

## U.S. HISTORY: 1865 TO THE PRESENT STUDY GUIDE – POST-WWII CHANGES – 2023 STANDARDS

The transformation of the United States foreign policy between the end of World War II and leading into the new millennium

### STANDARD USII.7A – POST-WAR AGREEMENTS

- a) explain how key decisions and agreements including, but not limited to the **Atlantic Charter**, formation of the **United Nations**, and the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** established international allies

After World War II, leaders from Allied nations made several key decisions and agreements to **shape the future of the world** and **keep peace**:



#### Atlantic Charter (1941)

- A plan made by **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** and **Prime Minister Winston Churchill**.
- Set goals for a **peaceful world** after WWII:
  - No more expansion by **force**
  - Free **trade** among nations
  - Freedom for all countries to choose their own **governments**



#### United Nations (UN)

- Formed in **1945** after WWII to **keep peace around the world**.
- The U.S. became a **key member**.
- Main goals:
  - Prevent future **wars**
  - Promote **human rights** and cooperation among nations



#### NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

- A **military alliance** formed in **1949** to **defend democratic nations** against threats—especially from communist countries.
- If one member is attacked, all others agree to help defend it.
- Members include the U.S., Canada, and Western European countries.



**Why it matters:** These agreements turned the U.S. into a **world leader** and created **strong alliances** for protection and peace.

### STANDARD USII.7B – REBUILDING EUROPE & JAPAN

- b) describe the **Marshall Plan's** objectives for rebuilding Europe, the occupation and **reconstruction of Japan**, and the emergence of the United States and the **Soviet Union** as **superpowers**;

The Allied victory in World War II led to the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as global superpowers.

#### United States helps rebuild postwar Europe and Japan

Much of **Europe** was in ruins following World War II.

- **Soviet forces** occupied most of Eastern and Central Europe and the eastern portion of Germany.
- The United States felt it was in its best interest to help **rebuild Europe** and prevent political and economic instability.

#### Rebuilding efforts



#### The Marshall Plan (1948)

- The U.S. gave billions of dollars to help **rebuild Europe** after WWII.
- Goals:
  - Help economies **recover**
  - Prevent the **spread of communism**
  - Support **democracy** and **stability**

#### Partition of Germany

Germany was **partitioned into East and West Germany**.

- **West Germany** became **democratic** and resumed self-government after a few years of American, British, and French occupation.
  - **East Germany** remained under **the domination of the Soviet Union** and did not adopt democratic institutions.



#### Reconstruction of Japan

After Japan's surrender in WWII:

- The U.S. **occupied Japan** and helped rebuild it.
- A **democratic government** was established.
- Japan became a strong **ally of the U.S.** and a leading economy.



#### Rise of Superpowers

After WWII, only **two nations** were strong enough to lead the world:

- **United States** (democracy & capitalism)
- **Soviet Union** (communism)
- This rivalry started the **Cold War**.

## STANDARD USII.7c - COMMUNISM & DEMOCRACY


- c) describe the differences between a **communist** nation and a **democratic** nation including, but not limited to self-governance and economic philosophy;

### Democratic Nations (like the U.S.)

- People choose their leaders through **elections**
- Citizens have **freedom of speech**, religion, and press
- **Capitalist economy** – people and businesses control the economy

### Communist Nations (like the Soviet Union)

- **Government controls everything** – no free elections
- Few **individual freedoms**
- **Command economy** – government owns businesses and property

 **The Cold War** was a long conflict between these two ideas—with each side trying to spread its system of government and economy.

## STANDARD USII.7d – COLD WAR

- d) examine the role of the United States in fighting communism and defending freedom during the **Cold War** including, but not limited to the **Berlin Airlift**, **Korea** and **Vietnam**, the roles of John F. **Kennedy** and Nikita **Khrushchev** during the **Cuban Missile Crisis**, the fall of the **Berlin Wall** and the **collapse of communism** in Eastern Europe;

**The United States and the Soviet Union emerged from World War II as world powers, triggering a rivalry over ideology and national security.**

### Terms to know

- **Cold War:** The state of tension without actual fighting between the **United States** and the **Soviet Union**, which divided the world into **two camps**



### Origins of the Cold War

- Differences in goals and **ideologies** between the United States and the Soviet Union (the two **superpowers**).
  - The **United States** was **democratic and capitalist**;
  - the **Soviet Union** was **dictatorial and communist**.



- The Soviet Union's **domination** over Eastern European countries (**Iron Curtain**)
- American policy of **containment** (to stop the spread of **communism**)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (**NATO**) vs. **Warsaw Pact** (defense alliances)

Although the U.S. and Soviet Union **never fought directly**, they took opposite sides in **many global conflicts**:



### Berlin Airlift (1948–49)

- The Soviet Union **blocked supplies** to West Berlin.
- The U.S. flew in **food and fuel** for nearly a year to support the people of West Berlin.
- Later, in 1961, the **Berlin Wall** was built to divide communist East Berlin and democratic West Berlin.
- In 1989, the wall was **torn down**, symbolizing the **end of communist control** in Eastern Europe.



### Korean War (1950–1953)

- Communist **North Korea**, with help from China, invaded democratic **South Korea**.
- The U.S. and United Nations **helped South Korea**.
- War ended in a **stalemate**, but South Korea remained free.





## Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

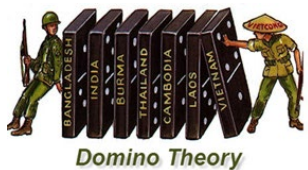
- The Soviet Union placed nuclear missiles in **Cuba**, just 90 miles from Florida.
- **President John F. Kennedy** demanded their removal.
- **Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev** agreed to remove the missiles after tense negotiations.

This was the **closest the world came to nuclear war**.



## Vietnam War

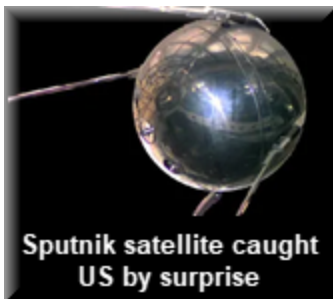
- The U.S. tried to stop **communism** from spreading in Vietnam.
- Some believed in the **Domino Theory** - the fall of Vietnam to Communism would result in the **spread of communism** elsewhere
- Americans were **divided** over whether the United States should be involved militarily in **Vietnam**.
- In 1973, the U.S. eventually **withdrew**, and Vietnam became communist.



*Domino Theory*

## Space Race and Arms Race

- The **Space Race** between the United States and the Soviet Union was a contest to gain technological superiority (e.g., **Sputnik, landing on the moon**).
  - The USSR rocketed to the lead in the Cold War's "Space Race" with the launch of **Sputnik**, a basketball-sized satellite that became the first manmade object to orbit the Earth.
- The **Arms Race** was the stockpiling of **nuclear weapons** as a deterrent to nuclear war.



# STANDARD USII.7E – COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM

- e) explaining the **collapse of communism** in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the **end of the Cold War**, including the actions of **Ronald Reagan** and **Mikhail Gorbachev**.



## Why Did Communism Collapse?

- Communist countries in **Eastern Europe** faced:
  - **Economic problems**
  - **Unhappy citizens**
  - **Pro-democracy movements**
- People demanded **freedom**, and one by one, countries turned away from communism.



## Key Leaders:



- **Ronald Reagan** (U.S. President):
  - Challenged the Soviet Union and supported **anti-communist movements**
  - Known for the "**Reagan Doctrine**" – supported countries fighting against communism
- **Mikhail Gorbachev** (Soviet Leader):
  - Introduced **reforms** to improve the Soviet economy and give more freedoms
  - Eventually allowed more independence in Eastern Europe



## The Cold War officially ended in the early 1990s

- **Breakup of Soviet Union** into independent countries
- **Collapse of communism** in Europe
- Destruction of the **Berlin Wall**



## Review Summary:

Topic	Key Ideas
Atlantic Charter	Set post-war peace goals during WWII
United Nations (UN)	Formed to keep peace and promote cooperation
NATO	Military alliance for defense of democratic nations
Marshall Plan	U.S. helped rebuild Europe and stop spread of communism
Superpowers	U.S. and Soviet Union rose after WWII
Democracy vs. Communism	Freedom vs. government control
Cold War Conflicts	Berlin Airlift, Korean War, Vietnam, Cuban Missile Crisis
End of Cold War	Fall of the Berlin Wall, breakup of the Soviet Union
Reagan & Gorbachev	Reagan opposed communism; Gorbachev allowed reforms