Chapter 25 - The United States in the Cold War

Section 1 - Roots of the Cold War

Focus Question: How did the United States respond to the early stages of the Cold War?

I. Growing Distrust
   A. Differences between the Allies became apparent even before the end of the war.
   B. Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt met in Yalta in February 1945.
      1. Here Stalin promised to hold free elections in Eastern Europe, under his control, but instead he established communist governments.
   C. Churchill uses the term iron curtain, which refers to a barrier to understanding and information.
   D. By 1948, most Eastern European nations had become satellites of the Soviet Union.

II. Containing Soviet Expansion
   A. The Cold war began at a time when many Americans were worried about our nation’s leadership in Harry S Truman.
      1. Truman was not well known, but he showed his leadership qualities when faced with his first challenge of a communist-led revolt in Greece.
   B. The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan
      1. In March 1947, Truman asked Congress to aid Greece and Turkey and declared that the United States would try to stop the spread of communism.
      2. In a message to Congress, he stated what would become known as the Truman Doctrine.
         a) “It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” - Harry S Truman
         b) The policy became known as containment.
      3. Military aid would not be able contain communism alone.
         a) Much of Europe lay in ruins after the war and the Communists promoted the idea that capitalism could not repair the damaged economies of Europe.
         b) Secretary of State George Marshall proposed a plan, in June 1947, that called for the United States to provide economic...
Chapter 25- The United States in the Cold War

assistance to European nations this becomes known as the Marshall Plan.
(1) Between 1948 and 1951, the United States loaned over $12 million to 16 Western European nations.

C. The Berlin Airlift
1. At the Yalta Conference, Germany was divided into four zones, which would be controlled by France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union.
2. By 1948, the Western Powers believed it was time to reunite Berlin, but Stalin opposed this move.
   a) Stalin responded to this idea by setting up a blockade around Western Berlin.
   b) Instead, the Allies responded with the Berlin Airlift, sending food and other supplies to West Berlin for about a year.
   c) The Soviets then ended the blockade in May 1949.
3. The Western Allies combined their zones to create the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany.

D. Cold War Crisis
2. In August 1961, the East German government began to build a wall, the Berlin Wall.

III. International Organizations
A. Moving away from isolationism, the United States played a key part in the creation of the United Nations (UN).
B. The United Nations
1. The main goals of the UN were to maintain peace and settle international disputes.
2. The General Assembly and the Security Council make up the UN.
3. Every member nation has a single vote in the General Assembly, but it has no way to enforce the decisions that are made.
4. The Security Council on the other hand had more power they are able to enforce the decisions that are made.
   a) The Security Council is made up of 15 members, five of which are permanent
Chapter 25- The United States in the Cold War

including the United States, Russia, China, Great Britain and France.

b) Each permanent member has the power to veto and of one of the five rejects a proposal the Council cannot act.

5. The UN’s greatest success has not been in preventing war, but rather in fighting hunger and disease and improving education around the world.

C. NATO and the Warsaw Alliance

1. In April 1949, the United States and other Western nations created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which was a formal military alliance.


IV. The Shock of 1949

A. Until September 1949, most Americans believed they were safe, but in this month, the Soviet Union tested their own atomic bomb.

B. The second shock that Americans felt was when the Nationalist government in China collapsed under the pressure form the Communists.

1. Under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the Communists formed the People’s Republic of China.

2. The Chinese Nationalists fled to Taiwan and the United States only recognized the government of Taiwan was the legal government of China.