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History & Geography



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COLD WAR

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COLD WAR

The end of the biggest war in the history of the world (World War II) was also the beginning of the most complicated war in American history, the Cold War. The Cold War was a battle of ideas, alliances, and fear between the communist countries of the world, led by the Soviet Union, and the free world, led by the United States.

It was rather like two powerful towns that built forts filled with cannons next door to each other, gathered rifles and soldiers, fired shots once in a while, but never quite decided to attack the other fort. The U.S. and the Soviet Union never actually went to war with each other. However, they helped out in wars fought by

their allies, spied on each other, built huge collections of atomic bombs to threaten each other, and encouraged or forced other countries to join their side of the “war.”

It was a long, expensive, difficult war. It began in 1945 at the end of World War II. It did not end until 1989, when communism collapsed in Europe. This LIFEPAC® will cover the first part of the Cold War from 1945 until about 1970. It will cover the two major wars that were fought by the U.S. against communism in Korea and Vietnam. It will also discuss the way the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement affected America.

OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC.

When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Describe how the Cold War began.
2. Describe the events and crises of the Cold War.
3. Describe the anti-communist feelings in America and the actions of Senator Joseph McCarthy.
4. Describe the Korean and Vietnam Wars.
5. Describe the Civil Rights Movement.
6. Describe the protests and rebellions of the 1960s.
7. Name the presidents and describe their activities from 1945 to 1973.

VOCABULARY

Study these new words. Learning the meanings of these words is a good study habit and will improve your understanding of this LIFEPAC.

adviser (ad vī' zer). A person who gives an opinion about what should be done

brutal (brü' tl). Cruel; inhuman

censure (sen' shər). An expression of unfavorable opinion; criticism

character (kar' ik tər). Moral strength

contain (kən tān'). To hold back

controversial (kon' trə vēr' shəl). Open to argument or dispute

equality (i kwol' ə tē). The exact likeness in value or rank

hearing (hir' ing). A chance for both sides to speak about an issue or problem

idealist (ī dē' ləst). A person who wants things to be perfect, to live up to a model of the very best

immoral (i mōr' əl). Wrong, not right; wicked

missile (mis' əl). A rocket that carries a bomb (can be atomic) to a target (missiles can be launched from land, air or sea)

rebellious (ri bel' yəs). Defying authority; acting to resist or fight against law or authority (like rules of proper behavior)

sponsor (spon' sər). A person or country responsible for a person, nation, or thing

symbol (sim' bəl). Something that stands for or represents something else

underestimate (un' dər es' tə māt). To assume a person or country will do less than they can or will do

upheaval (əp hē' vəl). A large amount of disorder; great changes

vain (vān). Having too much pride in one's ability or achievements

Note: These words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in this LIFE PAC. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, review the definition.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʒ/ for then; /z/ for measure; /ə/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.



THE UNITED STATES

I. COMMUNIST THREAT

In the course of World War II, the Soviet Union conquered most of eastern Europe. The U.S. expected those nations to be set free to choose their own governments. Instead, they were forced to set up communist governments. The nations of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, East Germany, Albania, and Bulgaria became Soviet *satellites*. They were cut off from contact with the free countries and were forced to obey the Soviet Union. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were forced to join the Soviet Union.

At first, the Americans hoped to work with the Soviets, who had been their allies during World War II, but the Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, wanted power and he wanted to expand communism. He didn't want to work with the West. America quickly became aware that the Soviets were now a threat to the peace and freedom of the world. Rather than retreat to isolationism again, America took the lead to protect the free world. This need to stand against communism was the main cause of the Cold War.

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Describe how the Cold War began.
2. Describe the events and crises of the Cold War.
3. Describe the anti-communist feelings in America and the actions of Senator Joseph McCarthy.
7. Name the presidents and describe their activities from 1945 to 1973.

Restudy these words.

brutal

censure

contain

equality

hearing

symbol

underestimate

Building the Iron Curtain

Communism. To understand the Cold War, it is important to first understand communism. Communism is a form of government in which everything is owned by the government. There is no freedom and the people are controlled by lies. Communism promises people complete **equality** but, in fact, is a very harsh and unfair government.

The government owns all the land, businesses, and factories under communism. Thus, no one can make shoes, cars, baskets, or airplanes unless the government orders them to do it. The government rarely orders

the right amount of the things people need, so it is normal not to have enough food or goods under communism.

Also, people are paid for their work by the government and they are not paid more for good work. They also cannot be fired, so they do as little work as possible, making shoes, cars, and other things that are poor quality and often fall apart. People living under communism usually do not have enough of the things they need and what they do have is not very good.

There is no freedom under communism. Usually, one person or a few people run the government. They cannot be voted out of office. When there are elections, the leaders choose who will be elected. Anyone who says that the government is bad or doing something wrong is arrested. Religion is often forbidden, and Christians can go to jail or be killed for believing in Jesus.

Communism also works by lying. People are told that their nation is wonderful and that life is awful in the free countries. The people in a communist country are usually not allowed to talk with people from free countries and learn the truth. American newspapers, for example, are forbidden in communist countries because they tell the truth. Communist governments spend a lot of time telling their people how wonderful communism is, no matter how bad things really are.

Lying about everything is a very big part of communism. They even call their nations democracies and republics!! For example, the full name of the Soviet Union was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), while East Germany was the German Democratic Republic. Thus, free

people have good reasons to be afraid of having their nation conquered by communists.

Post-War Europe. After Germany was defeated in 1945, it was divided into four parts. Each part was run by a different Allied nation: America, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. The capital, Berlin, was divided up the same way. The Soviets refused to let their part of Germany work with the others. Finally, Britain, France and the U.S. put their three parts together to form the nation of West Germany, a free country. The Soviet Union made their part into a communist country called East Germany.

The Soviet Union also refused to honor its promise to allow free elections in eastern Europe. In the years right after the war, all of the nations taken by the Soviet Union set up communist governments with the help of Soviet soldiers. Yugoslavia created its own communist government and never was fully controlled by the Soviet Union. These new communist countries were not allowed to trade with, work with, or communicate much with the free nations of Europe. Winston Churchill, the former Prime

