

**SS6H7 The student will explain conflict and change in Europe to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

b. Explain the impact of WW II in terms of the Holocaust, the origins of the Cold War, and the rise of Superpowers.

## THE HOLOCAUST

As part of Hitler's plan to conquer the world, he began the systematic killing of every Jew—man, woman, or child—under Nazi rule. The Nazis imprisoned Jews in certain sections of cities, made them wear special identifying armbands, and separated them from their families. This was only the beginning. The Nazis built concentration camps and sent Jews from the cities by railcar to these camps. When the Jews arrived, their heads were shaved and a number was tattooed onto their arms. Many were immediately herded into showers, which were nothing more than gas chambers. In such places, as many as 2,000 people could be killed at one time. Thousands died from forced labor, little food, and exposure to the summer heat and winter cold. By the time World War II was over, as many as 6 million Jews were dead. Other groups were Hitler's victims as well. He targeted anyone he felt was inferior: political prisoners, the mentally ill, and the disabled. **Genocide**, the planned killing of a race of people, became a crime when the United Nations passed the Genocide Convention in 1948.

At the end of World War II, when the Allies gained control of the camps, the survivors of the **Holocaust** had no place to go. Many had no living family members. They were trapped in the country of their oppressors. The Jews wanted a state in Palestine, their ancient homeland in the Middle East. In 1947, the United Nations divided Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state, Israel. Israel officially opened its borders to Jews in 1948.

435. What is genocide?

- A. forced labor or slavery
- B. the planned killing of a race of people
- C. the division of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states
- D. not shown

436. Who created the country of Israel?

- A. Allies
- B. Arabs
- C. Nazi Germany
- D. United Nations

437. Who was spared in the Holocaust?

- A. men
- B. women
- C. children
- D. none of the above

438. What actions did the United Nations take as result of the Holocaust?

- A. divided Palestine and Germany
- B. defeated Hitler and freed the Jews
- C. helped the Jews find jobs and shelter
- D. created a Jewish state and made genocide a crime

## THE COLD WAR

Beginning in 1945, the *Cold War* was a period of distrust and misunderstanding between the Soviet Union and its former allies in the West, particularly the United States. The Soviet Union was a communist country that believed a powerful central government should control the economy as well as the government. This idea was very different from the democracy and capitalism found in the United States. The United States believed that business should be privately owned. After World War II, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin placed most of the Eastern European countries under communist control. These countries became known as the Eastern Bloc. The United States led the Western Bloc countries of Western Europe. The line separating the two was called the "Iron Curtain."

Another problem of the Cold War was the division of Germany. At the end of the war, the Allies divided Germany into four sections to keep it from regaining power. The United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union each controlled a section. In 1948, the Western Allies wanted to reunite Germany, but the Soviets disagreed. The Soviets declared their section of the country "East Germany," the reunited sections became West Germany. Even the capital of Berlin in East Germany was divided into East and West. Tensions grew. In 1961, communist leaders built the Berlin Wall. It separated the communist part of the city from the free sections.

Some countries under communist rule tried to break away from the Soviet Union, but the Soviets sent the military into these countries to keep them in line.

Each side in this Cold War thought the other was trying to rule the world. Neither side gave up, and people lived in fear that another world war might erupt. People worried that if such a war happened, it would be a nuclear war. Such a war would be a disaster for everyone on the earth. Countries formed new alliances to protect themselves. In 1949, the western European countries plus the United States and Canada formed the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)*. The eastern countries signed the Warsaw Pact.

439. Which country was the leader of the Eastern Bloc?

- A. Germany
- B. Soviet Union
- C. United States
- D. United Kingdom

440. What are the two terms used to describe the dividing line between eastern and western, communist and noncommunist areas?

- A. NATO and Warsaw Pact
- B. Berlin Wall and Iron Curtain
- C. Allied Powers and Axis Powers
- D. Nazi Germany and Free Germany

441. Which was one of the areas of disagreement between the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War?

- A. defeat of Hitler
- B. best type of economic system
- C. the danger of nuclear weapons
- D. the need to work with other countries

- \_\_\_\_\_ 442. When was the Cold War?  
A. after World War II  
B. before World War I  
C. between World War I and World War II  
D. before the worldwide economic depression
- \_\_\_\_\_ 443. The Warsaw Pact was to the Soviet Union as NATO was to the  
A. Eastern Bloc  
B. United States  
C. West Germany  
D. European Union

### RISE OF THE SUPERPOWERS

As the Cold War continued, the United States and the Soviet Union increased their area of influence. More countries allied with each. The United States and the Soviet Union had the ability to influence world events and project worldwide power. The countries were evenly matched. The world took sides, communist or democracy, socialist or free market.

The Soviets had a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. They influenced other communist countries and dictatorships around the world. The Soviets occupied the largest country in the world. The Soviet Union had the third-largest population in the world and the second-largest economy. The Soviets had military and space technology, a worldwide spy network (the KGB), and one of the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world.

The third-largest country in the world, the United States also had a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and strong ties with Western Europe and Latin America. The fourth most populated country, the United States supported undeveloped countries and developing democratic ones. The United States had powerful military support from NATO, the largest navy in the world, and bases all over the world, even bordering the Warsaw Pact countries. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spent money to spy on the Soviet Union. The United States had a large reserve of nuclear weapons.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 444. As a world superpower, the Soviet Union had  
A. support from NATO.  
B. the largest navy in the world.  
C. strong ties with Latin America.  
D. a seat on the UN Security Council.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 445. As a world superpower, the United States had  
A. the KGB, a spy network.  
B. military bases all over the world.  
C. influence over communist dictatorships.  
D. the second-largest economy in the world.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 446. Which condition is required to be considered a superpower?  
A. a space program  
B. membership in NATO  
C. democratic government  
D. influence over world events

### THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND GERMAN REUNIFICATION

The Soviet Union was spending more and more of its money putting down revolts within its country, protecting its borders, and keeping up with the United States in the arms race. By 1985, the economy was so unstable that Mikhail Gorbachev, the head of the Soviet Union, reduced government control of business and increased freedoms for Soviet citizens. These actions helped to improve relations with the United States and inspired people in other Eastern Bloc countries to demand freedom from communist rule.

In November 1989, the Berlin Wall was torn down, and Germany began the process of unifying. People around the world celebrated. East and West Germany were made one country in 1990. The Cold War was over. The Soviet republics that had once been separate countries began seeking their independence too. The Soviet Union was no more. Many countries were created from the former Soviet Union. Russia was the largest.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 447. Why did Gorbachev reduce government control of the economy?
- A. citizens demanded more personal freedom
  - B. other Eastern Bloc countries were reducing control
  - C. an unstable economy due to increased military spending
  - D. not shown
- \_\_\_\_\_ 448. What marked the end of the Cold War?
- A. the rule of Gorbachev
  - B. the creation of Russia
  - C. the break-up of the Soviet Union
  - D. the destruction of the Berlin Wall
- \_\_\_\_\_ 449. What was the largest country created from the former Soviet Union?
- A. Belarus
  - B. Germany
  - C. Russia
  - D. Ukraine