

WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

A New Enemy

After World War II, U.S. General George Patton administered western Germany, while Soviet officials governed eastern Germany. Patton looked to the east and proclaimed:

“Russia knows what she wants. World domination! . . . Let’s keep our boots polished, bayonets sharpened, and present a picture of force and strength to the Russians. This is the only language that they understand and respect. If we fail to do this, then I would like to say that we have had a victory over the Germans and have disarmed them, but we have lost the war.”

—General George S. Patton, October 1945

▲ U.S. and Soviet soldiers celebrate the Allied victory.

The Cold War Begins

Objectives

- Trace the reasons that the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union unraveled.
- Explain how President Truman responded to Soviet domination of Eastern Europe.
- Describe the causes and results of Stalin’s blockade of Berlin.

Terms and People

satellite state	containment
Cold War	Marshall Plan
iron curtain	Berlin airlift
Truman Doctrine	NATO
George F. Kennan	Warsaw Pact

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Contrast As you read, contrast the conflicting goals of the United States and the Soviet Union.

American Goals	Soviet Goals

Why It Matters In the 1930s, the policies of isolationism and appeasement had contributed to the rise of dictatorships and the outbreak of global war. After World War II, U.S. leaders viewed these past policies as mistakes. They sought new ways to keep the United States safe and to protect its interests around the world. **Section Focus Question:** How did U.S. leaders respond to the threat of Soviet expansion in Europe?

Roots of the Cold War

When Franklin Roosevelt died in April 1945, the nation was at a critical point. The United States was still at war. In addition, relations with the Soviet Union—one of the most important wartime allies—were beginning to break down.

American and Soviet Systems Differ The United States and the Soviet Union had been united only in their opposition to Nazi Germany. Beyond that, they had little in common. The United States was a capitalist democracy. Its citizens believed in free elections, economic and religious freedom, private property, and respect for individual differences. The Soviet Union was a dictatorship. Under Joseph Stalin, the Communist Party made all key economic, political, and military decisions. The Soviet people could not worship as they pleased, own private property, or express their views freely. Those who opposed or questioned Stalin risked imprisonment and death.

Allies Disagree on Future of Eastern Europe By the time Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill met at Yalta in February 1945, it was clear that the Allies would defeat Germany. But it was unclear how Germany and the nations of Eastern Europe would be governed after the war. Soviet troops already occupied much of Eastern Europe and some of Germany.

Stalin wanted to keep Germany weak and divided. He also wanted Eastern Europe to remain under the control of the Soviet Union. The United States and Great Britain sought a stronger, united Germany and independent nations in Eastern Europe. At the conference, Stalin agreed to establish “broadly representative” governments and free elections in Eastern Europe and to divide Germany only temporarily into zones of occupation.

Despite Stalin’s promises, nearly all of the lands occupied by the Soviet Red Army in the spring of 1945 remained under Soviet control after the war. The Eastern European countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, as well as the eastern portion of Germany, became **satellite states** controlled by the Soviet Union.

Truman and Stalin Clash at Potsdam By the time Soviet, British, and U.S. leaders met at Potsdam in the summer of 1945, Harry Truman had succeeded Roosevelt as President. Truman and Clement Attlee, the new British prime minister, hoped that Stalin would confirm the decisions made at Yalta. However, Stalin refused to make a commitment to allow free elections in Eastern Europe.

Comparing Viewpoints

What Will Happen to Postwar Europe?

The Soviet Union and United States disagreed on what should happen to Europe after World War II. The disagreement had much to do with the conflicting values of the two countries and their leaders.

JOSEPH STALIN

Stalin was a dictator who ruled the Soviet Union from the 1920s to the 1950s. His policy of collectivizing land led to famine and to the death of millions. He also ordered the execution of thousands of communist officials.

Primary Source

“To choose one’s victims, to prepare one’s plan minutely, to slake an implacable vengeance, and then to go to bed . . . there is nothing sweeter in the world.”

“This war is different from all earlier ones; the conqueror of a region imposes his own social system on it.”



HARRY S. TRUMAN

As President from 1945 until 1953, Truman tried to stop the spread of communism. He promoted a “Fair Deal” program that included more social security benefits, public health insurance, and an end to racial discrimination.

Primary Source

“I would rather have peace in the world than be President.”

“The American people desire, and are determined to work for, a world in which all nations and all peoples are free to govern themselves as they see fit, and to achieve a decent and satisfying life.”

Compare

1. How did Truman’s views on power differ from those of Stalin?
2. How did the two leaders disagree on the issue of self-government in Eastern Europe?

Truman left Potsdam believing that the Soviet Union was “planning world conquest” and that the alliance with the Soviet Union was falling apart. With the Soviet Red Army at his command, Stalin seemed to present a real threat. Thus, the stage was set for a worldwide rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. The 46-year struggle became known as the **Cold War** because the two superpowers never faced each other directly in a “hot” military conflict.



Checkpoint How did the goals of U.S. and Soviet foreign policy differ after World War II?

Meeting the Soviet Challenge

President Truman was not the only world leader who believed that Stalin had aspirations toward world domination. Winston Churchill also spoke out forcefully against the Soviet Union. On March 5, 1946, he gave an important speech at Fulton College in Missouri, Truman’s home state. Referring to a map of Europe, Churchill noted that “an **iron curtain** has descended across the Continent.” (See the Primary Source on the opposite page.) East of that iron curtain, the Soviet Union was gaining more control by installing communist governments and police states and by crushing political and religious dissent. In addition, Churchill feared, the Soviets were attempting to spread communism to Western Europe and East Asia. The only solution, Churchill said, was for the United States and other democratic countries to stand firm.

Truman Faces a Crisis Truman shared Churchill’s beliefs. Born in a small town in Missouri, Truman had been too poor to attend college. He was the only president in the twentieth century with no college education. Instead, he worked the family farm, fought in France during World War I, and eventually began a political career. His life was a testament to honesty, integrity, hard work, and a willingness to make difficult decisions. “The buck stops here,” was his motto as President. It meant that the person sitting in the Oval Office had the obligation to face problems head-on and make hard decisions.

In 1947, no issue was more weighty than the growing crisis between the United States and the Soviet Union. After the war, a number of European and Asian countries were struggling against communist movements supported by the Soviets. In particular, the governments of Greece and Turkey were battling communist forces seeking to gain control. Greece and Turkey needed aid, and in 1947 the United States was the only country with the resources to help them.

The Truman Doctrine Opposes Communist Expansion On March 12, 1947, President Truman addressed both houses of Congress. With emotion in his voice, Truman described the plight of the Greek and Turkish people. The fight they were waging, he said, was the fight that all free people had to confront. Truman requested money from Congress “to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation [conquest] by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” If the United States retreated into isolationism, he warned, the peace of the world and the welfare of the nation would be in danger.

Congress responded by voting to give \$400 million in aid for Greece and Turkey. President Truman’s promise to aid nations struggling against communist movements became known as the **Truman Doctrine**, and it set a new course for American foreign policy.



Checkpoint What events caused President Truman to propose what became known as the Truman Doctrine?

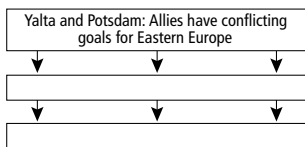
Vocabulary Builder

aspiration—(as pih RAY shuhn) *n.* ambition; strong desire to achieve a particular goal

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence

As you read, trace events and developments in Europe that contributed to the growth of Cold War tensions.



Cold War Europe, 1949



Geography Interactive

For: Interactive map
Web Code: nep-1202



In his speech at Fulton, Missouri, Winston Churchill described the extent of the Soviet “iron curtain,” shown on the map above.

Primary Source “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 . . . Central and Eastern Europe. . . . The Communist parties, which were very small in all these Eastern States of Europe, have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control.”

—“Iron Curtain” speech,
Winston Churchill, March 5, 1946

Map Skills Europe became a divided continent as the Cold War developed after World War II.

- 1. Region** Why did the Soviet Union support the creation of communist states in Eastern Europe?
- 2. Draw Conclusions** Based on the map, in what ways might the Soviet Union have benefited from gaining control of Greece and Turkey?



Churchill and the Iron Curtain

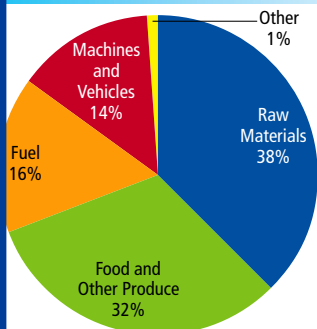
The day after Churchill gave his “Iron Curtain” speech, this cartoon appeared in a British newspaper. It shows Churchill peeping under the barrier built by “Joe” Stalin.

Marshall Plan Aids European Recovery

These Greek children benefited from U.S. aid designed to promote stable democracies in Europe. According to the pie chart, what portion of U.S. aid was devoted to reducing famine?



Shipments Financed by the Marshall Plan, 1948–1951



Containing Soviet Expansion

In the July 1947 issue of the magazine *Foreign Affairs*, a writer who called himself “X” published an article titled “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” The author was really **George F. Kennan**, an American diplomat and a leading authority on the Soviet Union. His article presented a blueprint for the American policy that became known as **containment** because its goal was to keep communism contained within its existing borders.

Kennan Argues for Containment Kennan contended that while Stalin was determined to expand the Soviet empire, he would not risk the security of the Soviet Union for expansion. In Kennan’s view, the Soviet Union would only expand when it could do so without serious risks. Stalin would certainly not chance war with the United States—a war that might destroy his power in the Soviet Union—just to spread communism.

Kennan cautioned his readers that there would be no quick, easy solution to the Soviet threat. Containment would require a full commitment of American economic, political, and military power:

Primary Source

“We are going to continue for a long time to find the Russians difficult to deal with. It does not mean that they should be considered as embarked upon a do-or-die program to overthrow our society by a given date. . . . In these circumstances, it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”

—George Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”

The Marshall Plan Aids Europe’s Economies The containment policy’s first great success was in Western Europe. After World War II, people there confronted severe shortages of food, fuel, and medical supplies, as well as brutally cold winters. In this environment of desperate need, Secretary of State George C. Marshall unveiled a recovery plan for Europe. In a speech at Harvard University, he warned that without economic health, “there can be no political stability and no assured peace.”

In early 1948, Congress approved the **Marshall Plan**. Over the next four years, the United States gave about \$13 billion in grants and loans to nations in Western Europe. The program provided food to reduce famine, fuel to heat houses and factories, and money to jump-start economic growth. Aid was also offered to the Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe, but Stalin refused to let them accept it.

The Marshall Plan provided a vivid example of how U.S. aid could serve the ends of both economic and foreign policy. The aid helped countries that desperately needed assistance. The prosperity it stimulated then helped the American economy by increasing trade. Finally, the good relationships that the aid created worked against the expansion of communism.



Checkpoint Why did George Kennan think that containment would work against Soviet expansion?

The Cold War Heats Up

The front lines of the Cold War were located in Germany. The zones that were controlled by France, Britain, and the United States were combined to form West Germany. West Germany was bordered on the east by the Soviet-controlled East Germany. The Allies also controlled the western part of Berlin, a city tucked deep inside communist East Germany. (See the map on the opposite page.)

Berlin Airlift Saves West Berlin West Berlin was, as one Soviet leader later described it, “a bone in the throat” of the Soviet Union. Its relative prosperity and freedom stood in contrast to the bleak life of East Berliners. Stalin was determined to capture West Berlin or win other concessions from the Western allies. In June 1948, he stopped all highway, railway, and waterway traffic from western Germany into West Berlin. Without any means of receiving aid, West Berlin would fall to the communists.

Stalin was able to close roads, stop barges, and block railways, but he could not blockade the sky. For almost a year, the United States and Britain supplied West Berlin through a massive airlift. Food, fuel, medical supplies, clothing, toys—everything the residents of West Berlin needed was flown into the city.

INFOGRAPHIC

Airlift Saves Blockaded Berlin

The Soviet blockade caused more than 2 million West Berliners to face severe shortages of food and other vital supplies. For more than a year, American and British pilots flew round-the-clock deliveries into the city—sometimes at the rate of a plane per minute. Each flight brought food, fuel, and occasionally candy to the desperate population.

Divided Germany

West Berlin lay deep inside the communist country of East Germany.



Children cheer as a plane delivers much needed supplies.

Thinking Critically

- Analyze Maps** Why could the Allies not use land routes to supply West Berlin?
- Analyze Visuals** How did the airlift affect West German attitudes toward the United States and Britain?

History Interactive*

For: More about the Berlin Airlift
Webcode: nep-1213

Even through rain and snow, goods arrived regularly. The **Berlin airlift** demonstrated to West Berlin, the Soviet Union, and the world how far the United States would go to protect noncommunist parts of Europe and contain communism.

Vocabulary Builder

acknowledge—(ak NAHL ihj) *v.* to admit or recognize

Cold War Rivals Form Alliances In May 1949, Stalin was forced to **acknowledge** that his attempt to blockade Berlin had failed. The Berlin airlift was a proud moment for Americans and Berliners and a major success for the policy of containment. One Berlin resident later recalled her feelings when the blockade was finally lifted:

Primary Source

“Sheer joy—nothing else. Nothing else. Joy, and [the feeling that], ‘We have done it! And it works!’ . . . That was so very important. The West has won! I say this quite deliberately in such a crass way because you wanted to know how I felt emotionally. The West—well, we have succeeded. And the West has won and the others have not!”

—Ella Barowsky, CNN interview, 1996

The Berlin airlift demonstrated that Stalin could be contained if Western nations were prepared to take forceful action. The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, formed in 1949, provided the military alliance to counter Soviet expansion. Twelve Western European and North American nations agreed to act together in the defense of Western Europe. Member nations agreed that “an armed attack against one or more of them . . . shall be considered an attack against all of them.” This principle of mutual military assistance is called collective security.

In 1955, West Germany became a member of NATO. In response, the Soviet Union and its satellite states formed a rival military alliance, called the **Warsaw Pact**. All the communist states of Eastern Europe except Yugoslavia were members. Like members of NATO, nations of the Warsaw Pact pledged to defend one another if attacked. Although members agreed on paper not to interfere in one another’s internal affairs, the Soviet Union continued to exert firm control over its Warsaw Pact allies.



Checkpoint How did the United States and its allies apply the containment policy in Europe?

SECTION

1 Assessment

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice

Web Code: nea-1203

Comprehension

1. Terms For each term below, write a sentence explaining how it changed the lives of people living in post-World War II Europe.

- satellite state
- iron curtain
- Truman Doctrine
- Marshall Plan
- Berlin airlift
- NATO

2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:

Contrast Use your chart to answer the Section Focus Question: How did U.S. leaders respond to the threat of communism and the Soviet Union?

Writing About History

3. Quick Write: Frame Research Questions

Choose one event from this section. Write three questions that you could use as the basis for a research paper. For example, if you chose the Berlin airlift, you might ask, “How much food was flown into Berlin?”

Critical Thinking

4. Draw Conclusions How would having control over satellite states benefit the Soviet Union if it became involved in a European war?

5. Contrast How did U.S. foreign policy after World War II differ from U.S. foreign policy after World War I?

6. Identify Alternatives What options besides containment might Truman have considered in response to Soviet expansion?