



The Cold War

After World War II, Germany was defeated and France and Great Britain were tired. Two other nations were on their way to becoming superpowers. Both the United States and the Soviet Union had the money and military strength to control the world. The two became rivals in a new war called the Cold War.

Each country had very different ideas about how to run a nation. Joseph Stalin, the Soviet dictator, wanted to spread communism in Eastern Europe.

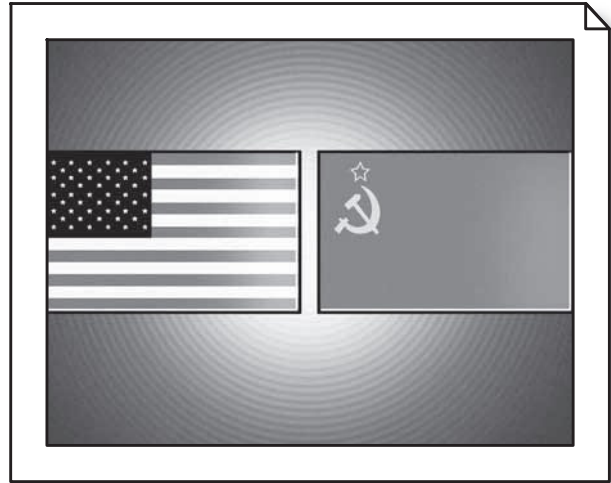
In a communist government, the government controls the economy and is run by a single political party. U.S. President Harry S Truman and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill did not like this idea. As democratic, capitalist leaders, they did not want communism to spread. In democratic, capitalist nations, the people have control over both the government and the economy.

Soon, Eastern European countries like Poland and East Germany had communist governments. Churchill described Soviet control of Eastern Europe as an “iron curtain” that divided the continent. The iron curtain became a symbol of the Cold War to Westerners. It illustrated how the world was divided between East and West. On one side were the Soviet-dominated, communist countries of Eastern Europe. The Western democracies, led by the United States, were on the other side.

President Truman came up with a new policy about communism called containment. He said communism could exist in places that were already under Soviet control. However, it could not be allowed to spread. The United States said it would use military force to contain communism.

As tensions grew, alliances formed. In 1949, the United States, Great Britain, France, and other countries formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). They agreed to defend each other in case of attack. In 1955, the Soviet Union responded by starting the Warsaw Pact. This military alliance included the Soviet Union and its allies, such as Poland and East Germany.

Each alliance in the Cold War armed itself in case there was an attack from the other side. In 1949, the Soviets developed an atomic bomb. Now, both sides had nuclear weapons. Each superpower raced to build bigger, better weapons than its rival. The Cold War lasted until the 1980s. Although an actual war never broke out and the weapons were never used, the world was in crisis for almost 40 years.





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Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

1. _____ was the dictator of the Soviet Union.

- A. Winston Churchill
- B. Harry S Truman
- C. Joseph Stalin
- D. Mao Zedong

2. The United States and its allies did not want _____ to spread.

- A. communism
- B. capitalism
- C. economics
- D. containment

3. The “iron curtain” was a symbol of _____.

- A. the atomic bomb
- B. World War II
- C. the Cold War
- D. NATO

4. President Truman said the United States would use _____ to contain communism.

- A. a wall
- B. diplomacy
- C. the courts
- D. military force

5. The Cold War lasted until the _____.

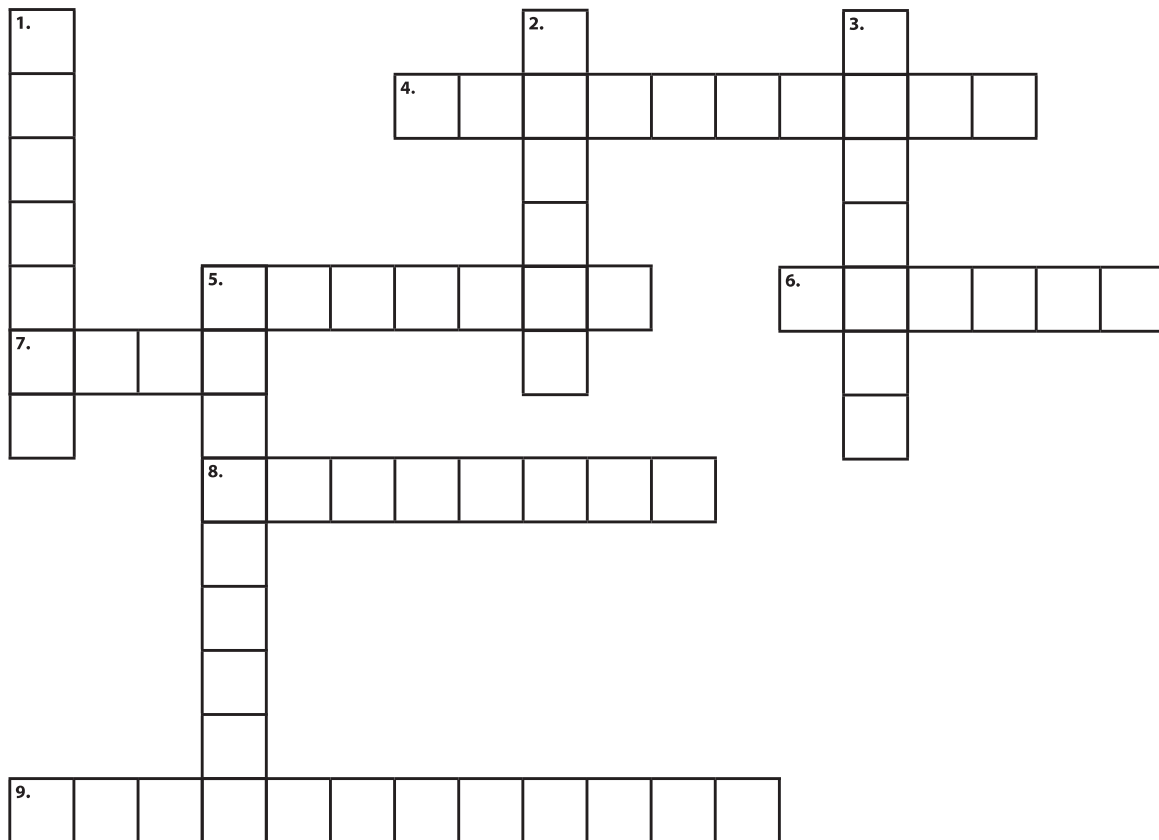
- A. 1970s
- B. 1980s
- C. 1990s
- D. 2000s



The Cold War

Crossword Puzzle

Write the best answer in each blank, and complete the crossword puzzle.



ACROSS

4. The _____ was formed by the Soviet Union and its allies.
5. In the _____, the United States and the Soviet Union competed for power.
6. In democratic, capitalist nations, the _____ have control over both the government and the economy.
7. _____ was the alliance formed by the United States, France, and other countries.
8. The United States would use _____ force to contain communism.
9. The _____ and Great Britain are democratic, capitalist countries.

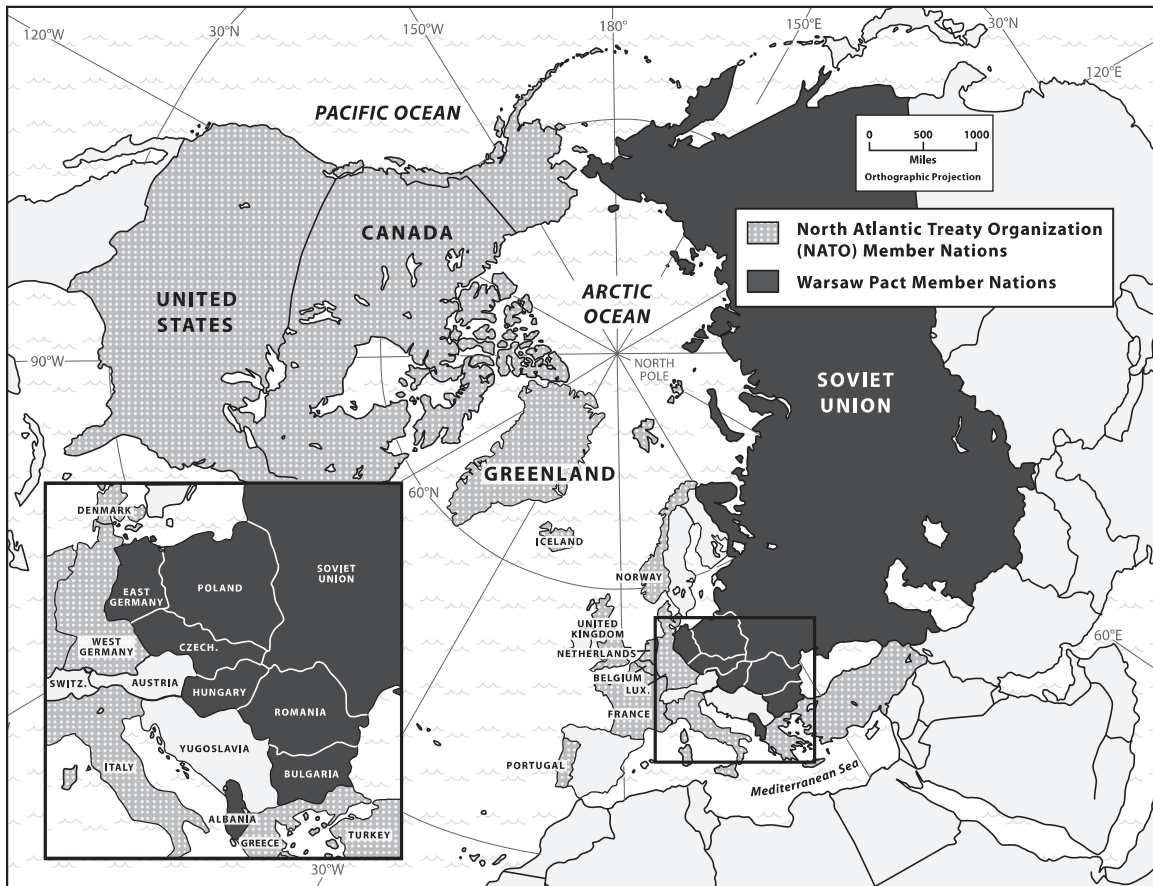
DOWN

1. The two sides raced to build bigger, better _____.
2. _____ said that communism could not be allowed to spread.
3. _____ European countries like Poland and East Germany had communist governments.
5. In a/an _____ government, the government controls the economy and is run by a single political party.

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Map – Alliances During the Cold War, 1955

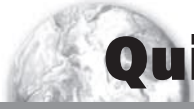
Use the map to answer the following questions. Write the answers in complete sentences.



1. Name two countries that were members of NATO.

2. Name two countries that were members of the Warsaw Pact.

3. Name two countries that were not part of either alliance.



Quiz: The Cold War

True/False

Decide if each statement is true or false, and write “true” or “false” in the blank.

- _____ 1. The “frozen curtain” was a symbol of the Cold War.
- _____ 2. Joseph Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union.
- _____ 3. The Cold War lasted until the 1980s.
- _____ 4. The Soviet Union was a capitalist country.
- _____ 5. Eastern European countries like Poland and East Germany had communist governments.

Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

6. In democratic, capitalist nations, the government and economy are run by the _____.

A. government
B. people
C. children
D. military

7. In the Cold War, the United States and _____ competed for power.

A. East Germany
B. Great Britain
C. the Soviet Union
D. NATO

Short Answer

Answer the following question in complete sentences.

8. What was Truman’s containment policy?
