

# CHAPTER 16

## The Cold War and European Recovery

Looking across Europe in 1945, one saw a civilization in ruins. Europeans suffered through one of the coldest winters on record in 1945–1946; Germans called this time their *Stunde Null*, or zero hour. Destruction and devastation created a power vacuum in Europe, into which rushed the new contending superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union. Due to fundamental economic and political differences and a cycle of action-reaction by each side, by 1947 the two superpowers were locked in a Cold War that divided Western from Eastern Europe. Competition between the superpowers decisively shaped the contrasting development of the two regions: the West toward economic recovery and integration and the East under Soviet domination and ultimately rebellion. In the final analysis, Europe rose like a phoenix from the ashes after 1945, but its recovery has been marked by fits and starts, successes and failures. By 1991, a new era opened with the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union itself, an opportunity for the continent to work toward a European identity that combined East and West.

**Note:** To users of Palmer, Colton, and Kramer, *A History of the Modern World*, this chapter condenses material from Chapters 22 through 27 in your text.

**Sidebar:** The question of responsibility for the onset of the Cold War represents a major historiographical issue. During the 1940s and 1950s, American historians emphasized the role of Soviet expansion in driving the conflict. By the 1960s and 1970s, in the midst of Vietnam and with newly declassified documents, revisionist historians tended to blame the nature of American capitalism and U.S. atomic policy for the Cold War. By the 1980s, a postrevisionist school emerged explaining the conflict in terms of a downward spiral of misinterpretations and actions-reactions.

### THE COLD WAR, 1943–1991

#### *Origins of the Conflict*

The Grand Alliance between the Anglo-American powers and the Soviet Union had always been a marriage of convenience; it was a relationship based on a battle against a common enemy—the Nazis. Since the Bolshevik Revolution, relations between the new Soviet Union and the west had been strained: (1) The Allies sent assistance to the White Army during the Russian Civil War; (2) the United States did not recognize the Soviet Union until 1933; (3) the western democracies excluded the Soviet Union from interwar diplomacy while appeasing Hitler; and (4) Stalin and Hitler joined in dividing Poland to initiate World War II.

During World War II, the so-called **Big Three** (Stalin, Churchill, Roosevelt) met several times to forge common policies; these meetings also revealed strains in the alliance. In February 1945 at **Yalta**, just months from victory, the Big Three met to discuss the layout of postwar Europe. Soviet armies stood within 40 miles of Berlin and dominated most of Eastern Europe. This reality determined much of the Anglo-American posture toward Stalin, though Roosevelt tended to see himself as the mediator between the more *Realpolitik*-oriented Churchill and Stalin. The parties agreed to the **Declaration**

**on Liberated Europe**, which promised national self-determination and **free elections** in Eastern Europe. Stalin was especially concerned with controlling postwar Poland, which territorially was moved 300 miles west at the expense of Germany and to the benefit of the Soviet Union. As for Germany, the three leaders agreed it must be disarmed and de-Nazified, though

they differed over Stalin's proposal for its complete dismemberment and the extraction of \$20 billion in reparations. Finally, the Big Three agreed to create the **United Nations** in hopes of resolving future security issues. Despite the agreements, it soon became clear that the Anglo-Americans and Soviets interpreted their decisions differently, particularly free elections. Later critics viewed Roosevelt's position as a "sell out" of Eastern Europe in order to gain Soviet support for the continuing war against Japan.

When the Allies next met at **Potsdam** in July 1945, the war in Europe had ended. In the interim, Roosevelt had died and his successor, **Harry Truman** (1884–1972), proved more suspicious of Stalin's intentions. Also, during the conference, Labour leader Clement Attlee was voted into office as prime minister, replacing Churchill. The Allies agreed to hold war crimes trials of the top Nazi leaders at **Nuremberg**, divide Germany into **four occupation zones**, and provide **reparations** for the rebuilding of the Soviet Union. However, disagreements between the United States and the Soviet Union deepened over Poland and the other Eastern European states. When the United States abruptly ended aid to the Soviet Union (but not Great Britain) in the spring of 1945 and developed its monopoly on atomic weapons, Soviet suspicions of American intentions mounted. By 1947, a series of disagreements led to a fracturing of the wartime alliance and open if often restrained conflict between the former allies.

### *Nature of the Conflict*

The Cold War played out as a complex, multipronged worldwide competition between the **superpowers** of the United States and the Soviet Union.

**Political:** The United States and the Soviet Union vied to spread their respective political influence throughout the world. Beginning in Europe, the Cold War soon spread to Asia, and eventually to the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. In some cases, direct control was exercised, as with the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe; in others, indirect economic control, as with U.S. policy in Latin America, proved sufficient to maintain bloc solidarity. The system of Liberal democracy and free markets became known as the First World, the Soviet system of planned economies and one-party rule as the Second World, and those nonaligned nations refusing to choose sides as the **Third World**, a term now used to signify less-developed nations. Both sides developed alliances to maintain collective security in their blocs. In response to the Berlin Crisis of 1948–1949, the United States entered into its first peacetime alliance, the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, later followed by **CENTO** in the Middle East and **SEATO** in Southeast Asia. When the West rearmed Germany in 1955, the Soviets responded with the **Warsaw Pact** to defend the Eastern bloc.

With its expressed goal of spreading world revolution, the Soviet Union created fear among the Western capitalist and democratic nations. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, President Truman relied on the expertise of a former diplomat and historian named **George Kennan** (1904–2005) to develop the strategy of **containment**. Containment employed a variety of techniques—war, diplomacy, aid, intelligence, funding rebel groups—to halt the spread of communism around the world. To support its new international presence, the U.S. Congress passed the **National Security Act (1947)**, which created the **National Security Council (NSC)** (also with a National Security Advisor) and the **Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)** and reorganized the Department of Defense. Numerous novels and films have since reflected the cloak-and-dagger spy battles between the CIA and Soviet KGB to gain the upper hand.

**Military:** Nuclear weapons technology led to an **arms race** between the two superpowers. The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic weapon in 1949, and both nations developed the hydrogen bomb in 1952–1953. Under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union in 1957

launched its first satellite—*Sputnik*—bringing the arms race to outer space. Fearing a so-called “missile gap,” the United States hurriedly worked to develop rocket technology, culminating with **Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs)** capable of reaching the Soviet Union from silos in America or Europe. By the 1970s, both sides combined boasted about 25,000 long-range nuclear weapons. In addition, many of these missiles contained multiple warheads able to fire at several targets once in the air; they were known as **MIRVed weapons (Multiple Independently-Targeted Reentry Vehicles)**. Moreover, each side developed nuclear submarines with the capacity to fire nuclear missiles from the depths of the ocean, forming a “**nuclear triad**”—on land, in the air, and under the sea.

An ironic consequence of the nuclear age was the doctrine of **Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD)**: neither side had an incentive to launch a first strike because it was sure to incur unacceptable casualties from the opponent’s missiles. Therefore, “missiles that kill people” kept the peace by precluding a nuclear strike, but “missiles that kill other missiles” (**Anti-Ballistic Missiles—ABMs**) threatened to upset the nuclear balance by providing an incentive to launch a first strike and were thus banned by the superpowers in a 1972 agreement. During the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union may have spent as much as 25 to 30 percent of its gross domestic product on military expenditures, a massive commitment of resources for a modern society and a tremendous drain on its economy.

**Economic:** Perhaps never in history had one nation so dominated the world economy as did the United States at the end of World War II. Fully 80 percent of the world’s trade passed through American hands, and 50 percent of the world’s productive capacity was American. The United States thus stood in the unique position of helping to rebuild the world economy, which it wished to do by promoting free markets and access to American goods. To pursue this goal, the United States extended aid to Europe in the form of the **Marshall Plan** (1947), aid that the Soviet Union prohibited its Eastern European satellites from accepting, viewing the plan as a capitalist plot aimed at the Soviet sphere. In response, the Soviet Union organized the Eastern bloc around the rival **Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON)**, an effort to create a specialization of production among its satellites.

As the Cold War expanded, the United States often exploited the power of its multinational corporations to control the economies of underdeveloped nations, particularly in Latin America. For example, when a socialist government was elected to power in 1954 in **Guatemala** with the intention of nationalizing U.S. fruit companies that dominated that nation’s banana industry, the U.S. government engineered a CIA-backed coup deposing the government. Many such underdeveloped nations and former colonies sympathized with the Soviet critique of capitalism and adopted state planning to promote internal development and gain control of resources vis-à-vis the former colonial powers of the West. Both superpowers often extended aid in strategic regions with the goal of gaining allies.

**Ideological:** At its heart, the Cold War represented a battle over rival views of the world, a combat of antagonistic ideologies. Each side hoped to win hearts and minds with propaganda. In 1946, Winston Churchill fired the first salvo in the war with a speech in Fulton, Missouri, when he announced that an “**Iron Curtain**” had descended across the continent of Europe, dividing the free peoples of the West from the oppressed peoples of the East. The United States established the Voice of America and **Radio Free Europe** to broadcast messages from “free and prosperous citizens” across the Iron Curtain. Internally, the United States in the 1950s plunged into a **Red Scare**, or McCarthyism (named after Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy), aimed at real and imaginary communist enemies in the upper reaches of government and in Hollywood.

Though Soviet propaganda tended to be more heavy-handed, it also aimed to control public opinion within its bloc. In 1948 the **Communist Information Bureau (Cominform)** was created to replace the old Comintern suspended during World War II. The notion that each side struggled for a cherished way of life—the future of civilization itself—added intensity to the Cold War not fully captured by traditional conceptions of geopolitical maneuvering.

### *Chronological Development of the Cold War*

This section is designed to suggest the scope and duration of the Cold War. It is divided chronologically into phases, with brief explanations of the main areas of conflict. Consider it a supplement to the previous conceptual overview.

#### **Beginnings, 1945–1953**

**The Cold War began with mutual suspicions related to Germany, control of Eastern Europe, nuclear weapons, and eventually the spread of rivalry into Asia.**

**1945:** Germany is divided into four zones of occupation—British, American, Soviet, and French. Additionally, the city of **Berlin** (entirely within the Soviet zone) is divided into four occupation zones. Germany and, more specifically, Berlin become the epicenter of the emerging Cold War.

The United States explodes atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, ending the Pacific War but also initiating the nuclear age.

Soviet troops occupy all of the nations of Eastern Europe except Albania and Yugoslavia. At first, coalition governments of socialist/communist parties rule along with democratic and/or free market parties.

**1946:** Winston Churchill delivers his Iron Curtain speech.

**1947:** The United States extends Marshall Plan aid to the nations of Europe to be funneled through the **Office of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC)** rather than to each nation individually.

Fearing the spread of communist insurgencies in Greece and Turkey, President Truman offers financial assistance to any nation facing “insurgencies by armed minorities.” Along with the Marshall Plan, this **Truman Doctrine** establishes the early outlines of a new interventionist approach by the United States in European affairs.

In most Eastern European nations, Western-backed parties are pushed out of power, while in Italy, elections vault the pro-U.S. **Christian Democrats** to leadership while limiting the influence of the usually strong socialist and communist Parties.

**1948:** Concerned over economic conditions in Germany and Soviet reparations policies, the United States, Britain, and France merge their three occupied German zones and introduce a new Deutschmark currency. In response, the Soviet Union imposes the **Berlin Blockade**, cutting the western part of the city off from rail and auto traffic, threatening to “starve it out.” Rather than confront the Soviets directly, President Truman begins the **Berlin Airlift**, an almost year-long enterprise designed to supply the basic needs of West Berliners.

**Heads Up!** The AP Exam almost always features an FRQ on the post-1945 period, as well as about six to eight multiple-choice questions. Though the chronology here addresses only one of the major themes of the postwar era—the Cold War—be careful of treating the post-1945 era as “current events” trivia. Continue to link specifics to themes to guide your studying and prevent getting lost amid the “forest.”

## Section II: Content Review

Noncommunists are kicked out of the **Czechoslovakian** government in a **coup**. The leader of the noncommunists, Jan Masaryk, is later found dead outside his window, either a suicide or murder.

**1949:** Stalin ends the Berlin Blockade, admitting the public relations defeat. The division of Germany becomes formal with the creation of the **Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany—FRG)** and the **German Democratic Republic (East Germany—GDR)**. Under American leadership, Western Europe forms a mutual defense system known as NATO to defend against future Soviet provocations.

Communists under **Mao Zedong** (1890–1976) gain control of the Chinese mainland, driving the nationalists onto the island of Taiwan. In addition, the Soviet Union explodes its first atomic bomb. These two events spur the Red Scare in the United States.

**1950:** Communist North Korea invades the Western-backed government of South Korea. Taking advantage of the Soviet boycott of the Security Council, President Truman builds a UN coalition to combat the invasion and signify the American commitment to the policy of containment. The **Korean War** would drag on for three years and involve fighting between the United States and China.

**1953:** Joseph Stalin's death opens a new era in Cold War diplomacy. The Korean War ends with the division into North Korea and South Korea at the 38th parallel.

### **Coexistence and Confrontation, 1953–1970**

This period began with an effort at "peaceful coexistence," but rivalries reheated over Berlin, control of the vital Middle East, and Soviet intrusion into America's perceived sphere of influence in Latin America, which almost brought the superpowers to nuclear war in 1962.

**1954:** Vietnamese resistance fighters under communist leader **Ho Chi Minh** (1890–1969) defeat French colonial forces at **Dien Bien Phu**, leading to Vietnam's division along the 17th parallel between communist North Vietnam and Western-backed South Vietnam.

The United States supports a coup against socialist Guatemalan leader Jacobo Arbenz Guzman to prevent the nationalization of land owned by U.S. fruit companies.

**1955:** NATO agrees to rearm West Germany, leading to the Soviet creation of the Warsaw Pact alliance in Eastern Europe.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles announces the American policy of "massive retaliation," threatening an all-out nuclear attack in response to communist aggression anywhere in the world.

A **summit in Geneva**, Switzerland, between President Eisenhower (1890–1969) and Khrushchev leads to the evacuation of forces from Austria and its neutralization.

**1956:** Soviet leader **Nikita Khrushchev** (1894–1971) gives a "**secret speech**" to the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union condemning the excesses of the Stalin period and signals his goal of **de-Stalinization**. Khrushchev also suggests the possibility of "**peaceful coexistence**" between the capitalist West and communism.

Taking their cue from Khrushchev, the leadership of the Polish and Hungarian communist parties begins a liberalization of economic and intellectual life. The **Hungarian revolt** goes too far for Khrushchev and is crushed by Soviet forces.

**1957:** Soviet leaders announce the launching of the first satellite into outer space—*Sputnik*. The United States follows with the creation of the **National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA)**, indicating the beginning of the space race.

**1959:** Leftist forces under **Fidel Castro** (1926– ) overthrow the U.S.-backed government of **Cuba**. Castro nationalizes the sugar industry, seizes American assets, and establishes strong ties with the Soviet Union.

**1960:** Soviet forces shoot down a **U-2 spy plane** over Russian territory, forcing the United States to recant previous statements denying such flights. The incident forces the cancellation of a planned superpower summit.

**1961:** A U.S.-backed invasion of Cuba by exiled Cubans ends disastrously with the capture of such forces at the **Bay of Pigs**.

Another crisis over control of the city of Berlin leads to the erection of the **Berlin Wall** by East Berlin to prevent its citizens from escaping to the West.

**1962:** Soviet plans to install nuclear missiles in Cuba lead to a two-week crisis, pushing the world to the brink of nuclear war. The **Cuban Missile Crisis** ends when **President Kennedy** (1917–1963) assures Khrushchev that the United States will not invade Cuba in exchange for the removal of the missiles.

**1963:** The superpowers agree to the creation of a **Hot Line** establishing direct contact in times of crisis. In addition, the two sides, along with Great Britain, agree to the **Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**, prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons underground, in outer space, or under water.

**1964:** America's commitment to fighting in Vietnam, between the communist north and U.S.-backed south, deepens with the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**, allowing **President Johnson** (1908–1973) greater latitude to involve American forces.

**1967:** Israel attacks its Arab neighbors and seizes the West Bank, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights. In this **Six-Day War**, the United States backs Israel while the Soviets support Arab forces.

**1968:** Soviet forces crush the Czechoslovakian reform movement, known as the "**Prague Spring**," and announce the **Brezhnev Doctrine**, whereby a perceived threat to socialism in one nation is taken as a threat to socialism everywhere.

### **Détente, 1970–1978**

A French term, *détente*, means an easing of tensions. During the decade, the superpowers work to normalize relations between their two rival blocs and to accept the permanent existence of the rival side.

**1970:** The **Treaty of Moscow** between West Germany and the Soviet Union establishes diplomatic relations between the two nations and recognizes the split between East and West Germany. Soon after, both nations are admitted to the United Nations.

**1972:** Soviet and American negotiators agree to the first limitations on nuclear weapons, the **Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I)**, which also recognizes the nuclear parity that exists

**Sidebar:** The question of weapons in outer space continued throughout the Cold War with the development of ICBMs. Also, in the 1980s, President Reagan became committed to an antimissile shield, known as the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which caused increased friction with the Soviet Union. In the long run, Gorbachev's concern over the high cost of this project helped end the Cold War. The United States recently abandoned the 1972 ABM treaty.

## Section II: Content Review

between the superpowers. In addition, both sides agree to an **Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty** to reduce the potential for a first-strike launch.

**President Nixon** (1913–1994) becomes the first U.S. president to visit the People's Republic (Communist) of China, which leads to formal diplomatic relations later in the decade.

**1973:** The United States removes its last major military units from fighting in Vietnam. In 1975, North Vietnam captures Saigon, the South Vietnamese capital, ending the war with Vietnam's unification under communism.

**1975:** Signed by all the nations of Europe, including the United States, Canada, and USSR, the **Helsinki Accords** bring a formal end to World War II by acknowledging existing national boundaries. In addition, human rights provisions open the door for dissent within the Soviet Union and in the Eastern European satellites. This represents the height of détente.

### Revival and End, 1979–1991

The period of détente ended with a series of actions by both the United States and the Soviet Union that increased Cold War tensions. However, Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to leadership of the Soviet Union helped bring an end to the Cold War by the late 1980s.

**1979:** To prop up a communist regime on its border, the **Soviet Union invades Afghanistan**, bogging it down in a Vietnam-style quagmire until 1988. In response, the U.S. Senate refuses to ratify the SALT II agreement to limit nuclear weapons, and **President Carter** (1924– ) limits grain shipments to the Soviet Union and boycotts the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. Further, the United States provides aid to Afghan freedom fighters known as the *mujahadeen*.

**1983:** President **Reagan** (1911–2004) denounces the Soviet Union as the “evil empire” and pledges to install intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe. World concerns grow over the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the dangers of nuclear power.

A Korean commercial jet strays into Soviet airspace and is shot down by Soviet forces, killing all 269 people aboard.

**1985:** **Mikhail Gorbachev** (1931– ) becomes the new Soviet leader and works toward an internal reform of the Soviet system that requires a reduction in Cold War tensions.

**1987:** After several inconclusive superpower summits, Reagan and Gorbachev agree to the **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty**, which eliminates an entire class of weapons on European soil.

**1988:** Gorbachev withdraws the final Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

Reagan and Gorbachev sign the **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)**, which reduces the number of long-range missiles on both sides.

**1989:** Communist governments in Eastern Europe collapse as Gorbachev refuses to employ Soviet troops to defeat the peoples' revolutions. The **Fall of Communism** results in the end of Germany's division (by 1990) and the movement toward democracy and free markets in the former Soviet satellites.

**1991:** After a failed coup by communist hardliners fails, the **Soviet Union collapses** into its member national republics. Soviet President Gorbachev resigns with the official end of the USSR.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS SINCE 1990

The first opportunity to test the post-Cold War diplomatic order was the **Gulf War**. In 1990, Iraqi forces under command of leader Saddam Hussein (1937– ) invaded Kuwait, claiming it as a historic province of Iraq. Ironically, the United States lent support to Hussein during the brutal Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), which followed Iran's Islamist revolution against the U.S.-backed government of the Shah and subsequent hostage crisis of U.S. embassy personnel. **President George Bush** (1924– ) pledged that the aggressive action "would not stand" and secured agreement from both the Soviet Union and China on the UN Security Council for a multinational force to liberate Kuwait. With minimal casualties, the U.S. **Desert Storm Operation** of 1991 defeated Iraqi forces in Kuwait but left Saddam Hussein in power.

**Heads Up!** Since the Test Development Committee creates the AP Exam several years before its administration, don't feel that you need to study "current events." However, topics such as the end of the Cold War, conflicts in Yugoslavia, and European unity have appeared on the exam recently.

Following World War II, the United States became more deeply involved in the Middle East, driven by securing strategic oil supplies and supporting its Israeli ally. The presence of American military bases and troops in many undemocratic Middle Eastern nations, as well as U.S. support for Israel, inspired terrorist incidents beginning in the 1970s, such as the **Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO)** killing of the Israeli Olympic team in 1972 in Munich and the hijacking of Western airliners. Such terrorist incidents caused concern for the U.S. government but posed no direct threat on American soil.

That changed when **al-Qaeda**—a terrorist group supported by the radical Islamist **Taliban** regime in Afghanistan—crashed hijacked commercial jets into the World Trade Center in New York City, a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on **September 11, 2001**, causing the deaths of 3,000 people. In response, **President George W. Bush** (1946– ) pledged a "war on terror." With broad international support, American forces successfully deposed the Taliban regime in Afghanistan but without capturing (at this writing) the top leadership of al-Qaeda. However, the Bush administration's subsequent **War in Iraq** (2003), based on the presumption of Saddam Hussein's possession of "weapons of mass destruction," won only limited support among its European allies and caused a rift in the alliance. These incidents remind us that the end of the Cold War has not eliminated conflict from the world, and, if anything, how a U.S.-Soviet rivalry often restrained its junior partners from initiating potential confrontations among the superpowers.

## THE SOVIET UNION: FROM SUPERPOWER TO COLLAPSE

### *Cold War Repression under Stalin*

Stalin continued repression in the Soviet Union during and especially after World War II. Rigid controls over economic, intellectual, and cultural life resulted in millions of persons being sent to forced labor camps (gulags) for deviations from the official "line." During Stalin's final years, the KGB (secret police) increased in power; right before Stalin's death, official anti-Semitism led to fabricated charges against a group of Jewish doctors accused of poisoning Kremlin officials. Fortunately for the accused, Stalin died before a new round of executions and imprisonment could commence in the so-called "doctor's plot."



### ***Khrushchev's Abortive Reforms***

After a short period of collective leadership in the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev emerged as the secretary general of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Khrushchev secured his leadership by distancing himself from his predecessor, initiating a campaign of de-Stalinization with a 1956 speech. Soviet intellectual life opened up somewhat, as writers were encouraged to publish some of the excesses of the Stalinist period. One example is Alexander Solzhenitsyn's grim depiction of the gulag system, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962). Khrushchev dramatically stated his goal of surpassing the U.S. economy by 1980 with the phrase "We will bury you." Despite Soviet space successes like *Sputnik*, Khrushchev's **decentralization** of the economy and focus on **consumer goods** failed to come close to overtaking American productivity. More important, Khrushchev failed to fix the woeful productivity of Soviet collective farms; his so-called "**virgin lands**" project of opening Soviet Central Asian lands to cultivation did little to address the bureaucratic structure of Soviet agriculture. Khrushchev found his way blocked by party bureaucrats, known as *apparatchiki*, who feared the effect of his reforms on their power. Along with his provocative foreign policy failures over Cuba, Berlin, and the break with communist China, Khrushchev's incomplete reforms led to his downfall in 1964.

### ***Nuclear Parity and Domestic Drift: Brezhnev***

Soviet life in the era of **Leonid Brezhnev** (1907–1982) reminds one of the Potemkin villages in the era of Catherine the Great (see Chapter 9)—a glittering façade of power to the outside world that hides the rot within. Party leaders specifically selected Brezhnev for his status quo credentials; his goal was "**no experimentation**," that is, to maintain the influence of the army, *apparatchiki*, and state-owned industrial enterprises. Brezhnev did preside over an important diplomatic achievement—nuclear parity with the United States by the 1972 SALT agreement. In addition, Soviet leaders could boast one of the most formidable space programs, scientific communities, and Olympic athletic successes. With the Brezhnev Doctrine (see previous discussion), the Soviet Union stood poised to maintain its sphere of influence on its borders without American interference. However, these successes could not compensate for the staggering Soviet economy. Successive Five-Year Plans barely met established quotas and hid the fact that in an emerging computer age, the nation continued to focus on production of heavy industry—tractors, steel, construction equipment. Economic life drifted amid a **lack of consumer goods** and productivity. Many workers failed to show up for work (**absenteeism**), and **alcoholism** became rife. Important indicators of social health, such as **infant mortality**, **suicide**, and **life expectancy**, experienced troubling reversals.

**Sidebar:** Though technically Gorbachev failed in his reforms, he will likely be considered one of the key figures of the twentieth century for helping to end the Cold War. Also critical for their lifelong opposition to communism and role in the events of the 1980s are President Reagan and Pope John Paul II.

### ***Gorbachev: Perestroika and Glasnost***

Soviet leadership in the late 1970s and early 1980s resembled a geriatric ward. Following Brezhnev, two aged leaders maintained the status quo. When Mikhail Gorbachev was chosen as general secretary of the CPSU in 1985, he came as breath of fresh air to the Soviet Union. At 54, he was the youngest member of the Politburo. Gorbachev recognized the problems within both the Soviet economy and social life; he hoped to save the Soviet system by creating "**socialism with a human face**." The centerpiece of Gorbachev's reform movement was *perestroika*, or restructuring, of the centrally planned Soviet economy. Gorbachev wished to promote production of more consumer goods and to decentralize control of the ineffi-

cient state-owned enterprises. The new Soviet leader underestimated the entrenched power of Soviet bureaucrats and soon added another fundamental principle to his reform—*glasnost*, or openness. Soviet citizens were encouraged to discuss openly the failures of the past; an underground press, *samizdat*, came out into the open, as Gorbachev allowed Soviet Jews to emigrate and promoted religious freedom. Nuclear disaster at **Chernobyl** in 1986 actually strengthened Gorbachev's hand by demonstrating the vital need for Soviet modernization and reform.

By 1988, Gorbachev found himself in an increasingly difficult position, pinched between hard-line defenders of the old system and "shock therapy" advocates of free-market capitalism. Agriculture presents a good example of the Soviet leader's dilemma. Gorbachev allowed small farmers to lease plots from the government collectives, but the state remained the sole owner of the land. As a result, commercial agriculture never developed, and productivity remained low. Politically, Gorbachev moved power from the party over to state institutions, as with the creation of a **Congress of People's Deputies**, which then elected him president. Dramatic by any standard, these reforms nonetheless proved inadequate either to save the old system or create a new one. Ironically, as approval for these measures plummeted in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's reputation and celebrity in the West skyrocketed as the liberator of Eastern Europe and an ender of the Cold War.

Reformers and defenders of the old system both began to lose faith in Gorbachev. Many reformers turned to the newly elected maverick president of the Russian republic—**Boris Yeltsin** (1931– )—who had been expelled from the CPSU by Gorbachev in 1987. More important, *perestroika* and *glasnost* had inadvertently sparked **independence movements** by the many ethnic minorities within the Soviet empire, particularly among the Baltic republics. Gorbachev veered between threats of force and conciliation to prevent the break-up of the USSR. However, the Soviet leader worked out a "**union treaty**" with the 15 republics (except for the Baltic States and Georgia) for greater autonomy within the USSR to take effect in August 1991. Before the treaty could become operative, however, communist hard-liners attempted to overthrow Gorbachev. The **August 1991 coup** failed miserably due to lack of planning, popular resistance, and the leadership of Yeltsin, who gained in stature by courageously opposing the illegal action. Gorbachev returned to power, but not for long; Yeltsin outlawed the Communist Party in Russia, and the Soviet Union was voted out of existence by the federation council of the various republics. The entity that had coincided with and helped define the turbulent twentieth century no longer existed.

### *Russia since 1991*

Russia's history since 1991 has been a troubled one. Following the collapse of the USSR in 1991, 12 republics agreed to form the loose **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)**. Like Gorbachev, Yeltsin found himself pushed back and forth between bold reform and repression. Pushing for a "strong presidential republic," Yeltsin in the spring of 1993 dissolved the legislature and called for new elections. Hard-liners in the legislature refused to leave the building, leading to a violent clash that left 100 dead. Though Yeltsin won the battle and his new constitution took effect, public support for reform flagged, as shown by the return of communists and Soviet nationalists to the new Duma. In addition, Yeltsin from 1994 to 1996 bogged the now-decrepit Russian army down in an ethnic conflict with separatist **Chechnya**, a small Islamic enclave. The conflict continues to this day with terrorism and atrocities on both sides.

Before his resignation in 1999, Yeltsin sponsored the rise of his handpicked successor as president, **Vladimir Putin** (1952–). Putin has worked to advance Russia's independent position in world affairs, promote economic development, and centralize state authority. After his reelection in 2004,

Putin's presidency has been marked by an increase in state control of the media and repression of internal opponents of his regime. Some fear Putin will establish an authoritarian regime as a "good tsar" to see Russia through its political transition. By some measures, Russia has gained much since 1985, including democratic institutions, private property, and freedom of religion. However, Russia continues to face serious problems: terrorism in Chechnya, corruption in government, **inequality** between urban and rural areas, **organized crime**, a **decaying military infrastructure**, and **declining life expectancy**, just to name a few. Many of these stand as perennial themes of Russian history.

## EASTERN EUROPE: IN THE SOVIET SHADOW

### *Stalinization*

After suffering two invasions by Germany in 30 years and in keeping with its perennial expansion, Russia under Stalin was determined to create a buffer zone to its west. Disagreements over the fate of Eastern Europe helped precipitate the Cold War between the superpowers. By 1948, all but Albania and Yugoslavia lay firmly within the Soviet sphere of influence. To combat the Marshall Plan, the Soviet Union developed its own framework for integration in the East known as COMECON. Communism and socialism in Eastern Europe found wide appeal after the war anyway, but Stalin wanted to assure himself of pro-Soviet communist regimes on his western border and so forced purge trials of any independent-minded homegrown leftists. Therefore, the Soviet Union imposed Stalinist regimes on the Eastern European satellites, a trend that involved the following to greater or lesser degrees:

- **One-party police states**—Once the Cold War broke open, all political parties but the Communist Party and its direct allies were banned. Eastern European states closely controlled speech, culture, and religious expression.
- **Planned economies**—The Soviet model of centralized control via party bureaucrats was exported to Eastern Europe. Moreover, the USSR assigned specific economic roles to the various nations, with, for example, East Germany focusing on heavy industry, Romania on oil production, and Bulgaria on agricultural products.
- **Collectivization of agriculture**—During the interwar period, most Eastern European states redistributed land to peasants in smaller plots. The Soviet Union now reversed this trend by requiring its satellites to collectivize agriculture and establish communal farms; in the more Western-oriented nations such as Poland and Hungary, this process did not include all farmland.

These policies fomented discontent among key segments of the populations of Eastern Europe—small farmers, the middle class, nationalists, and intellectuals. However, the ever-present fear of Stalinist repression kept a tight seal on such discontent.

### *De-Stalinization, Revolt, and the Brezhnev Doctrine*

Stalin's death in 1953 prompted revolts and hopes for change. East Berliners toppled statues of Stalin, but their revolt was quickly suppressed. A more momentous push for change came with Khrushchev's official policy of de-Stalinization in 1956. Several Eastern European states took the Soviet policy as their cue to liberalize their own economic and political systems.

Communist leaders in Poland and Hungary wished to establish a system more in keeping with national traditions. Polish party officials turned to reformer **Wladyslaw Gomulka** (1905–1982), who halted collectivization of agriculture, relaxed control over the economy, and improved rela-

tions with Poland's strong Catholic Church. Soviet leaders warned the Polish leaders that their reform had gone too far, but Gomulka stayed in power by promising allegiance to the Warsaw Pact and because the Soviets faced a bigger issue in Hungary.

Events in Poland sparked protests in Hungary. The Communist Party replaced hard-line leaders with the former prime minister **Imre Nagy** (1896–1958), who had previously been expelled from the party for "deviation." Nagy freed political prisoners and worked toward liberalizing Hungary's political and economic system. When Nagy announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and called on the world to recognize his nation's neutrality, the Soviets forced the Hungarian Communist Party to depose Nagy and appoint **János Kádár** (1912–1989) as the new leader. Soviet tanks now rolled in and crushed the uprising, at the cost of about 100,000 lives. Over 200,000 Hungarians fled the country, and Nagy himself was captured and hanged. The message was clear: Reform must not threaten the Soviet sphere of influence.

Despite the failed promise of de-Stalinization and the imposition of even harsher Soviet controls after 1956, many Eastern European satellites continued to desire greater autonomy. As part of a worldwide youth protest movement, Czechoslovakia attempted to liberalize its communist system during the "**Prague Spring**" of 1968. Reformers within the Communist Party replaced its Stalinist leaders with the Slovak reformer **Alexander Dubček** (1921–1992). Dubček encouraged a new spirit of openness and promised the relaxing of political controls, all in an effort to create a humane socialism. Though Dubček reassured Soviet leaders regarding his nation's commitment to the Warsaw Pact, he ultimately could not control the euphoria of the movement in Czechoslovakia and the concern of the surrounding Warsaw Pact leaders, who feared the spread of reform to their own nations. In August 1968, Soviet troops ended the reform and declared in the Brezhnev Doctrine that deviations from the socialist line would not be tolerated. As with Hungary, the United States tacitly accepted the Soviet action.

### ***The Fall of Communism, 1989–1990***

The collapse of communism during 1989–1990 stands as one of the most momentous and surprising events of the twentieth century. Reasons for the collapse divide into (1) propellant forces toward change and (2) the *lack* of restraining forces against it. By the 1980s, the economies of the Eastern European states were losing ground to more technological Western Europe. Also, **high oil prices** and **inefficient state-owned enterprises** had created huge **government debts**. Politically, the desire for national autonomy, religious freedom, and political rights lingered under the surface of passive obedience. Given these conditions, the presence of the Soviet army *and* the satellites' agreement to maintain their borders (to prevent refugees from escaping) acted as the only checks on a revolutionary situation. When these props were removed by Gorbachev and some members of the Warsaw Pact, the Berlin Wall came tumbling down.

**Heads Up!** Episode 23 ("The Wall Comes Down") of the CNN Cold War series provides a helpful overview of the events addressed here. See the Web site for details: [www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/](http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/).

With this general context in mind, we survey developments in the major Eastern European nations leading to the collapse of communism:

**Poland:** Gomulka began as a reformer but eventually resorted to repression to maintain order. Price increases by the government in 1970 brought down Gomulka. His replacement, Edward Gierek, embarked on economic reforms, but his borrowing from the West forced upon the nation an austerity program. Once again, price increases in 1980 led to discontent and strikes by workers. Unique in a communist nation, workers founded an *independent* labor union called

**Solidarity**, led by the militant shipyard worker **Lech Walesa** (1943– ), which soon boasted a membership of 10 million workers. Emboldened by the Catholic Church and a newly elected Polish pope, **John Paul II** (r. 1978–2005), workers demonstrated for free elections and a share in government. Fearing Soviet intervention, the new communist leader **General Wojciech Jaruzelski** (1923– ) declared **martial law** in 1981. Walesa was arrested and Solidarity was driven underground. The situation drifted until Gorbachev embarked on his *perestroika* reforms, and then pressure on the satellites increased to liberalize their systems. By 1989, Solidarity had convinced the government to allow free elections, which resulted in a universal repudiation of communist rule, as Solidarity won all but one seat in the legislature. The following year, Nobel Peace Prize winner Walesa was elected president in a stunning reversal of fortunes.

**Hungary**: Following the Soviet crushing of the Hungarian revolt, János Kádár maintained strong political control while allowing a more decentralized economy, called “**communism with a capitalist facelift**.” By 1980s, like the other satellites, Hungary experienced economic stagnation and rising debt. Communist party leaders quietly pushed Kádár out of power in 1988 and soon opened the door to a more social democratic economy with **multiparty elections**. In an act of reconciliation with its past, Hungary rehabilitated Nagy and the other leaders of the revolt and provided a burial with honors for those who had been killed. More important for future events, Hungary removed the barbed wire “iron curtain” around its borders, triggering a flood of refugees from nearby East Germany.

**East Germany**: Since 1961, the aged and increasingly out-of-touch **Erich Honecker** (1912–1994) ruled East Germany strictly with the aid of the state police, the **Stasi**. East Germany possessed the strongest economy in Eastern Europe and had allowed stronger political and economy ties to West Germany as part of that nation’s *Ostpolitik*; however, East Germany’s leaders always felt insecure in the presence of their larger and more dynamic western sister, an insecurity that accounts for the Berlin Wall. When Hungary opened its borders, the action prompted a flood of refugees fleeing west via a circuitous route. When Gorbachev visited East Germany in 1989 to celebrate its 40th anniversary, he inadvertently sparked mass demonstrations calling for reform and open travel. Though Honecker contemplated military repression using the Stasi, the communist Politburo removed him and opened travel through the Berlin Wall. Soon after, a euphoric populace destroyed the hated symbol, and the communists were kicked out of power. Momentum became unstoppable toward the **unification of Germany**. With the approval of the four WWII Allied powers, including the Soviet Union, Germany was reunified in October 1990.

**Czechoslovakia**: Events in Eastern Europe began to resemble the proverbial snowball rolling down the hill. Inspired by the revolts in Poland, Hungary, and East Germany, mass demonstrations broke out in the fall of 1989 in the capital city of Prague. A group of intellectuals, Charter ‘77, led by the jailed playwright **Vaclav Havel** (1936– ), became a rallying point against the Stalinist regime. By this point, the communist leaders had lost both their nerve and any remaining moral authority; within weeks, the communist monopoly on power evaporated to be replaced by free elections, a free press, and emergence of Havel as the president of Czechoslovakia. Observers dubbed the nonviolent change the “**Velvet Revolution**.” Because of its democratic past, the nation moved quickly toward a multiparty political system and a free-market economy. In the aftermath, Slovakia pressed for independence, accomplished through the so-called **Velvet Divorce** that created the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993.

**Romania**: Since 1965, the iron-fisted **Nikolae Ceausescu** (1918– 1989) had ruled Romania. Ceausescu justified his regime by striking an independent pose in foreign policy—opposing the

Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and building friendly ties with Western nations. Through rigid one-person rule, Ceausescu wished to force Romania into the modern industrial age; however, Ceausescu compromised the nation's standard of living to pay off foreign debt and support his family's extravagant lifestyle. Ceausescu brutally crushed any opposition with his **Securitate** police. Encouraged by the revolts across Eastern Europe, protests broke out in the city of **Timisoara**, which the Securitate smashed, at the cost of hundreds of lives. Violent street battles broke out among the regular army, which now supported the revolutionaries, and the Securitate. Eventually, Ceausescu's forces collapsed and the dictator, along with his wife, was captured. Both were executed on Christmas Day 1989. The **National Salvation Front** reform movement emerged to oversee the nation's difficult transition to democracy and capitalism.

Following the Velvet Revolution, new president Havel proclaimed, "Czechoslovakia is reentering Europe." If it takes two wings to fly, then Europe finally seems ready to take flight—with both East and West. Many of the former Soviet satellites have since rejoined the West by entering NATO and the European Union (EU); for some nations, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania, the evolution toward parliamentary democracy and free markets has proven more painful but continues today.

### *Yugoslavia: The Balkans Again*

The most violent break from communism occurred in multiethnic Yugoslavia. A diverse collection of Slavic ethnic groups, Yugoslavia was in many ways an artificial state. Though Croats and Serbs speak the same language, the former historically were tied more to the West religiously (Catholicism) and politically, whereas the latter were oriented more toward Russia and Orthodox Christianity. During World War II, the Nazi invasion of 1941 led to the creation of a Croat fascist movement, the Ustashe, which committed atrocities against Serbs. Communist resistance leader Marshal Tito succeeded in liberating his nation from the Nazis while also resisting Soviet domination. To maintain control of Yugoslavia, Tito experimented with a decentralized though socialist economic system and a federation of ethnic states, kept tightly together by the authority of the Communist Party.

Following Tito's death in 1980, ethnic tensions reemerged and burst into the open with the events of 1989–1991. The Western-oriented republics—**Croatia**, **Slovenia**, and **Bosnia**—voted in 1991 for independence. However, significant minorities of Serbs lived in each of these regions, prompting a series of violent wars between 1991 and 1999. Led by the nationalist **Slobodan Milosevic** (1941–2006), Yugoslavia (now simply Serbia and Montenegro) attacked Bosnia to recapture Serb territory; in the process, Serbian troops engaged in "ethnic cleansing" campaigns against Bosnian Muslims involving mass killing, rape, and the destruction of homes. Croatian armies responded with their own atrocities against Serb civilians. Europe stood appalled and impotent at the sight of ethnic conflict thought to be a relic of the WWII era. Finally in 1996, NATO and the United States engineered a cease-fire and with the **Dayton Peace Accord**, the parties agreed to the partition of Bosnia, enforced by UN peacekeepers. Now Milosevic turned to the historically important province of **Kosovo**, populated primarily by ethnic Albanians known as Kosovars. To halt another ethnic cleansing campaign, **President Clinton** (1946– ) led a NATO bombing operation that once again led to an end of the killing and the placement of peacekeepers. By 2001, Milosevic had been voted out of office and placed on trial at The Hague, Netherlands, for crimes against humanity; however, he died in 2006 before his trial was completed.

**Heads Up!** Essay questions on the post-WWII period are likely to focus on thematic issues, such as Western European unity. While knowledge of internal policies and leaders of specific nations can be useful in this regard, make sure not to get mired in trivia; instead focus on the connection to the theme.

## WESTERN EUROPE: PULLING BACK AND TOGETHER

Western Europe lay in ruins in 1945. By the mid-1950s, however, it had experienced a remarkable recovery. How? First, the nations of Western Europe pulled back from their imperial commitments, either surrendering or losing their colonies, thus freeing themselves from the expense of defending empires. Second, the two world wars acted as an icy bucket of water in the face of extreme nationalism. After 1945, the peoples of Western Europe, prompted by the United States, worked toward economic and political unity. The Atlantic alliance (NATO) provided collective security while economic unity produced a stunning turnaround.

### *Recovery and Reconstruction*

Following World War II, Western Europe faced immense devastation. Important industrial areas had been bombed to oblivion, infrastructure lay in ruins, and regular economic structures such as currencies and trade had collapsed. Complicating recovery was the issue of **displaced persons (DPs)**—the 30 to 50 million refugees seeking relatives and shelter, and the ethnic minorities (mostly Germans) forcibly removed in the redrawing of postwar boundaries. What's more, harsh winters and poor harvests from 1945 to 1947 increased fears of the spread of communism.

With its dominant economy and readiness to enter decisively into European affairs, the United States offered Marshall Plan aid (totaling \$12 billion) to the nations of Europe. American leaders insisted that such aid be funneled through the Office of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) to promote unity—both for efficiency's sake and to create bloc solidarity as the Cold War heated up.

Learning lessons from the post-WWI settlement, industrial nations began creating international economic institutions even before World War II ended. The Allied nations in 1944 adopted the **Bretton Woods system**, which included an **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** for currency stabilization. Currencies were to be backed by gold and **exchange rates fixed** to ensure stability. Based on the strength of the U.S. economy, the dollar evolved into an unofficial reserve currency, at least until 1971 when President Nixon was forced to abandon the **gold standard** due to inflation, returning the industrial world to a system of "floating currencies." In addition, the **International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)** provided loans for the modernization of infrastructure (e.g., dams, roads, and sewers). To avoid the economic nationalism of the interwar period, Western nations worked toward a system of free trade. The informal **General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT)** worked toward the reduction and elimination of trade barriers and eventually gave way to the more formal **World Trade Organization (WTO)** in 1997. In all, these institutions performed admirably in regulating the world economy and promoting growth, though they came under increasing criticism from opponents of economic globalization in the 1990s.

Western European governments accepted the need for state management of a capitalist economy. **Keynesian economics** emerged as the reigning theory; states employed tax and budget policies to promote growth and cushion recessions. In Britain, the new Labour government signaled its commitment to full employment and the social welfare state by following the recom-

mendations of the wartime **Beveridge Report** (1942). Several states nationalized key industries, such as utilities and transport, to ensure the public welfare, but these new **mixed economies** (free markets *and* government regulation) did not approach the rigid controls of Soviet-style planned economies. European growth continued throughout the 1960s but stalled with the **oil shock** of the 1970s and 1980s. **Stagflation** (combination of inflation and unemployment) forced a reappraisal of Keynesian theory and a move to reduce the welfare state and government regulation in favor of **supply-side economics**.

### **Decolonization**

World War I shook Europe's control of its colonies, and World War II severed it. By 1945, most European nations no longer possessed the means or the inclination to continue as colonial powers. Also, the senior member of the Western alliance, the United States, generally opposed Europe's continued domination of colonial empires. Nonetheless, the road to independence proved rough in many cases both for the mother country and the colony. If you encounter this topic on the AP Exam, it is likely to be couched in a comparative framework. What follows are three approaches to decolonization.

**Great Britain:** The new Labour government lacked enthusiasm for the British Empire. After World War I, Britain ruled several areas of the world under **mandates**, a system of tutelage (protection and guidance) leading to independence. After World War II, Britain generally favored a strategy of "partition and run" for its colonies and mandates, encouraging the contending groups to sort out the political settlement. In the case of **Palestine**, a proposed partition in 1947 led to the founding of the **state of Israel** in 1948 and the first of several wars between Palestinians and Israelis. Both Hindus and Muslims had for decades urged Britain to leave India, led by Gandhi's campaign of nonviolent resistance. Britain's partition of the subcontinent in 1947 left Muslim East and West **Pakistan** divided between Hindu **India**; this geographic anomaly, along with dispute over the border region of **Kashmir**, has fed a succession of conflicts between Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India, both now nuclear powers.

In Africa, the push for independence accelerated after 1960 and is demonstrated by the increase in UN membership from the 51 original members to around 190 in 2000. Britain faced its most difficult situation in Egypt. After overthrowing the British-backed government in 1952, Egyptian leader **Gamal Abdul-Nasser** (1918–1970) announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal, sparking an invasion by British, French, and Israeli forces. The **Suez Crisis** of 1956 ended when the United States and the Soviet Union denounced the invasion and forced its withdrawal. This defeat is usually taken to signify the end of Britain's status as a world power. Britain's retreat from direct colonial control continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s in Asia as well, though many former colonies retained political and economic contacts with Britain through the commonwealth system.

**Low Countries:** During World War II, Japan "liberated" many Asian colonies of the European powers, including the Dutch East Indies. Even before the war, an Indonesian Nationalist Party under **Sukarno** (1901–1970) agitated for autonomy. After the expulsion of Japan in 1945, the movement actively sought independence. Attempts to subdue the revolt failed, and the Netherlands withdrew from the archipelago and refocused on European issues. After 1949, Indonesia faced a number of difficult transitional issues, such as a communist threat, government corruption, and political violence over East Timor (a Christian enclave among a Muslim majority). However, Indonesia has moved toward democracy and become a major economic and political power in Asia.



## Section II: Content Review

Belgium planned to grant independence to its African colony, the **Congo**, over a 30-year period following World War II. Faced with increasing pressures, Belgium changed its position and pulled out in 1960. Chaos ensued, due to separatist movements, rival political factions, and army mutinies. With UN support, Belgian forces returned in 1961 to restore order, but a leftist rebellion continued. Eventually, the Congo was ruled as a brutal and corrupt dictatorship by Mobutu Sese Seko. Because of the Congo's vast but untapped resources, its political problems spilled over into neighboring Burundi and **Rwanda**. The latter nation descended into ethnic violence in 1994 between rival tribes (Hutus and Tutsis); after several Belgian peacekeepers were killed, the nation pulled out of the country as the genocide continued.

**France:** To reestablish prestige after its poor showing in World War II, France was determined to hold onto its colonial empire. It soon faced a nationalist and communist insurgency in **Indochina** against the **Viet Minh**, led by Ho Chi Minh. The conflict represents an appropriate example of how communism and anticolonialism often became fused in the context of the Cold War. As noted earlier, the French were forced to withdraw in 1954, only to have the United States take up the battle in its own war in **Vietnam**. France's more agonizing war occurred in **Algeria**. Unlike Indochina, much of the Algerian population was French settlers, *colons*, and the postwar French government resolved to defend their interests. A militant and nationalist group, the **National Liberation Front (FLN)**, waged an almost eight-year war against the French, with atrocities on both sides. The war produced a crisis for the French government, eventually bringing down the **Fourth French Republic** and leading to the reemergence of Charles de Gaulle. President de Gaulle ended the war in 1962, despite opposition from the army, and granted Algerian independence.

As these examples demonstrate, European nations came to realize the inevitability of independence at different times and with varying approaches, some of which proved violent. Before refocusing on Europe, you should keep in mind that Europe's involvement with its former colonies did not end with independence—issues of terrorism, peacekeeping, guest workers, and colonial dependence continued.

### *Western European Unity and Economic Integration*

Putting aside the narrow nationalism that had brought them low, Western and Central Europeans moved incrementally in the postwar period toward economic and political integration. Key to this unity was the partnership between France and West Germany. In 1952, two practical men of business and politics, both from Alsace-Lorraine—**Jean Monnet** (1888–1979) and **Robert Schuman** (1886–1963)—proposed the **European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)** involving Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg (**Benelux nations**), and France, Italy, and Germany. The six nations ("**Inner Six**") eliminated tariff barriers and placed coal and steel production under a High Authority. Within five years, production had doubled. Flush with success, the Inner Six in 1957 adopted the **Treaty of Rome**, creating the **European Economic Community (EEC)** or **Common Market**, which worked toward the abolition of trade barriers, the free flow of capital, and common economic policies. In addition, the six agreed to coordinate their nonmilitary atomic research and development under the **European Atomic Community (Euratom)**.

**Heads Up!** To learn more about the structure and activities of the EU, visit the Web site [europa.eu/index-en.htm](http://europa.eu/index-en.htm).

At first, Great Britain stood aside from the Common Market, owing to its special relationship with the United States and its commonwealth. Later in the 1960s when the British changed their

minds, de Gaulle of France vetoed their entry for fear that Britain's overseas commitments would dilute European unity. Eventually, the British joined the EEC in 1973, along with Denmark and Ireland. During the 1980s and 1990s, more nations on the Mediterranean and in Eastern Europe, with the fall of communism, joined the growing community. After the passing of the oil shock of the 1970s, the European Community moved toward a stronger integration. In 1991, the member states signed the **Maastricht Treaty** aimed at creating a "single Europe." This new **European Union (EU)** was governed by an elected **European Parliament** and a centralized decision-making **European Commission** of civil servants and administrators. Recent expansion has increased the number of EU members to 25. More importantly, 12 EU members in 2000 adopted the new **euro** currency to replace their national currencies. Some have criticized the distant and bureaucratic nature of the EU—and indeed the movement toward a truly United States of Europe has moved in fits and starts and still lies a way off—but progress since the late 1940s has resulted in a trading bloc of 345 million, which accounts for 40 percent of the world's trade.

### *Western European National Politics*

Though the themes of Western Europe as a region take precedence, the AP Exam may feature several multiple-choice questions that require knowledge of specific nations or an FRQ in which one may usefully employ such knowledge. To keep this material to manageable size, I have included it in chart format.

Nation	Issues	Leaders/Groups	Events	Analysis
Great Britain	Since 1945, Britain has faced an older and less advanced economic infrastructure than the other Western European nations. In addition, it has battled high unemployment and its adjustment to a second-tier power.	* The Labour Party and the Conservative Party have alternated control of the government, with Labour working toward the expansion of the welfare state. * <b>Margaret Thatcher</b> (1925–) — ideological ally of President Reagan, Thatcher attacked the size of the welfare system, <b>denationalized industries</b> , attacked the power of labor	* <b>The "Troubles"</b> in Northern Ireland between the Catholic <b>Irish Republic Army (IRA)</b> and Protestants led to continued violence in Northern Ireland. * Thatcher launched the <b>Falklands War</b> with Argentina in 1982 over control of an island chain off of South America. The conflict aroused British nationalism. * In 1973, Britain joined the Common	Britain continues to face decaying industrial cities and lower economic productivity than its Western European partners. However, growth has increased under the Blair government, and many believe Britain will one day join the euro.

Section II: Content Review

Nation	Issues	Leaders/Groups	Events	Analysis
Great Britain		unions, and reasserted British power abroad. * <b>Tony Blair</b> (1953–)—current prime minister represents the New Labour, less union and more middle class, and has supported U.S. efforts against terrorism.	Market, but has not yet embraced the euro currency. * Britain has “devolved” political decision making to its various nations, such as Scotland and Wales. * A 1998 agreement between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland has Britain poised to solve its long “Irish Question.”	
France	The postwar <b>Fourth Republic</b> (1945–1958) struggled with the legacy of collaboration during the Vichy regime and political instability yet enacted important reform legislation. During the <b>Fifth Republic</b> (1958–) and under de Gaulle, France left the NATO military alliance and pursued a more independent	* <b>Charles de Gaulle</b> (1890–1970)—de Gaulle supported European integration but an independent foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States. * <b>Francois Mitterand</b> (1916–1996)—Socialist president from 1981 to 1995, Mitterand at first expanded the welfare state but was forced to retrench and “cohabit” with conservative	* In 1961, France pulled out of the NATO military alliance (remaining in the political alliance). * France developed independent nuclear weapons, known as the <i>force de frappe</i> . * <b>Student revolts</b> in 1968 led to violence in Paris and almost brought down the de Gaulle government. * <b>Colonial conflicts</b> in Indochina and Algeria caused	France benefited from its involvement in the EU and partnership with Germany. French assertions of political and diplomatic power have not always coincided with its economic power, which is second in Europe to Germany’s.

Nation	Issues	Leaders/Groups	Events	Analysis
France	line in foreign affairs, known as <b>Gaullism</b> . The Fifth Republic features a strong presidency.	prime ministers. * <b>Jean Monnet</b> (1888–1979)—architect of European unity.	internal political conflict and changes.	
(West) Germany	West Germany—Germany after its <b>reunification</b> in 1990—has worked to demonstrate its allegiance to <b>democracy</b> and the Western alliance by distancing itself from the Nazi past.	* <b>Konrad Adenauer</b> (1876–1967)—known as the “founding chancellor.” He led the <b>Christian Democratic Party (CDs)</b> , a right-center party favoring laissez-faire economics and close ties to the United States * <b>Ludwig Erhard</b> (1897–1977)—economic minister and brains behind Germany’s <i>Wirtschaftswunder</i> (“economic miracle”). * <b>Willi Brandt</b> (1913–1992)—Socialist chancellor whose <i>Ostpolitik</i> (opening to the East”) led to normalized relations between East Germany and the Soviet Union. * <b>Helmut Kohl</b> (1930– )—Christian Democratic	* In 1955, Germany rearmed and joined NATO. * Germany joined the UN in the 1970s as part of détente. * German reunification came soon after the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989.	Germany seems firmly established as a democracy and committed member of the Atlantic Alliance. Reunification cost trillions of marks and the eastern part of Germany still suffers from higher unemployment and environmental problems. Germany’s economic strength and potential makes it the strongest member of the EU.

Section II: Content Review

Nation	Issues	Leaders/Groups	Events	Analysis
(West) Germany		(CD) chancellor who oversaw German reunification.		
Italy	Following World War II, Italy <b>abolished</b> the <b>monarchy</b> and worked toward economic modernization. Leftist parties proved resilient, and Italy's parliamentary system has produced more than 60 different governments since 1945.	* <b>Alcide de Gaspari</b> (1881–1954)—Christian Democratic prime minister who helped establish Italy's new parliamentary system and membership in the Atlantic alliance. * Socialists finally gained power in 1983 but their policies differed little in practice from the CDs.	* In 1946, Italians by a small majority voted to abolish the monarchy for its involvement in fascism. * " <b>Eurocommunism</b> " became a continental movement—communist parties who rejected ties to the Soviet Union and the more radical features of Marxism-Leninism. * In 1993, Italy restructured its system of <b>proportional representation</b> , which has allowed for longer-lived governments and more stability.	Italy recovered economically after the war, but was hard hit by the <b>oil shock</b> . It continues to deal with lack of development in the south and corruption in government.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Ash, Timothy Garton, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (1993)—The author examines the roots of German reunification.

Ash, Timothy Garton, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* (1993)—A gripping journalistic account of events in Eastern Europe during the fall of communism.

Gaddis, John Lewis, *The Cold War: A New History* (2005)—A noted diplomatic historian incorporates the latest interpretations of the conflict.

Holbrooke, Richard, *To End a War* (1998)—An American diplomat tells the story of the Bosnian conflict from a first-person perspective.

Huntington, Samuel, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1996)—The author argues controversially that the post-Cold War world will experience rising conflicts over culture and religion.

Kennedy, Paul, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict, 1500–2000* (1987)—With broad historical perspective, the author examines the importance of economic productivity and “imperial overreach” in the rise and decline of great powers.

Lewis, Flora, *Europe: The Road to Unity* (1992)—A thematic and nation-by-nation study of Europe on the verge of economic and political unity.

Matlock, Jack, *Reagan and Gorbachev: How the Cold War Ended* (2004)—The American ambassador to the Soviet Union recounts events of the final phase of the Cold War.

Mazower, Mark, *The Balkans: A Short History* (2000)—Provides a brief introduction to a complex region.

Remnick, David, *Lenin’s Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire* (1993)—A journalist’s account of the fall of the Soviet empire.

Sherwin, Martin, *A World Destroyed: The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance* (1975)—This study examines the impact of America’s atomic monopoly on the beginnings of the Cold War.

[www.almaz.com/nobel/peace/1990a.html](http://www.almaz.com/nobel/peace/1990a.html)—Biographical information related to Mikhail Gorbachev, including primary sources.

[www.wall-berlin.org/gb/berlin.htm](http://www.wall-berlin.org/gb/berlin.htm)—This site provides a history of the Berlin Wall, along with photographs.

[www.ihf-hr.org/index.php](http://www.ihf-hr.org/index.php)—This site provides the latest information on the state of human rights in the world.

[www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2002/01/01/sights\\_n\\_sounds/media.1.2.html](http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2002/01/01/sights_n_sounds/media.1.2.html)—Sponsored by National Geographic, this site offers maps, sources, and multimedia clips on European integration.

[www.ibiblio.org/expo/soviet.exhibit/entrance.html](http://www.ibiblio.org/expo/soviet.exhibit/entrance.html)—This exhibit provides a Soviet perspective on Cold War events.

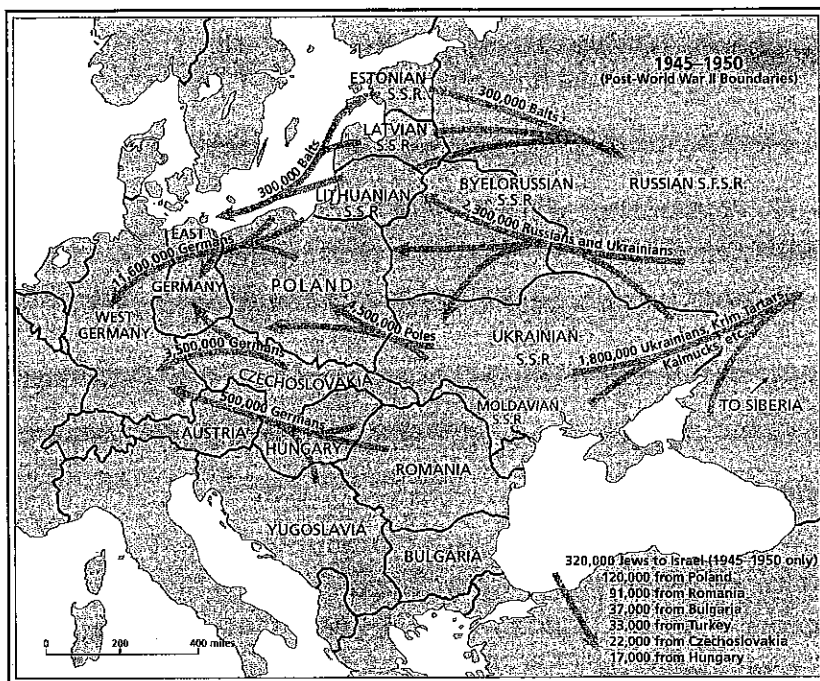
[www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/](http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/)—A companion Web site to the CNN series on the Cold War. The series contains 24 episodes with footage of events, interviews with participants, and commentary by historians. A valuable and user-friendly resource.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following accurately characterizes a major cause of the Cold War?
  - a. the early Soviet monopoly of nuclear weapons
  - b. American designs on controlling Eastern Europe
  - c. disagreements over whether to de-Nazify Germany
  - d. the superpowers’ differing political systems
  - e. Soviet offers of economic aid to Western Europe

Section II: Content Review

2. The movements of populations in the map below can best be explained as:
  - a. the result of expulsion and boundary changes following World War II.
  - b. treaty agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union partitioning Europe.
  - c. refugees fleeing to new economic opportunities in Western Europe.
  - d. cultural exchanges designed to rebuild harmony following the war.
  - e. invasion routes of guerilla armies that thrived in the postwar chaos.



3. The statement below is taken from which of the following Cold War agreements?
  - a. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
  - b. Communist Information Bureau (Cominform)
  - c. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
  - d. Marshall Plan
  - e. Helsinki Accords

*"The Parties reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."*

4. Stalinist control of Eastern Europe involved imposition of all of the following EXCEPT:
  - a. a one-party communist state.
  - b. collectivization of agriculture.
  - c. a command economy.
  - d. adherence to Soviet foreign policy.
  - e. independent development of nuclear weapons.

5. As leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev's (1985–1991) primary goal was to:
  - a. end the Cold War with the United States.
  - b. save socialism through reform and openness.
  - c. liberate the ethnic minorities of the USSR.
  - d. reassert Soviet control over Eastern Europe.
  - e. introduce a laissez-faire economic structure.
6. A major political development in Western Europe after World War II was:
  - a. the rise of socialist parties that gained power in the 1960s.
  - b. the movement toward common economic and political policies.
  - c. withdrawal of Great Britain from the Atlantic alliance.
  - d. the renewal of nationalism and territorial conflicts.
  - e. America's increasing disengagement from European affairs.
7. Which of the following individuals played a major role in helping to bring about the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe?
  - a. Nicolae Ceausescu
  - b. Erich Honecker
  - c. Imre Nagy
  - d. Leonid Brezhnev
  - e. Lech Walesa
8. How did the economic policies of Western European governments after World War II differ from those in the interwar period (1919–1939)?
  - a. Emphasis was placed on regulation and management of the economy.
  - b. High tariff barriers were enacted to protect domestic industries.
  - c. The gold standard was abandoned in favor of fluctuating currencies.
  - d. International organizations were avoided in favor of bilateral agreements.
  - e. Welfare programs were reduced in an effort to reduce budget deficits.
9. Which Western European power experienced the greatest degree of conflict in its decolonization efforts after 1945?
  - a. Belgium
  - b. the Netherlands
  - c. Great Britain
  - d. France
  - e. West Germany
10. The American policy of containment during the Cold War involved:
  - a. extending economic aid for humanitarian relief efforts.
  - b. easing tension with the Soviet Union through spheres of influence.
  - c. halting the spread of communism through a variety of means.
  - d. preventing the spread of Western Europe as a competing power.
  - e. invading Eastern Europe to liberate that area from Soviet oppression.

### **SAMPLE ESSAY**

*Compare and contrast the impact of the Cold War on the movement toward unity within Western Europe and Eastern Europe, respectively, in the period 1945–1960.*

The Cold War had a big impact on Europe after WWII. However, different parts of Europe were affected differently. Western Europe really gained a lot from being allied with the United States, but the East was dominated by the Soviet Union. In this essay, I will discuss



## Section II: Content Review

the different policies of the superpowers and how the Cold War created blocs of countries that opposed each other over the Iron Curtain.

Western Europe was ruined in 1945. At first, the United States did not know what to do about the situation. Soon conflict with the Soviet Union broke out over Berlin and free elections in Eastern Europe. To oppose communism, the United States tried to help rebuilt Europe; American leaders knew that communism could spread if conditions continued to be bad. So the United States provided Marshall Plan aid and promoted the unity of the West. NATO was created and West Germany was admitted into it. This alliance tried to defend against the spread of communism. Also, Western Europe began to pool their resources together. They created the Coal and Steel Society and eventually the Treaty of Rome to knock down tariff barriers. These two organizations promoted an "economic miracle" and helped Europe get back on its feet. Some leaders, like de Gaulle of France, did not like U.S. domination of Europe but most in the West realized that they needed an American ally to fight the Soviet threat.

The Soviet Union wanted to dominate Eastern Europe, because the Soviets were all about world domination. It was part of their Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Communist governments were imposed on the satellite nations, called this because they revolved around the Soviet Union. Oppression reigned in the East and all the bad features of communism were imposed on these nations—gulags, no free press, and rigid bureaucratic economies. Some states rebelled against the Soviet Union like Hungary, because of their domination. This did not help the unity of the East because it was unity imposed by the Soviet Union. This is shown later when the nations of Eastern Europe revolted against the USSR with the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late 1980s.

As you can see, the West benefited a lot from their association with the United States. Western European nations like France and Germany experienced great growth in their economies from 1945–60 and banded together to oppose communism. NATO protected them against the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the East was dominated by the Soviet menace. Nations had to toe the Soviet line or face invasion. So in the long run, the West was positively unified but East was negatively unified.

This response clearly addresses the tasks of the question, though unevenly. First, though the thesis is explicit, the introductory paragraph might include a few sentences of historical context regarding the postwar period. As for the body paragraphs, the essay tends to be one-sided. It is obvious that the student offers a negative view of the Soviet Union; though this view is based partly on fact, the student does not offer much evidence to support her position. Both paragraphs, but especially the one on Eastern Europe, would benefit from several additional examples. If this student advances a negative perspective on the USSR, the conclusion offers some opportunity to examine the effects of Soviet policies on Eastern Europe in the period after 1960. However, the student simply repeats several of the negative assessments provided earlier. On the positive side, the student remained within the bounds of the question and established a coherent thesis. Score: 6.

# CHAPTER 17

## Contemporary European Society and Culture

Wars not only reorder the balance of power and diplomatic structures, they also create major changes in society and culture. This truism certainly applies to the period following the end of World War II. Pent-up demand for products and the need for reconstruction fed an economic miracle, especially in Western Europe. Prosperity, in turn, promoted a population increase, consumerism, and technological advance. Most governments committed themselves to a more active role in economic regulation and ensuring a social welfare system. Renewed prosperity and the specter of the Cold War also worked a downside. Numerous groups of “outsiders”—students, feminists, environmentalists, terrorists—offered various critiques of European society in the years after 1945. Culturally, experimentation flourished in the postwar intellectual climate but also revealed divisions between traditionalists and modernists, and even postmodernists. Following World War II, Europe’s problems are increasingly seen in a global context.

**Note:** To users of Palmer, Colton, and Kramer, *A History of the Modern World*, this chapter concentrates on Chapter 27 of your text, but also includes additional material.

### THE ECONOMIC MIRACLE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Europe’s amazing recovery from the destruction of World War II produced a higher standard of living and increased life expectancy, but also resulted in negative side effects. In this section, we examine the social changes provoked by the changing European economy and the advance of technology.

#### *The Baby Boom and After*

The Great Depression and World War II had dampened European birth rates. After 1945, the Western world underwent a steady increase in the birth rate, known as the **baby boom**. Governments encouraged the trend in an effort to replace lost population from the war and also to allay a labor shortage in the period. State policies of **neonatalism** subsidized additional births, infant nutrition, and day care. Also aided by an influx of immigrants, Europe’s population increased by 25 percent between 1945 and 1970. With the onset of artificial means of contraception, particularly the **birth control pill**, in the 1960s, the birth rate trended downward after the mid-1960s. The baby boomers born in this interval and who grew up amidst prosperity and consumerism benefited from the increased standard of living but also came to criticize it, along with their parents’ values.

Since the 1970s, and especially since 1990, the population of many European nations, especially in the West, has stagnated. Some demographers forecast **negative population growth** for Italy and France over the next generation. This trend affects politics for two reasons. Government provision for generous retirement benefits must be funded by the taxes of the young. When these programs were first implemented, 20 workers funded the benefits of 1 retiree. That ratio has decreased to between three and five workers per retiree, creating a potential **entitlements time bomb** in the next few decades. Europe’s prosperity also attracts immigrants from Asia, the Middle East, and elsewhere. Greater ethnic diversity has increased social tension and led to the

## *Section II: Content Review*

growth of nationalist and **anti-immigrant political parties**. With the decline in religious observance among European Christians, it is estimated that **Muslims** will **outnumber Christians** in Europe by 2025. It is likely that this demographic shift will be attended by increased conflict, as witnessed by the clash over a Danish newspaper's publication in 2006 of cartoons satirizing Islam and Mohammed.

### *Growth of and Challenge to the Welfare State*

Western and Eastern governments both significantly expanded welfare benefits following World War II. In the Eastern nations, this trend coincided with the establishment of Marxist governments dedicated to social equality and providing the basics for all of their citizens. In the West, the trend was driven by the dominance of Keynesian economic theory and fears about socialist exploitation of class conflict. Western nations provided **old-age pensions, unemployment, and disability insurance**; subsidized or **socialized medical care**; and redistributed income through progressive taxation. For the most part, this "**social safety net**" proved popular, though it came under increasing criticism during the stagnant 1970s and 1980s.

The late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed a resurgence of conservative political parties in several nations, such as Great Britain and the United States. Leaders like British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Reagan criticized the overregulated economy and bloated government bureaucracy as causing the high inflation and unemployment of the period. Even socialist Francois Mitterand of France was forced to abandon the more ambitious elements of his social reform program by the mid-1980s due to budget deficits and stagnating productivity. **Supply-side economists** argued that economic productivity would result from a reduction of taxes, regulation, and government spending on the welfare state. Supply-side policies did produce growth in the 1980s and early 1990s, but leftist groups believed the costs too high in poverty, inequality, and decline of organized labor.

### *Consumerism and Its Critics*

Postwar prosperity brought a flood of new consumer goods. Pent-up demand from two decades of retrenchment during the Great Depression and WWII burst open with a spree of kitchen appliances, television sets, automobiles, and clothing fashions. **Mass marketing** techniques grew in sophistication, employing **TV spots** and **computer technology** to sell the "good life." Images and sounds of blue jeans and Coca-Cola were beamed across the Iron Curtain to demonstrate the superior abundance of Western society. Marketers often employed sexuality to sell products, a fact condemned both by religious conservatives and some feminists who decried the objectification of women. The Western economies (including the United States) began a shift away from traditional heavy industry toward services and information processing. While this **postindustrial economy** created new opportunities and wealth, it also gutted jobs from older industrial areas, such as the Midland cities of Britain—Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sheffield.

Many across the political spectrum—from traditionalists to socialists—found the new consumerism shallow and wasteful. Environmentalists objected to the waste of nonrenewable resources and levels of pollution. Socialists found confirmation of theories of Marxist alienation in Western society's high levels of crime, suicide, and social dislocation. British economist **E. F. Schumacher** (1911–1977) argued for balancing society's need for efficiency and productive centralization with humanistic values of community and the dignity of labor. In