

CHAPTER 37

The Cold War Begins, 1945–1952

The next two chapters present the story of the great postwar “baby boom” generation (i.e., people born between 1945 and 1960). This generation was very much influenced and conditioned by the generally strong economy and by the major social and cultural changes described here. Perhaps less directly, their world was molded by the nuclear arms race and the perilous “Cold War” with the Soviet Union.

- 1. Unit Introduction (pp. 856–857)** The authors here summarize the formative forces for the generation born after World War II. Explain what they mean in the first paragraph when they say that the “two themes of promise and menace mingled uneasily throughout the nearly five decades of the Cold War era. . . .” *** What is the difference between “Russia” and the “Soviet Union”?

(1) Promise:

(2) Menace:

(3) “Russia”/“Soviet Union”:

- 2. Adjustment to Peacetime (pp. 858–860)** The authors describe the shock to both production and price levels as the economy converted back from emergency wartime production and had to absorb large numbers of returning soldiers. Postwar Republican efforts to slow down the New Deal–inspired march of unionization came to a head in 1947 with the passage of the _____ - _____ Act restricting union activities. Congress passed the “GI Bill of _____,” which helped educate some _____ million veterans and lent them money through the _____ Administration (VA) so they could settle down in their own houses. *** Did the government pass this law primarily because it felt an obligation to those who had fought the war? If not, what other motivations might have been involved? The authors say that this act produced big economic benefits for the country. Do you think that taxpayers should pay for free higher education as they do in some other countries?

(1) Motivation:

(2) Free higher education:

- 3. Postwar Economic Boom (pp. 860–864)** The authors list several causes of the sustained economic boom that lasted basically from 1950 to 1970. What do they mean by the following factors?

(1) World War II itself:

(2) “Permanent war economy” (charts, p. 861):

(3) Cheap energy:

(4) Productivity gains:

(5) “Sunbelt” and mobility:

4. Suburbs and Baby Boom (pp. 864-866, 868-869)

a. A depression and war-weary middle-class population happily moved to the suburbs and began making babies in the postwar years. As you read the section on “The Suburbanites,” list some of the pros and cons of the lifestyle described.

(1) Pros:

(2) Cons:

b. The authors refer to the “baby boom” from 1945 to 1960 as a “pig passing through a python.” This caused a boom in elementary school construction in the 1950s, then rock music in the 1960s and 1970s. The baby boom generation is now firmly in middle age. *** If you had some extra cash, what types of businesses might you invest in today that will benefit from the “Baby Boom Bulge” over the next twenty years?

5. Harry S Truman (pp. 866-867) In this short section, the authors pass judgment on Truman, a man from a relatively plain Missouri background whose fate it was to be thrust into the presidency at a time in which some momentous decisions had to be made. *** From what they say here, do you guess that the authors will be positive or negative on Truman’s performance in office? Why? What clues do they give?

6. Yalta Sets the Stage (pp. 867, 870) In the absence of a formal peace conference (like Versailles after World War I), the wartime meeting at the Russian resort of Yalta in February 19____ among Roosevelt, _____, and _____ takes on huge importance. At Yalta, a new _____ Nations organization was agreed upon. Stalin promised free postwar elections for Eastern European countries such as _____, but Russian forces were occupying these countries on their march toward Berlin and there was little the West could do to keep Stalin from eventually breaking this promise. In return for a share of the goodies at the peace table, Stalin promised to help the United States defeat Japan within _____ months of the final victory over Germany. **(Remember from the last chapter the argument of some that the prospect of Russia thus enhancing its postwar position in Asia MAY have influenced the American decision to drop the A-bomb when it did.)**

7. **U.S. vs. USSR (pp. 870–871)** List a few of the ways that the authors, in their even-handed analysis, say that both the differences and similarities between the United States and the USSR led to an almost inevitable conflict.

(1) Differences and suspicions:

(2) Similarities:

8. Cold War Begins (pp. 871–879)

a. A new postwar international framework, this time with full U.S. participation, was established when the International _____ Fund (IMF) and the _____ Bank were established at the _____ Woods Conference in 1944. Replacing the old League, a new _____ Nations was established in San Francisco a year later. The U.N. had a number of successes but missed a golden opportunity to control the massive dangers of atomic power when the _____ Plan was never approved. Twenty-two top Nazis were tried and convicted at _____ after the war. *** If war involves mass killing by definition, do you think it's fair to hold trials for "war crimes"? If so, can you think of any acts by the United States during its various wars that might justify prosecution?

b. After the war, both Germany and its capital _____ were each divided into four supposedly temporary "zones of occupation" to be administered by the "Big Four"—the United States, the USSR, _____, and _____. These evolved into two separate countries, _____ Germany, tied to the Soviets, and _____ Germany, tied to the western powers. In 1948, Stalin imposed a blockade, trying to starve the western powers out of their sectors of Berlin, located deep inside the eastern sector. The United States responded with a gigantic _____ designed to keep the Berlin supply line open. Stalin finally called off the blockade in May 19____. By 1947, the broad strategy of "containing" Soviet expansionism, first developed by Soviet specialist George F. _____, had become accepted in America. Following potential communist takeovers in Greece and _____, this strategy became formalized in what came to be known as the _____ Doctrine, an open-ended American commitment to support "free peoples" resisting communist takeovers. *** What do you see as the strengths as well as the potential dangers of this American "holy-war" against communism?

(1) Strengths:

(2) Potential dangers:

c. To keep communism out of Western Europe, Truman won approval in 1948 for the _____ Plan, which would eventually funnel \$_____ billion into the successful reconstruction of Western Europe. It would also set the stage for the eventual creation of the European _____ (EC) which is now unifying European countries. In 1947, the National _____ Act reorganized and unified the military in the face of the Soviet challenge and created a new National _____ Council (NSC) and Central _____ Agency (CIA). In a major break with the nation's isolationist past, Congress in 1949 approved joining the North _____ Organization (NATO), a defensive alliance of western European nations. Japanese reconstruction proceeded quickly and efficiently under the command of U.S. General Douglas _____ and with the cooperation of the Japanese. In China, however, Communist forces under Mao

_____ in 1949 forced the Nationalist government under Generalissimo Jiang _____ to leave the mainland and set up on the island of _____. This development, together with the first Soviet explosion of an _____ bomb in 1949, further heightened American anxieties. A massive and fantastically dangerous nuclear arms race ensued, beginning with the first explosion of an American _____ bomb in 1952.

9. Cold War at Home (pp. 879–883)

a. There is now no doubt that the Soviets did support a variety of “front” organizations in the United States (as well as the open American Communist Party) and had a few spies planted within U.S. agencies. However, the frantic anti-Communist hysteria of the late 1940s and early 1950s was largely reprehensible. _____ oaths were required of teachers and government employees, and many good careers were ruined. Future president Richard M. _____ came to prominence as a lowly congressman when he successfully pursued diplomat Alger _____. Worst of all was the intimidation of Senator Joseph R. _____, who started by accusing State Department employees of Red ties and expanded from there. This hysterical period quieted down a bit after the 1953 execution of Julius and Ethel _____ on charges of delivering atomic secrets to the Soviets. *** What actions, if any, by people working to change or overthrow the U.S. government do you think should be illegal?

b. The 1948 election pitted the incumbent Democratic President _____ against Republican New York Governor Thomas E. _____. Truman’s party was divided on the right by ultraconservative J. Strom _____ and on the left by Henry A. _____. Though apparently the loser, Truman’s feisty style won him another term.

10. Korea (pp. 883–885)

a. This major war, which killed as many Americans as Vietnam, gets only a two-page treatment here. Remember the concessions given to Stalin at Yalta in return for his agreement to help with the final defeat of Japan. As a result of this, Russia occupied the northern half of the Korean peninsula and the United States the southern half. Two separate antagonistic countries evolved. In June of 1950, the North Koreans crossed the ____th parallel in an attempt to defeat the South and unify the country. Why do the authors say on p. 883 that this invasion provided proof to Truman of the fundamental premise of the “containment doctrine”?

b. Code-named “_____ -68,” the administration used this crisis as an excuse for a massive military buildup. Implementing his “containment” policy, Truman obtained a U.N. Security Council resolution (in the absence of the Soviet representative) condemning the invasion. He then sent in U.S. forces under General _____. These forces made a surprise invasion behind enemy lines at _____ in September 1950, and drove north to the Chinese border, whereupon Chinese troops entered the war, crossing the _____ River and forcing the Americans back to a long stalemate around the 38th parallel dividing line. Because General _____ publicly demanded the right to widen the war by attacking parts of China, he was removed from office by President _____ in 1951. *** Do you agree with MacArthur that he was being asked to fight a war “with one hand tied behind his back”? Do you agree with Truman that, despite his popularity and success, MacArthur should have been removed from command? Why or why not?

(1) MacArthur’s complaint:

(2) MacArthur’s removal: