The Cold War and Decolonization

World History Final Exam Review
Causes of the Cold War

- Differing Ideologies: Communism v. Capitalism/Non-Communism
- WWII Conferences, Yalta and especially Potsdam, showed US and USSR had different visions for the postwar world
- US and USSR had very different WWII experiences but emerged as major powers
- Division of Germany into different occupation zones after WWII caused more conflict
- Etc.
USSR v. US

* Created Warsaw Pact with its allies
* Sought to create a buffer with Communist satellite states
* Second World
* Allies mostly Eastern
* Supported Communist sides of civil wars

* Created NATO with its allies
* Sought to stop the spread of Communism
* First World
* Allies mostly Western
* Supported Non-Communist sides of civil wars
Major US Leaders & Related Cold War Terms/Events

- **Truman:**
  - Postdam Conference, Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Berlin airlift, Korean War

- **Eisenhower:**
  - brinkmanship, domino theory, Korean War

- **Kennedy:**
  - Bay of Pigs invasion, Cuban Missile Crisis

- **Johnson:**
  - Escalation of Vietnam War

- **Nixon:**
  - Detente, visit to China, ending of Vietnam War, SALT

- **Reagan:**
  - INF treaty, fall of Berlin Wall, pressure on Soviets
Major Soviet/Russian Leaders & Related Cold War Terms/Events

* Stalin:
  * Yalta/Potsdam Conferences, iron curtain, Berlin blockade
* Khrushchev:
  * Cuban Missile Crisis, destalinization, crushed rebellion in Hungary
* Brezhnev:
  * Brezhnev Doctrine, invaded Czechoslovakia during Prague Spring, SALT
* Gorbachev:
  * reforms like glasnost and perestroika, INF Treaty
* Yeltsin:
  * first democratically elected president of the Russian Federation, post-Cold War
Arms Race & Space Race

* Arms race began when USSR dropped an atomic bomb
* Arms race made the threat of nuclear war and mutually assured destruction possible as US and USSR developed hydrogen and nuclear bombs
* Space race began when USSR launched Sputnik 1 into space
* Space race ended when US landed on the moon
Iron Curtain

- Winston Churchill refers to the division between non-Communist Western Europe and Communist Eastern Europe as the iron curtain.
- The Berlin Wall is a physical representation of the iron curtain - it literally divides a city between US-supported Western Berlin and Soviet-supported Eastern Berlin.
Economic Recovery

* US created the Marshall Plan to help Europe rebuild its economy. It primarily helped Western Europe, but the US was willing to help Eastern Europe if it rejected communism.
* When the US wanted to give supplies to Western Berlin, which was located in the Soviet-controlled part of Germany, Stalin set up the Berlin Blockade
* The US countered with the Berlin Airlift, dropping supplies to Western Berlin
* The blockade was removed, but the Berlin Wall was built a couple years later
Containment

* US foreign policy was centered on containment, which meant stopping the spread of communism.

* Truman Doctrine - Truman’s policy of supporting countries that rejected communism. It was used in Turkey and Greece.

* Domino Theory - Belief that if one country fell to communism, its neighboring countries would fall too. It was used to justify the US support of South Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

* US policy of containment helped get the US involved in the Korean and Vietnam wars - they supported the South in both wars.
**Brinkmanship**

- Brinkmanship was the threat of massive retaliation and getting close to war without actually going to war.
- Mutually assured destruction between the US and USSR was almost guaranteed.
- Examples of brinkmanship not being an effective strategy - The Cuban Missile Crisis, which was the closest the US and USSR came to directly fighting. In some ways, the Korean and Vietnam Wars show the challenges too as the US and USSR indirectly fought.
- It was replaced with detente.
Major Wars and Conflicts

* Chinese Civil War
  - Communists under Mao Zedong supported by USSR
  - Non-communists under Jiang Jieshi supported by US
  - Communists won
  - Mao Zedong has a Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution in China

* Cuban Missile Crisis
  - After Bay of Pigs Invasion
  - USSR built nuclear missile sites in Cuba to protect Castro
  - Kennedy set up a blockade
  - Compromise was made - Khrushchev would remove the missiles if Kennedy promised not to invade Cuba
Major Wars and Conflicts

* Korean War
  * Korea was divided at the 38th parallel. North was Communist and South was Non-Communist.
  * MacArthur led the UN/US troops in support of South Korea. China supported North Korea.
  * War ended in a stalemate - Korea is still divided.

* Vietnam War
  * North Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh vs. South Vietnam/US under Ngo Dinh Diem. The pro-Communist Vietcong removed Diem from power.
  * LBJ escalated the war with the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Nixon gradually pulled the US out of the war with Vietnamization.
  * North Vietnam won, and Vietnam was reunified under Communism.
Detente

- Detente was the lessening of Cold War tensions that was first introduced by Nixon
- It replaced brinkmanship.
- It was marked by a more practical way of dealing with other countries.
- SALT agreements between the US and USSR and Nixon’s visit to China were examples of detente.
End of the Cold War

* Despite Gorbachev’s attempts to reform the USSR with glasnost, perestroika, and some democratic ideas, USSR was weakening.
* Economic troubles in the USSR and increasing nationalism in Eastern European nations, especially the satellites, caused more conflict.
* The Berlin Wall was torn down in 1989.
* The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought the official end of the Cold War.
Decolonization

* Decolonization occurred primarily after WWII during the Cold War as empires had difficulty holding on to their territories after the war.
* Newly independent countries often had to choose whether to ally with the US or USSR.
* Most decolonized areas experienced many challenges, such as economic instability, political corruption, dictators or military rule, civil wars, ethnic/religious conflicts, poverty, etc.
* New boundaries were often drawn arbitrarily.
* Decolonized areas include Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Indian Subcontinent.