Chapter 35
The Cold War Begins, 1945-1952

Presented by:
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I. Truman: The “Gutty” Man from Missouri

- “Accidental president” Harry S Truman presided over initial postwar period
  - Called “average man’s average man”
  - First president in many years without a college education
  - Had farmed, served as artillery officer in France during WWI, and failed as haberdasher
  - Moved into Missouri politics, rose from judgeship to U.S. Senate
  - Though protégé of notorious political machine in Kansas City, he managed to keep his own hands clean

I. Truman: The “Gutty” Man from Missouri (cont.)

- Started presidency with humility, but gained confidence to point of cockiness:
  - Gathered old associates of “Missouri gang” around him and was stubbornly loyal to them
  - Could be impulsive and stubborn
  - Cynics jibed, “To err is Truman”
  - Down-home authenticity
  - Few pretensions; rock-solid probity
  - A lot of old-fashioned character trait called moxie

II. Yalta: Bargain or Betrayal?

- Yalta conference (February 1945):
  - Final fateful conference of Big Three, at former tsarist resort on Black Sea
  - Stalin, Churchill and fast-failing Roosevelt
  - Momentous agreements and plans:
    - Final plans to smash buckling German lines
    - Assigned occupation zones in Germany
    - Stalin agreed Poland, with revised boundaries, should have representative government based on free elections
II. Yalta: Bargain or Betrayal?
(cont.)
• Bulgaria and Romania to have free elections—another promise flouted
• Big Three announced plans for fashioning new international peacekeeping organization—United Nations
• Controversial decisions on Far East:
  – Lacking a tested atomic bomb, FDR wanted USSR to enter Asian war to pin down Japanese troops in Manchuria and Korea
  > Would lessen U.S. losses if had to invade Japan
  – Stalin agreed to do so three months after Germany defeated,
  – In return, FDR agreed for USSR to receive:
    > Southern half of Sakhalin Island and Japan's Kurile Island
    > Control of railroads and two key seaports in China's Manchuria

II. Yalta: Bargain or Betrayal
(cont.)
• When it turned out USSR not needed to defeat Japan, Roosevelt’s critics charged:
  – He sold Jiang Lieh (Chiang Kai-shek) down river by conceding control of Manchuria to Stalin
  – Also assailed “sell-out” of Poland and other Eastern European countries
• Roosevelt’s defenders:
  – Stalin, with his red army, could have taken more of China
  > So Yalta actually set limits on his ambitions
  – At time of Yalta, Soviet troops occupied East Europe, and a war to eject them unthinkable
II. Yalta: Bargain or Betrayal (cont.)

- Big Three not drafting comprehensive peace settlement:
  - Sketched general intentions and tested one another’s reactions
  - More specific understandings among wartime allies awaited arrival of peace

III. The United States and the Soviet Union

- Little hope USA and USSR could reach cordial understanding on postwar world:
  - Communism and capitalism historically hostile social philosophies:
    - USA did not officially recognize USSR until 1933
    - Soviet skepticism nourished by long delays of Americans and British to open second front against Germany
    - Britain and America froze Soviet “ally” out of project to develop atomic weapons
    - Washington abruptly terminated lend-lease aid to USSR in 1945 and then spurned Soviet plea for reconstruction loan while approving a loan for England

III. The United States and the Soviet Union (cont.)

- Different visions of postwar world separated two:
  - Stalin aimed to guarantee security of Soviet Union
    - Twice in 1900s, Russia attacked through Poland
    - By maintaining Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern and Central Europe, USSR could protect itself as well as consolidate revolutionary base as world’s leading communist country
  - Many Americans saw “sphere of influence” as ill-gained “empire”
    - Doubted Soviet goals purely defensive
    - “Sphere of influence” clashed with Roosevelt’s and Wilson’s “open world” —decolonized, demilitarized, democratized with strong international organization for global peace
III. The United States and the Soviet Union (cont.)

- Both isolated from world affairs before WWII
  - United States through choice
  - Soviet Union through rejection by other powers
- Both had “missionary” diplomacy—trying to export their political doctrines
- Some confrontation unavoidable between
  - Communistic, despotic Russia
  - Capitalistic, democratic America

III. The United States and the Soviet Union (cont.)

- “Grand Alliance” only a child of necessity
- In progression of events, suspicion and rivalry
  - Grew because of misperceptions and genuine conflict of interests between two superpowers
- Cold War:
  - Tense standoff lasted four and a half decades
  - Shaped Soviet-American relations
  - Overshadowed postwar international order in every corner of globe
IV. Shaping the Postwar World

- USA erected structures for more open world envisioned by Roosevelt
- 1941 Atlantic Charter proclaimed rights of
  - Self-determination
  - Free trade
  - “Freedom from fear and want” for all individuals
  - (See Thinking Globally in Chap 39)

IV. Shaping the Postwar World (cont.)

- Bretton Woods Conference (1944):
  - Western allies established
    - International Monetary Fund (IMF) to encourage world trade by regulating currency exchange rates
    - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) to aid economic growth in war-ravaged and underdeveloped areas
      - Three years later, GATT began global reduction in trade barriers
    - USA took lead in creating these bodies and supplied much of their funding
    - Soviets declined to participate

IV. Shaping the Postwar World (cont.)

- U.N. Conference opened on April 25, 1945:
  - Roosevelt shrewdly moved to establish new international body before war’s conclusion
  - Meeting in San Francisco, representatives from fifty nations fashioned United Nations Charter
  - USA took lead, but USSR participated
  - United Nations (U.N.):
    - Successor to League of Nations
    - Differed in many ways:
      - League adopted rules denying veto to any party to a dispute
IV. Shaping the Postwar World (cont.)

- U.N. provided that no member of Security Council, dominated by Big Five (USA, Britain, France, USSR, and China), could have action taken against it without its consent
- U.N. General Assembly could be controlled by smaller countries
- In contrast to American reception of League in 1919, Senate approved U.N. Charter on July 28, 1945, by vote of 89 to 2

IV. Shaping the Postwar World (cont.)

- U.N., headquartered in New York City, had some initial successes:
  - Helped preserve peace in Iran, Kashmir, and other trouble spots
  - Played large role in creating new Jewish state of Israel
  - U.N. Trusteeship Council guided former colonies to independence
  - UNESCO, FAO, and WHO brought benefits to peoples across globe

IV. Shaping the Postwar World (cont.)

- New atomic technology tested spirit of cooperation, and U.N. failed badly:
  - USA proposed separate agency to have world-wide authority over atomic energy, weapons, and research
  - Soviet Union responded with call for total outlawing of nuclear weapons by every nation, but USA refused
  - Soviet Union used veto to scuttle proposals at U.N.
  - Opportunity to tame nuclear monster lost
V. The Problem of Germany

- Hitler’s ruined Reich had created problems for all wartime Allies:
  - Agreed Nazism had to be cut out of German politics
  - Involved punishing Nazi leaders for war crimes
  - **Nuremberg war crimes trial 1945-1946**:  
    - Tried 22 top culprits
    - Accusations included  
      - Crimes against laws of war and humanity  
      - Aggression contrary to solemn treaty pledges
    - Justice, Nuremberg-style, harsh
    - 12 accused Nazis executed

V. The Problem of Germany (cont.)

- Seven sentenced to long jail terms
- "Foxy Hermann" Goering escaped hangman by swallowing hidden cyanide capsule
- Other trials continued for years
- Critics condemned trials as judicial lynching:
  - Because victims tried for offenses that had not been clearcut crimes when war began

- Beyond punishing top Nazis, Allies could agree on little about postwar Germany
  - Some American Hitler-haters wanted to dismantle German factories and reduce country to potato patch
  - Soviets, denied U.S. economic assistance, determined to rebuild by extracting reparations from Germans
V. The Problem of Germany
(Cont.)

- Both clashed with reality that healthy Germany industrial economy indispensable to European recovery
- Germany divided into four military occupation zones:
  » Each one assigned to one of Big Four powers (France, Britain, America, and USSR) (see Map 35.1)
- Western Allies:
  » Refused to allow Moscow to bleed their zones of the reparations Stalin insisted he had been promised at Yalta
  » Began to promote idea of reunited Germany

V. The Problems of Germany
(Cont.)

- Communists responded by tightening grip on Eastern zone
- Soon apparent Germany would remain divided:
  » West Germany became independent country, wedded to West
  » East Germany, along with other Soviet-dominated Eastern European countries became nominally independent "satellite" states bound to Soviet Union
  » Eastern Europe virtually disappeared from Western sight behind "Iron curtain" of secrecy and isolation
  » Division of Europe would last some four decades
V. The Problems of Germany (cont.)

• What about Berlin?
  – Deep within Soviet zone
  – Divided into sectors occupied by troops of each of four victorious powers
  – In 1948, after controversies over:
    • German currency reform and four-power control
    • Soviets abruptly closed rail and highway access to Berlin
  – Berlin huge symbolic issue for both sides

V. The Problems of Germany (cont.)

• Americans organized gigantic Berlin airlift:
  – U.S. pilots ferried thousands of tons of supplies a day to grateful Berliners
  – Western Europe took heart from demonstrated American commitment in Europe
  – Soviets lifted blockade in May 1949
  – Same year, two Germanys, East and West, established
  – Cold War congealed
VI. Cold War Deepens

- Stalin, seeking oil concessions, broke agreement to remove troops from north Iran
  - Stalin eventually backed down
- Moscow’s hard-line policies in Germany, Eastern Europe, and Middle East wrought psychological Pearl Harbor
  - Americans upset by Kremlin’s unwillingness to continue wartime partnership
  - Attitudes on both sides hardened

VI. Cold War Deepens (cont.)

- Truman’s response to Soviet challenges:
  - Containment doctrine:
    - Crafted by George F. Kennan in 1947
    - Held that Russia, whether tsarist or communist, relentlessly expansionist
    - Argued flow of Soviet power could be contained by “firm and vigilant containment”
  - Truman Doctrine:
    - Truman embraced Kennan’s “get-tough-with-Russia” intellectual framework

VI. Cold War Deepens (cont.)

- Went before Congress on March 12, 1947
- Asked for $400 million to bolster Greece and Turkey
  - Support for those resisting “Communist aggression”
- Congress granted money and thus support for open-ended commitment of vast proportions
- Exaggerating Soviet threat, Truman pitched message in charged language of holy global war against godless communism to overcome any revived isolationism
VI. Cold War Deepens (cont.)

• Threats in war-ravaged Western Europe:
  – Especially France, Italy, and Germany
    • Danger of being taken over from inside by Communist parties
    • On June 5, 1947, Secretary of State George Marshall invited Europeans to get together and work out a joint plan for economic recovery
    – If they did, USA would provide substantial financial assistance
    – This cooperation eventually led to creation of European Community (EC)

VI. Cold War Deepens (cont.)

• Marshall Plan:
  • Met in Paris in July 1947 to thrash out details
  • Marshall offered same aid to USSR and its allies, but under terms USSR could not accept
  • Called for spending $12.5 billion over four years in 16 cooperating countries (see Map 35.2)
  • Congress at first balked at mammoth sum
  • Looked huge when added to $2 billion already provided for European relief
  • As Cold War tensions escalated, Congress voted initial appropriations in April 1948
VI. Cold War Deepens (cont.)

• Marshall Plan a spectacular success:
  • U.S. dollars assisted anemic Western European nations
  • “Economic miracle” drenched Europe in prosperity
  • Communist parties in Italy and France lost ground
    – Two countries saved from communism
  – Truman on May 14, 1948 officially recognized state of Israel on day of its birth
  • Antagonized oil-rich Arabs who opposed such a state in British mandate territory of Palestine
  • Decision greatly complicated USA-Arab relations

VII. America Begins to Rearm

• Soviet menace resulted in creation of huge new national security apparatus
  – National Security Act 1947:
    • Created Department of Defense
    • Headed by new cabinet office, secretary of defense
    • Under the secretary were civilian secretaries of the navy, the army, and the air force
    • Uniformed heads of each service brought together as Joint Chiefs of Staff
VII. America Begins to Reform (cont.)

- Established National Security Council (NSC) to advise president on security matters and
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to coordinate government’s foreign fact gathering
- Congress:
  • Authorized “Voice of America” (1948) to beam American radio broadcasts behind iron curtain
  • Resurrected military draft: conscription of selected young men from 19 to 25
    - Selective Service System shaped millions of young people’s educational, marital, and career plans
VII. America Begins to Reform (cont.)

- USA decided to join defensive European Pact—North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):
  - To bolster containment and help reintegrate Germany
  - Treaty signed in Washington on April 4, 1949
  - Twelve original signatories pledged to
    - Respond with "armed force" if necessary
  - Senate approved treaty in July by vote of 82 to 13
  - Membership boosted to 14 in 1952 when Greece joined and to 15 in 1955 by addition of West Germany

VII. America Begins to Reform (cont.)

- NATO pact epochal:
  - Dramatic departure from American diplomatic convention
  - Gigantic boost for European unification
  - Significant step in militarization of Cold War
  - NATO became cornerstone of all Cold War American policies toward Europe
  - Pundits summed up NATO’s three-fold purpose:
    - "To keep the Russians out, the Germans down, and the Americans in"

VIII. Reconstruction and Revolution in Asia

- Reconstruction in Japan:
  - Simpler than Germany because a one-man show
    - MacArthur led program for democratization of Japan
    - Top "war criminals" tried in Tokyo from 1946 to 1948
      - 18 sentenced to prison terms; 7 hanged
    - MacArthur successful and Japanese cooperated to an astonishing degree
      - MacArthur-dictated constitution adopted in 1946:
        - Renounced militarism; provided for women's equality
        - Introduced Western-style democratic government
        - Paved way for Japan's phenomenal economic recovery
VIII. Reconstruction and Revolution in Asia (cont.)

- Reconstruction in China
  - Opposite of Japan:
    - Bitter civil war raged between Nationalists vs. communists
    - Washington halfheartedly supported Nationalist government of Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi
    - Communists led by Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung)
    - Corruption and ineptitude in Jiang’s regime eroded popular confidence in his government
    - Communist armies forced Jiang in 1949 to flee to island of Formosa (Taiwan)

- Collapse of Nationalist China a major defeat for America and its allies in Cold War—worst to date:
  - Nearly ¼ of world’s population—some 500 million — swept into communist camp
  - “Fall of China” became bitterly partisan issue in USA
    - Republicans assailed Truman for having “lost China”
    - Claimed Democrats had deliberately withheld aid from Jiang

- More bad news:
  - Sept. 1949: Truman announced Soviets had exploded an atomic bomb
VIII. Reconstruction and Revolution in Asia (cont.)

- To outpace Soviets in nuclear weaponry, Truman ordered development of Hydrogen bomb
  - “H-bomb” much more powerful than atomic bomb
  - J. Robert Oppenheimer led group of scientists in opposition to development of thermonuclear weapons
  - Albert Einstein declared, “annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibilities”

VIII. Reconstruction and Revolution in Asia (cont.)

- United States explored first hydrogen device in 1952
- Soviets countered with their first H-bomb explosion in 1953
- Nuclear arms race entered perilously competitive cycle
  - Only constrained by recognition that truly hot Cold War would destroy world
IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts

• New shooting phase to Cold War: June 1950 in former Japanese colony
  — After WWII, Soviet troops accepted Japan’s surrender north of thirty-eighth parallel
  — American troops did so south of 38th parallel
  — Both superpowers professed to want reunification and independence of Korea
    • As in Germany, each side helped set up rival regimes above and below parallel

IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts (cont.)

— By 1949, both sides had withdrawn forces:
  • Left a bristling armed camp
  • Two hostile regimes eyed each other suspiciously
— Explosion came on June 25, 1950
  • Spearheaded by Soviet-made tanks, North Korean army rumbled across 38th parallel
  • South Korean forces pushed to Pusan in south
— Truman viewed incident through “containment doctrine” that any relaxation in America’s guard would invite communist aggression
IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts (cont.)

- Prompted massive expansion of U.S. military
  - National Security Council Memorandum Number 68 (NSC-68):
    - Recommended USA quadruple defense spending
    - Truman ordered massive buildup, well beyond what was necessary for Korea:
      - U.S. had 3.5 million men under arms
      - Spent $50 billion per year on defense budget—some 13% of GNP
IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts (cont.)

- NSC-68 key document of Cold War period:
  - Marked major step in militarization of American foreign policy
  - Reflected sense of almost limitless possibility that pervaded postwar American society
  - Rusted on assumption that enormous American economy could bear without strain huge costs of gigantic rearmament program
  - Said one NSC-68 planner: “There is practically nothing the country could not do if it wanted to do it”

IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts (cont.)

- Truman and United Nations:
  - On June 25, 1950, obtained unanimous condemnation of North Korea as aggressor:
    - Security Council called all U.N. members, including USA, to “render assistance” to restore peace
    - Two days later, Truman ordered American air and naval units to support South Korea
    - Ordered General MacArthur’s Japan-based troops into action alongside beleaguered South Koreans
    - So began ill-fated Korean War

IX. The Korean Volcano Erupts (cont.)

- United States’ role:
  - Simply participating in U.N. “police action”
  - In fact, United States provided 88% of U.N. contingents
  - MacArthur, appointed U.N. commander of entire operation:
    - Took orders from Washington, not from Security Council
X. The Military Seesaw in Korea

- MacArthur landed behind enemy’s line at Inchon on September 15, 1950:
  - Succeeded brilliantly
  - North Koreans scrambled back behind “sanctuary” of thirty-eighth parallel
  - U.N. Assembly tacitly authorized crossing by MacArthur
  - Truman ordered MacArthur northward as long as no armed intervention by Chinese or Soviets (see Map 35.3)
- Americans raised stakes in Korea:
  - Brought China into dangerous game

X. The Military Seesaw in Korea (cont.)

- Chinese involvement:
  - Would not sit by and watch hostile troops approach boundary between Korea and China
  - MacArthur boasted he would “have the boys home by Christmas”
  - In Nov. 1950, tens of thousands of Chinese “volunteers” fell upon his rashly overextended line
    - Hurl U.N. forces back down peninsula
  - War became stalemate near thirty-eighth parallel
X. The Military Seesaw in Korea (cont.)

- MacArthur pressed for drastic retaliation, while Washington refused to enlarge already costly conflict:
  - Europe, not Asia, was administration’s first concern
  - USSR, not China, loomed as more sinister foe
- MacArthur sneered at concept of “limited war”
  - Truman bravely resisted calls for nuclear escalation
  - When MacArthur criticized president’s policies publicly, Truman had no choice but to remove insubordinate
  MacArthur from command on April 11, 1951
- Many Americans criticized Truman’s decision
- Reflected popular passions of Cold War at home

XI. The Cold War Home Front

- Cold War deeply shaped political and economic developments at home after WWII
- New anti-red chase accelerated by fears of communist spies in USA:
  - In 1947, Truman launched massive “loyalty” program
    - Attorney general drew up list of 90 supposedly disloyal organizations
    - Loyalty Review Board investigated more than three million federal employees
    - Some 3,000 of whom either resigned or were dismissed, none under formal indictment
XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

- Individual states became involved
  - Loyalty oaths demanded of employees, especially teachers
- 1949: 11 communists brought before New York jury for violating Smith Act of 1940:
  - First peacetime anti-sedition law since 1798
  - Convicted of advocating overthrow of American government by force, defendants sent to prison
  - Supreme Court upheld convictions in Dennis v. United States (1951)

XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

- House of Representatives in 1938 established House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to investigate "subversion"
  - In 1948, Richard M. Nixon, ambitious committee member, led chase after Alger Hiss:
    - Prominent ex-New Dealer
    - Distinguished member of "eastern establishment"
    - Accused of being a communist agent in 1930s
    - Hiss demanded right to defend himself
    - Dramatically met chief accuser before HUAC in August 1948
    - Hiss denied everything but was caught in falsehoods
XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

– Convicted of perjury in 1950; sentenced to 5 years in prison

– Julius and Ethel Rosenberg:
  • Allegedly “leaked” atomic data to Moscow
  • Convicted in 1951 of espionage
  • Went to electric chair in 1953
    – Only people in American history ever executed in peacetime for espionage
  • Sensational trial and electrocution, combined with sympathy for two orphaned children, began to sour some citizens on excesses of red-hunters

XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

– Was America really riddled with Soviet spies?
  • Soviet agents did infiltrate some government agencies, though without severely damaging consequences

– Some conservatives used red brush to tar anyone involved in social change as “subversive”

– Red hunt turned into a witch hunt:
  • 1950: Truman vetoed McCarran Internal Security Bill:
    – Authorized president to arrest and detain suspicious people during “internal security emergency”
    – Critics: bill smacked of police-state tactics
    – Congress enacted bill over Truman’s veto
XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

- Senator Joseph R. McCarthy: most dangerous practitioner of demagogic anticommunism
  - February 1950: accused Secretary of State Dean Acheson of knowingly employing 205 Communists
    - McCarthy never identified a single actual communist
  - His Republican colleagues encouraged him to attack
  - His rhetoric grew bolder as did his accusations
  - He saw red hand of Moscow everywhere
  - McCarthyism flourished in seething Cold War atmosphere of suspicion and fear

- McCarthy most ruthless red-hunter and did most damage to American traditions of fair play and free speech
- Careers of countless officials, writers, and actors ruined by "Low-Blow Joe"
- Politicians trembled in face of such attacks
- At peak of his power, McCarthy controlled personnel policy in State Department
  - Resulted in severe damage to morale and effectiveness of professional foreign service
  - Deprived government of a number of Asian specialists
  - Damaged America's international reputation for fair and open democracy

- Went too far when he attacked U.S. Army
  - Military fought back in 36 days of televised hearings (spring 1954) in Army-McCarthy hearings:
    - Up to 20 million watched hearings
    - McCarthy publicly cut his own throat by parading his essential meanness and irresponsibility
  - Senate formally condemned him for "conduct unbecoming a member"
  - Three years later McCarthy died of chronic alcoholism
  - "McCarthyism" a label for dangerous forces of unfairness/fear, unleashed by democratic society
XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

- Cold War shaped American culture
  - Many interpreted conflict between capitalist West and communist East in religious terms
- Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr cast Cold War as a battle between good and evil
  - Divided world into two camps: “children of light” vs. “children of darkness”
- Religious belief of any kind became distinguishing feature of “American Way”
  - Congress in 1954 inserted words “under God” into Pledge of Allegiance

XI. The Cold War Home Front (cont.)

- Radical voices muzzled
- Even moderate civil rights activists slandered as communists or fellow travelers
- Cold War also created pressure on USA to live up to its democratic ideals
- Created new opportunities for civil rights activists to press USA on civil rights claims
  - See Truman’s landmark Executive Order 9981, desegregating Armed Forces (1948)

XII. Postwar Economic Anxieties

- Decade of 1930s had left deep scars:
  - Joblessness and insecurity pushed up suicide rate and dampened marriage rate
    - Babies went unborn—pinched budgets and sagging self-esteem wrought a sexual depression
  - War banished blight of depression
  - A faltering economy threatened to confirm worst predictions of doomsayers:
    - Who foresaw another Great Depression
  - Gross national product (GNP) slumped in 1946-47
  - Epidemic of strikes swept country
XII. Postwar Economic Anxieties (cont.)
– Growth of organized labor annoyed conservatives
  • Congress passed Taft-Hartley Act (1947) over Truman’s veto
    – Outlawed “closed” (all-union) shop
    – Made unions liable for damages that resulted from jurisdictional disputes among themselves
    – Required union leaders to take a noncommunist oath
  • CIO’s Operation Dixie:
    – Aimed at unionizing southern textile workers and steel workers
    – Failed because white workers feared racial mixing
    – Service workers proved difficult to organize
    – Union membership peaked in 1950s, then began slow decline

XII. Postwar Economic Anxieties (cont.)
– Democratic administration took steps to forestall economic downturn:
  • Sold war factories and government installations to private business at fire-sale prices
  • Secured passage of Employment Act of 1946:
    – Made government policy “to promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power”
    – Created three member Council of Economic Advisers to provide president with data and recommendations on implementation
  • 1944 passage of Servicemen’s Readjustment Act
    – Better known as GI Bill of Rights, or GI Bill

XII. Postwar Economic Anxieties (cont.)
– Feared job market not able to absorb so many returning vets
  – Offered $20 a week for up to 52 weeks in compensation
  – Generous provision for sending former soldiers to school
  – Some eight million veterans advanced their education
  – Most attended technical and vocational schools
  – Some two million attended colleges and universities
  – Total spent on education = $34.5 billion in taxpayer dollars
  – Act enabled Veterans Administration to guarantee $16 billion in loans for vets to buy homes, farms, and small businesses
  – Act nurtured robust and long-lived economic expansion and profoundly shaped entire history of postwar era
XIII. Democratic Divisions in 1948

• 1948 election:
  – Republicans (won control of Congress in 1946)
    • Gathered in Philadelphia in 1948 to choose their presidential candidate
    • Nominated Thomas E. Dewey again
  – Democrats chose Truman:
    • In face of vehement opposition by southern delegates
      – Alienated by his strong stand in favor of civil rights for blacks, especially his decision in 1948 to desegregate military

XIII. Democratic Divisions in 1948 (cont.)

• Truman’s nomination split party:
  – Embittered southern Democrats from thirteen states
    • Met in convention in Birmingham, Alabama
    • Nominated Governor J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina on States’ Rights party ticket
  – Henry A. Wallace also threw his hat in:
    • Nominated at Philadelphia by new Progressive party
    • Opposed Truman’s get-tough-with-Russia policies
  – With Democrats split, Dewey’s victory seemed assured
XIII. Democratic Divisions in 1948 (cont.)

- Truman delivered over 300 hundred speeches
  - Lashed out at Taft-Hartley “slave-labor” law
  - And “do-nothing” Republican Congress
- Whipped up support for his
  - Program of civil rights
  - Improved labor benefits
  - Health insurance
XIII. Democratic Divisions in 1948 (cont.)

- Election results:
  - Truman swept to stunning triumph
    - Thurmond took 39 electoral votes in South
    - Truman won 303 electoral votes, primarily from South, Midwest, and West
    - Dewey’s 189 electoral votes principally from east
    - To make it sweeter, Democrats regained Congress
  - Truman’s victory rested on farmers, workers, and blacks, all of whom were Republican-wary

- Fourth point of Truman’s inaugural address
  - Thereafter known as “Point Four”
    - Lend money and technical aid to underdeveloped lands to help them help themselves
    - Truman wanted to spend millions to keep underprivileged peoples from becoming communists
    - Rather than billions to shoot them after they became communists
  - Program officially launched in 1950
    - To help impoverished nations in Latin America, Africa, Middle East, and Asia

- Sweeping Fair Deal reform program
  - Presented to Congress in 1949 for:
    - Improved housing
    - Full employment
    - National health insurance
    - Higher minimum wage
    - Better farm price supports
    - New TVAs
    - Extension of Social Security
XIII. Democratic Divisions in 1948 (cont.)

– Most proposals killed by opposition from congressional Republicans and southern Democrats
  • Only major successes:
    – Raised minimum wage
    – Provided for public housing in Housing Act of 1949
    – Extended old-age insurance to more beneficiaries in Social Security Act of 1950


• 1950s economic surge:
  • U.S. economic performance became envy of world
  • National income nearly doubled in 1950s
  • Nearly doubled again in 1960s
  • Shoot through trillion-dollar mark in 1973
  • Americans, 6% of world’s population, enjoyed about 40% of planet’s wealth
  • Fantastic eruption of affluence
  • Prosperity underwrote social mobility
  • Paved way for success of civil rights movement


• Funded vast new welfare programs (e.g., Medicare)
• Gave Americans confidence to exercise unprecedented international leadership
  – Americans drank deeply from gilded goblet:
    • Made up for sufferings of 1930s
    • Determined to “get theirs” while getting was good
    • “Middle class” households (earn between $3,000 and $10,000 a year) doubled to include 60% of Americans by mid-1950s
    • 60% of families owned their own homes in 1960 compared to 40% in 1920s
    • 1960: nearly 90% of families owned a television

- Women reaped great rewards:
  - Urban offices and shops provided bonanza of employment
  - Great majority of new jobs created went to women
  - Especially as service sector outgrew manufacturing sector
  - Women accounted for 1/4 of U.S. workforce at end of WWII and nearly 1/2 by 1990s
  - Yet popular culture glorified traditional feminine roles of homemaker and mother
  - Clash between demands of suburban housewifery and realities of employment eventually sparked feminist revolt in 1960s

XV. The Roots of Postwar Prosperity

- What propelled economic growth:
  - Second World War itself:
    - USA used war to fire up factories and rebuild economy
  - Much rested on underpinnings of colossal postwar military budgets (see Figure 35.2)
    - Fueled by massive appropriations for Korean War and defense spending (10% of GNP)
    - Pentagon dollars primed pumps of high-technology industries—aerospace, plastics, and electronics

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Figure 35.2: [Graph or Chart]
XV. The Roots of Postwar Prosperity (cont.)

- Military budget financed much scientific research and development ("R and D")
  - Unlocking secrets of nature key to unleashing economic growth

- Cheap energy fed economic boom:
  - Americans and Europeans controlled flow of abundant petroleum of Middle East to keep prices low
  - Americans doubled oil consumption (1945-70) as they:
    - Built endless ribbons of highways
    - Installed air-conditioning in homes
    - Engineered sixfold increase in country’s electricity-generating capacity between 1945-70

- Spectacular gains in worker productivity
  - 1950s: on average productivity increased 3% per year
  - Enhanced by rising educational level of workforce
    - By 1970, nearly 90% of school age population enrolled in educational institutions
    - Better educated and better equipped workers in 1970 could produce twice as much as in 1950
  - Rising productivity in 1950s and 1960s virtually doubled average American’s standard of living in postwar years

- Changes in nation’s basic economic structure
  - Accelerating shift of work force out of agriculture
XV. The Roots of Postwar Prosperity (cont.)

- Consolidation produced giant agribusinesses able to employ costly machines
- With mechanization, new fertilizers, government subsidies and price supports:
  - One farmworker could now feed 50 people, compared to 15 people in 1940s
  - Farmers now plowed fields in air-conditioned tractor cabs, listening to stereophonic radios
  - By end of 1900s, farmers made up only 2% of working Americans—yet fed much of world

XVI. The Smiling Sunbelt

- Population redistribution begun by WWII:
  - Americans had always been a people on the move
  - After 1945, on average 30 million people changed residences every year
  - Families especially felt strain of separation
  - Popularity of advice books on child-rearing:
    - Dr. Benjamin Spock’s The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care
  - In fluid postwar neighborhoods, friendships hard to sustain
  - Mobility exacted high human cost in loneliness/isolation

XVI. The Smiling Sunbelt (cont.)

- Growth of Sunbelt—15-state area:
  - From Virginia through Florida, Texas, Arizona, California
  - Had population growth rate twice that of Northeast
  - California by 1963 = most populace state in USA
  - South and Southwest a new frontier
  - Distribution of population increase, 1958 (see Map 35.4)
  - Federal funds key to prosperity of South and West states:
    - Annually received $444 billion more than North and Midwest by 2000s
    - New economic war between states shaped up
  - Big effects on presidency and House of Representatives
XVII. The Rush to the Suburbs

• In all regions, whites fled cities for new suburbs (see Makers of America)
  – Government policies encouraged movement away from urban centers
    • Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and Veterans Administration (VA) offered home-loan guarantees
    • Tax deductions for interest payments on home mortgages a financial incentive
    • Government-built highways sped commuters to suburban homes; facilitated mass migration

XVII. The Rush to the Suburbs (cont.)

• Home construction industry boomed in 1950s and 1960s
  – Levittown revolutionized techniques of home construction
  – Helped people move to suburbs
  – Critics wailed at monotony of suburban “tract” development
• “White flight” to suburbs left inner cities black, brown, and broke (see Makers of America in Chap. 36)
• Businesses (and their taxes) left cities for new suburban malls
• Government policies aggravated pattern of residential segregation by often denying FHA mortgages to blacks
  – Limited black mobility out of city, sent them to urban public housing projects—thus solidifying racial separation
  – Blacks missed out on huge increase in value of suburban homes
XVIII. The Postwar Baby Boom

• Baby boom:
  – Huge leap in birthrate in fifteen years after 1945:
    • Record number of marriages at war’s end
    • Began immediately to fill nation’s empty cradles
    • Touched off demographic explosion adding 50 million
to nation by end of 1950s
    • Crested in 1957
    • By 1973, fertility rates dropped below point necessary
to maintain existing population without immigration

XVIII. The Postwar Baby Boom
(cont.)

  – Boom-or-bust cycle of births begot bulging wave
  along American population curve
  • For example, increased elementary school
    enrollments to nearly 34 million by 1970
  • Then a closing of elementary schools and
    unemployment of teachers in late 1970s
  – By 1960s, economic shift of baby products to
    youth products (“youth culture”)
  – Baby boomers continued to affect culture and
    economy as they aged

CHRONOLOGY

1944-1968: Baby boom years

1944-1968: Warren Court

1944-1968: Civil rights era

1944-1968: Cold War

1944-1968: Postwar baby boom

1944-1968: Vietnam War

1944-1968: Korean War

1944-1968: McCarthyism

1944-1968: Eisenhower era

1944-1968: Kennedy era

1944-1968: Carter era

1944-1968: Reagan era

1944-1968: Bush era

1944-1968: Clinton era

1944-1968: Clinton era