

UNIT FIVE

Global and Regional Developments Since 1945

The Aftermath and Consequences of World War II

1. Human and Economic Impact

- **Casualties:** World War II resulted in the deaths of about 55-62 million soldiers and civilians.
- **Destruction:** European infrastructure was severely damaged, with 70% of industrial facilities destroyed. Millions were left homeless.

2. Political Changes

- **European Borders:** The war led to the redrawing of borders in Europe, the creation of Israel, and the division of Germany and Korea.
- **Shift in Power:** The geopolitical power shifted from Western Europe to a bipolar world dominated by the USA and the Soviet Union.
- **Independence Movements:** Many African, Asian, and American colonies gained independence in the following decades.

3. Formation of New Global Organizations

- **United Nations (UN):** Established in 1945 to prevent future wars and address global issues.
- **Other Organizations:** The World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) were also created to support global economic stability and development.

4. Cold War and Division of Germany

- **Democratic vs. Communist Governments:** Western Allied zones had democratic governments, while Soviet-occupied areas had communist governments.
- **Division of Germany:** Germany was split into West Germany (American, British, French zones) and East Germany (Soviet zone). This division marked the beginning of the Cold War, leading to the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Peace Agreements

1. Allied Conferences

- **Casablanca, Tehran, Yalta, Potsdam:** Allied leaders met from 1943 to 1945 to plan military strategies and post-war arrangements.
- **Yalta Conference (February 1945):** Germany was to be divided into military zones. The Allied powers agreed to bring war criminals to justice.

2. Establishment of the United Nations

- **San Francisco (April 1945):** 50 nations signed the UN Charter, aiming to maintain peace and prevent future conflicts.

War Crime Trials

1. Nuremberg Trials

- **Purpose:** To prosecute German war criminals for crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- **Outcome:** 24 individuals were charged; 12 were sentenced to death, and three were freed.

2. Tokyo Trials

- **Purpose:** To prosecute Japanese leaders for similar crimes.
- **Outcome:** Opened in May 1946, concluded in November 1948, with 25 leaders charged and numerous others prosecuted for war crimes.

The United Nations Organization (UN)

1. Purpose and Structure

- **Goals:** Maintain international peace and security, promote friendly relations, and address global issues.
- **Headquarters:** Located in New York City.
- **Main Organs:**
 - **General Assembly:** Represents all member states and appoints various committees.
 - **Security Council:** Maintains international peace, with five permanent members having veto power.
 - **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):** Coordinates economic and social activities.

- **Trusteeship Council:** Supervised territories transitioning to independence (no longer active).
- **International Court of Justice:** Judicial body resolving legal disputes between states.
- **Secretariat:** Administrative arm led by the Secretary-General.

Post-War Economic Recovery

1. Western Europe

- **Marshall Plan (1948):** U.S. financial aid helped rebuild Western European economies and counter Soviet influence.
- **Outcome:** Economic recovery was substantial, aiding in the prevention of communist expansion and fostering cooperation.

2. Eastern Europe

- **Molotov Plan (1947):** Soviet aid to rebuild Eastern Europe under communist influence.
- **COMECON:** Economic alliance of socialist countries.

3. Global Divisions

- **Cold War:** Europe was divided into Western (U.S. influence) and Eastern (Soviet influence) spheres.
- **Third World:** Non-aligned countries, mostly former colonies in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

These post-war changes set the stage for modern international relations and the global socio-economic landscape.

The Cold War Realities: The Relation between the Capitalist and Communist Blocs

Introduction to the Cold War

The Cold War was a period of intense rivalry and tension between two superpowers: the United States (USA) and the Soviet Union (USSR). It began around 1947 and lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Unlike traditional wars, the Cold War did not involve direct military conflict between the superpowers. Instead, it was characterized by an arms race, military alliances, economic competition, propaganda, espionage, and proxy wars in various regions around the world.

Key Features of the Cold War

1. **Arms Race:** Both the USA and USSR competed to develop superior weapons, including nuclear and conventional arms. This led to significant advancements in technology, such as rockets used in the space race. Major developments included intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear submarines.
2. **Military Alliances:**
 - **NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):** Formed in 1949 by Western countries including the USA, Canada, and several European nations. NATO's purpose was to provide collective defense against Soviet aggression. It expanded over time to include more nations.
 - **Warsaw Pact:** Established in 1955 as a counter to NATO, it was a military alliance of Communist countries led by the USSR. It included nations like East Germany, Poland, and Hungary. The pact dissolved in 1991 after the end of the Cold War.
3. **Major Cold War Conflicts:** Several significant conflicts and crises occurred, such as:
 - **Korean War (1950-1953):** North Korea (supported by the USSR and China) fought against South Korea (supported by the USA and its allies).
 - **Vietnam War (1955-1975):** A conflict in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, where North Vietnam (Communist) fought against South Vietnam (supported by the USA).
 - **Cuban Missile Crisis (1962):** A 13-day confrontation over Soviet missiles in Cuba, which brought the world to the brink of nuclear war.

The End of the Cold War

The Cold War began to wind down with the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev as Soviet leader in 1985. His policies of **Perestroika** (restructuring) and **Glasnost** (openness) aimed to reform the Soviet economy and political system. Key events leading to the end of the Cold War included:

- **Chernobyl Accident (1986):** A catastrophic nuclear disaster in the USSR that highlighted the need for reform.
- **Fall of the Berlin Wall (1989):** Symbolizing the end of Communist control in Eastern Europe.
- **Collapse of the Soviet Union (1991):** Marked the definitive end of the Cold War, leading to the independence of former Soviet republics.

Nonaligned Movement (NAM)

During the Cold War, some countries chose not to align with either superpower bloc. The Nonaligned Movement, formally established in 1961, included nations from Africa, Asia, and Latin America that sought to maintain their independence from both the USA and the USSR.

Summary

The Cold War was a global struggle for influence between the capitalist bloc led by the USA and the communist bloc led by the USSR. It involved a range of tactics including military build-up, political alliances, and proxy wars. The Cold War's end came with significant geopolitical changes, including the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the reorientation of global power dynamics.

Vietnam: Decolonization and War

Colonization and Anti-Colonial Struggle

- **Colonizer:** France colonized Vietnam, along with Cambodia and Laos, forming the French Indochina Union in 1887.
- **Anti-Colonial Struggle:** In the early 20th century, Vietnamese nationalism grew. Political exiles formed nationalist parties in China, Japan, and France. When they tried to organize in Vietnam, many leaders were arrested or executed. Ho Chi Minh, a key figure, founded the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930. During Japanese occupation (1940-41), Ho organized the Vietminh Front to fight both the French and Japanese.

Post-World War II and Division

- **Proclamation and Conflict:** After WWII, Ho Chi Minh declared the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, but France wanted to reoccupy Vietnam. This led to a war between the French and Vietnamese from 1946 to 1954. In 1954, the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, leading to the Geneva Accords, which temporarily divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel: Communist North and non-Communist South.

Vietnam War

- **North vs. South:** The North, led by Ho Chi Minh, aimed to reunify Vietnam under Communist rule, while the South, under Ngo Dinh Diem, opposed this. By 1959, guerrilla warfare had started in the South. The US, supporting

the South, increased its involvement. The war intensified, with the US sending up to half a million troops.

- **Outcome:** In 1963, Diem was overthrown. By 1965, the US began heavy bombing and deployed more troops. Despite significant US support, the South Vietnamese forces collapsed. On April 30, 1975, the Communists took Saigon, leading to the reunification of Vietnam in 1976 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City. The war caused massive casualties and significant destruction.

Reasons for Defeat of South Vietnam and the US

- Corruption and unpopularity of the South Vietnamese government.
- Ho Chi Minh's strong leadership and national hero status.
- Anti-Communist sentiment in the South supporting Communist guerrillas.
- Superior fighting skills of North Vietnamese troops.
- Difficult jungle terrain undermining US military technology.
- Domestic opposition to the US involvement in Vietnam.

Korea: Partition and War

Colonization and Division

- **Colonizer:** Korea was a Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945.
- **Post-WWII Division:** After WWII, Korea was divided along the 38th parallel into American (South) and Soviet (North) zones. The North was led by Communist Kim Il Sung, and the South by nationalist Syngman Rhee. Both leaders wanted reunification but under their own systems. Separate governments were established in 1948: the Republic of Korea (South) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North).

The Korean War

- **Conflict:** The Korean War (1950-1953) started when North Korea, supported by the Soviet Union, invaded South Korea. The US and 19 other UN member states supported South Korea. The war became a major international conflict involving the US and the UN.
- **Outcome:** The war ended in a stalemate with an armistice in 1953. It was one of the most destructive conflicts of the 20th century, causing about four million casualties. The war's impact on Korea was profound, with significant economic and social damage.

The Middle East: Geographical and Political Context

- **Geographical Setting:** The Middle East includes Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine. The term "Middle East" emerged in the early 20th century and is loosely defined.

Arab Nationalism and Independence

- **Mandates and Independence:** After WWI, the Ottoman Empire was divided into British and French mandates. British and French rule faced resistance from Arab nationalists. Post-WWII, Britain and France ended their mandates, leading to new sovereign states. In 1947, the UN proposed partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, affecting regional politics.
- **Conflicts:** The Middle East has experienced internal and interstate conflicts, including civil wars, the Arab-Israeli dispute, and various wars such as the Suez Crisis, Iran-Iraq War, Gulf War, and the Iraq War.

Zionism and the Creation of the State of Israel

Background

- **Diaspora:** In 70 AD, the Jewish people were expelled from Palestine by the Romans. This dispersion is known as the Diaspora.
- **Zionism:** In 1897, Theodor Herzl founded the Zionist Movement, advocating for a Jewish state in Palestine, then controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Zionism is both a religious and political movement aiming to re-establish a Jewish homeland in what is historically known as the Land of Israel.

Early 20th Century Developments

- **Migration and Tensions:** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jews migrated to Palestine, focusing on agriculture and buying land. This led to increased contact and conflict with local Arabs, sometimes displacing Arab peasants.
- **Balfour Declaration:** During World War I, Britain promised autonomy to both Jews and Arabs. In 1917, the British issued the Balfour Declaration, supporting a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Path to Statehood

- **UN Partition Plan:** Post-World War II, the Holocaust intensified support for a Jewish state. On November 29, 1947, the UN proposed partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Jewish leaders accepted, but the Arab states did not. On May 14, 1948, Israel declared independence.

Israeli-Arab Conflicts

- **1948 War:** The declaration led to the first Arab-Israeli War. Surrounding Arab countries attacked Israel, expecting an easy victory. Despite heavy casualties, Israel survived and expanded beyond the UN partition lines, creating a large number of Palestinian refugees.
- **Suez Crisis (1956):** Israel, with Britain and France, invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula after Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal. A UN-brokered ceasefire led to Israel withdrawing from Egyptian territory.
- **Six-Day War (1967):** Egypt, Syria, and Jordan mobilized against Israel. Israel preemptively struck and gained control of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, Golan Heights, and East Jerusalem. A UN resolution called for a land-for-peace exchange, but both sides rejected it.
- **Yom Kippur War (1973):** Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel. Israel eventually pushed back and regained control of the territories.

Peace Efforts

- **Camp David Accords (1978):** Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, mediated by U.S. President Jimmy Carter, signed a peace treaty in 1979. Egypt regained the Sinai Peninsula, and diplomatic relations with Israel were established, leading to Egypt's expulsion from the Arab League.
- **Lebanon Invasion (1982):** Israel invaded Lebanon to attack the PLO. The invasion escalated into a broader conflict but failed to establish a stable regime in Lebanon. Israel eventually withdrew.

Recent Conflicts and Peace Efforts

- **Intifada (1980s):** Palestinians began the intifada, a widespread uprising against Israeli occupation in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. This led to the rise of the radical group Hamas.
- **Oslo Accords (1993):** A historic agreement between Israel and the PLO aimed at peace and recognition, but conflicts continued, with ongoing issues over settlements and territory.

Summary

Zionism, initiated by Theodor Herzl, aimed to re-establish a Jewish state in Palestine. This movement led to significant migration, conflicts with local Arabs, and eventual statehood for Israel. The subsequent decades saw several wars, peace efforts, and ongoing conflicts, shaping the complex and ongoing Israeli-Arab relations.