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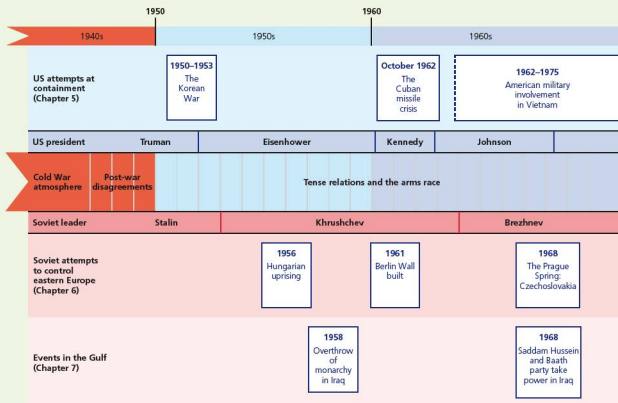
# Modern World History

Option B: The 20th century



# The Cold War and the Gulf, 1945–2000

## PART 2



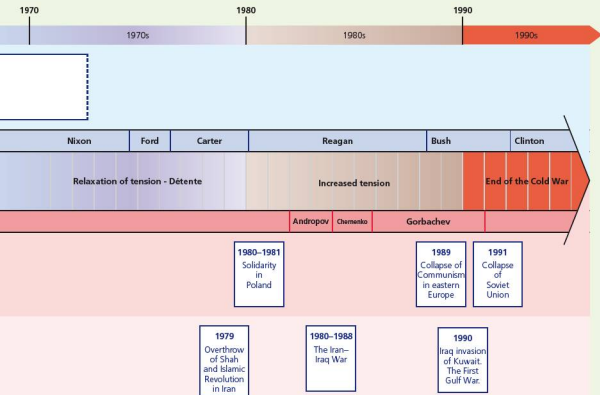
## Focus

The Second World War led to a decisive change in the balance of power around the world. The countries that had dominated European affairs from 1919 to 1939 such as France, Britain or Germany were now much poorer or less powerful. World history was much more affected by what the leaders of the new 'superpowers' (the USA and the USSR) believed and did. So the big story of Part 2 is how the superpowers became enemies, how they clashed (directly or indirectly) during the Cold War and how they tried to influence the affairs of other countries.

- ♦ In Chapter 4 you will examine the short-term causes of the Cold War. Why did the USA and the USSR, who had fought together as allies against Hitler, fall out and enter a 40-year period of tension and distrust?
- ♦ One of the USA's obsessions in this Cold War period was to hold back the spread of Communism. Chapter 5 examines why they so feared the spread of Communism, how they tried to contain it and helps you to judge how successful they were.

- ♦ While the USA was trying to contain Communism, the Soviet Union was trying to shore it up in its east European neighbours. This was no easy task. They faced frequent protests and problems. In Chapter 6 you will consider how they did this, how far they succeeded and why in the end it all came crashing down with the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.
- ♦ Finally, in Chapter 7 you will shift your focus to the Persian Gulf and the intertwined fates of two countries Iraq and Iran. You will examine how they developed in the period 1970–2000 and why they came into conflict with each other and with the western powers.

The events in these chapters overlap. The timeline below gives you an overview of the main events you will be studying. It would be helpful if you made your own copy and added your own notes to it as you study.





# 4

## Who was to blame for the Cold War?

### FOCUS POINTS

- Why did the USA–USSR alliance begin to break down in 1945?
- How had the USSR gained control of eastern Europe by 1948?
- How did the USA react to Soviet expansionism?
- What were the consequences of the Berlin Blockade?
- Who was the more to blame for starting the Cold War: the USA or the USSR?

In May 1945 American troops entered Berlin from the west, as Russian troops moved in from the east. They met and celebrated victory together. Yet three years later these former allies were arguing over Berlin and war between them seemed a real possibility.

What had gone wrong?

In this chapter you will consider:

- ♦ how the wartime alliance between the USA and the USSR broke down
- ♦ how the Soviet Union gained control over eastern Europe and how the USA responded
- ♦ the consequences of the Berlin Blockade in 1948.

The key question you will be returning to at the end is who is most to blame for this increasing tension (which became known as 'The Cold War').

- ♦ Was it the USSR and Stalin with his insistence on taking over and controlling eastern Europe?
- ♦ Or was it the USA and President Truman with the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid?
- ♦ Or should they share the blame? In the post-war chaos in Europe they both saw it as their role to extend their influence, to proclaim the benefits of their own political system and denounce the other side. So maybe they should share the blame.
- ♦ Or was the Cold War inevitable – beyond the control of either country?

Here are some of the factors that you will study in this chapter. At the end you will be asked to become an expert in one of them so you could help yourself by making notes about each one as you read the chapter.

*The situation before the Second World War*

*The personal relationships between various leaders*

*The conflicting beliefs of the superpowers*

*The war damage suffered by the USSR*

*Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe*

*Marshall Aid for Europe*

*The Berlin Blockade*

◀ It is not just cartoons that can have messages. Photos can too. This photo shows American and Soviet soldiers shaking hands in April 1945.

- 1 What is the message of the photo?
- 2 How far do you trust it to show relations between the USA and the USSR in 1945?

## Think!

Create your own version of the timeline on pages 74–75. You will be adding events and comments to it throughout the chapter to help you in your final Focus Task.

To start, extend the timeline back to 1917 and use the information on these two pages to mark any events or developments that might affect relationships between the USA and the Soviet Union.

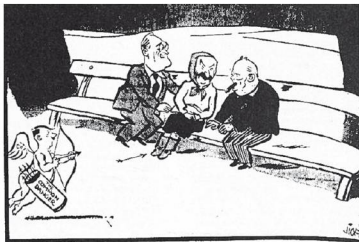
## Source Analysis

- Cartoons often criticise particular people or their actions. Sometimes they praise. Sometimes they simply comment on a situation. Would you say Source 1 is criticising, praising or commenting? Explain how the points in the cartoon helped you to decide.
- Spot the loaded language! What words and phrases in Source 2 tell us that this source is hostile to Communism and the USSR?

## Allies against Hitler

During the Second World War the Allies produced many images showing friendly co-operation between American, British and Soviet forces and peoples. In fact the real story is rather different. Hitler was the common danger which united President Roosevelt (USA), Winston Churchill (Britain) and Communist leader Josef Stalin of the Soviet Union (the USSR). This is shown in Source 1. It was a strategic wartime alliance not a bond of brotherhood. This becomes clear when we look back further into history.

### SOURCE 1



A British cartoon from 1941, with the caption 'Love conquers all'.

The two sides were enemies long before they were allies. The USSR had been a Communist country for more than 30 years. The majority of politicians and business leaders in Britain and the USA hated and feared Communist ideas (see the Factfiles on page 79). In the past they had helped the enemies of the Communists. This made the USSR wary of Britain and the USA. And Britain and the USA were just as wary of the USSR. In the 1920s suspected Communists had been persecuted in a 'Red Scare'. In 1926 the British government reacted harshly to a General Strike partly because it was convinced that the Strike was the work of agents of the USSR.

- Relations between Britain and the USSR were harmed in the 1930s by the policy of Appeasement (see page 60). It seemed to Stalin that Britain was happy to see Germany grow in power so that Hitler could attack him.
- Stalin responded by signing a pact with Hitler (see page 66) – they promised not to attack each other, and divided Poland between them! To the western nations this seemed like a cynical act on Stalin's part.

So in many ways the surprising thing is that the old enemies managed a war-time alliance at all. But they did and the course of the war in Europe was decisively altered when Germany invaded the USSR in 1941. The Soviets mounted a fierce defence of their country against the power of the German forces from 1941 to 1945. It was Soviet determination and Soviet soldiers that turned the tide of the European war against Germany. Churchill and Roosevelt admired the Soviets and sent vital supplies but tension remained. Stalin wanted his allies to launch a second military front against Germany and was bitter that this did not happen until June 1944.

### SOURCE 2

*Like a prairie-fire, the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution of law and order a year ago. It was eating its way into the homes of the American workmen . . . crawling into the sacred corners of American homes . . .*

*Robbery, not war, is the ideal of Communism . . . Obviously it is the creed of any criminal mind, which acts always from motives impossible to understand for those with clean thoughts.*

Extract from a statement by Mitchell Palmer, Attorney General of the USA, April 1920.

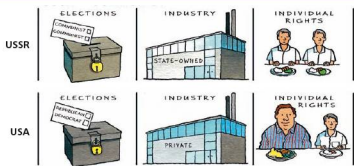
## Factfile

## A clash of ideologies

The USA	The USSR
The USA was capitalist. Business and property were privately owned.	The USSR was Communist. All industry was owned and run by the state.
It was a democracy. Its government was chosen in free democratic elections.	It was a one-party dictatorship. Elections were held, but all candidates belonged to the Communist Party.
It was the world's wealthiest country. But as in most capitalist countries, there were extremes – some great wealth and great poverty as well.	It was an economic superpower because its industry had grown rapidly in the 1920s and 1930s, but the general standard of living in the USSR was much lower than in the USA. Even so, unemployment was rare and extreme poverty was rarer than in the USA.
For Americans, being free of control by the government was more important than everyone being equal.	For Communists, the rights of individuals were seen as less important than the good of society as a whole. So individuals' lives were tightly controlled.
Americans firmly believed that other countries should be run in the American way.	Soviet leaders believed that other countries should be run in the Communist way.
People in the USA were alarmed by Communist theory, which talked of spreading revolution.	Communism taught that the role of a Communist state was to encourage Communist revolutions worldwide. In practice, the USSR's leaders tended to take practical decisions rather than be led by this ideology.
Americans generally saw their policies as 'doing the right thing' rather than serving the interests of the USA.	Many in the USSR saw the USA's actions as selfishly building its economic empire and political influence.

## Revision Tip

You need to know these things so make your own copies of the diagrams on the right and then use the Factfile to make notes around them summarising the two systems.



## Superpowers

The USA and the USSR had emerged from the war as the two 'superpowers'. After the Second World War powers like Britain and France were effectively relegated to a second division. US leaders felt there was a responsibility was attached to being a superpower. In the 1930s, the USA had followed a policy of isolation – keeping out of European and world affairs. The Americans might have disapproved of Soviet Communism, but they tried not to get involved. However, by the 1940s the US attitude had changed. Roosevelt had set the Americans firmly against a policy of isolation and this effectively meant opposing Communism. In March 1945 he said to the American Congress that America 'will have to take the responsibility for world collaboration or we shall have to bear the responsibilities for another world conflict'. There would be no more appeasement of dictators. From now on, every Communist action would meet an American reaction.

## Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember at least two examples of agreement at Yalta and one (the main!) disagreement.

# The Yalta Conference, February 1945

In February 1945 it was clear that Germany was losing the European war, so the Allied leaders met at Yalta in the Ukraine to plan what would happen to Europe after Germany's defeat. The Yalta Conference went well. Despite their differences, the Big Three – Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill – agreed on some important matters.

It seemed that, although they could not all agree, they were still able to negotiate and do business with one another.

## Agreements

### ✓ Japan

Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan once Germany had surrendered.

### ✓ Elections

They agreed that as countries were liberated from occupation by the German army, they would be allowed to hold free elections to choose the government they wanted.

### ✓ War criminals

As Allied soldiers advanced through Germany, they were revealing the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps. The Big Three agreed to hunt down and punish war criminals who were responsible for the genocide.

### ✓ Germany

They agreed that Germany would be divided into four zones: American, French, British and Soviet.

### ✓ United Nations

The Big Three all agreed to join the new United Nations Organisation, which would aim to keep peace after the war.

### ✓ Eastern Europe

The Soviet Union had suffered terribly in the war. An estimated 20 million Soviet people had died. Stalin was therefore concerned about the future security of the USSR and specifically the risk of another invasion from Europe. The Big Three agreed that eastern Europe should be seen as a 'Soviet sphere of influence'.

## Disagreements

### ✗ Poland

The only real disagreement was about Poland.

- Stalin wanted the border of the USSR to move westwards into Poland. Stalin argued that Poland, in turn, could move its border westwards into German territory.
- Churchill did not approve of Stalin's plans for Poland, but he also knew that there was not very much he could do about it because Stalin's Red Army was in total control of both Poland and eastern Germany.
- Roosevelt was also unhappy about Stalin's plan, but Churchill persuaded Roosevelt to accept it, as long as the USSR agreed not to interfere in Greece where the British were attempting to prevent the Communists taking over. Stalin accepted this.

## SOURCE 3

*We argued freely and frankly across the table. But at the end on every point unanimous agreement was reached ... We know, of course, that it was Hitler's hope and the German war lords' hope that we would not agree – that some slight crack might appear in the solid wall of allied unity ... But Hitler has failed. Never before have the major allies been more closely united – not only in their war aims but also in their peace aims.*

Extract from President Roosevelt's report to the US Congress on the Yalta Conference.

## SOURCE 4

*I want to drink to our alliance, that it should not lose its ... intimacy, its free expression of views ... I know of no such close alliance of three Great Powers as this ... May it be strong and stable, may we be as frank as possible.*

Stalin, proposing a toast at a dinner at the Yalta Conference, 1945.

## Think!

- The photo on page 1 of this book shows the Big Three at the Yalta Conference. Imagine you were describing the scene in this photo for a radio audience in 1945. Describe for the listeners:

- the obvious points (such as people you can see)
- the less obvious points (such as the mood of the scene)
- the agreements and disagreements the Big Three had come to.



## Source Analysis

### Behind the scenes at Yalta

The war against Hitler had united Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill and at the Yalta Conference they appeared to get on well. But what was going on behind the scenes? Sources 5–10 will help you decide.

#### SOURCE 5

*In the hallway [at Yalta] we stopped before a map of the world on which the Soviet Union was coloured in red. Stalin waved his hand over the Soviet Union and exclaimed, 'They [Roosevelt and Churchill] will never accept the idea that so great a space should be red, never, never!'*

Milovan Djilas writing about Yalta in 1948.

#### SOURCE 7

*Perhaps you think that just because we are the allies of the English we have forgotten who they are and who Churchill is. There's nothing they like better than to trick their allies. During the First World War they constantly tricked the Russians and the French. And Churchill? Churchill is the kind of man who will pick your pocket of a kopeck! [A kopeck is a low value Soviet coin.] And Roosevelt? Roosevelt is not like that. He dips in his hand only for bigger coins. But Churchill? He will do it for a kopeck.*

Stalin speaking to a fellow Communist, Milovan Djilas, in 1945. Djilas was a supporter of Stalin.

#### SOURCE 10

*[At Yalta] Churchill feared that Roosevelt was too pro-Russian. He pressed for a French zone to be added to the other three to add another anti-Russian voice to the armies of occupation.*

Written by Christopher Culpin in a school textbook, *The Modern World*, 1984.

#### SOURCE 6

*I have always worked for friendship with Russia but, like you, I feel deep anxiety because of their misinterpretation of the Yalta decisions, their attitude towards Poland, their overwhelming influence in the Balkans excepting Greece, the difficulties they make about Vienna, the combination of Russian power and the territories under their control or occupied, coupled with the Communist technique in so many other countries, and above all their power to maintain very large Armies in the field for a long time. What will be the position in a year or two?*

Extract from a telegram sent by Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman in May 1945.

#### SOURCE 8

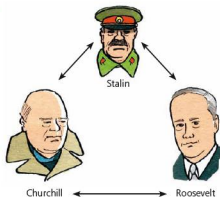
*The Soviet Union has become a danger to the free world. A new front must be created against her onward sweep. This front should be as far east as possible. A settlement must be reached on all major issues between West and East in Europe before the armies of democracy melt.*

Churchill writing to Roosevelt shortly after the Yalta Conference. Churchill ordered his army leader Montgomery to keep German arms intact in case they had to be used against the Russians.

#### SOURCE 9

*Once, Churchill asked Stalin to send him the music of the new Soviet Russian anthem so that it could be broadcast before the summary of the news from the Soviet German front. Stalin sent the words [as well] and expressed the hope that Churchill would set about learning the new tune and whistling it to members of the Conservative Party. While Stalin behaved with relative discretion with Roosevelt, he continually teased Churchill throughout the war.*

Written by Soviet historian Sergei Kudryashov after the war.



- 1 Draw a simple diagram like this and use Sources 5–10 to summarise what each of the leaders thought of the other.
- 2 How do Sources 5–10 affect your impression of the Yalta Conference?
- 3 How far do you trust these sources to tell you what the leaders actually thought of each other?

## SOURCE 11

*This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army has power to do so. It cannot be otherwise.*

Stalin speaking, soon after the end of the Second World War, about the take-over of eastern Europe.

## SOURCE 12

*Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand – ‘how many [army] divisions have you got?’ ... I’m tired of babbling the Soviets.*

President Truman, writing to his Secretary of State in January 1946.

## Think!

- 1 Read Source 11. At Yalta, Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed with Stalin that eastern Europe would be a Soviet ‘sphere of influence’. Do you think Source 11 is what they had in mind?
- 2 Explain how each of the three developments described in the text might affect relationships at Potsdam.
- 3 What is your overall impression of Source 12:
  - ◆ a reasonable assessment of Stalin based on the facts
  - ◆ an overreaction to Stalin based on fear and prejudice against the USSR?
 Use extracts from the source to support your view.

## Focus Task

### Why did the USA–USSR alliance begin to break down in 1945?

Under the following headings, make notes to summarise why the Allies began to fall out in 1945:

- ◆ Personalities
- ◆ Actions by the USA
- ◆ Actions by the USSR
- ◆ Misunderstandings

## The Potsdam Conference, July–August 1945

In May 1945, three months after the Yalta Conference, Allied troops reached Berlin. Hitler committed suicide. Germany surrendered. The war in Europe was won.

A second conference of the Allied leaders was arranged for July 1945 in the Berlin suburb of Potsdam. However, in the five months since Yalta a number of changes had taken place which would greatly affect relationships between the leaders.

### 1 Stalin’s armies were occupying most of eastern Europe

Soviet troops had liberated country after country in eastern Europe, but instead of withdrawing his troops Stalin had left them there. Refugees were fleeing out of these countries fearing a Communist take-over. Stalin had set up a Communist government in Poland, ignoring the wishes of the majority of Poles. He insisted that his control of eastern Europe was a defensive measure against possible future attacks.

### 2 America had a new president

On 12 April 1945, President Roosevelt died. He was replaced by his Vice-President, Harry Truman. Truman was a very different man from Roosevelt. He was much more anti-Communist than Roosevelt and was very suspicious of Stalin. Truman and his advisers saw Soviet actions in eastern Europe as preparations for a Soviet take-over of the rest of Europe.

### 3 The Allies had tested an atomic bomb

On 16 July 1945 the Americans successfully tested an atomic bomb at a desert site in the USA. At the start of the Potsdam Conference, Truman informed Stalin about it.

The Potsdam Conference finally got under way on 17 July 1945. Not surprisingly, it did not go as smoothly as Yalta.

To change the situation further still, in July there was an election in Britain. Churchill was defeated, so half way through the conference he was replaced by a new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. In the absence of Churchill, the conference was dominated by rivalry and suspicion between Stalin and Truman. A number of issues arose on which neither side seemed able to appreciate the other’s point of view.

#### Disagreements at Potsdam

##### ✗ Germany

Stalin wanted to cripple Germany completely to protect the USSR against future threats. Truman did not want to repeat the mistake of the Treaty of Versailles.

##### ✗ Reparations

Twenty million Russians had died in the war and the Soviet Union had been devastated. Stalin wanted compensation from Germany. Truman, however, was once again determined not to repeat the mistakes at the end of the First World War and resisted this demand.

##### ✗ Eastern Europe

At Yalta, Stalin had won agreement from the Allies that he could set up pro-Soviet governments in eastern Europe. He said, ‘If the Slav [the majority of east European] people are united, no one will dare move a finger against them’. Truman became very unhappy about Russian intentions and soon adopted a ‘get tough’ attitude towards Stalin.

#### Revision Tip

Your notes from the Focus Task will be useful for revision. Make sure you can remember one example of each.

## Source Analysis ▼

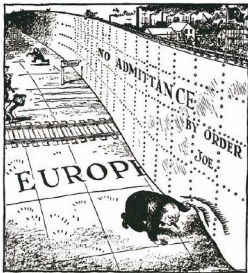
- 1 How do Sources 13 and 14 differ in their interpretation of Stalin's actions?
- 2 Explain why they see things so differently.
- 3 How do Sources 15 and 16 differ in their interpretation of Churchill?
- 4 Explain why there are differences.

## SOURCE 13

*A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. From Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste on the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended. Behind that line lie all the states of central and eastern Europe. The Communist parties have been raised to power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. This is certainly not the liberated Europe we fought to build. Nor is it one which allows permanent peace.*

Winston Churchill speaking in the USA, in the presence of President Truman, March 1946.

## SOURCE 15



A British cartoon commenting on Churchill's 'iron curtain' speech, in the *Daily Mail*, 6 March 1946.

## The 'iron curtain'

The Potsdam Conference ended without complete agreement on these issues. Over the next nine months, Stalin achieved the domination of eastern Europe that he was seeking. By 1946 Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania all had Communist governments which owed their loyalty to Stalin. Churchill described the border between Soviet-controlled countries and the West as an iron curtain (see Source 13). The name stuck.

## SOURCE 14

*The following circumstances should not be forgotten. The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland and Romania. 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. 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?*

Stalin, replying to Churchill's speech (Source 13).

## SOURCE 16



A Soviet cartoon. Churchill is shown with two flags, the first proclaiming that 'Anglo-Saxons must rule the world' and the other threatening an 'iron curtain'. Notice who is formed by his shadow!

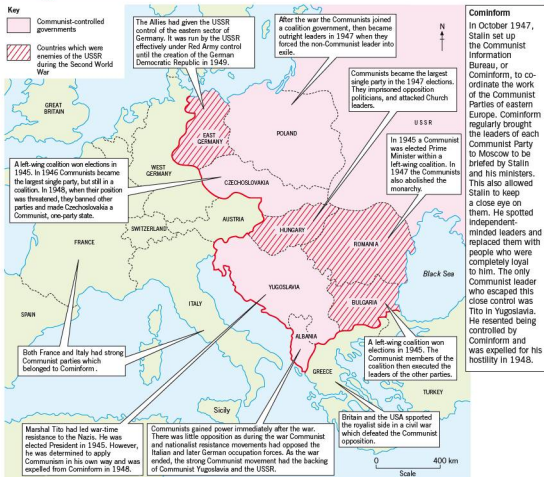
## Think!

Some historians say that Churchill is as much to blame for the post-war distrust between the Soviet Union and the West as Roosevelt, Truman or Stalin. What evidence is there on pages 80–83 to support or challenge this view?

## Stalin strengthens his grip

Source 17 shows how Stalin extended Soviet power across eastern Europe. With Communist governments established throughout eastern Europe, Stalin gradually tightened his control in each country. The secret police imprisoned anyone who opposed Communist rule.

### SOURCE 17



The Communists in eastern Europe, 1945–48.

### Focus Task

#### How did the USSR gain control of eastern Europe?

- Study Source 17. Find examples of the Communists:
  - banning other parties
  - killing or imprisoning opponents
  - winning democratic elections
- Find examples of how these factors helped the USSR take control
  - the Red Army
  - Communist involvement in resistance movements
  - agreements at Yalta
- 'The only important factor in the Communist take-over of eastern Europe was armed force.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer carefully.

## Source Analysis ▼

- 1 Do Sources 18 and 19 have the same message?
- 2 Source 18 is a British source. Does it seem likely that similar documents were being produced by the American government?

## The reaction of the USA

The Western powers were alarmed by Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe. Roosevelt, Churchill and their successors had accepted that Soviet security needed friendly governments in eastern Europe. They had agreed that eastern Europe would be a Soviet 'sphere of influence' and that Stalin would heavily influence this region. However, they had not expected such complete Communist domination. They felt it should have been possible to have governments in eastern Europe that were both democratic and friendly to the USSR. Stalin saw his policy in eastern Europe as making himself secure, but Truman could only see the spread of Communism.

## SOURCE 18

*After all the efforts that have been made and the appeasement that we followed to try and get a real friendly settlement, not only is the Soviet government not prepared to co-operate with any non-Communist government in eastern Europe, but it is actively preparing to extend its hold over the remaining part of continental Europe and, subsequently, over the Middle East and no doubt the Far East as well. In other words, physical control of Europe and Asia and eventual control of the whole world is what Stalin is aiming at – no less a thing than that. The immensity of the aim should not betray us into thinking that it cannot be achieved.*

Extract from a report by the British Foreign Secretary to the British Cabinet in March 1948. The title of the report was 'The Threat to Civilisation'.

## SOURCE 19



An American cartoon commenting on Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe. The bear represents the USSR.

## Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember two examples of methods that the USSR and the Communist parties used to take power in Eastern Europe, and one reason why Greece was important in the Cold War.

By 1948, Greece and Czechoslovakia were the only eastern European countries not controlled by Communist governments. It seemed to the Americans that not only Greece and Czechoslovakia but even Italy and France were vulnerable to Communist take-over. Events in two of these countries were to have a decisive effect on America's policy towards Europe.

## Greece, 1947

When the Germans retreated from Greece in 1944, there were two rival groups – the monarchists and the Communists – who wanted to rule the country. Both had been involved in resistance against the Nazis. The Communists wanted Greece to be a Soviet republic. The monarchists wanted the return of the king of Greece. Churchill sent British troops to Greece in 1945 supposedly to help restore order and supervise free elections. In fact, the British supported the monarchists and the king was returned to power.

In 1946, the USSR protested to the United Nations that British troops were a threat to peace in Greece. The United Nations took no action and so the Communists tried to take control of Greece by force. A civil war quickly developed. The British could not afford the cost of such a war and announced on 24 February 1947 that they were withdrawing their troops. Truman stepped in. Paid for by the Americans, some British troops stayed in Greece. They tried to prop up the king's government. By 1950 the royalists were in control of Greece, although they were a very weak government, always in crisis.

## SOURCE 20

*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 . . . The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining those freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world.*

President Truman speaking on 12 March 1947, explaining his decision to help Greece.

## The Truman Doctrine

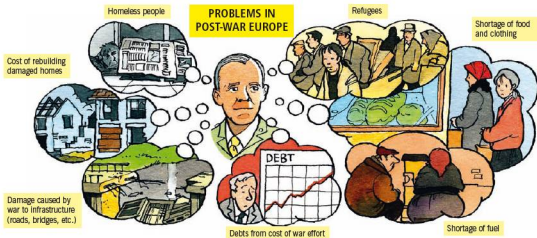
American intervention in Greece marked a new era in the USA's attitude to world politics, which became known as 'the Truman Doctrine' (see Source 20).

Under the Truman Doctrine, the USA was prepared to send money, equipment and advice to any country which was, in the American view, threatened by a Communist take-over. Truman accepted that eastern Europe was now Communist. His aim was to stop Communism from spreading any further. This policy became known as containment.

Others thought containment should mean something firmer. They said that it must be made clear to the Soviet Union that expansion beyond a given limit would be met with military force.

## The Marshall Plan

Truman believed that Communism succeeded when people faced poverty and hardship. He sent the American General George Marshall to assess the economic state of Europe. What he found was a ruined economy. The countries of Europe owed \$11.5 billion to the USA. There were extreme shortages of all goods. Most countries were still rationing bread. There was such a coal shortage in the hard winter of 1947 that in Britain all electricity was turned off for a period each day. Churchill described Europe as 'a rubble heap, a breeding ground of hate'.



Marshall suggested that about \$17 billion would be needed to rebuild Europe's prosperity. 'Our policy,' he said, 'is directed against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos.'

In December 1947, Truman put his plan to Congress. For a short time, the American Congress refused to grant this money. Many Americans were becoming concerned by Truman's involvement in foreign affairs. Besides, \$17 billion was a lot of money!

## Czechoslovakia, 1948

Americans' attitude changed when the Communists took over the government of Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia had been ruled by a coalition government which, although it included Communists, had been trying to pursue policies independent of Moscow. The Communists came down hard in March 1948. Anti-Soviet leaders were purged. One pro-American Minister, Jan Masaryk, was found dead below his open window. The Communists said he had jumped. The Americans suspected he'd been pushed. Immediately Congress accepted the Marshall Plan and made \$17 billion available over a period of four years.

## Think!

Explain how events in

- Greece
  - Czechoslovakia
- affected American policy in Europe.

## Think!

- 1 Draw a diagram to summarise the aims of Marshall Aid. Put political aims on one side and economic aims on the other. Draw arrows and labels to show how the two are connected.
- 2 Which of the problems in post-war Europe do you think would be the most urgent for Marshall Aid to tackle. Explain your choice.

## Marshall Aid

On the one hand, Marshall Aid was an extremely generous act by the American people. On the other hand, it was also motivated by American self-interest. They wanted to create new markets for American goods. The Americans remembered the disastrous effects of the Depression of the 1930s and Truman wanted to do all he could to prevent another worldwide slump.

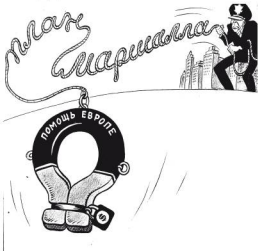
Stalin viewed Marshall Aid with suspicion. After expressing some initial interest, he refused to have anything more to do with it. He also forbade any of the eastern European states to apply for Marshall Aid. Stalin's view was that the anti-Communist aims behind Marshall Aid would weaken his hold on eastern Europe. He also felt that the USA was trying to dominate as many states as possible by making them dependent on dollars.

SOURCE 21



An American cartoon, 1949.

SOURCE 22



A Soviet cartoon commenting on Marshall Aid. The rope spells out the words 'Marshall Plan' and the lifebelt magnet is labelled 'Aid to Europe'.

## Source Analysis ▲

- 1 Do Sources 21 and 22 support or criticise Marshall Aid?
- 2 Do you think the sources give a fair impression of Marshall Aid? Explain your answer.

## Revision Tip

Stalin and Truman saw Marshall Aid differently. Try to sum up each view in a sentence.

## Focus Task

### How did the USA react to Soviet expansion?

- 1 Work in pairs and write two accounts of US policy in Europe. One of you should write from the point of view of the Americans; the other should write from the point of view of the Soviets. The sources and text on these two pages will help you.

You should include reference to:

- a) US actions in the Greek Civil War in 1947
- b) the Truman Doctrine
- c) Soviet action in Czechoslovakia in 1948
- d) the Marshall Plan and Marshall Aid.

As you consider each event, try to use it to make one side look reasonable or the other side unreasonable – or both!

- 2 Was the distrust between the USA and the USSR a problem of action (what each side is actually doing) or interpretation (how things are seen)?

## The Berlin Blockade

By 1948 the distrust between the USA and the USSR was so great that leaders were talking in public about the threat of war between the two countries. Instead of running down arms expenditure, as you would expect them to after a war, the two sides actually increased their stock of weapons.

Each side took every opportunity to denounce the policies or the plans of the other. A propaganda war developed. Despite all the threatening talk, the two sides had never actually fired on one another. But in 1948 they came dangerously close to war.

SOURCE 23



Germany in 1948.

### The Western zones recover

After the war, Germany was divided into four zones (see Source 23). Germany had become a real headache for the Western Allies. After the destruction of war, their zones were in economic chaos. Stalin feared a recovering Germany and wanted to keep it crippled. But it was clear to the Allies that Germany could not feed its people if it was not allowed to rebuild its industries. Although they themselves were wary of rebuilding Germany too quickly, Britain, France and the USA combined their zones in 1946 to form one zone which was called Trizonia to start with but became known in 1949 as West Germany. In 1948 they reformed the currency and within months there were signs that Germany was recovering.

SOURCE 24



Berlin shoppers look at goods in shop windows a few days after the new currency was brought in. The notices say 'Our new prices'. Before the new currency, shops had few goods on display and there had been a thriving black market.



## SOURCE 25

On 23 June the Soviet authorities suspended all traffic into Berlin because of alleged technical difficulties . . . They also stopped barge traffic on similar grounds. Shortly before midnight, the Soviet authorities issued orders to . . . disrupt electric power from Soviet power plants to the Western sectors. Shortage of coal was given as a reason for this measure.

US Government report, June 1948.

## SOURCE 26

The crisis was planned in Washington, behind a smokescreen of anti-Soviet propaganda. In 1948 there was danger of war. The conduct of the Western powers risked bloody incidents. The self-blockade of the Western powers hit the West Berlin population with harshness. The people were freezing and starving. In the Spring of 1949 the USA was forced to yield . . . their war plans had come to nothing, because of the conduct of the USSR.

A Soviet commentary on the crisis.

## Source Analysis

- 1 Read Source 25. What reasons did the Soviet Union give for cutting off West Berlin?
- 2 Why do you think the USA did not believe these were genuine reasons?
- 3 How do Sources 26 and 27 differ in their interpretation of the blockade?
- 4 What is the message of the cartoon in Source 28?
- 5 Which source do you think gives the most reliable view of the blockade?

## The blockade

Stalin felt that the USA's handling of western Germany was provocative. He could do nothing about the reorganisation of the western zones, or the new currency, but he felt that he could stamp his authority on Berlin. It was deep in the Soviet zone and was linked to the western zones of Germany by vital roads, railways and canals. In June 1948, Stalin blocked all these supply lines, cutting off the two-million strong population of West Berlin from western help. Stalin believed that this would force the Allies out of Berlin and make Berlin entirely dependent on the USSR.

It was a clever plan. If US tanks did try to ram the road-blocks or railway blocks, Stalin would see it as an act of war. However, the Americans were not prepared to give up. They saw West Berlin as a test case. If they gave in to Stalin on this issue, the western zones of Germany might be next. Truman wanted to show that he was serious about his policy of containment. He wanted Berlin to be a symbol of freedom behind the Iron Curtain.

## The Berlin airlift

The only way into Berlin was by air. So in June 1948 the Allies decided to air-lift supplies. As the first planes took off from their bases in West Germany, everyone feared that the Soviets would shoot them down, which would have been an act of war. People waited anxiously as the planes flew over Soviet territory, but no shots were fired. The planes got through and for the next ten months West Berlin was supplied by a constant stream of aeroplanes (three per minute) bringing in everything from food and clothing to oil and building materials. It made life possible in the western sectors, although there were enormous shortages and many Berliners decided to leave the city altogether. By May 1949, however, it was clear that the blockade of Berlin would not make the Western Allies give up Berlin, so Stalin reopened communications.

## SOURCE 27

We refused to be forced out of the city of Berlin. We demonstrated to the people of Europe that we would act and act resolutely, when their freedom was threatened. Politically it brought the people of Western Europe closer to us. The Berlin blockade was a move to test our ability and our will to resist.

President Truman, speaking in 1949.

## SOURCE 28



A cartoon by Leslie Illingworth from the *Daily Mail*, 20 April 1949.

## SOURCE 29

*The Berlin air-lift was a considerable achievement but neither side gained anything from the confrontation. The USSR had not gained control of Berlin. The West had no guarantees that land communications would not be cut again. Above all confrontation made both sides even more stubborn.*

Historian Jack Watson writing in 1984.

## The consequences of the Berlin Blockade

### A divided Germany

As a result of the Berlin Blockade, Germany was firmly divided into two nations. In May 1949, the British, French and American zones became the Federal Republic of Germany (known as West Germany). The Communist eastern zone was formed into the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany) in October 1949.

### A powerful symbol

Germany would stay a divided country for 41 years. Throughout that time Berlin would remain a powerful symbol of Cold War tensions – from the American point of view, an oasis of democratic freedom in the middle of Communist repression; from the Soviet point of view, an invasive cancer growing in the workers' paradise of East Germany.

## SOURCE 30

#### Think!

It is difficult to give an exact date for when the Cold War actually started.

- ◆ Some might say that it was at Yalta, as Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt argued over Poland.
- ◆ Others might say that it started in 1948 with the Berlin Blockade.
- ◆ There are other possible starting dates as well between 1945 and 1948.

What do you think? As a class, list all the possible starting dates you can think of. Then choose three to compare. Whatever your choice, support it with evidence from this chapter.



A 1958 Soviet cartoon. A Soviet doctor is injecting the cancer (the 'Occupation regime' of the Western Allies) with a medicine called 'Free City Status for West Berlin'.

### A flashpoint

Berlin was more than a symbol, however. It was also a potential flashpoint. As you study the story of the Cold War, you will find that the USA's and the USSR's worries about what might happen in Berlin affected their policies in other areas of the world. You will pick up the story of Berlin again in Chapter 6, page 133.

### A pattern for the Cold War

Since 1946 some people had been using the term 'Cold War' to describe the tense relationships between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. The Berlin Blockade helped demonstrate what this Cold War actually consisted of. It set out a pattern for Cold War confrontations.

- On the one hand, the two superpowers and their allies had shown how suspicious they were of each other; how they would obstruct each other in almost any way they could; how they would bombard each other with propaganda.
- On the other hand, each had shown that it was not willing to go to war with the other. The Berlin Blockade established a sort of tense balance between the superpowers that was to characterise much of the Cold War period.

#### Revision Tip

For the topic of the Berlin Blockade, aim to be able to explain (with examples):

- ◆ how the Allies started to rebuild Germany
- ◆ one reason this alarmed Stalin
- ◆ two important consequences of the blockade.

## SOURCE 31

Article 3: To achieve the aims of this Treaty, the Parties will keep up 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.

Extracts from the NATO Charter.

## NATO and the Warsaw Pact

During the Berlin Blockade, war between the USSR and the USA seemed a real possibility. At the height of the crisis, the Western powers met in Washington and signed an agreement to work together. The new organisation they formed in April 1949 was known as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). Source 33 shows the main terms of the NATO alliance, and Source 34 shows Stalin's reaction to it.

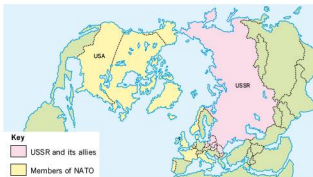
Although the USSR was critical of NATO it took no further action until 1955 when the NATO powers allowed West Germany to join NATO. This brought back terrible reminders of the Second World War. In response the USSR and the main Communist states in Eastern Europe (including Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary) formed the Warsaw Pact alliance. The members of the alliance promised to defend each other if any one member was attacked. They also promised not to interfere in the internal affairs of each member state and asserted the independence of each member of the alliance. In reality of course the USSR had huge influence over the independence and internal affairs of each of the member states.

## SOURCE 32



A cartoon by David Low, 1949, entitled 'Your play, Joe'. Western leaders wait to see how Stalin will react to the formation of NATO.

## SOURCE 33



NATO and the Soviet satellites of eastern Europe. With the establishment of NATO, Europe was once again home to two hostile armed camps, just as it had been in 1914.

## SOURCE 34

The Soviet government did everything it could to prevent the world from being split into two military blocks. The Soviet Union issued a special statement analysing the grave consequences affecting the entire international situation that would follow from the establishment of a military alliance of the Western powers. All these warnings failed, however, and the North Atlantic Alliance came into being.

Stalin commenting on the formation of NATO, 1949.

## Source Analysis

- 1 What evidence is there in Sources 31–34 to indicate that NATO was a purely defensive alliance?
- 2 Read Source 34. What 'grave consequences' do you think Stalin had in mind?

## Focus Task

## What were the consequences of the Berlin Blockade?

Here are some consequences of the Berlin Blockade.

- ◆ The Soviet Union and the West both claimed a victory.
- ◆ The Western Allies set up a military alliance called NATO.
- ◆ Many westerners left Berlin for good.
- ◆ The airlift showed the West's commitment to Berlin.
- ◆ The airlift kept Berlin working.
- ◆ Berlin became a symbol of Cold War tension.
- ◆ It ended the four-power administration of Germany and Berlin and split Germany into two blocs. Germany remained a divided country for 40 years.
- ◆ There was no fighting – the dispute ended peacefully.
- ◆ It heightened fear of the Soviet Union in the west.
- ◆ The airlift improved relations between Germans and the Allies (who had so recently been at war).

Write each consequence on a card then:

- a) divide the cards into short-term and long-term consequences
- b) choose two which you think are the most significant consequences and explain your choice.

## Focus Task

### Who was more to blame for the Cold War?



Work in small groups. Five people per group would be ideal.

You are going to investigate who was to blame for the Cold War. The possible verdicts you might reach are:

- A The USA was most to blame.
- B The USSR was most to blame.
- C Both sides were equally to blame.
- D No one was to blame. The Cold War was inevitable.

This is our suggested way of working.

- 1 Start by discussing the verdicts together. Is one more popular than another in your group?
- 2 a) Each member of the group should research how one of the following factors helped to lead to the Cold War:
  - ♦ the situation before the Second World War (pages 78–79).
  - ♦ the personal relationships between the various leaders (pages 77–84).
  - ♦ the conflicting beliefs of the superpowers (pages 83–84).
  - ♦ the war damage suffered by the USSR (pages 80 and 83).
  - ♦ Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe (pages 82–83).
  - ♦ Marshall Aid for Europe (pages 86–87).
  - ♦ the Berlin Blockade (pages 88–90).

You can start with the page numbers given. You can introduce your own research from other books or the internet if you wish.
- b) Present your evidence to your group and explain which, if any, of the verdicts A–D your evidence most supports.
- 3 As a group, discuss which of the verdicts now seems most sensible.
- 4 Write a balanced essay on who was to blame, explaining why each verdict is a possibility but reaching your own conclusion about which is best. The verdicts A–D give you a possible structure for your essay. Write a paragraph on each verdict, selecting relevant evidence for your group discussion. A final paragraph can explain your overall conclusion.

## Revision Tip

It is useful to think about big questions like 'who was most to blame...' but it is also useful to think about the role of specific factors so turn your research for question 2 into revision cards and share them with your fellow students.

## Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently.

### Essential

- ♦ Atomic bomb
- ♦ Alliance
- ♦ Appeasement
- ♦ Berlin airlift
- ♦ Berlin Blockade
- ♦ Capitalism
- ♦ Cominform
- ♦ Communism
- ♦ Democracy
- ♦ Dictatorship
- ♦ Iron curtain
- ♦ Isolationism
- ♦ Marshall Aid
- ♦ Marshall Plan
- ♦ NATO
- ♦ Potsdam Conference
- ♦ Russia
- ♦ Soviet sphere of influence
- ♦ Superpower
- ♦ The Soviet Union
- ♦ The West/The Western Powers
- ♦ Truman Doctrine
- ♦ Yalta Conference

## Chapter Summary

### The beginnings of the Cold War

- 1 The USSR was a Communist country with a one-party state; the USA was a capitalist democracy. They had very different ideas about how a country should be run and had been enemies throughout the 1930s. However, because they had a shared enemy (Hitler) they were allies during the Second World War.
- 2 When it was clear that Germany was going to be defeated their leaders met together at Yalta (in the USSR) to plan what would happen after the war. The US and Soviet leaders, Roosevelt and Stalin, appeared to get on well, although behind the scenes there were tensions and disagreements.
- 3 They agreed that after the war Germany (and its capital Berlin) would be divided into four sectors run by Britain, the USA, France and the USSR, and that eastern Europe would be a Soviet 'sphere of influence'.
- 4 After the war ended the countries met again at Potsdam in Germany but by this time much had changed: Roosevelt had been replaced as President by Truman; Stalin's troops were occupying most of eastern Europe and the Americans had dropped an atomic bomb.
- 5 Relations between the USA and USSR quickly deteriorated and a Cold War started (a Cold War is the threat of war and deep mistrust but no outright fighting).
- 6 All the countries of eastern Europe elected or had forced on them a Communist government that was allied to the USSR. The division between Communist east and capitalist west became known as the iron curtain.
- 7 The USA wanted to stop Communism spreading – the Truman Doctrine said that America would help any country that was resisting outside pressure (by which Truman meant Communism). This marked a decisive end to US isolationism.
- 8 The USA offered financial help (Marshall Aid) to countries in western Europe to rebuild.
- 9 The USSR saw Marshall Aid and the Truman Doctrine as a threat to the USSR, which might lead to an attack on the USSR itself.
- 10 Berlin became the first focus of Cold War tension when it was blockaded by Stalin to prevent supplies getting into the US/British/French sectors. The western allies responded with the Berlin airlift.

## Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1 (a) What was agreed by the Allied leaders at the Yalta Conference? [4]  
(b) Why had relationships between the USA and the USSR changed by the time of the Potsdam Conference? [6]  
(c) 'The Cold War was caused by the Soviet take-over of eastern Europe.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]
- 2 Study Source 3 on page 80 and Source 7 on page 81. Why are these sources so different? Explain your answer using the sources and your knowledge. [7]
- 3 Study Source 15 on page 83. What is the message of the cartoonist? Explain your answer. [7]
- 4 Study Sources 26, 27 and 28 on page 89. Which of Sources 26 or 27 would the cartoonist in Source 28 agree with? Explain your answer using the sources and your own knowledge. [8]

# IS THIS TOMORROW



**AMERICA UNDER COMMUNISM!**