Lesson 5

The Cold War Reaches around the World

You learned in the previous lessons that the policy of containment was developed to prevent the spread of communism in Europe. However, when communist movements began to develop in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, the United States expanded the policy of containment to stop the Soviet threat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words, Terms and People</th>
<th>☑️ ☑️ ☑️ ☑️ ☑️</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mao Zedong</td>
<td>communist leader who took over China in 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chiang Kai-Shek</td>
<td>leader of the Nationalist Chinese who were forced to leave China and settle in Taiwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fidel Castro</td>
<td>communist revolutionary leader who took control of Cuba in 1959</td>
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Mao Zedong, leader of the People's Republic of China (Mainland)  
Chiang Kai-Shek, leader of the Nationalist Chinese (Taiwan)
The Cold War in Asia

During World War II, China was an ally of the United States and Japan was an enemy. After the war, these political alliances were reversed. Japan’s government became a constitutional democracy following the United States’ occupation of this country after its defeat. Therefore, Japan became an ally of the United States. However, in China a communist takeover resulted in strained relations with the United States.

The Communists take over China

In the 1930s China became involved in a civil war. Mao Zedong was the leader of the communist forces in China. He tried to gain control over the nationalists led by Chiang Kai-Shek. This civil war continued through the 1930s. Even the beginning of World War II and the need to fight the common enemy of Japan did not stop the fighting between these two sides.

During the years immediately following World War II, the United States gave much support to Chiang Kai-Shek and the nationalist Chinese. However, it was not enough to stop Mao Zedong and his communist troops. By mid-1949, China became a communist dictatorship. Chiang Kai-Shek was forced to retreat to the island of Taiwan located on the southeast coast of China. The United States, however, continued to recognize Chiang’s government as the official government of China even though he never regained control of the Chinese mainland.

Propaganda posters like the one pictured here were designed to convince the communist Chinese people that they must liberate Taiwan from the American aggressors. A relentless campaign of misinformation portrayed the Taiwanese as suffering at the hands of the Americans. It was an effective campaign that kept the communists in power.
Map Work
Study the map below. Notice the relative sizes and locations of mainland China and Taiwan.

1. From studying this map, what would the United States need to do in terms of economic and/or military aid in order to continue to recognize Nationalist China as the official government of that country under the policy of containment? Explain your response.
Vietnam

After World War II, Vietnam, one part of Indochina, sought its independence from France. The fighting began almost immediately after the war. In the mid-1950s the United States became involved and by the 1960s a full-scale war had broken out. The Vietnam War will be discussed in depth in Unit 3.

The Middle East

The Cold War also spread to the Middle East. This area was very important because of its large supplies of oil. During World War II, the Allies occupied Iran, which is located just south of the Soviet Union. After the war, the United States and Britain left Iran, but the Soviets did not. The United States became increasingly concerned about the Soviet military presence in Iran and threatened to take action if they did not pull out of that Middle East country. The Soviets eventually withdrew in 1946.

The Division of Palestine

In 1948 the United Nations divided Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state. For years it had been the desire of many Jews to establish a Jewish nation in Palestine. During and just after World War II, thousands of European Jewish refugees immigrated to Palestine. This growth in population made it possible to form the new nation. This new Jewish state was named Israel. From the beginning, there was great tension between Israel and the Arab countries nearby. Israel was soon invaded by neighboring Arab states, and bloody fighting erupted between Arabs and Jews. In what has been referred to as the 1948 War, Israel defeated its invaders and took over most of the Palestinian lands. A truce ended this conflict in 1949 although it did not end the tensions. The United States sided with Israel during this time, but at the same time worked to maintain its connections to the Arab nations which controlled the
world’s oil. The United States was concerned that the Arab nations might come under the influence of the Soviet Union.

Map work

Study carefully the map of the Middle East and read the excerpt from the article about the Arab-Israeli War, 1948.

The Arab-Israeli War of 1948

The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 broke out when five Arab nations invaded territory in the former Palestinian mandate immediately following the announcement of the independence of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948. In 1947, and again on May 14, 1948, the United States had offered de facto recognition of the Israeli Provisional Government, but during the war, the United States maintained an arms embargo against all belligerents.
Raising the Israeli flag signified the conclusion of the conflict.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 (also known as the Partition Resolution) that would divide Great Britain’s former Palestinian mandate into Jewish and Arab states in May 1948. Under the resolution, the area of religious significance surrounding Jerusalem would remain under international control administered by the United Nations. The Palestinian Arabs refused to recognize this arrangement, which they regarded as favorable to the Jews and unfair to the Arab population that would remain in Jewish territory under the partition. The United States sought a middle way by supporting the United Nations resolution, but also encouraging negotiations between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East.

The United Nations resolution sparked conflict between Jewish and Arab groups within Palestine. Fighting began with attacks by irregular bands of Palestinian Arabs attached to local units of the Arab Liberation Army composed of volunteers from Palestine and neighboring Arab countries. These groups launched their attacks against Jewish cities, settlements, and armed forces. The Jewish forces were composed of the Haganah, the underground militia of the Jewish community in Palestine, and two small irregular groups, the Irgun, and LEHI. The goal of the Arabs was initially to block the Partition Resolution and to prevent the
establishment of the Jewish state. The Jews, on the other hand, hoped to gain control over the territory allotted to them under the Partition Plan.

After Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, the fighting intensified with other Arab forces joining the Palestinian Arabs in attacking territory in the former Palestinian mandate. On the eve of May 14, the Arabs launched an air attack on Tel Aviv, which the Israelis resisted. This action was followed by the invasion of the former Palestinian mandate by Arab armies from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Saudi Arabia sent a formation that fought under the Egyptian command. British trained forces from Transjordan eventually intervened in the conflict, but only in areas that had been designated as part of the Arab state under the United Nations Partition Plan and the corpus separatum. [This term is made up of two Latin words, corpus (body) and separatum (separation). Together they mean the separation of something that used to be whole – Jerusalem.] After tense early fighting, Israeli forces, now under joint command, were able to gain the offensive.

Though the United Nations brokered two cease-fires during the conflict, fighting continued into 1949. Israel and the Arab states did not reach any formal armistice agreements until February. Under separate agreements between Israel and the neighboring states of Egypt, Lebanon, Transjordan, and Syria, these bordering nations agreed to formal armistice lines. Israel gained some territory formerly granted to Palestinian Arabs under the United Nations resolution in 1947. Egypt and Jordan retained control over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank respectively. These armistice lines held until 1967. The United States did not become directly involved with the armistice negotiations, but hoped that instability in the Middle East would not interfere with the international balance of power between the Soviet Union and the United States.

2. After studying the map on Page 43 and below, and reading the article, explain why both the U.S. and the Soviet Union would have had an interest in the outcome. What does that have to do with the policy of containment?

3. Locate the Soviet Union (Russia) on the map above. Why would its location cause the United States to be concerned about its influence on Middle East? What does that have to do with the policy of containment?
The Cold War in Latin America

For many years the United States had controlled much of the economic affairs in Latin America. Beginning with the Monroe Doctrine, through the taking of the canal zone by President Theodore Roosevelt, and the invasion of Mexico under President Woodrow Wilson, the United States had had its way in Latin America. By the mid-1920s and into the 1930s the United States controlled the economies of ten Latin American countries and protected American interests in these economies with our military might. This was not a comfortable relationship. As you will recall, in the years immediately prior to WWII President Franklin Roosevelt was concerned enough about the possibility of war that he instituted a number of reforms with our nearest neighbors. This new Good Neighbor Policy toward Latin America, although an improvement, did not make up for a century of exploitation. Thus both during and after World War II, the United States felt the need to do more to protect its financial investments in Latin America. The fear was that if the Soviet Union spread its communist message to Latin America, large American companies located there would be threatened or even lost. American investments had made a few leaders and families wealthy while leaving most in desperate poverty. If poverty could encourage people to turn to communism, Latin America was ripe fruit and the Soviet Union wanted to pick it.
In 1959 a major crisis occurred when the revolutionary leader Fidel Castro overthrew Fulgencio Batista, the dictator of Cuba. He proceeded to take over American companies and property. On January 3, 1961, The United States broke all ties with Castro and cut off exports to Cuba. Castro then turned to the Soviet Union for economic and military support. Communism had reached the Western hemisphere. This situation caused great anxiety and tension for the United States. A communist country, Cuba, was only ninety miles from the United States mainland.

Diplomatic relations with Cuba resumed April 11, 2015, under the leadership of Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro and marked by the reopening of embassies in both countries.

Analysis

4. Why did the United States expand its policy of containment to include more than just Europe?

5. What happened to the Chinese nationalists?

6. Why did the Cold War spread to Iran?
7. How and when did the nation of Israel come into existence?

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8. What was the reaction of the neighboring Arab states to this new country?

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9. Why was Latin America vulnerable to communism? How had the U.S. contributed to that situation?

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Critical Thinking

10. What was the United States’ response when Fidel Castro’s revolution ousted the dictator Juan Bastita in Cuba and the communists overthrew the emperor and gained mainland China? To what extent was the response by the U.S. effective? Explain. You will need a thesis sentence for your response. See Lesson 4 for a definition of a thesis.

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Reread your response. Be sure to check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation.