

Chapter 26: Cold War Conflicts

Section 1: Origins of the Cold War

-The US and the Soviet Union emerged from WWII as two "Superpowers" with vastly different political & economic systems.

Former Allies Clash

-Besides their communist & capitalist system, the US was furious at how Stalin at first supported Hitler, then only after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union he supported the Allies.
-The US & the Soviets became more suspicious of each other during the war.
-Relations worsened after Stalin learned about the secret development of the A-bomb.

The UN

*United Nations (UN)- April 25, 1945, the representatives of 50 nations met in San Francisco to establish a new peace keeping body.

-Both the US & the Soviet Union used the UN as a forum to spread their influence over others.

Truman Becomes President

-FDR died- Truman became president (12 April 1945)
-During his term as VP, Truman had not been included in top policy decisions.
-He did not even know about the development of the Atomic Bomb.

The Potsdam Conference (July 1945)

-"The Big Three"- The US, GB, & the Soviet Union met at the final war time conference at Potsdam near Berlin.

-At the earlier Yalta Conference, Stalin promised FDR that he would allow free elections in Poland & other parts of East Europe that he occupied. By July 1945, it was clear that he would not keep this promise.

Tension Mounts

-Truman was upset at Stalin's refusal to allow free elections.
-Truman's goal in demanding free elections was to spread democracy to nations that had been under Nazi rule. (Self-determination)
-After hard bargaining, it was agreed that the Soviet, British, Americans, & French would take reparations mainly from their own occupation zones within Germany.

Soviets tighten their grip on Eastern Europe

-Stalin installed communist govts in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, & Poland.

*Satellite Nations- countries dominated by the Soviet Union.

US Established a Policy of Containment

-February 1946- George F. Kennan- an American diplomat in Moscow, proposed a policy of *containment- taking measures to prevent any extension of communist rule to other countries.

-The policy began to guide the Truman administration's foreign policy.

-Western Europe was mostly democratic & Eastern Europe was communist. *"Iron Curtain"- came to stand for the division of Europe.

-Stalin felt that these words from Churchill were a "call to war".

Cold War in Europe

*Cold War- a conflict between the US & the Soviet Union in which neither nation directly confronted the other on the battlefield. (1945-1991)