were playing two games at once (financial and anti-imperialist) when they tied the dollar to gold, because this blocked the British pound sterling from resuming its former place as the US dollar's rival.

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Steil outlines his views in his book, published in 2013, titled *The Battle of Bretton Woods: John Maynard Keynes, Harry Dexter White, and the Making of a New World Order.* He argues that an arrogant Keynes was outmanoeuvred by US representatives. He summarises his views in a 2013 *Washington Post* interview:

> In the 1940s, after the war had started, the FDR administration is already thinking quite seriously about how Britain's impending bankruptcy can redound to the geopolitical benefit of the United States. They were thinking about how if we manage our financial aid to Britain carefully and control it tightly, we can get Britain through the war, but also simultaneously limit its room for maneuver in the postwar world. It was a conscious effort to force liquidation of the British empire after the war.
>
> Benn Steil, interview, *Washington Post,* 14 March 2013.

Following on from Bretton Woods there were discussions between August and early October 1944 about a new postwar version of the League of Nations. The Dumbarton Oaks meeting in Washington, DC, was attended by representatives of the 'Big Three' (the US, Britain and the USSR) and by nationalist China. France, still in the process of being liberated, was absent but was promised a seat in the new organisation's council.

THE YALTA CONFERENCE AND THE POSTWAR WORLD ORDER

In February 1945, the Big Three leaders met at an eight-day conference at the Livadia Palace in Yalta, in the Crimea. A frail Roosevelt (he died four months later), a suspicious and sidelined Churchill, and a self-assured Stalin were to form the postwar world order in a secret agreement. De Gaulle was not invited, on the advice of France's provisional foreign minister Georges Bidault. This actually suited de Gaulle since he distrusted the 'Anglo-Saxon' members of the Big Three, and could later absolve himself of any unpopular decisions that came out of the meeting. De Gaulle was anyway a notoriously difficult ally. Indeed, in private correspondence with Churchill, Roosevelt referred to him as 'well nigh intolerable' and Churchill said he was 'vain and even malignant'. De Gaulle's absence therefore suited at least two of the Big Three.

The gist of the secret Yalta arrangement for Germany was as follows. The former Nazi state was to be weakened by splitting it between the USSR and the West; the German people were to be provided with a subsistence living; what was left of German industry was to be destroyed or confiscated; war criminals were to be prosecuted; and central and eastern European nations were to be given the opportunity to elect representative governments. Stalin supported this latter move although he clearly had plans to dominate eastern and central European nations after their liberation.

When the Yalta agreement was finally published in 1946, its terms provoked an outburst of anger in Britain and in the US. It was alleged that eastern Europe (Poland featured heavily here) had been betrayed and handed over to communism. In Britain it was further alleged that an unwell and therefore pliable Roosevelt had colluded with a forceful Stalin at Churchill's expense, weakening the negotiating power of the Western allies and Britain's imperial status. This was the

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beginning of a lasting myth about Yalta – that a feeble Roosevelt and an uncaring Churchill had handed Poland, and the rest of eastern Europe, to the Soviets.

As it happened, in February 1945, Roosevelt and Churchill were caught in a cleft stick. The US diplomat James F Byrnes summed up the Allies' dilemma. With a ferocious war in the east yet to be won, and with 11 million combined Soviet forces in occupation throughout central and eastern Europe, he pointed out that it was not what the Western allies would allow the Russians to do, but more a question of what they could *get* the Russians to do.

Stalin was determined to set up Poland as a Moscow-friendly, communist buffer state. After all, it had been a corridor for two German invasions of Russia (in 1914 and 1941). To further his plan, Stalin held a strong bargaining chip, because both Roosevelt and Churchill needed Russian assurances that the USSR would join in the unfinished war against Japan, at a time when the US atomic bomb was not yet operationally available. Accordingly, Churchill's plan for a democratic, Western-friendly Poland – it was the nation Britain had gone to war for to save from dictatorship by Hitler in 1939, after all – was stymied. With Russia holding central and eastern Europe in its grip, there was little else to be done, much to Churchill's exasperation.

In any case, the war in Europe ended on 8 May 1945 (9 May in the USSR), and the war against the Japanese was to end on 14 August 1945. By the summer of 1945 it was time for a more comprehensive postwar settlement.

The 'Big Three' at Yalta

Getty Images/PhotoQuest

SOURCE 1.4 The Big Three at Yalta in 1945: Churchill (left), Roosevelt (centre) and Stalin (right)

There are several photographs of the 'Big Three' at Yalta. (Harry Hopkins, one of Roosevelt's closest advisers, referred to the trio as the 'Big Two and a Half' a sardonic remark about Britain's waning geopolitical influence.) Considering the Big Three as individuals, rather than governments, raises a serious question about the importance of personalities over principles in international negotiations.

The image in Source 1.5 captures Churchill chatting, possibly about the Polish issue, with Roosevelt. British diplomat Hugh Lunghi was taken aback at the president's appearance, saying, 'His face was waxen to a sort of yellow, waxen and very drawn, very thin, and a lot of the time he was sort of sitting there with his mouth open sort of staring ahead. So that was quite a shock'.[2] Later medical evidence suggests that Roosevelt was suffering from temporary blackouts now known as transient ischemic attacks, or TIAs. Even so, and contrary to Yalta mythology, Roosevelt gained his publicly professed aims at the conference, apart from a TIA-induced lapse that allowed the USSR to regain its territorial position in China at the expense of the nationalist Chinese government. Stalin looks impassive.

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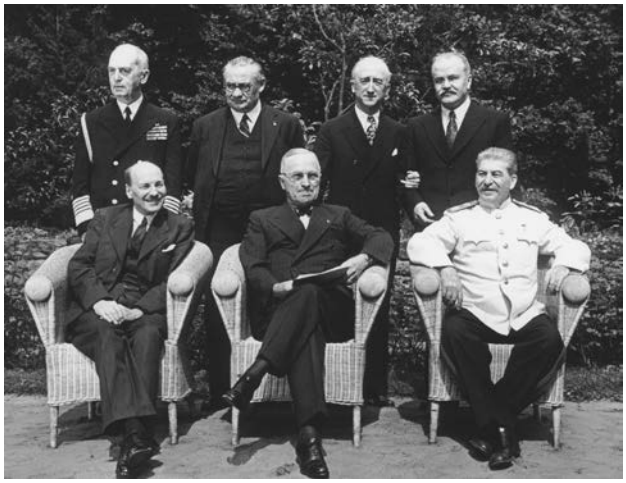
THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE: THE NEXT STAGE

From 17 July to 2 August 1945, following Germany's defeat but prior to Japan's surrender, the Big Three met at the Cecilienhof Palace, in Potsdam. This conference was a follow-up to Yalta, and intended to decide Germany's fate in more detail. With the European war over, cracks had begun to appear in the alliance. These differences were mainly to do with Stalin's anxiety that the USSR needed a generous reparations settlement to help rebuild its shattered economy. Stalin was worried that the US and Britain would block his request for compensation.

The composition of the Big Three had changed that summer. Roosevelt had died on 12 April and was replaced by Harry Truman. Churchill had been electorally defeated and replaced on 26 July by Labour prime minister Clement Attlee. Stalin remained the USSR's chief representative.



Alamy/ITAR-TASS Photo Agency

SOURCE 1.5 Stalin, Truman and Attlee (seated from right to left) at Potsdam, with their advisers (standing, from left): US Admiral WD Leahy, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, US Secretary of State James F Byrnes and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov

Although there were ongoing disagreements between the Allies, particularly over reparations and the borders of Poland, they did agree to the occupation of Germany in four zones (US, British, French and Russian), to be overseen by an Allied Control Commission. In addition they agreed that Germany should be demilitarised, democratised and denazified, and that war criminals should be arrested and tried. A final ultimatum was also issued to Japan, but not by Russia, which was yet to go to war with Japan.

In a conversation on 24 July that changed the USSR's relations with the West, Truman told Stalin that the US had successfully detonated an atom bomb. This was arguably an attempt to coerce Stalin into reducing his reparations demands, but Stalin remained intransigent. Through his intelligence services, he already knew about the 'A-bomb', as it became known. Indeed, the USSR had been planning its own version since 1943, and it would go on to conduct its own first test in August 1949 – this would mark the start of a fierce and dangerous nuclear rivalry between the USSR and its former Allies, and become a key element in the coming Cold War. As for reparations, the USSR was allowed to demand reparations of its Soviet-occupied German zone and to take 10 per cent of what was left of western German industrial equipment back to Russia.

THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION: A NEW GLOBAL ORDER

A less controversial feature of the Yalta and Potsdam meetings was the continuing work of drafting the charter for a postwar United Nations Organization (UNO; it later became known simply as the United Nations), a key Roosevelt goal. While the UNO was to be based on the unsuccessful League of Nations model, it was designed to be more inclusive, more efficient, more comprehensive and more effective than the League.

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The League of Nations as a cautionary tale for the 1940s

After some minor successes in the 1920s, the League of Nation's efforts had come to nothing in the 1930s, when the League had encountered the ruthless and scornful brutality of the Axis powers and their own idea of a three-way world order – a Nazi Europe and Russia, a Fascist Italian Africa and an imperial Japanese Asia.

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SETTING UP THE UNITED NATIONS

On 25 April 1945, just a few weeks before the war in Europe was to end, a major conference was convened in San Francisco of the major Allies and 46 other nations. That conference framed the terms of the UN's work in its charter. The charter included specifications that the UN would, among other things, oppose war, advocate for universal human rights, ensure treaty obligations and international laws were met, and promote social progress and a 'larger freedom'.

The Charter of the United Nations

The introductory 'Purposes and Principles' of the 1945 UN Charter give a good indication of what this new organisation was meant to do; they have remained unchanged to this day. Here are the four key points.

1 To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

2 To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;

3 To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and

4 To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

Chapter 1, 'Purposes and Principles', Article 1, United Nations Organization Charter, 1945.

Questions

1. Examine each point above carefully. Explain how the wording might relate to events in international relations between 1900 and 1945.
2. How does this set of principles differ from the aims of the League of Nations? Explain any differences.
3. Why was the UN Charter a radical change from past international agreements?
4. What new forms of language in this section of the Charter demonstrate the idealism underpinnning the UN? What motivations lay behind that thinking? Were these aims realistic?

On 24 October 1945, the UN was set up as an autonomous diplomatic entity in Manhattan, New York. The UN's structure was based on that of the League of Nations, but it had a much more inclusive Council and Assembly and a larger secretariat.

The organisational structure was based on the decisions of a small, eleven-member Security Council, consisting of five permanent members (Britain, France, the US, the USSR and China, represented by the Republic of China, the nationalist government of Jiang Jieshi) and six rotating members. Each permanent member of the Security Council (including the People's Republic

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Getty Images/Fotosearch

SOURCE 1.6 Eleanor Roosevelt, who played a key role in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is pictured here reviewing the result of her work in poster form.

of China, which replaced the Republic of China in 1971) had the power of veto ('I forbid' in Latin). This meant that any substantive Security Council resolution could be blocked by a single permanent member whatever the Council's majority might want. The veto would be used as a Cold War and decolonisation-era tactic by both sides in the 1950s and 1960s, tailing off in use towards the late 1980s.

The Security Council also had the authority to raise armed forces from member states and to take armed collective action to maintain the peace.

The second element in the UN's organisational structure was the much larger General Assembly of 51 members. It was presided over from 1948 to 1949 by Australian jurist and diplomat Herbert Vere ('HV') Evatt, who had been a leading light in the foundation of the UN and in the drawing up of its human rights charter. From 1946 to 1951, US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was a highly influential chair of the UN Human Rights Commission.

Over time, the General Assembly, more of a debating chamber than an executive body, was to grow and become dominated by post-colonial nations, many of which were hostile to the interests of Western powers.

Finally, the UN's work was administered by a secretariat. It would grow rapidly over the years, and was initially headed by a highly capable Secretary-General, Norwegian politician and diplomat Trygve Lie (pronounced 'Trigvee Lee').

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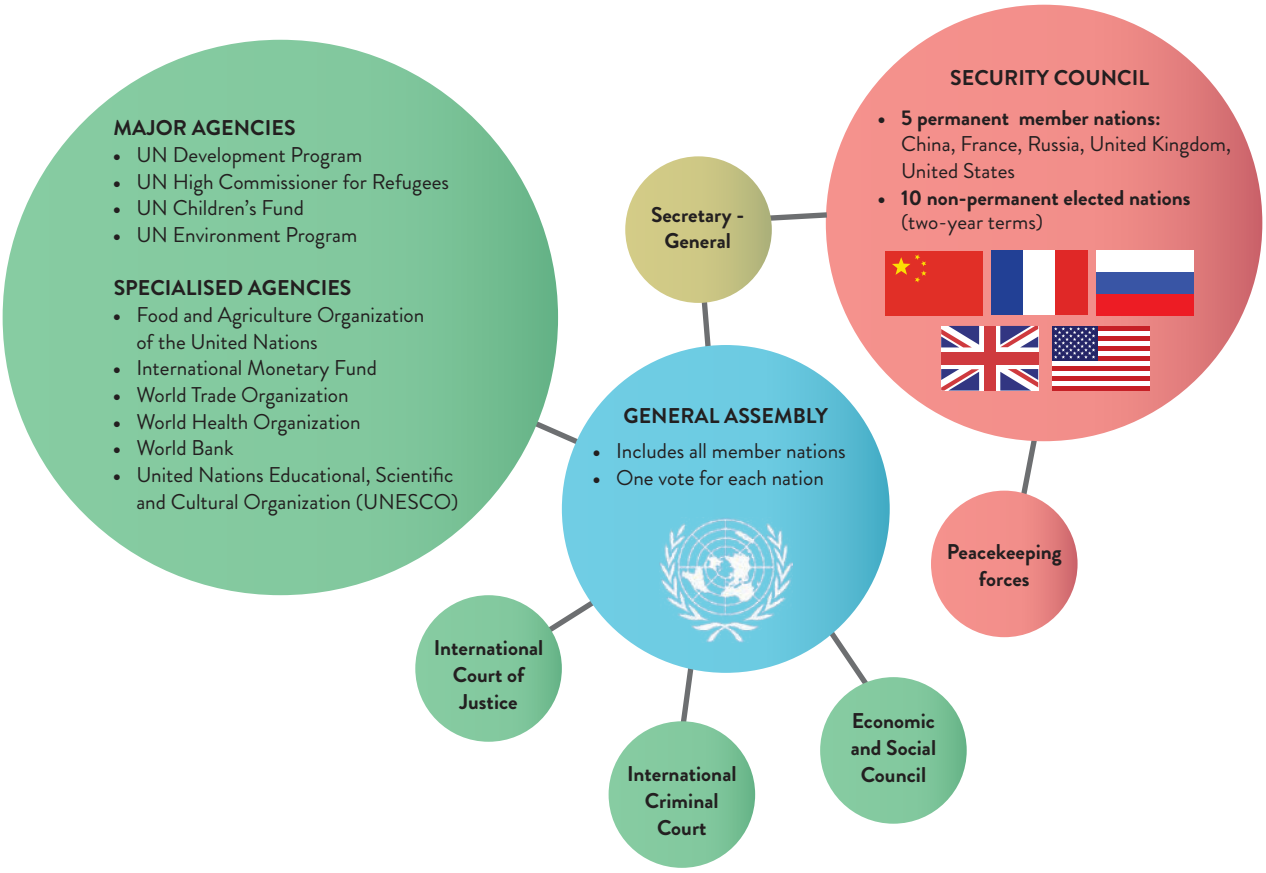
In contrast to the League's poor executive track record, Trygve Lie would become the first in a long line of distinguished UN Secretaries-General that includes Dag Hammarskjöld (Sweden, 1953–61), U Thant (Burma/Myanmar, 1961–71), Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (Peru, 1982–91) and 2001 Nobel Prize winner Kofi Annan (Ghana, 1997–2006). As another point of comparison with the League's paltry 100-strong workforce, the UN secretariat in 2014 employed 43 000 staff, a figure, incidentally, that has led to criticism of over-bureaucratisation of the UN.

As for the defeated powers, Japan was granted UN observer status in 1952 and full status in 1956. Italy was also admitted as an observer in 1952 and was granted full status in 1955. West Germany was admitted to the UN as an observer in 1955, and East Germany as an observer as late as 1972. Both Germanies were admitted to full status in 1973. The key point to note here is the difference between gaining observer status and full status. The two Germanies were slow to gain full UN recognition because of ongoing Cold War disagreements over proposals for their membership, tensions that positioned the Germanies as strategic pawns in the UN membership game.

As the UN developed, its shape and purpose were modified by subsequent events. These led, for example, to the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1945; the creation of the state of Israel in May 1948; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 1948; and the formation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in December 1950.



SOURCE 1.7 Structure of the UN. In the early 21st century the activities of the UN and its institutions are much more complex than they were at the time of its foundation in 1945.

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Chapter summary

+ In modern history, serious attempts to stabilise international relations by establishing a world order date back to the early 19th century, when European diplomats set up secret geopolitical arrangements to the advantage of their leaders who were the dominant powers of the day. The diplomats formed an aristocratic collective who often knew each other personally, spoke French (the common diplomatic language) and met in leisurely gatherings to thrash out differences of opinion. This period of international relations was dominated by two individual aristocrats, Metternich and Bismarck.
+ In the early 20th century, Woodrow Wilson set his mark on the next stage of world order design when he insisted that international disputes be settled in an open fashion, that self-determination be an important part of negotiations and that democratic interests be served. His principled stand foundered on the rocks of US isolationism and on the League of Nations' inability to deal with aggressive European dictators and a warlike Japanese military.
+ Failed efforts to create a stable international order in the first half of the 20th century led to two horrific world wars. The international relations of that time were again dominated by individuals, such as Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin.
+ The post-1945 priority for most of the victors of the Second World War was to set up a new and more effective collective and consultative association of nations. This led to the creation of the UN, an organisation built on effective collective security, and on policy and process, not on the personal ambitions of individual politicians as, for example, had been the case with the agreement between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill at Yalta.
+ Almost immediately, the UN faced powerful countermoves to its attempts at international stabilisation. These included the 1947 onset of the Cold War, successive and frequently violent decolonisation crises, and recurring conflicts in the Middle East over the creation of the state of Israel.

Endnotes

1 Fraser J Harbutt, *Yalta 1945: Europe and America at the Crossroads*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, p. 1.

2 Laurence Rees, *World War II: Behind Closed Doors: Stalin, the Nazis and the West*, BBC Books, 2009, p. 333.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

Further resources

John Milton Cooper Jr, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 2009.

Max Hastings, *Inferno: The World at War, 1939–1945*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 2011.

Martyn Housden, *The League of Nations and the Organisation of Peace*, Pearson Longman, Harlow, 2012.

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Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*, Penguin, New York, 2012.
Serhii (SM) Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, Viking, New York, 2011.
Benn Steil, *The Battle of Bretton Woods: John Maynard Keynes, Harry Dexter White, and the Making of a New World Order*, Princeton University Press, 2013.

Chapter review activities

1 How realistic do you think Woodrow Wilson was about open international collaboration?
2 Was there any way the League of Nations could have thwarted the Axis powers?
3 Was Roosevelt simply carrying on the work of Woodrow Wilson?
4 How did the international conferences that occurred at the time of the Second World War between the years 1941 and 1945 differ from preceding arrangements for dealing with international relations?
5 Examine the life and work of Keynes and White. Assess which of the two was the more significant economist.
6 What were the motivations of the Big Three at the Yalta Conference?
7 Did anyone gain from Yalta? Explain your reasoning.
8 Why was the Potsdam Conference of global significance?
9 What factors led to the creation of the United Nations Organization in 1945?
10 How did the UN differ from its predecessor, the League of Nations?
11 What role did Eleanor Roosevelt play in establishing the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights? How innovative and significant was that declaration?
12 There is an argument that liberal internationalism can be a cover for national goals. What evidence can you find among the events described in this chapter that might support or refute that argument?
13 The UN was set up in 1945. How did the world look in 1945 to a geopolitical optimist? How did it look to a geopolitical pessimist?

Essay question

14 How and why did attempts to establish world orders succeed or fail in the first half of the 20th century?

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CHAPTER TWO

The Cold War begins, 1945–1949

Before the guns of the Second World War fell silent in 1945, the alliance between the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain had begun to fall apart. That the Allies could even achieve wartime cooperation, given their ideological, social and political differences, was extraordinary, and demonstrated how serious the Axis threat had been. But when the combination of fascism and Japanese militarism was defeated, there was nothing left to hold the alliance together. The origins of the Cold War can be found in the competing geopolitical visions of the Soviets and Americans after the war, and in particular their respective plans for the shape of postwar Europe and Germany.

The Soviets prized security on their western borders above all, and feared encirclement by capitalist powers. As a consequence they were wedded to the idea of a sphere of influence in the eastern European states and the permanent weakening of Germany.

The US, on the other hand, was committed to the principle of self-determination for all nations, and open, global free-trade arrangements. The Americans believed that the peoples of eastern Europe should determine the type of government they lived under. The Americans also believed a unified and economically sound Germany was necessary for the political stability of Europe.

The relationship between the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and the US president Harry S Truman was also significant after the war. There was a growing atmosphere of mistrust, which became palpable after the US exploded the first atomic bombs.

By the end of the 1940s the Cold War had spread outside Europe. China's embrace of communism led to fears in the West of a so-called 'domino effect'. It was the failure to reconcile their competing visions that led the US and the USSR to develop policies that would entrench the Cold War for the next 45 years.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

+ What were the key ideological, cultural and political differences between the Soviet Union and the United States that led to the development of the Cold War?
+ What was the significance of the Truman Doctrine and of the Berlin blockade?

‹ The Allied leaders at the Potsdam Conference, July 1945: left to right, Clement Atlee (Britain), Harry Truman (US) and Joseph Stalin (USSR)

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The origins of the Cold War

superpower
A nation that has the greatest capacity to influence political, economic and military affairs on a global scale. During the Cold War era the US and the USSR were the world's two superpowers

The Second World War brought both the United States and Soviet Union out of their prewar isolation. When Germany was finally defeated in May 1945, cracks had already begun to appear in the alliance between the two **superpowers**. Stalin was suspicious of the US's motive for its late entry into the European war, and he was wary of the Americans' failure to inform him of their new secret atomic weapon.

The Cold War

The term 'Cold War' expresses the permanent state of political and military tension that existed between the United States and the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1991. The war was 'cold', as opposed to 'hot', because the superpowers never directly confronted each other. This was because the new reality of nuclear weapons multiplied the consequences of a war. Instead of fighting with weapons, both sides tended to wage war on each other on an ideological, political and economic level.

THE COLD WAR BEGINS, 1945–49

1945	**FEBRUARY**	Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill (the 'Big Three') met at Yalta and agreed on a four-power division of Germany and Berlin after the war
	APRIL	US president Franklin Delano Roosevelt died, and was replaced by Harry S Truman
	MAY	The war ended in Europe
	JULY–AUGUST	The Big Three met at Potsdam to discuss the shape of the postwar world
		Atomic bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
1946	**FEBRUARY**	George Kennan sent his 'Long Telegram' from Moscow, accusing the Soviets of being aggressive and expansionist
	MARCH	Former British prime minister Winston Churchill delivered his 'Iron Curtain' speech
		Greek Civil War began
	SEPTEMBER	Novikov Telegram was sent from Washington to Moscow in response to growing Cold War tensions. It opened old wounds and accused the US of pursuing an imperial policy of economic expansion
1947	**MARCH**	President Truman delivered his 'Containment' speech to a joint session of Congress
	JUNE	European Recovery Plan, or 'Marshall Plan', was announced
1948	**JUNE**	Berlin blockade began
1949	**SEPTEMBER**	Soviet Union made its first successful test of a nuclear bomb in the remote desert of Kazakhstan
	OCTOBER	People's Republic of China was declared, following Communist victory in the long-running civil war

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As discussed in Chapter 1, the Yalta Conference in February 1945 highlighted disagreements about the postwar future of Poland and the states of eastern Europe. These differences set the tone for relations as the hostilities of the war drew to an end. After all, the British had entered the war to defend Polish territorial integrity and they would not easily accept a permanent Soviet occupation of Poland. For the Soviets, Poland was a matter of security; they wanted a **buffer zone** between the USSR and industrial Europe, to prevent a so-called 'capitalist encirclement'. The Americans, on the other hand, were guided by the principle of national **self-determination**, as outlined in the Atlantic Charter, and Roosevelt was trying to rally support among the Allies for a United Nations.

SOURCE 2.1 The Soviet sphere of influence in Europe, 1947

TABLE 4.1 The relative strength and situation of the world powers in 1945

US	The US had the world's largest economy. It had a huge army, navy and air force, and it was the only power that had a nuclear bomb.
USSR	The USSR had the largest land army in Europe. Its occupation of eastern Europe was of great strategic importance and something the Americans could do little about without the threat of force. It had lost tens of millions of people in the war and was in need of significant reconstruction in 1945.
UK and France	The war had brought an end to the old imperial order. The US policy of self-determination for all nations meant that the old European empires would have to relinquish their wealthy overseas territories. Both the UK and France embarked on a reconstruction program, and the UK established its welfare state.
Germany	Germany was occupied and divided into four zones. The Americans wanted to rebuild Germany as a prosperous trading partner and democratic counterweight to the Soviet Union, while the Soviets were committed to Germany's permanent weakening. Germany would remain divided between East and West in 1949.
Japan	Japan was suffering under the effects of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese imperial military order was replaced with a US occupation and a new democratic constitution.
China	The Chinese had suffered greatly as a consequence of the Japanese 'Three Alls' policy. Civil war resumed between the Nationalists and Communists at the end of the war. The Communists would eventually prevail in October 1949.

buffer zone
A geographical area separating two potentially conflicting areas

self-determination
The right of a nation to determine its own political system free from outside interference

POSTWAR AIMS OF THE SOVIET UNION

The initial postwar aims of the Soviet Union revolved around security on its western borders. The USSR had lost 27 million people in the war and would not retreat and withdraw its forces from eastern Europe until agreement had been reached about the future of Germany.

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sphere of influence
The region over which a powerful state can exercise some control, for security or economic purposes

communist
A supporter of communism, an economic system of collective, state ownership of industry and infrastructure, in which the benefits of production are distributed among citizens

As Stalin pointed out in 1945, Germany had been able to attack Russia twice in the recent past, moving through bordering countries. Consequently, the Soviets believed they were justified in their demands for a buffer zone and **sphere of influence** in eastern Europe. They installed a **communist** government in Poland in January 1945, and forced other countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania, to adopt governments sympathetic to Moscow. Stalin's other major postwar aim was to weaken Germany's own ability to again visit war on Russia. Before the war, Germany had been the major capitalist–industrial power on the continent, so it was not in Soviet interests to encourage the re-emergence of a strong Germany. Stalin hoped the four-power division of Germany would keep it weak.

POSTWAR AIMS OF THE UNITED STATES

The Americans, far from accepting arguments about security, regarded the Soviet refusal to withdraw from their eastern positions as the political and ideological expansion of communism. To complicate matters, it appears that, at Yalta, Roosevelt had granted tacit acceptance of the Soviet presence in eastern Europe as a trade-off to obtain Stalin's support to finish the war against Japan. Roosevelt's untimely death in April 1945 left the matter entirely unresolved. His replacement, Harry S Truman, not nearly as deft at diplomacy as Roosevelt, took a more aggressive stance towards the Soviets. Historians can only speculate on whether or not Roosevelt would have been able to steer a less rocky course through the postwar settlement. Truman also needed to display a strong hand against the Soviets to avoid accusations within the US of being soft on communism.

THE FUTURE OF GERMANY

But it was the future of Germany that most preoccupied the Americans. Unlike the Soviets, they wanted a strong, industrial Germany, to ensure the continuation of open markets and strong trade in Europe. The US had benefited most from the war, with American companies taking huge orders for consumer and agricultural goods from a devastated Europe. This rapid rate of economic expansion could not be maintained without strong markets and without trading partners with deep pockets. At Yalta, the **Big Three** powers had agreed to divide Germany and Berlin into four zones, occupied by the US, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France, until permanent reunification arrangements could be made. It would be over Berlin that the fractures in the alliance deepened, and the Soviet and American failure to find common cause permanently entrenched Cold War tensions.

Big Three
The leaders of the Soviet Union (Stalin), the US (Roosevelt) and Britain, (Churchill), during the Second World War

Harry S Truman (1884–1972)

Harry S Truman was the president of the US from 1945 to 1953. Born in rural Missouri in 1884, Truman was a farmer and haberdashery shop owner before moving into law and politics in 1934.

Truman was suddenly thrust into the presidency during the final months of the war after the death of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. With little foreign policy experience, Truman was responsible for steering the world along the rocky path to peace. He had to make

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major decisions about war and peace, and reshape the postwar world in a way that would maintain American prosperity.

In August 1945 Truman made the decision to end the Pacific War against Japan with the atomic bomb. The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were razed to the ground, resulting in the instant deaths of 120 000 people, and many thousands more over the following days and months, from the effects of nuclear radiation. Truman's diaries reveal a deep sadness about the aftermath of the bomb.

After the war, Truman had to confront the threat of communism in Europe and its spread into Asia. The ideology of communism was fundamentally different to the American vision for the world, but Truman would have to overcome generations of American isolationism to adopt a more active role internationally.

Alamy/GL Archive

Joseph Stalin (1878–1953)

Joseph Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union from 1927 until his death in 1953. Although a relatively minor figure at the time of the 1917 Russian Revolution, he rose to power after the death of Lenin. Stalin's brand of communism advocated rapid industrialisation, which often resulted in violent social change. His brutal drive for agricultural collectivisation and industrialisation in the 1930s cost the lives of tens of millions of Soviet citizens. He was a paranoid leader who ruled through his hated secret police, the NKVD (later the KGB). His laws cruelly suppressed real or imagined opposition, using a system of terror that included show trials and summary executions. Stalin's attitude is expressed in the famous quote attributed to him, 'Death solves all problems – no man, no problem'.

Alamy/MARKA

For all his brutality, Stalin was responsible for a remarkable transformation in Russia. From being a backward agricultural nation of peasants it became an industrial power that was able to defeat Hitler. In the postwar world, the Soviet Union became a superpower that was so technologically advanced it was able to produce a nuclear weapon and engage in the space race.

In the negotiations at the end of the war Stalin was a wily foe. He deeply distrusted the Americans and he achieved his fundamental goal for the postwar world: a buffer zone and sphere of influence in eastern Europe.

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Question

Stalin attributed the defeat of Germany to the success of Soviet industrialisation in the 1930s. But the 1930s came at great cost to many Soviet citizens.

1. Choose two of the topics below and research them in relation to Stalin's activities in the USSR in the 1930s:
   a collectivisation
   b the Kirov Decrees
   c show trials and Communist Party purges
   d industrialisation.

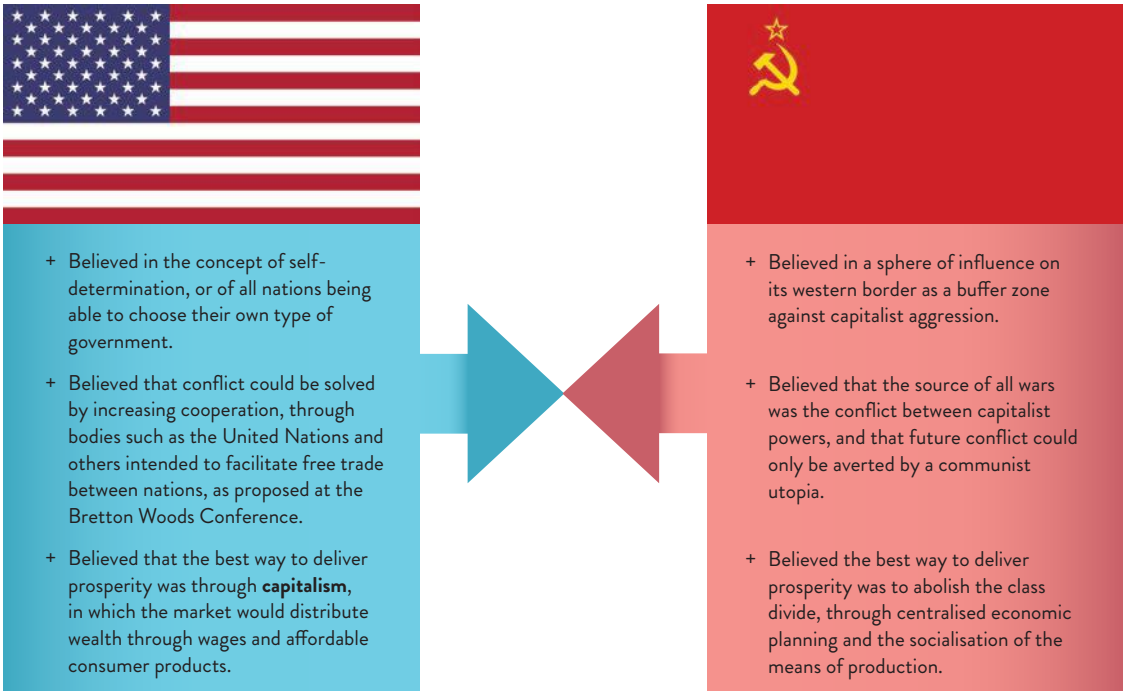
Conflicting ideologies

idealism
In international relations, the striving of a nation or leader towards ideals, or ideas of how things ought to be

realism
In international relations, a nation's acting in accordance with its own interests and in the context of geopolitical events

Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union fluctuated as each player shifted back and forth between the **idealism** of their political and economic visions for the organisation of the world, and the **realism** defined by their military capacity and by other geopolitical events, such as the development of the atomic bomb and the presence of Soviet troops across eastern Europe.

The friction between the US and the Soviet Union simmered throughout 1946. A series of speeches, letters, telegrams and interviews revealed the deep divisions and mistrust between the former Allies only months after the conclusion of the war. Documents from 1946 provide a great insight into each power's analysis of the other's motives, actions and ideologies.



capitalism
An economic system in which trade and industries are owned and controlled by private enterprise for profit

SOURCE 2.2 The competing ideologies of the US and the USSR

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A war of words

During 1946 a series of communications encapsulated the key concerns during the early Cold War. Shaped by different ideological and strategic concerns, each power in the emerging conflict began to articulate very different understandings of a new postwar world order.

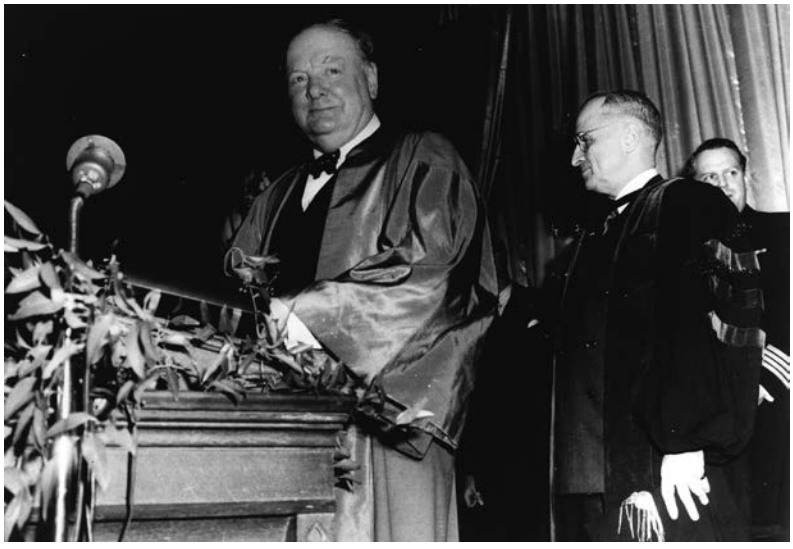
The Kennan 'Long Telegram': Moscow, 22 February 1946

On 22 February 1946, George F Kennan, an American diplomat based in the Soviet Union, sent a telegram to Washington outlining his views on Soviet foreign policy:

> Everything must be done to advance relative strength of USSR as a factor in international society … no opportunity must be missed to reduce strength and influence … of capitalist powers …
>
> … Russians will participate officially in international organizations where they see opportunity of extending Soviet power or of inhibiting or diluting power of others … I reiterate, Moscow has no abstract devotion to UNO ideals. Its attitude to that organization will remain essentially pragmatic and tactical …
>
> … [Various Soviet cultural organisations will be internationally deployed to] undermine general political and strategic potential of major western powers. Efforts will be made in such countries to disrupt national self confidence … in defiant violent struggle for destruction of other elements of society … In foreign countries Communists will, as a rule, work toward destruction of all forms of personal independence, economic, political or moral … Everything possible will be done to set major Western Powers against each other …
> In summary, we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief … that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure …
>
> … Soviet power … does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks … Gauged against the Western world as a whole, Soviets are still by far the weaker force.

Alamy/INTERFOTO

SOURCE 2.3 The diplomat George Kennan



Getty Images/Popperfoto

SOURCE 2.4 Winston Churchill (left) with Harry S Truman (right) just before Churchill delivered his 'Sinews of Peace' speech in Fulton, Missouri

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Churchill's 'Sinews of Peace' speech: Missouri, 5 March 1946

On 5 March 1946 the former British wartime prime minister, Winston Churchill, delivered his famous 'iron curtain' line in his 'Sinews of Peace' speech. He gave the speech to an American audience at Westminster College, in Fulton, Missouri:

> The United States stands at this time at the pinnacle of world power.
>
> ... A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organisation intends to do in the immediate future ... I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and for my wartime comrade, Marshal Stalin. There is deep sympathy and goodwill in Britain – and I doubt not here also – towards the peoples of all the Russias and a resolve to persevere through many differences and rebuffs in establishing lasting friendships. We understand the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers by the removal of all possibility of German aggression ... It is my duty, however, for I am sure you would wish me to state the facts as I see them to you, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe.
>
> From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow ...

Stalin's reply to Churchill's 'Sinews of Peace' speech: *Pravda*, 14 March 1946

Stalin responded to Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech in an interview published in the Soviet state publication *Pravda* on 14 March 1946. Here, Stalin outlined what he considered were the realities of the Soviet situation:

> ... In substance, Mr. Churchill now stands in the position of a firebrand of war. And Mr. Churchill is not alone here. He has friends not only in England but also in the United States of America ... In this respect, one is reminded remarkably of Hitler and his friends ...
>
> ... The Soviet Union has lost in men several times more than Britain and the United States together ... It may be that some quarters are trying to push into oblivion these sacrifices of the Soviet people which insured the liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite yoke ... But the Soviet Union cannot forget them. One can ask, therefore, what can be surprising in the fact that the Soviet Union, in a desire to ensure its security for the future, tries to achieve that these countries should have governments whose relations to the Soviet Union are loyal? How can one, without having lost one's reason, qualify these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as 'expansionist tendencies' of our Government? ...

The Novikov Telegram: Washington, 27 September 1946

Like Kennan's Long Telegram, the Soviet ambassador in Washington, Nikolai Novikov, provided an interpretation of his own on the foreign policy aims of the United States:

> The foreign policy of the United States ... is characterized in the postwar period by a striving for world supremacy. This is the real meaning of the many statements by President Truman ... that the United States has the right to lead the world. All the forces of American diplomacy – the army, the air force, the navy,

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industry, and science – are enlisted in the service of this foreign policy. For this purpose broad plans for expansion have been developed ... and the establishment of a system of naval and air bases stretching far beyond the boundaries of the United States.

... [The United States had calculated] that during the Second World War they would succeed in avoiding, at least for a long time, the main battles in Europe and Asia ... [they] would enter only at the last minute, when it could easily affect the outcome of war ... [and] that the Soviet Union ... would also be exhausted or even completely destroyed as a result of the war ...

... All of the countries of Europe and Asia are experiencing a colossal need for consumer goods, industrial and transportation equipment, etc. Such a situation provides American monopolistic capital with prospects for enormous shipments of goods into these countries ... would mean a serious strengthening of the economic position of the United States ... and would be stage on the road to world domination.

... The Soviet Union continues to be economically independent of the outside world ... [and] the USSR's international position is currently stronger than it was in the prewar period ... the Soviet armed forces are located on the territory of Germany and other formerly hostile countries, thus guaranteeing that these countries will not be used again for an attack on the USSR ... Such a situation ... cannot help but be regarded by the American imperialists as an obstacle in the path of the expansionist policy of the United States.

... The 'hard-line' policy with regard to the USSR announced by Byrnes ... is at present the main obstacle on the road to cooperation of the Great Powers ... The present policy of the American government with regard to the USSR is also direct at limiting or dislodging the influence of the Soviet Union from neighbouring countries ... The numerous and extremely hostile statements by American government, political and military figures with regard to the Soviet Union and its foreign policy are very characteristic of the current relationship between the ruling circles of the United States and the USSR.

Questions

1. What does Kennan claim are the aims of Soviet foreign policy? Give detail about how he thinks the Soviets plan to achieve these aims.
2. According to Winston Churchill, what 'shadow' has fallen over Europe?
3. *Map work:* Create a map of Europe that shows the Iron Curtain as if it were drawn. Highlight all of the main capital cities behind the curtain.
4. What was Stalin's central argument for wanting to maintain a sphere of influence in the countries on his western border?
5. a What does Novikov argue is the central aim of US foreign policy?
   b According to Novikov, how did the US benefit from the war?
6. Compare and contrast the foreign policy goals of the USA and the Soviet Union. How accurate do you think each side's view is of the other?
7. How useful are these sources for a historian trying to understand how the USA and the USSR viewed each other?

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By 1947, the tensions of the previous year had clearly been felt. The political historian Len Scott argues that the Truman Doctrine came ' … with a rhetoric designed to arouse awareness of Soviet aims, and a declaration that America would support those threatened by Soviet subversion or expansion … [and] expressed the self-image of the US as inherently defensive'.[1]

foreign policy
A sovereign state's policy on dealings with other states and foreign entities, normally in pursuit of its national interests

Aside from the political posturing of both sides and the need to settle the territorial questions of the period, for the Americans it was vital to extend and continue their newfound prosperity and to ensure that markets for trade would be open to them. Henry Heller, an historian of the Cold War argues, 'For the United States the primary motive of its new international **foreign policy** was not to contain communism. Its broader aim was rather to maintain and extend US capitalism based on the principles of economic liberalism'.[2]

Conflicting politics

The ideological differences between the United States and the Soviet Union would soon turn into geopolitical conflict with each side seeking to protect and advance their own interests. In 1947 the US established the policy of **containment** in the face of two changing geopolitical circumstances. First, a series of Soviet-led crises between 1946 and 1947, which threatened the sovereignty of Iran, Turkey and Greece, alarmed the Americans. Second, the British, who had traditionally provided support in these regions, became unable to continue their military presence there. For the Americans it was one thing for the Soviet Union to simply stay in their eastern European positions after the war, but another thing entirely for the Soviets to attempt to spread their influence to the south and gain a foothold in the Near and Middle East.

containment
The American policy of checking the expansion of Soviet communism through economic aid, military intervention or diplomacy

These two factors led the US to establish long-running foreign policy positions against the Soviets; the Truman Doctrine and the **Marshall Plan**. These programs were an attempt to both contain communism and promote capitalism as a means of recovery in Western Europe. The longer the major economies of Britain, France and Germany took to recover, the more vulnerable they were believed to be to the influence of communism. The fundamental differences in the political and economic ideologies of the US and the USSR were further sharpened when Truman articulated exactly what he believed the Americans were standing up to, and followed this anti-Soviet declaration with a US$400 million commitment to support Turkey and Greece. Marshall Plan money, famously dismissed by the Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, as 'dollar imperialism', would provide US$15 billion worth of grants to Europe in an effort to rebuild ruined economies.

Marshall Plan
The American program to make US$15 billion available to European nations to support economic recovery after the Second World War

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE – CONTAINMENT

On 12 March 1947, when President Truman appeared in front of a joint session of Congress to outline his reasons for urgent economic and financial assistance for the relief of Turkey and Greece, he accompanied his request with a statement about what he saw as the key differences between communism and capitalism. He told Congress:

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> One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms ...

The Truman Doctrine offered US$400 million to protect Turkey and Greece against Soviet aggression. The Americans would now shoulder the burden of containing communism in these countries by providing military assistance and financial support. Truman's speech also contained a warning to the Soviets: America would protect the rights of people everywhere to determine their own political destiny, with force if necessary.

The crises in Iran, Turkey and Greece had convinced the Americans that they needed to contain communism within the eastern European sphere, as defined at Yalta in early 1945. It had become clear the Soviets would simply not move their forces, and there was little the Americans or British could do about it.

Iran

In August 1941 (two years into the Second World War) the Soviets and British jointly occupied Iran. This was part of an agreement that they would both withdraw from Iran six months after the war ended. The Iranians had no reason to suspect that the Allies would not honour this agreement. In fact, the Big Three met in the Iranian capital of Tehran in 1943, and restated their commitment to Iranian territorial sovereignty and to Iran as an ally.

Following the 2 September signing of the Japanese surrender to Allied forces, the Iranian government wrote a politely worded letter to the Allies – the Americans, British and Soviets – asking each to leave the country. The British left Iran, as per their agreement. However, Stalin was plotting ways to consolidate this foothold in Iran.

It was oil that attracted the Soviets to Iran. Iranian oil had been the lifeline for Soviet troops during the war, and the Soviets had come to depend on its cheap, abundant supply. Indeed, Stalin had teams of geologists secretly drilling and exploring for oil deposits in the north of the country during the occupation and was desperate to extract an oil agreement with the Iranians. A strictly anti-communist Iranian government made such an agreement unlikely.

During December 1945, seven months after the European theatre of war ended, the northern regions of Iran, which were home to the **Azeris** and the **Kurds**, asserted their independence from Iran by declaring Soviet-backed democratic republics. Documents from the Russian archives show that Soviet **Politburo** members were actively promoting separatist national movements in the north of Iran in an effort to destablise the country. This newly proclaimed independence led to clashes between the Soviet-trained Kurdish forces and the Iranian military. The Iranian failure to bring the Kurdish and Azerbaijani forces under control caused alarm in the US.

Azeris
Also called 'Azerbaijanis'; a predominantly Shiah Muslim ethnic community living in modern Iran and Azerbaijan

Kurds
An ethnic community living in modern Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey

Politburo
The central policy-making body in the Soviet Union

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For the Western powers the loss of Iran would give the Soviets a strategic advantage in the Middle East region. Since the 1920s the US and Britain had developed extensive oil interests in the Middle East, most notably in Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and had cultivated strong networks of political influence. Fears that the Soviets would prevail in Iran made US President Harry S Truman furious.

President Truman on Iran

In January 1946 Truman wrote a letter to James Francis Byrnes, the US Secretary of State, expressing his outrage at Russian actions in Iran. He wrote:

> When you went to Moscow you were faced with another accomplished fact in Iran. Another outrage if ever I saw one … Iran was our ally in the war. Iran was Russia's ally in the war. Iran agreed to the free passage of arms, ammunition and other supplies running into millions of tons across her territory from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. Without these supplies, furnished by the United States, Russia would have been ignominiously defeated. Yet now Russia stirs up rebellion and keeps troops on the soil of her friend and ally, Iran.
>
> There isn't a doubt in my mind that Russia intends an invasion of Turkey and the seizure of the Black Sea Straits to the Mediterranean. Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand – 'How many divisions have you?' … I do not think we should play compromise any longer … I'm tired of babying the Soviets.

Questions

1. Describe how Iran contributed to the Allied war effort.
2. What does Truman believe are the real intentions of the Russians in the area around Iran?
3. Research the origins of the quote 'How many divisions have you?' A hint is that it was said by Stalin.

The Iranian crisis is important because it was the first time that the United States attempted to contain Soviet expansion through the processes of the United Nations Security Council. In the end, a direct conflict was averted, not by the intervention of the UN, but by Stalin being granted a limited agreement from the Iranian government for the supply of oil, in return for his withdrawal of Russian troops from the country. When Stalin agreed, the Azeri and Kurd hopes for independence were dashed.

Turkey

It was geography more than any other factor that stoked the fires of conflict between the US and the Soviet Union over Turkey. Since early 1946, the Soviets had been calling for revision of an international treaty that gave Turkey control of the passages of water that link the Black Sea with the Aegean and Mediterranean seas – the Bosphorus Strait, the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles. The Soviets regarded these straits as strategically important to their military,

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political and economic interests, and they believed that the 1936 Montreux Convention, an agreement about rights of access to the straits, was outdated.

Leaders in the US saw the Soviet demands over the straits as expansionist, and worried what they might mean if the Soviets were to achieve further advances in the Middle East. In addition to access of the straits, the Soviets wanted to **annex** the areas of Kars and Ardahan and establish military bases on Turkish territory. Turkey rejected these demands as it was committed to continuing the neutrality it had enjoyed in the war. It looked to the United Nations and the US for support.

annex
Assume control of a portion of land belonging to another sovereign nation

SOURCE 2.5 The straits that link the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean beyond: the Bosphorus Strait, the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles

The American ambassador to Turkey, Edwin C Wilson, wrote to US Secretary of State James Byrnes in March 1946 stating what he believed were the motivations behind the Soviet moves in Turkey:

> The real Soviet objective towards Turkey is not a revision of the régime of the Straits, but actual domination of Turkey. In the vast security belt of the Soviet Union which extends from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Turkey constitutes a sole gap. Turkey maintains an independent foreign policy and in particular looks to the Western democracies for guidance and assistance. This the Soviet Union is unwilling to tolerate.

In the following month, the battleship USS *Missouri* sailed through the straits and into Istanbul. It was a sign to the Soviets that the US would protect Turkey's sovereignty.

The crisis came to a head on 7 August 1946 when the Soviets wrote a formal letter rejecting the Montreux Convention, a move the Americans regarded as aggressive. President Truman

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US Navy

SOURCE 2.6 In a show of support for the Turks, the USS *Missouri* sailed into Istanbul on 6 April 1946.

and Secretary Byrnes resolved to face off against the Soviets. They stated that they would resist Soviet aggression using all the means at their disposal, and in particular they would resist aggression against Turkey.

Although there was little possibility that the Soviets would actually launch military action to acquire the straits, the crisis in Turkey was important for a number of reasons. First, it was a case of Turkey successfully standing up to its larger, more powerful neighbour and seeking the assistance of the US to do so. Second, it led to Turkey joining the Western community by being granted membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. Finally, the American response to the Soviets in Turkey would prepare the ground for the policy of containment.

The Greek Civil War, 1946–49

The final crisis that convinced the Americans of the need to contain communism was the Greek Civil War, which began in March 1946 and lasted for three and a half years, concluding in October 1949.

Background to the conflict

The Second World War had had a devastating impact on Greece, as it was occupied by Italy and Germany between April 1941 and October 1944. During the occupation, a famine killed 40 000 people, 1000 villages and small towns were destroyed, and more than 70 000 Greeks were killed by the occupation forces. Bitter divisions in the country led to a deep split between the emerging communist forces of the left and the exiled Greek government of the right.

When the Germans retreated in 1944, Greece was left in a power vacuum. The Greek government in exile had very little control of events within the country and during the war the Greek Communist Party (KKE) had become influential. The British prime minister Winston Churchill, facing the political reality that Stalin and the Soviets would control eastern Europe after the war, sought a deal to prevent the communists from gaining power in Greece. On 9 October 1944 Churchill offered the Soviets a free hand in Romania in return for them agreeing not to dominate Greece via the KKE. Stalin agreed.

Some two months after the Soviets withdrew their support for the KKE, the rightist Greek government sought to reassert its control of the country. On 3 December 1944 the so-called 'white terror' began, with the aim of bringing the communists to heel; government forces began a violent persecution and repression of the left. This persecution continued until the end of the Second World War.

The March 1946 election and start of the Civil War

The crisis came to a head during the March 1946 election. The KKE did not accept the outcome of the election, arguing that the new government was corrupt and unrepresentative, and that it sponsored right-wing terrorism. The KKE resumed the conflict that had been simmering since

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late 1944. It declared war on the Greek government and promised to restore democracy. The KKE commenced operations against the government, with the support of communists from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Stalin gave limited support and tacit acceptance to the KKE. The Americans were alarmed once again because of potential Soviet influence on the doorstep of the strategically important Middle East.

The British government, who were the traditional protectors of Greece, were unable to fund any support of the anti-communist forces because of the cost of an expensive postwar reconstruction at home. They declared that they could no longer shoulder the burden of supporting the Greek government.

The Greek Civil War

SOURCE 2.7 This cartoon from the British communist newspaper *Daily Worker*, 7 May 1946, depicts the Greek government's political persecution of the Greek communists.

Question

1. How useful is this cartoon for the historian studying the Greek Civil War? In your answer, consider its content and the name of the paper it appeared in.

Significance of the war

The Greek Civil War eventually led to the declaration of the Truman Doctrine but it was also significant for other reasons:

+ It brought Greece into NATO.
+ It caused a split between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union over the role of communism in the region. Josip Broz Tito, the prime minister of Yugoslavia, wanted to continue support for the KKE, while Stalin was more cautious and withdrew support.
+ It set a precedent that America would support the use of force to defend the right of countries to maintain their sovereignty in the face of communist aggression.

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THE MARSHALL PLAN

American foreign policy in this period vacillated between realism and idealism. It was one thing to attempt to contain communism through the threat of force and through diplomacy, but more constructive measures would have to be put in place for Europe to weather the threat of communism. The aftermath of the war had brought unimaginable poverty to Europe, and throughout 1946 the fear of famine and homelessness was widespread. Winston Churchill came close to expressing the level of deprivation in his 'Sinews of Peace' speech (see page 36).

When former US general and now Secretary of State George Catlett Marshall addressed the crowd assembled at Harvard University on 5 June 1947, he could hardly have impressed more urgently upon his fellow Americans the grave situation in Europe. Marshall said, ' … the people of [the United States] are distant from the troubled areas of the earth and it is hard for them to comprehend the plight … of the long-suffering peoples [of Europe]'. He detailed for his audience the destruction of cities and infrastructure in Europe, the disappearance of financial institutions, the loss of traditional divisions of labour and confidence in currencies, and the short supply of raw materials.

Marshall understood that without a plan for economic recovery, communism might become attractive politically to western European governments, or alternatively they would be forced to make trade deals with the Soviet Union to meet their basic needs. The European Recovery Program, or 'Marshall Plan', created by Marshall, injected about US$15 billion worth of grants to assist European governments with reconstruction, including purchases of fuel, raw materials and food.

U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

SOURCE 2.8 Left to right: President Truman, George Marshall, Paul Hoffman and Averell Harriman in the White House's Oval Office, discussing the Marshall Plan, 29 November 1948

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The communist threat in Italy and France

After the Second World War the threat of communism in Italy and France was real. The Communist Party of Italy had reasserted its authority during the war, in 1943, when it played a significant role in the resistance against the Fascism of Mussolini and occupation by the Nazis. Led by Palmiro Togliatti, the Italian Communists were heavily influenced by Moscow. The party had 2.3 million members after the war, and it represented a significant political threat to the American influence. In the 1946 election, the Communists received 19 per cent of votes. In the 1948 election, the communists and socialists formed a coalition, but were defeated mainly because of their opposition to the Marshall Plan.

In France, the Communist Party achieved 25 per cent of the total vote in the first postwar election in 1945. This large vote gave the party some cabinet seats in the coalition government, and its leader, Maurice Thorez, was installed as deputy prime minister. The communist vote remained steady in France at just over 20 per cent until the late 1960s.

Ironically, the Marshall Plan was at odds with the style of recovery hoped for by most European leaders. Many governments maintained tariff barriers, and the American vision of free trade was at odds with the protection of their economies. They were suspicious of open, free-trade capitalism and blamed it for causing the Great Depression that had wrought so much suffering before the war. Most governments also believed that the cause of the war had been the Depression. However, in the face of starvation and with communism threatening, leaders were left little choice but to accept the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan also touched on one of the fundamental disagreements between the Americans and Soviets: the future of Germany. For the Americans, it was important that Germany could rise again as a powerful, industrial trading partner in Europe. They were convinced that a strong Germany was vital to the recovery of Europe. The Soviets, however, wanted to ensure that Germany would remain permanently weak. This was a sore point that would flare up in the following year with the Berlin blockade.

The Marshall Plan had the effect of reinforcing the division between the communist East and the West. Although the money was largely targeted at Western European economic recovery, the Americans also offered aid to Eastern bloc countries and to the Soviets. This offer was famously dismissed by Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov as 'dollar imperialism'. In response, the Soviets created **Comecon** (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), to foster trade cooperation among eastern European countries.

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were central planks in the US plan to contain communism during the early years of the Cold War. In the context of European failure to quickly recover from the Second World War, and attempted Soviet incursions into countries on the southern borders of the USSR, the Americans had to respond in ways that would challenge Soviet influence and expansion. Containment heralded the end of British influence on the European continent and signalled the American intent to shoulder the burden of recovery in line with the US's vision of the postwar world.

Comecon
The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, an economic organisation from 1949 to 1991; it was the Eastern bloc equivalent of the Marshall Plan

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The Germany question

Berlin, the capital city of Germany, had been a source of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union since mid-1945, when the Allies had agreed on the four-power division of Germany at Potsdam. At that time Berlin had also been divided into four zones. The American, British and French sectors of Berlin, deep inside the Soviet occupation zone, was dubbed an 'island of capitalism in a sea of communism'.

There were fundamental differences in the way both sides viewed the future of Germany. The US wanted to develop a strong, industrial Germany, while the Soviets wanted to keep it permanently weak, and their ongoing demand for reparations payments were designed to ensure Germany's ongoing poverty. While the alliance against Germany had united the Soviets and the Allies in 1941, disagreements about the future of Berlin created the first serious crisis of the Cold War era.

By 1948 the question of the future of Germany was still not settled. The London Conference was convened in February 1948 to resolve the issue, but the Soviets were not invited. At the same time, the Soviet takeover of Czechoslovakia added to already heightened tensions. Britain, France and the US – the three Western nations occupying Germany – as well as Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg agreed to unification of the Western zones of occupation, the establishment of a democratic state, and the introduction of a new currency, the deutschmark. West Germany and West Berlin were conceived. The conference undermined the existing arrangements that had been established by the Allied Control Council at the end of the war. On 20 March 1948 the Soviets left the Allied Control Council, angry at outcomes of the London Conference.

Stalin already felt under siege by the Americans. The previous two years had seen the Kennan Telegram, the 'Iron Curtain' speech, American policies of containment and the flow of Marshall Plan money into Europe. Even before the London Conference, Britain and the US had already combined their zones of occupation in Germany in an area to be called 'bizonia'. Now the West was trying to force the issue of Germany by uniting in a single bloc against the Soviets. Ironically, it was Stalin who had most to lose from Cold War divisions becoming entrenched.

THE BERLIN BLOCKADE, 1948–49

The immediate cause of the Berlin blockade was the introduction of a new currency into the Western sectors of Berlin on 23 June 1948. The deutschmark had replaced the reichsmark in the other Western zones only five days earlier. In a humiliating move for the communists, East Germans rushed to cash in their reichsmarks in exchange for the new currency. Stalin responded by closing all roads, canals and railways into Berlin. If Stalin could not control his former allies, he would attempt to starve the West Berliners into submission.

The Americans immediately sent 60 long-range B-29 bombers from the US to bases in Britain. Although they did not carry nuclear weapons, the implications were clear. If the Soviet Union attempted to take West Berlin, Truman was prepared to fight back with conventional force or nuclear weapons.

Historians accept that Stalin did not want to provoke a war by blockading Berlin. He perhaps felt it inevitable the West and East would be permanently divided, and it is likely he

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Getty Images/Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone

SOURCE 2.9 In response to Stalin's blockade of West Berlin, the Western powers airlifted some 4500 tons of supplies into Berlin each day for nearly a year. In this photograph German children gather to watch an American aircraft flying at low altitude over Berlin.

wanted the West to give up Berlin. But Berlin was too important for the Americans to let go. Although the city was of no practical or strategic significance to them, it was of enormous symbolic value. To let Berlin go would mean accepting the principle of a Soviet sphere of influence in the east, and the Americans were not willing to move on this point. The loss of Berlin would be a triumph of communism over capitalism.

The US and Britain responded to the blockade with a massive daily airlift of supplies into West Berlin from 24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949. The architects of the airlift were General Lucius Clay and Major General William Tunner. The Americans and British airlifted more than 4500 tons of food, fuel and other basic necessities into Berlin each day.

There were a number of significant outcomes of the Berlin blockade and airlift:

+ The German question was finally solved, with the creation of West Germany and East Germany.
+ The Americans demonstrated their commitment to the people of West Berlin and its mayor, Ernst Reuter.
+ Berlin became the symbol of the Cold War.
+ The Soviets showed they would not be intimidated, and Stalin played a game of brinkmanship.
+ There was an implied threat of nuclear conflict, with Truman moving the B-29 bombers to British bases.

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The Berlin blockade

THE BIRD WATCHER

SOURCE 2.10 The cartoon 'The Bird Watcher', by EH Shepard, *Punch*, 14 July 1948

SOURCE 2.11 A cartoon by Mirko Szewczuk, a German cartoonist who had served in the propaganda office of the Wehrmacht (German defence force) during the Second World War

Questions

1. Write one paragraph for each cartoon describing what is occurring in it. Identify what or who is being represented and how. (Hint: the coat of arms of Berlin features a bear and a crown.)
2. These cartoons were published in British and German periodicals. In what ways might this have impacted on their representation of the events of the Berlin blockade?
3. Explain which image you consider to be more supportive of the airlift.
4. What value might these cartoons have to historians researching the early Cold War period?
5. The career of cartoonist and illustrator EH Shepard left an enduring legacy. Conduct research into his life and career. Summarise his significance as an artist and commentator.

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Key developments in 1949

Three developments in 1949 changed the face and character of the early Cold War. In April the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established, a military alliance of the United States and Western European countries. In August the Russians tested their first atomic bomb and effectively ended the US's monopoly on nuclear power. In October communism spread outside of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe into the world's most populous nation – China. Each of these events was a significant change to the status quo of international relations; each created new challenges for the world's two superpowers, and each expanded the reach of Cold War tensions beyond Europe and the Middle East.

THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was established on 4 April 1949, largely in response to the ongoing crisis over the Berlin blockade, which was lifted only one month later in May. It was hoped that the formation of NATO would also have other benefits. A strong alliance between Western European nations and the US would prevent the resurgence of nationalist militarism in Europe, which had resulted in two world wars in the preceding decades. Moreover, NATO would serve as a body to encourage cooperation between European nations that were leaning towards greater economic unity.

As a military alliance, NATO was also designed to deter the Russians from aggression and expansion into the West. A permanent American presence in Europe would provide this deterrence. Of course, NATO can be seen as vehicle by which the US's retreat from its isolationism became more permanent. In many ways, forming NATO was an inevitable move for the Americans in Europe after committing huge sums of money to the Europeans through the Marshall Plan and in accordance with the Truman Doctrine.

Manhattan Project
The American program responsible for developing the nuclear bomb during the Second World War

RUSSIA AND THE BOMB

The Soviets achieved their first successful atomic blast in a Kazakhstan desert on 29 August 1949. Codenamed 'First Lightning' it was a secret mission that was not acknowledged publicly until announced by US President Harry S Truman on 23 September, at which time the Soviets confirmed they did possess a nuclear bomb. The American monopoly on nuclear weapons was over.

The Russians had developed a nuclear program to match that of the US. Of course, some of the knowledge required to build the bomb had come from spying activity in the US. In particular, the German-born British physicist on the **Manhattan Project**, Klaus Fuchs, was responsible for sharing American secrets with the Soviets. Fuchs was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment in 1950.

Getty Images/Sovfoto/UIG

SOURCE 2.12 It was left to Truman to announce the atomic blast the Soviets called 'First Lightning'; the Americans called the blast 'Joe-1', after Joseph Stalin.

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The Soviet bomb prompted the Americans to up the ante in the arms race, and they announced plans in January 1950 to develop the hydrogen bomb – a weapon that would potentially generate a blast one thousand times more powerful than the atomic bomb used in Hiroshima.

Nuclear weapons raised the stakes in the Cold War. Efforts to build up conventional forces gave way to technological developments that enabled more powerful weapons to be launched by more effective delivery systems. Even launching rockets as part of a space program was not just about exploration, but a clear signal to the other side regarding the reach of new weapons.

Stalin responded to the news of the successful blast of 'First Lightning' with jubilation. His public statements were designed to show that he would not be intimidated by a US claiming a monopoly on nuclear bombs. Now that the Soviets had an atom bomb, the nature of the conflict would change.

THE COMMUNIST VICTORY IN CHINA

On 1 October 1949 the Chinese Communist Party, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, emerged victorious from its 23-year civil war against Jiang Jieshi's (Chiang Kai-shek's) Nationalist Party and declared the People's Republic of China. Mao's victory was significant because now America's battle against communism had spread outside of Europe. But it was not immediately clear that Mao's administration would take its orders from Moscow. In 1944 Stalin had dismissed the Chinese as not real communists, and in 1935 Mao had sought to rid the Chinese Communist Party of Soviet influence. Soon, however, Mao declared an alliance with the Soviet Union. He publicly acknowledged that the Chinese must 'lean to one side' and join the international movement of communism led by Moscow.

In effect, the Chinese had opened up a second front in the communist war against capitalism. The US had been a long-term supporter of the Nationalists, supplying them with US$3 billion worth of aid, and the communist triumph came as a surprise. The Americans continued to support Jiang Jieshi, who established a Nationalist republic in Taiwan.

domino theory
The American idea that communism would spread through the entire South-East Asian region; countries in the region would fall to communism one at a time, like a row of dominoes

There was a range of significant consequences of the Chinese turn to communism. In summary:

+ The Cold War spread geographically outside of Europe.
+ A second front against capitalism opened up in the world.
+ Fears of communism spreading through Asia led to the so-called **domino theory**.

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Who started the Cold War?

The Cold War began as a complex series of events and of conflicts and misunderstandings that had become entrenched by 1949. Debate among historians about the development of the Cold War generally falls into four categories: traditionalist, revisionist, post-revisionist and post-Soviet archival. Source 2.13 summarises the ways in which historians have approached the origins of the Cold War.

SOURCE 2.13 How have historians interpreted the origins of the Cold War?

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HISTORIANS AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

By early 1947 the tactics of the Kremlin had so alarmed the American people, as numerous public opinion polls reveal, that formidable popular support could be confidently expected for a get-tough-with-Russia policy. The stage was set for the Washington government to seize the diplomatic initiative in the cold war against communism.

Thomas A Bailey, *America Faces Russia*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1950, p. 335.

There is inherent in the American policy of containment, after all, a deep callousness and indifference to the very Western values that it asserts and proclaims as absolutes. Its logic rests on the proposition that the act of forcing hardships on people through outside pressure will ultimately provoke them to action on behalf of those Western values.

William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, Dell Publishing, New York, 1959, p. 288.

It is often believed that American policy followed a conciliatory course, changing – in reaction to Soviet intransigence – only in 1947 with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. My own belief is somewhat different. It derives from the comment of Truman's Secretary of State that by early autumn of 1945 it was 'understandable' that Soviet leaders should feel American policy had shifted radically after Roosevelt's death: It is now evident that, far from following his predecessor's policy of cooperation, shortly after taking office, Truman launched a powerful foreign policy initiative aimed at reducing or eliminating Soviet influence from Europe … The atomic bomb influenced diplomacy [and] determined much of Truman's shift to a tough policy aimed at forcing Soviet acquiescence to American plans for Eastern and Central Europe.

Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1965, p. 12.

The 'new' Cold War history will be multi-archival, in that it will at least *attempt* to draw upon the records of *all* major participants in that conflict … [These ideas] represent what I think we know *now* but did not know, at least not as clearly, while the Cold War was going on. We will surely know *more*, though, as time passes …

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, pp. 282–3.

Questions

1. According to Thomas Bailey, what impression did the American public have of the Russians?
2. What were William Appleman Williams' criticisms of the containment policy?
3. According to the extract from Gar Alperovitz, what popular misconception was there about the nature of Truman's policy compared with that of Roosevelt?
4. Why did Alperovitz believe Truman had the confidence to pursue a more aggressive policy?
5. According to John Gaddis, why is our knowledge of the Cold War likely to develop and change over time?

Conclusion

The Cold War emerged from the competing ideologies and geopolitics of the immediate postwar period. The attempt to reshape the world in the image of Soviet communism or American capitalism led to deep distrust between the Soviets and Americans. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan were attempts by the US to fashion a European recovery in order to guarantee American prosperity in the future. For the Soviets, security in eastern Europe was necessary to

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prevent an unfriendly encirclement, and was driven by an ideology that assumed conflict with capitalist powers was inevitable. The Soviets believed in a buffer zone and sphere of influence at all costs.

There were fundamental differences in the politics and ideologies of the Soviet Union and the US. The coming apart of their wartime alliance reflected the failure of leadership on both sides to work through these differences in ways that could create a more peaceful world.

Chapter summary

- The Cold War emerged from the competing ideologies and geopolitics of the postwar period. It emerged from the differing visions of nations that had been part of an alliance during the Second World War.
- The attempt to reshape the world in the image of Soviet communism or American capitalism led to deep mistrust between the Soviets and Americans. Ideological tensions between the USSR and the US were felt from 1946 onwards.
- When Iran, Turkey and Greece came under Soviet threat, the US responded with the Truman Doctrine, which sought to contain communism.
- To deter the spread of communism, the US implemented the Marshall Plan and offered US$15 billion in economic aid to European nations.
- Stalin's blockade of Berlin in 1948–49 brought the unresolved matter of Germany to a head, and eventually led to it being permanently divided in two.
- In 1949, NATO was formed, the Soviets detonated their first atom bomb, and the Chinese Communists were victorious.

Endnotes

1 Len Scott, 'International history 1945–1990', in J Baylis and S Smith, *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford, London, 1997, p. 76.

2 Henry Heller, *The Cold War and the New Imperialism: A Global History 1945–2005*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 2006, p. 40.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

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Further resources

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War,* Penguin, London, 2005.

Henry Heller, *The Cold War and the New Imperialism: A Global History 1945–2005,* Monthly Review Press, New York, 2006.

Cold War, DVD and television series (episodes 1 'Comrades'; 2 'Iron Curtain'; 3 'Marshall Plan' and 4 'Berlin'), aired on Cable News Network (CNN), 1998.

Chapter review activities

1 Define communism and capitalism.

2 Draw up a table such as the one below and provide a detailed summary of Soviet and American aims after the Second World War.

Postwar aims of the USSR	Shared aims	Postwar aims of the US

3 Before the Second World War, America had had a longstanding policy of isolationism. What kind of world did the US want to create after the war?

4 Research the Atlantic Charter and make a detailed summary of its main points.

5 Summarise the main reasons for the tensions between the US and the USSR between 1945 and 1949. What do you think was the most important reason for tension?

6 Explain the Soviet desire for a buffer zone on its western border. Which countries did the Soviet Union want to include within its sphere of influence?

7 Evaluate the reasons why the US wanted to rebuild a strong Europe at the end of the Second World War.

8 Truman, Kennan and Churchill represented the motivations of the Soviets in very direct ways. Write five words that best describe how they represented the Soviets. Give one piece of evidence to support the use of each word to represent the Soviets.

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9 Create a newspaper cartoon about one of the following:
   a Truman's speech about containment of March 1947
   b Kennan's 'Long Telegram'
   c Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech.

10 Make a list of the ways in which the Americans attempted to contain communism between 1945 and 1949.

11 Define the Truman Doctrine.

12 How might the Soviet leadership have viewed Truman's containment doctrine and the Marshall Plan?

13 Explain the significance of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as factors contributing to the Cold War.

14 The year 1949 was crucial in changing the character of the Cold War. Give reasons why.

15 Who were the members of NATO in 1949?

16 Why were the Americans so frightened of communism as a way of life?

17 In a table, summarise each of the interpretations of the origins of the Cold War.

Traditional	Revisionist	Post-revisionist

18 The origins of the Cold War are contested because there is a great deal of evidence to support the positions of both the Americans and Soviets. Write an essay that explains, in your view, who or what was responsible for the development of the Cold War up to 1949.

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CHAPTER THREE

The Cold War world order, 1949–1979

By the end of 1949 it was clear that the Cold War was well underway. However, while Europe's division into East and West created tension between the new superpowers, this never erupted into armed conflict in Europe. Only during the Berlin blockade of 1948–49 was there any real disagreement that involved Soviet and Western forces, but even then not a single shot was fired. Broadly speaking, each side respected the other's sphere of influence in Europe, and for the duration of the Cold War Europe's borders did not change.

What did become clear to both sides, however, was that elsewhere around the globe, power vacuums emerged that created opportunities for the spread of the Cold War. The establishment of Communist China and decolonisation in Asia and Africa were watched closely by Moscow and Washington as the Cold War expanded into a global order.

In 1948 the United States adopted a policy known as 'containment'. It served to counter the spread of communism by 'containing' it where it had been established. The policy was enforced by armed conflict outside Europe on more than one occasion, most notably in the Korean War of 1950–53 and in the Vietnam War of 1965–75. Containment was also used to prevent governments sympathetic to the USSR becoming established in other parts of the world, particularly in Africa. The US also pursued the policy of 'rollback', which actively sought to subvert and destroy communist governments.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

+ What forms did Cold War conflict take?
+ Where was the Cold War fought?
+ What were the phases of the Cold War?

‹ Military personnel erect an Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on the launching pad. Missiles greatly increased the potential range and threat of nuclear weapons and so cast a considerable shadow across the Cold War era.

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Consolidation and crisis, 1949 to 1961

The most dangerous developments of the Cold War occurred in the period from 1949 to 1961. Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in this period went through a number of different phases, from episodes of high tension to periods of relative calm. After the Russians exploded their first nuclear device in late 1949 a proliferation of nuclear weapons created a climate of fear for many people, and in the Western world the fear of communism bordered at times on hysteria.

KEY EVENTS, 1949–61

1949	**APRIL**	NATO was established
	12 MAY	Berlin blockade ended
	23 MAY	Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was created
	29 AUGUST	USSR exploded its first atomic bomb
	1 OCTOBER	People's Republic of China was formed
	OCTOBER	German Democratic Republic (East Germany) was created
1950	**JUNE**	Korean War began
1953	**5 MARCH**	Stalin died
		Workers' uprising in East Berlin
		Korean War ended
1955		Warsaw Pact was formed
1956	**JUNE**	Polish uprising
	OCTOBER	Hungarian Revolution
1961	**APRIL**	Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba
	AUGUST	Construction of Berlin Wall began

EUROPE, 1949–61

The consolidation of West Germany

The creation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1949 put to rest almost any ideas of a unified German state and sat at the core of a divided European continent. The Berlin blockade had revealed to the West that militarily it was not ready for conflict with the USSR. And, soon after the creation of NATO, other events, notably the communist victory in China and the detonation of the first Soviet nuclear bomb, alarmed the West further. Until West Germany could be integrated into a Western European economic and military system, the Americans felt that Stalin could exert pressure on the new state and draw it into the Soviet sphere of influence. Hindering the rebuilding of West Germany were fears from other states, especially France, that a powerful Germany could be a threat to Western Europe, either directly or by provoking war with the East. However, the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1950 allayed some of these fears because it allowed Western European states to exploit West Germany's coal and steel resources for their own rearmament programs. The

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French were pleased with this arrangement, and Konrad Adenauer, the West German chancellor, was equally enthusiastic because the ECSC provided security and economic stabilisation for West Germany. Historian Michael Hogan notes the importance of the ECSC when he suggests that it 'amounted to the treaty of peace that had never been signed' between France and Germany.

In 1952 the West German army was created, under the European Defence Community (EDC) scheme, by which European nations placed some of their troops under common command. Despite the collapse of the EDC in 1954, in 1955 West Germany officially became part of NATO. The East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, had earlier declared his support for communist North Korea after its attack on South Korea in 1950, and had suggested similar action in Europe to reunite Germany. Ulbricht's suggestion made Western European countries cast aside most of their concerns about a strong united Germany and instead focus on the need for a unified military bloc to counter the greater threat of communist aggression against West Germany.

The Warsaw Pact

The integration of West Germany into the US sphere of influence may have allayed some West German fears of the Soviet threat, but it did little to placate the Soviets themselves. The re-emergence of an armed and politically hostile Germany on their border was exactly the same

SOURCE 3.1 Warsaw Pact and NATO member states during the Cold War period. The 'Iron Curtain' that divided East from West can be clearly identified.

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sort of situation that had drawn Russia and the Soviet Union into two world wars within half a century. Barely a week after West Germany was admitted to NATO, in 1955, the Soviet Union announced the formation of the Warsaw Pact. Following on from the creation of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) in 1949, which coordinated the economic policies of the Eastern bloc states, the Warsaw Pact now drew those states together militarily. Military command of the entire Eastern bloc was centralised in Moscow, but the Warsaw Pact also served a political role during the Cold War, most significantly in the crises of 1956 and 1968, during which political unity within the pact was as important as military action in subduing the uprisings in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

THE COLD WAR – A BIG MISUNDERSTANDING?

When examining the Cold War, the issue of 1940s and 1950s perceptions cannot be ignored. There is no doubt that the differing ideologies of the US and the Soviet Union, as well as pre-existing animosity between the two nations, helped to create a climate conducive to conflict, but many historians also consider that a major cause of the Cold War was the simple fact that the two sides had little real understanding of each other. Richard Vinen suggests that:

> The confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact was in some ways more dramatic and extreme than any that had taken place before in Europe. Previous conflicts had involved parties that knew and to some extent understood each other … The European ruling classes often spoke each other's languages and knew each other's countries intimately … The Soviet Union was different. Few Western leaders spoke Russian and … they had little understanding of central and eastern Europe.
>
> Richard Vinen, *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Da Capo, Cambridge, 2001, p. 267.

Misunderstanding between the Americans and the Soviets sometimes led to tragic misinterpretation of events and actions. As many academics have observed, each side was quick to interpret the other's actions as a threat but at the same time unable or unwilling to acknowledge that their own actions could be interpreted the same way.

Questions

1. What does Richard Vinen consider as distinct about the Cold War?
2. How does this differ to the Concert of Europe discussed on page 13?
3. How might a better understanding of Russia have changed the nature of the conflict?

RELATIONS THAW, 1953–56

peaceful coexistence
Khrushchev stated there were two alternatives for relations between the US and USSR – peaceful coexistence or war; through peaceful coexistence the US and USSR would still be political opponents but each would convince the other of its superior ways through peaceful means, not military power

In 1953, while disagreements between the East and West remained, signs of improving relations began to emerge. In March Stalin died, ending more than 20 years of his dictatorial rule over the Soviet Union. Under Stalin, tensions between the Soviet Union and the West had been high; his death brought new leaders to the forefront of Soviet politics. With no clear successor named, a collective leadership was established. Georgy Malenkov was the new Chairman, with Vyacheslav Molotov, Nikolai Bulganin, Lavrenti Beria and Lazar Kaganovich as deputies. When Malenkov resigned, Nikita Khrushchev took charge as Chairman, after outmanoeuvering his opponents. Khrushchev was in full control by 1955. He wanted to improve relations with the US and embraced a policy known as '**peaceful coexistence**'. He recognised that both superpowers possessed nuclear weapons and that tensions needed to be relaxed to avoid a dangerous conflict. He still pursued his goal of a communist-dominated world but did so by

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Alamy/ITAR-TASS Photo Agency

SOURCE 3.2 Khrushchev speaking at the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. During this speech he denounced Stalin, setting in motion a period of 'de-Stalinisation'.

economic and social means rather than through military conflict. His approach was welcomed in the West, where it was seen as an important turnaround from the long-held Soviet idea that war between communism and the West was inevitable.

There were leadership changes in the US as well. Former US general Dwight D Eisenhower won the US presidential election in November 1952, succeeding Harry Truman. Eisenhower spoke tough when it came to standing up to the Soviet Union and he increased the US's nuclear arsenal, but he was not willing to risk a war and in fact helped to end the war in Korea (see also pp. 69–71). In 1953 a ceasefire was signed in Panmunjom, ending the three years of bitter conflict in Korea, and in 1954 the war between Indochina and France finally came to a close. These all suggested to many people that the Cold War might be 'thawing'.

In the Soviet Union Khrushchev pursued a domestic policy known as '**de-Stalinisation**'. He believed that Stalin's rule had been harsh and cruel not just to the USSR itself but to its satellite states also, and in an address to the 20th Party Congress in February 1956 he publicly denounced Stalin as a tyrant and recognised the satellite states' rights to find their 'own way to socialism'. The broadcasting of this speech across eastern Europe by the US's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) raised hopes that political change might be imminent. However, Khrushchev assumed that all satellite states wished to remain within the Soviet bloc. The world was yet to discover what would happen if one of those states chose a path to socialism with which the USSR disagreed.

de-Stalinisation
From 1956, a period in which criticism of Stalin was accepted in the USSR. However, criticism of the Communist Party or of communism in general was still not permitted

CHALLENGES TO SOVIET CONTROL

The countries of the Soviet bloc did not remain entirely compliant under communism during the Cold War period. Early on in 1953 there was serious unrest in East Germany, and uprisings would follow in Hungary and Poland in 1956. The challenges to Soviet rule that led to the collapse of communism in eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union after 1989 were therefore not the first, but they were clearly the most successful and would eventually bring the Cold War to an end. Earlier challenges to Soviet domination had varying degrees of success, but for the most part they resulted in the Soviet Union intervening to reassert its control. Evidently, Khrushchev wanted to pursue peaceful coexistence with the the US and other Western powers, but he had no real intention of allowing freedom among the Soviet satellite states themselves.

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Getty Images/ullstein bild

SOURCE 3.3 Striking workers march through the Brandenburg Gate in East Berlin during the 1953 uprising.

East Germany, 1953

In 1953 a combination of factors led to a political and social crisis in East Germany. As part of East Germany's postwar reparations payments, much of its infrastructure had been dismantled and transported to the Soviet Union; this weakened East Germany's domestic industry. East Germany's leader, Walter Ulbricht, had also instigated forced collectivisation of farms, and his harsh program of socialism had resulted in a mass exodus of the population to the West. At one point, the Soviet Council of Ministers was urged to 'sell' East Germany to the West for US$10 billion because it was simply becoming too expensive to support. Despite being urged to take a more conciliatory approach in East Germany, Ulbricht's high industrial targets and fixed wages remained in place, resulting in widespread strikes across East Germany throughout 1953.

The US welcomed the crisis, which it thought might destabilise the Soviet grip on East Germany, but the Americans did not provide direct military aid. The Americans publicly called for a conference to discuss the future of Germany, fully aware that the crisis would make any such meeting unlikely. At the same time they secretly attempted to prolong the unrest through provocative broadcasts from American radio stations in West Berlin; their hope was that the unrest would spread and result in a general uprising against communism in East Germany. The Soviet Union hoped that a four-power conference might result in a neutral, unified Germany over which they could have influence, but support from West Germany for the striking workers in the East demonstrated that the Soviets' influence would be limited and forced them to change their policy towards the two Germanies. Instead of attempting to foster a Soviet-friendly West Germany the Soviet rulers had little option but to consolidate their power in East Germany and accept the division of 1949.

Poland and Hungary, 1956

Encouraged by the policy of de-Stalinisation, which characterised much of Khruschev's period of rule, and by Khrushchev's hinting that Soviet satellite states could follow 'different roads to socialism', Poland became the first satellite state to challenge Soviet control in the de-Stalinisation era. Rioting broke out in Poznan in June 1956 in protest against increased work targets. Władysław Gomułka, the popular and pro-reform former Polish Communist Party leader, was brought back to power to attempt to defuse the situation. He requested, and was granted by Khrushchev, greater freedom to follow a Polish road to socialism, but in return he vowed to remain loyal to the Warsaw Pact.

Later that year, as part of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation policy, the hardline Stalinist leader of Hungary, Mátyás Rákosi, was replaced with the more moderate Ernő Gerő. When Gerő proved to be no more acceptable to the Hungarian people than Rákosi, the USSR allowed a new government under the leadership of Imre Nagy to be formed. Very quickly Nagy began planning for wide-ranging reforms, including the introduction of free elections and the reinstating of private ownership of farms. Crucially, Nagy also began planning for Hungary to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and become a neutral state. Moscow's response was to send in tanks and troops; this sparked widespread rioting and violence. Protests by the United Nations were simply ignored by

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the USSR. The uprising was crushed, but not before 20 000 Hungarians had died and around ten times that number had fled the country.

The West did not help the Hungarians in their struggle, partly because they maintained the unofficial agreement that each 'bloc' would not interfere in the other's affairs, but also because their attentions that summer and autumn were focused on the Suez Crisis in the Middle East. President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt had nationalised the Suez Canal, but as it was mainly owned by Britain and France (as major shareholders in the Suez Canal Company) they sent troops to the region to protect their interests. Israel, having been threatened with war by Nasser, took advantage of the situation and invaded Egypt. The British and French also invaded Egypt but were forced to withdraw after demands from the US, the USSR and the United Nations. While this crisis was unfolding in the Middle East the Soviets effectively had a free hand to deal with Hungary in whatever manner they felt appropriate.

Getty Images/Hulton Archive

SOURCE 3.4 Armed civilians stand ready to repel Russian forces during the Hungarian Revolution in 1956.

Punch magazine and the Hungarian Uprising

Questions

1. What is the setting of the cartoon?
2. Who are the figures in the background and what is happening?
3. What is the overall message of the cartoon?

SOURCE 3.5 Cartoon from *Punch*, 28 November 1956, commenting on the Suez and Hungarian crises

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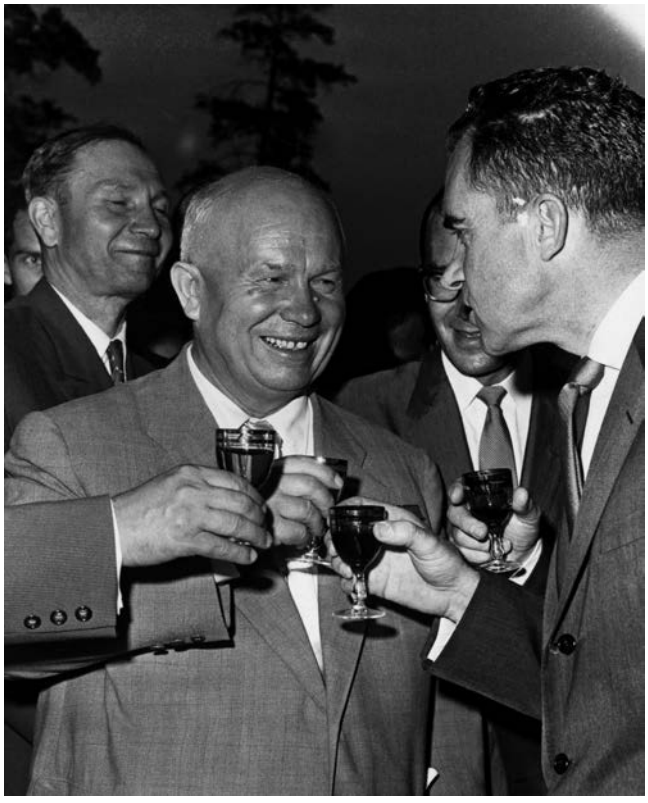
THE COLD WAR FREEZES, 1958–61

Despite the crises of the mid-1950s, relations between the US and the USSR continued to alternate between periods of détente, when tensions relaxed, and periods of crisis. The years 1958 to 1961 particularly illustrated this trend and led to what was arguably the most critical moment of the Cold War. To begin with, Berlin became once again the central focus of the Cold War in 1958 when Khrushchev made the sudden announcement that the USSR no longer recognised the rights of the Western powers in the city. The Western powers made it clear they would resist any attempt at being forced out of Berlin and for the moment the situation eased. In addition, as historian John Gaddis points out, 'From 1957 to 1961 Khrushchev openly, repeatedly, bloodcurdlingly, threatened the West with nuclear annihilation … He would even specify how many missiles and warheads each target might require'.[1]

Notwithstanding that bluster, in July 1959, Richard Nixon, then vice president of the US, visited the USSR to open the American National Exhibition in Moscow, soon after a similar Soviet exhibition had been held in New York. These two exhibitions were designed to showcase home appliances, automobiles and the general, day-to-day lifestyle of Soviet and American citizens. It was hoped they would improve political relations between the two nations in the spirit of peaceful coexistence. During Nixon's visit to the USSR he engaged in a lively and at times heated discussion with Khrushchev. The 'Kitchen Debate', as it became known, was an exchange of ideas on the virtues of capitalism and communism. A few months later, in September, Khrushchev visited the US and, while his reception was mixed, many thought that peaceful coexistence between the two superpowers might actually be possible.



Corbis/Bettmann

SOURCE 3.6 Khrushchev and Nixon attended the American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959

However, relations soon turned sour again when, in 1960, an American U-2 spy plane was shot down over Soviet territory. President Eisenhower refused to apologise or to guarantee that flights over Soviet territory would cease. Khrushchev stormed out of the Paris Conference, which had only just begun. The 'thaw' was over.

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Kennedy and Khrushchev – Cold War adversaries

There are few political rivalries as famous as that between the American president John Fitzgerald Kennedy and the Soviet premier Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev. Their political relationship lasted only three years but it shaped the Cold War in a way that dramatically affected both the US and the USSR.

Alamy/ITAR-TASS Photo Agency

SOURCE 3.7 Nikita Khrushchev and John Kennedy meet for talks on the Cuban Missile Caribbean Crisis at the US Embassy in Vienna, 3 June 1961.

When Kennedy won the presidential election in 1960 he was only 43 years old, whereas the 66-year-old Khrushchev had already been in power in the Soviet Union for several years. Khrushchev was frustrated with the US; on his visit there the previous year he had received a cool reception, and the U-2 incident and subsequent failure of the Paris summit left him mistrustful of the West. President Eisenhower had been more of an equal of Khrushchev's. Both had been of a similar age and both had held very responsible positions during the Second World War. Now, a young Kennedy was Khrushchev's American adversary, and Khrushchev was keen to size up his opposition. Kennedy's Inaugural Address of January 1961 could have been interpreted by the Soviets as provocative. In it, Kennedy intended to 'Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty'.

The first and only meeting between Khrushchev and Kennedy took place at the Vienna Summit in June 1961, only two months after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba. During the invasion, American-backed Cuban forces had attempted to overthrow Fidel Castro, who had declared Cuba a communist country. The invasion failed completely when Kennedy withdrew air support to the Cubans in order to avoid revealing the extent of US involvement. Kennedy was embarrassed by the defeat in Cuba, and Khrushchev was furious with the Americans for attempting to oust Castro – his newest communist ally, the leader of a nation situated only 145 kilometres from the US. At the Vienna Summit, Khrushchev demanded the Western powers leave Berlin and recognise East Germany as a sovereign nation – on threat of war. His demands were refused and Kennedy left the summit shaken by Khrushchev's aggressive stance. Khrushchev more

continued

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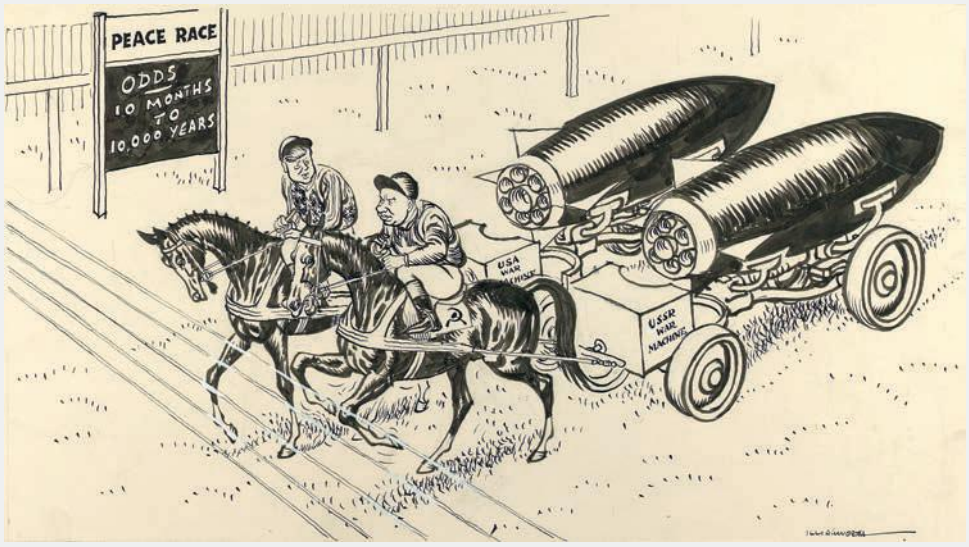
continued

than likely never intended military conflict, but used this meeting to establish his dominance over the younger American. This appeared to be a regular strategy for Khrushchev – what the West referred to as 'nuclear sabre rattling' – he would use fear of nuclear war to help achieve his goals. It was a dangerous game because the Western powers could never be entirely sure just how serious Khrushchev was. In the end, conflict over Berlin never eventuated, but the Berlin Wall was erected in August 1961. After the Vienna Summit, Kennedy and Khrushchev never met in person again. In fact, it would be ten years before any US president and Soviet leader met again.



SOURCE 3.8 A cartoonist's impression of relations between Kennedy and Khrushchev during the Vienna Summit of 1961

In 1962, relations between Khrushchev and Kennedy worsened further when Khrushchev, emboldened by his reading of Kennedy as young and inexperienced, stationed Soviet nuclear weapons in Cuba (See page 81). The October days of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world closer to nuclear conflict than ever before, or since. The two leaders both demonstrated restraint in the face of the crisis. Kennedy could have launched military strikes against the missile sites in Cuba, and in fact was encouraged to do so by his military advisers on more than one occasion. Instead he ordered a naval 'quarantine' around Cuba to prevent Soviet ships from approaching the island. And Khrushchev could have ordered his ships to run the quarantine around Cuba, which would have provoked a military response. But neither leader chose to escalate the conflict, and in the end both managed to avoid the situation spiralling into nuclear war. Furthermore, soon after the crisis, the two leaders discussed how they could control the arms race. What had begun as a volatile relationship in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs invasion turned into a relationship of mutual respect and genuine cooperation. However, the Cuban Missile Crisis was the moment in the Cold War when tensions between the superpowers were at their most intense.

Questions

1. What is each figure in the cartoon doing?
2. What does the cartoonist suggest was the main purpose of the summit, according to the two leaders?
3. How successful do you think the summit was in achieving this purpose?
4. What does the relationship between Khrushchev and Kennedy suggest about the significance of personality and interpersonal relations in international relations?

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The Berlin Wall

At the Vienna Summit of June 1961, Khrushchev demanded the Western powers leave Berlin and officially recognise East Germany. This would allow the Soviets to consolidate their rule in that country – something they were unable to do while they shared control of Berlin with the Western powers. East Germans were still able to travel freely to the Western sectors of the city, and in the 1950s roughly 200 000 people per year had fled via West Berlin to the West – this was the last remaining 'escape hatch' in the Iron Curtain – from West Berlin it was easy to obtain transport to West Germany. Most of those who fled East Germany were highly skilled workers or qualified professionals, hoping for a better standard of living. The migration of skilled workers away from the Soviet bloc humiliated the Soviet Union politically and weakened it economically.

A number of summits were held between 1959 and 1961 on a range of issues facing the two superpowers, but none offered any particular hope for an extended period of positive relations. Historian John Gaddis suggests that the two sides only managed to disagree. Tensions rose again during the summer of 1961, with both the Americans and Soviets mobilising troops in and around Berlin. American soldiers in Berlin were on high alert and Kennedy made it clear that he would defend West Berlin militarily if required. However, on 13 August 1961 the border between West Berlin and East Berlin was closed by Soviet troops and the construction of the Berlin Wall began. All free movement from East to West Berlin was halted. Families and friends were simply cut off from one another, and all the Berlin border crossings were sealed, except for the famous 'Checkpoint Charlie'.

Getty Images/Czechatz/ullstein bild

SOURCE 3.9 Workers building the Berlin Wall; East German guards were present to ensure the workers weren't tempted to try escaping to the West.

SOURCE 3.10 The Berlin Wall reinforced the border between West Berlin and East Germany (known as the German Democratic Republic, or GDR).

In future years, despite the wall, many people tried to escape from East Berlin to the West. At least 136 people are known to have died as a result of trying to cross the wall. Most of them were shot by East German border guards. Peter Fechter, an 18-year-old East Berliner, was fatally wounded while trying to cross on 17 August 1962. The images of his slow death at the base of the wall became emblematic of the struggle of so many East Berliners who tried to escape to the West. However, other attempts to defect were successful. Underground tunnels

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Getty Images/Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone

SOURCE 3.11 Soviet and American tanks face each other across Checkpoint Charlie during a tense moment in October 1961, soon after construction of the Berlin Wall.

Getty Images/Stegelitz/ullstein bild

SOURCE 3.12 A woman in West Berlin passes a bag of food to a man in East Berlin through the border fence, 1961.

were the most common, but not only, method of escape. In 1963 an East German acrobat managed to cross the border by tightrope walking on an unused high-tension cable. In 1983 two friends, with the help of a contact on the Western side, set up and used a zip-line (flying fox) to cross – a family of three had escaped in a similar way in 1965. And in 1979 a successful escape was made when a mechanic and a mason teamed up to craft a hot-air balloon to carry them and their families over the wall.

Socially, the wall was divisive but, politically, the tensions between the US and USSR relaxed almost immediately once the border was closed. It became clear to the Americans that Khrushchev had no immediate intentions to seize West Berlin. As Kennedy surmised, 'There wouldn't be any need of a wall if he [Khrushchev] occupied the whole city'. Immediately before the wall had gone up, American and Soviet tanks had stood eye to eye in the centre of the city, the only time during the Cold War when they did so. In the end the wall meant conflict was averted, and Kennedy himself acknowledged this as positive when he stated, '… a wall is a hell of a lot better than a war'.[2]

Once again, Cold War tensions had risen in Europe but had been defused. And once again, the Cold War was about to erupt elsewhere in the world.

THE COLD WAR IN ASIA, 1949–61

The end of the Second World War in Asia created a political power vacuum. Before the war most countries in the region had been administered as colonies by European nations. The Japanese had driven the Europeans out of many countries during the war and they had occupied these countries themselves, but they were eventually defeated in 1945. Encouraged by the ability of the Japanese to dislodge European colonial powers, independence movements emerged across Asia after the Japanese defeat, making it difficult for the European powers to reassert their control. The United States was opposed to colonialism but was also worried that instability in Asia would make it easier for communism to gain a foothold. The concern in the US was not simply paranoia – both Stalin and Mao actively attempted to exploit anti-colonial sentiment in Vietnam. In the face of the communist threat, American anti-colonialism was replaced by a policy of containment and a desire to prevent the spread of communism in Asia.

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War in Korea, 1950–53

The victory of the communists in China in 1949 was a massive setback for the American policy of containment. It was feared that Korea would be next. The peninsula had been under Japanese occupation since 1910, but at the end of the Second World War the United States and the USSR had agreed to divide the country into two zones at the 38th parallel. The USSR was to administer the northern part of the country and the Americans the south until free elections could be held. Soon, however, Cold War rivalry began to play out.

Elections in the south resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in August 1948, under the rule of Syngman Rhee. Soon afterwards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was established under Kim Il-Sung's communist rule. Both the Americans and Russians withdrew their troops in 1949 but tensions on the peninsula remained. The artificial division of the country left many Koreans bitter, and governments in both the north and south wanted to bring the whole peninsula under their control. Tensions exploded when North Korean troops invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950.

Within three days North Korean forces had captured Seoul, the southern capital. The US acted quickly and proposed a resolution at the United Nations to condemn the attack and send military aid to South Korea. The Soviet Union could have blocked the proposal but at the time it was boycotting the UN for its refusal to recognise communist China, and so in the Soviets' absence the resolution was passed. In total 21 nations offered military or logistical support for South Korea; the US made the largest commitment. In September the UN force arrived and pushed North Korean forces back to the 38th parallel.

TABLE 3.1 The United Nations force in Korea. Figures in the table indicate the size of forces present in South Korea at the end of the period of hostilities, in 1953. In addition to the countries listed, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Denmark and India contributed military hospitals and other medical support. At the beginning of the conflict South Korea was not a member of the United Nations.

Country	Size of armed force in Korea
Republic of Korea	590 911
United States	302 483
United Kingdom	14 198
Canada	6146
Turkey	5453
Australia	2282
Philippines	1496
New Zealand	1385
Ethiopia	1271
Greece	1263
Thailand	1204
France	1119
Colombia	1068
Belgium	900
South Africa	826
The Netherlands	819
Luxembourg	44

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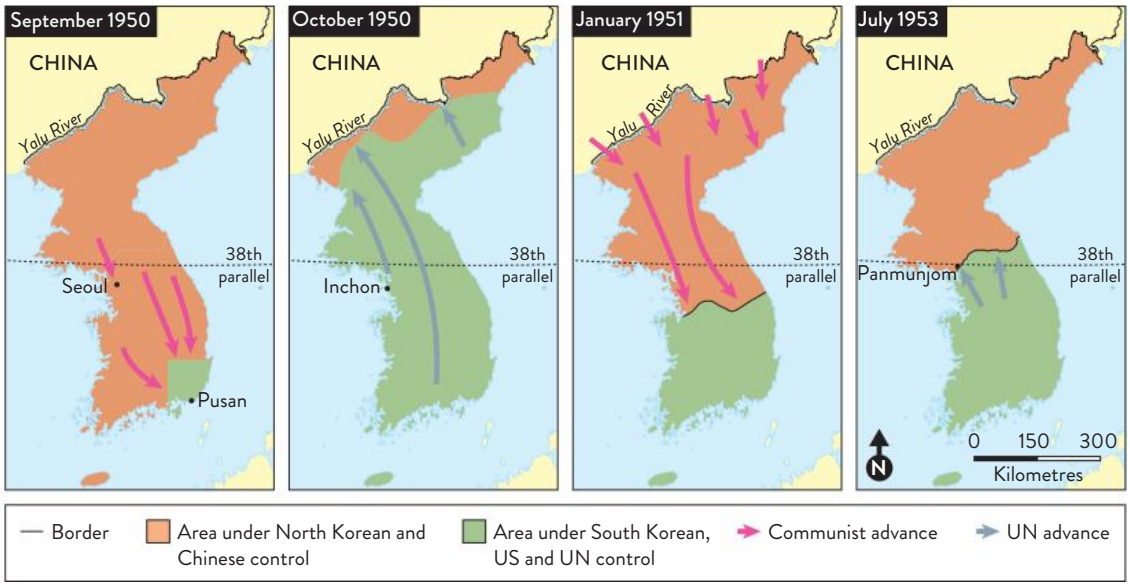
rollback
An aggressive US policy that aimed not merely to contain communism but also to force it to recede and retreat

Corbis

SOURCE 3.13 American fighters in formation over Korea. American pilots were aware they were flying against Soviet pilots, and they named an area of north Korea as 'MiG Alley' (after Soviet-built planes called MiGs).

The American general Douglas MacArthur, who was commander of the UN force, did not stop at the 38th parallel. 'Containment' became **rollback** and he pursued the North Koreans almost to the Yalu River, across which lay China (see Source 3.14). Warnings from China that invasion of North Korea would be resisted were ignored by the US, and it seemed likely, at least to the Chinese, that the UN would cross the Yalu and invade China itself. In November 1950 China sent a massive force of nearly 200 000 troops across the Korean border. This time it was the UN's turn to retreat. General MacArthur was dismissed when he insisted on invading the north once again and proposed the use of nuclear weapons to end the war; Truman considered the idea but refused. MacArthur also suggested an invasion of China could help bring an end to communism in that country but Truman was not interested. Instead both sides dug in and the conflict effectively became a stalemate.



SOURCE 3.14 The progression of the Korean War. The initial advance by North Korea nearly captured the entire peninsula, but the counterattack by UN forces reached the Chinese border before China became involved. The truce line of 1953 was almost exactly where the initial dividing line between the two Koreas had been before fighting began.

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During the next two years the US followed the policy of 'limited war' in Korea, meaning that they were careful not to allow the conflict on the peninsula to expand into a wider conflagration with China or, even worse, the Soviet Union. This was despite the fact that American pilots were flying against Soviet airmen over Korea. The Soviets were flying aircraft with Chinese markings but the Americans knew the planes were piloted by Soviets. The fact was kept secret because to admit it might have led to war with the Soviet Union.

Peace talks on Korea began in 1951 but it was not until 1953 that a ceasefire was finally signed. An agreement was made that the truce line would be roughly along the 38th parallel – where it had been before the fighting had begun three years earlier. Both sides claimed a victory of sorts. China and North Korea claimed they had resisted and pushed back the invasion of their territory by the UN and the US. The Americans claimed Korea as a victory for the policy of containment – the communist invasion had been pushed back and communism had not spread across the peninsula. Whatever the claims of victory, the Korean people lost the war. In addition to the total military deaths on both sides of some 750 000, approximately 1.5 million Korean civilians in the North and a further 1 million in the South had been killed, and the country remains divided today. Both southern and northern capitals, Seoul and Pyongyang, were largely destroyed in the war and much of the peninsula was left in ruins.

The Korean War had long-term effects in terms of the broader Cold War context. China began pursuing its development of nuclear weapons, and the US and USSR each developed more powerful nuclear devices. The UN had proven it was capable of acting against threats to its members and it was therefore more successful than the League of Nations had been in the 1930s. The USSR abandoned its boycott of the UN and returned, if only to use its power of veto to prevent any future action against communist nations.

The Malayan Emergency, 1950–60

The Korean peninsula was not the only region in Asia in which the communist threat was being keenly felt by the West. In Malaya (now Malaysia), the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) was gaining local support. Just as the West had feared, the harsh economic and social conditions following the Second World War were leading many people towards communism. After three managers of European rubber plantations were murdered in 1948 by members of the MCP, tensions increased. A military commitment was made by Britain, with Australian support, to counter the communist threat and support the Malayan government. For 12 years the insurgency was fought by air and land in the jungle, with the threat eventually being subdued by 1960.

Australian War Memorial [P01306.006]

SOURCE 3.15 Australian soldiers in the jungles of Malaya. Similar conditions would be encountered by Australian forces later in the Vietnam War.

After signing a treaty in September 1954, representatives of Australia, Great

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Britain, the US, France, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan formed the South-East Asia Treaty Organization, to better coordinate responses to the growing communist threat in the South-East Asian region. The SEATO alliance would be important in the following decade, when Australia considered, and eventually committed to, action in Vietnam. However, SEATO was disbanded in 1977.

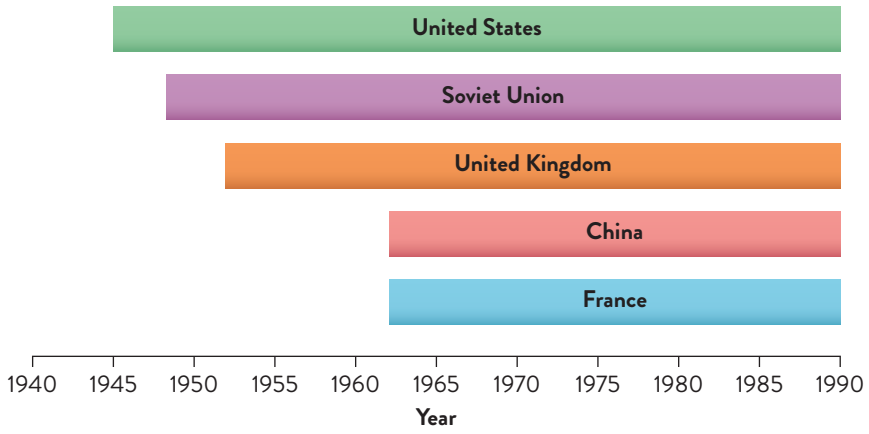
THE ARMS RACE BEGINS

Since August 1949, when the Soviet Union detonated its first nuclear device, there had been a competition between the USSR and the US to develop the greatest number of and the most destructive nuclear weapons. The Americans had had a four-year 'head start' on the atomic bomb and by the time the Soviets became a nuclear power the Americans were well beyond the testing stage. They already had nearly 100 bombs and had also developed the long-range aircraft that could deliver them to targets.

The American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, announced the new US policy of 'massive retaliation'. By maintaining a ten-to-one ratio of nuclear superiority over the Soviets, the Americans felt confident the threat of annihilation would act as a nuclear deterrent and be enough to keep the Russians from pursuing unacceptable policies. However, as the Russians built up their stockpile of nuclear weapons, the Americans had to spend more to maintain their lead. During the 1950s the US increasingly focused on the development of nuclear weaponry at the expense of its conventional forces. But, as the Soviets attempted to close the gap between their nuclear arsenal and that of the Americans, both sides realised there would be no winner if a nuclear conflict did occur.

In 1952 the British joined the arms race when they exploded their first nuclear device at the Montebello Islands off the coast of Western Australia (see page 110). Later they developed ballistic missile technology for both the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy and, with the support of the US, the Polaris and then Trident missile systems kept Britain supplied with nuclear warheads. However, it is estimated that the largest stockpile of British warheads at any one time was around 400, whereas both the United States and Soviet Union had stockpiles of tens of thousands of nuclear devices.

In the early days of the arms race the Soviets focused their efforts not only on nuclear warheads, but on new delivery systems. They developed bombers with longer ranges because they still did not have friendly air bases within range of most of their bomber fleet. They also



SOURCE 3.16 From the time of the first use of atomic weapons in 1945, the 'nuclear' club expanded.

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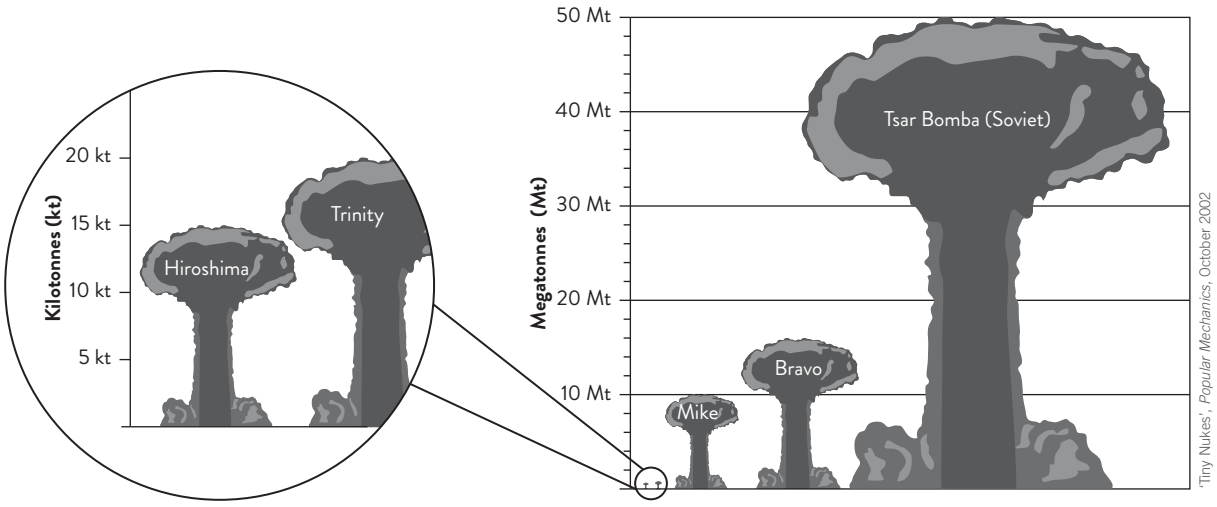
focused on the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). These missiles could carry their nuclear payload further and faster than any bombers could. Alarmed once again at the progress of the Soviet nuclear program, the Americans began developing their own missiles to close the perceived 'missile gap' between the superpowers. By 1963 the US had 550 ICBMs; the Soviets had fewer than 100.

By the mid-1960s each side possessed enough nuclear weapons and sufficiently effective delivery systems to destroy the entire human race several times over. The nuclear weapons were supposed to serve as a deterrent. This meant that they forced the superpowers to actively avoid starting a war with each other because to do so would result in massive destruction for both sides. The concept of Mutually Assured Destruction, or 'MAD', kept both sides in check. It was based on the logic that if one side launched a nuclear attack against the other it would be detected in time for a retaliatory strike to be launched against the aggressor, and this would thereby ensure both nations were effectively destroyed. Complete annihilation became more and more assured as weapons systems became more advanced. In the 1960s, for example, the Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicle, or MIRV, was developed; it was a single missile that could carry several warheads aimed at different targets.

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (see page 81) confirmed for both the US and the USSR the inherent dangers of conflict in the nuclear age. While both sides continued to develop nuclear weapons after the crisis, they also agreed on certain limitations. The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty ended atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, and further agreements in 1967 banned the use of nuclear weapons in space. In 1972 the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) placed a limit on the number of missiles each side could have. This did not reduce the number of weapons in existence, but for the first time it put an upper limit on further development, and this slowed the arms race. It was not until the 1980s that agreements were made to reduce the massive stockpile of nuclear weapons.



SOURCE 3.17 Relative sizes of significant nuclear detonations. The first ever detonation of a nuclear weapon, 'Trinity', and the Hiroshima bomb (both atomic bombs) are dwarfed by the later American 'Mike' and 'Bravo' tests (hydrogen bombs with more destructive power), which in turn measure at less than a third the explosive power of the Russian 'Tsar Bomba', the largest ever nuclear detonation.

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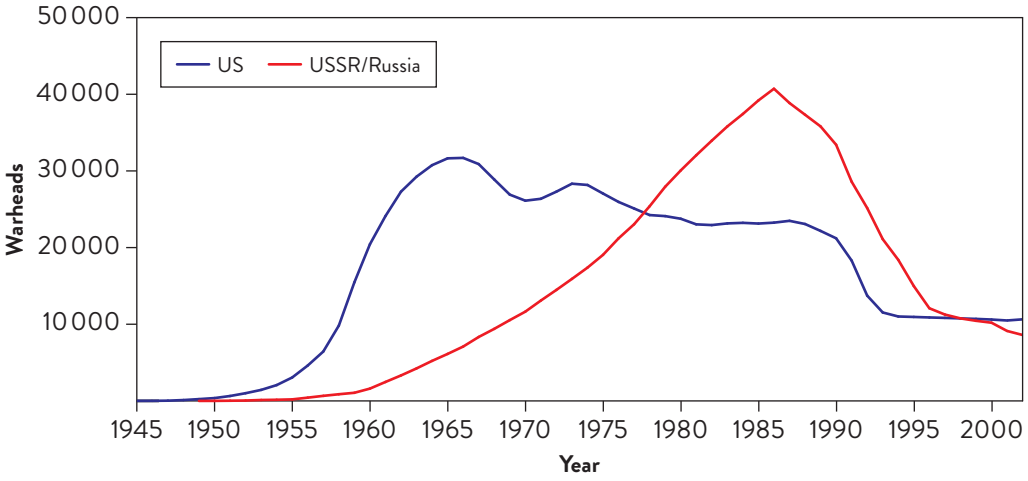
The nuclear arms race

US and Soviet nuclear stockpile, 1945–2002

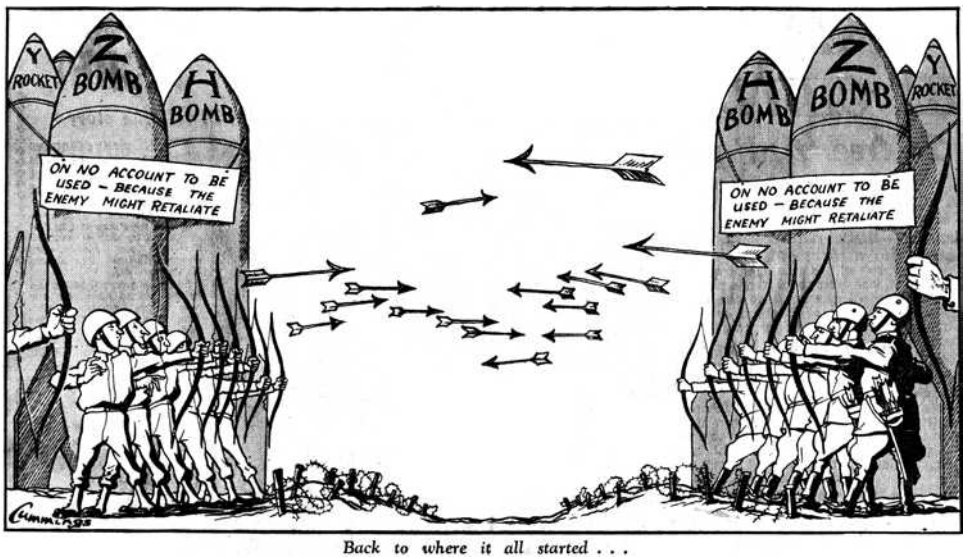


SOURCE 3.18 A graph showing the number of nuclear warheads possessed by the US and the USSR throughout the Cold War

Questions

Refer to the graph above to answer the following questions.

1. Approximately how many warheads did the US have stockpiled in 1960?
2. In what year did the Soviets have more warheads that the Americans for the first time?
3. In what year did both sides begin to reduce their stockpile of warheads?
4. Is there a year in which you could claim that the arms race was over? Explain your answer.
5. This graph indicates the number of warheads each side had but does not comment on the delivery systems available to them. How might that limit the value of this graph as a historical source?



SOURCE 3.19 The cartoon 'Back to where it all stated', by A Cummings, commented on the idea that the arms race was a nuclear deterrent; it appeared in the *Daily Express* on 24 August 1953.

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continued

Questions

1. Why are the soldiers in Source 3.19 using bows and arrows as weapons instead of the much more powerful weapons available to them?
2. Explain how this cartoon portrays the notion of Mutually Assured Destruction.

THE UNITED STATES IN THE 1950s

Anti-communist sentiment in the US was high even when the communists came to power in Russia in 1917, but during the 1950s it reached almost hysterical levels. During the Russian Civil War of 1918–20 the US had sent troops to help fight against the communists. Then, during the Second World War, the alliance between the USSR and the US against Nazi Germany did little to improve relations between the two nations – it was simply an alliance of convenience in the face of a common enemy. The quick deterioration of the alliance at the end of the war, as well as the events in China and Korea, served to reinforce that the two sides were in conflict, at least ideologically.

A fear of communist spies in the 1930s led the US Congress to establish the House Un-American Activities Commission (HUAC) to search for communists. In 1947 HUAC gained widespread public attention when it investigated a number of prominent Hollywood writers, producers and directors who were suspected of being communists. One group, known as the 'Hollywood Ten', refused to answer HUAC's questions, claiming that they were unconstitutional. Their refusal led to imprisonment, and hundreds of others were blacklisted and unable to work.

Two other prosecutions against communists received worldwide attention: those against Alger Hiss and against the Rosenbergs. Hiss, a US State Department official, was accused of being a spy and of passing secret documents to the Russians. Evidence was limited but in 1950 he was eventually sentenced to five years in prison for perjury. US citizens Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted of selling information about the atomic bomb to the Russians. They were sentenced to death, and executed in 1953. Both cases received widespread media attention and fuelled anti-communist sentiment in the US.

'McCarthyism' was a feature of the first half of the 1950s. The term was originally coined to describe the actions of Joseph McCarthy, a Republican senator from Wisconsin who was convinced the US State Department was infested with communists. McCarthy will forever be associated with the 'Red Scare', as it was known, in which hundreds of people were accused of being communists. McCarthy soon became one of the most feared men in America. However, he overreached when he accused army officers of communist sympathies and even attacked

Corbis/Bettmann

SOURCE 3.20 Senator Joseph McCarthy in action, explaining the extent of Communist Party activity in the United States. Note the expressions on the observers.

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the president for supporting the senate when it condemned McCarthy's actions. His fall from favour was spectacular; he fell into obscurity and died in 1957, almost certainly of cirrhosis of the liver, at the age of 48. McCarthyism was over, but fear of communism remained in the US for the entire Cold War period.

Duck and cover!

The development of more destructive nuclear weapons and the ever-present fear of communism in the 1950s led many people to believe it was only a matter of time before a nuclear war began. To prepare the population for survival against a nuclear attack, the US government, through its civil defence programs, developed evacuation plans and education programs. It produced, for instance, the well-known film *Duck and Cover*, which features Bert the Turtle demonstrating the most effective ways to survive a nuclear blast. Of course, some programs were largely to keep the public's morale up and this became clear as the population began to realise just how devastating the impact of a nuclear war would really be. But some programs were genuinely aimed at ensuring survival and protecting people from the fallout of a nuclear explosion. President Kennedy, for example, wanted to construct shelters across the country, to help as many people as possible survive both the short- and long-term effects of a nuclear attack.

Oregon Historical Society #bb013234

SOURCE 3.21 Bert the Turtle, a character from the film *Duck and Cover*, was used in the 1950s to educate people on ways to protect themselves in the event of a nuclear attack.

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THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT

In the 'Sino-Soviet Split', which occurred throughout the period roughly from 1960 to the early 1980s, relations between China and the Soviet Union were strained – sometimes to the point of military skirmishes occurring along the border between the two countries. Stalin had only ever been a half-hearted supporter of Chinese communism. He believed it inferior to the Soviet variety partly because the 'hero' of Chinese communism was the agricultural worker, rather than the industrial worker who was at the heart of Soviet communism. Stalin had been suspicious of the agricultural peasant class since he purged the kulaks (peasant farmers who were relatively wealthy) from Soviet life in the 1930s. In the Soviet Union the revolution was made in the cities, but in China it was made in the countryside. After Stalin's death in 1953, Khrushchev, while demonstrating more generosity towards China, felt the same way as Stalin had before him. Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation program and calls for peaceful coexistence with the West were regarded by the Chinese as a sign of weakness. Relations grew tenser until Khrushchev withdrew all Soviet assistance from the Chinese.

Throughout Mao Zedong's rule of China, tensions between the USSR and China were high. The Americans saw the growing rift between Mao and the Soviets as an opportunity to weaken the USSR, and President Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972 was a turning point in the relationship between China and the West. The volatile relationship between the Soviet Union and China remained until Mao's death in 1976 and continued to 1979 as Deng Xiaoping rose to power.

The Cold War and the wider world

The Cold War had an impact on other countries around the globe, outside of Europe and Asia. The tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States played out in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, for instance. The two superpowers wanted to extend their 'spheres of influence' over some nations in these regions by economic, military and political means. In many cases internal issues within countries were exploited by the superpowers to ensure their own interests were served. As the Cold War progressed, each side had mixed success in its attempts to extend and consolidate power around the world.

THE COLD WAR IN LATIN AMERICA

Latin America, the region made up of Mexico, Central America and South America, as well as the islands of Cuba and the Caribbean Sea, was generally underdeveloped economically at the end of the Second World War. Because of this the United States saw much of the region as 'fertile land' for communist uprisings, or, at the very least, the establishment of leftist governments. Over the course of the Cold War the US did everything it could to avoid communism spreading in Latin America. Overall its efforts were successful, and until the 1970s Castro's rise in Cuba was the only significant communist success in the region. Population growth in Latin America made jobs hard to come by, and as people moved from the countryside to the cities, looking for work, slums developed. Aside from in Chile there was little tradition of democracy in Latin America; most states were run by military dictators. As the issues facing each state grew more serious the chances of revolution increased. Determined not to have any governments sympathetic to communism on their doorstep, the US took a close interest in the political developments of the region and in many cases intervened if it was in their interests.

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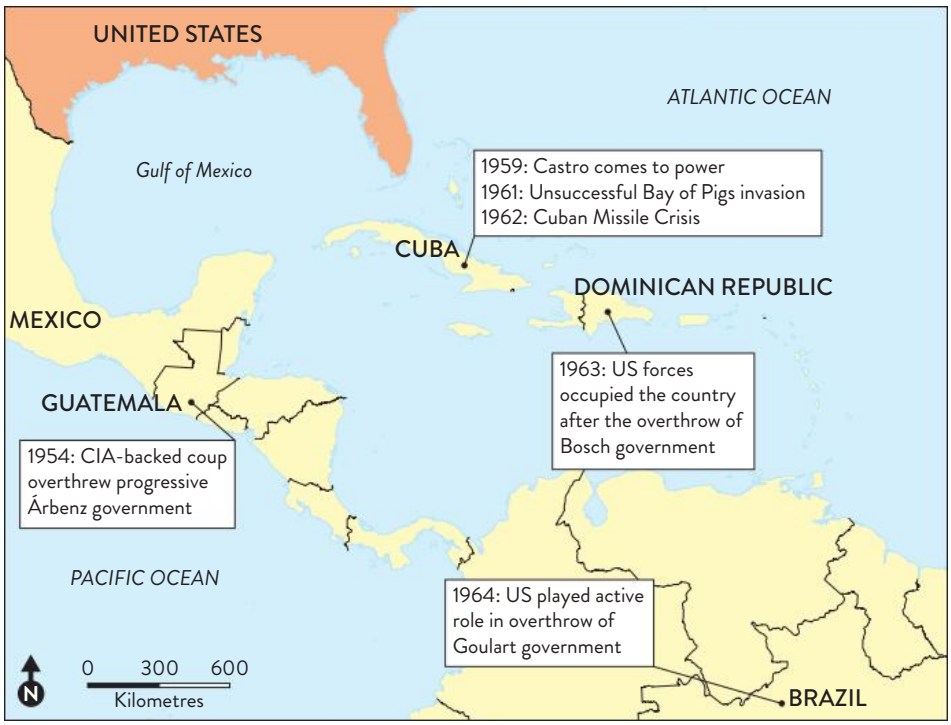
American aid to Latin American countries was often economic. It was hoped that an economic boost for a government would raise living standards for its people and prevent them turning to communism. However, sometimes there were conditions attached to US economic aid. For example, a country may have had to promise to spend funds on American-made products. This would disadvantage local industries and make the country economically reliant on the US. Critics of the US's aid policy in Latin America would later suggest this was the American intention all along.

Significant interventions by the US in Latin America occurred in:

+ Guatemala – In 1954 the progressive government of Jacobo Árbenz was overthrown by a coup supported by the US's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), after it was labelled communist due to its agrarian reforms. Árbenz was replaced by Colonel Carlos Armas.
+ the Dominican Republic – In 1963, when the democratically elected and seemingly anti-communist president, Juan Bosch, initiated social reforms, the US turned against him and helped to overthrow him in a coup. When riots broke out demanding his return to power, 20 000 American troops were sent to help restore order and prevent Bosch's return.
+ Brazil – Even in the largest and most populous of the Latin American nations, the US intervened against communism. It helped overthrow President João Goulart in 1964. Goulart was a millionaire landowner and devout Roman Catholic, but his land reforms and failure to support American sanctions against Cuba, after the rise of Castro, made the US perceive him as communist, and this was enough to secure his fate.



SOURCE 3.22 The map above indicates the key locations and levels of US involvement in various regions of Latin America during the 1950s and 1960s.

With the obvious exception of the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis (pages 81–3), the tensions of the 1940s–1960s between the Americans and Soviets did not directly play out to any large extent in Latin America. However, the Cold War indirectly resulted in great change and upheaval for many nations in Latin America, as the US attempted to establish and maintain its regional dominance.

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THE COLD WAR IN AFRICA

The decolonisation experience of many countries in Africa in the decades after the Second World War affected how they dealt with the two superpowers of the Cold War. Before the Second World War almost all African nations were colonies of European empires, but the weakening of Europe after the war resulted in many European colonies – throughout the world – gaining their independence. In Africa, within two decades from the end of the war, most nations had become independent. The US was eager for European countries to grant their colonies independence, largely because this would open up new economic opportunities for America, and give it increased political influence in Africa. The US felt that one of two things would help stabilise the newly independent, and therefore politically volatile, nations of Africa – American trade or communism. The Americans were not prepared to allow communism to make any gains. The clearest examples of this in Africa were the developments in the Congo and in Ghana.

The Congo gained its independence from Belgium in 1960, with Patrice Lumumba as its new prime minister. His calls for economic independence threatened the financial interests that American and Belgian companies still had in the rich copper mines of the Congo's Katanga region. The US and Belgium quietly supported the calls for Katanga's secession from the rest of the country, and when Lumumba appealed first to the United Nations, and then in a last ditch effort to the USSR, the Belgian and US governments supported his overthrow and execution in 1961. The US subsequently supported the brutal regime of General Mobutu, who remained in power until 1997.

In Ghana, President Kwame Nkrumah was keen to follow the policy of **non-alignment** and form positive relations with both the US and USSR. His fostering of diplomatic relations with East Germany, China and the USSR was once again seen by the US as a move towards communism. In 1966, the CIA backed a coup led by the army while Nkrumah was on a visit to Asia; he was subsequently forced into exile.

non-alignment
During the Cold War, a doctrine by which some nations actively avoided taking sides with one or other of the superpowers

THE COLD WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East played an important role in the Cold War era, both geographically and politically. The Suez Canal was a vital transport route for the Western powers, and the Middle East's reserves of oil meant that the West was anxious to maintain an influence in the region.

Israel was a key ally of the Western powers in the Middle East, and it maintained close ties with the US. But Israel was harassed and forced to defend itself against a number of threats from its neighbours. These included, most notably, when the Arab states invaded soon after the state of Israel was created in 1948; when Egypt threatened war against the backdrop of the Suez Crisis in 1956; when Israel was involved in the Six-Day War against Iraq, Egypt and Syria in 1967; and again when Israel fought against Egypt and Syria in the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

While it is true that these conflicts were ostensibly about the existence of Israel itself, certainly the Suez conflict and the Yom Kippur War played out against, and had implications for, the broader Cold War context. During the 1956 Suez conflict, the US and the USSR showed rare unity in their condemnation of Britain and France's military action in support of Israel's invasion of Egypt. The Soviets did not want Egypt, sympathetic to the Soviets, violated by the West, and the US was concerned about the flow-on effect on their supplies of oil if the war were to develop.

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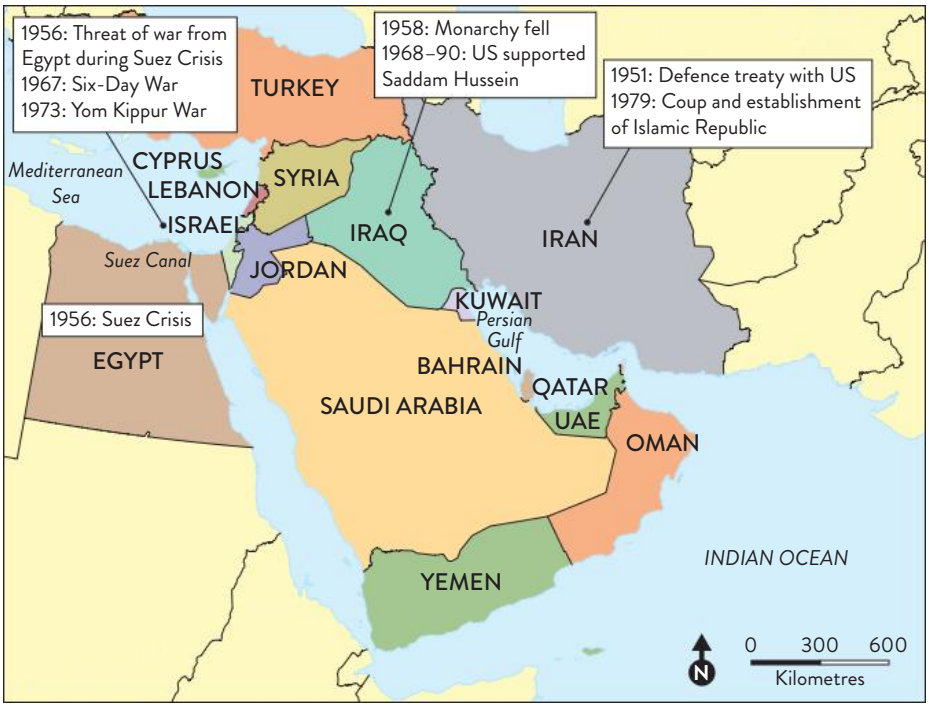

SOURCE 3.23 Key developments in the Middle East during the Cold War years of 1945 to 1979

The Yom Kippur War of 1973 caused US fears about oil supplies to be realised. In this conflict Arab oil-producing states put pressure on Israel's allies, including the US, by reducing supplies of oil. This drove oil prices up significantly and caused a crisis for the world's industrial nations.

Iran was another focal point for tension as the Cold War progressed. In 1945 the Soviets had tried to set up a communist government in the north of the country, which bordered the Soviet Union and already had an active communist party. The Shah (Iran's leader), Mohammad Reza Pahlevi, signed a defence treaty in 1951 with the Americans, who saw the treaty as a part of their policy of containment. However, nationalist sentiment in Iran meant that many resented any form of foreign influence at all. In response to what was felt an unreasonable level of foreign ownership in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddeq nationalised the company. Britain and the United States supported a coup that removed Mosaddeq from his position and restored the Shah to full power. The Shah remained in power until 1979 when he was overthrown and an Islamic republic was established under the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Iraq also gained attention from the West during the Cold War. The pro-British monarchy was ousted in 1958 in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis, and Iraq then became a republic. Although it was not communist, the Americans, via the CIA, tried several times to destabilise the reformist government by arming Kurdish guerrillas in the north-east of Iraq and encouraging Turkey to invade. In 1968 Saddam Hussein became the leader of Iraq. From 1979 the United States backed his regime in its struggles against the anti-US government of Iran. But then Hussein too fell foul of American interests, after invading Kuwait in 1990. Hussein was overthrown and eventually captured in 2003.

Crisis and détente, 1962 to 1979

The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 helped to defuse the tense situation that had developed between the United States and the Soviet Union in Europe. The last 'gap' in the Iron Curtain was now closed and Europe's focus as a Cold War 'battleground' eased. Soon, however, tensions were to rise again elsewhere, as a communist threat emerged closer to the US than ever before. The threat of nuclear war became real, and after that the superpowers worked to slow down the arms race between them. In fact, relations between them generally improved over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, during what became known as a period of 'détente'.

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CRISIS AND DÉTENTE IN THE COLD WAR, 1962–79

1962	**OCTOBER**	Cuban Missile Crisis
1965	**MARCH**	First US combat troops arrived in Vietnam
1968		Prague Spring
1972		Nixon visited China and Russia
		SALT I agreement signed
1975		Apollo–Soyuz Project
		Helsinki Accord
1977		Charter 77 formed
1979		Iranian Revolution
		Soviets invaded Afghanistan

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962

During the Korean War of 1950–53 the US had attempted to contain the spread of communism in Asia. Ten years later it faced a similar threat, but this time much closer to home.

In 1959 Fidel Castro came to power in Cuba after overthrowing Fulgencio Batista. Batista had ruled as a dictator since 1952 and had been supported by the United States. After coming to power Castro seized a number of American-owned companies and made trade agreements with the Soviet Union. As his Soviet sympathies became clear the Americans decided to act to remove him from power. The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) trained and armed a group of exiled Cubans who had fled after Castro's rise to power. In April 1961 a force of around 1400, known as Brigade 2506, landed on Cuba's south coast at the Bay of Pigs, with the intention of gathering local support and overthrowing Castro. Poor planning and an underestimation of the loyalty of the people to Castro meant that the invasion was a disaster, and most of the attackers were killed or captured within two days. Afterwards Castro was

SOURCE 3.24 During the Cuban Missile Crisis, most major cities in the United States were within range of Soviet missiles.

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AAP/AFP

SOURCE 3.25 At the United Nations, the American ambassador Adlai Stevenson points out the Soviet missile sites from reconnaissance photos taken over Cuba.

convinced the US would try to overthrow him again, so he sought more direct support from the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev was only too happy to help a communist ally, especially one that lay only 150 kilometres from the US. Despite Khrushchev's claim that he was placing only defensive weapons in Cuba, he placed nuclear missile launchers manned by Soviet crews and aimed at the US at a number of locations on the island. All the major eastern and central cities, including New York, Washington and Chicago, were within the 2000-mile range of the missiles. It is important to note, however, that much of the US was already within range of Soviet long-range missiles, with or without those in Cuba. However, to the American public, the missiles in Cuba appeared to be a much more direct threat.

Since the Cuban Missile Crisis, historians have pondered on the question of why Khrushchev placed the missiles in Cuba. Assisting in the defence of Cuba was only one of his motivations. Others were:

+ to test the resolve of the new and inexperienced President Kennedy, especially so soon after the disastrous Bay of Pigs incident
+ to gain the bargaining power necessary to force the US to remove some of its missiles that were in striking distance of the USSR
+ to help close the 'missile gap' and dissuade the US from a 'first strike' against the USSR.

Placement of the missiles took the Americans by surprise. They were discovered after analysts looked at photos taken from a U-2 spy plane flying high over Cuba. President Kennedy was informed on 16 October 1962 and for six days the Executive Committee of the National Security Council, or ExComm, met to discuss response options. Those options included immediate airstrikes against the missile sites; an invasion of Cuba; putting diplomatic pressure on the Soviet Union through the United Nations; a naval blockade around Cuba to prevent any further missiles being sent there – or they could do nothing. The last option was unacceptable to Kennedy because, even though the US still had nuclear superiority over the Russians and even though the Cuban missiles presented no greater threat than already existed, doing nothing would set a precedent for the Soviets to feel confident to challenge the US elsewhere in the world – such as in West Berlin. In the end the decision was made to place a naval blockade around Cuba; Kennedy publicly announced this on 22 October.

After a very tense six days, during which letters were exchanged between Kennedy and Khrushchev, and the United Nations called for restraint from both sides, the situation was defused when Khrushchev ordered Soviet ships on their way to Cuba to turn back. Nuclear bombers and missile command centres in the US had been put on Defense Condition (Def Con) 2, meaning they were prepared for war. The next level, Def Con 1, meant war. The Soviet missiles in Cuba were dismantled and sent back to the USSR, in exchange for a guarantee that the US would never invade Cuba or attempt to remove Castro by force, and according to a secret arrangement in which the Americans agreed to remove some of their nuclear missiles from Turkey.

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The crisis had brought the world that much closer to nuclear conflict and put into perspective just how dangerous the nuclear arms race had become. It led to discussions between the Americans and Soviets about how they could reduce the threat of nuclear war, and they established a 'hot-line' between Moscow and Washington to make it easier for the two leaders to contact each other directly. In July 1963 the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed, in which the two sides agreed to carry out future nuclear tests underground to avoid pollution of the atmosphere.

The events of October 1962 did not end the arms race – in fact, they made the Soviets more determined than ever to close the arms gap with the US – but there were at least some signs that the two sides were willing to work together. As far as containment was concerned, the US had failed in Cuba. It remained communist, and the US had made a guarantee not to attempt to overthrow Castro. The Soviet Union remained committed to the defence of Cuba in the event of invasion, so any attempted US military action would likely have led to Soviet involvement and risked nuclear war once again.

'Over the garden wall'

The illustration below was drawn by Norman Mansbridge, a British cartoonist who worked for a number of publications. He said of himself: 'I've no real political convictions'.

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

Questions

1. Who are the two individuals portrayed in the cartoon?
2. What do the branches of the trees represent?
3. What is the message of the cartoon?
4. What do you think are the values and limitations of this image as a historical source? Does the fact that Mansbridge claimed to have no political convictions affect your evaluation of the source?

SOURCE 3.26 'Over the garden wall', by Norman Mansbridge, *Punch*, 1962; the cartoon comments on Kennedy's reaction to the Soviet missiles in Cuba.

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Non-alignment

As tensions between the two superpowers increased after the Second World War a number of nations rejected the notion that they should align themselves with either the American or Soviet blocs. These nations took steps to actively promote the policy of not taking sides in the major division. Such a policy was developed in the 1950s, particularly at the Bandung Conference of 1955. Held in Indonesia, 25 nations were represented at Bandung, and issues such as self-determination, respect of sovereignty and non-aggression were discussed. The conference laid the foundations for what became known as 'non-alignment', a policy that is different to that of neutrality. Members of the Non-Aligned Movement took active steps to mediate between the two superpowers and worked to promote peace, whereas countries that were neutral avoided involvement completely. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru stated in his address to the Bandung Conference that:

> I belong to neither [bloc] and I propose to belong to neither whatever happens in the world ... If all the world were to be divided up between these two big blocs what would be the result? The inevitable result would be war. Therefore every step that takes place in reducing that area in the world which may be called the unaligned area is a dangerous step and leads to war.

The Non-Aligned Movement was officially formed in 1961. Members tended to represent developing nations, particularly those in Africa and South America. Prime Minister Nehru of India played a major role in establishing the movement, encouraged by the opportunity he saw to forge a new role for his nation after its independence from Great Britain in 1947.

Questions

1. What advantages might non-aligned nations have gained from the superpowers?
2. What impact might a non-aligned grouping have on the international balance of power?

THE VIETNAM WAR, 1965–75

In 1954 the Battle of Dien Bien Phu had ended with a victory by the Vietnamese over the French. This ended French control in Indochina (the region encompassing Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). The Japanese had occupied Indochina during the Second World War (as well as much of the rest of South-East Asia and China), but after 1945 France had hoped to reassert control over Indochina. The French had been in control of Vietnam before the war, since 1884. However, the wartime resistance movement known as the Viet Minh aimed to end all foreign control of Vietnam. The Japanese had been defeated and the Viet Minh were determined to ensure that the French would not come back. In 1946 war broke out between the French and the Viet Minh, and by 1954 more than 75 000 French soldiers had been killed in a war fought

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against a determined enemy in the mountains and thick jungles of Vietnam. The French garrison of Dien Bien Phu in northern Vietnam was surrounded. It became the last stand for the French, who eventually surrendered.

The Geneva Agreement of 1954 ended French rule in Indochina. Independence was also granted to Laos and Cambodia. Vietnam was to be divided into two separate states at the 17th parallel line of latitude. The northern part was to be ruled by the communists under Ho Chi Minh and the south was to be ruled separately until elections could be held to decide on the future of the country as a whole. However, it was not in US interests for an election to be held quickly because it was likely that the communists would have won. President Eisenhower stated at the time:

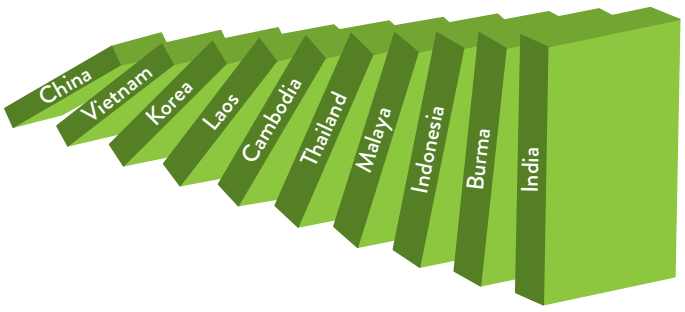
> "I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indo-Chinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held as of the time of the fighting (1954), possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the communist Ho Chi Minh."[3]

With a mindset acutely focused on the perceived threat from communism, the US failed to consider that Ho Chi Minh's struggle was one of national liberation rather than one of communist expansion. Indeed, the extent to which Ho was a nationalist or a communist is still debated by historians to this day.

The domino theory

During the 1950s a strong belief developed in the US that when one country 'fell' to communism it would result in the surrounding countries becoming vulnerable and eventually succumbing in turn. This became known as the 'domino theory'. It was thought that communism would spread beyond the Soviet Union into surrounding countries; furthermore, its spread around the world would be unrelenting – hence the need for 'containment'. China was the first domino, becoming communist in 1949. Vietnam, which was at war with France then, was seen as next in line to fall to communism, and Korea yet another domino in danger of falling. Eventually, most if not all of Asia, and even Australia, would be under direct threat.

The domino theory was not implausible – international borders are not impervious and the often chaotic or violent way in which communism was established in some parts of the world meant it did sometimes spill into neighbouring countries.



SOURCE 3.27 The domino theory suggested that once one country 'fell' to communism neighbouring countries would also come under its influence and fall to communism too, in turn, like dominos.

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continued

Questions

1. Compare and contrast Sources 3.27 and 3.28. In what ways are they similar and in what ways do they differ?
2. Which countries are identified as points of origin for the spread of communism?
3. Does the octopus in Source 3.28 illustrate the domino theory accurately?

New Zealand Herald/Gordon Minhinnick

SOURCE 3.28 This cartoon, published in New Zealand in 1950, portrays the expansion of communism as an octopus, originating in communist China.

Eisenhower puts forward the principle of the theory, 1954

During a press conference on 7 April 1954, President Eisenhower was asked about the situation in Indochina. The war was over for the French, but the Americans were concerned about the threat of communism. Eisenhower's response included one of the first references to the domino theory.

> *Journalist:* Mr President, would you mind commenting on the strategic importance of Indochina to the free world? I think there has been, across the country, some lack of understanding on just what it means to us.
>
> *President Eisenhower:* You have, of course, both the specific and the general when you talk about such things. First of all, you have the specific value of a locality in its production of materials that the world needs. Then you have the possibility that many human beings pass under a dictatorship that is inimical to the free world. Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the 'falling domino' principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences.
>
> Now, with respect to the first one, two of the items from this particular area that the world uses are tin and tungsten. They are very important. There are others, of course, the rubber plantations and so on.
>
> Then with respect to more people passing under this domination, Asia, after all, has already lost some 450 million of its peoples to the Communist dictatorship, and we simply can't afford greater losses. But when we come to the possible sequence of events, the loss of Indochina, of Burma, of Thailand, of the Peninsula, and Indonesia following, now you begin to talk about areas that not only multiply the disadvantages that you would suffer through loss of materials, sources of materials, but now you are talking really about millions and millions and millions of people.
>
> Finally, the geographical position achieved thereby does many things. It turns the so-called island defensive chain of Japan, Formosa, of the Philippines and to the southward; it moves in to threaten Australia and New Zealand.

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It takes away, in its economic aspects, that region that Japan must have as a trading area or Japan, in turn, will have only one place in the world to go – that is, toward the Communist areas in order to live. So, the possible consequences of the loss are just incalculable to the free world.

Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954, pp. 381–90.

Questions

1. What are the three 'specific' and 'general' concerns that Eisenhower had about Indochina?
2. Eisenhower used the word 'lost' to describe Asian peoples living in communist countries. Why do you think he chose this word?
3. What impact did Eisenhower think the domino effect would have on Japan, even if Japan itself did not become communist?
4. Refer back to Sources 3.27 and 3.28. How closely do they reflect the sentiment expressed by Eisenhower in his speech? Does one cartoon match the speech more closely?

America becomes involved in Vietnam

After Vietnam was divided into North and South Vietnam in 1954 the Americans gave significant financial support to the South Vietnamese government to help it resist any future communist threat from the North. The president of South Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem, was deeply unpopular. His election victory in which he had won more than 90 per cent of the votes had been rigged, and in the first years of his presidency thousands of political opponents were arrested or executed. He was staunchly Roman Catholic and his policies oppressed the majority Buddhist population of South Vietnam. However, he was also passionately anti-communist and for this reason was supported by the US. Vice President Lyndon B Johnson was known to have said that Diem was 'the only boy we've got out there'.

Diem's regime continued to be one of harsh oppression and brutality, and eventually the US cut off all aid to him. He was assassinated in November 1963 after a military coup and was followed by a succession of generals as rulers, but the political situation did not improve. Opposition groups had united and formed the National Liberation Front and the guerrilla campaign in South Vietnam, aimed at destabilising Diem's regime, grew more intense. Johnson, now president of the US, decided that more American help was needed.

After an attack by North Vietnamese patrol boats on US naval vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964 Johnson called for direct American military involvement in Vietnam. The Gulf of

SOURCE 3.29 During the Vietnam War the Ho Chi Minh Trail wound its way through Laos and Cambodia; it was used to get Viet Cong forces and supplies, supported by the communists in North Vietnam, into South Vietnam.

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Corbis/Kyoichi Sawada/Bettmann

SOURCE 3.30 American soldiers in action during the Vietnam War. The harsh terrain was a particular difficulty for the Americans and their allies.

Tonkin Resolution gave Johnson the power to take whatever action he deemed necessary to restore peace in Vietnam. Often referred to as the 'blank cheque', it did not place any limit on the size of the force available to him. In March 1965, American combat troops were sent to Vietnam and, soon after, a large-scale bombing campaign began against North Vietnam, called Operation Rolling Thunder.

The American War

Within a year of the first American forces arriving, some 380 000 troops were in Vietnam, yet progress was minimal. The Viet Cong guerrilla tactics were very effective against the Americans, who were used to fighting more conventional enemies. Guerrilla tactics involved small-scale attacks and 'hit and run' strategies, against which the Americans struggled to gain the upper hand. American soldiers in Vietnam, mainly volunteers were often young and inexperienced, and the commanders were slow to respond and adapt to the Viet Cong tactics.

Meanwhile, US bombing of the north continued, and over the course of the war more than 7 million tonnes of bombs were dropped on North Vietnam – more than the total tonnage dropped by the Allies in the Second World War. Yet all the while, the Viet Cong seemed unaffected and, in fact, they were able to launch a massive assault on South Vietnam in January 1968. The Tet Offensive, as it was known, resulted in the capture of more than three quarters of all the towns and villages in South Vietnam. Most of the territory was regained quickly by the Americans and South Vietnamese, but the Tet Offensive, which was covered by the major US television networks, revealed to the US government, and TV audiences, that the war was effectively unwinnable. The American public had been assured that progress was being made in Vietnam and that the US could win the war, but the Tet Offensive showed them that this was not merely a jungle war against an ill-equipped enemy. It was a modern war in which the enemy was able to strike wherever it pleased, to the complete surprise of the Americans. Peace talks opened in Paris within months of the Tet Offensive, but the war would continue for another five years.

The end of the war

The Vietnam War was a terrible burden on President Johnson, and he did not seek re-election in the 1968 elections. The new president, Republican Richard Nixon, pursued the notion of 'peace with honour' in Vietnam, and so, rather than withdrawing all American troops immediately, he initiated the process of **Vietnamisation**. It involved slowly handing over fighting to the South Vietnamese while the Americans pulled out from 1969; they would provide the South Vietnamese with support in the process. This support involved not only the renewed bombing of North Vietnam but also of Laos and Cambodia, to disrupt the enemy supply lines leading to South Vietnam.

Vietnamisation
Nixon's policy by which the US would hand over the responsibility of fighting the war in Vietnam to the South Vietnamese. This would allow the US to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, yet achieve what Nixon called 'peace with honour'

In 1973 a peace settlement was signed between the US and North Vietnam, and in March that year the last US combat troops left Vietnam, although some advisers and other personnel remained behind. Both sides had agreed to respect the 17th parallel demarcation line, but the North continued its military campaign and in April 1975 Northern forces captured the Southern capital, Saigon, and united the country under communist rule. As

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if to prove the domino theory correct, that year also saw communist governments installed in Laos and Cambodia. The policy of containment had failed completely in Indochina. Ironically, though, the Vietnam War helped initiate a period of détente in the Cold War.

TOWARDS DÉTENTE

The Vietnam War had a number of short- and long-term effects both on the United States and on the progress of the Cold War. The US's experience in Vietnam led Nixon to believe there must be a better way to fight communism than via military conflict. The war had cost many American lives – some 58 000 US servicemen had died – and it had failed to contain communism. It had cost President Johnson his presidency, and along with the Watergate scandal it would also cost Nixon his.

Getty Images/Dirck Halstead/The LIFE Images Collection

SOURCE 3.31 Happier times: Nixon and Brezhnev on friendly terms during the period of détente

Nixon acknowledged that communism had not created a single ideological bloc that was a threat to the world. The Sino-Soviet split had continued and the tensions between China and the Soviet Union were serious enough to have resulted in border clashes between the two communist powers. Nixon had an opportunity to exploit the difficult relations between the USSR and China by improving relations with China. Travel restrictions to China were eased and the US navy withdrew from the Taiwan Straits. Mao was equally anxious to 'unfreeze' relations with the US, and Nixon visited Beijing in 1972.

Not wanting to be left behind, the Soviet Union sought ways to improve its relations with the West as well. In fact, all three sides – China, the USSR and the US – had clear motives for wanting to pursue a policy of détente.

China had developed its own style of communism and the Sino-Soviet split meant relations between it and the Soviet Union were tense. Mao was anxious to avoid becoming isolated if the Soviets improved their relations with the West. China had been watching US involvement in Vietnam closely, in case the war spilled into China, as was almost the case in Korea. Mao could have sent troops into North Vietnam, to help Vietnam directly but he was in the process of modernising China and improved trade with the US would help him achieve that aim. Improving relations with the US peacefully was in his interests.

The Soviet Union had been spending a great deal of money on defence throughout the period of the Cold War, and it simply could not afford to continue this while maintaining a decent standard of living for its people. Improved relations with the US would mean the USSR could reduce its defence budget, and resultant trade with the US would also improve the Soviets' economic situation. Soon after visiting Beijing, Nixon visited Moscow and met with Leonid Brezhnev, the president of the USSR. During their talks they signed the first Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT I) in 1972. This treaty placed limits on their numbers of weapons and missiles and helped slow the arms race. Brezhnev visited the US the following year and further arms reduction agreements were made.

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NEW CHALLENGES TO SOVIET CONTROL: CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE PRAGUE SPRING, 1968

In 1968 it was 12 years since the Hungarian uprising of 1956, and since then there had been very little intervention by the Soviet Union in its European satellite states. This is not to say that there had not been disagreements between Moscow and its allies in eastern Europe, but if those disagreements had not threatened the unity of the Warsaw Pact or the ultimate domination of the Communist Party, then the Russians had been reluctant to act. But in 1968 the USSR was once again facing a serious challenge to its control, this time in Czechoslovakia. There, reformers came to power and attempted to implement a policy that became known as 'socialism with a human face' because of its contrast to the austere severity of the previous regime.

Czechoslovakia's economy had suffered a recession in 1961 under the rule of Antonin Novotny, and by 1968 the country was stagnating, when previously it had been the most successful and advanced state in the Eastern bloc. Novotny resigned in January 1968 and was replaced by Alexander Dubček. So began the 'Prague Spring', a brief period of liberalisation under Dubček. Among his plans for reform were increased democratisation, a relaxation of censorship and more freedom to travel. Industry and agriculture would also be reformed by introducing works councils to control factories, rather than party officials, and independent collectives to replace the collective farms run by the state.

Getty Images/Sovfoto/UI

SOURCE 3.32 The Brezhnev Doctrine in action – Soviet tanks in eastern Europe, in this case bringing the Prague Spring of 1968 to an end

Dubček was very careful to make it clear that he would not stray from the Warsaw Pact, but as far as Brezhnev was concerned his reforms posed a threat to Moscow's control over its satellite states. In August 1968, Soviet, Polish, Bulgarian and East German forces invaded Czechoslovakia in what was the first enactment of the 'Brezhnev Doctrine'. This doctrine stated that whenever there was a threat to communist unity in the Eastern bloc, the individual nation's rights were less important than those of the broader communist community. The Czechs responded to the invasion with passive resistance, remembering the violence with which the Hungarian uprising was crushed 12 years earlier. There was little violence, but many arrests were made. The West refused to intervene because Czechoslovakia was in the Soviet sphere and because relations between the superpowers were showing signs of improvement. Dubček was forced to abandon his reforms, and in 1969 he was replaced by Gustáv Husák, a loyal communist who remained in power until 1987. He led Czechoslovakia through a period of **normalisation**, which involved reinstating censorship and full government control.

normalisation
In Czechoslovakia, the period after the Prague Spring of 1968, during which censorship and repression were reasserted; normalisation lasted until 1989

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Life in the Eastern bloc

> I cannot recognise my country from the way it is depicted in the press and media. We didn't just have autumn and winter. We had spring and summer too.
>
> Corinna Hartfouch, East German actress, speaking in 1995, quoted in P Malloy, *The Lost World of Communism: An Oral History of Daily Life Behind the Iron Curtain,* Random House, 2009, p. 304.

This comment appears to challenge the common perception of everyday life in Eastern bloc countries – waiting for hours in long queues to buy bread or meat, constant worries about surveillance by the secret police and the inability to question 'the system'. It also suggests a certain degree of what is called in German *Ostalgie*, meaning nostalgia for life in East Germany before the fall of communism. Either way, it would appear that the views of Corinna Hartfouch are to some extent those of the minority. Generally speaking, life in the Eastern bloc was dictated either by the regime that was in power at the time or centrally from Moscow.

Wikimedia Commons/Appaloosa

SOURCE 3.33 A machine used by the Stasi to reseal envelopes after they had been steamed open as part of its surveillance program

Political, artistic and religious freedoms were limited in Eastern bloc countries, although the extent to which this was the case depended on the country itself. In Poland, for example, Catholicism remained a significant force throughout the Cold War period. In the Soviet Union religious and artistic freedom was minimal during Stalin's rule. Under Khrushchev the Communist Party's grip on everyday life was loosened through the years of de-Stalinisation, but while it was permissible to criticise Stalin and his regime, criticism of the Communist Party or of communism itself was certainly not allowed. And the grip tightened again with the ascension of Brezhnev. It was not until the late 1980s, when Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* was implemented, that the Soviet people felt safe to express concerns about the communist system in the Soviet Union (see Chapter 5).

East Germany was home to one of the most famous, or infamous, of all Communist secret police organisations – the Ministry for State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*), better known as the Stasi. Through a network of agents and informers, the Stasi took the notion of surveillance to a level not seen since the period of terror in the Soviet Union under Stalin. Arrests and interrogations were commonplace, whether or not a crime had been committed. Millions of East Germans were harassed by the Stasi, and after the Cold War a number of former Stasi agents and officers were tracked down and charged with various crimes.

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OSTPOLITIK: A NEW START

Ostpolitik translates as 'Eastern policy'. It refers to the policy adopted by West Germany in the latter years of the 1960s. Previously the government of West Germany had refused to recognise or have diplomatic relations with any nation that recognised East Germany, except the Soviet Union. This meant that West Germany had had no relations with any Soviet bloc state other than the USSR. It had still hoped for a reunification of Germany under a West German government, but as this became less and less likely a change in policy became necessary. The West German foreign minister (and later chancellor) Willy Brandt devised the policy of *Ostpolitik*, which formed a key part of détente in Europe. As West Germany would be at the frontline of any conflict on the European continent, Brandt was anxious to improve relations in order to offer some protection for West Germany. To that end he accepted the Oder–Neisse (river) line as the German–Polish frontier, which had not been finalised at the end of the Second World War. Securing this border helped to ease lingering tensions between West Germany and the Eastern bloc states.

Getty Images/STR/AFP

SOURCE 3.34 Chancellor Willy Brandt of West Germany kneels in front of a memorial to the Warsaw Ghetto during a visit to Poland. The gesture was unplanned and when asked about it later Brandt simply said 'I did what human beings do when speech fails them'.

The timing of *Ostpolitik* was perfect. At the same time as Brandt was seeking improved relations with the East, the Soviets and Americans were beginning to come to terms with each other, and Nixon had extended an olive branch to China (albeit as much to exploit the Sino-Soviet split as to improve Sino-US relations). However, Nixon and the US initially had some worries about a re-emergence of German nationalism through *Ostpolitik*, given the continuing US presence in West Berlin. But the Moscow Treaty of 1970 between West Germany and the Soviet Union was signed, and *Ostpolitik* continued with West Germany signing further treaties with Poland and with Czechoslovakia.

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James Bond: Cold War warrior

One particularly enduring image of the Cold War era is that of James Bond, the Royal Navy commander and secret agent 007, a character created by author Ian Fleming for a series of spy novels he wrote in the 1950s and 1960s. In some ways the Cold War was played out almost as much in the popular culture of the Bond novels and films as in real life. Not unintentionally, many of the Bond films echo the development of the Cold War, so much so that they could be considered propaganda.

In the first Bond film, *Dr No*, released in 1962, agent 007 is sent to a Caribbean island to prevent a mad Chinese scientist from disrupting American rockets with an atomic-powered radio beam. Only months later, the Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of war.

From Russia with Love was released in 1963, capitalising on anti-Soviet sentiment in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The public needed a dose of propaganda at this time as there was a growing sense the Soviets were gaining the upper hand in the Cold War. In the film Sean Connery appears as the quintessential hero – suave, charming and self-assured. In contrast, his Russian adversaries are ruthless and evil.

Alamy/Pictorial Press Ltd

SOURCE 3.35 *From Russia With Love*, the second Bond film, released in 1963, referenced the Cold War tensions of its time.

Later, in 1977's *The Spy Who Loved Me*, Bond is forced to work with a Soviet agent after British and Soviet nuclear submarines disappear. The enemy is determined to trigger a nuclear war between Britain and the USSR, so that civilisation can be replaced by his new world order. In the era of détente, a British and Soviet spy working together proved a hit, and this film was received well by critics and audiences.

Things changed, however, when the Cold War turned frosty again (see Chapter 5). In *The Living Daylights*, from 1987, Bond is pitted against a corrupt officer of the KGB (the Soviet security agency) and at one point helps the mujahidin in Afghanistan do battle against Soviet forces.

The first post-Cold War Bond film was *GoldenEye*, released in 1995. Fittingly, the breakup of the USSR provides a backdrop to events. Bond's superior, 'M', describes him as 'a relic of the Cold War' – an apt description, considering the origins of the film franchise.

THE 'HIGH POINT' OF DÉTENTE, 1975

Improved relations between the US and the communist powers of China and the Soviet Union had begun in the late 1960s and continued throughout the 1970s. Nixon's successful visits to Moscow and Beijing in 1972, and the reciprocal visit by Brezhnev to Washington, showed that relations between the now three superpowers were warming. By 1975, agreements had been reached on arms limitations,

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NASA, artwork by Davis Meltzer

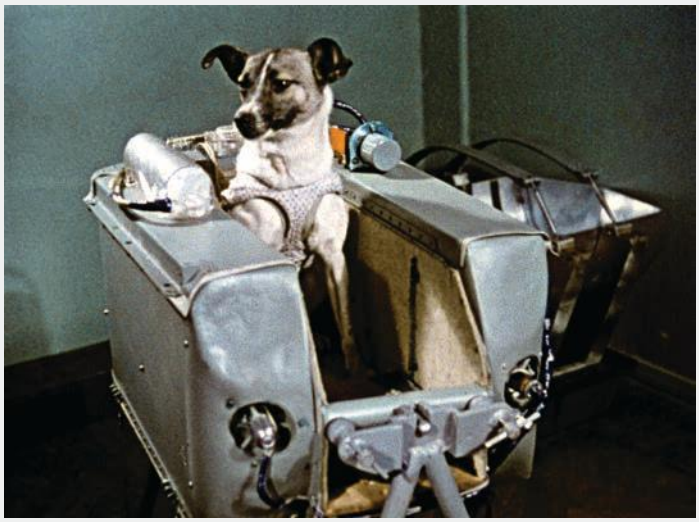
SOURCE 3.36 An artist's impression of the docking phase of the Apollo–Soyuz Project of 1975; this was perhaps literally the 'high point' of détente.

and the Vietnam War had drawn to a close, at least for the Americans. In 1975 a number of agreements and cooperative efforts came together. These were indications that the year marked the time of warmest relations between Moscow and Washington in the postwar period.

On 17 July 1975 three years of planning and cooperation between the US and USSR culminated in the success of the Apollo–Soyuz Project. An American Apollo space capsule docked with a Soviet Soyuz craft in orbit around the Earth. For three days the American and Soviet crews conducted joint experiments. This was the first time the two superpowers had cooperated fully in a space mission; previously they had been engaged in what had become known as the 'space race'.

The space race

With the development of more sophisticated rockets and missiles in the 1950s, space became an area of competition between the superpowers, who aimed for superiority in spaceflight capability. The 'starting gun' of the space race was the successful launch of the Russian satellite *Sputnik 1*, in October 1957. Primitive by today's technological standards, *Sputnik 1* was a metal sphere with a 58-centimetre diameter and four antennae attached; it sent out a radio pulse from orbit that was detectable on Earth. The fact that the Soviets could launch a satellite that could fly over the US alarmed the Americans and gave the Russians an early lead in the space race. With their work overseen by Sergei Korolev, the Soviets maintained their lead with the first animal in space, a dog named Laika, in 1957; the first man, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961; and the first woman, Valentina Tereshkova, in 1963.



Alamy/RIA Novosti

SOURCE 3.37 Laika, the first dog in space. Unlike her human counterparts, Laika died within the first seven hours of her space flight, from overheating and stress.

The 1961 Outer Space Treaty prohibited the placing of any nuclear weapons in orbit, but manned space travel continued rapidly in the 1960s, after President Kennedy declared in 1961 the long-term goal of the American space program 'of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth'. In what would become the most significant moment of the space race, that goal was achieved on 16 July 1969. *Apollo 11* astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin set foot on the surface of the Moon. The third member of the crew, Michael Collins, manned the command module that orbited the Moon.

Question

1. Why was the space race considered an important part of the Cold War?

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The Helsinki Accord was another advance in 1975 in terms of agreements between nations; it was signed in August 1975. It was the result of two years of international conferences held since 1973. The conferences were focused on improving security and cooperation in Europe and on making agreements between 35 countries on economics, technology, **disarmament** and human rights.

disarmament
In international relations, a process in which nations reduce their nuclear and conventional weapons, often by holding high-level talks and making agreements with other countries

The Helsinki Accord was divided into three main sections, referred to as 'baskets'. The first basket focused on security in Europe and outlined ways in which the signatory nations should peacefully settle disputes. The second dealt with areas of economics, technology and the environment, and the third basket concerned cooperation in 'humanitarian and other fields'. It was the third basket that would become the most significant in the following years. By signing the Helsinki Accord, the USSR agreed to the specifics regarding human rights and basic freedoms outlined in the third basket. Later this would open the USSR to criticism when these criteria were not met. In fact, in 1993, historian Martin Walker suggested that:

> "In retrospect, the Helsinki Treaties of 1975 appear as the West's secret weapon, a time-bomb planted in the heart of the Soviet Empire. Throughout Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself, a handful of brave and determined campaigners used the human-rights provisions of the Helsinki 'Final Basket' to insist that their governments live up to the commitments they had signed."[4]

While 1975 can be seen as the high point of détente, it can also be interpreted as the beginning of the end of what some historians have called the 'first' Cold War.

THE END OF DÉTENTE

In 1977, in response to Czechoslovakia's signing of the Helsinki Accord, a group known as Charter 77 was formed in Czechoslovakia. It was a non-political group made up of individuals who were devoted to human rights. After the Prague Spring of 1968, in the period of 'normalisation' instigated by Gustáv Husák, many human rights were suppressed. Charter 77 was formed to assert the rights outlined in the Helsinki Accord, to which Husák was now a signatory. Members of the group, including playwright and future Czech president Václav Havel, were harassed and imprisoned, but the group attracted international attention and applied pressure on the communist government, so much so that it became a key factor in Czecholslovakia's 'Velvet Revolution' of 1989.

The final years of the 1970s saw détente break down and the world enter a renewed Cold War, sometimes called the 'second' Cold War. The election of President Jimmy Carter in the US in 1976 and his focus on human rights resulted in tensions with Brezhnev. When Brezhnev was criticised by Carter over the Soviet Union's civil rights violations, Brezhnev simply reminded Carter of continued US support for corrupt and oppressive governments in Latin America. Soviet placement of new nuclear weapons in Europe alarmed the Americans, who in response stationed missiles of their own in the region, and began research into their Strategic Defence Initiative, or 'Star Wars', a missile defence system that would operate from orbit and use lasers to shoot down incoming Soviet missiles.

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, relations reached their lowest point since the Cuban Missile Crisis. A coup had overthrown the monarchy, and the reformist government that replaced it provoked widespread opposition from Islamic fundamentalists, which could have spilled over into the Muslim republics of the southern Soviet Union. The

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potential instability was not acceptable to the USSR, and the Soviets considered their invasion to be defensive, but it was condemned by the United Nations and regarded by the West as a dangerous new development in Soviet foreign policy. Grain and technology exports to the Soviet Union were banned and US athletes boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games in protest. Despite SALT II negotiations reaching a successful climax in 1979, at a different non-ballistic level, the Cold War intensified. Détente had come to an end.

Chapter summary

- During the 30-year period of 1949 to 1979 the Cold War developed from a European affair to one that essentially divided the whole world.
- The tensions between the Soviets and Americans that grew from the 'German question' were played out in almost every European country in a variety of ways.
- Both the US and the USSR developed powerful new weapons and ways of delivering them, but came to the realisation that there would be no winners in a nuclear war.
- Détente was seen as a way to come to terms with each other's existence but it did not bring an end to the Cold War. The end of détente led to the final, and perhaps most dangerous, phase of the Cold War.

Endnotes

1 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, Penguin, 2006, p. 26.
2 John Kennedy, quoted in R Dallek, *John F Kennedy: An Unfinished Life 1917–1963*, Allen Lane, London, 2003, p. 41.
3 Dwight D Eisenhower, *The White House Years*, volume 1, 1963, p. 372.
4 Martin Walker, *The Cold War*, Random House, London, 1994, p. 237.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

Further resources

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, Penguin, London, 2006.
Martin Walker, *The Cold War and the Making of the Modern World*, Arrow Books, London, 1993.
Cold War, DVD and television series (episodes 5 to 16; especially 9 'The Wall', 10 'Cuba', 11 'Vietnam' and 16 'Détente'), aired on Cable News Network (CNN), 1998.

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Chapter review activities

1 How important do you think perception was as a factor in the development of the Cold War?

2 According to Richard Vinen, what was the key difference in the conflict between Warsaw Pact members and NATO, compared with earlier conflicts?

3 To what extent do you think there was a 'thaw' in Cold War relations after 1953?

4 What role, if any, did Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation play in causing the challenges to Soviet control in Poland and Hungary in 1956?

5 Outline the reasons why the West did not intervene in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

6 If the US was already within range of Soviet missiles in 1962, why do you think Khrushchev placed missiles in Cuba?

7 Look at the cartoon 'Over the garden wall' (Source 3.26). How valid is its message, given the US was already within range of Soviet missiles?

8 In what ways did the Berlin Wall solve the problems of the Cold War in Europe, rather than create them?

9 **a** Define the term 'containment' in your own words.
b Decide the extent to which each of the following was a success or a failure for the policy of containment – the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War. Give reasons for your answers.

10 Create a mindmap (or other visual summary) showing the reasons why each of the superpowers – the US, China and the USSR – sought an easing of tensions between them by the 1970s.

11 Prepare a timeline of the ten most significant events of Cold War between 1949 and 1979. Rank the events in your timeline in terms of their significance and write an extended paragraph explaining your ranking.

12 Write a profile of one of the following Cold War leaders: John F Kennedy, Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev or Richard Nixon. Your profile should include biographical details, a selection of five key quotes and an evaluation of his role as a Cold War leader.

Essay question

13 Evaluate the role of one superpower in the Cold War between 1949 and 1979.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Australia's Cold War

The Second World War was a testing time for Australia. Our armed forces served in most theatres of operations, from the deserts of northern Africa to the jungles of Papua New Guinea, and across the North Atlantic into the South Pacific. Nearly 40 000 Australians died during the war. Australia had played such an important part in the war that afterwards the government had a desire to take an active role in world affairs. When the Cold War period began after the war, the realignment of Australia's foreign policy during the war, and a closer relationship with the United States, was also to affect our experience of the postwar period.

As the Cold War developed, subsequent governments made efforts to protect Australia from the threat of communism. Alliances were strengthened with both the US and Great Britain, and Australia's influence in the South-East Asian region grew. However, Australia remained somewhat subservient to its powerful allies, and at times the desire to maintain close relationships with these nations resulted in Australia's interests taking second place to those of the other world powers, in particular the US.

INQUIRY QUESTION

+ What impact did the Cold War have on Australian society and politics?

‹ Visibly distressed, Evdokia Petrova, wife of Vladimir Petrov, the Russian diplomat granted asylum in Australia, is hustled to a waiting plane at Sydney Airport by two burly Russian guards, who intended to spirit her back to Russia, on 19 April 1954. She was rescued when the plane landed at Darwin and given asylum.

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Australia's postwar foreign policy: old allies, new allies

Before the Second World War, Australia's closest ally was Great Britain. The Australian states had begun as British colonies, and after Federation in 1901, when the nation became a Commonwealth, Australia's allegiances to Britain remained strong. Most Australians felt strong ties to the 'mother country' and this sense of connection endured into the Second World War. And with a population of fewer than five million, Australia relied on Britain for defence. The British had a strong presence in Singapore, and fears of attack by any of our Asian neighbours were eased by the knowledge that the British naval fleet based in Singapore would help to protect Australia.

However, in February 1942 Japanese forces, which had invaded Malaya, captured Singapore, taking 60 000 British and Imperial prisoners, including 15 348 Australian troops, many raw, untrained men with scarcely two weeks' training. The British Empire was brought to its knees in South-East Asia. Australia felt exposed, as the British were concentrating on winning the war against Hitler in Europe and were unable to commit large numbers of forces to the Pacific theatre of war. Australia needed a strong ally and it had already turned towards the United States. Prime Minister John Curtin had made this sentiment clear soon after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor before the fall of Singapore. In December 1941 Curtin had stated:

> "The Australian Government regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the fighting plan … Without inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom."
>
> John Curtin, 'The Task Ahead', *The Herald*, Melbourne, 27 December 1941.

This is not to say that Australia would abandon Great Britain. Australian air crews made a significant contribution to the bombing campaign over Nazi-occupied Europe throughout the war. But Curtin intended that Australia would focus on the conflict that most threatened it directly – the war with Japan.

Australia and the early Cold War

After 1945 Australia's relations with other nations were very much shaped by the climate of the Cold War. Australia was active in the foundation of the UN (see page 102) as a 'middle power', but as the Cold War intensified in Europe new and closer challenges, such as the establishment of the communist People's Republic of China in 1949, arose. Cold War concerns increasingly affected not only Australia's international relations but they also had a direct impact on domestic politics, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s.

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AUSTRALIA'S COLD WAR: SIGNIFICANT EVENTS TO 1975

1920		Communist Party of Australia formed
1945		Cold War begins around this time
1948		Herbert Vere Evatt elected president of the United Nations General Assembly
1949		Robert Menzies won the federal election
1950		Korean War began
1951		ANZUS Treaty signed
1952		Britain's first nuclear test was conducted on the Montebello Islands in Western Australia
1954		SEATO Treaty signed
		Petrov Affair
1955		Australian Atomic Energy Commission established
1956		Melbourne hosted the Olympic Games, which became known as the 'Friendly Games'
1957		Anti-Communist Labor Party, later renamed the Democratic Labor Party, was formed after the Labor Party split
		South Vietnamese president, Ngo Dinh Diem, visited Australia
1962		Australian military advisers arrived in South Vietnam
1964		Conscription reintroduced in Australia
1965		Australia committed combat troops to South Vietnam
1966	**18 AUGUST**	Battle of Long Tan
	25 NOVEMBER	Liberal Harold Holt won the federal election by a landslide
1970		Moratoriums held in Melbourne and Sydney to protest against the Vietnam War
1972		Gough Whitlam came to power
1975		Gough Whitlam dismissed and Malcom Fraser became prime minister

Australia and the United Nations

When the Second World War ended in 1945 Australia felt the need to be more secure in what had become a very different world from that of 1939. Australia was a large country with a small population, and during the war it had found its needs were often subordinate to those of its powerful allies. For instance, the British prime minister Churchill had demanded the Australian prime minister Curtin to send Australian soldiers directly from the Middle East to South-East Asia without refitting in Australia. It was much to Churchill's chagrin that Curtin defied his demand, realising that to send the troops straight into jungle warfare, ill-equipped and untested, would have resulted

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Getty Images/Yale Joel/The LIFE Picture Collection

SOURCE 4.1 Herbert Vere Evatt, president of the United Nations General Assembly from 1948 to 1949, addresses the assembly.

in needless casualties. In 1945 Australian soldiers did suffer needlessly at the command of the American General MacArthur, in 'mopping up' operations against the Japanese when the war was effectively already won. After the war, it was time for Australia to take a more assertive role in world affairs.

Nuclear weapons were a new threat to world peace after the Second World War, and at the same time European colonial dominance was being challenged around the world. Australia also felt entitled to a voice in postwar reconstruction and in forming the international system that emerged after the war. This is particularly evident in the early days of the United Nations (UN). The leader of Australia's delegation to the 1945 UN conference in San Francisco was Minister for External Affairs Dr Herbert Vere Evatt. He spoke passionately about the need for smaller and less populous nations to have a voice on the world stage, and he was concerned that much of the world's postwar reconstruction had already been decided on by the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union at the Yalta Conference. Through the efforts of Evatt, Australia played a key role in the creation of the UN, and in particular lobbied for the UN to offer smaller nations, including Australia, opportunities to have their voices heard. In 1948 Evatt was elected president of the General Assembly of the UN. He made his mark on the UN, with the *New York Times* observing the following of his role in the 1945 conference:

> When Dr Evatt came here he was a virtually unknown second-string delegate ... He leaves, recognised as the most brilliant and effective voice of the Small Powers, a leading statesman for the world's conscience.
>
> *New York Times*, 27 June 1945.

AUSTRALIA AND THE KOREAN WAR

Contrary to its later reputation as the 'Forgotten War', the Korean War was an important event in Australia's Cold War history. In 1950, after North Korea made a surprise attack on South Korea, the United Nations quickly passed a resolution that called for the defence of the South (see pages 69–71). Australia's prime minister, Robert Menzies, elected at the end of 1949, committed Australian forces to the fight in Korea, and all three services – navy, army and air force – saw action in Korea until the armistice in 1953.

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Australia's most famous engagement of the war was at Kapyong in April 1951. Australia's 3rd Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment along with Canadian, New Zealand and British troops, held off a massive Chinese assault through the Kapyong Valley, blocking a major route south, towards the South Korean capital, Seoul.

By the end of the war some 17 000 Australian personnel had served in Korea and 340 Australians had died. Australia had played its role in the first major challenge facing the United Nations.

Australian War Memorial [HOBJ2104]

SOURCE 4.2 Australian soldiers on watch in Korea. With bitterly cold winters and scorching summers, conditions were difficult for Australian forces during the Korean War.

THE ANZUS AND SEATO TREATIES

The attack by North Korea on South Korea and the later entry of China into the Korean War concerned Australia's government. Menzies had won the 1949 election with a strong anti-communist message, and soon after his victory he had sent Australian forces to help suppress a communist insurgency in Malaya, at that time a British colony (see pages 71–72). The 1950 outbreak of war in Korea was interpreted by the government as part of a pattern of communist aggression towards South-East Asia, and it was feared that Australia could eventually become one of the nations that fell to communism in accordance with the 'domino theory'.

Australia's involvement in both the Malayan Emergency and the Korean War demonstrated the policy adopted by both Australia and the US of 'forward defence', which held that nations would need to fight communism wherever it was found, rather than waiting for the threat to reach them directly. This policy would also be the basis of Australia's involvement in Vietnam 10 years later.

Prime Minister Menzies stated that, 'with our vast territory and our small population we cannot survive a surging Communist challenge from abroad except by the cooperation of powerful friends'. Menzies wanted a NATO-style agreement for Australia, to ensure mutual assistance between sympathetic nations in the event of armed aggression against any one of them.

The US was the most powerful of Australia's friends, and in 1951 the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty, known as the ANZUS Treaty, was signed between Australia, New Zealand and the US. Through the treaty, the three nations pledged support for one another in the event of an armed attack in the Pacific region, and agreed to 'act to meet the common danger'. To 'act' did not necessarily mean each nation had an automatic obligation to offer military support under ANZUS, but there was a guarantee that consultation would occur if any nation was under threat. Australia wanted an alliance; the US wanted cooperation; and neither got exactly what it wanted under ANZUS.

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'Nearer, clearer, deadlier'

Questions

1. Why do you think the figure in the cartoon is portrayed as a Roman soldier?
2. What is the significance of the jungle background?
3. How does this cartoon echo the sentiments of Prime Minister Menzies?
4. What is the message of this cartoon?

SOURCE 4.3 'Nearer, Clearer, Deadlier', a cartoon by Norman Lindsay that appeared in *The Bulletin* in 1950. The hammer and sickle on the shield are the symbol of communism.

By 1954 the situation in South-East Asia had become worse for Australia. The domino theory was widely seen as becoming a reality, with the end of French rule in Indochina and the continuing communist insurgency in Malaya. The South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), arranged by the US, was created to form a more binding agreement between signatories than the ANZUS Treaty. The SEATO Treaty was more clearly targeted as an anti-communist agreement and brought together not only countries in South-East Asia itself, but other nations with interests in the region, including Great Britain and France. There were limitations and amendments to the treaty. For example, the Americans made it clear that in the event of conflict they would provide air and sea power, but not land-based troops, and that they would only act against communist threats, not engage in other conflicts between Asian countries. But by and large the SEATO alliance became stronger than the ANZUS pact. Both ANZUS and SEATO gave Australia some peace of mind during a period of the Cold War when fear of communist expansion was at its peak.

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Communism in Australia

Communism had been an issue in Australia even before the Cold War. Conservatives in Australia had been wary of the 'Red threat' ever since the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, and especially since the subsequent formation of the Communist International, or Comintern, in 1919, which aimed to promote communism around the world. The Bolshevik withdrawal of Russia from the First World War had left many Australians with a sense that Russians simply could not be trusted.

TABLE 4.1 Estimated membership of the Communist Party of Australia

Year	Membership (fee-paying)
1922	128
1927	296
1930	486
1931	2093
1937	4421
1943	23 000 (estimate)
1945	16 000
1946	13 000

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) was formed in 1920. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s it had a significant impact on the trade union movement. In 1924 it sought to affiliate itself with the Australian Labor Party but was rejected. As the effects of the Great Depression took hold, though, the CPA's popularity among workers grew and it helped form the Unemployed Workers Movement (UWM). When the leaders of the UWM began organising demonstrations against government offices its leaders were arrested and gaoled. The CPA itself fell out of favour, broadly speaking, when it did not support Australia's involvement in the Second World War, and it was declared illegal by the government in 1940. However, when the USSR joined the war in 1941 and it became clear that much of the suffering of the war was being borne by the Soviets, the CPA was permitted to resume its activities and membership grew to around 23 000 before declining again.

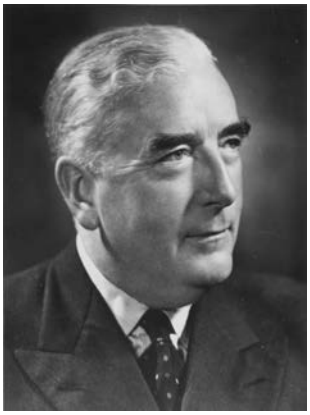
MENZIES AND COMMUNISM

Robert Menzies had always been anti-communist. He won the election for prime minister in 1949 through a campaign that promised to make the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) illegal. The CPA had been implicated in a number of postwar industrial strikes, and although the extent of its actual involvement in the strikes is not accurately known, the implications at the time were enough to concern the broader population, who had come to fear and distrust communism after China's recent communist victory and the Soviet Union's detonation of an atomic weapon.

Sir Robert Gordon Menzies (1894–1978)

Robert Menzies is Australia's longest serving prime minister. He led the country from 1939 to 1941, and again from 1949 to 1966, by which time the Cold War was at its height. He was prime minister during the Korean War, and when the British were conducting their nuclear program in Australia. He was prime minister at the time of the Petrov Affair, when the Labor Party split and during the Vietnam War.

After the Second World War, fear of communism was growing in Australia and Menzies cleverly exploited this during his electoral campaign. He was determined to stamp out communism in Australia, and attempted to make the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) illegal.



Portrait of RG Menzies, prime minister of Australia, by Arthur Dickinson, 1950s, courtesy of National Library of Australia

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Menzies is remembered for his intelligence, quick wit and staunchly monarchist attitudes. His leadership is associated with a period of growth at home and conflict abroad. Australia experienced economic prosperity under Menzies, but on three occasions he committed Australian forces to international conflicts battling communism – the Korean War in 1950, Malaya in 1952, and the Vietnam War in 1965.

Menzies' campaign speech, 10 November 1949

> At the last election we had just emerged successfully from the greatest war in history. Our people were unwilling to displace from office those who had conducted Government during the last three-and-a-half years of that struggle, and returned them with a substantial majority. The Government misinterpreted the vote as an instruction, not to preserve the liberties of the subject, but to curtail them; not to encourage the restoration of normal, competitive enterprise, but to set up the Socialist State. It will be for you to say whether you approve of this interpretation.
>
> When we speak of Socialism, we no longer speak of a theoretical or far distant goal. Our opponents mean business. To the limits that the Constitutional division of powers will permit, indeed without limit if their platform plank of giving all power to the Commonwealth Parliament obtains public approval, they have determined upon 'Socialism in our time'.

Questions

1. Of which war is Menzies speaking in the first sentence of the extract above?
2. How does Menzies claim the government 'misinterpreted' the vote?
3. How does Menzies describe the threat of socialism?
4. What are the values and limitations of this source for a historian or student?

True to his word, Menzies proceeded with steps to ban the CPA with the introduction of the Communist Party Dissolution Bill of 1950, which passed through parliament and became law on 20 October 1950. But the Bill was immediately appealed in the High Court by the CPA, the Labor Party and several trade unions. Dr Evatt, then deputy leader of the Labor Party, argued it was unconstitutional since it relied on the Commonwealth's special defence powers enacted during the Second World War. Since the country was not at war, Evatt argued, the defence powers did not provide a legal basis for the Bill. The appeal was successful and the Bill was declared invalid by the High Court.

Menzies was persistent. To make the CPA illegal the government would have to change the Constitution. He took the issue to the Australian people by holding a referendum in 1951, seeking to change the Constitution so that the government would have more power to deal with

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the communist threat. The referendum was narrowly defeated, not necessarily in sympathy for or defence of communism, but because of broader public concerns about granting government greater powers.

Fear of communism persisted in Australia, as it would throughout much of the Cold War period. The threat of communism continued to be a key concern in Australian society and politics.

The 1951 referendum

SOURCE 4.4 Posters encouraging people to vote 'yes' and 'no' in the 1951 referendum, which sought to extend Commonwealth powers so the Communist Party of Australia could be made illegal

Questions

1. What were the main arguments of each side supporting and opposing the referendum, as expressed in the posters?
2. Which of the posters do you consider more effective?
3. What are the values and limitations of posters such as these for historians studying the 1951 referendum?

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THE LABOR PARTY SPLIT

Dr Evatt's opposition to the Communist Party Dissolution Bill may have helped ensure the Bill never became law, but it also created a division within the Australian Labor Party (ALP) that would change it forever.

Anti-communists within the ALP were critical of Evatt's opposition to the Dissolution Bill. The core opposition within the ALP came from members of the 'Catholic Social Studies Movement', or simply 'the Movement', led by BA Santamaria. Evatt accused the Movement of being at the core of a conspiracy against him, after his loss in the 1954 federal election – held at a time when allegations of espionage and the Petrov Affair implicated some members of the ALP as communists. The group loyal to the Movement subsequently broke away from the ALP to form the Anti-Communist Labor Party, called the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) from 1957.

News Ltd, cartoon by John Frith, 'Party unity?', *The Herald*, March 1955

Its title Doctor? They call it "Party Unity."
During the Hobart Labor Conference Dr Evatt visited the Art Gallery.

SOURCE 4.5 A cartoon by John Firth, which appeared in *The Herald* in March 1955; it mocks the divisions within the Labor Party at the time of the Split.

'The Split' was devastating for the ALP. At a time of generally greater prosperity and affluence, the traditional working-class support for the ALP was not as strong as it had been 20 years earlier, and the perception of ALP communist affiliations, whether true or not, severely damaged the party. In addition, the DLP prevented the ALP from winning national government throughout the 1950s and 1960s, because, in accordance with Australia's preferential voting system, many votes were lost from the ALP when Santamaria directed DLP supporters to preference the Liberal Party above Labor. The conservative domination of Australia's politics would last nearly 20 years.

THE PETROV AFFAIR

Ironically, the furore surrounding the defeat of Menzies' Communist Party Dissolution Bill meant there was still a continued fear of communism in Australia that Menzies could exploit politically. The Petrov Affair of 1954 gave him the opportunity to do just that.

Soon before the 1954 election Menzies announced the defection of Vladimir Petrov, a secretary in the Soviet embassy in Canberra. Petrov was granted asylum in Australia and dramatic attempts by the Soviets to get his wife Evdokia back to Moscow by plane were prevented when the aircraft she had boarded stopped in Darwin and she was intercepted by Australian officials who offered her asylum too. The Petrovs revealed that they had indeed been spying in Australia and implicated members of Dr Evatt's staff. The government launched

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a royal commission to investigate, and while no evidence was found to justify any charges the damage was done and Menzies used the affair to further claim the ALP was riddled with communists.

The Cold War climate was a major factor in the perception of the Petrov Affair. It is true that communist agents such as Petrov did recruit local informants to pass on information to Moscow; indeed, American agents in Australia did the same thing, but no investigations were launched into their activities. In the Cold War climate Australia's former Soviet allies were now adversaries, and the gathering of information by communist agents was regarded as treason, while the equivalent actions of Americans did not receive the same attention.

National Archives of Australia [A6201,62]

SOURCE 4.6 Soviet officials escort Evdokia Petrova onto a plane bound for the Soviet Union. After the Petrovs were given asylum in Australia they took on a new name and settled in the Melbourne suburb of East Bentleigh.

THE 1956 MELBOURNE OLYMPICS: THE 'FRIENDLY GAMES'

In November 1956 Melbourne hosted the first Olympic Games to be held in the southern hemisphere, and the first outside Europe or North America. They became known as the 'Friendly Games' despite being held against the backdrop of heightened Cold War tensions. Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon boycotted the games in protest over the Suez Crisis that was unfolding in the Middle East, and China also boycotted them because the Republic of China (Taiwan) had been permitted to compete. China still to this day refuses to recognise Taiwan as a sovereign nation because the nationalists who were defeated by the communists in 1949 fled there.

More notable than the boycotts was the water polo final that became known as the 'blood in the water' match. The competition for a gold medal was between Hungary and the Soviet Union. It occurred only weeks after the Hungarian Revolution had been crushed. The Hungarian players had been evacuated from Hungary and only learnt the full extent of the Soviet invasion when they were in Melbourne. The match was violent from the start with punching and kicking on both sides. The photo of Hungarian Ervin Zádor emerging from the pool with blood flowing from a cut above his eye has become the enduring image of the match. In the end Hungary won the match with a score of 4–0.

National Library of Australia, reproduced with permission of News Limited

SOURCE 4.7 Ervin Zádor is escorted from the water polo pool during the 'blood in the water' final between Hungary and the Soviet Union.

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Australia and the arms race

On 3 October 1952 Great Britain joined the 'nuclear club' when it detonated its first nuclear device. The location of the test was the Montebello Islands, off the coast of Western Australia. Four years later another two tests were conducted in the same area. With the domino theory seemingly becoming a reality, the French on the back foot in Vietnam, and communism in danger of gaining a foothold in British Malaya, Australia supported Britain's atomic program and offered territory to enable testing. The scientific adviser to Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill had said, 'If we are unable to make the bomb ourselves, and have to rely entirely on the United States for this vital weapon, we shall sink to the rank of a second class nation'.[1] Australia was selected as a testing ground due to its remoteness and sparse population. In 1955 the Australian Atomic Energy Commission was established to administer the program of British tests and also to investigate the potential for the wider, non-military use of atomic energy. Subsequently, Australia's first nuclear reactor was built at Lucas Heights in Sydney in 1958.

After the first detonation on the Montebello Islands, British testing moved primarily onto the Australian mainland in an area of South Australia called Maralinga. From 1956 to 1957, seven British nuclear devices were tested at Maralinga. Further 'minor' tests were then carried out until 1963, as part of attempts to analyse the effects of radiation and fallout on civilian populations. Britain and the United States had had their cooperation over development of nuclear weapons limited by the McMahon Act of 1946, but by 1963 they were working together, and it was cheaper, and more diplomatically prudent, for the British to conduct their tests in the US. The program in Australia was quickly wound up, leaving Australia with little more than thousands of square kilometres of contaminated desert. In the 1950s arms race, Australia's needs remained subordinate to those of Great Britain.

TABLE 4.2 British atomic weapons tests in Australia

Operation name	Test location	Bomb name	Date	Yield (kilotonnes)
Operation Hurricane	Montebello Islands		3 October 1952	25
Operation Totem	Emu Field	Totem 1	15 October 1953	9.1
	Emu Field	Totem 2	27 October 1953	7.1
Operation Mosaic	Montebello Islands (Trimouille Island)	G1	16 May 1956	15
	Montebello Islands (Alpha Island)	G2	19 June 1956	60
Operation Buffalo	Maralinga	One Tree	27 September 1956	12.9
	Maralinga	Marcoo	4 October 1956	1.4
	Maralinga	Kite	11 October 1956	2.9
	Maralinga	Breakaway	22 October 1956	10.8
Operation Antler	Maralinga	Tadje	14 September 1957	0.9
	Maralinga	Biak	25 September 1957	5.7
	Maralinga	Taranaki	9 October 1957	26.6

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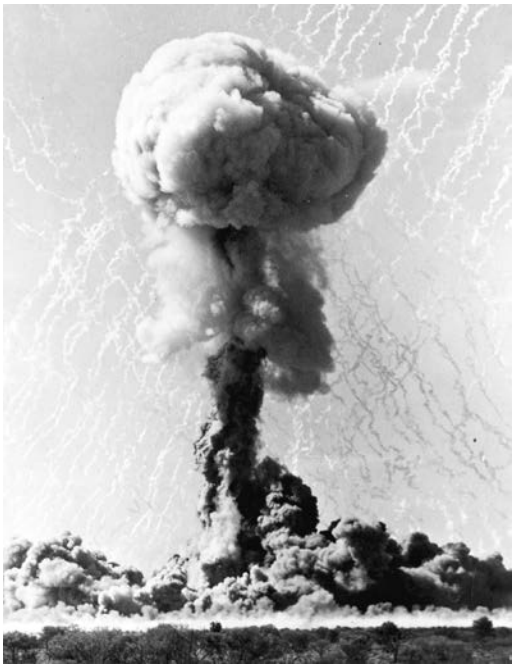
Although Australia had discussed the idea of obtaining its own nuclear weapons after the Chinese detonation in 1963, this did not eventuate. The only nuclear detonations in Australia were those of the British tests. After China detonated a nuclear bomb in 1963 the Australian government decided it was important to pursue the goal of developing nuclear weapons independently of any other nation. Research continued throughout the 1960s, and 'Operation Blowdown' in 1963 involved the detonation of 50 tonnes of explosives in remote Queensland; the destructive power in this test was similar to that of a small nuclear device, although it was not actually a nuclear weapon. The aim was to simulate and investigate the impact a tactical nuclear device would have on a forest environment. In the end, though, nuclear weapons were never used. Pursuing the goal of a nuclear Australia, Prime Minister John Gorton signed but refused to ratify the international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. As the Vietnam War wound down for the Australians and Americans, the policy of 'forward defence' changed to one that aimed for Australia to be able to protect itself on its own territory, potentially with nuclear weapons. However, Gorton's successor, William McMahon, cancelled the nuclear program in 1971, and in 1973 Prime Minister Whitlam ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty.



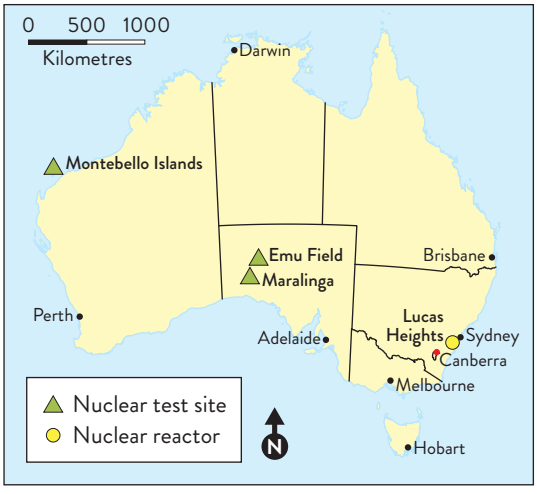
Newspix/News Ltd

SOURCE 4.8 The detonation of a nuclear bomb, part of 'Operation Buffalo', a British nuclear test carried out at Maralinga in 1956

In 2001 the British government admitted that Australian armed forces personnel had been used as human guinea pigs in the Australian tests, to assess the effects of entering a nuclear blast zone soon after detonation. The tests also had serious long-term effects on the environment, and as late as 1995 compensation payments were made to the Indigenous people from the Maralinga area, the Tjarutja. Various clean-up operations were undertaken to remove and bury residual radioactive material. The 1782 square kilometres of Maralinga were handed back to the Tjarutja on 4 November 2014.

AAP Image/Mayu Kanamori

SOURCE 4.9 A marker at a British test site at Maralinga in South Australia warns of high radiation levels at the site.



SOURCE 4.10 Australia's nuclear program: key locations

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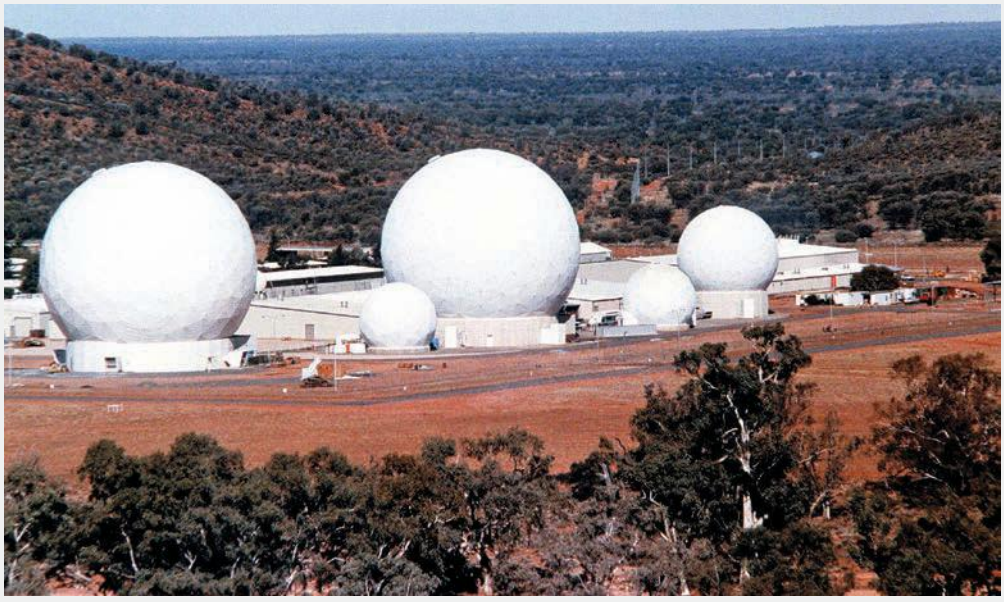
American bases in Australia

Throughout the Cold War, Australia relied closely on its alliance with the United States for defence. Just as Australian governments had offered Australian land for British nuclear tests in the 1950s, so too were they happy to accommodate American requests for surveillance and 'listening posts' in the 1970s and 1980s. Two such bases illustrate in particular the level of commitment by Australia to the US alliance. Joint Defense Facility Nurrungar, established in 1969, and Pine Gap, which became operational the following year, were both used for satellite tracking and surveillance.

Today Pine Gap is understood to control US spy satellites when they are over parts of the globe that include China and South-East Asia. It played a key role in the gathering of information during the 1970s and 1980s.

Nurrungar was jointly operated by the Australian Defence Force and the US Air Force until 1999. It served as a listening post and was intended to detect the launch of any Soviet missiles, but it also helped pinpoint targets for the US bombing of Cambodia during the Vietnam War. Subsequently, many people believed that Nurrungar's presence would make Australia a target of Soviet nuclear missiles in the event of an attack.



Getty Images/STF/AFP

SOURCE 4.11 The Pine Gap facility near Alice Springs, in the Northern Territory. During the Cold War, Pine Gap and Nurrungar in South Australia were key surveillance installations for the United States, illustrating its close alliance with Australia.

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Australia and the Vietnam War

Australia's most well-known and controversial Cold War episode was involvement in the Vietnam War (see also pp. 84–9). For 10 years Australian forces were engaged in Vietnam, and, although the war was supported initially by the Australian public, as it went on their response to it grew more and more divisive. It was the first war to involve Australia but not Great Britain. In the end, 50 000 Australians served in Vietnam, 520 lost their lives and 2500 were wounded. Equally important, Australian society was challenged by the issue of conscription. It involved young men being entered into a ballot at the age of 20 and randomly selected for compulsory military service and deployment to Vietnam.

AUSTRALIA GETS INVOLVED

After the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Vietnam had been divided into two countries. North Vietnam, led by Ho Chi Minh, was communist. South Vietnam, led by President Ngo Dinh Diem, was supported by the United States. From the late 1950s, when it became clear that communist insurgency could destabilise South Vietnam, Australia sent aid to reinforce the nation. In 1957 Ngo Dinh Diem visited the US and Australia to promote his presidency of South Vietnam and to garner support against communism. Diem was a fervent Roman Catholic and his visit was widely supported by Australia's Catholic leadership, who described him as 'his nation's saviour from Red onslaught, an ardent patriot of great courage and moral integrity, and an able Catholic intellectual'[2]. Diem's portrayal as a powerful anti-communist in South-East Asia was a major influence on support for Australia's military commitment in the years to come.

Key to Australia's deepening involvement in Vietnam was its close alliance with the US. The Australian experience in the Vietnam War tended to echo or reflect the American involvement. As the US began to send military advisers, so too did Australia, with our first commitment of 30 soldiers, to act as advisers, arriving in 1962. Two years later, the Gulf of Tonkin incident of August 1964 led President Johnson of the US to commit combat forces to Vietnam, the first of which arrived in March 1965. Johnson called for America's allies to actively help and 'show their flags' in Vietnam. Australia happily responded in April 1965 when, rather than await a request from South Vietnam for military assistance, the Menzies government asked the Vietnamese themselves to request troops from Australia. The decision was announced by Menzies on 29 April:

> "The Australian Government is now in receipt of a request from the Government of South Vietnam for further military assistance. We have decided … to send an infantry battalion for service in South Vietnam."
>
> Robert Menzies, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 29 April 1965, volume HR45, p. 1060.

There were three main reasons for Australia's commitment of combat forces in Vietnam:

1 Fear of communism and the impact of the domino theory: There is no doubt that the risks predicted by the domino theory were accepted as genuine by the Australian government

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in the 1950s and 1960s. The domino theory (see page 85) holds that as one country 'falls' to communism the surrounding countries will become more vulnerable and eventually themselves also fall, like dominos.

2 Alliances and treaty obligations: Australia's commitment to the ANZUS and SEATO treaties were, as far as the government was concerned, reason enough for Australian commitment in Vietnam. As enthusiastic signatories to both treaties, in particular SEATO whose focus was directly against communism, Australia could not reasonably sit by and ignore an obvious communist threat in its region.

3 Credibility with the US: The US was Australia's most powerful ally and the nation on which Australia had relied heavily during the Second World War. Consequently it was clear to the Australian government that it should support the American effort in Vietnam. Australia's commitment to Vietnam was very small compared with that of the Americans, but it was seen as important, to ensure that the US would help us if we ever came under any similar threat. Alan Renouf, First Secretary at the Australian embassy in Washington, communicated the following soon after Menzies' announcement of Australia's commitment:

> "Our objective should be ... to achieve such an habitual closeness of relations with the United States ... that in our time of need ... the United States would have little option but to respond as we would want. The problem of Vietnam is one, it seems, where we could without a disproportionate expenditure pick up a lot of credit with the United States."
>
> Alan Renouf, Washington, communication to the Department of External Affairs, Canberra, 11 May 1964.

Broadly speaking, the decision to send combat troops to Vietnam was supported by the public and by the press. *The Age* newspaper (30 April 1965) recognised Australia's 'inescapable obligations'; *The West Australian* (1 May 1965) said 'the government could not shirk its responsibilities [in Vietnam]', and *The Sydney Morning Herald* (30 April 1965) noted 'this is a right and indeed inevitable decision'. *The Australian* (30 April 1965) was in the minority as one of few newspapers to openly oppose the decision and called it 'reckless'.

In parliament, opinions on Australian involvement split along party lines. The leader of the Australian Labor Party and then Opposition leader, Arthur Calwell, said of the decision, 'We oppose it firmly and completely'. He continued, 'We do not think it will help the fight against Communism. On the contrary, we believe it will harm that fight in the long term'.[3]

Calwell believed that there was a basic misunderstanding in Australia about the nature of the war in Vietnam, and that the government had wrongly concluded that communism 'can be defeated by military means alone'. Statistics show that Calwell's opinion was shared by a minority. In 1965 nearly 60 per cent of the population wanted Australia to fight on in Vietnam, and less than 30 per cent wanted Australian troops brought home. Support for the war in 1965 was widespread.

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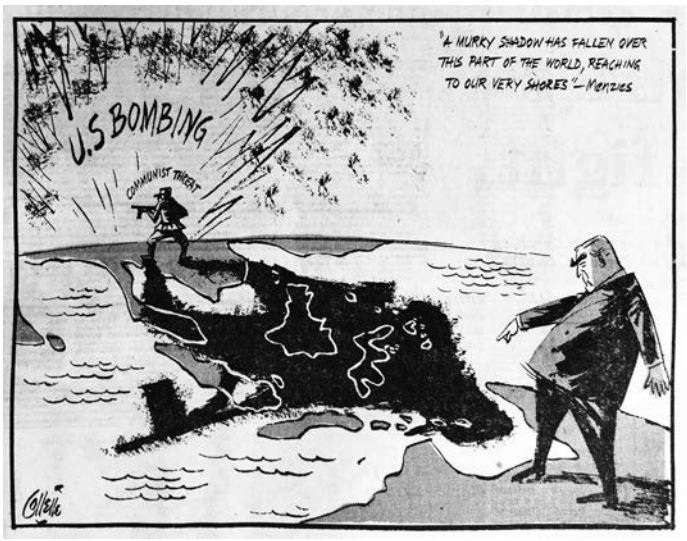
'A murky shadow … '



Newspix/Aubrey Collette

SOURCE 4.12 Cartoon from *The Australian*, 14 June 1965. Prime Minister Menzies stands on the northern shore of Australia, saying, 'A murky shadow has fallen over this part of the world, reaching to our very shores'. In the distance a figure labelled 'communist threat' is being illuminated by 'US bombing'.

Questions

1. Was *The Australian* in support of or in opposition to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War? What then are your first impressions of the attitudes represented in the image?
2. In the cartoon, the man representing the communist threat appears relatively small and a long way off, but his shadow is big. This conveys the message that the threat of communism is close to Australia. What is creating the shadow? What message does this convey?
3. What is the overall message of this cartoon?

AUSTRALIAN TROOPS IN VIETNAM

Australian troops in Vietnam fought mainly in the Phước Tuy province in South Vietnam, largely independent from the American forces. Generally speaking, the Australian experience of the Vietnam War involved small units, sometimes consisting of only five or ten soldiers, spending a number of days in the jungle and on mountains, conducting 'search and destroy' missions to find and eliminate enemy encampments and caches (stores) of weapons. The Australian forces used tactics and fighting styles similar to those employed by the guerrillas in the Viet Cong. As a result, Australian forces suffered, proportionally, far fewer casualties than the Americans. The Americans preferred to set up ambushes and wait for the enemy to come to them, but the Australians became known for their ability to seek out the enemy.

In August 1966 Australian forces fought in their most famous engagement, the Battle of Long Tan. In a rubber plantation close to the main base of the Australian forces, 120 soldiers fought off a much larger Viet Cong force. In the battle 18 Australians died, including 11 conscripts. The date of the battle, 18 August, is commemorated each year as Vietnam Veterans Day.

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Australian War Memorial [EKN/67/0130/VN]

SOURCE 4.13 Australian troops in Vietnam awaiting helicopter transport. Helicopters played a vital logistical role throughout the Vietnam War.

CONSCRIPTION

The conscription debate is often misunderstood. Conscription, or National Service, involves the compulsory call-up of a certain number of young men to undertake military training, but they do not necessarily engage in active combat. Among the enduring images of the Vietnam War are those of protests organised by anti-conscription movements, and it has often been claimed that conscription was deeply unpopular throughout the war. This is not necessarily an accurate statement. Generally, the idea of young men undertaking military service has been accepted and even supported by Australians so long as it has not involved actual fighting overseas.

Conscription had been a part of Australia's history before the Vietnam War. Its origins lay in Australia's desire for security in the years following Federation in 1901. The Defence Act of 1903 gave the government the power to conscript for home defence – but not the power to send conscripts overseas to fight. Forced military service had been in place from 1911 to 1929 and from 1941 to 1950 but, as per the Defence Act, during these periods conscripts only served in Australian territory. Conscription was in place during the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1972 but conscripts made up only around one quarter of Australia's military personnel in that conflict. The remaining personnel were volunteers.

The return of conscription was announced by Prime Minister Menzies in November 1964 – before Australia had committed troops to fight in Vietnam. At that time the government's

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main concern was to ensure there was a large enough force to defend Australia if regular army forces were needed overseas, not necessarily in Vietnam but if the conflict in Malaya widened.

Conscription enjoyed broad support in Australia, even during the years of the Vietnam War. Throughout the 1960s, polls indicate that more than 60 per cent of the population supported compulsory military training, and even as Australian soldiers were returning from Vietnam in 1972 support for conscription was still more than 50 per cent. However, the possibility of conscripts being deployed to Vietnam was less popular. Less than 40 per cent of the population thought conscripts should be sent to Vietnam. Around 1 in 3 conscripts during the period of the Vietnam War served in Vietnam.

This is not to say that conscription did not have its opponents. Protest groups including Save Our Sons (SOS) and the Youth Campaign Against Conscription (YCAC) grew into mass protest movements as the war continued. Conscription was ended after Gough Whitlam came to power in 1972.

CHANGING ATTITUDES

The widespread support for the war lasted a number of years as it was perceived that progress was being made in Vietnam. In 1966 President Johnson of the US visited Australia, and despite some protests he was warmly received. Prime Minister Harold Holt's phrase 'All the way with LBJ' became the conservative catchcry of the day. Johnson's visit helped to maintain popular support for the war. This slogan is also sometimes credited with helping Harold Holt win the 1966 federal election, a landslide win for the Liberal Party, which felt that it had a mandate to continue Australia's involvement in Vietnam. Support for the war continued to outweigh opposition to it, and it was not until late 1969 that more people wanted Australian soldiers brought home than wanted them to fight on. The Liberal Party won the next election in 1969, although with a much smaller margin.

As the war continued, a number of factors began to erode public support for it:

1 The Tet Offensive of 1968, in which the Viet Cong launched a massive offensive against the cities of South Vietnam, revealed the communist enemy was far from being defeated.
2 Daily broadcasting of recent battle scenes direct to television sets in Australian homes increased the public's war weariness. There was a growing perception that little progress was being made.
3 Deaths of conscripts in battle raised questions about how much power government should have over people's lives.
4 Events such as the My Lai Massacre of 1968, made public in 1969, appalled the public. At the village of My Lai a platoon of US soldiers had killed hundreds of unarmed villagers.

By 1970 protest groups such as SOS, the YCAC and many others had joined together to form a broader anti-war protest movement. They staged moratoriums in Melbourne and Sydney in 1970, which called for an end to the war.

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Getty Images/Universal History Archive

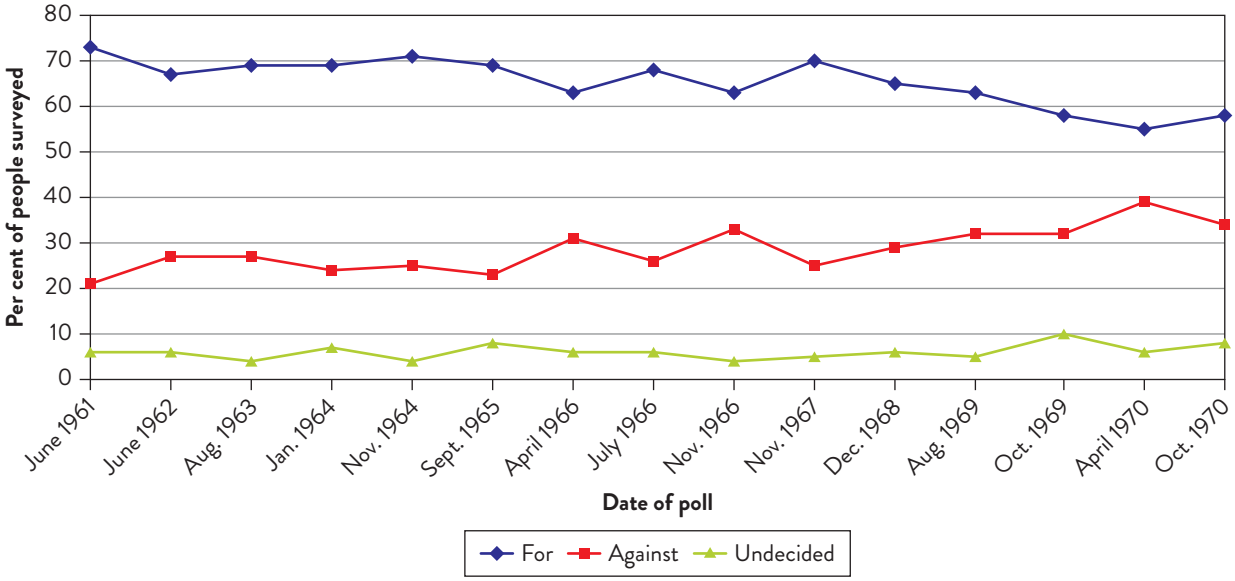
SOURCE 4.14 American troops fire on Viet Cong positions in Saigon in 1968, during the Tet Offensive. The Tet Offensive was a key turning point in the Vietnam War.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH/B. Buckley

SOURCE 4.15 Protesters take to the streets of Sydney on 30 June 1971, as part of the moratorium campaigns.

It is sometimes claimed that the Vietnam War era came to an end in Australia because protest movements forced the government to end involvement in the war. However, by the time of the first moratorium in May 1970, Prime Minister John Gorton had already announced that Australian troops would begin withdrawing from Vietnam. President Nixon had begun withdrawing US troops from 1969 and, further echoing American decisions on the war, Australia followed suit. By the time Labor's Gough Whitlam had won the federal election in 1972 fewer than 100 Australian troops remained in Vietnam. Members of the Royal Australian Air Force remained after the last troops returned; they played a humanitarian role until 1975, leaving only days before the fall of Saigon.

Conscription at the time of the Vietnam War



SOURCE 4.16 Results of Roy Morgan Gallup Poll, showing support for conscription from June 1961 to October 1970

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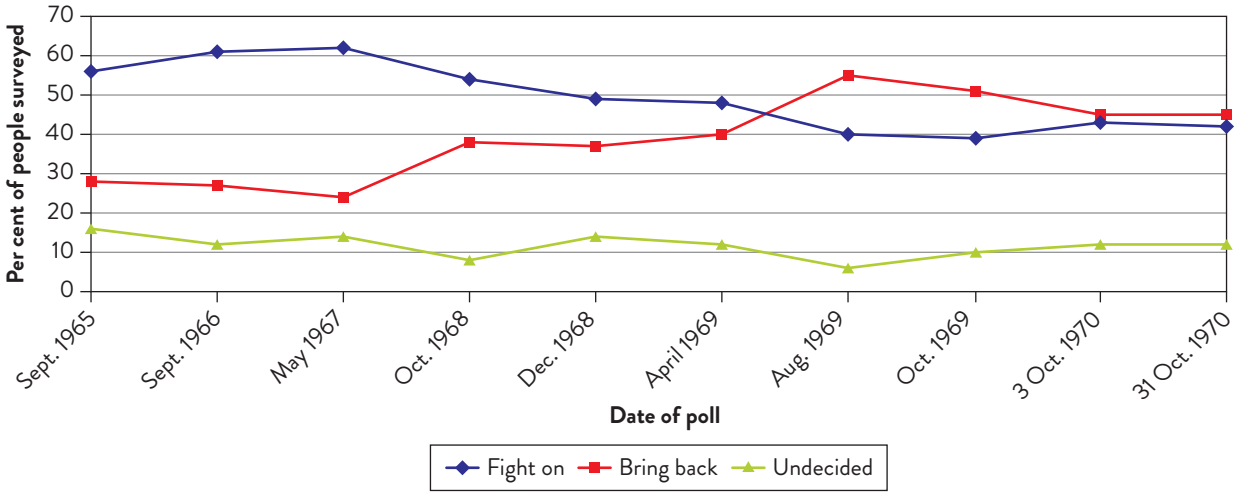
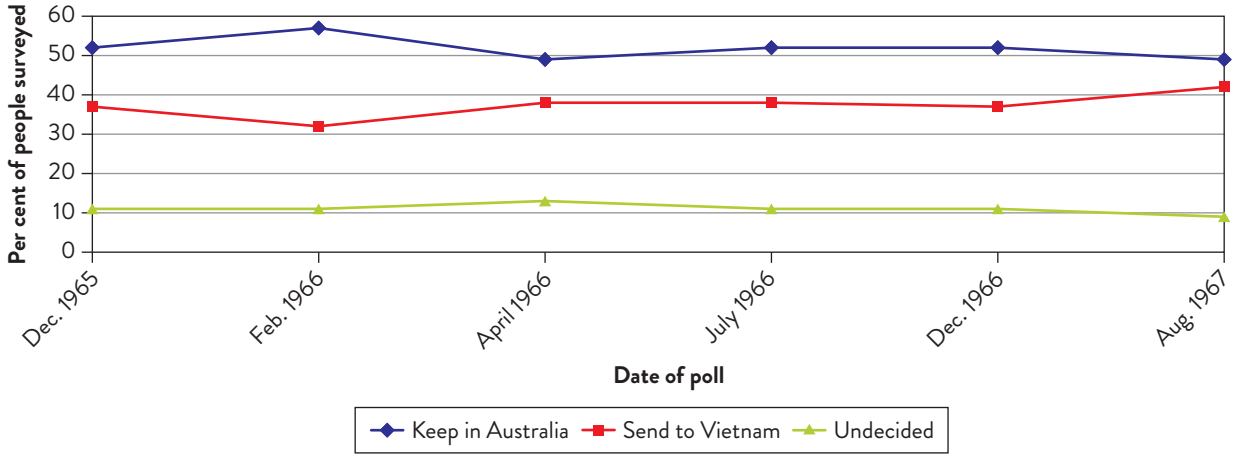


SOURCE 4.17 Results of Roy Morgan Gallup Poll, showing opinions on whether Australian forces in Vietnam should fight on or be brought back home, September 1965 to October 1970



SOURCE 4.18 Results of Roy Morgan Gallup Poll, showing opinions on whether or not Australian conscripts should be sent to Vietnam or kept in Australia, from December 1965 to August 1967

Questions

1. What words would you use to describe the level of support for conscription throughout the period 1961 to 1970?
2. a In what year was opposition to conscription greatest?
   b Approximately what percentage of the population was opposed to conscription in that year?
3. In what year did the desire to 'bring back' forces become greater than a wish to 'fight on' in Vietnam? Can you suggest any reasons why public opinion changed at this time?
4. Describe the public's attitude towards sending conscripts to Vietnam, as suggested in these graphs.
5. How accurate is the statement 'Conscription was unpopular during the period of the Vietnam War', according to the information provided in these graphs? Explain your answer.
6. How can graphs be a valuable source of information when studying history?
7. What are the limitations of graphs when studying history?
8. Discuss, and then summarise, the value and limitations of these particular graphs for a historian or student studying Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

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THE LEGACY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

Vietnam is still recovering from the war, which ended in 1975. The widespread use of toxic defoliants such as Agent Orange has left large parts of South Vietnam still unable to be used for growing crops or rearing livestock. The active component of the defoliant, called dioxin, is highly toxic, and even decades after its use it remains in the food chain. It is a suspected cause of increased cases of cancer in Vietnamese people exposed to it, as well as in Australian and US service personnel exposed during the war; it is also a suspected cause of birth defects in their children.

Heavy bombing of North Vietnam destroyed hundreds of towns and villages and much infrastructure. Unexploded bombs and artillery shells remain a hazard in both the north and south of Vietnam today.

After the reunification of the country under communist rule in 1975 there followed a period of political purges and oppression, directed towards anyone suspected of being anti-communist or having fought for the South during the war. Hundreds of thousands of people fled Vietnam and became refugees. In the six years after the end of the war Australia accepted nearly 50 000 Vietnamese refugees.

After Vietnam

After the end of the Vietnam War, the Cold War entered a phase of détente (see pages 127–8). This easing of tensions between the Soviet Union, China and the United States led to Australia refocusing its foreign policy. In 1976, during the era of détente, the Labor government established diplomatic relations with China, and Australia was also one of the first nations to engage diplomatically with Vietnam after the war. When the Liberal Party, with Malcolm Fraser as prime minister, came to power in 1975, Fraser maintained good relations with China. In part, this decision was a continuation of Cold War allegiances, because the strengthening of the relationship

National Archives Australia [A8746/KN15/11/73/15]

SOURCE 4.19 Gough Whitlam's visit to China in 1973 was the first to that country by an Australian prime minister.

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with China was based on the belief that it was an ally against the Soviet Union; however, the turn towards China did signal a new phase in Australia's international relations.

The influence of Cold War relations on the Fraser government also meant that Australia was highly critical of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the Soviet build-up of a naval fleet in the Pacific. Détente came to an end, and Cold War tensions rose once again. After Ronald Reagan became US president in 1980, Fraser encouraged the expansion of American military communications bases in Australia, despite the broader move away from the influence of America's foreign policy.

After the Vietnam War Australian forces did not play a direct role in any further Cold War conflicts. Australia's role became one of supporting allies, while it guided its foreign policy increasingly towards Asia. At times Australia led the way in helping to resolve tensions in the Asian region – for example, in East Timor in 1999.

Australia, peacekeeping and the United Nations

Since the early years of the United Nations (UN), member nations have been called upon not only to help counter direct threats such as that faced in Korea, but also to contribute to peacekeeping operations. These are different from traditional military operations in that they are guided by three principles, according to the UN – consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force (except in self-defence). Australia has been involved in many such peacekeeping operations around the world.

In 1947 Australian forces made up part of the force that helped Indonesia peacefully win independence from the Dutch, and since 1956 Australians have served with UN operations in the Middle East.

Towards the end of the Cold War, the UN operation that monitored the eventual ceasefire between Iran and Iraq after eight years of conflict included Australians. But it was in the decade immediately following the Cold War that the UN was at its busiest. In particular, Australians served in Cambodia to help settle disputes that had raged since Pol Pot's regime of the 1970s had come to an end. In Africa, Australians provided humanitarian aid to Somalia in the wake of civil war in 1993, and in the following year Australian medical personnel made vital contributions helping Rwandans who were victims of civil unrest.

East Timor

The most significant peacekeeping operation that Australia has been involved in took place in East Timor in 1999. This was not an official UN peacekeeping operation, although it was acted on in accordance with UN resolutions. Its purpose was to support East Timor's effort to secure independence from Indonesia. Invaded by Indonesia in 1975, East Timor was finally granted a referendum by Indonesia by which to determine its future – it could remain part of Indonesia or become independent. The overwhelming desire to be independent resulted in violence from pro-Indonesia militia forces, supported by some Indonesian security forces. Many East Timorese were killed, and as many as half a million were forced from their homes. Australia led a multinational peacekeeping force to stop the violence and ensure a peaceful transition to independence. More than 5000 personnel were sent to East Timor.

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Chapter summary

+ In the period after the Second World War Australian governments each had their own idea of the role Australia would play on the world stage.
+ Australia was actively involved in the arms race and in the Vietnam War; these were both significant developments of the Cold War and occurred during its most volatile stages.
+ Over the period of the Cold War Australia's foreign policy developed from one that was closely linked to the desires of other nations to one in which a level of independence never before seen was achieved. However, the desire by Australia's post–Second World War governments to play a leading role in world affairs was not entirely fulfilled, and Australia's Cold War fortunes often remained intertwined with those of its allies. Australia's leadership role in the 1999 peacekeeping mission in East Timor was perhaps the first evidence of a truly leading role in world affairs.

Endnotes

1 Lord Cherwell to Winston Churchill, quoted in Margaret Gowing, *Independence and Deterrence: Britain and Atomic Energy, 1945–1952*, volume 1, *Making Policy*, St Martin's Press, New York, 1974, p. 407.
2 Quoted in Paul Ham, *Vietnam: the Australian War*, Harper Collins, Pymble, New South Wales, 2007, p. 57.
3 Arthur Calwell, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, 4 May 1965, volume 46, pp. 1102–7.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

Further resources

Peter Edwards, *Australia and the Vietnam War*, UNSW Press, Australia, 2014.

Frank Walker, *Maralinga; the Chilling Exposé of Our Secret National Shame and Betrayal of Our Troops and Country*, Hachette, Australia, 2014.

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Chapter review activities

1 Why was Prime Minister John Curtin's speech of December 1941 so significant for Australia's foreign policy?

2 Summarise the key concerns facing the Australian government at the end of the Second World War.

3 What is your understanding of the term 'domino theory'?

4 How did the ANZUS and SEATO treaties impact on Australia's foreign policy?

5 Drawing on your own knowledge of the Cold War period, evaluate the extent to which Prime Minister Menzies achieved his aim of creating a NATO-style agreement in ANZUS.

6 How and why did Australia's general attitude towards communism change in the period 1919 to 1949?

7 Why was Menzies' referendum of 1951 defeated?

8 What were the short- and long-term effects of the Labor Party Split?

9 Evaluate Australia's role in the nuclear arms race during the Cold War.

10 Consider the three main reasons for Australia's commitment of combat forces in the Vietnam War. Rank them in order of importance, explaining the reasoning for your order.

11 How did the détente era affect Australia?

Essay questions

12 Why, and to what extent, did attitudes to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War change over time?

13 'Australia's leading of the peacekeeping force in East Timor in 1999 established its role as a leader in world affairs.' To what extent do you think this is an accurate statement?

14 What impact did the Cold War have on Australian society and politics?

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Getty Images/Keystone France/Gamma-Keystone

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CHAPTER FIVE

The Cold War ends, 1980–1991

In the first years of the 1980s there was compelling evidence that the world was headed for a renewal of the Cold War. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on Christmas Day 1979 marked the end of détente, and Ronald Reagan became president of the United States in 1981. Having been elected on a tough anti-communist platform, Reagan famously gave a speech about the Soviet Union as an 'Evil Empire'. He also announced expensive and ambitious new initiatives that would launch the arms race into space. Yet, by 1985, the new, reform-minded Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was able to build a more positive relationship with Reagan and with the British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher.

Over the next decade, both sides attempted to deal with the threat of nuclear war through negotiations on arms reductions and by holding superpower summits. But it was events inside the Soviet Union that would eventually lead to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Soviet communism. Gorbachev's twin policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* recognised the need for fundamental reforms of the Soviet system, by providing greater transparency in government and for economic restructuring. These reforms spread beyond the Soviet Union and led to pro-democracy demonstrations in eastern Europe and a re-examination of the Soviets' role in the world. The final stage of the Cold War was as traumatic as it was swift. It took place over a period of two years, beginning in November 1989, when the Berlin Wall was torn down, and culminating on Christmas Day 1991, when the Soviet Union was dissolved with the stroke of a pen.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

+ What were the main causes of the end of the Cold War?
+ To what extent were Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* responsible for ending the Cold War?

❮ Crowds rush to the Berlin Wall on 10 November 1989 to welcome East German refugees to the West.

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Intensification and resolution

bipolarity
In geopolitics, an international system in which there are two dominant and competing major world powers (compare *unipolarity* and *multipolarity*)

détente
From French, meaning 'relaxation'; in relation to the Cold War, used to refer to the easing of tensions between the USSR and the US between 1968 and 1979

The 1980s was a period in which international relations were dominated by Cold War tensions and by the **bipolarity** of the world order that had emerged following the Second World War. Indeed, for much of the decade tensions seemed heightened compared with the relative calm of the **détente** that had characterised the 1970s. During the early 1980s, for example, new tensions emerged over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and over the United States' intensification of weapons programs. These suggested the Cold War was to be an enduring feature of the international order. Largely unexpectedly, however, the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader from 1985, triggered a startling transformation that culminated in the breakdown of Soviet authority in eastern Europe from 1989 to 1990, and then, by December 1991, the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself. This rapid change in international relations, in part, had its origins in the period of détente. But a number of factors, operating over both the long and short term, was ultimately responsible for the end of the Cold War. The attempted reforms in the Soviet Union and the responses in its satellite states in Europe were significant, as was the relationship between Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, the president of the United States. And various economic crises also played a role.

THE COLD WAR, 1979–91

1979	**4 NOVEMBER**	Iranian protesters took over the American embassy in Tehran, keeping 52 people as hostages for a total of 444 days
	25 DECEMBER	Approximately 75 000 Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan
1981	**JANUARY**	Ronald Reagan was sworn in as president of the United States
1982	**NOVEMBER**	Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev died; Yuri Andropov was appointed his successor
1984	**FEBRUARY**	Soviet leader Yuri Andropov died; Konstantin Chernenko was appointed his successor
1985	**MARCH**	Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko died; Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed his successor
	NOVEMBER	First superpower summit held in Geneva, Switzerland
1989	**8–9 NOVEMBER**	The Berlin Wall was torn down
	25 DECEMBER	After a brief trial, pro-democracy demonstrators had Romanian president Nicolae Ceaușescu and his wife Elena executed
1990	**OCTOBER**	Germany was reunified
1991	**AUGUST**	In the USSR, Communist hardliners staged an attempted coup in protest against reforms in the Soviet Union. Although the coup was short and ended peacefully, it began the disintegration of the USSR
	25 DECEMBER	The Soviet Union was effectively dissolved

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Détente

The period of the Cold War known as détente, between 1968 and 1979, was the result of both the United States and the Soviet Union attempting to relax political tensions after some of the flashpoints of the previous years. The most serious crisis of the Cold War, in Cuba in 1962, almost led to a nuclear confrontation and, as a result, a direct phone link was established between the leaders of the USSR and the US.

At its heart, détente was an attempt to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. In 1968 a number of nuclear and non-nuclear powers signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in an attempt to stop the spread and reduce the number of nuclear weapons. As we have seen, in 1969 the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) negotiations opened a dialogue between states about reducing arsenals. On 30 September 1971 the Soviets and Americans signed the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Nuclear War; this laid out a detailed communication plan about missile tests, nuclear accidents and the event of nuclear weapons falling into unauthorised hands. When President Richard Nixon of the US met with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow in May 1972, it was the first time two superpower leaders had met face to face since the Vienna Summit in June 1961. Clearly, both sides had a deep understanding of the consequences of nuclear confrontation and a keen interest to avoid it at all costs.

rapprochement
From the French term *rapprocher*, meaning 'to bring together'; in international relations the word is used to describe the establishment of harmonious relations between two nations

Ostpolitik
From German, meaning 'eastern policy'; the West German attempt to normalise relations with East Germany and the states of eastern Europe

But it was not always easy to decipher what lay behind the politics of détente. The Soviets believed that they were entering détente from a position of strength. They had achieved arms equality with the US in Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and were winning the space race, and the West had found itself impotent against Soviet intervention in Prague in 1968. Meanwhile, the Americans were tied up pursuing their geopolitical goals in Asia. To the chagrin of the Soviets, they were seeking **rapprochement** with China, and Nixon made a historic visit there in 1972 to establish diplomatic relations with the Chinese Communists. More significantly, the US was committed to fighting an unpopular war in Vietnam. Respite from tensions in Europe was a welcome relief for all.

The extent to which détente was an achievement is debatable. Critics within the US contended that the Soviet Union was using détente to lull the West into a false sense of security while building up arms. In his memoirs, President Reagan dismissed détente as another instrument of Russian aggression. In Europe, there was a greater turn towards cooperation when West German leader Willy Brandt pursued a policy of ***Ostpolitik***. But this attempt to normalise relations between West Germany and its eastern neighbours that were under control of the Soviet bloc should also be seen in the context of the development of the European Economic Community, which was formalising economic ties between European countries as part of an effort to prevent future wars and to ensure the economic prosperity of all.

Corbis/Wally McNamee

SOURCE 5. 1 President Richard Nixon (left) and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev (right) shake hands after signing the SALT in May 1972; both welcomed and pursued a policy of détente for their own interests.

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Détente

Ronald Reagan's definition

Détente is a French word the Russians had interpreted as a freedom to pursue whatever policies of subversion, aggression, and expansionism they wanted anywhere in the world.

Ronald Reagan, *An American Life,* Threshold Editions, New York, 1990, p. 265.

From an obituary of Leonid Brezhnev

As the leader of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev was a canny and careful Communist Party functionary who sought to make his country the military equal of the United States and promote its political influence around the world through the policy of détente.

Obituary of Leonid Brezhnev, *The New York Times,* 11 November 1982.

Questions

1. What was the attitude of Reagan towards détente? Do you think his assessment is fair?
2. Does the writer of the obituary from *The New York Times* share Reagan's view? Give reasons for your answer.

stagnation
In economics, a long period of slow economic growth and high unemployment

The Soviets had devoted a significant proportion of their budget to military spending during the 1970s. Brezhnev battled the military in the Communist Party for a reduction in spending, but the generals held a great deal of factional power. This overspending would ultimately cripple the Soviet economy. By diverting all its economic strength into building up its nuclear capability the Soviet Union experienced a decade of economic **stagnation**, which left its people far behind in the stakes for higher standards of living.

In addition to the Prague Spring of 1968 (see page 90), two further key events mark the end of détente. The Iranian Revolution in February 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 turned the tide of public opinion in the US against détente. In the lead-up to the election of November 1980, Republican candidate Ronald Reagan was able to make Jimmy Carter and the Democrats appear weak on their attitudes to the Soviets. For the Republicans, Soviet involvement in the Middle East, where the Americans had significant oil interests, proved what they had been saying all along: the Soviets were using détente to pursue a strategic advantage over the US.

The Soviets in the Middle East

THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

When 75 000 Soviet troops marched into Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, on Christmas Day 1979, they did so in response to a fledgling Marxist revolution that had attempted to cast aside a strong Muslim tradition in favour of communism.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) had been in power since 1978, when, during the 'April Revolution', it had overthrown the pro-American government in a violent coup. What was interesting about the revolution was the attempt of an atheistic Marxist government to lead citizens who held deeply conservative Islamic beliefs into a secular and communist state.

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It would have been no easy task. An example of the deep religious and political divide within the country was demonstrated in October 1978, when the new prime minister, Nur Mohammed Taraki, introduced a new Afghani flag. It featured the deep red of the Soviets in place of the traditional Islamic green, a design that was very controversial. It soon became clear that the new Afghani leaders would require the support of the Soviets if they were to survive. In December 1978, the Soviets and Afghanis signed a 'Treaty of Friendship'.

The new Afghani leadership was zealous in pushing through socialist reforms in the country, but it met stiff resistance from tribal leaders, religious authorities and peasants. Violent resistance began to break out and the country was threatened with civil war. The Soviet Union, reluctant to intervene directly, sent military advisers to support the PDPA. They also encouraged the PDPA leadership to tone down its reform program in an effort to quell discontent.

In particular, the Soviets targeted Hafizullah Amin, one of the zealous factional leaders of the PDPA. This intervention backfired. Many PDPA supporters did not want to become puppets of a foreign government and turned their support to Amin, leading to further divisions. By September 1979, internal fighting within the PDPA had resulted in the death of Prime Minister Taraki, and Amin replaced him as leader. When the Soviets finally 'invaded' on Christmas Day, one of their first acts was to kill Amin and install a new government that was more favourable to Moscow.

The Soviets did not entertain the idea of entering Afghanistan lightly. Dubbed the 'graveyard of empires', Afghanistan had been an extraordinarily difficult area to conquer since antiquity. It is a country of mountains, deserts and freezing winters, and it is difficult to achieve a strategic military advantage. The Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev was convinced that the operation begun in December would be over within a month. But the Soviets would be in Afghanistan for nearly a decade.

Meanwhile, opposition to communism grew in the Afghani countryside. The Soviet Union had to deal with a new guerrilla force, the **mujahidin**. It had the support of countries such as Pakistan, Iran and the US. One of the mujahidin leaders was Osama bin Laden, a Saudi who would later become infamous for his planning of the World Trade Center attack in New York City in September 2001 (see page 168).

mujahidin
Arabic, plural (singular is *mujahid*), meaning 'those engaged in *jihad* (which is frequently and controversially translated as "holy war")'; in this context it is applied to Muslim fighters funded by the US and other states to resist the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989

The Soviet invasion was the final nail in the coffin of détente. One of the striking features of the invasion was that the Soviets underestimated the reaction of the Americans. In response to the invasion, the Carter administration:

+ halted technology and grain shipments to the USSR
+ withdrew the American team from the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games
+ refused to ratify the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) II agreement reached earlier in 1979
+ significantly increased its spending on defence.

The Soviets in turn boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, and organised an alternative, the Friendship Games. The eastern bloc countries, plus nations such as Cuba, Afghanistan and North Korea, competed apart from the rest of the sporting world.

The extent to which external players influenced events in Afghanistan can be seen in Gorbachev's response to why he did not pull out of the country when he assumed power in 1985. In his

Corbis/Reza/Webistan

SOURCE 5.2 The Afghani mujahidin were funded by the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and helped to defeat the Soviet Union in a decade-long conflict.

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memoirs, Gorbachev argues that extracting the Soviet Union from Afghanistan was difficult because the conflict had drawn in a range of regional players, including Pakistan and Iran, and the US, and many of these countries were funding and providing training and weapons for the mujahidin. By 1989, the war in Afghanistan had cost 1.5 million lives.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reinvigorated the Cold War, which had 'calmed' during the era of détente.

theocratic state
A state that is constitutionally ruled according to the dictates of a religious text, such as the Bible or Koran

The Iranian Revolution and capture of hostages at the US embassy

Corbis/Michel Setboun

SOURCE 5.3 Ayatollah Khomeini on his return to Iran in 1979

Afghanistan was not the only problem facing the Americans in 1979. Islamic radical Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini made a triumphant return to Iran on 1 February 1979 from his 14-year exile. Only two weeks earlier, on 16 January, the Iranian leader Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, who had ruled the country with an iron fist since 1953, and who had been becoming increasingly unpopular, had left. He had gone to the United States to receive treatment for lymphoma, and this US connection had only increased his unpopularity among the Iranians. They had called for the Shah to be returned to Iran to face justice for the decades of repression they had suffered at the hands of his hated SAVAK secret police.

The return of the Ayatollah led to an Islamic revolution resulting in the overthrow of the Shah – effectively now in exile in the US – on 11 February. Khomeini led Iranians back to a deeply conservative form of Islam that would transcend politics and transform Iran into a theocratic state. More than anything, Khomeini was a populist who could provide a religious explanation for the political situation.

On 4 November 1979, Islamic students who were followers of Khomeini stormed the American embassy building in Tehran. They captured 52 Americans, whom they held hostage for over a year. The hostage-taking was in response to a call from the Ayatollah to strike at the interests of the US, which he referred to as 'the Great Satan'. President Carter responded by freezing US$8 billion worth of Iranian assets held in the US and putting a ban on Iranian oil imports. He also deported a number of Iranians. In return for the release of the hostages, Iran demanded the return of the Shah to face justice.

The Shah's death in July 1980 put an end to one of the Iranian demands. Then the commencement of the Iran–Iraq war in September added further pressure to solve the hostage crisis. The negotiations to end the crisis were highly political, taking place right in the middle of a US election campaign. Accusations have been levelled that Reagan's negotiators wanted to delay the hostages' release until after the election so as not to give Carter a boost in the polls and so they could claim credit if Reagan won the election, which he did. In the end the hostages were released at the moment of Reagan's inauguration, so that the credit went to both Reagan and Carter. The latter flew to Germany to meet the released hostages on behalf of the new president.

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President Reagan and the United States in the 1980s

At the turn of the decade Americans were reeling from events in Afghanistan and Iran. In November 1980 they elected Ronald Reagan as president, a leader who had resolved to be tough on communism and promised a return of prosperity to the middle classes. Reagan's inaugural speech covered these two central themes. First, he denounced potential adversaries as 'enemies of freedom' and warned that America would fight for its brand of peace. This promise was an open threat to any government, particularly in Central America, that might be tempted away from the US sphere of influence by communism; it was also a sign of support for anti-communist forces everywhere. By 1985, it came to be known as the **Reagan Doctrine**. Second, Reagan signalled his intention for economic reform. He wanted to roll back the size of the federal government and implement a series of reforms that included tax cuts, reductions in public spending and less red tape for American business. Reagan's America would be the beacon light of resurgent capitalism in the world.

Reagan was a tough-talking, former Hollywood actor, who sought to reassert American dominance in the world. His foreign policy aimed to defeat the Soviets in a renewed arms race, through general rearmament and the **Star Wars** program. He also intended to halt the spread of communism in America's 'backyard' through strong anti-communist rhetoric.

Reagan Doctrine
The commitment by the US to support anti-communist resistance groups, especially in Central America; formulated by President Reagan

Star Wars
The nickname for Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), a plan to launch a defensive missile shield into space

Ronald Reagan (1911–2004)

Ronald Reagan was president of the United States between 1981 and 1988. A former Hollywood actor, he was elected to the presidency on a strong anti-communist platform and an economic plan to bring prosperity back to America through tax cuts for corporations and high-income earners, and by cutting government spending. Reagan initiated the 'Star Wars' program, an ambitious plan to establish a missile defence shield in space, to protect America against the threat of nuclear war with the Soviets. The tide of tension with the Soviets turned in 1985 when Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. Reagan and Gorbachev developed a great friendship and subsequently embarked on a round of nuclear disarmament talks.

Alamy/GL Archive

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STAR WARS

The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was the cornerstone of Reagan's new rearmament program. It was ambitious in scope, technologically advanced and enormously expensive. It was nicknamed 'Star Wars' because its main feature was to deploy defensive weapons into space to intercept incoming ballistic missiles before they reached the US. Weapons analysts believed that the program would not work. They argued that there was very little that could be done to prevent a full-scale nuclear attack. They also suggested that the program could undermine the concept of **mutual deterrence** that might prevent an attack in the first place.

mutual deterrence
The idea that both the Soviets and Americans would refrain from using nuclear weapons because of the threat of massive retaliation

Star Wars was a response to claims that the US had been duped into a false sense of security during the period of détente and to the fact that by the early 1980s the Soviet Union matched America in its nuclear capability. The invasion of Afghanistan had proven that the Soviets were inherently expansionist and aggressive. The SDI would restore American arms superiority.

Another view of the Star Wars program was that the Americans were trying to bankrupt the Soviets by tempting them to engage in a massive arms build-up, which would put huge pressure on their economy. However, in 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the Communist Party in the USSR, and one of his key policy planks was disarmament. The US, on the other hand, got to the end of the Reagan presidency in 1988 with a US$2.5 trillion debt – up from US$1 trillion in 1980.

The prominent historian of the Cold War, John Lewis Gaddis, has pointed out that Reagan believed Star Wars would ultimately advance weapons technology so far as to make nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. Reagan's logic was that a successful defence shield would render nuclear weapons harmless. The Soviets would thus be forced to concentrate on their own defence and they would have to develop their technology in this direction, rather than towards making more advanced weapons. In the end, SDI was derided by the media and by political commentators, and it was eventually shelved by the scientific community because it was too difficult to achieve.

SOURCE 5.4 Political cartoon from 1987, satirising the 'Star Wars' initiative

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The Strategic Defense Initiative

John Lewis Gaddis

Reagan was deeply committed to SDI: it was not a bargaining chip to give up in future negotiations. That did not preclude, though, using it as a bluff: the United States was years, even decades, away from developing a missile defense capability, but Reagan's speech persuaded the increasingly frightened Soviet leaders that this was about to happen.

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War,* Penguin, London, 2005, p. 227.

Ronald Reagan

What made the idea promising was that, if it worked and we then entered an era when the nations of the world agreed to eliminate nuclear weapons, it could serve as a safety valve … the SDI held too much potential for the security of mankind to be traded away at the negotiating table.

Ronald Reagan, *An American Life,* Threshold Editions, New York, 1990, p. 608.

Mikhail Gorbachev

We are stealing everything from the people. And turning the country into a military camp. And the West clearly want to pull us into the second scenario of arms race. They are counting on our military exhaustion. And then they will portray us as militarists. And they are trying to pull us in on the SDI.

Mikhail Gorbachev, address to the Politburo on the role of the military, 8 May 1987.

Questions

1. Why did Gaddis refer to the SDI as a 'bluff'?
2. What did Reagan believe to be a positive outcome of the SDI?
3. What was Gorbachev's view of the potential for a Soviet arms build-up?

The 'Evil Empire'

At a breakfast hosted by the National Association of Evangelicals on 8 March 1983, Reagan's attitude to the Soviet Union was revealed in the so-called 'Evil Empire' speech. In this speech, Reagan criticised the Soviets for their dismissal of religion as a guiding moral force. The wider context was that Reagan was in the middle of the Geneva arms talks and he felt frustrated with the Soviets' refusal to budge on removing key missile sites. He was of the belief that America was falling behind in the arms race. And he wanted to convince the rest of America and the Congress that this was the case.

Reagan's fondness for inappropriate comments was also displayed on 11 August 1984, when in a pre-broadcast radio warm-up, he joked that he had ordered the bombing of the Soviet Union to begin in five minutes. The tape was leaked in October to the American audience, and the Soviets mobilised forces in the initial confusion following the tape's release.

On 1 September 1983, the Soviet Union accidentally shot down Korean Air Flight 007 after it drifted into Russian airspace. Sixty-three Americans were killed among the total of 269 passengers and crew. Reagan, having referred to the Soviet Union as an 'evil empire' in March of the same year, and having announced an ambitious new arms program, was incensed at the Soviet actions. The Soviets in turn accused the Americans of trying to use the tragedy to provoke a war.

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THE REAGAN DOCTRINE

Another central plank in President Reagan's anti-communist platform was the so-called Reagan Doctrine. This foreign policy position sought to provide support to any developing country to resist Soviet aggression. Indeed, Reagan believed that the Soviets were actively promoting instability in developing countries in order to gain a strategic advantage. The Reagan Doctrine was reminiscent of Eisenhower's rollback policy of the 1950s. According to it, as had been the case with rollback, the US would challenge communist-inspired takeovers with force if necessary, particularly in Central America.

Reagan's 'State of the Union' address, 1985

American presidents traditionally deliver an annual address to a joint sitting of Congress. These speeches usually address a range of issues, some domestic and some international. They are commonly referred to as the 'State of the Union' address. The Reagan Doctrine was best expressed in President Reagan's 1985 State of the Union address:

> Our security assistance programs help friendly governments defend themselves and give them confidence to work for peace. And I hope that you in the Congress will understand that, dollar for dollar, security assistance contributes as much to global security as our own defense budget.
>
> We must stand by all our democratic allies. And we must not break faith with those who are risking their lives – on every continent, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua – to defy Soviet-supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth.
>
> The Sandinista dictatorship of Nicaragua, with full Cuban–Soviet bloc support, not only persecutes its people, the church, and denies a free press, but arms and provides bases for Communist terrorists attacking neighboring states. Support for freedom fighters is self-defense and totally consistent with the OAS [Organization of American States] and UN Charters. It is essential that the Congress continue all facets of our assistance to Central America. I want to work with you to support the democratic forces whose struggle is tied to our own security.
>
> Ronald Reagan, 'State of the Union' address, 6 February 1985.

Questions

1. What do you think that Reagan means by 'security assistance'?
2. Make a list of the activities of the Sandinistas, according to Reagan.
3. What role does Reagan believe 'freedom fighters' have in resisting communism?

One of the major features of the Reagan Doctrine was that it supported anti-communist groups, even though their activities were at odds with democratic values. This support often took the form of secret military assistance to guerrilla groups, via the CIA. It had the benefit of keeping American troops out of foreign entanglements, but the US sometimes found itself supporting groups with questionable human rights records. Still, after Vietnam, the American public had little appetite for direct American involvement in lengthy wars and the Reagan Doctrine seemed at the time like a reasonable alternative.

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The historian Henry Heller, in his book *The Cold War*, published in 2006, details key aspects of the Reagan Doctrine[1]:

+ It involved 'low-intensity warfare' – this did not involve direct fighting by US troops, but rather the arming of nationalist or anti-communist forces.
+ It used economic blockades to starve out supplies from communist groups.
+ It provided support for counter-revolutionary armies, which ranged from standard armies to guerrilla forces to death squads.
+ It involved covert US military warfare, including psychological and technological warfare.
+ It involved 'lightning strikes' by US troops – quick interventions, rather than lengthy conflicts.

The Iran–Contra affair

By implementing its foreign policy through proxy and covert activity, the American government became involved in controversial episodes, most notably the Iran–Contra affair. In 1985 Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon were holding American hostages. In order to secure their release, and without the knowledge of the United States Congress, the Reagan administration agreed to sell weapons to Iran, which backed Hezbollah and could influence it to release the hostages, but which was a fierce opponent of the US. The Iranians would use the weapons in their fight against Iraq. To hide the sale of the weapons, the money received as payment was secretly directed to the pro-American 'Contra' rebels fighting the communist regime in Nicaragua. This roundabout arms deal had the effect of resolving the hostage crisis and funding anti-communist forces. Of course, the whole episode was illegal.

Corbis/Bettmann

SOURCE 5.5 Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North was at the centre of the Iran–Contra affair. North claimed he was acting on orders from superiors when he secretly redirected funds from arms sales to Iran to the 'Contra' in Nicaragua. Such covert activities were part of the Reagan administration's tactics to halt the spread of communism in Central America.

Reagan testified in November 1986 that he knew nothing of the arms sales to Iran. After a lengthy Congressional hearing in 1987 it was discovered that National Security Advisor John Poindexter and Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North had conducted the negotiations without Reagan's knowledge. The affair was a major scandal in the US.

REAGANOMICS AND THE TRICKLE-DOWN EFFECT

After the Reagan Doctrine, the second major policy plank of Reagan's was his determination to return America to the prosperity that had evaded it in the deep recession of the 1970s. Reagan came to the presidency with strong views on the economy and how to fix it. For him, the problem began and ended with 'big government' – government that was too large, too expensive, too intrusive and taxed too highly. Reagan believed that cuts to tax and to the size of government would cure America's ills.

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Reagan thought that the burden of tax on Americans was too great. He believed that the tax system was the biggest roadblock to prosperity and argued that the best way to increase government revenue was by cutting taxes. His logic was that personal income taxes that increased in line with an individual's income discouraged them to earn as much as they could. Lower taxes would therefore encourage people to work more. If people worked more, then tax revenues would be higher. There was a similar reason for reducing taxes for corporations. Reagan believed that if corporations were taxed less, there would be incentive for them to invest and create jobs. In the first August of his administration, Congress passed a plan for tax cuts of 25 per cent over three years. This thinking became the basis for the so-called 'trickle down effect'. The idea was that tax cuts would stimulate activity by giving business incentives to create jobs. Eventually, the benefits would trickle down to all Americans.

But at the same time as Reagan implemented tax cuts he was increasing spending on the military. To pay for this he was also forced to make deep cuts in social programs.

The 'Rust Belt' – the end of the American Dream?

The term 'Rust Belt' came to denote a region of America that suffered from the decline in the US manufacturing base in the 1980s. Manufacturing had formerly provided the American working class with stable incomes and pensions for life. If nothing else, the American worker had enjoyed a level of material comfort that far exceeded that of the Soviet worker.

During the 1980s, external forces on the manufacturing sector put pressure on the American worker. For example, technology had changed the face of manufacturing, and computer-driven systems could do the tasks of low-skilled workers for a fraction of the cost. In addition, in some industries low-skilled workers could be employed more cheaply in other countries, so American companies began to move their operations offshore. As a consequence, some American cities went into steep decline. The impact on working-class America at this time was documented in popular music and film. Bruce Springsteen's classic song of 1985, 'Born in the USA', is an ironic reflection on the lack of opportunity that met a Vietnam veteran on his return to America.

Alamy/Jim West

SOURCE 5.6 An abandoned car manufacturing plant in Detroit, Michigan, a victim of the steep decline in American manufacturing

For many Americans, the Reagan years represented the end of the American Dream. They were years in which not only the wages of the factory floor worker and the chief executive officer diverged massively, but job security and retirement benefits decreased. In America in the 1950s, the average earnings of a CEO were 20 times greater than the average wage of an employee; in 1980, they were 42 times greater, and in 2000, 120 times greater.

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The Soviet Union in the early 1980s

When Leonid Brezhnev died, on 10 November 1982, the new leader of the Soviet Union, Yuri Andropov, inherited the entrenched stagnation of the Soviet economy that had been a feature of Brezhnev's 22 years in power. Andropov attempted to reverse the most serious problems, particularly low worker productivity, declining living standards, long queues for consumer goods and alcoholism at work. If efficiency were to return to the Soviet economy, then self-discipline would have to reign. This view reflected a deeply held belief among the Soviet leadership that poor individual habits rather than the Soviet system were responsible for poor economic performance. Andropov attempted to provide greater autonomy to enterprise managers (those in charge of factories, mines and so on) so that they could have some control over their own budgets. Another of his goals was to halt corruption in the party, a move that was deeply unpopular among the old guard. When Andropov became ill, he charged a young technocrat and long-time party associate, Mikhail Gorbachev, to oversee many of the reforms.

Sipa Press/Snapper Media

SOURCE 5.7 Leonid Brezhnev (centre) and Yuri Andropov (right) share a moment.

When General Secretary Andropov died, an old Brezhnev ally, Konstantin Chernenko, assumed leadership of the party, in February 1984. Too ill to govern effectively, Chernenko lasted a little over 12 months before Gorbachev was appointed to the position of General Secretary of the Communist Party.

ENTER MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union on 11 March 1985. Although he had a strong belief in the Soviet system, he was just as firm in his view that the system was broken and needed reforming. The great question was, could Gorbachev borrow from capitalism in order to save socialism?

On 27 January 1987 Gorbachev stood in front of the central **Politburo** and set a new direction for the Soviet Union. Many of the old guard were dead, and Gorbachev promoted young people with fresh ideas to key positions. He wanted to establish a decisive break from the stagnation of the Brezhnev era.

Politburo
The central decision-making committee of the USSR

Australian historian David Christian argues that the 'Gorbachev generation' of political leaders were natural reformers for the following reasons:

+ They were highly educated and came of age politically at a time of de-Stalinisation.
+ They came to power when the Soviet Union was already a superpower, and therefore lacked the vulnerability of earlier leaders.
+ The central problem of their careers was to reform an existing system.
+ The Stalin generation blocked their rise to power so they had plenty of time to think about the issues facing the Soviet Union.[2]

One fundamental problem with the Soviet economy was that there was no incentive for workers to increase productivity. Quotas imposed by a central planning authority dictated the number of goods to be produced, and there were penalties for failure to meet the required targets.

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Mikhail Gorbachev (1931–)

Alamy/ITAR-TASS Photo Agency

Mikhail Gorbachev was the leader of the Soviet Union between March 1985 and December 1991. He was a committed communist whose domestic and international policies, ironically, had the unintended consequence of leading to the end of communism. Gorbachev's domestic policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (economic restructuring) were designed to promote greater political freedom in the Soviet Union and to introduce minor market reforms to reinvigorate the economy. A part of Gorbachev's plan to return the Soviet Union to prosperity was to minimise its financial and military commitments abroad. He repealed the Brezhnev Doctrine, which meant that he did not intervene in the affairs of eastern European states. This led to widespread democratic movements which, left unchecked, eventually resulted in the overthrow of communism in the Eastern bloc.

PERESTROIKA AND *GLASNOST*

Gorbachev's strongest policy positions were laid out at the 27th Party Congress in March 1986. In his book *Perestroika*, Gorbachev writes about the 1970s saying that it was an anomaly that great technological advances in this decade had the potential to deliver high living standards, but in the USSR, 'The country began to lose momentum … A kind of "braking mechanism" affecting social and economic development formed'.[3] One of the features of Gorbachev's reforms was that he did not believe that productivity could be lifted through doing more of the same. For Gorbachev, things needed to change. To make them change, he would have to re-examine the nature of socialism and introduce limited market reforms in an effort to get the economy moving.

Perestroika

perestroika
Russian, meaning 'restructuring'; Gorbachev's policy of introducing limited market reforms into the Soviet economy after 1986

The policy of ***perestroika***, or 'restructuring', was Gorbachev's response to a number of key problems facing the Soviet economy. Low productivity, falling agricultural harvests, declining living standards and long queues to purchase scarce and expensive consumer goods of poor quality were typical of the problems facing the Soviets.

These problems, Gorbachev believed, were an inheritance from the Brezhnev era, and they had become entrenched. Gorbachev believed that limited market reforms might provide the incentive for workers to lift their productivity. Restructuring involved less central planning, and handing over responsibility for decision-making to local operations.

In other words, Gorbachev proposed a form of market socialism. His approach drew many comparisons with Lenin's 'New Economic Policy', which suggested that the state could gradually retreat from some enterprises and allow the sale of surplus goods. This, it was believed, would provide workers with greater incentive to work harder. Gorbachev also allowed cooperatives and

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small businesses to be established. Hairdressers, restaurants and other small businesses began to pop up all over Russia. But reforms did not bode so well in major industries, and worker dissatisfaction led to a general coalminer's strike in 1988, which nearly crippled the country.

By and large, the *perestroika* reforms were a failure. Only 750 000 people out of 135 million workers were employed in privately run enterprises by 1988. The era of *perestroika* coincided with great political change that resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the transition of Russia into a capitalist, free-market economy. Ironically, *perestroika* was meant to revive communism, not end it. Gorbachev was a firm believer in Leninism right until the end of his time as leader.

Getty Images/Igor Gavrilov/The LIFE Images Collection

SOURCE 5.8 Shoppers form a queue outside a liquor store in Moscow.

Perspectives on *perestroika*

Mikhail Gorbachev

Perestroika was a reform that aimed at gradual political change to create an infrastructure for market economics. We had several generations with no experiences of markets. You can't just announce the markets and see them appear overnight. I was actually saying it will take a generation for it to start working.

Mikhail Gorbachev, in *Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World Economy*, Part 2, 'The Agony of Reform', PBS.

What specifically did we accomplish as a result of the stormy years of *perestroika*? The foundations of the totalitarian system were eliminated. Profound democratic changes were begun. Free general elections were held for the first time, allowing real choice. Freedom of the press and a multi-party system were guaranteed ... Human rights now became an unassailable principle.

Mikhail Gorbachev, *On My Country and the World,* Columbia University Press, 2000, pp. 57–8.

Ronald Reagan

I read *Perestroika*, the book by Mikhail Gorbachev that outlined his goals for restructuring the Soviet economy ... Although he didn't describe it as such, it was a bill of particulars condemning the workings of communism, and it was as damning as anything ever written about Communism in the West. It was an epitaph: Capitalism had triumphed over Communism.

Ronald Reagan, *An American Life,* Threshold Editions, New York, 1990, pp. 702–3.

Questions

1. Why did Gorbachev wish to introduce *perestroika* at a gradual pace?
2. Make a list of what Gorbachev feels he achieved as a result of *perestroika*. Why do you think his list does not include economic success?
3. Describe Ronald Reagan's attitude towards *perestroika*.

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Glasnost

glasnost
Russian, meaning 'publicity, openness, transparency'; Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* proposed openness and the promotion of greater transparency in the Soviet government

The second of Gorbachev's major reform policies was ***glasnost***, which translated into English means 'openness'. The intention of *glasnost* was to establish genuine transparency in the Soviet government. It would be achieved by holding multi-candidate elections between members of the Communist Party (all other political parties were banned), encouraging political debate and giving the press greater freedom to comment on the actions of the government and the direction of policy.

Gorbachev believed that the communist elites were the most significant barrier to change in the USSR. *Glasnost* would help swing open the doors of democratic reform and this was what the old bureaucracy feared most. They were not used to having their decisions open to public scrutiny.

It would take a while for *glasnost* to establish itself. After all, for many years in the Soviet Union there had been no tradition of open debate, no scrutiny of public officials and little discussion about the future direction of society. The new openness led to the proliferation of organisations that were not under the umbrella of the Communist Party. By 1987 there were some 30 000 organisations meeting to discuss topics as varied as liberalism, nationalism and the environment. Known as 'informals', these groups were not supposed to offer a political alternative to communism, but Gorbachev knew that they would inevitably allow alternative political ideas to flourish.

Gorbachev wanted to go beyond using *glasnost* as a slogan, and he introduced a series of reforms that would encourage public debate. He knew full well that Russians were cynical of the old propaganda techniques, and he wanted his reforms to create genuine change. To ensure that *glasnost* would take root within the Soviet citizenship, Gorbachev:

+ engaged the support of the USSR's key intellectuals and writers to help him communicate the serious issues facing the Soviet Union; he wanted the workers to be aware of the state's problems and be part of their solution
+ was interested in hearing about the lives of everyday people in ways that were unmediated by the bureaucracy; for this, he needed a free and open press
+ encouraged and allowed intellectual debate about policy within and outside government ranks, and encouraged robust disagreement between conservatives and radicals
+ enforced a more open government bureaucracy so that there would be no more secrecy; information would henceforth flow freely.

Getty Images/SHONE/GAMMA/Gamma-Rapho

SOURCE 5.9 Aerial view of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, three days after the explosion on 29 April 1986. In the foreground are the remains of the number 4 reactor, which exploded and collapsed, releasing radioactive material into the atmosphere.

The need for *glasnost* was tragically revealed on 26 April 1986, when the number 4 nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in the Ukraine exploded and leaked highly radioactive fallout into the atmosphere. Gorbachev later claimed he was not informed of the extent of the problem at Chernobyl and had difficulty extracting the truth from officials. At any rate, the Soviet people were not informed of the disaster until Gorbachev relayed the details on television two days later, on 28 April. In those two days, Chernobyl, only 130 kilometres

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from the Ukrainian capital of Kiev, suffered from explosions ripping through the other reactors at the power plant and threatening water supplies. Eight thousand lives were lost as a result of the explosions, and radioactivity in the area was not contained because of the veil of secrecy that accompanied the clean-up in the initial stages of the disaster.

In 1988 Gorbachev announced the first democratic elections in Russia, in the hope that his reforms would provide him with broad public support. However, by 1988 many Soviets were struggling to see the advantages of Gorbachev's *perestroika*. The promises Gorbachev had made had not all been fulfilled, and inflation gripped the country. There were shortages of consumer products and still long queues for food.

The impact of *glasnost* was perhaps most significant in the eastern European countries of the Soviet bloc. In countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and East Germany, the hope of greater transparency and free speech gave weight to people's desires for political freedom. It was *glasnost* that made possible the pro-democracy demonstrations that eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet-backed regimes.

Gorbachev on *glasnost*

Glasnost made its way with considerable difficulty. The **nomenklatura** opposed *glasnost* in every way they could, both openly and secretly ... But it was precisely *glasnost* that awakened people from their social slumber, helped them overcome indifference and passivity and become aware of the stake they had in change ... *Glasnost* helped us to explain, and promote awareness of the new realities ... In short, without *glasnost* there would have been no *perestroika*.

nomenklatura
A Russian word, used to describe members of the Soviet bureaucracy who held great administrative power

Mikhail Gorbachev, *On My Country and the World,* Columbia University Press, 2000, pp. 60–1.

The closed nature and secrecy of the nuclear power industry, which was burdened by bureaucracy and monopolism in science, had an extremely bad effect. I spoke of this at a meeting of the Politburo on 3 July 1986: 'For thirty years you scientists, specialists and ministers have been telling us that everything was safe. And you think we look on you as gods. But now we have ended up with a fiasco ... Chernobyl became a difficult test for *glasnost*, openness and democracy ... shed a light on many of the sicknesses of our system as a whole ... the concealing or hushing up of accidents and other bad news, irresponsibility and carelessness, slipshod work, wholesale drunkenness. This was one more convincing argument in favour of radical reforms.

Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs,* Doubleday, New York, 1995, pp. 191–3.

Questions

1. Which group of people had the most to lose from *glasnost* and why?
2. How did *glasnost* benefit the whole of the Soviet Union?
3. Why did the Chernobyl nuclear incident reveal the need for *glasnost*?
4. What might be the strengths and weaknesses of using Gorbachev's reflections on *glasnost* as a historical source?

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SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY: TOWARDS ARMS REDUCTION

Gorbachev observed the massive military build-up underway in the US, in particular Reagan's Star Wars program, with concern. But he did not want to undermine reforms at home by becoming entangled in another arms race with the US. After all, the Soviet government was spending US$2 billion per year in a war it would eventually lose in Afghanistan. It was faced with a choice between participating in a new arms race or increasing living standards of its people. Gorbachev chose the path of domestic reform for the benefit of Soviet citizens.

In the process, Gorbachev would embark on a new course unthinkable to previous generations. To counter the growing arms rivalry, he would go down the path of disarmament. He spoke out against the arms race, arguing that the fortune spent on nuclear rivalry was robbing ordinary Soviet citizens of their claims for higher living standards.

unilateral
Affecting only one side, party or individual; in foreign policy and international relations a state that acts unilaterally acts on its own accord without consulting other nations

Significantly, he implemented a **unilateral** ban on further deployment of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) in April 1985. In 1987, he also made unilateral cuts to the Soviet military budget. It was a brave move. On 7 December 1988 Gorbachev gave an address to the United Nations in which he announced that he would drastically cut the size of the Soviet ground force. In the speech he also denounced the use of force and the threat of force in foreign policy.

Gorbachev's speech to the United Nations, 1988

> It is evident ... that force and the threat of force can no longer be, and should not be instruments of foreign policy ... The compelling necessity of the principle of freedom of choice is also clear to us ... Freedom of choice is a universal principle to which there should be no exceptions.
>
> In order to involve society in implementing the plans for restructuring it had to be made more truly democratic. Under the badge of democratization, restructuring has now encompassed politics, the economy, spiritual life, and ideology. We have unfolded a radical economic reform, we have accumulated experience, and from the new year we are transferring the entire national economy to new forms and work methods ...
>
> The Soviet Union has made a decision on reducing its armed forces. In the next two years, their numerical strength will be reduced by 500 000 persons, and the volume of conventional arms will also be cut considerably. These reductions will be made on a unilateral basis.

Address by Mikhail Gorbachev, Forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, 7 December 1988.

Questions

1. What did Gorbachev argue could no longer be used as an instrument of foreign policy and why?
2. What is significant about the fact that Gorbachev made the speech above about domestic issues in the United Nations?

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An unlikely friendship

In an effort to diminish tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, Mikhail Gorbachev and his foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, embarked on a so-called 'charm offensive'. Western leaders warmed to Gorbachev. The British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, concluded that Gorbachev was a man she could do business with. President Reagan thought that building a personal relationship with the leader of the Soviet Union would be indispensable to ongoing peace between the two nations and they struck up the most unlikely of friendships. Americans were gripped with Gorbachev fever, or 'Gorbymania', and the Soviet leader was crowned by *Time* magazine as 'Man of the Year' for 1987. The friendship between Reagan and Gorbachev led to a series of **superpower summits** and arms reduction talks, and much progress was made in genuinely reducing tensions between their two nations, as is shown in Table 5.1.

Alamy/ITAR-TASS Photo Agency

SOURCE 5.10 Reagan and Gorbachev, who shared an unlikely friendship, were both committed to the ideal of a safer world in the nuclear age.

superpower summits
During the Cold War, high-level diplomatic meetings between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States that attempted to solve fundamental differences between the two nations

TABLE 5.1 Major arms agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Reagan–Gorbachev era

Meeting	Achievements
Geneva Summit, November 1985	No major treaties were produced, but the groundwork was laid for future cooperation. Both sides agreed to work towards a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) to halve their nuclear arsenals. Work was begun on an Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, aimed to remove short- and medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe. Agreement could not be reached on the SDI (Star Wars). Reagan and Gorbachev were able to speak privately for a few hours.
Reykjavik, (Iceland), October 1986	Gorbachev proposed that nuclear weapons be eliminated by the year 2000. Both sides committed to reduce the number of strategic nuclear weapons by half within five years. The superpowers were limited to having 1600 missiles and 6000 warheads each. Both sides agreed that Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces be withdrawn from Europe (but this was revoked after a failure to agree on the SDI).
Washington, December 1987	The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty was finally signed on 8 December. Both sides agreed to further reductions of warheads, to 4900 each. Various political issues discussed, including Central America and human rights.
Moscow, May–June 1988	Both sides agreed to eliminate 3000 medium-range missile warheads. Both sides came closer to signing the START treaty.
Moscow, July 1991	The START treaty was signed between Gorbachev and President George HW Bush.

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The end of Moscow-dominated communism

The years 1989 to 1991 were a dramatic period in eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, as 45 years of Soviet-backed communism began to fall apart under the strain of pro-democracy movements and because of Gorbachev's willingness to let events run their course. Several key factors led to the breakdown of Moscow-dominated communism in eastern Europe. Among the most significant were Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the Soviet Union's recognition that it could no longer prop up unpopular communist regimes, and the tide of popular pro-democracy demonstrations that swept the Soviet bloc.

ABANDONING THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE

Perhaps the most significant foreign policy reform that contributed to the end of the Cold War was Gorbachev's abandoning of the Brezhnev Doctrine (see page 90). The doctrine had been used to justify the use of the threat of force to maintain a Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe ever since the troubles in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Many Soviet-bloc despots relied on the doctrine as insurance to maintain control within their own borders, confident that any sign of trouble could be quashed with Soviet support, usually involving the arrival of tanks and ground troops.

As early as March 1985, Gorbachev summoned leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries to inform them of his rejection of the Brezhnev Doctrine. He preferred nations in the Eastern bloc to stand on their own two feet as independent sovereign states, without having the Soviet Union interfere in their internal affairs. Many of the Eastern bloc leaders dismissed this as rhetoric. The ramifications of Gorbachev's new policy would not become clear until the threat of pro-democracy movements undermined the leaders' own authority.

POPULAR REVOLUTIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE

In 1989 Gorbachev made good on his promise of non-intervention. Popular revolutions swept through eastern European states, ironically many of them inspired by the reforms of Gorbachev himself. Although these revolutions had different features in each country, many would lead to elections and ultimately the overthrow of communism. The death of communism was largely a peaceful affair. Although Gorbachev was a staunch believer in the communist cause to the end, he allowed the forces of history to dictate events.

Corbis/Peter Turnley

SOURCE 5.11 A mass demonstration organised by the Solidarity movement in Poland, 1987

Poland

The first of the eastern European revolutions was in Poland. The trade unions and Catholic Church had been a powerful influence in Poland since the Solidarity movement had begun in 1981, but they had struggled to achieve higher standards of living for workers. In 1989, after a series of rolling strikes by disgruntled workers, the first free elections were held in Poland. A non-communist government was voted in for the

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first time since the Second World War. In 1990 Lech Walesa, founder of the Solidarity movement, was made president of a new democratic Poland.

Hungary

Like Poland, Hungary also had a long history of popular opposition to Soviet control. The failed 1956 uprising (see pages 62–3) is the most obvious example. During late 1988 reformists in the Communist Party and bureaucracy, and intellectuals, began to advocate change and formed political organisations. The appointment of a new party leader in 1989 prompted further changes. The new leadership introduced what can best be described as a democratisation package, which permitted the formation of independent trade unions, the right to assembly and association, and freedom of the press. This was followed by the introduction of new electoral laws, revision of the constitution, the formation of new political parties, and the calling of open and free elections. Such a rapid and peaceful transition would not have been possible without Gorbachev's renouncement of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

The Iron Curtain opens

The liberalisation of Hungary also tore apart Churchill's metaphorical 'iron curtain', which had divided Europe since 1945. Movement between the Soviet bloc states and the West had been strictly curtailed in the Cold War era, as the Berlin Wall so dramatically illustrated. In a radical step, Hungary, as early as 1988, had begun to permit the free travel of its citizens. Unhindered by Moscow – in fact, Gorbachev is believed to have noted, 'To be honest I don't see a problem with it' – the government began dismantling the 240 kilometres of electrified fence that served as the border between Hungary and Austria. As news of the removal of the fence spread, East Germans and Czechoslovakians, who were able to travel to Hungary, arrived to seek political asylum at the West German embassy in the Hungarian capital of Budapest. Within months the trickle of Czech and East German refugees became a flood of tens of thousands of people, crossing the border directly into Austria. The Iron Curtain had parted without intervention from the Soviet Union.

Getty Images/Sovfoto/UIG

SOURCE 5.12 As a precursor to the fall of the Berlin Wall in November, Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock (left) and Hungarian Foreign Minister Gyula Horn cut the fence between their two countries on 27 June 1989. Border guards had already begun dismantling sections on 2 May 1989.

AAP/AP-Photo/votava

SOURCE 5.13 East Germans crossing the border from Hungary into Austria in April 1989.

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The Daily Telegraph

'I will answer nothing, I will sign nothing, I will not recognise this court'

The final defiance of a hated dictator

THE CHRISTMAS REVOLUTION

Alamy/CBW

SOURCE 5.14 Newspaper headlines following the executions of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu

Romania

The revolution in Romania ran a much rockier course than the revolutions in Poland and Hungary. Nicolae Ceaușescu had ruled a corrupt regime from 1965 to 1989; he had a lavish lifestyle while Romanian citizens were mired in poverty. Ceaușescu presided over a cruel, Stalinist police state that ruthlessly suppressed opposition.

While pro-democratic movements were peacefully sweeping across Europe, Ceaușescu ordered his security forces to fire on demonstrators assembled at Timișoara on 17 December 1989. In the following days, violent clashes between government forces and protesters resulted in the deaths of more than one thousand people.

Ceaușescu and his wife Elena, realising that the waves of demonstration would eventually drive them from power, attempted to escape Romania. But on Christmas Day 1989, they were hastily summoned, tried, found guilty and executed by a special court. Their final humiliating hours brought to a conclusion the horrors they had visited on the Romanian people. Ceaușescu was defiant to the end, telling his captors that he did not recognise their authority as a court. The deaths of the Ceaușescus were televised on Romanian television as proof that the dictator and his wife had fallen.

THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

Conflicts over the city of Berlin were fundamental to the development of the Cold War. Berlin was the focus of early Cold War crises, and the Berlin Wall, which divided the city in 1961, was of enormous symbolic significance throughout the Cold War. In the summer of 1989, East Germans began to demand greater freedoms of movement. Their leader, Erich Honecker, was a staunch and inflexible communist. He resisted any hint of change and clung to power right to the end. But the fall of communism came swiftly and almost unexpectedly to Berlin.

On 9 November 1989 the new spokesman for the East German Politburo, Günter Schabowski, was holding a press conference in front of international media. His answers to a series of questions about a new law promising greater ease of travel between East and West Germany provided the spark that eventually ended European communism. Schabowski had not read his briefing notes carefully enough, and under persistent questioning from an Italian journalist about when new travel regulations would come into effect, he muttered the words, 'Immediately. Without delay'.

The words were broadcast on Berlin television that evening. Hundreds and then thousands of Berliners streamed down to the wall at key points, including Checkpoint Charlie and the Brandenburg Gate. East German border guards, settling into another routine night of patrol, were unsure about the gathering throng. They were ordered not to fire on the crowd.

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From around 7 o'clock, East and West Berliners, separated for 28 years, began to climb on top of the wall and dismantled it with hammers, picks and other tools. All through the night *the* symbol of the Cold War was torn to the ground in jubilant celebration.

A section of the wall that is 1.3 kilometres long still stands, as part of the East Side Gallery. More than 100 paintings mark this longest remaining fragment of the wall, as a tribute to freedom and unification. Perhaps the most famous painting is *My God, help me survive this deadly love* by Dmitri Vrubel. It depicts Leonid Brezhnev and Erich Honecker locked in a kiss.

Alamy/imageBROKER

SOURCE 5.15 On the evening of 9 November 1980 and into the next day, hundreds of thousands of Berliners climbed on top of the Berlin Wall and tore it down.

Alamy/travelstock44

SOURCE 5.16 This famous painting, on the remaining section of the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery, is an artist's interpretation of the fraternal kiss exchanged between Brezhnev and Honecker at the 30th anniversary of the creation of East Germany in 1979. The caption on the poster reads 'My God, help me to survive this deadly love'.

GERMAN REUNIFICATION

The fall of the wall almost immediately raised the question of the reunification of East and West Germany as a single nation. International responses were mixed, with leaders in Britain, France, Italy, Poland and Israel voicing concerns about the threat of a united Germany. Germans too were reticent. The prominent West German author Günter Grass, for example, objected to proposed unification on historical, cultural, economic and political grounds. He wrote:

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> I still believe, as I did in the past, that we shouldn't have annexed East Germany in that over hasty way ... Before long, the country and its industry were liquidated, while the Treuhand [the agency that privatised East Germany's state-owned enterprises] sold off its assets for next to nothing.
>
> 'Interview with Günter Grass', *Spiegel Online*, 20 August 2010, viewed 7 April 2015, www.spiegel.de.

In the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) the conservative chancellor Helmut Kohl, aware that a reunified Germany would face a general election soon after any amalgamation, took immediate action when the Berlin Wall was opened. He drew up a ten-point plan for reunification, phoning the East German communist leader Egon Krenz, who opposed reunification, and he consulted with Gorbachev while attempting to bring some order into the unfolding confusion. Germany was formally reunified in October 1990, less than a year after the fall of the wall.

East Germany after reunification

The political reunification of the two Germanies was rapid – the process took less than a year. And the long-term implications for East Germany were significant. Before reunification in 1990, East Germany (officially the German Democratic Republic) had a population of 16 million, compared with West Germany's population of 63 million; it was significantly smaller, more agricultural and poorer than its Western counterpart. Per capita income in 1989 was US$10 400 in East Germany and US$24 400 in West Germany. In 2010, per capita income in a united Germany had risen to $US 38 200.

The following extracts, from the German weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel*, each reflect on the impact of reunification.

Fifteen years after reunification

The East's cultural heritage has been rescued, Western environmental standards have been implemented in the East, police investigations in the eastern state of Mecklenburg are now not dissimilar to those in Bavaria, and the East has in many cases outpaced the West when it comes to the quality of higher education. But despite these advances, the East's social framework lacks an adequate economic base. To this day, the East is still unable to survive without government subsidies amounting to some €70 to €80 billion a year.

Stefan Berg, Steffen Winter and Andreas Wassermann, 'Germany's Eastern burden: the price of a failed reunification', *Spiegel Online*, 5 September 2005, viewed 5 April 2015, www.spiegel.de.

Twenty years after reunification

Today, the eastern German economy is still in a sorry state, and there are no indications that the situation will change. An estimated €1.3 trillion ($1.6 trillion) have flowed from the former West Germany to the former East Germany over the last 20 years. But what has that money achieved? Historic neighborhoods have been restored, new autobahns built and the telephone network brought up to date, but most of the money was spent on social benefits such as welfare payments. The anticipated economic upswing failed to materialize.

Alexander Neubacher and Michael Sauga, 'Germany's disappointing reunification: how the East was lost', *Spiegel Online*, 1 July 2010, viewed 7 April 2015, www.spiegel.de.

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continued

Twenty-three years after reunification

It's been almost 25 years since the Berlin Wall came down. At times, it feels as if East and West Germans are becoming more and more estranged. I recently sat at a table with a few representatives of the 'third generation East'. They were at least 15 years younger than me, and they had the serious expressions of people who know that they still have a long way to go.

Alexander Osang, 'The little Germans: alienation still divides East from West', *Spiegel Online*, 21 August 2013, viewed 7 April 2015, www.spiegel.de.

Questions

1. What are some of the problems that Germans have faced over the past 25 years since reunification?
2. How useful are the sources from *Der Spiegel* for the historian studying the impact of German reunification?

From Soviet Union to Russia

The transformation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) from a communist superpower to a number of independent states, including the fledging capitalist, democratic Russian Republic, was, like the transition of the Eastern bloc nations, traumatic and dramatic. Again, the implications of Gorbachev's reforms, particularly of *perestroika*, are a key to the breakdown of the Soviet Union, an entity that was composed of multiple republics, including the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, the Ukraine, and, by far the largest and most powerful republic, Russia. The reforms of *perestroika* created a political space in which voices of dissent could be more freely expressed. At the same time Gorbachev's efforts to reframe the political structures of the Soviet Union were extensive. Between February and March 1990 the Central Committee of the Soviet Union, on Gorbachev's recommendations, gave up its monopoly on power, permitted multi-party elections and established a mechanism for states to withdraw from the USSR. These steps laid the foundation for the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, as nationalism and liberalism emerged as alternative political ideologies to communism.

AFP/Ria Novosti/Yuryi Abramochkin

SOURCE 5.17 People from the town of Rapla in Estonia participate in a 600-kilometre human chain, passing through several Baltic republics, to mark the 50th anniversary of the non-aggression treaty between Germany and the USSR, August 1989.

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THE BREAKDOWN OF THE USSR

The first cracks in the USSR appeared in 1986 and 1987 when the Baltic republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania began to demand greater autonomy, and took steps towards gaining it. Gorbachev's failure to respond encouraged nationalists in other republics to follow a similar path. In the wake of events in eastern Europe in late 1989, momentum for autonomy and democratic reform intensified, even in Russia itself. During 1990, six of the Soviet republics – Lithuania, Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, Armenia and Georgia – each held elections in which the Communist Party lost power; the new governments increasingly pursued actions to consolidate their sovereignty at the expense of the central government. In Russia itself, Boris Yeltsin, a long-time party figure, with the backing of democrats, declared the sovereignty of the Russian Federation, and a month later, in July 1990, he resigned from the Communist Party itself. Despite these developments, the Soviet Union remained a political entity and deployed military forces in a number of the rebellious republics, most notably in Lithuania and Azerbaijan, to stem what was becoming an increasingly fragile political environment.

Gorbachev and the end of communism

SOURCE 5.18 'What do you say we bury him too?', by Nicholas Garland, *Daily Telegraph*, 14 March 1985

SOURCE 5.19 'Opening the curtain', by Jeff Hook, 14 November 1989

SOURCE 5.20 'The cracks begin', by Jeff Hook, 10 November 1989

continued

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continued

Questions

1. Who are the two standing figures in Nicholas Garland's cartoon and what are they deliberating over?
2. Research the origins of the quote 'We will bury you'. Why is it referred to in Source 5.18?
3. Identify three key visual elements used in Jeff Hook's 'Opening the curtain' and describe their historical significance.
4. Examine Jeff Hook's 'The cracks begin'.
   a. What does the cracking stone refer to?
   b. Does the speaker convey a positive or negative attitude to the reforms of Gorbachev (centre)?
5. How is Gorbachev contrasted with the personalities to his left and to his right?
6. How useful are these three sources for the historian studying Gorbachev's role in bringing Soviet communism to an end?

THE COUP OF AUGUST 1991

While events on the fringes of the Soviet Union were threatening the stability of the state, developments in Russia intensified. The political complications of Yeltsin's declaration of Russian sovereignty were setting in, and tensions had started to emerge between the government of Russia and that of the Soviet Union. In the atmosphere of change, it was not clear where the authority of Yeltsin (as Russian president) began and where that of Gorbachev (as Soviet leader) ended. This tension is most apparent in the introduction of economic reforms initiated by Yeltsin in August 1991. These aimed to transform Russia's economy from the command system of the communist era to one based on free-market principles. The initiatives were opposed by Gorbachev, who saw them as too radical, too ambitious and counter to the socialist principles he aimed to preserve.

Despite Gorbachev's fears one thing was clear: the Soviet Union was slipping away. On 19 August 1991, Communist hardliners sought to reassert the authority of the Soviet Union by staging an unsuccessful coup while Gorbachev was on vacation in the Crimea. With the backing of the Committee for State Security (the KGB), tanks rolled into the square outside Moscow's parliament house. The coup leaders declared a state of emergency and placed Gorbachev under arrest.

Yeltsin was on hand in Moscow. Standing on one of the tanks, he addressed the crowd and called for a general strike until the attempted coup was over. He condemned the conspirators and demanded that Gorbachev be released from custody. Yeltsin came off looking as the champion of reform and a supporter of Gorbachev.

Getty Images/DIANE-LU HOVASSE/AFP

SOURCE 5.21 Russian president Boris Yeltsin stands on top of a tank in defiance of a communist-led coup in August 1991. Although the coup itself was short-lived and non-violent, it eventually hastened the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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The coup of August 1991

Yeltsin addresses the crowd

Undoubtedly it is essential to give the country's president, Gorbachev, an opportunity to address the people. Today he has been blockaded. I have been denied communications with him. We demand an immediate [meeting] of an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the Union. We are absolutely confident that our countrymen will not permit the sanctioning of the tyranny and lawlessness of the putschists, who have lost all shame and conscience.

Yeltsin's address to the Russian people, delivered from a tank outside the parliament building, Moscow, 19 August 1991, translated from Russian by the US State Department.

Gorbachev reflects

Looking back now at everything that happened, it is evident to me that the main orientation of Yeltsin and his entourage was to pursue a course aimed at the dissolution of the Soviet Union, at taking control of Russia, so as to seize power for themselves ... The August coup caused a breakdown in the process of the formation [of the new Union], created complications and spurred on the process of disintegration.

Mikhail Gorbachev, *On My Country and the World,* Columbia University Press, 2000, pp. 110, 135.

Question

1. Compare and contrast the views of Yeltsin and Gorbachev on the significance of the August coup.

Although Yeltsin was not involved in the organisation of the coup, afterwards he took immediate steps to protect the interests of Russia so that it could effectively transform to an independent state. In the week that followed the coup, a number of large states, including the Ukraine and Belarus, declared their independence from the Soviet Union.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1991

Throughout 1991 the leading countries of the Soviet Union declared their independence from the Union. Then, at 7.30 a.m. on 25 December 1991, the Soviet flag was lowered above the Kremlin for the last time and Mikhail Gorbachev became a leader without a country. With the stroke of a pen, the Soviet Union was finally dissolved as Gorbachev signed a paper relinquishing all of his duties as president of the USSR.

It is ironic that in trying to save the Soviet system, Gorbachev was an inspiration for so many who wanted to destroy it. On Christmas Day 1991, the 74-year experiment with Lenin and Marx on the European continent came to an end, and the Cold War was over.

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AFTER THE COLD WAR

By the time the Soviet Union was dissolved on Christmas Day 1991, the Cold War had been the status quo in international relations for 45 years. Historians and observers began to consider the reasons for the end of the Cold War and speculate on what global order would replace it. Read the following sources and answer the questions below.

John Lewis Gaddis, 1997

> The 'new' Cold War history will be multi-archival, in that it will at least attempt to draw upon the record of all participants in that conflict … Cold War history will take ideas seriously … For the events of 1989–91 make sense only in terms of ideas. There was no military defeat or economic crash, but there was a collapse of legitimacy. The people of one Cold War empire suddenly realised that its emperors had no clothes on.

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, pp. 282, 283.

Eric Hobsbawm, 1994

> The collapse of one part of the world revealed the malaise of the rest. As the 1980s passed into the 1990s it became evident that the world crisis was not only general in an economic sense, but equally general in politics. The collapse of communist regimes … produced an enormous zone of political uncertainty, instability, chaos and civil war, but also destroyed the international system that had stabilized international relations for some forty years … the tensions of troubled economies undermined the political systems of liberal democracy, parliamentary or presidential, which had functioned so well in the developed capitalist countries since the Second World War.

Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*, Abacus, London, 1994, p. 10.

Samuel P Huntington, 1996

> The post–Cold War world is a world of seven or eight major civilizations. Cultural commonalities and differences shape the interests, antagonisms, and associations of states. The most important countries in the world come overwhelmingly from different civilizations. The local conflicts most likely to escalate into broader wars are those between groups and states from different civilizations … Power is shifting from the long predominant West to non-Western civilizations. Global politics has become multipolar and multi-civilizational.

Samuel P Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order,* Simon and Schuster, London, 1996, p. 29.

Questions

1. According to John Gaddis, how will historians of the future (after 1997) provide a more balanced interpretation of the Cold War?
2. According to Gaddis, what was the primary reason for the end of the Cold War?
3. Reread the extract from Eric Hobsbawm. How did the collapse of communism have a negative effect on *both* the sides that had engaged in the Cold War?
4. Explain Samuel Huntington's view of the source of conflict in the post–Cold War period.
5. *Extension activity*: Research one conflict of the post–Cold War world, in light of the view of a historian quoted here. Choose *one* of the following:
   - **a** The breakdown of the former Yugoslavia (Hobsbawm)
   - **b** The 'war on terror' (Huntington)

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Chapter summary

+ The 1980s began with renewed hostilities between the Americans and the Soviets. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the Iranian Revolution marked the end of the period of détente.
+ The new US president, Ronald Reagan, came to power as a tough anti-communist and immediately implemented a large arms build-up.
+ In 1985 the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. He had a more conciliatory message to give the West. A committed Leninist, he wanted to reform the Soviet system in order to revive it.
+ Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* and his reversal of the Brezhnev Doctrine had the unintended consequence of weakening rather than strengthening Soviet communism, and eventually led to its collapse.
+ Reagan and Gorbachev worked together to minimise the threat of nuclear conflict, through superpower summits and arms reduction talks.
+ Pro-democracy demonstrations across eastern Europe eventually led to the fall of communist regimes across the Soviet bloc.
+ The ultimate symbol of the Cold War, the Berlin Wall, fell on 9 November 1989; one year later Germany was reunified.
+ The new Russian leader Boris Yeltsin led Russia into political and economic reforms that were characterised by turmoil, and on Christmas Day 1991 the Soviet Union was officially dissolved.

Endnotes

1 Henry Heller, *The Cold War*, Monthly Review Press, 2006, p. 65.
2 David Christian, *Power and Privilege: The Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Challenge of Modernity*, 2nd edition, Longman, Melbourne, pp. 363–4.
3 Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, 1987, p. 18.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

Further resources

David Christian, *Power and Privilege: The Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and the Challenge of Modernity,* 2nd edition, Longman, Melbourne, 1994.

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War,* Penguin, London, 2005.

Henry Heller, *The Cold War and the New Imperialism: A Global History, 1945–2005,* Monthly Review Press, New York, 2006.

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Chapter review activities

1 Outline the key achievements of détente.

2 Describe the main criticisms of détente.

3 Use the following 10 words – in any order – to describe your understanding of the end of détente:

Ostpolitik	SALT	Ayatollah	anti-communist	Brezhnev
nuclear war	US embassy	mujahidin	arms	April Revolution

4 Explain why Reagan referred to the Soviet Union as 'evil'.

5 What was the Reagan Doctrine and how might it have compromised American values?

6 Outline the key facts of the Iran–Contra scandal.

7 Did Reaganomics have an overall positive or negative impact on the American worker?

8 Listen to the Bruce Springsteen song 'Born in the USA'. Outline the key areas that Springsteen is protesting about.

9 Why were Mikhail Gorbachev and the leaders of his generation well placed to achieve reform in the Soviet Union?

10 Why did Gorbachev attempt to deal with the issue of alcoholism in Soviet society?

11 Make a list of the key features of *glasnost*.

12 Describe the key features of p*erestroika*.

13 Outline some key features of the revolutions that transformed Europe after 1989.

14 Complete a research project on the Czechoslovakian 'Velvet Revolution'. Discuss key personalities and events.

15 Compare a map of Europe in the mid-1990s with the map showing Europe divided by the Iron Curtain (page 59). Identify any new countries or political entities in eastern Europe. How do the maps compare with a map of central and eastern Europe in the 1920s? Explain what consequences the changes on the maps might have for future international relations.

Essay questions

16 To what extent was Gorbachev responsible for the failure of communism in eastern Europe?

17 To what extent were Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost and perestroika* responsible for ending the Cold War?

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CHAPTER SIX

A new world order

The Cold War era was, rather surprisingly, a period of certainty. The world order established at the end of the Second World War created a peculiar system of international relations. Dominated by two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, the system, for all its threats and potential problems, was relatively stable. There had, after all, been no open conflicts between the superpowers in the 46 years since 1945. The end of the Cold War, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, seems to have recast the international order. Initially it appeared that the US would remain the dominant force in world affairs; however, as time progressed, it became clear that the global world order was no longer dominated by one or two nations but is now marked by **multipolarity**.

multipolarity
In geopolitics, an arrangement in which there are many competing powers

Since the early 1990s there has been a series of changes in the world order that would almost have been unimaginable in the Cold War era. The United Nations has been released in part from the tensions of the Cold War standoff that were played out in the Security Council in the past. It has emerged as a more influential, multilateral force in world affairs. The European Union has expanded to include former Soviet satellite states, creating an increasingly politically and economically integrated European super state.

While these developments can be seen as stabilising the international order since the early years of the 21st century, there have also been fewer certainties than during the Cold War era. On 11 September 2001 the attacks by Al Qaeda on Washington and New York brought to the fore a global threat of Islamic fundamentalism, which continues, along with the rise of ISIS, to generate instability and uncertainty in the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Africa. New economic and political 'great powers', most notably China and India, have also emerged as important players on the world stage. And the balance of international relations has increasingly shifted from Europe and North America to the Asia–Pacific region. What these developments mean for the world order of the future, remains unresolved.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

+ What was the impact of the end of the Cold War on the world order?
+ What is the future of the world order?

‹ The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York have had a profound impact on the geopolitics of the world in the 21st century.

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The global scene in the 1990s

The collapse of the USSR in 1991 led to a decade of chaos, known as the 'Roaring Nineties', in Russia, and a decade of rapid change in the former Soviet republics and for the USSR's allies. In eastern Europe, the emergence of a post-Soviet democratic bloc had been making progress, despite hiccoughs such as the attempted coup in Russia in August 1991. The new Russian Federation already seemed to have been reduced from a global Cold War power to a mere regional power.

Elsewhere, by late 1991 a measure of stability had returned to some troubled parts of Africa and Latin America. In South Africa, President de Klerk's apartheid government had entered negotiations to end racial segregation. In Latin America the totalitarian military juntas in Brazil (1969–85), Chile (1973–90) and Argentina (1976–83) had been replaced by viable democracies, but there were still problems in the Central American republics of Nicaragua and Guatemala. As for Asia, the USSR had pulled out of Afghanistan in 1988–89. In the Middle East, the Lebanese civil war (1975–90) had just petered out, although there were ominous stirrings in Iraq.

In the Balkans, from 1991 until 1999, the political and economic disintegration of Yugoslavia aroused ethnic and religious conflicts, leading to genocidal carnage (more than 100 000 dead) that echoed Nazi-era atrocities. The horrors included the mass murder of more than 8000 Bosnian men and youths at Srebrenica in 1995, an episode in which UN peacekeepers played an inglorious role. In the African country of Rwanda, ethnic rivalries, and a poorly managed intervention by the UN, resulted in the genocidal campaign of 1994 led by the majority Hutus; this left 800 000 dead, mainly Tutsi men, women and children (UN figures).

Alamy/dinosmichail

SOURCE 6.1 The memorial that lists the 8372 Bosnian Muslim men and youths murdered by Bosnian Serb forces at Srebrenica in June 1995. This incident, and others that followed, led to UN-supported NATO bombings of Serb positions in August and September of 1995. Serbia agreed to end hostilities in November that year.

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A CHANGING WORLD ORDER, 1990–

1990	**AUGUST**	Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait
	SEPTEMBER	US President George HW Bush gave a speech about a new world order
1991	**JANUARY**	A US-led coalition evicted Iraqis from Kuwait (First Gulf War)
	JULY	India's Prime Minister Rao announced his new economic policy
	DECEMBER	The USSR was dissolved
1992	**APRIL**	After a year of sporadic conflict, the Bosnian war intensified in former Yugoslavia
1993	**FEBRUARY**	A failed World Trade Center bombing marked an upsurge in Al Qaeda terrorist activity
1999	**JUNE**	The last of the major conflicts in the Balkans (over Kosovo) ended
2001	**11 SEPTEMBER**	Al Qaeda attacked New York and Washington
	OCTOBER	A US-led coalition invaded Afghanistan
2003	**MARCH**	A US-led coalition invaded Iraq (start of Second Gulf War)
2007	**JANUARY**	President George W Bush announced the US military's 'surge' in Iraq
2011	**NOVEMBER**	The US and allied forces withdrew from Iraq (end of Second Gulf War)
2012	**JULY**	The US and allied forces began withdrawing from Afghanistan
	APRIL	Chinese and Philippine navy vessels were in a standoff over the Scarborough Shoal area; this marked the start of two years of intense territorial claims and maritime bickering between China and its neighbours
2014	**JUNE**	Islamic State took over much of Iraq and Syria and proclaimed a 'caliphate'
	JUNE–AUGUST	American advisers and special forces returned to Iraq
	AUGUST	The US and other forces began air strikes in Iraq against Islamic State

The European Union

The European Union (EU) arose from the 1993 Maastricht Treaty and what had originally been the six-nation European Common Market (officially known as the European Economic Community, or EEC). The EEC was an economic union of western European nations founded under the 1957 Treaty of Rome and dominated by West Germany and France, with the United Kingdom joining later (in 1973) and becoming a somewhat reluctant major partner. Part of the rationale for the formation of the EEC had been a post-1945

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SOURCE 6.2 The flag of the European Union. The 12 gold stars on a blue background symbolise the three underpinning aspirational philosophies of the European Union – unity, solidarity and harmony – they have nothing to do with the number of member nations.

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desire to replace former nationalist rivalries with a culture of pan-European economic and political cooperation. By the 1990s the EEC had a parliament located in Brussels, and comprised 12 western European nations, including a united Germany.

The expected benefits of the new EU were to be mainly economic, diplomatic and legal, and to facilitate greater cross-border trade. By 2010, EU membership stood at 28. Features of the EU include:

+ a single currency, the euro (which is not used in the UK or Denmark)
+ a common foreign policy approach
+ a common approach to migration issues, human rights and legal matters
+ the EU parliament, based in Brussels, which makes the laws
+ the EU Council, which makes executive decisions
+ the EU Commission, which carries out decisions
+ the EU Court, which deals with legal issues.

On 13 December 2007 a reformist agreement, the Treaty of Lisbon, was signed by EU members. It became law in 2009, and tidied up administrative, legal and constitutional matters, but stopped short of creating a constitution. Not all EU members were in agreement with the Lisbon treaty, with the UK, Ireland, Poland, the Czech Republic and Denmark objecting mainly to the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and questioning how it might affect detailed local matters of justice and home affairs. In 2015 Denmark, Ireland, Poland and the UK still had opt-out rights in different policy areas.

The EEC and its successor EU have been dogged by criticism over the past half-century, coming from various member states, mainly from conservative and far right political parties who have a nationalistic tendency, strong anti-immigration policies and a dislike of what they see as bloated, expensive and restrictive EU parliamentary and bureaucratic activities. Anti-EU politicians have taken advantage of political apathy in some member states to achieve MEP (Member of the European Parliament) status, allowing them to criticise the EU from within. More recently (from about 2010 onwards) the entry of relatively impoverished eastern and central European states into the EU has placed a strain on its policy of open borders and transnational employment, increasing transnational support for far-right parties.

On the diplomatic front, the EU has offered various nations the possibility of membership if they meet its economic and human rights stipulations. For example, Turkey, a major NATO power, has been keen to gain entry to the EU since the 1990s, but its ambitions have been blocked mainly by Germany and France, allegedly because of Turkey's human rights record. The EU is effectively a German-led European power and economic bloc. It continues to work on developing this bloc so that member nations can deal on more equal terms with a geopolitically dominant US.

Questions

1. How and why might the creation of the EEC and the EU have reduced the likelihood of conflict in Europe?
2. How might the establishment of the EU influence the global world order in future?

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The Gulf War, 1991

On 2 August 1990 the ominous rumblings that had been coming from Iraq turned into an unprovoked Iraqi invasion of neighbouring Kuwait. Only two years after the conclusion of a bitter and devastating Iraq–Iran war (1980–88) Saddam Hussein, president and brutal dictator of oil-rich Iraq since 1979, ordered just a fraction of his massive one-million-strong army south to invade the oil-rich but much smaller neighbouring country of Kuwait. The pretext for the invasion was a border dispute over oil rights.

There were other reasons for the invasion, including Kuwait's high levels of oil production, which lowered overall oil prices and undermined Iraq's oil profits; the Iraqi desire for access to Kuwait's deep-water port of Shuwaikh; a large and unpayable war debt owed by Iraq to Kuwait; Saddam's anxiety that Kuwait was part of a larger Arab plot to destabilise Iraq's **Shiah** minority (most of whom lived in the south of Iraq); and the official Iraqi view that Kuwait should not have been separate from Iraq anyway as it had been part of Ottoman Mesopotamia in the past, which had included both Iraq and Kuwait.

Shiah
The second largest denomination of Islam

It took Iraqi troops a mere six hours to arrive in the capital, Kuwait City. The country was then annexed by Iraq as its new 19th province. In Washington, the response was quick. Anxious about the effect of the invasion on world oil supplies and prices, the Americans labelled Saddam an aggressor. On 2 August the UN Security Council issued a resolution demanding Iraq withdraw from Kuwait, and the US began to assemble a military coalition. By late 1990 the coalition was ready for action.

Saddam Hussein (1937–2006)

Alamy/Keystone Pictures USA

Saddam, as he was commonly called in the West, came from a peasant family and was born in a village near the northern Iraqi town of Tikrit. He joined the Ba'ath Party in 1957. This was an Arab socialist party, founded in 1943, to promote the establishment of a socialist Arab union. Saddam ruthlessly climbed his way to the top of the party organisation and into the leadership of Iraq in 1979.

Saddam's administration was marked by brutal forms of nepotism, a secularist modernisation of Iraqi society, the opening up of societal opportunities to Iraqi women, ruthless suppression of dissent, harsh management of ethnic and religious rivalries (mainly between Sunnis, Shiahs and Kurds), and the nationalisation of Iraq's oil industry in the 1970s. During a long and costly war against revolutionary Islamist Iran (1980–88), Saddam's forces used chemical weapons against Iranian forces and against Iraqi citizens who opposed his rule. Saddam was captured by US forces in December 2003. He was handed over to the CIA and then to the Iraqi authorities who accused him of the massacre of Shiah Iraqis in 1982. Saddam and seven others were tried and found guilty. Saddam was hanged in a US–Iraqi base in Baghdad on 30 December 2006.

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George HW Bush (1924–)

Alamy/Ian Shaw

A Texan by adoption, George Herbert Walker Bush is often referred to as 'George Bush senior' because his son, George W Bush, was also president of the US. George Bush senior served as a pilot in the Pacific theatre during the Second World War, before founding and establishing a successful family oil business. He entered politics in the 1950s. He served for two years as the US Ambassador to the United Nations and played a key role in America's diplomatic recognition of China, after which he became head of the CIA. After campaigning unsuccessfully for the Republican Party presidential candidacy in 1979 he became Ronald Reagan's vice president for two terms. Bush was then elected as Reagan's successor in 1988. He served as president from 1989 to 1993.

THE UNITED STATES RESPONDS

On 17 January 1991 a huge, US-led military force attacked the positions of the Iraqi army bunkered down in Kuwait. This attack was the first real test of US diplomatic strategy and military action since the end of the Cold War. Within a few weeks this First Gulf War was over. The military coalition, authorised by the United Nations, began operations against Iraq and expelled Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The Emir was restored to power in Kuwait and the country's oil wealth remained beyond Iraq's reach. On 27 February 1991, in a national broadcast, US President George HW Bush announced a ceasefire, saying, 'Kuwait is liberated, Iraq's army is defeated and our military objectives are met'. He went on to urge Saddam Hussein to observe a permanent ceasefire.

weapons of mass destruction
Armaments (usually nuclear, chemical or biological weapons) that can cause indiscriminate death and destruction on a massive scale

Interestingly, in the context of later developments, the US-led coalition claimed that its forces had destroyed 11 Iraqi chemical and biological warfare facilities in Iraq itself – the kinds of facilities that were capable of providing Saddam's regime with outlawed **weapons of mass destruction** (WMD), which he had used in the war against Iran and also against the Kurdish people in his own country in 1988.

The short, sharp triumph against Saddam led politicians and military leaders in America to form the view that a victorious overseas military campaign in a troublesome Middle East was a viable option. It pushed memories of the disastrous overseas campaign in Vietnam, fought during the Cold War era, into the background.

But by late 1991 the Saddamist government had cruelly subdued the internal rebellions that flared up in Iraq in the postwar period, and it was back in full charge of the country.

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A new world order

In the late 1980s the abandonment of Marxist ideology and the collapse of several Marxist states was greeted with delight by Western conservative governments, and with dismay by those few remaining communist states, such as Cuba and Vietnam, which still relied heavily on Russian support. George HW Bush, US Republican president at the time, expressed no doubts about what the various failures of communism meant to him and to the world. In a speech delivered to a joint session of Congress on 11 September 1990 he spoke of his idea of a new world order, and observed:

> Out of these troubled times, our fifth objective – a new world order – can emerge: a new era, freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace.

Fukuyama's 'end of history'

The Western response too was reflected in the success of an essay written in 1989 by the Reaganite political scientist Francis Fukuyama, just before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Fukuyama's 'The end of history' was first published in the *National Interest*, an American foreign policy journal, and then expanded on in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*, published in 1992. Fukuyama argued that superior, free-market, liberal democracies had triumphed, and would continue to triumph, in the struggle against anti-democratic ideologies such as Marxism.

> What we may be witnessing is … the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.
>
> Francis Fukuyama, 'The end of history', *The National Interest,* Summer 1989, p. 4.

Questions

1. Why, in 1990, might President Bush have declared that a new world order was among his objectives?
2. Why, in late 1989, did Francis Fukuyama argue that 'history' was over?

President George HW Bush's world view, 1991

On 29 January 1991 President Bush delivered his State of the Union address to the US Congress. His speech reflected on the military situation in Iraq and in the wider world as well as on domestic American policy. Some key extracts are given below.

> I come to this House of the people to speak to you and all Americans, certain that we stand at a defining hour. Halfway around the world, we are engaged in a great struggle in the skies and on the seas and sands. We know why we're there: We are Americans, part of something larger than ourselves. For two centuries, we've done the hard work of freedom. And tonight, we lead the world in facing down a threat to decency and humanity.
>
> What is at stake is more than one small country; it is a big idea: a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind – peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law. Such is a world worthy of our struggle and worthy of our children's future.
>
> The community of nations has resolutely gathered to condemn and repel lawless aggression. Saddam

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Hussein's unprovoked invasion – his ruthless, systematic rape of a peaceful neighbor – violated everything the community of nations holds dear. The world has said this aggression would not stand, and it will not stand. Together, we have resisted the trap of appeasement, cynicism, and isolation that gives temptation to tyrants. The world has answered Saddam's invasion with 12 United Nations resolutions, starting with a demand for Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal, and backed up by forces from 28 countries of 6 continents. With few exceptions, the world now stands as one.

The end of the cold war has been a victory for all humanity. A year and a half ago, in Germany, I said that our goal was a Europe whole and free. Tonight, Germany is united. Europe has become whole and free, and America's leadership was instrumental in making it possible ...

The war in the Gulf is not a war we wanted. We worked hard to avoid war. For more than five months we – along with the Arab League, the European Community, the United Nations – tried every diplomatic avenue. UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar; Presidents Gorbachev, Mitterrand, Ozal, Mubarak, and Bendjedid; Kings Fahd and Hassan; Prime Ministers Major and Andreotti – just to name a few – all worked for a solution. But time and again, Saddam Hussein flatly rejected the path of diplomacy and peace.

George HW Bush, address before a joint session of the Congress, 29 January 1991, online by Gerhard Peters and John T Woolley, The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=19253.

TABLE 6.1 Countries engaged in the US-led military force in the Gulf War

Argentina	Kuwait	Senegal
Australia	Morocco	Sierra Leone
Bahrain	Netherlands	Singapore
Bangladesh	New Zealand	South Korea
Belgium	Niger	Spain
Canada	Norway	Syria
Denmark	Oman	United Arab Emirates
Egypt	Pakistan	United Kingdom
France	Portugal	United States
Greece	Qatar	
Italy	Saudi Arabia	

Questions

1. What does President Bush argue is the consequence of the end of the Cold War?
2. What values does President Bush identify as positive and negative in this address to Congress?
3. Using evidence from both sources and your wider knowledge, evaluate President Bush's contention that 'With few exceptions, the world now stands as one'. Consider which nations, institutions and individuals are represented in both the table and speech. Which are absent?
4. In what ways might the new relationships represented in the table and speech be seen as forming a 'new world order'?

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The Middle East, Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden

In 1991 the military coalition led by the United States used Saudi Arabia as a Middle Eastern base for operations against Iraq, another Arab nation. This had unintended consequences in the long term. For Islamic militants it was a betrayal of the Islamic values of the Saudis and of the other Arab states allied with the US. In addition the militants believed the US was instigating an attack on Islam itself, even though Iraq was nominally a secular society. This, in their minds, demanded revenge. Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born jihadist, who was then little known, began to formulate **Islamist** payback.

In 1993 Bin Laden established Al Qaeda (Arabic, meaning 'the Base'). The group's aims were shaped by a desire to establish Islamic states in which **Sharia law** was practised; they reflected great hostility towards the US and Judaism. Under Bin Laden's leadership, Al Qaeda fostered – initially from Sudan and from 1996 from Afghanistan – a network of like-minded Islamic militants who launched terrorist attacks against US targets in the Middle East and in Africa.

Islamist
A term generally used in the West to describe Islamic militants

Sharia law
The system of Islamic law based on the Qur'an and the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; Sharia law guides Muslims in such areas as marriage, property, business and government

Osama bin Laden (1957–2011)

Born in Saudi Arabia to a wealthy family that ran a large construction business, Bin Laden was raised as a devout Sunni Muslim. From 1979 he became increasingly drawn to the conflict in Afghanistan and began encouraging other Arabs to support the Afghan resistance to the Soviet Union. By the mid-1980s he had established a number of bases and camps in Afghanistan at which he trained and recruited mujahidin (see page 129) to fight against Soviet troops. In this he had the backing of the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the support of the Pakistani military; he also drew on his own personal wealth to support his campaign. Returning to Saudi Arabia, following the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989, he was initially regarded as a hero.

Getty Images/Universal History Archive

From the time of the Gulf War he became increasingly critical of his homeland and angered by the fact that it permitted the US-led coalition to launch its attacks on Iraq from Saudi Arabian territory. Such was his anger at the US that he declared a holy war, or 'jihad', against them. This attitude led to him being exiled from Saudi Arabia.

After the 11 September Al Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington in 2001, Bin Laden went into hiding on the Afghan–Pakistan border. He was eventually found and shot in a raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on 2 May 2011. His body was buried at sea.

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The shift from political to militant Islam: a very concise guide

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SOURCE 6.3 The writing on the black flag of jihad is called the shahada. It is the Muslim expression of faith: 'There is no god but Allah; Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah'. The text is used on the flags of Al Qaeda, Al Shabaab and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), among others.

Islam is practised in long-established centres across Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent, and in China as well as in Central and South-East Asia. It also thrives in regions converted to Islam more recently, generally by force or through trade. At the same time, due to the 20th- and 21st-century increase in economic migration, refugee resettlement and asylum-seeking, Islam has spread to nations that previously had a negligible Islamic presence. Like Christianity, Islam is not a homogenised religion. It has many sects, several of which are rivals for authenticity (mainly Sunni and Shiah). Some of these sects persecute one another in the name of religion, behaving much as Christian sects did in the 16th and 17th centuries.

In the 20th century, as the Ottoman Empire declined and European imperialist powers moved into regions previously controlled by the Ottomans, some Islamic scholars called for a reactive revival of Islamic purity and the extension of Islam into political activity. One key political group that came out of this revival movement was the pan-Islamic Muslim Brotherhood, active today and established in Egypt in 1928. The Muslim Brotherhood favoured Islamic purity using whatever means, including the use of violence. The radical organisation has always had a fraught relationship with more conservative (and often repressive and corrupt) Arab authorities. It was, for example, proscribed by the military government in Egypt in 2013, after an election triumph in 2012. It is a highly visible element within an Islamic reform movement that also includes other radical organisations as well as more moderate 'Islamists'.

Until the growth of the Arab oil industry in the post-colonial 1960s and beyond, pan-Islamic movements may have had popular backing on the streets but they had little global influence. Things changed in 1973, however, when Arab states began an effective oil embargo. They did so in response to Israeli victories in the Yom Kippur War and as protest against US-led support for Israel in the war, which was fought against a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria. Developed nations then looked at the world anew. The embargo led to a massive rise in oil prices, rifts between developed nations and the worst global recession since the stock market crash of 1929. After 1973, the Arab oil-producing nations began to exercise increasing global political influence based on oil revenues and their capacity to harm the world's economy with further oil embargoes. The influence of the Arab oil-producers gained strength in 1979 when oil-rich Iran joined global oil politics on the Arab side, after its pro-Western Shah was deposed and replaced by a fiercely anti-Western Shiah religious leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. (Iran is a Persian nation that sees itself as different from the Arab states because of its distinct cultural heritage and history.)

Of the Arab nations, it was Saudi Arabia, a medieval-style Sunni monarchy that took the geopolitical lead, maintaining close relations with the US and other Western nations, while paradoxically advocating and supporting a global evangelical program based on an especially pure, even puritanical, minority version of Islamic revivalism known as Wahhabism. Saudi Arabia dominates the group of Arab nations – which also includes the Emirates and Egypt – that is engaged with the West and prepared to modernise but ostensibly rejects Western values.

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But for some Islamists, political engagement with the West has never been an option. The creation by the UN of Israel in 1948, and the US-led support for Israel against Palestine, makes engagement with the West insupportable for these groups. In general, in the Middle East (and in other Muslim-dominated nations) there is widespread support for both secular and religious organisations that are pro-Palestinian. Oil riches reaped by the Arab nations and by Iran, the existence of the Jewish state of Israel, the continuing support of a US-led coalition against pro-Palestinian interests, an increase in radical Islamist consciousness, a growing self-confidence among Islamic communities worldwide, the success of the mujahidin against the USSR in Afghanistan – all these factors merged in the 1990s and led to the geopolitical development of militant Islam as a potent global force, within which Islamist **terrorism** has played an increasingly active part. This is yet another development in the changing world order, in which Islamist militants use unstable or rogue states as training grounds for seemingly indiscriminate but carefully chosen operations normally involving mass murder.

By 2000 Islam had all but replaced the declining ideology of Marxism as the major force for radical thought and action in the **subaltern** nations of the 21st century. For many 21st-century Westerners, the Islamist terrorist has become the new bogeyman, replacing the 20th-century's anarchist and Marxist revolutionary. At the same time, a recent development in Islamic militancy is the tendency for the two major sects – Sunni and Shiah – to turn on each other.

Apart from the Al Qaeda franchise begun by Osama bin Laden, several other militant Islamist groups are active today. They include Lashkar-i-Taiba (Army of the Righteous; Pakistan; Sunni), Hamas (Gaza; Sunni), Hezbollah (Lebanon; Shiah), Armed Islamic Group (Algeria; Sunni) and ISIS or the Islamic State (Syria and Iraq; Sunni). As well, there are various splinter groups and offshoots of the better-known organisations – all now looking to develop a world order of their own based on radical Islam.

Al Qaeda's assault on the United States

terrorism
The use of extreme violence by groups or individuals, or the threat of such violence, in an attempt to gain a particular goal, such as the destabilisation and destruction of a ruling authority

subaltern
Lower in rank; in this context the word describes groups without power

By the late 1990s, Bin Laden was regarded as a key pro-Taliban (see 'Key organisations', page 6) figure in Afghan politics. He was the mentor to thousands of what were referred to as 'Afghan Arab' activists. These activists were responsible for deadly anti-US bombings, including the bombing of a hotel in Aden, Yemen, in 1992; the failed truck bombing of the New York World Trade Center in 1993; the bombing in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, in 1995; and the bombing of a US military residence in Khobar, Saudi, in 1996.

Forced out of his haven in Sudan in 1996, mainly through US diplomatic pressure and pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Bin Laden retreated to the Tora Bora caves of Afghanistan. It was here that he teamed up with his Taliban allies and issued a 'Declaration of War against the Americans who Occupy the Land of the Two Holy Mosques (Saudi Arabia)'. Al Qaeda was subsequently implicated in the mid-1998 bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which resulted in many civilian casualties.

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Bin Laden and his organisation were firmly on the radars of Western, Middle Eastern and Pakistani intelligence agencies by the late 1990s, and they were increasingly spotlighted in US and Arab media. Bin Laden was still seen as more of a facilitator of jihadist activity rather than as an active terrorist leader. This was to change on 12 October 2000 when Islamic militants planned and carried out a deadly attack on the American guided-missile destroyer USS *Cole*, while the ship was refuelling in harbour, in Aden. Al Qaeda claimed responsibility.

At the same time, during the 1990s, other Al Qaeda operatives, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, had been working on schemes involving bombing, and the hijacking and crashing of planes or multiple planes. One of these schemes was the failed Bojinka plot of January 1995, which was to involve the simultaneous assassination of Pope John Paul II in the Philippines, the mid-air destruction of 12 airliners and an attack on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) headquarters in Langley, Virginia, using a bomb-laden Cessna. The CIA leadership was aware of such plots, but unwilling to share information with their rival Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), an intelligence failure that was to have dire consequences for the inhabitants of New York and Washington in September 2001.

Corbis/Masatomo Kuriya

SOURCE 6.4 The second plane, Flight 174, approaching the World Trade Center on the morning of 11 September 2001. Within an hour, the south tower would collapse.

THE EVENTS OF 9/11

The events of 9/11 are well known. On the morning of 11 September 2001 four teams of Saudi-born hijackers, some trained as pilots, took over four US domestic passenger planes using easily concealed but lethal box cutters (Stanley knives) and other small knives as weapons.

The first plane, Flight 11, was a Boeing 767 carrying approximately 75 000 litres of jet fuel. At 8.46 a.m., it crashed into the top of the World Trade Center's north tower. At 9.03 a.m., the second plane, Flight 174, also a Boeing 767, crashed into the mid-section of the south tower. At 9.59 a.m., the south tower started to collapse.

Each tower subsided in an almost vertical collapse. Between 13 000 and 15 000 men and women were successfully evacuated from the building complex encompassing the towers. A total of 6294 office workers, rescue staff and residents were treated for injuries, and 2606 people died as a result of the attacks, most of them New Yorkers.

Meanwhile, at 9.37 a.m., the third plane, Flight 77, a Boeing 757, had crashed into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the US Department of Defense, killing all 59 passengers aboard, as well as 125 Pentagon employees. The fourth plane, Flight 93, also a Boeing 757, was on its way to Washington. Passengers on this plane were apparently forced to the rear of the aircraft by the hijackers but they heard about the other attacks on their mobile phones and a desperate decision was made to attack the hijackers. What happened next is unclear but the plane dived into the ground in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, at 10.03 a.m. All 40 passengers and crew were killed. All 19 hijackers involved in the four attacks were killed.

The events of 9/11 only lasted 1 hour and 18 minutes but they changed the way the US viewed and dealt with the world; they changed the way Islam was regarded by the West, and they changed the way Islamist militants regarded themselves.

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THE INTERNATIONAL REACTION TO 9/11

Interestingly, there was almost unanimous condemnation of the 9/11 attacks from the international community, including from the majority of Islamic states and from many notable Islamic figures. Even nations who considered themselves hostile to the US, such as China, Russia, North Korea and Cuba, voiced their condemnation. The PLO leader Yasser Arafat, probably horrified at the damage this event could do to the Palestinian cause, also condemned the 9/11 attack. However, almost immediately, radical elements within the Arab world and beyond moved into conspiracy theory mode; they blamed 9/11 on Israel, Jews generally, the US government and the CIA.

THE REACTION TO 9/11 IN THE UNITED STATES

As might be expected, the initial reactions to the attacks among American citizens were shock, humiliation, anger and devastation, partly because of the loss of life, partly because of the shame caused by such a large-scale terrorist incursion onto US territory at a time when the US was the world's sole superpower, and partly because of the visual impact of the live, televised collapse of the towers. Almost immediately, comparisons were made to the devastating surprise attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

AL QAEDA'S REACTION TO 9/11

After the September 11 attacks, carefully worded statements from Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders to Arab and Pakistani media seemed to indicate that Al Qaeda was not involved – although the organisation supported the cause of the hijackers. In private, the Al Qaeda leaders were much less guarded. For example, Bin Laden's son-in-law, a high-ranking Kuwaiti leader, Sulaiman Abu Gaith, was filmed almost a month after 9/11, on 10 September 2001, saying to Bin Laden that 'The Americans must know that the storm of airplanes will not stop, God willing, and there are thousands of young people who are as keen about death as Americans are about life'.[1]

Much later, in a US court case in 2014, Abu Gaith testified that, on the night of 11 September 2001, he had been summoned to Bin Laden's cave in Afghanistan to hear his father-in-law say, 'Did you learn what happened? We are the ones who did it'.

THE US ON THE TRAIL OF AL QAEDA AND THE TALIBAN

The US government's first response was to send forces to a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, the known refuge for Al Qaeda terrorists. A second reaction was to set up a US$40 billion disaster relief fund. The third major reaction was to push through the hastily drafted Patriot Act, by 26 October 2001. The Patriot Act was intended to deal in part with the intelligence system flaws that had allowed 9/11 to happen, and to help in the detection and obstruction of further terrorist activities. The Act itself remains controversial because it appears to contain provisions that can be applied to non-terrorist, criminal matters. Its opponents suggest that its over-zealous implementation inflamed tensions between law-abiding Islamic citizens of the US and non-Islamic citizens.

As for the US campaign in Afghanistan, President George W Bush issued an ultimatum to the Taliban to hand over Bin Laden (who, at that time, denied responsibility for 9/11), other leaders

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of Al Qaeda and all other terrorists. He also demanded the release of all imprisoned foreign nationals and the shutdown of terrorist training camps. The Taliban refused to comply. President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the UK then combined to send a task force to Afghanistan in an operation code-named 'Operation Enduring Freedom'. For the next ten years, US-led forces in the difficult terrain of Afghanistan were to struggle against Islamist forces.

On 7 October 2001 a joint US–UK aerial bombardment of Taliban positions in Afghanistan began. American forces then combined with a group of northern warlords known as the Northern Alliance to drive the Taliban into neighbouring Pakistan and the Tora Bora mountains. A combined NATO-led campaign under the UN flag of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) then attempted to clear the Taliban and Al Qaeda out of the Tora Bora ranges. By 2002, with the Taliban largely subdued or driven out of Afghanistan and dispersing to other locations, it looked as if Operation Enduring Freedom and the ISAF campaign had succeeded.

George W Bush (1946–)

George Walker Bush is the son of George HW Bush, and to avoid confusion is often referred to as George Bush Junior, or by his nickname Dubya (an approximation of the Texas pronunciation of the letter 'W'). He was president of the United States from 2001 to 2009. Before that he was Governor of Texas. Prior to entering politics he worked in the oil industry and co-owned a baseball team. His terms as president were dominated by foreign affairs, following the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington. In domestic issues he pursued a politically conservative agenda.

Alamy/GL Archive

Ominously for the NATO-led coalition, however, in the summer of 2002, the Taliban began to regroup. Meanwhile Al Qaeda left Afghanistan, scattered and extended its franchise to operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Bin Laden took refuge in Pakistan, a nation whose intelligence organisation, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was notorious for double-dealing and ambivalence in its dealings with the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

SADDAM HUSSEIN'S REACTION TO 9/11

Of all the international responses to 9/11, the response of Saddam Hussein was the most unsympathetic. Speaking on Baghdad TV on 12 September, Saddam is quoted as saying:

> "The United States reaps the thorns that its leaders have planted in the world. These thorns have not only caused the feet and hearts of certain people to bleed, but also caused the eyes of the people to bleed – those people who wept a lot over their dead."
>
> Saddam Hussein, quoted in Efraim Karsh and Inari Rautsi, *Saddam Hussein: a political biography*, Grove Press, New York, 2002.

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The War in Iraq, 2003 to 2011

In March 2003 a coalition force led by the United States invaded Iraq in a resumption of hostilities against the Saddam regime. To George W Bush's administration (2001–09), the events of 9/11 marked a turning point in the US's relations with its allies and with its perceived enemies. One active enemy was Saddam. The US government claimed that the Iraqi dictator was a supporter of international terrorism and a mass murderer of his own people. The terrorism allegation was wildly off the mark, but Saddam's regime had used weapons of mass destruction against the Iraqi people and against Iranian forces. These weapons, it was alleged by the US, were still in Iraq and were still available for further mass killings; therefore, Saddam needed to be removed by invasion. What ensued after 2003 was an eight-year campaign in which Iraqi civilians and insurgents, and forces of the US coalition, suffered horrific casualties. By the end of the decade, it was generally agreed that the US's attempt at 'regime change' had failed, and that the US had attacked the wrong target. In 2014 the US found itself back in Iraq, by then an almost failed state besieged by militant Sunni group, Islamic State.

WHY DID THE US AND ITS ALLIES INVADE IRAQ?

An article written in 2013 by the conservative commentator Victor Daniel Hanson provides some insight into why the Bush administration was so keen to take on Saddam. It appeared in the right-wing *National Review* on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the start of what would be called the Second Gulf War. Hanson's views are based on his interpretation of the Bush administration's attitude at the time of the war. The accuracy or otherwise of his views is open to debate. The reasons he gives for the US entering the war include:

+ The First Gulf War of 1991 was unfinished business for President Bush and the US government because Saddam was still in charge of Iraq, he had continued to sponsor terrorism and he had continued to massacre his own people.
+ The apparently rapid success of US-led forces in 2001–02 in the tricky fighting terrain of Afghanistan and the success of the 100-hour campaign in Iraq in 1991 boded well for this latest military intervention. The American Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, was so confident of quick victories in Afghanistan and Iraq that he argued for, and succeeded in getting a small number of ground troops, in this case 148 000 US troops, supported by high-technology air cover and advanced, computer-based combat systems, in accordance with a strategy that came to be called the Rumsfeld Doctrine, or 'War Lite'.
+ After 9/11, American public and political opinion was generally in favour of removing a villainous Saddam. In 2003 a Gallup poll found that 79 per cent of those surveyed supported the invasion of Iraq.
+ Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction.
+ It was believed that a grateful, post-Saddam Iraq would be a friend of the US.
+ Saddam's regime owned rich oil resources. These propped up the Iraqi tyrant, who had a tendency to meddle in international affairs. The US believed it should deal with Saddam before his attempts to manipulate oil revenue got out of hand.

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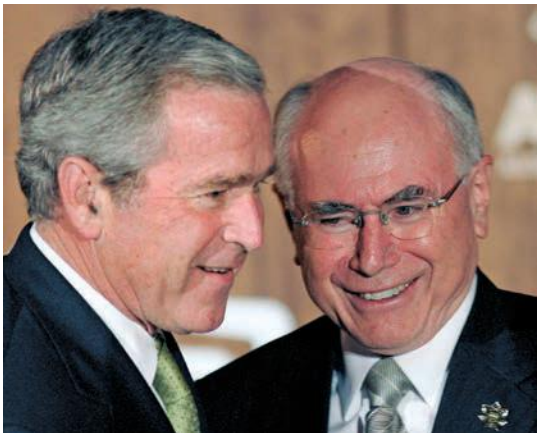
The Australian response to 9/11

In March 2003 the prime minister of Australia, John Howard, addressed the National Press Club in Canberra. In his address he outlined why the Australian government supported the US campaign in Iraq:

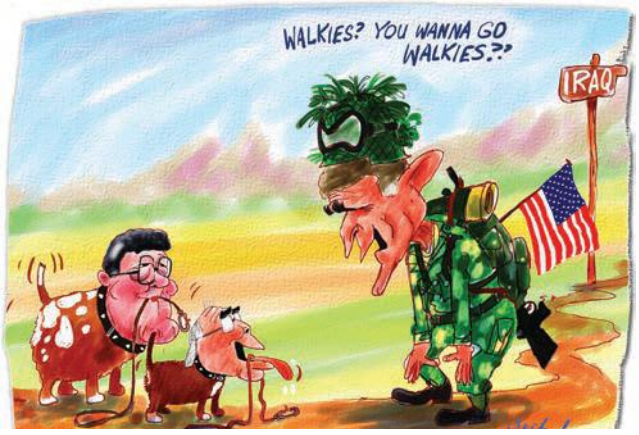
> We believe that it is very much in the national interest of Australia that Iraq have taken from her chemical and biological weapons and [be] denied the possibility of ever having nuclear weapons. Not only is it inherently dangerous for a country such as Iraq with its appalling track record to have these weapons but if Iraq is allowed to get away with it other rogue States will believe they can do the same because they will have seen a world effectively stand by and allow it to happen. And as these dangerous weapons spread, so the risk that they may fall into the hands of terrorists will multiply. And if terrorists ever get their hands on weapons of mass destruction that will, in my very passionate belief and argument, constitute a direct, undeniable and lethal threat to Australia and its people, and that would be the ultimate nightmare not only for us but for other peoples in other nations. That, more than anything else, is the reason why we have taken the stance we have and it's the reason why we believe that Iraq should be effectively and comprehensively disarmed.
>
> Of course our reliance with the United States is also a factor, unapologetically so. America has given very strong leadership to the world on the issue of Iraq. Let us be honest, this issue would not be back before the Security Council now were it not for the United States. The Security Council would not have become re-energised at the task of disarming Iraq had it not been for the United States. Alliances are two-way processes and our alliance with the United States is no exception and Australians should always remember that no nation is more important to our long-term security than that of the United States.

John Howard's address on Iraq to the National Press Club, Canberra, 13 March 2003.



Corbis/Pool/epa/Mick Tsikas

SOURCE 6.5 The Australian Prime Minister John Howard and President George W Bush shared a close personal relationship.



Cartoon by Nicholson www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au

SOURCE 6.6 A cartoon by the Australian artist Peter Nicholson from September 2002; it portrays the relationship between Australia and the United States. The two enthusiastic dogs represent Australia's Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.

Questions

1. What were John Howard's arguments for Australia's intervention in Iraq?
2. Given what Howard knew at the time, were these arguments sound?
3. How justifiable did these arguments prove to be?
4. What message does Source 6.6 convey? Why might the artist have chosen the idea of 'walkies' to convey it? How accurate is this view of relations between the US and Australia?

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THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SADDAM

Some words and phrases took on special significance in relation to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. They concerned the Bush administration's thinking on the war and its military strategy, its public relations campaign, the actual events of the conflict, and its consequences. The words and phrases, discussed below, are *regime change, war on terror, weapons of mass destruction, coalition of the willing, shock and awe, mission accomplished, insurgency, the surge, withdrawal* and *resurgence.*

'Regime change'

There was no evidence that Saddam intended to repeat the kind of aggressive conduct he had directed at Kuwait against other nations. But despite this, in late 2002 and early 2003, the Bush administration was convinced of the need for 'regime change' in Iraq. In Bush's own words Saddam's Iraq was, 'a grave threat to peace'. Bush stated:

> The Iraqi regime has violated all of [its 1991] obligations. It possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons. It is seeking nuclear weapons. It has given shelter and support to terrorism, and practices terror against its own people.
>
> Speech given at Cincinnati Museum Center, Ohio, 8 October 2002.

'War on terror'

There is now a general consensus that, during the prewar period, the White House public relations machine, as well as the UK government, created a rumour-based climate of opinion in both nations that encouraged the public to believe that Saddam had somehow been involved in the events of 9/11, even though Osama bin Laden was actually hostile to Saddam's regime because of its quasi-socialist, non-Islamicist, Baathist nature. And according to an article published in *The Washington Post* in 2006, based on a Senate intelligence report, in late September 2002 the CIA discovered from one of Saddam's elite confidants that Saddam had never had contact with Bin Laden. Indeed, Saddam viewed Bin Laden as an enemy of his regime. This high-level intelligence contradicted the White House's view of Saddam and was not passed on by the CIA to Bush and his circle.

Defining *terror* and *terrorism*

Terror as a political concept is defined as a sensation created through the use of violence and intimidation and aimed at achieving a particular goal. Terror can be practised by governments and other authorities to remove, subdue or intimidate internal and external enemies. Since the 1960s this kind of terror has generally been known as *state-sponsored terror*. *Terror* is also sometimes used to refer to periods during which governments or ruling authorities create terror to achieve their aims.

Terrorism, on the other hand, is the use of violence by groups or individuals rather than by ruling authorities or governments. It is directed at particular goals, such as the destabilisation and destruction of a ruling authority. In some cases, it is deliberately and ruthlessly employed as a way of increasing state-initiated repression against the masses, which, it is hoped, will eventually lead to a general anti-government uprising. This latter form of terrorism is known as *revolutionary terrorism.* In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, anarchists and Marxists took part in revolutionary terrorism.

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Alamy/Arthur Turner

SOURCE 6.7 The image of a masked Middle Eastern fanatic with an AK47 at the ready is how many envisage a terrorist in action, but over the past half century, terrorists have come from all continents and have used an assortment of weapons, including chemical weapons and car and truck bombs – the 9/11 hijackers used box cutters.

Terrorism and the use of terror to achieve political, social, economic or religious aims has a very long recorded history. It goes back to the Roman tactic of terrorising any potential opponents by ruthlessly obliterating actual enemies, as occurred with the Carthaginians in 146 BCE. Since the 1960s pro-Palestinian militants have taken part in a more widely understood practice of terrorism, in this case as an attempt to get Israel to withdraw from the territories of Palestine it has occupied since 1967. The use of the term *terrorist* is contentious. There is an argument that one person's *terrorist* can be another person's *freedom fighter*. This was the case with Nelson Mandela, who was imprisoned as a terrorist in 1962 by a South African government that itself practised state-sponsored terror. The words *terror* and *terrorism* present complex semantic, moral and ethical issues.

'Weapons of mass destruction'

Iraq's track record when it came to nuclear, chemical (gas) and biological WMDs was not good. Saddam had used chemical weapons against Iran and against Iraq's own Kurds between 1983 and 1988, killing 33 000 combatants and non-combatants, according to a CIA estimate (*Iraq's Chemical Warfare Program*, 2004 report). There is evidence that Iraq stockpiled biological weapons ready for use in 1991 during the Gulf War but they were never deployed. Evidence gathered after Saddam's defeat in 2003 showed that, after his unsuccessful invasion of Kuwait, the dictator was pressuring his scientists to create at least one nuclear bomb, which he would probably have used against Israel, although what the means of delivery might have been remains unclear. This project was abandoned in 1991 when UN weapons inspectors were allowed into Iraq and all its WMD programs were wound down. Even so, Iraqi scientists were under instructions to block UN monitoring. This gave rise to continuing suspicions in the US and the UK, in 2002–03, that Iraq was still capable of having WMDs.

'Coalition of the willing'

To carry out the invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration formed a 'coalition of the willing'. The group initially consisted of the US, the UK, Australia and Poland. (Prime Minister John Howard agreed to Australia joining. Poland had entered NATO in 1999, and in 2003 was negotiating entry into the EU.) By March 2003 the White House had claimed 30 members for its Coalition, although only the US, the UK and Australia were prepared to provide substantial numbers of combat troops. By April 2003 the number of nations in the Coalition had risen to 49. They were a motley crew, ranging from Afghanistan to Uzbekistan. Noticeable by their absence, for various reasons, were Russia, China, France, Germany, Canada and New Zealand.

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'Shock and awe'

'Shock and awe' was a military technique used by Coalition forces to overwhelm Iraqi troops. The technique aimed at swift supremacy through relentless assaults from the air and from the sea (where appropriate), and through frontal and rear assaults by land on enemy positions, lines of communication, command and control centres, and reserve positions. The aim of 'shock and awe' was to make Iraqi forces feel helpless and ready to surrender. It worked.

'Shock and awe'
A military technique that involved applying maximum force at the opening of a campaign, in order to overpower the enemy and gain a quick victory

'Mission accomplished'

When George Bush spoke to the crew of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* on 1 May 2003, he stood in front of a 'Mission Accomplished' sign. This seemingly triumphalist public relations exercise, organised by White House staffer Dan Bartlett, gave the distinct impression to television audiences and newspaper readers around the world that the Iraq War was all but over. But the sign actually referred to the completion of the *Abraham Lincoln*'s own mission, and Bush did point this out to his audience. He said, 'We have difficult work to do in Iraq. We are bringing order to parts of that country that remain dangerous. Our mission continues'. In the light of what followed in Iraq, this visually powerful moment has generally been regarded as a public relations disaster for Bush, who in 2008 admitted that it had conveyed the wrong message.

'Insurgency'

A second, much more disastrous period of the Iraq War began in May 2003 and continued to July 2011, by which time the Coalition's core plans to find and destroy WMDs, 'drive out' terrorists and begin Iraqi nation-building had resulted in a Pyrrhic victory – the costs of the war outweighed any apparent benefits of having won it. No WMDs were discovered and the invasion of Iraq by Coalition troops had provoked widespread and savage Sunni and Shiah **insurgency** campaigns against the foreign invaders, their agents and innocent civilians. As for nation-building, while Saddam was captured by US forces, tried by an Iraqi court and executed in 2006 by (mainly Shiah) Iraqi authorities, the failure of the US-led occupation forces to use existing Baathist networks to prop up the new regime gave space for the insurgency campaigns to gather strength.

Getty Images/STEPHEN JAFFE/AFP

SOURCE 6.8 President George W Bush speaks in front of a large sign on USS *Abraham Lincoln* on 1 May 2003. This image was to haunt him for the rest of his political life.

insurgency
A violent uprising against a government or other authority

'The surge'

In 2007 American strategy in the war changed, and **'the surge'** began. An additional 20 000 troops were sent to Iraq in an effort to suppress the insurgency with overwhelming force. Tactics changed too, with US troops adopting a more subtle, counter-insurgency approach. At the same time, Sunni leaders in northern Iraq, who opposed the influx of foreign Al Qaeda fighters, began to align themselves with US and Iraqi government forces. Meanwhile, Muqtadā al-Sadr and his rebellious Shiah militia proclaimed a mid-year ceasefire.

'the surge'
During the Iraq War, a US military strategy that involved saturating key areas with large deployments of troops, in order to make non-insurgent Iraqis feel secure enough to play a part in an embryonic Iraqi democratic process

'Withdrawal'

American casualties in Iraq reached their highest point in 2007. In 2008, there was a reduction in US casualties, as a consequence of the surge and the political changes that reduced insurgency activity. The US was in a position to start handing over more of its military tasks

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to Iraqi defence and security forces. In late 2008 an agreement was signed between the Iraqi government and the Bush administration, which allocated responsibilities between them and outlined a timetable for US withdrawal by the end of 2011. The withdrawal was overseen by the Obama administration after Bush retired from the presidency.

'Resurgence'

In 2013, continuing pro-Shiah bias in a corrupt US-supported Iraqi government, combined with the inadequacy of Iraqi defence and security services, led to the 'resurgence' of Sunni militants who were hostile to the Shiah authorities. Sunni insurgent activities included the capture of the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, and the formation of a radical Islamic caliphate, the so-called Islamic State, in parts of Iraq and Syria. In September 2014, 23 years after the start of the First Gulf War, US President Obama announced the formation of yet another military coalition to deal with problems in Syria and Iraq.

HISTORIANS AND THE IRAQ WAR

A reflective historical debate about the Iraq War is yet to be had. There are several reasons why this is the case.

Contemporary history in general poses problems for historians because the events they are studying are too recent. Their opinions are yet to be validated and contextualised by examination of a wide range of sources. There may, for example, be relevant printed and electronic documents that will not become available for 20 or 30 years at the earliest after events have taken place, whatever the activities of Wikileaks or its successors. Many official documents and other archival records are only published after a lapse of 25 to 30 years. And there will be countless as yet undisclosed and unverified personal emails, texts and smartphone images that historians will need to consider in order to form a complete picture of the past.

Related to this is the problem of evaluating trends over time. For example, a historian writing about the war in Iraq in mid-2002 or in 2006 (after 'the surge') would have a different interpretation of events compared with one writing nine or ten years later. The historian writing earlier would probably conclude that US foreign policy in Iraq had been firm and successful, an opinion that the later historian would have to severely revise.

A further problem is related to the writing of what well-known British military historian Antony Beevor calls 'instant history'. According to Beevor, the writing of instant history by investigative journalists and media commentators causes problems for scholarly historians, because it sometimes results in situations whereby participants in events have destroyed evidence of the events soon after they occurred, in order to avoid being subject to journalistic scrutiny.

Finally, so-called activist historians may promulgate biased views of the past, and this needs to be accounted for in any evaluation of sources. During the Iraq War, for example, US historians belonging to the American Historical Association formed an 1800-strong protest organisation named 'Historians against the War' (HAW). The organisation was supported by highly regarded figurehead historians such as Howard Zinn (a Marxist) and Andrea Smith (a feminist and anti-war activist). The scale of this activist movement in a single scholarly profession is unprecedented.

Questions

1. What assessment does Robert Kagan make of the Iraq War?
2. In two sentences summarise Thomas E Ricks's reflection on the Iraq War.
3. What value do these accounts of the Iraq War have for historians?
4. Why is it sometimes suggested that journalists write the first draft of history?
5. Why is it difficult for historians to assess the causes and course of recent events?

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continued

The differing views of three contemporary historians help to illustrate the difficulties historians face when studying the Iraq War. Historian Robert Kagan from the Brookings Institution is a firm neo-conservative Republican. This extract is from a *New York Times* article Kagan co-wrote with the founder of neo-conservatism, William Kristoll, in 1998, titled 'Bombing Iraq isn't enough':

> We can do this job. Mr. Hussein's army is much weaker than before the Persian Gulf war. He has no political support beyond his own bodyguards and generals. An effective military campaign combined with a political strategy to support the broad opposition forces in Iraq could well bring his regime down faster than many imagine .
>
> William Kristoll and Robert Kagan, 'Bombing Iraq isn't enough', *The New York Times*, 30 January 1998.

In 2012 Kagan wrote an article for the *New Republic* titled 'Not fade away: against the myth of American decline', in which he argued that 'For all the controversy, the United States has been more successful in Iraq than it was in Vietnam'.[2] Although Kagan has moderated his position slightly since writing this, his views still represent a zealous, neo-conservative view in favour of an active US foreign policy strategy.

Historians who are critical of the war tend to fall into two camps. First, there are historians aligned with the HAW group, who, from their different academic backgrounds, write disapproving accounts of aspects of the war. Second, there is a category not of professional historians but of journalists or policy analysts who use their professional training to write significant historical accounts of the war. This category includes investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, who broke the story about torture at the Abu Ghraib prison in 2004, having already become famous in 1969 for breaking the story of the massacre at My Lai during the Vietnam War. It also includes the American investigative journalist American Thomas E Ricks, who wrote the following in his influential book *Fiasco*, published in 2006:

> President George W Bush's decision to invade Iraq in 2003 ultimately may come to be seen as one of the most profligate actions in the history of American foreign policy. The consequences of his choice won't be clear for decades, but it already is abundantly apparent in mid-2006 that the U.S. government went to war in Iraq with scant solid international support and on the basis of incorrect information – about weapons of mass destruction and a supposed nexus between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda's terrorism – and then occupied the country negligently. Thousands of U.S. troops and an untold number of Iraqis have died. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent, many of them squandered. Democracy may yet come to Iraq and the region, but so too may civil war or a regional conflagration, which in turn could lead to spiraling oil prices and a global economic shock.
>
> Thomas E Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Penguin, New York, 2006.

A REFLECTION ON THE IRAQ WAR

By 2009 the Pentagon estimated that 4487 US troops had been killed in the Iraq campaign of 2003–11 and 32 226 had been wounded in action. It is further estimated that 118 000 US personnel deployed between 2001 and 2014 have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder (US Congress Research Service report, February 2014). Estimates of Iraqi casualties vary but the official Iraqi government figures are 85 000 deaths, including military and civilian. Reliable figures for wounded and injured are not available. British military casualties were 179 dead. Australian casualties were two dead.

When it ended, the Iraq War of 2003–11 had been the longest war fought in US history. At the beginning, there was strong popular support in the US for the conflict. But it quickly became clear that the Bush administration had acted recklessly, on poor intelligence, and that the US forces had begun their 2003 campaign with poor tactical intelligence and had formed ill-advised, inadequate and unrealistic plans for the occupation period. For example, British Major-General Tim Cross

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arrived in Washington just before the invasion to find that the American Office of Post-War Planning had done almost no planning for Iraq after the conflict. He later commented in an interview with the British documentary filmmaker Richard Sanders, 'The major plan for post-war Iraq was that we do not need a plan, that Iraq would resolve itself in effect'.

Critics of the Bush strategy pointed out that the US-led coalition had fought the wrong war. Their argument was that the US should have been campaigning in Afghanistan, not in Iraq. As early as 2004, distinguished historian Arthur Schlesinger commented that the war:

> … has got us into a ghastly mess in Iraq; and it has diverted attention, resources and military might away from the war that should have commanded the Bush administration's highest priority – the Afghan war against al-Qa'ida and international terrorism. Meanwhile Afghanistan is a mess too. Mr Bush chose the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time.
>
> Arthur Schlesinger, 'This is Bush's Vietnam – the wrong war, at the wrong time, in the wrong place', *The Independent*, 15 April 2004.

Getty Images/Scott Peterson

SOURCE 6.9 American troops leave Joint Base Balad in Iraq, 1 November 2011.

As US casualties in Iraq mounted and as evidence of US atrocities in Iraq was revealed, the Bush administration began to lose support for the war in the US. This was damaging to the administration's moral position and to its international and domestic credibility. At the same time, Iraq acted as a high-profile focal point, and a training ground for anti-US insurgents, many of them drawn from neighbouring Arab countries.

In 2011, US forces left Iraq, despite continuing sectarian violence. The 2003–07 insurgency was all but over, and by 2011 Al Qaeda operations in Iraq had been crushed. The nation at least had a democratic constitution, and a coalition government that was functioning, after a manner, even though it was Shiah-dominated. But *The New York Times* carried a story that commented:

> As the United States prepares to withdraw its troops from Iraq by year's end, senior American and Iraqi officials are expressing growing concern that Al Qaeda's offshoot here, which just a few years ago waged a debilitating insurgency that plunged the country into a civil war, is poised for a deadly resurgence.
>
> 'Leaving Iraq, US fears new surge of Qaeda terror', *The New York Times*, 5 November 2011.

In 2011 alone, an estimated 4149 Iraqis were killed (UK-based Iraqi Body Count organisation) in mutually destructive conflicts. And in 2014, US forces were back in the region, this time in Iraq and Syria providing air support and training in the continuing campaign against the Islamic State movement.

New superpowers on the block?

In 1991 President George HW Bush proclaimed a new world order. But as the 1990s progressed it became increasingly apparent that the idea that Bush and others, such as Francis Fukuyama, had of the new world order was not necessarily shared by all nations or, indeed, all peoples. The rise of militant Islam certainly confirmed the fact there were competing models for how society should be organised.

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Nor was it clear, by the early years of the 21st century that the new world order would be based on American hegemony. In 2004, for example, the *Fortune* journalist Jeffrey Sachs declared the 21st century to be the 'Asian century'. More recently an Australian government White Paper, published in 2012, was titled 'Australia in the Asian century'. This document suggests that the rise of Asia in the coming years is not a threat to Australia; instead, the economic prosperity and growth of India and China are positive opportunities for the nation. American foreign policy during the presidency of Barack Obama has also pivoted towards the Asia–Pacific region, a recognition of the fact that the region is of economic and strategic significance. Interestingly, however, the term 'Asian century' was not first used by Westerners. In 1988 Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, and Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian prime minister, met in Beijing for a series of discussions that culminated in a joint statement that also mentioned an 'Asian century'.

World orders are not fixed. India and China are rapidly undergoing economic and social transformation, and they are increasingly influencing regional and global affairs. Given this, it is appropriate to consider if the renewal of the world's two most populous nations is creating two new superpowers.

MODERN INDIA

Probably the best starting point for an examination of India's rise in global status in the latter half of the 20th century is 18 May 1974. This was the day India conducted its first test of a nuclear bomb, exploding an 8-kilotonne device known as 'Smiling Buddha'. Provocatively, the test site was in Rajasthan state, next door to Pakistan, but there was also a challenge in this test to India's other neighbour, China. India was the first nation outside the UN Security Council to detonate a nuclear device, but having undertaken the successful test India did not renew its nuclear testing program until 1998, after neighbouring Pakistan conducted successful tests. The acquisition of nuclear weapons does not make a superpower, but it certainly signals a nation's intention to exert influence on other powers.

Getty Images/PUNJAB PHOTO/AFP

SOURCE 6.10 A massive crater marks the site of the first Indian underground nuclear test conducted on 18 May 1974 at Pokhran, Rajasthan.

The Rao economic reforms

The next key event in India's rise to global significance was Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's economic reform program, begun in 1991. Rao was the leader of the Congress Party of India, and he was called back to politics after the assassination of the previous Congress Party leader, Rajiv Gandhi. As prime minister, he initiated a series of economic and foreign policy shifts that broke away from post-independence traditions.

Rao's economic plan, which he implemented with the assistance of the finance minister Manhoman Singh, was to open up India to the global market economy, through deregulation of its economy and finance system, reduction of subsidies to farmers, tax concessions to private companies, restrictions on trade union activity and removal of barriers to foreign investment. After a short, sharp reformist

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term in office, Rao's downfall came in 1996, when the Congress Party suffered its greatest defeat in Indian history, a result that was interpreted as a rejection of his tough policies. Nevertheless, succeeding governments continued to implement his deregulation approach.

The consequences of the Rao–Singh economic reforms were immense for India. Most obviously, India has opened up its economy. Growth over the last decades has been considerable and most notable in the area of information technology. The increasing gross domestic product (GDP) of India over the recent period is indicative of its economic success. In 1990, before the Rao government's reforms, India's GDP was US$326 billion. By 2010, the GDP had risen to US$1.7 trillion. The benefit of this rapid growth, however, has not trickled down to the poor. Poverty, particularly in the countryside and in large urban centres, still persists today, with India accounting for one third of all the world's poor. According to the World Bank, in 2014, 68 per cent of India's population was living on the equivalent of less than US$2 a day.

Foreign and military policy

In terms of foreign policy, India has changed its strategic direction with the 'Look East Policy' (LEP), initiated by Rao in 1991 and pursued by subsequent governments. By developing stronger relations with South-East Asia, India has hoped to offset Chinese influence in the region. Again, the initiatives of the Rao government have largely been followed into the early 21st century. In earlier periods Indian foreign policy had largely been regional in focus – concerned with India's relationship with neighbouring Pakistan and China. In recent years, because of India's expanding economic interests and trade connections, military planners have broadened their notion of India's sphere of influence beyond the subcontinent, to include regions surrounding the Indian Ocean and into the Asia–Pacific. These planners now aim to be able to protect India's interests in these areas by 2022.[3] India is currently ranked the fourth largest military force in the world, after the United States, Russia and China.

AAP/AFP PHOTO/MOD

SOURCE 6.11 The Indian Navy's $2.3 billion *Vikramaditya* is an ex-Russian, limited capability, ski-jump aircraft carrier. The navy is planning to use bigger flat-deck carriers in its next building phase, suggesting something about India's naval ambitions.

Corbis/epa/JAGADEESH NV

SOURCE 6.12 The Tejas fighter, developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), is a light, delta-winged supersonic fighter, which has been built to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing Russian-built MiG 21s. There have been serious teething problems with the prototype for these planes.

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MODERN CHINA: EMERGING SUPERPOWER?

China's rise to the status of modern great power started with the death of the political leader Mao Zedong in 1976. To Communist Party of China (CPC) reformists Mao was an integral part of what they believed was an outdated ideological worldview. Mao represented the old ways, which had defined the revolutionary beginnings of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and the post-revolutionary development of the country from then on. After Mao's death and the power struggle that followed, Deng Xiaoping became the **paramount leader** of China. Deng knew something had to be done about China's economy. After almost 40 years of socialist reform, per capita annual income was less than US$100.

paramount leader
A CPC official who is recognised as the most influential leader in the Chinese political system, without holding any major figurehead position

Economic transformation

With the support of his **Eight Elders**, Deng opened China up to the global market economy. In 1978 he launched the 'Four Modernisations' policy for agriculture, industry, science/technology and national defence. And in 1979 he published his four 'Cardinal Principles'; they involved keeping to the socialist road, upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat, upholding the leadership of the Communist Party, and upholding Marxism–Leninism. These initiatives started a process of reform and opening up of China to the world.

Eight Elders
A kind of CPC kitchen cabinet, consisting of Deng and seven of his close associates, all of whom were about his age. The Eight Elders ruled China in the 1980s and the 1990s

Gradual economic and social reforms, plus the growing demand for democratic rights, led to fierce debates in the 1980s within the party hierarchy about China's future direction and ideology. The question at the time was, did China's future lie in a more tightly controlled, planned economy or had these controls led to social unrest? Deng, who supported the army's role in suppressing dissent at Tiananmen Square, retired in 1989, but came out of retirement in 1992 to maintain an unofficial guiding role in Chinese affairs.

China's new economic policies have transformed it as an economic power. By 2010 per capita income in China had risen to US$6091, almost a 70-fold jump from the equivalent 1978 figure. In comparison, Australia's figures for per capita growth from 1978 (US$8240) to 2010 (US$67 442) represent only an eight-fold increase. There are still issues with poverty in China, even though, according to the World Bank, China cut the poverty rate from 84 per cent to 12 per cent between 1981 and 2008. In 2012, 7 per cent of the population were living in poverty, with an estimated 98.99 million (mainly rural) citizens earning less than 6.3 yuan, or US$1.25, a day.


Corbis/Imaginechina


Corbis/Imaginechina

SOURCE 6.13 Shanghai in the late 1980s (left) and in 2010 (right). Deng's reforms were to give China a 10 per cent average annual economic growth, from 1978. An example of the kinds of changes that took place after the death of Mao, the port city of Shanghai, historically a great trading centre, became the model city of the new economy. These two images reflect the changes that have taken place in Shanghai since Deng's reforms began.

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Tiananmen Square

Tiananmen Square is the main square in Beijing. Following the April 1989 death of the popular reformist Hu Yaobang, student-led demonstrators took over the square, creating a massive, rolling, pro-democracy demonstration, which ended in a bloody crackdown by the People's Liberation Army (the Chinese military) on 4 June. Unconfirmed estimates of casualties vary from hundreds to thousands. After the demonstration was broken up the government began a massive repression of protesters, making an estimated 10 000 arrests.

Getty Images/CNN

SOURCE 6.14 An unidentified man, known only as 'Tank Man', halts a column of tanks as the Chinese military moves in to clear demonstrators from Tiananmen Square in June 1989.

China and the world

China's economic growth over the last decades has substantially increased its global influence. Now the world's second largest economy, China's foreign policy has increasingly been directed at exerting influence elsewhere in the world. This has been accompanied by efforts to consolidate and settle its relationships within the Asia–Pacific region and beyond, and to expand its military capacity to protect its economic interests.

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The new and the old

TABLE 6.2 Gross domestic product, 2013

Ranking	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2013	2019 (International Monetary Fund forecast)
1	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States	United States
2	Soviet Union	Soviet Union	Soviet Union	Japan	Japan	China	China
3	West Germany	Japan	Japan	Soviet Union	Germany	Japan	Japan
4	United Kingdom	West Germany	West Germany	West Germany	United Kingdom	Germany	Germany
5	France	France	France	France	France	France	United Kingdom
6	China	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Italy	China	United Kingdom	France
7	Japan	Italy	Italy	United Kingdom	Italy	Brazil	India
8	Canada	China	Canada	Canada	Canada	Italy	Brazil
9	Italy	Canada	China	Spain	Mexico	Russia	Russia
10	India	India	Mexico	Brazil	Brazil	India	Italy

TABLE 6.3 Top 10 military powers, 2014

1	United States
2	Russia
3	China
4	India
5	United Kingdom
6	France
7	South Korea
8	Germany
9	Japan
10	Turkey

http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp

India: the next superpower?

In stark contrast to Asia's other billion-person emerging power, India has simultaneously cultivated an attractive global image of social and cultural dynamism … India's rise in geostrategic terms is rendered all the more significant since its power resides at the confluence of the United States' two great hegemonic challenges: counter-terrorism operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the management of China's growing regional assertiveness. If India's proud non-alignment during the Cold War had given it a leadership role in the developing world, its 21st century position places it at the heart of superpower geopolitics. Barack Obama's enthusiastic endorsement of a permanent UN Security Council seat for India, as part of making the US–India relationship 'a defining partnership of the century ahead', speaks volumes for the global importance of how India defines its foreign policy.

Still, for all India's success, its undoubted importance, and despite its undisputed potential, there is cause for caution in assessing India's claim to superpower status. India still faces major developmental

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challenges. The still-entrenched divisions of caste structure are being compounded by the emergence of new inequalities of wealth stemming from India's economic success. India's democracy may have thrived in a manner that few ever expected, but its institutions face profound challenges from embedded nepotism and corruption. India's economic success continues to come with an environmental cost that is unsustainable.

Moreover, India has pressing security preoccupations. Domestically, insurgent violence affects large parts of India, creating risks and imposing additional costs on investment and economic development. Longstanding disputes necessitate that India focus its security concerns on its immediate borders and near-abroad, stymying efforts to define its strategic interests in a broader regional or global context.

India: The Next Superpower, report by the London School of Economics, executive summary, March 2012.

China's rise to global economic superpower?

This is an excerpt from an article published on 2 February 2015 in *The World Post*, an associate publication of the well-regarded *Huffington Post*. The article's authors are Professor Nake M Kamrany, from the school of Economics at the University of Southern California, and researcher Frank Jiang, also from USC:

The political system is not monolithic … Political leadership is elected every five years. Last year [2014] 10 000 small protests were tolerated. Currently over half of China's GDP is produced by private enterprises. China's government has not been shut down due to internal political dissent or multi-party feuds. More than 250 million people have been lifted out of poverty, this is approximately 20% of the total population.

The foregoing are indicative that China is embarking on a distinctly alternative approach of inter-governmental collaboration and connectivity to promote economic catch-up of low and middle income countries that are located in the path of the silk road.

Nake M Kamran and Frank Jiang, 'China's rise to global economic superpower', *The World Post*, viewed 29 March 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nake-m-kamrany/chinas-rise-to-global-eco_b_6544924.html.

Questions

1. What do you think might be the more positive signs of India's rise towards superpower status?
2. The extract from the London School of Economics report states that President Obama has endorsed India becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council. What are the factors that have led to Obama's endorsement? What are his motivations for the endorsement? What is the geopolitical significance of the endorsement?
3. What does the report suggest are obstacles in the way of India's rise to superpower status?
4. Given what you know about the history of relations between India and China, how is Beijing dealing with the competition with India for geopolitical status and economic hegemony?
5. According to these extracts, what differences can you see between India and China's superpower potential?

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Conclusion

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s was the end of a long period of relative peace and predictability in the international order. At first it seemed that the outcome of the Cold War might be a new world order with the United States as the dominant global power, but the events of the early 21st century meant that this vision was short lived. The end of the Cold War was not, as Francis Fukuyama had imagined, the 'end of history' but the start of a new phase.

This new world order held, and indeed still holds, great uncertainty. First, the emergence of Islamic militancy has changed the dynamic of international relations. As a movement Islamism defies our established understanding of geopolitics, in which a great power emerges from a nation state. Second, this movement's use of terror as a tactic has also altered the experience of war, by shifting battle zones to the homefront. Finally, while the US remains the world's greatest economic power and military force, new contenders for the position of great power have emerged and these nations too are influential global forces.

Chapter summary

+ What had at first seemed a victory for the West in a two-sided Cold War soon turned into a confused and confusing, patchy 'world order' in which the US had to deal with a continuation of even more fragmented and troublesome political and military conflicts in the Middle East.
+ The ill-conceived US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 exacerbated what were at best suspicious and at worst hostile perceptions of Western intentions among Islamic peoples. It handed over hegemony in the Middle East region to Islamic militants and to Iran.
+ The American vision of a world order marked by **unipolarity**, which arose in the 1990s, has not been fulfilled, due to the rise of India and of an increasingly confident and confrontational China. The global growth of Islamic militancy has endangered the notion of any kind of Western or Asian bipolar world order, replacing it with a multipolar arrangement.

unipolarity
In geopolitics, an arrangement in which there is only one dominant power

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Endnotes

1 'Osama bin Laden's son-in-law in court for terrorism trial', *Time*, 3 March 2014.
2 Robert Kagan, 'Not fade away: against the myth of American decline', 17 January 2013, Brookings, viewed 7 April 2015, www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/01/17-us-power-kagan.
3 Sujan Dutta, 'Military to expand strategic footprint', *The Telegraph*, 4 October 2011, viewed 7 April 2015, www.telegraphindia.com/1111004/jsp/nation/story_14586060.jsp.

Weblinks

Weblinks relevant to this chapter can be found at http://nmh.nelsonnet.com.au/changingworld

Further resources

Katharine Adeney and Andrew Wyatt, *Contemporary India*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2010.
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Kerry Brown, *Contemporary China*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2013.
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Victor Daniel Hanson 'Why did we invade Iraq?', *National Review*, 26 March 2013, www.nationalreview.com/article/343870/why-did-we-invade-iraq-victor-davis-hanson.
Seymour Hersh, *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*, Allen Lane, London, 2004.
Thomas E Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Penguin, New York, 2006.
Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, Vintage, New York, 2007.

Chapter review activities

1 Did George HW Bush and Francis Fukuyama have a sound basis for the assessment of global politics they made in 1989? Explain your reasoning.
2 Investigate the effect of the collapse of the USSR on Balkan politics.
3 Research the Balkans Wars of the 1990s. What made these such vicious conflicts?
4 Find out what arguments there were opposing the Gulf War in the period immediately before it, in 2002–03.
5 Research the significance of the oil question in the diplomatic and military calculations that were made in relation to the Gulf War.
6 What evidence is there that the Bush administration's desire for war in Iraq was a symptom of some unfinished business for Bush's family?

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7 Examine the full transcript of George W Bush's 'Cincinnati speech', available on the website of the US Department of State. Remembering that these kinds of speeches are carefully crafted for effect, pick out the key words and phrases that might have convinced the audience that war against Iraq was necessary. Then pick out any weak parts in Bush's argument.

8 Using books and reputable online resources, find evidence from the 1990s that shows how Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein were regarded in:
   a the West
   b the Arab states.
   c Use your answers to the questions above to rank the Bush administration's reasons for going to war against Iraq in 2003 in order of validity. Give evidence-based arguments to support your ranking.

9 Examine the list of Coalition members on page 174.
   a Choose five and explain their possible reasons for involvement in the Coalition.
   b Which were the few significant nations that refused to join the Coalition, and what might their reasons have been? Bear in mind that they might each have had different reasons.

10 What does the 'Mission accomplished' incident suggest about the role of imagery in modern politics and in modern warfare?

11 Find out why Donald Rumsfeld was a controversial figure during the Gulf War period. Draw up a list of three of his best-known quotes, ranked to show how controversial they were. Explain the context of each quote and its meaning.

12 During the insurgency period of the Iraq conflict, both sides committed atrocities. There were many civilian murders and killings of unarmed soldiers. What do you think are the military, legal, moral and public relations issues involved in these kinds of activities?

13 Was the 2003 intervention in Iraq by the US's 'coalition of the willing' justified?

14 Who won the Iraq War?

15 What obstacles are there to India gaining superpower status?

16 How does China see itself as a 21st-century power? Is this vision an alarming one for the West?

17 During the period 1990 to 2015 what role has the UN played in world affairs in terms of fulfilling its charter?

Essay question

18 What was the impact of the end of the Cold War on the world order?

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CONCLUSION

The Changing World Order

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The year 2014 marked the beginning of four years of commemoration of the centenary of the First World War (1914–18). Politicians from across the globe converged on the sites where the battles of the Western Front were fought, in Belgium and France. They lamented the loss of life during this terrible war and paid tribute to the courage of the young and the fallen. As it turned out, the First World War was not 'the war to end all wars', as it had been hoped, and the 20th century was marked by a colossal loss of life in the succeeding wars. But the young men who fought in the First World War could not have imagined the new horrors that technology would make possible in wars over the next one hundred years.

A NEW COLD WAR?

As world leaders gathered at Liège in Belgium in 2014 to remember the First World War, the rift was widening between the United States and Russia over the conflict in Ukraine. A vicious civil war had broken out between the government of Kiev, which wanted greater unity with the rest of Europe, and the Russian-backed militia in the east of the country. Only weeks earlier Malaysian Airline Flight MH17 had been shot from the sky over eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board. The conflict had reopened the wounds of old Cold War rivalries.

ISLAMIC STATE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

In the Middle East, a group calling itself Islamic State (IS) had declared large areas of Iraq and Syria under its control and had taken over major cities such as Mosul and Raqqa. Islamic State has been characterised by extraordinary acts of violence against Westerners and other Muslims, with recorded beheadings of American, English and Japanese nationals being broadcast weekly by the group, along with threats of further atrocities. Disaffected young men from Australia, Britain and Europe have begun to join the ranks of IS.

While the origins of the conflict in the Middle East are complex, it is worth reflecting that the maps drawn as part of the peace settlement after the First World War continue to be a source of great tension among various ethnic and religious tribal groups in the Middle East. The 'war on terror' has removed longstanding regimes, and old religious and ethnic rivalries have asserted themselves in new and destabilising ways. More hopefully, the so-called 'Arab Spring', a series of popular revolutions that began in Tunisia in 2010 and spread to Egypt, has led to some dictators being thrown out of office, leading to the possibility of new democracies.

THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS AND AUSTERITY IN EUROPE

In 2015, 70 years of Western European unity is under threat as national disagreements arise from worsening economic conditions in countries such as Greece, Spain and Ireland. Germany is once again the economic strength of Europe and in dispute with other nations over the size of their debts to the European Union (EU). Greek elections in early 2015 brought the extreme left-wing Syriza Party to power, and the neo-Nazi party, Golden Dawn, became the third largest party in the

❮ The sculpture *Non Violence,* also known as 'The Knotted Gun', by Swedish artist Carl Fredrik Reutersward sits outside the United Nations headquarters in New York City. The sculpture was a gift from Luxembourg to the UN in 1988.

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Greek parliament. Syriza became involved in financial and economic arguments with the EU and International Monetary Fund, a move that has increased hostility among member states of the EU.

One hundred years after the First World War, social inequality within previously prosperous Western countries has become a source of concern. The global financial crisis (GFC) of 2007–08 has led to a staggering concentration of wealth among the few, and governments across the world have pursued austerity policies, which have cut social welfare programs in order to reduce debts accrued during the GFC. In early 2015, citizens in Greece and Spain staged huge protests against austerity measures.

THE 'WAR ON TERROR' AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In 2015, it seems that the realists among the foreign policy makers are in the ascendency in international relations. This dominance is a surprise, given the spirit of cooperation throughout the immediate post–Cold War period of the 1990s, when the United Nations intervened in conflicts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda, to make peace, and it worked hard to reduce inequality and poverty. The United Nations' programs were an expression of the idealism envisioned by former US presidents Wilson and Roosevelt.

But the reality of conflict in the world reasserted itself on the morning of 11 September 2001. After the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, it appeared that idealist conceptions of a world order gave way to realist conceptions. The neo-conservative think tanks, such as the Project for the New American Century, initiated by William Kristol and Robert Kagan, argued that the US would have to assert its authority in the world in a manner similar to that of the old empires. As a result, after 9/11, the neo-conservatives in the Bush administration engaged in a series of pre-emptive wars against Afghanistan and Iraq, under the guise of 'war on terror'. In the process, they undermined their own moral authority, especially when they effectively suspended the rule of law by submitting terrorists they had captured to military commissions and to torture, at the Guantanamo Bay military prison in Cuba.

The mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden, had repeatedly warned the US to remove its military bases from Saudi Arabia after the First Gulf War of 1990. As a result of the US's failure to remove the bases, the precursors to the Twin Tower attacks included attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi and Tanzania, and the bombing of the USS *Cole* in Yemen. The war on terror became the new status quo in international relations. It began to inform not only the military actions of Western nations, but brought into focus questions of cyber security and privacy, immigration and national security.

To achieve world order on a global scale, it is important to develop a shared vision of that order. The experiences of the last 70 years have demonstrated the deep divide in competing visions. From the liberalism of Roosevelt to the realism of the Project for the New American Century; from the implementation of theocratic law in some Middle Eastern states to the communism of nations in Eastern Europe and Asia – it has become increasingly difficult to reconcile the fundamental worldviews of different groups and nations. Furthermore, some attempts to force democratic values on traditional societies have failed. In the 21st century, we have been left with a more uncertain and unpredictable world.

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ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss one example of an idealist vision of world order.
2. To what extent was the 'war on terror' underpinned by a realist conception of international relations?
3. Research one of the following works and comment on its significance in terms of the world order after 2015:
   a *The End of History* by Francis Fukuyama
   b *The Clash of Civilisations* by Samuel P Huntington
   c *Orientalism* by Edward Said.
4. Is the world becoming more or less chaotic? Give reasons for your answer.
5. Make a list of the main factors that have shaped the contemporary world.
   After you have finished your list, rank the factors from most to least important. Justify your top ranking.
6. *Personality study*: Choose *one* leader you have studied during the course. Write an obituary that focuses on his or her contribution to the world order.
7. *Essay*: Compare and contrast the various forms of world order that have influenced international affairs between 1945 and today.

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The author team of the Nelson Modern History series combines the collective experience of some of Australia's finest educators, teachers, historians, academics and curriculum experts. Cengage gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the authors and the many teachers, historians and academics who contributed to the development of the series.

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