

GLOSSARY

A

Aborigines the indigenous or native people of Australia; "the people who were here from the beginning"

acid rain clouds or rain containing sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide, and nitrogen oxides that causes problems in the environment

algal bloom a rapid increase in lake algae, caused by phosphorus pollution; can kill plant and animal life

Allied Powers the alliance of Great Britain, France, Russia, and the United States during World War I

arable farmable; a description applied to land that is capable of being farmed

autocratic government a government with a single ruler with unlimited power

B

Basic Law the constitution of Germany

blackout a time when all electricity to a region is cut off

British Commonwealth weak association of member countries once part of the British Empire; also called the Commonwealth of Nations

British pound the currency of the United Kingdom

budget a plan for spending and savings based on estimated income and expenses

Bundesrat the less-powerful upper house of the German parliament, which represents the interests of the state governments

Bundestag the powerful lower house of the German parliament; elects the chancellor

bush the remote countryside of Australia

C

capitalism a decentralized market economy

Central Powers the alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria in World War I

chancellor head of state running day-to-day operations of government in some democracies, like Germany

chief executive a leader who heads the military, enforces laws, and keeps a country running day to day

clear-cutting cutting all the trees in an area

Cold War a period of distrust and misunderstanding between the Soviet Union and its former allies in the West, particularly the United States

colony a foreign area controlled by a country and contributing to its wealth

Columbian Exchange the moving of animals, plants, people, and diseases between the Old and New Worlds

command economy an economy in which centralized planning groups decide what and how goods and services will be produced, distributed, and consumed

Commonwealth of Nations weak association of member countries once part of the British Empire; also called the British Commonwealth

communist describes a government that owns or controls most farms and businesses

confederation government a form of government based on a voluntary agreement under which separate countries work together

conquistador Spanish conqueror

constitutional monarchy a government in which the king or queen is head of state with little real power, as limited by a constitution

credit the ability to borrow money

Crusades military expeditions sent from 1096 to 1272 by various popes to capture the Holy Land from Muslim Turks

Cuban Missile Crisis a tense time in 1962 when nuclear war seem possible after the Soviet Union placed missiles in Cuba and the United States demanded their removal

currency money used in a particular country to buy goods and services

Cyrillic alphabet writing system (differing from the Roman alphabet) used to write Russian and other Slavic languages

czar absolute rule of Russia before 1917

D

deforestation the process of clearing forests, selling the timber, and using the cleared land for other purposes

demand how many people want the goods available and what they are willing to pay for them

direct democracy a democratic form of government requiring a vote by all citizens for every government decision

E

economic depression a hard time in the economy when businesses, banks, factories close and people lose their jobs; buying and selling almost stops

economic system the way a country decides what goods and services will be produced, how they will be produced, and who will consume them

embargo a government order stopping trade with another country to put pressure on the government of that other country

entrepreneur one who risks his or her own money, time, ideas, and energy to start and run a business

euro the currency of the European Union

European Union (EU) a group of 27 European countries united to bring more advantages to members that might not be available to the smaller nations; the EU works to improve trade, education, farming, and industry among the members

exchange rate the price of one nation's currency in terms of another nation's currency

expenses the costs related to running a business

exports goods sold to other countries

F

federal government a form of government in which power is divided between a central government and smaller divisions, such as states

Federation Council that part of Russia's Federal Assembly that represents state government; approves presidential appointments

financial investment savings put into a bank account, certificate of deposit, stock, bond, or mutual fund that pays a future benefit such as interest

free economy describes an economy where businesses can operate without too many rules from the government

free enterprise a decentralized market economy

free-trade zone an area where there are no tariffs among participating countries; for example, North America (NAFTA) or the European Union

G

genocide the planned killing of a race of people

Germanic languages includes languages like German or English originating from Germanic tribes; largest European language group; found in northwest and central Europe

Great Britain the united countries of England, Scotland, and Wales, a union that dated from the early 1700s

Great Smog four days of intense smog in London in 1952, which alerted people to poor air quality

Great War European conflict from 1914 to 1918; also known as World War I and "the war to end all wars"

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) the total value of all the goods and services produced in a country in one year

Gulf Stream a current of warm water from the Gulf of Mexico that moves north across the Atlantic, warming Ireland and the United Kingdom

H

head of state in a parliamentary system, the symbolic leader of a country

Holocaust the systematic killing of 6 million Jews and others by the Nazis before and during World War II

House of Commons the powerful, representative lawmaking body of the United Kingdom's Parliament; controls the budget

House of Lords the less-powerful, advisory lawmaking body of the United Kingdom's Parliament

human capital workers of a business or country including their education, training, skills, and health

I

illiteracy rate the percentage of a country's people who cannot read and write

imports goods purchased from other countries

income money coming in for a person or into a business

indigenous population the first people known to inhabit an area

industrialized countries countries that depend more on manufacturing than farming; generally have a high standard of living

interest a fee for the use of money

investing putting money into a bank account, stock, bond, or mutual fund that pays interest

L

laissez-faire a decentralized market economy

Latin America countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean having Spanish or Portuguese as their primary language

law of supply and demand determines price based on amount of goods available, how many consumers want the goods, and what they are willing to pay

life expectancy the average number of years a person in a country may be reasonably expected to live

literacy rate the percentage of a country's people who can read and write

literate able to read and write

M

market economy an economy in which changes in price guide what and how goods and services will be produced, distributed, and consumed

mestizo in Latin America, one whose ancestors were both European and Native American

militarism using strong armies and threats of war

mixed economy an economy that blends characteristics of both command and market economies, but falls closer to one form or the other

monarch a king or queen, symbol of a country; "the Crown"

monolith what you see of a single large rock sticking out of the earth

MP member of parliament, elected as a representative of the people in a parliamentary system of democracy

mulatto in Latin America, one whose ancestors were both African and European

N

NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement, which was signed in 1994 by the United States, Canada, and Mexico eliminating tariffs

Nahuatl Aztec language

nationalism the love of one's country

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) an alliance of the United States, Canada, and its western European allies; formed after World War II

Nazi Party National Socialist Party of Germany's Adolf Hitler

O

oligarchic government a government that is ruled by a few

Ottoman Empire Turkey and its colonies

outback the dry interior of the continent of Australia

P

parliamentary system type of democratic government where citizens elect MPs who choose a prime minister as chief executive

penal describes a prison

peso the Mexican or Cuban currency

phosphorus a chemical used in fertilizer, pesticides, toothpaste, detergents, and explosives that can pollute water

physical capital factories, machines, technologies, buildings, and property needed for a business to operate

physical capital investment purchasing physical capital

Pope leader of the Roman Catholic Church

presidential system type of democratic government where citizens elect members of the legislature and also the chief executive, known as the president

prime minister the head of state in a parliamentary system of democracy, responsible for running the day-to-day operations of government

profit money left after business expenses are subtracted from business income

Q

Quechua the Inca language

quota (1) in a centralized command economy, being told by government what and how much to produce in a certain time; (2) a limit placed on the number of imports that may enter a country

R

real Brazilian currency

real investment the purchase of a new home by a person or the purchase of physical capital by a business

representative democracy a democratic form of government in which the citizens elect representatives to make government decisions

Romance languages includes languages like French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian, which come from Latin, the ancient Roman language; found in south and west of Europe

ruble the Russian currency

S

Santeria a Cuban religion based on African traditional beliefs

savings income not spent

scarcity limited supply of something

Scramble for Africa the division of much of Africa among European countries between 1885 and 1910

separatist a person who wants Quebec to be an independent country from Canada

service jobs jobs that involve providing services to people rather than products

slag leftover rock from the smelting process

Slavic languages includes Russian; found in central and eastern Europe; sometimes written with Cyrillic alphabet

smokeless zones areas of London where, in order to improve air quality, only smokeless fuels can be used

Soviet Union a powerful communist country that supported the Castro government in Cuba

specialization the division of labor; work is divided into parts for workers, factories, or countries to become expert at producing certain goods

State Duma the elected body of Russia's Federal Assembly; controls the budget and makes laws; approves prime minister selected by the president

stock market crash occurs when the value of stocks falls quickly and deeply

supply the amount of goods available

T

tariff a tax on imports

third world countries developing nations that do not have much industry and that depend upon farming; have lower standard of living than industrialized countries

trade the voluntary exchange of goods and services among people and countries benefitting both parties

trade barriers ways of limiting trade by tariffs, quotas, or embargoes

traditional economy an economy in which customs and habits of the past decide what and how goods and services are produced, distributed, and consumed

U

unitary government a form of government in which a central government operates all levels of government in a country

urban referring to cities

V

viceroys Spanish governor of conquered American lands

W

welfare state government that guarantees certain benefits to the unemployed, poor, disabled, old, and sick, such as is done in the Basic Law of Germany

World War I European conflict from 1914 to 1918; also known as the Great War and "the war to end all wars"

World War II worldwide conflict lasting from 1939 to 1945

Z

Zapatistas a guerrilla group who supported improved living conditions for indigenous Mexicans; they have resorted to harassment, sabotage, and forcible takeovers of local governments

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