

Chapter 28 Outline - The Cold War and American Globalism, 1945–1961

- I. Introduction

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a protracted bipolar contest for power called the Cold War. During the era of the Cold War, U.S. leaders often interpreted anticolonialism and political instability in Third World nations as having been inspired by the Soviet Union. To counter the perceived Soviet threat, U.S. leaders engaged in a globalist, interventionist foreign policy and engendered an atmosphere within the nation in which dissenters of the Cold War consensus were discredited and debate over foreign policy was stifled.

- II. From Allies to Adversaries

- A. Decolonization

Economic dislocation and the disintegration of empires destabilized the international system and characterized the world after World War II.

- B. Stalin's Aims

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Stalin's primary aim was to secure his nation against the possibility of another invasion.

- C. U.S. Economic and Strategic Needs

Having emerged from the Second World War as the world's most powerful nation, the United States wanted a quick reconstruction of nations and a world economy based on free trade.

The Soviets refused to join the World Bank and International Monetary Fund because both institutions were dominated by the United States.

- D. Stalin and Truman

Stalin's approach to world affairs was influenced by a "them" versus "us" mentality that bordered on paranoia.

Truman liked to see the world in simple either/or terms and had a brash and impatient style not suited to diplomacy.

- E. The Beginning of the Cold War

Suspensions that led to the Cold War date back as far as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the United States protested Soviet actions in eastern Europe. At the same time the Soviet Union protested U.S. meddling in eastern Europe and what it perceived to be the revival of its traditional enemy, Germany.

- F. Atomic Diplomacy

The United States pursued a policy of using the atomic monopoly for leverage.

Truman supported the Baruch Plan by which the U.S. would abandon its atomic monopoly only after the world's fissionable material was brought under the authority of an international agency. The Soviets rejected the plan, and a nuclear arms race began.

- G. Warnings from Kennan and Churchill

George F. Kennan doubted that Soviets could be trusted, and Winston Churchill's "iron curtain" speech solidified many Americans' fears.

- H. Truman Doctrine

In response to a British request for American aid against leftist insurgents in Greece and Turkey, Truman announced his commitment

to stopping communism.

- I. Inevitable Cold War?

For a variety of reasons, it seems that a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union was destined to occur. It is less clear that the conflict had to result in a Cold War.

- III. Containment in Action

- A. Lippmann's Critique

Walter Lippmann worried that containment would drain America's resources and would hurt diplomatic efforts.

To put the containment doctrine into practice, the U.S. began building an international economic and defensive network.

- B. Marshall Plan

In 1947, the United States initiated the Marshall Plan, funneling billions of dollars into Western Europe.

- C. National Security Act

The National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, the United States Information Agency, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

In response to the Marshall Plan and the National Security Act, Stalin formed the Cominform and tightened his grip on eastern Europe.

- D. Berlin Blockade and Airlift

In response to the Allied decision to unite their sections of Germany, the Soviets denied them access to Berlin. Truman responded with a massive airlift.

The Berlin crisis convinced the western nations to sign the North Atlantic Treaty Organization collective security accord.

- E. Twin Shocks

In September 1949, the Soviet Union detonated an atomic bomb, thus ending the U.S. monopoly on atomic power. In addition, the communists were victorious in China.

The United States responded to Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb by producing the hydrogen bomb.

In April 1950, the National Security Council issued NSC-68, a secret document asking for increased military expenditures to counter worldwide communist expansion and calling for a publicity campaign to gain public support for the expenditures.

- IV. The Cold War in Asia

- A. Chinese Civil War

Despite Jiang Jieshi's corruption and recalcitrance, the United States continued to back him against Mao Zedong.

Mao defeated Jiang and established the People's Republic of China. Truman did not recognize the new republic.

- B. Vietnam's Quest for Independence

The Vietnamese resisted colonialism, and when French authority collapsed during World War II, the Vietminh declared independence in 1945. The Cold War gave the United States several reasons to reject Vietnamese autonomy.

The United States bore most of the financial costs of the French war against the Vietminh.

- V. The Korean War

- A. U.S. Forces Intervene

The United Nations' Security Council voted to aid South Korea and Truman ordered American troops into the region without seeking congressional approval.

MacArthur staged a brilliant amphibious landing behind enemy lines that forced the North Koreans to retreat.

- B. Chinese Entry into the War

When the Chinese sent thousands of troops into North Korea, MacArthur demanded full-scale bombing of China.

- C. Truman's Firing of MacArthur

MacArthur denounced Truman's actions regarding China, leading the President to fire him.

- D. Peace Agreement

Thousands of North Korean and Chinese prisoners did not want to go home; the United States did not return them.

In July 1953, an armistice was signed. The boundary between North and South Korea was established near the 38th parallel and a demilitarized zone was established between the two.

- E. Consequences of the War

More than 4 million people died in this limited war. The powers of the presidency grew during the war, and the stalemated war helped elect Eisenhower.

Worldwide military containment became entrenched as U.S. policy causing an escalation in defense spending and an arms race between

the United States and the Soviet Union.

- VI. Unrelenting Cold War

- A. “Massive Retaliation”

“Liberation,” “massive retaliation,” and the “New Look” military became bywords of American foreign policy. Backed by increasing stockpiles of nuclear weapons, the United States practiced “brinkmanship.” Eisenhower popularized the “domino theory.”

- B. CIA as Foreign Policy Instrument

The CIA put foreign leaders on its payroll, subsidized foreign labor unions, and engaged in “disinformation” campaigns. The CIA also launched covert operations to subvert governments in the Third World.

- C. Nuclear Buildup

American production of the incredibly powerful hydrogen bomb increased Soviet-American tensions.

Following Soviet advances in missile technology, made obvious in the firing of the world’s first ICBM and the propelling of *Sputnik* into orbit, the United States stepped up its missile research and created NASA in 1958.

Eisenhower preferred using propaganda to fight the Soviets, as seen in the “People-to-People” campaign, cultural exchanges, and participation in trade fairs.

- D. Rebellion in Hungary

When troops crushed a revolt against Soviet power in Hungary, America could do nothing to help the rebels without risking full-scale war.

- E. U-2 Incident

The Soviets walked out of the 1960 Paris summit when the Americans refused to apologize for U-2 spy missions.

- F. Formosa Resolution

The Formosa Resolution of 1955 allowed deployment of American forces to defend the Formosan islands of Jinmen and Mazu, which prompted China to develop nuclear capability by 1964.

- VII. The Struggle for the Third World

- A. Interests in the Third World

Decolonization advanced rapidly after 1945. The Soviets and the Americans sought alliances with the new nations.

Many Third World nations did not want to take sides in the Cold War and declared themselves nonaligned.

American leaders often saw the Third World's people as emotional, irrational, and dependent.

- B. Racism and Segregation as U.S. Handicaps

American racism became an embarrassment and a liability in efforts to befriend Third World nations.

Believing that Third World nationalist revolutions were aimed at American allies and at American investments, the United States was hostile toward those revolutions. This hostility hurt the United States in its quest for influence in the Third World.

- C. Development and Modernization

The United States sought to aid developing nations in order to foster stability. The United States also directed propaganda toward the Third

World to persuade Third World peoples to abandon radical doctrines and neutralism.

People in the developing nations both envied and resented the United States.

- D. Intervention in Guatemala

The CIA helped overthrow Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in Guatemala in 1951 because the United Fruit Corporation disliked his confiscation of their lands.

- E. The Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro

Fidel Castro's ouster of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba sparked a serious crisis. When Cuba moved into a closer relationship with the Soviets, Eisenhower ordered the CIA to organize an invasion force of Cuban exiles to overthrow Castro.

The CIA also plotted to assassinate Castro.

As Cuba moved even closer to the Soviet Union, Eisenhower broke diplomatic relations with the island nation.

- F. Arab-Israeli Conflict

The United States recognized the new nation of Israel in 1948.

American policy in the Middle East centered on upholding Israel and protecting the region's extensive oil holdings.

- G. Suez Crisis

In 1956, Egypt nationalized the British-owned Suez Canal. The Israelis, British, and French moved against Egypt, but the United States refused to support them.

- H. Eisenhower Doctrine

Eisenhower declared that the United States would intervene in the Middle East if any government threatened by a communist takeover asked for aid.

The Vietminh surrounded French troops at Dienbienphu, forcing France to end the war.

- I. Geneva Accords on Vietnam

A peace accord divided Vietnam and set a 1956 election to unify the country; but Diem and Eisenhower, believing the communists would win, refused to hold the election.

- J. National Liberation Front

The United States backed a corrupt and repressive regime in South Vietnam. Communists in South Vietnam organized the National Liberation Front, known as the Vietcong.