

Section 1

The Origins of the Cold War

Guide to Reading

Big Ideas

Government and Society Although World War II was nearly over, personal and political differences among Allied leaders and the peoples they represented led to new global challenges.

Content Vocabulary

- satellite nations (p. 537)
- Iron Curtain (p. 537)

Academic Vocabulary

- liberate (p. 532)
- equipment (p. 534)

People and Events to Identify

- Yalta (p. 532)
- Cold War (p. 534)
- Potsdam (p. 536)

Reading Strategy

Categorizing Complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by filling in the names of the conferences held among the “Big Three” Allies and the outcomes of each.

Conferences	Outcomes

TENNESSEE STANDARDS United States History

Performance Indicators State:

9.1 Recognize differences among the victorious Allied Powers after World War II (i.e., capitalist, communist, military structure, individual differences).

9.3 Locate and label countries, using a map, dominated or threatened by Communism.

9.11 Read and interpret Cold War documents (e.g., Truman’s announcement of the dropping atomic bombs, the contrast between Eisenhower’s farewell speech and Kennedy’s speech at Kennedy’s inaugural, Goldwater’s 1964 party nomination acceptance speech, Johnson’s Gulf of Tonkin declaration).

After the war ended, tensions continued to rise over the amount of freedom the Soviets were going to allow the nations they controlled. Leaders of Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union held conferences but could not resolve this issue.

The Yalta Conference

MAIN Idea Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met at Yalta to discuss Poland, Germany, and the rights of liberated Europe.

HISTORY AND YOU Do you remember Wilson’s idealistic Fourteen Points and how they were changed during negotiations after World War I? Read on to learn how negotiations during and after World War II led to results different from what Roosevelt and Truman wanted.

In February 1945, with the war in Europe almost over, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met at **Yalta**—a Soviet resort on the Black Sea—to plan the postwar world. Although the conference seemed to go well, several agreements reached at Yalta later played an important role in causing the Cold War.

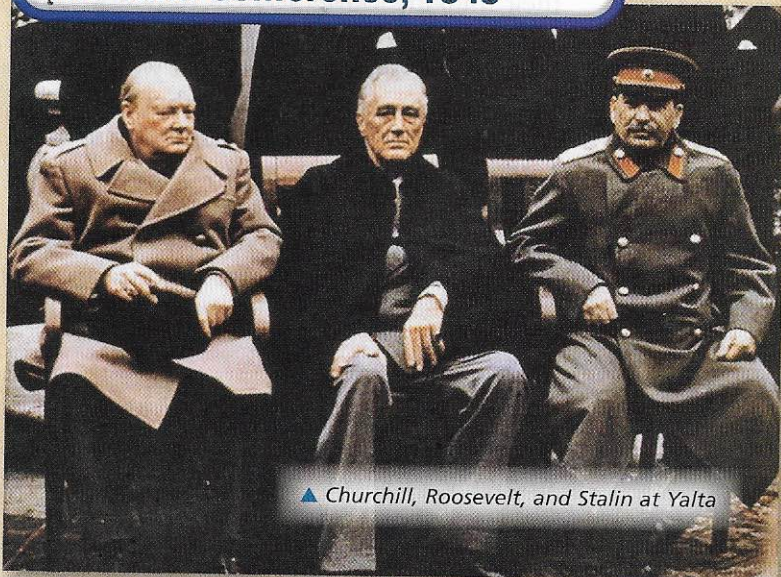
Poland

The first issue discussed at Yalta was what to do about Poland. Shortly after the Germans invaded Poland, the Polish government fled to Britain. In 1944, however, Soviet troops drove back the Germans and entered Poland. As they **liberated** Poland from German control, the Soviets encouraged Polish Communists to set up a new government. This meant there were now two governments claiming the right to govern Poland: one Communist and one non-Communist.

President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill both argued that the Poles should be free to choose their own government. “This is what we went to war against Germany for,” Churchill explained, “that Poland should be free and sovereign.”

Stalin quickly responded to Churchill’s comments. According to Stalin, because Poland was on the Soviet Union’s western border, the need for its government to be friendly was a matter of “life and death” from the Soviet point of view. Every time invaders had entered Russia from the west, they had come through Poland. Eventually, the three leaders compromised. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to recognize the Polish government set up by the Soviets. Stalin agreed that the government would include members of the prewar Polish government and that free elections would be held as soon as possible.

The Yalta Conference, 1945



▲ Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin at Yalta

The Declaration of Liberated Europe

At Yalta, the Allies issued the Declaration of Liberated Europe. The Soviet Union's failure to uphold the Declaration contributed to the coming of the Cold War. The Declaration contained the following commitments:

- The peoples of Europe will be allowed to create democratic institutions of their own choice, but must destroy all remaining aspects of Nazism and fascism in their societies.
- The United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union will help the peoples of Europe to do the following:
 1. Establish peace in their country
 2. Provide aid to people in distress
 3. Form temporary governments that represent all democratic elements of the society and hold free elections to choose a government that responds to the will of the people
- The United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union will continue to support the principles expressed in the Atlantic Charter.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC The Division of Germany, 1945



Analyzing VISUALS

1. **Specifying** In the Declaration of Liberated Europe, what three things did the Big Three promise to help the peoples of Europe do?
2. **Locating** In what zone in the divided Germany was Berlin located?

The Declaration of Liberated Europe

After reaching a compromise on Poland, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin agreed to issue the Declaration of Liberated Europe. The declaration asserted “the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live.”

The Allies promised that the people of Europe would be allowed “to create democratic institutions of their own choice.” They also promised to create temporary governments that represented “all democratic elements” and pledged “the earliest possible

establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people.”

Dividing Germany

After discussing Poland and agreeing to a set of principles for liberating Europe, the conference focused on Germany. Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin agreed to divide Germany into four zones. Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and France would each control one zone. The same four countries would also divide the German capital city of Berlin into four zones, even though it was in the Soviet zone.

Although pleased with the decision to divide Germany, Stalin also demanded that Germany pay heavy reparations for the war damage it had caused. Roosevelt agreed, but he insisted reparations be based on Germany's ability to pay. He also suggested, and Stalin agreed, that Germany pay reparations with trade goods and products instead of cash. The Allies would also be allowed to remove industrial machinery, railroad cars, and other **equipment** from Germany as reparations. This decision did not resolve the issue. Over the next few years, arguments about German reparations greatly increased tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Tensions Begin to Rise

The Yalta decisions shaped the expectations of the United States. Two weeks after Yalta, the Soviets pressured the king of Romania into appointing a Communist government. The United States accused the Soviets of violating the Declaration of Liberated Europe.

Soon afterward, the Soviets refused to allow more than three non-Communist Poles to serve in the 18-member Polish government. There was also no indication that they intended to hold free elections in Poland as promised. On April 1, President Roosevelt informed the Soviets that their actions in Poland were not acceptable.

Yalta marked a turning point in Soviet-American relations. President Roosevelt had hoped that an Allied victory and the creation of the United Nations would lead to a more peaceful world. Instead, as the war came to an end, the United States and the Soviet Union became increasingly hostile toward each other. This led to an era of confrontation and competition between the two nations that lasted from about 1946 to 1990. This era became known as the **Cold War**.

Soviet Security Concerns

The tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union led to the Cold War because the two sides had different goals. As the war ended, Soviet leaders became concerned about security. They wanted to keep Germany weak and make sure that the countries between Germany and the Soviet Union were under Soviet control.

Although security concerns influenced their thinking, Soviet leaders were also communists. They believed that communism was a superior economic system that would eventually replace capitalism, and that the Soviet Union should encourage communism in other nations. Soviet leaders also accepted Lenin's theory that capitalist countries would eventually try to destroy communism. This made them suspicious of capitalist nations.

American Economic Issues

While Soviet leaders focused on securing their borders, American leaders focused on economic problems. Many American officials believed that the Depression had caused World War II. Without it, Hitler would never have come to power, and Japan would not have wanted to expand its empire.

Debates

IN HISTORY

Did the Soviet Union Cause the Cold War?

Many people have debated who was responsible for the Cold War. Most Americans, including diplomat George Kennan who had served in Russia, believed that it was Soviet ideology and insecurity that brought on the Cold War. On the other side, communist leaders, such as Stalin's adviser Andrei Zhdanov, believed that capitalism and imperialism caused the Cold War.

American advisers also thought that the Depression became so severe because nations reduced trade. They believed that when nations stop trading, they are forced into war to get resources. By 1945, Roosevelt and his advisers were convinced that economic growth was the key to peace. They wanted to promote economic growth by increasing world trade.

Similar reasoning convinced American leaders to promote democracy and free enterprise. They believed that democratic governments with protections for people's rights made countries more stable and peaceful. They also thought that the free enterprise system, with private property rights and limited government intervention in the economy, was the best route to prosperity.

Reading Check **Identifying** What did the Allies decide at Yalta?

Truman Takes Control

MAIN Idea Although President Truman took a firm stand against Soviet aggression, Europe remained divided after the war.

HISTORY AND YOU Have you ever had to say no to someone or insist they do something? Read to learn about President Truman's actions at Potsdam.

Eleven days after confronting the Soviets on Poland, President Roosevelt died and Harry S. Truman became president. Truman was strongly anti-Communist. He also believed that World War II had begun because Britain had tried to appease Hitler. He did not intend to make the same mistake with Stalin. "We must stand up to the Russians," he told Secretary of State Edward Stettinius the day after taking office.

YES

George F. Kennan

American Diplomat



PRIMARY SOURCE

"[The] USSR still [believes] in antagonistic 'capitalist encirclement' with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence. . . . At bottom of [the] Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity. . . . And they have learned to seek security only in patient but deadly struggle for total destruction of rival power, never in compacts and compromises with it.

. . . In summary, we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that . . . it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure."

—Moscow Embassy Telegram #511, 1946

NO

Andrei Zhdanov

Advisor to Stalin



PRIMARY SOURCE

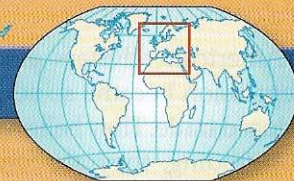
"The more the war recedes into the past, the more distinct becomes . . . the division of the political forces operating on the international arena into two major camps. . . . The principal driving force of the imperialist camp is the U.S.A. . . . The cardinal purpose of the imperialist camp is to strengthen imperialism, to hatch a new imperialist war, to combat socialism and democracy, and to support reactionary and antidemocratic profascist regimes. . . .

. . . As embodiment of a new and superior social system, the Soviet Union reflects in its foreign policy the aspirations of progressive mankind, which desires lasting peace and has nothing to gain from a new war hatched by capitalism."

—from *For a Lasting Peace for a People's Democracy*, no. 1, November 1947

DBQ Document-Based Questions

- 1. Paraphrasing** What belief of the Soviets does Kennan say will prevent "permanent peaceful coexistence" with the United States?
- 2. Identifying Central Issues** What does Zhdanov say are the goals of the "imperialist camp" led by the United States?



PRIMARY SOURCE

"A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately light by the Allied victory. . . . 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 what I must call 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. . . .

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. . . .

In front of the iron curtain which lies across Europe are other causes for anxiety . . . in a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers and throughout the world, Communist fifth columns are established and work in . . . absolute obedience to the directions they receive from the Communist center. . . . I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines."

—Winston Churchill, address to Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946

DBQ Document-Based Questions

- 1. Finding the Main Idea** What was the "iron curtain," and why do you think Churchill described it in that way?
- 2. Identifying Central Issues** What "other causes for anxiety" did Churchill say the Soviets were creating?

Ten days later, Truman did exactly that during a meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov. Truman immediately brought up the issue of Poland and demanded that Stalin hold free elections as he had promised at Yalta. Molotov took the unexpectedly strong message back to Stalin. The meeting marked an important shift in Soviet-American relations and set the stage for further confrontations.

The Potsdam Conference

In July 1945 with the war against Japan still raging, Truman finally met Stalin at **Potsdam**,

near Berlin. Both men had come to Potsdam primarily to work out a deal on Germany.

Truman was now convinced that industry was critical to Germany's survival. Unless that nation's economy was allowed to revive, the rest of Europe would never recover, and the German people might turn to communism out of desperation.

Stalin and his advisers were equally convinced that they needed reparations from Germany. The war had devastated the Soviet economy. Soviet troops had begun stripping their zone in Germany of its machinery and industrial equipment for use back home, but Stalin wanted Germany to pay much more.

At the conference, Truman took a firm stand against heavy reparations. He insisted that Germany's industry had to be allowed to recover. Truman suggested that the Soviets take reparations from their zone, while the Allies allowed industry to revive in the other zones. Stalin opposed this idea since the Soviet zone was mostly agricultural. It could not provide all the reparations the Soviets wanted.

To get the Soviets to accept the agreement, Truman offered Stalin a small amount of German industrial equipment from the other zones, but required the Soviets to pay for part of it with food shipments from their zone. He also offered to accept the new German-Polish border the Soviets had established.

Stalin did not like Truman's proposal. At Potsdam, Truman learned that the atomic bomb had been successfully tested, and he hinted to Stalin that the United States had developed a new, powerful weapon. Stalin suspected that Truman was trying to bully him into a deal and that the Americans were trying to limit reparations to keep the Soviets weak.


Despite his suspicions, Stalin had to accept the terms. American and British troops controlled Germany's industrial heartland, and there was no way for the Soviets to get any reparations except by cooperating. Nevertheless, the Potsdam conference marked yet another increase in tensions between the Soviets and the Americans.

The Iron Curtain Descends

Although Truman had won the argument over reparations, he had less success on other issues at Potsdam. The Soviets refused to make any stronger commitments to uphold the Declaration of Liberated Europe. The presence of the Soviet army in Eastern Europe ensured that pro-Soviet Communist governments would eventually be established in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. "This war is not as in the past," Stalin commented. "Whoever occupies a territory also imposes his own social system. . . . It cannot be otherwise."

The Communist countries of Eastern Europe came to be called **satellite nations** because they were controlled by the Soviets, as satellites are tied by gravity to the planets they orbit. These nations had to remain Communist and friendly to the Soviet Union. They also had to follow policies that the Soviets approved.

After watching the Communist takeover in Eastern Europe, Winston Churchill coined a phrase to describe what had happened. In a 1946 speech delivered in Fulton, Missouri, he referred to an "iron curtain" falling across Eastern Europe. The press picked up the term and, for the next 43 years, when someone referred to the Iron Curtain, they meant the Communist nations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. With the **Iron Curtain** separating the Communist nations of Eastern Europe from the West, the World War II era had come to an end. The Cold War was about to begin.

 **Reading Check Explaining** How did the Potsdam Conference hurt Soviet-American relations?

Vocabulary

1. Explain the significance of: Yalta, Cold War, Potsdam, satellite nations, Iron Curtain.

Main Ideas

- 2. Identifying** At Yalta, what agreement did the "Big Three" come to about Germany's future after World War II?
- 3. Summarizing** What concerns made the Soviets suspicious of the Western Allies?
- 4. Explaining** How did the Potsdam Conference help bring about the Cold War?

Critical Thinking

- 5. Big Ideas** How did different economic systems cause tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union?
- 6. Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list events that led to the Cold War.



- 7. Analyzing Visuals** Study the map on page 536. Why did the Soviet Union want to have control over the countries on its western border?

Writing About History

- 8. Expository Writing** Suppose that you are an adviser to Truman. Write a report explaining your interpretation of Churchill's "iron curtain" speech.

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