

Subject : Junior Cycle History
Teacher : Niall Lenehan

LESSON 21
The Cold War

Learning Intentions

1. Understand the causes of the Cold War
2. Understand the importance and significance of the Cold War.

3.5 recognise the importance of the Cold War in international relations in the twentieth-century world

Key words -define these

Cold War

Nuclear War

Democracy

Space Race

Arms Race

Berlin Wall

Marshall Plan

Capitalism

Causes of the Cold War

1. Political differences

- The Soviet Union was a **Communist Country** – All property and businesses were state owned. There was only one political party and there was no free speech.
- US was a **Capitalist country** – Everybody has the freedom to gain wealth, own their own business and land with no interference from the government.
- The US was a democracy – People could vote for whichever political party they wanted and had freedom of speech.
- Both sides had **distrusted each other since WW2.**



2. The Iron Curtain

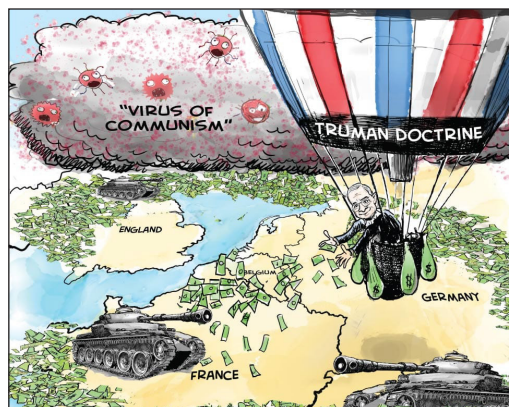
- After WW2, Stalin had installed Communist governments in eastern European countries such as East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Romania – These were known as '**satellite states**'
- The British and Americans feared that Communism would spread to other European countries.
- Winston Churchill called the line dividing that divided Europe, the '**Iron Curtain**'



Iron curtain dividing west (blue) and eastern Europe (red)

3. The Truman Doctrine (Containment)

- US President Harry Truman announced the 'Truman Doctrine'. This meant that the US would pledge **to help other countries resist the spread of Communism**.
- This would be done through military aid.
- This policy was also referred to as '**Containment**'.

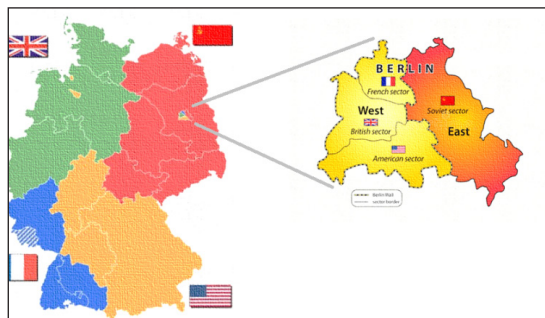


4. The Marshall Plan

- This was when the **US offered help to help the European economies** recover after the war.
- Stalin did **not allow Eastern European countries** under Communist control to receive any help from the Marshall plan.

The Berlin Blockade and Airlift, 1948-49

- The Allied leaders met at the **Yalta and Potsdam** conferences at the end of WWII. They decided that:
- Germany would be divided into 4 occupied zones – **American, Soviet, British and French**.
- **Berlin** would be divided into 4 zones.
- This division would be temporary.



Berlin was divided into 4 zones but lay within the Soviet zone of Germany

- After WW2, Germany was a **devastated country** and needed economic help.
- The Russians wanted a **permanently weakened Germany** that could not start another war.
- The Western Allies (Britain, France, USA) wanted to help **Germany become economically** strong again.
- Both sides disagreed over this.
- The Western Allies introduced a new currency to their zones called the **Deutschmark** – The Soviets **refused to allow this currency** into their zones.
- On 24 June 1948, The Soviets cut off all road, rail and canal links to West Berlin, leaving it **isolated in the Soviet zone** of Germany – The Berlin Blockade had begun.
- The Western Allies decided to supply Berlin by Air – This was known as **Operation Vittles**.
- They flew cargo planes full of fuel, medical supplies into Berlin for 11 months straight. In total, nearly **300,000 flights** were made into Berlin.



Berliners watch allied planes arrive into Berlin with supplies

The Consequences of the Berlin Airlift

- The Berlin Blockade showed that while there may be tensions between the **USSR and the West**, the **USSR was not prepared to go to war**.
- Two countries were established: **West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany)** and **East Germany (German Democratic Republic)** under Soviet control.
- The USA, Canada and other Western European powers formed **NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).
- The **Berlin Wall** was built in 1961: In the 1950's, many East Germans fled to West Germany as it was much **more prosperous**.
- The West offered **greater freedom and better job opportunities**. East Germany constructed a wall between East and West Berlin in 1961 to stop the migration of people to the west.
- This wall would last until 1989.



The Berlin Wall

The Korean War, 1950-53

Background

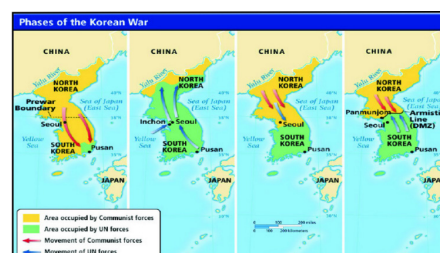
- At the end of WWII, Korea was divided along the **38th parallel** between North and South Korea.
- **North Korea was Communist** while South Korea was supported by America.
- In June 1948, The United Nations called for elections in both North and South Korea – Elections only went ahead in the South.
- **The Democratic Republic of Korea** was then set up in the North with Pyongyang as its capital.



North and South Korea

The Outbreak of war

- In June 1950, the North Korean army (Equipped by Soviets) **invaded the south**.
- US President Harry Truman sent **military support to South Korea**. The United Nations also sent an army to help them.
- **Mao Zedong** (Leader of Communist China) sent Chinese troops to help North Korea.
- The war continued in a see-saw fashion until 1953. The **election of President Eisenhower** in the US and the **death of Stalin** brought an end to the conflict in June 1953.
- Both sides agreed to maintain the border along the 38th parallel.



Recap exercise 21.1

- Q1.** Explain two key differences between the USA and the USSR.
- Q2.** Explain two causes of the Cold War.
- Q3.** Why did people flee from East to West Berlin?
- Q4.** Why did North Korea invade South Korea?

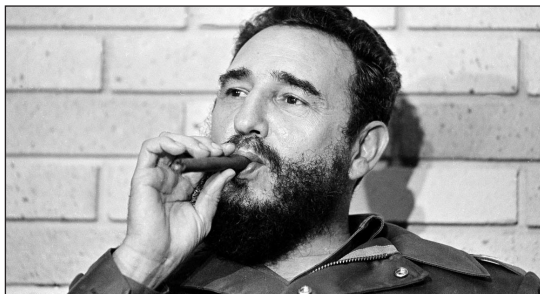
Consequences of the Korean War

- **Death toll:** 54,000 US troops were killed, 400,000 South Korean troops killed, 500, North Koreans died, almost 500,000 Chinese soldiers died.
- North Korea became a **communist totalitarian** dictatorship.
- South Korea became a prosperous democracy.
- America became Allies with Japan.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

Background

- In the 1950's, Cuba had a close relationship with the US – They had close trade links and the US supported the Cuban dictator, **Batista**.
- In 1959, **Fidel Castro** led a communist revolution and **overthrew Batista**.
- Castro took over Cuban sugar plantations and businesses. The US refused to buy sugar from Cuba.
- Russian leader **Nikita Khrushchev** helped the Cubans by buying their sugar and selling weapons to them.



Fidel Castro

The Bay of Pigs invasion

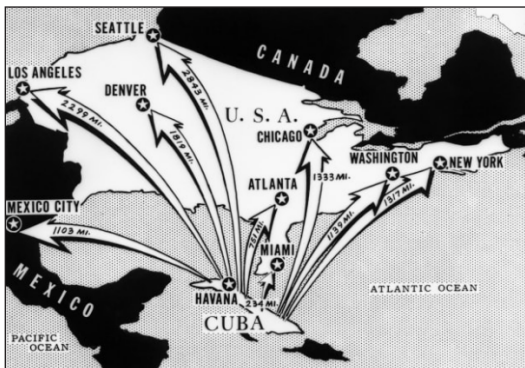
- The American **CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)** planned an invasion of Cuba by anti-Cuban exiles in April 1961.
- The Invasion was a failure and increased Soviet/Cuban relations.



The Bay of Pigs invasion

Soviet missile bases

- In 1962, Russian leader, Khrushchev **built missile bases in Cuba** which were within striking distance of the US.
- The US had their own missile bases stationed in Turkey.
- An American **U-2 spyplane** photographed these bases in Cuba. These Russian missile bases meant that now all US cities were within striking distance.



The range of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba



Soviet missile launch sites

On the brink of war

- US president Kennedy announced a **naval blockade of Cuba** until the missiles were removed.
- Soviet ships were continuing to sail towards Cuba
 - **A nuclear war was a real possibility.** There was a tense stand off between both sides.
- Both sides finally reached an agreement: The US promised **not to invade Cuba** and Kennedy **removed US missiles from Turkey**.
- The Soviets **dismantled their missiles in Cuba**.



"It was a perfectly beautiful night, as fall nights are in Washington. I walked out of the president's Oval Office, and as I walked out, I thought I might never live to see another Saturday night."

- Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, recalling the Cuban Missile Crisis

The Consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis

- The Crisis **nearly resulted in a nuclear war** – Both the Soviets and US pledged to never risk a direct nuclear war again.
- A Washington-Moscow '**hotline**' was set up so both leaders could talk directly in the event of any other hostilities.
- Both countries signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which stopped above ground **nuclear tests**.

The fall of the Soviet Union

- **Mikhail Gorbachev** became leader of the Soviet Union in 1985 – He wanted to reduce military spending and try to improve the lives of Soviet citizens instead.
- The Soviet economy had many problems and suffered food shortages.
- Gorbachev and **US President Ronald Reagan** began to reduce the arms race and reduce the size of their militaries and nuclear weapons.



- In 1988, Gorbachev declared that the Soviet Army would **not be used to keep communist governments in power** throughout the USSR – Many of these governments fell.
- In November 1989, the **Berlin wall was knocked down**. One year later, East and West Germany were reunited.
- Communism eventually completely collapsed in the Soviet Union in 1991.
- Gorbachev resigned and the Soviet Union officially broke up – **The Cold war was at an end**.

21.2 Exam Prep

Study this cartoon from November 1945. It is a comment relations between the USA(America) and the USSR(Russia) during the early days of the Cold War.



Images in the cartoon:

Bear
Eagle
Gulch/ravine
Dark clouds

Q1. From your study of the Cold War, name an incident which involved the USA, USSR, and one other country (Germany, Cuba, Korea etc).

21.3 Homework Correction

Q1. What was a direct impact from the cutting of fuel supplies?

It resulted in a lack of transport which hampered the distribution of food.

Q2. What evidence suggests to us that Irish people suffered from a severe lack of food?

We know there was a severe lack of food as an Irish civil servant recorded ghostly "half-starving people" begging for food, cursing Dublin and predicting famine.

Q3. Give an example of the 'alternative foodstuffs' that were used.

The alternative foodstuffs included watered down turf mould and black loaf.

Q4. Explain why Ireland remained neutral during WW2.

Ireland remained neutral during WW2 as the Irish military was not equipped or prepared to fight in a major war. Irelands economy was also very weak and could not support any war effort. Ireland also wanted to show that it was independent from Britain by not joining their side.