

# The Early Cold War Years

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

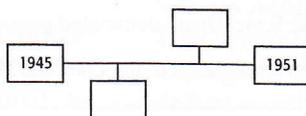
As the Cold War began, the United States struggled to oppose Communist aggression in Europe and Asia through political, economic, and military measures.

### Key Terms and Names

George Kennan, containment, Marshall Plan, NATO, limited war

### Reading Strategy

**Sequencing** As you read about the Cold War, complete a time line similar to the one below by recording the major events involving the Korean War.



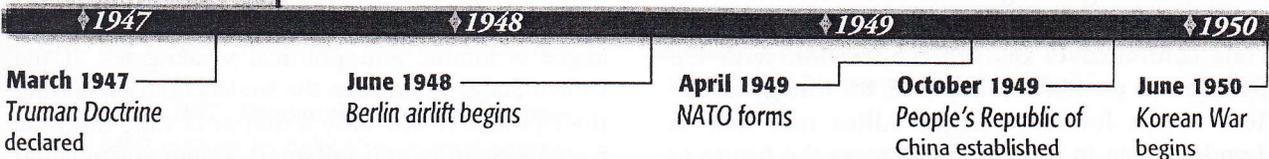
### Reading Objectives

- Describe the American view of the Soviet Union and the policy of containment.
- Explain the causes of the Korean War.

### Section Theme

**Global Connections** Beliefs about Soviet goals and actions had a lasting effect on American policies abroad and on the agencies used to carry them out.

### Preview of Events



## ★ An American Story ★



Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen

Air Force lieutenant Gail Halvorsen was one of the pilots who airlifted supplies into Berlin in 1948. On one of his days off, he was shooting a home movie outside Berlin's Tempelhof Airport and soon drew a crowd of curious boys and girls. As a wartime pilot, Halvorsen had met children in other cities. They would playfully confront American soldiers, asking, "Any gum, chum?" While digging into his pockets for gum, Halvorsen had an idea. He said that if the children would wait at the end of the runway the next day, he would drop candy from his airplane.

The next day, eager children gathered at the airport. As Halvorsen's plane flew overhead, three small white parachutes floated down with a payload of candy. Halvorsen's "chocolate bombs" became a routine, earning him the nickname *Schokoladenflieger* ("chocolate-flyer"). Other pilots joined in, and by the end of the airlift, American pilots had dropped 250,000 candy parachutes for the children of Berlin.

—adapted from *Berlin in the Balance*

## Containing Communism

The early Cold War shaped the politics and economics of many parts of the world, especially Europe. The airlift of supplies to Berlin, like Halvorsen's own candy airlift, reassured Europeans that the United States would help them rebuild their lives, even in the shadow of growing Soviet hostility.

## Causes and Effects of the Cold War

### Causes

- Soviet Union controls Eastern Europe after World War II.
- Chinese Communists win control of mainland China.
- United States and Soviet Union explode atomic bombs.

### Effects

- Marshall Plan provides aid to Western Europe.
- Western nations form NATO; Communist nations respond with Warsaw Pact.
- Korean War erupts.
- American and Soviet arms race begins.
- Red Scare leads to hunt for Communists in the United States.

### Graphic Organizer → Start

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated postwar politics.

**Evaluating** What do you think was the most important cause of the Cold War? Why?

Despite the growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, many American officials continued to believe cooperation with the Soviets was possible. In late 1945, the foreign ministers of the former wartime Allies met first in London, then in Moscow, to discuss the future of Europe and Asia.

Although Ernest Bevin, the British foreign minister, and James Byrnes, the American secretary of state, pushed the Soviets to hold free elections in Eastern Europe, the Soviets refused to budge. "Our relations with the Russians," Bevin gloomily concluded, "are drifting into the same condition as that in which we had found ourselves with Hitler."

**The Long Telegram** Increasingly exasperated by the Soviets' refusal to cooperate, officials at the State Department asked the American Embassy in Moscow to explain Soviet behavior. On February 22, 1946, diplomat **George Kennan** responded with what came to be known as the **Long Telegram**, a 5,540-word cable message explaining his views of Soviet goals.

According to Kennan, the Soviets' view of the world came from a traditional "Russian sense of insecurity" and fear of the West, intensified by the Communist ideas of Lenin and Stalin. Because Communists believed that they were in a long-term historical struggle against capitalism, Kennan argued, it was impossible to reach any permanent settlement with them.

Kennan therefore proposed what became the basic American policy throughout the Cold War: "a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of

Russian expansive tendencies." Kennan explained that, in his opinion, the Soviet system had several major economic and political weaknesses. If the United States could keep the Soviets from expanding their power, it was only a matter of time until the Soviet system would fall apart. Communism could be beaten without going to war. The Long Telegram circulated widely in Truman's administration. It gave rise to the policy of **containment**—keeping communism within its present territory through the use of diplomatic, economic, and military actions.

**Crisis in Iran** While Truman's administration discussed Kennan's ideas, a series of crises erupted in the spring and summer of 1946. These crises seemed to prove that Kennan was right about the Soviets. The first crisis began in Iran in March 1946.

During World War II, the United States had put troops in southern Iran while Soviet troops occupied northern Iran to secure a supply line from the Persian Gulf. After the war, instead of withdrawing as promised, the Soviet troops remained in northern Iran. Stalin then began demanding access to Iran's oil supplies. To increase the pressure, Soviet troops helped local Communists in northern Iran establish a separate government.

To American officials, these actions signaled a Soviet push into the Middle East. Secretary of State James Byrnes sent Moscow a strong message demanding that they withdraw. At the same time, the battleship USS *Missouri* sailed into the eastern Mediterranean. The pressure seemed to work. Soviet forces withdrew, having been promised a joint Soviet-Iranian oil company. The Iranian parliament later rejected the plan.

**The Truman Doctrine** Frustrated in Iran, Stalin turned to Turkey. There the straits of the Dardanelles were a vital route from Soviet Black Sea ports to the Mediterranean. For centuries Russia had wanted to control this strategic route. In August 1946, Stalin demanded joint control of the Dardanelles with Turkey. Presidential adviser **Dean Acheson** saw this move as the first step in a Soviet plan to control the Mideast, and he advised Truman to make a show of force. The president declared, "We might as well find out whether the Russians are bent on world conquest." He then ordered the new aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* to join the *Missouri* in protecting Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean.

While the United States supported Turkey, Britain tried to help Greece. In August 1946, Greek Communists launched a guerrilla war against the Greek government. For about six months, British troops helped the Greeks fight the guerrillas. The effort strained Britain's economy, which was still weak from World War II. In February 1947, Britain informed the United States that it could no longer afford to help Greece.

On March 12, 1947, Truman went before Congress to ask for \$400 million to fight Communist aggression in Greece and Turkey. His speech outlined a policy which became known as the **Truman Doctrine**. Its goal was to aid "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." Its immediate effects were to stabilize the Greek government and ease Soviet demands in Turkey. In the long run, it pledged the United States to fight communism worldwide. (See page 958 for more on the Truman Doctrine.)

### **ECONOMICS**

**The Marshall Plan** Meanwhile, postwar Western Europe faced grave problems. Economies were in ruin, people were near starvation, and political chaos was at hand. The terrible winter of 1946 made things worse.

In June 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed the European Recovery Program, or **Marshall Plan**, which would give European nations American aid to rebuild their economies. Truman saw the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine as "two halves of the same walnut," both essential



*George Marshall*

for containment. Marshall offered help to all nations planning a recovery program:

“Our policy is not directed against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. . . .”

—quoted in *Marshall: A Hero for Our Times*

The Soviet Union and its satellite nations in Eastern Europe rejected the offer. Instead, the Soviets developed their own economic program. This action further separated Europe into competing regions. The Marshall Plan pumped billions of dollars worth of supplies, machinery, and food into Western Europe. Western Europe's recovery weakened the appeal of communism and opened new markets for trade.

**Reading Check** **Summarizing** What were the goals of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan?

## **The Berlin Crisis**

The Marshall Plan was only one part of the American strategy for rebuilding Europe. President Truman and his advisers believed that Western Europe's prosperity depended on Germany's recovery. The Soviets, however, still wanted Germany to pay reparations to the Soviet Union. Eventually, the dispute over Germany brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of war.

**West Germany Is Founded** By early 1948, U.S. officials had concluded that the Soviets were deliberately trying to undermine Germany's economy. In response, the United States, Great Britain, and France announced that they were merging their zones in Germany and allowing the Germans to have their own government. They also agreed to merge their zones in Berlin and to make West Berlin part of the new German republic.

The new nation was officially called the Federal Republic of Germany, but it became known as West Germany. West Germany's economy was completely separate from the Soviet zone, which eventually became known as East Germany. West Germany was not allowed to have a military, but in most respects, it was independent.



### **Picturing History**

**Bucking the Blockade** The Berlin airlift became a symbol of American determination to resist the Soviet Union's effort to control Berlin. For how many months did American pilots supply Berlin with food and supplies?

**The Berlin Airlift** The decision to create West Germany convinced the Soviets that they would never get the reparations they wanted. In late June 1948, Soviet troops cut all road and rail traffic to West Berlin. The blockade provoked a crisis. President Truman sent long-range bombers with atomic weapons to bases in Britain. General Lucius Clay, the American commander in Germany, warned that if Berlin fell, West Germany would be next. "If we mean to hold Europe against communism, then we must not budge," he said.

The challenge was to keep West Berlin alive without provoking war with the Soviets. In June 1948, Truman ordered the **Berlin airlift** to begin. For 11 months, cargo planes supplied Berliners with food, medicine, and coal. The airlift continued through the spring of 1949, bringing in over 2 million tons of supplies. Stalin finally lifted the blockade on May 12. The Berlin airlift became a symbol of American determination to stand by the divided city.

**NATO** The Berlin blockade convinced many Americans that the Soviets were bent on conquest. Both the public and Congress began to support a military alliance with Western Europe. By April 1949, an agreement had been reached to create the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—a mutual defense alliance.

NATO initially included 12 countries: the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, and Iceland. NATO members agreed to come to the aid of any member who was attacked. For the first time in its history, the United States had committed itself to maintaining peace in Europe. Six years later, the United States and its allies decided to allow West Germany to rearm and join NATO. This decision alarmed Soviet leaders. They responded by organizing a military alliance in Eastern Europe, which became known as the **Warsaw Pact**.

**Reading Check** **Evaluating** What triggered the beginning of the Berlin airlift?

## **The Cold War Spreads to East Asia**

The Cold War eventually spread beyond Europe. Conflicts also emerged in Asia, where events in China and Korea brought about a new attitude toward Japan.

**Civil War and Revolution in China** In China, Communist forces led by **Mao Zedong** had been struggling against the Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-shek since the late 1920s. During World War II, the two sides suspended their war to resist Japanese occupation. With the end of World War II, however, civil war broke out again. Although Mao made great gains, neither side could win, and neither would accept a compromise.

To prevent a Communist revolution in Asia, the United States sent the Nationalist government \$2 billion in aid beginning in the mid-1940s, but it squandered this advantage with poor military planning and corruption. By 1949 the Communists had captured the Chinese capital of Beijing and moved southward, while support for the Nationalists declined.

In August 1949, the State Department discontinued aid to the Chinese Nationalists. The defeated Nationalists then fled the Chinese mainland for the small island of Taiwan (Formosa). The victorious Communists established the People's Republic of China in October 1949.

**After the Fall** China's fall to communism shocked Americans. To make matters worse, in September 1949 the Soviet Union announced that it had successfully

tested its first atomic weapon. Then, early in 1950, the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union signed a treaty of friendship and alliance. Many Western leaders feared that China and the Soviet Union would support Communist revolutions in other nations.

The United States kept formal diplomatic relations with only the Nationalists in Taiwan. It used its veto power in the UN Security Council to keep representatives of the new Communist China out of the UN, allowing the Nationalists to retain their seat.

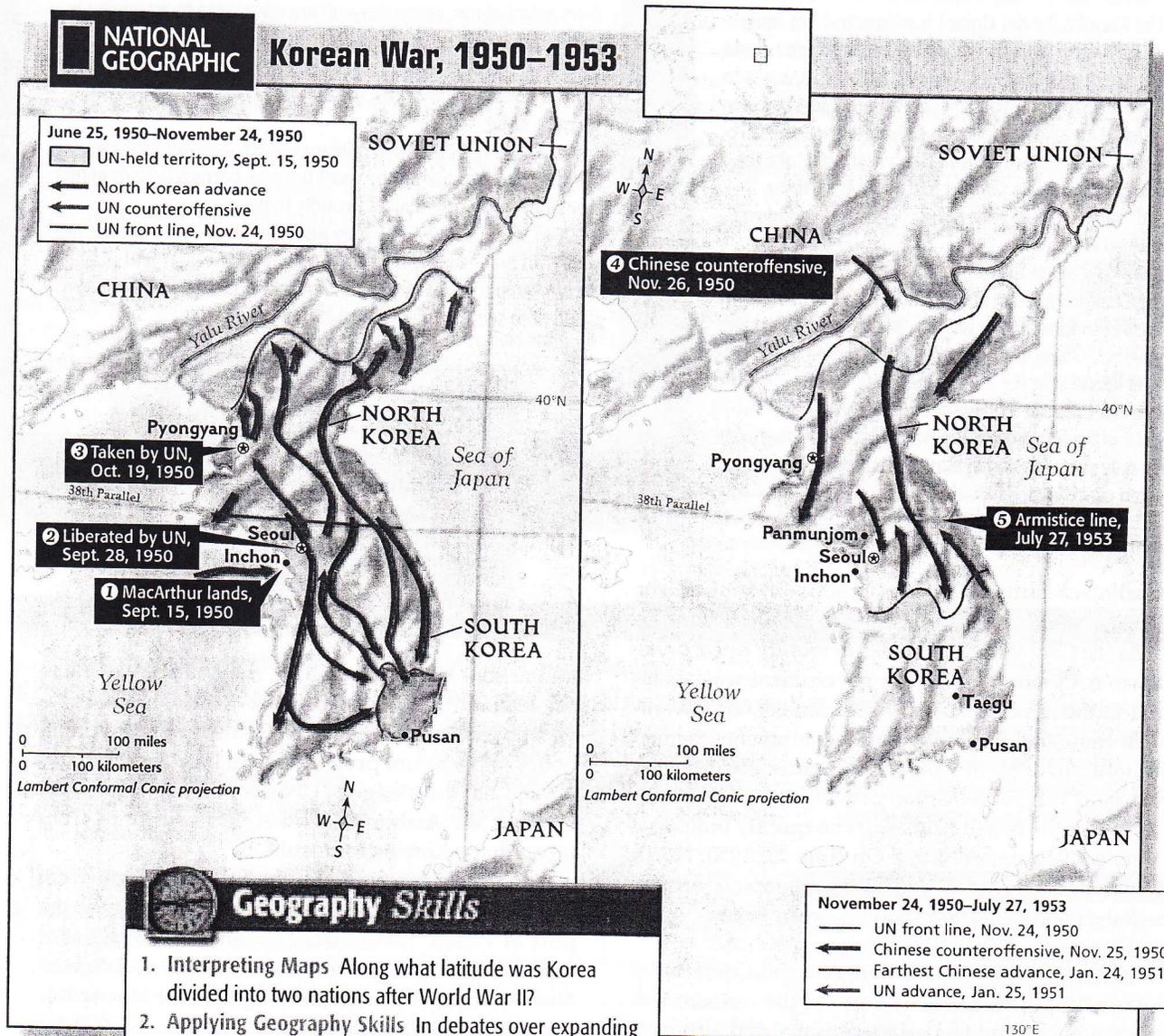
The Chinese revolution brought about a significant change in American policy toward Japan. At the end of World War II, General Douglas MacArthur had taken charge of occupied Japan. His mission was to introduce democracy and keep Japan from

threatening war again. Once the United States lost China as its chief ally in Asia, it adopted policies to encourage the rapid recovery of Japan's industrial economy. Just as the United States viewed West Germany as the key to defending all of Europe against communism, it saw Japan as the key to defending Asia.

**Reading Check Analyzing** How did the revolution in China affect American foreign policy with Japan?

## The Korean War

At the end of World War II, American and Soviet forces entered Korea to disarm the Japanese troops stationed there. The Allies divided Korea at the 38th



# Different Viewpoints

## Should the War in Korea Be Expanded?

A controversy between President Harry S Truman and General Douglas MacArthur began shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War. It reached a climax when the president relieved MacArthur of his command. Truman believed in a limited war in Korea, while MacArthur wanted total victory.

### President Harry S Truman defends limited war:

The Kremlin [Soviet Union] is trying, and has been trying for a long time, to drive a wedge between us and the other nations. It wants to see us isolated. It wants to see us distrusted. It wants to see us feared and hated by our allies. Our allies agree with us in the course we are following. They do not believe that we should take the initiative to widen the conflict in the Far East. If the United States were to widen the conflict, we might well have to go it alone.

If we go it alone in Asia, we may destroy the unity of the free nations against aggression. Our European allies are nearer to Russia than we are. They are in far greater danger. . . . Going it alone brought the world to the disaster of World War II. . . .

I do not propose to strip this country of its allies in the face of Soviet danger. The path of collective security is our only sure defense against the dangers that threaten us.

parallel of latitude. Soviet troops controlled the north, while American troops controlled the south.

As the Cold War began, talks to reunify Korea broke down. A Communist Korean government was organized in the north, while an American-backed government controlled the south. Both governments claimed authority over all of Korea, and border clashes were common. The Soviet Union provided extensive military aid to the North Koreans, who quickly built up a large, well-equipped army. On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops invaded into the south, rapidly driving back the poorly equipped South Korean forces.

**The UN Intervenes** Truman saw the Communist invasion of South Korea as a test of the containment policy and ordered United States naval and airpower



**General Douglas MacArthur**  
addresses Congress, April 19, 1951:

History teaches with unmistakable emphasis that appeasement but begets new and bloodier war. . . . Like blackmail, it lays the basis for new and successively greater demands, until, as in blackmail, violence becomes the only other alternative. Why, my soldiers asked of me, surrender military advantage to an enemy in the field? I could not answer.

It was my constant effort to preserve them and end this savage conflict honorably and with the least loss of time and minimum sacrifice of life.

I am closing 52 years of military service. . . . But I still remember the refrain of one of the most popular barrack ballads of that day which proclaimed most proudly that—

“Old soldiers never die, they just fade away.” And like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away—an old soldier who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty. Good-by.

### Learning From History

1. **Identifying Central Issues** How did MacArthur view Truman’s decision to fight a limited war in Korea? How did Truman see it?
2. **Making Inferences** On the basis of what authority did Truman fire MacArthur?

into action. He then called on the United Nations to act. Truman succeeded because the Soviet delegate was boycotting the Security Council over its China policy and was not present to veto the American proposal. With the pledge of UN troops, Truman ordered General MacArthur to send American troops from Japan to the Korean peninsula.

The American and South Korean troops were driven back into a small pocket of territory near the port of Pusan. Inside the “Pusan perimeter,” as it came to be called, the troops stubbornly resisted the North Korean onslaught, buying time for MacArthur to organize reinforcements.

CLICK HERE



HISTORY  
Online 

**Student Web Activity** Visit the *American Republic Since 1877* Web site at [tarvol2.glencoe.com](http://tarvol2.glencoe.com) and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 21** for an activity on the Cold War.

On September 15, MacArthur ordered a daring invasion behind enemy lines at the port of Inchon. The Inchon landing took the North Koreans by surprise. Within weeks they were in full retreat back across the 38th parallel. Truman then gave the order to pursue the North Koreans beyond the 38th parallel. MacArthur pushed the North Koreans north to the Yalu River, the border with China.

**China Enters the War** The Communist Chinese government saw the advancing UN troops as a threat and warned the forces to halt their advance. When those warnings were ignored, China launched a massive attack across the Yalu River in November. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops flooded across the border, driving the UN forces back across the 38th parallel.

As his troops fell back, an angry MacArthur demanded approval to expand the war against China. He asked for a blockade of Chinese ports, the use of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces, and the bombing of Chinese cities with atomic weapons.

**Truman Fires MacArthur** President Truman refused MacArthur's demands because he did not want to expand the war into China or to use the atomic bomb. MacArthur persisted. He publicly criticized the president, saying, "There is no substitute for victory."

Determined to maintain control of policy and show that the president commanded the military, an exasperated Truman fired MacArthur for insubordination in April 1951. MacArthur, who remained popular despite being fired, returned home to parades and a hero's welcome. Despite criticism, Truman remained committed to *limited war*—a war fought to achieve a

limited objective, such as containing communism.

**Changes in Policy** Truman chose General Matthew Ridgway to replace MacArthur. By mid-1951, the UN forces had pushed the Chinese and North Korean forces back across the 38th parallel. The war then settled down into a series of relatively small battles over hills and other local objectives. In November 1951, peace negotiations began, but an armistice would not be signed until July 1953. More than 33,600 American soldiers died in action in the Korean War, and more than 2,800 died from accidents or from disease.

The Korean War marked an important turning point in the Cold War. Until 1950 the United States had preferred to use political pressure and economic aid to contain communism. After the Korean War began, the United States embarked on a major military buildup.

The Korean War also helped expand the Cold War to Asia. Before 1950 the United States had focused on Europe as the most important area in which to contain communism. After the Korean War began, the United States became more militarily involved in Asia. Defense agreements were signed with Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia. American aid also began to flow to the French forces fighting Communist guerrillas in Vietnam.

**Reading Check Analyzing** How did President Truman view the Communist invasion of South Korea?

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

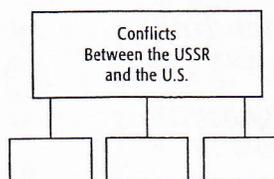
- Define:** containment, limited war.
- Identify:** George Kennan, Marshall Plan, NATO.
- Review Facts** How did the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan address the spread of communism?

### Reviewing Themes

- Global Connections** What long-term Cold War strategy did the United States follow?

### Critical Thinking

- Evaluating** How did the Long Telegram influence American policy?
- Categorizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list early conflicts between the USSR and the U.S.



### Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Maps** Study the maps of the Korean War on page 663. When did the United Nations control the most territory in Korea? When did both sides finally agree upon an armistice line?

### Writing About History

- Persuasive Writing** Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper explaining whether you agree or disagree with President Truman's firing of General MacArthur.