

Global Resistance to Established Power Structures

What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?

—Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948)

Essential Question: What were differing reactions to existing power structures after 1900?

The conflicts of the 20th century affected newly independent states and long-established ones. Some of the most successful challenges to existing order, such as the one led by Mohandas Gandhi, used nonviolence. Other movements, such as Shining Path in Peru, used violence against civilians to achieve political results. Some leaders, such as Francisco Franco in Spain, used the military to crush resistance. The military-industrial complex that President Eisenhower warned about took hold in other countries, as governments increased arms supplies and traded weapons with one another.

Nonviolent Resistance as a Path to Change

Despite the frequent wars and violent protests of the 20th century, movements around the world also used nonviolence to bring about political change. Three of these movements were particularly large and effective, in part because of their visionary leaders.

Mohandas Gandhi Topic 7.5 described how Mohandas Gandhi led nonviolent marches, boycotts, and fasts to oppose British colonial rule in India. In 1947, India became independent.

Martin Luther King Jr. The most prominent of African American civil rights leaders in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s was a Baptist minister, the Reverend **Martin Luther King Jr.** The civil rights movement used various tactics to achieve its goals:

- Court decisions, such as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that banned forced racial segregation of schools in the United States

- A year-long boycott of public buses in Montgomery, Alabama (1955–1956), which ended segregation in public transit
- Massive marches, such as the 250,000-person March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1964

These efforts provided the foundation for the movement's biggest successes, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1965, which is covered in Topic 9.5.

Nelson Mandela In South Africa, the white-minority government codified a system of racial segregation, called apartheid, into law in the 20th century. Leading the black resistance to apartheid was a socialist lawyer, **Nelson Mandela** (1918–2013). Though early in his life he sometimes supported sabotage and other forms of violence, he was known for leading nonviolent protests. The victory over apartheid is described in Topic 9.5.

Challenges to Soviet Power in Eastern Europe

In the 1950s and 1960s, reformers in Eastern European satellites of the Soviet Union sought to become less dominated by the Soviets. In most cases, the Soviets clamped down hard against dissent.

Poland In 1956, Polish workers demonstrated against Soviet domination and demanded better living conditions. As a result, a new secretary of the Polish Communist Party, **Wladyslaw Gomulka**, came to power. He decided to pursue an independent domestic policy in Poland but continued to be loyal to the Soviet Union, allowing the continued presence of Soviet troops in Poland. The Soviet-established forced collectivization of farms ended at this time.

Hungary In that same year, Hungarian protesters convinced the country's political leader **Imre Nagy** to declare Hungary's freedom from Soviet control and demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country. Nagy vowed to support free elections in which non-Communist parties would participate. He announced Hungary's neutrality in the Cold War and the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Soviet leaders responded by invading Hungary, gaining control of Budapest in 1956. The Soviets captured Nagy and executed him. Many Hungarians fled to the West as refugees.

Czechoslovakia The reform movement in Czechoslovakia reached a peak in the **Prague Spring** of 1968. **Alexander Dubcek**, first secretary of the Communist Party, acceded to the demands of the Czech people by increasing freedom of speech and the press and allowing greater freedom to travel. He also agreed to make the political system more democratic.

As with Hungary, Soviet leaders feared the Prague Spring's independence. Soon the armies of four Warsaw Pact nations crushed it. In 1968, the Soviet Union used the **Brezhnev Doctrine**, named for then-Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, to justify its actions. This doctrine stated that the Soviet Union and its allies would intervene if an action by one member threatened other socialist countries. (Connect: Explain the continuity or change between the Eastern European resistance movements in the 19th and 20th centuries. See Topic 6.3.)

1968: The Year of Revolt

Events in Czechoslovakia were just one of many upheavals in 1968:

- In Yugoslavia, students marched against authoritarian government.
- In Poland and Northern Ireland, people protested over religious issues.
- In Brazil, marchers demanded improvements in public education and fairer treatment of workers.
- In Japan, students protested both university financial policies and government support for the United States in the war in Vietnam.

In many countries, protests took place on university campuses. Tensions started building up after World War II, when higher education had opened up for more people in Western society and facilities were crowded. As a result, discontent was high among the student population by the 1960s, resulting in a call for university reforms. Student grievances mounted as civil rights, women's rights, workers' rights, and the war in Vietnam commanded attention.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

The student movement in Mexico was met by military resistance. Two months before the 1968 Olympics began in Mexico City, armored vehicles entered the city to suppress the social movement.

France In 1968, the student movement reached epic proportions in Paris, France. Hundreds of thousands of students took to the streets, resulting in violence when police forces moved in. In sympathy, some 10 million French workers went on strike. It was the largest general strike in French history. President Charles de Gaulle called new elections in France and was able to remain in office when his party won.

The United States In the United States, students and others demonstrated for rights for women and African Americans. However, the largest and most heated protests were against the country's involvement in the war in Vietnam. After members of the Ohio National Guard killed four unarmed students during an antiwar demonstration at **Kent State University** on May 4, 1970, students and faculty at hundreds of U.S. colleges and universities went on strike.

An Age of Terrorism

In the post-Cold War period, large-scale open conflict between sovereign states was rare. Instead, individuals unaffiliated with any government committed terrorist acts in Western Europe, South America, the Islamic world, and the United States that intimidated and murdered civilians.

Conflict in Northern Ireland Most of Ireland, the portion dominated by Roman Catholics, gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1922. However, Northern Ireland, which was dominated by Protestants, remained part of the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland Catholics suffered discrimination, and many wanted their region to join the rest of the Irish Republic. Northern Ireland Protestants fiercely refused.

The Catholic-Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland became more violent in the 1960s, with Catholics fighting as part of the **Irish Republican Army (IRA)** and Protestants with the **Ulster Defence Association**. Between 1969 and 1994, some 3,500 people died in the conflict. Some members of the IRA took their independence campaign to England by engaging in acts of terrorism, the use of violence to achieve political ends. These acts included setting off bombs in London and other cities. In 1994, the two sides reached a cease-fire. Later the IRA renounced violence and turned to politics to achieve its goals.

Separatists in Spain Another group that used terrorist tactics to advance a political agenda was the **Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA)** organization, founded in 1959, which wanted independence for the Basque region in northern Spain. ETA actions killed more than 800 people and injured many others. In 1973, members of ETA killed the hand-picked successor to longtime dictator Francisco Franco. (See Topic 7.4.) Over the years, ETA announced several cease-fires. In 2011 it declared an end to violent actions and promised to work within the political system to achieve Basque independence.

Peru's Shining Path During the 1970s, former philosophy professor **Abimael Guzmán** built a revolutionary organization called **Shining Path** based on the ideas of Mao Zedong and Cambodia's Khmer Rouge. In 1980, the Shining Path began decades of bombings and assassinations in Peru in order to overthrow the existing government and replace it with a communist one. Shining Path's 20 years of terrorism caused an estimated 37,000 deaths. Guzmán was arrested and sentenced to life in prison in 1992, though the Shining Path continued its attacks through the late 1990s. In 2011 one of the group's top leaders admitted defeat and began negotiations with the Peruvian government.

Islamic Terrorism Several small groups used a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, one widely condemned by mainstream Muslims, to justify terrorism. Among these groups were the Boko Haram in West Africa, al-Shabaab in East Africa, the Islamic State of Iraq, the Levant (ISIL) in the Middle East, and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Most victims were Muslims. Some high-profile attacks occurred in European cities such as Madrid, London, and Paris.

One of the deadliest groups was al-Qaeda. Financed by Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda carried out attacks in many countries, including one in the United States on September 11, 2001. In this attack, terrorists killed themselves and more than 3,000 people when they hijacked and crashed planes in New York City, near Washington, D.C., and in rural Pennsylvania. Most of the world, even bitter foes of the United States such as Iran, rallied to support the United States. Focused efforts by the United States and its allies severely weakened al-Qaeda. Bin Laden was killed in a raid on his home in 2011.

Terrorism in the United States While the September 11 attack was the deadliest act of terrorism in the United States, it was not the only one. Acts of terrorism in the United States come from different sources and groups, including domestic groups, some of which are associated with white-nationalist or extreme right-wing views. One of the largest of these occurred when two anti-government extremists bombed a federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995, killing 168 people. Other attacks targeted Muslims, Jews, and blacks.

Response of Militarized States

States in which military dictators ran the government tended to respond to internal conflicts in ways that made the conflicts even worse. Spain under Franco and Uganda under Idi Amin are two prominent examples.

The Franco Dictatorship in Spain The dictator Francisco Franco ruled Spain from 1939 to 1975. (See Topic 7.4.) He had come to power by overthrowing a popularly elected government that included many leftists. Franco's fervent anti-communism made him an ally of the United States. It also led his government to execute, imprison, or send to labor camps hundreds of thousands of political dissenters. However, opposition to his authoritarianism remained. When Franco died, Spain took the opportunity to move toward democracy.

Intensified Conflict in Uganda under Idi Amin Few countries in the 1970s suffered as much as Uganda, a small country in eastern Africa ruled from 1971 to 1979 by Idi Amin, a military dictator so brutal he was known as the "Butcher of Uganda." Although he was aligned with Western democracies early on, he was later backed by the Soviet Union and East Germany. He declared himself president for life and set policies that worsened ethnic tensions, denied people basic human rights, and undermined economic stability. Amin was unpredictable. He was for a time the chairman of the



Organization of African Unity and even a member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. But in 1972 he forcefully expelled 60,000 Asians from Uganda, most of whom were of Indian descent, and turned over their businesses to his supporters. He is believed to be responsible for up to 500,000 deaths among targeted ethnic groups during his reign. When he threatened neighboring Tanzania with attack, Ugandan nationalists joined forces with Tanzanian troops and forced Amin into exile.

The Military-Industrial Complex

Conflicts around the world intensified because of fear and economic pressure. Countries that felt threatened, including the United States and the Soviet Union, built strong militaries to defend themselves. These military forces required large factories to build planes, tanks, and other goods. Since many countries lacked facilities to make their own weapons, the international weapons trade expanded greatly.

As the defense industries expanded, so did the number of people who relied on them for jobs. Cutting back on defense spending, then, became very difficult. In 1961, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower, a highly decorated general in World War II, called this combination of government defense departments and private businesses supplying their demands the military-industrial complex. He warned that it could grow powerful enough to threaten the country's democracy.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
<p>GOVERNMENT: Europe Wladyslaw Gomulka Imre Nagy Prague Spring Alexander Dubček Brezhnev Doctrine Irish Republican Army (IRA)</p>	<p>Ulster Defence Association Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA) GOVERNMENT: South America Abimael Guzmán Shining Path</p>	<p>SOCIETY: Protests Martin Luther King Jr. Nelson Mandela Kent State University</p>

End of the Cold War

Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

—Ronald Reagan, speech in West Berlin, Germany, June 12, 1987

Essential Question: What caused the end of the Cold War?

Power structures continued to change in the 1980s and 1990s. President **Ronald Reagan's** appeal to Soviet leader **Mikhail Gorbachev** came two years before the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. Two years after the fall, a coup ousted Gorbachev from power. The Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War was over. The U.S.-Soviet Union rivalry that had dominated the world stage for nearly five decades ended. Governments in only a few countries, such as China, North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, still called themselves communists. Political alliances changed, and economic interactions among nations expanded.

The Final Decades of the Cold War Era

Despite the persistent mistrust between the two countries, diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were maintained—albeit inconsistently at times—during the last decades of the conflict. Proxy wars and support of opposing sides in international conflicts remained standard for both nations. These conflicts reinforced the fundamental disagreement between the capitalist United States and the communist Soviet Union. Agreements between the superpowers to limit nuclear weapons played a key role in ending the Cold War. However, the path to a thaw was not always steady. (Connect: Describe the similarities in the competition between world powers in the Cold War and during the imperial era. See Topics 4.4 and 4.5.)

Détente and a Colder War After resolving the crises of the 1960s, which included the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis, the relationship between the superpowers improved in the following decade. This period of time was called **détente**, a relaxation of strained relations between nations.

One symbol of détente was the visit of President Richard Nixon to the Soviet Union in 1972. Nixon and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev signed the **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT)**, designed to freeze the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles that each power could keep. To play one power against the other, Nixon also visited China that year. It was the first visit by an American president in the existence of communist China.

Détente served both the U.S. and Soviet needs at the time. The Soviet Union faced challenges during the late 1960s and the 1970s.

- Economically, the USSR was in a crisis. It was no longer growing. Central governmental controls prevented farmers and manufacturers from deciding what to grow or make and what to charge for it. Foreign trade was extremely limited.
- Eastern European Soviet bloc countries were bucking for reforms and freedom from Moscow's direct control. The Soviet military violently put down the Prague Spring, a liberation movement in Czechoslovakia.
- Russia faced skirmishes with China along their shared border—a reflection of the troubled relationship between the two communist countries.

The United States also faced difficulties. President Nixon was mired in the Vietnam War, a costly and unpopular conflict. The American economy was suffering as well. The possibility of establishing relations with China would, Nixon knew, open potential new markets to the United States and at the same time press a bit on the strained Soviet-Chinese relationship. Détente could help the United States maintain its containment policy and might ease tensions between the superpowers.

As a result of détente, the United States started to sell excess stores of American grain to the Soviet Union, where drought had created a shortage. This benefitted American farmers, who now had access to a new, large market for goods, and the struggling people of the Soviet Union. However, after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, U.S. President Jimmy Carter halted the grain shipments. This action marked the end of détente.

Soviet-Afghan War The Soviets invaded Afghanistan to prop up that country's communist government against Muslim fighters. Estimates of Afghan civilian deaths vary from 562,000 to two million. Millions of Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran, and many within the country became homeless. Ultimately, the Soviet army could not conquer the guerrilla groups in the rough terrain of Afghanistan. Soviet legitimacy was undermined and new forms of political participation in Afghanistan developed. As the Soviet Army withdrew in 1989, a civil war continued in Afghanistan. While the collapse of the Soviet Union would not occur until 12 years after the Afghan War began, the war put immense stress on the Soviet Union's centralized economic system and left Soviet leadership vulnerable to reform.

Reagan and Gorbachev During the presidency of Ronald Reagan (1981–1989), tensions between the Americans and the Soviets increased even further. Reagan referred to the Soviet Union as the “evil empire” and sent military aid, including weapons, to support the Afghans. The Soviet Union resented this overtly militaristic move.

In addition, by the early 1980s, the United States and the Soviet Union had more than 12,000 nuclear missiles, each one pointed at the other side. Not



only would the superpowers destroy each other with a nuclear exchange, but the rest of the world would also be destroyed—seven times over.

In light of this growing tension, Reagan declared that the United States would create a missile defense program he called the **Strategic Defense Initiative**, or **SDI**. Dubbed “Star Wars” (after the internationally popular 1977 film) by critics, the system would supposedly destroy any Soviet nuclear missiles that targeted the United States or its allies. Lacking such a system, the Soviets would be unable to keep U.S. missiles from hitting targets in the Soviet Union. The Soviets saw this move as the beginning of an arms race in space. While it was not an immediate threat that required a quick response, it worried liberal and moderate Soviets who wanted reforms. They saw it as a long-term economic concern and one that strengthened the hand of Soviet conservatives. The Soviets objected loudly to Reagan’s plan.

The Thaw The increase in tensions during the 1980s led to other nations believing that they must choose sides between the superpowers. Non-aligned nations hoped they would not experience a nuclear holocaust that the two nations caused.

In this tense atmosphere, Mikhail Gorbachev, a more progressive Communist than previous Soviet leaders, came to power in 1985. He favored **perestroika**, attempts to restructure the Soviet economy to allow elements of free enterprise, and **glasnost**, the policy of opening up Soviet society and the political process by granting greater freedom. Reagan and Gorbachev met three times in two years. The two men liked each other and, despite tough negotiations, created a working relationship that ultimately delivered results.

In 1987, the Soviet Union and the United States agreed on a new nuclear arms treaty. The **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF)** restricted intermediate-range nuclear weapons. Around the world, people could breathe a cautious sigh of relief as the world’s two superpowers reduced the risk of nuclear war. The INF and other U.S.-Soviet agreements quieted some of the more bellicose Cold War supporters in both countries. With less pressure from Soviet conservatives, Gorbachev could more easily implement political and economic reforms in the Soviet Union.



Source: Edmund S. Valtman / Library of Congress

The man is Mikhail Gorbachev, who looks on sadly at a symbol of the Soviet Union, the hammer and sickle, broken into pieces.



The End of the Soviet Union

One aspect of Gorbachev’s reform program was an end to economic support for the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe. He also implied that the Soviet Army would no longer come to the rescue of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. In effect, economic reform in the Soviet Union provided greater freedom to other communist countries. Once people in these countries got a small taste of freedom, they wanted more. As a result, democratic reform movements swept through Eastern European nations in 1989. The Berlin Wall was torn down. In October 1990, East and West Germany reunited as one country.

The Spread of Reforms With most of the Eastern European nations caught up in democratic reforms, it was not long before the Soviet Union was also swept into the movement. Lithuania, Georgia, and other Soviet republics began to overthrow their rulers and declare independence. The Warsaw Pact dissolved. Gorbachev’s reforms ultimately led to his political downfall and the end of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Among the former Soviet republics that became independent countries, Russia emerged as the strongest. The Cold War had ended.

New Challenges The decline of a superpower presented opportunities and several challenges. Political alliances changed, and economic interactions among nations expanded. With this new openness, particularly with regard to trade, the world became more interconnected than ever before. This interconnectedness produced greater wealth for some but hardships for others. The post-Cold War world had to grapple with new democracies, vast economic inequality, ethnic conflict and genocide, terrorism, environmental degradation, and global epidemics.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
GOVERNMENT: Global Ronald Reagan Mikhail Gorbachev détente Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT)	perestroika glasnost Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF)	TECHNOLOGY: Military Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

Causation in the Age of the Cold War and Decolonization

Walls in the mind often stand longer than those built of concrete blocks.

—Willy Brandt, December 1991

Essential Question: Why and to what extent were the effects of the Cold War similar in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres?

The end of World War II marked the beginning of a new world order as the nations of Western Europe no longer dominated the world stage. The United States and the Soviet Union took over as the superpowers. In Western Europe, however, countries were free from domination by a superpower and retained their political independence and democratic governments. The Marshall Plan had helped them rebuild and achieve a level of economic prosperity that was unknown among the countries of Eastern Europe.

However, during this time, Western European colonial empires began to crumble as anti-imperialist sentiment fueled independence movements in Africa and Asia. Resentment of European and American economic imperialism also rose in Latin American countries, leading to revolutionary movements that aimed to overturn the political and social status quo in these countries. The United States and the Soviet Union regularly supported opposing sides in these clashes, projecting their own differences onto regional conflicts.

The Cold War also influenced economic, social, and cultural aspects of global events, providing further evidence that this conflict had far-reaching effects that affected the latter half of the 20th century.

Challenges to Existing Social Orders

The years following World War II were a time of unprecedented conflict as people and states challenged the established order. How they carried out their challenges, how the existing powers responded, and how the challenges were (or were not) resolved depended in part on the position of the challenging people or states in the geopolitical balance of power.

Toward the end of World War II, a serious ideological and economic rift emerged among the “Big Three” Allied powers—the Soviet Union, the United States, and Great Britain. The United States and Great Britain, along with France (which had recently been liberated from German occupation),

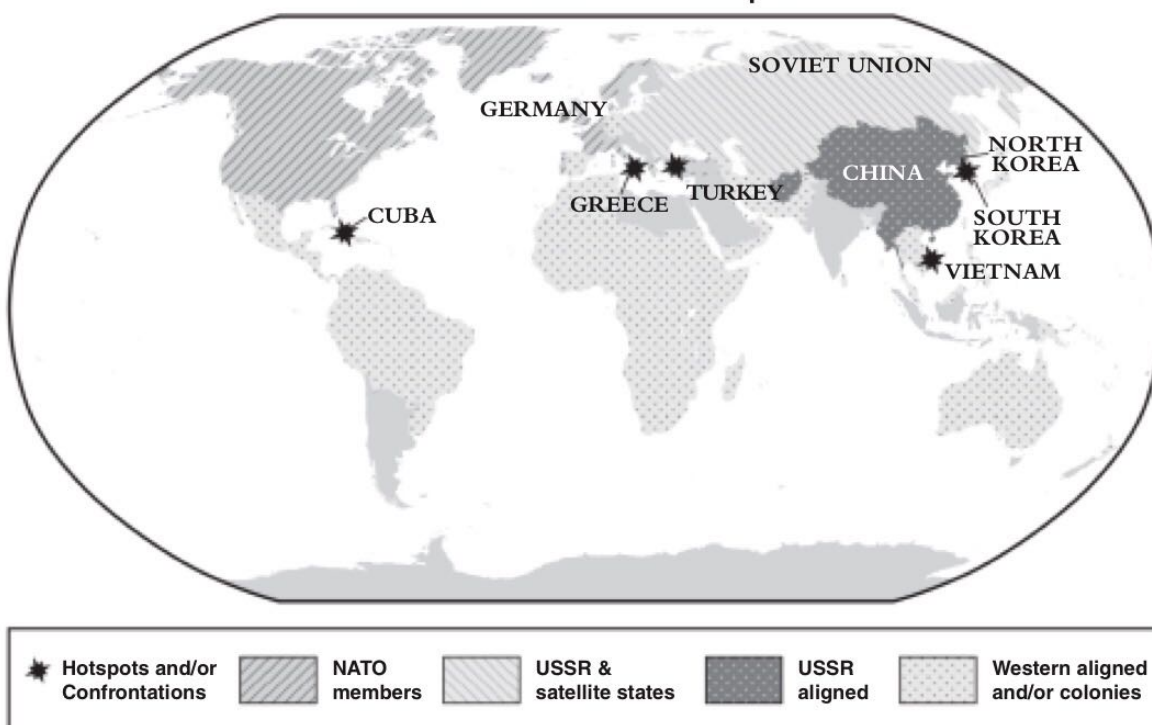


occupied the western half of Germany. The Soviets occupied the eastern half. Agreements made at Yalta and Potsdam were supposed to have settled the future status of Western and Eastern European countries affected by the war. However, after the war officially ended, it became apparent that the Soviet Union was not going to relinquish control over the Eastern European territories it occupied during the war. The Soviets viewed these states as a buffer against future aggression from the West. Even though the countries of Eastern Europe were officially independent, the Soviet Union had immense influence over their governments and internal affairs. The so-called Soviet bloc was made up of East Germany and these satellite nations of the USSR. The United States distrusted the motives of the Soviet Union and believed the Soviets were intent on bringing about a global communist revolution.

After China became a communist state in 1949 and the United States recognized it could not free Eastern Europe from Soviet influence, the United States established a policy of containment. The policy used military, economic, and political means to stop the spread of communism outside of the areas where it was currently practiced. Containment drove the direction of U.S. foreign policy throughout the Cold War.

Three Alignments The Cold War thus caused a division of the world into three alignments. The “First World” was the United States and its allies. The “Second World” was the Soviet Union, the Soviet bloc countries of Eastern Europe, and other communist nations around the world. The third alignment was often called the “Third World” but was more accurately described as the non-aligned countries that did not have close military or ideological ties with any of the First or Second World countries.

Cold War Blocs and Hotspots



As the map on the previous page shows, the United States was the First World superpower situated in the Western Hemisphere. The dominant superpower in the Second World, the Soviet Union, was in the Eastern Hemisphere. These superpowers represented a geopolitical balance of power. Third World countries were mainly those with colonial pasts; they were in Asia, Africa, and Oceania in the Eastern Hemisphere and Latin America in the Western Hemisphere.

Superpower Rivalries

One result of the superpower rivalry was the division of Europe. The western portion had, for the most part, democratic and free-market societies, while the eastern portion was autocratic and communist. The dividing line ran through Germany, which was divided into the two independent countries of West and East Germany. The capital city of Berlin was similarly divided. The Iron Curtain, as it was termed, reflected the Western democratic view that the Soviet-bloc countries were a threat to the individual freedoms and liberty of the people living on both sides of the border. The Soviets believed, based on their historical perspective, that the Western democracies were intent on invading the Soviet Union. Mistrust on both sides led to a nuclear arms race that was an existential threat to Europe and the world.

The Arms Race The United States developed an atomic bomb at the end of World War II. It used the bomb to end the conflict with Japan by dropping two of them—one on the city of Hiroshima and the other on Nagasaki. The devastation to the two cities shocked the world. The Soviet Union soon developed its own nuclear weapon, and the nuclear arms race was on. The number of nuclear weapons and the means to use them increased for both states. Relations between the superpowers grew tense, and the fear in Europe, and elsewhere, was that any provocation could lead to nuclear annihilation. Both the United States and the Soviet Union took defensive actions that resulted in Europe becoming what was effectively an armed camp with millions of troops and weapons, both conventional and nuclear, facing off against each other.

During this time, two international military alliances formed. The United States and its allies formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Soviet Union and its allies created the Warsaw Pact. Both groups sought to ensure collective security through military cooperation. Part of the “cold” factor in the Cold War is that there never was direct, “hot” military conflict between the two superpowers. But the brinkmanship and proxy battles that characterized this war put most people on Earth on edge whenever the United States and the Soviets appeared poised to launch a nuclear attack.

Hopes for Greater Self-Government

The high point of empires and colonization was World War I. The British, the French, and other Europeans had colonized almost all of Africa, India, and Southeast Asia, and they dominated China. The Turkish Ottoman Empire

controlled the Middle East. But the desire for self-government that had fueled colonial rebellions throughout the Americas in the 18th and 19th centuries as well as national independence movements in Europe in the 19th century spread throughout the world in the 20th century. The two world wars crystallized the opposition to the empires. Although most hopes for independence remained unfulfilled after World War I, the war did result in the breakup of two large multiethnic empires, Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Turkey.

World War II, however, accelerated the dismantling of global colonial empires. Between the end of World War II in 1945 and the year 2000, the number of independent states more than doubled, going from around 75 to around 190.

As the Cold War established new alignments among both newer and established states, it extended far beyond its ideological roots and exerted political, economic, social, and cultural influence on nearly all parts of the globe.

Comparing Political Effects of the Cold War

The Cold War affected the Eastern and Western Hemispheres in similar ways, since each was dominated by a superpower and also had former colonies and emerging new nations. However, most countries in the Western Hemisphere had become independent long before the Cold War. The Eastern Hemisphere paid an especially heavy price as a result of the Cold War, since several key proxy conflicts were located in Asia and Africa. Nonetheless, rivalries between the superpowers played out in both hemispheres.

Many transitions to independence were largely peaceful and nonviolent; others involved open armed rebellions. In some cases, these insurgent movements were led by communist groups and supported by the Soviet Union, such as in Vietnam and Angola. As a result, the United States would either support the colonial power against the communist insurgency or would support opposition groups that would establish a non-communist government. Often these Western-backed governments proved to be unpopular with the majority of the people, which only heightened anti-imperialist feelings.

Political Effects in Asia The Cold War brought armed conflict and played a part in internal revolts and crises in some countries of Asia. The U.S. policy of containment led to wars in Korea and Vietnam. Communist revolutions overtook Cambodia and Laos. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan to prop up the communist government in that country. Anti-communist crackdowns occurred in Indonesia and the Philippines. Communist China had a falling-out with the Soviet Union and began to seek better relations with the United States.

Political Effects in Africa As with Asia, the Cold War brought conflict and turmoil to Africa. Communist insurrections supported by the Soviet Union were often met by government resistance supported with arms supplied by the United States. Communist governments came to power in Ethiopia and Angola. In the case of Angola's war for independence from Portugal, the Soviet Union and the United States fought a proxy war. The Soviets supported the use



of Cuban soldiers and provided arms and military training to help establish a communist-style government in the country. The United States provided arms and supported anti-communist groups.

Political Effects in the Western Hemisphere Latin America also experienced the results of the Cold War conflict between the superpowers. Communist revolutions were successful in Cuba and Nicaragua. Communist insurrections, sometimes backed by the Soviet Union or Cuba, occurred in El Salvador, Columbia, Peru, and Guatemala. The United States would support the government in power—often a dictatorship made up of military officers or right-wing politicians—to try to stop the spread of communism.

Comparing Economic Effects of the Cold War

The Cold War divided Europe in economics as well as politics. The Western countries, aided by the United States’ Marshall Plan, rebuilt their economies after the destruction of World War II with a mixture of free-market principles and state-sponsored economic development. The Eastern bloc nations struggled in a transition away from communism to free-market economies. Developing countries—those in the “Third World”—faced unique challenges.

State Response to Economic Challenges in the West To promote economic security, many Western European governments created public health systems, built public housing, provided unemployment insurance, and developed state-backed pension plans. The creation of the welfare state, as it became known, was to counteract the attraction of the communist system that promised to provide many of these benefits. As a result, the Western European nations’ economies boomed while the Eastern European economies, under a communist system, struggled to recover from the costs and effects of the war.

Health Care Insurance Coverage by Country			
Country	Percentage Covered by a Government Program	Percentage Covered by Private Insurance	Total Percentage of Population Covered
Denmark	100	0	100
Greece	100	0	100
Australia	100	0	100
South Africa	84	16	100
Germany	89	11	100
United Kingdom	100	0	100
United States	36	55	91
India	22	5	27

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Data for 2016

State Response to Economic Challenges in the Eastern Bloc The Soviet government quickly transitioned its economy after the war to peacetime endeavors. Yet the military-industrial complex was so large in the Soviet Union that it employed about 20 percent of the workers, many of whom became unemployed during the transition. The Soviet-bloc countries faced a serious economic crisis as the government instituted economic reforms to encourage free-market practices and move away from a state-controlled economy.

However, moving from a state-controlled to a free-market economy proved to be an extremely complex endeavor. Debates swirled about whether to institute reforms gradually or all at once, and party officials resisted the loss of their control over the economy. In the end, reformers have succeeded in removing state controls over prices, and formerly state-owned businesses have been privatized. After a period of decline, the Russian economy is improving.

China made a more gradual transition to a free-market economy and has become a global economic powerhouse.

State Response to Economic Challenges in Developing Countries Many former colonies still had close economic ties to the countries that had colonized them and remained dependent on the extraction and exporting of natural resources. The perspective of many people in the former colonies was that the industrial countries were using this relationship to exploit and undermine the economies of these developing countries. Getting control of their resources was a top priority of developing nations. Oil-rich Angola, for example, left in disarray after years of civil war, has a government-controlled oil conglomerate that accounts for about 70 percent of government revenue and has helped the nation rebuild and update infrastructure.

Comparing Social and Cultural Effects

The tension and turmoil of the Cold War era created social effects for all sides involved. For example, the proxy wars cost millions of people their lives, especially in Southeast Asia. In the Vietnam war alone, two million soldiers and two million civilians died over 20 years of conflict. Bombs destroyed villages, and chemical defoliants killed anything growing on farmlands. Families were separated and displaced. Many rural villagers left for the city, where they thought they could find safety. Saigon, the capital city, tripled in size as refugees from the countryside flooded in. Most of the fighting took place in South Vietnam, so it sustained the most damage, but North Vietnam was also bombed—especially such infrastructure as railroads and highways.

Social Tensions The Cold War created suspicions as well. Americans were afraid of communist infiltration, and some people's careers were ruined when they were unjustly accused of being communists. In the Soviet Union, people were afraid to express their beliefs openly if they disagreed with the government. They knew they could be sent away to a political prison camp. People everywhere lived under the threat of a nuclear attack. Some people built bomb shelters where they hoped they could safely weather an atomic attack.



Cultural Effects With greater personal freedom, and with help from the United States, Western Europeans experienced a cultural rebirth after World War II. Scientific research, music, art, and architecture flourished. Eastern Europe, in contrast, lacked freedom of expression. Because of the Cold War, governments actively blocked the spread of Western culture. The people of Eastern Europe did not see much in the way of cultural achievements beyond those that were government-sponsored or approved.

During the Cold War, many people from former colonies moved to the metropole (see Topic 8.6), furthering the blending of cultures. At the same time, the imperial powers left a legacy of culture in their former colonies, including the languages spoken, as the chart below shows.

European-Based Languages Spoken Widely in Sub-Saharan Africa		
Language	Number of Native Speakers	Countries Where the Language is Common
French	120 million	• Senegal • Democratic Republic of the Congo
Portuguese	14 million	• Angola • Mozambique
Dutch (Afrikaans)	7 million	• South Africa
English	7 million	• South Africa
Spanish	1 million	• Equatorial Guinea

In places where a Cold War superpower had maintained order, such as Afghanistan and Yugoslavia, violent culture clashes occurred when the superpower retreated. In Yugoslavia, for example, which had been stitched together and annexed to Serbia after World War I, ethnic tensions flared as Serbia's ultra-nationalist president, Slobodan Milosevic, pitted one group against another to strengthen his own position after the fall of the Soviet Union left a power vacuum. Wars in the region took tens of thousands of lives and created hundreds of thousands of refugees. (Connect: Analyze the changing goals for both superpowers during the Cold War. See Topics 8.1, 8.3, and 8.8.)

Development of Global Institutions

The end of the Cold War and the growth of globalization has reset the geopolitical framework. The idea of a balance of power has yielded to a more cooperative approach as countries recognize global interdependence. To further cooperation, global organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Association have been established. Others address such transnational issues as environmental degradation and global warming, human rights, and epidemic diseases.