

## Chapter 13 Notes: The Cold War Era

### Section 1: Cold War Origins

#### Wartime Diplomacy

During World War II, the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain worked out plans for the organization of the postwar world.

- In February 1945, the “Big Three” Allied leaders—Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin—met at Yalta to discuss issues affecting the postwar world.
- The Allies agreed to divide Germany into four zones, with each zone run by an Allied power.
- President Roosevelt died suddenly on April 12, 1945, and Vice President **Harry S. Truman** succeeded him.
- On June 26, in San Francisco, California, 50 nations signed the charter creating the United Nations, which they hoped could settle international disputes and prevent future wars.

#### Soviet Expansion in Europe

Soviet efforts to spread communism in Europe led to tense relations with the United States, which wanted to contain communism.

- Distrust soon arose between the West and the Soviets, and Europe split into two armed camps—Communist Eastern Europe and democratic Western Europe.
- Winston Churchill believed that an “**iron curtain**” had descended on Europe, permanently cutting off Eastern Europe from the West.
- Since the United States and the Soviet Union could not **cooperate**, the United States adopted the policy of **containment**—holding back the Soviets using military as well as nonmilitary ways.
- When Communists attempted to overthrow Greece’s pro-Western government, President Truman provided immediate aid to the Greeks.
  - This pledge that the United States would fight the spread of communism worldwide came to be known as the Truman Doctrine.
- The economic support for Western Europe known as the Marshall Plan helped weaken the appeal of communism.

#### Crisis in Berlin

The Western Allies successfully resisted Soviet attempts to halt the Allies’ plans for uniting West Germany.

- Stalin feared that a reunited Germany would **pose** a threat to the Soviet Union.
- On June 24, 1948, Soviet troops created a blockade, cutting off West Berlin’s 2.2 million citizens from needed supplies.
  - The Soviets hoped this blockade would force the Americans, British, and French to reconsider their plan for unification.
- President Truman sent supplies through an **airlift**, and eventually Stalin ended the blockade.
- By the end of 1949, there were two German states—the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), allied with the United States, and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), a Communist state tied to the Soviet Union.

#### Two Armed Camps

The United States and the Soviet Union formed rival alliances, and their competition for influence spread to other parts of the world.

- The Berlin crisis showed that the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a **cold war**—a war in which the two enemies did not actually fight each other.
- In 1949 the United States, Canada, and 10 Western European nations formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO.
- In response, the Soviets in 1955 set up a military alliance—the Warsaw Pact—with the Communist governments of Eastern Europe.
- As the Cold War deepened, many nations experienced dramatic change. Many areas broke free of colonial rule and became independent.
  - The Philippines gained independence from the United States in 1946.

- In the late 1940s, the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, and Burma won freedom from British rule.
- During the 1950s and 1960s, more than 25 African nations gained independence from European powers.
- After declaring independence, the Jewish state of Israel was attacked by the armies of neighboring Arab countries in the first of six major wars between the Arabs and Israelis.
- In 1949, **Mao Zedong** formed a new Communist state, the People's Republic of China.
- Former leader Chiang Kai-shek retreated with his forces to the island of Taiwan off the southeastern coast of China, and the United States recognized the government in Taiwan as the legitimate government of all China.

### Cold War Fears

The Cold War heightened Americans' fears about communism in American society.

- The Cold War increased Americans' fears of Communist **subversion**, and many Americans worried that Communists had penetrated all levels of American society and were weakening the government.
- In response to this "Red Scare," President Truman ordered an investigation into the loyalty of all federal employees.
  - Although little evidence of **espionage** was found, many federal workers lost their jobs.
- Several screenwriters and film directors went to jail for refusing to answer questions about their political beliefs or those of their colleagues.
  - Reacting to pressure, film companies created **blacklists**—lists of individuals whose loyalty was suspect—that kept people from working in films.
- Alger Hiss, a former government official, was accused of spying for the Soviets, found guilty of **perjury**, and sent to prison.
- The Rosenbergs, a couple from New York, were accused of passing secrets about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union and sentenced to death for spying.
- From 1950 to 1954, the hunt for Communists was led by Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin, who claimed that a vast Communist network existed within the government.
- In December 1954, the Senate voted to **censure** McCarthy for his wild accusations.

### Section 2: Postwar Politics

#### The Postwar Economy

Americans faced rising prices and labor unrest during the late 1940s.

- During the war, government price controls kept the cost of consumer goods **stable**; however, when the government lifted these controls, prices began to climb.
  - Because of this **inflation**, prices rose much faster than wages.
- When employers refused to raise wages, labor strikes broke out and disrupted the economy.
- President Truman had to intervene to get striking miners and railroad workers to return to work.

#### Truman Faces the Republicans

President Truman and the Republican-controlled Congress disagreed over how to solve the nation's economic problems.

- In September 1945, President Truman presented a plan of **domestic** reforms aimed at solving some of the nation's economic problems.
  - Truman later called this program the **Fair Deal**.
- Because of opposition by a coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats, Truman's plan failed to pass in Congress.
- In the spring of 1947, Republican legislators introduced the **Taft-Hartley Act**. The act:
  - limited the actions workers could take against their employers.
  - allowed the government to temporarily stop any strike that endangered public health or safety.

- outlawed the **closed shop**, or the practice of forcing business owners to hire only union members.
- Truman vetoed the act, but the Republican-controlled Congress overrode Truman's veto.
- Truman and Congress agreed on improving the efficiency of the federal government, which had grown considerably since the New Deal.
- In 1947 Congress passed the National Security Act, which set up several government agencies.
  - The Department of Defense
  - The Joint Chiefs of Staff
  - The National Security Council
  - The Central Intelligence Agency
- In the presidential election of 1948, Truman faced Republican Thomas Dewey as well as two candidates that split from the Democratic Party—Strom Thurmond and Henry Wallace.
- With the Democrats badly divided, Dewey was the favorite to win the election; however, Truman won a narrow victory and the Democrats regained control of both houses of Congress.

### A Fair Deal for Americans

The Truman administration pushed for civil rights reforms.

- After being reelected, Truman quickly reintroduced the Fair Deal legislation he presented to Congress in 1945.
- Congress passed laws to raise the minimum wage, expand Social Security benefits for senior citizens, and provide funds for housing for low-income families.
- Truman called for an end to discrimination based on race, religion, or ethnic origins.
- Truman ordered federal agencies to end job discrimination against African Americans and ordered the armed forces to **desegregate**.
- Although much of the president's Fair Deal vision went unfulfilled, he made an important start toward improving the lives of millions of Americans.

### Section 3: The Korean War

#### Conflict in Korea

Americans under the United Nations' flag fought a war in Korea during the early 1950s.

- At the end of World War II, the Americans and the Soviets divided the east Asian country of Korea at the 38th parallel of latitude.
- On June 25, 1950, the Communist forces of North Korea invaded South Korea in an attempt to take over that country.
- Truman persuaded the United Nations to send troops, most of which were American and under the command of U.S. general **Douglas MacArthur**.
- Encouraged by early success, General MacArthur urged President Truman to order the invasion of North Korea and create a unified and democratic Korea.
- The Chinese Communists saw the advancing troops as a threat, and hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops crossed the border and drove the UN forces back to South Korea.

#### American Leadership Divided

President Truman and General MacArthur disagreed over how to fight the Korean War.

- United Nations forces launched a counteroffensive and pushed the Communists back across the 38th parallel, and the war became a stalemate which lasted for almost two years.
- On April 11, 1951, President Truman concluded that he must relieve General MacArthur of his command in Korea due to their different opinions on the war.
- In 1953, a cease-fire agreement was signed that set up a demilitarized zone between the two Koreas.
- The Korean War ended with no victory for either side and almost no change in territory.

## Section 4: America in the 1950s

### The Eisenhower Years

President Eisenhower promoted policies to maintain prosperity at home and to compete with the Soviets abroad.

- In November 1952, Americans elected **Dwight D. Eisenhower** to the presidency in a landslide victory over Illinois Governor Adlai E. Stevenson.
- During his two terms in office, Eisenhower followed a moderate, or middle-of-the-road, approach to domestic policy.
- When Eisenhower completed his second term in 1961, the federal budget had a **surplus** of \$300 million.
- In 1956 Congress passed the Federal Highway Act, which funded the building of more than 40,000 miles of highways that tied the nation together.
- During the 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a nuclear **arms race**.
  - Both sides built more and more **nuclear** warheads and guided missiles that could destroy the other side many times over.
  - With the threat of nuclear destruction so great, a badly managed crisis could lead to all-out war.
- In early November 1956, Soviet leader **Nikita Khrushchev** ordered Soviet forces to crush a revolt in Hungary.
  - President Eisenhower condemned the Soviet crackdown but did not intervene.
- In July 1955, Eisenhower, NATO leaders, and Soviet officials met at a **summit** conference in Geneva, Switzerland, and discussed major issues, raising hopes for peace.

### Prosperity and Change

A booming economy changed the social and cultural life of Americans during the 1950s.

- During the 1950s, the American **economy** grew rapidly.
- **Affluence**, the growing variety and quantity of products available, and expanded advertising all played a role in an increased demand for consumer goods.
- Television became the main form of entertainment as well as an important source of news and information for American families.
- A new form of music—rock ‘n’ roll—achieved great popularity among teenagers.

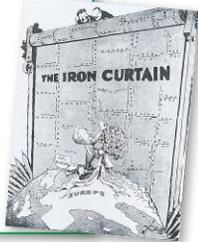
### Problems in a Time of Plenty

Many Americans did not share in the prosperity of the 1950s.

- Many farmers and people in Appalachia lived in poverty and did not share in the prosperity of the 1950s.
- As increasing numbers of middle-class Americans moved to the suburbs in the 1950s, the inner cities became islands of poverty.
- The urban poor struggled not only with poverty but also with racial discrimination in employment, housing, and education.
- Some Americans felt that the sameness of corporate and suburban life and the increase of American **materialism** had a cost.
- A group of writers called the Beats also criticized American society.
- With American society changing, women and African Americans became increasingly impatient for change and less willing to accept their status as second-class citizens.

## The Cold War

- Soviets occupy much of Eastern and Central Europe
- Truman doctrine proposed
- Congress approves Marshall Plan
- Berlin airlift
- With United Nations, U.S. fights in Korea
- Crisis in the Middle East
- Uprising in Hungary
- War in Southeast Asia
- Troubles in Latin America
- Geneva summit encourages peaceful coexistence
- Space race



Berlin airlift (above);  
Senator Margaret Chase Smith (right)



## Prosperity

- Productivity increases
- Per-capita income and the standard of living increases
- The baby boom increases population
- Suburban housing developments boom
- Car culture grows
- Consumerism grows
- Television viewing increases

## Problems and Issues

- Growing competition hurts small farmers
- Decline in coal industry increases poverty in rural areas
- Inner cities decay as businesses and residents relocate
- Social critics question conformity
- Women question their roles in society
- African Americans challenge segregation



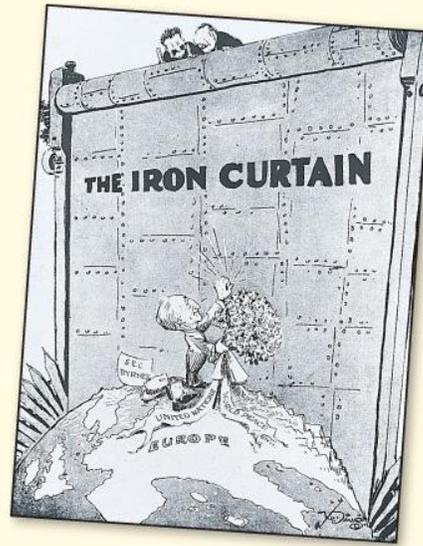
## Eisenhower's Domestic Policy

- Attempts to limit government spending
- Federal Highway Act
- Extends social programs

◀ Students receive polio vaccine



## Europe After World War II



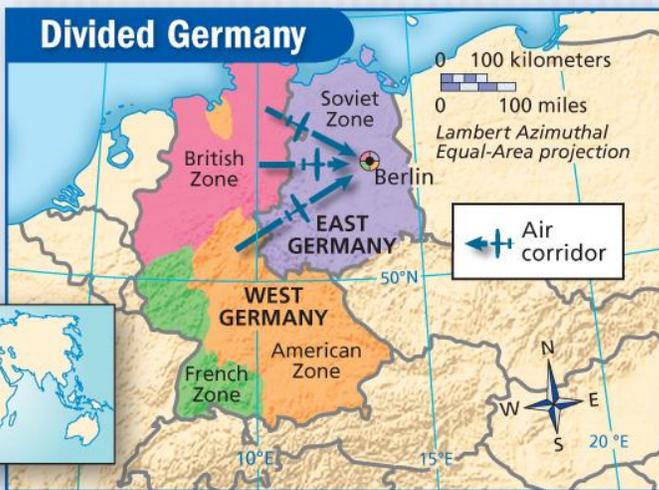
▲ U.S. Secretary of State Byrnes calls on Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and government official Vyacheslav Molotov.

## Primary Source Berlin Airlift

West Berlin, located in the middle of Soviet-controlled Germany, was isolated when Soviet leader Joseph Stalin blockaded all roads, railways, and waterways into the city. All planes were streamed along one of three 20-mile-wide air corridors. ▼



▲ Berliners watch as sacks of flour are unloaded.



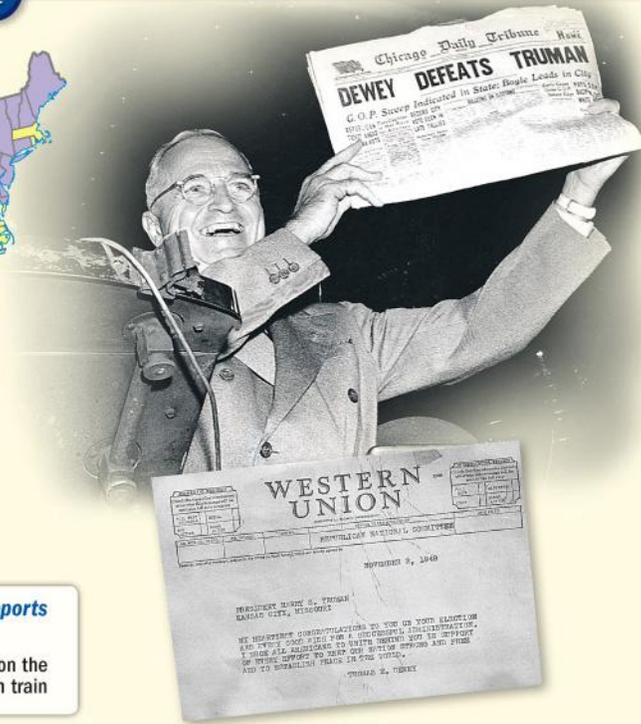
A 15-year-old girl living near one of the airports where a plane landed every three minutes, said, *"The noise of the planes didn't bother us at all. As a matter of fact, we felt secure. As long as we heard those planes flying, we felt like everything was all right."*

—from *Berlin in the Balance*

# The Election of 1948



Candidate	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Political Party
Truman	303	24,105,812	Democrat
Dewey	189	21,970,065	Republican
Thurmond	39	1,169,021	States' Rights



*"We were getting good crowds despite the newspaper reports that Mr. Dewey was a 10-to-1 bet to win the election."*

—William J. Bray, assistant on the 1948 presidential campaign train

## Primary Source

## The Korean War 1950–1953



# Economics & History

## By the Numbers

<b>1951</b>	<b>Comparing by Cost</b>	<b>2007</b>
\$0.92	Milk, per gallon	\$3.07
\$0.75	Eggs, per dozen	\$1.54
\$0.15	Loaf of bread	\$1.15
\$0.49	Oranges, per dozen	\$1.09
\$0.60	Chicken, per pound	\$1.03
\$0.03	Cost of first-class postage stamp	\$0.41
\$0.49	Movie ticket	\$6.50
\$1.45	Average hourly wage	\$17.30
\$1,995	Average cost of a new car	\$27,800
\$3,709	Median income for a family of four	\$59,000
\$299	Television set, 16-inch screen	\$299

—from various sources