

Chapter 31: Western Society and Eastern Europe in the Decades of the Cold War



After World War II: A New International Setting for the West

For a few years after 1945, recovery in Europe seemed impossible.

Western governments retained cultural relations and sometimes provided administrative and military help in their former colonies.

There was conflict between the USA and USSR between 1945-1947, as the USSR occupied many eastern European countries.

The Eastern Bloc emerged: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary.

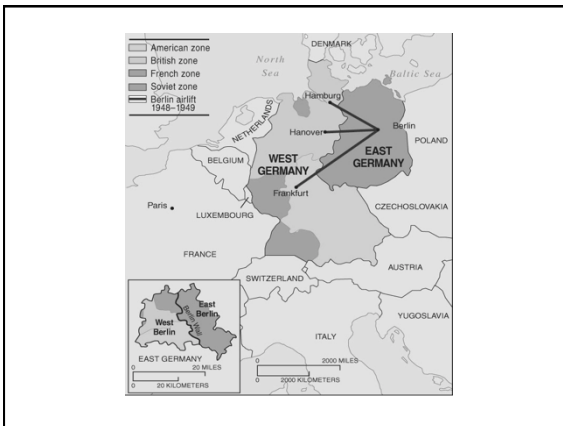


After World War II: A New International Setting for the West

The phrase "iron curtain" was used to describe the division between free and repressed societies in Europe.

The USA proclaimed the Marshall Plan, a program of loans that were designed to aid Western nations rebuild from the war.

Germany was divided into four zones; a zone was occupied by the USA, Britain, France and the USSR.



After World War II: A New International Setting for the West

In 1947, the USSR blockaded Western powers from establishing a stable currency and the USA responded with a massive airlift to keep the city supplied.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was formed in 1949 as a defense alliance against possible Soviet aggression.

The USSR established the Warsaw Pact with its eastern European satellite countries.

The USSR and USA began stock-piling nuclear weapons.

The Resurgence of Western Europe

France, Great Britain and the USA merged their zones into what was the Federal Republic of Germany.

Italy established a constitutional democracy.

Western Europe saw a movement toward welfare states.

Welfare states are incredibly expensive.

The Resurgence of Western Europe

The United States saw civil rights movements in the 1960's.

Green Movements in Europe saw a rise in the 1970's focused on environmental issues and uncontrolled economic growth.

Western nations saw economic recessions in the 1970's and signaled political change.

The Resurgence of Western Europe

In 1958, six European nations (West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) formed the European Economic Community, which later is the European Union.

In 2001, a single currency, the Euro was established.

Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Sweden and Finland joined later.

The Resurgence of Western Europe

Economies in Europe expanded in the 1950's.

Europe saw labor shortages and then saw an influx in immigrant labor from Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Ownership of standard consumer goods like televisions and cars expanded.

Economic inequality was seen in the 1990's as many immigrants experienced discrimination and low wage employment.

Cold War Allies: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Canadian economic integration with the United States continued.

Canada's most distinctive issue was growing agitation of French Canadians in Quebec for regional autonomy and event national independence.

Australia and New Zealand cooperated with the United States foreign policy after World War II but began to distance themselves in the 1980's.

Australian and New Zealand exports were increasingly directed toward Pacific nations, like Japan.

Cold War Allies: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

The United States became the world's leading defender of democratic and capitalistic values.

The United States entered a period of intense concern for communist conspiracies.

United States military spending increased dramatically.

They resisted the invasion of South Korea by the communist North Korea and launched an invasion into North Korea in 1951.

Cold War Allies: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Under Dwight Eisenhower, the United States implemented a policy of "containment" by arranging alliances with countries that virtually surrounded the USSR.

The United States intervened against communist revolutionaries in South Vietnam when they began bombing North Vietnam in 1965.

The United States withdrew in 1975 and all of Vietnam was communist.

Cold War Allies: The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Ronald Reagan, elected President of the USA in 1980, sponsored a number of expansive weapons systems.

The economy of the USSR, attempting to keep pace with the weapons of the USA, almost collapsed.

By the early 1990's, the Cold War was virtually over.

Culture and Society in the West

The number of working women steadily increased in the 1950's, particularly in service jobs.

By the 1970's, women had 44% of the total jobs in Western countries.

Family rights increased, such as access to divorce, abortion laws and development of birth control.

Birth rates declined after the 1960's.

Culture and Society in the West

Divorce rates increased as family roles adjusted to working women.

New feminism emerged; a new wave of women's rights that emphasized equality to down play domestic roles and qualities of women.

Feminism seemed to respond to the desire for individuality and work identity in women.

Culture and Society in the West



Francis Crick and James Watson discovered DNA, which opened the way for advances in genetic knowledge.

A new group of "pop" artists emerged to bridge the gap between art and mass culture.

Social sciences turned to mass data collection to understand trends.

Culture and Society in the West

Popular culture was lively, especially in Europe were the United States "Coca-Cola-ization" was seen.

The most celebrated figures of the 1960's were The Beatles.

Pre-marital sex became more common as changes in sexual behavior changed.

Eastern Europe After World War II: A Soviet Empire

The Soviet Union was able to build its status as a world power by:

- pushing westward
- concentrating on heavy industry and weapons development
- establishing a protectorate over North Korea
- aiding the Communist party in China
- the development of hydrogen and atomic bombs.

Eastern Europe After World War II: A Soviet Empire

After World War II, the USSR intended on showing its willingness to confront the West, instead of remaining in isolation.

The Soviets built the Berlin Wall in 1961 to halt the flow of immigration from East Berlin to West Berlin.

Soviet control over Eastern Europe loosened over the years.

The USSR still maintained considerable influence over Europe.

Eastern Europe After World War II: A Soviet Empire

The USSR rebuilt following World War II and maintained strong government authority.

The USSR remained isolated in terms of access to media, travel and other means to see the outside world.

The bureaucracy expanded in terms of education, welfare and police operations.

Soviet Culture: Promoting New Beliefs and Institutions

The Soviet government severed its connection to the Orthodox church after World War I.

Social culture placed an emphasis on science and social science.

The USSR fully industrialized between the 1920's and 1950's, with increasing urbanization.

Consumerism was not seen in the USSR, like it was in the West.

The communist system did not resolve problems with agriculture.

Soviet Culture: Promoting New Beliefs and Institutions

Social structure, such as an emphasis on the nuclear family and declining birth rates, were similar to the West.

After Stalin's death in 1953, a ruling committee continued Stalin's policies until Nikita Khrushchev emerged in 1956 and gained power in the USSR.

There was a sense of de-Stalinization, which suggested a more tolerant political climate in the USSR.

Soviet Culture: Promoting New Beliefs and Institutions

Khrushchev and the Soviets installed missiles in Cuba to taunt the United States.

Sputnik, the first space satellite was sent into space in 1957.

The USSR never engaged in direct warfare but maintained a high level of preparedness.

Economic conditions in the USSR deteriorated rapidly in the 1980's and led to the collapse of communism.
