

UNIT 6: THE COLD WAR - AN INTRODUCTION

The Alliance Breaks Apart

Growing Differences - during WWII, USSR and western nations cooperated to defeat Nazi Germany

- conflicting ideologies + mutual mistrust = Cold War
- Cold War - state of tension and hostility among nations without armed conflict between the major rivals (U.S. vs. USSR)

Origins of the Cold War - Stalin - 2 goals in Eastern Europe: a) spread communism
b) create a buffer zone of friendly govts. as defense against Germany

- FDR + Churchill made Stalin promise to allow free elections in Eastern Europe, but he ignored his pledge

A Divided Europe - March 1946 - Churchill gave a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, MO - used the term "iron curtain" - this became a symbol of the Cold War, expressing the growing fear of communism

- the "iron curtain" was the division of Europe into eastern and western "blocs"
 - East = communist, Soviet-dominated
 - West = western democracies, U.S.-dominated



THE "IRON CURTAIN"

In a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, former Prime Minister Winston Churchill warned of the communist tyranny threatening Europe.

Invited by President Truman to speak before his home state, Churchill alerted the free world of the communist threat. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." Churchill further added, "I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines." Churchill's words of warning were confirmed by Soviet action.

Time after time the Soviets had failed to live up to their promises. At Yalta, Stalin had agreed to free elections in post war Europe. Instead, he sponsored communist governments in bordering nations: Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. Stalin further tightened his hold on the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In Turkey, the Soviets were demanding military bases and the control of the Bosphorus Strait (the opening for the Mediterranean Sea to the Black Sea). Stalin felt this strait was critical for his land-locked naval fleet. And in Greece, Stalin sponsored communist rebels. It became apparent to the West that the Soviet goal was to keep friendly states along its borders and expand communist doctrine.

Churchill's warning was later enunciated in the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine. The "iron curtain" may have descended across Europe, but it would not extend any further.



TRUMAN DOCTRINE

Joseph Stalin's determination to build a buffer zone along the western border of the Soviet Union and expand communist ideology led to his creation of Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe. Stalin felt that the outside world was hostile to communism and the only way to protect the Soviet Union was to overthrow the political forces beyond its borders.

Many Americans feared the expansion of communism. Americans and their allies believed that Soviet hostility towards the West and capitalist nations would remain a constant factor in the years ahead. Therefore, President Truman issued a policy of **containment**. The long-term commitment dedicated the U.S. to halting Soviet aggression and expansion. The U.S. military force would drive the Soviet Union inward and either stop the communist expansion or bring about change in the totalitarian state.

The U.S. first intervened in Turkey and Greece to confront communism. Economic aid and military advisement proved vital in confronting the communist threat. President Truman said, "The free peoples of the world look towards us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world."



MARSHALL PLAN

World War II left Western Europe in ruins. Former General George C. Marshall, now President Truman's secretary of state, proposed at a speech at Harvard University to offer extensive economic aid to all the nations of Europe. He urged that the U.S. act quickly: "The patient is sinking while the doctors deliberate." Marshall's remedy was the injection of \$13 billion to help rebuild 16 Western European nations.

Winston Churchill described Europe as a "rubble heap, a charnel house, a breeding ground of pestilence and hate." Communist parties grew ever stronger and there appeared nothing could stop the communist conquest of Europe.

However, within four years, the Marshall Plan boosted industrial production above pre-war production. The typical pattern of post war inflation, as Germany experienced, was negated as currencies were stabilized. European exports grew rapidly. Major European cities and the infrastructure of Europe was rebuilt.

The U.S. prospered enormously. The infusion of investment and economic growth stifled communist activists. The economic aid package contributed to the new policy of **containment**. Communist ideals floundered under the economic prosperity. Greece and Turkey were the first recipients. Additionally, American economic growth boomed.



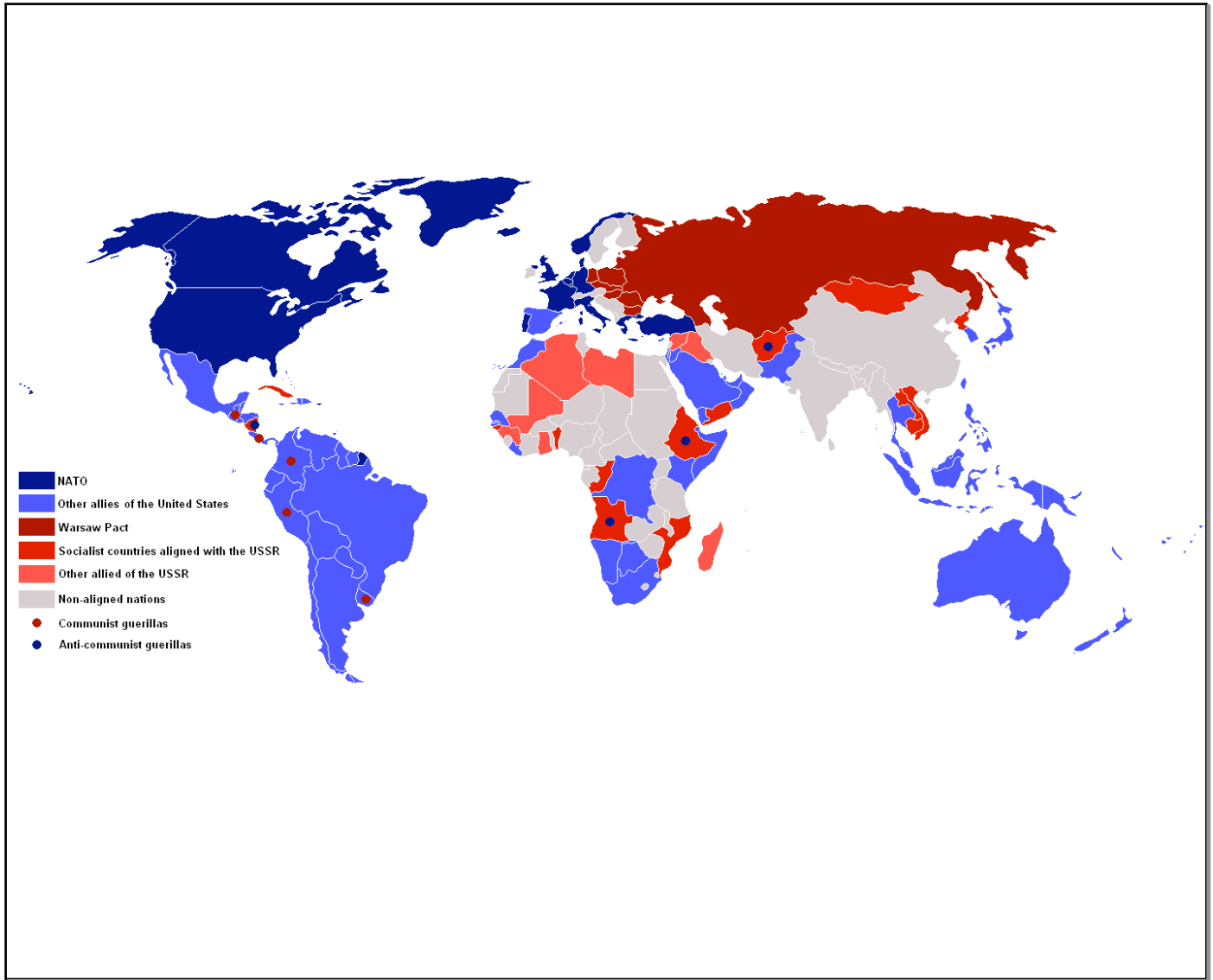
THE BERLIN AIRLIFT

In the spring of 1948, spurred by the opposition and resentment toward the Marshall Plan, the Soviets started interrupting the flow of food, coal, and other goods into the zones of Berlin occupied by the U.S., France and Great Britain. Berlin, the cultural capital of Germany centered in Soviet-occupied East Germany, was besieged by five well-equipped Red Army divisions. Never before had a city of three million people in a time of "peace" been ordered to surrender under the threat of starvation and/or civil war. In an attempt to squelch Western influence in East Germany, the Soviets stopped all food trains from the Western zones on which Berlin heavily depended for survival, cut the Western sector's electricity in half (by halting their contribution to it), blocked all coal shipments for Berlin industries, forbade the city government to distribute any food outside the Soviet sector, cut off all milk supplies from the Soviet zone, and even cut off supplies of medicine (but yielded under the American threat to withhold penicillin supplies). The blockade shut down much of Berlin's industry and threw 125,000 people out of work. There were only four hours worth of electricity each day. Berliners lit their homes with candles or simply went to bed at sunset.

In response to the blockade, the U.S. and Great Britain flew more than 2 million tons of supplies to Berlin. The pilots flying the cargo planes that landed at a rate of one every 1-3 minutes, 24 hours a day, referred to their mission as "Operation Vittles." From June 1948 through September 1949, the people of Berlin lived primarily on the airlift's dehydrated potatoes, powdered eggs, powdered milk, dried vegetables, and the occasional cans of meat.

The siege of Berlin, and the subsequent airlift, were the first major conflicts of the Cold War in which the U.S. and the Soviet Union were physically in direct opposition.

The results of the airlift helped to show the communist world that the Western countries were willing to carry out the Truman Doctrine; it weakened any communist support the Soviets may have had in Western Europe, and precipitated the tension over the Western Allies' decision to unify the American, French and British-held German zones.



NATO AND WARSAW PACT

Both the U.S. and the USSR feared that the "Cold War" might escalate into a "hot war." Each met the threat of a "hot war" by organizing alliances.

The Soviet blockade of Berlin and vigorous economic recovery in Western Europe heightened fears that Soviet military aggression would plunge Europe into another war. Therefore, in 1949, guided by President Truman, a defense alliance called the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed. The NATO pact joined the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal. Later, West Germany, Turkey and Greece increased the membership to fifteen nations.

The alliance had two main features. First, the U.S. pledged itself to the defense of Europe: "An armed attack against one or more... shall be considered an attack against all." Second, President Truman sent American troops to Europe to serve as the nucleus of the NATO army. The army would be commanded by General Eisenhower. Thus, any Soviet attack would be an attack on the United States.

The NATO alliance escalated the Cold War. The Soviets retaliated in 1955 by forming an alliance called the Warsaw Pact. This alliance linked the Soviet Union with its Eastern European satellites: Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Albania. Two hostile alliances now confronted each other across a divided Europe.



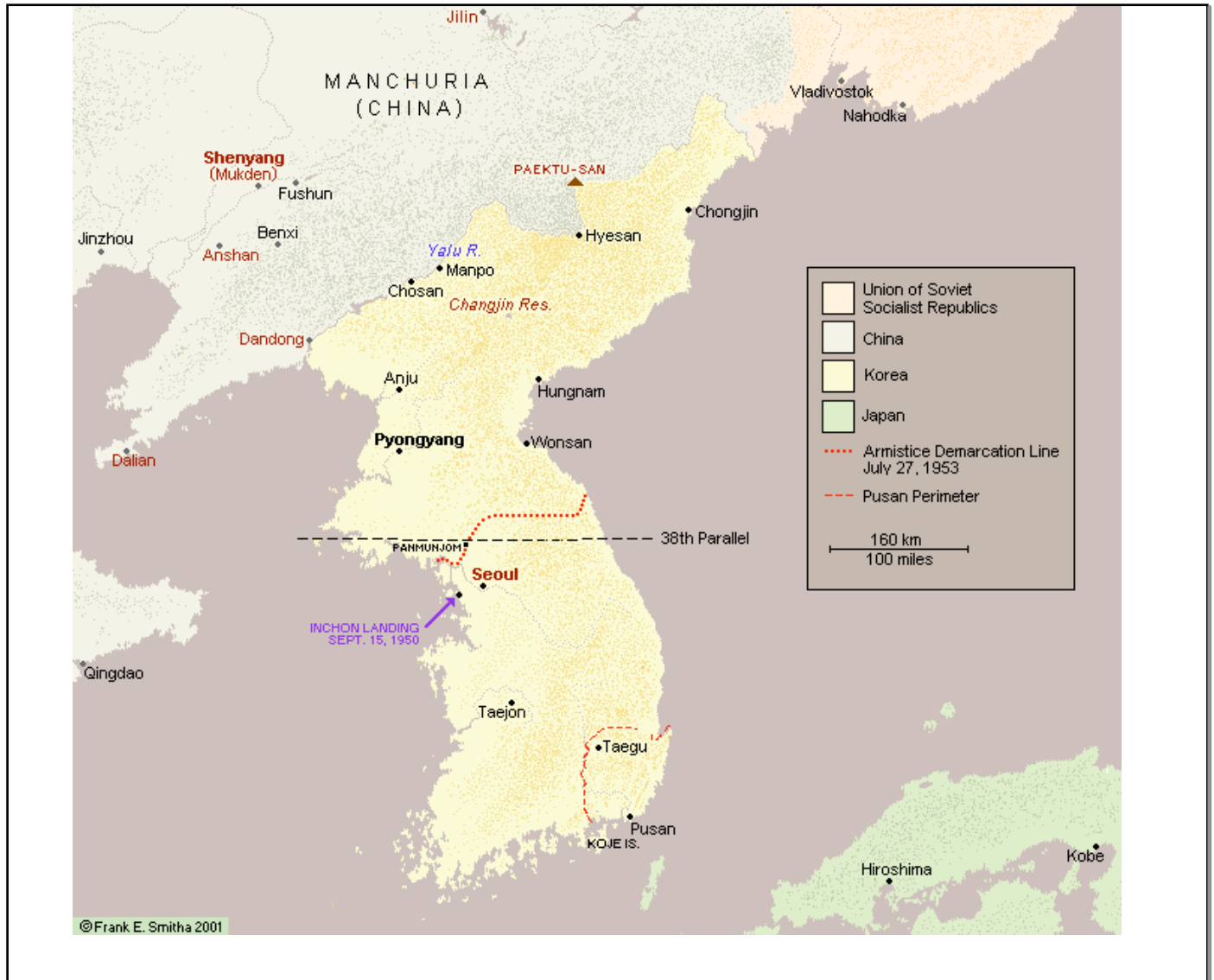
THE FALL OF CHINA

A bloody civil war raging since 1930 continued to divide China after World War II. The communist insurgents were led by Mao Zedong. The Nationalist leader was Chiang Kai-shek. Only unified in their desire to rid China of Japanese rule and foreign intervention, the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek sought to destroy the communists as part of cleansing China.

Chiang's forces outnumbered communist guerrillas 2 to 1 and were aided through the U.S. policy of containment, yet \$2 billion of aid money fell into the hands of Mao's rebels. The U.S. military advisor in China, General Stidwell, reported that Nationalist losses were due to "the world's worst leadership" and a "complete loss of will to fight." Corruption and incompetence allowed more than 75% of U.S. military aid to fall into the hands of the communists.

On October 1, 1949, at Tiananmen Square, Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China. A few months later he signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union. The defeated Chiang established the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan. The U.S. government refused to acknowledge the People's Republic and supported the Chinese representation in the United Nations by Taiwan.

Mao's victory and alliance with the USSR was a major blow to the U.S. policy of containment. The U.S. saw the fall of China as a part of a communist plan to spread communism throughout the world. Cold War tensions spread from Europe to Asia and U.S. policymakers predicted that neighboring nations would "fall like dominoes" to communism.



THE KOREAN WAR

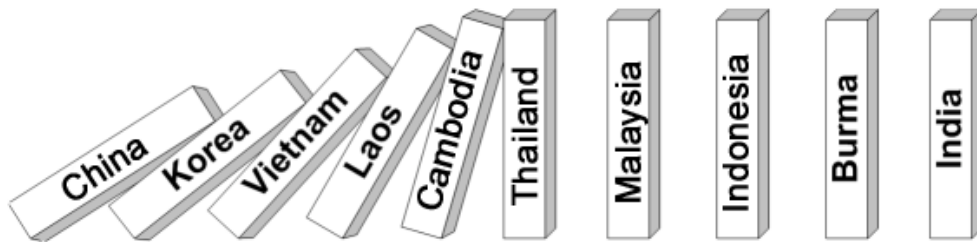
"Korea occupied a strategic peninsula that borders China and the Soviet Union and extends within 100 miles of Japan." (California Framework Case Studies) Because of its strategic importance and the fall of China in 1949, Korea would be the first military conflict to test American will to contain communism.

At the Potsdam Conference, the "Big Three" had agreed to divide Korea at the 38th parallel following the defeat of Japan. The Soviets instituted a communist government along its common border in the North, while the U.S. supported a non-communist government in the South.

On the morning of June 25, 1950, the North Korean army charged across the border in a surprise attack. President Truman called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. The council condemned North Korea's actions and called on all member nations to come to South Korea's aid. President Truman rushed troops commanded by General MacArthur to South Korea. Within months the UN army had regained control of the southern peninsula.

Truman was now faced with a difficult decision: Should he press north and unify the Korean peninsula or should UN forces halt at the 38th parallel? China warned that any advance across the 38th parallel would be viewed as an attack on China. Truman elected to move north. With China now engaged, the UN and President Truman retreated to fight a "limited war" or "police action" only to defend South Korea. They believed this strategy would prevent an enlarged conflict with China and the Soviet Union.

Truce talks began in Panmunjom in July 1951 and did not conclude until July 27, 1953. The truce left Korea divided at the 38th parallel and the border heavily defended on both sides. U.S. policymakers learned the importance of Japan and ended any discussion of U.S. recognition of the People's Republic of China, while enhancing the U.S. commitment to Taiwan. Now U.S. leaders studied possible future targets of communist aggression in Indochina, and the U.S. strengthened its determination prevent the fall of other nations in the area.



THE DOMINO THEORY

American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and President Eisenhower coined the term "Domino Theory" to explain the United States' determination to contain communism.

During a news conference in April 1954, President Eisenhower explained, "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." Dulles elaborated, "If Indochina falls Thailand and Burma would be in extreme danger; Malaya, Singapore and even Indonesia would become vulnerable to the Communist power drive."

This doctrine that the fall of one nation in Southeast Asia would lead to the fall of its neighbors became known as the Domino Theory. It was the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia during the Cold War, and it led to the commitment of U.S. troops in Vietnam.



HUNGARIAN REVOLT

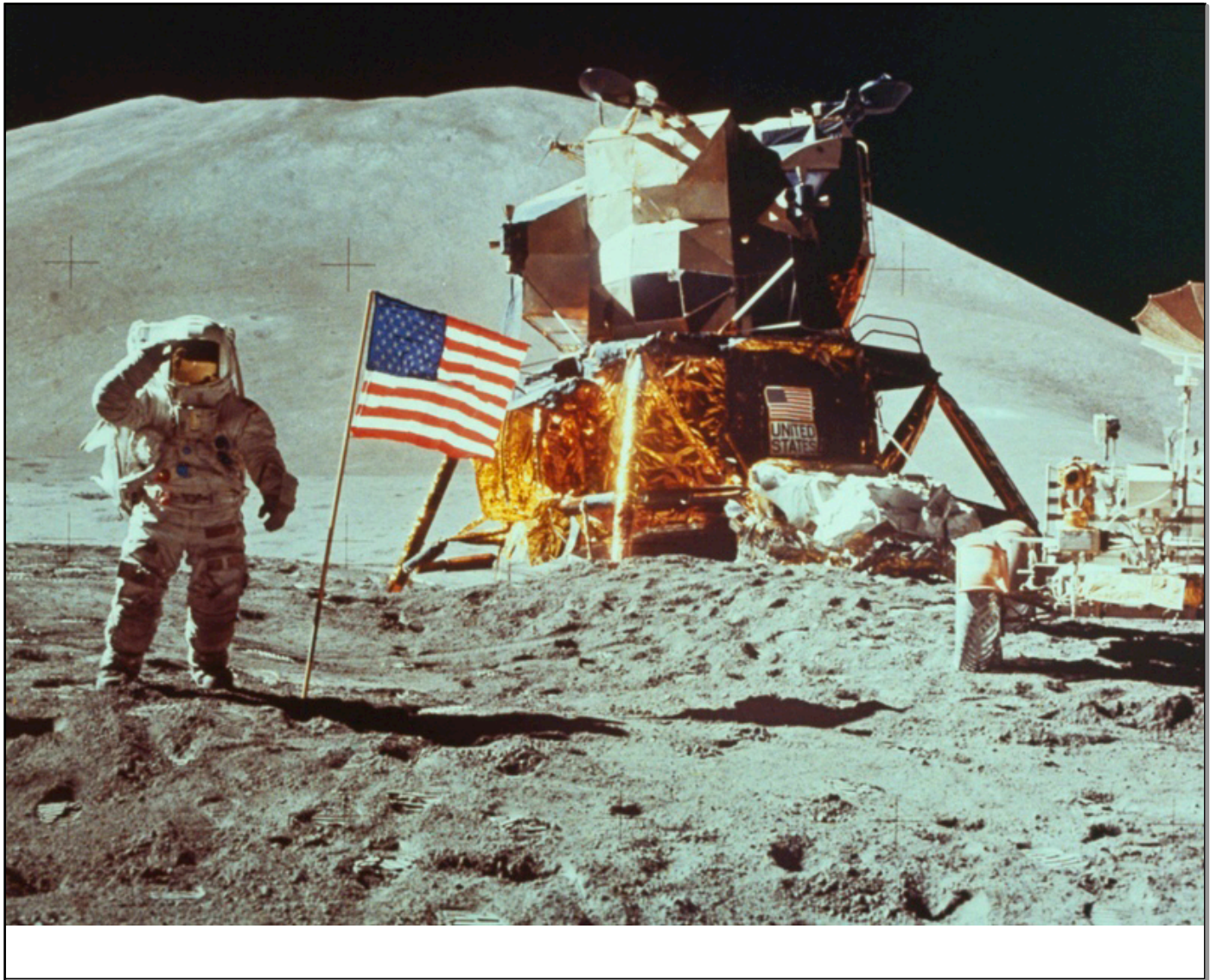
At the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956, Nikita Khrushchev shocked party members and the world by denouncing Stalin's unlimited use of power and revealing the "extraordinary reign of mass terror" Stalin committed against the Soviet people.

Khrushchev's speech marked a turning point in Soviet history. Khrushchev unveiled new economic and political reforms within the Soviet Union and permitted Soviet satellites to exercise greater freedoms. Hungarian leaders instituted the greatest reforms. Hungary had been at the center of resistance to Soviet domination. Riots and violence against Soviet property in Hungary inspired Khrushchev to permit reforms. Hungarian leaders limited the power of the secret police, released political prisoners and increased the production of consumer goods. However, when the leaders announced plans to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, permit free elections and demand all Soviet troops leave Hungary, Khrushchev reacted swiftly.

Soviet armor and infantry swept into Hungary. Hungarian "freedom fighters" erected barricades and armed with pistols and bottles fought the crack Soviet Red Army. The uprising was violently squashed. Over 200,000 Hungarians fled to the West, and Hungarians leaders were executed.

The U.S. watched the uprising and American propaganda lent inspiration to the "freedom fighters." The U.S. policy of containment did not extend into communist satellites. The UN passed resolutions condemning Soviet repression, but no action was taken against

the Soviet Union. The Soviets' brutal suppression of the Hungarian uprising brought a quick end to the "thaw" of the Cold War.



THE SPACE RACE

The early to mid-1950s was the high point of American technological supremacy. However, on October 4, 1957, Americans turned on their television sets to a strange beeping sound and a newscaster announcing, "Listen now for the sound which forevermore separates the old from the new." The sound Americans heard came from space. Above the earth orbited a small, 184-pound satellite called *Sputnik* (Russian for "traveling companion"). The Soviets launching of this satellite jolted American confidence. Later that year, America suffered another scientific and propaganda defeat when its first unmanned satellite exploded on the launching pad. Early in 1958, the Soviets took another big step forward when they launched a small satellite with one passenger: a dog. The Space Race was a race for the "new frontier."

Shortly after President Kennedy's inauguration in 1961, a Russian cosmonaut named Yuri Gagarin became the first human being to orbit the earth. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev triumphantly boasted, "Let the capitalist countries try to catch up with our country which has blazed the trail into space." President Kennedy saw the Soviet challenge as a serious military and scientific threat. At a special session of Congress, Kennedy proclaimed that the U.S. "should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to earth." The stakes in the Space Race had been raised.

Within a year of Kennedy's speech, Alan Shepard rocketed into suborbital space, John Glenn orbited the earth three times in his capsule *Friendship 7*, and an unmanned mission was on its way to Venus. America was reclaiming its technological superiority.

President Kennedy's dream became a reality on July 16, 1969, as *Apollo 11* burst through the atmosphere towards the moon. On board were astronauts Michael Collins, Buzz Aldrin, and Neil Armstrong. Four days later, the spacecraft orbited the moon. A lunar module jettisoned from the mother ship and landed on the moon. Announcing man's victory over nature, Armstrong proclaimed the historic words, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." Symbolic of conquest, Armstrong planted the American flag to "fly" on the moon.



THE U-2 CRISIS

As the 1950s came to a close, tensions between the U.S. and the USSR eased for a short time. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev became the first Russian leader to visit the United States when he was welcomed to the White House for a superpower summit conference by the U.S. President (and former D-Day commander) Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower in September 1959. Khrushchev's 12-day goodwill tour of the U.S. was a landmark event in the postwar relationship between the U.S. and the USSR. The Soviet premier planned to take a short trip to "the happiest place on earth," Disneyland, which had opened four years earlier (he didn't go because of concerns over security). A major "thaw" appeared to be occurring in the icy Cold War relationship between the nuclear giants. Another summit meeting was scheduled to be held in Paris the following spring and "Ike" even accepted Khrushchev's invitation to visit Russia after the Paris conference was over. Peaceful coexistence between the superpowers seemed for the first time a real possibility.

The bliss of this initial superpower summit was short-lived, however, as on May 1, 1960, the Soviets shot down an American U-2 spy plane flying illegally in Soviet airspace. Piloted by Francis Gary Powers, the plane's mission was to photograph Soviet missile sites. Powers parachuted from the stricken plane successfully only to be captured by the Soviets and put on international display as an example of how the Americans could not be trusted. Two weeks later at the summit conference in Paris, Khrushchev furiously denounced this violation of Soviet airspace and integrity. He demanded from Eisenhower an immediate apology for the spy flights and severe punishment for those responsible for them. When Eisenhower refused these demands, Khrushchev angrily

left Paris and withdrew his earlier invitation to Eisenhower to visit Moscow. "Ike" returned to the White House extremely disappointed that "the stupid U-2 mess" had frustrated his efforts at forging a more cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union.



BAY OF PIGS

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy said, "The torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans." He promised to "defend freedom in its hour of maximum danger" and pledged to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." The island of Cuba, 90 miles off the coast of Florida, presented Kennedy his first threat to liberty.

In the late 1950s, Fidel Castro, a young revolutionary, led a popular revolution ending nearly 30 years of a corrupt dictatorship in Cuba. However, Castro immediately seized totalitarian powers and moved towards an alliance with the Soviet Union. President Eisenhower, alarmed by these events, cut diplomatic relations with Cuba and ordered the CIA to begin training Cuban expatriates in Guatemala to invade Cuba and lead a popular anti-Communist uprising.

Along with the torch of liberty, President Kennedy assumed Eisenhower's plan. On April 17, 1961, an invasion force landed at the Bay of Pigs on the southern coast of Cuba. Castro's forces swept down and quickly defeated the ill-trained rebels. At least 300 were killed and 1,200 were taken prisoner. The popular anti-Castro uprising the CIA had predicted never occurred. President Kennedy, not willing to pay the price or bear the burden of war with the Soviet Union, refused to land American troops or provide U.S. air support.

In a televised speech to the nation, Kennedy took full responsibility for the failed invasion. In Cuba, Castro's grip on the nation tightened and his popularity increased,

and Soviet Premier Khrushchev interpreted the events as a sign of division between U.S. military leaders and the young President Kennedy. Additionally, Khrushchev concluded that a new generation of Americans lacked the resolve to contain communist expansion.

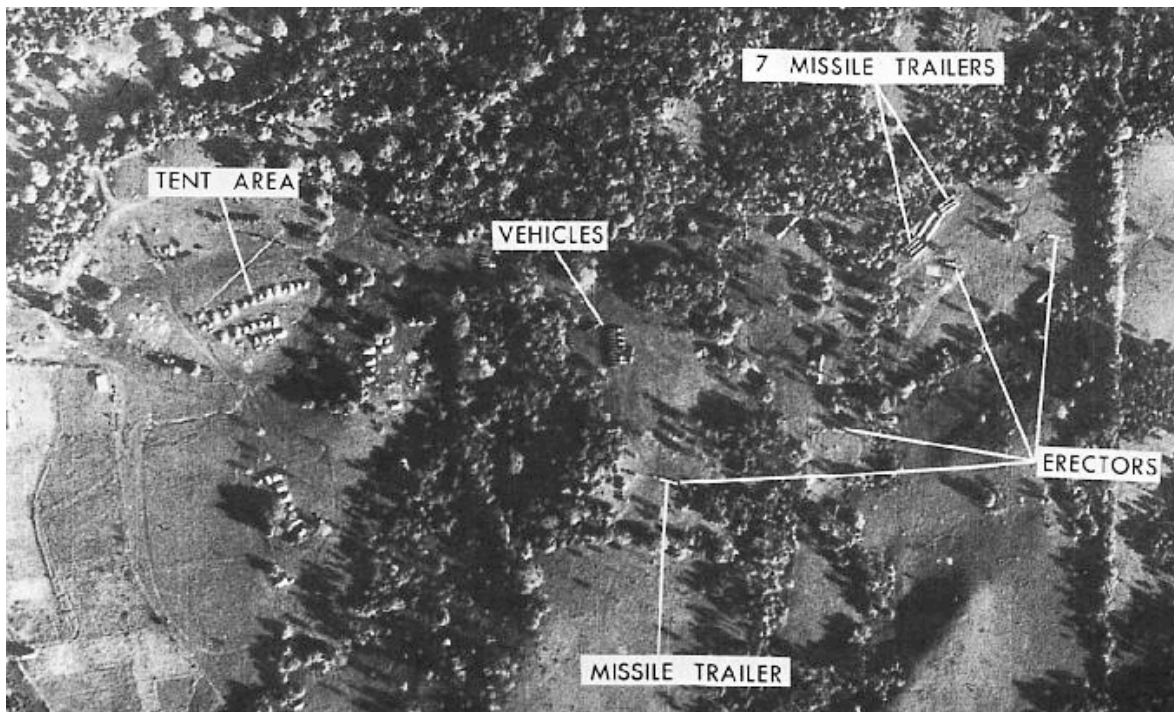


THE BERLIN WALL

By 1961, West Berlin had become a serious threat to the stability of communist East Germany. West Berlin's prosperous economy made it a "showcase of democracy." Since 1950, about one out of every five East Germans had fled to West Berlin to reach West Germany. This mass exodus vividly demonstrated the failure of communism in East Germany. Unable to persuade their citizens to stay, worried East German officials made "fleeing the republic" a crime punishable by imprisonment.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev realized that legal barriers would not stop the flood of refugees leaving East Germany. While President Kennedy prepared for a possible military confrontation, the Soviets secretly devised another plan. Just after midnight on August 13, 1961, steel-helmeted East German troops began to unload concrete posts and rolls of barbed wire along the border between East and West Berlin. Within a few days, a concrete wall topped with barbed wire cut the city in two.

The Berlin Wall successfully reduced the flow of East German refugees to a tiny trickle. At the same time, however, the Wall became an ugly symbol of communist oppression that would stand for almost thirty years. Two years after its construction, an enormous crowd of West Berliners cheered as President Kennedy proudly declared, "All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore as a free man, I take pride in the words, 'Ich bin ein Berliner.' " ("I am a Berliner.")



CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

The "missile gap," the Bay of Pigs, and the construction of the Berlin Wall highlighted the escalating distrust between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. However, thirteen days in October 1962 brought the world to the brink of nuclear destruction. American President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev stood "eyeball to eyeball."

In President Kennedy's first State of the Union address, he predicted this crisis: "Each day the crises multiply. Each day their solution grows more difficult. Each day we draw nearer the hour of maximum danger." On October 14, 1962, President Kennedy's hour was realized. A U-2 spy plane uncovered Soviet missiles being installed in Cuba. The Soviet missiles had the range and nuclear capability to strike every major city in the U.S. Eight days later, President Kennedy addressed the nation. He demanded the Soviets immediately withdraw the missiles and announced a naval quarantine of Cuba. The line was now drawn.

A frantic week of negotiations at the UN climaxed as Soviet freighters turned after encountering U.S. ships along the naval blockade. Nuclear war was averted when the Soviets agreed to remove the missiles in return for a pledge from the U.S. not to invade Cuba and dismantle NATO missiles in Turkey.

The Cuban missile crisis marked an important turning point in the Cold War: a de-escalation of tension. The two nations agreed to install a telephone hotline linking Moscow and Washington. Khrushchev and Kennedy signed a Limited Test Ban Treaty

prohibiting nuclear tests in the atmosphere. Finally, Khrushchev's miscalculation of the young American president would prove to be politically fatal; Communist leaders, humiliated by Khrushchev's retreat at Berlin and in Cuba, removed him from power.

A quarter-century after the fall of Saigon,
the long, divisive struggle in Indochina
still lingers in the American fabric



VIETNAM

A profitable French colony prior to World War II, Vietnam became one of the major battlegrounds on the Cold War during the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The war in Vietnam had a major impact on American self-confidence and brought into question the containment policy of the Truman years.

At the beginning of World War II, Indochina was conquered by the Japanese as part of their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." However, with the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945, the French reclaimed their former colony. A brutal war for independence followed between French colonial forces and Vietnamese nationalists under the command of communist leader Ho Chi Minh. In 1954, the French retreated from the region under an international agreement which gave the northern part of Vietnam to the communists and established a non-communist state in the southern part of the country. The U.S., as the leader of the non-communist world, became the protector of South Vietnam from the aggressive tendencies of the Soviet-backed communists in the north.

From 1965-1973 American troops fought a frustrating war of attrition in Vietnam. At the height of the conflict in 1968 more than 500,000 American soldiers, many of them 18 and 19-year-old draftees, patrolled the jungles and villages of South Vietnam. Supplied and trained by the Soviet Union and China, the Vietnamese communists proved to be an elusive enemy. They fought in guerrilla fashion, ambushing American patrols and outposts in an unpredictable pattern that frustrated American generals and foot soldiers alike.

As American losses mounted, a growing number of people back home began to question the war effort. Massive protests across the U.S. eventually led to an American withdrawal from Southeast Asia in 1973. By 1975, South Vietnam had fallen to the communists and its former capital of Saigon had been renamed Ho Chi Minh City. The fall of Saigon forced America to re-evaluate its policy of containment. For the first time many people argued that America's power was limited and that it could no longer afford costly foreign involvements. More than 58,000 Americans and over 1 million Vietnamese died during the war in Vietnam.



SPRINGTIME IN PRAGUE

"Democracy is not merely the right to utter opinions, it also depends upon how these opinions are treated, whether the people really have a feeling of taking part in solving important social problems." - Alexander Dubcek, 1968

During the late 1960s, student and intellectual unrest spread throughout the United States, Western Europe and the Eastern bloc nations. The discontent reflected a distrust of the "establishment" (the older generation). The new generation called for liberal reforms including freedom of the press, the right to assembly, labor reforms, and a greater voice in government.

No nation exemplified this spirit more than the communist nation of Czechoslovakia. In early 1968, hardline communist leaders were replaced by the liberal Alexander Dubcek (Doob-check). Dubcek hoped to create "socialism with a face." Censorship was lifted, the media flowered in the sunlight of freedom, and the arts blossomed. The Czech judiciary reopened cases from the past two decades to "rehabilitate" victims of Stalin's purges. Workers were allowed to strike against the government for improved conditions. This swing of the political pendulum to the left demanded a swift reactionary response.

Although Dubcek had no intention of Czechoslovakia breaking from the Soviet satellites, he was summoned to East Germany to explain his reforms. Fearing a liberal spillover into the repressed Warsaw Pact nations, Soviet tanks rolled with stunning speed, reaffirming Soviet dominance of its satellite nations.

Soviet repression met worldwide condemnation, yet, like in Hungary, the West was unwilling to commit force.

During the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, Czech scientists, writers and intellectuals issued the *Manifesto Against Aggression*:

"...we consider it necessary to proclaim certain basic convictions which we hold in common as intellectuals..."

1. "As intellectuals, we have the right to speak the truth."
2. "We trust the strength of ideas, and we distrust power. We have no weapons but words and ideas, yet we are convinced that no force of oppression can withstand the thrust of thought."
3. "People may be deprived of all their civil rights, but they cannot be deprived of their freedom to think."
4. "The violent acts of recent days have demonstrated again that totalitarian dictatorships represent the greatest danger to mankind."

In light of this assault on Soviet domination, a new policy was adopted by the Kremlin. In the past, the Soviet Union always regarded it their duty to defend communism from imperialist (Western) attack. The new policy, term the **Brezhnev Doctrine**, asserted the Soviet Union's right to intervene in any member country of the Socialist Commonwealth where the purity or supremacy of the party might be threatened.



DETENTE

The dreadful war in Vietnam caused American leaders to re-examine earlier Cold War policies. The Truman Doctrine of confrontation and containment had proved costly in both valuable resources and American lives. Under the leadership of President Richard Nixon in the early 1970s, a short-lived era of cooperation and understanding between communist and capitalist worlds was inaugurated.

Known as **Detente** (the French term for "relaxing" or "easing"), this period was marked by a spirit of cooperation which included cultural exchanges, superpower summits and the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (known as SALT) which limited the production of nuclear weapons for the first time. In 1972, Nixon became the first American president to travel to Beijing and Moscow, the capitals of the two most powerful communist countries. These summit meetings were followed by trade agreements, scientific exchanges, and even a joint space station venture between the U.S. and the USSR. Apparently exhausted after decades of confrontation, the main combatants in the Cold War conflict appeared, for at least a brief moment, to be on the brink of ending the hostilities between them.

The spirit of Detente, however, despite reducing tensions between the superpowers in the short run, could not eliminate the profound differences between the First and Second Worlds. The communists continued to deny their citizens such fundamental human rights as freedom of speech and worship, and the capitalists continued to rely on private property and free market competition as the basis of their economic and social systems. Although they had found some room for cooperation, there was still no denying the basic

incompatibility of the American and Soviet ideologies.

The spirit of Detente weakened in the late 1970s and it finally died a tragic death in December 1979 when Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev ordered a Red Army invasion of Afghanistan to support a faltering communist government besieged by anti-communist rebels. An American senator remarked in response to this kind of aggression, "Detente is dead and the Soviets killed it."



SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

Fearing a Muslim uprising in Afghanistan could spread into neighboring Muslim regions in the Soviet Union, Moscow ordered an invasion of Afghanistan. Through a lightning series of events in December 1979, supposedly at the request of the Afghanistan government, 40,000 Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan, overthrew and executed President Hafizullah Amin along with his family, and, to complete the coup, installed Babrak Karmal as the new president. The move against Afghanistan, which borders the Soviet Union to the south, was the first time since World War II that Moscow had used significant numbers of its own armed forces in a state outside the Warsaw Pact. It was a threatening extension into Asia of the Brezhnev Doctrine, which claimed that Moscow had the right to assist any socialist state in trouble.

The invasion caused alarm and immediate response worldwide. In a televised message, President Jimmy Carter stated, "Such gross interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan is in blatant violation of accepted international rules of behavior." Carter personally delivered the same message to Leonid Brezhnev over the rarely-used White House-Kremlin hotline. China complained that "Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty have become toys in Moscow's hands." President Carter suspended arms control talks, cut off all grain sales to the Soviet Union, and organized a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Summer Olympics. One senator summed up the situation when he said, "Detente is dead, and the Soviets killed it."

The invasion resulted in a war between the Soviets and the Mujahedin (Muslim rebels armed by the U.S. with the assistance of Pakistan). The war lasted ten years, cost

thousands of lives and billions of dollars, and left Afghanistan in ruins. Later, historians compared the Soviet Union's struggle and defeat in Afghanistan to America's fight in Vietnam.



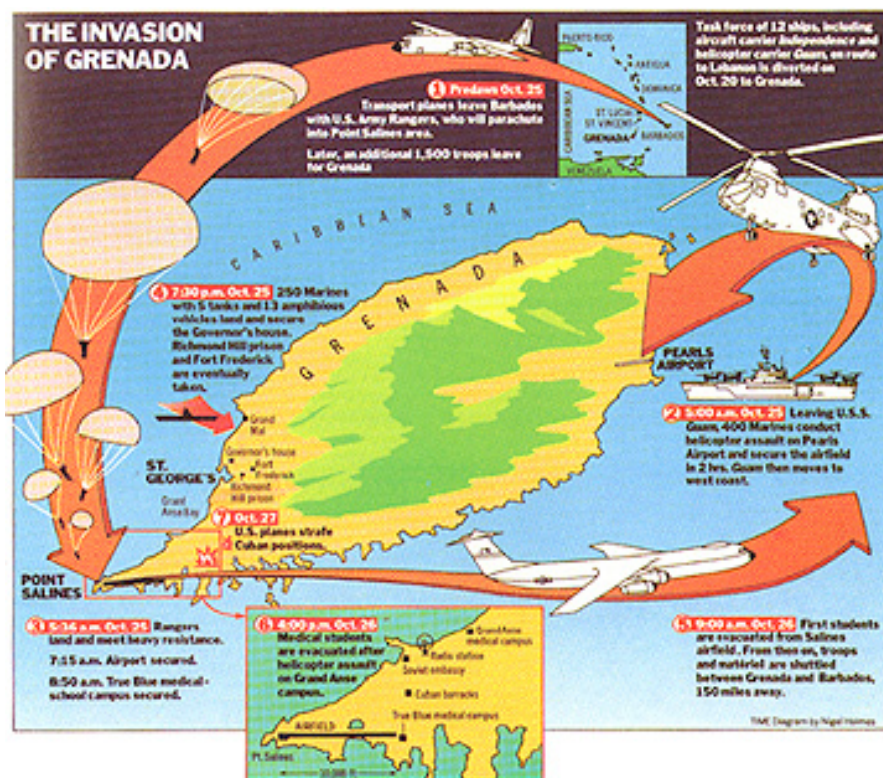
SOLIDARITY

The Solidarity labor movement led a political struggle against Poland's Communist regime during the 1980s. Founded in September 1980 by strikers at the Gdansk shipyards in response to food shortages, long lines, low wages, and poor working conditions, Solidarity was led by one of the strikers, a shipyard electrician, Lech Walesa. Walesa argued that although Poland possessed a skilled labor force, ample and fertile farmland, and considerable natural resources, the government (under the direction of the Soviet Union) had mismanaged funds and resources. By February 1981, Solidarity, the first independent labor union in the Communist bloc, grew to ten million members and challenged the communist government through numerous strikes, rallies, and sit-ins.

In September 1981, Solidarity called for free elections. The Soviet Union responded with the warning that Poland should not resort to "non-Leninist" means in trying to solve its economic problems and that the government should use "any means necessary to defend socialism." The Polish premier, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, warned Solidarity, "Further destructive activities may lead to conflict and to fratricidal war." Because the Soviet Union had 55 divisions poised within striking distance of Poland, the West maintained a high state of alert and was pessimistic about the situation. One senior British diplomat stated, "If they send in the Red Army, they will have created a nightmare that will make Afghanistan look like a tea party."

By the end of 1981, martial law had been declared, Solidarity was outlawed, and thousands of Poles including Lech Walesa were arrested. One bitterly disgusted Polish woman lamented, "We had a year and a half to create something unique and beautiful.

This time, I thought, there's really a chance to reform socialism... Now I don't believe that can happen again. There can't be communism without tanks."



THE INVASION OF GRENADA

As a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the subsequent U.S.-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, the Cold War was back in full swing. The Detente period of the 1970s which had been marked by a warming of relations between the First and Second Worlds was distant memory as Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency of the United States in 1981. Reagan had campaigned as a tough "Cold Warrior" who would stand up to the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union. He vowed to assert the dominance of the democratic capitalist ideology throughout the globe. In 1983, Reagan got the chance to make good on this campaign promise.

On the small Caribbean island of Grenada (population 100,000), a leftist government had come to power in 1979. Headed by Maurice Bishop, this government began a friendly relationship with Cuba's Fidel Castro, eventually inviting the Cubans to use supplies from the Soviet Union to build a new air base on the island. Enraged by the prospect of another communist military outpost in the Western Hemisphere, American officials warned Bishop during a June 1983 meeting in Washington to back off or suffer the consequences. Taking the hint, Bishop vowed to improve relations with the U.S.

In October, hard-line communist members of Bishop's government and army, frustrated by his willingness to bow to U.S. pressure, kicked him out of power and executed him. Frightened by these developments, President Reagan ordered the invasion of Grenada by American forces to chase out the Cubans and restore order. The declared purpose of the invasion was to protect the lives of the 1,000 American citizens (including 700 medical students) who were trapped on the island during the political bloodshed that

ousted Bishop.

The first large-scale American combat mission since the end of the Vietnam War was a success. Most of the Cuban and Grenadian communist forces were subdued within the first 48 hours of the invasion. American losses totaled less than 20 dead and 100 wounded. The bulk of the invasion force was sent home by Christmas, the communist threat in Grenada having been extinguished.



MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

Mikhail Gorbachev's bold program to democratize and institute a free market economy in the Soviet Union triggered a democratic revolution in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev introduced a new policy called *glasnost*, or openness, which encouraged discussion that fostered *perestroika*, or economic and political reform. It also spelled the end of the Cold War.

The late 1970s saw the deterioration of Detente. The U.S. highlighted Soviet violations of human rights and their continued worldwide military threat. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the arrest of Polish labor union leader Lech Walesa and the abolition of Solidarity, and the shooting down of a Korean airliner led President Reagan to charge that the Soviet Union was "an evil empire."

In 1979, Premier Leonid Brezhnev issued the **Brezhnev Doctrine**, a policy of Soviet military intervention in nations where the Socialist state seemed in danger of collapse. The Soviet Union earlier had quickly and violently repressed democratic uprisings in Hungary and Czechoslovakia; now under the Brezhnev Doctrine they enjoined a similar task in Poland and Afghanistan. Afghanistan became the Soviet Union's "Vietnam." The protracted war in Afghanistan divided the Soviet people and drained the USSR of scarce resources. Solidarity's rise in Poland brought in to question communist doctrine. Furthermore, ethnic divisions and nationalism within the Soviet Union and in the Baltic states tore the weakening Soviet economy. The Soviet machine was collapsing.

In 1985, Gorbachev recognized the economic and political weakening of communism. Failed international incursions, economic stagnation and corruption couple with the huge U.S. military build-up in the early 1980s forced Gorbachev to launch his revolutionary programs. His new policies eased East-West tensions. In 1987, Gorbachev and President Reagan signed the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty that called for the destruction of intermediate range nuclear weapons. In 1988, Gorbachev reduced the number of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe and ordered the pull-out from Afghanistan.

The climate of reform swept through Eastern Europe. Years of Soviet repression and severe economic shortages became visible under *glasnost*. Solidarity's victory in Poland, the fall of the Romanian government, and the Baltic states gaining independence was only overshadowed by the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. Throughout the Cold War, East Germany had been the cornerstone of the communist bloc. Now, the East German government, unable to manage their borders, allowed for democratic reform and the opening of the Berlin Wall. By 1993, Germany was unified.



MASSACRE AT TIANANMEN SQUARE

As the 40th anniversary of the Communist Party takeover of China approached during the 1980s, Chinese leaders found themselves faced with two major problems: a faltering communist economy that had failed to bring promised widespread prosperity to the Chinese people, and an overly harsh and dictatorial government that refused to allow its citizens even the most basic of human rights. Responding to the growing frustration of the Chinese people, Communist party leaders in the late 1980s embarked on an uncharted journey of reform. Communist Party chief Deng Xiopeng decided to first attack his nation's economic problems by instituting limited free market reforms and allowing an increased number of Chinese students to study abroad to expand the technical knowledge of his country. What Deng did not anticipate was that by admitting the weaknesses of the communist system and allowing economic reform, he had opened the door to demands for political change as well.

For seven weeks during the spring of 1989, leading Chinese students and intellectuals, many of whom had studied in the West and had seen the benefits of a free society, gathered at Tiananmen Square in downtown Beijing for an ongoing series of peaceful demonstrations against the government. Eventually joined by tens of thousands of frustrated citizens from all over the capital city, the protesters rallied around the concept of creating a new democracy in China to replace the aging totalitarian dictatorship. They defiantly spoke out against the communists and even erected the "Goddess of Democracy," a 33-foot-tall plaster statue bearing a somewhat more than coincidental resemblance to the Statue of Liberty in New York City.

In early June, after weeks of indecision, the Communist Party leadership decided to crush the pro-democracy movement and restore order in the capital. As the tanks rolled in, the students bravely resisted by building barricades and showering the soldiers with rocks and bottles. Their resistance was met with gunfire. In the end, between 500 and 1,000 people lay dead. Hundreds more were quickly arrested and executed as the communists reestablished their iron-fisted grip on Chinese society.

This bloody episode damaged the relationship between China and the U.S. which had been largely cordial since the Detente period of the 1970s. It also made it painfully apparent that although communism might be fading in Europe and in the Soviet Union, the Communist Party in China was not yet ready to throw in the towel.