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# The Cold War

1941–95

DAVID G. WILLIAMSON

FOURTH EDITION



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To Luca, Marco, Saul and Jonah

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# Contents

## **Introduction: about this book**

### **Chapter 1 Context**

- 1 The international context of the origins of the Cold War

### **Chapter 2 The origins of the Cold War**

- 1 What was the Cold War?
  - 2 The opposing ideologies of the Cold War
  - 3 The Soviet Union and the Western powers 1917–41
  - 4 Tensions within the Grand Alliance 1941–5
  - 5 The liberation of Eastern and Western Europe 1943–5
  - 6 The Yalta Conference, February 1945
  - 7 The end of the war in Europe
- Question practice

### **Chapter 3 The breakdown of the Grand Alliance 1945–7**

- 1 Transition from war to fragile peace 1945–6
  - 2 Germany, June 1945 to April 1947
  - 3 The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the Soviet response
  - 4 The 'iron curtain': European states 1945–7
  - 5 Key debate
- Question practice

### **Chapter 4 Conflict over Germany and consolidation of rival blocs**

- 1 The division of Germany
  - 2 The rearmament of Western Europe 1948–52 and the Soviet response
  - 3 The political and economic consolidation of the rival blocs
  - 4 The 'Thaw' 1953–5
  - 5 Key debate
- Question practice

## **Chapter 5 The spread of communism in Asia**

- 1 Japan and the Cold War 1945–52
  - 2 The triumph of communism in China 1945–50
  - 3 The Korean War 1950–3
  - 4 South-East Asia 1945–54
- Question practice

## **Chapter 6 The Khrushchev era and the ‘Second Cold War’ 1956–62**

- 1 The year of crises: 1956
  - 2 The aftermath of the Hungarian and Suez Crises
  - 3 The Berlin Crisis 1958–61
  - 4 The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962
  - 5 Assessment: the ‘Second Cold War’
- Question practice

## **Chapter 7 The Cold War in the era of *détente* 1963–75**

- 1 Challenges facing the USSR and USA 1963–72
  - 2 The road to *détente* 1963–75
  - 3 *Ostpolitik*
  - 4 The Helsinki Accords
- Question practice

## **Chapter 8 The Cold War 1975–91**

- 1 The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America 1975–83
  - 2 The ‘Third’ or ‘New Cold War’ 1979–85
  - 3 Gorbachev: *glasnost* and *détente* 1985–9
  - 4 The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe 1989–95
  - 5 The disintegration of the USSR 1990–1
- Question practice

## **Chapter 9 Interpreting the Cold War: a debate**

- 1 Could the Cold War have been avoided?
- 2 When did the Cold War actually start?
- 3 The Cold War in Europe

**4** Why did the Cold War in Europe last for so long?

**5** The Cold War in Asia

**6** The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America

**7** Why did the Cold War end?

Question practice

**Exam focus**

**Timeline**

**Glossary of terms**

**Further reading**

# Dedication

## **Keith Randell (1943–2002)**

The *Access to History* series was conceived and developed by Keith, who created a series to ‘cater for students as they are, not as we might wish them to be’. He leaves a living legacy of a series that for over 20 years has provided a trusted, stimulating and well-loved accompaniment to post-16 study. Our aim with these new editions is to continue to offer students the best possible support for their studies.



# Introduction: about this book

This book has been written primarily to support the study of the following courses:

- AQA 2R The Cold War, c.1945–91
- OCR Units Y223 (AS) and 253 The Cold War in Europe 1941–1995.

The specification grid on pages **ix–x** will help you understand how this book's content relates to the course that you are studying.

The writer hopes that student readers will regard the book not simply as an aid to better exam results, but as a study which is enjoyable in itself as an analysis of a very important theme in history.

The following explains the different features of this book and how they will help your study of the course.

## Beginning of the book

### Context

Starting a new course can be daunting if you are not familiar with the period or topic. This section outlines what you need to know about the beginning of the period and will set up some of the key themes. Reading this section will help you get up to speed on the content of the course.

## Throughout the book

### Key terms

You need to know these to gain an understanding of the period. The appropriate use of specific historical language in your essays will also help you improve the quality of your writing. Key terms are in boldface font the first time they appear in the book. They are defined in the margin and appear in the glossary of terms at the end of the book.

### Profiles

Some chapters contain profiles of important individuals. These include a brief biography and information about the importance and impact of the individual. This information can be very useful in understanding certain events and providing supporting evidence to your arguments.

### Sources

Historical sources are important in understanding why specific decisions were taken or on what contemporary writers and politicians based their actions. The questions accompanying each source will help you to understand and analyse the source.

## **Key debates**

The key debates between historians will help you think about historical interpretations and understand the different points of view for a given historiographical debate.

## **Chapter summaries**

These written summaries are intended to help you revise and consolidate your knowledge and understanding of the content.

## **Summary diagrams**

These visual summaries at the end of the sections are useful for revision.

## **Refresher questions**

The refresher questions are quick knowledge checks to make sure you have understood and remembered the material that is covered in the chapter.

## **Question practice**

There are opportunities at the end of each chapter to practise exam-style questions, arranged by exam board so you can practise the questions relevant for your course. The exam hint below each question will help you if you get stuck.

# **End of the book**

## **Timeline**

Understanding chronology (the order in which events took place) is an essential part of history. Knowing the order of events is one thing, but it is also important to know how events relate to each other. This timeline will help you put events into context and will be helpful for quick reference or as a revision tool.

## **Exam focus**

This section gives advice on how to answer questions in your exam, focusing on the different requirements of your exam paper. The guidance in this book has been based on detailed examiner reports since 2017. It models best practice in terms of answering exam questions and shows the most common pitfalls to help ensure you get the best grade possible.

## **Glossary of terms**

All key terms in the book are repeated here.

## **Further reading**

To achieve top marks in history, you will need to read beyond this textbook. This section contains a list of books and articles for you to explore. The list may also be helpful for an extended essay or piece of coursework.

# Online extras

This new edition is accompanied by online material to support you in your study. Throughout the book you will find the online extras icon to prompt you to make use of the relevant online resources for your course. By going to [www.hodderhistory.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hodderhistory.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras) you will find the following:

## Activity worksheets

These activities will help you develop the skills you need for the exam. The thinking that you do to complete the activities, and the notes you make from answering the questions, will prove valuable in your learning journey and helping you get the best grade possible. Your teacher may decide to print the entire series of worksheets to create an activity booklet to accompany the course. Alternatively they may be used as standalone activities for class work or homework. However, don't hesitate to go online and print off a worksheet yourself to get the most from this book.

## Who's who

A level history covers a lot of key figures so it's perfectly understandable if you find yourself confused by all the different names. This document organises the individuals mentioned throughout the book by categories so you know your Adenauer from your Ulbricht!

## Further research

While further reading of books and articles is helpful to achieve your best, there's a wealth of material online, including useful websites, digital archives, and documentaries on YouTube. This page lists resources that may help further your understanding of the topic. It may also prove a valuable reference for research if you decide to choose this period for the coursework element of your course.

# Specification grid

Chapter	AQA	OCR
<b>Chapter 1 Context</b>		
1 The international context of the origins of the Cold War		
<b>Chapter 2 The origins of the Cold War</b>		
1 What was the Cold War?	✓	✓
2 The ongoing ideologies of the Cold War	✓	✓
3 The Soviet Union and the Western powers 1917–41		✓
4 Tensions within the Grand Alliance 1941–5	✓	✓

5 The liberation of Eastern and Western Europe 1943–5	✓	✓
6 The Yalta Conference, February 1945	✓	✓
7 The end of the war in Europe	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 3 The breakdown of the Grand Alliance 1945–7</b>	✓	✓
1 Transition from war to fragile peace 1945–6	✓	✓
2 Germany, June 1945 to April 1947	✓	✓
3 The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the Soviet response	✓	✓
4 The 'iron curtain': European states 1945–7	✓	✓
5 Key debate: Did the USA or the USSR start the Cold War 1945–7?	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 4 Conflict over Germany and consolidation of rival blocs</b>		
1 The division of Germany	✓	✓
2 The rearmament of Western Europe 1948–52 and the Soviet response	✓	✓
3 The political and economic consolidation of the rival blocs	✓	✓
4 The 'Thaw' 1953–5	✓	✓
5 Key debate: Was it inevitable that the division of Germany should deepen and become more permanent during the years 1948–55?	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 5 The spread of communism in Asia</b>		
1 Japan and the Cold War 1945–52	✓	
2 The triumph of communism in China 1945–50	✓	
3 The Korean War 1950–3	✓	
4 South-East Asia 1945–54	✓	
<b>Chapter 6 The Khrushchev era and the 'Second Cold War' 1956–62</b>		
1 The year of crises: 1956	✓	✓
2 The aftermath of the Hungarian and Suez Crises	✓	✓
3 The Berlin Crisis 1958–61	✓	✓
4 The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962	✓	

5 Assessment: the 'Second Cold War'	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 7 The Cold War in the era of <i>détente</i> 1963–75</b>		
1 Challenges facing the USSR and USA 1963–72	✓	✓
2 The road to <i>détente</i> 1963–75	✓	✓
3 <i>Ostpolitik</i>	✓	✓
4 The Helsinki Accords	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 8 The Cold War 1975–91</b>		
1 The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America 1975–83	✓	
2 The 'Third' or 'New Cold War' 1979–85	✓	✓
3 Gorbachev: <i>glasnost</i> and <i>détente</i> 1985–9	✓	✓
4 The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe 1989–95	✓	✓
5 The disintegration of the USSR 1990–1	✓	✓
<b>Chapter 9 Interpreting the Cold War: a debate</b>		
1 Could the Cold War have been avoided?	✓	✓
2 When did the Cold War actually start?	✓	✓
3 The Cold War in Europe	✓	✓
4 Why did the Cold War in Europe last for so long?	✓	✓
5 The Cold War in Asia	✓	
6 The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America	✓	
7 Why did the Cold War end?	✓	✓

## CHAPTER 1

## Context

# 1 The international context of the origins of the Cold War

### *What was the international impact of the Russian Revolution?*

The **Industrial Revolution** of the nineteenth century created bitter social divisions between the newly created class of industrial workers, who toiled in the new factories, and the much smaller group of those who benefited from the profits of what the workers produced. The injustices of this system led to the development of socialist parties throughout Europe. By the 1880s, the ideas of **Karl Marx** and **Friedrich Engels** (see page 6) were a powerful influence on European socialism: they were revolutionary and aimed at the overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement by a fairer society, which would give the workers control over the economy and improve their standard of living.

By 1900, the mainstream socialist parties in central and western Europe were becoming less revolutionary and were ready to work towards change using **democratic** rather than revolutionary means. The earlier threat of revolution had caused governments progressively to widen the franchise and reform working conditions in the factories. By 1914, when the First World War broke out, the main socialist parties in central and western Europe rallied patriotically to their countries' support. Even in Russia, the majority of socialists were ready to support the war against Germany, with the exception of the **Bolshevik Party**. Its leader, **Vladimir Lenin**, however, hoped that a Russian defeat by Germany would lead to a Bolshevik or Communist revolution, which would then spread throughout Europe.

## The Russian Revolution

Lenin was proved right in 1917. Heavy casualties, military defeats and chaotic organisation sapped the morale of the Russian army and led to revolution in February 1917 and the abdication of the tsar. A provisional government was established, but, in October 1917, the Bolsheviks, exploiting the misery caused by the government's determination to continue the war against Germany, seized power and made peace with Germany. This action alone caused the **Allied and Associated powers**, who were fighting Germany, to view the new Bolshevik government with mistrust. In the subsequent civil war in Russia between the **White Russians** and the Bolsheviks, Britain, France, the USA and Japan gave the White Russians military and financial assistance. However, this did not prevent their defeat and confirmed Russian suspicions that Japan, the USA and the Western European states were out to destroy the Bolshevik regime, which (see pages 6–8), was also seen as an **ideological challenge** to Western democracy.

## The international impact of the Revolution



Marx and his fellow Communists had assumed that a Communist revolution would occur in a highly industrialised country such as Germany or Britain. Yet, contrary to these expectations, the revolution had broken out in Russia, which in 1917 was still predominantly a rural economy despite the accelerated development of its industries during the war. Lenin and his colleagues were convinced that communism in Russia could survive only if the rest of the developed world also went communist. With this in mind, the **Comintern** was founded to promote worldwide revolution. It tried to encourage revolutions in Germany and the Western European states and also supported nationalist independence movements in China and the British and French empires. Ultimately, as is explained in [Chapter 2](#) (see page [7](#)), the aim of Lenin and his successors was to establish a Communist society.

Strategically, Russia or the **USSR**, as it became called after 1922, was much weaker than it had been before 1914 under the tsars. Although the Bolsheviks won the civil war, they had been unable to stop Poland, Finland and the Baltic states (see the map, page [11](#)) from becoming independent. These states now created what was called a '*cordon sanitaire*', or barrier, between the USSR and central Europe, which prevented the USSR from becoming a direct threat to the Western powers. Throughout the 1920s, the USSR was on the defensive; it was slowly recovering from the civil war and feared that its enemies might combine to destroy the Revolution. When Stalin became the dominant leader in 1928, the USSR retreated into a policy of 'socialism in one country', whereby it concentrated on building socialism at home and tried to isolate itself from the rest of the world.

Once Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany, Stalin modified this policy. Hitler not only perceived the USSR and Bolshevism to be a mortal threat to Germany but was also determined to colonise and settle Germans in large parts of the western territories of the USSR. In reaction to this, Stalin advised Communists in the European states to ally with the more moderate, democratic socialist and liberal parties to form **popular fronts** against fascism. At the same time, the USSR joined the **League of Nations** and negotiated the Franco-Soviet Pact in 1935, and also intervened in the Spanish Civil War to support the Popular Front against Franco.

Despite the threats from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, Britain and France on the one hand and the USSR on the other still viewed each other with deep suspicion. To many in both Britain and France, the USSR was a far greater threat to Europe than Nazi Germany. It was not surprising, therefore, that Stalin feared that Britain and France would remain neutral if Hitler decided to attack the USSR. This mutual suspicion prevented any effective cooperation against Nazi Germany in the period 1938–9, and helps to explain why Stalin in August 1939 decided to agree to the Nazi–Soviet Pact, just ten days before the German invasion of Poland which triggered the Second World War. To avoid a war on two fronts, Hitler had offered Stalin eastern Poland, provided he remained neutral in the war against the Western powers.

## The Second World War

The desire for security and a deep distrust of Britain and France had persuaded Stalin to take this step, but it was a serious miscalculation. He believed that the war would lead to a bloody stalemate and eventually to Communist revolutions in Britain, France and Germany, but Hitler rapidly defeated France in 1940, and on 22 June 1941 launched a massive attack on the USSR. However, even though this cost the USSR over 20 million casualties in the ensuing struggle, the war enabled the USSR to escape from its isolation. Once the USA entered the war in December

1941, the USSR had become, together with Britain and the USA, one of the victorious 'Big Three' powers in the fight against Nazi Germany and its allies.

Yet by 1943–4, when the 'Big Three' started to discuss the shape of the post-war world, cracks had begun to appear in the alliance and the old mistrust resurfaced. It became clear that Britain and the USA had a very different concept of democracy from the USSR (see page 7). As the Allies advanced across the continent of Europe into Germany, each side pursued different policies. The USSR saw to it that in the liberated eastern countries the key political posts were occupied by Communists, while in the states liberated by Britain and the USA every effort was made to keep Communists from seizing power.

When the war against Germany ended in 1945, the global balance of power was radically altered. Britain and France were both powers in decline, while the USA had emerged from its **isolationist** policies in the 1930s to become the strongest military and economic power in the world. It was determined to open the world up to free trade and its version of democracy. The USSR, on the other hand, had also become a great power, controlling most of eastern Europe. It, too, had its own agenda. Ultimately, it believed in imposing communism on a global scale. In the short term, it was ready to compromise with the Western powers, but essentially it viewed these powers as ideological enemies, who were intent on the destruction of communism and the USSR. This then was the context of the Cold War that was to dominate the world until 1989.

## CHAPTER 2

# The origins of the Cold War

The Cold War was a period of intense political and ideological hostility between capitalist and Communist countries, in particular between the USA and the USSR, which, from its onset in 1945, lasted for over 40 years. Several times, it brought the world perilously close to another global war. This chapter looks at historians' attempts to define what the Cold War was and its origins from 1917 to 1945 through the following themes:

- What was the Cold War?
- The opposing ideologies of the Cold War
- The Soviet Union and the Western powers 1917–41
- Tensions within the Grand Alliance 1941–5
- The liberation of Eastern and Western Europe 1943–5
- The Yalta Conference, February 1945
- The end of the war in Europe

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## KEY DATES

1917	Oct.	Russian Revolution
1918–20		Russian Civil War
1939	Sept.	Hitler and Stalin partitioned Poland
1941	June	German invasion of USSR
1943	Sept. 3	Italian Armistice
	Nov.–Dec.	Tehran Conference
1944	June 6	Allied forces invaded France
	July	Red Army entered central Poland
	Aug. 23	Formation of coalition government in Romania
	Sept. 9	Communist coup in Bulgaria
	Oct. 9	Anglo-Soviet 'percentages agreement'
	Dec.	British suppressed Communist uprising in Greece
1945	Feb. 4–11	Yalta Conference
	May 8	Unconditional German surrender

---

## 1 What was the Cold War?

### *What were the main characteristics of the Cold War?*

The term 'cold war' had been used before 1945 to describe periods of extreme tension between states stopping just short of war. In 1893, the German **socialist** Eduard Bernstein described the **arms race** between Germany and its neighbours as a kind of 'cold war' where 'there is no shooting but ... bleeding'. In May 1945, when the USA and the USSR faced each other eyeball

to eyeball in Germany, this term rapidly came back into use. The British writer George Orwell, commenting on the significance of the dropping of the atomic bomb (see page 40), foresaw ‘a peace that is no peace’, in which the USA and USSR would be both ‘unconquerable and in a permanent state of cold war’ with each other. The Cold War was, however, more than just an arms race. It was also, as historian John Mason has pointed out, ‘a fundamental clash of **ideologies** and interests’. These are discussed in more detail in the next section.

The US historian Anders Stephanson, writing in 1996, defined the essence of the Cold War as follows:

- Both sides denied each other’s legitimacy as a regime and attempted to attack each other by every means short of war.
- Increasingly this conflict became **polarised** between two great powers: the USA and the USSR. There was an intense build-up of both nuclear and conventional military weapons and a prolonged arms race between the USA and the USSR.
- Each side suppressed its internal **dissidents**.

Most historians would accept this definition, although there is less agreement on the timescale of the Cold War. The British historian David Reynolds, whose chronology is for the most part followed in this book, argues that there were three cold wars:

- 1948–53
- 1958–63
- 1979–85.

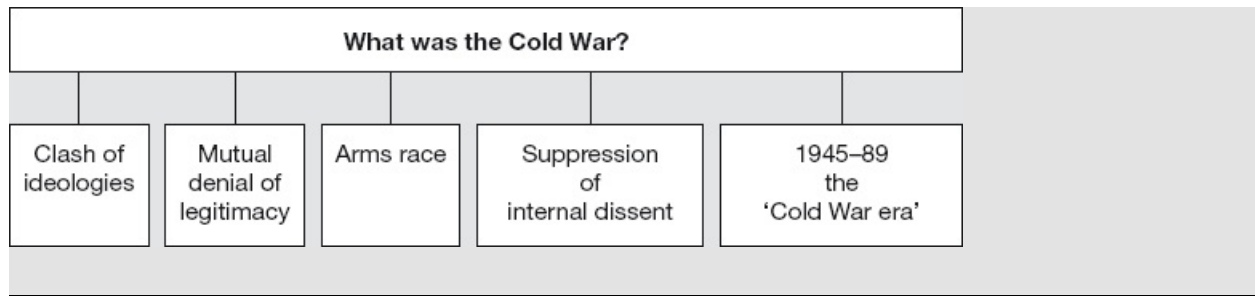
These were ‘punctuated by periods of *détente*’. Two Russian historians, Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, however, provide a slightly different model: they define the Cold War as lasting from 1948 to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and the subsequent 27 years as no more than a ‘prolonged **armistice**’ rather than actual peace. The problem with this interpretation is that it ignores the impact of the Vietnam War and the outbreak of the ‘Third Cold War’ in 1979.

While the chronology of the Cold War is open to debate, and the beginning of the ‘Second Cold War’ could as easily be dated from October 1956 as from November 1958, it is important to grasp that the years 1945–89 formed a ‘Cold War era’, in which years of intense hostility alternated with periods of *détente*, but, even then, the arms race and ideological competition between the two sides continued. Both sides also continued to engage in ‘**proxy conflicts**’ in the developing world. The US historian John Lewis Gaddis argues that the Cold War lasted for so long because of the nuclear balance. Soviet military, particularly nuclear, strength disguised the essential economic weakness of the USSR, which eventually caused its collapse (see page 203).

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### WHAT WAS THE COLD WAR?



## 2 The opposing ideologies of the Cold War

*In what ways did the ideologies of the opposing sides differ?*

The main intellectual basis of communism was constructed in the nineteenth century by two Germans, Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx. Their thinking provided the foundations of **Marxism–Leninism**, which, in the twentieth century, became the governing ideology of the USSR, much of central and eastern Europe, the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, and several other states.

Marx argued that capitalism and the **bourgeoisie** in an industrial society would inevitably be overthrown by the workers or **proletariat** in a socialist revolution. This initially would lead to a **dictatorship of the proletariat** in which the working class would break up the old order. Eventually, a true egalitarian communist society would emerge in which money was no longer needed and each gave ‘according to his ability’ and received ‘according to his need’. Marx idealistically believed that once this stage was achieved then crime, envy and rivalry would become things of the past since they were based on greed and economic competition.

### Marxism–Leninism

In the early twentieth century, Vladimir Ilych Lenin developed Marx’s ideas and adapted them to the unique conditions in Russia. Russia’s economy was primarily agricultural and lacked a large industrial proletariat, which Marx saw as the class that would rise up and revolt. Lenin, therefore, argued that the Communists in Russia needed to be strongly organised with a small compact core, consisting of reliable and experienced revolutionaries, who could achieve their aims of undermining and toppling the tsarist regime. In 1903, Lenin and his followers founded the Bolshevik Party, which seized power in Russia in October 1917.

Just before the Bolsheviks seized power, Lenin outlined his plans for the creation of a revolutionary state in an unfinished pamphlet, *State and Revolution*. It would be run by ‘the proletariat organised as a ruling class’ and would use terror and force against any organisation or person who did not support it. In fact, the state would be the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’, but would ‘wither away’ only once its enemies at home and abroad were utterly destroyed. Then, of course, the reality of communism would dawn where, it was believed, there would be no economic exploitation, crime, selfishness or violence.

Under the leadership of at first Lenin, and then Josef Stalin (see page 16), the USSR became an authoritarian, Communist state where the government was in charge of all aspects of the economy; there were no democratic elections and freedom of speech was limited. Thus, the state did not in fact 'wither away'.

## Capitalism

Capitalism is an economic system in which:

- The production of goods and their distribution depend on the investment of private capital with a view to making a profit.
- Unlike a socialist **command economy**, a capitalist economy is run by people who wish to make a profit and therefore have to produce what people want, rather than what the state wants.
- Opposition to Marxism–Leninism in the USA and the Western European states was reinforced, or – as Marxist theoreticians would argue – even determined, by the contradictions between capitalism, which was the prevailing economic system in the Western world, and the command economies of the Communist-dominated states.

## Rival definitions of democracy

In the West there was a deep mistrust of communism as a political system, particularly its lack of democracy. The USSR dismissed parliamentary democracy as a mere camouflage for capitalism and its politicians as its puppets. For Marxist–Leninists, democracy meant economic equality where there were no extremes between wealthy capitalists and poor workers and peasants. However, for the democratic states of Western Europe and the USA, democracy meant:

- the liberty of the individual
- equality before the law
- freedom of speech
- a parliament elected by the people to whom the government is ultimately responsible.

Rather than economic equality under the dictatorship of the proletariat, liberal or parliamentary democracy challenges the right of any one party and leader to have the permanent monopoly of power. It is opposed to dictatorship in any form and ultimately the people can get rid of an unpopular government in an election.

## Religion

Marxism–Leninism was opposed to religion. One of its core arguments was that it was not an all-powerful God who influenced the fate of humankind, but rather economic and material conditions. Once these were reformed under communism, humankind would prosper and not need religion. For Marxists, religion was merely, as Marx himself had said, 'the opium of the masses'. It duped the proletariat into accepting exploitation by their rulers and capitalist businessmen. During the revolution in Russia, churches, mosques and synagogues were closed down, and religion was banned. Ironically, Marxism–Leninism, for all its hatred of **transcendental religions**, was in reality a secular religion in that its adherents believed fanatically in the truth of its ideology.

In Europe, Christian Churches were among the leading critics and enemies of communism. After 1945, Catholic-dominated political parties in western Germany and Italy played a key role in opposing communism. In 1979, the election of Pope John Paul II of Poland as head of the Roman Catholic Church strengthened political opposition in Poland to communism (see page 200).

#### SOURCE A

From *The Cold War, 1945–1991*, by John W. Mason, Routledge, 1996, page 71.

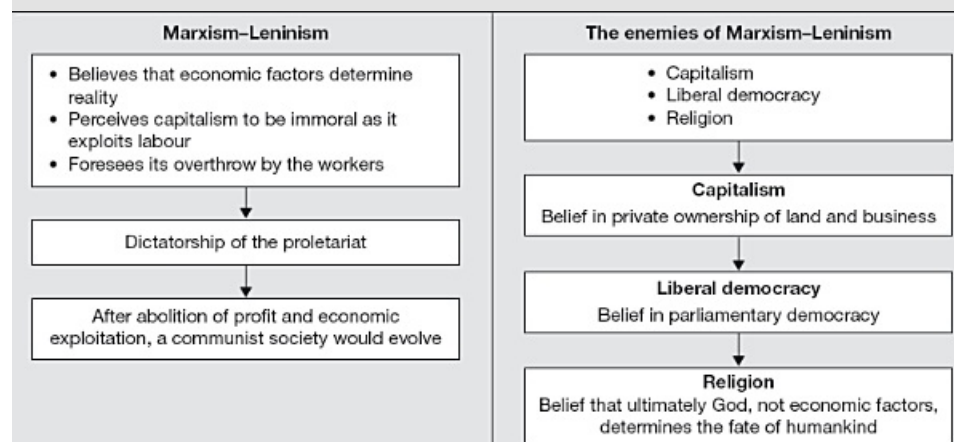
*Fundamentally the cold war was a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, fuelled on both sides by the belief that the ideology of the other side had to be destroyed. In this sense ... co-existence was not possible ... The Soviet Union held to Lenin's belief that conflict between Communism and Capitalism was inevitable. The United States believed that peace and security in the world would only emerge when the evil of Communism had been exorcised [expelled].*

#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How does the historian John Mason define the causes of the Cold War in [Source A](#)?

#### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

##### THE OPPOSING IDEOLOGIES OF THE COLD WAR



## 3 The Soviet Union and the Western powers 1917–41

*How did relations develop between the USSR and the main Western states in 1924–41?*



### ***Was there already a 'Cold War' between the Western powers and the USSR in 1918–41?***

The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia succeeded against the odds, but Lenin was initially convinced that victory within Russia alone would not ensure the survival of the Revolution. If communism was to survive in Russia, it had also to triumph globally. Otherwise the capitalist powers would crush it.

---

#### **SOURCE B**

**From Lenin's 'Farewell Address to the Swiss Workers', April 1917. Quoted in M.S. Levin et al., translators, *Lenin's Collected Works*, volume 23, Progress Publishers, 1964, page 371.**

*To the Russian proletariat has fallen the great honour of beginning the series of revolutions which the imperialist war [the First World War] has made an objective inevitability. But the idea that the Russian proletariat is the chosen revolutionary proletariat is absolutely alien to us. We know perfectly well that the proletariat of Russia is less organised, less prepared and less class conscious than the proletariat of other countries. It is not its special qualities but rather the special conjuncture of historical circumstances that for a certain, perhaps very short, time has made the proletariat of Russia the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world.*

*Russia is a peasant country, one of the most backward of European countries. Socialism cannot triumph directly and immediately ... [but] ... our revolution [may be] the prologue to world socialist revolution, a step towards it.*

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#### **SOURCE QUESTION**

To what extent does [Source B](#) help in understanding Soviet foreign policy in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution?

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## **The USA and Russia 1917–18**

The simultaneous expansion of Russia and the USA until they dominated the world had been foreseen as early as 1835 by the French historian Alexis de Tocqueville (see [Source C](#)):

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#### **SOURCE C**

**From Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, edited by J.P. Mayer, Doubleday, 1969, pages 412–13.**

*There are now two great nations in the world, which, starting from different points, seem to be advancing toward the same goal: the Russians and the **Anglo-Americans**. Both have grown in obscurity, and while the world's attention was occupied elsewhere, they have suddenly taken their place among the leading nations, making the world take note of their birth and of their greatness almost at the same instant. All other peoples seem to have nearly reached their natural limits and to need nothing but to preserve them; but these two are*

*growing. ... The American fights against natural obstacles; the Russian is at grips with men. The former combats the wilderness and barbarism; the latter, civilization with all its arms ... To attain their aims, the former relies on personal interest and gives free scope to the unguided strength and common sense of individuals. The latter in a sense concentrates the whole power of society in one man. One has freedom as the principal means of action; the other has servitude. Their point of departure is different and their paths diverse; nevertheless, each seems called by some secret desire of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source C](#) help to explain US–Soviet rivalry during the years 1941–5?

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It was, however, the First World War that brought these great states more closely into contact with each other. When the USA entered the war against Germany, it was briefly an ally of the Russians, but this changed dramatically once the Bolsheviks seized power in October 1917 and made peace with Germany. Ideologically, there developed a clash between the ideas of the US president, Woodrow Wilson, and Lenin. Wilson, in his Fourteen Points of January 1918, presented an ambitious global programme for self-determination, free trade and collective security through a League of Nations, while Lenin preached world revolution and communism.

## The Russian Revolution and Allied intervention 1918–22

One historian, Howard Roffmann, argued in 1976 that the Cold War ‘proceeded from the very moment the Bolsheviks triumphed in Russia in 1917’. There was certainly immediate hostility between Soviet Russia and the Western states. Although the Bolsheviks had seized power in the major cities in 1917, they had to fight a bitter civil war to destroy their opponents, the Whites, who were assisted by Britain, France, the USA and Japan. These countries hoped that, by assisting the Whites, they would be able to strangle Bolshevism and prevent it from spreading to Germany which, after defeat in the First World War in November 1918, was in turmoil and vulnerable to communist revolution by its own workers. If Germany were to become communist, the Allies feared that the whole of Europe would be engulfed in revolution. However, Allied intervention was ineffective and served only to strengthen Bolshevism. In 1919, French and US troops withdrew, to be followed by the British in 1920. Only Japanese troops remained until the end of the Civil War in 1922. Intervention in the USSR did inevitably fuel Soviet suspicions of the Western powers.

## The Polish–Russian War 1920

At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the British foreign minister, Lord Curzon, proposed that **Poland**’s eastern frontier with Russia should be about 160 kilometres (100 miles) to the east of

Warsaw; this demarcation became known as the Curzon Line. Poland, however, rejected this and exploited the chaos in Russia to seize as much territory as it could. In early 1920, Poland launched an invasion of Ukraine. This was initially successful, but, by August 1920, Bolshevik forces had pushed the Poles back to Warsaw. With the help of military supplies and advisers from France, Poland rallied and managed to inflict a decisive defeat on the **Red Army**, driving it out of much of the territory Poland claimed. In 1921, Poland signed the Treaty of Riga with Russia and was awarded considerable areas of Ukraine and Byelorussia, in which Poles formed only a minority of the population.

The extension of Poland so far east helped to isolate Russia geographically from western and central Europe. The creation of the independent states of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania helped to further this, leading to the creation of a *cordon sanitaire*, a zone of states, to prevent the spread of communism to the rest of Europe. The recovery of these territories of the former Russian Empire became a major aim of the USSR's foreign policy before 1939.



**Figure 2.1** Central and eastern Europe in 1921. This map shows the changes made by the peace treaties of 1919–21 and how Russia (USSR) was now confined to the margins of Europe. What information about the situation in Europe is conveyed in this map?

## Soviet foreign policy 1922–41

Once the immediate possibility of a world revolution vanished, the consolidation of socialism within the USSR became the priority for Lenin and his successors, particularly Stalin, who after 1928 adopted the policy of '**socialism in one country**'. However, this did not stop the USSR from supporting subversive activities carried out by communist groups or sympathisers within the Western democracies and their colonies. These activities were co-ordinated by the Comintern, which was established in 1919 to spread communist ideology. Although foreign

communist parties had representatives in the organisation, the Communist Party of Russia controlled it.

## Hitler and Stalin 1933–8

The coming to power of Hitler and the Nazi Party in Germany in 1933 led to a radical change in Soviet foreign policy. Nazi Germany, with its hatred of communism and stated goal of annexing vast territories in the Soviet Union for colonisation, presented a threat to the USSR's very existence. To combat this, Stalin, despite the ideological differences between the USSR and Britain and France, attempted to create a defensive alliance against Nazi Germany:

- In 1934, the USSR joined the League of Nations, which Stalin hoped to turn into a more effective instrument of collective security.
- In 1935, Stalin signed a pact with France and Czechoslovakia in the hope that this would lead to close military cooperation against Germany. French suspicions of Soviet communism prevented this development.
- In 1936, Stalin intervened in the Spanish Civil War to assist the Republican government against the **Nationalists**, who were assisted by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.
- In September 1938, in response to Hitler's threat to invade Czechoslovakia, Stalin was apparently ready to intervene, provided France did likewise. However, Hitler's last-minute decision to agree to a compromise proposal at the Munich Conference of 29–30 September, which resulted in the **Munich Agreement**, ensured that Soviet assistance was not needed. The fact that the USSR was not invited to the Conference reinforced Stalin's fears that Britain, France and Germany would work together against the USSR.

## Anglo-French negotiations with the USSR, April–August 1939

In March 1939, Germany invaded what was left of Czechoslovakia and, in April, the British and French belatedly began negotiations with Stalin for a defensive alliance against Germany. These negotiations were protracted and complicated by mutual mistrust. Stalin's demand that the Soviet Union should have the right to intervene in the affairs of the small states on its western borders if they were threatened with internal subversion by the Nazis, as Czechoslovakia had been in 1938, was rejected outright by the British. Britain feared that the USSR would exploit this as an excuse to seize the territories for itself.

Stalin was also suspicious that Britain and France were manoeuvring the Soviets into a position where they would have to do most of the fighting against Germany should war break out. The talks finally broke down on 17 August over the question of securing Poland's and Romania's consent to the passage of the Red Army through their territory in the event of war; something which was rejected by both states.

## The Nazi–Soviet Pact

Until early 1939, Hitler saw Poland as a possible ally in a future war against the USSR for the conquest of *lebensraum*. Poland's acceptance of the **Anglo-French Guarantee** forced him to

reconsider his position and respond positively to those advisers advocating temporary cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Stalin, whose priorities were the defence of the USSR and the recovery of those parts of the former Russian Empire which had been lost in 1917–20, was ready to explore German proposals for a non-aggression pact; this was signed on 24 August. Not only did it commit both powers to benevolent neutrality towards each other, but in a secret protocol it outlined the German and Soviet **spheres of interest** in Eastern Europe: the Baltic states and Bessarabia in Romania fell within the Soviet sphere, while Poland was to be divided between them.

On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September. The Soviet Union, as agreed secretly in the Nazi–Soviet Pact, invaded eastern Poland on 17 September, although by this time German armies had all but defeated Polish forces. By the beginning of October, Poland was completely defeated and was divided between the Soviet Union and Germany.

## Territorial expansion, October 1939 to June 1941

Until June 1941, Stalin pursued a policy of territorial expansion in Eastern Europe aimed at defending the USSR against possible future aggression from Germany. To this end, and with the dual aim of recovering parts of the former Russian Empire, Stalin strengthened the USSR's western defences:

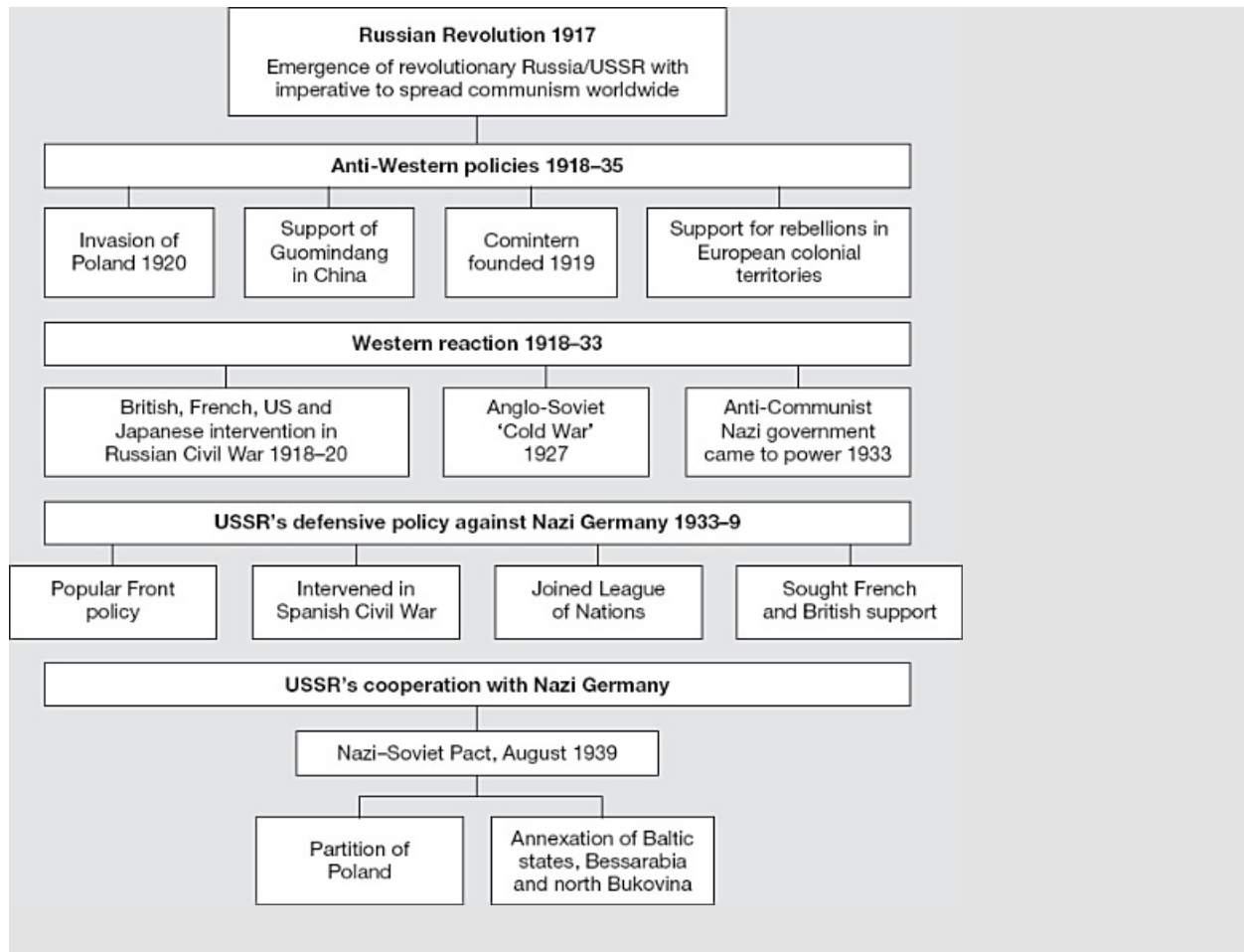
- He signed mutual assistance pacts with Estonia and Latvia in October 1939. The Lithuanians were pressured into agreeing to the establishment of Soviet bases in their territory.
- In March 1940, after a brief war with Finland, the USSR acquired the Hanko naval base and other territory along their mutual border.
- Stalin's reaction to the defeat of France in June 1940, which meant German domination of Europe, was to seize the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and to annex Bessarabia and northern Bukovina from Romania.

In Poland and the other territories occupied by the USSR and the Red Army, officers and **NKVD** agents were immediately sent in to impose Soviet communism. They used local collaborators and communists as well as organising mass deportations of potential enemies to gulags or **concentration camps** in the USSR. In many ways this anticipated Soviet policy in Eastern Europe after 1945.

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WESTERN POWERS 1917–41



## 4 Tensions within the Grand Alliance 1941-5

***In what ways did the war aims and ambitions of the USSR, the USA and Britain conflict?***

***To what extent had the Great Powers agreed on dividing up Europe into spheres of influence by the end of 1944?***

Between June and December 1941, the global political and military situation was completely transformed. On 22 June, Germany invaded the USSR. Hitler's aggression turned Britain and the USSR into allies fighting a common enemy, and on 12 July this was confirmed by the Anglo-Soviet agreement. On 7 December 1941, Japan's attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, brought the USA into the war, as it immediately declared war on Japan, an **Axis** power. In response, Germany and Italy both declared war against the USA on 11 December. Germany was now confronted with what became the Grand Alliance of Britain, the USA and the USSR, the leaders of which were known as the 'Big Three'. Although all three powers cooperated closely in the war against Germany, the USA and USSR never actually signed a formal alliance



and the USSR did not enter the war against Japan until July 1945.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Get to grips with the reasons for the tensions in the Grand Alliance, 1941–5 by completing Worksheet 1 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Both sides remained suspicious of each other's motives. Stalin kept open the possibility of a separate peace with Germany, and suspected that the Anglo-American decision not to invade France until 1944 was a plot to ensure the defeat of communism by Nazi Germany. **Andrei Gromyko**, a Soviet diplomat in Washington in 1942, was convinced that these mutual suspicions led to a 'secret Cold War accompanying the "hot war" '.

## The conflicting aims of the Big Three

As victory over the Axis powers became more certain, each of the three Allies began to develop its own often conflicting aims and agendas for post-war Europe.

### The USSR's aims

In the early 1950s, most Western observers assumed that Moscow's main aim was to destroy the Western powers and create global communism, yet more recent historical research, which the end of the Cold War has made possible, has shown that Stalin's policy was often more flexible and less ambitious – at least in the short term – than it appeared to be at the time. By the winter of 1944–5 his immediate priorities were clear. He wanted security for the USSR and **reparations** from Germany and its allies. The USSR had, after all, borne the brunt of German aggression and suffered immense physical damage and heavy casualties – at least 20 million people by May 1945. Just as statesmen in the West perceived communists in Italy, France or Greece to be a potential threat to the stability of Western Europe, so Stalin, too, viewed any permanent divergence from the Soviet Communist model in the occupied territories as a threat both to Soviet security and to communism.

To protect the USSR against any future German attack, Stalin was determined to hang on to the land annexed from Poland in 1939 and, as compensation, to give Poland the German territories that lay beyond the River Oder (see the map on page 41). He also aimed to reintegrate into the USSR the Baltic provinces of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as well as the territory lost to Finland in 1941, to annex Bessarabia and to bring both Romania and Bulgaria within the Soviet orbit (see the map on page 11).

In eastern Europe, Stalin's first priority was to ensure that regimes friendly to the USSR were set up. In some states, such as Poland and Romania, this could only be guaranteed by a Communist government, but in others, such as Hungary and Czechoslovakia, Stalin was prepared to tolerate more broadly based, but friendly, governments in which the Communists formed a minority. However, even where the Communists might not be in a majority, the USSR took the following steps to ensure that ultimately they would be able to take control:



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## Josef Stalin



<b>1879</b>	Born Loseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili in present-day Georgia, the son of a cobbler
<b>1917–22</b>	Appointed Soviet commissar for the nationalities
<b>1928</b>	Defeated internal opposition and effectively became Soviet leader
<b>1928–34</b>	Introduced collectivisation of agriculture and the Five-Year Plan to industrialise the USSR
<b>1941</b>	Surprised by German invasion of the USSR
<b>1945</b>	Presided over the final defeat of Nazi Germany
<b>1947</b>	Founded Cominform
<b>1948–9</b>	Berlin Blockade
<b>1950</b>	Secretly approved North Korean plans to invade South Korea
<b>1953</b>	Died

Stalin was originally going to become a priest, but was expelled from the seminary because of his revolutionary beliefs. He was twice sent to Siberia and after escaping had to seek exile in Vienna and Paris. In 1912, he became the Bolshevik expert on racial minorities, and after the Revolution he was appointed commissar of nationalities. In 1922, he occupied the key position of General Secretary. By 1928, he had defeated his political rivals and was in control of the Bolshevik Party. He launched the Five-Year Plan, which involved the **collectivisation of agriculture** and the massive expansion of heavy industry. Opponents and critics were subjected to show trials and purged. In May 1941, he became chairman of the Council of Ministers, and in the Great Patriotic War (1941–5) against Germany took over supreme control of the Soviet war effort. Victory in 1945 was celebrated as exclusively his achievement. It enabled the USSR to dominate Eastern Europe. Until his death Stalin's power was unchallenged. To ensure that his policies were carried out he relied on the Commission for Foreign Affairs or the 'Quintet'.

Stalin's character is important in any assessment of the causes of the Cold War. In many ways the record of his foreign policy was cautious and pragmatic, but he was also a Marxist–Leninist, who believed in the ultimate triumph of communism. Historians are divided as to whether he had ambitions to gain control of Germany and even of Western Europe after 1945. Some, like the US historian R.C. Raack, writing in

1995, believed that he pursued a revolutionary and expansionary policy until 1948, when he returned to a more defensive policy towards the USA and the West. Others point out that the USSR had suffered enormously in the war and was hardly in a position to challenge the West after 1945.

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- The NKVD built up secret police forces in the occupied areas modelled after its own image, which arrested potential enemies of the USSR.
- Local Communists were put in charge of radio stations as the radio was the most powerful form of popular mass media at that time. The Soviet authorities hoped that eventually pro-communist radio programmes as well as other propaganda methods would win mass support for a communist government.
- Particular care was taken to control youth organisations such as Church groups or boy scouts.

By 1944, Stalin seemed to have envisaged a post-war Europe which, for a period of time at least, would consist of three different areas:

- An area under direct Soviet control in Eastern Europe: Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and, for a time at least, the future Soviet zone in Germany.
- An 'intermediate zone', which was neither fully communist nor fully capitalist, comprising **Yugoslavia**, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Finland. The communists would share power there with the liberal, moderate socialist and peasant parties, but retain tight control over the police and media. These areas would act as a 'bridge' between Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe and Western Europe and the USA.
- A non-communist Western Europe, which would also include Greece.

## Dissolution of the Comintern

In 1943, Stalin dissolved the Comintern (see page 2) as a gesture to convince his allies that the USSR was no longer supporting global revolution. The British government saw this optimistically as evidence that Stalin wished to cooperate in the reconstruction of Europe after the end of the war.

## The USA's aims

In the 1950s, Western historians, such as Herbert Feis, argued that the USA was too preoccupied with winning the struggle against Germany and Japan to give much thought to the political future of post-war Europe, since it assumed that all problems would, in due course, be solved in cooperation with Britain and the USSR. Yet this argument was sharply criticised by **revisionist historians** in the 1960s and 1970s who insisted that the USA very much had its own security agenda for the post-war period.

More recently, historians writing after the end of the Cold War, such as Melvyn Leffler and Frederik Logevall, have stressed that the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, and the dramatic developments in air technology during the war, made the USA feel vulnerable to potential threats from foreign powers. Consequently, as early as 1943–4, US officials began to draw up plans for a chain of bases which would give the USA control of both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. This would also give US industry access to the raw materials and markets of most of Western Europe and Asia. Leffler argues that the steps the USA took to ensure its own

security alarmed Stalin and so created a ‘spiral of distrust’, which led ultimately to the Cold War.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of President Roosevelt by completing Worksheet 1 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SOURCE D

**From an article by Melvyn Leffler, ‘National Security and US Foreign Policy’, in M.P. Leffler and D.S. Painter, editors, *Origins of the Cold War*, Routledge, 1994, pages 37–8.**

*The dynamics of the Cold War ... are easier to comprehend when one grasps the breadth of the American conception of national security that had emerged between 1945 and 1948. This conception included a strategic [military and political] sphere of influence within the western hemisphere, domination of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, an extensive system of outlying bases to enlarge the strategic frontier and project American power, an even more extensive system of transit rights to facilitate the conversion of commercial air bases to military use, access to the resources and markets of Eurasia, denial of these resources to a prospective enemy, and the maintenance of nuclear superiority.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How important is [Source D](#) in explaining the causes of the Cold War?

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## The United Nations

US political intentions were made clear in the **Atlantic Charter**, which British Prime Minister Churchill and US President **Roosevelt** drew up in August 1941, four months before the USA entered the war. This new, democratic world order was to be underpinned by a future United Nations Organisation (UN). By late 1943, Roosevelt envisaged this as being composed of an assembly where all the nations of the world would be represented, although real power and influence would be wielded by an executive committee, or Security Council. This would be dominated by the Soviet Union, Britain, China, France and the USA. For all his talk about the rights of democratic states, he realised that the future of the post-war world would be decided by these powerful states.

## The USA’s economic aims

Most of Roosevelt’s economic policy was inspired by the ideas of his predecessor, Woodrow Wilson (see page [10](#)), who in 1919 had hoped eventually to turn the world into one large free trade area. This would be composed of democratic states, where **tariffs** and **economic nationalism** would be abolished. The US government was determined that there should be no

more attempts by Germany or Italy to create **autarchic economies**, and that the British and French, too, would be forced to allow other states to trade freely with their empires. Indeed, the US commitment to establishing democratic states meant that they supported the **decolonisation** of the European colonial empires.

In July 1944, the USA organised a conference in New Hampshire attended by 44 nations which created a new global structure encouraging international trade. It set up the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (see page 141). Also, the dollar replaced the British pound sterling as the standard currency of world trade. By accepting this, Britain effectively acknowledged US global economic leadership. Significantly, however, Stalin, despite the offer of a large US loan, rejected any involvement in these new institutions, as he feared that this would open up the USSR to capitalism.

## Britain's aims

The British government's main aims in 1944 were to ensure the survival of Britain as an independent Great Power still in possession of its empire, and to remain on friendly terms with both the USA and the USSR. The British government was, however, alarmed by the prospect of Soviet influence spreading into central Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, where Britain had vital strategic and economic interests. The Suez Canal in Egypt was its main route to India and British industry was increasingly dependent on oil from the Middle East. As Britain had gone to war over Poland, Churchill also wanted a democratic government in Warsaw, even though he conceded that its eastern frontiers would have to be altered in favour of the USSR.

## Inter-Allied negotiations 1943–4

Churchill and Roosevelt held several summit meetings to discuss military strategy and the shape of the post-war world, but it was only in 1943 that the leaders of the USSR, the USA and Britain met for the first time as a group.

### The foreign ministers' meeting at Moscow, October 1943

In October 1943, the foreign ministers of the USA, the USSR and Britain met in Moscow, the Soviet Union's capital, in an effort to reconcile the conflicting ambitions of their states. They agreed to establish the European Advisory Commission to finalise plans for the post-war Allied occupation of Germany. They also issued the 'Declaration on General Security'. This proposed the creation of a world organisation to maintain global peace and security, the UN, which would be joined by all peaceful states. The US **secretary of state**, Cordell Hull, insisted that the Chinese President **Jiang Jieshi**, as head of a large and potentially powerful allied country, should sign this declaration too. Stalin also informed Hull, in the strictest secrecy, that the USSR would enter the war against Japan after Germany's defeat in Europe.

### Tehran Conference, 28 November to 1 December 1943

At the Tehran Conference, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met for the first time to discuss post-war Europe, the future organisation of the UN and the fate of Germany. Stalin again made it very clear that he would claim all the territories which the USSR had annexed in Poland and the Baltic

in 1939–40, and that Poland would be compensated with German territory. To this there was no opposition from either Churchill or Roosevelt.

When discussing the future strategy of the war, the key decision was made to land British, **Commonwealth** and US troops in France (Operation Overlord) rather than, as Churchill wished, in the Balkans, in 1944. This effectively ensured that the British and US armies would be tied up in western Europe and would leave the USSR to liberate both eastern and south-eastern Europe by itself. The USSR would therefore be in the position to turn the whole region into a Soviet sphere of interest. It was this factor that ultimately left the Western powers with little option but to recognise the USSR's claims to eastern Poland and the Baltic states.

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#### SOURCE E

**From President Roosevelt's conversation with his son at Tehran on 29 November 1943, in Jonathan Fenby, *Alliance*, Simon & Schuster, 2008, pages 246–7.**

*Our Chiefs of Staff are convinced of one thing, the way to kill the most Germans, with the least loss of American soldiers is to mount one great big invasion and then slam 'em with everything we have got. It makes sense to me. It makes sense to Uncle Joe. It's the quickest way to win the war. That's all.*

*Trouble is, the PM [Churchill] is thinking too much of the post-war, and where England will be. He's scared of letting the Russians get too strong in Europe. Whether that's bad depends on a lot of factors.*

*The one thing I am sure of is this: if the way to save American lives, the way to win as short a war as possible, is from the west and the west alone ... and our chiefs are convinced it is, then that's that! I see no reasons for putting the lives of American soldiers in jeopardy in order to protect real or fancied British interests on the European continent.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Study [Source E](#). What were the political implications of Operation Overlord?

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#### ONLINE EXTRAS

##### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source E](#) by completing Worksheet 2 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The Churchill–Stalin meeting, October 1944

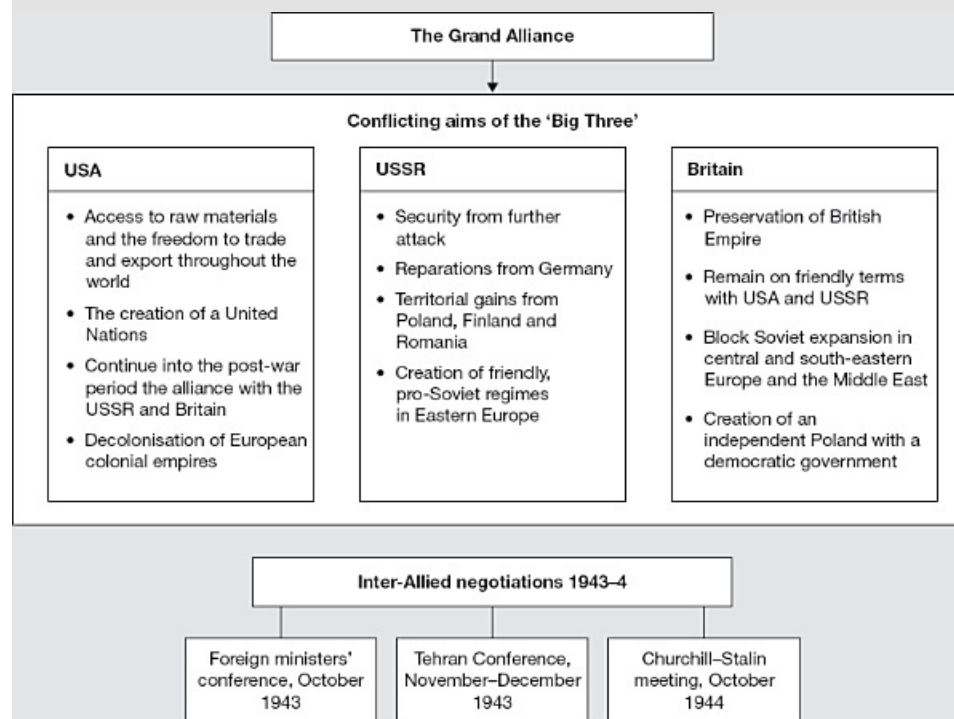
A year later, in an effort to protect British interests in the eastern Mediterranean (see page [19](#)), Churchill flew to Moscow and proposed a division of south-eastern Europe into distinct spheres of interest. This formed the basis of an agreement, the so-called 'percentages agreement':

- The USSR was given a 90 and 75 per cent predominance in Romania and Bulgaria, respectively.
- Britain was given 90 per cent in Greece.
- Yugoslavia and Hungary were to be divided equally into British and Soviet zones of interest.

After reflection, this agreement was quietly dropped by Churchill as he realised that it would be rejected outright by Roosevelt once it was brought to his attention. This, Churchill feared, would only lead to unwelcome tension in the Anglo-US alliance. Roosevelt had informed Stalin shortly before Churchill arrived in Moscow that there was ‘in this global war ... no question, either military or political, in which the United States [was] not interested’. However, it did broadly correspond to initial Soviet intentions in Eastern Europe, and Stalin did recognise Britain’s interests in Greece, even denying the local communists any Soviet support (see page 27). It also indicated that in foreign policy, Stalin could be pragmatic and possibly open to negotiation over Eastern Europe.

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### TENSIONS WITHIN THE GRAND ALLIANCE 1941–5



## 5 The liberation of Eastern and Western Europe 1943–5

*How far did the liberation of Europe, 1943–5, intensify the rivalry and distrust*

### ***between the 'Big Three'?***

The **liberation** of Eastern Europe by the Soviet Army and Western Europe by predominantly Anglo-American forces in 1944–5 created the context for the Cold War in Europe. It was in Europe where the Cold War both started and ended.

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## **ONLINE EXTRAS**

### **OCR**

Get to grips with the Grand Alliance by completing Worksheet 2 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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In the liberated territories in both Eastern and Western Europe, Stalin advised the local Communist parties to form popular fronts or alliances with the liberal, socialist and peasant parties. Although communism was a strong force in Italy, France and Greece, ultimately its power was limited by the fact that these states had been liberated by Anglo-American and not Soviet armies. In Eastern Europe, the Red Army gave vital protection to the local communist parties, which eventually enabled them to seize power. However, even here under the protective umbrella of the Red Army, Stalin realised that this would take time and that its pace would vary from country to country.

## **Eastern Europe 1944–5**

To understand the complex political situation created by the end of the war, it is important to understand the significance of the **Allied Control Commissions (ACCs)**, the tension between the governments-in-exile and the local **partisan groups**, and the close links between the communist parties and the USSR.

### **Allied Control Commissions**

Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Hungary and Romania were Axis states. Although they were allowed their own governments after their occupation by the **Allied powers**, real power rested with the ACC. The first ACC was established in southern Italy in 1943 by Britain and the USA after the collapse of the Fascist government there. As the USSR had no troops in Italy, it was not represented on the ACC. Similarly, as it was the USSR that liberated Eastern Europe from Germany, Soviet officials dominated the ACCs in Romania, Bulgaria, Finland and Hungary. In this respect, Soviet policy was the mirror image of Anglo-American policy in Italy.

### **Governments-in-exile and partisan groups**

Political leaders who had managed to escape from German-occupied Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece and Yugoslavia to Britain, set up what were called governments-in-exile in London for the duration of the war. Being in London, however, they lost control of the partisan groups fighting in the occupied territories. Except for Poland, communist partisan groups emerged as the strongest local forces and their leaders were not ready to take orders from their governments-in-exile. Sometimes this suited Stalin, and sometimes, as in Greece (see page 26), it did not.



# Poland

The Polish question was one of the most complex problems facing the Allies. Britain, together with France, had gone to war in September 1939 as a result of the German invasion of Poland. The British government therefore wanted to see the emergence of a democratic Poland once Germany was driven out by the Red Army. On the other hand, Stalin was determined not only to regain the territories that fell into the Soviet sphere of interest as a result of the Nazi–Soviet Pact (see page 13), but also to ensure that there was a friendly pro-Soviet government in Poland. In effect, this meant forcibly establishing a communist dictatorship, as the majority of Poles were strongly anti-Soviet and anti-communist.

In principle, Britain and the USA had agreed at Tehran to the Soviet annexation of eastern Poland (see page 19), and that Poland would eventually be compensated for this by acquiring territory on its western frontiers from Germany. Both hoped optimistically that Stalin would tolerate a democratically elected government in Warsaw.

## The Soviet advance into Poland

Once the Red Army crossed Poland's eastern frontier in early January 1944, the Soviet Union annexed the territory it had claimed in September 1939. By July, Soviet troops had advanced into central Poland. As they advanced, they systematically destroyed the national Polish resistance group known as the **Polish Home Army**. Stalin fatally undermined the authority of the Polish government-in-exile in London by establishing the Committee of National Liberation, based in Lublin in Poland, which became known as the Lublin Committee. The task of the committee was to administer Soviet-occupied Poland, and eventually to form the core of a future pro-Soviet government in Poland.

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### SOURCE F

**From a report by Colonel T.R.B. Sanders, who was in command of an Allied mission which visited the V2 missile site at Blizna in central Poland in September 1944 after it had been captured by the Red Army. National Archives (NA HS4/146), London.**

*Everywhere we went (except in the forward areas) there were posters with portraits and short descriptions of the nine or ten chief members of the Lublin Committee. Other posters dealt with conscription, giving up of wireless sets, giving up of arms and payment of social insurance instalments. In addition all along the roads, there were numerous billboards with slogans in Russian and Polish such as 'Long live the Red Army!' 'Glory to our Great Leader Stalin!'*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source F](#) help to explain Stalin's policy in Poland?

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## The Warsaw Uprising



The Soviet Union's policy was revealed when the Polish Home Army rose in revolt against the Germans in the Polish capital of Warsaw in August 1944. By capturing Warsaw, the Home Army calculated that it would be able to set up a non-communist government there, which would be recognised by the Western allies as the legal government of Poland. It was hoped that this would then stop Stalin from creating a communist Poland. Not surprisingly, Stalin viewed the uprising with intense suspicion. Although Soviet troops penetrated to within 20 kilometres of Warsaw, the Polish insurgents were left to fight the Germans alone and, as Stalin intended, were defeated by 2 October.

The German defeat of the Warsaw Uprising effectively destroyed the leadership of the Home Army, and inevitably this made it easier for Stalin to enforce his policy in Poland. As Soviet troops moved further west towards the Oder River (see the map on page 41) in the remaining months of 1944, the NKVD, assisted by Polish Communists, shot or imprisoned thousands of members of the Home Army in a determined attempt to eliminate the anti-Soviet Polish opposition.

## Britain, the USA and Poland

Despite all that had happened, Roosevelt and Churchill still clung to the hope that it would be possible to reach a compromise with Stalin about the future of Poland. In the interests of post-war Allied unity, they were both determined to avoid a premature break with the USSR over Poland. In January 1945, the USSR formally recognised the Communist-dominated Committee for National Liberation as the **provisional government** of Poland. Britain and the USA, although they still supported Poland's government-in-exile in London, played down the significance of this in the interests of the unity of the Grand Alliance.

## Romania and Bulgaria

On 20 August 1944, the Soviets launched a major offensive to drive German troops out of the Balkans. The immediate consequence of this was the collapse of the pro-German regimes in both Romania and Bulgaria. As with Poland, both states were vital to the military security of the USSR, since, if they were under friendly pro-Soviet governments, they would protect the USSR's south-western frontiers from any future attack. Soviet control of Romania would also allow access to Yugoslavia and south-eastern Europe, and enable it to strengthen its strategic position in the Black Sea. Stalin was also determined to re-annex the Romanian territories of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, which he had occupied in 1940. Control of Bulgaria would give the USSR a naval base from which to dominate the approaches to the Turkish Straits and the Greek frontier (see the map on page 11). It was vital, therefore, to Stalin that both states should have governments friendly to the USSR, which ultimately meant, of course, that they would be communist. However, in achieving this aim, he used different tactics in each country

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of the origins of the Cold War by completing Worksheet 3 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Romania

In a desperate attempt to take control of Romania before the Red Army could occupy the whole country, the Romanian king deposed the pro-German government on 23 August. The king hoped that, like Italy (see page 29), Romania would be allowed to negotiate a ceasefire with the Western allies and then form a new government in which Communists would only be a minority. This idea was an illusion based on the false assumption that Britain and the USA would open up a second front in the Balkans which would give these two allies more say in Romania's affairs. The king had no alternative but to negotiate an armistice on 12 September, with the Soviets who now occupied the country.

## Romania under Soviet occupation

Britain, and also the USA, accepted that Romania, unlike Poland, was in the Soviet sphere of influence and made no attempt to interfere with Soviet policy there. Consequently, within a few months the Romanian Communists and their allies were able to dominate the government. An ACC was created but controlled by Soviet officials. At first, a weak coalition government composed of Communists, Socialists, National Liberals and the **left-wing** National Peasants' Party, the so-called Ploughmen's Front, was formed. Independently, Soviet officials on the ACC encouraged local Communists and their allies to form the National Democratic Front, which incited the peasants to seize farms from landowners and the workers to set up Communist-dominated production committees in the factories. In February, after Churchill had sent troops to Greece to crush a Communist revolt (see below), Stalin exercised his rights under the 'percentage agreement', and ordered the Red Army to put a National Democratic Front Government into power.

## Bulgaria

Soviet troops occupied Bulgaria in early September 1944 and established the Bulgarian ACC on 28 October. Local Communists, including several thousand partisan troops, had already established the Patriotic Front, an alliance of anti-German left-wing forces, which had seized power in Sofia shortly before the Red Army arrived. The Bulgaria Communists were determined to consolidate their position. The country's former ruling class was eliminated, with over 10,000 people executed. The trade unions and police were dominated by Communists and large farms were taken over by peasants.

## Soviet response

Much to the surprise of the local Communists, this enthusiasm for revolution did not fit in with Stalin's overall strategy. Essentially, he was determined to safeguard Soviet control over Bulgaria, yet not antagonise his Western allies any more than necessary while the war with Germany was still being fought, and at a time when Poland was becoming an increasingly divisive issue. Since the USSR's position was guaranteed through the key role of the Soviet chairman of the ACC, and the strong position of the local Communist Party, Stalin could afford to be conciliatory. Consequently, he attempted in the autumn of 1944 to persuade the Bulgarian Communists to pursue a more moderate policy. He wanted them to tolerate a certain degree of

political opposition and to work within the Patriotic Front coalition. This was difficult to achieve as local Communists, sometimes backed by Soviet officials on the ACC, were determined to gain complete power regardless of Stalin's instructions or the diplomatic consequences.

## Yugoslavia and Greece

In both Greece and Yugoslavia, Communist partisans played a key role in the fight against the Germans. As we have seen, Stalin recognised Greece as belonging to the British sphere of interest (see page [20](#)), and Britain had already sent troops to Greece in October 1944. He was, therefore, unable to provide any direct assistance to the Communists there. In Yugoslavia, on the other hand, the situation was different as Soviet troops were able to link up with the partisan forces under **Josip Broz** (Tito), which had played a major role in the anti-German resistance. As a communist, Tito looked to the USSR as a model for the state he wished to create in Yugoslavia, but his independence and self-confidence were to cause Stalin considerable problems.

### Yugoslavia

After occupying Bulgaria, Soviet troops joined with partisan forces in Yugoslavia, launching an attack on Belgrade on 14 October 1944. By this time, Tito had created an effective partisan army which not only fought the Germans but also waged civil war against non-communist Serbs and Croat nationalists, the Chetniks. Tito's position had been strengthened when Britain decided in May 1944 to assist him rather than the nationalists, as his partisans were more effective opponents of the Germans. With British weapons and equipment, Tito's partisans effectively dominated the struggle against the Germans and nationalists, laying the foundations for a communist takeover in 1945 in both Yugoslavia and neighbouring Albania. Whenever Tito's partisans occupied an area, they formed Communist-dominated committees which took their orders from him rather than from the Yugoslav government-in-exile in London.

For Stalin, the key to controlling south-eastern Europe was to create a military and political alliance between Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and the USSR. Tito was not, however, an easy ally and tried to carry out his own policies independently of the USSR. Despite Stalin's reluctance to provoke a crisis with Britain and the USA on the eve of the Yalta Conference (see page [30](#)), Tito established Communist governments in both Yugoslavia and Albania, which his forces controlled by November 1944.

Stalin was able to exercise a firmer control over Tito's foreign policy. In January 1945, he vetoed Tito's scheme for a federation with Bulgaria which would have turned it into a mere province of Yugoslavia. He made it very clear that Yugoslavia would have to subordinate its local territorial ambitions to the overall foreign policy considerations determined by the Soviet Union, although this naturally displeased Tito, and eventually was to lead Yugoslavia's breaking its links with the USSR (see page [89](#)).

### Greece

Tito and Stalin also clashed over the attempts by the Communist-controlled People's Liberation Army (ELAS) in Greece to set up a national liberation government on the Yugoslav model.

During the war, ELAS emerged as the most effective resistance force in Greece and, like Tito's partisans, fought the Germans and non-communist **guerrilla groups**. By the time the Germans evacuated Greece in 1944, ELAS dominated most of the Greek countryside. Yet, as Greece was an area regarded by the USSR as being well within the British sphere of influence, Stalin urged ELAS to join a moderate coalition government with non-communist parties, and work more gradually towards establishing communist control. When a revolt encouraged by Tito broke out in Athens on 3 December 1944, Stalin, true to his agreement with Churchill, stopped him from helping Greek Communists and raised no objection to their defeat by British troops.

## Hungary and Czechoslovakia

In neither Czechoslovakia nor Hungary did Stalin have any immediate plans for a Communist seizure of power. He believed that initially Soviet interests could be protected by the formation of a popular front government in which the Communists would play a key role, but in both states the control of the secret police was firmly in the hands of the Communists and the Soviet NKVD.

### Hungary

The decision taken at the Tehran Conference not to start a second front in the Balkans ensured that the Red Army would also decide Hungary's fate. When Soviet troops crossed the Hungarian frontier in September 1944, the head of state, Admiral Miklós Horthy, appealed to the Soviets for a ceasefire, but Germany took Horthy's son prisoner and encouraged the Hungarian ultra-nationalists, the **Arrow Cross Party**, to seize power in western Hungary. It was not until early December 1944 that Red Army units reached the outskirts of Budapest, Hungary's capital.

In the Soviet-occupied section of the country, the Hungarian Communist Party was initially too weak to play a dominant role in politics, and it therefore had little option but to cooperate with the Socialist Party, the Smallholders Party (a peasants' party) and several other middle-class parties. In December 1945, when elections took place for the National Assembly, the Communist Party, despite the presence of the Red Army, gained only seventeen per cent of votes cast, but it was given the key post of the Ministry of the Interior, which controlled the police, in the provisional national government. Throughout 1945, Stalin's immediate aim was to remove anything from Hungary that could be claimed as war reparations by the USSR, since Hungary had been a German ally. In the longer term, he was not sure whether Hungary should be integrated into the emerging **Soviet bloc**, where it would be dominated militarily, politically and economically by the USSR, or whether Soviet interests could best be protected through a popular front government.

### Czechoslovakia

Of all the Eastern European states, Czechoslovakia had the closest relations with the USSR. The Czechoslovaks felt betrayed by Britain and France over the Munich Agreement of 1938 (see page [12](#)) and looked to the USSR as the power that would restore their country's pre-1938 borders. In 1943, the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in London under **Edvard Beneš**, the former president, negotiated an alliance with the USSR, although this still did not stop Stalin from annexing Ruthenia, in eastern Czechoslovakia, in the autumn of 1944 (see the map on page [11](#)).

As the Soviet army occupied more and more of Czechoslovakia in the winter of 1944–5, the balance of power tilted steadily away from the democratic parties represented by the government-in-exile in London to the Czechoslovak Communist Party led by **Klement Gottwald**, who was a refugee in Moscow. Stalin, nevertheless, forced Gottwald to accept Beneš as president and work within a coalition government. In turn, Beneš followed a conciliatory policy and was ready to cooperate with the Communist Party, enabling Stalin to achieve a harmony that had been impossible to reach in Poland. When the provisional government was formed in 1945, the Communist Party was able to demand eight seats in the cabinet including the influential Ministries of the Interior and Information. Gottwald skilfully camouflaged the Communist Party's powerful position by not demanding the position of prime minister.

## Finland

In the summer of 1944, when Soviet troops invaded Finland, it was granted an armistice on unexpectedly generous terms. The Finns had to:

- declare war on the Germans
- cede part of the strategically important Petsamo region on the Arctic coast and the other territory which the USSR had annexed at the end of the Soviet–Finnish war in March 1940
- pay reparations
- make the Finnish Communist Party legal
- accept an Anglo-Soviet ACC, which was to ensure that the terms of the armistice were carried out.

However, politically, the Finns were allowed a considerable degree of freedom. Marshal C.E.G. Mannerheim, who had cooperated closely with Germany during the war, remained president until 1946 and there was only one Communist in the first post-war cabinet.

Why did Stalin pursue such a moderate policy in Finland? To a certain extent this was a gesture, like his abolition of the Comintern in 1943 (see page 17), which was aimed at convincing Britain and the USA that he was no longer planning world revolution. The Finnish Communist Party was weak and unpopular, and the USSR had little option but to rely on the non-Communist parties. The Finns, unlike the Hungarians, were also lucky enough to have been able to quit the war at the right moment. They were in a position to give the USSR such vitally needed reparations as barges, rolling stock and manufactured goods, as well as to help the Red Army to drive the Germans out of Finland.

## Liberation of Italy and France

Italy and France were liberated by the Western allies. Italy was a leading Axis state, while France, until its defeat in 1940, had played the main part in the war against Germany. In both states, communist resistance to German occupation and its **puppet governments** helped to legitimise the Communist Party and enhance its popularity. The liberated regions of Italy were controlled by the Italian ACC, in which the British and Americans played the dominant role. In France, General de Gaulle, the leader of the **Free French**, established an independent government after the liberation of Paris in August 1944. Realistically, in neither state had the Communists a chance of seizing power, as they lacked the support of a Soviet army of

occupation. The alternative, as Stalin stressed, was to protect Soviet interests by joining the government and working with the Socialists and Liberals.

## Italy

After the Allied landings in Sicily in July 1943, Mussolini, the Italian Fascist dictator, was overthrown and imprisoned, and in September an armistice was signed. This did not prevent German troops from seizing Italy's capital, Rome, and occupying most of the Italian peninsula. The Allies were then forced to fight their way up the peninsula, and it was only in April 1945 that northern Italy was finally conquered. Italy was the first Axis state to sign an armistice, and the way it was administered by the Allies set important precedents for the future. All Soviet requests to be involved were firmly rejected by Britain and the USA, which later gave Stalin an excuse to exclude them from Eastern Europe. An Italian government was established and it was gradually given responsibility for governing the liberated areas. This government was closely supervised by the Anglo-American ACC.

## Palmiro Togliatti

Stalin had little option but to accept these arrangements, although he was determined that Italian Communists should not be excluded from participating in the new government. **Palmiro Togliatti**, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, was ordered to form a coalition with the Socialist Party. He was to avoid any aggressive actions, such as an uprising or a civil war, which would cause tension between the USSR and the West and so make it more difficult for Stalin to consolidate the Soviet position in Eastern Europe. Togliatti was also to draft a popular programme for reforming the Italian economy which, by promising measures that would help the workers and peasants, would prepare the way for later Communist Party electoral successes.

Togliatti carried out these instructions as well as he could, joining the new government that was formed when Rome was occupied by the Allies in June 1944. In the north, in the winter of 1944–5, Communists played a key role in the resistance against the Germans. Togliatti, only too aware of how the British had crushed the Greek revolt, managed to keep his more radical partisans in check. By the time the war ended, this resistance had won the Communists considerable support throughout Italy and made them an essential partner in the coalition government. This was seen when Togliatti himself became minister of justice in the Italian government, which was formed in April 1945. At this stage, Stalin's policy in Italy was to push the Italian Communist Party into joining a governing multi-party coalition.

## France

When Paris was liberated in August 1944, General Charles de Gaulle, the leader of the Free French, immediately established an independent government. His aim was to rebuild French power and to create a powerful French-led Western European bloc. To counter the predominance of the Anglo-Americans, he looked to the Soviet Union, and in December 1944 signed the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance, which committed both states to cooperate in any future defensive war against Germany.

As in Italy, the French Communist Party, having played a prominent part in the resistance, became a major force in French politics. Its leader, Maurice Thorez, was instructed by Stalin to

support the Soviet–French alliance and work towards creating a left-wing coalition with the socialists, which, it was hoped, would eventually be able to form a government.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of the liberation of Europe by completing Worksheet 3 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

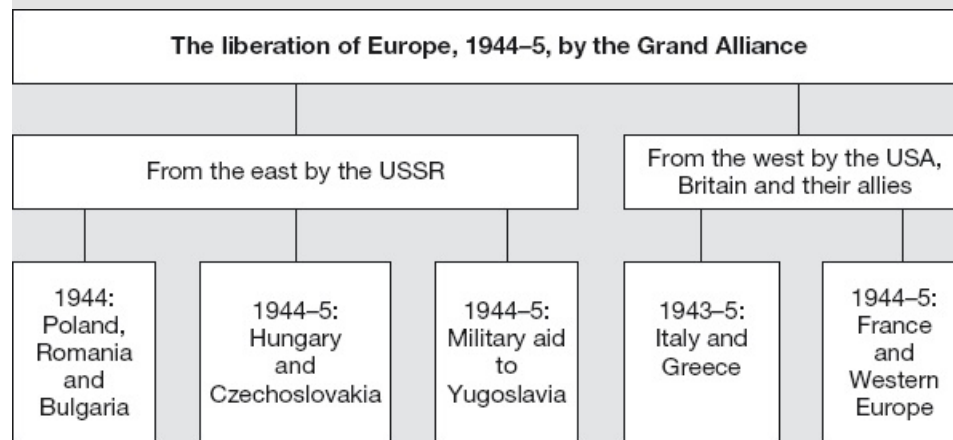
### OCR

Develop your analysis of key events in the years 1941–5 by completing Worksheet 4 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE LIBERATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE 1943–5



## 6 The Yalta Conference, February 1945

### *What was achieved at the Yalta Conference?*

The Yalta Conference, attended by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, was, to quote the journalist and historian Martin Walker writing in 1994, ‘the last of the wartime conferences ... [and] the first of the post-war summits’. Besides creating plans for finishing the war in Europe and eastern Asia against Japan, it also attempted to lay the foundations of the coming peace. Plans were finalised for the occupation of Germany by the victorious powers, among which, on Churchill’s insistence, France was to be included because he feared that the USA might withdraw its troops



from Europe soon after the end of hostilities. Each power was allotted its own zone, including a section of Berlin, which was placed under **four-power control** (for details of the zone divisions, see the map on page 41). The decision was also taken to establish the UN.

## Poland

Poland again proved to be the most difficult subject on the agenda, and the Allies were only able to reach agreement through a series of ambiguous compromises which could be interpreted differently by the USSR and the Western powers:

- They confirmed that Poland's eastern border would run along the Curzon Line.
- They agreed in principle, as they had at Tehran, that in compensation for the land lost to the USSR, Poland would receive a substantial increase in territory in the north and west from land to be removed from Germany. The exact details of this were not stated.
- The decision was also taken to reorganise the provisional government by including democratic politicians from both Poland and the London government-in-exile.
- Elections would be held as soon as possible.

### SOURCE G



The 'Big Three': Churchill, Roosevelt, who was already terminally ill, and Stalin (front row, left to right) at the Yalta Conference in 1945. No French representative was invited.



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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How valuable is [Source G](#) in assessing Allied unity in February 1945?

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Superficially, this seemed to be a success for Britain and the USA, but in fact the terms were so vague that Stalin could easily manipulate them. First, the exact amount of land that Poland would receive at the cost of Germany was not fixed, and secondly, words like ‘democracy’ and ‘elections’ meant very different things to the participants. For Stalin they essentially meant the domination of Poland by the Communist Party, while for Britain and the USA they meant effectively the domination of the non-Communist parties.

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### SOURCE H

**From Norman Davies, *God’s Playground: History of Poland*, volume 2, Oxford University Press, 2005, page 364.**

*Given the relentless character of Soviet diplomacy over the Polish problem, it must be recognized ... that Stalin’s views had changed fundamentally. In 1939–41, the Soviet dictator had showed a willingness to trample on every vestige of Polish nationality or independence. From 1941 onwards he constantly reiterated his desire to restore ‘a strong and independent Poland’. His understanding of ‘strength’ and ‘independence’ differed considerably from that which was held in Britain and America, or indeed in Poland, but was no less substantive for that. Anyone who has any doubts concerning the genuineness of Stalin’s commitment should compare the post-war history of Poland with that of the Baltic states or the Ukraine. Stalin was the author not only of post-war Polish independence, but also of the peculiarly stunted interpretation of that concept which prevailed in the post-war era.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How useful is the assessment in [Source H](#) by the historian Norman Davies in understanding Stalin’s Polish policy?

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## ‘Declaration on Liberated Europe’

To underpin the right of the liberated states to determine their own governments, Roosevelt persuaded Stalin and Churchill at Yalta to agree to the ‘Declaration on Liberated Europe’, which committed the three governments to carry out emergency measures to assist the liberated states and to encourage democratic governments.

With the start of the Cold War, this became, as the journalist Martin Walker observed, a key text ‘upon which all future accusations of Soviet betrayal and bad faith were made’. Yet such accusations, although essentially true, completely ignored the reality of the situation in Eastern Europe. Stalin saw Poland, and indeed the other Eastern European countries, as corridors for an attack from Germany or Eastern Europe on the USSR. He was therefore going to ensure that friendly governments, which in most cases were to mean Communist ones, were in place.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Practise planning for essay questions by completing Worksheet 4 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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#### SOURCE I

**From 'Declaration on Liberated Europe'. Quoted in Martin Walker, *The Cold War and the Making of the Modern World*, Vintage, 1994, page 14.**

*[The Declaration emphasises] the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived of them by the aggressor nations.*

*To foster the conditions in which the liberated people may exercise these rights, the three governments will jointly assist the people in any liberated state or former Axis satellite state in Europe where in their judgement conditions require: (a) to establish conditions of internal peace; (b) to carry out emergency measures for the relief of distressed peoples; (c) to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people; and (d) to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.*

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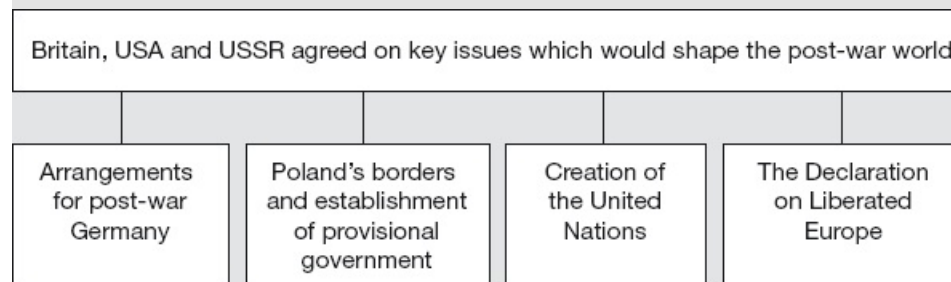
#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How reliable is [Source I](#) as a guide to the immediate post-war policies of the Big Three?

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#### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

##### THE YALTA CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 1945



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## ONLINE EXTRAS

## AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source I](#) by completing Worksheet 5 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the causes of the hostility between the USA and the USSR by completing Worksheet 5 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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# 7 The end of the war in Europe

### *Why did Churchill view the USSR's advance westwards with suspicion?*

Three months after the Yalta Conference, the war in Europe ended. In the final weeks of the war British and US forces raced to Trieste, Italy, in an attempt to stop Yugoslav forces seizing the port, while British troops in northern Germany crossed the River Elbe and advanced into Mecklenburg to prevent the Soviets from occupying Denmark (see the map on page [41](#)). Churchill also urged the USA to make special efforts to take Berlin and Prague to pre-empt a Soviet occupation, but the US generals were not ready to see their soldiers killed for what they regarded as political reasons, and so both capitals fell to Soviet troops.

When the war ended with the surrender of Germany on 8 May 1945, Anglo-American forces occupied nearly half the area that was to become the Soviet zone in Germany (see the map on page [41](#)). It was not until early July that these troops were withdrawn into the US and British zones, which had been agreed on at Yalta.

The Red Army now confronted the Western allies in the middle of Germany. A few days before he killed himself in April 1945, Hitler predicted that:

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### SOURCE J

**From F. Genoud, editor (translated by R.H. Stevens), *The Testament of Adolf Hitler: The Hitler-Bormann Documents, February–April 1945*, Icon Books, 1961, page 107.**

*With the defeat of the Reich [Germany] and pending the emergence of the Asiatic, the African, and perhaps the South American nationalisms, there will remain in the world only two Great Powers capable of confronting each other – the United States and Soviet Russia. The laws of history and geography will compel these two Powers to a trial of strength either military or in the fields of economics and ideology. These same laws make it inevitable that both Powers should become enemies of Europe. And it is equally certain that both these powers will sooner or later find it desirable to seek the support of the sole surviving great nation in Europe, the German people.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

According to [Source J](#), what will be the global consequence of the defeat of Nazi Germany?

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## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The roots of the Cold War lay in the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and in Marxism–Leninism. This was countered by the USA's intention to open up the world to capitalism, free trade, democracy and self-determination. During the interwar years, the Soviet government focused on internal issues rather than foreign policy, but used secret agents to stir up trouble in the capitalist states of Western Europe and their empires. At first, Stalin sought to cooperate with Britain and France against Hitler, but in August 1939 he signed the Nazi–Soviet Pact to regain the land lost to Poland in 1920.

The German invasion of June 1941 led to the USSR allying with the very states it so distrusted. While the Second World War lasted, the USSR and its Western allies had no option but to cooperate to defeat Germany, despite tensions in the Grand Alliance. The military campaigns that defeated Germany in 1944–5 dictated the immediate post-war situation in Europe. Eastern Europe fell under the control of the Red Army, and Western Europe was firmly within the sphere of the British and the Americans.

At the Yalta Conference of February 1945, the Big Three agreed to place Germany under four-power control, and democratically elected governments were to be set up in liberated Europe.

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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

What are the main arguments of Marxism–Leninism?

Why did Western liberals distrust Marxism–Leninism?

To what extent was Soviet foreign policy, 1920–45, aimed at consolidating the Soviet state?

How serious were the tensions within the Grand Alliance?

To what extent were the aims of the Big Three contradictory?

What were the key sources of political power in liberated Eastern Europe, 1944–5?

To what extent was Stalin's concern about post-war Poland prompted by the needs of Soviet security?

How did the USSR consolidate its position in Romania and Bulgaria?

Why were Tito's ambitions viewed with suspicion by Stalin in 1944 and early 1945?

What was Stalin's policy in Hungary and Czechoslovakia?  
Why did Stalin pursue such a moderate policy in Finland?  
How influential were the Communist Parties in Italy and France?  
How was an agreement on Poland reached?  
How significant was the Declaration on Liberated Europe?  
Why did Poland cause problems for the Grand Alliance?

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

How far do you agree that Stalin's concern about post-war Poland was prompted by the needs of Soviet security? [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Examine a range of causes for Stalin's concern about post-war Poland. Consider the importance of Soviet security and reach an interim judgement about its importance before considering other reasons and reaching interim judgements. This will allow you to weigh up the overall importance of Soviet security against other factors.

How effectively had the USSR consolidated its position in eastern Europe by May 1945? [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Establish a range of criteria against which to judge effectiveness. This might include issues such as security or economic control or you might do this country by country. Then reach interim judgements, which should be used to reach an overall judgement.

### Interpretation question

'It makes sense to seek the roots of the Cold War in the mistrust between the USA and its allies and the USSR during the Second World War.' Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations you have studied. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Place your interpretation within the context of the debate the Cold War's origins. Contextual knowledge should then be used to explain the strengths and limitations of the interpretation, using knowledge to support and challenge the view that mistrust built up during the war was to blame.

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## CHAPTER 3

# The breakdown of the Grand Alliance 1945–7

This chapter considers reasons for the breakdown of the Grand Alliance in 1945–7. During this period, there was growing tension between the Western allies and the Soviet Union in the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean, over Poland and the Balkans, as well as in China and East Asia. Above all, there was the problem of the future of Germany, which was under the control of four different states. Neither the Western powers nor the USSR could agree on joint measures for its economic and political reconstruction.

This chapter examines these issues through the following themes:

- Transition from war to fragile peace 1945–6
- Germany, June 1945 to April 1947
- The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the Soviet response
- The ‘iron curtain’: European states 1945–7

The key debate on page [62](#) of this chapter asks the question: Did the USA or the USSR start the Cold War 1945–7?

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## KEY DATES

<b>1945</b>	<b>July–Aug.</b>	Potsdam Conference
<b>1946</b>	<b>March 5</b>	Churchill’s ‘iron curtain’ speech
	<b>April 21</b>	Social Unity Party formed
	<b>May 3</b>	General Clay halted reparation payments from Soviet zone
<b>1947</b>	<b>Jan. 1</b>	Anglo-American Bizone formed
<b>1947</b>	<b>Feb. 10</b>	Peace treaties signed with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland and Hungary
	<b>March 12</b>	Truman Doctrine announced
	<b>March–April</b>	Council of Foreign Ministers’ meeting, Moscow
	<b>June 5</b>	Marshall Aid Plan announced
	<b>Oct. 5</b>	Cominform founded

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## 1 Transition from war to fragile peace 1945–6

*What impact did the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki have on relations between the USSR and the Western powers?*

### ***In what ways did the friction between the members of the Grand Alliance increase during 1945–6?***

All three members of the victorious Grand Alliance – Britain, the USA and the USSR – wished to continue the alliance, yet for this to survive there needed to be either a common danger or an agreement between its members on key principles. By the autumn of 1945, there was neither. German aggression had drawn the USSR and the two leading capitalist states, Britain and the USA, together, but, behind the scenes, the USSR was deeply suspicious of the motives of its allies. In Stalin's eyes, these two powers were ideological enemies who would do everything to destroy communism. Britain and then the USA became, in their turn, equally suspicious of Stalin's post-war ambitions.

The following challenges and problems facing the wartime allies in the course of the next eighteen months were to intensify these suspicions:

- the initial inexperience of President Truman
- the future of Germany
- the successful development of the atomic bomb by the USA
- the defeat of Japan and Soviet exclusion from its post-war occupation
- Stalin's willingness to test the resolve of the West by asserting Soviet power in Eastern Europe
- the USSR's ambitions in the Mediterranean and the Far East
- the increasing weakness of Britain
- the consequences of the Truman Plan and Marshall Aid.

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#### **ONLINE EXTRAS**

##### **AQA**

Get to grips with technical terms by completing Worksheet 6 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## **The impact of US President Harry Truman**

Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945 and was replaced by Harry Truman. Truman was both more aggressive and decisive, but less experienced, than Roosevelt. He became president at a point when the government of the USA was becoming increasingly concerned about Soviet policies in Poland, and was considering limiting **lend–lease** shipments to the USSR solely to material to be used for the war on Japan. The USA hoped that this might persuade Stalin to become more cooperative in carrying out the Yalta Agreement. In fact, the policy had the opposite effect and, unsurprisingly, merely succeeded in giving Stalin the impression that the USA was trying to extract political concessions through crude economic pressure.

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#### **ONLINE EXTRAS**

##### **OCR**

Test your understanding of the problems Truman was facing 1945–52 by completing Worksheet 6 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)



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## Harry S. Truman



<b>1884</b>	Born in Lamar, Missouri
<b>1934</b>	Elected as a Democrat to the Senate to represent the state of Missouri
<b>1944</b>	Vice-president
<b>1945</b>	April 12: became president on Roosevelt's death
<b>1947</b>	Announced the Truman Doctrine
<b>1948</b>	Elected president for the second time
<b>1950</b>	Committed US forces to defend South Korea
<b>1951</b>	Refused to extend Korean War to China
<b>1972</b>	Died

### Background

Unlike President Roosevelt, Truman came from a modest background. His father was a farmer, and before joining the army in 1917, he himself had worked in office posts, as well as helping his father on the farm. After the war, he briefly opened a haberdashery shop in Kansas City. He also joined the Democratic Party and was elected as a county court judge in 1922. He became a senator in 1935 and was re-elected in 1940. During the Second World War, he had no experience of foreign affairs, but made his name as chairman of a committee set up to inquire into waste by the US army. In 1945, he was vice-president for just 82 days before being catapulted into the presidency on Roosevelt's death.

### His presidency

Revisionist historians regard his unsympathetic handling of the USSR as one of the causes of the Cold War. Daniel Yergin, for instance, argued in 1977 that 'he had a storybook view of history' and 'tended to see clearly defined contests between right and wrong, black and white'. On the other hand, in Truman's defence it can be argued that before his death Roosevelt was becoming increasingly concerned about Soviet policy in Eastern Europe. From 1945 to the end of his presidency in 1953, under his leadership, the USA played a major role in containing the USSR. Both in 1948–9

during the Berlin airlift, and in 1950 when China came to the help of the North Koreans, Truman showed considerable caution and determination not to allow events to escalate into nuclear war. His sacking of the charismatic General MacArthur in 1951 and the failure of the USA and its allies to win a decisive victory in Korea caused his approval rating with Americans to drop to just 22 per cent. In 1953, after the Republican victory, Truman retired from politics.

---

## Preparing for the Potsdam Conference: May to June 1945

Both Churchill and Stalin were in favour of calling another Allied conference as soon as possible after the ending of the war in Europe. Churchill wanted a conference before Britain and the USA had withdrawn the bulk of their forces from the European mainland, while Stalin hoped to secure Allied acceptance of his policy in the Balkans and Poland. Truman, too, wanted to clear up the remaining wartime problems as quickly as possible so that the USA could end its military and economic responsibilities in Europe. However, he insisted that it should be delayed until July, quite possibly, as some historians suggest, to give time for the testing of the atomic bomb, which he hoped would strengthen the USA in its dealings with Stalin.

Still unsure at this date of the potential power of the atomic bomb, or whether one could be detonated at all, Truman needed Soviet help to defeat Japan. In order to improve relations he sent Roosevelt's former adviser, **Harry Hopkins**, to discuss the areas of contention between the USSR and USA in an effort to show that the USA would continue Roosevelt's policy of cooperation. A compromise of sorts was agreed on Poland whereby a small number of non-Communists would join the Polish government. Effectively, as the historian Jonathan Haslam observed in 2011, this enabled Stalin to secure Poland as 'a **fiefdom** with window dressing'. Stalin also reassured him that the USSR would enter the war against Japan and agreed to meet Truman and Churchill in Potsdam in mid-July.

### The conference

On 17 July, Stalin, Churchill and Truman met at Potsdam, just outside Berlin. On 26 July, Churchill was replaced by Clement Attlee as British prime minister after a decisive Labour Party victory in the British general election. The conference continued, however, without interruption. The interlinked questions of Germany and Poland's western frontiers dominated the agenda. American efforts to persuade the USSR to honour the spirit of the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe failed, as the Soviets argued that the situation in Eastern Europe, which was firmly within their sphere of interest, was merely the mirror image of what was happening in Greece and Italy, where the Western powers dominated.

### Germany

While Britain, the USA and USSR could agree on the necessary measures for German demilitarisation, **denazification** and the punishment of war criminals, they were able to conclude only the following minimal political and economic guidelines for the future of Germany:

- As there was no central German government, an Allied Control Commission (ACC) was established, composed of the military commanders from each of the four occupying powers. To avoid being outvoted by the three Western powers, the Soviets insisted that each commander should have complete responsibility for his own zone. This decision effectively stopped the ACC from exercising any real power in Germany as a whole, and made the eventual partition of Germany more likely.
- A limited number of central German departments dealing with finance, transport, trade and industry were to be formed at some point in the future.
- Agreement on reparations was more difficult to achieve. The USSR had suffered immense damage during the war, and was determined to extract as much as possible in reparations from Germany. Britain and the USA, on the other hand, were convinced that the German economy must be left sufficiently strong so that it could pay for the imported food and raw materials that the Germans needed; they did not want the cost of this to be borne by the Allies. A temporary compromise was negotiated whereby both the USSR and the Western powers would take reparations from their own zones. In addition to this, Britain and the USA would grant ten per cent of these reparations to the Soviets and a further fifteen per cent in exchange for the supply of food and raw materials from the Soviet zone.

## Poland

The Western allies had agreed at Yalta that Poland should be awarded ‘substantial accessions of territory’ from Germany to compensate for the land annexed by the USSR (see page 31). However, both Britain and the USA considered that the new boundary between Germany and Poland, lying along the Oder and western Neisse Rivers, which the USSR had unilaterally determined, gave far too much territory to Poland. As Soviet troops occupied eastern Germany and Poland, there was little that Britain and the USA could do to change the frontier. Both powers eventually recognised the **Oder–Neisse Line** pending a final decision at a future peace conference. They hoped that this concession would persuade the Soviets to be more flexible about German reparations and the establishment of a democratic government in Poland.

## The Council of Foreign Ministers

The ‘Big Three’ also agreed to set up the Council of Foreign Ministers, which was to be composed of the foreign ministers of Britain, the USSR, China, France and the USA. Its task was to negotiate peace treaties with the former Axis powers of Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland and Hungary, and to prepare a peace settlement with Germany once the Allies had set up a German government able to negotiate on behalf of Germany.

## The impact of the atomic bomb

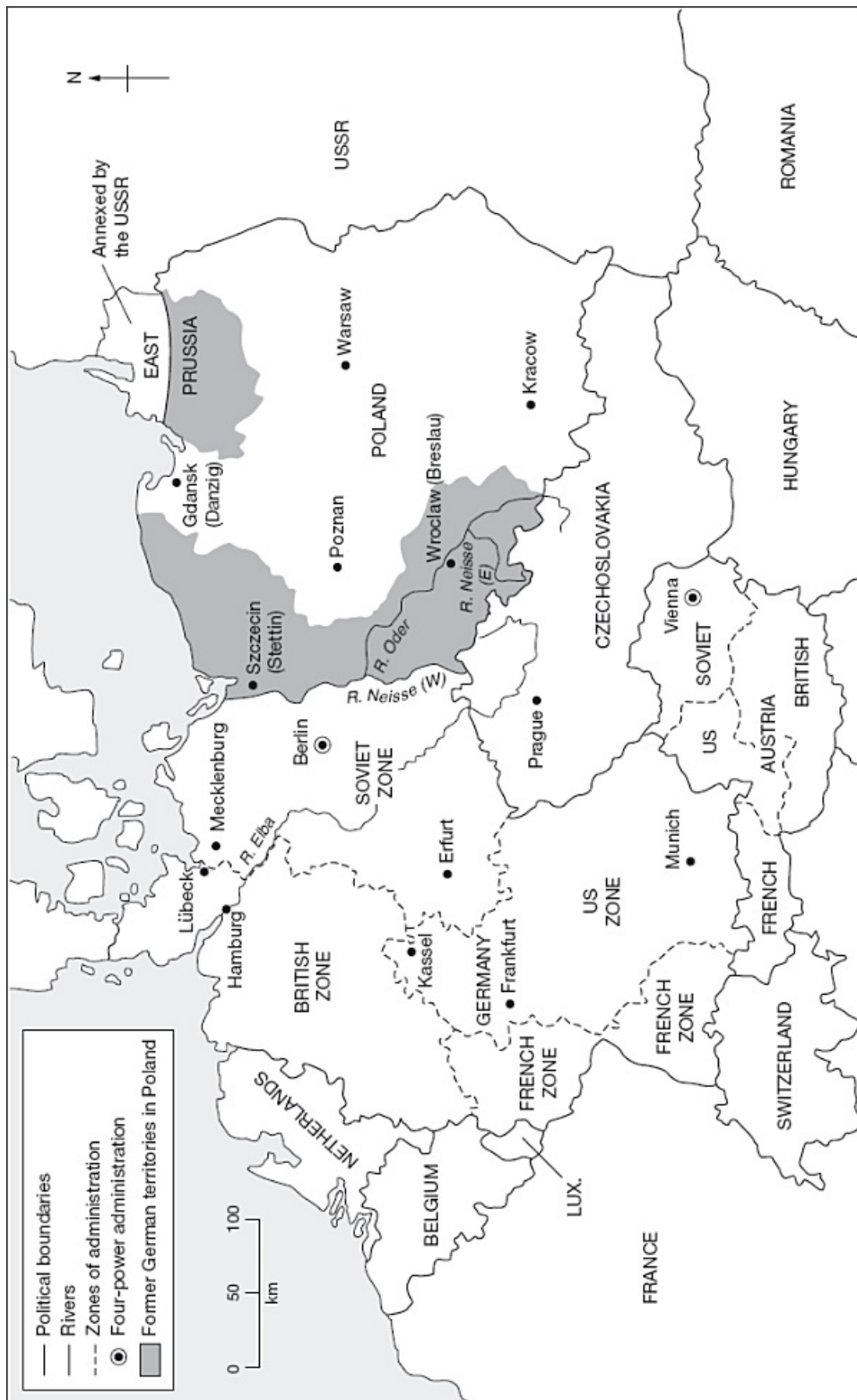
The development of the atomic bomb was to have a profound impact on the development of the Cold War. It caused a particularly dangerous nuclear arms race between the USA and the USSR, but ultimately it led to a stalemate in the Cold War when each side realised that a nuclear war could only lead to mutual destruction (see page 161).

The atomic bomb was tested successfully at Alamogordo in New Mexico in the USA on 16 July 1945. Its destructive potential was much greater than expected and it was ready for immediate

use against Japanese cities. On 6 August, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, killing nearly half the population and flattening the city. Three days later, another bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, killing a further 40,000 people.

## **The Soviet reaction**

The Red Army command was horrified by the bomb's military implications, and realised that at a stroke, it shifted the balance of military power back to the USA. The Soviets feared that once the USA had built another ten to fifteen bombs, it would launch an all-out attack on the USSR's cities. Stalin, when he was told by Truman, showed no surprise, as Soviet agents in the USA had already informed him of the bomb's construction, but he did take immediate steps to build a Soviet atomic bomb. On 20 August, this was declared a priority, and was followed up by two other projects for developing missiles and anti-aircraft defences. The possession of the bomb by the USA also increased Soviet determination to control Eastern Europe to provide further cover against a nuclear attack.



**Figure 3.1** Germany and Poland in 1945. The new borders of Poland and Germany were not achieved without an immense and forced movement of population. What information about the territorial changes in Poland and Germany is conveyed in this map?

## The USSR and the Japanese surrender

The horrific destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the threat of further US raids, and the Soviet invasion of **Manchuria**, left Japan with little option but to surrender. This shattered Stalin's assumption that the war against Japan would last another six months, which would have enabled the USSR to strengthen its position in East Asia, and possibly to land troops on the Japanese island of Hokkaido. After the Japanese surrender, Truman took rapid steps to ensure that the USSR played virtually no role in the subsequent occupation of Japan (see pages [107–9](#)).

## The USA and the future of the bomb

Essentially, two alternatives confronted Truman's government once the atomic bomb had been shown to be effective. The first was that the USA could seek to retain its nuclear monopoly for as long as possible. The second was that it could hand over the control of the bomb to the United Nations (UN). Some in the US government initially believed that a monopoly on the weapon would enable the USA to dictate the terms of the diplomatic debate to the rest of the world.

Truman's advisers were much more cautious. **Dean Acheson** pointed out that the US lead in nuclear science was only temporary and that the Soviets would rapidly catch up. Indeed, the temporary nature of the US lead was revealed when a Soviet espionage network was discovered in September 1945 operating in both Canada and the USA that had already sent a considerable amount of information about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union.

---

### SOURCE A

**From a memorandum by Dean Acheson, the US undersecretary of state to President Truman, 25 September 1945. Quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Cold War, 1941–1947*, Columbia University Press, 2000, page 252.**

*The joint development of this discovery with the UK and Canada must appear to the Soviet Union to be unanswerable evidence of an Anglo-American combination against them ... It is impossible that a government as powerful and power conscious as the Soviet Government could fail to react vigorously to this situation. It must and will exert every energy to restore the loss of power which this situation has produced.*

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source A](#) explain the USSR's reaction to the news that the USA had exploded the atomic bomb?

---

## The United Nations Atomic Energy Commission

Truman, therefore, agreed in principle to the international control of atomic energy by the UN,

providing that other nations also agreed to abide by its rules. In November 1945, the USA, together with the two nations that had helped it to develop the atomic bomb, Britain and Canada, called for the creation of a UN commission which would create rules for the control of nuclear weapons. These were:

- exchange of basic scientific information for peaceful ends between all nations
- establishing means for the control of atomic energy to ensure its use for peaceful purposes only
- the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons
- establishing an effective system of inspection to prevent the clandestine manufacture of nuclear bombs.

At the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1945, the Soviets agreed to the establishment of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission. They did, however, insist that it should report to the Security Council rather than the Assembly, where the Soviets could use their veto power as a permanent member if the need arose. The USA countered in early 1946 by suggesting that no country should have veto power over atomic energy matters, even in the Security Council, in an obvious effort to circumvent any Soviet interference.

## Breakdown of agreement

Increasingly, however, plans for the international control of nuclear energy became a casualty of the growing mistrust between the Soviets and the Western powers. When US proposals were again discussed at the UN in June 1946, the Soviets refused to surrender their veto on the grounds that it would enable them to be outvoted on the Security Council, and instead suggested the immediate destruction of all nuclear weapons. The USA rejected this, claiming there were no safeguards to ensure that all nuclear weapons would in fact be destroyed.

---

### SOURCE B





**'Christmas Card' by cartoonist Kem (Kimon Evan Marengo), 1945. It shows Truman (as the Statue of Liberty) with Stalin, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, French President Charles de Gaulle and Chinese leader Jiang Jieshi.**

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Study [Sources A](#) and [B](#). How far does [Source B](#) support the argument made in [Source A](#)?

---

The Soviets retaliated in December 1946 by vetoing the US plan in the Security Council. Nothing could now prevent a nuclear armaments race, and it was not until after the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (see page [161](#)) that the USA and USSR began to take steps to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

## The Paris Peace Treaties with Italy and the minor Axis powers 1945–7

When the Council of Foreign Ministers met for the first time in September 1945 to discuss the details of the peace treaties, arguments erupted almost immediately. The Soviets pressed for a harsh peace with Italy, while Britain and the USA argued that Italy deserved more lenient treatment. The USSR also insisted that the armistice agreements, which it had already signed with Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary and Romania, should form the basis of the subsequent peace treaties. The USA, on the other hand, insisted that before the peace treaties could be signed with these states, legal governments representing their people must be formed. To save the negotiations from a complete breakdown, James Byrnes, the US secretary of state, went to Moscow in December 1945, and a compromise was reached whereby the Eastern European and the Italian peace treaties would be negotiated simultaneously. Negotiations dragged on for over a year and were frequently threatened by escalating tension between the USSR and the USA and its British and French allies. Nevertheless, in the final analysis, both sides wanted the peace treaties settled, and were able to make compromises. In February 1947, the Paris Peace Treaties were finally concluded.

### Italy

The USA argued that Italy, by making peace with the Allies in 1943, had effectively joined their side by 1945, but the USSR insisted that, as a former Axis power, Italy should accept a punitive peace. The USA was also alarmed by Soviet claims to a share of Italy's former colony, Libya, which would enable the USSR to extend its power into the Mediterranean. Only by agreeing to a severe peace with Italy, which involved the loss of territory to Yugoslavia (see page [59](#)), the payment of \$360 million reparations (\$100 million of which were to go to the USSR) and controls on the size of Italy's armed forces, was the USA able to achieve agreement that Italy's former colonies would become **trust territories** under the UN. With the signature of the treaty, Italy again became an independent state.

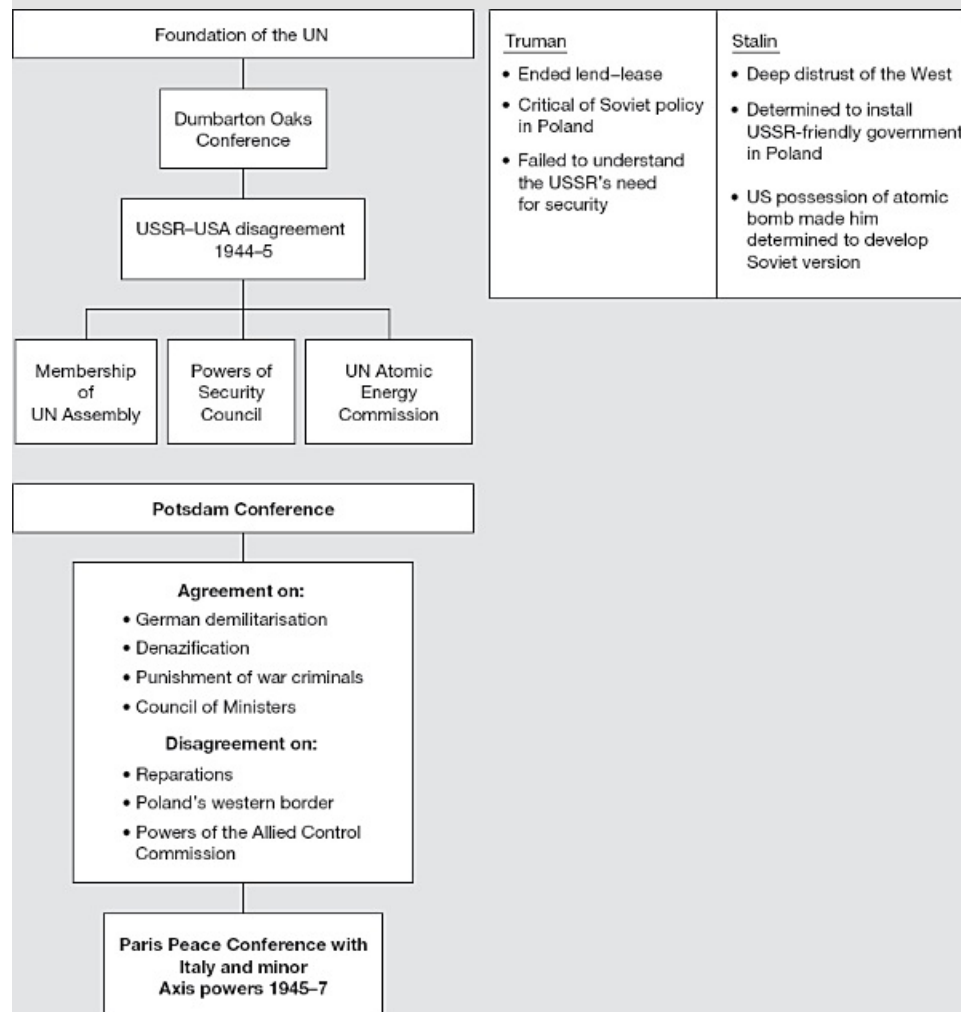


## Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Finland

The Soviets wanted the conclusion of the peace treaties with the former Axis states as soon as possible, as they wished to dissolve the ACC on which Western observers participated (see page 22) and obtain reparations. Once new governments were in place (see pages 57–8) in these states, Britain, France and the USA were ready to accept the peace treaties. These were all signed on 10 February 1947, but disagreements about the value of former German property to be handed over to the USSR delayed the Austrian treaty until 1955 (see page 98). Finland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania were all committed to paying reparations to the USSR, while Finland was also to cede the strategically important naval base of Petsamo to the USSR (see Figure 4.2, page 99). No treaty could be signed with Germany as disagreement between the four occupying powers prevented the restoration of an independent central German state until 1990.

### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### TRANSITION FROM WAR TO FRAGILE PEACE 1945–6



## 2 Germany, June 1945 to April 1947

*Why did the four occupying powers fail to work out a joint programme for Germany's future by April 1947?*

*To what extent did the USSR aim to control the whole of Germany?*

Germany's position in the middle of Europe with its potential military and economic strength ensured that neither the USSR nor the Western allies could allow the other to dominate it. Indeed, as tension rose, both sides began to wonder whether Germany itself could not perhaps be enlisted as a future ally in a possible East–West conflict. The German question became one of the central issues of the Cold War. Stalin was to appreciate this well before the Western allies did.

### Soviet aims in Germany

In June 1945, Stalin explained his plans for eventually bringing a reunified Germany into Moscow's sphere of influence to the leaders of the German Communist Party (KPD). The Red Army would directly control the Soviet zone of occupation, while the KPD would seek to win the support of the German workers in both the Soviet and the Western zones. Once Germany was allowed to hold elections for a new parliament, Stalin hoped that the KPD would form a governing coalition with the Socialist and Liberal Parties, eventually taking control of the German government. This may well have been the reason that the USSR was the first occupying power to allow the formation of democratic parties in its zone in June 1945, but even so, Communists were given all the key posts in the trade unions and cultural associations and, above all, they also controlled the local radio stations. In the autumn of 1945, the Soviets were also ready to agree to setting up a central German transport authority and a **national federation of trade unions**, but both these proposals were defeated by French opposition to restoring a united Germany, which might again dominate Europe.

### The creation of the Socialist Unity Party (SED)

To broaden the appeal of the KPD, so that it would eventually appeal to Germans in all four zones of occupation, Stalin ordered his officials to force through the merger of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) with the KPD in the Soviet zone in Eastern Germany. The Central Executive of the SPD in the Soviet zone was subject to considerable threats by the Soviet authorities, and only after at least 20,000 Social Democrats had been interrogated and imprisoned and in some cases murdered, did it agree to the formation of the new party that Stalin envisaged. On 21 April, the Socialist Unity Party (SED) was formed.

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#### SOURCE C

**At the end of April 1946, Stalin issued an important directive to his officials in the Soviet zone. The following is an extract from this directive. Quoted in Willy**

**Loth, *Stalin's Unwanted Child: The German Question and the Founding of the GDR*, Macmillan, 1998, page 38.**

*From the standpoint of the Soviet Union, it is not yet time to establish central authorities nor in general to continue with a policy of centralisation in Germany. The first goal, organising the Soviet occupation zone under effective Soviet control, has been more or less achieved. The moment has thus now come to reach into the Western zones. The instrument is the United Socialist–Communist Party. Some time will have to elapse before the party is organised in an orderly fashion in Greater Berlin itself, and this process will take even longer in the Western zones. Only when the Soviet vision has been realised and the Unity Party has established itself in the Western zones, will the time have come to address once again the question of central administrations and of effective Soviet support for a policy of centralisation in Germany.*

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Assess the value of [Source C](#) to a historian studying Stalin's policy towards Germany, May 1945–7.

---

## Reaction in Western Germany

The forced amalgamation of the SPD and KPD in the Soviet zone created fear and suspicion in Western Germany, which prevented the new party's success there. When SPD members in the Western zones of Berlin were asked in March by the Berlin party leadership to approve the merger of the two parties, they rejected the proposal by a massive margin of 82 per cent. It was this suspicion and fear of Soviet intentions that was to be a major reason some two years later for public support in West Germany for the creation of a West German state.

## The problem of reparations

By the spring of 1946, the compromise over reparations, which had been negotiated in Potsdam, was already breaking down. The Western zones, particularly the heavily populated British zone, were absorbing the majority of the German refugees who had been expelled from the former German territories that had been ceded to Poland and Czechoslovakia at the end of the war (see the map on page [41](#)). As the cost of feeding and housing them fell on the occupying authorities, Britain and the USA were anxious to encourage a modest German economic recovery so that their zones could at least pay for their own food imports. Consequently, until their zones became self-supporting, they wished to delay delivering to the USSR the quotas from their own zones of machinery and raw materials that had been agreed at Potsdam (see page [39](#)). There was even talk that the Soviet zone would have to deliver food to the hard-pressed Western zones.

In May, General Clay, the **military governor** of the US zone, announced that no further reparation deliveries would be made to the Soviet authorities from the US zone until the four occupying powers had drawn up an overall plan for the German economy. His intention was to force both the Soviets and the French to agree to treat Germany as an economic unity with its economy organised on a national rather than a zonal level. The Soviets suspected that the

Americans were bringing pressure to bear on them to agree to a reconstructed German economy within an international capitalist system. They feared that a united German capitalist economy would play an important part in a US-dominated global capitalist trading system. In June, they responded to this threat by increasing production in their zone and transforming 213 key German firms into special Soviet-controlled companies, the total production of which was to go straight to the USSR.

## The creation of Bizonia

When the Council of Foreign Ministers returned to the question of Germany in July, Molotov, the Soviet foreign minister, insisted that the Germans should pay the USSR the equivalent of \$10 billion in reparations. James Byrnes, the US secretary of state, again argued that reparations could only be paid once Germany had a **trade surplus** that would cover the cost of food and raw material imports. He then offered to unify the US zone economically with the other three zones. Only Britain, which was finding its zone a major drain on its fragile economy, accepted.

In retrospect, this was a major step in the division of Germany between East and West, although its significance was played down initially. When the British and US zones were merged economically in January 1947 to form what became called **Bizonia**, the Americans argued that, far from breaking the Potsdam Agreement, the amalgamation would create the economic preconditions for fulfilling the Potsdam Agreement. It was hoped that Bizonia would become so prosperous that, through interzonal trade, it would gradually attract and knit the French and Russian zones into a united national German economy. A more prosperous Germany would then be able to pay the reparations that had been demanded at Potsdam. In an attempt to convince the USSR that Bizonia was not an **embryonic state**, the offices responsible for food, finance and transport were deliberately located in different cities. The USSR suspected, however, that Bizonia was the first step towards creating a separate West German state.

## Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, March to April 1947

The Moscow meeting was one of the turning points in the early history of the Cold War. The Soviets made a determined effort to destroy Bizonia by demanding that a new central German administration under four-power control should be immediately set up. They ran into strong opposition from the British foreign secretary, **Ernest Bevin**, who feared that this would slow down the economic recovery of the British zone. In London, Bevin's officials had skilfully drawn up a plan for revising the Potsdam Agreement, which Bevin knew the Soviets could not accept. The USSR would, for instance, have to return some of the reparations that it had seized in its zone to help balance the budgets in the Western zones, and it would receive no coal or steel deliveries until the whole of Germany could pay for its own food and raw material imports. Bevin successfully managed to manoeuvre the USSR into a corner when he persuaded the Americans to agree that political unity could only come after economic unity. As this would mean a protracted delay in reparation deliveries, the Soviets had little option but to reject the proposal, which is exactly what the Western powers hoped they would do.

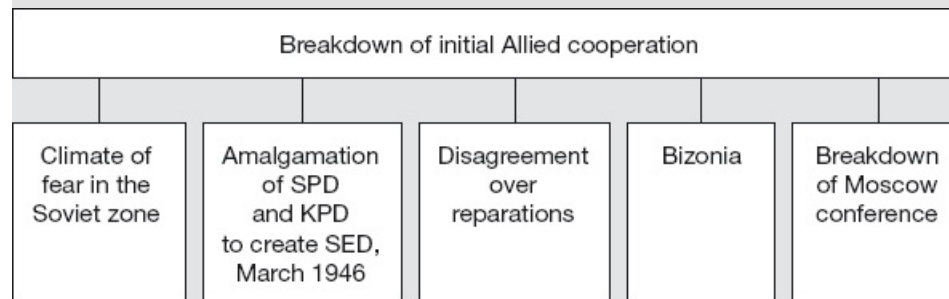
To the British and Americans, the Moscow conference was what historian Willy Loth in 1998 called a 'successful failure', in that it enabled them to press on with building up Bizonia.

Nothing, however, was decided on the divisive issues of reparations, and the future of Germany was left to dominate the agenda of the next conference, scheduled to meet in London in November (see page 69).

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### GERMANY, JUNE 1945 TO APRIL 1947



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## 3 The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the Soviet response

***To what extent were the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan designed to contain Soviet power?***

***What were the aims of the Marshall Plan and why did the USSR reject them?***

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan marked the real beginning of the Cold War and of US military and economic engagement in Western Europe. Together, they helped to ensure capitalism and democratic governments in much of western and southern Europe while limiting the political and economic influence of the Soviet Union and its satellite states. The Marshall Plan, particularly, was a major challenge to the USSR and forced it to consolidate its hold on Eastern Europe. Some revisionist historians such as William Appleman Williams and Gabriel Kolko see the Marshall Plan as further evidence of US provocation of the USSR (see page 63). This interpretation does, however, play down the perceived Soviet threat to western and southern Europe.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Get to grips with the consequences of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan by completing Worksheet 7 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Origins of the Truman Doctrine

The American possession of the atomic bomb did not deter Stalin from pursuing policies hostile to Britain and the USA in Turkey, the Middle East and Manchuria.

- In Turkey, Stalin intended in 1945–6 not only to establish Soviet control over **the Straits** with naval bases in the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, but also to redraw the Turkish frontier with the USSR by forcing Turkey to cede those border areas where there were large Armenian, Georgian and Kurdish populations. In August 1946, Stalin attempted to put pressure on the Turkish government to agree to his demands by mobilising troops on the USSR–Turkish frontier. This inevitably caused alarm in Washington and London and even led to talk in American military circles of a possible nuclear strike against the USSR. Stalin rapidly retreated, but to save face, he publicly dismissed the US atomic monopoly as a empty threat.
- In northern Iran, Stalin delayed the departure of Soviet troops, which had occupied the area in 1941 to safeguard the oil wells there from a possible German attack. He encouraged the Kurdish and Azerbaijani nationalist movements to set up independent states under the protection of the USSR. To counter this, the Iranian prime minister was encouraged by the USA to take the matter to the UN in 1946, where the USSR had no allies. Unwilling to risk war, Stalin bowed to pressure to evacuate northern Iran.
- In Manchuria, the USSR had also tested the USA's resolve by delaying the evacuation of its troops until May 1946 and covertly assisting the Chinese Communists (see page [113](#)).

In the final analysis, Stalin would retreat if put under enough pressure but his persistent attempts to exploit the situations in Turkey and Iran, combined with his open disregard for the Declaration of Liberated Europe (see page [32](#)) in Eastern Europe, intensified distrust of Soviet action in both the USA and Britain.

Truman's growing distrust of Stalin was further fuelled in February 1946 by **George F. Kennan**'s famous 'long telegram' (see [Source D](#)). This analysed Stalin's foreign policy and concluded that the USSR was an opportunist state that seized every chance globally to project its own power. Kennan argued persuasively that the only way to stop this would be for the USA and its allies to establish firm barriers against Soviet expansion. Kennan's warning was endorsed in March by Churchill in his famous 'iron curtain' speech in Missouri, in which he pointed out that 'an iron curtain had descended across the Continent' (see page [56](#)). President Truman was in the audience.

---

#### SOURCE D

**From George Kennan's, 'long telegram' of 22 February 1946. Quoted in George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925–1950*, Bantam, 1969, pages 549–51.**

*... Soviet leaders are driven by necessities of their own past and present position to put forward a dogma which pictures the outside world as evil, hostile and menacing, but, as bearing within itself germs of creeping disease ... until it is given final coup de grace [final blow] by the rising power of socialism and yields to a new and better world. This thesis provides justification for that increase of military and police power in Russia ..., for that isolation of Russian population from the outside world, and for that fluid and constant pressure to extend limits of Russian police power .... Basically this is only the steady advance of uneasy Russian nationalism, a centuries old movement .... But in a new guise of international Marxism, with its honeyed promises to a desperate and worn out world. It is more dangerous and insidious than ever before.*

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## ? SOURCE QUESTION

Study [Source D](#). Assess its value to a historian studying Stalin's role in the Cold War.

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## The impact of the British economic crisis

In June 1945, the Americans had assumed that Britain would continue to play a major role in the eastern Mediterranean, but by January 1947 Britain faced a crippling economic crisis. As a result of political unrest in India, Palestine and Egypt, and the long delay in completing the post-war peace treaties, Britain had to keep a large number of troops in Germany, Italy, the Middle East and Asia. This was, of course, enormously expensive, and by January 1947 Britain had used up the loan granted to it by the USA in 1945. The situation was made worse by the heavy blizzards and exceptionally cold weather that had brought British transport, industry and coal mining virtually to a halt for several weeks. On 21 February, the British, in desperation, informed the Americans that their financial and military aid to both Greece and Turkey would have to cease on 31 March.

This was very unwelcome news in Washington, as civil war had broken out again in Greece in September 1946 when Stalin, contrary to his earlier policy in 1944 (see page [25](#)), tolerated Yugoslav, Bulgarian and Albanian efforts to assist the Greek Communists against the British-backed Greek government with soldiers, equipment and money. Truman feared, above all, that the Communists might launch a similar uprising in Italy once Allied troops had left after the signing of the peace treaty (see page [44](#)). He felt, therefore, that he had to act quickly to strengthen non-Communist forces in areas that were vulnerable to Soviet pressure, but to do this he required money, which could only be found by persuading **Congress** to vote for the necessary funds.

## The announcement of the doctrine

On 12 March, in a deliberately dramatic speech designed to appeal to Congress, Truman stressed the seriousness of the international situation and how Europe was increasingly becoming divided into two mutually hostile blocs.

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### SOURCE E

**From Truman's speech to Congress, 12 March 1947. Quoted in G. Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, Routledge, 1999, page 22.**

*One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections and the suppression of personal freedoms.*

*I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way ... The seeds of*



*totalitarian [undemocratic and dictatorial] regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How helpful is [Source E](#) to understanding the causes of the Cold War?

---

## Stalin's reaction

At first, Stalin dismissed Truman's speech as an exercise in propaganda. Initially, he even increased aid to the rebels, but within six months he cut off all assistance to them, and more importantly insisted that Tito did the same. Closing the Yugoslav–Greek border deprived the Greek rebels of any help or the chance of escaping across the frontier to regroup. This left them with the only option to surrender.

## The Marshall Plan

The Truman Doctrine marked a new and important US policy initiative that was to lead to what became called the Marshall Plan.

Since 1945, the Americans had been pumping money into Western Europe in an attempt to prevent famine and total economic collapse. In 1947, influential US journalists and politicians were beginning to argue that only through political and economic integration could Western Europe solve the whole complex of problems facing it. This would create a large and potentially prosperous market, which would act as a barrier to the further spread of communism and perhaps, in time, even pull the Eastern European states out of the Soviet bloc. It would also build a political structure into which West Germany, or indeed the whole of Germany, could be integrated and so contained – as well as helping to boost the US economy.

## General Marshall's offer

In June 1947, after extensive consultations in Washington, General **George Marshall**, the new US secretary of state, made his historic offer of an aid package for Europe (see [Source F](#), page 53). The offer was extended to Moscow, as Truman did not want to be seen to be responsible for the division of Europe. However, the USA set rules for the acceptance of financial aid, which it was sure the USSR could not agree to. In that way, the USSR itself could be seen as responsible for dividing Europe.

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### SOURCE F

**From General Marshall's speech to Harvard University on 5 June 1947. Quoted in *US Department of State Bulletin*, XVI, 15 June 1947, page 1160.**

*It is already evident that before the United States Government can proceed further to alleviate the situation and help start the European world economy, there must be some*



*agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government. It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a programme to place Europe on its feet economically.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Study [Sources E](#) and [F](#). How useful are these two sources for understanding US policy towards to USSR in 1947?

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## The Paris negotiations

After Marshall's speech, the British and French called for a conference in Paris to formulate plans for the acceptance of US aid. Stalin rightly suspected that the offer masked an attempt by the USA to interfere in the domestic affairs of the European states, but he sent Molotov to Paris to discuss further details with the British and French. The Soviets certainly wanted financial aid from the USA but without any conditions attached. Britain and France, however, argued that the European states should draw up a joint programme for spending the aid, rather than each individual state sending in a separate list of requests. On Stalin's orders, Foreign Minister Molotov rejected this and left the conference. Stalin feared that a joint programme would enable US economic power to undermine Soviet influence in Eastern Europe by encouraging free trade and the exchange of ideas with the West and the growth of capitalism. Bevin, whose enthusiastic support for a joint European programme had led to Molotov's departure in protest, observed perceptively that his departure marked the beginning of the formation of a **Western bloc**.

On 16 July, detailed negotiations on the Marshall Plan began in Paris, where sixteen Western European nations, including Turkey and Greece, were represented. Relevant information on Bizonia was provided by the occupation authorities. The Eastern European states were invited but were stopped by Stalin from attending. This simplified the negotiations for the Western powers but even so, agreement was difficult to achieve; each Western European state had its own agenda. The French, for instance, wanted to ensure that their own economy had priority in receiving US aid over the economic needs of Bizonia. They were, however, ready to consider the formation of a **customs union**, as long as it enabled France to control the West German economy. The British, on the other hand, wished to safeguard their national **sovereignty** and were opposed to creating powerful **supranational** organisations.

By mid-August, the Americans were disappointed to find that the Western Europeans had not come up with any radical plans for economic integration, and had only produced a series of national 'shopping lists'. Each country had merely drawn up a list of requests with its own needs in mind, rather than thinking supranationally about the needs of its neighbours and the European continent. Jefferson Caffery, the US ambassador in Paris, complained that this simply re-created pre-war economic conditions with all the 'low labor productivity and maldistribution of effort which derive from segregating 270,000,000 people into ... uneconomic principalities' – that is, small countries with their own separate economies. As an American citizen he was dismissive of small historical countries that were fiercely proud of their independence.

The Western European states also asked for \$29 billion, far more than Congress was ready to grant. To avoid the conference ending in failure, Bevin called an emergency meeting in Paris, which decided to let the Americans themselves propose where cuts in this sum could be made. The US officials immediately set up an **Advisory Steering Committee**, which attempted to bring the Europeans into line with essential US requirements, but by late September, Washington had achieved only limited success:

- Although the sixteen states promised to liberalise trade and France agreed to start negotiations for a customs union, these commitments were hedged around with qualifications aimed at protecting national independence.
- Germany's economic revival was declared essential, although it was to be carefully controlled to protect its neighbours.
- There was to be cooperation on the development of **hydroelectric sources**, pooling of railway wagons, and the setting up of production targets for coal, agriculture, refined oil and steel.

There was to be no supranational authority that could force the individual states to carry out these policies. At most, the sixteen states promised to set up a joint organisation to review how much progress was being made.

## The Soviet response

Stalin's decision to put pressure on the Eastern European states to boycott the Paris conference marked the end of his attempts to cooperate with the USA and maintain the Grand Alliance. In September 1947, he invited the leaders of the Eastern European, French and Italian Communist parties to a conference at Szklarska Poręba in Poland to discuss setting up the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), which would co-ordinate the policies and tactics of the Communist parties both in the satellite states and in Western Europe. It was the first international Communist organisation established since the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943. Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's representative, told the delegates that the world was now divided into two hostile camps: the imperialist bloc led by the USA, intent on 'the enslavement of Europe', and the 'anti-imperialist and democratic camp' led by the USSR. From this, it followed that the whole policy of cooperating with moderate socialist and liberal parties would have to be abandoned. Where possible, communist parties would have to take over power themselves and create societies whose economy and social system would be modelled on the Soviet system. From now on, as Martin McCauley put it in 1995, 'there was to be only one road to socialism'.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of the Marshall Plan by completing Worksheet 7 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

## THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE, THE MARSHALL PLAN AND THE SOVIET RESPONSE

Truman Doctrine, March 1947
<p><b>Reasons for its announcement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Britain unable to defend eastern Mediterranean</li> <li>• Yugoslavs assisted Greek Communists</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Doctrine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truman offered US support to countries resisting communist subversion</li> <li>• Stressed need to improve economic conditions in Europe</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Marshall Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer of aid package</li> <li>• Funds distributed by supranational organisation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepted by Western European states</li> <li>• Rejected by USSR, which set up Cominform</li> </ul>

## 4 The ‘iron curtain’: European states 1945–7

*How correct was Churchill’s assessment that an ‘iron curtain’ had descended across Europe?*

### The ‘iron curtain’

In a famous speech at Fulton in the USA on 5 March 1946 (see [Source G](#), page 56), Churchill observed that ‘from Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste, in the Adriatic, an **iron curtain** has descended across the continent’.

How accurate was this analysis? Up to the spring of 1947 it can be argued, to quote the British historians G. and N. Swain, that ‘diversity rather than uniformity’ still characterised the situation in Europe. Yugoslavia and Albania had their own communist regimes, whose aggressive plans for a Balkan union and meddling in Greek domestic affairs Stalin at first attempted to control. Poland and Romania, both vital to the USSR’s security, underwent socialist revolutions and were in effect already Soviet satellites. In Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Finland and even Bulgaria, Stalin pursued a more moderate policy of influence rather than direct control. Yet with the escalation of the Cold War brought about by the Marshall Plan discussions and the creation of the Cominform,

Stalin began to impose a much more uniform pattern on Eastern Europe. In Western Europe the intensifying Cold War polarised domestic politics, with the communists on one side and non-communists on the other. Communist parties were forced out of coalitions in France and Italy. Only in Finland did the situation remain unchanged.

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#### SOURCE G

**From Winston Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri, USA, on the 'iron curtain', 5 March 1946. Available at [www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1946-03-05.pdf](http://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1946-03-05.pdf).**

*From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities, and the populations around them lie in the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in some cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow. Athens alone ... is free to decide its future ... The Russian-dominated Polish Government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany ... The Communist parties, which were very small in all these Eastern States of Europe, have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy ... An attempt is being made by the Russians in Berlin to build up a quasi-Communist party in their zone of occupied Germany by showing special favors to groups of left-wing German leaders.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

According to [Source G](#), why does Churchill argue that an 'iron curtain' has descended across the continent?

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#### ONLINE EXTRAS

##### AQA

Test your understanding of [Source G](#) by completing Worksheet 8 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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#### SOURCE H

**From Stalin's interview with the Soviet newspaper, *Pravda*, 13 March 1946. Quoted in Martin McCauley, *Origins of Cold War, 1941–1949*, third edition, Longman, 2003, pages 142–3.**

*... The following circumstances should not be forgotten. The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Romania and Hungary. The Germans were able to make their invasion through these countries because at the time governments hostile to the Soviet*

*Union existed in these countries. As a result of the German invasion the Soviet Union has lost irretrievably in the fighting against the Germans, and also through the German occupation and the deportation of Soviet citizens to German servitude, a total of about seven million people. In other words, the Soviet Union's loss of life has been several times greater than that of Britain and the United States of America put together. Possibly in some quarters an inclination is felt to forget about these colossal sacrifices of the Soviet people which secured the liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite [Nazi] yoke. But the Soviet Union cannot forget about them ... And so what can there be surprising about the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, is trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries? How can anyone, who has not taken leave of his senses, describe these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as expansionist tendencies on the part of our state?*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How useful is [Source H](#) in explaining Soviet policy in Europe in 1945–7?

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## Poland

Why did Britain and the USA not intervene in Poland to stop the Communists from seizing power? To deflect Western criticism from his Polish policy, Stalin had set up a Provisional Government of National Unity in June 1945, which had been joined by **Stanisław Mikołajczyk**, the former leader of the government-in-exile in London. Stalin could not risk genuinely free elections since the Communist Party, as a result of its unpopularity, would inevitably suffer defeat. Mikołajczyk therefore resigned in protest from the provisional cabinet in August 1945. In October 1946, he refused to allow his party, the Polish Peasants' Party, to join the Communist-dominated **electoral bloc**. His reason for this decision was that the bloc intended to present the electors with a single list of candidates who would all support a Communist-dominated government. He hoped that this boycott would trigger a political crisis that would force Britain and the USA to intervene.

In fact, the new **doctrine of containment** being worked out by Truman accepted unofficially that Poland was within the USSR's sphere of interest and that the USA would not intervene in its domestic affairs. Thus, when Mikołajczyk suggested that Britain and the USA should send officials to monitor the election in January 1947, both declined in the knowledge that there was little they could do to influence events in Poland. The results were a foregone conclusion. The bloc, which used terror and falsified electoral results with impunity, officially gained 394 seats, while the Peasants' Party gained a mere 28.

Although Władysław Gomułka, the leader of the Polish Communist Party, was dependent on Soviet assistance, he believed passionately that Poland had a unique history and could not just follow unquestioningly the Soviet example. He therefore viewed with dismay the creation of the Cominform, as he feared that it would force the Eastern European Communist parties to follow down to the last detail the Moscow model of socialism. Only under considerable pressure did he reluctantly accept membership. However, a year later Stalin had him removed from the leadership.

## Romania

After the Potsdam Conference, at which it was decided that peace treaties could only be signed when governments recognised by the wartime allies had been established, Romania's King Michael called on Britain and the USA not to recognise the new government as it had been imposed by the Soviet Union in December 1945. As the Council of Foreign Ministers was about to begin negotiations on the Romanian peace treaty (see page 44), Stalin decided to call on **Petru Groza**, the prime minister, to appoint two more non-Communists to the government. In reality, however, this made little difference. Groza was able to strengthen the National Democratic Front in March 1946 when the Romanian Socialist Party merged with the Communist Party. As in the Soviet zone of Germany, this effectively ensured Communist domination of the party. In May, the Front was further extended to include the National Popular Party, the National Peasant Party, as well as representatives from the Communist-organised trade unions, and youth and women's organisations.

In November 1946, the Communist-dominated National Democratic Front went to the polls. As in Poland, abuses occurred during the election: opposition newspapers were closed down and leading members of the opposition were murdered. It was, therefore, unsurprising that the Front won more than 80 per cent of the vote. Nevertheless, it did represent a broad spectrum of the population and would have won the national elections even without these aggressive and undemocratic tactics. The Front opposed the supporters of the former government, which had allied with Germany in the Second World War, and it also carried out popular social reforms such as the redistribution of land from the great landowners to the peasantry.

In February 1947, with the signature of the Paris Peace Treaties (see page 44), the ACC was dissolved. Under Soviet pressure, Romania refused Marshall Aid and joined the Cominform. In December 1947, King Michael was forced to abdicate and, in April 1948, a Communist people's republic was declared.

## Bulgaria

Soviet techniques and policy were similar in Bulgaria, although Stalin hoped to avoid unnecessary friction with the Western powers until the peace treaty had been signed. In December 1945, he, therefore, forced the Communist-dominated Bulgarian government to include two members of the opposition, but when these began to demand changes in policy, Stalin advised the Communists to adopt a series of well-planned measures to smother the opposition. Yet, with an eye on the still unfinished peace treaties, he remained anxious to mask the party's dictatorship. He even urged the sceptical Bulgarian Communists in September 1946 to set up a 'Labour Party' which would have 'a broader base and a better mask for the present period'.

In October, elections took place for a national assembly. The opposition parties managed to win over one-third of the total votes, but Western hopes that this would form the basis of an effective parliamentary opposition were soon dashed. The Truman Doctrine and increasing US involvement in Greece meant that Bulgaria became a frontline state in the defence of communism. Consequently, Stalin allowed the Communists to liquidate the opposition. The Bulgarian Communist Party also took the creation of the Cominform as a cue for pressing on with its radical programme for nationalising industry, collectivising agriculture and creating a

one-party state.

## Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia occupied a unique position among the Soviet-dominated states in eastern and south-eastern Europe, as the Communist Party had effectively won power independently of the Soviet forces. The People's Front, a bloc of parties dominated by the Yugoslav Communist Party, won 90 per cent of the votes in the election of November 1945, and Tito was then able smoothly to implement a revolution based on the Stalinist model in the USSR.

In southern Europe, Tito had ambitious aims which clashed with British and US policy. Yugoslavia assisted Greek Communists in their attempts to seize power in Greece (see pages 26 and 51), while also claiming border territories from Italy – specifically Venezia Giulia and Trieste (see the map on page 11), an important port on the Adriatic Sea. In May 1945, Yugoslav partisans occupied both territories after German troops were withdrawn, but were forced out of Trieste by British and US troops.

The USSR sympathised with Tito and argued that Trieste belonged historically, as well as geographically and economically, to the regions that now formed Yugoslavia, but Stalin was not ready to risk confrontation with Britain and the USA over these claims. In the end, an agreement was reached in the Paris peace negotiations in 1947 where Trieste was divided into two separate parts; one under Anglo-American control and the other under Yugoslav control.

## Czechoslovakia and Hungary

Up to the autumn of 1947, Stalin appeared to be interested primarily in preserving a strong Communist influence in Czechoslovakia and Hungary rather than in complete domination.

### Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia, the post-war social revolution had been carried out by an alliance of Socialists and Communists under the direction of President Beneš. Soviet troops had been withdrawn as early as December 1945. The elections in May 1946, in which the Communists won some 38 per cent of the vote, were carried out without any violence or efforts by the Communist Party to manipulate the vote. Although the Communist leader, Klement Gottwald, had established a tight grip on the Czech security forces, he had no plans for a coup and appeared to pin his hope on winning the 1948 election. Without the intensifying Cold War, Czechoslovakia might perhaps have remained a bridge between East and West, as Beneš had hoped, but the Marshall Plan and the subsequent creation of the Cominform effectively created a climate where this was impossible. The Czech cabinet voted unanimously in July to attend the Paris conference on the plan (see page 53), but the Soviet government insisted that the Americans, under cover of offering a loan, were trying to form a Western bloc and isolate the Soviet Union.

Czech proposals for compromise were ruthlessly dismissed. Jan Masaryk, the foreign minister, later told the British ambassador: 'I went to Moscow as the foreign minister of an independent sovereign state; I returned as a **lackey** of the Soviet government.' What this implied became clearer at Szklarska Poręba in September, when the secretary-general of the Czech Communist



Party, Rudolf Slánský, told the conference that the reactionary forces would have to be expelled from the National Front. In February 1948, the Communist Party seized power in Czechoslovakia (the Prague Coup).

## Hungary

It seemed in the autumn of 1945 that Hungary, like Czechoslovakia, was treated as a special case by Stalin. The elections of November 1945 were free, even though the Soviets could have influenced them easily. Two years later, the press was still free, as was debate in parliament, the borders with the West were open, and most small- and medium-sized businesses were in private hands. Yet, until the signing of the peace treaty, Soviet influence was guaranteed through its dominating position on the ACC, which was the real governing force in Hungary, and Stalin was able to insist on the Communist Party participating in the coalition government and controlling the vital Ministry of the Interior.

In the spring of 1947, the most powerful opposition to the Communists was shattered when the leader of the Smallholders' Party, Béla Kovács, was arrested by Soviet troops for conspiring against the occupation. Yet even this did not lead to an overwhelming Communist success in the August elections, when the left-wing bloc only won 45 per cent of the vote. As late as the autumn of 1947, it still seemed possible that Hungary might retain some independence, but it was increasingly being drawn into the Soviet bloc. On 8 December, a treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed with Yugoslavia and, a month later, a mutual aid treaty with the USSR. In March 1948, as a result of Soviet pressure, the Hungarian Communist and Socialist parties merged. The following February, the Communist-dominated Hungarian People's Independence Front was formed, and in the elections of May 1949 only candidates from the Independence Front were allowed to stand.

## Finland

Finland again remained the exception to the pattern developing in the other Eastern European states. Its weak Communist Party received little help from the USSR. Why was this so? The American historian Adam Ulam argued in 1968 that Finland escaped being integrated into the Soviet bloc merely by chance, as Zhdanov, the Soviet chairman of the ACC, was away most of the time in Moscow. The Finnish historian Jukka Nevakivi, however, stressed that Stalin simply wanted to neutralise Finland. Once the peace treaty was signed (see page 44) he was ready to leave the Finns alone. Stalin seemed convinced that, unlike Poland, Finland was no threat to the USSR, and the threat of invasion through Finland into the Soviet Union was considered highly unlikely.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Get to grips with the causes of the Cold War by completing Worksheet 9 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Finland's neutrality was emphasised in 1947 when its government declined an invitation to the



Paris conference on the Marshall Plan, on the grounds that it wished 'to remain outside world political conflicts'. On the other hand, it did not become a member of the Cominform, and received financial assistance from the USA independently of the Marshall Plan.

## **The containment of communism in France and Italy**

There were strong Communist parties in both Italy and France, which, as in the Eastern European states, had been members of coalition governments. The Cominform instructed them that they were to oppose their countries' support for the Marshall Plan.

### **France**

After the liberation, the French government initially attempted to balance between the USSR and the Western powers. Indeed, many historians argue that France did not really join the Cold War on the side of Britain and the USA until the Moscow conference of March 1947. However, the French historian Annie Lacroix Riz has shown that long before then France had in reality aligned itself with Britain and the USA. As early as October 1945, General de Gaulle was thinking of a Western European defence organisation with a US and possibly even a German contribution, despite his earlier determination to distance himself from the USA and Britain (see page 30); but when he fell from power in 1946, the new government, a Communist, Socialist and Christian Democrat coalition, attempted to act as a bridge between East and West. However, behind the scenes the Christian Democrats and even some of the Socialists secretly made it clear that they would like to draw nearer to the USA.

In March 1946, the French Socialist leader, Leon Blum, went to Washington to negotiate an American loan, and accepted the US arguments for free international trade, which effectively meant France's inclusion in the capitalist Western world. At the Moscow conference in March 1947, France openly aligned itself with the British and Americans, and two months later the Communists were expelled from the governing coalition. Initially, they remained allied with the Socialists, but in the autumn Stalin ordered them to stage a series of violent strikes against the Marshall Plan. This finally persuaded the Socialists to distance themselves from them and to accept the pro-US policy of the Christian Democrats.

### **Italy**

There was a similar pattern of events in Italy. The Communists joined the coalition government in April 1945, and some Italian statesmen argued that Italy should try to balance between the USSR and the Western powers. Yet essentially, Italy, as Stalin himself conceded, had little option but to support the latter group, since it had been liberated and occupied by them. In December 1945, a new coalition government was created under Alcide de Gasperi, a Christian Democrat, who rapidly won US support for his economic policies. As East–West tension grew in 1946–7, the Italian government moved to the right, and in May 1947 the Communists were dismissed from the cabinet. This cleared the way for the government to accept the Marshall Plan and to align itself unambiguously with the West.

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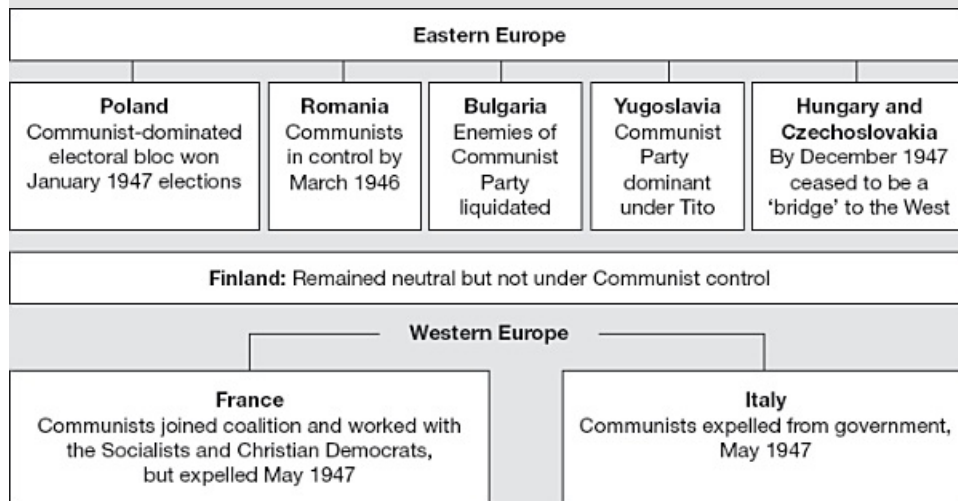
## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Develop your analysis of key figures by completing Worksheet 8 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE 'IRON CURTAIN': EUROPEAN STATES 1945–7



## 5 Key debate

### *Did the USA or the USSR start the Cold War 1945–7?*

The Cold War divided Europe until 1989. Why this happened and who was responsible are topics much debated by historians. To the conservative or traditionalist historians in the West, there is no doubt that it was Stalin; while revisionists look more sympathetically on the USSR and blame the USA and, to a lesser extent, Britain. With increased access to Soviet archives after 1990, historians from both 'the West' and the former Soviet bloc, such as Leonid Gibiansky in 1997, argue that Stalin's policy in Europe was more varied than had been originally assumed by Western historians.

## Traditionalist interpretations

Traditionalist Western historians, such as Herbert Feis who wrote in the 1950s, firmly put the blame for starting the Cold War on Stalin. These historians argued that Stalin ignored promises given at the Yalta Conference in February 1945 to support democratically elected governments. Instead, over the next three years, he proceeded to put his own Communist puppets in power in the Eastern European states. Once it was clear that Britain and France were too weak

economically and politically to defend Western Europe, the USA intervened and made the following key decisions which marked the beginning of the Cold War:

- creation of Bizonia
- Truman Doctrine of containment
- Marshall Plan.

This interpretation of the start of the Cold War depicted the USA responding defensively to aggressive Soviet moves. In the USA, the leading Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis, writing after the end of the Cold War, gave a new slant to this interpretation by arguing that the Cold War was an unavoidable consequence of Stalin's paranoia, and was an extension of the way he dealt with opposition within the USSR.

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### EXTRACT 1

**From 'Origins of the Cold War' by Arthur Schlesinger, *Foreign Affairs*, volume 46, 1967, page 12.**

*An analysis of the origins of the Cold War which leaves out those factors – the intransigence of Leninist ideology, the sinister dynamics of a totalitarian society and the madness of Stalin – is obviously incomplete. It was these factors which made it hard for the West to accept the thesis that Russia was moved only by a desire to protect its security and would be satisfied by the control of eastern Europe; it was these factors which charged the debate between universalism [the belief that mankind can only be saved through a particular belief – in this case Marxism–Leninism] and spheres of influence with apocalyptic [momentous] potentiality.*

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### ? INTERPRETATION QUESTION

How far do the historians quoted in Extracts 1–3 agree or differ in the reasons they give for the start of the Cold War?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of why the Grand Alliance broke down by completing Worksheet 9 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Revisionist historians

Revisionist historians argued that the USA pursued policies that caused the Cold War in Europe. For instance, William Appleman Williams claimed in 1959 that the USA aimed to force the USSR to join the global economy and open its frontiers to both US imports and political ideas, which would have undermined Stalin's government. Ten years later, another historian, Gabriel Kolko, summed up US policy as aiming at restructuring the world economically so that US business could trade, operate and profit without any restrictions.

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## EXTRACT 2

**From William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, Delta Books, 1962, pages 206–7.**

*American leaders had ... come to believe the theory, the necessity and morality of open door [free trade] expansion ... As far as American leaders were concerned the philosophy and practice of open-door expansion had become in both its missionary and economic aspects, the view of the world ...*

*Particularly after the atom bomb was created and used, the attitude of the United States left the Soviets with but one real option; either acquiescence in American proposals or be confronted with American power and hostility. It was the decision of the United States to employ its new and awesome power in keeping with the **Open Door Policy**, which crystallized the Cold War.*

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## Post-revisionist historians

Writing from the 1990s onwards, post-revisionist historians have the advantage of being able to use Soviet archive material. Historians like John Lewis Gaddis, Vladislav Zubok, Constantine Pleshakov and Norman Naimark have shown that local Communists in the Soviet zone in Eastern Germany, Bulgaria, Romania and elsewhere had considerable influence on policies which sometimes ran counter to Stalin's own intentions. They have also shown that Stalin's policy in Eastern Europe was more subtle than traditionally viewed. While he was certainly determined to turn Poland, Romania and Bulgaria into satellite states, regardless of what the West might think about the violation of democracy or **human rights**, he also had flexible views. For two years this allowed Hungary and Czechoslovakia to retain connections to the West and for Finland to remain a neutral non-communist Western-style democracy.

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## EXTRACT 3

**From John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War*, Allen Lane, 2006, page 11.**

*Stalin's post-war goals were security for himself, his regime and his ideology in precisely that order. He sought to make sure that no internal challenges could ever again endanger his personal rule, and that no external threats would ever again place his country at risk. The interests of Communists elsewhere in the world, admirable though these might be, would never outweigh the priorities of the Soviet state as he had determined them. Narcissism, paranoia and absolute power came together in Stalin: he was, within the Soviet Union and international Communist movement, enormously feared – but also worshipped.*

*Wartime expenditure in blood and treasure, Stalin believed, should largely determine who got what after the war: the Soviet Union, therefore, would get a lot.*

---

## Conclusion

Is it an exaggeration to say that Stalin pursued a relatively moderate line in Eastern Europe up to

1947, and that his German policy was more a clumsy attempt to neutralise Germany and gain the vital reparations needed by the USSR, rather than a result of deep-laid plans to take control of territory occupied by Germany during the Second World War?

Historian Michael McGwire, writing in 1994, has argued that Stalin was actively seeking to preserve what was left of the wartime cooperation between Britain, the USA and the USSR and, as a consequence of this, had by 1947, lost his chance to control Greece. By mid-1947, Stalin was pushed on the defensive, first by the Truman Doctrine and then by the Marshall Plan.

Does this mean that Truman in fact started the Cold War? The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were certainly important stages reached in the escalation of the Cold War, but the context in which the USA acted is also important. The seismic events of early 1947 – Britain's near bankruptcy and withdrawal from the eastern Mediterranean, growing economic paralysis in Germany, civil war in Greece and China (see page 115), and the strength of the Communist parties in Italy and France – galvanised the US government into announcing first the Truman Doctrine and then the Marshall Plan. This was the turning point in the immediate post-war period and provoked the USSR into tightening its grip on Eastern Europe and creating the Cominform.

---

## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of the breakdown of the Grand Alliance by completing Worksheet 10 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

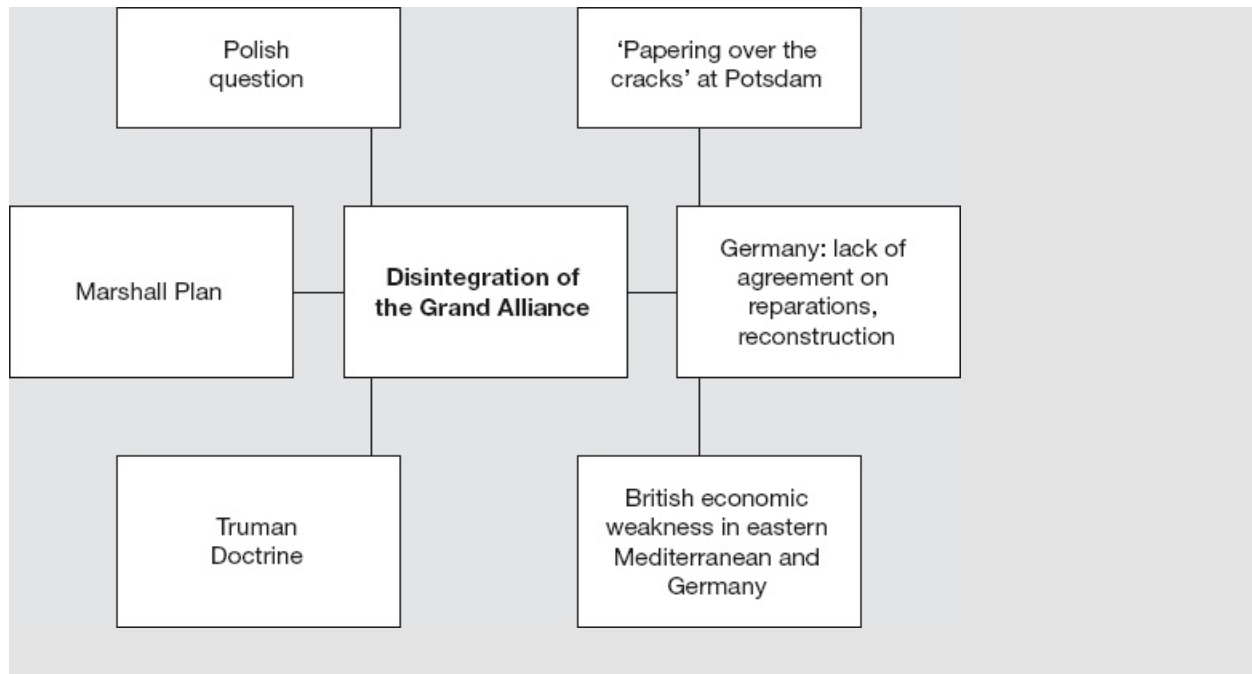
Test your understanding of the factors that caused the breakdown of the Grand Alliance by completing Worksheet 10 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE BREAKDOWN OF THE GRAND ALLIANCE 1945–7





## CHAPTER SUMMARY

In 1945, the Grand Alliance between Britain, the USA and the USSR came under increasing pressure as all three powers had diverging aims. The abrupt termination of lend-lease supplies, disagreement over the control of nuclear weapons, Soviet policy in Poland and Eastern Europe and Truman's unilateral decision to exclude the USSR from participating in the occupation of Japan increased the tension between the three former allies. Nevertheless, the Potsdam Conference did produce temporary compromise agreements on Germany and fixed Poland's western frontier, while the Council of Foreign Ministers eventually managed to negotiate peace treaties with Germany's former allies. However, four-power control in Germany rapidly exposed the divisions between the occupying powers. There was disagreement on reparations, and in January 1947 Britain and the USA took what in retrospect can be seen as the first step in the partition of Germany by establishing Bizonia.

The year 1947 effectively witnessed the start of the Cold War. In March, in response to Communist threats in Greece, Soviet pressure on Turkey and Iran and Britain's growing economic weakness, US President Truman announced the Truman Doctrine. This was followed in June by the Marshall Plan, which offered financial aid to Europe. Stalin created the Cominform and vetoed any acceptance of the Marshall Plan aid by the Eastern European states. The USSR also consolidated its grip on these states and created what Churchill called an 'iron curtain'. In reaction to this, Western European states looked increasingly to the USA for economic and military protection. In this context, the question of who caused the Cold War is discussed in the key debate.

---

## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

What initial impact did Truman have on US policy towards the USSR?

To what extent did the Allies disagree about the constitution of the UN?

To what extent did the Potsdam Conference reveal fundamental disagreements between the wartime allies?

Why did the UN fail to gain control over nuclear weapons?

Why, despite worsening relations between the USSR and Britain and the USA, was it possible to negotiate the peace treaties with Italy and other minor Axis states in 1947?

Why could the occupying powers not agree on German reparations?

Why did the USA and Britain create Bizonia?

Why did the Moscow conference fail?

---

## Question practice: AQA

### Essay questions

'Stalin's main aim in 1945–7 was security.' Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Explain first Stalin's preoccupation with security and then set two or three other motives alongside this before reaching an overall judgement which might link the factors together.

How effective was the USA's intervention in dealing with the perceived growing Soviet threat to Western Europe, 1945–7? [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Balance what the USA managed to achieve in Western Europe in the years 1945–7, and then set alongside this the evidence which could suggest that the Soviet threat was still very real. Do not go beyond 1947 in your answer.

### Source analysis questions

With reference to [Sources A](#) (page 42) and [H](#) (page 56), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the causes of the division of Europe, 1945–7. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn, including references to the tone where relevant. Do not try to write an overall summary – just a judgement on each one in turn.

---

With reference to [Sources D](#) (page [50](#)), [E](#) (page [51](#)) and [F](#) (page [53](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying US policy towards the USSR in Europe, 1945–7. [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn, including the tone where relevant. Write a judgement on each one in turn.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

‘The Marshall Plan may have saved Western Europe from communism, but it also divided Europe.’ How far do you agree? [AS level]

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**EXAM HINT** Consider the arguments for and against the Marshall Plan saving Europe from communism and reach a judgement. Then consider arguments for and against it dividing Europe and reach a judgement. Then reach a balanced overall judgement about the question.

---

Which of the following had the greater impact on preventing the four occupying powers from agreeing on German unity? i) The amalgamation of the SPD and KPD in April 1946. ii) Disagreements over German reparations. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii). [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Explain the ways in which each of the issues prevented the occupying powers from agreeing on German unity. It is then important to reach an overall judgement as to which had the greater impact and explain why it was greater.

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## CHAPTER 4

# Conflict over Germany and consolidation of rival blocs

This chapter covers the key period from 1948 to 1955 during which two German states, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), were created and the division of Europe was consolidated into a Soviet bloc and a Western bloc. This chapter examines these developments through the following themes:

- The division of Germany
- The rearmament of Western Europe 1948–52 and the Soviet response
- The political and economic consolidation of the rival blocs
- The ‘Thaw’ 1953–5

The key debate on page [100](#) of this chapter asks the question: Was it inevitable that the division of Germany should deepen and become more permanent during the years 1948–55?

---

## KEY DATES

<b>1947</b>	<b>Dec. 15</b>	Break-up of London Conference of Foreign Ministers
<b>1948</b>	<b>June 20</b>	Currency reform in Western zones
	<b>June 24</b>	Berlin Blockade started
<b>1949</b>	<b>May 12</b>	Berlin Blockade ended
		COMECON formed
	<b>April 4</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) set up
	<b>Aug.</b>	FRG established
	<b>Oct. 12</b>	GDR set up
<b>1950</b>	<b>June 25</b>	Outbreak of the Korean War
<b>1951</b>	<b>April 18</b>	European Coal and Steel Community (Schuman Plan) Treaty
<b>1952</b>	<b>March 10</b>	Stalin's note proposing a neutral united Germany
	<b>May 27</b>	European Defence Community Treaty signed in Paris
<b>1953</b>	<b>March 5</b>	Stalin died
	<b>June 16–17</b>	Strikes and riots in the GDR
<b>1955</b>	<b>May 5</b>	The FRG became a sovereign state and joined NATO
	<b>May 14</b>	Warsaw Pact signed

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## 1 The division of Germany

*Why and how were the FRG and GDR created?*

### ***Why did the Berlin Blockade fail to prevent the creation of the FRG?***

Starting in January 1947, forces were set in motion that would create two separate German states by the end of 1949:

- The creation of Bizonia in January 1947 and the introduction in June 1948 of the *Deutschmark* in West Germany and *Ostmark* in East Germany effectively divided Germany economically.
- The failure of the Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting in November 1947 led to the Western allies agreeing to set up a West German state.
- When Stalin failed to block this move through the Berlin Blockade, West Germany was formed in the summer of 1949 and East Germany followed in December.
- Berlin, however, as a result of the defeat of the Soviet blockade, remained divided into four zones and legally still under four-power control.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of the division of Germany by completing Worksheet 11 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## **The London Conference of Foreign Ministers 1947**

The foreign ministers of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR met in London in November 1947 in yet another attempt to find a solution to the problem of what to do with Germany. However, by the time the conference opened the chances of any agreement seemed remote. The USA vigorously supported the idea of **Western European integration** and was at least temporarily resigned to the division of Germany. The USSR still wished to avoid the partition of Germany, as this would result in the great industrial complex of the **Ruhr** becoming part of a US-dominated Western European bloc.

The Soviets had tried hard to rally public opinion across Germany against the policy of the Western allies. **Walter Ulbricht**, the leader of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) (see page 46), was instructed to organise a 'German People's Congress for Unity and a Just Peace'. Representatives from all parties throughout Germany were invited to attend its meetings on 6–7 December 1947 in Berlin. The intention was then to send a delegation to the London Conference to support the Soviet demand for the formation of a German central government. Roughly one-third of the 2225 delegates came from the West, but these were overwhelmingly Communists from areas like the Ruhr and the big industrial towns. The movement did not, therefore, genuinely reflect West German opinion, and the British foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, refused to allow its delegation permission to enter Britain.

The London Conference broke up on 15 December amid bitter recriminations. Stalin accused Britain and the USA of violating the Potsdam Agreement and of denying the USSR its fair share of reparations. The Western powers rejected Soviet counterproposals for forming a German government, which would govern a united Germany, as they feared the Russians would gain

control of it. All hope of four-power control now disappeared, and instead, for Britain, France and the USA, the alternatives of a Western alliance, closer economic cooperation in Western Europe and the creation of a West German state appeared to be the only practical options.

## The decision to create a West German state

The failure of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1947 strengthened Britain and USA in their resolve to form a separate West German state. A second London conference was then held from February to June 1948 where Britain, France, the USA and the **Benelux** countries met to discuss the establishment of this new state. Initially, this proposal met with considerable hostility from the French, who dreaded the revival of a Germany with the potential to invade France yet again. French fears were somewhat eased by the fact that the new West German state would be subject to tight controls by the Western allies and by the US pledge to keep troops stationed in Western Europe. The production of the great industrial centre of the Ruhr was to be regulated by the **International Ruhr Authority**, which would be controlled by the Western allies. West Germans would also have to accept the **Occupation Statute** which would give Britain, France and the USA far-reaching powers over trade, foreign relations, economic issues and disarmament. On 7 June, Germans in the Western zones were granted permission to begin drafting a constitution for a democratic, **federal** West Germany. On 20 June, the Western allies, without consulting the Soviet Union, introduced a new currency for the three Western zones of occupied Germany, the *Deutschmark*, or German mark.

## The Soviet response: the Berlin Blockade

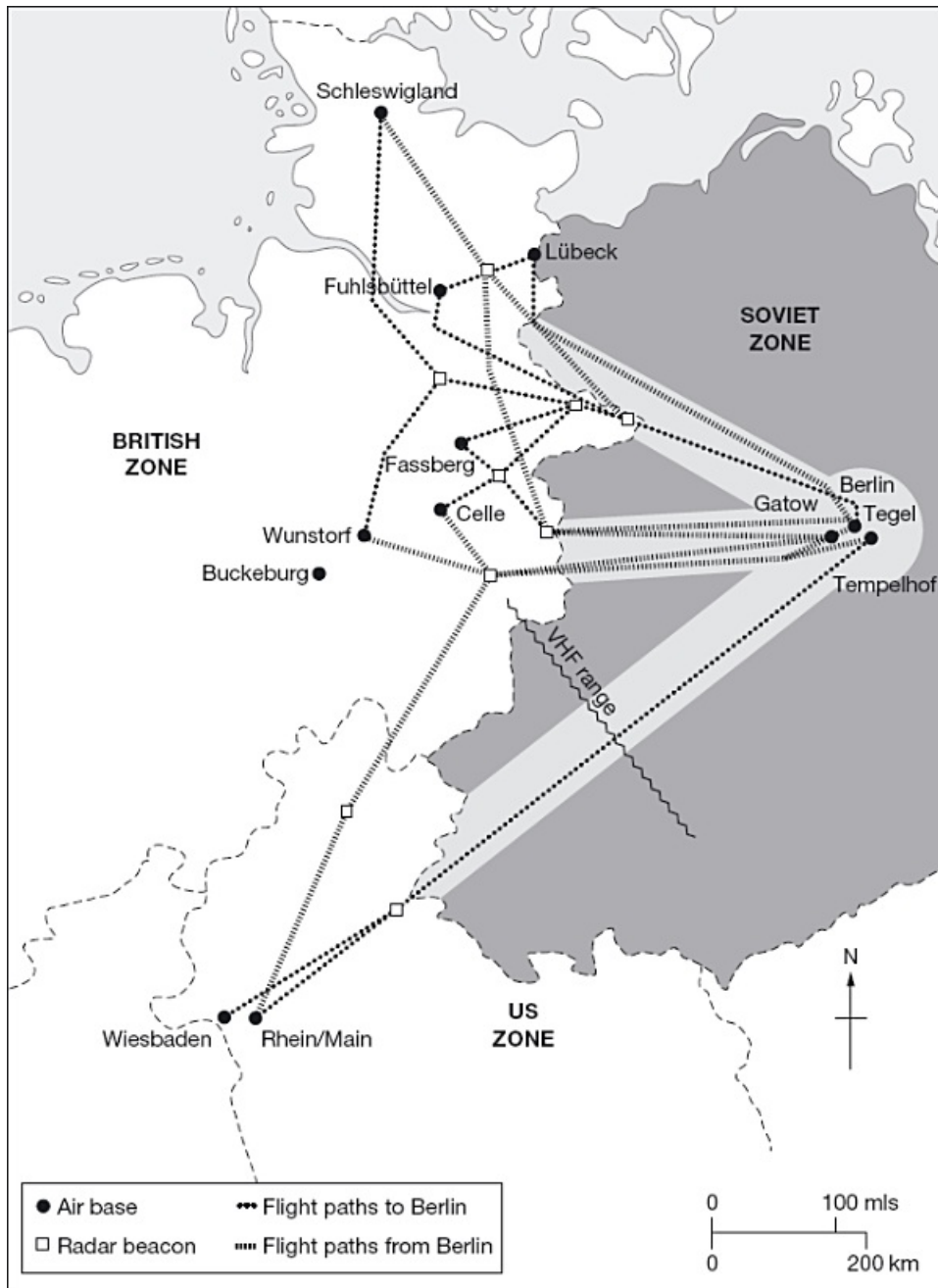
The USSR viewed with alarm the prospect of the formation of a strong West German state, which with all its industrial and military potential would become part of an anti-Soviet alliance led by the USA. Stalin hoped to counter these developments in two ways:

- By an appeal to German nationalism, which would oppose the division of Germany. He even thought of creating a party for former Nazis with the title of National Democratic Party, which would cooperate with the SED in a coalition. Nothing came of this policy in the short term, but the idea of appealing to German nationalism was to resurface in 1952 (see page [83](#)).
- He also believed that the USSR could force the Western allies to abandon their plans by blockading West Berlin, which in 1945 had been split into three zones controlled, respectively, by the British, American and French, but was separated from the rest of Germany by its location deep in the Soviet zone in Eastern Germany (see the map on page [153](#)). West Berlin was totally dependent on the rail and road links running through the Soviet-controlled zone for its supplies of food and new materials from Western Germany. Starting in March 1948, Soviet forces began gradually to restrict the movement of people and goods between West Berlin and Western Germany.

## The blockade begins

On 23 June, the Western allies introduced the *Deutschmark* into West Berlin. The Soviets immediately responded by blockading West Berlin. They argued that the blockade was a defensive measure to stop the Soviet zone being swamped with **devalued Reichsmarks**, which

the new *Deutschmark* was replacing in Western Germany and West Berlin. Rail and road links to the west, as well as the supply of electricity which came from East Berlin, were cut. A day later, a new currency for their Eastern German zone, the *Ostmark*, or East mark, was introduced. With the introduction of new currencies, two separate German states were now beginning to take shape.



**Figure 4.1** A map showing how the airlift worked. Radar beacons regulated the flow of the aircraft before they entered corridors to Berlin. What does this map indicate about West Berlin's vulnerability to the blockade?

## The Western response: the Berlin airlift

The Western response was confused and unsure. The French were convinced that West Berlin

could hold out only for a matter of weeks, while, to quote the historian Avi Schlaim, writing in 1983, the US administration ‘seemed almost paralysed by uncertainty and fear’. It was Bevin who again provided the initial leadership of the alliance, and suggested forceful countermeasures. Essentially, he was determined to maintain the Western position in Berlin and press on with setting up a West German state, while at all costs avoiding war. He rejected suggestions by General Clay, the US military governor, that an armed convoy should force its way through to West Berlin, because this could easily have provoked a clash with Soviet forces. Instead, he convinced the Americans that West Berlin could be supplied by an **airlift** made possible by aircraft flying along the three ‘corridors’, or flight paths, allocated to the Western allies by the Soviets in 1945 (see [Figure 4.1](#), page 71). He also responded enthusiastically to US requests to transfer 60 of the new B-29 bombers to East Anglia in England. It was assumed at the time that these carried atomic bombs, but in fact this was a bluff, as the modified B-29s, which could carry them, only arrived in Britain in 1949. Nevertheless, this gesture probably did deter the Soviets from trying to interfere with the airlift, although they, too, wanted to avoid war.

---

#### SOURCE A



**West Berlin children watch a US plane, loaded with food, come in to land in August 1948. Pilots would often drop sweets to the waiting children below.**

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

For what audience is the photo in [Source A](#) intended?

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By the end of July, British and US planes were managing to fly into West Berlin an average of 2000 tons of food and raw materials a day. Yet if stocks were to be built up for the coming winter, 5000 tons would have to be flown in on a daily basis.

# The Moscow talks

As it was very uncertain whether these totals could be maintained, the three Western powers were ready to explore the possibility of reaching an agreement over Berlin. On 2 August, their ambassadors met Stalin in Moscow. Interpreting their approach as a sign of weakness, he was uncompromising over his demands. According to the Soviet record of the meeting on 2 August:

---

## SOURCE B

**From the official Soviet record of a meeting of 2 August 1948. Quoted in 'The Soviet Union and the Berlin Crisis' by M. Narinski, in F. Gori and S. Pons, editors, *The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1945–53*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1996, page 68.**

*Comrade Stalin spoke of two factors – the special currency in Berlin and the decisions of the London Conference. He thought that it was those decisions which gave rise to the restrictive measures under discussion ... Comrade Stalin said that ... simultaneously with the rescinding of the restrictions on transport applied by the Soviet Military Administration, the special currency [the Deutschmark] ... introduced by the three powers into Berlin should be withdrawn and replaced by the currency circulating in the Soviet zone ... That was the first point. Secondly, assurance should be given that application of the London Conference's decisions would be postponed until representatives of the four powers had met and negotiated on all the basic questions concerning Germany.*

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## ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source B](#) explain Stalin's decision to blockade Berlin?

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source B](#) by completing Worksheet 12 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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The Western powers would not reverse their decision to create a West German state, but they were ready to agree to the circulation of the *Ostmark* in the whole of Berlin, subject to the financial control of the four powers. Yet, as further discussions between the military governors of the four zones in September showed, the Soviets wanted total control of the currency. If they were to abandon the blockade, at the very least they intended, as one Soviet official observed:

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## SOURCE C

**From the recollections of a senior Soviet official. Quoted in 'The Soviet Union and the Berlin Crisis' by M. Narinski, in F. Gori and S. Pons, editors, *The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1945–53*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1996, page 69.**



*... to restore the economic unity of Berlin, to include all Berlin in the economic system of the Soviet zone and also to restore unified administration of the city. That would have served as a basis for winning over the population of West Berlin, and would have created the preconditions for completely ousting the Western powers from Berlin.*

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source C](#) explain why the discussions between the military governors did not result in a compromise over Berlin?

These talks broke down on 7 September because neither side would give way. As the Soviets were convinced that the airlift to West Berlin could not be sustained during the winter, they decided to play for time and avoid any compromise. Consequently, all the efforts of the United Nations (UN) to mediate during the winter of 1948–9 failed.

## End of the blockade

By the end of January 1949, however, it became clear that Stalin's gamble was failing. The winter of 1948–9 was exceptionally mild and, thanks to the effective deployment of the large American C-54 planes, which flew to Berlin from bases in the British zone, the average daily tonnage for January was 5620. By April this had reached 8000 tons a day and about 1000 aircraft were able to use the air corridors to Berlin at any one time (see [Figure 4.1](#), page 71). In February, the Western powers also declared the *Deutschmark* to be the sole legal currency in West Berlin and stopped all Western exports to the Soviet zone, which increased the pressure on the zone's economy.

Stalin, who was not prepared to go to war over Berlin, had little option but to cut his losses. In an interview with a US journalist on 31 January 1949, he made a considerable concession when he indicated that he would make the lifting of the blockade dependent only on calling another meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers. The Americans responded to this and talks began between the Soviet and US representatives on the UN Security Council in New York. In early May, they finally reached agreement that the blockade would be called off on 12 May and that eleven days later a Council of Foreign Ministers would meet in Paris to discuss both the future of Germany and the Berlin currency question. On neither issue did the Council produce a breakthrough, but the four powers approved the New York agreement on lifting the blockade and agreed to discuss how the situation in Berlin could be normalised, although on this no agreement was secured until 1971 (see page 184).

## Why did the Berlin Blockade fail?

The Western powers had won a resounding victory over the USSR. What was the reason for this?

- The mild winter helped and the success of the airlift was crucial as it kept West Berlin supplied with food, fuel and vital raw materials for its factories.
- The Western allies were also helped by the support of the West Germans and West Berliners.



During the airlift, the Western allies, particularly American soldiers and airmen, were seen as liberators, while the Soviets appeared to be 'looters', 'takers' and, in recollection of their record in 1945, 'rapists'.

- Finally, the USA in 1948 still had a monopoly on atomic bombs, which made the cities of the USSR vulnerable to obliteration.

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## Konrad Adenauer



<b>1876</b>	Born in Cologne
<b>1917–33</b>	Mayor of Cologne
<b>1946–9</b>	Head of German Christian Democrat Party in the British zone
<b>1949</b>	Chairman of the German Parliamentary Council, which drafted the West German constitution
<b>1949–63</b>	Chancellor of the FRG
<b>1967</b>	Died

Adenauer was a devout Roman Catholic who initially trained as a lawyer, and in 1909 went into municipal politics in Cologne. From 1917 to 1933, he became Mayor of Cologne. He enjoyed good relations with the British occupying authorities, 1919–25. In 1923, at the time of the **Ruhr occupation** by the French, he urged the creation of a Rhenish republic with close economic relations with France. This was rejected by Berlin. In 1933, the Nazis dismissed him from his office. After the failed assassination attempt against Hitler in 1944, he was briefly arrested although innocent of involvement.

### Political record 1945–63

Adenauer was reinstalled as Mayor of Cologne in 1945 by the Americans, but dismissed by the British. This enabled him to play a major role in forming the Christian Democrat Party and become its leader. In this role, he chaired the Parliamentary Council that drafted the West German constitution, becoming chancellor in 1949. During his lengthy chancellorship he restored the West German economy and ensured that the FRG joined both the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community (EEC). In 1963, he was forced to resign because of his handling of the **Spiegel affair**.

## Role in the Cold War

Adenauer was a key figure in the early Cold War. He refused point blank to negotiate with Communist East Germany and took every chance to integrate the FRG into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the EEC (see pages 79 and 147). Some historians, like Willy Loth, argue that his refusal to contemplate a united neutral Germany merely perpetuated the division of Germany. Others, like Hans-Peter Schwarz, however, stress that Adenauer was simply a realist, who saw that the only way of unifying Germany was to wait until East Germany collapsed as a result of its own economic weakness.

---

## Formation of the two German states

The future shape of Germany was effectively decided by the end of 1948. Stalin had failed to deter the Western allies from pressing ahead with their plans for establishing the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and, in the end, he had little option but to create a communist East Germany, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), as a counterweight to the FRG.

### The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)

The West German constitution was approved in the spring of 1949 by the three Western occupying powers, and elections for the new parliament (*Bundestag*) took place in August. A month later when parliament met, Konrad Adenauer became the first West German chancellor. The FRG was, however, far from being independent. The Occupation Statute, which came into force in September, replaced the military government in the former Western zones with a **High Commission**. This still gave Britain, France and the USA the final say on West German foreign policy, security questions, exports and many other matters that an independent state is normally free to decide on for itself.

### The German Democratic Republic (GDR)

In the winter of 1948–9, the Soviets were reluctant to set up a separate East German state if there was still a chance of stopping British and US plans for West Germany and of one day creating a neutral pro-Soviet Germany. Stalin was prepared to give the Soviet zone a greater degree of independence, but for the moment this was just a temporary step that would not block eventual German unity. He feared that the creation of an East German state would merely make the division of Germany final.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1949, Walter Ulbricht and the other leaders of the SED claimed that only their party was working for national unity, in contrast to the **splitters** in the West, whom, he alleged, were deliberately plotting to divide Germany. To emphasise this claim, the SED, in March 1948, set up a 'German People's Council' (*Volksrat*) of 400 delegates, a quarter of whom were Communists from the Western zones, to draft a constitution for a united German state. If a unified Germany proved impossible to create, then this constitution would form the basis of a new East German state. In May, Wilhelm Pieck, the chairman of the SED, pointed out that once a West German state was set up, the Soviet zone would inevitably have to

‘develop its own independent state structure. It did not matter whether the Western Powers tore Germany apart ... a month earlier or a month later. The important thing was to be prepared for every eventuality.’

By March 1949, the SED was ready for this ‘eventuality’. The constitution of the future East German state had been drafted and approved by the People’s Council. On paper at least, it did not seem to be so very different from West Germany’s. In reality, however, it was, as the historian Peter Merkl observed in 1963, a **‘make-believe constitution’** camouflaging a one-party dictatorship. In May, a new People’s Congress was elected. The voters, as in the other Soviet-dominated countries in Eastern Europe, had been presented with just one list of candidates, all of whom represented the views of the SED.

At the end of May, the Congress met and approved the draft constitution, but Moscow, where the real power lay, kept the SED in suspense. The Soviets believed that there was still a slim chance of stopping the creation of a separate West German state. However, once the West German elections, in which the German Communist Party (KPD) won only 5.7 per cent of the votes, had taken place in August, Stalin realised that there was no longer any alternative to forming the GDR, even though for him it was an exercise in damage limitation, which would ensure that the Soviet zone did not become sucked into a united Western-orientated Germany. On 12 October, the government of the new state was formed and the Soviet military occupation of the zone came to an end, although a Soviet Control Commission was set up, which, like the Allied High Commission in the West, retained considerable reserve powers.

## Berlin

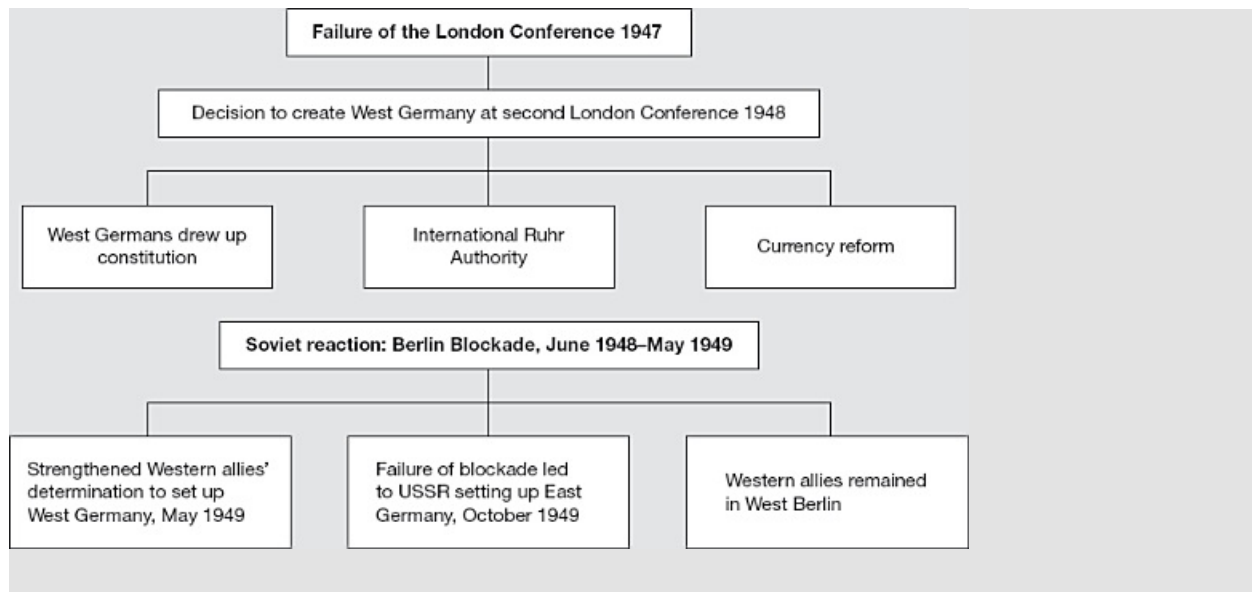
The division of Germany ensured that Berlin remained a divided city within a divided state within a divided continent. At the end of November 1948, the Germans in West Berlin, in response to threats and intimidation from the SED, set up their own city government with an elected assembly, which had an overwhelming anti-Communist majority. Britain, France and the USA permitted West Berlin to send representatives to sit in the West German parliament in Bonn but, as the city was still legally under four-power control, they had no voting rights.

There was, as yet, no physical barrier between East and West Berlin. Nevertheless, the Soviet sector of Berlin became the capital of the new GDR. The frontier was still open in the city. The Berlin Wall was not built until August 1961 (see page [154](#)).

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE DIVISION OF GERMANY



## 2 The rearmament of Western Europe 1948–52 and the Soviet response

*How was Western military power strengthened in 1948–52?*

*Why did it take so long for the European Defence Community Treaty to be signed?*

Between 1949 and 1952, vital steps were taken to build up the defences of Western Europe against a possible Soviet attack, which the outbreak of the Korean War (see page 122) made all the more urgent:

- First of all, the Brussels Pact was signed by Britain, France and the Benelux states.
- This was underpinned by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the US military and financial commitment to the defence of Western Europe.
- Attempts, ultimately unsuccessful, were made to create the framework for a European army (the European Defence Community), although in 1955 the FRG did join NATO.

Stalin responded to the rearmament of Western Europe by expanding the Red Army and successfully testing the Soviet atomic bomb, but he also attempted to neutralise West Germany and mobilise pacifist opinion through the World Peace Movement.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of the division of Germany by completing Worksheet 11 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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# The Brussels Pact and 'Western Union'

The creation of a West German state was still viewed with deep mistrust and fear by France and many other European states. In an effort to calm their anxieties, the British came up with a plan for a defensive alliance against Germany, but which, in reality, as Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian prime minister, pointed out, 'was meant as a screen behind which to consider defences against Russia', as occupied Germany was hardly in a position to threaten its neighbours. The Communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia on 22 February 1948 (see page 60) had been a powerful factor in persuading the French to join an alliance system directed primarily against the USSR rather than Germany. The French government was also reassured by the US decision to keep troops in West Germany for the foreseeable future.

On 17 March 1948, the Brussels Pact was signed by Belgium, Britain, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It did not mention the USSR by name but simply promised mutual defence against an aggressor from any quarter. The treaty contained clauses on cultural and social cooperation and provision for setting up a **Consultative Council**. This reflected the intention of the British foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, to encourage general Western European cooperation as a further barrier to the spread of communism. Bevin intended that the Brussels Pact should be underpinned by an Atlantic alliance in which the USA would be a key member. The Americans responded rapidly to this suggestion, and by the end of March the first of a series of secret meetings between British, Canadian and US officials began to explore the possibility of such an alliance. Eventually this was to lead to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty.

## The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

The Prague coup of February 1948 and the Berlin Blockade finally persuaded the USA that there was a need to commit formally to the defence of Western Europe. From the spring of 1948 through to early 1949, the USA gradually developed the framework for a North Atlantic–Western European military alliance with its allies in Europe. Over the course of these negotiations it became increasingly clear that the proposed North Atlantic Treaty interlocked with the plans for creating a West German state since it eased fears of a revitalised German state, particularly for France.

To persuade the US Congress to agree to commit troops to the defence of Europe, President Truman stressed that the treaty did not oblige the USA to go to war without the consent of Congress, as Congressional approval was constitutionally necessary before war could be declared. In the end, Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty contained the rather imprecise wording that each treaty member 'will take such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain security in the North Atlantic area'. The Western European states, particularly France, found this too vague, but decided to use Article 3, which called for 'continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid', to involve the USA ever more closely in the defence of Western Europe.

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April 1949 for an initial period of twenty years. It included Canada, the USA, the Brussels Pact powers, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Italy and

Portugal, and it came into force in August 1949.

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#### SOURCE D

**From the North Atlantic Treaty, 4 April 1949, available at the NATO website ([www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm)).**

*The Parties to this Treaty ... are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.*

*They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. ...*

*Article 3: In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack. ...*

*Article 5: The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with other Parties such action as it deems necessary including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.*

*Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What does [Source D](#) reveal about the aims of NATO?

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## The growing Soviet threat to the West

Despite the foundation of NATO and the defeat of the Berlin Blockade, there was a strong feeling in the Western alliance in the winter of 1949–50 that it was losing ground to the Soviet Union. In September, the USSR had successfully exploded its first atomic bomb, while a month later China fell to the Communists (see page [116](#)). In 1948, Stalin had also approved dramatic measures for the expansion the Red Army: tank production plans, for example, called for an annual increase from 1150 to 4350 tanks, and production of artillery was to quadruple.

Meanwhile, Western European integration was developing only slowly. NATO was still in its infancy, and lingering fears of German domination among the Western European states stopped the USA from building up the new Federal Republic's economic and military strength to a point where it could play a major role in the defence of Western Europe. Until the FRG was fully integrated economically and militarily into Western Europe there was still a real danger that Stalin might be able to win the Germans over by offering them unity and markets stretching from the River Oder, which formed the border between the GDR and Poland (see the map on page

41), to the Pacific Ocean. If the West Germans, who now had their own parliament, voted for neutrality and reunification with the GDR, short of using military force, the Western allies would have to accept it. In such a situation, the danger for the USA and its allies would be that a neutral Germany, with its economic resources and population of 80 million, would be open to Soviet influence and pressure.

## The impact of the Korean War

The Korean War changed the situation dramatically:

- The invasion of South Korea by Communist North Korean troops on 25 June 1950 (see page 122) appeared to many in Western Europe and the USA to be a prelude to a new global conflict in which the Soviets would finally overrun Western Europe. It was assumed that North Korea acted under Stalin's orders and this fear was reinforced when East Germany's leader, Ulbricht, not only supported North Korean aggression, but appeared to recommend similar action as a way of unifying Germany. The creation of a new East German **paramilitary police force** of some 60,000 men gave some substance to these threats.
- In the USA, the war strengthened the **Republican Party**, which was influenced by the anti-communist crusade of **Joseph McCarthy** and forced President Truman, a member of the **Democratic Party**, to make rearmament his government's overriding priority. Truman, who had already agreed in February 1950 to the development of the **hydrogen bomb**, quadrupled the military budget, and in December 1950 sent a further four divisions of troops to Europe.

## The abortive European Defence Community (EDC)

In light of the Korean War and Ulbricht's statements, West German rearmament was viewed by the Americans as essential to strengthen the defences of Western Europe, but the idea of an independent West German army was unacceptable to the French.

As a compromise, on 24 October 1950, the French prime minister, René Pleven, proposed the formation of the European Defence Community (EDC), which was known as the Pleven Plan. Its purpose was to create a European army under supranational control with a European minister of defence responsible to a European assembly, the members of which would be appointed by the participating governments. To ensure that the FRG was kept under control, its troops would join not in divisions (units of about 10,000 troops) but instead in battalions (much smaller units composed of only about 800 troops).

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### SOURCE E

**On 17 August 1950, Chancellor Adenauer raised the question of security at a conference with the three Allied High Commissioners. Quoted in Konrad Adenauer, *Memoirs, 1945–1950*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965, pages 274–5.**

*I had proposed the creation of a federal police force to the High Commissioners at the end of June 1950 ... By the middle of August I was convinced on the basis of confidential information that French resistance might be overcome if I made another attempt to do so.*

*I raised the subject of security at a conference with the High Commissioners of 17 August 1950 ... I begged the High Commissioners to intercede with their governments for some*



*demonstration of military strength that might restore people's confidence in the possibility of resistance ... My second request was that the Federal Government should be ready to build up a defence force ... to offer effective resistance to an attack by the People's [GDR] Police.*

*I noted that Pieck and Ulbricht had repeatedly declared their intention of 'liberating' West Germany, and if these statements were taken in conjunction with military preparation currently being carried out by the Soviet Zone [GDR] police, there could be no doubt about their purpose.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What information is conveyed by [Source E](#) about Adenauer's assessment of the Soviet threat to the FRG?

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source E](#) by completing Worksheet 13 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Militarily this was unworkable, as it was essentially a French plan aimed more at controlling German rearmament than at military effectiveness. The British refused to join and only Belgium and Luxembourg showed any real interest, while the USA felt that it was military nonsense. However, after prolonged discussions, a workable compromise was achieved that would ultimately enable German troops to be recruited. In October 1951, as a result of US pressure, detailed negotiations on the EDC started in Paris.

Public opinion in both France and the FRG was divided on the EDC:

- In the FRG, the German Social Democrat Party bitterly attacked Adenauer's intention to join the EDC on the grounds that this would permanently divide Germany. To blunt the impact of this opposition on the West German electorate, Adenauer demanded that the Western allies should grant more independence to the FRG. He hoped that this would convince the West Germans that rearmament would lead to the FRG being given equality of treatment by its former occupiers. In response to this, the Occupation Statute of 1949 (see page [75](#)) was replaced by the General Treaty in May 1952, which recognised the FRG's new status as an independent state.
- The French government was still determined to prevent Germany from becoming a major military power, and again insisted on restricting the size of German units that could be integrated into the EDC. It eventually agreed to signing the Treaty on 27 May 1952, but afterwards there was a long, unsuccessful struggle to have the EDC treaty **ratified** by the French parliament, which finally rejected it in 1954. The following year, however, the FRG did join NATO (see page [96](#)).

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## ONLINE EXTRAS



## Financing Western European rearmament

In Western Europe, NATO states increased their expenditure on rearmament from \$4.4 billion in 1949 to \$8 billion in 1951. Inevitably, this laid a heavy financial burden on their economies but they were assisted by the USA, which financially played as important a role as it did in defence. **Marshall Aid** (see page 52) was at first diverted to those Western European industries that were vital for rearmament and then, in 1951, stopped altogether in favour of a direct military assistance programme.

The Korean War initially caused a significant increase in the cost of living, which rose by twenty per cent in France and ten per cent in Italy, Britain and the FRG, while wages failed to keep pace. Yet, it also stimulated industrial demand and led the way to a prolonged economic boom in Western Europe. Prosperity, together with NATO and US military protection, stabilised Western Europe and effectively countered the communist threat from the east.

## Stalin's response to rearmament

Stalin attempted to counter the threat of NATO and German rearmament in two ways:

- he launched the Communist-led World Peace Movement, which campaigned for disarmament and world peace
- and offered the FRG the prospect of joining a neutral, united Germany.

### The World Peace Movement

In November 1949, Cominform (see page 54) was given the task of mobilising a Soviet-backed peace movement. At a time when rearmament was causing severe strains on the Western European economies, Stalin intended to use the peace movement to play on the fears of many in Western Europe who dreaded the outbreak of a third world war. He hoped that this would lead to a backlash against NATO and Adenauer's government in the FRG.

In 1949, with assistance from Cominform, the World Committee for the Partisans for Peace was created to organise the peace movement. In early 1951, it handed this task to a World Peace Council elected by the Soviet-dominated Congress of the Partisans of Peace. In March 1950, the Council launched its Stockholm Appeal, which demanded the banning of the atomic bomb and the condemnation as war criminals of whichever government used it first in conflict. The campaign was supported mainly by Soviet bloc countries. NATO governments viewed it with considerable suspicion. The British prime minister, Clement Attlee, for instance, called it 'a bogus forum of peace with the real aim of sabotaging national defence'. Because of its strong links with the USSR, it had little impact on NATO states.

### The Stalin note of March 1952: an attempt to neutralise

# Germany

From the autumn of 1950 until the spring of 1952, Stalin put forward a series of initiatives aimed at achieving a united but neutral Germany. In March 1952, in a note to the Western allies, he made a far-reaching proposal for free elections in Germany supervised by a commission of the four former occupying powers. This would lead to the establishment of an independent Germany. The new, reunified Germany would be neutral, and so would not be able to join the EDC or NATO. It would also not be burdened with reparations and would even have a small army.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Develop your analysis of Stalin and the division of Germany by completing Worksheet 13 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Was Stalin really serious with this offer? Many West Germans believed that Adenauer should have responded more positively to Stalin's initiative. They were convinced that it was a 'missed opportunity', an opinion that has been echoed by revisionist historians, of whom R. Steininger and Willy Loth are the most persuasive. Adenauer, however, like the Americans and the British, wanted to see the FRG firmly integrated into the West and not replaced by a unified neutral Germany, which would be vulnerable to Soviet pressure.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Get to grips with Stalin's successes and failures by completing Worksheet 14 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Thus, Stalin's initiative was never fully explored by the Western powers. In July 1952, Ulbricht was given the go-ahead for an accelerated socialisation programme, which involved collectivisation of agriculture and nationalisation of small industries in East Germany, which suggested that Stalin had now finally given up the idea of sacrificing the GDR to stop the rearmament of the FRG. The leaders of the GDR's Socialist Unity Party (SED) went to Moscow in April 1952 to discuss the response of the Western allies to Stalin's note.

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## SOURCE F

**Stalin's future plans for the GDR were noted by one of the East German leaders. Quoted in 'Stalin's Plans for Post-War Germany' by Wilfried Loth, in F. Gori and S. Pons, editors, *The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1943–53*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1996, page 31.**

*'Comrade Stalin considers that irrespective of any proposals that we can make on the German question, the Western powers will not agree with them and will not withdraw from Germany in any case. It will be a mistake to think that a compromise might emerge or that*

*the Americans will agree with the draft of the peace treaty. The Americans need their army in West Germany to hold Western Europe in their hands. They say that their army is to defend [the Germans]. But the real goal of this army is to control Europe. The Americans will draw West Germany into the Atlantic Pact. They will create West German troops. Adenauer is in the pocket of the Americans ... in reality there is an independent state being formed in West Germany. And you must organize your own state. The line of demarcation between East and West Germany must be seen as a frontier and not as a simple border but a dangerous one. One must strengthen the protection of this frontier.'*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How useful is [Source F](#) in explaining Stalin's policy towards the GDR 1949–52?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source F](#) by completing Worksheet 15 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of the impact of the division of Germany by completing Worksheet 14 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SOURCE G



The SED celebrating its second party conference in July 1952. From left to right the placards show pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

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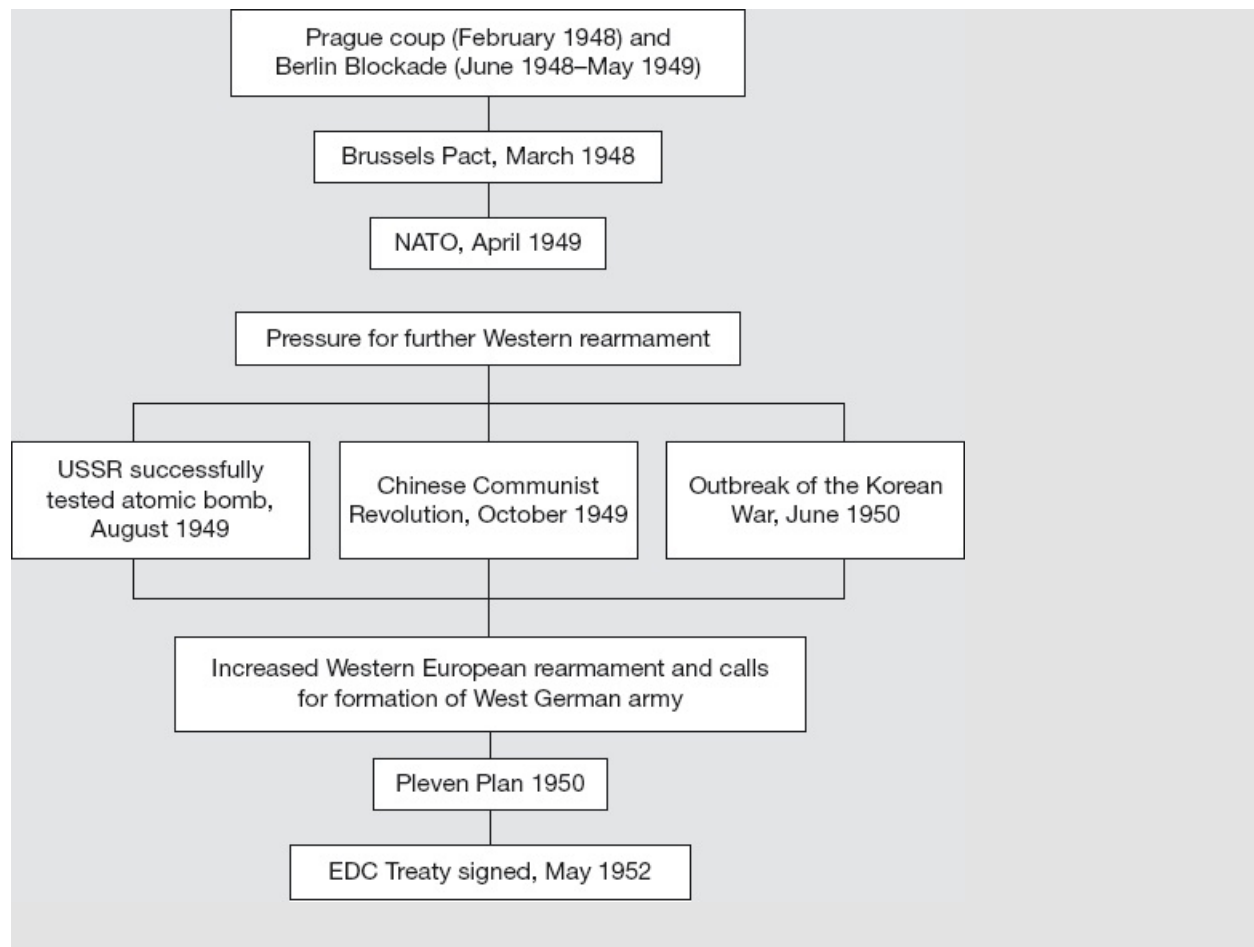
#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How important are [Sources F](#) and [G](#) for understanding the development of the GDR as a Soviet-dominated Communist state?

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### THE REARMAMENT OF WESTERN EUROPE 1948–52



### 3 The political and economic consolidation of the rival blocs

*How did the polarisation of Europe into two rival blocs accelerate during the years 1950–2?*

*How did the USSR strengthen its grip on the Eastern bloc?*

In Western Europe, military integration through NATO and (it was still hoped) the EDC was accompanied by steps towards economic and political integration, which eventually led to the formation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 (see page [147](#)). While this took place with US encouragement, essentially it was a result of Franco-West German initiatives. In Eastern Europe, on the other hand, political and economic consolidation was aimed to create a bloc modelled economically, politically and militarily on the USSR and masterminded from Moscow. The one state that escaped this straitjacket was Yugoslavia (see page [89](#)).

### Western economic integration

Western integration was determined by two key factors. On the one hand, the Americans intended, as the historian Michael Hogan argued in 1987, to rebuild Western Europe in the image of the USA; they hoped that a European political and economic union would create a United States of Europe. The US government was convinced that once an economically integrated and politically united Western Europe existed, it would rapidly become as wealthy as the USA. This would:

- deter people from wanting communist government
- significantly boost world trade
- provide valuable markets for US exports
- eventually draw the Eastern European states out of the Soviet bloc.

On the other hand, France and the smaller European states saw Western political and economic integration as providing the key to harnessing the great industrial resources of the FRG to the defence of Western Europe against communism and the USSR, without running the risk of resurrecting a strong Germany. Britain, however, refused to commit itself to further integration with Europe and, instead, insisted on cultivating its close links with the USA and the British Commonwealth.

## **The European Coal and Steel Community**

In May 1950, France's foreign minister, Robert Schuman, announced a plan to create the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The Schuman Plan, as it was called, would enable the Western allies to exploit Germany's coal and steel resources for their own rearmament programmes without running the risk of simultaneously building a strong and independent West Germany. It was received enthusiastically by Adenauer, the West German chancellor, as he realised that only through integration could West Germany forge a partnership with the Western allies and gain security from the Soviet threat. Italy and the Benelux states also welcomed it, but Britain, not wishing to lose control of its own coal and steel industries (which the Labour government had only just nationalised), was not willing to join.

The ECSC was formed in July 1952 and replaced the International Ruhr Authority (see page 70) with a new supranational organisation, controlled by the six member states: the three Benelux countries, France, Italy and the FRG. The ECSC regulated their coal and steel industries, guaranteeing that the economic needs of each member for these vital raw materials would be met. The ECSC laid the foundations for Western European economic, and ultimately political, integration. Together with the military security that NATO provided, it immeasurably strengthened the Western bloc.

## **The consolidation of the Eastern bloc 1948–52**

From 1948, Communists dominated the governments of what became known as Eastern bloc states. Theoretically, each state within the Soviet bloc remained independent, but all, with the exception of Yugoslavia, adopted identical cultural, military, economic and social policies. To further encourage and support closer relations between the various Communist states, the Soviets had created two supranational organisations: Cominform and COMECON.

## Cominform

Cominform, the Communist Information Bureau (see page 54), was established in September 1947 to promote ideological unity among the Communist parties in Europe. All the Soviet bloc Communist parties joined, as did the French and Italian parties. Its main tasks were to complete the **Sovietisation** of the Soviet satellite states, to co-ordinate the activities of the Communist parties in both the Soviet bloc and throughout the world, and to combat what was termed **Titoism**.

## COMECON

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) was founded in 1949 by the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania, and joined in 1950 by the GDR. Its main task was to integrate the economies of Eastern Europe with the USSR's, but initially the organisation existed only in name. It was not until 1954 that a secretariat was established and only in 1959 was the organisation given more authority and became better organised. Although there was no effective economic integration in the Soviet bloc until after 1959, the individual states broadly followed the Soviet pattern of economic development:

- Agriculture was collectivised.
- Centralised economies were established.
- **Five-Year Plans** laid the foundations for large-scale industrialisation and the development of **heavy industry**.

## Soviet control of Eastern Europe

The only effective ties strengthening the bloc were the network of **bilateral** treaties of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance signed between the USSR and the individual satellite states, and also between these states themselves. Each of these treaties contained the following agreements:

- a mutual defence agreement
- a ban on joining a hostile alliance, such as NATO
- recognition of equality, sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs (although in practice this did not deter the USSR from intervening in the domestic policies of its satellites).

Stalin achieved obedience to the Soviet line by frequently summoning the leaders of the Eastern bloc states to Moscow, and also through the direct participation of Soviet ambassadors and advisers in the internal affairs of the satellites. In the background, of course, there was always the threat of the Red Army. The armed forces of the satellite states, unlike the NATO armies, formed a completely integrated system centred in Moscow. Each army was issued with Soviet equipment, training manuals and armaments. Even the style of uniform was identical. The **Stalin cult** was also a unifying factor in the Eastern bloc. He was celebrated everywhere as the builder of socialism in the USSR and the liberator of Eastern Europe. To survive in this period, local politicians had essentially to model themselves on Stalin, and the societies and economies of the satellite states had to be based on the Soviet model.

# The Yugoslav–Soviet split

By 1949, not only was Europe divided into two blocs, but within the Eastern bloc there also emerged a split between the USSR and Yugoslavia. Although Tito, the Communist ruler of Yugoslavia, had been publicly praised in September 1947 as one of the USSR's most loyal and effective allies, Stalin had reservations about him. Stalin was particularly critical of Yugoslav attempts to play an independent role in the Balkans.

In the course of the winter of 1947–8, the friction between the Soviets and the Yugoslavs increased as Tito alarmed Stalin with talk of forming a Balkan Federation which would include Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. The leaders of both Bulgaria and Romania responded enthusiastically to these proposals. Tito also stationed Yugoslav troops in Albania to protect Greek Communist guerrilla camps without consulting either Stalin or **Enver Hoxha**, the Communist Albanian leader. Stalin feared that Tito's activities would not only make the Yugoslav Communist Party the strongest force in the Balkans, which the USSR would be unable to manipulate, but also provoke the USA at a time of escalating tension over Germany.

## The break with Stalin

Communist Party officials from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were summoned to Moscow in February 1948. Stalin specifically vetoed the stationing of Yugoslav troops in Albania and, instead of the wider federation favoured by Tito, proposed a smaller Bulgarian–Yugoslav union. The two states were required to commit themselves to regular consultations with Soviet officials on foreign policy questions in an effort to prevent independent action. Tito, however, refused to subordinate his foreign policy to the Soviet Union and rejected union with Bulgaria on these terms. He feared that, given Soviet influence there, the union would merely be a way for the Soviets to take control of the Yugoslav government. Stalin reacted to this open defiance of his leadership by withdrawing Soviet advisers and personnel from Yugoslavia, and accused its leaders of being political and ideological criminals.

Stalin pressured other Eastern bloc states to support the Soviet decision to isolate Yugoslavia and in June 1948, at the second Cominform meeting, the entire Eastern bloc, along with Western European Communists, expelled Yugoslavia from the organisation. Yugoslavia was the first communist state in Europe to act independently of the Soviet Union and defy Stalin.

## Soviet attempts to remove Tito

Initially, Stalin hoped that the Yugoslav Communist Party would overthrow Tito, but Tito rapidly purged the party of pro-Cominform suspects. Soviet attempts to assassinate Tito were also unsuccessful, as were attempts to apply economic pressure through a **trade embargo**. Finally, Stalin started to apply military pressure by concentrating troops on Yugoslavia's borders. According to a Hungarian general who fled to the West, plans were actually made for a Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia, but abandoned when the outbreak of the Korean War (see page [122](#)) indicated that the USA and NATO might respond with force.

## Tito and the West

These threats led Tito to turn to the West for assistance. Tito abandoned his support for Greek



Communist rebels and in return received arms and financial assistance from Britain and the USA. Close links developed between the **CIA** and the Yugoslav secret service. In 1954, Yugoslavia, along with Greece and Turkey, both of whom were NATO members, signed the Balkan Mutual Defence Pact, a military agreement aimed at the USSR and its allies.

Yugoslavia also distanced itself ideologically from the USSR. Tito broke with the Soviet model of **centralised control of the economy**, and instead in 1950 began to experiment with workers' self-management of factories. This, in theory, enabled the workers to manage and operate their own factories through elected workers' councils. Prices were no longer fixed by the government after 1952 and businesses were able to export their products without government involvement. The state did, however, retain control of the banking system and industrial investment.

## Western attempts to destabilise the Soviet bloc

Tito's break with the USSR in 1948 demonstrated that the unity of the Soviet bloc was more fragile than it appeared to many observers. This encouraged NATO to explore various ways of weakening the USSR's position in Eastern Europe:

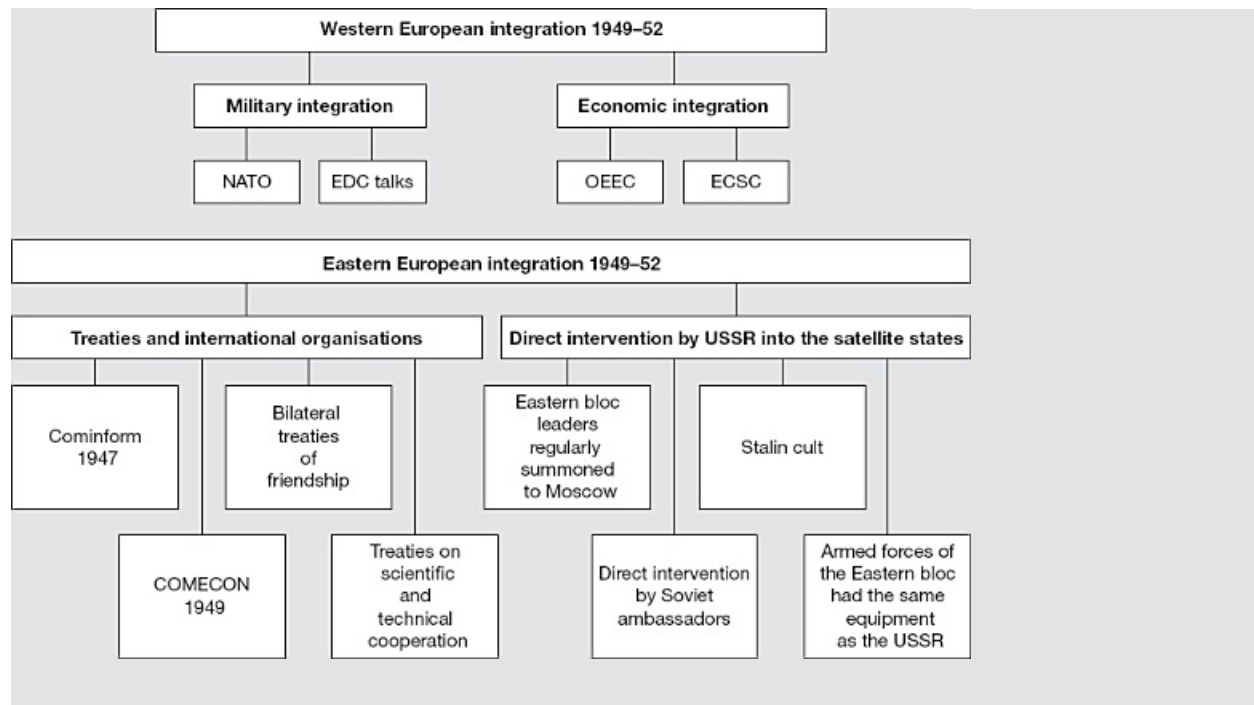
- The USA and Britain gave military and economic assistance to Yugoslavia (see above).
- Between 1949 and 1952 there was a series of unsuccessful operations by the USA and Britain to remove Albania's Communist leader Enver Hoxha, as a step towards replacing its Soviet-sponsored government.
- Attempts were made to undermine Soviet authority by constantly filing complaints to the UN about human rights abuses in the Eastern bloc.
- Eastern European refugees were helped financially, so as to encourage others to flee from the Soviet bloc.
- Radio Free Europe, which broadcast anti-Soviet propaganda to Eastern European states, was sponsored by the US government.

All these measures were aimed at weakening Soviet power in Eastern Europe over the long term. Neither the USSR, nor the USA and its NATO allies, were ready to risk war. It was the Far East where the triumph of communism in China posed new and dangerous challenges not only to the USA and the European colonial powers, but also eventually to the USSR itself (see pages [160](#); [167–9](#)).

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION OF THE RIVAL BLOCS



## 4 The ‘Thaw’ 1953–5

*How did the Western powers react to changes in Soviet foreign policy?*

*Was there really a ‘thaw’ in relations between the USSR and the USA and its allies?*

After the death of Stalin on 5 March 1953, relations between the USSR and the USA and its allies markedly improved, to the point where journalists spoke of a ‘thaw’.

## The new leaders 1953

In 1953, there was a change of leadership in the USSR and the USA. General Dwight D. Eisenhower won the presidential election in November 1952 in the USA, and a collective leadership took the place of Stalin’s one-man dictatorship in the Soviet Union after his death on 5 March.

### President Eisenhower

President Eisenhower initially promised to take a much tougher line towards the USSR and even spoke of freeing the people in Eastern Europe from Soviet control. He considered using nuclear weapons in Korea in 1953 and Indo-China a year later, and cavalierly referred to the atomic bomb simply as ‘another weapon in our arsenal’. However, like his predecessor, Harry Truman, he was not in reality ready to risk a nuclear war, being aware of the damage even a few Soviet nuclear bombs would do to the USA. He and his secretary of state, **John Foster Dulles**, at times pursued a policy of **brinkmanship**. They threatened the use of nuclear weapons but then drew

back from ‘the brink’ of using them. On 1 November 1952, the USA exploded the first hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean and a year later the USSR also successfully tested a hydrogen bomb. By the end of 1955, both sides had long-range aircraft able to drop these bombs on each other’s territory. Even though the USA possessed more bombs than the USSR, each superpower was in a position to inflict catastrophic damage on the other. In this situation, Eisenhower saw that the only practical alternative was the peaceful containment of Soviet power in Europe, rather than attempting to remove it by force.

## Changes in the USSR after Stalin’s death in March 1953

**Nikita Khrushchev**, Georgi Malenkov, Vyachlav Molotov, Lavrenty Beria and Nikolay Bulganin shared power in the period immediately after Stalin’s death. They were political rivals and each hoped to secure sole supreme power for himself. After the East German Uprising in June 1953, for which he was made the scapegoat (see page [94](#)), Beria was arrested and executed. Over the next five years, Khrushchev managed to sideline his other rivals and emerge as the head of the USSR by 1958.

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## Dwight D. Eisenhower



<b>1890</b>	Born in Texas
<b>1915</b>	Graduated from West Point Military Academy
<b>1942</b>	Commander of Allied forces in North Africa
<b>1944</b>	Supreme commander of troops invading France
<b>1950–1</b>	Commander of NATO
<b>1952</b>	Elected president of the USA
<b>1953</b>	Ended Korean War
<b>1956</b>	Opposed Anglo-French Suez invasion
<b>1961</b>	Left office
<b>1969</b>	Died

### Background

Eisenhower’s parents were strict Christians of modest means. His father worked in a dairy. He became a professional soldier in 1915, and in the Second World War played

a major role in the US army, which came to a climax when he was appointed supreme commander of the Allied armies invading France in June 1944. He showed considerable skill in leading this coalition of armies, and in 1951–2 was appointed the first supreme commander of NATO. In 1952 and 1956, he campaigned successfully in the presidential elections.

### **As president of the USA**

In his presidential campaign in 1952, Eisenhower had promised to cut military spending while standing up to the USSR. He was worried that the massive military expenditure created 'an **industrial and military complex**' which had a vested interest in the arms race. He ended the Korean War in 1953 (see page [124](#)) and managed to reduce annual government expenditure on arms by nearly \$10 billion by 1956. He refused to back the Anglo-French Suez operation (see page [143](#)), as he believed that it would antagonise Arab nationalists and play into the hands of the Soviets. Eisenhower was interested in avoiding confrontation with the USSR and China where possible. Under him, however, the USA came increasingly to rely on nuclear weapons as a way of cutting costs and minimising reliance on expensive conventional weapons.

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In 1953, in the immediate aftermath of Stalin's death, Khrushchev and his allies were determined to improve living standards in the USSR and to dismantle the police state created by Stalin. To implement these reforms, they needed a more relaxed international climate which would enable them to spend less on armaments. In August 1953, Malenkov declared in the **Supreme Soviet** that there was 'no disputed or unresolved question that cannot be settled by mutual agreement of the interested countries'.

## **The West and *détente***

Given this desire for *détente* by the Soviet leadership, not only was a settlement in Korea and Indo-China possible, but it also appeared as though the question of German unity might be reopened and potentially resolved.

### **Eisenhower's response 1953**

On 16 April 1953, Eisenhower announced that any improvement in Soviet–US relations would depend on free elections in Eastern Europe. In May, Winston Churchill, who had become prime minister of Britain again in October 1951, suggested a four-power conference in which plans for German reunification and demilitarisation would be discussed. This proposal was unpopular with the West German chancellor, Adenauer, Eisenhower and indeed with Churchill's own cabinet. They all feared a neutral Germany would be established that would then be vulnerable to pressure from the USSR and ultimately removed from the Western European economic and military systems. This scenario had consistently been the fear of Western governments since the end of the war. However, such was the desire for peace throughout Western Europe that both Adenauer and Eisenhower reluctantly had to agree to discuss a possible agenda for talks at a preliminary conference of foreign ministers, although this did not meet until December in

Bermuda.

## The USSR and the GDR, April to June 1953

In early 1953, the Soviet Foreign Office made proposals for German unity, submitting them to the USA, Britain and France. It suggested a provisional government be created of politicians from both German states and the removal of all foreign troops of occupation.

### The crisis in the GDR

As a member of COMECON (see page [87](#)), the GDR had reorganised its economy following the model of the USSR. In 1951, its first Five-Year Plan was launched with the intention of doubling the GDR's industrial output. By 1952, this aim was achieved in the production of iron, steel and chemicals. Ulbricht was, however, determined on yet more increases. In July 1952, workers' individual production targets were suddenly raised by ten per cent, while at the same time there were sharp rises in the price of food and public transport. Farmers were also threatened with collectivisation of agriculture along Soviet lines.

By spring 1953, tension was further increased by the arrest of leading non-Communist politicians. Church leaders warned of the possibility of a major catastrophe, while even within the GDR's Communist Party, the SED, there were indications that many were ready to challenge the government's economic plans, which were causing growing resentment in the country. Increasing numbers of East Germans fled into West Berlin and then to the rest of the FRG through the **open border** (see [Figure 6.1](#), page [153](#)) between East and West Berlin. As many of these were professionals, skilled workers and farmers, their departure deprived the GDR economy of vital human resources (see [Source H](#), page [94](#)).

### Soviet concern

The growing crisis in the GDR deeply embarrassed the new Soviet leadership. If an anti-government revolt erupted, Soviet troops would have to intervene, which would threaten the USSR's new policy of *détente*. In May 1953, the **Presidium** of the Soviet Council of Ministers met to consider the problem. Beria, the head of the Soviet secret police, now called the KGB, began to reassess the value of the GDR to the Soviet bloc. It was proving an expensive and unstable state to support, as well as an area of friction with the Western bloc. Backed by Deputy Prime Minister Malenkov, he urged his more cautious colleagues in the Presidium to propose to the USA, Britain and France that a united, neutral Germany be formed. He argued that to achieve reunification on such terms, Germany would be willing to pay substantial reparations to the USSR.

Although Beria and Malenkov failed to win over other Soviet ministers, who still clung to the idea of working slowly and cautiously towards a unified and communist Germany, they did agree to summon Ulbricht to Moscow on 2 June. In the interests of *détente*, he was ordered to pursue a more conciliatory approach so that various groups within the GDR were not antagonised, and to abandon his programme for rapid socialisation. These concessions, however, came too late and he failed to scale down the high production targets that had been set for the

workers. Some contemporaries believed that by leaving the ten per cent increase in production targets in place, Ulbricht was deliberately provoking an uprising in the GDR, so that armed intervention by the USSR would be triggered. This would make it all the more difficult to reunite Germany and would therefore enable the GDR to survive as a Soviet satellite, thus keeping Ulbricht in power.

---

#### SOURCE H

**From a document given to Ulbricht and two of his colleagues by the Soviet leadership when they visited Moscow on 2 June 1953. Quoted in 'Cold War Misperceptions: The Communist and Western Responses to the East German Refugee Crisis in 1953' by V. Ingimundarson, *Journal of Contemporary History*, volume 28, 1994, page 473.**

*The pursuit of a wrong political line in the German Democratic Republic has produced a most unsatisfactory political and economic situation. There are signs of bitter dissatisfaction – among broad masses of the population, including the workers, the farmers, and the intellectuals – with the political and economic policies of the GDR. The most conspicuous feature of this dissatisfaction is the mass flight of East German residents to West Germany. From January 1951 through April 1953, 447,000 people have fled alone. Working people make up a substantial number of the defectors. An analysis of the social composition of defectors reveals the following: 18,000 workers; 9,000 medium and small farmers, skilled workers, and retirees; 17,000 professionals and intellectuals; and 24,000 housewives. It is striking that 2,718 members and candidates of the SED and 2,619 members of the FDJ [Free German Youth Movement] were among the defectors to West Germany in the first four months of 1953.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source H](#) explain the East German Uprising?

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## The East German Uprising

A series of strikes and riots broke out throughout East Germany on 16 June 1953. Workers demanded increased pay, more political freedom and the re-establishment of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), which had been amalgamated with the KPD in 1946 to create the SED (see page 46). By the following day, waves of spontaneous and uncoordinated strikes, demonstrations and riots had erupted across the whole of the GDR. Crowds collected outside prisons and state and party offices and called for the resignation of the government; but only in two cities, Görlitz and Bitterfeld, were there determined efforts to take over the city governments. In East Berlin, 100,000 people demonstrated on the streets.

The government, distrusting the loyalty of its own police forces, appealed to the USSR to intervene. On 17 June, Soviet troops backed by tanks moved to suppress the uprising. Sporadic demonstrations and riots continued throughout the summer and 125 were people killed, nineteen of them in East Berlin.



# The consequences for German unity

The uprising took both the USSR and the Western allies by surprise, and has been called by the historian Christian Ostermann, in 1996, 'one of the most significant focal points in the history of the Cold War'.

## US reaction

Despite his pledge during the presidential election to liberate Eastern Europe from Soviet control, Eisenhower did not interfere with the Soviet suppression of the East German Uprising. The US government hoped that the sight of Soviet troops on the streets of East Berlin would fuel West German fears of the USSR and persuade the voters to re-elect Adenauer in the September 1953 elections. Yet there was a danger that if the USA was seen to do nothing to help the East Germans, there could, as C.D. Jackson, Eisenhower's adviser for psychological warfare, said, 'be a terrible let down in East and West Germany, which will seriously affect the American position and even more seriously affect Adenauer's position'.

### SOURCE I



**East German workers hurl stones at Soviet tanks on 17 June 1953. This picture was published in the press throughout the non-Communist world and came to symbolise the spirit of revolt against Soviet rule.**

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

In what ways could [Source I](#) be used by the enemies of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe?

Eisenhower's advisers launched a two-pronged strategy. The USA would respond to pressure of public opinion in West Germany for intervention in East Germany by calling for a foreign ministers' conference on the future of Germany. At the same time, through provocative broadcasts from its radio stations in West Berlin, it would do all it could to prolong the unrest in East Germany. This policy certainly strengthened support for Adenauer in the FRG; he won the election in September by a much larger margin than he had in the previous election.

## **The Berlin Conference, 25 January to 18 February 1954**

By the time the foreign ministers of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR met in Berlin in early 1954, all hope of making any progress on reuniting Germany had ended. Beria, who of all the Soviet politicians had been the most anxious to find a solution to the problems caused by a divided Germany, had been arrested and executed by his political rivals on the grounds that his 'treachery' had led to the East German Uprising. In Berlin, both the USSR and the Western allies produced mutually unacceptable plans for German unity, which each side rejected. The USSR feared that the Western proposal of holding free elections in Germany would lead to a massive anti-Communist vote, while the Western powers feared that a neutral disarmed Germany, not integrated into NATO or the EDC, would be vulnerable to Soviet influence. The question of German reunification thus remained deadlocked.

## **French rejection of the EDC, August 1954**

On 15 May 1953, the EDC and the General Treaty (see page [82](#)) had both been ratified by the West German parliament, but the EDC was rejected by the French National Assembly on 30 August 1954. This reopened the whole question of West German rearmament and the FRG's entry into NATO, which was vital for the defence of Western Europe.

## **FRG's entry into NATO, May 1955**

The immediate priority of Britain and the USA was to secure the FRG's entry into NATO. France's fears of a rearmed Germany were overcome by Adenauer's agreement to limit the West German army to the size envisaged in the EDC treaty and the FRG's renunciation of nuclear weapons. Britain's commitment to keep four divisions of troops supported by aircraft in West Germany also reassured France. In October 1954, a fresh settlement was reached between NATO and the FRG that recognised the sovereignty of the FRG and its membership of NATO, the Brussels Pact and the Western European Union (formally the Western Union, see page [78](#)). The Western allies again committed themselves to work towards a united, federal Germany integrated into a democratic Europe. Until this happened, their troops would remain in the FRG and Berlin would remain under four-power control. On 5 May 1955, the treaty came into force and four days later the FRG joined NATO and also became a member of the Western European Union.

These treaties effectively completed the post-war settlement of Western Europe. Yet they also deepened the division of Europe. While the possibility was kept open for German unification, in reality the integration of the FRG into NATO made unity in the foreseeable future unlikely. The very success of the FRG's integration intensified what the historian Christoph Klessmann, writing in 1988, called 'the reactive mechanism' of the Cold War: the more the FRG was integrated into the West, the more tightly bound was the GDR into the Soviet bloc.



## The Warsaw Pact treaty

On 14 May 1955, the USSR and Eastern European states signed the Warsaw Pact; the GDR eventually joined in January 1956. The pact committed its members to consult on issues of mutual interest and to give all necessary assistance in the event of an attack on any one of them in Europe. Essentially, the treaty was signed for political rather than military reasons as a response to the FRG's entry into NATO, but it still kept open the option of a neutral Germany by declaring that if a 'general European treaty of Collective Security' was signed, the Warsaw Pact would lapse.

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### SOURCE J

**From the introduction to the Warsaw Pact Treaty, which was signed in May 1955. Quoted in Roger Morgan, *The Unsettled Peace*, BBC Books, 1974, page 75.**

*Mindful ... of the situation created in Europe by the ratification of the Paris agreements, which envisage the formation of a new military alignment in the shape of 'Western European Union', with the participation of a re-militarized Western Germany and the integration of the latter in the North Atlantic bloc ... increases the danger of another war and constitutes a threat to the national security of peaceable states;*

*Being persuaded that in these circumstances the peaceable European states must take the necessary measures to safeguard their security and in the interests of preserving peace in Europe ... [they] have decided to conclude the present Treaty of Friendship Cooperation and Mutual Assistance ....*

*Article III: [They] shall immediately consult with one another, whenever in the opinion of any one of them, a threat of armed attack on one or more of the parties to the Treaty has arisen ...*

*Article V: The contracting parties have agreed to establish a joint command of the armed forces ...*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What according to [Source J](#) was the Warsaw Pact a direct response to?

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## The 'Geneva spirit' and its limitations

In May 1955, Khrushchev and Bulganin, who had now emerged as the leaders of the USSR, accepted an invitation from the Western allies to meet in Geneva, Switzerland. This would be the first major summit conference since Potsdam in 1945 (see page [39](#)). The British prime minister, Anthony Eden, envisaged this to be the first of several summits, which would aim to reduce tension between the Soviet and Western blocs.

## The Geneva Conference

When the leaders of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR met in July, they agreed to discuss the following agenda:

- the reunification of Germany
- European security
- disarmament
- the development of contacts between East and West.

While conversations were conducted in an atmosphere of *détente*, the limits to the new spirit of coexistence, or ‘Geneva spirit’, were quickly reached. The USSR agreed to evacuate Austria, which had been divided into four zones in 1945, provided it remained neutral and did not join NATO. There was, however, still deadlock between the two sides over the future of Germany. Nor was progress made on disarmament or arms control, although it was agreed that the foreign ministers of the major powers should meet again to discuss the questions of Germany, security and disarmament.

## Adenauer's visit to Moscow, September 1955

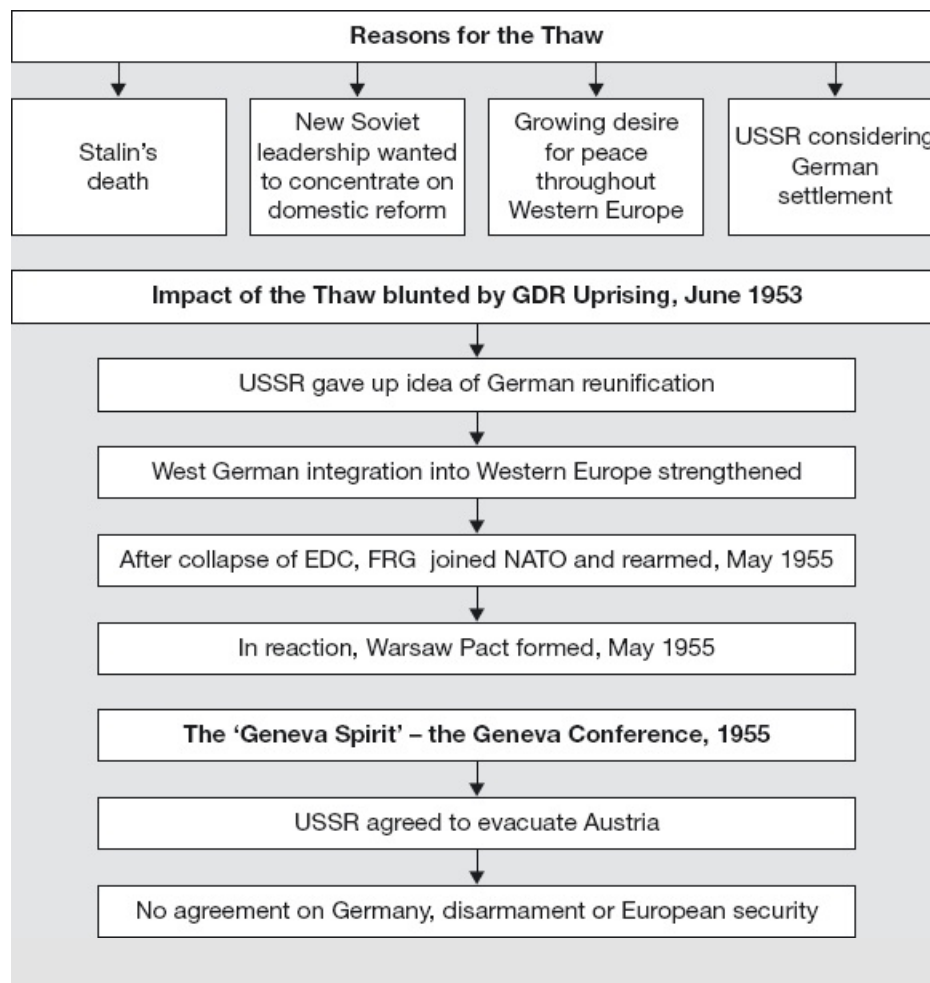
In September 1955, Adenauer visited Moscow to negotiate the return of the last German prisoners-of-war and to establish normal diplomatic relations with the USSR. Yet far from leading to a breakthrough in the German question, the division between the two Germanys widened still further after this visit. To reassure the GDR of continued Soviet support, the USSR acknowledged the GDR as an independent state in its own right. Adenauer, worried that an exchange of ambassadors with the USSR might be interpreted to mean that his government recognised the legal existence of the GDR, announced the **Hallstein Doctrine**. This stated that the FRG would consider the recognition of the GDR by any state, other than the USSR, as an unfriendly act which would lead to an immediate break in diplomatic relations.



**Figure 4.2** Cold War Europe in 1955. What information is conveyed by the map about the division of Europe in May 1955?

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE 'THAW' 1953–5



## 5 Key debate

***Was it inevitable that the division of Germany should deepen and become more permanent during the years 1948–55?***

The division of Germany remained, until the end of the Cold War in 1989, one of the most visible consequences of the Cold War. The frontiers between the two hostile blocs ran through the middle of Germany, interrupting historic economic, social and political links. Historians have argued whether this traumatic division could have been avoided or whether it was an inevitable consequence of the Cold War.

## The traditional view

The traditional view put forward by historians such as William McNeill in 1953 and Herbert Feiss in 1957 is that Stalin, as a Marxist–Leninist, harboured ambitions to turn Germany, or at least the Soviet zone, into a Marxist state. Consequently, the creation of the SED in 1946 and Soviet policies within the Soviet zone in Germany were merely preliminary steps to achieve that aim. Ultimately this triggered the division of Germany.

Historian Martin McCauley succinctly sums up this view:

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#### EXTRACT 1

**From Martin McCauley, *Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1949*, Pearson, 2003, pages 10–11.**

*According to ... [this traditional view] the well springs of the Cold War are to be found in Marxism-Leninism with its doctrine of class struggle leading to revolution on a world scale ... They take it for granted that the Soviets always sought ways of undermining the authority of non-Communist powers so as to expand the Communist world. ... Not content with eastern and south-eastern Europe, the USSR attempted to draw the whole of Germany into the Soviet orbit and by fomenting strikes and social unrest in western and southern Europe and in Asia sought to expand Communist influence in those regions as well.*

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#### ? INTERPRETATION QUESTION

How far do the historians quoted in Extracts 1–3 agree or differ in the reasons they give for the division of Germany?

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## Opposition to the orthodox view

The revisionist views question the idea of Stalin having solely a Marxist programme and argue that his policy was in reality more flexible and also that it was often a defensive response to Allied initiatives. For instance, the historians Ann Deighton and J. Farquharson writing in 1989 and 1991 respectively, both stress the role of Britain in the partition of Germany. They show that economic weakness led Britain to support the formation of the Bizone and to press for the creation as soon as possible of a self-governing West Germany. Britain could no longer afford to subsidise its zone in Germany.

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#### EXTRACT 2

**From David Williamson, *A Most Diplomatic General. The Life of General Lord Robertson of Oakridge*, Brassey's, 1996, page 107.**

*Bevin [the British foreign secretary] went to Moscow quite prepared to break with the Russians over Germany. His officials had drawn up a radical plan, which became known as the 'new Potsdam' or Bevin Plan. This laid down conditions for the revision of the Potsdam agreement, which they knew Russia would not be able to accept. Not only would Russia have to return some of the reparations, which she had illegally taken from her own zone to help balance Anglo-American deficits, but also contribute to the bills of the western powers and receive no steel or coal deliveries until Germany was self-sufficient.*

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The decision by the Western allies to set up the FRG led to the creation of the GDR. Revisionist German historians such as Rolf Steininger in 1990 and Willy Loth in 1998 stress that Stalin did not intend to divide Germany, but was more interested in obtaining a neutral Germany, which

would not threaten the USSR. Both these historians argue that Stalin's offer of a united neutral Germany in March 1952 was genuine and should have been explored. This has been hotly disputed by many other German historians such as Hans-Peter Schwarz and Gerhard Wittig. For Stalin, the creation of a potentially independent West German state was a serious blow. East Germany has been described by Loth as his 'unwanted child'. Until his death, Stalin, so Loth and Steininger argue, saw the GDR as only a temporary structure that he would be happy to dismantle, if he could somehow create a neutral Germany independent of a US-dominated Western Europe.

Consequently, by moving so quickly to set up a separate West Germany and a North Atlantic security system, were Britain, France and the USA responsible for the division of Germany and the partition of Europe into two blocs? The eminent US diplomat George Kennan, in seeming contradiction to his 'long telegram' of February 1946 (see page 50), warned in September 1948 that this policy would lead to 'an irrevocable congealment of the division of Europe into two military zones: a Soviet zone and a US zone. Instead of the ability to divest ourselves gradually of the basic responsibility for the security of Western Europe, we will get a legal perpetuation of that responsibility.'

From the reaction to this advice in London, Paris and Washington, it was obvious that most Western Europeans and their governments preferred a divided Germany and a Western Europe protected by a US military presence to the uncertainties and risks to which a neutral unified Germany would have exposed them. It was also by no means clear that Stalin would in reality have tolerated a genuine independent and neutral Germany.

## **Revisionists and the June uprising in the GDR**

Revisionist historians, particularly Loth and Ostermann, are also interested in Soviet policy towards the GDR in the months after Stalin's death, and argue that Beria and Malenkov were serious in their desire to reunite the two Germanys, provided the security of the USSR could be guaranteed. They argue that this promising initiative was destroyed by the East German Uprising, which led to Soviet military intervention and renewed Cold War tension in Germany. By intervening militarily, the Soviets played into the hands of Ulbricht, who had a vested interest in the survival of the GDR. At this point, then, according to their arguments, it was Ulbricht rather than the Kremlin that perpetuated the division of Germany.

## **Post-revisionist views**

The views of many of the early revisionist historians, such as Gabriel Kolko and William Appleman Williams in the 1960s and early 1970s, were often inspired by anti-Americanism and opposition to the Vietnam War (see page 173). The post-revisionists, writing either after the end of the Cold War or in its final stages, were able to take a more balanced view, which in some ways comes nearer to the 'orthodox' view of the 1950s.

### **John Lewis Gaddis**

Gaddis comes down on the side of arguing that, while Stalin may very briefly have flirted with the idea of tolerating an independent united Germany, he was determined to keep the USSR's

grip on a socialist East Germany, which was firmly integrated into the Soviet bloc. Gaddis, however, does agree that briefly Beria really did champion the idea of ‘selling’ the GDR to the West Germans, and that it was Ulbricht who sabotaged that proposal. He is also sceptical as to whether the West would ever have accepted the creation of a united neutral Germany.

## Geir Lundestad

In 1986, Lundestad took issue with Williams and Kolko, as they saw the USA as the ‘aggressor’ and therefore divider of Germany and Europe. After studying the sources in the Western European archives, Lundestad argued that the Americans, far from imposing their power on Western Europe, in fact created an ‘**empire by invitation**’. Lundestad stresses that it was the Western Europeans, particularly the West Germans, who ‘invited’ the USA to construct what amounted to an empire in Western Europe in order to defend it against communism. He points out how anxious the Western Europeans were, for instance, to support NATO and to rely on US military superiority. In the final analysis, the West Germans were not ready to risk reunification with the GDR as long as the USSR remained Communist.

## Odd Arne Westad and Kershaw

While Westad, writing in 2018, puts the Cold War into a global perspective, and is highly critical of US policy in Asia and Africa during the Cold War, he does agree with Lundestad that the majority of Europeans, especially the West Germans, welcomed the US military presence within their own borders. US military commitment not only helped to keep the peace but enabled democracy in West Germany to revive, even if it meant the division of Germany. Ian Kershaw, also writing in 2018, stresses, like Christoph Klessmann (see page 97), ‘the reactive mechanism’ of the Cold War, and how for instance the ‘quick riposte’ [response] to the FRG’s membership of NATO in 1955 was the creation of the Warsaw Pact.

## Conclusion

Was agreement over Germany possible? Germany in 1945, despite the appalling bomb damage, was still potentially the great industrial powerhouse of Europe. The Western allies were fortunate enough to control the Ruhr. Could they risk losing this economic power to an unstable neutral Germany? By the same token, could the USSR risk a united Germany becoming integrated into Western Europe?

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### EXTRACT 3

**From David Reynolds, ‘The European Dimension of the Cold War’, in M. Leffler and D. Painter, editors, *Origins of the Cold War*, Routledge, 1994, page 136.**

*Even if the wartime allies had been willing to limit their geopolitical and ideological aspirations, however, the problems of Germany made a secure sphere of influence agreement – mutual tolerance of eastern and western blocs – an unlikely eventuality. The aftermath of Hitler’s war was too profound, too unsettling. For the western powers the economic dislocation of Germany and the emergence of Communism, whatever Stalin’s immediate policy, were unacceptable. For the Soviet Union, any attempt to rehabilitate Germany, its*



*mortal enemy, were equally intolerable. The struggle for the mastery of Germany lay at the heart of the grand alliance and also of the Cold War.*

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the key events in 1948–55 by completing Worksheet 15 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## CHAPTER SUMMARY

By June 1948, four-power control in Germany had broken down, and the Western allies decided to create the FRG. To stop this, Stalin blockaded West Berlin. The blockade was broken by the airlift, and was called off in May 1949. In August, the FRG's first government was formed. In response, the GDR was created in October, but Berlin remained under four-power control. The division of Germany intensified the Cold War. The Western powers rearmed, created NATO and began the process of Western European integration. The USSR responded by tightening its grip on the Soviet bloc through COMECON and Cominform. Only Yugoslavia was able to establish a regime which, although communist, was independent of the USSR. It received covert financial and military aid from the USA. In 1952, Stalin proposed German reunification, provided Germany remained neutral, but the Western allies rejected this because they feared a neutral Germany would be vulnerable to Soviet pressure. In 1953, unity again seemed momentarily possible, but any chance of this was ruined by the June uprising. In 1955, the FRG joined NATO and in response the communist states formed the Warsaw Pact. Perhaps earlier the division of Germany could have been avoided, but now it seemed permanent.

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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

How was French opposition to the establishment of the FRG overcome at the 1948 London conference?

Why did the Western allies persist with setting up the FRG?

To what extent was the GDR set up in response to the FRG?

What impact did the division of Germany have on Berlin?

What was the real intention of the Brussels Pact?

Why was the North Atlantic Treaty signed and to what extent was it a compromise between European and US wishes?

How were the economic problems caused by the rearmament programmes of 1950–1 overcome?



What did the French hope to achieve with the Schuman Plan and how did it help to end the bad feeling between France and Germany?

What was the political and economic significance of the ECSC?

How successful were Western attempts to destabilise the Soviet bloc in the period 1948–55?

What was the response of the USSR in 1953 to the growing crisis in the GDR?

What was the significance of the East German Uprising for Germany?

What were the consequences of the French rejection of the EDC?

To what extent was the Warsaw Pact a consequence of West Germany's membership of NATO?

What was the importance of the 'Geneva spirit' in international affairs?

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## Question practice: AQA

### Essay question

'The Berlin Blockade was a monumental error by Stalin.' Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Do not get drawn into a description of events. Analyse the Blockade in the context of what the situation was before and what happened immediately afterwards. Balance negatives and positives for assessing Stalin's actions.

### Source analysis questions

With reference to [Sources F](#) (page [84](#)) and H (page [94](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these two sources to a historian studying Soviet policy towards the GDR, 1948–55. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn, including a consideration of the tone where appropriate. A judgement is needed on each source in turn.

With reference to [Sources D](#) (page [79](#)), E (page [81](#)) and J (page [97](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the factors that consolidated the division both of Europe and of Germany. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn. Include a consideration of the tone where relevant. Do not write an overall judgement on the three – just a judgement on each one in turn.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

'Europe was divided into two mutually hostile blocs by 1950'. How far do you agree?  
[AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Consider a range of issues and examine how far, for each, they provide evidence that Europe was divided and reach an interim judgement on each issue. These interim judgements should be used to reach an overall judgement about whether Europe was divided by 1950.

Which of the following had the greater impact on preventing the reunification of Germany? i) The FRG's membership of NATO. ii) East German membership of the Warsaw Pact. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii). [A level]

**Exam hint** Explain the ways in which each of the issues had an impact on preventing reunification. It is then important to reach a judgement as to which had the greater impact and explain why it was greater.

How effectively was West Germany integrated into Western Europe by 1955? [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Establish a range of criteria against which to judge effectiveness. This might include issues such as military, political, or economical effectiveness. Then reach interim judgements, which should be used to reach an overall judgement.

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## CHAPTER 5

# The spread of communism in Asia

While the Cold War divided Europe, it did not lead to the outbreak of a 'hot war'. In Asia, on the other hand, the spread of communism led to large-scale hostilities in Korea and Indo-China and guerrilla warfare in Malaya. This chapter investigates the spread of communism in Asia during this period through the following themes:

- Japan and the Cold War 1945–52
- The triumph of communism in China 1945–50
- The Korean War 1950–3
- South-East Asia 1945–54

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## KEY DATES

<b>1945</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	Soviet invasion of Manchuria Japan surrendered and occupied by USA
<b>1946</b>	<b>June</b>	Chinese Civil War resumed
	<b>Nov.</b>	Guerrilla warfare began in Vietnam
<b>1949</b>	<b>Oct.</b>	People's Republic of China (PRC) proclaimed
<b>1950</b>	<b>Feb.</b>	USSR–PRC Treaty
	<b>June</b>	Outbreak of Korean War
	<b>Oct.</b>	PRC entered Korean War
<b>1951</b>	<b>Sept.</b>	Japanese Peace Treaty signed
<b>1953</b>	<b>July</b>	Korean War ended
<b>1954</b>	<b>May</b>	Diên Biên Phu
	<b>July</b>	Geneva Accords
<b>1957</b>		Malayan independence

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## 1 Japan and the Cold War 1945–52

*How did the US occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1952 increase Cold War tensions?*

The defeat of Japan in the Second World War eliminated a power that had dominated East Asia since the early twentieth century. Japanese occupation of the former European colonies such as **Malaya**, **French Indo-China** and the **Dutch East Indies** in 1941–2 weakened colonial governments and led to the formation of independence movements, many of which were associated with communism. These all called for an end to imperialism.

## The US occupation of Japan

In Europe, the Soviet Union fought Germany, but remained uninvolved in the concurrent war in Asia and the Pacific until August 1945, although in 1939 Soviet forces had briefly clashed with the Japanese on the Mongolian border. At the Yalta Conference it was agreed that the USSR would declare war on Japan three months after the surrender of Germany in order to assist a likely US invasion of Japan (see page [30](#)). In return, Stalin was promised, by Churchill and Roosevelt, the restoration of the economic rights which Russia had enjoyed in north-east China and Manchuria before 1905.

The combination of the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945 (see page [40](#)) by the USA and the Soviet invasion of Manchuria led to the unconditional surrender by Japan on 15 August. Soviet troops advanced through Manchuria to the 38th parallel in Korea (see the map on page [125](#)) and at the end of August, Japan was placed under Allied military occupation under the command of US General **Douglas MacArthur**. The USA successfully resisted Soviet demands to divide Japan, like Germany, into separate Allied zones. Only in December 1945 was the inter-Allied Council for Japan formed, but it had no real power to make decisions about the future of Japan. MacArthur retained the key power to control and administer Japan and needed only to consult with the Allied Council. The USA provided most of the troops occupying Japan and was therefore able to dominate the country, dictating all policies.

## US policy in Japan 1946–52

In 1947, US policy in Japan, as in Germany, became less repressive, both because the Cold War in Europe had intensified and because in China the Nationalist government was increasingly threatened by Communist forces (see page [115](#)). The emphasis was now on transforming Japan into an economic ally of the USA and a market for its exports. In 1948, a new plan for the development of the Japanese economy was unveiled and financial assistance was granted to rebuild Japanese industry, despite Soviet protests that this would restore Japan's military strength. The USA intended to strengthen Japan's economy so that it would help prevent the formation of communist governments elsewhere in South-East Asia by encouraging regional trade and increasing prosperity. US policy towards Japan was one of the reasons that led to the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance between Communist China and the USSR in February 1950 (see [Source A](#), page [109](#)).

## The Treaty of Peace with Japan

On 4 September 1951, the Treaty of Peace with Japan, which came into force in April 1952, was signed in San Francisco, USA, between Japan and its former adversaries in the Second World War. Its key terms were:

- the termination of military occupation
- the surrender of Japanese claims to territory, rights or property in Korea, Taiwan and China
- the right of the USA to continue to use the island of Okinawa as a military base
- agreement that Japan would provide compensation to Allied civilians and prisoners-of-war who had lost property or suffered as a result of Japanese internment and human rights abuses
- that reparations by Japan would be made to states affected by the war, including Indo-China, the Philippines, Burma and Indonesia.

The USSR attended the San Francisco Conference but refused to sign the treaty. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko protested that the treaty aimed to transform Japan into a US military base while drawing Japan into a military alliance against the USSR. Gromyko was partly right. Japan was indeed in the US sphere of influence; only four days after the treaty, a bilateral agreement was signed between Japan and the USA which permitted the USA to station troops in Japan for the purpose of defending it against a possible attack from the newly created People's Republic of China (see page 116). Unlike the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, was not, however, developed into a military power.

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#### SOURCE A

**From the translation of the 'Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance' signed between the USSR and the People's Republic of China on 14 February 1950, in US National Intelligence Estimate 58, 10 September 1952.**

*Article 1: Both Contracting Parties undertake jointly to adopt all necessary measures at their disposal for the purpose of preventing the resumption of aggression and violation of peace on the part of Japan or any other state that may collaborate with Japan directly or indirectly in acts of aggression. In the event of one ... [Party] being attacked by Japan or any state allied with her and thus being involved in a state of war, the other ... Party shall immediately render military and other assistance by all means at its disposal ...*

*Article 2: The two Contracting Parties undertake, in a spirit of friendship and mutual agreement to bring about the earliest conclusion of the peace treaty with Japan jointly with the other powers which were allies during the Second World War.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

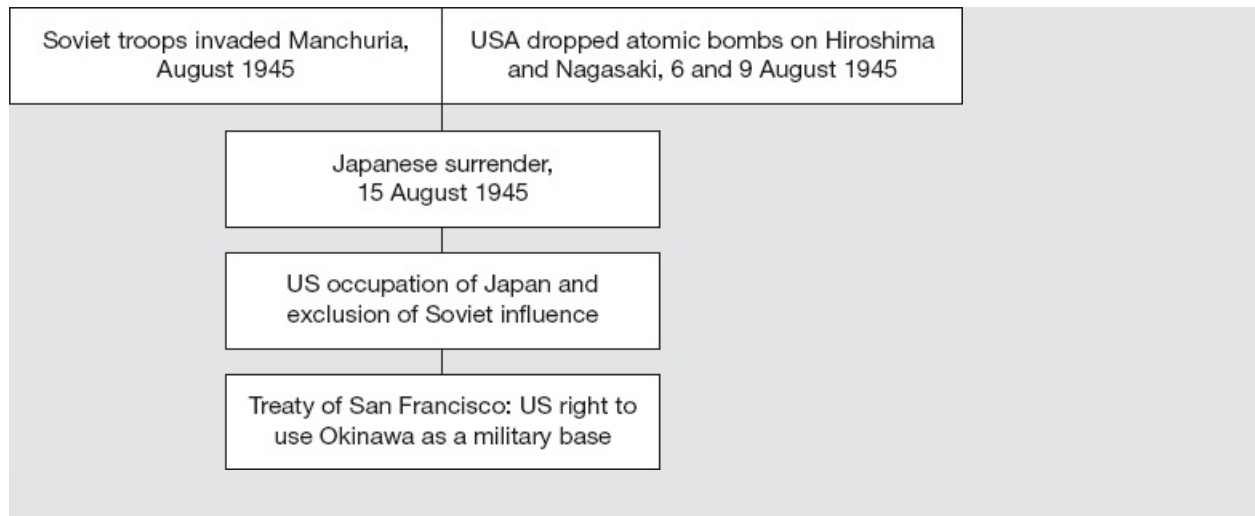
How far does [Source A](#) explain the reaction of the USSR and Communist China to US plans to create a pro-Western and independent Japan?

---

#### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### JAPAN AND THE COLD WAR 1945–52

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## 2 The triumph of communism in China 1945–50

### *What were the aims of the USSR and the USA in China 1945–9?*

The triumph of Communist forces in China under Mao Zedong dramatically altered the character of the Cold War. On the one hand the USSR had gained a new and potentially powerful ally in eastern Asia which could now put pressure on the USA and its allies there. On the other hand, a strong China, even a communist China, could potentially in the future be a threat to the USSR.

## Nationalists and Communists in China 1927–45

The Chinese Civil War between the Nationalist Guomindang (**GMD**) led by General Jiang Jieshi (see page 19) and the Chinese Communist Party (**CCP**) led by Mao Zedong broke out in 1927. When Japan launched a large-scale invasion of China in 1937, the CCP and GMD formed an uneasy anti-Japanese alliance which lasted until Japan's defeat in August 1945. At the Cairo Conference of 1943, Jiang was recognised by Britain and the USA as China's leader and a key ally in their war against Japan. The GMD, however, suffered a series of devastating defeats at the hands of the Japanese in the spring and summer of 1944, which, combined with high inflation and governmental corruption in the areas it controlled, undermined Jiang's claims to be China's national leader. In contrast, the strength of the CCP had greatly increased. It had, or so Mao claimed, an army of nearly a million people supported by an additional force of about 900,000 **militia** men, while party membership was over a million.

Exploiting the GMD's unpopularity at the end of 1944, the CCP decided on two new strategies:

- The CCP's best troops would penetrate into the area south of the Yangtze River (see the map on page 115) to establish bases from which they would be able to confront the GMD after the

war.

- In a political manoeuvre to challenge Jiang's claim to be the leader of China, Mao, like his Eastern European counterparts, proposed replacing Jiang's one-party dictatorship with a coalition government that included the CCP, which would then attempt to take control of key ministries within the coalition.

Initially, Mao won US support for his coalition programme, as Roosevelt hoped that a coalition would stabilise China and lead to a more effective campaign against Japan. However, this strategy failed when Jiang declared that he would enter a coalition with Mao only if he were given complete control of the CCP's armed forces, a condition which Mao could hardly accept.

---

## Mao Zedong



- 1883** Born into a peasant family in Hunan
- 1943** Chairman of CCP
- 1949** Civil War ended with Mao's victory
- 1957** Launched Great Leap Forward
- 1966–76** Cultural revolution unleashed
- 1976** Died

### Early years

The son of a prosperous small-scale farmer, Mao became a communist while working at Beijing University and was appointed party secretary for the Hunan province branch of the CCP. In 1927, he was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Chinese Red Army. To escape defeat by the Nationalists, he took part in the 'Long March' to the remote region of Yanan. He defeated his political rivals to become effective head of the CCP as chairman of the **Politburo**.

### The defeat of the GMD

After the outbreak of war with Japan, Mao agreed to an alliance with the GMD to form a united front to defend China. It was an uneasy truce which broke down in 1946. Jiang was defeated in 1949 and the PRC was proclaimed on 1 October with Mao as chairman of the ruling CCP. Over the next 25 years he turned China into a communist society, ruthlessly eliminating 'class enemies', collectivising agriculture and through a



series of Five-Year Plans building a state-controlled industrial base.

### **In power**

Mao's impact on the Cold War was immense. Not only did he lead communism to success in China, but by doing so he created an alternative to Stalinism and the Soviet variant of Marxism–Leninism. Nevertheless, initially, Mao looked to Stalin as the leader of world communism, and in February 1950 signed the Sino-Soviet Pact. He intervened in the Korean War in 1950 at Stalin's behest, which enabled him to mobilise Chinese public opinion against the USA and to support his domestic reform programme. He also assisted the Việt Minh's struggle against the French in 1949–54.

By 1960, Mao had made the PRC a major rival to the USSR in the communist world. Mao also came to distrust Khrushchev and later Brezhnev as 'revisionists' who had effectively abandoned the struggle with the USA. The growing hostility between the two world communist powers had a profound effect on the future of the Cold War. Its impact was to weaken the USSR's global position and make it almost impossible for it to win the Cold War.

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## **Soviet invasion of Manchuria, August 1945**

When the USSR declared war against Japan on 8 August, Mao ordered his forces to cooperate closely with the Soviet army and occupy key cities and rail links in central and northern China, particularly the north-east. He was convinced that the Soviet entry into the war had created a new international dimension which would favour the CCP in its struggle with the GMD. He also instructed his generals and the party leaders to prepare for renewed conflict with the GMD once Japan had surrendered.

It was, on the other hand, vital for Jiang, as the leader of China's internationally recognised government, to stop Mao from occupying territory liberated from Japan by the USSR. On 12 August, he ordered the CCP forces not to advance into Manchuria. As his own army was still in southern China, Jiang was not in a position to enforce this command without Soviet and US assistance.

## **Soviet and US policy in China 1945**

Initially, both Soviet and US policies in China coincided. Both assumed that the GMD would eventually reassert control over China once Japan surrendered. Both also wanted Mao to accept this and ultimately join a coalition government with Jiang. Neither the USSR nor the USA yet grasped that the CCP would ultimately be much more successful than the GMD in gaining popular support for its cause in China.

### **The USSR**

Mao and other CCP leaders were convinced that Stalin, as a Communist, would never tolerate a victory by the GMD as it would benefit the USA. Stalin's priority was the defence of Soviet

interests in China, and he believed that only the GMD, as China's legal government, could deliver these concessions. On 14 August 1945, he therefore signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance in which Jiang acknowledged the independence of Outer Mongolia and the Soviet military occupation of Port Arthur (see [Figure 5.1](#), page [115](#)) and agreed to joint control with the USSR of the Changchun Railway (formerly the Chinese Eastern Railway). In return, Stalin agreed to recognise Jiang as China's leader, and not assist the CCP against the GMD. This agreement was a serious blow to Mao; it completely undermined his assumption that the USSR would prove to be a loyal ally in the struggle against the GMD. On the other hand, as events were to show, Stalin did not abandon Mao entirely.

## The USA

Now that the war with Japan was over, the USA was concerned about the spread of Soviet influence in the Far East. It put pressure on both Jiang and Mao to negotiate a compromise agreement to stabilise China, so as to avoid a damaging civil war which might provide the USSR with further opportunities to strengthen its position in China. When Jiang asked for assistance in taking over the territory surrendered by the Japanese, the USA responded immediately by airlifting GMD troops to Nanjing, Shanghai, Beijing and later to Manchuria (see [Figure 5.1](#), page [115](#)).

## The Chongqing negotiations, August to October 1945

Under the joint pressure of the USA and the USSR, the CCP's Politburo authorised Mao to meet Jiang in Chongqing on 26 August 1945. The negotiations turned out to be lengthy and complex. The main stumbling block continued to be whether the CCP should maintain an independent army. Jiang insisted that Mao should place all troops under the command of the government. Mao rejected this, but he was ready to reduce the number of his troops, provided the GMD did likewise. The two sides also failed to agree on a constitution for a new democratic China. By October, it was clear that the gap between the two sides was as wide as ever.

Even while the talks continued, clashes between the GMD and CCP escalated. In northern and north-eastern China, where the USA had succeeded in transporting large numbers of GMD troops, several major battles took place. At this stage, it seemed as if the better equipped GMD had the upper hand.

## Soviet-US tension in Manchuria

Despite the Sino-Soviet Treaty, Mao received news in late August and early September that the Soviet forces of occupation in Manchuria were unofficially ready to help the CCP. After discussions between CCP commanders and a representative of Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, the Soviet commander in the region, it was agreed on 14 September that CCP forces could occupy the countryside and the smaller towns of Manchuria as long as they did not enter the cities. Significantly, the Soviets also conceded that when the time came for Soviet troops to leave Manchuria, they would not automatically hand the region over to GMD forces, but would allow

the two Chinese political factions to resolve the issue themselves. Since they hoped that the CCP would be in a position to control much of Manchuria, this was a formula for allowing the CCP to establish itself in the region.

In early October, Soviet troops began to halt the movement of GMD troops into Soviet-occupied areas of Manchuria, while advising the CCP to move another 300,000 troops into Manchuria. On 19 October, Mao decided to launch a campaign to control the whole of the north-east of China. In response, Jiang informed US President Truman that the USSR's violations of the Sino-Soviet Treaty were a serious threat to peace in East Asia, and asked the USA to mediate. Meanwhile, he accelerated the transfer of his troops to the north-east and seized control of the Shanhaiguan Pass, a major route into Manchuria from the rest of China.

US warships also patrolled the sea off Port Arthur, which was under Soviet occupation. This appeared to the Soviets to be a deliberate provocation and there now seemed a danger not only of a full-scale civil war in China, but also of a confrontation between the USA and the USSR. In the face of these dangers, the USSR reduced its assistance to the CCP and insisted that it withdraw from the areas bordering the Trans Manchurian Railway. The CCP temporarily suspended its aim of seizing the whole of the north-east and instead concentrated on occupying the countryside and the smaller cities.

## The Marshall mission

The escalation of the Chinese Civil War in the autumn of 1945 confronted the USA with a major dilemma. It wanted to halt the expansion of Soviet influence in China, yet it did not want to risk military confrontation through direct intervention. President Truman announced in December 1945 that he would continue to grant assistance to the GMD, but categorically stated that he would not intervene militarily. He also sent General Marshall (see page 52) to mediate between Mao and Jiang. His aim was to establish a Nationalist-dominated government in which the CCP would be represented as a minority party. Marshall failed to negotiate a compromise, but his insistence on a truce in the spring of 1946, just at the time when the GMD was on the verge of victory in Manchuria, enabled the CCP, with the help of the Soviets, to regroup its forces. The Soviets also made available a vast amount of captured Japanese weapons to the CCP when they left Manchuria in May 1946, having stripped it of as many economic resources as it could transport, while also providing military training for its officers.

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### SOURCE B



**The population of Port Arthur in Manchuria celebrating Soviet soldiers arriving after the victory over the Japanese occupation troops in August 1945. The Red Army, comprising about 700,000 troops, rapidly occupied Manchuria.**

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? **SOURCE QUESTION**

What message does [Source B](#) give about Soviet policy in Manchuria?

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**Figure 5.1** Map of China showing the major battles of the Chinese Civil War. What can be learned from this map about the strategic importance of north-east China?

## Defeat of the Nationalists 1946–9

With the failure of the Marshall mission, the Civil War erupted again. In July 1946, Jiang launched a major assault, and by October had swept the CCP out of the Yangtze region. The GMD, however, failed to capture Manchuria, where the CCP had, with Soviet assistance, established a strong base, but in the spring of 1947 the Nationalists resumed the offensive and seized Yanan, the CCP's capital. By autumn, however, the war began to favour the CCP. From December 1947 to March 1948, Mao ordered a series of offensives in Manchuria and northern China, and by autumn the CCP had advanced into central China.

## Soviet assistance to the CCP 1948–9

By spring 1948, Stalin had decided that the CCP had a genuine chance of success. He sent I.V. Kovalev, the Soviet commissar for transportation, to oversee the repair of bridges and railways to



facilitate the advance of CCP forces and to act as his contact with Mao's headquarters. However, he still kept in contact with the GMD. He was worried that a possible victory by the Republican Party in the USA in the November 1948 elections would bring to power a president who might intervene militarily in China. Consequently, when Mao's forces moved into central and southern China, where the USA and Britain had strong economic interests, Stalin responded positively to a request from Jiang to mediate between the two sides. He informed Mao of his concern about possible US intervention, but Mao, confident of victory, firmly rejected any mediation by the USSR.

## US assistance to the GMD

In 1947, the USA reviewed its policy towards China. Many US diplomats, as well as the **joint chiefs of staff** and the secretaries of defence and the navy, urged greater commitment and substantially more military aid to the GMD. Marshall, who was now secretary of state, and Truman, rejected this on the grounds that such a policy would both prove prohibitively expensive and possibly lead to war with the USSR. The USA, therefore, limited its assistance to giving Jiang financial aid, which allowed him to purchase arms from the USA. This policy continued even when Jiang, defeated on the mainland, withdrew to Taiwan in December 1949.

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### SOURCE C

**From 'Soviet Assessment of US Foreign Policy, 27 Sept. 1946'. Quoted in S.N. Goncharov, J.W. Lewis and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, Stanford University Press, 1993, pages 229–30.**

*US policy in China is aimed at fully bringing that country under the control of American monopoly capital. In pursuing this policy, the US Government goes so far as to interfere in China's internal affairs ... how far the American government's policy towards China has already gone is seen in its current attempts to control the Chinese army. Recently the US government submitted to Congress a draft law on military aid to China under which the Chinese army would be totally reorganized, trained by American instructors, and supplied with American weaponry and ammunition ...*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How accurate an assessment does [Source C](#) give of US policy in China 1945–9?

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## Mao's triumph

CCP successes in 1949 removed any doubt about the outcome of the Chinese Civil War and were to have a profound impact on how the Cold War would develop.

In January 1949, the GMD forces north of the Yangtze River were defeated and Beijing was captured. CCP armies crossed the Yangtze in April, occupied Shanghai in late May and captured Guangzhou in October. On 1 October, the People's Republic of China (PRC) was proclaimed in Beijing. Jiang fled to the island of Taiwan in December, with over 2 million others, where he

maintained the Nationalist government, claiming that it was still China's legal government. With US backing, his regime retained the Chinese seat on the United Nations (UN) Security Council until 1971, when it was taken by the PRC as a result of the US–Chinese *détente* (see page 170). The newly established PRC was, however, recognised by Britain, India, Pakistan and Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) in January 1950 on the grounds that it enjoyed the backing of the Chinese people. The PRC was only recognised by the US government in 1979.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of Mao's triumph and its impact by completing Worksheet 16 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The Sino-Soviet Pact

On 6 December 1949, Mao visited Moscow to celebrate Stalin's seventieth birthday and to negotiate the Sino-Soviet Pact. His overriding aim was to secure Soviet assistance to industrialise China and to create a modern air force, navy and army. To achieve this, he was even ready to accept for the time being the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1945, by which Outer Mongolia and Port Arthur were occupied by the USSR (see page 112).

Paradoxically, however, Stalin still had considerable reservations about Mao and the CCP, which he viewed, in the words of the historian Jonathan Haslam, writing in 2011, more 'as a force for national liberation rather than for socialism'. These reservations were intensified when Dean Acheson, in his speech to the National Press Club in Washington on 12 January, appeared to be trying to drive a wedge between the USSR and the PRC when he attacked Stalin 'for detaching the northern provinces of China from China and attaching them to the Soviet Union'. Acheson even went on to hint at the possibility of negotiating a *détente* between the USA and the PRC. Mao's victory in China had, of course, greatly strengthened communism globally, but at the same time it had created a potential rival to the USSR in the communist camp, who could – like Tito – eventually challenge Moscow's authority.

At first on his arrival in Moscow, Mao was ignored by Stalin. Only after Mao let it be known by deliberately speaking out loudly in his **bugged** residence that he was ready 'to do business with Britain, Japan and America' did negotiations with Stalin begin, and the Sino-Soviet Pact was signed on 14 February 1950 (see [Source A](#), page 109). It committed both states to:

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### SOURCE D



**Mao proclaiming the founding of the People's Republic of China from the top of Tiananmen Gate in Beijing, 1 October 1949.**

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source D](#) succeed in portraying the significance of Mao's victory?

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- cooperate in terms of defence in the case of attack by Japan or its ally (meaning the USA)
- conclude a peace treaty with Japan which would not be hostile to the interests of either state
- not conclude any hostile agreement with another power aimed at the other member of the pact
- consult closely on matters of mutual interest.

The USSR gained much from the pact. The USSR was to be supplied with valuable raw materials, tungsten, tin and antimony for ten years at very low prices. Stalin, in return, would provide military support for the PRC, including the establishment of air-defence installations in coastal areas near Taiwan.

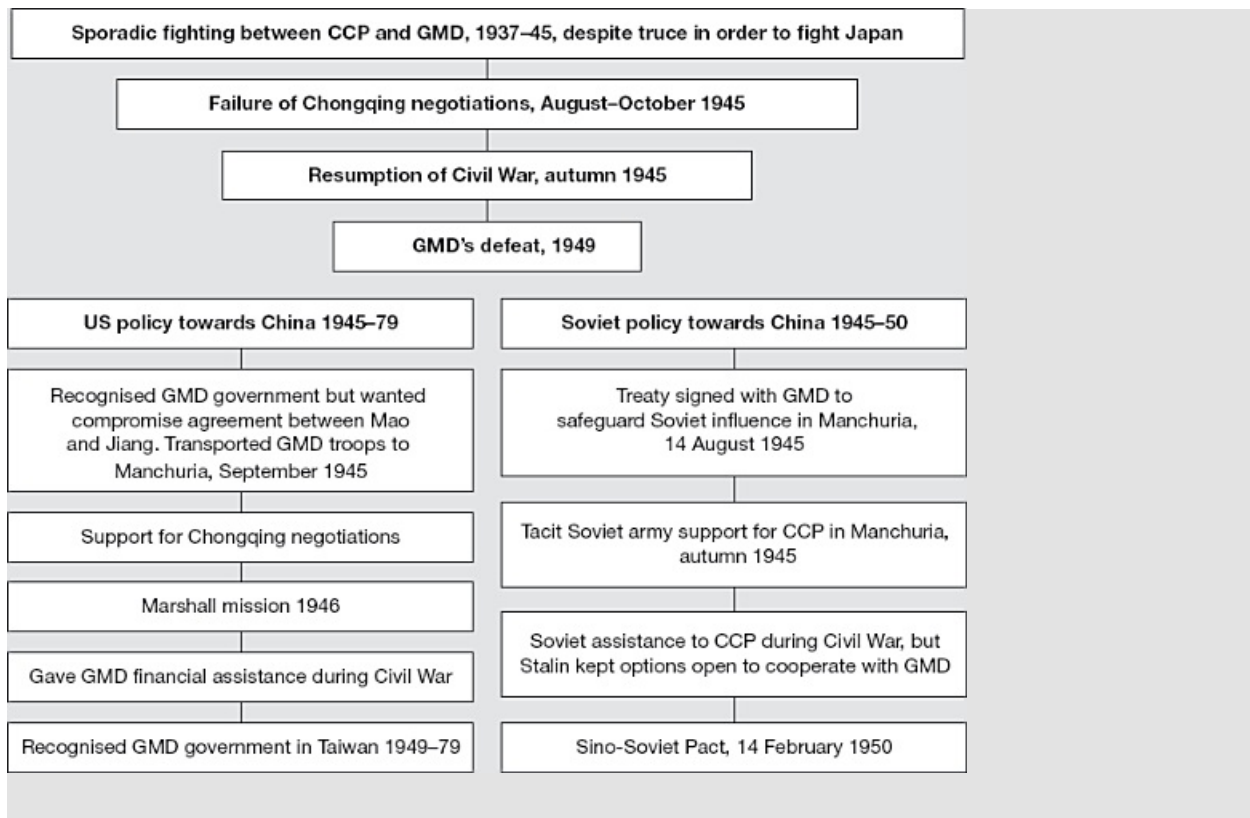
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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE TRIUMPH OF COMMUNISM IN CHINA 1945–50

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### 3 The Korean War 1950–3

#### *What caused the Korean War and how did it affect the Cold War?*

Japan had annexed Korea in 1910. During the Second World War, Koreans were conscripted into the Japanese military forces or worked as labourers. Britain, the USA and the GMD made the Cairo Declaration on 30 November 1943, stating that Korea should become free and independent. Stalin accepted this and in May 1945 agreed that once Japan was defeated there should be a **trusteeship** for Korea with supervision by the USA, the USSR, Nationalist China and Britain.

#### Korea 1945–9

Once the Red Army had occupied North Korea on 12 August 1945, the Soviets lost little time in installing local Communists in power in the areas under their control. Worried about Soviet intentions, the USA immediately proposed an initial division of the peninsula at the 38th parallel (see the map on page 125). In the north, Japanese troops would surrender to the Soviets and in the south to the USA. This was accepted by the USSR, but when US troops eventually arrived on 8 September, they discovered that a young Communist named **Kim Il Sung** had established a committee in the Korean capital of Seoul, announcing its intention to rule Korea as a Communist People's Republic. A rival anti-Communist group under **Syngman Rhee**, a fervent Korean nationalist who had spent most of his life in the USA, had also established a committee which

claimed to be the Provisional Government for the whole nation. Kim and Rhee were each determined to unify Korea and exclude the other in the process.

## The creation of North and South Korea: ROK and DPRK

Initially, the USA rejected the claims of both groups, and in December 1945, at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, the USA and USSR went ahead with their plans for creating a trusteeship for Korea. A joint commission of Soviet and US officials was to advise the Koreans on creating a democratic government, but disagreements with the Soviets about which political parties should be allowed to participate led the USA, in November 1947, to refer the problem to the UN.

Despite Soviet opposition, the UN General Assembly agreed in January 1948 to send a commission to supervise elections in both north and south Korea. When it arrived to start its work, its members were not allowed by the Soviets to enter the north. In the south, Syngman Rhee's Nationalist Party won an overwhelming majority and created the independent Republic of Korea (ROK), more commonly known as South Korea. In the north, under Soviet protection, Kim Il Sung created the Communist Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in September 1948. Each state, as was also the case in divided Germany (see page 75), claimed to represent the entire nation and was hostile to the other. Each worked to unite Korea on its own terms.

## Soviet withdrawal

Soviet troops were withdrawn from northern Korea by the end of 1948, but they left behind them much military hardware, which included not only their own equipment but also armaments seized from the defeated Japanese. These were regularly supplemented by further arms deliveries from the USSR. Indeed, according to one Soviet official, these were on a far more generous scale than those given to the CCP in China. In the winter of 1948–9, Stalin was still not entirely confident that the CCP would win the civil war in China. In the event of their defeat, North Korea would be a useful base for protecting Soviet interests in Manchuria.

## US withdrawal

With the creation of the ROK, US policy makers were divided about whether the 45,000-strong US occupation army should remain or whether these troops should be withdrawn. Military planners thought that the troops could be more effectively deployed elsewhere and that Korea should not be included within the USA's **Asian defence perimeter**. Against this view was the argument that a removal of troops would weaken US prestige and result in the occupation of South Korea by a Soviet-armed North Korea. In the end, US Secretary of State Dean Acheson and President Truman were convinced that Korea was not worth the expense of a prolonged military occupation. Consequently, when the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling on the USA and the USSR to withdraw their troops as soon as possible, the USA removed its troops by June 1949. In January 1950, Acheson, in a much publicised speech, defined the USA's Asian defence perimeter, which pointedly did not include Korea.

**From US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's speech to the National Press Club in Washington, 12 January 1950. Quoted in *Department of State Bulletin*, XXII, 23 January 1950, page 116.**

*What is the situation in regard to the military security of the Pacific area, and what is our policy in regard to it?*

*In the first place, the defeat and the disarmament of Japan has placed upon the United States the necessity of assuming the military defense of Japan so long as that is required, both in the interest of our security and in the interests of the security of the entire Pacific area ...*

*So far as the military security of other areas in the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee these areas against military attack. But it must also be clear that such a guarantee is hardly sensible or necessary within the realm of practical relationship. Should such an attack occur ... the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations ...*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Assess the value of [Source E](#) to a historian studying the causes of the Korean War.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source E](#) by completing Worksheet 17 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## NSC68

Arguably, Acheson's message gave out ambiguous signals. However, in April 1950, the **US National Security Council** finished its detailed assessment (NSC68) of the Communist threat after the loss of China. NSC68 was, in the historian George Herring's judgement in 2008, 'one of the most significant Cold War documents', as it urged:

- A massive increase in rearmament and containment of global communism.
- Since communism backed by the USSR and PRC was intent on imposing its ideology on the world, the USA must wage the Cold War on every front by political, economic and military means.
- The USA must therefore be ready to deploy its military forces wherever in the world communism threatened to prevail.
- Government spending and taxes would have to be significantly increased to meet this commitment.

At first, Truman backed away from such an expensive policy, but the outbreak of the war in Korea appeared to vindicate the NSC68's assessments and ensured that its recommendations,

which involved a big increase in the armed forces of the USA, **economic mobilisation** and the taking on of a string of global commitments, would be put into effect.

## Kim Il Sung seeks support from Stalin and Mao

Kim visited Moscow for talks with Stalin in April 1949. When he complained about southern violations of the frontier, Stalin urged him to 'strike the southerners in the teeth'. It is probable that Stalin envisaged that Kim would wage a guerrilla war rather than launch a full-scale invasion. In the summer of 1949, after US troops had left, Kim sent several well-equipped guerrilla groups across the frontier in an unsuccessful attempt to establish bases in the mountains in the south-east of the country. Kim decided that since the guerrilla operations had failed, the only way to unite Korea under his leadership was through a major invasion. To do this he needed the support of Stalin, whom he visited again in May 1950.

Stalin saw the potential of a Communist Korea as a useful economic and military ally, which would go some way to compensate the USSR's lack of influence in Japan. After Acheson's speech, he was convinced that the USA would not assist South Korea. Nevertheless, he remained cautious and told Kim that the USSR would not send troops to Korea, and that he should instead ask the PRC for assistance.

When Kim visited Beijing in April 1950, Mao also gave his consent, again based on his assessment that the USA would not intervene. He was persuaded by Kim that Stalin was more enthusiastic than he was in reality.

## The outbreak of the Korean War

Thanks to Soviet arms deliveries, North Korea possessed a decisive superiority over the South in terms of military strength. It launched its attack on South Korea on 25 June 1950, surprising both the South Koreans and the USA.

### US–UN intervention

Initially, Kim's forces swept all before them, but the speed of the US reaction surprised the Soviets and their allies. Whereas guerrilla attacks might not have provoked a US response, a major military invasion was another matter. The US government, influenced by NSC68, reasoned that major aggression had to be countered or the lack of a US response would invite further invasions by Soviet puppet states elsewhere in the world, particularly in Europe (see page 80).

The USA immediately appealed to the UN Security Council to authorise a military force to intervene and end the fighting. As the USSR was boycotting the UN in protest at the exclusion of the PRC by the USA, the Soviet representative was unable to veto Resolution 83, which called on member nations to assist South Korea. Andrei Gromyko was later to reveal that the Soviet decision not to use the veto was a deliberate ploy by Stalin, who wanted the USA drawn into a war in which the USSR was not involved. The USA therefore was able to dominate the Security

Council and act as the 'world policeman'. In response to this resolution, the USA, and its allies Britain and France, ordered immediate military intervention. This decision was made less risky by the fact that Stalin had secretly informed Truman that he would not see the intervention of US troops in Korea as a cause of war between the two superpowers. At the same time, Truman sent the US Navy's 7th Fleet to patrol the Taiwan Strait to prevent either the Nationalists in Taiwan or the PRC from conducting military operations against each other. The USA was determined to prevent the PRC from capturing Taiwan since aircraft based there could threaten Japan and the Philippines, both of which were in the USA's sphere of interest.

## **The UN counterattack**

By early August, Kim's forces had conquered 90 per cent of South Korea (see the map on page 125) and the US-led UN military task force was confined to a small area around Pusan. Supplied with equipment and reserves based in Japan, US troops were able to break out of Pusan at the end of the month. A dramatic counterattack was launched when General Douglas MacArthur (see page 108), who had been appointed commander of the UN task force, landed troops at Inchon on 9 September, far behind North Korean lines. On 1 October, UN forces crossed the 38th parallel, and nearly three weeks later Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, was captured as US-led UN forces advanced to Korea's border with the PRC's province of Manchuria.

## **The PRC's entry into the war**

In response to this military crisis, Kim sent an urgent request to Stalin on 29 September 1950 for Soviet military assistance. Stalin was not ready to risk war with the USA, but he urged Mao to intervene, warning him that failure to do so would have grave consequences not just for the PRC's north-east provinces, but for all communist nations. The presence of the 7th Fleet in the Straits of Taiwan, the granting of military aid to the Philippines and French Indo-China, as well as the US-led advance on the Manchuria border, were seen by Mao to be a direct military threat to China. Even so, he was not ready to intervene until Stalin agreed to provide further military support and air defences for both the main PRC cities and its troops in Korea. However, PRC 'volunteers' disguised as North Koreans did fight in Korea months before the PRC's formal entry.

On 18 October, military intervention began. Within two weeks, PRC troops had crossed the Yalu River border and attacked UN forces, whose supply lines were overextended. By the end of the year, UN troops had been driven back across the 38th parallel. Soviet fighter planes, which were painted in PRC colours and flown by Soviet pilots in PRC uniform, defended the Yalu crossings and gave some limited support to the Chinese army.

## **The threat of nuclear war**

At a press conference on 30 November, Truman hinted (although he later claimed that he never intended to employ nuclear bombs) that the USA might use atomic bombs against PRC troops and cities, but was dissuaded from doing so by his allies, particularly British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, who feared that this might lead to the activation of the Sino-Soviet Pact and a much larger conflict, as the Soviets now possessed atomic weapons as well. Mao was undeterred by the threat and argued that atomic bombs would have relatively little impact on the PRC as it

had practically unlimited manpower and could continue to field large armies!

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#### SOURCE F



**Chinese volunteer troops near the River Yalu, October 1950. Chinese intervention marked a major escalation of the war.**

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What is the implication of [Source F](#) for the war in Korea?

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## India's ceasefire proposal

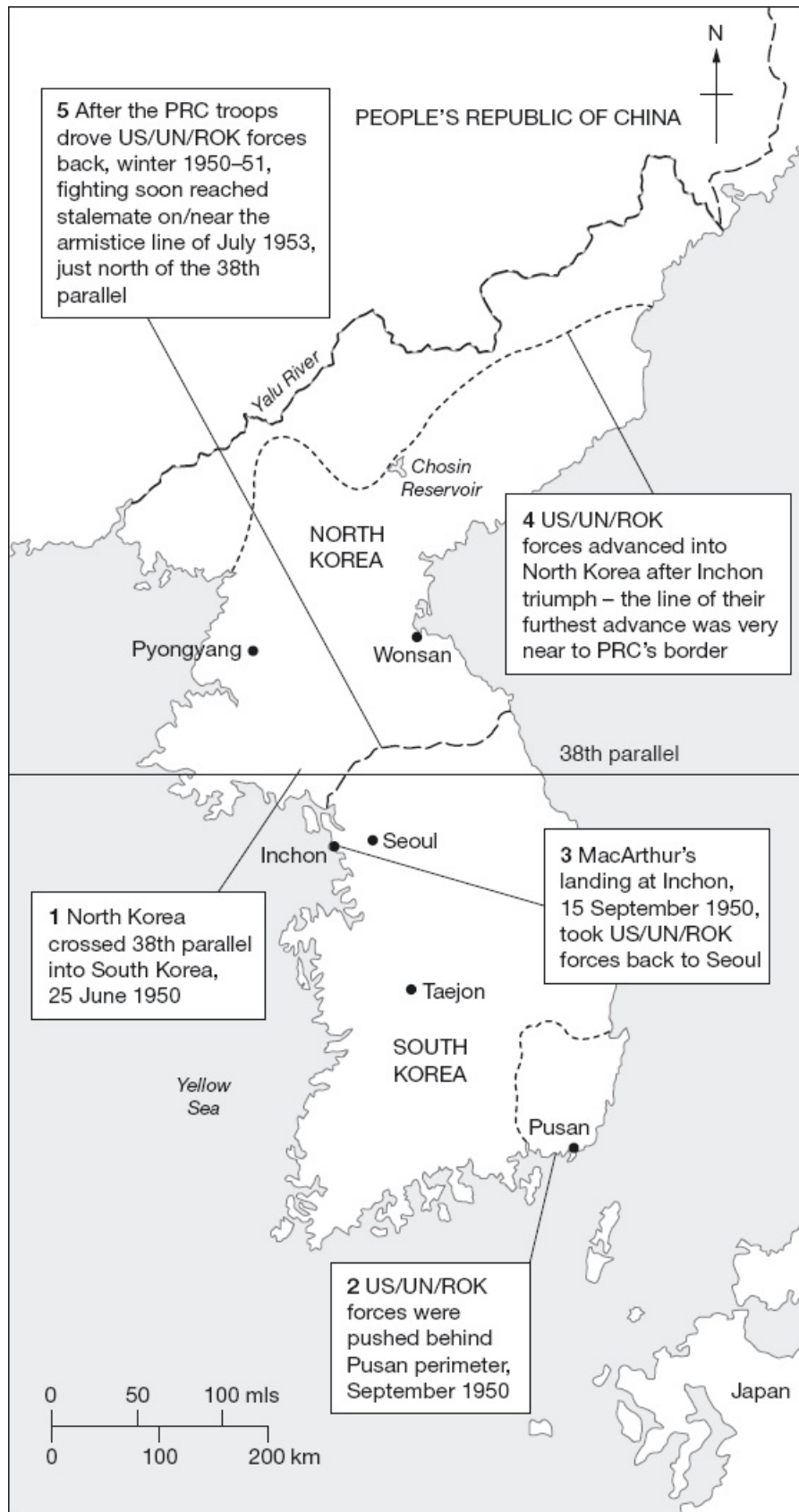
On 5 December 1950, thirteen non-Western states, headed by India, handed a peace proposal to the PRC and the UN. The proposal recommended that the PRC halt its advance at the 38th parallel, that a ceasefire should be declared and that a conference should be called to find a solution for the problem of Korea. Nine days later, the UN General Assembly approved the proposal and created a group to seek a basis on which a viable ceasefire could be arranged.

India's proposal presented President Truman with a dilemma. On the one hand, supporting it would lose South Korean support as well as risk the fury of the Republican-dominated Congress and much of the US press, both of which urged a tough line towards communist states (see page [81](#)). On the other hand, rejecting it would lead to the loss of support for the USA in the UN. In the end, the USA backed the proposal largely in the hope that the PRC would reject it. In this they were proved right, as Mao was determined to continue the war, aiming for a crushing victory over what he termed 'American imperialism'. Consequently, after PRC military successes in December 1950, he rejected the ceasefire proposal and ordered another offensive, which resulted in the capture of Seoul on 4 January 1951.

# Armistice negotiations

By July 1951, fighting had stabilised along the 38th parallel. During the next two years, tortuous negotiations were conducted between the two sides, each of which constantly sought to achieve an advantage over the other. The PRC leadership understood that it lacked the resources to defeat the US-led UN force. The PRC, however, could claim that the dramatic rout of the USA in North Korea in December 1950 represented a major victory and that its armies commanded a strong position on the battlefield. Mao agreed to negotiations for a truce in the hope that this might eventually lead to the withdrawal of UN troops from Korea. He explained this strategy as 'preparing for a long war while striving to end the war through peace negotiations'. By the end of May 1951, the USA also believed that its position on the battlefield was secure enough to negotiate an end to the war, but, like Mao, the USA hoped to make further military gains which would strengthen its position at the negotiating table.





**Figure 5.2** Map of the Korean War. How helpful is this map in understanding the Korean War?

On 27 July 1953, both sides finally agreed an armistice after the newly elected US President Eisenhower (see page 91) threatened the use of nuclear weapons. This recognised the 38th parallel as a temporary dividing line between North Korea and South Korea. This division has remained the frontier ever since.

## **The consequences of the Korean War**

The Korean War had important consequences for the PRC, the USA, the USSR and Western Europe.

### **Consequences for the PRC**

Mao used the Korean War to foment enthusiasm for revolutionary change within the PRC and to mobilise public opinion by stirring up hatred for what he termed 'American arrogance'. A national campaign aimed at suppressing 'reactionaries and reactionary activities' was unleashed across the PRC to remove any opponents of the government. By the time the Korean War ended, society and politics had been radically changed in the PRC. Agricultural land, for example, had been redistributed to the peasantry and the landlord class eliminated, ending an economic and social system thousands of years old. PRC victories in Korea in 1950 were promoted as removing over a century of humiliating defeats at the hands of European and Japanese armies, which inevitably strengthened Mao's government.

### **Consequences for the USA**

The Korean War strengthened the arguments of the US National Security Council that communism represented a co-ordinated global threat. After the outbreak of the war, Truman accepted the National Security Council's proposals for a massive rearmament programme and tripled the US military budget. It became the basis of US foreign policy for the rest of Truman's presidency and in essentials was continued by his successors for the next twenty years.

### **Consequences for the USSR: Sino-Soviet relations**

Throughout the war, Mao consulted with Stalin on all the key decisions and was dependent on the USSR for much of the PRC's military supplies. On one level, the war brought the USSR and China closer together, but, as the historian Chen Jian observed in 2001: 'on another level, the Chinese experience during the Korean War also ground away at some of the cement that kept the Sino-Soviet alliance together'. Mao resented Stalin's opportunism, particularly when he demanded cheap raw materials in return for signing the Sino-Soviet Pact, and made China pay excessive sums for military supplies. Khrushchev was later to observe that Stalin's exploitative policies in China matched those previously pursued by the Western imperialist nations!

### **Consequences for Western Europe**

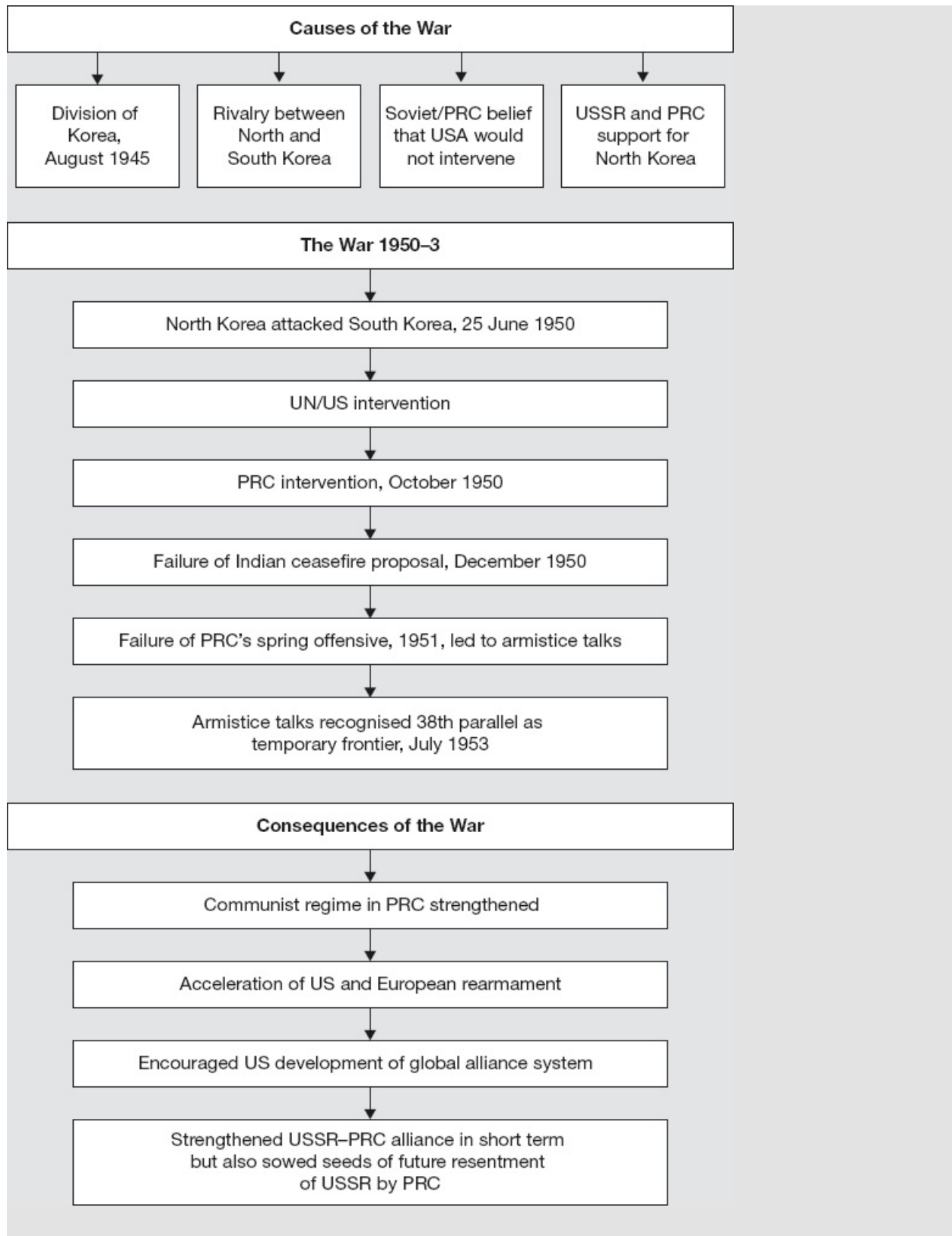
In the long term, the Korean War did serious damage to the interests of the Soviet Union in Europe. It strengthened the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and led to the rearmament of West Germany and the first steps towards the integration of Western Europe (see

page 80). As the historian Norman Stone concisely stated in 2010, ‘the Korean War created Europe’.

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE KOREAN WAR 1950–3



## 4 South-East Asia 1945–54

### *What was US policy in South-East Asia 1945–54?*

US policy in South-East Asia was motivated primarily by the intention to block the spread of communism. Initially, it feared that attempts by the old European colonial powers to re-establish control over their former colonies would merely encourage this spread. As a statement by the US Security Council in March 1949 put it: ‘19th century imperialism is no antidote to communism in revolutionary areas. It is rather an ideal culture for the breeding of the Communist virus.’

## Indonesia

Consequently, in Indonesia, Truman was determined to stop Dutch attempts to reimpose their control in December 1948. In March 1949, Dean Acheson bluntly informed the Dutch that if they did not hand over power to the Nationalist leader Sukarno, they would not only lose their portion of Marshall Aid but also be denied military support from NATO. Confronted by such an ultimatum, the Dutch had little alternative but to recognise Indonesian independence.

## Malaya

In Malaya, however, where the British were fighting against a Communist-led guerrilla war, the USA could see no alternative to supporting the colonial government provided that it eventually prepared the country for independence. The USA feared that a Communist Malaya would act as a bridgehead for the expansion of communism from China throughout the whole of South-East Asia. The British counter-insurgency campaign proved to be remarkably effective. By winning the support of the native Malays, they were able to defeat the Communists, who recruited mainly from the expatriate Chinese community in Malaya. In 1957, Malaya became independent, and, with continued British assistance, the Communists were defeated by 1960.

## Indo-China 1945–54

Japan had occupied French Indo-China in 1940, but allowed French officials to continue to administer the region. Both the French and the Japanese were opposed by the **Việt Minh**, which was founded by **Hồ Chí Minh** in 1941 and commanded by **Võ Nguyên Giáp**. Hồ was both a communist and nationalist who intended to create an independent Vietnam after the defeat of the Japanese. Thus, after the Japanese surrender on 29 August 1945, Hồ immediately proclaimed the independent, Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with its capital at Hanoi.

The new republic met with opposition from both Britain and Nationalist China. In August 1945, British troops occupied southern Vietnam, while the Chinese Nationalists took control of the north. Britain immediately released and rearmed French troops who had been interned by Japan, and these, reinforced by the arrival of further French military units, clashed with the Việt Minh. Hồ Chí Minh eventually compromised with the French government, agreeing that Vietnam should become a self-governing state within French Indo-China and therefore only semi-independent.

# The Indo-Chinese War of 1946–54

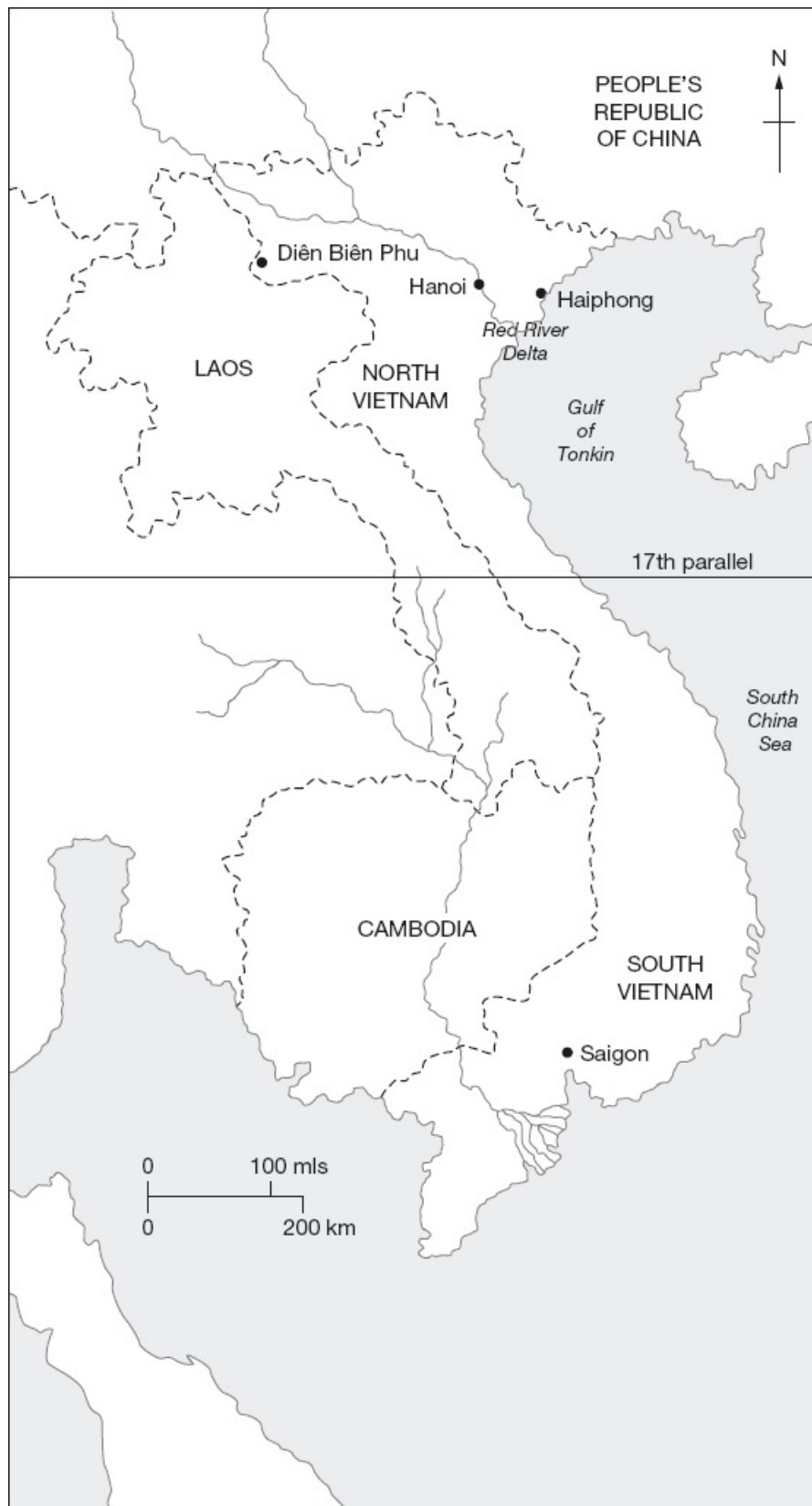
This agreement did not last, as the French government was still determined to control Vietnam while Hồ wanted only the loosest of associations with France. Open conflict erupted in November 1946 when France bombarded Việt Minh forces in the port of Haiphong. Until 1949 France had little difficulty in confining the revolt to mountainous areas. CCP guerrillas from China occasionally assisted the Việt Minh, but it was only after his victory in 1949 that Mao was in a position to offer significant military assistance. Mao saw Hồ's war against France as part of the overall anti-imperialist struggle which he was waging against the USA, Britain and France.

## France on the defensive 1950–4

In April 1950, Mao sent one of his most experienced generals, Chen Geng, to Vietnam. He organised a military campaign along the Vietnamese–PRC border where direct assistance to the Việt Minh could be provided. By November, France had lost control of the border territories, and equipment and supplies from China were able to flow unchecked into Vietnam. In December 1952, Việt Minh troops were strong enough to seize parts of Laos (see the map on page 130). To counter this threat France sent more reinforcements to Indo-China and appointed a new commander, General Henri Navarre. The French also received an increasing amount of US military and financial assistance.

## Diên Biên Phu

Navarre planned to eliminate the Việt Minh guerrillas in southern Vietnam and then launch a campaign to drive the Việt Minh from their stronghold in the Red River Delta in the north. The Việt Minh responded by advancing across north-western Vietnam into Laos. From there, with support of the **Pathet Lao**, they planned to move southwards into Cambodia and onwards to Saigon. To block this advance, France decided to fortify the strategically important village of Diên Biên Phu. A large force of French paratroopers was dropped and airstrips were constructed in November 1953. The Việt Minh, however, managed to surround French positions and, with anti-aircraft guns supplied by the PRC, prevented any further supplies from reaching Diên Biên Phu. By late April, French troops were confined to a small area of less than two square kilometres, and surrendered on 7 May 1954. The historian, Max Hastings, writing in 2018, calls Diên Biên Phu one of the 'great military epics of the twentieth century'.



**Figure 5.3** Map of Indo-China. What light does this map shed on the strategic problems facing the French in the Indo-Chinese War?



# The USA and the Indo-Chinese War

The USA faced a quandary in Vietnam: should it support anti-colonialism or anti-communism? One way out of this dilemma was to find a non-Communist rival to Hô who would be able to appeal to the people's nationalism and thus unite them against communism by setting up a strong, patriotic and capitalist government. For this to work, France would have to be pressured into granting a greater degree of independence to Vietnam while still continuing the war against the Việt Minh. In June 1949, the USA and France persuaded Bao Dai, who from 1925 to 1945 had been the Emperor of Vietnam – controlled first by France and then ultimately by Japan – to become head of state of a semi-independent Vietnam which would still be part of France's empire.

---

## SOURCE G



**Defeated French troops at Diên Biên Phu. A few managed to escape to Laos. Some 11,721 French and South Vietnamese troops were captured. Of these, only about 3300 were repatriated back to France in September 1954.**

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What information about the war in Vietnam is conveyed by [Source G](#) and for what audience is this photo intended?

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Bao Dai rapidly proved to be a failure. He had no programme, no ideology and little local support from the Vietnamese people; France gave him no real power. The USA found that as a consequence of its efforts to stop communism from spreading across South-East Asia, it was now supporting France in a colonial war that effectively prevented an oppressed nationality from gaining independence.

In April 1954, faced with the imminent fall of Diên Biên Phu, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles recommended air strikes on Việt Minh positions from US aircraft flown from carriers in the South China Sea. If that failed to halt the Việt Minh, he contemplated the use of tactical nuclear weapons and the landing of ground forces. These ideas were strongly opposed by Britain and the US military chiefs of staff and therefore abandoned. The US chiefs of staff advised that this should be considered only if Vietnam was invaded by the PRC, while the British government warned that US intervention would provoke full-scale PRC military retaliation in Vietnam.

## The Geneva Conference 1954

As early as September 1953, the USSR suggested calling an international conference to solve the Korean and Indo-Chinese problems. Both the PRC and the USSR were ready to compromise to end the Indo-Chinese War. Both wished to avoid an escalation of the conflict which US military involvement would bring. Both, too, wanted to focus on domestic policies. The USSR also hoped that, by being conciliatory to France, it could weaken French support for German rearmament and the European Defence Community (EDC) (see [page 81](#)).

In the autumn of 1953, however, France agreed in principle to the conference but still optimistically hoped that an eventual victory at Diên Biên Phu would strengthen its negotiating position. US Secretary of State John Dulles only reluctantly gave his assent as he feared that any compromise over Indo-China would result in Communist gains in South-East Asia. He was also quick to stress that the attendance of the PRC at the conference did not imply its recognition by the USA. At a press conference in early April, President Eisenhower used the term **domino principle** to illustrate his fears that if one country (in this case Indo-China) went Communist, its neighbours would follow.

## Compromise reached

The Geneva Conference started on 26 April 1954. The decisive defeat at Diên Biên Phu on 6 May finally persuaded France to reject outright US advice to continue fighting. The Việt Minh was also ready to compromise, having suffered heavy casualties at the battle for Diên Biên Phu from which it needed time to recover. The way to a compromise was now open.

At the end of June, Britain, France, the USSR and the PRC agreed that an independent Laos and Cambodia should be established and Vietnam partitioned at the 17th parallel (see [Figure 5.3](#), [page 130](#)). The US government did not oppose this, but refused formally to sign the final Geneva

Accords. It instead issued a declaration taking note of what had been decided and an undertaking not to undermine the settlement. The PRC and the USSR persuaded Hô to agree and to aim to unify Vietnam peacefully through future elections. Zhou Enlai, the premier of the PRC, stressed emphatically that 'It is possible to unite Vietnam through elections when [the] time is ripe' and warned Hô that force would only drive the South Vietnamese to the US side.

## The Geneva Accords

On 21 July, the agreements were signed:

- Laos and Cambodia were made independent.
- Vietnam was divided along the 17th parallel.
- French forces would withdraw from the north of this line and Việt Minh forces from the south.
- In two years' time there would be democratic elections for a united Vietnam.
- Neither North nor South Vietnam was to conclude military alliances with foreign powers, nor to allow foreign military bases on their territory.

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### SOURCE H

**From the reminiscences of General Giap (military commander of the Việt Minh) in 1964. Quoted in R.J. McMahon, editor, *Major Problems in the History of Vietnam*, D.C. Heath, 1990, pages 122–3.**

*The historic Diên Biên Phu campaign and in general the Winter 1953–Spring 1954 campaign were the greatest victories ever won by our army and people up to the present time. These great victories marked a giant progress, a momentous change in the education of the Resistance War for National Salvation put up by our people against the aggressive French imperialists propped up by U.S. interventionists. The great Diên Biên Phu victory and the Winter–Spring victories as a whole had a far reaching influence in the world.*

*While the bellicose [warlike] imperialists were confused and discouraged, the news of the victories won by our army and people on the battlefronts throughout the country, especially the Diên Biên Phu victory, have greatly inspired the progressive people the world over ... Diên Biên Phu was also a great victory of the forces of peace in the world. Without this victory, certainly the Geneva Conference would not be successful and peace would not be re-established in Indochina.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How reliable is the assessment in [Source H](#) of the significance of Diên Biên Phu?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source H](#) by completing Worksheet 18 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

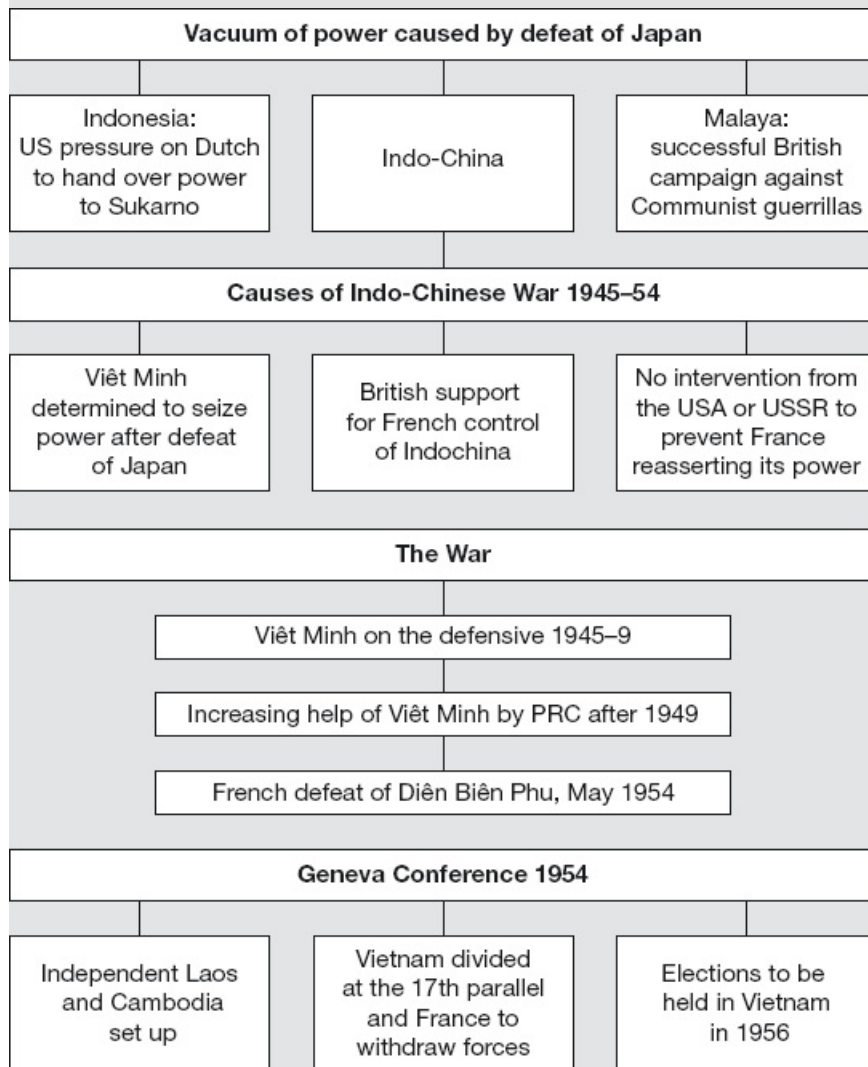
### AQA

Test your understanding of US policy in East Asia by completing Worksheet 19 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### SOUTH-EAST ASIA 1945–54



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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

In August 1945, the Soviets invaded Manchuria and northern Korea while US troops occupied Japan. The USA was unwilling to share the occupation of Japan with any other power, and over the next five years ensured that Japan recovered economically to become an important part of US global defence against communism.

The CCP's victory in 1949 altered the balance of power in Asia and led to PRC support for Communist movements in Korea and Indo-China. Despite the withdrawal of both Soviet and US troops in 1949, Korea remained partitioned between the Communist North and the anti-Communist nationalist South. In June 1950, North Korean troops, encouraged by Stalin, invaded the South. Their repulse led to the intervention of the PRC and continuation of the war until 1953. The war had a profound impact on Western Europe, paving the way for West German rearmament and eventually Western European economic integration. The PRC sent equipment and advisers to Indo-China, which helped to defeat France in 1954. At the Geneva Conference in 1954, Vietnam was partitioned into two states, while Cambodia and Laos gained independence. Elections for a united Vietnam were to be held in 1956. The USA did not sign the accords.

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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

What was US policy in Japan 1945–51?

What was the US attitude to the attempts by the European colonial powers to re-establish their power in South-East Asia?

Why were the USA and USSR unable to achieve a peaceful settlement in China 1945–6?

To what extent did Stalin support Mao?

Why was the Chinese Communist Party able to win the Civil War?

What was the significance of the Sino-Soviet Pact, 14 February 1950?

Why were there two Korean states by 1949?

To what extent did both Mao and Stalin support Kim's plans to invade South Korea?

Why could the Korean War not be ended until July 1953?

What was the impact of the Korean War on Europe?

To what extent did the Communist triumph in China impact on Indo-China?

To what extent did the Việt Minh achieve victory in the Indo-Chinese war of 1946–54?

Why was it possible to achieve a compromise at the Geneva Conference?

What was the attitude of the USA to the Geneva Conference of 1954?

To what extent did the domino principle define the attitude of the US to the Indo-Chinese War?

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## Question practice: AQA

### Essay question

'Successful US military intervention in Korea stabilised the situation in East and South-East Asia.' Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Difficult because the word 'successful' needs to be considered in relation to Korea and then to a huge area beyond Korea.

### Source analysis questions

With reference to [Sources A](#) (page [109](#)) and E (page [120](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining the causes of the Korean War. [AS level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and assess the provenance of each source. For high marks the comparison is important: either during the answer or in a detailed paragraph at the end.

With reference to [Sources A](#) (page [109](#)), E (page [120](#)) and H (page [133](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the Cold War in Asia 1945–63. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn. Do not try to reach a comparative judgement, just a judgement on each one in turn.

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## CHAPTER 6



# The Khrushchev era and the 'Second Cold War' 1956–62

This chapter covers the eventful period when the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, was trying to consolidate the USSR's grip on Eastern Europe, while also attempting to 'de-Stalinise', or liberalise, conditions within it. It focuses on the following interlinked events and their impact on East–West relations:

- The year of crises: 1956
- The aftermath of the Hungarian and Suez Crises
- The Berlin Crisis 1958–61
- The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962
- Assessment: the 'Second Cold War'

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## KEY DATES

1956	Feb. 25	Khrushchev attacked Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress
	June	Riots in Poland
	Nov. 4	Hungarian Rising defeated
1957	March 25	Treaty of Rome signed
1958	Nov. 27	Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum
1959	Jan.	Castro seized power in Cuba
1960	May 1	US U-2 spy plane shot down over USSR
	May 16–17	Paris Summit broke down
1961	Aug. 13	Frontier between East and West Berlin closed
1962	Sept. 13	USA warned USSR on installation of missiles in Cuba
	Oct.–Nov.	Cuban Missile Crisis

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## 1 The year of crises: 1956

### *Why did de-Stalinisation cause serious crises within the Soviet bloc?*

The year 1956 was a pivotal year in the Cold War. In October, Soviet global ambitions, the political consequences of the 'thaw' in Eastern Europe and Egyptian nationalism in the Middle East led to a complex series of interlocking crises, all of which had the potential to cause a world war.

Initially, it seemed that the USSR would continue with the policy of *détente* and liberalisation, but in the autumn Soviet leaders were confronted with the dilemma that would recur several times before the end of the Cold War: how far could they afford to relax Soviet control over



Eastern Europe? If concessions led to demands for ever-greater political freedom, at what point would Soviet troops intervene to maintain control?

It was also in 1956 that the foreign policy of the USSR became more global. Stalin had shown little interest in the **developing world**. The new Soviet leadership, however, was more anxious to gain influence in the former colonies, which had now become independent of their European rulers. Khrushchev realised that the USSR could exploit anti-colonialism to weaken the West. In December 1955, during a tour of India, Burma and Afghanistan, he had stressed Soviet willingness to cooperate with the developing world. He lost no opportunity to repeat, as Lenin had done before him (see page 12), that their main enemy was colonialism and imperialism. However, although the newly independent countries of the developing world were still suspicious of, if not hostile to their former colonial masters in Europe, they were not willing to become involved in the Cold War. They would accept military and financial assistance from the USSR but rejected any form of Soviet control.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of Khrushchev by completing Worksheet 21 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SOURCE A

**In April 1955 the five independent states in Asia organised a conference in Bandung in Indonesia, to which the leaders of independence movements in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere were invited. The following is an extract from a description of the opening of the conference by Richard Wright, an African American writer and former Communist. Quoted in Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, page 99.**

*... In the early and difficult days of the Russian revolution, Lenin had dreamt of a gathering like this, a conglomeration of the world's underdogs, coming to the aid of the hard pressed Soviets ... [But] from a strict Stalinist point of view, such a gathering as this was unthinkable, for it was evident that the Communists had no control here ... Every religion under the sun, almost every race on earth, every shade of political opinion, and one and half thousand million people from 12,606,938 miles of the earth's surface were represented here.*

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does **Source A** help to explain both Soviet interest in the newly independent states and the determination of these states to remain independent of the Cold War?

---

## De-Stalinisation

**De-Stalinisation** had a big impact on the relations between the USSR and its satellite states. It

appeared to promise a return to the policy of ‘different roads to socialism’, which Stalin briefly tolerated between 1945 and 1947 (see page 22). The pace of de-Stalinisation accelerated after the fall of Beria (see page 96). His secret police network, which had spies throughout Eastern Europe, was dissolved, and politicians such as Gomułka in Poland and Kadar in Hungary were released from prison and returned to public life. This raised expectations in the satellite states that they would be given more independence from Moscow.

## Khrushchev’s speech at the Twentieth Party Conference

A further wave of de-Stalinisation followed after Khrushchev’s famous speech at the Twentieth Party Conference in February 1956, denouncing Stalin and recognising the rights of the satellite states to find their ‘national ways to socialism’. Although the speech was supposed to be secret, the US security service, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), acquired a copy and ensured that it was broadcast to Eastern Europe. By raising hopes of political change, this contributed to the unrest in Poland and Hungary later in the year.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of Khrushchev by completing Worksheet 16 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Improvement in Yugoslavia–Soviet relations

Expectations of reform were further increased by the improvement in relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia, which was ‘readmitted’ to the Socialist bloc after Khrushchev and Bulganin had visited Belgrade in May 1955. The blame for the break in 1948 was attributed fairly and squarely to Stalin (see page 88). Khrushchev was, of course, primarily interested in bringing back Yugoslavia into the Soviet sphere of influence, while Tito, the Yugoslav leader, ambitiously believed that, as a result of his experience in defying Stalin, he was a role model for the new generation of Soviet leaders and would now become a leading figure in the Soviet bloc. In June 1956, after talks in Moscow, Khrushchev and Tito issued a communiqué in which they agreed that ‘the path of socialist development differs in various countries and conditions, that the multiplicity of forms of socialist development tends to strengthen socialism and that any tendency of imposing one’s opinions on the ways and forms of socialist development is alien to both’. This was an optimistic doctrine assuming that the satellite states wished to remain within the Soviet bloc. What would happen, however, if one or more of these states decided to take a controversial road to socialism, with which the USSR did not agree? Would it intervene militarily or run the risk of seeing the Soviet bloc disintegrate?

## The Polish Crisis, June to October 1956

The limits to this doctrine of allowing the Eastern European states to develop socialism in their own way were tested first of all in Poland in the autumn of 1956. At the end of June riots broke

out in Poznań when the local factory workers protested about the imposition of increased work targets. The riots were quelled with heavy casualties, but to overcome the bitterness this caused, the Polish Communist Party turned again to its popular former leader, Gomułka, who had just been released from prison (see page 57). The Soviet government, fearing that he would seek to restore Polish independence, sent a high-powered delegation to Warsaw on 19–20 October, and ordered the Red Army units stationed in Poland to advance on the city in an attempt to stop his election. Gomułka refused to be cowed and his election went ahead.

Faced with the prospect of having to fight the Poles at a time when the situation in Hungary was rapidly deteriorating (see page 140), Khrushchev wisely withdrew the troops and chose to believe Gomułka's assurances that Poland would remain a loyal member of the Warsaw Pact. As the Soviet leader was to observe, 'finding a reason for an armed conflict now would be very easy, but finding a way to put an end to such a conflict would be very hard'.

---

#### SOURCE B

**From Khrushchev's comments to the Central Committee of the USSR on the political situation in Poland and Hungary, 24 October 1956. Quoted in 'Hungary and Poland, 1956: Khrushchev's CPSU CC Presidium Meeting on East European Crises, 24 October, 1956', translated by Mark Kramer, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, issue 5, 1995.**

*The discussions between the delegations ranged from being very warm to rude. Gomułka several times emphasized that they would not permit their independence to be taken away and would not allow anyone to interfere in Poland's internal affairs. He said that if he were leader of the country he would restore order very promptly.*

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source B](#) help to explain why the USSR managed to keep Poland in the Soviet bloc?

---

## The Hungarian Rising, 29 October to 4 November

Just as the worst of the Polish Crisis was over, the USSR was faced in Hungary with the most serious challenge to its power since the Second World War. As part of his de-Stalinisation campaign, Khrushchev had, with Tito's backing, put pressure on the Hungarian Communist Party in July to replace its old-style Stalinist leader, Mátyás Rákosi, with the more liberal Ernő Gerő. Tito had considerable ambitions in Hungary, as he hoped that an independent Communist regime would emerge in Budapest that would look to Belgrade rather than Moscow and so strengthen his overall influence within the Soviet bloc.

### The appointment of Imre Nagy

In the early autumn the pressures for further change, which Tito encouraged, continued to grow. A turning point was reached on 23 October 1956 when a large demonstration in Budapest, called in support of the Polish reformers, escalated out of control. Protestors demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops and a new government under **Imre Nagy**, an independent-minded Communist who advocated reforms similar to those Tito had introduced in Yugoslavia (see page **89**). They attacked the state radio station. In an attempt to avert further violence, Gerö gave way and appointed Nagy as prime minister.

In response to these demonstrations, the USSR mobilised 30,000 troops backed with tanks and artillery. Khrushchev, however, tried to reconcile his pledges to concede greater independence to the satellite states with Soviet security needs. On 30 October, he issued the 'Declaration on the Principles of Development and a Further Strengthening of Friendship and Co-operation between the USSR and other Socialist Countries'. This attempted to provide a **legal and mutually agreed framework** for Soviet military bases in Eastern Europe. This did not, however, stop Nagy from threatening the basis of Soviet power in Eastern Europe by announcing his intention to withdraw Hungary from the Warsaw Pact. If this happened, Hungary would effectively become independent of the USSR, and Poland, and the other satellite states would most likely follow.

Heavy fighting between the Hungarians and Soviet troops erupted in the countryside in north-west Hungary and, by 28 October, the rebels were in control of most of Hungary outside Budapest.

## US policy

The USA's Radio Free Europe, a radio station sponsored by the US government to broadcast anti-Soviet and pro-US propaganda, encouraged Hungarians to revolt. They were led to believe that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) would intervene to provide protection from the USSR, although that was in reality highly unlikely. US President Eisenhower, fearing that the USSR might be willing to risk nuclear war rather than lose Hungary, made it absolutely clear to the Soviet leaders that NATO would not intervene to save Nagy. He instructed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to announce publicly on 27 October 1956 that the 'US had no ulterior purpose in desiring the independence of the satellite countries' and would not 'look upon these nations as potential military allies'.

## The Suez Crisis: the background

Soviet policy during the Hungarian Rising cannot be fully understood without also looking at the Suez Crisis.

Colonel **Nasser**, who became president of Egypt in 1954, embodied the new independent anti-colonialist spirit of the Bandung Conference. His main aims were to force the European colonial powers out of the Middle East and North Africa, and to gain complete control of the **Suez Canal**. Nasser also wanted to build the Aswan High Dam to improve irrigation in the Nile valley and develop hydroelectric power. To achieve these aims he needed both financial and military help. He rejected a US offer to supply weapons because this would involve the dispatch of US military personnel to supervise and effectively control their use. Instead he turned to the USSR. Khrushchev agreed to supply the necessary military equipment through Czechoslovakian channels, primarily to strengthen the USSR's influence in the Arab world, because Britain

together with US support had formed the **Baghdad Pact** in 1955 to protect the Middle East from a Soviet attack.

Alarmed by the arms deal, Britain and the USA together with the **World Bank** sought to improve relations with Egypt by offering in December 1955 to raise \$270 million towards building the Aswan High Dam. Egypt also explored Soviet offers to build the dam more cheaply on the grounds that the financial guarantees demanded by the World Bank from Egypt amounted to control of the Egyptian economy. When Britain and the USA learned that Nasser had approached the USSR for loans, they cancelled their offer. Dulles was convinced that in the end the USSR would be unable to finance the construction of the dam and that a disillusioned Nasser would turn again to the USA. Nasser now had no option but to accept the Soviet offer, but he also **nationalised** the Suez Canal, which was owned by an Anglo-French company, so that he could get further revenue from the tolls that the ships had to pay when using the canal.

## Anglo-French collusion with Israel

Nationalisation of the Suez Canal gave Britain, France and Israel an excuse to topple Nasser. All three states wanted to remove him from power. For the British and French, he was a determined enemy of their remaining colonial influence in North Africa and the Middle East. For the Israelis, Nasser represented a dangerous threat as he was intent on ending what he saw as the 'European **Zionist** occupation of Palestine'; that is, the new state of Israel. Egypt was also the main base from which terrorist attacks on Israel were launched.

On 16 October 1956, Britain, France and Israel created a joint plan for invading Egypt:

- Israeli troops would invade Egypt through the Sinai peninsula and advance towards the Canal.
- Britain and France would intervene in the conflict between Israel and Egypt by sending a force of 80,000 troops to protect the Canal, using the 1954 Anglo-Egyptian Agreement to justify their action.

When Israel attacked on 29 October, Britain and France immediately demanded withdrawal of both the Israeli and Egyptian forces from the Canal, although Egypt had not been the aggressor and had lost control of most of the Sinai peninsula. When Nasser refused, British planes bombed Egypt's airfields on 31 October.

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### SOURCE C



**Russian officers in Budapest, November 1956, advance threateningly towards a Western photographer.**

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source C](#) symbolise Soviet policy in Hungary in November 1956?

---

## The Suez Crisis and Hungary

Khrushchev was convinced that Nasser would be quickly removed and that Soviet influence in the Middle East would suffer a disastrous blow. If this was combined with further setbacks in Hungary, Soviet power and prestige might never recover. He therefore decided on military intervention in Hungary. On 4 November, Soviet troops advanced into Hungary and, after a few days of fierce fighting, a new government loyal to the USSR under János Kádár was installed.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Develop your analysis of Soviet intervention in Hungary by completing Worksheet 17 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## US intervention

Much to Khrushchev's surprise, Nasser was saved by the Americans, who viewed the Suez War as an attempt by Britain and France to prop up their disintegrating empires in the Middle East and Africa. The British had assumed they would get US support, but Eisenhower, in the middle of an election campaign, refused to give this. Not only did the Americans condemn the attack in the United Nations (UN), but they also refused a loan to Britain. Through massive diplomatic and financial pressure on London and Paris, Eisenhower managed to halt the fighting on 6 November, just at the point where the British and French troops were near to capturing the whole length of the Suez Canal.

The main reason why the USA had halted the Suez conflict was that it was determined to prevent Soviet attempts to increase their influence among Arab nationalists, and to avoid criticism of their lack of intervention in Hungary. Khrushchev had already proposed a joint USA–USSR peacekeeping operation along the Suez Canal under control of the UN and threatened to send troops to enforce the peace even if the USA did not participate. Dulles and Eisenhower, therefore, felt that the USA had to choose between supporting Anglo-French colonialism and aligning with Arab nationalism. By choosing the latter they believed that the USA would be able to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East and the Developing World more effectively.

## The Soviet missile threat

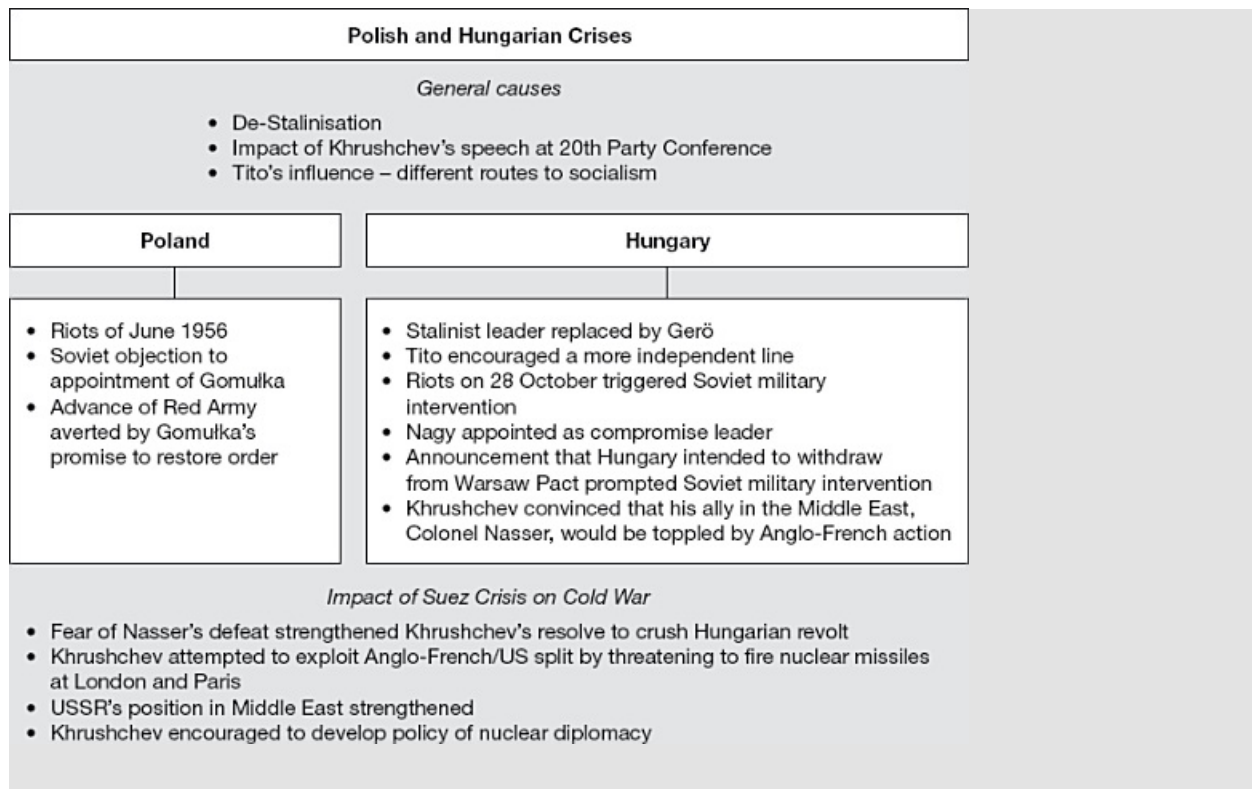
Khrushchev cleverly exploited this split in the Western alliance and on 5 November threatened nuclear missile attacks on Britain, France and Israel if they did not stop the war. Although it was known at the time by **Western intelligence** that the USSR did not yet possess the rockets to propel such missiles, the ceasefire on the following day made it look as if it was the Soviet ultimatum rather than US financial pressure that had saved Egypt. Khrushchev himself was thus able to take the credit in the Middle East and the communist world for having defeated the British and French 'imperialists'.

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### THE YEAR OF CRISES: 1956





## 2 The aftermath of the Hungarian and Suez Crises

***What were the consequences of the 1956 crises for the Soviet and Western blocs?***

The Hungarian and Suez Crises were turning points in the Cold War:

- The USSR was increasingly ready to exploit **nuclear diplomacy** to achieve its aims.
- The limits to the liberalisation of the Soviet bloc were brutally shown in Hungary.
- The USA's abrupt termination of the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt and refusal to intervene in Hungary caused growing doubts about the USA's support for NATO amongst its European allies, and led to increasingly assertive policies by France.
- The influence of Britain and France was greatly diminished in the Middle East, and both the USA and the USSR struggled to fill the subsequent political vacuum.

### The Soviet bloc

The Polish and Hungarian Crises had shown how difficult it was for the Soviet government to encourage the satellite states to reform without creating a demand for their transformation into genuine democratic regimes. They also highlighted the problems the Soviet bloc had in the post-Stalinist era in agreeing on common policies, as there was no framework for regular



consultations.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Get to grips with de-Stalinisation by completing Worksheet 18 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Moscow conference of international Communist leaders

Khrushchev addressed himself to this problem at the conference attended by the international Communist leaders at Moscow in October 1957. The conference passed a motion, which, although opposed by the Poles and the Yugoslavs, recognised the USSR as ‘the first and mightiest’ of the socialist countries, while still acknowledging the legitimacy of the principle of ‘different roads to socialism’. It also made very clear that a communist leader under pressure could appeal to the Soviet bloc for ‘mutual aid’, which in effect meant military assistance to counter any major disturbances. An element of diversity was still tolerated and considerable economic help was given to the satellite states by the USSR, but it was understood that they must in all essentials stick to the Soviet political and economic model. Almost inevitably, this doctrine led to a fresh break with Tito, who now joined with India and Egypt to form the **non-aligned movement** of neutral states.

## Khrushchev's position strengthened

One of the important legacies of the Hungarian and Suez Crises was that Khrushchev's position was greatly strengthened in the USSR. Dulles, the US secretary of state, had perceptively warned that he was ‘the most dangerous person to lead the Soviet Union since the **October Revolution**’. Dulles felt that, whereas Stalin attempted to calculate carefully the consequences of his actions, Khrushchev was prepared to take dangerous risks to achieve his ends.

After his propaganda success in the Suez Crisis, Khrushchev was convinced that the mere threat of nuclear weapons would enable him to force the West to make concessions in Berlin and elsewhere. His policy of nuclear diplomacy gained more credibility when the USSR launched the world's first **intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** in August 1957, and followed it up by sending a satellite, the *Sputnik*, into orbit in October. As the historian John Lewis Gaddis, writing in 1997, observed, ‘[This] brought the Cold War, quite literally, close to home. One needed no Geiger counter to measure this new manifestation of potential nuclear danger. All that was necessary was to look up, on a clear night, to see the sunlight reflecting off the spent rocket casing as it tumbled slowly in orbit, right over one's own house.’ The USSR followed up this success by putting the astronaut Yuri Gagarin into space in April 1961, a few weeks ahead of the USA's Alan Shepard.

Although the overall military balance still favoured the West, Khrushchev deliberately exaggerated the extent of the Soviet successes in order, as he wrote in his memoirs, ‘to exert pressure on American militarists – and also influence the minds of more reasonable politicians – so that the United States would start treating us better’. In fact, it was not until 1960 that the USSR had four ICBMs equipped with nuclear warheads (see page 152). Meanwhile, the USA

was developing **Polaris submarines**. By 1962, eight of these were at sea and were able to fire 144 nuclear missiles.

## US–Soviet rivalry in the Middle East

The decline of British and French power in the Middle East, which was accelerated by the Suez Crisis of 1956, created a political vacuum which the USA and USSR competed to fill:

- The USSR attempted to weaken the Baghdad Pact (see page 141) by increasing arms supplies to Egypt and Syria in the summer of 1957. It welcomed the proclamation of the anti-Western Iraq Republic in 1958 and the creation of a federal union between Egypt and Syria – the United Arab Republic.
- President Eisenhower responded by gaining approval from Congress for a policy which became known as the ‘Eisenhower Doctrine’ by which the USA undertook to protect the territories and independence of any state in the Middle East threatened by Communist aggression. This could involve financial and military aid as well as ‘direct employment of the armed forces of the United States’.

In July 1958, the Eisenhower Doctrine was acted on when the Iraqi army mutinied, killed both the king and crown prince as well as the pro-Western prime minister, and proclaimed a republic that looked to Nasser for support. Both the pro-Western regimes in the Lebanon and Jordan now felt threatened and asked Britain and the USA for immediate assistance. The USA sent 14,000 troops to the Lebanon, and Britain 2200 paratroopers to Jordan. These forces stabilised the situation and were rapidly withdrawn.

Essentially, both Iraq and the new United Arab Republic remained firmly non-aligned in the Cold War. Nasser’s main enemies were still Britain and France, and above all Israel. The USSR was able to supply arms to Iraq and the United Arab Republic, but gained little real political influence there as both fiercely asserted their independence.

## NATO

What were the consequences of the 1956 crises for the Western bloc? The immediate damage done to NATO by the Suez Crisis was quickly repaired, as was the Anglo-American special relationship; yet in continental Western Europe as a whole, a certain distrust of US policies lingered. Once the Soviets were in a position to threaten the US east coast cities with their new ICBMs, the European leaders wondered whether the Americans would still defend Western Europe from a possible Soviet attack. Rather than see New York and Washington destroyed, would they not do a deal with the Soviets and surrender Western Europe or at least West Germany?

These fears were strengthened by several contemporary developments. The Americans and British were reducing their **conventional forces** in Europe and equipping those that remained with **tactical nuclear weapons**. In October 1957, Adam Rapacki, the Polish foreign minister, also put forward plans for a **nuclear-free zone** in central Europe, which Adenauer, the chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), believed was a ‘Russian trap’ leading to the reunification of a neutralised Germany. Adenauer feared that a neutral, united Germany could

easily be overrun by the USSR. Not surprisingly, therefore, Adenauer became more responsive to French plans in early 1958 for developing a French–German–Italian nuclear bomb that would be independent of the British and Americans.

Doubts about the USA's loyalty to its European allies also influenced Adenauer's thinking about the future of the new European Economic Community (EEC), and his attitude to General de Gaulle, who returned to power in France in May 1958. The two statesmen had very different plans for its future. Adenauer wanted it to develop into a closely integrated community linked to the USA, while de Gaulle hoped that it would become an association of independent states, completely free from US influence, and under French leadership. If, however, the Americans decided to pull out of Europe or sacrifice West Berlin to the USSR, de Gaulle's vision of Europe was the only alternative Adenauer could fall back on.

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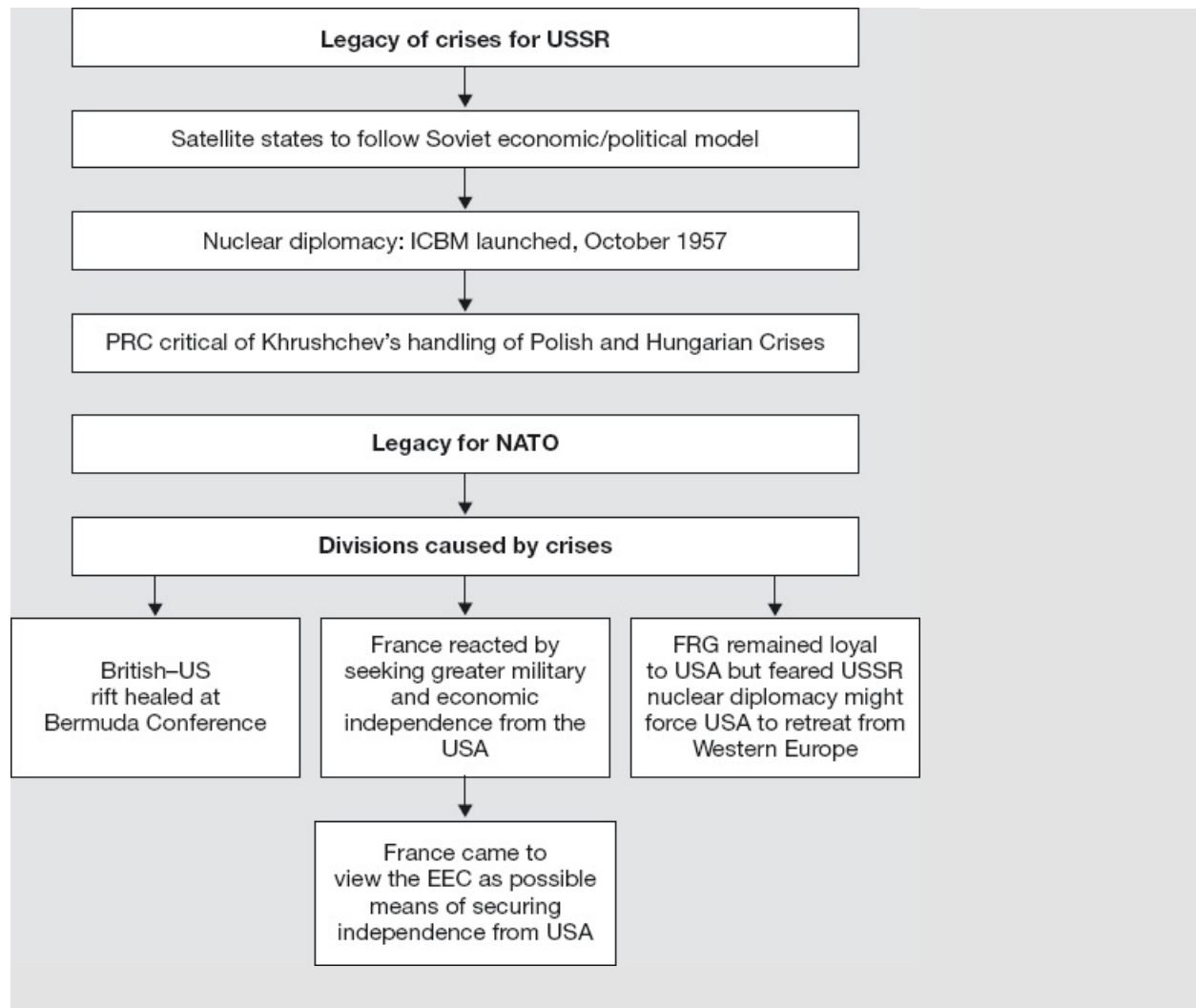
## The EEC and EFTA

The European Economic Community (EEC) was set up by the Treaty of Rome, which was signed with general US approval by the FRG, France, Italy and the Benelux states in March 1957. Its aim was to create a common market or customs union within twelve years, while also gradually forming a more integrated political structure. British plans for setting up a much larger free trade zone were turned down by the leaders of the six powers on the grounds that they would not provide an effective basis for European economic and political cooperation. This led to Britain forming the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960 with Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Portugal. Thus, a major economic split in Western Europe developed just at the time that it was about to face renewed pressure from the Soviet bloc.

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### THE AFTERMATH OF THE HUNGARIAN AND SUEZ CRISES



### 3 The Berlin Crisis 1958–61

#### *What was Khrushchev intending to achieve by triggering a crisis over Berlin?*

In the autumn of 1956, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had acted, in contrast to Poland and Hungary, as a loyal ally of the USSR. Yet the GDR, despite joining the Warsaw Pact in 1956 (see page 97), remained a fragile and artificial state, totally dependent on Moscow and on the presence of twenty divisions of Soviet troops stationed within its frontiers. It was confronted by a prosperous West Germany, the miraculous economic recovery of which inevitably attracted many of its youngest and most ambitious citizens.

Through the open frontier in Berlin it was still possible to escape from the drab life of socialist planning and rationing to the bright lights of the FRG, and both Adenauer and the USA did everything to encourage this. Between 1945 and 1961, about one-sixth of the whole East German population had fled westwards. One way of stopping this exodus was dramatically to improve the standard of living in the GDR, but to achieve this it was essential to stop skilled workers and professionals fleeing in large numbers to the FRG. This meant that something had to be done

about the status of West Berlin.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of the USSR and Germany by completing Worksheet 22 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Khrushchev's aims

By the autumn of 1958, Khrushchev was increasingly confident that the USSR could force the USA into making concessions over West Berlin, and indeed perhaps over the whole German question. By grossly exaggerating the extent of Soviet nuclear power and by putting pressure on West Berlin, he was sure that he could force concessions from the Western allies without the risk of war. He graphically observed: 'Berlin is the testicles of the West ... every time I want to make the West scream I squeeze on Berlin.' Also, as the Chinese Communist leaders pointed out, if the GDR could not be turned into a viable state able to hold its own with the FRG, the whole prestige of international communism was at stake.

Apart from strengthening the GDR, what other aims had Khrushchev in mind? He also hoped to:

- stop or at least delay the decision by NATO in December 1956 to equip 26 divisions, including twelve West German, in the FRG with tactical nuclear weapons
- show his critics within the USSR and China that he was not 'soft on the imperialists'
- divide the Western powers
- force the Western powers to accept the USSR as a political and military equal and to come to the conference table to draw up a German peace treaty. This would involve the Western powers' withdrawal from Berlin and their recognition of the division of Germany and of the GDR's post-war frontiers with Poland.

In the words of a US historian, Hope Harrison, writing in 2003, 'Khrushchev always saw and used West Berlin ... as a lever to compel the West to recognize the post-war *status quo* and the existence of East Germany.'

## The Berlin ultimatum, November 1958

The long and dangerous crisis began on 10 November when Khrushchev called for a peace treaty with the two German states ([Source D](#), page 150).

On 27 November, Khrushchev followed this up with a six-month ultimatum demanding the demilitarisation of West Berlin, the withdrawal of Western troops and its change of status into a **free city**. If the Western allies refused to sign a peace treaty with the two German states, Khrushchev threatened to conclude a peace agreement just with the GDR and to recognise its sovereignty over East Berlin. This would then enable it to control access to West Berlin and interfere at will with traffic using the **land corridors** from the FRG. The Western allies would thus be compelled to deal with GDR rather than Russian officials and so in effect recognise the

sovereignty of the GDR, which would shatter the Hallstein Doctrine (see page 98). He was, however, as will be seen, to have second thoughts about putting quite so much power into the hands of Walter Ulbricht, the leader of the GDR.

---

#### SOURCE D

**From Khrushchev's speech of 10 November 1958. Quoted in Roger Morgan, *The Unsettled Peace*, BBC Books, 1974, page 78.**

*Is it not time for us to draw appropriate conclusions from the fact that the key items of the Potsdam Agreement concerning the maintenance of peace in Europe and consequently throughout the world, have been violated, and that certain forces continue to nurture German militarism, prompting it in the direction in which it was pushed before the Second World War, that is against the East?*

*The time has obviously arrived for the signatories of the Potsdam Agreement to renounce the remnants of the occupation regime in Berlin, and thereby make it possible to create a normal situation in the capital of the German Democratic Republic. The Soviet Union, for its part, would hand over to the sovereign German Democratic Republic the functions in Berlin that are still exercised by Soviet agencies. This, I think, would be the correct thing to do.*

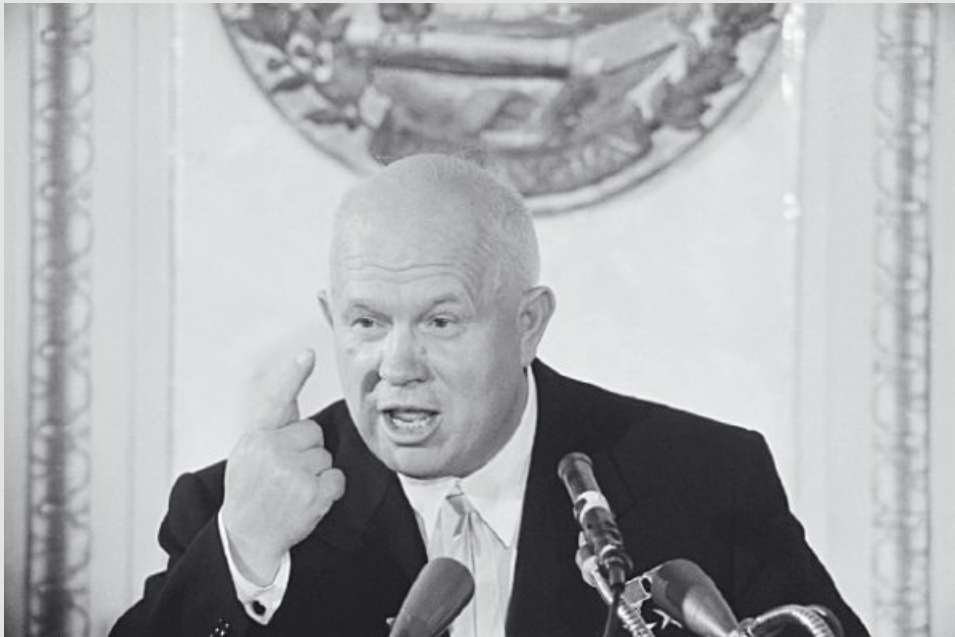
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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source D](#) help to explain the causes of the Berlin Crisis of 1958–61?

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#### SOURCE E



**Khrushchev wagging his finger to make a point. Khrushchev's speeches at summit conferences and the UN during the long Berlin Crisis were both**

threatening and aggressive.

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What is the value of [Source E](#) to a historian studying Khrushchev's role in the Berlin Crisis?

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## The Western reaction 1959–60

Although the Western allies rejected the ultimatum, Khrushchev was successful in forcing them to the conference table to discuss the 'German question'. In February 1959, they agreed that a foreign ministers' conference should meet in Geneva in the summer. Khrushchev was also delighted to see splits beginning to appear in the Western alliance. In the preceding months, Adenauer viewed with increasing concern statements from London and Washington signalling a desire for compromise and concession, and inevitably drew closer to de Gaulle, who urged a much tougher line against the Soviets. Adenauer was particularly alarmed by the decision of British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan to visit Moscow in February and by Eisenhower's invitation to Khrushchev to visit the USA in the coming autumn.

## The Geneva Conference, May to August 1959

At the Geneva Conference both sides put forward proposals for German unity, but no agreement was secured. The Western powers came up with their usual demand for free elections, while the USSR suggested that the two Germanys should form a **confederation**, which would only very slowly evolve into a united state. However, as the Soviets did succeed in persuading the West to discuss the Berlin problem as a separate issue, Khrushchev believed that his threats were paying off, and he continued the pressure, renewing the ultimatum in June.

## Summit meetings, September 1959 to May 1960

Why was so little progress made in solving the Berlin Crisis in 1959–60? Between 1959 and 1961 there were more summits than at any time since the Second World War. When Khrushchev visited Eisenhower at Camp David, the holiday residence of US presidents, in September 1959, the mood was friendly but, to quote the US historian John Lewis Gaddis, writing in 1997, the two leaders 'got no further than an agreement to disagree'. Over the next two years, Khrushchev alternated periods of *détente*, when he temporarily allowed the ultimatum to lapse again, with spells of activating acute crisis during which further threats were devised, to force the West into making concessions over the status of Berlin and the future of Germany.

Khrushchev's actions were not without success. Behind the scenes in London and Washington, and at times even in Paris, various schemes for creating a nuclear-free zone in central Europe, recognising Poland's western frontiers (see page [40](#)) and the GDR, were considered. Adenauer, meanwhile, was desperate to stop any of these plans from reducing the FRG to a neutral second-rate state, but by May 1960, when the Paris Summit was due to open, he had no idea what Eisenhower and Macmillan might be about to propose. Thus, for him at least, it was 'a gift from heaven', as the German historian Klessmann in 1988 has called it, when Khrushchev used the



shooting down of a US spy plane over the USSR as an excuse to cancel the summit, and wait until a new US president was elected in the autumn.

---

## John F. Kennedy



<b>1917</b>	Born into a wealthy Irish American family in Massachusetts
<b>1940–3</b>	Served in the US navy; his boat was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer
<b>1953</b>	Elected to the Senate as a Democrat
<b>1960</b>	Won presidential elections by a narrow margin and became the first Roman Catholic president in the USA's history
<b>1961</b>	Allowed a disastrous invasion of Cuba by exiles – the Bay of Pigs incident Met Khrushchev in Vienna and was told that the USA was on the 'wrong side of history' Indicated that the USA would protect West Berlin by force if necessary
<b>1962</b>	Successfully brought the Cuban Missile Crisis to an end
<b>1963</b>	Assassinated in Dallas, Texas

### Early career

Kennedy's father was US ambassador in London. John Kennedy served during the war in the US navy. He sat as a Democrat in the US House of Representatives, 1947–53 and then was a senator until his election in 1960 as president.

### Presidency

As a result of his comparative youth and charm, Kennedy seemed initially to be a breath of fresh air in Washington. However, his period of office was marked by acute Cold War tension in both Berlin and Cuba. After he met Khrushchev for the first time in Vienna in June 1961, Kennedy remarked: 'He just beat the hell out of me. I've got a terrible problem. If he thinks I'm inexperienced and have no guts, until we remove those ideas, we won't get anywhere with him.' Kennedy was worried about the USA losing the Cold War and feared that the USSR was in a strong position to gain support

in the developing world. Consequently, he built up the US armed forces and was determined that the USA should send a man to the moon by 1970.

In the Cuban Missile Crisis, historians have traditionally seen him as a hardliner, who in the last resort was ready to risk war, but, in fact, secret tape recordings of his key advisory body, which were taken with the permission of Kennedy during the crisis, show that he took the lead in pressing for a compromise.

Kennedy was assassinated on 22 November 1963 in Dallas.

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## U-2 spy planes and the arms race

In 1956, the US air force bought 53 Lockheed U-2 spy planes. Based in Japan, Turkey and Britain, they were able to fly over Soviet territory and photograph military bases, missile factories and launch pads. By 1961, Soviet technology had caught up with the U-2s, and on 1 May a Soviet anti-aircraft missile shot down a plane that had been sent to see whether there were missile bases in the Urals. Nevertheless, these flights established that, for all Khrushchev's boasting, the Soviets possessed in the spring of 1961 very few ICBMs and no launching platforms for them. Indeed, the USSR had only four ICBMs, which were based on a site near Archangel.

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## The construction of the Berlin Wall

Khrushchev's hopes that the new US president, John F. Kennedy, would make the concessions that Eisenhower had refused proved unrealistic. However, Kennedy's response to Soviet threats to West Berlin hinted at a possible solution to the Berlin problem.

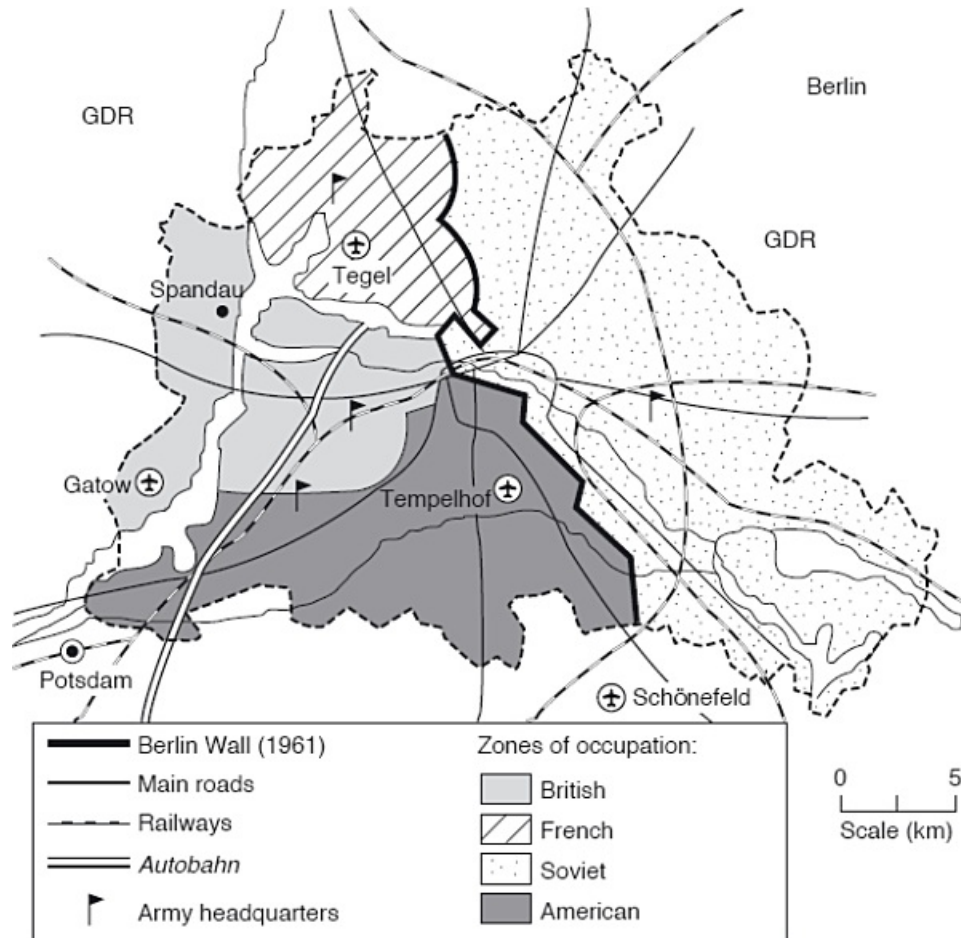
### President Kennedy and Berlin

While Kennedy dramatically increased US forces in Europe, he also urged negotiation on the German question and pointedly stressed in a television broadcast on 25 July 1961 (see [Source G](#), page 155) that the USA was essentially interested in defending free access to West Berlin from the FRG, rather than maintaining the existing status of Berlin as a whole. He was, in fact, indicating that the USA and NATO would fight to preserve the freedom of West Berlin, but would not intervene to stop the GDR from closing the frontier between East and West Berlin.

Until the autumn of 1960, Khrushchev determined the course of the Berlin Crisis. Ulbricht, who certainly stood to benefit from a successful outcome, was little more than a spectator. Khrushchev still hoped to use Berlin as a means to solve the German problem as a whole, and despite his bluster, acted cautiously. However, in desperation, as the numbers of refugees to the West dramatically increased during the years 1960–1, Ulbricht pressed Khrushchev to sign a separate peace treaty with the GDR, at one juncture sarcastically observing: 'You only talk about a peace treaty, but don't do anything about it.'

In the end, Khrushchev was compelled to act by the growing economic crisis in the GDR. In April 1960, the remaining independent farmers were forced into collective farms. The immediate

economic impact of this was disastrous: crop yields plummeted and within months there were serious shortages of bread, butter and meat. This led to an ever-increasing number of people fleeing to West Germany. In 1960, 199,000 fled and in the six months up to June 1961, a further 103,000. There was also widespread unrest in factories.



**Figure 6.1** Divided Berlin. To what extent does this map of Berlin, August 1961–November 1989, explain why the GDR was so anxious to construct the Berlin Wall?’

**SOURCE F**



**Building the Berlin Wall, August 1961.**

---

? **SOURCE QUESTION**

What information is conveyed by [Source F](#) about the construction of the Berlin Wall?

---

Around the beginning of August, Khrushchev decided that the border between East and West Berlin would be closed. This decision was confirmed at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact states in Moscow on 3–5 August 1961, and in the early morning of 13 August the operation was efficiently and swiftly carried out. The border was sealed with barbed wire, and when no Western countermeasures followed, a more permanent concrete wall was built soon afterwards.

## Significance of the Berlin Wall

The first Berlin Crisis had ended in complete failure for Stalin (see page [74](#)). Like Stalin, Khrushchev failed to force the Western allies to withdraw troops from West Berlin or to compel them to negotiate peace treaties with the two German states. On the other hand, with the construction of the Berlin Wall, he achieved a limited but important success for Soviet policies. The existence of the GDR was now assured, and ultimately the FRG would be forced to drop the Hallstein Doctrine and recognise its independence. By tolerating it, the Western powers, in effect, recognised East Germany. As the historian Hermann Weber observed in 1988, East German Communists were to look back on 13 August 1961 as ‘the secret foundation day of the GDR’. With the Berlin Wall in place, the people of East Germany had no option but to remain in the GDR. This enabled Ulbricht to develop what he called the New Economic System, which

was eventually supposed to revolutionise the GDR's economy and gain enthusiastic acceptance for socialism by giving more independence to management and linking workers' wages to productivity.

## Learning to live with the Berlin Wall 1961–3

The prolonged crisis over Berlin effectively ended with the Wall, although this was not immediately obvious at the time. The Soviet Union renewed nuclear testing and, on 30 October 1961, exploded an enormous bomb of over 50 megatons, which it was calculated could destroy an area considerably larger than Wales. There was also continued tension along the Wall in Berlin. US troops were ostentatiously practising tearing down simulated walls, while on 27 October, Soviet and US tanks stood almost muzzle to muzzle for several hours at **Checkpoint Charlie**. Khrushchev was determined to keep up the pressure on West Berlin. In October, for instance, he told the Soviet foreign minister, Gromyko, and the Polish leader, Gomułka, that 'we should ... exploit the weakness of the enemy. We should strive to remove the official representatives from West Berlin.'

In a series of talks with the Soviet leaders over the next year, Kennedy attempted to lower the tension by exploring the possibility of an agreement over Berlin, which would guarantee the rights of the Western allies, while recognising what he called the 'legitimate interests of others'. By this, of course, he meant the USSR and GDR. Inevitably, Adenauer regarded these negotiations with great suspicion and dreaded that Kennedy would end up sacrificing West Berlin. Consequently, he drew even closer to France, signing in January 1963 with de Gaulle the Franco-German Treaty of Friendship and supporting the French veto on Britain's application to join the EEC (see page 180).

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of key Cold War events in 1956–61 by completing Worksheet 19 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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In October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis (see page 156) temporarily forced the Berlin question into second place and rallied the Western powers around Kennedy. After the crisis, discussions on Berlin continued, but the need to find a settlement was no longer so urgent. Having come so close to nuclear war in Cuba, Khrushchev shied away from another confrontation in Berlin and accepted that for the time being the Wall had consolidated the GDR. The Soviet government also began to reassess its policies and priorities in light of the lessons learned in the Cuban Missile Crisis. As far as they affected Europe, these policies will be analysed in [Chapter 7](#).

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source G](#) by completing Worksheet 23 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SOURCE G

**From US President Kennedy's 'Report to the Nation in July 1961', 25 July 1961. *Department of State, Documents on Germany, 1944–1985*, US Department of State Publication, no. 9446, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington, DC, 1986, pages 763–4.**

*We are there [in Berlin] as a result of our victory over Nazi Germany, and our basic rights to be there deriving from that victory include both our presence in West Berlin and the enjoyment of access across East Germany. These rights have been completely confirmed ... But in addition to those rights is our commitment to sustain – and defend, if need be – the opportunity for more than two million people [in West Berlin] to determine their own future and choose their own way of life.*

*Thus our presence in West Berlin, and our access thereto, cannot be ended by any act of the Soviet Government ... An attack in that city will be regarded as an attack upon us all ...*

*We cannot and will not permit the Communists to drive us out of Berlin either gradually or by force.*

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## ? SOURCE QUESTION

How valuable is [Source G](#) as a guide to US policy during the Berlin Crisis?

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE BERLIN CRISIS 1958–61

#### Causes

- Berlin remained an unresolved issue
- East Germans could escape through Berlin to the West
- West vulnerable and could be put under pressure in Berlin to make concessions

November 1958; Khrushchev issued Berlin ultimatum:

- West Berlin to become a free city
- Peace treaty to be signed with both German states

Failure of Geneva and Paris Conferences 1959 and 1960

Threatened collapse of GDR persuaded Khrushchev to agree to sealing East Berlin frontier, August 1961

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## ONLINE EXTRAS



## OCR

Test your understanding of the rise in tension between the USSR and the West in Europe, 1956–62 by completing Worksheet 20 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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# 4 The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962

***What were the origins of the Cuban Missile Crisis?***

***Why did the Cuban Missile Crisis not result in war between the USA and the USSR?***

Although the Cuban Missile Crisis was a direct confrontation between the USA and the USSR, involving neither NATO nor the Warsaw Pact, it had a profound impact on the Cold War in Europe. Both sides came to the brink of war but drew back from a nuclear conflict.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the Khrushchev era by completing Worksheet 21 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SOURCE H

**From John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*, Oxford University Press, 1997, page 261.**

*[The crisis over Cuba was] the only episode after World War II in which each of the major areas of Soviet–American competition intersected: the nuclear arms race, to be sure, but also conflicting ideological aspirations, ‘third world rivalries’, relations with allies, the domestic political implications of foreign policy, the personalities of individual leaders. The crisis was a kind of funnel – a historical singularity if you like – into which everything suddenly tumbled and got mixed together. Fortunately no black hole lurked at the other end ...*

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How helpful is [Source H](#) in analysing the nature of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source H](#) by completing Worksheet 24 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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# The causes of the crisis

In the 1950s, the Soviets had viewed Central and South America as essentially a US sphere of interest. They had not protested when the CIA intervened in 1954 to topple the allegedly pro-Communist President Árbenz in Guatemala. However, the USA's domination did cause a growing resentment among South American intellectuals and nationalists, and was one of the factors that prompted **Fidel Castro** to launch a **guerrilla war** against the government of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba in December 1956. By January 1959, contrary to expectations, his forces were able to take over the government in Havana.

At this stage, Castro was an anti-American nationalist but not a communist. It was probably growing opposition from the Cuban middle classes to his economic policies and increasing US hostility to his attempt to follow a policy of non-alignment in the Cold War that drove him into adopting Marxism–Leninism. Friction with the USA was also caused by his seizure of property owned by the major US firms, particularly the United Fruit Company.

As relations with the USA deteriorated during the summer of 1959, Castro began to put out feelers towards Moscow, and in February 1960 he invited Anastas Mikoyan, deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, to visit Havana. Mikoyan returned to Moscow with a glowing account of the Cuban Revolution, which reminded him of the heroic early days of the Russian Revolution. In July, Khrushchev threatened the USA with a missile attack if it dared invade Cuba and suggested that Washington declare the end of the **Monroe Doctrine**.

## The Bay of Pigs incident

The growing links between Cuba and the USSR persuaded Eisenhower to authorise the CIA to start planning Castro's removal. In April 1961, four months after Kennedy came to power, a force of about 1400 Cuban exiles landed south of Havana at Playa Girón on the Bay of Pigs. It was hoped that this would spark off a popular uprising against Castro, but Castro, in anticipation of such a move, imprisoned thousands of suspects. At the last moment, Kennedy also cancelled both bombing raids by the US air force and a landing by US marines. Consequently, Castro had no trouble in defeating the invasion. As John Lewis Gaddis observed in 1997, the Bay of Pigs incident was 'a monumental disaster for the United States ... comparable only to the humiliation the British and French had suffered at Suez five years earlier' (see page [143](#)).

Although Khrushchev was delighted by this humiliation, he nevertheless saw it as a warning that the Americans would inevitably try to topple Castro again. In this he was correct. The CIA continued to devise plans for Castro's assassination, and large-scale military manoeuvres took place in the Caribbean Sea in the spring and summer of 1962 in anticipation of an invasion.

## The Soviet decision to place missiles on Cuba

In August 1962, Khrushchev negotiated, without the knowledge of the USA, the Soviet–Cuban accord with Castro. Over the next few weeks the Soviets began secretly to deploy medium-range nuclear missiles on Cuba. These would be defended by 40,000 Soviet troops based on the island, anti-aircraft batteries, short-range battlefield rockets and MiG-21 fighter planes.

There were two key reasons for this highly dangerous operation:

- To gain a base from which the USA could be threatened by medium-range Soviet missiles. This would correct the strategic imbalance caused by the construction of US missile bases in Turkey and Western Europe and go some way towards closing the **missile gap** between the USSR and the USA.
- Castro also wanted to defend the revolution in Cuba. The Soviets saw the revolution as a major success for Marxism–Leninism, and its defeat would, as Mikoyan told Castro, ‘throw back the revolutionary movement in many countries’.

On 4 October, the Soviet ship *Indigirka* arrived at the port of Mariel in Cuba with enough nuclear warheads to equip at least 158 strategic and nuclear weapons.

## The crisis comes to a head: 14–28 October 1962

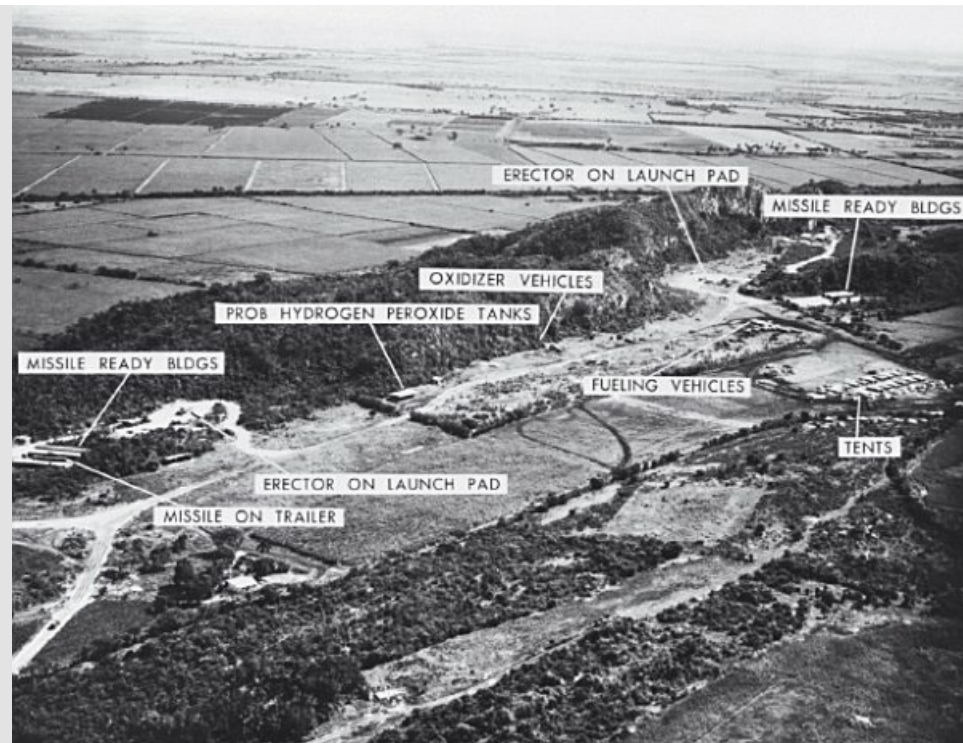
On 14 October, a US U-2 spy plane discovered the missiles. President Kennedy was informed two days later and initially the news was kept quiet from the American public. The options open to the US government were explored by a small crisis committee, the **ExComm**. It dismissed launching a surprise air attack as too risky, while an appeal to the UN was ruled out as it would take too long, especially as further reconnaissance flights indicated that the Soviets already had four medium-range missile sites operational. Instead, plans were drawn up for a possible invasion of Cuba by US forces and an ultimatum was to be sent to Moscow demanding that the missiles be withdrawn.

### Quarantine zone

In the meantime, the US navy set up a quarantine zone 1200 kilometres (750 miles) from the Cuban coast. Once they entered this area, Soviet ships would be stopped and searched for weapons due to be delivered to Cuba. On the advice of the British ambassador this was reduced to 800 kilometres (500 miles).

---

#### SOURCE I



**An aerial reconnaissance photograph showing a medium-range ballistic missile launch site in Cuba, October 1962.**

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What information does [Source I](#) convey about the causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

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On 22 October, Kennedy announced on US television the news of the existence of Soviet missiles on Cuba and that he had ordered the naval blockade of the island. He also made clear that if any nuclear missile was fired from Cuba, he would order a massive nuclear attack on the USSR. Khrushchev initially was determined to complete the missile sites in Cuba and ordered the Soviet ships to challenge the blockade. It looked as though a naval confrontation was inevitable.

## Soviet decision to withdraw the missiles

On 26 October, in response to an appeal for negotiations from U Thant, the UN secretary-general, and fearing an imminent US air attack on Cuba, Khrushchev informed the Americans that he would withdraw the missiles. In return, he demanded a guarantee that the USA would not invade Cuba. However, once he realised that this made him look weak in the eyes of his political rivals, in a second message on 27 October he insisted that the removal of missiles from Cuba was dependent on the dismantling of US **Jupiter missile** bases in Turkey (See [Source J](#), page **160**). To appease US public opinion, Kennedy responded to the first letter officially, but secretly he agreed to remove the fifteen Jupiter missiles from Turkey once the Cuban crisis was over. He

stressed, however, that if the Soviets made this offer public, it would be withdrawn. He also publicly declared that the USA would not invade Cuba.

Effectively this ended the crisis, and all the Soviet missiles and troops were withdrawn from Cuba by 20 November.

---

### SOURCE J

**From Khrushchev's message to Kennedy, 27 October 1962. Quoted in Priscilla Roberts, editor, *Cuban Missile Crisis: The Essential Reference Guide*, ABC-CLIO, 2012, page 213.**

*You are disturbed over Cuba. You say that this disturbs you because it is 90 miles [145 km] by sea from the coast of the United States of America. But Turkey adjoins us ... Do you consider, then, that you have the right to demand security for your own country and the removals of the weapons you call offensive, but do not accord the same right to us? You have placed destructive missile weapons, which you call offensive in Turkey, literally next door to us ...*

*I think it would be possible to end this controversy quickly and normalize the situation ...*

*I therefore make this proposal: We are willing to remove from Cuba the means which you regard as offensive ... Your representatives will make a declaration to the effect that the United States, for its part, considering the uneasiness and anxiety of the Soviet state, will remove [the missiles] from Turkey ...*

---

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far is [Source J](#) helpful in explaining why the Cuban Missile Crisis occurred?

---

### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source J](#) by completing Worksheet 25 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The aftermath of the crisis

In the short term, President Kennedy's prestige increased enormously. He was promoted as the one who had called Khrushchev's bluff. His concession that the Jupiter missiles would be withdrawn from Turkey in return for the removal of the missiles from Cuba remained a secret until after his death. Khrushchev's retreat met with bitter criticism from Mao Zedong, the leader of Communist China, and Castro, who accused him of surrendering to the USA. It weakened his position within the USSR. Yet his fall in October 1964 was more the result of domestic politics and power struggles than a consequence of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

## Cuba

The Soviet decision to remove the missiles was seen as a betrayal by Castro and convinced him that Cuba would have to develop its own independent revolutionary strategy. By the mid-1960s, Castro actively assisted revolutionary movements in the developing world, not only to support the spread of communism but also to distract the USA so that it would not renew pressure on Cuba.

## The USSR

The overwhelming superiority of the USA in nuclear weapons, as shown during the nuclear crisis, came as a shock to the Soviet leadership. The USSR was determined to achieve parity in nuclear weapons with the USA and began an ambitious programme for the construction of ICBMs (see page 178). The total command of the seas by the USA which enabled it to establish so effectively the quarantine zone around Cuba also persuaded the USSR to build a large navy, which in the future would enable it to project its power globally.

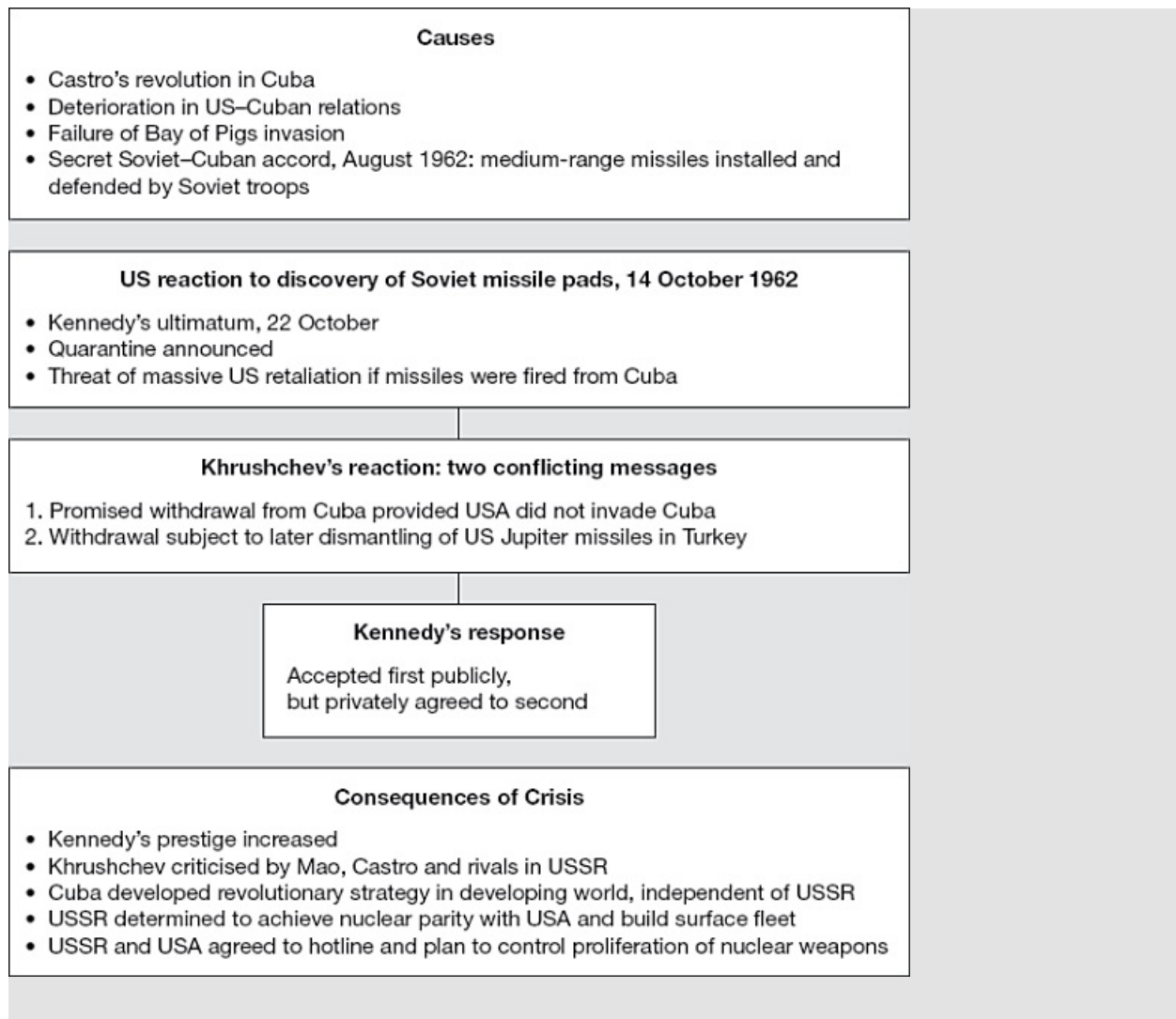
## Reduction in international tension

The Cuban Missile Crisis brought both the USA and USSR to the brink of nuclear war. The crisis neither ended the Cold War nor stopped the nuclear arms race between the USA and USSR, but it did lead to an understanding by both sides that nuclear war would lead to what became known as ‘mutually assured destruction’ or MAD. Increasingly, both sides began to give priority to plans for controlling the **proliferation** of nuclear weapons and their testing (see page 177). In 1963, a **hotline** was established which linked the Soviet and US leaders. The intention behind this was that both leaders could directly contact each other instead of relying on contacts through the UN or their own diplomats, and therefore rapidly defuse crises that might lead to nuclear war.

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

#### THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS 1962



## 5 Assessment: the 'Second Cold War'

*How accurate is it to describe the whole period 1956–63 as the 'Second Cold War'?*

In 1955, it seemed that the Cold War in Europe, if not over, had at least stabilised. The Soviets had pulled out of Austria and there was much talk about the 'Geneva spirit' (page 98). Yet, over the next six years, no progress was made towards *détente*, as relations between the Warsaw Pact states and the North Atlantic Alliance deteriorated to a level not seen since the Berlin Blockade of 1948–9. Do the reasons for this lie with Khrushchev or were there deeper causes?

### Deterioration in East–West relations

A major cause of European instability was the failure of the USSR to set up in Eastern Europe what the Americans managed to create in Western Europe: 'an empire by invitation' (see page



**103).** The de-Stalinisation policies of 1953–6 were attempts to create more popular regimes that did not depend on terror and the Red Army to survive, and to allow the peoples of Eastern Europe some input into influencing their own politics. Yet the Polish riots and the Hungarian revolt of 1956 showed how hard it was to achieve a balance between liberalisation and the maintenance of essential control. This was to remain one of the main dilemmas facing the Soviet leadership until 1990.

## To the brink and back?

Until 1961, the division of Germany and the unsolved problem of Berlin also remained a major destabilising factor in Europe. The root of the problem was the chronic economic weakness of East Germany, which could only be remedied by closing the inner Berlin frontier. This would prevent the flight of desperately needed skilled workers from East to West where they could earn more money. However, this measure would violate the Yalta Agreement (see page 31) and cause a major crisis involving the USA and its allies. Both German states depended for their existence on their superpower protector. As neither the USA nor the USSR could allow its part of Germany to collapse or be absorbed by the rival bloc, the two German leaders, Ulbricht and Adenauer, had at times considerable influence over the foreign policy of Moscow and Washington, respectively. Thus, Adenauer did much to stop Eisenhower from effectively exploring the possibilities of a Berlin settlement in the period 1958–60, while recent research by Hope Harrison (*Driving the Soviets up the Wall, 1953–1961*, 2005) has shown that it was pressure from Ulbricht that finally propelled Khrushchev into building the Berlin Wall.

---

### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of the Berlin crisis, 1958–61, by completing Worksheet 22 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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The crises of 1956 and 1958–61 were triggered by instabilities within the Soviet bloc and central Europe, but they were made far more dangerous by Khrushchev's high-risk 'nuclear diplomacy'. In 1956, by threatening to bombard Britain, France and Israel with nuclear missiles, even when in reality the USSR had not yet developed the military capacity to do this, he was able to pose as the saviour of Egypt. He did not hesitate to use the ultimate threat of nuclear weapons as a bargaining counter in both the Berlin and Cuba Crises. Yet, as we have seen, much of this was only 'bluff and bluster'. In that sense, Khrushchev very much presided over a period of acute tension which perhaps could be called a Second Cold War.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Get to grips with Khrushchev's nuclear diplomacy by completing Worksheet 26 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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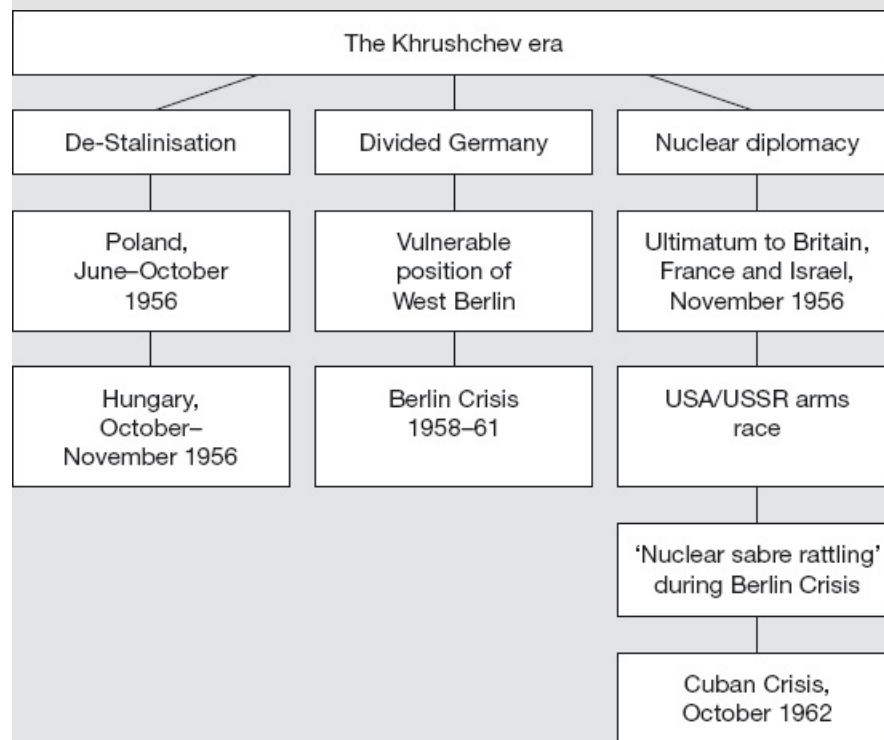
In other ways, however, the Khrushchev years set the pattern for the next three decades.



Globally, Khrushchev appreciated the potential for encouraging anti-Western movements among the new non-aligned states. In Europe, the Berlin Wall, however cruel in its division of a city and prevention of families and friends from seeing each other, did at last stabilise the GDR and with it central Europe. It also enabled both superpowers, as Gaddis has put it, to 'break loose' from their German allies and explore the possibility of *détente* in Europe. Paradoxically, Khrushchev was also the father of *détente*. Despite his brinkmanship over Berlin and Cuba, he aimed for peaceful economic and ideological competition with the West. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, Soviet policy settled down, as we shall see later, to a dual policy of achieving *détente* in Europe and nuclear equality with the USA, while also exploiting anti-Western movements in the developing world.

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### ASSESSMENT: THE 'SECOND COLD WAR'



## CHAPTER SUMMARY

Khrushchev attempted to liberalise the Soviet regimes in Eastern Europe, but the Hungarian Rising terminated this experiment and resulted in Soviet military intervention. The Suez Crisis in November 1956 enabled him to pose as the champion of developing, non-aligned states and to take the credit for the failure of the Anglo-French attempt to topple Nasser.

The division of Germany and the unsolved problem of Berlin still remained a major

problem. The cause of this was the GDR's economic weakness, which could only be remedied by preventing the flight of skilled workers to the FRG. Ultimately, Khrushchev sanctioned the Berlin Wall, which led to the consolidation of the GDR.

In Cuba, the USSR exploited Castro's break with the USA to install medium-range nuclear missiles which could threaten the security of the USA. Kennedy responded vigorously and the subsequent crisis was one of the most dangerous of the Cold War. Conflict was avoided by Khrushchev's agreement to dismantle the missiles in exchange for a guarantee from Kennedy that the USA would not invade Cuba, as well as a secret promise that NATO's nuclear missiles would be removed from Turkey.

---

## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

What was the significance of Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Conference?

Why did the USSR face a challenge to its authority in Hungary and Poland?

In what ways did the Suez Crisis influence Soviet action in Hungary?

Why did Dulles think that Khrushchev was such a dangerous Soviet leader?

How did the Western allies respond to Khrushchev's ultimatum regarding Berlin in 1958?

Why was so little progress made in solving the Berlin Crisis in 1959–60?

Why did Ulbricht want to seal off East Berlin from West Berlin?

Why did Khrushchev agree to the construction of the Berlin Wall?

Was the construction of the Berlin Wall a major success for the Soviet bloc?

Why, despite the construction of the Berlin Wall, did tension remain high in Europe until 1963?

Why did the US-backed invasion of Cuba fail?

Why did Khrushchev decide to site medium-range Soviet missiles on Cuba?

Why did the Cuban Missile Crisis not result in war between the USA and the USSR?

How near to war did the USA and USSR come during the years 1958–62?

Was there a 'Second Cold War'?

---

## Question practice: AQA

### Essay questions

'De-Stalinisation seriously weakened Soviet power in eastern Europe, 1953–63.'  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. [AS level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Argue whether de-Stalinisation seriously weakened Soviet power or not. Look for evidence to support and evidence to contradict the view, then explain your overall judgment.

---

‘However cruel, the construction of the Berlin Wall stabilised the situation in Germany.’  
Assess the validity of this view. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Remember to address the first two words as well as the main part of the quotation. For the second part analyse how much stability was possible after the wall had been built compared with the situation beforehand.

---

## Source analysis questions

With reference to [Sources D](#) (page 150), [F](#) (page 154) and [G](#) (page 155), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the development of the Berlin Crisis 1958–61. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn. Do not try to reach a comparative judgement, just a judgement on each one in turn.

---

With reference to [Sources H](#) (page 157), [I](#) (page 159) and [J](#) (page 160), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the Cuban Missile Crisis. [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn, including comments on the tone where relevant. Do not try to write an overall conclusion, just a judgement on each one in turn.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

Assess the consequences for the Soviet bloc of Khrushchev’s policy of de-Stalinisation. [AS level]

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**EXAM HINT** Responses will explain a range of consequences of Khrushchev’s policy of de-Stalinisation for the Soviet bloc. For each one discussed a judgement will be reached and these interim judgements will form the basis of an overall judgement in the conclusion.

---

How effective was Khrushchev in challenging the USA and its allies, 1956–62? [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Establish a range of criteria against which to judge effectiveness. This might include political influence, economic influence or security or you might do this event by event. Then reach interim judgements, which should be used to reach an overall judgement.

---

## CHAPTER 7

# The Cold War in the era of *détente* 1963–75

One of the most important consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis was the conviction in both Moscow and Washington that there would be no winners in an all-out nuclear war. Both sides were, therefore, ready to pursue a policy of *détente* in Europe, especially as the USA was involved in the Vietnam War and the USSR was facing a major threat from China. These themes are studied in this chapter under the following headings:

- Challenges facing the USSR and USA 1963–72
- The road to *détente* 1963–75
- *Ostpolitik*
- The Helsinki Accords

---

## KEY DATES

1963	Aug. 5	Test Ban Treaty
1964	Oct. 15	Fall of Khrushchev
1965	Feb. 7	US bombing of North Vietnam began
1968	Aug. 21–27	Invasion of Czechoslovakia
	July	Non-proliferation Treaty
1969	Sept. 28	Brandt became chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)
1970	Aug. 12	USSR–FRG Moscow Treaty
	Dec. 7	Warsaw Treaty
1971	Sept. 3	Four-Power Treaty on Berlin
1972	May	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I)
	Dec. 21	Basic Treaty between FRG and the German Democratic Republic
1973	Jan.	Paris Peace Accords
1974	July	SALT II negotiations
1975	Aug. 1	Helsinki Final Act

---

## 1 Challenges facing the USSR and USA 1963–72

*What problems did the USSR face with China and the USA in Vietnam?*

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the nature of the Cold War in Europe changed. A new period of

stability emerged, which has sometimes been called the ‘long peace’, a term first used in 1989 by the historian John Lewis Gaddis. Both the two superpowers and the Western European states sought *détente* in Europe, although they all interpreted the meaning of *détente* differently. The Americans were heavily involved in the Vietnam War, and wanted *détente* to stabilise Europe and restrain the USSR, while the USSR was also facing a growing challenge from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Consequently, it hoped that *détente* would lead Washington and its allies permanently to accept the post-war division of Europe, and to agree to something approaching nuclear parity between the USA and USSR.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Practise your essay planning skills by completing Worksheet 27 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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*Détente* in Europe did not, of course, mean that the Cold War was over. Both the USSR and PRC assisted the North Vietnamese, while the USSR constructed a large navy to enable it to project its power globally. In 1976, for instance, it was able to transport some 12,000 Cuban troops along with tanks and missiles to aid the Communist People’s Movement for the liberation of Angola (see page [194](#)).

## The USSR and China: the Sino-Soviet split

The Sino-Soviet split was caused by a mixture of both domestic and international factors, as well as by the simmering resentment in China of the long history of Russian imperialism which had encroached on its northern frontiers during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Fundamentally, Mao came to perceive Khrushchev to be an **appeaser** of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the USA, and, above all, as a betrayer of the legacy of Stalin and Lenin. In return, the Soviet leadership was convinced that, under Mao, the PRC intended to displace the USSR as the leading communist state.

After 1958, differences between the PRC and the USSR multiplied:

- Soviet economic advisers and technicians, who had arrived in 1956 to help the PRC industrialise, advised Mao that the economic plan, the ‘**Great Leap Forward**’, was both impractical and harmful to the Chinese economy. In July 1960, these experts were recalled to the USSR.
- Mao rejected Soviet plans for sharing military bases and operating joint naval units in the Pacific, which, he believed, were in reality ‘imperialist’ plans to subordinate the PRC’s armed forces to the USSR.
- When, in August 1958, the PRC began an intense bombardment of the Nationalist-controlled **Quemoy Islands** off Taiwan in order to rally the Chinese people behind the ‘Great Leap Forward’, Khrushchev expressed alarm that this might lead to war with the USA.
- In June 1959, Khrushchev refused to assist the PRC any further with nuclear technology on the grounds that the USA and USSR were discussing a possible ban on nuclear weapons at Geneva (see page [151](#)).



- Relations between the two rulers deteriorated to the point where a mutual slanging match broke out: Khrushchev, for example, abused Mao as an 'Asian Hitler' and 'a living corpse', while Mao retaliated by calling Khrushchev 'a redundant old boot'!

With Khrushchev's fall from power in October 1964 and his replacement by Leonid Brezhnev, there was initially some hope that better relations could be restored. In November, a mission led by Premier Zhou Enlai was sent to the USSR to improve Sino-Soviet relations, but it was unsuccessful, and it was alleged that the Soviet defence minister, Marshall Rodion Malinowski, actually urged Zhou Enlai to overthrow Mao.

---

## Leonid Brezhnev



<b>1906</b>	1906
<b>1941–5</b>	Political commissar attached to the army
<b>1963</b>	Involved in plot to oust Khrushchev
<b>1964–82</b>	After Khrushchev's fall, became general secretary of the Russian Communist Party
<b>1968</b>	Ordered occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces
<b>1972</b>	Initiated <i>détente</i> with the USA
<b>1975</b>	Signed Helsinki Pact
<b>1979</b>	Decided to intervene in Afghanistan
<b>1982</b>	Died

### Early career

Brezhnev was a member of the first generation of future Soviet leaders to have grown up without having participated as an adult in the Russian Revolution. His father was a worker in Ukraine, where Leonid was born in 1906. He gained his first experiences as a Communist official during the Stalinist era. He first met Khrushchev in 1931 and became one of his favourites. After Stalin's death, he backed Khrushchev in his successful attempts to remove the Stalinist old guard from office. Up to the early 1960s he remained loyal to Khrushchev but after the Cuban Missile Crisis he helped to remove him from office in 1964.

### Career as general secretary

As general secretary he was one of the most powerful figures in the USSR, although initially he governed as a part of *troika*, the two other members of which were **Alexei Kosygin** and **Nikolai Podgorny**. Only in the 1970s did he emerge as the dominant politician, at a time when his health began to deteriorate. He had supported Khrushchev's more liberal policies but, once in power, he developed an increasingly conservative and repressive domestic policy. Abroad, he pursued *détente* with the USA but also gave assistance to friendly regimes in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In 1979, he committed Soviet troops to help prop up the socialist government in Afghanistan.

---

In August 1966, Mao launched the **Cultural Revolution**, which was meant to inspire the Chinese to recapture the revolutionary enthusiasm of 1949 and to hunt down intellectuals and Chinese Communist Party officials supposedly guilty of 'revisionist' attitudes. Mao linked the fight against the revisionists within China with the propaganda campaign against the 'revisionist' USSR, which was now regarded as the PRC's primary foe.

## The Sino-Soviet border conflict 1969

In the nineteenth century, the Russian Empire had forced the Chinese Empire to negotiate treaties which ceded several regions to Russia. After 1917, the USSR repudiated these treaties but never returned the territory. The PRC deeply resented this, which further damaged relations between the two powers.

A major territorial dispute occurred in 1969, centred on the 52,000 square kilometres of Soviet-controlled land between the Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region in western China and the Soviet-controlled region of Tajikistan. Each side massed hundreds of thousands of troops along the disputed border areas. In March 1969, two bloody conflicts erupted on Zhenbao Island, a small island on the Ussuri River, which marked the border between the PRC and the USSR. The island lay to the PRC side of the river, but was occupied by the Soviets. On the night of 1–2 March, a PRC force overwhelmed the Soviet garrison but was eventually driven off the island after a massive Soviet counterattack. On 13 August, another major clash occurred in Xinjiang Province, where a PRC brigade of over 1000 men was annihilated by Soviet troops. The PRC retaliated by declaring a general mobilisation along the border with the USSR and Mongolia.

---

### SOURCE A



**PRC soldiers patrolling on Zhenbao Island, March 1969.**

---

? **SOURCE QUESTION**

How far is [Source A](#) helpful in explaining the relations between the PRC and USSR in the late 1960s?

---

## **PRC–US *rapprochement***

Full-scale war between the two Communist superpowers was a real possibility. To counter the Chinese threat, Brezhnev deliberately encouraged rumours that the USSR would launch a pre-emptive strike against China's nuclear installations. This was effective in that tensions were eased in early September, after Kosygin and Zhou Enlai met in Beijing and agreed that a PRC–Soviet conflict would only benefit the USA. Nevertheless, the USSR continued in its attempts to intimidate the PRC with rumours of nuclear strikes. On the one hand this was a successful act of deterrence, but on the other it made a *rapprochement* with the USA increasingly attractive for the PRC.

Diplomatic contacts between the PRC and the USA began for the first time in December 1970. Two years later, in February 1972, US President **Richard Nixon** flew to Beijing. After discussions with Mao the two governments declared that:

- neither would 'seek hegemony in the Asia–Pacific region and each was opposed to efforts by any other country [here the USSR was meant but not named] to establish such hegemony'
- the future of Taiwan would be settled peacefully.

## **Winners and losers: the impact of the**

## *rapprochement*

Through this process of *rapprochement*, the PRC successfully gained US backing to join the United Nations in 1971 and strengthened both its **strategic position** and its international status. By the same token it was a major blow for the USSR. Essentially, the *rapprochement* meant that if war broke out between the USSR and the USA, the PRC would either remain neutral or even assist the USA. The agreement also strengthened the hand of the USA, just at the point when Nixon was withdrawing US troops from Vietnam. As Zhou Enlai had secretly assured him that the PRC would not intervene militarily in the war, he was free to defeat North Vietnam's offensive in the spring of 1972 against the South through a massive and sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnamese forces (see page 174).

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Test your understanding of the Cold War and *détente* by completing Worksheet 28 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Vietnam 1954–63

The USA was determined to avoid elections for a united Vietnamese parliament, which, it was agreed on at the Geneva Conference in 1954, were to be held in 1956 (see page 133), in case they resulted in the creation of a communist Vietnam. Instead, the USA hoped to strengthen an independent South Vietnam. In an attempt to stop the spread of communism to South-East Asia, the USA also established the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), as a regional defence system, in September 1954. Its members were: the USA, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan. In practice, the alliance proved ineffective as its members were not legally obliged to assist each other militarily to prevent the spread of communism.

In June 1954, with US support, the head of state, Bao Dai (see page 132), appointed **Ngô Đình Diêm** as prime minister of South Vietnam, largely on the strength of his virulent anti-communism. Diêm quickly removed Bao Dai and temporarily managed to consolidate his own position, but then rapidly lost support. He alienated key groups, particularly the Buddhists, by favouring Roman Catholics, who comprised only ten per cent of the population. Catholics were given preferential treatment in the allocation of posts in the army and the public service. He also did not carry out the promised programme of land reform which would have taken land away from the large landowners and redistributed it to the peasantry.

Exploiting Diêm's growing unpopularity in the spring of 1959, North Vietnam announced the resumption of the armed struggle against the South Vietnamese government and smuggled arms southwards along the newly constructed **Hồ Chí Minh Trail**. In September 1960, the **Việt Cộng**, the Communist movement in South Vietnam, founded the National Liberation Front (NLF), which aimed to rally all those opposed to Diêm's regime by promising land reform and the creation of a united, independent Vietnam.

## Diêm's fall

By the autumn of 1961, Diêm's government was in danger of collapse. The Việt Công had seized control of a large number of villages. In response to Diêm's demands for immediate assistance, President Kennedy sent a small force of 8000 US troops to help conduct military operations against the Việt Công, but this was not enough to stabilise Diêm's regime. On May 1963, Diêm's troops fired into a crowd of people celebrating the sacred occasion of Buddha's birthday because they had violated the law banning the flying of non-governmental flags. This provoked a wave of anger across the country which resulted in protest marches and even **self-immolations** by Buddhist monks. Worried by Diêm's unpopularity and by rumours that he was considering negotiations with North Vietnam, Kennedy backed a coup mounted by the South Vietnamese army in November 1963 to remove Diêm. Both Diêm and his brother were murdered. General Nguyễn Khánh was then installed as the new leader.

## The war escalates

Yet Khánh, too, failed to defeat the Việt Công, and by 1964 the war in South Vietnam was rapidly escalating. On 2 August, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked a US destroyer, the *Maddox*, in the Gulf of Tonkin. The *Maddox* retaliated by damaging two boats and sinking a third. On 7 August, the US Congress, in an overwhelming vote, gave the president the authority 'to take all necessary measures' to defend US forces in South-East Asia (see [Source B](#), page 173).

In January 1965, the USA began a sustained bombing campaign against North Vietnam, Operation 'Rolling Thunder', and in 1966 there were over 500,000 US soldiers in South Vietnam. Despite their enormous destructive capability, US tactics were to prove ineffective against the Việt Công, who were supplied with weapons and provisions transported down the Hồ Chí Minh Trail. Eventually, supplies carried along this route were able to support some 170,000 Việt Công guerrillas. The paddy fields and dense jungles formed an ideal terrain for guerrilla fighting. The Việt Công were able to ambush US and South Vietnamese forces and then disappear into the safety of the jungle.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Test your understanding of the Vietnam War by completing Worksheet 29 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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#### SOURCE B

**From the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 7 August 1964. Quoted in *US Department of State Bulletin* 51, 1313 (24 August 1964), page 268.**

*Whereas units of the Communist regime in Vietnam, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, have deliberately and repeatedly attacked United States naval vessels lawfully present in international waters, and have thereby created a serious threat to international peace ...*

*Whereas the United States is assisting the peoples of southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambition in that area, but desires only that these peoples should be left in peace to work out their destinies in their own way ...*

*Now be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled that the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander-in-Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent any further aggression.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How does [Source B](#) help to explain why the USA intervened in Vietnam?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source B](#) by completing Worksheet 30 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The Sino-Soviet split and North Vietnam

Both the USSR and the PRC gave substantial aid to the North Vietnamese. Yet they were unable to co-ordinate their assistance and viewed each other as rivals for influence on the North Vietnamese government:

- North Vietnam was given substantial aid by the PRC, but it was agreed that unless US troops invaded the North, the PRC would not become directly involved in the fighting. Altogether, over 320,000 PRC troops served in North Vietnam and were engaged in the construction, maintenance and defence of transport links and important strategic targets. This freed North Vietnamese troops for deployment in the South and deterred a US invasion of the North.
- Between 1965 and 1967, the USSR delivered about \$670 million worth of goods and aid (in the dollar values of the time), including surface-to-air missiles, mainly for the defence of North Vietnamese cities against US air attack. It also sent some 12,000 military instructors.

The PRC hoped to exploit the war not only to emphasise that it, rather than the USSR, was the true centre of communism and global revolution, but also to consolidate popular support behind the regime at a time when the Great Leap Forward (see page [167](#)) was obviously failing. When PRC military instructors first entered North Vietnam in August 1965, they had already been trained to work as political agents to instruct the population in the benefits of communism as practised in the PRC. The North Vietnamese authorities viewed this as interference in the internal politics of their country and rapidly stopped such activities. Their aim was first and foremost to reunite Vietnam. To them, the Sino-Soviet split was a distraction and they refused initially to take sides, while accepting help from both the USSR and the PRC.

By 1968, however, North Vietnam was increasingly siding with the USSR. On the one hand its government feared that the PRC, with some 200,000 troops controlling the lines of



communication to South Vietnam and Laos, might be tempted to turn both states into satellites. On the other hand, the PRC was suspicious that North Vietnam ultimately intended to annex Laos and Cambodia, which would threaten its own interests there.

The PRC reduced its assistance to North Vietnam in 1969, but there was no immediate break in relations between the two countries. It was only after Vietnam joined the Soviet economic bloc in 1978 and invaded Cambodia (see page 207) that the PRC, as a punitive measure, briefly invaded North Vietnam, withdrawing after a month's heavy fighting.

## Negotiations to end the war 1968–73

The USA lost support for the war at home when public opinion turned against the conflict. Instrumental in this was the reporting by the US media of the Tet Offensive of January to February 1968, when South Vietnamese cities and military installations were attacked by the North Vietnamese and Việt Công during the festival of Tết Nguyên Đán. When they managed briefly to penetrate the US embassy compound in Saigon, they achieved a great propaganda victory because it was seized on by the global media as evidence that the US and South Vietnamese had been defeated. The fact that the offensive was halted with considerable loss of North Vietnamese and Việt Công life was all but ignored. Facing violent student protest and a hostile media and public opinion, President **Lyndon Johnson** stated that he would not campaign for re-election in November 1968 and began negotiations with North Vietnam for a ceasefire. This was initially unsuccessful as North Vietnam remained adamant that the USA should withdraw its troops unconditionally.

### The impact of US President Nixon

President Nixon's main aim, after his election in November 1968, was to end US involvement in Vietnam 'with honour' as quickly as possible, but this was a complex task. His national security adviser, **Henry Kissinger**, hoped to link peace in Vietnam with *détente* with the USSR. He calculated that the USSR was so anxious to reach an agreement at the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) (see page 177) that it would put pressure on North Vietnam to come to the conference table, but Brezhnev rejected such a linkage and continued to supply North Vietnam with arms. He was convinced that war weariness and stalemate in Vietnam would sooner or later force the USA to make peace with North Vietnam on generous terms.

## Withdrawal of US troops 1970–3 and the Paris Peace Accords

Nixon's military strategy was to carry out a policy of Vietnamisation, which meant transferring the burden of the land war to the South Vietnamese while withdrawing US troops. Increasingly, it was only US air power that prevented the defeat of South Vietnam. In 1970, Nixon ordered the bombing of Việt Công military bases and supply routes in Cambodia, and in April, despite having announced the withdrawal of 150,000 US soldiers from Vietnam, sent some 30,000 US and South Vietnamese troops over the border into Cambodia. Large stocks of Việt Công weapons were captured there and the pressure was eased on South Vietnam as some 40,000



North Vietnamese troops had to be deployed in Cambodia to protect their installations and supplies.

In an attempt to reassure the American public that this was not a permanent escalation of the war, Nixon gave assurances that US troops would only advance 21 miles (34 km) into Cambodia and would withdraw by the end of June. The US Congress remained unconvinced and responded by forbidding the future deployment of US troops in either Laos or Cambodia. In March 1972, the North launched a massive offensive against the South, which was only halted by US air attacks.

In the end, the crucial factor leading to a peace agreement being signed in Paris was the realisation by North Vietnam that US air power could effectively prevent an immediate takeover of the South, despite the dominance of North Vietnamese forces on the ground. In another impressive display of US air power, in December 1972 Nixon sent in waves of B-52 bombers against the Hanoi–Haiphong area in North Vietnam (see the map on page 130), which used the new ‘**smart**’ **bombs** to target military installations. Even so, some 1000 civilians were killed.

On 27 January 1973, the Paris Peace Accords were at last signed:

- The USA was to withdraw its remaining forces within 60 days.
- US prisoners-of-war would be released.
- A ceasefire was declared throughout Vietnam.
- The territorial integrity of the whole of Vietnam, according to the 1954 Geneva Agreement, would be recognised by the USA.
- Elections were to be held in both North and South Vietnam.

In essence, as historian Norman Stone has observed, this peace agreement was ‘fraudulent, a face-saver for the Americans’.

Although the last US troops left Vietnam in March 1973, the war did not end: the North moved tanks and troops into the South in early 1975, and the US-trained South Vietnamese army was unable to stop them. By April 1975, Việt Công troops had seized Saigon, the South’s capital, and the US embassy had to be evacuated by helicopter amid scenes of panic, which were shown around the world by television. The impression given was one of American defeat and humiliation. Vietnam was now a united, communist state.

Inevitably, the defeat in Vietnam, together with the **Watergate scandal**, did immense damage to US prestige and self-confidence, and made it reluctant to project its power in the years immediately after 1975. Both Presidents Ford and Carter reduced the USA’s direct military intervention in the developing world and instead attempted to use regional powers such as Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, Iran and Indonesia – whose armed forces received aid and training, to contain communism in their regions. The humiliation of defeat disguised the fact that by 1979 the USA was winning the Cold War. In the Middle East, Egypt ended its close links with the USSR, while the USA’s *rapprochement* with the PRC was a serious challenge to the USSR.

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## SOURCE C



**US embassy officials being evacuated by helicopter from Saigon, South Vietnam, April 1975.**

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**? SOURCE QUESTION**

How far does [Source C](#) help to explain how the US record in Vietnam was viewed globally?

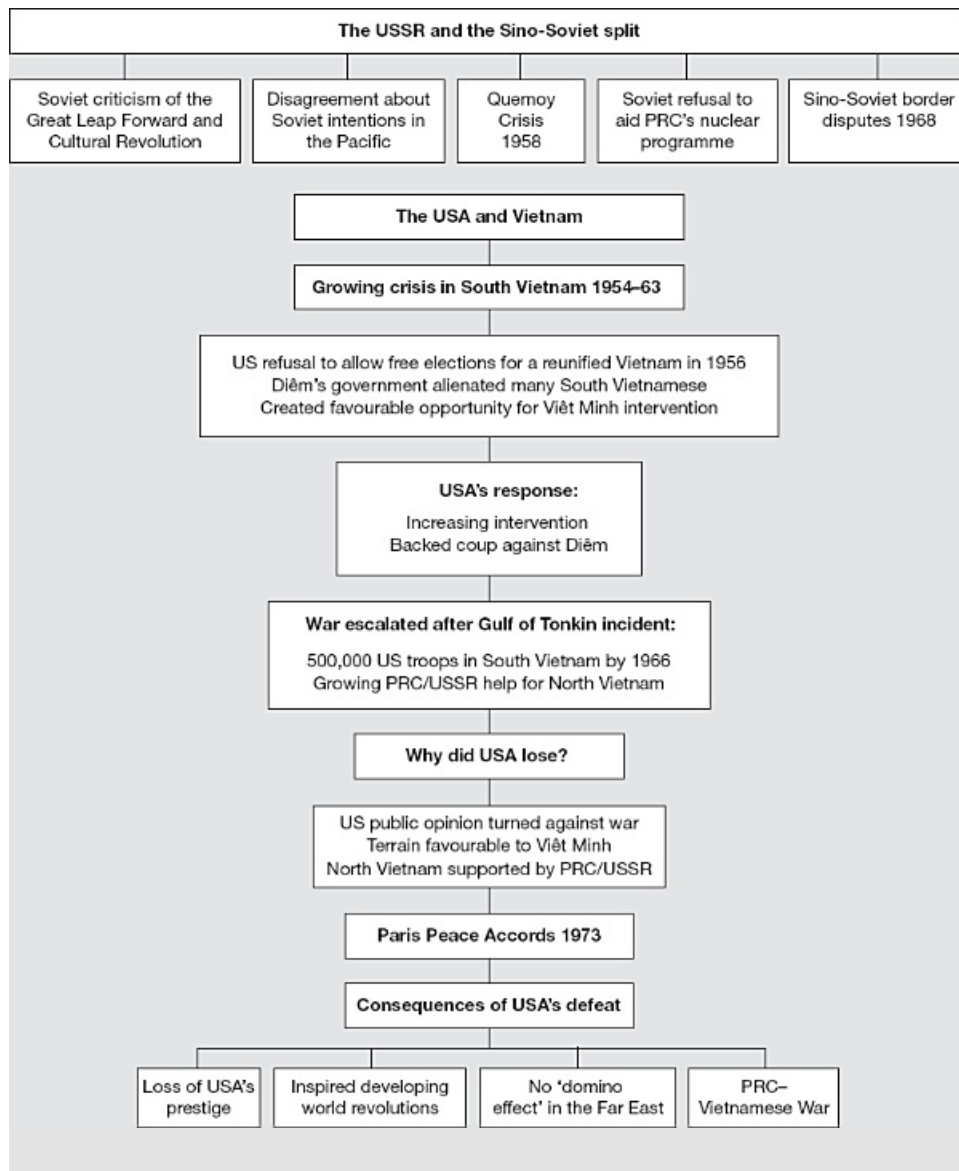
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**SUMMARY DIAGRAM**

**CHALLENGES FACING THE USSR AND USA 1963–72**

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## 2 The road to détente 1963-75

***What steps were taken to control the development of nuclear weapons between 1963 and 1975?***

Between 1963 and 1975, despite the divisive impact of the Vietnam War, relations had improved between the USA and NATO on the one side and the USSR and the Warsaw Pact on the other. The Cuban Missile Crisis had confronted the USA and USSR with the very real threat of a devastating nuclear war, from which they had pulled back, and in Europe the Berlin Wall had stabilised the volatile situation in Berlin. The main consequences of these events were:

- a series of agreements, principally between the USA and the USSR, controlling the proliferation of nuclear weapons
- the development of *Ostpolitik* in central Europe

- the Helsinki Accords.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Get to grips with the USSR and détente by completing Worksheet 23 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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*Détente* did not end the Cold War, but it did create a new framework for US–USSR relations, which each side believed could be exploited to take advantage of the other.

## Controlling the development of nuclear weapons

Between 1963 and 1968, the following agreements were negotiated, which were aimed at stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and making the world a safer place:

- The Test Ban Treaty of 1963, signed by Britain, the USSR and the USA, banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space, was negotiated on the assumption that the only two nuclear powers that counted were the USSR and USA. It was, however, rejected by both France and China, whose leaders went on to develop their own nuclear weapons.
- In July 1968, Britain, the USA and the USSR signed the Non-proliferation Treaty, in which they pledged themselves not to transfer nuclear weapons to other countries or to assist other states to manufacture them. In November 1969, they were joined by West Germany.

In 1970, US and Soviet experts began the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Vienna, and in May 1972, President Nixon and the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, signed the SALT I Treaty at the Moscow summit. The treaty consisted of two parts:

- There was to be a five-year freeze on the construction of missile launchers and a freeze on intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles and long-range bombers. President Nixon accepted that the Soviets should have a greater number of missiles than the USA as the Americans had a superiority in **MIRVs**, which were capable of hitting more than one target at a time.
- The second part of the treaty concerned defence against missiles. Both sides were allowed only two **anti-ballistic screens**, one for their capital cities, Washington and Moscow, and one for their main missile sites. Both sides were left almost defenceless against attack. It was hoped that the reality of ‘mutually assured destruction’, if war were to break out, would in fact guarantee peace.

Both statesmen also agreed to hold a conference on security, which the USSR hoped would result in the legal recognition of all territorial changes made in Europe since 1945:

- In July 1974, the USA and USSR agreed that negotiations should start for the SALT II treaty, which would impose permanent limitations on nuclear weapons. This was eventually concluded in June 1979, but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan prevented its ratification (see page **197**).

**Table 7.1** Numbers of US and Soviet nuclear launchers and warheads, 1962–80. What information do these figures convey about the US–USSR arms race?

Year	USA		USSR	
	Launchers	Warheads	Launchers	Warheads
1962	1653	3267	235	481
1964	2021	4180	425	771
1966	2139	4607	570	954
1968	2191	4839	1206	1605
1970	2100	4960	1835	2216
1972	2167	7601	2207	2573
1974	2106	9324	2423	2795
1976	2092	10436	2545	3477
1978	2086	10832	2557	5516
1980	2022	10608	2545	7480

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## What did the USA and USSR hope to achieve from *détente*?

The USA and the USSR each supported *détente* for different reasons. The USSR hoped to:

- Stabilise the arms race once it had achieved parity with the USA, as it wanted to reduce expenditure on nuclear weapons.
- Gain recognition from the USA and NATO of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and of Poland's and Czechoslovakia's post-1945 frontiers.
- Encourage East–West trade, which would give the USSR and its Eastern European satellites access to Western technology and finance.
- Neutralise the threat of a USA–PRC alliance by maintaining good relations with the USA and NATO.

The USA in its turn hoped that *détente* would:

- Strengthen its relations with its NATO allies, especially the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which was actively seeking *détente* in the form of the new *Ostpolitik* (see page 183).
- In the period 1969–72, facilitate a resolution in Vietnam by persuading the USSR to put pressure on North Vietnam to negotiate a peace settlement.
- Halt the escalating arms race.
- Create a new international order, which through arms control and trade would discourage the USSR from undermining NATO and the USA.
- By exposing the Communist bloc to Western finance and influence, eventually undermine communism itself.

### SOURCE D

From US Secretary of State Kissinger's briefing to US President Nixon before

**the Moscow meeting of 1972 (Nixon's underlining is shown). Quoted in H. Kissinger, *The Complete Memoirs*, Simon & Schuster, 2013 (e-book).**

*[Brezhnev] sees the US at once as a rival, mortal threat, model, source of assistance and partner in physical survival ... he no doubt wants to go down in history as the leader who brought peace and a better life to Russia. This requires conciliatory and cooperative policies toward us. Yet, he remains a convinced Communist who sees politics as a struggle with an ultimate winner; he intends the Soviet Union to be that winner... Brezhnev's gamble is that as these policies gather momentum ..., their effects will not undermine the very system from which Brezhnev draws his power and legitimacy. Our goal on the other hand is to achieve precisely such effects over the long run ...*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does **Source D** explain why both the USA and USSR supported a policy of *détente*?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of **Source D** by completing Worksheet 31 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Developments in Western Europe 1964–8

The Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in 1968 were the most significant achievements in the early period of *détente*. These agreements were welcome in Western Europe, but essentially they assumed a world divided into two blocs led by their respective superpowers.

By 1968, the Vietnam War was causing a rising wave of anti-Americanism. The USA was both failing to win the war and, as a result of its ruthless but ineffective military tactics, losing its position as the moral leader of the West. Its European allies rejected President Johnson's argument that the war was a vital part of the **global confrontation** with communism, and instead concentrated on easing tensions within Europe. This task was made easier by the fall of Khrushchev in October 1964 and his replacement by Brezhnev and Kosygin. Brezhnev (see page **168**), who rapidly emerged as the key figure in the USSR, was less erratic than Khrushchev and appeared to be more of a conciliator and **consensus** seeker, with whom the Western European leaders thought they could negotiate.

### France's withdrawal from NATO

Potentially, the disagreements over the Vietnam War and the increasing assertiveness of the Western European states could have destroyed NATO and have led to a US withdrawal from Western Europe. De Gaulle, the French president, took the lead in the attack on US influence in



Western Europe. In 1963, he vetoed Britain's application to join the European Economic Community, on the grounds that Britain was still too pro-American, and three years later he withdrew French forces from NATO and then expelled its headquarters from Paris. He followed this up with a visit to the USSR, where he announced that the European states should liberate themselves from the **bloc mentality** of the Cold War. He also did all he could to weaken the dollar at a time when the USA was beginning to come under financial pressure as a result of the costs of the Vietnam War.

## The US reaction

Given the prosperity of Western Europe and its refusal to assist the USA in Vietnam, and the determination of its leading states to pursue their own ways to *détente*, it was not surprising that, in 1967, US senator Michael Mansfield put forward a motion in the Senate urging the withdrawal of the majority of US troops from Europe. This attracted nearly half the votes of the Senate. Both to persuade Congress to continue to support the US military involvement in Europe and to prevent his allies from following the French example and leaving NATO, President Johnson committed himself to support *détente* and to negotiate 'mutual and balanced force reductions' with Moscow. This eventually led to the SALT I Treaty in 1972. He also stressed that his goal was not to 'continue the Cold War but end it'.

## The Harmel Report and the future of NATO

France's withdrawal from NATO set a dangerous precedent as growing disagreements with the USA over Vietnam might persuade other countries to follow France's example and also withdraw. To avert this, NATO adjusted its aims and organisation to take account of the new mood for *détente*. In December 1967, a NATO committee chaired by Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel drew up a report that committed NATO not only to defending Western Europe, but also to reaching a *détente* with the Warsaw Pact states. The Harmel Report redefined NATO's role in the age of *détente* and prevented the political fallout from the Vietnam War destroying the Western alliance.

---

### SOURCE E

**From 'The Report of the North Atlantic Council: The Future Tasks of the Alliance (Harmel Report)', 13 December 1967, available at the NATO website ([www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_67927.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_67927.htm)).**

*Since the North Atlantic treaty was signed in 1949, the international situation has changed significantly and the political tasks of the Alliance have assumed a new dimension. Amongst other developments, the Alliance has played a major part in stopping Communist expansion in Europe; the USSR has become one of the two world super powers but the Communist world is no longer monolithic; the Soviet doctrine of 'peaceful co-existence' has changed the nature of the confrontation with the west but not the basic problem ...*

*The Atlantic Alliance has two main functions. Its first main function is to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to defend the territory of member states ...*

*... the second function of the Alliance ... [is] to pursue the search for progress towards a*



*more stable relationship in which the underlying political issues can be solved ... The way to peace and stability in Europe rests in particular on the use of the Alliance constructively in the interests of détente. The participation of the USSR and USA will be necessary to achieve a settlement of the political problems in Europe.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

Study [Sources D](#) and [E](#). How far do they explain the reasons for the policy of *détente* carried out by the USA and NATO?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source E](#) by completing Worksheet 32 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Divisions within the Warsaw Pact

The Soviet retreat from Cuba, the growing atmosphere of *détente* and the Sino-Soviet split all combined to weaken Soviet control over Eastern Europe and provide some opportunities for the satellite states to pursue their own policies. Poland, for instance, wished to expand trade with the West, while Romania wanted to establish better relations with the FRG. In an attempt to stop these independent initiatives, the Warsaw Pact issued in 1966 the Bucharest Declaration, which tried to define what the whole Soviet bloc wanted to achieve through *détente*. This called for:

- the recognition of post-war frontiers in Eastern Europe
- the creation of a new European security system
- a veto on nuclear weapons for West Germany
- a programme for economic, scientific and technical cooperation between East and West.

## The Prague Spring

The Soviet government's efforts to consolidate its control over Eastern Europe and to co-ordinate the foreign and military policies of the Warsaw Pact suffered a serious setback when, in January 1968, Alexander Dubček became the first secretary of the Czech Communist Party. Like Nagy in Hungary in 1956 (see page [140](#)), he attempted to create a socialist system that would be based on the consent of the people, rather than one forced on them by the USSR, as had been the case in Eastern Europe since the late 1940s.

In April 1968, Dubček unveiled his programme for democratic change and modernisation of the economy, which marked the start of what was called the **Prague Spring**. In April, the Czech Communists announced a new programme for 'a new profoundly democratic model of Czechoslovak socialism conforming to Czechoslovak conditions'. Like Gorbachev later in the USSR (see page [205](#)), Dubček wanted to preserve socialism, but increasingly public opinion began to press for the creation of a democracy based on the Western model. In June, he

abolished censorship, leading to a flood of anti-Soviet propaganda being published in Czechoslovakia.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the Prague Spring by completing Worksheet 24 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The Soviet reaction

Inevitably, these developments began to worry Brezhnev and the other leaders of the Warsaw Pact, who, after meeting on 15 July, warned Dubček that they were ‘deeply disturbed’ about what was happening in Czechoslovakia. They ominously warned him that this was ‘the common concern’ of all the states in the Warsaw Pact.

Although Dubček reluctantly agreed to restore censorship, Brezhnev had no confidence that he would succeed and, during the night of 20–21 August 1968, twenty divisions of Warsaw Pact troops provided by the USSR, Hungary, Poland, the GDR and Bulgaria invaded Czechoslovakia and terminated the Prague Spring. In November, Brezhnev defended the invasion by again stressing that any threat to socialism in a Warsaw Pact country was also a threat to its allies. To counter this, collective intervention, as happened in Czechoslovakia, would be justified. This became known as the Brezhnev Doctrine and was only abandoned by Gorbachev in 1989.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia was, as Michel Debré, the French prime minister, put it, ‘a traffic accident on the road to *détente*’. It slowed down but did not halt progress. The elections of Richard Nixon to the US presidency in November 1968 and of Willy Brandt to the West German chancellorship in October 1969, with a mandate for his *Ostpolitik* policy, were soon to give *détente* fresh impetus.

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE ROAD TO *DÉTENTE* 1963–75



The following factors made <i>détente</i> in Europe increasingly attractive:	
After Cuba, the desire by both the USA and USSR to control the spread of nuclear weapons	
Both the USA and USSR wished for <i>détente</i> in Europe:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The USA was involved in Vietnam</li> <li>• The USSR faced the growth of Chinese power</li> </ul>	
The growing wish of the Western European states for <i>détente</i>	
Increasing trade contacts between the Eastern and Western blocs	
The acceptance by the West of the Brezhnev Doctrine after Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia, August 1968	

### 3 *Ostpolitik*

***What were the aims of Brandt's Ostpolitik and how did he seek to achieve them?***

Gradually, during the 1960s, the FRG began to abandon the Hallstein Doctrine (see page 98) and reconsider its policy towards the GDR and the Soviet bloc. The main person behind this new policy of *Ostpolitik* was **Willy Brandt**, who became German foreign secretary in 1966. The key to his policy was that German unification was a long-term goal that could only gradually be reached within the context of a European *détente*.

As chancellor of the FRG, Brandt negotiated a complex set of interlocking treaties which marked a major turning point in the Cold War. On one level his policy was primarily a matter of coming to terms with post-war Europe. This, of course, involved the recognition of the GDR regime, although his whole strategy, by defusing the tense situation between the two Germanys, was also aimed at leaving the door ajar for future unification. *Ostpolitik* was not conducted in a vacuum. Brandt had to gain the support of the USA and his NATO allies by emphasising that the FRG did not intend to quit NATO or the **European Community**. In the course of 1970–2, five sets of intricate and interdependent agreements were negotiated. First of all, four treaties were negotiated between the FRG individually with the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR, and then the Four-Power Treaty on Berlin between Britain, France, the USA and the USSR.

### The Moscow Treaty 1970

No progress could be made in *Ostpolitik* until relations between the FRG and the USSR had improved. The FRG's signing of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in 1969 (see page 177), its readiness to increase technological and economic links with the USSR and willingness to agree to a European security conference, which Moscow hoped would confirm its post-war control over Eastern Europe, were all preliminary concessions that helped to pave the way for a treaty

with Moscow.

After prolonged and difficult negotiations the ‘foundation stone of *Ostpolitik*’, as the British historian A.J. Nicholls, writing in 1994, called the Moscow Treaty, was eventually signed on 12 August 1970 by Brandt and Brezhnev. In this, the USSR and FRG declared that they had no territorial claims against any other state. The FRG recognised the ‘non-violability’ of both Poland’s western frontier and the inner German frontier. In a second part of the treaty, the FRG committed itself to negotiating treaties with Poland, the GDR and Czechoslovakia. While the FRG still did not officially recognise the GDR, it agreed to abandon the Hallstein Doctrine and accept that both Germanys would eventually become members of the UN.

The Soviets had, in effect, gained West German recognition of their European empire, yet this recognition was not unconditional. The West Germans also presented Brezhnev with a ‘letter on German unity’. This stressed the FRG’s right to work towards a state of peace in Europe in which ‘the German people regains its unity in free self-determination’. Similarly, the word ‘**inviolable**’, as applied to the Oder–Neisse line (see page 40) and the inner German frontier, rather than the preferred Soviet word ‘**immutable**’, arguably kept the door open for a later peaceful revision of the frontier. However, in reality, neither word made much difference. Unity would only happen when the USSR lost the will to prop up the GDR! Finally, the ratification of the treaty was made dependent on a Four-Power Treaty covering Berlin.

## The Warsaw and Prague Treaties

Negotiations with Poland ran parallel with the Moscow talks and were completed in December 1970. Both states recognised that they had no territorial demands on each other and that the Oder–Neisse line was ‘inviolable’. Trade and financial assistance from the FRG were to be increased, while the **ethnic Germans** still within Poland were to be allowed to emigrate to West Germany.

In June 1973, a similar agreement was signed with Czechoslovakia, which specifically revoked the Munich Treaty of 1938 (see page 12).

## Four-power negotiations over Berlin

In March 1970, four-power discussions began on the thorny problem of access to West Berlin. The involvement of Britain, France and the USA in these negotiations sent signals to both NATO and the Warsaw Pact that *Ostpolitik* would not lead to a weakening of the FRG’s links with the West. The Western allies wanted a settlement, underwritten by the USSR, that would finally confirm West Berlin’s links with the FRG and guarantee its freedom of access to the West.

At first, the Soviets were anxious to avoid making too many concessions, but two major factors made them responsive to Western demands:

- Their desire for a general European security conference.
- Their reluctance to alienate President Nixon at a time when he was planning to improve relations with China (see page 169). They feared that if the USSR followed too rigid a policy, they would only drive the USA and China closer together.

The Four-Power Treaty on Berlin, signed on 3 September 1971, was, to quote the historians L.

Bark and D.R. Gress, writing in 1989, a ‘milestone in the history of divided Berlin and divided Germany’. The Soviets conceded three vital principles:

- unimpeded traffic between West Berlin and the FRG
- recognition of West Berlin’s ties with the FRG
- the right for West Berliners to visit East Berlin.

In return, Britain, France and the USA agreed that the Western sectors of Berlin were not legally part of the FRG, even if, in practice, they had been so ever since West Berlin adopted the FRG’s constitution in 1950.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Get to grips with the Cold War 1963–75 by completing Worksheet 25 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The Basic Treaty

Once the Moscow Treaty and the agreement on Berlin had been signed, the way was open for direct negotiations between the GDR and FRG. For the GDR an agreement with the FRG was not without risk. If successful, it would undoubtedly secure the GDR’s international recognition, but at the continued risk of closer contact with the **magnetic social and economic forces of the FRG**. In July, Leonid Brezhnev stressed to the somewhat sceptical **Erich Honecker**, who had just replaced Ulbricht as the GDR leader, the solid advantages of the treaty for the GDR in that ‘[its] frontiers, its existence will be confirmed for all the world to see ...’. However, he also warned him that Brandt was aiming ultimately at the **social democratisation** of the GDR, and added: ‘It ... must not come to a process of *rapprochement* between the FRG and the GDR. ... Concentrate everything on the all-sided strengthening of the GDR, as you call it.’

First of all, a series of technical agreements on **transit traffic**, the rights of West Berliners to visit East Berlin and postal communications were concluded. Then the two states moved on to negotiate the more crucial Basic Treaty, which was signed in December 1972. In it, the FRG recognised the GDR as an equal and sovereign state and also accepted that both states should be represented at the UN. The FRG did, however, stress that it still considered the people of the GDR to have a common German citizenship, and in a ‘Letter Concerning German Unity’, which it presented to East Berlin, it repeated its determination to work peacefully for German reunification.

## The consequences of *Ostpolitik*

The existence of the two Germanys now seemed to be a permanent fact confirmed by treaty. The two German states joined the UN in 1973. Within their respective blocs, both the FRG and the GDR played increasingly important economic, military and political roles. Nothing, however, had changed the essential vulnerability of the GDR, whose very existence in the last resort still depended on Soviet bayonets, as the events of 1989–90 were to show (see pages [216–18](#)).

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of *Ostpolitik* by completing Worksheet 26 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### OSTPOLITIK

Willy Brandt needed to secure approval from the USA, USSR and NATO

Moscow Treaty, August 1970: FRG committed itself to recognising post-1945 frontiers

Berlin Treaty signed by the four occupying powers, September 1971: unimpeded transit rights to West Berlin recognised

Treaties with Poland, December 1970, and with Czechoslovakia, June 1973, confirmed 1945 borders

The Basic Treaty, December 1972: FRG gave up Hallstein Doctrine

## 4 The Helsinki Accords

### *Were the Helsinki Accords a triumph for Brezhnev?*

In July 1973, the conference on security and cooperation opened in Helsinki. The journalist Robert Hutchings, writing in 1997, called it the ‘centrepiece of Soviet and East European diplomacy’ in the 1970s. Essentially, the USSR wanted to persuade the West to recognise as permanent the territorial and political division of Europe made at Yalta (see page 30), while stepping up economic, scientific and technological cooperation. It was anxious to exploit Western know-how and technology to modernise its economy.

The USA initially consented in 1969 to holding the conference in return for a Soviet agreement on Berlin and the opening of the SALT I negotiations (see page 177). It also used the conference as a means to extract from the USSR concessions on human rights, which in time could bring about fundamental changes in the Soviet bloc and lead to a loosening of Soviet control over the satellites. The subsequent Helsinki Agreement marked the high point of *détente* and was signed on 1 August 1975 by 33 European states, Canada and the USA.

The agreement was divided into three sections, or ‘baskets’, as they were called:

- The first dealt with ‘questions relating to security in Europe’ and laid down a set of principles to guide the participating states in their relations with each other. These included peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and the ‘inviolability’ of frontiers. Brezhnev had hoped initially that he would be able to negotiate a peace treaty permanently guaranteeing the new post-war frontiers, but under West German

pressure, Henry Kissinger, the US secretary of state, managed to persuade the Soviets to accept the eventual possibility of a 'peaceful change to frontiers'.

- 'Basket two' concerned cooperation in 'the field of economics, of science and technology and the environment'.
- 'Basket three' called for 'cooperation in humanitarian and other fields'. This meant expanding trade, tourism and cultural contacts between the two blocs, as well as promoting the reunion of families split by the iron curtain.
- Finally, there was to be a follow-up conference two years later to work out further measures for European security and cooperation.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the development of *détente* by completing Worksheet 27 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Who gained most from Helsinki?

At first glance, perhaps, it could be argued that Brezhnev had achieved Western recognition of the Soviet Empire and an end to all attempts to undermine it. 'Right-wing' politicians, such as British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and US President Ronald Reagan, saw it, to quote the latter, as a '**new Yalta**', placing 'the American seal of approval on the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe'. While there was some truth in this, Helsinki's stress on human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the increased East–West contact it encouraged, did in the medium term contain the potential for undermining the unpopular Soviet-dominated regimes in Eastern Europe. The Helsinki treaties have been called 'a time bomb planted in the heart of the Soviet Empire'. The new US president, Jimmy Carter, for example, made human rights in Eastern Europe one of the priorities of his foreign policy. In February 1977, much to the annoyance of Brezhnev, he championed the rights of the dissident Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source F](#) by completing Worksheet 33 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### SOURCE F

**From 'Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States', 1 August 1975, US Department of State (available at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)).**

*The participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion ... Within this framework the participating States will recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with*



*others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.*

*The participating States on whose territory national minorities exist will respect the right of persons belonging to such minorities to equality before the law, will afford them the full opportunity for the actual enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and will, in this manner, protect their legitimate interests in this sphere.*

*The participating States recognize the universal significance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for which is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation among themselves as among all States ...*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source F](#) explain why the USA and its allies signed the Helsinki Accords?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Get to grips with the USSR and *détente* by completing Worksheet 28 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of Brezhnev by completing Worksheet 29 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE HELSINKI ACCORDS



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## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The years from 1963 to 1975 were a period of *détente*. The USA, distracted by the Vietnam War, wanted a stable Europe, while the USSR was facing a growing challenge from the PRC and hoped to consolidate gains made in Eastern Europe in 1945. The European allies of both the USSR and the USA increasingly tried to exploit these superpower concerns to pursue more independent policies, but in Czechoslovakia, demands for economic and political reform led to intervention by Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968. However, this did not stop the development of *détente* in Europe and between the USA and USSR.

Within Europe, Brandt's *Ostpolitik* led in 1970–3 to the interlocking treaties between the FRG, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the GDR, which recognised the frontiers of 1945 and the legal existence of the GDR. In September 1971, the Four-Power Berlin Treaty was signed, which regulated the status of West Berlin and the rights of access enjoyed by the Western powers. Progress was also made in controlling the use and spread of nuclear weapons through the Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968, and SALT I, while it was agreed that a second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) should be convened. The resulting treaty was eventually signed in 1979. At the Helsinki Conference of 1975, the USSR again achieved the recognition of Eastern Europe's post-1945 frontiers, but at the cost of concessions on human rights.

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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

Why did mutual distrust between the party leadership of the PRC and USSR develop between 1958 and 1960?

Why did relations between the USSR and PRC continue to deteriorate between 1964 and 1969?

Why did the Vietnam War escalate after August 1964?

What difficulties did the USA encounter in its attempts to end the war in Vietnam?

How successful were the attempts to control the development of nuclear weapons?

How did the Western European states attempt to pursue a policy of *détente* with the Warsaw Pact states?

Why did relations deteriorate between France and the USA?

What was the US reaction to the assertiveness of the Western European states?

How divided was the Warsaw Pact during the period 1963–9?

To what extent was the Prague Spring a threat to Soviet control of Eastern Europe?

Why was the Moscow Treaty the key to Brandt's *Ostpolitik*?

How far did the Four-Power Treaty on Berlin solve the Berlin problem?

To what extent was the Basic Treaty a victory for the GDR and USSR?

What were the terms of the Helsinki Accord?

Did the East or the West benefit more from the terms of the Helsinki Accord?

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## Question practice: AQA

### Essay question

'*Ostpolitik* and the Helsinki Agreement principally benefited the USSR.' Assess the validity of this view. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse in terms of who benefited – and not just the USSR. Aim to reach a judgement that either agrees or partially agrees or (less likely) totally disagrees.

### Source analysis question

With reference to [Sources B](#) (page [172](#)), [D](#) (page [179](#)) and [E](#) (page [180](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the development of the Cold War in 1964–75. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each of the three sources in turn. Include the significance of the tone where this is relevant. Make sure that you focus on the wording in the question.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

Assess the reasons for improved relations between the USA and the USSR from 1963 to 1975. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Explain a range of reasons for the improved relations, and for each one discussed, reach an interim judgement as to its importance. These interim judgements will be used to reach an overall judgement as to the relative importance of the reasons.

Which did more to bring about *détente* in Europe? i) *Ostpolitik*. ii) Attempts to control the development of nuclear weapons, 1963–79. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii). [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Explain the ways in which each of the issues helped to bring about *détente*. It is then important to reach a judgement as to which had the greater impact and explain the ways in which its impact was greater.

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How effective was *détente* in improving international relations between 1963 and 1975? [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Establish a range of criteria against which to judge effectiveness. For each criterion, analyse how effective it was in improving international relations. This might include issues such as the arms race or you might approach this event by event. Responses should also consider whether there were other issues that helped to improve international relations in this period. In analysing each issue or event, an interim judgement should be reached as to its effectiveness. These interim judgements should then be used to reach an overall judgement as to the effectiveness of *détente*, which may involve weighing it up against other factors that helped.

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## CHAPTER 8

# The Cold War 1975–91

This chapter investigates the outbreak and course of what some historians refer to as the ‘New Cold War’ in Africa, the Caribbean and Afghanistan, as well as in Europe. It explores the cost and failure of Soviet policies and the eventual collapse of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact. It also reviews the decline of the Soviet and COMECON economies and the impact of Gorbachev’s policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* through the following themes:

- The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America 1975–83
- The ‘Third’ or ‘New Cold War’ 1979–85
- Gorbachev: *glasnost* and *détente* 1985–9
- The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe 1989–95
- The disintegration of the USSR 1990–1

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## KEY DATES

<b>1975–6</b>		Angolan Civil War
<b>1977</b>	<b>April</b>	Soviet aid to Ethiopia began
<b>1979</b>	<b>Dec. 27</b>	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
<b>1980</b>	<b>Dec. 13</b>	Martial law declared in Poland
<b>1982</b>	<b>Nov.</b>	Brezhnev succeeded by Andropov
	<b>March</b>	Reagan announced development of Strategic Defence Initiative
<b>1985</b>	<b>March 12</b>	Gorbachev became USSR leader
<b>1986</b>	<b>Oct. 2</b>	USSR–US summit at Reykjavík
<b>1989</b>	<b>Feb.</b>	Soviet troops withdrawn from Afghanistan
	<b>June</b>	Elections in Poland
	<b>Sept.</b>	Hungary allowed German Democratic Republic citizens through frontier to Austria
	<b>Nov. 9</b>	Berlin Wall breached
<b>1990</b>	<b>Oct. 3</b>	Germany reunified
<b>1991</b>	<b>Jan.</b>	Soviet forces intervened in Baltic republics
	<b>July</b>	Warsaw Pact dissolved
	<b>Dec. 26</b>	USSR formally dissolved
<b>1992–6</b>		Croatian–Serbian War

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## 1 The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America 1975–83

***Why was the USSR able to extend its influence so successfully in Africa?***

***In what ways did US policy in Africa and the Caribbean show the limits of its power?***

International developments during the period 1975–85 were to confirm US President Nixon's comment that '*détente* does not mean the end of danger ... *détente* is not the same as lasting peace'. The USSR and its allies intensified their efforts to intervene and support sympathetic regimes in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South America. These actions began to undermine support for *détente* both in the USA and in Britain as they raised serious questions about the ultimate motives of the USSR.

## **The collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa**

By the early 1970s, the liberation movements in the former Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau were becoming a focus for Cold War rivalry between the USA and the USSR. In 1974, the situation was transformed by the so-called '**Carnation Revolution**' in Portugal. The army staged a coup and installed a new Portuguese government that was determined to end the fighting by granting its colonies independence. In Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau it was possible to form stable relatively unaligned regimes, but in Angola a three-sided civil war broke out between the Marxist **MPLA** and the two non-Marxist parties, the **FNLA** and **UNITA**.

## **Foreign intervention and the Angolan Civil War**

The civil war in Angola was also a **proxy war** in which covert assistance was given by the USA, the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the USSR, in efforts to ensure that a party hostile to their interests did not win the war:

- Having extracted itself from the Vietnam conflict, the USA was not willing to become heavily involved in Angola, but it wished to avoid a victory of the Communist MPLA which would allow the Soviets influence there. It, therefore, allocated some \$50 million for the recruiting of mercenaries and the training and equipping of troops in the FNLA and UNITA movements. It also airlifted in armaments and sent in a large number of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) advisers. However, in December 1975, the US Senate, which was determined to prevent a growing American military interest in Angola that might escalate into a 'second Vietnam', voted to block all funding for covert operations there.
- The PRC wanted to prevent the victory of the Soviet-backed MPLA because it feared that this would strengthen the USSR in the developing world and so enable it to put more pressure on the PRC. About 300 Chinese instructors were sent to help the FNLA, as well as 50 Korean technical experts. Chinese and US diplomats also began to meet in Beijing to discuss the progress of the war in Angola and arrange supplies of equipment and money.
- Brezhnev was initially wary of intervention in Angola as he feared its impact on *détente*, but,



under pressure from his own advisers and the Cubans, and also as a reaction to US intervention, he did eventually agree to transport 12,000 Cuban troops, along with tanks and missiles, to Angola.

## The victory of the MPLA

Cuban troops played a vital role in securing victory for the MPLA. Initially, UNITA was given powerful backing by South Africa, which was worried about the impact of a Communist victory on its own frontiers. By mid-November 1975, the UNITA army, led by South African troops, had almost reached Luanda, the capital of Angola, but the MPLA was saved by large-scale Cuban intervention. By December 1975, the Cubans had halted the South African/UNITA advance and inflicted two defeats on their forces. However, the US Senate's decision to terminate military assistance to FNLA and UNITA and its allies cut off military supplies from South Africa, and ensured the withdrawal of its troops from Angola. By March 1976, the MPLA was victorious.

## The consequences

For the USSR, and especially Cuba, the victory of the MPLA, together with the triumph of communism in Vietnam, seemed to confirm that the newly independent states in the developing world were ready to embrace Soviet-style communism. A sense of optimism swept through the Soviet Communist Party, while Castro felt that he had avenged himself on the USA after the humiliation of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962.

For many Americans, on the other hand, the triumph of the Soviet–Cuban-backed MPLA seemed to make a mockery of the ‘Helsinki spirit’ and *détente*, and exposed the post-Vietnam weakness of the USA.

## Ethiopia

By early 1974, the **global oil crisis**, which saw the price of oil quadruple in many countries, caused severe economic problems and social unrest in Ethiopia. In 1974, the army seized power, murdered the Emperor Haile Selassie and established a leftist regime under Colonel **Mengistu**, which was to give the USSR further opportunities to extend its influence in Africa.

During the 1960s, Haile Selassie had depended mainly on the USA for economic and military aid, but in 1974 the USA, enfeebled by the Watergate scandal (see page **175**) and its defeat in Vietnam, did nothing to help him. In February 1977, Mengistu murdered his political rivals and established a personal dictatorship.

Suspecting that the USA was covertly assisting its internal enemies, he now turned for assistance to the USSR and the Soviet bloc in Europe. In April 1978, responding to CIA reports that Mengistu was preparing to remove US advisers from Ethiopia, President **Jimmy Carter** pre-emptively recalled all US personnel in protest at Mengistu's terror campaign against his political rivals.

## Soviet intervention

Although approached by Mengistu after 1974 with requests for aid and military assistance, the USSR reacted cautiously. It was aware that the USA in 1974–6 was still supplying Ethiopia with arms, while it was itself supplying Ethiopia's enemy, Somalia, with weapons. With the coup of February 1977, the attitude of the USSR changed. Mengistu convinced the Soviet ambassador that Ethiopia would be a potentially loyal regional ally. The USSR agreed immediately to send large arms shipments to Ethiopia. By mid-April, according to Western sources, more than 100 tanks and armoured personnel carriers had already been delivered. For the USSR, the alliance with Ethiopia became its most ambitious intervention in Africa. It gave the USSR influence in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea area through its access to Eritrean ports such as Assab and Massawa.

Ethiopia's neighbour, Somalia, exploited the chaos caused by Mengistu's coup to attempt to annex **Ogaden**. In 1975, the Somali government established the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) to conduct guerrilla operations within Ogaden against Ethiopia. In 1977, Somali troops advanced into Eritrea and took the important town of Jijiga. After initially unsuccessful attempts to mediate, the Soviets engaged in a large-scale operation to save the Ethiopian revolution. Between September 1977 and May 1978, they flew in \$1 billion worth of military equipment to Ethiopia and 1000 military personnel to organise the counter-offensive against the Somalis. Fidel Castro also sent more than 11,000 troops from Cuba. Jijiga was recaptured and the Somali army defeated.

The conventional war had been won by Ethiopia, although WSLF guerrilla groups remained active in Ogaden until 1980. The USSR had now become a major player in African affairs. To many African leaders, the USSR was seen as a useful counterweight to US and European influence. In Ethiopia, Mengistu attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to rebuild Ethiopian society along Soviet lines. He was helped by thousands of experts from the Soviet bloc, the largest assistance programme the USSR had undertaken since helping China in the 1950s.

## The impact on US–USSR relations

Large-scale Soviet intervention in Ethiopia further threatened the policy of *détente* in Europe by antagonising President Carter's administration. The Republicans' argument that the USSR was exploiting the spirit of *détente* to strengthen its position in Africa helped **Ronald Reagan** to defeat Carter in the November 1980 presidential elections. It also led to increasing reluctance by the US Senate to ratify the second Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT II) Treaty.

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### SOURCE A

**From a speech by Ronald Reagan on 25 March 1978. Quoted in Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Intervention and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, page 283.**

*If the Soviets are successful – and it looks more and more as if they will be – then the entire Horn of Africa will be under their influence, if not their control. From there, they can threaten the sea lanes carrying oil to western Europe and the United States, if and when they choose. More immediately, control of the Horn of Africa would give Moscow the ability to destabilize those governments on the Arabian peninsula which have proven themselves strongly anti-Communist ... in a few years we may be faced with the prospect of a Soviet*

### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source A](#) explain the significance of Mengistu's victory in Ethiopia?

---

## US–Soviet rivalry in the Caribbean and Latin America

US influence was strengthened in South America when the socialist regime of Salvador Allende in Chile was overthrown by a military coup in 1973 and General Augusto Pinochet was installed as president. This was welcomed by President Nixon, who restarted the aid programme to Chile, which had been halted when Allende had been elected in 1970.

This neutralised the Communist threat in Chile, but by the end of the 1970s, Washington was alarmed by growing Communist influence in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Grenada, all of which were in the USA's own 'backyard'. The left-wing and strongly anti-American Sandinista Party had come to power in Nicaragua and supported rebel activity in nearby El Salvador. In the small island of Grenada, a Marxist party had also seized control, and built with Cuban help a 12,000-foot (3600-metre) jet aircraft runway, which the Soviets had been granted permission to use. In August 1981, the USSR agreed to supply Nicaragua with military assistance, which included tanks, helicopters and surface-to-air missiles.

Central America had now become a major focus for Cold War rivalry. Having suffered humiliating reverses in Vietnam, Angola and Ethiopia, the Reagan government was determined to counter Soviet- and Cuban-backed Communist regimes in Central America:

- US troops invaded Grenada in October 1983, overthrowing the Communist regime established there in 1979.
- In El Salvador, the USA countered Nicaragua's efforts to subvert the government by pumping in aid and sending military advisers.
- The USA waged a covert war against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua by equipping and supplying anti-Sandinista rebels (collectively referred to as the Contras) despite Congress's decision to prohibit the funding.

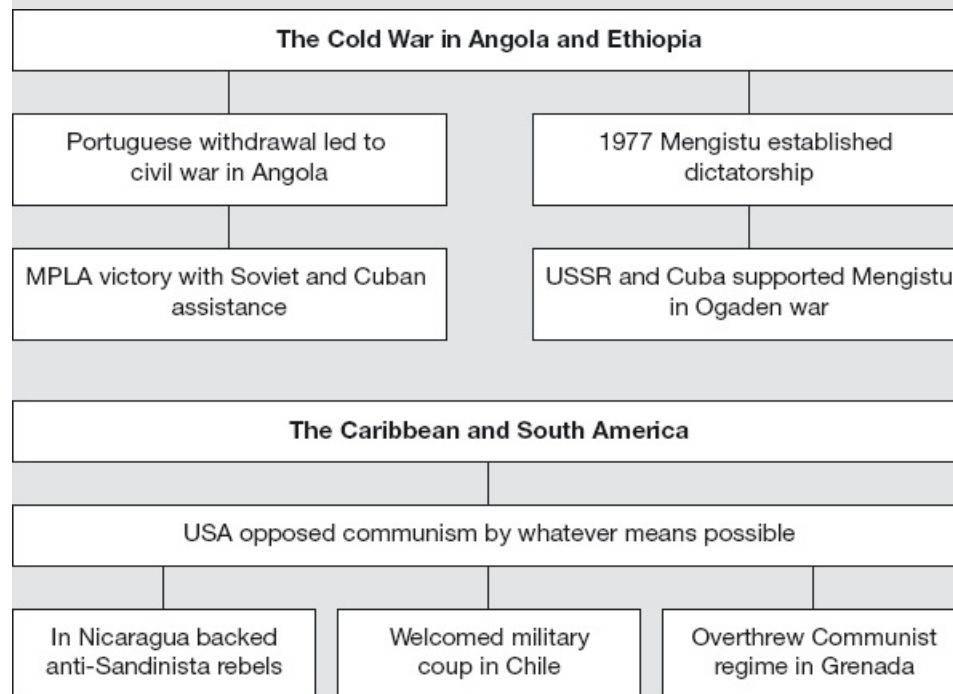
These measures were only partially successful. The invasion of Grenada was a great political success for Reagan in that old-fashioned **gunboat diplomacy** pleased the patriotic vote in the USA. Thanks to American aid, the Sandinistas were also denied victory in El Salvador. However, Reagan's defiance of Congress's ban on funding the Contras in Nicaragua led to a major political scandal, the **Iran–Contra affair**, which weakened Reagan's government without defeating the Sandinistas. In the end, the Sandinistas were defeated not by the Contras but in the election of 1990 by a **centrist coalition** (see page [206](#)).

The historian George Herring argued in 2008 that, in reality, 'Central America during the Reagan years provided the most graphic example of the limits of U.S. power'. The reason for Congress's

refusal to authorise large-scale aid to the Contras was the fear that this would end in military intervention and a war that would be difficult to stop. The long shadow of its humiliation in Vietnam still lay over US foreign policy.

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE COLD WAR IN AFRICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND SOUTH AMERICA 1975–83



## 2 The ‘Third’ or ‘New Cold War’ 1979–85

### *How justified are historians in calling the years 1979–85 the ‘New Cold War’?*

Between 1979 and 1985, a series of events occurred which triggered what some historians call the ‘Third Cold War’ or ‘New Cold War’. They use this term to describe the growing tension between the Soviet bloc and the Western powers which reached levels that had not existed since the Berlin and Cuban crises of 1958–62 (see [Chapter 6](#)). These events were:

- the medium-range missile controversy
- the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
- the Solidarity crisis in Poland 1980–2
- the threat of deteriorating US–USSR relations to *Ostpolitik*.

## The medium-range missile controversy

The first major blow to the Helsinki spirit occurred when the Soviet Union placed SS-20 medium-range nuclear missiles in central Europe in 1976. These weapons could reach targets between 600 and 5000 kilometres away, threatening all NATO states in Europe. In response, NATO initiated, in December 1979, a policy that if an arms agreement could not be reached with the Soviets, the USA would deploy **Pershing II** and **Cruise missiles** in Europe by 1983.

This agreement, however, was difficult to reach as the Soviet Union had in the meantime invaded Afghanistan (see below). In November 1981, US President Reagan suggested that both sides destroy their *existing* medium-range nuclear weapons, but the Soviets immediately rejected this as a one-sided gesture that would require them to destroy their weapons, while the USA had not yet deployed its up-to-date missiles. As the Soviets calculated that growing popular opposition from the **Greens** and **left-wing protest groups** would prevent their eventual deployment in Western Europe, accepting Reagan's proposal could only undo a Soviet military advantage. This was, however, a miscalculation: despite continued protest, Pershing and Cruise missiles were installed between 1983 and 1987 in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy, eliminating any Soviet strategic advantage.

## The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

The historian S.R. Ashton, writing in 1989, has observed that 'if a date has to be fixed for the onset of a New Cold War, it would be late 1979 when Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan'.

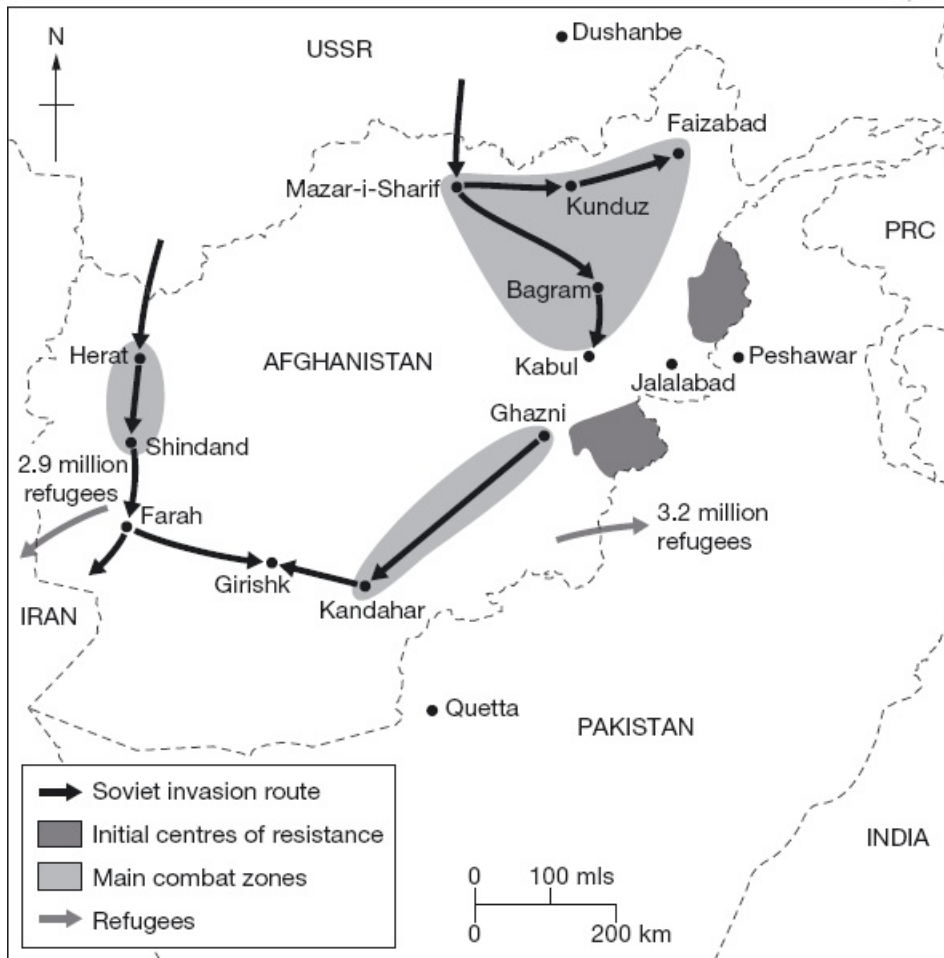
In April 1978, a coup, mounted independently of the USSR by the local Afghan Communist Party, which was composed of two rival groups, overthrew the monarchy. This regime then embarked on a radical reforming programme that provoked widespread opposition from the conservative Islamic forces in the countryside, which threatened the existence of the new regime. Moscow became increasingly worried about the impact that this opposition would have on the growth of **Islamic fundamentalism** in the Muslim republics of southern Russia. If successful, Moscow also feared that it would be another link in the **global encirclement** of the USSR at a time when China had established diplomatic relations with the USA (see page 169). Soviet fears were also reinforced by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) decision on 12 December to deploy Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe. It consequently came to the conclusion that if the Communist regime was to survive, the unpopular Communist President Hafizullah Amin would have to be removed and replaced by his Communist rival Babrak Kamal.

### Soviet military operations

Between 24 and 27 December 1979, 50,000 Soviet troops were flown into Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Within months, there were 100,000 Soviet troops stationed in the country. On 27 December, Soviet soldiers attacked the presidential palace, executed President Amin and replaced him with Babrak Kamal, the Communist politician. The Soviets hoped rapidly to crush the Muslim fundamentalist rebels and stabilise the government so that they could withdraw their troops within a few weeks. Soviet forces were able to occupy Kabul and the other major cities, but they encountered two major military problems:

- The Afghan army disintegrated, leaving Soviet forces to conduct all military actions and secure the country.
- Babrak Kamal did not have the backing of the Afghan people, who felt that he was a puppet of

the Soviets. This led them to support the *mujahedin* who wished to establish an Islamic government for the country.



**Figure 8.1** The Soviet campaign in Afghanistan 1979–86. To what extent does this map help to explain the Soviet failure in Afghanistan?

Faced by up to 200,000 *mujahedin*, the Soviet military controlled only one-fifth of the country. By 1985, it was clear that the war could not be won as the *mujahedin* factions had their bases in the inaccessible mountainous areas along the border with Pakistan. The unwinnable conflict demoralised Soviet forces and became a substantial financial strain on the USSR.

## US reaction 1979–87

The USA feared that the Soviets intended to take control of Afghanistan as a step towards further expansion towards the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, which contained much of the world's oil supply. President Carter responded by banning grain exports to the USSR, while the Senate refused to ratify the SALT II Treaty (see page 178). The USA also boycotted the 1980 Olympic Games that were held in Moscow.

More importantly, the USA financed the supply of weapons to the Afghan *mujahedin* with money distributed through agencies in neighbouring Pakistan. In 1986, President Reagan decided to send the *mujahedin* new lightweight ground-to-air missiles, which rapidly diminished Soviet



air superiority, and allowed the guerrillas to share information from US satellite and communications networks.

## The reaction of the People's Republic of China (PRC)

The PRC denounced the invasion of Afghanistan, cancelling the Sino-Soviet talks which were due to start in 1980. In May 1980, China's minister of defence, Geng Biao, visited the USA, which approved the export from the PRC of 400 items of advanced military technology to the *mujahedin*.

## The reaction of Western Europe

Britain, under its new prime minister, **Margaret Thatcher**, supported the line taken by the USA. The FRG and France, while condemning the invasion of Afghanistan at the United Nations (UN), were initially unwilling to let it destroy the *détente* that *Ostpolitik* had created in Europe. Many Europeans argued that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was no different from the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (see page 182). In both situations, the USSR acted merely to preserve Communist governments in neighbouring states.

## The Solidarity crisis in Poland 1980–2

Poland was, in many ways, the key country in the Soviet bloc:

- strategically it lay on the main route to the West
- it provided about one-third of the combined forces of the Warsaw Pact
- it had the largest population of the satellite states: 36 million.

Consequently, any instability in Poland inevitably threatened the whole cohesion of the Soviet bloc. By the summer of 1980, Poland was facing a major economic crisis. The rising cost of oil forced up prices and the economic recession in the West meant that Poland had a diminishing market for its exports. The government had also failed to modernise the economy and make it more competitive.

In 1980, strikes broke out in the shipyards in Gdańsk over the question of price increases. The government made far-reaching economic and political concessions, and in August recognised the **Solidarity movement** as an independent trade union. At first, it tried to claim that this concession applied only to Gdańsk, but this provoked a wave of labour unrest, culminating in the threat of a national strike. Membership of Solidarity rose to nearly 8 million, and it was supported by both Polish intellectuals and the Roman Catholic Church, which had been greatly strengthened by the election of a Polish pope, John Paul II, in 1978.

Both Brezhnev and the other Warsaw Pact leaders urged the Polish prime minister, Stanisław Kania, to crush the 'anti-Socialist opposition forces'. Honecker, the East German leader, wanted Brezhnev to send in troops. On 28 November 1980, he warned Brezhnev that 'any delay in acting against them would mean death – the death of socialist Poland'. Warsaw Pact forces were mobilised in early December, but at the last moment intervention was cancelled as Kania convinced Brezhnev that he could restore order himself. US warnings against the use of force were probably also a powerful deterrent.



In 1981, Solidarity began to call for further drastic political changes. At the ninth Congress of the Polish Communist Party, delegates attacked the party leaders and even began to dismantle the party's organisational structure. Once more, the question of Soviet intervention arose. The Americans called on the USSR to allow Poland to solve the crisis itself, which arguably indicated to Wojciech Jaruzelski, Kania's successor, that Washington would tolerate a declaration of **martial law** provided Soviet troops did not cross the frontier. In December, Moscow agreed to a declaration of martial law and in October 1982 Solidarity was outlawed.

## Deteriorating US–USSR relations: *Ostpolitik* under threat

*Ostpolitik*, which was a product of *détente* (see page 183), was inevitably threatened by the 'New Cold War'. Both the German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who had played a leading role in alerting the Western alliance to the dangers of the SS-20s, and his successor, Helmut Kohl, tried to protect it from the consequences of the sharply deteriorating East–West relations. At Tito's funeral in Belgrade in May 1980, Schmidt observed to Honecker that the European states must ensure that 'the really big brothers don't get nervous'. A month later he visited Moscow, where he managed to persuade Brezhnev, in principle, to negotiate with the USA on the crucial question of intermediate nuclear missiles, although little was achieved in subsequent talks in Madrid in 1980–3.

It is arguable that by 1980 *Ostpolitik* was beginning to degenerate into an open appeasement of Moscow and the Eastern European regimes. While the West German and French governments did condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and pointedly remarked that *détente* 'could not withstand another shock' like that, they did not join London and Washington in criticising the Polish government's reaction to Solidarity. Indeed, no less a person than the former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt actually condemned Solidarity for threatening the stability of the Polish regime! When martial law was declared by the Polish government in December 1981, Schmidt went out of his way to avoid criticising it. He was unwilling to sacrifice what had already been achieved by *Ostpolitik*, in improving relations between the two Germanys, for the sake of Poland. By the time the Pershing and Cruise missiles were deployed in the FRG in November 1983, Schmidt had been replaced by Kohl, who also took great care to minimise the impact of this action on *Ostpolitik*.

## Years of tension 1981–4

When Ronald Reagan became the US president in January 1981 he immediately increased expenditure on armaments, so that it amounted to 30 per cent of all government spending between 1981 and 1985.

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### SOURCE B

**From President Reagan's speech to the British parliament, 8 June 1982 (available from [www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/60882a](http://www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/60882a)).**

*I have discussed on other occasions ... the elements of Western policies toward the Soviet*

*Union to safeguard our interests and protect the peace. What I am describing now is a plan and a hope for the long term – the march of freedom and democracy which will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash-heap of history as it has left other tyrannies which stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people. And that's why we must continue our efforts to strengthen NATO ...*

*Our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, but let it be clear we maintain this strength in the hope it will never be used, for the ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world will not be bombs and rockets, but a test of wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How valuable are [Sources A](#) (page 195) and [B](#) to an historians studying US policy towards the USSR 1975–85?

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## ‘Star Wars’

In November 1982, Brezhnev died and was replaced by Yuri Andropov. Already concerned by the large increase in US military expenditure, Andropov was confronted a few months later by a major challenge by Washington. In 1983, Reagan announced the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), also commonly called ‘Star Wars’, which was planned to be an anti-ballistic missile shield composed of nuclear missiles and laser-armed satellites that would protect the USA from attack. This essentially meant that, if ever fully deployed, SDI would make obsolete the Soviet Union’s ability to threaten the USA, while, without a similar defence system, the Soviet Union would remain vulnerable to attack by the USA. The ramifications of this were tremendous for international diplomacy and threatened to end the balance of power between the two superpowers in favour of the USA.

## The shooting down of the South Korean airliner

On 1 September 1983, tension between the USA and USSR was further increased when a Soviet fighter aircraft destroyed a South Korean passenger aircraft, which had flown into Soviet air space, killing all 269 people on board, including 61 US citizens. As the plane was way off course, its lights switched off and unresponsive to warning shots fired by Soviet aircraft, Soviet air defence had taken it for an American or Chinese military reconnaissance plane. The USSR therefore refused to accept any blame, leading Reagan to describe the incident as ‘an act of unprecedented barbarism’. Andropov responded that his government felt that it could no longer do business with the USA. In November 1983, relations were so poor that Andropov feared that an annually scheduled NATO military exercise might be a cover for a nuclear attack on the USSR.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of the New Cold War by completing Worksheet 34 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE 'THIRD' OR 'NEW COLD WAR' 1979–85



## 3 Gorbachev: *glasnost* and *détente* 1985–9

### *What were Gorbachev's international and domestic aims?*

After Brezhnev's death in 1982, there was a rapid turnover of Soviet leaders during the subsequent three years which inevitably weakened the effectiveness of Soviet foreign and domestic policy. When Andropov died in February 1984, the Soviet Politburo chose Konstantin Chernenko, a cautious and elderly man in poor health, to succeed him. He agreed to reopen negotiations with the USSR for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which had been broken off when the USA installed nuclear missiles in Europe in 1983. These opened in Geneva in March 1985, the very month that Chernenko died and was replaced by Mikhail Gorbachev.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the decline of the USSR 1979–89 by completing Worksheet 30 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## The problems facing Mikhail Gorbachev

Gorbachev inherited a difficult situation:

- The collapse of *détente* in the late 1970s between the USA and USSR had led to a new and expensive arms race.
- The USSR, like the USA in the 1960s, was increasingly suffering from **global overstretch**. It was fighting an unwinnable war in Afghanistan and was also giving financial and military aid to left-wing regimes that had seized power in Angola and the Horn of Africa (see pages **192–6**). All of this cost a great deal of money.
- The Soviet economy was stagnating and desperately needed both technological and financial input from the West.

Gorbachev's response to these challenges was to launch an ambitious attempt to modernise the USSR within, while renewing *détente* with the West and ultimately ending the Cold War. It was a gamble that ended in the collapse of the USSR.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of key events 1985–95 by completing Worksheet 31 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## USSR's economic weakness

It was the economic weakness of the USSR and the COMECON states that was a key factor in the collapse of communism and the disintegration of the USSR by 1991. Yet, until at least 1960, their economies had performed relatively well. One reason for this was that the main industrial technology of the time was based on large productive units, such as car and tractor factories, and heavy industry, particularly coal and steel, which could function effectively as large units controlled by a central planning system.

The system lacked competent factory and business managers, and was poor at adapting to supplying at competitive prices the multitude of consumer goods that were available to the capitalist states. In the early 1960s, Soviet economist Yevsei Liberman and Ota Šikin from Czechoslovakia put forward ideas for decentralising the economy to allow decisions of production, design and pricing, and so on, to be taken by local factory managers. In Czechoslovakia these ideas began to be realised between 1965 and 1968, but after the termination of the Prague Spring (see page **181**), such experiments were discouraged for fear that they might lead to growing demands for political concessions.

There was, instead, a return to the Stalinist style of centralised control of the economy with its emphasis on heavy industry. For a time this did appear to work. *Détente* and *Ostpolitik* opened up the way for generous Western loans to the USSR and the satellite states, which helped to keep energy prices down and pay for massive industrial projects, but by the early 1980s the Eastern bloc economies were falling far behind the West. The total production of the USSR, for instance, was only 37 per cent of the **gross national product (GNP)** of the USA. The Western European economies had been badly hit by the escalating rises in oil prices, which started in 1973, but they had responded to this challenge by modernising their economies and developing new industries

and technologies. The USSR and its Eastern European satellites had failed to do this. The USSR had certainly benefited from the rise in oil prices in the 1970s as a major oil producer, but most of the money earned through its oil exports was spent on armaments, aid to the developing world and the import of grain, which tripled between 1973 and 1981.

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### SOURCE C

**From Soviet periodical *Novy Mir*, No. 6, by Nikolai Shmelevin, 1987. Quoted in M. McCauley, *Gorbachev*, Longman, 1998, page 68.**

*At present our economy is characterized by shortages [and] imbalances ... unmanageable, and almost unplannable ... Industry now rejects up to 80 per cent of technical decisions and inventions ... the working masses have reached a state of almost total lack of interest in ... honest labour ... Apathy, indifference, thieving ... have become mass phenomena, with simultaneous aggressive envy towards those who are capable of earning. There have appeared signs of ... physical degradation of a large part of the population, through drunkenness and idleness. Finally there is disbelief in the officially announced objectives and purposes, in the very possibility of a more rational economic and social organization of life. Clearly, all this cannot be quickly overcome – years, perhaps generations, will be needed.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

How far does [Source C](#) explain the reasons for Soviet weakness in 1987?

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source C](#) by completing Worksheet 35 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Mikhail Gorbachev



1931  
1970

Born in Stavropol in southern Russia  
Appointed first secretary of the Stavropol

	Regional Committee
1979	Joined the Politburo
1985	Elected general secretary of the USSR
1986	Launched the policies of <i>glasnost</i> and <i>perestroika</i>
1987	Called for multi-candidate elections in the USSR
1988	Announced the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine
1990	Received Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending the Cold War
1991	Soviet hardliners launched an unsuccessful coup against him and he resigned a few weeks later

### Early career

Gorbachev was born into a peasant family and initially worked on a collective farm. He studied law at Moscow University and then worked as an official for the Soviet Communist Party, first in Stavropol and then in Moscow, where in 1974 he became first secretary to the Supreme Soviet. In 1985, he was elected general secretary of the USSR by the Politburo.

### Career as general secretary

When Gorbachev became general secretary, compared to his elderly and sick predecessors, he appeared a youthful and dynamic leader. His great aim was to modernise the USSR, and the two key words *glasnost* and *perestroika* set the tone for his period in power. The ultimate survival of the USSR depended on *perestroika*. The historian S.R. Ashton, paraphrasing Henry Kissinger in 1989, observed that the USSR was in the 'unenviable position' of being threatened at the same time by two crises: 'an economic crisis if it did nothing to change its system, and a political crisis if it did anything'. Gorbachev was convinced that the USSR could no longer afford Cold War confrontation, and he renounced the idea of inevitable world conflict. Arguably, Gorbachev was therefore the single biggest force in ending the Cold War. He failed, however, to save Soviet Communism, and presided over the disintegration of the USSR. As the historian Jonathan Haslam observed in 2007, '[Gorbachev] never expected communism to collapse so abruptly, and so totally, even in East Germany, let alone Russia'.

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## Gorbachev's reforms

Initially, Gorbachev aimed to reform the economy by:

- increasing investment in technology
- restructuring the economy so it was less centralised (*perestroika*)
- giving workers greater freedom and incentives to encourage them to work harder.

## **Glasnost**

To win the support of the people for his reforms, Gorbachev realised that a policy of openness, or *glasnost*, had to be followed. In other words, economic and political issues needed to be debated openly. From the spring of 1986 onwards, state censorship of the media was progressively eased and reception of foreign broadcasts was allowed. This ensured that the disaster at the **Chernobyl** nuclear power station in 1986 received major international publicity, as did Soviet failures in the Afghanistan War. In this new climate, investigative journalism, hitherto unknown in the USSR, played a key role in exposing the corruption of the Communist Party elite with their subsidised shops, chauffeur-driven cars and other benefits. All of this did much irreparably to damage the image of the party in the eyes of many Soviet citizens.

The years 1988–9 were the high points of *glasnost*. New political organisations were established, such as the **Democratic Union**, and books by former dissidents were published. Religion, too, was tolerated. Churches, mosques and synagogues were reopened and, for the first time in Soviet history, religious texts and books were openly on sale in the shops. There was also a sudden appearance of uncensored newspapers and journals.

## **Constitutional changes**

In May 1989, the newly constituted **Congress of People's Deputies** was elected in what were the first contested national elections organised by the Communists. Although the Congress was no parliament, many different strands of public opinion were represented in it, and it had complete freedom to debate and criticise the government's policies. It also had the task of selecting the members for the Supreme Soviet, which was now to become in effect a parliament in session for much of the year. In fact, in the course of 1990–1, the Congress, rather than the Supreme Soviet, emerged as the most important force in Russia.

In February 1990, the cancellation of Article 6 of the old Soviet Constitution, which guaranteed the Communist Party a leading role in the USSR, destroyed the whole foundation on which the USSR's government existed. Party officials now had to have the backing of over 50 per cent of the electorate to remain in office, and in the March elections to the Congress of People's Deputies most long-term officials were rejected. Gorbachev was elected the first executive president of the USSR.

## **Détente renegotiated 1985–8**

Gorbachev quickly showed that he was determined to negotiate major reductions in nuclear weapons. In April 1985, he stopped increasing the number of SS-20s being installed in Eastern Europe, and in October started to reduce their number. He failed at the Reykjavík Conference in 1986 to persuade Reagan to give up the SDI plan in return for the negotiation of arms control treaties. However, such was his wish to end the arms race that he accepted unconditionally the NATO plan for a total withdrawal of medium-range missiles by both sides in Europe at the



Washington summit in December 1987.

For the next two years, Gorbachev showed a determination not just to restore *détente* but to end the Cold War. In December 1988 at the UN, he publicly conceded that Marxism–Leninism was not the key to ultimate truth. According to one US senator, this was ‘the most astounding statement of surrender in the history of ideological struggle’.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of Gorbachev’s impact by completing Worksheet 32 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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# Global *détente*

## Afghanistan

Gorbachev realised that Soviet policy had failed in Afghanistan (see page 198) and in November 1986 decided that Soviet troops, regardless of the consequences within Afghanistan, would have to be withdrawn as soon as possible. The Soviets replaced Afghan President Babrak Karmal with Mohammed Najibullah, who, they believed, would be able to form a government of national unity that could negotiate a peace between the various factions fighting in Afghanistan. In April 1988, protocols were signed in Geneva between Pakistan and Afghanistan, with the USSR and USA as sponsors. These consisted of the following agreements:

- Neither state would interfere in the internal affairs of the other or allow militant groups, hostile to the other state, to train within their territory.
- Afghan refugees in Pakistan would be permitted to return to Afghanistan.
- The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan would begin on 15 May 1988 and end by 15 February 1989.

These agreements did not bring peace to Afghanistan. The *mujahedin*, who were not represented at Geneva, fought on, while the USSR continued to give financial assistance and arms to Najibullah’s forces. As long as this continued, the USA gave financial and military support to the *mujahedin*. Fighting continued at varying levels in Afghanistan after the collapse of the Soviet Union and into the current period.

## Nicaragua

In 1988, both the USA and the USSR supported a plan drawn up by the Central American states that ended foreign assistance to all fighting groups and called for free elections to resolve the Nicaraguan Civil War (see page 196).

## Angola

In Angola, where fighting had continued between the Cuban-backed MPLA and the South

African-backed UNITA (see page 193), the USA and USSR jointly persuaded Cuba, Angola and South Africa to agree to a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Cuban troops. In December 1988, South Africa, in return, agreed to implement UN Resolution 435, which called for the independence of Namibia, a huge region on Angola's southern border that was administered on behalf of the UN by South Africa.

## Ethiopia

Gorbachev continued to send financial aid to assist the Mengistu regime (see page 194) in Ethiopia until 1989. In early 1990, due to the financial crisis triggered by the collapse in the prices of its coffee exports, Mengistu turned to the USA for financial aid, but in May 1991 he was ousted in a coup led by his anti-Marxist opponents. Little attention was given to Ethiopia in the final years of the Soviet Union's existence.

## Cambodia

In 1979, Vietnam, supported by the USSR, invaded Cambodia and overthrew the **Khmer Rouge regime** (see page 173), establishing the pro-Vietnam People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). Vietnamese military units remained in Cambodia to support the new republic. The extension of Vietnamese influence into Cambodia was opposed by both the PRC and the USA, as well as many of the smaller states in South-East Asia. Gorbachev was ready to collaborate with both the USA and the PRC to find a solution to the Cambodian problem. Just before his visit to Beijing in May 1989 (see below), where he hoped to end the disagreements between the PRC and the USSR, he put pressure on Vietnam to withdraw its troops from Cambodia. This did not lead to immediate peace, but a ceasefire between the PRK and the Khmer Rouge rebels was negotiated in 1991 by the UN Security Council with active US and Soviet assistance.

## End of the PRC–Soviet dispute

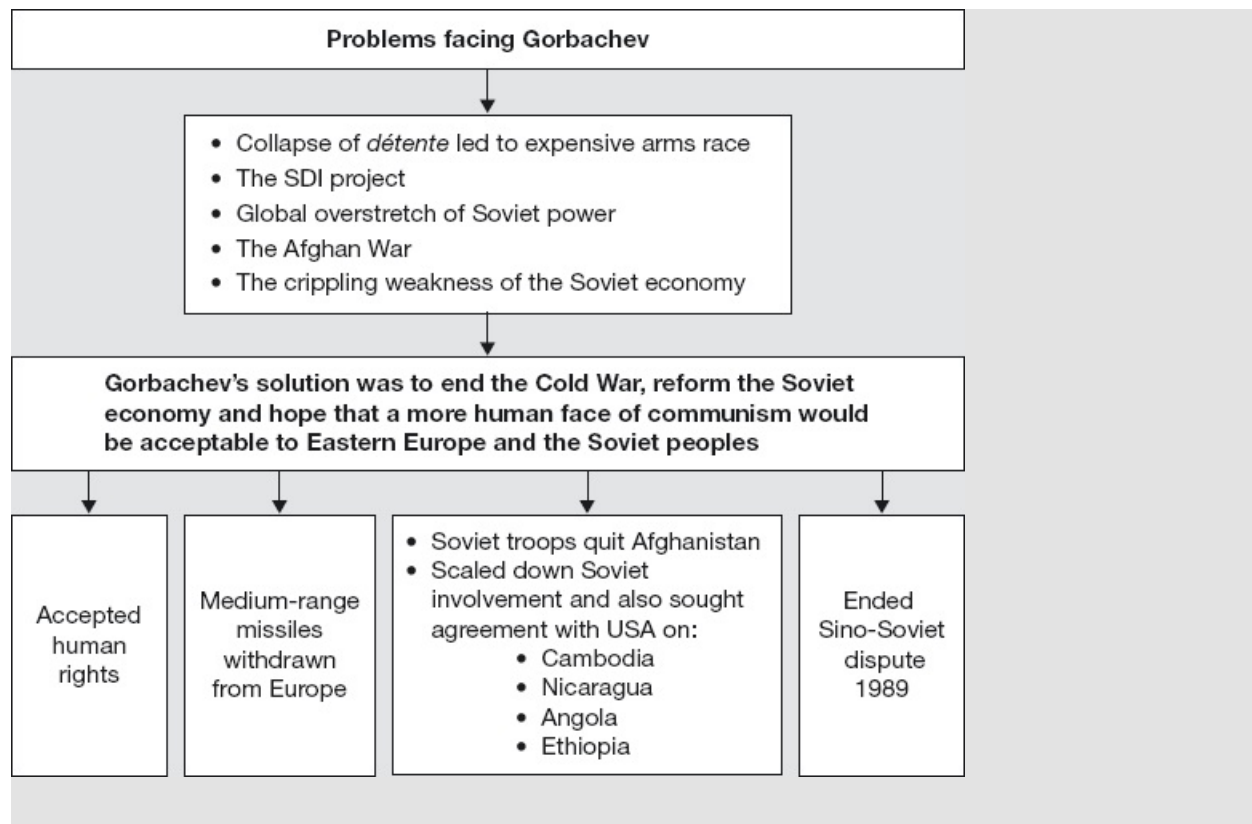
Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and cooperation over Cambodia had cleared the way for improving relations between the PRC and the USSR. In May 1989, after a summit meeting in Beijing between Gorbachev and Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, relations were fully restored. This was helped too by Gorbachev's prior announcement that he would reduce the number of border forces on the Sino-Soviet frontier. Gorbachev was greeted by hundreds of thousands of students, who hoped their leaders would follow his example and liberalise the PRC.

Deng, who was in the process of modernising the PRC and embracing Western capitalism, sympathised with Gorbachev's desire to reform the Soviet economy, but unlike Gorbachev he was not ready to make any political concessions. He was quick to declare martial law and forcibly clear Beijing's Tiananmen Square of democratic protesters on 4 June 1989, the day after Gorbachev flew back to the USSR. The Communist Party in China, unlike its counterpart in the USSR, managed to maintain its grip on power, while successfully modernising the economy.

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### SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### GORBACHEV: GLASNOST AND DÉTENTE 1985–9



## 4 The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe 1989–95

### *Why did communism collapse in Eastern Europe?*

By withdrawing from Afghanistan and Africa, Gorbachev refocused Soviet policy on Europe. Again, he hoped to safeguard Soviet security through a policy of political cooperation and negotiation. On 6 July 1989, he effectively renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine (see page 182) when he informed the Council of Europe in a famous speech that ‘the common European home ... excludes all possibility of armed confrontation, all possibility of resorting to threat or use of force ... employed by one alliance against another, within an alliance, or whatever it might be.’

By 1989, Gorbachev was encouraging Communist Eastern European states to follow the USSR’s example by reforming economically and liberalising politically. To understand the consequences of these radical policy changes, it is helpful to divide eastern and south-eastern Europe into three loose groups:

- In Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria, governments were ready to contemplate at least limited political and economic reform as long as Communists remained in overall control.
- In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Czechoslovakia, Romania and Albania, governments were unwilling to experiment with political or economic reform and were compelled to reform by the dramatic events occurring in the GDR.
- Yugoslavia, even before the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, was facing major

challenges with nationalism, which would ultimately tear it apart.

## Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria

The political changes in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria have been described as ‘negotiated revolutions’. What is meant by this is that the revolutionary changes that occurred in these countries were introduced with the support of the ruling Communists and decided on before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

**Table 8.1** Total indebtedness to the West (in millions of US dollars) of GDR, Poland and USSR 1975–89. How useful is this table in explaining the economic weakness of the Soviet bloc?

State	1975	1980	1985	1989
GDR	5,188	13,896	13,234	20,600
Poland	8,388	24,128	29,300	41,400
USSR	10,577	23,512	25,177	52,392

Reproduced with kind permission from Vienna Institute for Comparative Economic Studies, *Comecon Data 1989*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1990.

### Poland

With Poland’s economy increasingly indebted to the West as a consequence of its purchase of Western high-technology and consumer goods, General Jaruzelski was forced to introduce price rises of up to 200 per cent in 1988. This led to a series of strikes that forced the government not only to legalise Solidarity again (see page 200) but to enter into negotiations with both Solidarity leaders and the Catholic Church. All sides agreed at this point that relations with the USSR and the Warsaw Pact could not be discussed as they did not wish to provoke a military intervention. Neither did Solidarity challenge the dominance of the Communists in Poland. On 7 April 1989, the Round Table Agreements, as they were called, were signed between the three groups. Solidarity was recognised not just as a trade union, but also as a political party. A new constitution was also created. This allowed Solidarity to contest 35 per cent of seats in the lower house of parliament, the *Sejm*, with 65 per cent reserved for Communists. The upper house of the *Sejm* would be elected in free elections and both houses would jointly elect the president of Poland.

Gorbachev welcomed this agreement as he felt that it safeguarded Communist power. At the same time, there were sufficient political concessions to please the West and encourage it to increase its financial assistance to Poland.

In the first round of the elections on 4 June, Solidarity won 92 out of the 100 seats in the *Sejm*’s upper house and 160 of the 161 seats in the lower house for which they were allowed to compete. Two weeks later, Communists won all the seats reserved for them, but only 25 per cent of eligible voters voted. Initially, the Communist leadership hoped to form a government, but when the USSR announced that it would not ‘interfere in the internal affairs of Poland’, Solidarity was able to form a coalition government on 18 August which contained only four Communists.

Significantly, Gorbachev had made it clear on 16 August that the USSR would not intervene to reinforce an unpopular Communist regime. However, at the time it was still not obvious that a major turning point had been reached. Communists still controlled the Ministries of Defence, Interior, Transportation and Foreign Trade, while Jaruzelski remained president. Solidarity even declared that Poland would remain a member of the Warsaw Pact.

Only with the collapse of Communist rule in the GDR and Czechoslovakia (see below) did Solidarity remove Communists from control of the army and police. In January 1990, the Polish Communist Party was dissolved and then reformed as the Social Democrat Party. Jaruzelski resigned in November 1990 and **Lech Wałęsa**, the leader of Solidarity, was elected president.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of Poland and the USSR 1944–89 by completing Worksheet 33 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Hungary

By 1987, within Hungary criticism of both the economy and the government was growing. Living standards had declined and the country's debts to the West were the highest in Eastern Europe. As in Poland, corruption existed throughout the government.

In May 1988, responding to the atmosphere created by Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost*, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (**MSZMP**) replaced Prime Minister Janos Kádár with Károly Grósz, a committed reformer. In February 1989, the party accepted that Hungary would have to become a multi-party democracy to avert revolution. When Grósz visited the USSR in March 1989, Gorbachev welcomed the developments in Hungary, but he emphasised that the dominant position of socialism in Hungary should not be threatened (see [Source D](#), page **211**).

In June, following Poland's example, 'round table' talks began between the government and the opposition groups, ending in agreement that free parliamentary elections were to be held in the spring of 1990. The party leaders accepted this because they were convinced that, having seized the initiative to reform, the MSZMP would emerge as the dominant force in the new parliament and safeguard socialism in Hungary. The party attempted to transform itself into a Western-style socialist party later in the year and changed its name to the Hungarian Socialist Party (HSP), but in the elections of March 1990 it won less than eleven per cent of the vote and did not take part in the next government. However, over the next four years HSP did manage to make a successful transformation to a left-wing social democratic party. In 1994, it returned to power in alliance with the Free Democrats and in 1996 an opinion poll judged it to be the most popular party in Hungarian politics.

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### SOURCE D

**From Document No. 3, Memorandum of Conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and HSWP [Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party] General Secretary Károly Grósz, 23–24 March 1989. Quoted in *Cold War International History Bulletin*, Issue 12/13, Autumn/Winter 2001, page [78](#).**

*Comrade Grósz informed the negotiators about the Hungarian situation. He said that the events in Hungary have accelerated lately. Their direction is according to our intentions, while the pace is somewhat disconcerting. Comrade Grósz emphasized that we wish to retain political power and find a solution to our problems by political means, avoiding armed conflict.*

*We have a good chance for reaching our goals. People are afraid of a possible armed conflict. Workers, peasants and professionals want to work and live in peace and security ...*

*Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that we clearly have to draw boundaries, thinking about others and ourselves at the same time. Democracy is much needed and interests have to be harmonized. The limit, however, is the safe keeping of socialism and assurance of stability.*

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### ? SOURCE QUESTION

To what extent does [Source D](#) help to explain the problems facing reformers in Eastern Europe in 1989?

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Develop your analysis of [Source D](#) by completing Worksheet 36 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Bulgaria

By 1989, the ruling Bulgarian Communist Party had been led by Todor Zhivkov for 35 years. Zhivkov had promoted his family into positions of authority for which they were not qualified. **Cronyism** was one of the main features of his government. Those whom Zhivkov favoured in the party were allowed to shop in special stores that stocked imported Western goods, have access to the best education for their children and receive up to 500 per cent more salary than other officials. Zhivkov also launched a programme of 'Bulgarianisation', which led to the expulsion of some 200,000 ethnic Turks from Bulgaria and resulted in widespread international condemnation.

In July 1989, the Bulgarian foreign minister, Petar Mladenov, confidentially informed Gorbachev that he intended 'to carry out a change of direction in Bulgaria', which Gorbachev did not oppose, and on 9 November he forced Zhivkov to resign. As in Poland and Hungary, talks were held with emerging opposition groups and free elections were promised for June 1990. The Bulgarian Communist Party transformed itself into the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), and managed to win the election by a small majority, but was forced to resign by a general strike in November. In 1992, it again entered a coalition government with the Turkish minority party, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, and some dissident members of the Union of Democratic Forces, and narrowly won an outright majority in December 1994, only to be defeated decisively in elections called in response to the economic crisis of the winter of 1996–7. The BSP had failed in the medium term to distance itself from the legacy of

communism. In September 1996, one senior Bulgarian politician had expressed fears that the ‘ghost of communism’ was returning.

## Summary

The negotiated revolutions in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria were peaceful and in all three countries the ruling Communist Party accepted that their countries would have to become multi-party democracies. In Poland, the Communists managed for the time being to retain control of the key ministries, but in Hungary and Bulgaria the former Communist parties believed they could hang on to power by transforming themselves into Western-style socialist parties. Gorbachev approved the move towards democracy, provided socialism and stability were assured. In this he was to be mistaken.

## The GDR in crisis

The GDR was a product of the Cold War, and to survive into the Gorbachev era it needed to win the loyalty of its population, as it could no longer appeal to Soviet power to maintain law and order. By the summer of 1989, it seemed unlikely that it would be able to achieve this. Its economy, like the USSR’s, suffered from centralised planning and a top-heavy system of bureaucratic control. Ironically, only massive West German loans in 1983–4, which were a result of *Ostpolitik* (see page [183](#)), had saved it from bankruptcy.

The GDR faced a major challenge when the Hungarian government decided in August to open its frontiers with Austria and some 150,000 East German refugees poured across the border on their way to the FRG. Under pressure from West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Honecker also granted exit visas to the thousands of East Germans who had travelled to Poland and Prague, and who were besieging the West German embassies there in a desperate attempt to flee the GDR.

Honecker was now facing a crisis potentially every bit as grave as Ulbricht had in 1961 (see page [154](#)). His belated grants of exit visas did nothing to restore confidence in the GDR. On the contrary, it merely made his handling of the crisis look unsure. In Leipzig a series of large but peaceful demonstrations took place in late September and early October 1989, which the regime reluctantly tolerated because it knew that Gorbachev would not support a hardline policy. Indeed, when Gorbachev visited Berlin on 5 October to attend the celebrations marking the fortieth anniversary of the GDR, he advised Honecker to follow the example of the Poles and Hungarians and pointedly warned him that ‘life punishes latecomers’. At the meeting of the GDR Politburo on 17 October, Honecker was replaced by Egon Krenz, the former security chief.

## The Berlin Wall opens

In the absence of any effective restraints by the police or the army, ever increasing crowds of demonstrators continued to mass in the cities. On 4 November, half a million congregated in East Berlin to demand further reform and the right to travel abroad. Two days later, a proposal was made by the new Krenz government to issue permits for travel up to 30 days per year, but this was rejected by the *Volkskammer*, the GDR’s parliament, as insufficient. On 9 November, a more sweeping concession was made that granted all GDR citizens with passports the right to an



exit visa valid for any border crossing, including entry into West Berlin. Initially, this was supposed to take effect from the morning of 10 November, but it was announced prematurely in a press conference on the evening of the 9th, and that night border guards, facing a crowd of 20,000, opened up the crossing points through the Wall and into West Berlin (see [Figure 6.1](#), page [153](#)).

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Get to grips with the consequences of the demolition of the Berlin Wall by completing Worksheet 34 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## Consequences of 9 November 1989

The opening of the Berlin Wall added further impetus to the wave of democratic reforms spreading across Eastern Europe, and had immediate consequences not only for Germany, but also for both Czechoslovakia and Romania and ultimately Yugoslavia and Albania.

### The ‘Velvet Revolution’: Czechoslovakia

In 1989, Czechoslovakia was still controlled by the Communist Party, which had called for the suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 (see page [181](#)). Opposition was limited to small groups, such as Charter 77 led by **Václav Havel**, which attempted to monitor the government’s compliance with the Helsinki Accords. As a consequence of the changes in Poland and Hungary in the summer of 1989, the opposition strengthened, and Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec announced economic reforms which were similar to those introduced during the Prague Spring, but they were not accompanied by political reforms. It was only after the Berlin Wall was opened that the political situation changed dramatically. A demonstration officially called to honour the death of a student killed in the German occupation in the Second World War turned into a mass protest which triggered a series of events known as the ‘Velvet’ or non-violent revolution.

On 19 November, twelve opposition groups formed the Civic Forum which demanded political change. On 7 December, Adamec resigned and a new government was formed in which Communists were a minority. On 29 December, parliament elected Havel as president. Havel and the Civic Forum persuaded the USSR to withdraw its troops from the country while initially agreeing to remain part of the Warsaw Pact. Once it became clear that the two German states would reunite (see page [217](#)), Czechoslovakia, together with Poland and Hungary, pressed for the pact’s dissolution. In 1992, Czechoslovakia broke into two independent states: Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

### Romania

The opening of the Berlin Wall and the Velvet Revolution provided the Romanians with an opportunity to oust their Communist leader, Nicolae Ceauşescu. As in the other Communist states, economic hardship and blatant corruption, symbolised by Ceauşescu’s construction of a 1100-room palace, caused significant opposition to emerge against his government.

Gorbachev had been informed of plans to overthrow Ceaușescu as early as November 1989, and agreed provided that the Romanian Communist Party was left as the dominant force in the country. The first revolts against the regime broke out in the largely ethnic Hungarian city of Timisoara, near the Hungarian border, and spread to Bucharest, on 21 December. Once it became clear that the army had sided with the people against the state's secret police, Ceaușescu fled the capital. He was soon arrested by the army and executed with his wife on 25 December.

On 22 December, the National Salvation Front (NSF) was formed by Silviu Brucan, a former ambassador to the USA, General Militaru and Ion Iliescu, a leading Communist. After talks with opposition groups, the NSF established a Council for National Unity and held elections for a new government in May 1990. The NSF managed to win a majority and Iliescu was elected president. It was not until 1996 that the NSF was decisively defeated by a new party grouping, the Social Democratic Union.

## Yugoslavia and Albania

### Yugoslavia

After its expulsion from the Cominform in 1948 (see page [89](#)), Yugoslavia had followed a different pattern from the other Communist states in eastern and south-eastern Europe. It had more contact with the West and, in the 1960s and 1970s, Tito allowed greater cultural and intellectual freedom than existed in the other Communist states. However, Yugoslavia, like the other Communist states, faced growing economic and political problems that were to destroy it by 1990. It was heavily dependent on foreign investment and by 1989 inflation had reached almost 300 per cent annually.

The economic problems worsened relations between the nationalities that formed the Yugoslav state. The prestige of President Tito managed to keep ethnic rivalries in check, but after his death in 1980, leaders of the Yugoslav Federation increasingly used nationalism to strengthen their own political position. In the Soviet bloc, people's dissatisfaction with governments led to demands for democratic reform and the overthrow of communism. In Yugoslavia this was channelled into increasing ethnic rivalries.

Influenced by the events in Eastern Europe, the Communist Party's leading role in Yugoslavia was removed from the constitution by the Federal Prime Minister Ante Marković in January 1990 and multi-party federal elections were announced. These, however, only took place at state level, beginning with the northern state of Slovenia in April 1990. Each election brought to power nationalists and soon each Yugoslav state demanded independence, leading to the dismemberment of the country into independent rival states and war. Successively, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro, had declared their independence between 1991 and 2006. All but Macedonia and Montenegro fought wars to achieve independence, with the most brutal being the struggle in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995 in which 100,000 people were killed, millions displaced and most cities destroyed.



**Figure 8.2** Map of the new Europe, 1991. By 1992 Yugoslavia had disintegrated. How does this map show the consequences for the USSR of losing the Cold War?

## Albania

Under Enver Hoxha, Albania had ended diplomatic and economic relations with the USSR in 1961 and had clung to a strict Stalinist interpretation of communism. On Hoxha's death in 1985, Ramiz Alia initially continued the same policies, but in February 1989 announced a very limited reform programme based on Gorbachev's *perestroika*. Ceaușescu's fall in Romania led to unrest and riots in the capital city of Tirana, which pushed the government into announcing further reforms involving the decentralisation of the economy and the legalisation of non-Communist political parties. In the election of March 1991 the former Communist Party, now renamed the Socialist Party of Albania (APL), won the majority of seats. It briefly formed a government and Alia was elected as president in May, but further unrest led to fresh elections in 1992, which the strongly anti-Communist Democratic Party won by a sizeable margin of votes. With the collapse of the old state industries, Albania experienced an acute economic and social crisis and in March 1997 order had to be restored by an Italian-led peace force. In the April elections, the Albanian

Socialist Party (the former APL) won a large majority.

## Assessment

To survive, the GDR had been dependent on the USSR and the strict control of its frontiers to prevent the flight of a significant proportion of its population. Gorbachev's refusal to back Honecker, and the opening of the Austrian border with Hungary, led first to an exodus of refugees from the GDR through Hungary, then to growing protests culminating in the breaching of the Berlin Wall and ultimately to the collapse of the GDR. These events had a 'domino effect' and were the catalyst to democratic changes in Czechoslovakia, Romania and then Yugoslavia and Albania. Ultimately, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia fractured along ethnic lines – the former peacefully, the latter as a result of civil war. Albania, in emerging from its Stalinist straitjacket, experienced acute economic and social problems and ultimately had to be rescued by an Italian-led multinational peace force.

## Unification of Germany

On 13 November, Prime Minister Egon Krenz was replaced by Hans Modrow, the Dresden Communist Party secretary. Under his leadership, the GDR then rapidly followed the example of Poland and agreed to free elections, which were held in March 1990. The Alliance for Germany coalition, which supported reunification, won a majority of seats, and on 12 April the new government announced that it wished to join the FRG.

Initially, neither the USSR, nor Britain nor France wanted a united Germany, and Chancellor Kohl himself was thinking only of forming a very loose confederation which would very slowly grow into a political union, or federation. Nevertheless, the strength of East German public opinion in the winter of 1989–90 convinced him that unity was the only option. The division of Germany had marked the beginning of the Cold War; its reunification marked the end.

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### ONLINE EXTRAS

#### OCR

Test your understanding of key figures by completing Worksheet 35 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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Kohl could not reunify Germany without the agreement of the USSR, the USA and Germany's main Western European allies, Britain and France. However, only the USSR and the USA had the power to stop it. Thus, the real negotiations were between Bonn, Moscow and Washington. At first, Gorbachev was opposed to the liquidation of the GDR, and in December 1989 promised that he would 'see to it that no harm comes to the GDR'. Yet by the end of January his support for it was ebbing rapidly. On 10 February 1990, he told Kohl in Moscow that the Germans themselves should decide on the question of German unity, and at Ottawa four days later, President **George H.W. Bush** also gave the green light and outlined a formula for proceeding with the negotiations, the 'two-plus-four talks', which would bring together both the two Germanys and the four former occupying powers which still had **residual rights** in Berlin.

In a series of negotiations in Bonn, Berlin, Paris and Moscow in the summer of 1990, German unity was brokered. Any lingering Soviet opposition to German unity and the membership of a united Germany in NATO was overcome by the offer of generous West German loans which Gorbachev hoped would facilitate the modernisation of the Soviet economy. Opposition in the West, particularly in London and Paris, was stilled by Kohl's insistence on a united Germany's continued membership of NATO and on the incorporation of East Germany through its unification with the FRG into the European Community.

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#### SOURCE E



By February 1990, GDR troops had already started to demolish the Berlin Wall. The shattered pieces of the wall became collectors' objects. The Imperial War Museum in London has a panel on display.

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#### ? SOURCE QUESTION

What message does [Source E](#) send about the future of both Berlin and Germany?

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On 12 September, the Two-Plus-Four Treaty was signed in Moscow. It was in effect a peace treaty ending the partition of Germany, as it terminated the residual rights of the former occupying powers in Germany and committed the new Germany to recognising the Oder–Neisse border with Poland. At midnight on 2 October 1990, the GDR was integrated into the FRG and a reunited Germany came into existence. The West, albeit with Gorbachev's blessing, had indeed won a spectacular victory.

## Concluding the Cold War in Europe

After agreement on German reunification, the Cold War was effectively ended by decisions taken in Paris in November 1990. Representatives of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, which was

dissolved in July 1991, met in Paris in November 1990 to sign the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. It provided for the equal reduction of conventional weapons in both Eastern and Western Europe, agreed on a process of inspection and verification, and declared that the countries signing the pact were 'no longer adversaries'. The participants of the conference also produced the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. This established a secretariat to organise annual meetings at head-of-government level and for the creation of a Conflict Prevention Centre in Vienna to advise on conflict avoidance globally.

Aware of the escalating economic and political chaos in the USSR and the strong possibility that Gorbachev could be unseated (see page [224](#)), President Bush was anxious also to conclude the long-discussed agreement on strategic nuclear weapons. This was concluded in July 1991, and within ten years led to the elimination of about 80 per cent of all strategic missiles then in existence.

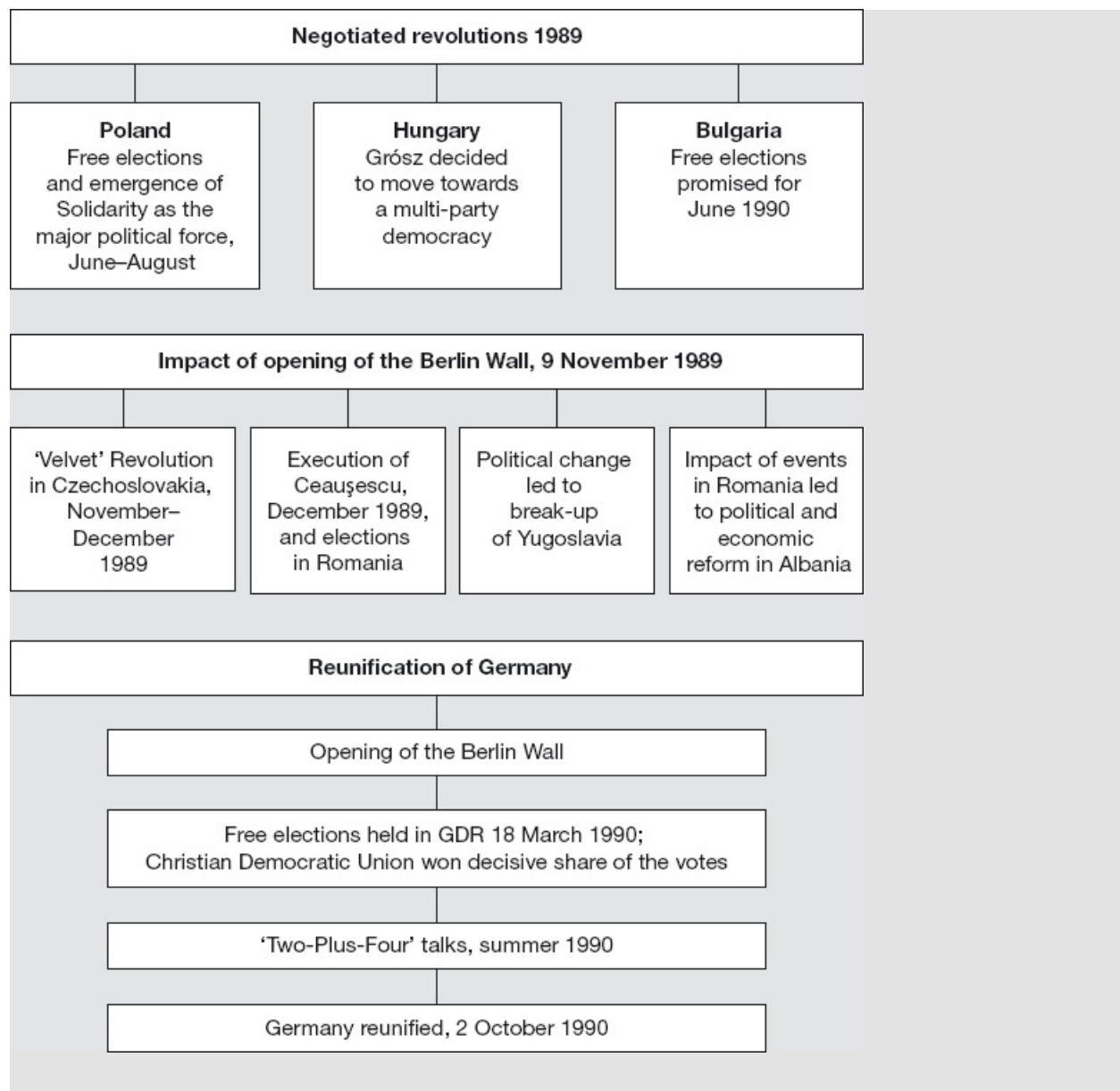
Gorbachev had successfully concluded the Cold War, which had placed an increasingly heavy financial burden on the USSR. He had hoped that he might be able to negotiate a large loan from the USA but in this he was disappointed. Bush was unwilling to grant any credits until Gorbachev had removed the last restraints to a free or capitalist economy in the USSR. Generous loans from the USA and Europe were arguably Gorbachev's last hope for saving the USSR (see pages [209](#) and [220](#)).

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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE 1989–95





## 5 The disintegration of the USSR 1990–1

***Why was Gorbachev unable to prevent the disintegration of the USSR?***

***To what extent was nationalism a factor in the disintegration of the USSR?***

By 1989, it was clear that *perestroika* had not managed to resolve the USSR's economic difficulties. The country's budget revenue steadily declined, while inflation rose. In 1987, the Soviet state deficit was 57.1 billion roubles; by 1989, 100 billion. The consequences of this were a growing shortage of goods and a fall in living standards. Two years later, by early 1991, the whole structure of Soviet Russia was on the verge of collapse, Communist Party organisations had imploded, and the secret police (KGB) and army were demoralised.



# The nationalities problem

The USSR was a federation of fifteen republics in which the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) was by far the largest state (see the map on page [225](#)). *Perestroika*, *glasnost* and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe led to a reawakening of nationalism in many constituent republic states that were part of the USSR and felt dominated by ethnic Russians. Gorbachev, despite being the father of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, was determined to keep the USSR together at all costs and initially was prepared to use force in the Baltic states, Armenia and the Central Asian Republics. This prompted his personal assistant Georgi Shakhnazarov to observe that ‘Gorbachev was two people: a radical and *apparatchik*’, meaning that he was a reformer but in some ways still a loyal and even conventional Communist. However, it was too late in the day to use force. The collapse of the Soviet economy had removed any remaining incentive to stay within the USSR (see [Source C](#), page [204](#)).

By December 1991, the USSR had been replaced by the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)**, which was a voluntary organisation of some of the former states that had formed part of the USSR. Why the USSR disintegrated and how its shadow, the CIS, was created are considered below.

## The Baltic states

The first states to break away from the USSR were the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. All three regarded themselves as illegally occupied by the USSR. They had been parts of the Russian Empire until the collapse of Russia in the First World War, when they gained temporary independence (see page [11](#)). They were absorbed by the Soviet Union in 1940, occupied by Germany from 1941 to 1944, and then again merged with the Soviet Union. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* encouraged reformers and nationalists to press for independence. In 1988, so-called Popular Fronts, which were coalitions of reformers, formed in all three republics. In February 1990, local elections were held throughout the USSR and pro-independence candidates won in the three Baltic republics. In March, Lithuania and Estonia declared their independence, and Latvia followed in May. They were given encouragement and support by Solidarity in Poland.

## Gorbachev's reaction

Initially, Gorbachev reacted strongly against the independence movements in the Baltic states. He imposed an economic blockade on Lithuania in April 1990 and in January 1991 Soviet troops entered all three Baltic states on the pretext of searching for military deserters. In Vilnius, Lithuania, Soviet troops seized the radio and television centre, killing thirteen civilians; but after encountering massive public demonstrations, they were forced to withdraw. On 11 January, President Bush contacted Gorbachev and expressed his concern. The violence, as in some of the other states, only served to strengthen the determination of the nationalists to gain independence.

## Transcaucasia and the central Asian republics

*Glasnost* had also encouraged the re-emergence of historic ethnic conflicts in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as in the central Asian republics of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

## Armenian–Azerbaijan conflict

The most serious conflict occurred in the southern Caucasus region and involved Christian Armenia and Muslim Azerbaijan. The Nagorno-Karabakh district, populated by Armenians, was claimed by Armenia but had been granted to Azerbaijan by Stalin in 1923. It was divided from Armenia by a thin strip of land (see [Figure 8.3](#), page 225). *Glasnost* enabled the Armenians to hold rallies during the winter of 1987–8 and demand its return. In February 1988, after a week of growing demonstrations in Stepanakert, the capital city, Nagorno-Karabakh voted to merge with Armenia. This was vetoed by Gorbachev, but it did not stop an eruption of anti-Armenian riots in Azerbaijan.

Gorbachev removed the leaders in both republics, but his failure to find a solution to the intractable Nagorno-Karabakh issue led to growing nationalism in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Early in 1988, leading Armenian intellectuals and nationalists formed the Karabakh Committee to organise a campaign for the return of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia. Yet in opposition to this, the Popular Front of Azerbaijan was formed in July 1988, which aimed at independence from the USSR and retention of the disputed area.

## Blockade of Armenia

In July 1988, Nagorno-Karabakh was temporarily placed under direct rule of the central government in Moscow. In an attempt to find a lasting solution, Gorbachev allowed the USSR's Supreme Soviet to decide on the region's future. However, it merely voted in November 1989 to return Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control. In defiance of this vote, the Armenian Supreme Soviet decided to ignore the decision and integrate the territory into Armenia. In response, the Azerbaijan Popular Front organised a rail blockade of Armenia which led to shortages of petrol and food. It also held a series of demonstrations in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, which rapidly degenerated into riots directed against the local Armenians, at least 91 of whom were killed. On 19 January, the Azerbaijan Popular Front declared a state of emergency, and the following day, its members seized government and Communist Party buildings.

Gorbachev responded by declaring martial law and sent Soviet troops to restore the government. Late at night on 19 January 1990, 26,000 Soviet troops entered Baku, smashing through barricades established by the Popular Front and attacking protesters, killing over 130. While the army gained control of Baku, it alienated the population of Azerbaijan. Most of the population of Baku attended the mass funerals of the victims, and thousands of Communist Party members publicly burned their party membership cards.

## Georgia

The independence movements in the Baltic, Armenia and Azerbaijan inspired similar movements in Georgia. On 7–8 April 1989, troops were sent to its capital Tbilisi after more than 100,000 people gathered in front of government offices and the Communist Party headquarters and called for Georgia's independence. Nineteen people were killed and more than 200 wounded. This radicalised Georgian politics, leading many to believe that independence was preferable to

continued Soviet rule.

## The central Asian republics

In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Gorbachev's attempt to purge the local Communist Party organisations of corrupt officials led to a nationalist backlash that ultimately resulted in both republics voting to leave the USSR. In Kazakhstan in 1986, Gorbachev replaced the ethnic Kazakh leader of the local branch of the Communist Party with a Russian. This was seen by the local population as humiliating and evidence of further ethnic Russian domination. It was, as the historian Robert Service observed in 2015, a 'staggeringly insensitive' action and led, on 17 December, to rioting in the cities across the republic. The government arrested thousands in a brutal crackdown.

In neighbouring Uzbekistan, Gorbachev's attempts were equally clumsy. Over 18,000 Uzbek Communist Party members were dismissed and mostly replaced with ethnic Russian officials, who knew little of the country or the language. Predictably this led to rising nationalism which agitated for ethnic Uzbek rule and independence.

## The western republics and Russia

In Moldavia, Ukraine and Belarus, demands for independence were strongest in those areas which had been **annexed** by the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1940.

### Moldavia/Moldova

The Democratic Movement of **Moldova** was created in 1988 to campaign initially for greater cultural independence from the USSR. This took the form of demands for the revival of Moldovan traditions and the recognition of Moldovan as the official language. In May 1989, inspired by events in the Baltic (see page [220](#)), the Popular Front of Moldova was founded. It successfully persuaded the Moldavian Supreme Soviet to adopt a new language law on 31 August 1989 which made Moldovan the official state language. In March 1990, it became the largest party in the elections for the Supreme Soviet and ultimately opted for independence.

### Ukraine

The key to the future of the USSR was Ukraine, its second largest republic. If Ukraine chose independence, the USSR would be irreparably damaged. Lvov, in western Ukraine, became the centre of protests which demanded greater toleration for Ukrainian Christians and culture. Initially, local Communist authorities attempted to repress demonstrations, but that became much more difficult when the republic-wide Ukrainian Popular Front Movement, *Rukh*, was created in 1989. In October 1990, it declared that its principal goal was no longer autonomy within the USSR, but complete independence.

### Belarus

Again, inspired by the Baltic popular fronts, the Belarus Popular Front was established in 1988 as both a political party and a cultural movement demanding democracy and independence for

Belarus. The discovery of mass graves in woods outside Minsk, the capital, of those executed by the NKVD during the Stalin era, added momentum to the pro-democracy and pro-independence movement in the republic. It was argued that in the future only complete independence from the USSR would protect Belarus from a recurrence of such atrocities.

## **Russia**

Elections had taken place for the Congress of People's Deputies in March and April 1990 (see page 205) and had given a majority to reformers and outright opponents of the Communist regime. It was clear that the old USSR in the form that it had existed since the early 1920s was now doomed. Gorbachev's rival, **Boris Yeltsin**, emerged as the leading politician in Russia and was elected chairman of the Congress. On 12 June, the Congress declared that Russia was a sovereign state and that its laws took precedence over those made by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The term 'sovereign' asserted the moral right of the republic to self-determination. It did not necessarily rule out the possibility of voluntarily negotiating a new federation.

## **'The summer of sovereignty'**

Elections also took place in the other republics during March and April 1990. All followed Russia's example in declaring their sovereignty. The exception was Latvia, which already claimed to be independent.

## **The end of the USSR**

The declarations of independence prompted Gorbachev to create a draft of the new Union Treaty in November 1990. In March 1991, a referendum was held on the question of creating a new union formed by the former members of the USSR. Soviet citizens were asked whether they supported the creation of a 'renewed federation of equal sovereign republics'. The referendum was boycotted by the Baltic republics, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia, but in the other republics it was supported by 74 per cent of voters.

## **Gorbachev under threat**

Gorbachev was in an increasingly vulnerable position. Unlike Yeltsin, he had not been democratically elected, nor did he have a secure power base. He was still president of the nearly defunct USSR and faced opposition from two quarters:

- Communists in the army, party and the KGB, who were bitterly critical of his policies, which in their eyes had led to the break-up of the USSR
- reformers led by Yeltsin, who in June 1991 became the first directly elected president of Russia.

## **The coup of 18–19 August 1991**

On 18 August, just two days before the Union Treaty was to come into effect, leading Communists, who were opposed to change, made one last attempt to save the old USSR. They

launched an abortive coup in Moscow while Gorbachev was on holiday in the Crimea. There was no public backing for the rebels and the coup collapsed. Yeltsin played a key role in rallying the crowds in Moscow against the coup and was able to emerge as the saviour of the new Russia. Gorbachev was sidelined as he was on holiday and Yeltsin was seen as the hero who saved Russia from a military coup. The once all-powerful Communist Party was made illegal in Russia in August.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Get to grips with the collapse of the USSR by completing Worksheet 37 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of Gorbachev and the fall of the USSR by completing Worksheet 36 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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**Figure 8.3** Successor states of the USSR. What information does this map convey about the collapse of the USSR?

## The consequences: the end of the USSR

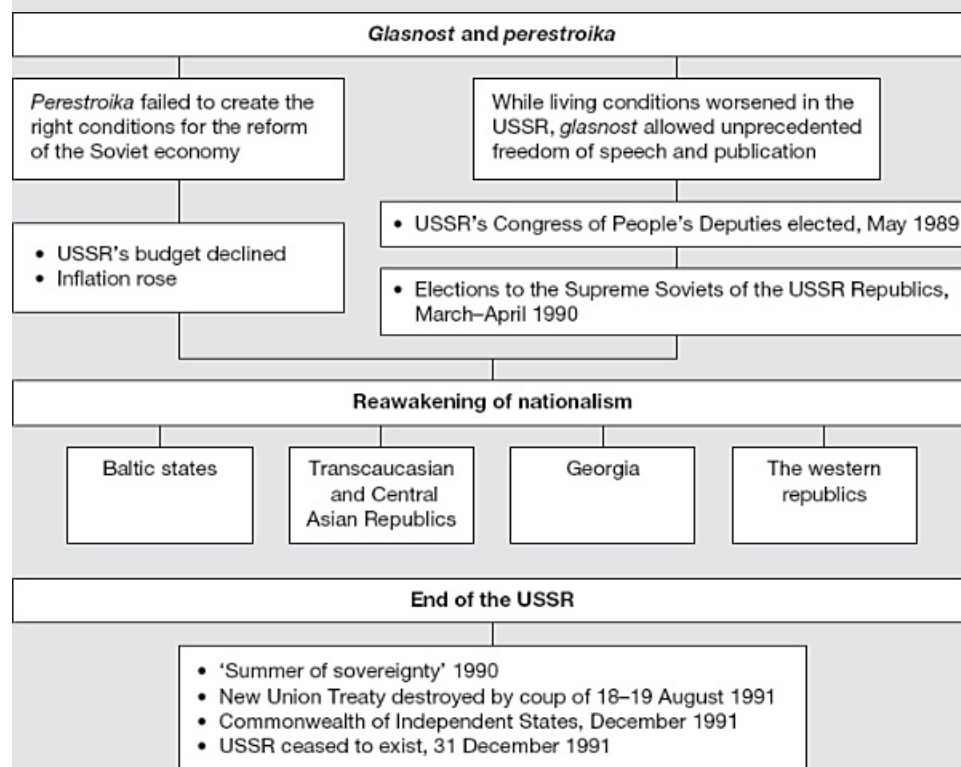
The nine republics that had agreed to the Union Treaty now refused to implement it. Gorbachev attempted to draft a new treaty, but this too was rejected by all the republics. The final blow to

the existence of the USSR came when Ukraine decided on complete independence from the USSR after holding a referendum in December 1991.

Nevertheless on 8 December, Ukraine, Russia and Belarus established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which was then joined on 21 December 1991 by eight additional former Soviet republics: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Georgia joined two years later, in December 1993. On 25 December 1991, Gorbachev resigned and, on 31 December, the USSR ceased to exist. Nothing could have been more symbolic of the USA's total victory in the Cold War.

## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE USSR 1990–1



## CHAPTER SUMMARY

By 1980, the Soviet centralised command economy was in rapid decline. It had squandered enormous sums on armaments and failed to restructure itself to face the economic challenges of the modern world. It was weakened by the renewed arms race and the Afghan War, and could no longer afford to enforce the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Gorbachev attempted to modernise the Soviet economy by the partial introduction of free-market principles. He hoped that a reformed and economically strengthened

USSR would be able to forge new links of friendship with Eastern European states, which would remain communist. This was a miscalculation. The GDR collapsed and German unification took place on the FRG's terms. Throughout Eastern Europe, communist regimes crumbled. Yugoslavia dissolved into several non-communist successor states.

The liberation of Eastern Europe from communism set precedents for the republics of the USSR. Weakened by economic crisis, the USSR had little to offer them. The Baltic republics, the Transcaucasian and Central Asian Republics, as well as Moldavia, Belarus, Ukraine and, finally, Russia itself, decided to abandon the USSR and communism. In December 1991, the USSR was replaced by the establishment of the CIS and Gorbachev was forced to resign. The Cold War had ended with the economic and political disintegration of the USSR.

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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

What impact did the invasion of Afghanistan have on the outbreak of the 'New Cold War'?

What was the significance of the Solidarity crisis for East–West relations?

Why did the events in Poland threaten *Ostpolitik*?

How bad were US–USSR relations between 1981 and 1984?

How serious were the economic problems facing the Soviet economy in 1960–85?

What steps did Gorbachev take to restore the policy of *détente*?

Why did Gorbachev inherit a difficult situation in 1985?

To what extent did Gorbachev support the political changes in Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary?

Why did the GDR collapse?

How was Germany reunified?

To what extent was the collapse of communism in Albania and Yugoslavia a consequence of the events in Eastern Europe in 1989?

How did communism collapse in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Romania?

Why did the western republics of the USSR and Russia declare themselves independent?

Why did the USSR collapse?

---

## Question practice: AQA

### Essay question



'Relations between the Soviet bloc and the Western powers became so bad between 1979 and 1985 that this period can be called the "New Cold War".' Assess the validity of this view. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Look for the evidence to support the proposition and then to contradict it. Make sure that you refer to events and situations in the period stated in the question.

---

## Source analysis questions

With reference to [Sources B](#) (page [201](#)), C (page [204](#)) and D (page [211](#)), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to a historian studying the reasons for the end of the Cold War. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn. Make sure that you focus on the reasons for the end of the Cold War.

---

With reference to [Sources A](#) (page [195](#)), B (page [201](#)) and C (page [204](#)), assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the reasons for the economic weakness of the USSR in the period 1985–90. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Analyse the content and evaluate the provenance of each source in turn. Refer to the tone where appropriate. Do not try to write an overall conclusion – just a conclusion on each source.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

Assess the consequences for the USSR of Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost*. [A level]

---

**EXAM HINT** Explain a range of consequences of Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost*. For each one discussed, a judgement will be reached and these interim judgements will form the basis of an overall judgement in the conclusion.

---

Which of the following was of greater importance in ending the Cold War? i) Soviet economic weakness. ii) The war in Afghanistan. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii). [A level]

---

**Exam hint** Explain the ways in which each of the issues had an impact on ending the Cold War. It is then important to reach a judgement as to which had the greater impact and explain why it was greater.

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How effective was the USA in checking Soviet ambitions in Europe during the years 1979–90? [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Establish what the Soviet ambitions were and for each one analyse how effective the USA was in checking them. This might include political influence, economic influence or security or you could do this event by event. Then reach interim judgements, which should be used to reach an overall judgement.

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## CHAPTER 9

# Interpreting the Cold War: a debate

This chapter is a general survey of the Cold War, concentrating on the following main issues that need to be considered if the Cold War is to be understood:

- Could the Cold War have been avoided?
- When did the Cold War actually start?
- The Cold War in Europe
- Why did the Cold War in Europe last for so long?
- The Cold War in Asia
- The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America
- Why did the Cold War end?

The Cold War in Europe lasted for over four decades. By the mid-1960s, the divisions that had grown out of the immediate post-war years were accepted, often as a fact of international life. In 1989, John Lewis Gaddis, a US historian, described the uneasy stability that it had created as the 'long peace'. It was, however, more a truce than a peace. Even at the height of *détente* during the 1970s, tension, hostility and competition still characterised the relations between the Warsaw Pact and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) states.

## 1 Could the Cold War have been avoided?

### *What caused the Cold War?*

Revisionist historians such as Daniel Yergin and Willy Loth, writing in 1977 and 1998, respectively, argue that it was the USA that provoked the Cold War by refusing to recognise the Soviet sphere of interest in Eastern Europe or to make concessions over reparations in Germany. Could the Cold War really have been avoided if Stalin had been treated more diplomatically and greater sympathy shown to the appalling post-war problems in the USSR? It is possible to make out a case that Stalin did in fact act with greater restraint in Eastern Europe than his later Cold War critics in the West gave him credit for. In 1944 he stopped Tito from intervening in Greece and, until 1948, allowed semi-democratic regimes to function in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Loth argues that initially he also tried to restrain his own military government officials in the Soviet zone of Germany from applying too rigidly the Soviet Communist model. Indeed, it is arguable that, up to the summer of 1947, Stalin gave precedence to trying to maintain the wartime Grand Alliance and failed to exploit favourable opportunities for establishing Soviet influence in such areas as Greece.

Was it, then, British and US policy that caused the Cold War? Can Stalin really be regarded as an innocent party pushed into waging the Cold War by the manoeuvrings of the Anglo-Americans? Revisionist historians point to the determination of the Americans to deny the Soviets access to raw materials in the Western hemisphere and of British attempts to force a decision on the future of Germany, which would almost inevitably lead to its division. There is no doubt that initially

Stalin's policy was 'moderate' in that he did not want a third world war, as the USSR was hardly in the position to wage it.

Yet, what, in retrospect, can be called moderation did not necessarily seem to be so at the time. The British and Americans were alarmed by Soviet requests for control of the Black Sea Straits and of the former Italian colony of Libya. Even though Stalin withdrew these, they were seen as evidence of expansionist tendencies. Similarly, the exclusion of Western influence from Poland and most of Eastern Europe seemed to be an aggressive act and fed suspicions in London and Washington of Soviet actions. There was an ambiguity about Soviet policy. Stalin's ruthless suppression of all opposition in Poland and the **shotgun marriage** of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the German Communist Party (KPD) in the Soviet zone in Germany in 1946 alienated politicians in London and Washington even when he still hoped to work closely with them. On the other hand, London and Washington also gave out conflicting signals. They resented being excluded from Eastern Europe, but in their turn excluded the USSR from Western Europe and the Mediterranean.

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#### EXTRACT 1

**From M. McCauley, *Russia, America and the Cold War*, Pearson, 2004, page 3.**

*Both America and Russia were revolutionary powers. They possessed universal visions of how to improve the lot of humankind. From a Marxist perspective ... the goal of Communism required an expansionary policy and this would continue until the goal of a Communist society world wide had been achieved. Likewise the US understood that its prosperity depended on what happened outside its borders ... Truman put it succinctly: 'if Communism is allowed to absorb the free nations then we would be isolated from our sources of supply and detached from our friends'.*

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#### ? INTERPRETATION QUESTION

How far does [Extract 1](#) explain the causes of the Cold War?

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Great power rivalry, mutual fears about security and the rival ideologies of capitalism and Marxism–Leninism were all causes of the Cold War. Stalin's personality, too, is relevant, and it is arguable that the Cold War was an extension of the same distrust and suspicion which characterised his domestic policy. According to Gaddis, 'he functioned in much the same manner whether operating within the international system, within his alliances, within his country ... or party ... The Cold War we came to know was only one of many from his point of view.'

## 2 When did the Cold War actually start?

***Why is there a debate about when the Cold War started?***

As has been shown in [Chapter 2](#), historians disagree about when to date the beginning of the Cold War. Relations between the Allied powers, particularly the USA and the USSR, had been deteriorating ever since the defeat of Hitler, which had been the main cement holding together

the Grand Alliance. The Cold War has been dated variously from the October Revolution of 1917, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Churchill's famous 'iron curtain' speech in March 1946 and the launching of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947. Although the beginnings of the Cold War are hard to pinpoint, it was certainly well under way by the end of 1947. The withdrawal of the USSR from the Paris talks on Marshall Aid, the creation of the Cominform and the breakdown of the London Conference were important stages in the escalation of the Cold War in that year.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the causes of the Cold War by completing Worksheet 37 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## 3 The Cold War in Europe

### *Why was Europe the main theatre of the Cold War?*

Europe was the main, although not the only, theatre of the Cold War. It was there that it both began and ended. For the USSR it was essential to keep Eastern Europe under its control as a protective barrier against any possible attack from the West. It was this fact that led to Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 and to the formulation of the Brezhnev Doctrine twelve years later. The prize that both sides struggled for was Germany. In this, the Western powers had the advantage as they controlled two-thirds of the country, which included the great industrial centre of the Ruhr. The military and economic integration of the Western two-thirds of Germany into Western Europe was what Stalin most dreaded. The Berlin Blockade was an attempt to stop this from happening, but it merely intensified Western efforts to create an independent West German state in 1949. Again, to prevent West Germany from joining NATO and/or the planned European Defence Community (EDC), Stalin orchestrated the World Peace Movement, and finally, as a last desperate try, he proposed in March 1952 a plan for creating a neutral and apparently free Germany. In 1953, Lavrentii Beria, one of the key politicians in the USSR just after Stalin's death, very briefly played with the possibility of 'selling' the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to West Germany, subject to certain restrictions on its armaments, but after the East German Uprising of 1953, this idea was quickly dropped and until 1989 Soviet policy was to build up the weak and vulnerable East German state.

The division of Germany mirrored the division of Europe. The construction of the Berlin Wall confirmed the division of Germany for another 28 years, and in time appeared to bring a certain stability to central Europe. The only problem was that in the long term the division was **asymmetrical**. As President Eisenhower's US National Security Council pointed out, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) 'had nearly three times the population, about five times the industrial output and almost twice the size' of the GDR. Similarly, Western Europe and the USA together represented infinitely more economic power than the Soviet bloc could command.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

## AQA

Get to grips with the nature of the Cold War by completing Worksheet 38 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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The same lack of symmetry can be seen in the way the two superpowers influenced their respective blocs. On balance, it is true to say that the USA initially set up in Western Europe an 'empire by invitation'. The Western Europeans in the late 1940s were desperate for US military and financial aid. On the other hand, in Eastern Europe, with the partial exceptions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia until 1947, the USSR established an empire by conquest.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Test your understanding of the consequences of the Cold War for Germany by completing Worksheet 38 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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In the Soviet zone of Germany the behaviour of the Red Army and the mass raping carried out by its soldiers in 1945 created an atmosphere of hate and fear, which reinforced West Germany's determination to remain within the US sphere of influence at all costs. Essentially, the Americans helped to create an independent, prosperous, economically and increasingly politically integrated Western Europe, functioning within a capitalist global system. The Soviets had little to offer Eastern Europe that could rival this. Hence, the economic strength of Western Europe exerted a magnetic attraction on the peoples of Eastern Europe.

# 4 Why did the Cold War in Europe last for so long?

### *Did the West overestimate the power of the USSR?*

If the West had such a significant advantage over the Soviet bloc, why did the Cold War last for so long? It is possible to argue that its eventual outcome should have been predicted as early as 1968, when the crushing of the Prague Spring forced the Czech government and the other satellite states to abandon their attempts to liberalise their economies and return instead to a system of more rigid centralised control, which made them less flexible and responsive to change. Yet, it still seemed inconceivable that the USSR and its Eastern European satellites would eventually collapse like a row of dominoes. The USSR seemed to be a superpower at least as strong as the USA. This overestimation of its power was caused by assessing its strength solely in terms of its nuclear weapons and the space race. These were the two areas where it could effectively compete with the West. The long period of *détente* preserved the Soviet nuclear deterrent, but its relative economic decline continued.



## 5 The Cold War in Asia

### *To what extent were the Cold Wars in Europe and Asia linked?*

The Cold War was a global phenomenon, even though its main theatre was in Europe. The success of communism in China in 1949 was one of the important developments in the Cold War. Together with the successful Soviet development of the atomic bomb, it strengthened the global power of communism. The outbreak of the Korean War generated fears that it would inspire a similar attack by East Germany on West Germany and accelerated Western European military and economic integration.

Initially, the USSR under Stalin remained the unchallenged centre of global communism, but the People's Republic of China (PRC) played an increasingly important role in the Far East and East Asia. Not only did the PRC intervene decisively in the Korean War, but its assistance to the Việt Minh in Indo-China played a major role in the French defeat of 1954, and indeed in the subsequent American defeat in the Vietnam War. Yet just as the global Cold War was reaching its peak with Soviet and Chinese intervention escalating in Africa, the Middle East and Far East, the two great Communist superpowers ceased to be close ideological allies and became deadly rivals. Indeed, the PRC sought protection from a possible war with the USSR by drawing closer to the USA.

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#### EXTRACT 2

**From 'China and the Cold War after Mao' by Chen Jian, in M. Leffler and O.A. Westad, editors, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, volume III, Cambridge University Press, 2010, page 195.**

*By the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union was a superpower in decline, and China contributed in crucial ways to Moscow's problems. In a strategic sense, Beijing's partnership with Washington and its continued confrontation with Moscow completely altered the balance of power between the two superpowers. More importantly, China's market orientated reforms destroyed Moscow's claims that Communism remained a viable alternative to capitalism. ... Since the Cold War from its inception had been a global struggle between two contrasting ideological and social systems, the new course embraced by China obscured the distinctions between the two sides and favoured the capitalist world. The Soviet Union and its allies found it increasingly more difficult to sustain the course of the Cold War.*

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#### ? INTERPRETATION QUESTION

To what extent does [Extract 2](#) explain the impact on the course of the Cold War of the Sino-Soviet split?

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## 6 The Cold War in Africa, the Caribbean and South America

### ***How successful was communism in Africa, the Caribbean and South America?***

Decolonisation in Africa, the Middle East and the Caribbean and the success of Castro in Cuba turned the Cold War into a global struggle. In Africa, the emergence of independent states from the wreckage of the old European empires provided opportunities for both the USSR and the PRC to exploit anti-American and anti-Western sentiment.

Cuba, with its record of successfully defying the might of the USA, became an example to Marxist parties throughout Africa, South America and the other Caribbean islands. Cuba also conducted its own foreign policy in Angola and played a crucial role in strengthening the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and other Marxist parties in Africa.

## **7 Why did the Cold War end?**

### ***Why did the Cold War not end until 1989?***

Behind the nuclear façade, the whole Soviet bloc was suffering a steady economic, ideological, moral and cultural decline. This was primarily caused by its own economic inefficiencies and inability to match the West's economic growth. *Détente*, the Helsinki Agreement and *Ostpolitik* increasingly exposed the Soviet Empire to Western influences. As Gaddis has put it:

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#### **EXTRACT 3**

**From John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*, Oxford University Press, 1997, page 284.**

*To visualize what happened, imagine a troubled **triceratops**. From the outside, as rivals contemplated its sheer size, tough skin, bristling armament and aggressive posturing, the beast looked sufficiently formidable that none dared tangle with it. Appearances deceived, though, for within, its digestive, circulatory and respiratory systems were slowly clogging up, and then shutting down. There were few external signs of this until the day the creature was found with all four feet in the air, still awesome but now bloated stiff, and quite dead. The moral of the fable is that armaments make impressive **exoskeletons**, but a shell alone ensures the survival of no animal and no state.*

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#### **? INTERPRETATION QUESTION**

In what ways does [Extract 3](#) help the historian to understand the collapse of the USSR?

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By planning to develop the Strategic Defence Initiative, Reagan challenged the USSR in a way that had not happened since the late 1940s. The USSR simply could not keep pace with this technology. This was the context in which Gorbachev came to the conclusion that the only chance the USSR had of surviving was to modernise its economy and society along Western lines. Thus, he embarked on an ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to base the USSR's links with its satellite states on consent rather than coercion. This approach, however, came too late. In 1968, many Eastern Europeans could perhaps still have been won over by the

prospect of ‘Socialism with a human face’, but twenty years later all socialist idealism had evaporated. After the grey, corrupt and repressive years of the Brezhnev era, the sudden freedom offered by Gorbachev was used by the Eastern Europeans to reject socialism and look to the US and Western European economic models.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### AQA

Test your understanding of the collapse of the USSR by completing Worksheets 39 and 40 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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In the PRC and Cuba, however, Gaddis’s picture of a ‘a troubled triceratops’ is not so valid. In the former, the Chinese Communist Party under Mao’s successors was successfully able to modernise its economy and embrace capitalism, thereby ending the ideological battle with the West, but unlike their colleagues in Moscow, they were able to maintain a tight grip on power. In Cuba, too, communism survived, but Castro stubbornly resisted all calls for reform. In the PRC, an economic miracle, which was denied to Gorbachev, undoubtedly enabled the Communist Party to survive. In Cuba, Castro as the great revolutionary leader – a Lenin and Mao rolled into one – could still draw on reserves of loyalty and gratitude.

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Get to grips with why the Cold War ended by completing Worksheet 39 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

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## ONLINE EXTRAS

### OCR

Develop your interpretation analysis skills by completing Worksheet 40 at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/accesstohistory/extras)

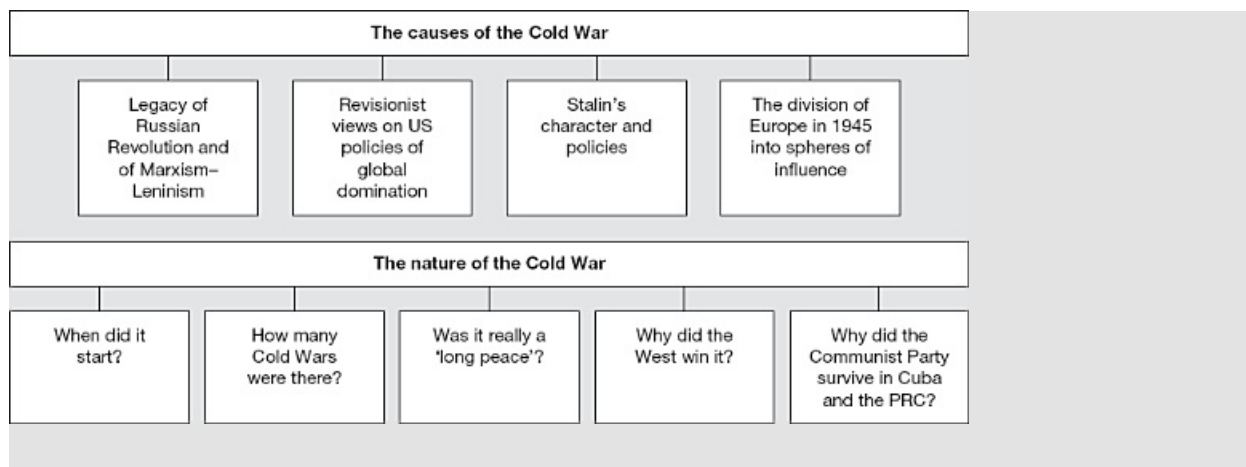
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## SUMMARY DIAGRAM

### WHAT WAS THE COLD WAR?





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## Refresher questions

Use these questions to remind yourself of the key material covered in this chapter.

Why did the Cold War last for so long?

Why did the USA and its allies win the Cold War in Europe?

Why did communism collapse in the USSR?

What role did Germany play in the Cold War?

Why was the USSR relatively successful in Africa in the 1970s?

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## Question practice: AQA

### Essay question

The USSR failed to win the Cold War primarily because of its economic weakness'. Assess the validity of this view. [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Analyse the reasons for the USSR's failure to win the Cold War – contrasting its economic weakness with other factors, and reach a clear judgment.

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## Question practice: OCR

### Essay questions

How effective was the USSR in controlling Eastern Europe, 1956–90? [A level]

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**EXAM HINT** Consider the arguments for and against the effectiveness of the USSR in controlling Eastern Europe, for example examining its effectiveness in East Germany, Hungary and Poland. For each state discussed, an interim judgement as

to the effectiveness needs to be reached and this will provide the basis for an overall judgement.

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Which of the following was of greater impact on the Cold War in Europe? i) The construction of the Berlin Wall. ii) The defeat of the Prague Spring, 1968. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Explain the ways in which each of the issues had an impact on the Cold War. Then reach a judgement as to which had the greater impact and explain why it was greater.

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Who was the more successful in strengthening the USSR in Europe? i) Khrushchev. ii) Brezhnev. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii). [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Explain the ways in which each of the rulers helped and hindered the strengthening of the USSR. It is then important to reach a judgement as to which was more successful and explain why they should be seen as more successful.

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Assess the consequences for Eastern Europe and the USSR of Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. [A level]

**EXAM HINT** Analyse a range of consequences of the two policies. This might include the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union, the nationalities problem, their role in the ending of the Cold War. You should reach interim judgements as to the importance of each consequence and use the interim judgements to reach an overall judgement as to the most important cause.

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# Exam focus: AQA

## Essay guidance

At both AS and A level for AQA Component 2: Depth Study: The Cold War, c.1945–1991 you will need to answer an essay question in the exam. Each essay question is marked out of 25:

AS examination	A level examination
Section B: answer <b>one</b> essay (from a choice of two)	Section B: answer <b>two</b> essays from a choice of three

There are several question stems which all have the same basic requirement: to analyse and reach a conclusion, based on the evidence you provide.

The AS questions give a quotation and then ask whether you agree or disagree with this view. Almost inevitably, your answer will be a mixture of both. It is the same task as for A level – just phrased differently in the question.

Detailed essays with accurate use of dates and own knowledge are more likely to do well than vague or generalised essays.

The AQA mark scheme is essentially the same for AS and the full A level. Both emphasise the need to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied. The key feature of the highest level is sustained analysis: analysis that unites the whole of the essay. Below is a summary of the mark scheme but it is always worth checking the full version on the AQA website ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)).

## Writing an essay: tips from examiners' reports

### Focus and structure

- Be sure what the question is asking and plan what the paragraphs should be about.
- It is important that the whole of the time period in the question is considered. A response that fails to cover the full date range set in the question will struggle to reach the higher levels. Equally, you should be careful not to go beyond the date range of the question and bring in information that is after the period stated. You will not be credited for bringing in knowledge and examples that are outside the dates in the question.
- Your introduction to the essay should be focused and outline the overall argument of the essay. It is not the place to talk about different definitions, for example, what 'regime' means. Make

sure you clearly state what your opinion is and why you think that.

- Be sure that each paragraph highlights the structure of the answer, for example the opening sentence should be analytical and not descriptive.
- Make sure that the introductory sentence of each paragraph relates directly to the focus of the question.
- Avoiding writing a narrative (an account of what happened). Simply listing events and telling the story will result in a low-level mark.

Level	AS level	A level
1	Extremely limited or irrelevant information. Unsupported, vague or generalist comments. (1–5)	Extremely limited or irrelevant information. Unsupported, vague or generalist comments. (1–5)
2	Descriptive or partial, failing to grasp full demands of question. Limited in scope. (6–10)	Descriptive or partial, failing to grasp full demands of question. Limited in scope. (6–10)
3	Some understanding and answer is adequately organised. Information showing understanding of some key features. (11–15)	Understanding of question and a range of largely accurate information showing awareness of key issues and features, but lacking in precise detail. Some balance established. (11–15)
4	Understanding shown, with range of largely accurate information showing awareness of some of the key issues and features. (16–20)	Good understanding of question. Well-organised and effectively communicated, with range of clear and specific supporting information showing good understanding of key features and issues, with some conceptual awareness. (16–20)
5	Good understanding. Well-organised and effectively communicated. Range of clear information showing good understanding and some conceptual awareness leading to a substantiated judgement. (21–25)	Very good understanding of full demands of question. Well-organised and effectively delivered, with well-selected, precise supporting information. Fully analytical, with balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. (21–25)

## Use detail

- Make sure that you show detailed knowledge, but only as part of an explanation being made in relation to the question. No knowledge should be standalone.
- For every piece of detailed knowledge think ‘so what?’ Why have you added this piece of information? What role is it playing in advancing your argument?

## Explanatory analysis and evaluation

Consider what words and phrases to use in an answer to strengthen the explanation. A good place to start is to use adjective qualifiers (words that precede an adjective that increase or decrease the quality signified by the word they modify).



## Use of primary sources and references to historians

- Primary sources can be referred to in your answer in order to add substance to an explanation.
- The views of historians can also be used, *but* do not parade knowledge about several historians who do not always agree with each other unless you are actively using their views to augment your own argument. Extensive historiography is not wanted. Indeed, an answer can be in the top level and make no mention of historians whatsoever.

## Balance

- Your answer must be a balanced response. This does not mean giving two alternative viewpoints and sitting on the fence or in the middle: you will need to consider a variety of factors and make a judgement. You will need to explain why the alternative view or factors are not as important or valid as the one you are advancing.

## Argument and counter-argument

- Think of how arguments can be juxtaposed as part of a balancing act to give contrasting views.
- Think how best to 'resolve' contradictory arguments.

## Relative significance and evaluation

- Think how best to reach a judgement when trying to assess the relative importance of various factors, and their possible interrelationship.

# Planning an essay

## Practice question 1

**'The Communist victory in China in 1949 had a huge impact on international relations, 1949–1954.' Assess the validity of this view.**

This question requires you to analyse the impact of the Communist victory in China on international relations. You must discuss the following:

- The impact of the Communist victory in China on international relations (your primary focus).
- The limitations of this impact on international relations (your secondary focus).

A clear structure makes for a much more effective essay and is crucial for achieving the highest marks. You need three or four paragraphs to structure this question effectively. In each paragraph you will deal with one factor. One of these *must* be the factor in the question. If you do not address the factor (in this case, the impact of the Communist victory in China) then you are not answering the question and will only score a low level.

A very basic plan for this question might look like this:

- Paragraph 1: brief background as to the potential significance of the Communist victory for international relations.
- Paragraph 2: an analysis of what changes the Communist victory in China actually brought

about.

- Paragraph 3: an assessment of the limitations of the effects that the Communist victory in China had on international relations.

It is a good idea to cover the factor named in the question first, so that you don't run out of time and forget to do it. Then cover the others in what you think is their order of importance, or in the order that appears logical in terms of the sequence of paragraphs.

## The introduction

Maintaining focus is vital. One way to do this from the beginning of your essay is to use the words in the question to help write your argument. The first sentence of your answer to question 1, for example, could look like this:

*The Communist victory in China in 1949 had an impact on international relations in two key areas as it strengthened communism as a global force and also affected international relations in the Far East.*

This opening sentence provides a clear focus on the demands of the question, although it could, of course, be written in a more exciting style. Continue to outline the argument of the essay – anticipating the conclusion. The rest of the essay should flow from these opening statements because you have indicated a clear sense of direction.

## Focus throughout the essay

Structuring your essay well will help with keeping the focus of your essay on the question. To maintain a focus on the wording in question 1, you could begin your first main paragraph with 'Communist victory'.

*The Communist victory in China was an event of considerable international significance as the largest and potentially most powerful country in the Far East was now communist and this would inevitably have an impact on international relations in the Far East.*

- This sentence begins with a clear point that refers to the primary focus of the question (Communist victory) while linking it to a factor (communism in the Far East).
- You could then have a paragraph for each of your other factors.
- It will be important to make sure that each paragraph focuses on analysis, and includes relevant details that are used as part of the argument.
- You may wish to number your factors. This helps to make your structure clear and helps you to maintain focus. However, this can also make the essay appear to be concerned with a list, and not encourage links between paragraphs.

## Deploying detail

As well as focus and structure, your essay will be judged on the extent to which it includes accurate detail. There are several different kinds of evidence you could use that might be described as detailed. These include correct dates, names of relevant people, statistics and events. For example, for question 1 you could use terms such as 'anti-colonialism', 'Sino-Soviet Pact' and 'Viet Minh'. You can also make your essays more detailed by using the correct technical

vocabulary. You might also be able to use specific primary sources, including brief quotations, and references to the views of particular historians who support your arguments. However, the quotations and arguments of historians must be relevant. There is no point in learning historians' quotes and squeezing them in somewhere just because you have learnt them. This will not gain you marks – they need to relate to your argument.

## Analysis and explanation

'Analysis' covers a variety of high-level skills including explanation and evaluation; in essence, it means breaking down something complex into smaller parts. A clear structure which breaks down a complex question into a series of paragraphs is the first step towards writing an analytical essay. The purpose of explanation is to provide evidence for why something happened, or why something is true or false. An explanatory statement requires two parts: a *claim* and a *justification*. For example, for question 1, you might want to argue that the Communist victory in China affected the war in Indo-China between the Viet Minh and the French. Once you have made your point, and supported it with relevant detail, you can then explain how this answers the question. For example, you could conclude your paragraph like this:

*So the Communist victory in China did have an impact on international relations in the Far East[1] because it strengthened the Viet Minh in Indo-China[2] and enabled their troops to defeat the French by 1954 and so strengthen communism in the Far East[3].*

- 1 The first part of this sentence is the claim while the second part justifies the claim.
- 2 'Because' is a very important word to use when writing an explanation, as it shows the relationship between the claim and the justification.
- 3 The justification.

## Evaluation

Evaluation means considering the importance of two or more different factors, weighing them against each other, and reaching a judgement. This is a good skill to use at the end of an essay because the conclusion should reach a judgement which answers the question. Ideally, this will have been anticipated in the introductory paragraph, thus ensuring that the essay has a clear sense of direction from beginning to end. For example, your conclusion to question 1 might read:

*Clearly[1], the Communist victory in China had a major impact on international relations. The Sino-Soviet Pact of February 1950 created an alliance between the two great Communist powers, the USSR and PRC, which strengthened them both in the period 1950–4. It also enabled communism to play a more important part in international affairs in the Far East. The PRC was able directly to help the Viet Minh in Indochina. Mao, with Soviet support, also encouraged the North Koreans to invade South Korea, and when the USA threatened Manchuria in October 1950, Chinese troops actually intervened. However[2], this did not lead to a Communist victory there, as the North Korean and Chinese troops were ultimately brought to a standstill on the borders of South Korea along the 38th parallel. Therefore[3], the Communist victory in China obviously affected international relations by strengthening the relationship between the USSR and the PRC, and encouraging Communist action in the Far East.*

**1–3** Words like ‘clearly’, ‘however’ and ‘therefore’ are helpful to contrast the importance of the different factors.

## Complex essay writing: argument and counter-argument

Essays that develop a good argument are more likely to reach the highest levels. This is because argumentative essays are much more likely to develop sustained analysis. As you know, your essays are judged on the extent to which they analyse.

After setting up an argument in your introduction, you should develop it throughout the essay. One way of doing this is to adopt an argument–counter-argument structure. A counter-argument is one that disagrees with the main argument of the essay. This is a good way of evaluating the importance of the different factors that you discuss. Essays of this type will develop an argument in one paragraph and then set out an opposing argument in another paragraph. Sometimes this will include juxtaposing the differing views of historians on a topic.

Good essays will analyse the key issues. They will probably have a clear piece of analysis at the end of each paragraph. While this analysis might be good, it will generally relate only to the issue discussed in that paragraph.

Excellent essays will be analytical throughout. As well as the analysis of each factor discussed above, there will be an overall analysis. This will run throughout the essay and can be achieved through developing a clear, relevant and coherent argument.

A good way of achieving sustained analysis is to consider which factor is most important.

Here is an example of an introduction that sets out an argument for question 1:

*Despite its victory in China, communism did not manage to dominate the Far East totally. Hence, Japan and Taiwan, for example, still remained under US protection[1]. However, it is undeniable that it had a major impact on international relations not only in the Far East but in Europe too, where it increased the prestige of communism and the potential military strength of the USSR through the Sino-Soviet Pact[2]. Its impact on international relations, not surprisingly, was strongest in the Far East, where the new Communist China could assist local Communist regimes and anti-colonial movements with men and equipment. The Communist victory in China played an important role in defeating the French in Indochina and checking the US advance into North Korea[3].*

- 1** The introduction begins with a counter-argument aimed at showing the limitations of one effect.
  - 2** The introduction continues with another reason; this time indicating the effect it did have on international relations.
  - 3** Concludes with an outline of detailed arguments of the most important reason for its effect on international relations.
- This introduction focuses on the question and sets out the key factors that the essay will develop.
  - It introduces an argument about which factor was most significant.

- However, it also sets out an argument that can then be developed throughout each paragraph, and is rounded off with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

## Complex essay writing: resolution and relative significance

Having written an essay that explains argument and counter-argument, you should then resolve the tension between the argument and the counter-argument in your conclusion. It is important that the writing is precise and summarises the arguments made in the main body of the essay. You need to reach a supported overall judgement.

One very appropriate way to do this is by evaluating the relative significance of different factors, in the light of valid criteria. Relative significance means how important one factor is compared to another.

The best essays will always make a judgement about which was most important based on valid criteria. These can be very simple, and will depend on the topic and the exact question.

The following criteria are often useful:

- Duration: which factor was important for the longest amount of time?
- Scope: which factor affected the most people?
- Effectiveness: which factor achieved most?
- Impact: which factor led to the most fundamental change?

As an example, you could compare the factors in terms of their duration and their impact. A conclusion that follows this advice should be capable of reaching a high level (if written, in full, with appropriate details) because it reaches an overall judgement that is supported through evaluating the relative significance of different factors in the light of valid criteria.

Having written an introduction and the main body of an essay for question 1, a concluding paragraph that aims to meet the exacting criteria for reaching a complex judgement could look like this:

*Thus, the impact of the Communist victory in China in 1949 on international relations was complex. The Sino-Soviet Pact did much to counter the West's financial and technical superiority. In the Far East, the PRC was also able to provide decisive military help to North Korea and the Viet Minh. Indeed, it enabled the latter to defeat the French in 1953–4. In Korea, Chinese troops were engaged in open warfare with the US-led UN forces. So the Chinese revolution certainly intensified the Cold War – in Korea it became a 'hot war' between the US-led UN forces and the PRC – but between 1949 and 1954 the balance was not decisively tilted against the USA and the Western powers, as the outbreak of the Korean War accelerated Western rearmament and attempts to integrate a West German army into the EDC and NATO. Only in Indochina did communism win a clear victory, but even there, at the Geneva Conference in 1954, the USA was able to insist on the division of Vietnam along the 17th parallel. It was to take another twenty years for communism to triumph there. In Korea the PRC certainly prevented the occupation of the North by UN forces, but it was unable to drive them out of the Korean peninsula and create a united Korean Communist regime. Therefore, while the Communist victory in China saw far-reaching effects with the Sino-Soviet Pact and a more powerful PRC, the Western powers, mainly the USA, sought to limit its*

impact in Korea and Indo-China.

## Sources guidance

Whether you are taking the AS exam or the full A level exam for AQA Component 2: Depth Study: The Cold War in Europe, 1945–1991, Section A presents you with sources and a question which involves evaluation of their utility or value.

AS examination	A level examination
Section A: answer question 1, based on two primary sources. (25 marks)	Section A: answer question 1, based on three primary sources. (30 marks)
Question focus: with reference to these sources, and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining ... ?	Question focus: with reference to these sources, and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to a historian studying ...

## Sources and sample questions

Study the sources. They are all concerned with the creation of the ‘iron curtain’.

### SOURCE 1

**From Winston Churchill’s speech at Fulton, Missouri, USA, on the ‘iron curtain’, 5 March 1946. Available at [www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1946-03-05.pdf](http://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1946-03-05.pdf).**

*From Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste, in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe – Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia. All these famous cities, and the populations around them, lie in the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence, but to a very high and increasing measure of control from Moscow. Athens alone ... is free to decide its future ... The Russian-dominated Polish government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany ... The Communist parties, which were very small in all these eastern states of Europe, have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. Police governments are prevailing in nearly every sense, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no true democracy ... An attempt is being made by the Russians in Berlin to build up a quasi-Communist party in their zone of occupied Germany by showing special favours to groups of left-wing leaders.*

### SOURCE 2

**From Stalin’s interview with the Soviet newspaper, *Pravda*, 13 March 1946, quoted in M. McCauley, *Origins of Cold War, 1941–1949*, Longman, 2003, pp. 142–3.**

... The following circumstances should not be forgotten. The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Romania and Hungary. The Germans were able to make their invasion through these countries because at the time governments hostile to the Soviet Union existed in these countries. As a result of the German invasion the Soviet Union has lost irretrievably in the fighting against the Germans, and also through the German occupation and the deportation of Soviet citizens to German servitude, a total of about seven million people. In other words, the Soviet Union's loss of life has been several times greater than that of Britain and the United States of America put together. Possibly in some quarters an inclination is felt to forget about these colossal sacrifices of the Soviet people which secured the liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite [Nazi] yoke. But the Soviet Union cannot forget about them ... And so what can there be surprising about the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, is trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries? How can anyone, who has not taken leave of his senses, describe these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as expansionist tendencies on the part of our state?

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### SOURCE 3

**From Truman's speech to Congress, 12 March 1947, quoted in G. Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics*, Routledge, 1999, p. 22.**

*One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections and the suppression of personal freedoms.*

*I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. ... The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died.*

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## AS style question

With reference to [Sources 1](#) and [2](#) (page 244), and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining why the Cold War started after 1945?

## A level style question

With reference to [Sources 1](#), [2](#) (page 244) and [3](#) (above), and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to a historian studying the causes of the Cold War.



# The mark schemes

## AS mark scheme

The mark scheme rewards analysis and evaluation of the source material within the historical context.

Level 1	Describing the source content or offering generic phrases
Level 2	Some relevant but limited comments on the value of one source or some limited comment on both
Level 3	Some relevant comments on the value of the sources and some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question
Level 4	Relevant well-supported comments on the value and a supported conclusion, but with limited judgement
Level 5	Very good understanding of the value in relation to the issue identified. Sources evaluated thoroughly and with a well-substantiated conclusion related to which is more valuable

## A level mark scheme

The A level mark scheme is similar to the AS one, but, of course, covers three sources, not two. Also, the wording of the question means that there is no requirement to decide which of the three sources is the most valuable. Concentrate instead on a very thorough analysis of the content and evaluation of the provenance of each source.

Level 1	Some limited comment on the value of at least one source
Level 2	Some limited comments on the value of the sources or on content or provenance or comments on all three sources but no reference to the value of the sources
Level 3	Some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance, with some historical context; but analysis limited
Level 4	Good understanding of all three sources in relation to content, provenance and historical context, to give a balanced argument on their value for the purpose specified in the question
Level 5	As Level 4, but with a substantiated judgement on each of the three sources

## Working towards an answer

It is important that knowledge is used to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issue raised in the question. Answers should be concerned with the following:

- provenance
- content of the source and contextual knowledge
- tone and emphasis of the sources.

## The sources

The two or three sources used each time will be contemporary – probably of varying types (for example, diaries, newspaper accounts, government reports). The sources will all be on the same broad topic area. Each source will have value. Your task is to evaluate how much – in terms of its content and its provenance.

## Content

You will need to assess the *value of the content* by using your own knowledge. When evaluating the source, consider the following questions:

- Is the information accurate? How does this affect the value of the source?
- Is it giving only part of the evidence and ignoring other aspects? How does this affect the value of the source?
- Is the tone of the writing significant? If so, how does this affect the value of the source?
- What was happening around the time that the source was written? How does this affect the value of the source?
- Merely saying the source is biased or subjective is not sufficient and you will need to go beyond such simplistic analysis in your answer.

## Provenance

You will need to evaluate the *provenance* of the source by considering who wrote it, and when, where and why. What was its purpose? Was it produced to express an opinion; to record facts; to influence the opinion of others? Who was the intended audience? Even if it was intended to be accurate, the writer may have been biased – either deliberately or unconsciously. The writer, for example, might have only known part of the situation and reached a judgement solely based on that.

Learning stock phrases about the nature of the source (for example, a diary or a newspaper) will not gain you any credit. General assertions will fail to score well.

## Analysing the sources

Here is a guide to analysing the provenance, content and tone for Sources 1, 2 and 3.

To answer the question effectively, you need to read the sources carefully and pull out the relevant points as well as add your own knowledge. You must remember to keep the focus on the question at all times.

## Source 1 (page 244)

### Provenance:

- Source 1 is an extract from a speech from Winston Churchill, leader of the Conservative Party in Britain, at Fulton, Missouri, 5 March 1946.
- It provides the opinion of the former British wartime prime minister, who enjoyed immense global fame and prestige as the ‘saviour’ of the free world from Nazi tyranny.

**Content and argument:**

- The source warns that an ‘iron curtain’ is descending across Europe from Stettin to Trieste.
- East of this line countries are subject to increasing Soviet influence. In Berlin and the Soviet zone in Germany, the USSR has created what in effect is a Communist Party.
- The source argues that local Communist parties, which only represent a small minority, are, with Soviet help, progressively establishing control of the Eastern European states.

**Tone and emphasis:**

- The tone is a powerful ‘wake-up’ call to the USA and the countries of Western Europe to take note of what is happening in Eastern Europe.
- Shows sympathy with the fate of the Eastern European states, which are in the process of losing their liberty to the USSR.

**Own knowledge:**

- Use your knowledge to agree/disagree with the source, for example: Soviet policy in Germany and towards Greece and Turkey. Also, the Soviet need for security.

## Source 2 (page 244)

**Provenance:**

- Source 2 is an extract from Stalin’s interview on 13 March 1946 with the Soviet Communist newspaper, *Pravda*. It was of great importance as Stalin was dictator of the USSR with complete powers.
- *Pravda* was the official public voice of the Soviet Communist Party, and so Stalin was anxious that his views as expressed would become known to the USA, Western Europe and indeed to Communists in Eastern and Western Europe.

**Content and argument:**

- The source outlines Soviet sacrifices and loss of life during the Second World War.
- It argues that the USSR, having been attacked through Eastern Europe by the Germans, must ensure its security by having friendly governments in place in those Eastern European countries.

**Tone and emphasis:**

- The article is a measured and apparently reasonable response to Churchill’s accusation made on 5 March 1946.

**Own knowledge:**

- Use your knowledge to agree/disagree with the source, for example: detailed knowledge about Soviet policy in Eastern Europe 1944–6.

## Source 3 (page 244)

**Provenance:**

- Source 3 is an extract from a speech by President Truman to the US Congress on 12 March 1947. As president, he is the single most powerful figure in the US government and will have

well-informed views on the Soviet threats to Greece, Turkey and elsewhere.

- The extract is taken from the president's speech to Congress. He is therefore making a public announcement about the aims of the US foreign policy and its intentions to support states that are threatened by communism.

### **Content and argument:**

- The source stresses that there are two ways of life in the world: one where the will of the majority prevails and there is individual liberty; the other where this is suppressed and dictatorship prevails.
- The aim of the USA is to assist the former and help countries maintain their liberty.
- The source argues that communism thrives where there is misery and want; the USA must remedy this.

### **Tone and emphasis:**

- The tone is idealistic and challenging. Truman is warning the USSR that the USA is determined to block the spread of communism where it has no majority backing.

### **Own knowledge:**

- Use your knowledge to agree/disagree with the source; for example: details about why the USA was concerned with Russian threats to independent states. The British decision to end aid to Greece and Turkey on 21 February 1946 is relevant here as it exposed these countries to threats from communism. In Greece the threat came more from Communist Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria, not directly from the USSR.

## **Answering AS questions**

You have 45 minutes to answer the question. It is important that you spend at least one quarter of the time reading and planning your answer. Generally, when writing an answer, you need to check that you are remaining focused on the issue identified in the question and are relating this to the sources and your knowledge.

- You might decide to write a paragraph on each 'strand' (that is, provenance, content and tone), comparing the two sources, and then write an extensive concluding paragraph which explains why one source is more valuable than the other. This should not be a short conclusion which consists mostly of assertions.
- Alternatively, you may decide to adopt a comparative approach, comparing the provenance and the content of each of the two sources.

At AS level, whichever approach you choose to adopt, you are asked to provide a judgement on which is more valuable. Make sure that this is based on clear arguments with strong evidence, and not on general assertions.

## **If you were answering the AS question**

- Think how you can best plan an answer.
- Plan in terms of the headings above, perhaps combining 'provenance' with 'tone and emphasis', and compare the two sources.

As an example, here is a comparison of Sources 1 and 2 in terms of provenance, and tone and emphasis:

*The two sources have directly opposing viewpoints and a very different provenance. Source 1 is from Winston Churchill, a man famed throughout the world for his leadership of Britain during the Second World War, but who is no longer in power. It is a strong and detailed criticism of Stalin's policies in Eastern Europe, which have resulted in the setting up of pro-Soviet or Communist regimes and the creation of a barrier between East and West Europe – the iron curtain. Source 2 is a direct reply to this criticism from Josef Stalin, the supreme ruler of the USSR, who enjoyed immense power and prestige in the Communist world. He makes a powerful but measured argument in support of Soviet policies.*

Then compare the *content and argument* of each source, by using your knowledge. For example:

*Source 1 is arguing that Stalin's policies have resulted in setting up pro-Soviet Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The consequence of this is that throughout this area, with the exception of Czechoslovakia, there is no democracy. Instead, these regimes are seeking to establish Soviet dictatorships and to cut off Eastern Europe from the West through the creation of the iron curtain. Source 2 also focuses on Eastern Europe. Stalin points out that the USSR has suffered millions of casualties during the war, unlike the USA and Britain, and is, therefore, determined to ensure that only regimes which are friendly and loyal to the USSR control the Eastern European states through which came the German attack in 1941.*

Which is more *valuable*? This can be judged either in terms of where the source came from; or in terms of the accuracy of its content. However, remember the focus of the question: in this case, why did the Cold War start?

With these sources, you could argue that Source 2 is the more valuable because it was written by Stalin, who held complete power in the USSR. He does not deny that the USSR is seeking to install governments 'loyal in their attitude to the Soviet', which effectively means communist, in the Eastern European states. Only through them can the USSR be sure of the loyalty of these states and that they will not ally with some future aggressor. It has the ring of truth and shows that the USSR's desire for security was one of the factors that started the Cold War. Although Source 1 is a valuable and perceptive comment on what is happening in Eastern Europe, it is from a politician who is now out of power. Its analysis is increasingly accepted by the West, but it comes from a man who, for the time being, lacks the power to take political decisions.

Then check the following:

- Have you covered the 'provenance' and 'content' strands?
- Have you included sufficient knowledge to show understanding of the historical context?

## Answering A level questions

The same general points for answering AS questions (see 'Answering AS questions', page 247) apply to A level questions, although of course here there are three sources and you need to assess the value of each of the three, rather than choose which is most valuable. Make sure that you remain focused on the question and that when you use your knowledge it is used to substantiate (add to) an argument relating to the content or provenance of the source.

If you are answering the A level question with Sources 1, 2 and 3 above:

- Here you are *not* asked to explain which is the most valuable of the three sources.
- You can deal with each of the three sources in turn if you wish.
- You need to include sufficient knowledge to show understanding of the historical context. This might encourage cross-referencing of the content of the three sources, inter-mixed with your own knowledge.
- It is possible to look at the provenance and content of each source separately, and incorporate 'tone and emphasis' where relevant. This can lead to a judgement on value. The danger is that you forget the overall judgement.
- It is preferable, if possible, to consider 'valuable' and then 'not valuable' for each source in turn, with an argument that combines 'provenance' and 'content'.
- This approach can link the strengths (and then the weaknesses) of the source as a whole.
- If you look at the provenance separately before reading the content, there is the danger that your argument on provenance is generalised and not related to the content. Often the 'provenance' part of an answer can provide a window into the content, leading to one strong argument about the strengths (or weaknesses) of the source in terms of its value.
- You do not have to give equal weight or write the same amount on content, provenance and tone: this would be too mechanistic an approach.
- In discussing weaknesses, do *not* write about what the source does not say. Stick to an analysis of what is there.
- You need to be able to show contextual knowledge where appropriate in your arguments in order to go beyond making assertions.
- 'Provenance' can include not just authorship and the context but also the intended audience.
- Bring in points about tone and language as relevant (under provenance and/or content) rather than as a separate point unless a particular source warrants that focus.
- When considering tone, remember that this is a history exam and not an exercise in English literature or English language! There is no need for a dedicated paragraph on tone that analyses the nuances of the language used. Simply saying that a source is emotive, picking out a word from the source that demonstrates the tone and explaining how it affects the value is sufficient. There is also no need to go looking for a certain tone that might not actually be in the source. Tone plays a subsidiary role in your answer and either the content or provenance will be the main driver on the value of the source.

## Keeping focus on the question

You must remember to keep *the focus on the question at all times*. Always bear in mind how your point is answering the question. Asking yourself 'so what?' will help keep your focus. For example, you may know lots about the author of the source and want to show how much you know. However, simply writing all you know about the author without addressing the question will not get you very far because you are not linking what you know to the value of the source.

The emphasis in all answers should be on the value of sources to an historian *for a particular enquiry*. In the example question, the key focus should be 'to a historian studying the reasons for the Cold War'.

# Exam focus: OCR

## Essay guidance

The assessment of OCR Units Y223 and Y253: The Cold War in Europe 1941–1995 depends on whether you are studying it for AS or A level:

AS examination	A level examination
You will answer one essay question from a choice of two, and one interpretation question for which there is no choice	You will answer one essay question from a choice of two, and one shorter essay question also from a choice of two

The guidance below is for answering both AS and A level essay questions. Guidance for the shorter essay question is at the end of this section. Guidance on answering interpretation questions is on page [256](#).

For both OCR AS and A level History, the types of essay questions set and the skills required to achieve a high grade for Unit Group 2 are the same. The skills are made very clear by both mark schemes, which emphasise that the answer must:

- focus on the demands of the question
- be supported by accurate and relevant factual knowledge
- be analytical and logical
- reach a developed and supported judgement about the issue in the question.

There are a number of skills that you will need to develop to reach the higher levels in the marking bands:

- understand the wording of the question
- plan an answer to the question set
- write a focused opening paragraph
- avoid irrelevance and description
- write analytically
- make a supported judgement about the relative importance of the issue you are discussing
- write a conclusion which reaches a supported judgement based on the argument in the main body of the essay.

These skills will be developed in the section below, but are further developed in the ‘Period Study’ chapters of the *OCR A level History* series (British Period Studies and Enquiries).

## Understanding the wording of the question

To stay focused on the question set, it is important to read the question carefully and focus on the key words and phrases. Unless you directly address the demands of the question you will not score highly. Remember that in questions where there is a named factor you must write a good analytical paragraph about the given factor, even if you argue that it was not the most important.





Types of AS and A level questions you might find in the exams	The factors and issues you would need to consider in answering them
<b>1</b> Assess the consequences for both Eastern and Western Europe in the years 1949–53 of the Berlin Blockade.	Weigh up the relative importance of a range of factors as to what impact the Berlin Blockade had on Eastern and Western Europe. This is developed below and a range of issues that might be discussed is outlined
<b>2</b> To what extent did the USA cause the Cold War through its policies in Europe, 1945–7?	Weigh up the relative importance of a range of factors, including comparing the impact of US actions, 1945–7, with the impact of other factors on the situation in Europe
<b>3</b> ‘Gorbachev’s policies ended in total failure.’ How far do you agree?	Weigh up Gorbachev’s policies from 1985 to 1991 and assess the policies against a range of criteria to decide if they were a ‘total failure’
<b>4</b> How successful was <i>détente</i> in the period from 1965 to 1979?	<p>This question requires you to make a judgement about <i>détente</i>. You will need to think about issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its aims as viewed from both sides: the USSR and its allies, and the USA and its allies</li> <li>• Its achievements in controlling nuclear weapons</li> <li>• Relaxation of tension in Central Europe, looking here particularly at the Helsinki Conference</li> <li>• For which power was <i>détente</i> the most successful?</li> </ul>

## Planning an answer

Many plans simply list dates and events: this should be avoided as it encourages a descriptive or narrative answer, rather than an analytical answer. The plan should be an outline of your argument; this means you need to think carefully about the issues you intend to discuss and their relative importance before you start writing your answer. It should therefore be a list of the factors or issues you are going to discuss and a comment on their relative importance.

For question 1 in the table, your plan might look something like this:

- The role of the blockade in the creation of East and West Germany, major factor in the short term, leads to division of Germany, ends wartime hopes and increases tensions.
- The importance of the airlift in the development of the Cold War, link to the idea of defending Western democracy against communism.
- The need to protect West Berlin without causing a third world war.
- Its role in turning Berlin into a symbol of the divide in Europe.
- West gave message to Stalin about holding on to Berlin.
- Gave message to the West that Stalin was aggressive and threatening.
- Role played in creation of NATO.
- Impact on developments in Eastern Europe and Stalin’s strengthening of control.

## The opening paragraph

Many students spend time ‘setting the scene’; the opening paragraph becomes little more than an introduction to the topic – this should be avoided. Instead, make it clear what your argument is going to be. Offer your view about the issue in the question – what were the key consequences of the blockade for Eastern and Western Europe? – and then introduce the other issues you intend to discuss. In the plan it is suggested that the blockade had a crucial impact on Germany. This should be made clear in the opening paragraph, with a brief comment as to why the blockade made the division of Germany almost inevitable. However, although the blockade was the most important factor, it is worth just briefly mentioning the other factors that you intend to discuss and giving a brief comment as to your view about their relative importance.

This will give the examiner a clear overview of your essay, rather than it being a ‘mystery tour’ where the argument becomes clear only at the end. You should also refer to any important issues that the question raises. For example:

*There are a number of reasons why the Berlin Blockade had such important consequences for Europe[1]. Stalin hoped that the blockade would force the Western Allies to give up their plans for creating a West German state. Its failure, however, made the creation of this state a virtual certainty as well as accelerating the formation of NATO and US involvement in Western Europe’s defence[2]. The consequences of these developments were to lead to Stalin setting up an East German state as well as strengthening his grip on Eastern Europe, particularly Czechoslovakia[3,4].*

- 1 The student is aware that there were a number of important reasons.
- 2 The student offers a clear view as to what they consider to be the most important reason – a thesis is offered.
- 3 There is a brief justification to support the thesis.
- 4 Some of the factors and their relative importance are briefly stated.

Now look at a less successful attempt to write an opening paragraph. Read the paragraph below written in answer to a similar question: ‘How important was the issue of Germany in bringing about the Cold War?’

*Between 1945 and 1949 the issue of Germany dramatically worsened the relations between the USSR and the Western powers[1]. They viewed Germany as the key to European recovery after the Second World War, but could not agree on the policies to be carried out in Germany[2]. By 1948, the Western powers introduced the Deutschmark and began to set up a separate West German state[3]. These actions provoked the USSR into blockading West Berlin, which was a major factor in the escalation of the Cold War[4].*

- 1 The answer acknowledges that Germany was a cause of tensions.
- 2 The answer describes what happens but does not explain how this contributed to the Cold War.
- 3 The descriptive approach continues with, at best, a hint that it led to the division of Germany, but it is still not linked to the issue of the Cold War.
- 4 The response asserts that it was a major cause, but this has not been shown.

Overall, there is no indication in this answer that there were other factors in causing the Cold War. Neither is there any real explanation as to why the issue of Germany was so important, which would be necessary to reach Level 3. Nor is there evidence of either evaluation or

judgement that would be needed for the higher levels.

## Avoid irrelevance and description

A well-prepared plan will stop you from simply writing all you know about the Berlin Blockade, for example, and force you to weigh up the role of a range of factors. Similarly, it should also help prevent you from simply writing about the process of setting up the two Germanys. You will not lose marks if you do that, but neither will you gain any credit, and you will waste valuable time.

## Write analytically

This is perhaps the hardest, but most important skill you need to develop. An analytical approach can be helped by ensuring that the opening sentence of each paragraph introduces an idea, which directly answers the question and is not just a piece of factual information. In a very strong answer it should be possible simply to read the opening sentences of all the paragraphs and know what argument is being put forward.

If we look at question 2: To what extent did the USA cause the Cold War through its policies in Europe, 1945–7? (page 250), the following are possible sentences with which to start paragraphs:

- The USA carefully cultivated its claim to be the protector of the ‘West’, but in reality its actions did much to provoke the Cold War, 1945–7.
- The USA did not cause the Cold War as it merely responded to Soviet actions in Eastern Europe and Germany.
- The Cold War was made more likely by the collapse of Germany in 1945 as it created a vacuum in which the USA and the USSR, which were countries with diametrically opposed policies and ideologies, confronted each other.
- The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan in 1947 played a key role in causing the Cold War, but they were an understandable response by the USA to perceived Soviet threats.
- The USA was unable to understand that the USSR’s actions were influenced by an overwhelming need for security and that the establishment of what Churchill called the ‘iron curtain’ was a defensive action.

You would then go on to discuss both sides of the argument raised by the opening sentence, using relevant knowledge about the issue to support each side of the argument. The final sentence of the paragraph would reach a judgement on the role played by the factor you are discussing. This approach would ensure that the final sentence of each paragraph links back to the actual question you are answering. If you can do this for each paragraph you will have a series of mini-essays, which discuss a factor and reach a conclusion or judgement about the importance of that factor or issue. For example:

*The actions and policies of the USA were important factors in the causes of the Cold War but they alone did not cause the confrontation, as other powers such as the USSR and Britain played important roles[1]. The intractable problems in Central Europe and Germany caused by the defeat of the Third Reich, the power vacuum that this opened up and the determination by the USSR to ensure that Poland and the other Eastern European states as well as Germany were controlled by friendly (that is, Communist) governments provoked the USA into*

*attempting to consolidate and assist Western Europe to prevent the spread of communism. The question of the future of Germany brought these factors together, as we can see in the question of German reparations, the reaction of the USA and its allies to the ‘shotgun marriage’ between the SPD and SED in the Soviet zone in April 1946, and the USSR’s reaction to the creation of the Bizone a few months later*<sup>[2]</sup>.

- 1 The sentence puts forward a clear view that the USA, while an important factor, did not alone cause the Cold War.
- 2 The claim that it was an important but not the sole factor is developed and some evidence is provided to support the argument.

The paragraph above explores ‘the other side of the argument’ and looks at the role of the USSR in causing the Cold War. It then goes on briefly to mention the response of the USA. Essentially, the contributions of both the USA and USSR to the causes of the Cold War are, however, rather too generally dealt with. Explaining their roles will take you only to Levels 3 or 4 depending on how well developed and how well supported your explanation is. To back up your argument here and ensure that you reach at least Level 4, concise evidence is needed as to why the Cold War was to a great extent a consequence of US–Soviet disagreements. Above all, however, in doing this the answer must avoid narrative. Answers that are not developed or are poorly explained will be placed in Level 3, while those that are well developed will reach Level 4. The answer above, if repeated in other paragraphs, would certainly reach Level 4.

In order to reach Levels 5 and 6, there needs to be clear evidence of the evaluation of factors – how important were the actions of the USA and USSR as factors in causing the Cold War? The paragraph above does start to move towards doing this as it argues that the defeat of Germany created the necessary context for US–Soviet rivalry. The paragraph also provides some limited support for this argument and it is this that turns an assertion that these actions were important into a judgement and takes the response to the higher levels.

At Level 5, the judgement is likely to be present only in the conclusion, as shown in the example below. However, a response that reaches Level 6 will make a judgement about the importance of each factor as it is discussed, so that there will be a series of interim judgements which are then pulled together in an overall conclusion.

## Questions for practice

Write six opening sentences for the following questions:

- ‘The only solution to the German problem, 1945–53 was partition.’ How far do you agree?
- Assess the reasons why the Cold War in Europe never became a ‘hot war’.
- How effective was President Truman in checking Soviet expansionism?
- ‘After 1945 Stalin was more effective than Khrushchev in defending Soviet interests in Europe.’ How far do you agree?

## The conclusion

The conclusion provides the opportunity to bring together all the interim judgements to reach an overall judgement about the question. Using the interim judgements will ensure that your conclusion is based on the argument in the main body of the essay and does not offer a different

view. For the essay answering question 1 (see page 250), you can decide what was the most important consequence of the Berlin Blockade, but for question 2 you will need to comment on the importance of the named factor – the USA – as well as explaining why you think a different factor is more important, if that has been your line of argument. Or, if you think the named factor is the most important, you would need to explain why that was more important than the other factors or issues you have discussed.

Consider the following conclusion to question 2: To what extent did the USA cause the Cold War through its policies in Europe, 1945–7?

*By the end of 1947 the Cold War was a reality. Europe, as Churchill had so graphically said, was divided by the ‘iron curtain’ from Stettin to Trieste. US policies and actions had certainly played an important part in this division. However, the USA did not cause the division by itself[1]. There were major ideological differences between the USA and USSR, both wanting to remake the world in their image. The USSR was determined to install a Communist regime in Poland by rigged elections and force, if necessary, and it had already made the SPD amalgamate with the KPD in the Soviet zone of Germany. There was no agreement on the future of Germany between the victorious members of the former Grand Alliance. By the end of 1947, US responses to these tensions had done much to make the Cold War a reality. The creation of Bizonia, which was originally proposed by the USA, was the first step in the partition of Germany, while the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan forced Stalin on the defensive and accelerated the formation of both a Soviet bloc and a US-dominated western bloc in Europe[2].*

- 1 This is a strong conclusion because it considers the importance of the named factor – the USA – but weighs that up against a range of other factors to reach an overall judgement.
- 2 It is also able to show links between the other factors to reach a balanced judgement, which brings in a range of issues, showing the interplay between them.

## How to write a good essay for the A level short answer questions

This question will require you to weigh up the importance of two factors or issues in relation to an event or a development. For example:

**Which of the following did more to consolidate the division of Germany, 1953–61?**

- (i) The defeat of the East German revolt in June 1953.
- (ii) The construction of the Berlin Wall.

**Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).**

As with the long essays, the skills required are made very clear by the mark scheme, which emphasises that the answer must:

- analyse the two issues
- evaluate the two issues
- support your analysis and evaluation with detailed and accurate knowledge
- reach a supported judgement as to which factor was more important in relation to the issue in

the question.

The last point is particularly important as many students write all they know about the two named events, individuals or factors, but do not relate it back to the actual question, in this instance the consolidation of the division of Germany.

The skills required are very similar to those for the longer essays. However, there is no need for an introduction, nor are you required to compare the two factors or issues in the main body of the essay, although either approach can still score full marks. For example, you could begin with the following:

*In the spring of 1953 the GDR was facing serious economic problems and growing dissatisfaction with the Ulbricht regime, which might have led to its collapse[1]. In Moscow, following the death of Stalin, a more conciliatory leadership had emerged led by Khrushchev, Beria and Malenkov. Beria had floated the idea to his colleagues that it would be cheaper in the long run to pull out of the GDR and accept German reunification in exchange for generous subsidies from the FRG. At the same time, public opinion in Western Europe was longing for the end of the Cold War, and Churchill, now prime minister again, was proposing a summit conference to achieve this[2]. We do not know whether this would have led to German reunification, but what we do know is that the East German revolt forced the USSR to drop all thoughts of a reunified Germany. It had no option but to defeat the revolt or suffer a massive blow to its prestige in Eastern Europe. The revolt encouraged the hardliners in the USSR who were opposed to giving up the GDR. At the same time it played into the hands of those in the West such as Chancellor Adenauer and US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who feared that a united neutral Germany would undermine the economic and military integration of the FRG into Western Europe. The defeat of the revolt thus confirmed the division of Germany, but the open frontier in Berlin remained a threat to the GDR[3].*

- 1 The answer explains the impact on the GDR of its economic difficulties.
- 2 The implications of this development are considered.
- 3 The wider implications are hinted at and this could be developed with reference to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The answer could go on to argue that the two problems were connected.

Most importantly, the conclusion must reach a supported judgement as to the relative importance of the factors in relation to the issue in the question. For example:

*Both these events were important in consolidating the GDR. The defeat of the uprising of June 1953 effectively dissuaded the USSR from compromising over the future of the GDR. Similarly, the sight of Soviet tanks on the streets of East Berlin confirmed the West's suspicions of the USSR. The GDR therefore survived, but it still faced major economic and social problems, which created instability and threatened its collapse[1]. These problems were made worse by the existence of a powerful and booming West German state, which attracted many East Germans, who could escape the GDR by crossing the open frontier in Berlin. In 1960, nearly 200,000, many of whom were skilled workers and professionals, fled the GDR for the FRG. If this continued both the East German economy and state would collapse. The construction of the Berlin Wall on 13 August stopped this exodus and gave the GDR a chance to keep its labour force and rebuild its economy. Both events contributed to the consolidation of the GDR. The crushing of the 1953 revolt defeated an immediate threat to the GDR's*



*existence, while the Berlin Wall averted its economic collapse for a generation*[\[2\]](#).

- 1** The response explains the relative importance of the two factors and offers a clear view.
- 2** The response supports the view offered in the opening sentence and therefore reaches a supported judgement.

## Questions for practice

- Which of the following had the greater impact on the development of *détente*? i) *Ostpolitik*. ii) SALT I. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii).
- Which of the following had a greater impact in ending the Cold War? i) Soviet economic weakness. ii) The collapse of the GDR. Explain your answer with reference to both i) and ii).

# Interpretations guidance

## How to write a good essay

The guidance below is for answering the AS interpretation question for OCR Unit Y253 The Cold War in Europe. Guidance on answering essay questions is on page [250](#).

The OCR specification outlines the two key topics from which the interpretation question will be drawn. For this book these are:

- The origins of the Cold War to 1945.
- The end of the Cold War, 1984–95.

The specification also lists the main debates to consider.

It is also worth remembering that this is an AS unit and not an A level historiography paper. The aim of this element of the unit is to develop an awareness that the past can be interpreted in different ways.

The question will require you to assess the strengths and limitations of a historian's interpretation of an issue related to one of the specified key topics.

You should be able to place the interpretation within the context of the wider historical debate on the key topic. However, you will *not* be required to know the names of individual historians associated with the debate or to have studied the specific books of any historians. It may even be counter-productive to be aware of particular historians' views, as this may lead you to simply describe their view, rather than analyse the given interpretation.

There are a number of skills you need to develop to reach the higher levels in the mark bands:

- To be able to understand the wording of the question.
- To be able to explain the interpretation and how it fits into the debate about the issue or topic.
- To be able to consider both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation by using your own knowledge of the topic.

Here is an example of a type of question you will face in the exam:

**Read the interpretation and then answer the question that follows:**



**‘[Gorbachev] never expected communism to collapse so abruptly, and so totally, even in East Germany, let alone Russia.’ (From J. Haslam, *Russia’s Cold War*, Cambridge, 2007.)**

**Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.**

## **Approaching the question**

There are several steps to take to answer this question:

### **1 Explain the interpretation and put it into the context of the debate on the topic**

In the first paragraph, you should explain the interpretation and the view it is putting forward. This paragraph places the interpretation in the context of the historical debate and explains any key words or phrases relating to the given interpretation. A suggested opening might be as follows:

*The interpretation puts forward the view that Gorbachev initially thought that he could strengthen communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR through reform. The author implies that he disastrously misjudged the situation[1]. In using the words ‘so abruptly, and so totally’, the author is referring to the rapid collapse of communism between 1989 and 1991 in Russia and throughout Eastern Europe[2]. The interpretation suggests that Gorbachev believed it was possible to modernise the Russian economy and safeguard Soviet security in Eastern Europe, especially the GDR, through a policy of political cooperation and negotiation and compromise – ‘glasnost’ and ‘perestroika’ – rather than force[3].*

- 1** The opening two sentences are clearly focused on the given interpretation. They clearly explain what Haslam thought Gorbachev intended, but there is no detailed own knowledge added at this point.
- 2** The third sentence explains what is meant by ‘so abruptly, and so totally’.
- 3** The last sentence begins to place the concept of a failure in Gorbachev’s judgement in the wider historical debate about reform. It suggests that this historian’s emphasis on it might challenge the view that Gorbachev was a very different Soviet leader from his predecessors, who in the final analysis was ready to risk the USSR itself to reform.

In order to place Haslam’s view in the context of the debate about Gorbachev’s role in the collapse of the USSR, you could go on to suggest there are a wide range of other factors to consider, such as the arguably terminal economic weakness of the USSR, its defeat in Afghanistan and Gorbachev’s attempts to keep the USSR as a unified state in 1990–1.

### **2 Consider the strengths of the interpretation**

In the second paragraph, consider the strengths of the interpretation by bringing in your own knowledge that supports the given view. A suggested response might start as follows when considering the strengths of the view:

*There is certainly much merit in Haslam's argument as it acknowledges that there is a problem in explaining why Gorbachev embarked on what in retrospect seem to be a series of policies which were effectively suicidal for the future of the USSR[1]. Economically, the USSR was in desperate need of reform and was finding the defence of the satellite states a heavy financial burden, but there seemed to be no reason initially why attempts to answer these problems should lead to the collapse of the USSR and communism in the Eastern Europe[2]. Thus, Haslam is right to emphasise that Gorbachev did not deliberately set about undermining his own power base. Indeed, he thought his reforms would strengthen it[3].*

- 1 The answer clearly focuses on the strength of the given interpretation.
- 2 The response provides some support for the view in the interpretation from the candidate's own knowledge. This is not particularly detailed or precise, but this could be developed in the remainder of the paragraph.
- 3 The final sentence links together factors which support Haslam's arguments.

In the remainder of the paragraph you could explore how Gorbachev's reforms accelerated the collapse of communism.

### 3 Consider the weaknesses of the interpretation

In the third paragraph, consider the weaknesses or at least the limitation of the given interpretation by bringing in knowledge that can challenge or modify the given interpretation and explain what is missing from the interpretation.

A suggested response might start as follows when considering the weaknesses of the view:

*There are, however, a number of ambiguities in Haslam's argument which need explanation[1]. Of course, Gorbachev did not initially intend to dissolve the USSR and end communism in Eastern Europe, but if that was so, why did he persist with his reforms? It can be argued that after a certain point Gorbachev was ready to accept that his reforms would lead to the demise of communism at least in the GDR and Eastern Europe. For instance, in December 1989 he wanted to maintain the GDR, but then by February 1990 he was willing to let the Germans decide its fate[2]. Here, one can argue that after a certain point he did understand that his reforms would lead to the collapse of communism in the GDR and to German reunification. In the USSR the picture is more complicated. Gorbachev's first reaction was to oppose nationalist movements, but after several attempts at armed intervention in Georgia and the Baltic states, for instance, Gorbachev came to terms with them and actively sought to create a new non-Communist Russian federation, which he realised marked the end of the USSR[3].*

- 1 The opening makes it very clear that this paragraph will deal with the limitations of the interpretation.
- 2 It explains clearly the limitations of the argument and provides evidence to support the claim. The evidence is not detailed and could be developed, but the answer focuses on explaining the limitations rather than providing lots of detail.
- 3 Although more detail could have been provided about Gorbachev's reforms, the answer goes on to explain a third ambiguity in Haslam's argument. All three factors could be developed in the remainder of the paragraph.

Answers might go on to argue that Gorbachev was pursuing an ambitious policy of reform.

Thanks to the economic situation in the USSR, Gorbachev had no option but to reform, but optimistically he thought that he would be able to create a new socialism with a human face in Eastern Europe, and at the same time, through 'glasnost' and 'perestroika', reform the USSR, while enabling the Communist Party to remain in power. Haslam is right that he had no idea that this would lead to the collapse of communism in the GDR and the USSR, but quite soon he realised the logic of his reforms in the GDR and eventually in the USSR, and despite some hesitations he did, in the end, continue to support the reforms. The paragraph might therefore suggest that the interpretation provides a partial answer which needs further explanation.

Make sure you don't overemphasise what is missing in the interpretation. Simply learning a list of the reasons for the collapse of the USSR and saying that the interpretation fails to consider this range of issues will not help you gain marks. The focus must be on the interpretations.

There is no requirement for you to reach a judgement as to which view you find more convincing or valid.

## Assessing the interpretation

In assessing the interpretation you should consider the following:

- Identify and explain the issue being discussed in the interpretation: what did Gorbachev really intend? Explain the view being put forward in the interpretation: the interpretation is arguing that Gorbachev had no intention to destroy communism.
- The idea that Gorbachev was not aware of the consequences of his reforms is certainly the most likely argument, but nevertheless you must carefully weigh up the possibility that he knew fully what he was doing.
- Explain how the interpretation fits into the wider debate about the issue of the reasons for the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

In other interpretations you might need to:

- Consider whether there is any particular emphasis within the interpretation that needs explaining or commenting on, for example, if the interpretation says something is 'the only reason' or 'the single most important reason'.
- Comment on any concepts that the interpretation raises, such as 'communism', 'collapse', 'East Germany'.
- Consider the focus of the interpretation: for example, if an interpretation focuses on Russia and East Germany, what was the situation in, say, Poland or Hungary?

In summary: what is important for answering interpretation questions?

- Explaining the interpretation
- Placing it in the context of the wider historical debate about the issue it considers. Are there other issues that the interpretation does not consider that need to be taken into account?
- Explaining the strengths and limitations of the view in the extract.

There is no requirement in the mark scheme for you to reach a judgement about the interpretation and whether you agree with the view or not.

## Questions for practice

- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied. 'The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been used to apportion blame for the Second Cold War to the USSR. It was viewed by western leaders, such as Carter and Thatcher, as showing the unwillingness of the Soviet leadership to change its policy of expanding the influence of communism.' (Steve Phillips, *The Cold War*, Heinemann, 2001, p. 188.)
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied. 'There is little doubt that the Cold War came to an end as a result of Soviet economic failure.' (S. Ball, *The Cold War, An International History 1947–1991*, Hodder, 1997, p. 241.)

# Timeline

Year	Ruler	Events in individual states	International events
1914–18			First World War
1917		Russian Revolution	
1917–22	Lenin (USSR)		
1919–20			Polish–Russian War
1919			Treaty of Versailles
1922–45	Mussolini (Italy)		
1927–49	Jiang Jieshi (China)		
1928–53	Stalin (USSR)		
1928		Stalin defeated internal opposition and became leader of the USSR	
1933		Hitler established Nazi government in Germany	
		Roosevelt elected President of the USA	
1933–45	Roosevelt (USA) Hitler (Germany)		
1937–45			Sino-Japanese War
1939			Nazi–Soviet Pact (August)
1939–45			Second World War
1940			Fall of France (June)
1940–5	Churchill (UK)	Churchill led wartime coalition in UK	
1941			German invasion of Russia (June)
			USA declared war on Japan and Germany (December)
1944			Britain and USA established second front in France (June)
			Warsaw Uprising (August)
1945			Unconditional German surrender: Soviet, and Western Allied troops occupied Germany (May)
			Potsdam Conference (July)
			USA dropped atomic bombs on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August)
1945–8		Establishment of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe	
1945–53	Truman (USA)		
1945–51	Attlee (UK)		
1945–9		Civil war in China between Communists and Guomindang	

Year	Ruler	Events in individual states	International events
1949		People's Republic of China founded in East Germany	
1949–54			Indo-Chinese War
1947		British economic crisis	Truman Doctrine (March)
			Marshall Plan
1947			Formation of Cominform and COMECON
1947		Creation of Blocs in western Germany	
1948		Germany returns to western zones in Germany	
		Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia	
1948–9			Berlin Blockade
1949		Mac's victory in China	Formation of NATO
			Establishment of FRG and GDR
1949–63	Abramson (FRG)		
1949–71	Ulrich (GDR)		
1949–76	Mao (China)		
1950–3			Korean War
1950–4	Churchill (UK)		
		East German Uprising	
1953–61	Eisenhower (USA)		
1953–64	Khrushchev (USSR)		
1954			Chen Shui-shen
1954–6	Eden (UK)		Geneva Conference
1955			Suez Crisis
1955–63	Macmillan (UK)		Hungarian Uprising and Polish Crisis
1957			USA–USSR space race begins
1958			EEC founded
			Strategic tension between USSR and FRG (1958 summit)
1958–61	De Gaulle (France)		Berlin Crisis
1959–2008	Castro (Cuba)		
1960–3	Kennedy (USA)		
1961		Economic crisis in GDR leading to construction of Berlin Wall	

Year	Ruler	Events in individual states	International events
1962			Cuban Missile Crisis
1963–9	Johnson (USA)		
1963–79			<i>Détente</i> led to SALT I and II
1964		Khrushchev forced to resign	
1964–82	Brezhnev (USSR)		
1965–9			US intervention in Vietnam escalated
1966–70		Anti-American sentiment in Western Europe increasing	
1968		Prague Spring	
1969			Sino-Soviet border conflict (March)
		France quit NATO	
1969		SPD gained power in FRG and started <i>Ostpolitik</i>	
1969–74	Nixon (USA)		
1969–74	Brandt (FRG)		<i>Ostpolitik</i> led to Moscow Treaty and Basic Treaty
1970, 1974			Paris Peace Accords
1972			
1972–4		Watergate scandal in USA	
1972–89	Honecker (GDR)		
1973		Start of US loss of self-confidence due to Vietnam War	
1974		Steep rises in oil prices hit Western economies	
1974–6	Ford (USA)		
1974–82	Schmidt (FRG)		
1975			Helsinki Accords
1975		As a result of Helsinki Conference Human Rights became an issue in USSR	
1970 onwards		Deterioration in Soviet and Eastern European economies	
1975–6			Angolan Civil War
1977–81	Carter (USA)	USSR's influence in Ethiopia increased	
1978–89	Deng Xiaoping (PRC)		
1979			Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
1979–90	Thatcher (UK)		
1980		Solidarity movement in Poland founded	
1981–9	Jaruzelski (Poland)		
	Reagan (USA)		
1982–90	Kohl (FRG and then united Germany)		

Year	Ruler	Events in individual states	International events
1983			Deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Western Europe
1983–4	Andropov (USSR)		
1983–4	Chernenko (USSR)		
1985			Reagan announced Strategic Defence Initiative
1985			USA-USSR summit at Reykjavik
1985–87	Gorbachev (USSR)		
1985–86		Gorbachev's policy of <i>glasnost</i> and <i>perestroika</i>	
		Collapse of communism in Eastern European states	
		Berlin Wall breached	
		Failed Soviet attempt to crush Baltic independence movements	
		Russia declared itself to be a sovereign state	
		USSR replaced by CIS	
		Collapse of Yugoslavia	
1989			Soviet troops withdrawn from Afghanistan
1989–93	G.H.W. Bush (USA)		
1990			Germany reunited (October)
1991			Yugoslav Part dissolved (May)
1991–9	Yeltsin (USSR)		

# Glossary of terms

**Advisory Steering Committee** A committee that would advise on priorities and the key decisions to be taken.

**Airlift** The transport of food and supplies by air to a besieged area.

**Allied and Associated powers** Britain, France, Italy and Japan were allies, while the USA was 'an associated power' without being committed to an alliance.

**Allied Control Commissions (ACCs)** These were set up in each occupied territory, including Germany. They initially administered a particular territory in the name of the Allies.

**Allied powers** Commonly referred to as the Allies during the Second World War, this group first consisted of Poland, France, Britain and others, with the USSR and the USA joining in 1941.

**Anglo-Americans** English-speaking Americans, most of whose ancestors came from the British Isles.

**Anglo-French Guarantee** In 1939, Britain and France guaranteed Polish independence, in the hope of preventing a German invasion of Poland.

**Annex** Take over and control.

**Anti-ballistic screens** Protection provided by rocket-launching pads.

**Apparatchik** A full-time professional bureaucrat in the Communist Party.

**Appeaser** One who appeases or conciliates a potential enemy by making concessions.

**Armistice** The official agreement of the suspension of fighting between two or more powers as a preliminary to a negotiated peace.

**Arms race** A competition or race between nations to arm themselves with the most deadly and effective weapons available.

**Arrow Cross Party** A Hungarian ultra-nationalist political party that supported Germany in the Second World War.

**Asian defence perimeter** A line through East and South-East Asia enclosing those regions that the USA was willing to defend against any other nation.

**Asymmetrical** Having a lack of symmetry or balance.

**Atlantic Charter** A statement of fundamental principles for the post-war world. The most important of these were: free trade, no more territorial annexation by Britain or the USA, and the right of people to choose their own governments.

**Autarchic economy** An economy that is self-sufficient and protected from outside competition.

**Axis** The alliance in the Second World War that eventually consisted of Germany, Italy, Japan, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as several states created in conquered areas.

**Baghdad Pact** Officially known as the Central Treaty Organization, formed in 1955 by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the UK. It was dissolved in 1979.



**Benelux** Belgium (Be), the Netherlands (Ne) and Luxembourg (Lux).

**Bilateral** Between two states.

**Bizonia** Formed in January 1947 out of an amalgamation of the British and US zones of occupation.

**Bloc mentality** A state of mind brought about by being a member of one of the two sides in the Cold War.

**Bolshevik Party** The Russian Communist Party, which seized power in a revolution in October 1917.

**Bourgeoisie** The middle class, particularly those with business interests, who Marx believed benefited most from the existing capitalist economic system.

**Brinkmanship** Appearing to approach the brink of nuclear war to persuade the opposition to concede.

**Bugged** Secretly recorded.

**C-54** Large US transport plane.

**Carnation Revolution** Military coup in Portugal, 25 April 1975. The soldiers were offered of carnations from a supportive population in Lisbon.

**CCP** Chinese Communist Party, led by Mao.

**Centralised control of the economy** Control of a country's economy from the centre, as in Stalinist Russia.

**Centrist coalition** A coalition of the parties of the political centre.

**Checkpoint Charlie** One of the few official crossing points between East and West Berlin. It is now a museum.

**Chernobyl** In April 1986, an accidental explosion at Chernobyl nuclear power station released a large amount of radioactive dust into the atmosphere, which affected much of western Russia and Eastern Europe; 31 people died.

**CIA** The Central Intelligence Agency was established by the USA in 1947 to conduct counterintelligence operations abroad.

**Collectivisation of agriculture** Abolishing private farms in favour of large units run collectively by the peasantry along the lines of Soviet agriculture.

**Comintern** A Communist organisation set up in Moscow in 1919 to co-ordinate the efforts of Communists around the world to achieve a worldwide revolution.

**Command economy** An economy where supply and pricing are regulated by the government rather than market forces such as demand, and in which all the larger industries and businesses are controlled centrally by the state.

**Commonwealth** Informal organisation of states that were formerly part of the British Empire.

**Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** A voluntary organisation eventually of twelve of the successor states of the USSR. Any decision made by it was not binding on its members.

**Concentration camps** Camps where large numbers of political prisoners are detained.

**Confederation** A grouping of states in which each one retains its sovereignty, hence much looser than a federation.

**Congress** The US parliament.

**Congress of People's Deputies** The supreme government institution in the USSR from May 1989 to May 1990 and then in the Russian Federation to September 1993.

**Consensus** General agreement.

**Consultative Council** A council on which the member states were represented and where they could discuss mutual problems.

**Conventional forces** Military forces that do not rely on nuclear weapons.

**Cronyism** Favouring one's friends by granting them favours, often when they are undeserving.

**Cruise missiles** Long-range missiles with a range of 1600 miles (2500 km).

**Cultural Revolution** A mass movement begun by Mao's supporters against those opposed to Mao's version of communism.

**Customs union** An area of free trade unhindered by national tariffs.

**De-Stalinisation** The attempts to liberalise the USSR after the death of Stalin in 1953 by abandoning the cult of personality and closing the *gulag* concentration camps.

**Decolonisation** The process leading to the granting of independence to colonies.

**Democratic** When all eligible citizens participate directly or through elected representatives in their country's government.

**Democratic Party** Founded in 1828. One of the two major political parties in the USA.

**Democratic Union** The first opposition party to the Communist Party of the USSR.

**Denazification** The process of removing all Nazi Party ideology, propaganda, symbols and adherents from every aspect of German life.

**Détente** A state of lessened tension or growing relaxation between two states.

**Devalued Reichsmarks** Reichsmark notes that had been replaced in West Germany and West Berlin and, therefore, had little value.

**Developing world** States that had been former colonies but which were now free and independent of both the USSR and the West. Used to be called the Third World.

**Dictatorship of the proletariat** Marx's term suggesting that following the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, government would be carried out by and on behalf of the working class.

**Dissident** Critical of the official line taken by the state.

**Doctrine of containment** A policy of halting the USSR's advance into Western Europe. It did not envisage actually 'rolling back' Soviet power from Eastern Europe.

**Domino principle** The belief that the fall of one state to communism would result in a chain reaction, leading to the fall of other neighbouring states.

**Dutch East Indies** A Dutch colony that became Indonesia.

**Economic mobilisation** Creating a war economy capable of financing a war.

**Economic nationalism** A policy in which every effort is made to keep out foreign goods.

**Electoral bloc** An electoral alliance by a group of parties.

**Embryonic state** Organisation that has some of the powers of a proper state, and is likely to grow into a fully fledged state.

**Empire by invitation** The Western Europeans were in effect asking to be put under US protection and so become a part of a US 'empire' or a US-dominated region.

**Ethnic Germans** German people who still lived in Poland after much former German territory was given to Poland in 1945.

**European Community** The new name for the European Economic Community.

**ExComm** The Executive Committee of the US National Security Council.

**Exoskeletons** Rigid, external coverings, or shells for the body.

**Federal (Federation)** A country formed of several different states that enjoy considerable autonomy in domestic affairs.

**Fiefdom** Originally the estate of a medieval noble; an area dominated by one power or dictator.

**Five-Year Plans** Plans to modernise and expand the economy over a five-year period.

**FNLA** The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola), led by Holden Roberto, was hostile both to the West and to communism but had links with the CIA.

**Four-power control** Under the joint control of the four occupying powers: Britain, France, the USA and the USSR.

**Free city** Self-governing city not incorporated into a state.

**Free French** Those French people who supported de Gaulle after the fall of France in June 1940, when he established his headquarters in London.

**French Indo-China** A French colony consisting of today's Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

**Glasnost** 'Openness' regarding the USSR's economic and political systems, including public discussion and debate.

**Global confrontation** The attempt to stand up to the enemy anywhere or everywhere in the world.

**Global encirclement** Surrounded on a global scale: threatened on all its frontiers by a coalition of enemies.

**Global oil crisis** In October 1973, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries suspended delivery of oil to the USA and Western Europe in protest against US assistance to Israel during the October War of 1973. When deliveries recommenced in March 1974, the price of oil had quadrupled.

**Global overstretch** The situation when great powers take on more global responsibilities than

they can either easily afford or manage.

**GMD** Guomindang [also called Kuomintang (KMT)]. Chinese Nationalist Party led by Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek].

**Great Leap Forward** Mao's plan that aimed dramatically to increase both industrial and agricultural production in China. The population was to be mobilised to build dams and small-scale smelting works. By 1962, this plan had caused the deaths of at least 40 million people, largely as a result of the famine that followed the collectivisation of the peasantry.

**Greens** Those supporting parties or groups whose stated aim is to protect the environment.

**Gross national product (GNP)** The total production of domestic industries combined with the earnings from exports.

**Guerrilla groups** Fighters who oppose an occupying force using tactics such as sabotage and assassination, preferring skirmishes to pitched battles.

**Guerrilla war** A war fought by small groups of irregular troops. The term comes from the Spanish resistance to Napoleon in the early nineteenth century.

**Gunboat diplomacy** Diplomacy carried out by force.

**Hallstein Doctrine** Named after Walter Hallstein, state secretary in the FRG's Foreign Ministry. It aimed at the diplomatic isolation of the GDR.

**Heavy industry** Coal, iron and steel production.

**High Commission** A civilian body charged with the task of defending the interests of the Western allies in Germany.

**Hô Chí Minh Trail** An infiltration route of hundreds of kilometres that allowed the movement of troops and war material through neighbouring countries into South Vietnam.

**Hotline** A direct communications link between US and Soviet leaders.

**Human rights** Basic rights such as personal liberty and freedom from repression.

**Hydroelectric sources** Power stations that generate electricity through water power.

**Hydrogen bomb** A nuclear bomb many times more powerful than an atomic bomb.

**Ideological challenge** Challenge to ideas and beliefs.

**Ideologies** The ideas, beliefs and theories that constitute a religious or political doctrine on which a political party or religion is based.

**Immutable** Unchangeable.

**Imperialist** Britain and France, which both still had extensive colonial empires. The Soviets also regularly called the Americans imperialists.

**Industrial and military complex** The powerful and politically influential combination of the armed forces and the defence industries.

**Industrial revolution** The change from a predominantly rural economy to an industrial economy dominated by large-scale factory production.

**Intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** A rocket capable of carrying nuclear warheads and

reaching great distances.

**International Ruhr Authority** An organisation to establish how much coal and steel the Germans should produce and ensure that a percentage of its production should be made available to its Western neighbours. It was replaced in 1951 by the European Coal and Steel Community.

**Inviolable** Not to be attacked or modified.

**Iran–Contra affair** Senior US officials illegally sold arms to Iran to raise money for the Contras in Nicaragua.

**Iron curtain** A term used by Churchill to describe how Stalin had separated Eastern Europe from the West.

**Islamic fundamentalism** A very literal and traditional version of Islam that is hostile to Western civilisation, be it Marxist or Christian.

**Isolationist** Remaining aloof from international politics.

**Joint chiefs of staff** Committee of senior military officers who advise the US government on military matters.

**Jupiter missile** A liquid-fuelled, surface-deployed missile, which was already out of date by 1962.

**Khmer Rouge regime** Established by Pol Pot and killed over 2 million of its own people in 1975–9.

**Lackey** An uncritical follower; a servant, who cannot answer back.

**Land corridors** Roads, railways and canals, which the Soviets had agreed in 1945 could be used to supply West Berlin.

**League of Nations** The precursor of the United Nations, set up in 1920.

**Lebensraum** Literally ‘living space’. Territory for the resettlement of Germans in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

**Left-wing** Liberal, socialist or Communist.

**Left-wing protest groups** Protest groups within left-wing parties such as the Labour Party in Britain or the Social Democrats in Germany.

**Legal and mutually agreed framework** A legal agreement, freely negotiated, that would allow the USSR to maintain bases in Hungary.

**Lend–lease** This US programme (started in March 1941) gave over \$50 billion (\$650 billion in today’s terms) of war supplies to Allied nations. This money was to be paid back at the end of the war.

**Liberation** The freeing of a country from foreign occupation.

**Magnetic social and economic forces of the FRG** Brandt believed that the economy and way of life in West Germany was so strong that ultimately it would exert a magnet-like attraction on the GDR.

**Make-believe constitution** A constitution that was not genuine and merely hid a dictatorship by one party: the SED.

**Malaya** A British colony that became Malaysia and Singapore.

**Manchuria** A region in the far north-east of China, occupied by the Japanese in 1931 until the end of the Second World War.

**Marshall Aid** Money given to help rebuild Western European economies by the Marshall Plan.

**Martial law** Military rule involving the suspension of normal civilian rights.

**Marxism–Leninism** Doctrines of Marxism which were modified by Lenin, who adapted Marx's teaching to the situation in Russia. Unlike Marx, he advocated the creation of a party dictatorship, which would have absolute powers, even over the workers.

**Military governor** The head of a zone of occupation in Germany.

**Militia** Part-time military reservists.

**MIRVs** Multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles containing several warheads, each capable of being aimed at a different target.

**Missile gap** Where one side has a temporary lead over the other in nuclear weapons.

**Moldova** The Romanian for Moldavia, the name by which Moldova was known during its history as part of the Russian Empire.

**Monopoly capital** Lenin's term to describe a situation where a capitalist state intervenes to support its industries and trade.

**Monroe Doctrine** The doctrine formulated by US President Monroe (1817–25) that the European powers should not intervene on the American continent, over which the USA claimed protective rights.

**MPLA** The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola), headed by António Neto, was predominantly a Marxist movement.

**MSZMP** Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt. The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party: the Communist Party in Hungary between 1956 and 1989.

**Mujahedin** Muslim fundamentalist guerrilla fighters.

**Munich Agreement** An agreement between Britain, France, Italy and Germany that the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia would become part of Germany.

**National federation of trade unions** A national organisation representing all the trade unions.

**Nationalise** To take ownership of privately owned industries, banks, and so on, by the state.

**Nationalist** A movement or person passionately devoted to the interests and culture of their nation, often leading to the belief that certain nationalities are superior to others.

**'New Yalta'** US President Reagan's argument that Yalta had allowed Soviet domination in Eastern Europe in return for liberal promises that the Soviets had no intention of honouring.

**NKVD** Soviet security organisation responsible for enforcing obedience to the government and eliminating opposition.

**Non-aligned movement** Not allied to either the USSR or the West.

**Nuclear diplomacy** Negotiations and diplomacy supported by the threat of nuclear weapons.

**Nuclear-free zone** An area, such as central Europe, in which nuclear weapons would be neither used nor based.

**Occupation Statute** A treaty defining the rights of Britain, France and the USA in West Germany.

**October Revolution** The revolution in October 1917 in which the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia.

**Oder–Neisse Line** Poland's western frontier based on the Oder and Neisse Rivers.

**Ogaden** In the late nineteenth century, when the Somali territories were divided between Britain, France and Italy, Ethiopia acquired Ogaden. Once the British and Italian territories became independent in 1960, the two states merged to form the new state of Somalia and laid claim to Ogaden.

**Open border** There was no physical barrier between Communist East Berlin and capitalist and democratic West Berlin.

**Open-door policy** Free trade policy facilitated by an absence of tariffs.

**Ostpolitik** West Germany's policy towards Eastern Europe, which involved recognition of the German Democratic Republic and the post-war boundaries in Eastern Europe.

**Paramilitary police force** Police officers armed with machine guns and armoured cars.

**Partisan groups** Resistance fighters or guerrillas in German- and Italian-occupied Europe.

**Pathet Lao** Independence movement in Laos, supported by the Việt Minh.

**Perestroika** 'Transformation' or 'restructuring' of the Communist Party to make it more responsive to the needs of the people.

**Pershing II** Medium-range missiles with a range of 460 miles (740 km).

**Poland** In 1815, Poland was partitioned between Austria, Russia and Prussia. In 1918, the defeat of Russia, Germany, which included Prussia, and Austria enabled it to regain independence.

**Polaris submarines** Submarines which can launch nuclear rockets.

**Polarised** Divided into two extremes (polar opposites).

**Polish Home Army** The Polish nationalist resistance group that fought German occupation during the Second World War.

**Politburo** The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

**Popular fronts** Coalitions of liberal, socialist and communist parties.

**Prague Spring** The liberalisation process put into effect by Alexander Dubček, the Czech prime minister.

**Presidium** Soviet inner council or cabinet.

**Proletariat** Marx's term for industrial working-class labourers, primarily factory workers.

**Proliferation** Increase and spread of nuclear weapons.

**Provisional government** A temporary government in office until an election can take place.



**Proxy conflicts** Wars encouraged or supported by major powers without their direct involvement.

**Puppet government** One that operates at the will of and for the benefit of another government.

**Quemoy Islands** Guomindang-controlled islands off Taiwan.

**Rapprochement** Establishing close relations between two states.

**Ratify** When an international treaty has been signed, it can come into effect only after the parliaments of the signatory states have ratified (that is, approved) it.

**Red Army** The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was the Bolsheviks' armed force, which eventually became the Soviet army.

**Reichsmark** German currency before 1948; it lost most of its value after Germany's defeat in the Second World War.

**Reparations** Materials, equipment or money taken from a defeated power to make good the damage of war.

**Republican Party** Founded in 1854. Essentially an American conservative party.

**Residual rights** The remaining privileges, going right back to 1945, which the four occupying powers of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR still enjoyed.

**Revisionist historian** A historian who revises the traditional or orthodox interpretation of events and often contradicts it.

**Revisionists** Those accused of revising the theory of Marxism–Leninism.

**Ruhr** The centre of the German coal and steel industries and at that time the greatest industrial region in Europe.

**Ruhr occupation** In 1923, the French occupied the Ruhr in an attempt to force the Germans to pay reparations.

**Secretary of state** The US foreign minister.

**Self-immolation** Burning oneself alive as a sacrifice and act of protest.

**Shotgun marriage** A forced union.

**'Smart' bombs** Precision-guided bombs which enable a target to be hit accurately.

**Social democratisation** Converting the Communist Socialist Unity Party into a more moderate Western-style social democrat party, like the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in the FRG.

**Socialism in one country** Policy aimed at strengthening socialism within the USSR even though elsewhere revolution had failed.

**Socialist** A believer in socialism: the idea that the community as a whole rather than individuals should control the economy.

**Solidarity movement** A movement that originated in support of the strikes in the Gdańsk shipyards in Poland.

**Sovereignty** Independence. A sovereign state possesses the power to make its own decisions.

**Soviet bloc** The group of states in Eastern Europe controlled by the USSR.

**Sovietisation** Reconstructing a state according to the Soviet model.

**Spheres of interest** Areas where one power is able to exercise a dominant influence.

**Spiegel affair** The arrest of the editors of the German weekly news publication, *Der Spiegel*, for publishing a confidential report on the West German army.

**Splitters** The SED accused the West Germans and the Western allies of splitting or dividing Germany.

**Sputnik** A satellite weighing 84 kilograms that orbited the Earth. In Russian, the word means ‘fellow traveller’, or supporter of the USSR.

**Stalin cult** The propaganda campaign vaunting Stalin as the great ruler and saviour of the USSR.

**The Straits** The Straits of the Dardanelles between Europe and Turkey.

**Strategic position** Overall global position and power.

**Suez Canal** Opened in 1869, owned by a joint Anglo-French company, 1875–1956. The Canal Zone was occupied by British troops, 1882–1956 (July). A few days after their evacuation it was nationalised by Nasser.

**Supranational** Transcending national limits or international in scope.

**Supreme Soviet** Set up in 1936 by Stalin. It consisted of two bodies: the Soviet of the USSR and the Soviet of Nationalities. Each Soviet republic had a Supreme Soviet or parliament, as did the overall USSR.

**Tactical nuclear weapons** Small-scale nuclear weapons that can be used in the battlefield.

**Tariffs** Taxes placed on imported goods to protect the home economy.

**Titoism** Communism as defined by Tito in Yugoslavia.

**Trade embargo** A complete ban on trade with a particular country.

**Trade surplus** Surplus (excess quantity) of exports over imports.

**Transcendental religions** Religions relating to the spiritual existence of God.

**Transit traffic** Traffic crossing through another state.

**Triceratops** A plant-eating dinosaur.

**Troika** A team of three.

**Trust territories** Former colonial territories put in trust to the UN until they were ready for independence.

**Trusteeship** Responsibility on behalf of the United Nations for the government and welfare of a state handed over temporarily to other powers.

**UNITA** The National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola) was created in the mid-1960s by Jonas Savimbi to provide an alternative to what he perceived to be the military inactivity and feebleness of the two other groups (MPLA and FNLA).

**US National Security Council** The main committee advising the US president on security issues. Created in 1947.

**USSR** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the name given to Communist Russia and the states under its control from 1922. Also known as the Soviet Union.

**Việt Công** Also known as the National Liberation Front (NLF). A Communist mass political organisation in South Vietnam with its own armed forces.

**Việt Minh** 'League for the Independence of Vietnam', created in 1941.

**Watergate scandal** On 17 June 1972, Republican Party officials broke into the headquarters of the opposition Democratic Party in the Watergate Building in Washington, DC, to find material which could be used to discredit the Democrats. The break-in was discovered and eventually led to Nixon's resignation in 1974.

**Western bloc** An alliance of Western European states and the USA.

**Western European integration** The process of creating a Western Europe that was united politically, economically and militarily.

**Western intelligence** Information gained by Western spies in Eastern Europe.

**White Russians** The name given to members and supporters of the counter-revolutionary 'White' armies which fought against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War (1918–21).

**World Bank** International financial institution that provides loans to developing countries for large-scale projects.

**Yugoslavia** In 1918, the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed. In 1929, it officially became Yugoslavia. The Serbs were the dominating nationality within this state.

**Zionist** A supporter of the foundation of a Jewish state in the historic land of Israel.

## KEY FIGURES

### **Abdul Nasser (1918–70)**

Played a key role in the overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy 1952; undisputed leader of Egypt 1954–70.

### **Alexei Kosygin (1904–80)**

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

### **Andrei Gromyko (1909–89)**

Soviet foreign minister 1957–85 and chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet 1985–9.

### **Boris Yeltsin (1931–2007)**

Head of the Communist Party in Moscow 1985–7, president of the Russian Federation 1991–9.

### **Dean Acheson (1893–1971)**

US undersecretary of state 1945–9, secretary of state 1949–53.

### **Douglas MacArthur (1880–1964)**

Supreme commander South-West Pacific 1942–5, military ruler of Japan 1945–50 and UN commander-in-chief in Korea 1950–1.

### **Edvard Beneš (1884–1948)**

Founder of Czechoslovakia and president 1935–8 and 1945–8.

### **Erich Honecker (1912–94)**

First secretary of the Socialist Unity Party, 1971–89.

### **Ernest Bevin (1881–1951)**

Labour politician, trade union leader and British foreign secretary 1945–51.

### **Fidel Castro (1926–2016)**

Leader of the guerrilla war in Cuba against Batista; prime minister 1959–76 and then president 1959–2008; active in support of developing world Marxist movements 1975–90.

### **Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945)**

A Democratic politician and four times president of the USA (1933–45).

### **Friedrich Engels (1820–85)**

German industrialist and mill owner in Manchester, who worked with Karl Marx.

### **George C. Marshall (1880–1959)**

Chief of staff of US army 1939–45, US secretary of state 1947–9, defence secretary 1950–2.

### **George F. Kennan (1904–2005)**

US diplomat and historian whose advice helped to formulate the Truman Doctrine.

### **George H.W. Bush (1924–2018)**

US president 1989–93. (Father of George W. Bush, US president 2001–9.)

### **Hô Chí Minh (1890–1969)**

Worked in the USA, Britain and France and studied Marxism in the USSR. He created the Việt Minh in 1941 and led the independence movement in Vietnam 1945–54. He was president of North Vietnam 1954–65.

### **Harry Hopkins (1890–1946)**

Close adviser of President Roosevelt and wartime diplomat.

### **Henry Kissinger (1923–)**

An academic and a security adviser to US presidents 1969–75.

### **Imre Nagy (1896–1958)**

Hungarian Communist, and prime minister 1953–5 and October to November 1956. Executed 1958.

### **Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] (1887–1975)**

Leader of Nationalist China, defeated by the Chinese Communists in 1949.

### **Josip Broz (Tito) 1892–1980**

Leader of the Yugoslav Communist resistance against German occupation. Yugoslav prime minister 1945–53 and then president until 1980. He pursued a policy independent of the USSR after 1948.

### **Jimmy Carter (1924–)**

President of the USA 1977–81.

### **John Foster Dulles (1888–1959)**

US diplomat and secretary of state 1952–9.

### **Joseph McCarthy (1908–57)**

Judge and Republican senator in the USA. His anti-Communist campaign created an atmosphere of fear and suspicion of all alleged left-wing activists and sympathisers.

### **Karl Marx (1818–83)**

German philosopher whose writings formed the intellectual basis of communism.

### **Kim Il Sung (1912–94)**

Prime minister of North Korea 1948–72 and president 1972–94.

### **Klement Gottwald (1896–1953)**

Leader of the Czech Communist Party and party chairman and president of Czechoslovakia 1948–53.

### **Lech Wałęsa (1943–)**

Co-founder of Solidarity and Polish president 1990–5.

### **Lyndon Johnson (1908–73)**

Democrat senator, US vice-president 1960–3, president 1963–9.

### **Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013)**

Conservative MP and British prime minister 1979–90.

### **Mengistu Haile Mariam (1937–)**

Leader of Ethiopia 1977–91. In 2007 he was charged with genocide.

### **Ngô Đình Diêm (1901–63)**

President of South Vietnam 1955–63. A convinced Catholic who alienated his country's

Buddhist majority.

**Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971)**

First Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, 1953–64 and Premier, 1958–64.

**Nikolai Podgorny (1903–83)**

Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

**Palmiro Togliatti (1893–1963)**

Leader of the Italian Communist Party and government minister 1944–7.

**Petru Groza (1884–1958)**

Romanian prime minister 1945–52.

**Richard Nixon (1913–94)**

US president 1969–74. Resigned after the Watergate scandal (see page [175](#)).

**Ronald Reagan (1911–2004)**

TV and film actor, governor of California and US president 1981–9.

**Stanisław Mikołajczyk (1896–1980)**

Prime minister in the Polish government-in-exile 1943–4 and deputy prime minister in Poland 1945–7.

**Syngman Rhee (1875–1960)**

President of South Korea 1948–60.

**Václav Havel (1936–2011)**

Czech writer and president of Czechoslovakia and then the Czech Republic 1989–2011.

**Võ Nguyên Giáp (1911–2013)**

Former professor of history. Military leader of the Việt Minh. He eventually unified Vietnam as a Communist state in 1975.

**Vladimir Ilych Lenin (1870–1924)**

Leader of the Bolshevik Party 1903–24 and ruler of Communist Russia 1917–24.

**Walter Ulbricht (1893–1973)**

First secretary of the SED, effectively the leader of the GDR 1946–71.

**Willy Brandt (1913–92)**

The charismatic mayor of West Berlin 1957–66; FRG foreign minister 1966–9 and chancellor 1969–74.

# Further reading

## The whole of the Cold War 1945–91 (Chapters 2–9)

**S.R. Ashton, *In Search of Détente: The Politics of East–West Relations Since 1945* (Macmillan, 1989)**

Published just before the Cold War ended, but it is nevertheless a useful survey, particularly on *détente*

**J.P.D. Dunbabin, *The Cold War: The Great Powers and their Allies* (Routledge, 2013)**

A detailed study of the global Cold War. It is arguably the most precise and detailed one-volume history of the Cold War in English

**J.L. Gaddis, *The Cold War* (Allen Lane, 2005)**

A helpful and readable synthesis of the Cold War

**I. Kershaw, *To Hell and Back, Europe 1914–49* (Allen Lane, 2015) and *Roller-coaster Europe, 1950–2017* (Allen Lane, 2018)**

Neither book is specifically about the Cold War, but together these two books do cover it in considerable detail

**M. Leffler and O.A. Westad, editors, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, volume I *Origins*; volume II *Crises and Détentes*; volume III *Endings* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)**

The three volumes contain chapters on all aspects of the global Cold War written by experts. The chapters can be informative, although not easy to read

**J.W. Mason, *The Cold War, 1945–91* (Routledge, 1996)**

An excellent introductory survey of just 75 pages. It covers the Cold War in both Europe and Asia

**N. Stone, *The Atlantic and its Enemies* (Penguin, 2011)**

A witty and wide-ranging book on the global Cold War

**M. Walker, *The Cold War* (Vintage, 1994)**

A readable, journalistic study of the whole Cold War. It covers all aspects of this struggle and contains much useful information

**O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)**

The main emphasis is on the Cold War both in Europe and the ‘Third World’



**O.A. Westad, *The Cold War* (Allen Lane, 2017)**

A long and comprehensive study of the Cold War in its global context

## **Historiography and problems of the Cold War**

**J.L. Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford University Press, 1997)**

This puts the Cold War into its global context and assesses the changing interpretations and explanations of the Cold War

**K. Larres and A. Lane, *The Cold War: The Essential Readings* (Blackwell, 2001)**

Contains some interesting articles and extracts from leading Cold War historians

**O.A. Westad, *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (Frank Cass, 2000)**

Brings together the often conflicting views of historians on the Cold War

## **The origins of the Cold War up to 1953 (Chapters 2–4)**

**J.L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (Columbia University Press, 2000)**

A study of US policy towards the USSR, 1941–7

**M. McCauley, *The Origins of the Cold War, 1941–49* (Longman, 1995)**

A clear and well-explained introduction to the causes and early stages of the Cold War

**D. Reynolds, editor, *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (Yale University Press, 1994)**

An informative survey of the historiography and the international historical debates on the Cold War covering the period 1945–55

**D. Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Houghton Mifflin, 1977)**

A revisionist study of the USA's involvement in the Cold War in Europe

## **Europe during the Cold War (Chapters 2–4, 6–9)**

**A. Applebaum, *Iron Curtain. The Crushing of Eastern Europe* (Penguin, 2013)**

Very good on Eastern Europe 1945–53

**G. Swain and N. Swain, *Eastern Europe since 1945* (Macmillan, 1993)**

A detailed study of post-war Europe

**J.F. Young, *Cold War Europe, 1945–91* (Arnold, 1996)**

An informative chapter on the Cold War and *détente* and then further useful chapters on European integration, Eastern Europe, the USSR and the main Western European states

## **Studies of Cold War Germany (Chapters 2–4, 6–9)**

**M. Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949–1989* (Oxford University Press, 1995)**

An informative study of the GDR based on primary sources

**W. Loth, *Stalin's Unwanted Child. The Soviet Union, the German Question and the Founding of the GDR* (Macmillan, 1998)**

An interesting study that argues that Stalin did not intend the division of Germany

**D.G. Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition, 1945–1961* (Pearson, 2001)**

Covers the occupation and division of Germany

## **The USSR and the Cold War (Chapters 2–9)**

**J. Haslam, *Russia's Cold War From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (Yale University Press, 2011)**

A study of Soviet foreign policy and its formulation during the Cold War

**M. McCauley, *The Khrushchev Era, 1953–1964* (Longman, 1995)**

A concise study of this dramatic period

**M. McCauley, *Gorbachev* (Longman, 1998)**

A biography of Gorbachev and particularly useful for the years 1989–91

**R. Pearson, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)**

An excellent but brief study of the USSR 1945–91

**G. Roberts, *The Soviet Union in World Politics: Coexistence, Revolution and Cold War, 1945–91* (Routledge, 1999)**

A brief but comprehensive survey of Soviet foreign policy during this period

**V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev***

**(University of North Carolina Press, 2007)**

An interesting and lively study of the USSR from 1945 to 1991

## **China (Chapters 5, 7 and 9)**

**Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001)**

Essential reading for understanding China during much of the Cold War

**J. Fenby, *The Penguin History of Modern China: The Fall and Rise of a Great Power, 1850 to the Present* (Penguin, 2008)**

Good background reading on the history of China

**M. Lynch, *Mao* (Routledge, 2017)**

A concise biography with useful information on the Chinese Civil War

## **The USA and the Cold War (Chapters 2–9)**

**G.C. Herring, *The American Century and Beyond. US Foreign Relations, 1893–2015* (Oxford University Press, 2017)**

Nearly half the book is devoted to the Cold War and the years 1945–91. Well worth reading!

**F. Logevall, *America's Cold War. The Politics of Insecurity* (Belknap Press, 2012)**

A pithy and easy-to-read survey of US foreign policy in the Cold War

## **The Vietnam War (Chapters 5, 7 and 9)**

**M. Hastings, *Vietnam: An Epic Tragedy, 1945–75* (HarperCollins, 2018)**

A first class and readable guide to the two wars in Vietnam

**F. Logevall, *The Origins of the Vietnam War* (Pearson, 2001)**

A helpful guide to the causes of the war up to 1965

**R.D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941–1975* (Oxford University Press, 1997)**

A good general account of the USA and the Vietnam War

## **Détente and Ostpolitik (Chapters 7–9)**

**O. Bange and G. Niedhart, editors, *Helsinki, 1975 and the Transformation of Europe* (Berghahn Books, 2008)**

Useful for understanding the impact of the Helsinki Final Act on the Cold War

**M. Bowker and P. Williams, *Superpower Détente: A Reappraisal* (Sage, 1988)**

Gives a full account of *détente* in the 1970s

**T. Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (Jonathan Cape, 1993)**

A very useful guide to *Ostpolitik* and the reunification of Germany

## The end of the Cold War (Chapters 8 and 9)

**R. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American–Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Brookings Institution, 1994)**

A difficult but important book on the end of the Cold War

**T. Garton Ash, *We the People – The Revolution of 1990* (Penguin, 1990)**

A journalist's account of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe

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**C.S. Maier, *Dissolution* (Princeton University Press, 1997)**

An interesting account of the collapse of the GDR

**R. Service, *The End of the Cold War, 1985–1991* (Macmillan, 2015)**

Excellent on Gorbachev and his policies

## Websites

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project>

The Cold War International History Project Bulletin (CWIHP, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC). CWIHP has published hundreds of articles and documents from Eastern European and Soviet archives. Its aim is 'to disseminate new information and perspectives on Cold War history emerging from previously inaccessible archives'. It has become a major source for Cold War studies

<https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB>

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Books provide online access to critical declassified records on issues including US national security and foreign policy. These include, for example, CIA reports, as well as translated Soviet documents

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/modsbook.asp>

Fordham University's Internet Modern History Sourcebook contains some material relevant to the Cold War

[www.historyplace.com/index.html](http://www.historyplace.com/index.html)

The History Place: US perspectives of twentieth-century history, which include the Cold War

years

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