

**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
REVISE  
HISTORY**

## Planning the Post-War Future

The Second World War lasted from **1939-1945**. The **main winners** were Britain, the USSR and the USA. Two main **summits** were held between the Big Three allies during 1945 to decide on the future of Germany and Eastern Europe. These were the **Yalta** conference and the **Potsdam** conference.

### There were Three Major Decisions at Yalta in 1945

The "big three" allied leaders — British Prime Minister **Winston Churchill**, US President **Roosevelt** and USSR leader **Stalin** — had already met at a conference in Tehran in 1943. They met again for the **Yalta Conference** in February 1945 — to plan what they wanted to happen **after** the war (although the conflict was still ongoing at this point).

- 1) Germany was to be **split** into four zones of occupation.
- 2) **Free elections** for new governments would be held in countries previously occupied in Eastern Europe.
- 3) The **United Nations** would **replace** the failed League of Nations.



### Then the Situation Changed

- 1) Roosevelt died and was succeeded by **Harry Truman**, who was **suspicious** of the USSR.
- 2) In Britain, the Conservative PM Winston Churchill was replaced by Labour's **Clement Attlee**.
- 3) The USSR **expanded westwards** into Finland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Baltic states.

The allies were now **suspicious** of each other. Stalin wanted to **control Eastern Europe** so didn't want elections there — the USA and Britain suspected this. Truman and Attlee were new to their jobs — Stalin thought they'd be **weak leaders** so he could do **whatever he wanted**.

### Agreements were Made at Potsdam in August 1945

**Germany surrendered** in **May 1945**. The allies made more decisions about **post-war Europe**:

- 1) The new **boundaries** of **Poland** were agreed.
- 2) The allies decided to **divide** Germany and Berlin between them.
- 3) They agreed to legal **trials** at Nuremberg of Nazi leaders for **war crimes**.



### The USA and USSR had very Different Ideologies

Although the USA and USSR had been **allies** during the Second World War they had very different beliefs. The USSR was **communist**. The USA was **capitalist**. After the end of the Second World War, the two countries became **rivals**.

- 1) Economically, communism meant **state control** of industry and agriculture. The USA, by contrast, valued **private enterprise** — the 'American Dream' was that anyone could work their way to the top to be **wealthy and successful**.
- 2) Politically, communism meant a **one-party state**. The USA valued **political freedom**.
- 3) Communism aimed at world **revolution**, and so it was seen by Americans as a **danger** to their **democracy**. Likewise, the communists feared worldwide **American influence**.

### Yalta learn this page — it's important...

Plenty for you to learn here — things changed fast after the war. Remember two of the Big Three **changed leaders** — you need to know what **difference** this made.



## Increasing Tensions

After World War Two, the USA and USSR were the major world superpowers. Unfortunately, relations between them went rapidly downhill...

### The USA and the USSR began an Arms Race

The USA and USSR became very competitive — each wanting to be the strongest, and feeling threatened by the other. There was an arms race to have the most powerful weapons.

- 1) Germany surrendered in May 1945, but the war against Japan continued. In August 1945, the USA dropped two atom bombs on Japan — destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These bombs were incredibly powerful and thousands of civilians were killed. Japan surrendered immediately after this.
- 2) The USA had kept the atom bomb (A-bomb) secret from the USSR until just before it was used in Japan. For four years, the USA was the world's only nuclear power.
- 3) But in 1949, the USSR exploded their own A-bomb. The USA developed the even more powerful hydrogen bomb (H-bomb) in 1952. The USSR followed with theirs in 1955.

### The USSR became Influential in Eastern Europe

- 1) At the end of the Second World War, the USSR's Red Army occupied Eastern Europe. Stalin had no intention of keeping the promise he made at Yalta to allow free elections in Poland.
- 2) Between 1945 and 1948, Stalin installed pro-Soviet "puppet" governments in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. Free speech was suppressed.
- 3) Non-communist parties were banned, and even communist parties were controlled by the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) to consist solely of Russian-style communists.
- 4) Comecon (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), set up in 1949, worked to nationalise the states' industries and collectivise agriculture.
- 5) For a while it seemed that Czechoslovakia might remain democratic. But when the Communist Party seemed likely to lose ground in the next election, it seized power in February 1948.
- 6) The exception to Soviet domination was Yugoslavia, which had freed itself from the Germans without the Red Army. Yugoslavia was communist but more open to the West. Its leader, Tito, argued with Stalin over political interference. Stalin cut off aid but didn't invade.

### There was an 'Iron Curtain' between East and West



- 1) Increasing tensions between the USA and the USSR became known as the 'Cold War'.
- 2) It was called the Cold War because there wasn't any direct fighting — instead both sides tried to gain the upper hand with alliances and plans.
- 3) Both sides were afraid of another war because of the huge power of atomic weapons.
- 4) Countries in Western Europe tended to support the USA. Most countries in Eastern Europe were dominated by the USSR.
- 5) In a famous speech, Winston Churchill warned there was an Iron Curtain dividing Europe.

### The Iron Curtain — it just wouldn't wash...

Nuclear weapons were capable of wiping out entire cities in one go — people thought it could be the end of humankind if a proper war broke out, which is why both sides were so cautious.



## US Influence and the Berlin Blockade

If there was one thing the USA didn't want, it was for the whole world to go communist.

### The USA was Worried about the Spread of Communism

President Truman was worried that other countries might also fall to communism. Truman tried to stop the spread of communism in two main ways:

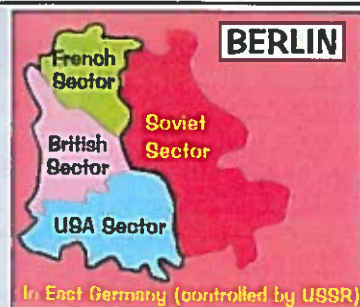
#### 1) The Marshall Plan

This promised American aid to European countries to help rebuild their economies — West Germany benefited massively. The USA was worried that if Western Europe remained weak it might be vulnerable to communism.

#### 2) The Truman Doctrine

The USA would support any nation threatened by a communist takeover. For example, the USA gave \$400 million of aid to Turkey and Greece to try to stop communism spreading. A civil war had started in Greece in 1946 between the pro-Western government and communists — Truman wanted to give the government all the help he could.

### In 1948 the USSR and the West Disagreed over Berlin



- 1) There were four zones of occupied Berlin. The USA and Britain agreed to combine their zones into a zone called Bizonia in 1947.
- 2) The French agreed to combine their zone with them — the new western zone had a single government, and a new currency to help economic recovery.
- 3) The Soviet Union opposed these moves. Stalin wanted to keep Germany weak — so he decided to blockade Berlin.
- 4) Berlin was in Eastern Germany, which was controlled by the USSR — so Stalin ordered that all land communication between West Berlin and the outside world should be cut off.

West Berlin survived because of the Berlin Airlift. Between June 1948 and May 1949, the only way of obtaining supplies from the outside world was by air. By 1949, 8000 tons of supplies were being flown into West Berlin each day.



### In 1949 Stalin Ended the Blockade

- 1) Two new states were formed — West Germany (German Federal Republic) and communist East Germany (German Democratic Republic).
- 2) In 1949 the Western Powers formed NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) against the communist threat. The Eastern Bloc formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955 — a military treaty designed to counter NATO.

### Two Germanies — and two German football teams...

Don't forget, the Cold War never led to any real fighting between the USA and USSR. Instead they seemed to be playing a giant game of chess. Make sure you know the two US policies intended to stop Europe turning communist, and the events that led to Germany being split up.



## The Cold War in Asia

In 1949 the **Communist State of China** was set up by Mao Tse-tung — this meant that the USA was **also worried** by the communist threat in **Asia**.

### In 1950 War broke out in Korea

Communist North Korea went to **war** with South Korea in order to **reunite** the country — this was seen as a **direct challenge** from communism to the West. The USA and the Western powers **intervened** on behalf of the United Nations to stop communism spreading.

### The UN Aim was to Resist Communist North Korean Aggression



- 1) The UN ordered an immediate **attack** against the North Koreans. **UN forces** landed at Inchon and **drove** the North Koreans **back** over the 38th parallel by September 1950.
- 2) President Truman allowed General MacArthur (UN commander) to **invade** North Korea — most of the UN force were Americans.
- 3) This worried China, who **feared** a Western **invasion**.
- 4) In October 1950, China joined the North Koreans in an **attack** which drove the UN forces back, and **captured** Seoul (the capital of South Korea) by January 1951. A UN counteroffensive retook the city, and drove the North Koreans back to **near the original border**.
- 5) MacArthur wanted to attack China but Truman **disagreed** — after arguing with the President, MacArthur was **sacked**.
- 6) Truman looked for peace and a **ceasefire** was **agreed** in 1953.

### A Communist Government came to power in North Vietnam



- 1) **Indochina** was a **French colony** that covered a large area of South-East Asia. In the 1940s and 1950s there was a **revolt** against the French — which turned into a long and bloody **war**. The resistance fighters were backed by **communist China**.
- 2) The **Geneva Conference** in 1954 was a meeting of international leaders to sort out problems in Asia — including this **conflict**.
- 3) Under the terms of the Geneva Accord, France **withdrew** from Indochina. Vietnam (formerly part of Indochina) was **partitioned** into **communist North Vietnam** and **democratic South Vietnam**. Laos and Cambodia were set up as **independent states**.

### The USA tried to Protect South Vietnam from Communism

- 1) The Truman Doctrine meant America was willing to provide **aid** to **South Vietnam** to stop it falling to communism. President Eisenhower supported the choice of **Diem** as **leader** of South Vietnam. He was a **corrupt** and **unpopular** ruler — but he was **anti-communist**.
- 2) Under **Eisenhower**, and later **Kennedy**, the USA gave loads of **money** to South Vietnam. They also sent military '**advisers**' — there were 12 000 American soldiers in Vietnam by 1962. The communist threat remained, and the US became **more involved** in countering it (see p.32).

### The Asian Cold War — pretty hot really...

There you are, the main events of the Korean War — but you just need to learn the **key points**. **The Korean War** was a dangerous moment that could easily have become a World War — make sure you know the **main reasons** why the **UN invaded** and why **China fought back**.



# The Cuban Missile Crisis

The USA wanted to keep all countries close to its shores friendly.

## ***Cuba was Only 100 Miles from the USA***

- 1) Since 1952 Cuba had been **ruled** by a military **dictator**, Batista. He was ruthless and corrupt.
- 2) He allowed American businessmen and the Mafia to make **huge profits** in a country where **most people** lived in **poverty**.
- 3) In 1956 a rebel called Fidel Castro attempted to **overthrow** the government, but was **defeated** and forced into **exile**.
- 4) In 1959 Castro began a **guerrilla war** and soon marched on Cuba's capital, Havana — and **successfully** overthrew the government.



Fidel Castro

## ***Castro wanted to Get Rid of American Influence***

- 1) Castro made a big impact. He **shut down** the gambling casinos and the brothels. He also **nationalised** American-owned sugar mills.
- 2) The USA **cut off** diplomatic **relations** with Cuba.
- 3) Castro began to work with the USSR — he'd always been **influenced** by **communism**.
- 4) The USSR offered to buy Cuba's sugar **instead** of the USA.

## ***Cuban Rebels in America plotted an Invasion***

- 1) In 1961, President Kennedy authorised a CIA-trained **invasion** of Cuba by rebels.
- 2) In April 1961, the rebels landed in the **Bay of Pigs**, but the USA **didn't give** them air **support** as they had promised. The rebels were easily **defeated** — it was a bit of a fiasco.
- 3) This invasion meant Castro decided that Cuba needed **Soviet military assistance**.

## ***Soviet Nuclear Missiles were shipped to Cuba***



- 1) In 1962, the USA's U-2 spy planes **detected** Soviet missiles in Cuba. From Cuba these missiles could be used to **attack** US cities with very little warning.
- 2) President Kennedy ordered a **naval blockade** of Cuba. All Soviet ships were to be **stopped** and **searched** to prevent further missiles being transported to Cuba.
- 3) Kennedy **demand**ed that Khrushchev **withdraw** his missiles and **prepared to invade** Cuba. The Soviet ships steamed on to Cuba.
- 4) The world was on the brink of **nuclear war**...

In the end, Khrushchev made a deal to **remove** the missiles from Cuba and ordered his **ships** to **turn around**. In exchange the US **lifted** the **blockade**, promised to **not invade** Cuba — and **secretly** agreed to **remove** their **missiles** from **Turkey**, which borders the USSR.

## ***U-2 were spy planes — I always thought they were a rock band...***

The **13 days** of the Cuban missile crisis were the closest the world's been to nuclear war. There was a **stalemate** with nuclear weapons because if one side fired, so would the other and **everyone** would be destroyed. It was a **no-win situation**.