

The Battles of the Cold War Jigsaw

Cold War in Korea Fact Sheet

Directions: Read the following information about the Korean War. Afterward, you will have the opportunity to work as an expert in a group to discuss the causes and outcomes of the Korean War and its role in the larger Cold War. Your group will take notes on the Battles of the Cold War Jigsaw Graphic Organizer. You will also be responsible for teaching another group about the Korean War. Your teacher may assign you to do additional research on Korea.

Introduction

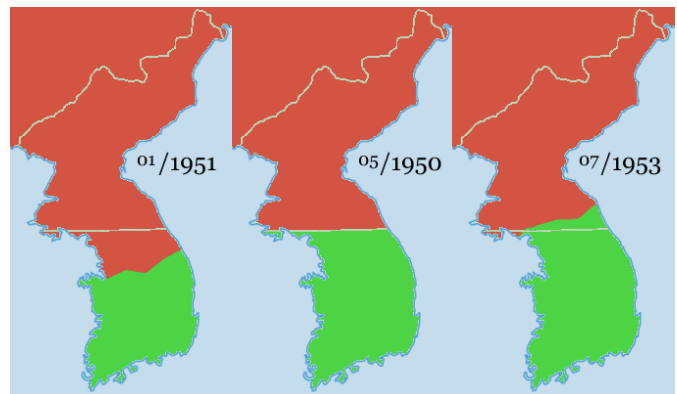
After the end of World War II, the United States and Soviet Union competed for power and influence in the world. Communist forces worked to expand their influence in areas of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. As a result, the United States worked to stop Communist influence by getting involved in the same areas. Regional conflicts in individual nations became part of the larger conflict between the United States and Soviet Union as these two nations, and sometimes Communist China, interfered. They interfered by providing funds, materials, and troops for battles. Some of these conflicts became what were called proxy wars. Proxy wars were the “hot” battles of the greater Cold War conflict. While the two sides influenced regional conflicts to fight the Cold War, advances in military technology and nuclear weapons increasingly threatened world peace. One such proxy war took place on the Korean Peninsula, between newly created North Korea and South Korea.

As you study the Korean War think about these questions, and use the information to complete the Jigsaw Organizer:

1. What were the causes of the regional conflict in **Korea**?
2. How was this regional conflict impacted by the Cold War?
3. What were the outcomes of the regional conflict in **Korea**?

Background

After Japan was defeated in World War II, the United States, China, and the Soviet Union all hoped to influence the form of government that would rule the Korean peninsula. The Soviet Union and China wanted a communist government. The United States and other western nations wanted to contain communism in Asia and prevent it from spreading to Korea. Korea shared a border with China to the north, making the spread of communism into Asia a fearful possibility. The two sides compromised by dividing Korea in half at the 38th Parallel, with U.S. forces occupying South Korea and Soviet forces occupying North Korea. This was done without any input from Korean officials near the end of World War II at the Potsdam Conference. The newly formed United Nations could not prevent the war between North Korea and South Korea that occurred from 1950 until 1953.



Map of North and South Korea divided at the 38th parallel¹

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Causes

Many factors contributed to the start of the Korean War. Free elections failed in both North and South Korea in 1948. The people were unable to agree on a ruling government. Also, the Soviet Union installed a communist leader, Kim Il Sung, in the North, and began to supply the North Korean army with weapons and ammunition. The Korean Peninsula became an area full of tension and it seemed war was likely. Local leaders tried many times to solve the crisis and end the skirmishes between North and South Korean troops, but failed. North Korea (which now had a large army) invaded the South on June 25, 1950.

United Nations Action

The United Nations immediately passed a resolution condemning the invasion. Two days later, the United Nations passed another resolution allowing the use of troops to remove the troops of North Korea from South Korea. Countries around the world sent troops to intervene as part of this United Nations action. Although it was a United Nations led force, the United States contributed most of the men and supplies. The war soon escalated, picking up where World War II had left off with the use of destructive weapons and military technology. UN forces drove the communists north and completed their objectives of removing North Korean troops from the South, but the army kept moving in an attempt to force North Korea to surrender. The American Commander of the Armed Forces, Douglas MacArthur, justified this action saying, "In war there is no substitute for victory." China, fearing domination by the United States, entered the war with nearly 250,000 troops on the first day and pushed UN forces back south.

Motives of the Superpowers

For Koreans, the war was a civil war between supporters and opponents of communism. Koreans had suffered from the impacts of western imperialism and Japanese invasion for much of the twentieth century, and this conflict was the latest in the ongoing struggle for independent Korean rule. For the rest of the world, it was the first proxy war fought over Cold War tensions. The Soviets supported the spread of communism, claiming it was a stronger form of government that provided a better way of life. The spread of communism would make the Soviet Union more powerful. It would be a Cold War victory. China believed the war was key to keeping the United States from intervening in China.



Chinese troops cross the Yalu River to enter the Korean War, 1950²

The U.S. claimed to be taking a "police action" to protect Korea, when they were actually fighting to prevent the spread of communism to the rest of Asia. U.S. politicians who claimed the U.S. was allowing communism to spread pressured the government to fight the war in Korea. Just one year prior to the outbreak of the war, the U.S. had been blamed for losing China to the communists. Whether this was true or not did not matter, as the politics at the time pushed the U.S. into war. The growing division between the Soviet Union and the West increased due to this conflict. This tension was made worse by the fact that both sides now had the capability to use nuclear weapons, which made any proxy war a threat to global peace.

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Conclusion

The Korean War resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Koreans, and tens of thousands more from other involved nations. In 1953, the war unofficially ended, with North and South Korea remaining divided at the 38th Parallel. No peace treaty was ever signed. North Korea remained isolated and communist while South Korea, also a dictatorship until the late 1980s, remained anti-communist. To this day, the Korean Peninsula remains divided and both armies remain prepared for the next possible conflict.



The Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) as seen from the north.³



Map showing the divided Korea⁴

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Cold War in Vietnam Fact Sheet

Directions: Read the following information about the Vietnam War. Afterward, you will have the opportunity to work as an expert in a group to discuss the causes and outcomes of the Vietnam War and its role in the larger Cold War. Your group will take notes on the Battles of the Cold War Jigsaw Graphic Organizer. You will also be responsible for teaching another group about the Vietnam War. Your teacher may assign you to do additional research on Vietnam.

Introduction

After the end of World War II, the United States and Soviet Union competed for power and influence in the world. Communist forces worked to expand their influence in areas of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. As a result, the United States worked to stop Communist influence by getting involved in the same areas. Regional conflicts in individual nations became part of the larger conflict between the United States and Soviet Union as these two nations, and sometimes Communist China, interfered. They interfered by providing funds, materials, and troops for battles. Some of these conflicts became what were called proxy wars. Proxy wars were the “hot” battles of the greater Cold War conflict. While the two sides influenced regional conflicts to fight the Cold War, advances in military technology and nuclear weapons increasingly threatened world peace. One such proxy war took place in Southeastern Asia, in the country of Vietnam.

As you study the Vietnam War think about these questions, and use the information to complete the Jigsaw Organizer:

1. What were the causes of the regional conflict in **Vietnam**?
2. How was this regional conflict impacted by the Cold War?
3. What were the outcomes of the regional conflict in **Vietnam**?

Background

Vietnam was occupied by Japan during World War II. After the war, the French attempted to re-colonize the nation until 1954. After the French were defeated, the Geneva Accords divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel. This was an attempt to prevent the fall of the entire nation to communism. For the next 20 years, Vietnam was engulfed in tension and a civil war, impacted by world powers that fought for an upper hand in the Cold War.

Causes

The North Vietnamese Communists, led by Ho Chi Minh, were not happy with the Geneva Accords that divided the country. Elections were supposed to be held in 1955 and the Communists felt this was their chance to unify Vietnam. However, Ngo Dinh Diem, the leader of South Vietnam, stated that elections would not be held. He stated that truly free elections could not take place in the North, so why should they take place in the South? Diem began to punish all suspected Communists in the South. The North saw this as an attack on their beliefs and authorized a fight against the South.



**North and South Vietnam
divided at the 17th parallel¹**

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The War

The Vietnamese Civil War was fought between communists led by Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam and Nationalists, the forces of South Vietnam. The Nationalist government became increasingly unpopular with most Vietnamese, who saw it as corrupt and unable to support religious and economic life for peasant farmers. The United States supported South Vietnam in an attempt to stop the spread of Communism. China and the Soviet Union provided funds and military supplies to support the North. Vietnam was a regional conflict, but it was also a conflict between Cold War superpowers that intervened. The war proved to be deadly, with drawn out battles that led to great destruction and suffering for Vietnam.

Communist forces had the advantage over the South and the United States. The regular North Vietnamese army and fighters in the South used terrorism and guerilla tactics to overcome America's superior technology and military resources. Tensions between the various sides worsened when the war was expanded into the neighboring nations of Laos and Cambodia in an attempt to disrupt communist supply lines. Many civilians were injured or killed, and most lost their homes during the fighting. Although the U.S. gradually committed more troops and expanded the war, not enough was done to win. When the war finally ended in 1974, the withdrawal of the U.S. was quickly followed by the defeat of the South and unification of the entire country under a communist government.



B-52 bombers drop hundreds of bombs at a time in Vietnam²

Conclusion



Victorious NVA troops at the Presidential Palace in South Vietnam, 1975³

The nine-year war proved to be a political embarrassment for the United States. It divided citizens on the home front and deepened opposition to government actions. Many people in the world were outraged by the deaths of millions of people in an attempt to contain communism. Communist Soviet Union and China achieved a victory, while in the U.S., the war ignited a controversy over the President's abuse of power during wartime. The course and outcome of the war intensified the nuclear arms race and pushed the U.S. and Soviet Union closer to war.

The Vietnam War became a symbol of the dangers of fighting limited, regional wars during the greater Cold War. Vietnam remains a communist nation today, and many Vietnamese and Americans still have clear memories of the war.

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Cold War in Afghanistan Fact Sheet

Directions: Read the following information about conflict in Afghanistan. Afterward, you will have the opportunity to work as an expert in a group to discuss the causes and outcomes conflict in Afghanistan and its role in the larger Cold War. Your group will take notes on the Battles of the Cold War Jigsaw Graphic Organizer. You will also be responsible for teaching another group about conflict in Afghanistan. Your teacher may assign you to do additional research on Afghanistan.

Introduction

After the end of World War II, the United States and Soviet Union competed for power and influence in the world. Communist forces worked to expand their influence in areas of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. As a result, the United States worked to stop communist influence by getting involved in the same areas. Regional conflicts in individual nations became part of the larger conflict between the United States and Soviet Union as these two nations, and sometimes Communist China, interfered. They interfered by providing funds, materials, and troops for battles. Some of these conflicts became what were called proxy wars. Proxy wars were the “hot” battles of the greater Cold War conflict. While the two sides influenced regional conflicts to fight the Cold War, advances in military technology and nuclear weapons increasingly threatened world peace. One such proxy war took place in South Asia, in the country of Afghanistan.

As you study the conflict in Afghanistan think about these questions, and use the information to complete the Jigsaw Organizer:

1. What were the causes of the regional conflict in **Afghanistan**?
2. How was this regional conflict impacted by the Cold War?
3. What were the outcomes of the regional conflict in **Afghanistan**?

Background

Afghanistan was located to the south of the Soviet Empire, and Russians had historically been concerned with maintaining influence over affairs in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, meant to expand Soviet power, started in 1979 and ended in humiliating defeat in 1989.

Causes

The causes of the internal conflict in Afghanistan can be traced to local events that began in 1978. After the end of the Afghan king’s 40-year rule, communist leaders in the Afghan army organized an overthrow of the new Prime Minister. The new communist government immediately attempted to reform economic and religious policies, which angered many Afghans.



Map of Afghanistan¹

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In 1978, Afghan citizens and soldiers rebelled against the new ruling government. Muslim freedom fighters started the “Mujahedeen.” The Mujahedeen were fighters who believed they were fighting in a holy war against the changes to their government and way of life, including religion, traditional marriage laws, and land rights. The Soviet Union became involved to ensure that the communist government stayed in power. At this point the regional conflict became part of the greater Cold War conflict.

Superpowers Act and React

The Soviets began secretly sending personnel to maintain control over the conflict. This escalated into the use of tanks and troops to invade Afghanistan before long. An outright war against rebels began in 1979. The Mujahedeen fought harder to overthrow the communists. The Soviet army used superior technology to take control of Afghan cities and



Mujahedeen Fighters in Afghanistan, 1985²

communications. However, the Soviets had to deal with the disadvantages of fighting a limited war in a foreign nation. Their enemy was all around them and they never knew who was a friend and who was an enemy. Also, Afghan rebels settled in rural areas, and were more familiar with the geography. It was difficult to fight in unfamiliar areas. Many Afghans joined the Mujahedeen because of a sense of nationalism and to oppose non-Muslim foreign invaders. Finally, the Soviets failed to acknowledge the role of their religious reform on the Muslim population. It angered the people to the point they were willing to die for their religion and cause.

Islamic nations and the United Nations condemned the Soviet actions. The primary supporters of the anti-communist forces were the U.S. and Saudi Arabia and they supplied funds and resources to rebels. The American C.I.A. supplied and trained the Mujahedeen to use weapons against the Soviet military. Rebels effectively used guerilla warfare to disrupt Soviet operations. Muslims from Middle Eastern nations joined in support of the Mujahedeen.

Osama bin Laden was one of these foreign supporters. He joined the fight because he believed in a unified Muslim world. He took money from the United States to fight the Soviet Union. Even though he did not like the United States, he saw this as an opportunity to fight against the Christian Russians. The Afghan army was not effective. They had little loyalty to the Soviet communist cause. By 1987 the Soviet government lost patience with the expensive and losing battle, and began withdrawing its demoralized troops from Afghanistan. The “Soviet Vietnam” came to an end by 1989.



Osama bin Laden in 1997³

Conclusion

More than a million Afghans died in this war and many cities lay in ruins. To this day, unexploded Soviet land mines remain a constant danger in many areas. A civil war followed into the 1990s, after which a pro-Islamic government has provided a base for terrorist operations against western nations, including the U.S.

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Soviet troops withdrawing from Afghanistan, 1988⁴

This war renewed Cold War tensions between the superpowers. The period of peaceful relations, known as “détente,” ended. This was shown publically by each nation’s boycott of each other’s Olympic Games. Each side feared the impacts of the crisis on the nearby oil-rich Middle East. The war also prevented the signing of the SALT II treaty to limit nuclear weapons, which came about in response to the growing threat of nuclear war.

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Cold War in Cuba Fact Sheet

Directions: Read the following information about conflict in Cuba. Afterward, you will have the opportunity to work as an expert in a group to discuss the causes and outcomes conflict in Cuba and its role in the larger Cold War. Your group will take notes on the Battles of the Cold War Jigsaw Graphic Organizer. You will also be responsible for teaching another group about conflict in Cuba. Your teacher may assign you to do additional research on Cuba.

Introduction

After the end of World War II, the United States and Soviet Union competed for power and influence in the world. Communist forces worked to expand their influence in areas of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. As a result, the United States worked to stop communist influence by getting involved in the same areas. Regional conflicts in individual nations became part of the larger conflict between the United States and Soviet Union as these two nations, and sometimes Communist China, interfered. They interfered by providing funds, materials, and troops for battles. Some of these conflicts became what were called proxy wars. Proxy wars were the “hot” battles of the greater Cold War conflict. While the two sides influenced regional conflicts to fight the Cold War, advances in military technology and nuclear weapons increasingly threatened world peace. In this case, there was not a war, but near nuclear war between the two great superpowers. This near war took place in North America, only ninety miles from the coast of Florida: Cuba.

As you study the conflict in Cuba think about these questions, and use the information to complete the Jigsaw Organizer:

1. What were the causes of the regional conflict in **Cuba**?
2. How was this regional conflict impacted by the Cold War?
3. What were the outcomes of the regional conflict in **Cuba**?

Background

Most people think of the major battles and conflicts of the Cold War as taking place far away from the United States. But the small island nation of Cuba, just 90 miles off the coast of Florida, played a major role in the Cold War. Cuba’s government was highly influenced by the United States prior to 1959. The close proximity of Cuba made it very important to the United States. In 1959, a Communist revolution took place in Cuba and overwhelmed the island nation. This successful revolution resulted in an alliance between Cuba and the Soviet Union. This put Cuba at the center of a crisis over nuclear weapons, which was the tensest conflict of the early Cold War.



Map of Cuba¹

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Causes

Before the revolution, most Cubans were poor, and opposed the corrupt government and unequal distribution of wealth. A small group of elite people had wealth and power. Fidel Castro led the revolutionaries. They overthrew the government and created a communist system of government.

The rise of a communist government less than 100 miles from the coast of the U.S. sparked fear that communism would spread further into Latin America. This fear grew due to Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union. At the same time, Soviet communist policies increased tensions in Eastern Europe when they crushed a democratic movement in Hungary. The situation in Cuba worsened in 1962.

In 1961, the United States tried unsuccessfully to overthrow Castro and the communist government in what is now called the Bay of Pigs. This failed invasion created more tension between the United States and the Cuban government. This tension came to a climax in 1962 with the discovery of Soviet-supplied nuclear weapons in Cuba by U.S. spy planes. This set off a chain of events that brought the superpowers closer to nuclear war than any other time during the Cold War. The United States could not allow Soviet made nuclear weapons, pointed at the United States, only 90 miles from the coast of Florida.



Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, 1961²

The Cuban Missile Crisis

For thirteen days in October, the U.S. and Soviet governments stood on the brink of nuclear war, each side demanding that the other back down. The U.S. feared that once the nuclear weapons were ready for use, they could be used to attack cities directly with little warning. The Soviet Union was committed to supporting a communist government in Cuba, and looked forward to the advantage of having an ally so close to U.S. territory. Cubans enjoyed a wave of nationalism and rallied around Fidel Castro, hoping to benefit from their new alliance with the Soviet superpower.



Photo of Soviet nuclear missile sites in Cuba taken by U.S. spy plane, 1962³

The United Nations responded with support for the U.S. and demanded the removal of the missiles. The crisis worsened when a U.S. spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, and Russian ships loaded with nuclear weapons moved closer to Cuba. The U.S. government debated whether to invade Cuba, but decided to blockade the island to prevent the delivery of more weapons. Eventually, the two sides negotiated a settlement, and the crisis ended after the Soviets agreed to remove the missiles.

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Conclusion

For Cuba, the event caused a surge of nationalism that gave Fidel Castro more power. It also gave Cuba a higher standing in world affairs because they had stood up to the United States. However, the nation remained mostly impoverished for the rest of the 20th century in part due to the resulting poor relations with the United States. Many communist supporters criticized the Soviet Union for backing down to the U.S., while many in the U.S. military were disappointed with the lack of military response to the crisis. In addition, some Soviet leaders criticized the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev for his actions because he brought the world close to nuclear war. One important result of the conflict was the establishment of a direct “hot line” of communication between the U.S. and Soviet leaders to help avoid a nuclear crisis in the future. The crisis demonstrated the danger of Cold War tensions in the age of nuclear weapons, and the willingness of the U.S. to act in response to a threat so close to their shores.



American plane flying near a Soviet cargo ship during the blockade of Cuba. All the ships eventually stopped and turned around, avoiding war.⁴

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