

Europe and North America (1945–Present)

SECTION 1

THE WESTERN WORLD: AN OVERVIEW

TEXT SUMMARY

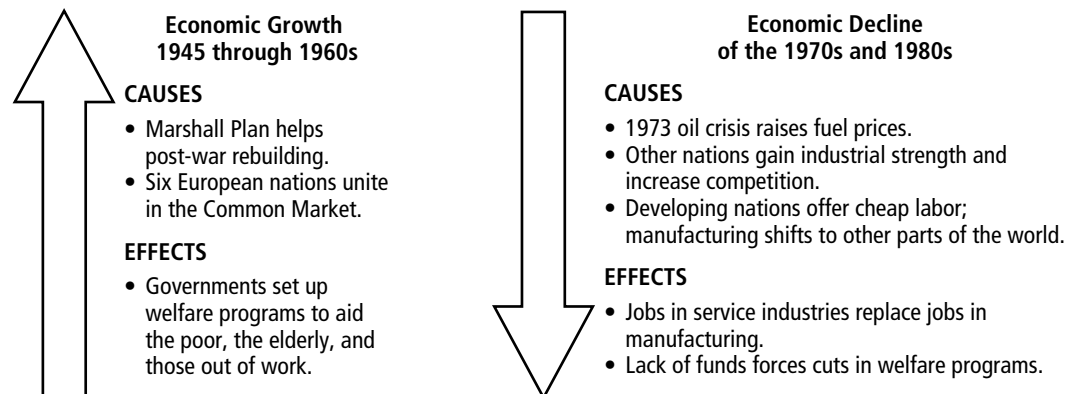
For more than 40 years, the Cold War divided Europe. Berlin, Germany, was a Cold War trouble spot. After World War II, the city was divided into the democratic West and the communist East. In 1961, the communists built a wall to stop East Germans from fleeing into West Berlin. In addition, distrust led both the United States and the Soviet Union to build more nuclear weapons. However, Soviet and American leaders knew an arms race could bring disaster. In the 1970s, a joint effort called **détente**, or lessening of bad feelings, aimed to ease tensions and limit arms.

As Western Europe recovered after World War II, the economy grew. Nations set up **welfare**, or government aid programs, to aid the needy. In 1957, much of Western Europe joined the Common Market (later called the European Community and European Union). This powerful trade alliance worked to end tariffs and to move goods freely across borders. However, economic growth slowed in the 1970s. (See diagram below.) Western industries faced an oil crisis when oil-producing nations decreased production and increased prices. New competition from Japan, China, and India contributed to an economic slowdown that forced governments to cut costs.

THE BIG IDEA

Western Europe rebuilt quickly after World War II, but faced problems in the 1970s.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *Post-World War II Economy of Western Europe*



Economic growth in the post-World War II years gave way to recession in the 1970s.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How was the Cold War a threat to peace in Europe?

2. **Diagram Skills** What were two causes of the economic decline of the 1970s?

THE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES

TEXT SUMMARY

After 1945, Western Europe joined forces through trade and military alliances. Still, difficulties existed for the nations.

Britain was economically drained by World War II. In 1945, the Labour party came into power. Labour put industries under government control and created a welfare state to care for the needy. After the economy slowed, the Conservative party returned to power in 1979. It put factories back in private hands, reduced the size of government, and cut welfare to save funds. People were out of work and general unrest resulted.

Weakened by the war, France also faced problems. In the 1950s, civil war threatened. The economy was weak, and French colonies fought to be free. France turned to Charles de Gaulle. Under President de

Gaulle, Algeria and other colonies gained independence. De Gaulle worked to make France a world power once more. He supported the development of nuclear weapons and energy, held talks with communist states, and formed ties with West Germany. By the 1970s, France welcomed new power and prosperity.

Western democracies helped West Germany rebuild quickly with Allied help. However, communist East Germany did not do as well. Many Germans dreamed of living in one strong nation again. By 1989, communists had lost control. In 1990, Germans voted to reunite, but the transition proved difficult.

THE BIG IDEA

After 1945, the Western European democracies worked with increased cooperation, but each nation faced its own problems.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: Germany Divided and Reunited



In 1990, Germans reunited their divided land.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Britain cut welfare services in the 1980s?

2. **Diagram Skills** What 1989 event allowed Germany to finally reunite?

NORTH AMERICAN PROSPERITY

TEXT SUMMARY

After World War II, the West felt threatened by communism. The United States wanted to stop that threat at home and around the world. American troops fought communism in Korea in the 1950s and in South Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. Economic aid helped keep communism out of developing lands. By 1990, the Cold War had ended. Still, the United States protected human rights and resolved conflicts.

In the 1950s, the United States economy boomed and social reforms changed life. Many Americans bought homes in the suburbs. Programs helped veterans, the elderly, and the poor. In the 1950s and 1960s, a civil rights movement demanded

equality for African Americans. It worked to end **segregation**, the separation of people by race, in schools, jobs, and housing. Leaders organized **boycotts**, the refusal to buy goods for political reasons, and staged protest marches. As a result, Congress passed new laws to ensure rights. This movement led other minorities to call for equality.

Canada also faced challenges after World War II. Canada welcomed **immigrants**, people moving to a country permanently, because it had plenty of land and an economic boom. Yet, Canada faced unrest in its province of Quebec. French-speaking Canadians wanted to form their own nation. Today, the United States and Canada enjoy close ties. Their border is a free-trade zone, and they work together to ease pollution.

THE BIG IDEA

After World War II, the United States took on the role of protecting the free world and stopping the spread of communism.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *The United States After World War II*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic boom • Korean War • Red (Communist) scare and McCarthy hearings • Civil rights movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing civil rights movement • Vietnam War • Increase in social services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal from Vietnam • High fuel prices due to oil crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutbacks in spending on social services • Federal budget problems • Call for stricter immigration laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of the Cold War • Gulf War in Kuwait and Iraq • Restoration of democracy in Haiti through U.S. help
1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s

After World War II, Americans fought to protect democracy, gain civil rights, and balance the federal budget.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What job did the United States take on after World War II?

2. **Time Line Skills** When did the United States send troops to fight communism in Korea?

THE SOVIET UNION: RISE AND FALL OF A SUPERPOWER

TEXT SUMMARY

After World War II, the Soviet Union was a superpower. Stalin still was firmly in control. He poured money into industry, science, and the military. His labor camps forced political prisoners to toil for their country.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY:

The Fall of the Soviet Union



By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union no longer existed.

THE BIG IDEA

Despite its early status as a superpower, the Soviet Union collapsed in the 1990s under pressure to reform.

After Stalin died in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev became the next Communist head. He allowed more freedom. Citizens enjoyed low rents, free health care, and jobs for almost everyone. However, they waited in long lines to buy goods. In 1962, Khrushchev nearly set off a war when he sent missiles to Cuba.

Under Leonid Brezhnev, Soviet life got worse. He jailed critics. He talked of limiting arms but began a military buildup. Brezhnev insisted he could send troops to any Warsaw Pact nation.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. He reshaped the economy and allowed some private business in a process called **perestroika**. Soviets gained new freedom. However, new policies caused food and medicine shortages. The Gorbachev reforms sparked demands for democracy in Eastern Europe. They also led Soviet republics to seek independence. In 1991, the Soviet Union **disbanded**, or broke up. The republics formed the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The new Russian Federation faced hard times. Russia and the other republics had to deal with such problems as food shortages, massive debts and unemployment, and ethnic unrest.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How was Gorbachev different from earlier Soviet leaders?
2. **Diagram Skills** What effect did the fall of the Soviet Union have on the Cold War?

A NEW ERA IN EASTERN EUROPE

TEXT SUMMARY

In 1945, most of Eastern Europe was tied to the Soviet Union. Communists controlled government and industry. They censored the press and jailed critics.

THE BIG IDEA

Soviet domination of Eastern Europe came to an end in 1989 and 1990.

In 1955, the Warsaw Pact linked the Soviet Union and its satellites in a military alliance. In 1956, Hungary tried to cut the ties. Soviet troops crushed the movement. In 1968, tanks rolled in to enforce communist control in Czechoslovakia.

Communists worked hard to keep a hold on Poland. In 1980, Polish workers set up a union called Solidarity. The Communists outlawed the union and jailed its leader. However, in 1989, Gorbachev pledged to stay out of Eastern Europe. Poland held elections. Solidarity

leaders won office. Soon, a freedom movement swept Eastern Europe. One by one, communist governments fell.

Under communism, **ethnic**, or racial, tensions were put down. In 1991, Yugoslavia split into several nations. Fighting broke out between the countries, but the worst was in Bosnia, where the Serbs wanted to drive out all other ethnic groups. They began attacking **civilians**, or nonmilitary people. In 1995, the Bosnian Serbs signed a peace agreement after being bombed by NATO. Then, in 1998, Serbs wanted to drive Albanians out of the region called Kosovo. Again, NATO bombed Yugoslavia in order to stop the Serbs, and Yugoslavia signed a peace agreement.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *The Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe*



The fall of communism came peacefully in most nations, but in Romania there was a bloody revolution.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did war break out in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

2. **Diagram Skills** In what year did communism fall in most of Eastern Europe?