Unit VI: Cold War America
Ending WWII & The Cold War
The Manhattan Project

• What began as a race to end the war became a race to rule the world
• Headed by General Groves and directed by J. Robert Oppenheimer
• The best-kept secret of the war
The Bomb

- August 6 the Enola Gay released Little Boy on Hiroshima
- 3 days later Fat Man was released on Nagasaki
- 200,000 were dead by the end of the year
Former Allies Clash

• Churchill, FDR, & Stalin at the Yalta Conference
• FDR dies before the war is ended
• Harry S. Truman President—does not trust Stalin (Potsdam Conference)

(Yalta summit 1945 with Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, 1945)
The Potsdam Conference

- Stalin had promised free elections in Poland
- He lied: Did not allow free elections and banned democratic parties
- Churchill was on his way out
Germany Post WWII

Map of Germany, 1945

(Map-Germany-1945, n.d.)
Berlin Wall Built

- To keep East Berliners from leaving
- Hotline phone established between the White House & the Kremlin
- Limited Test Ban Treaty—no nuclear testing in the atmosphere

East German construction workers building the Berlin Wall, Nov. 20, 1961
(National Archives, 1961)
Berlin Airlift

• When the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) closed off the capital of West Berlin
• American and British flew food and supplies into West Berlin for 327 days. They brought in 277,000 tons of supplies day and night.
Containment

- **Truman Doctrine**
  - $400 million in aid for Greece & Turkey
  - “It must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.”

- **The Marshall Plan**
  - Sec. of State George Marshall plan to provide aid to all European nations that needed it
  - 16 countries got $13 billion in aid
Soviets Tighten Grip

- Soviet Union has money and military strength
- Around 20 million died in WWII
- Felt justified in their claim to Eastern Europe

"Iron Curtain" as described by Churchill Mar. 5, 1946. Curtain extends down from Szczecin, Poland to Trieste, Italy (BigSteve, 2013)
Korea

- 38th Parallel- Japanese troops North surrendered to USSR (1945)
- Japanese troops South surrendered to the Americans
- Republic of Korea= South Korea (1948)
- Kim Il Sung-North
- Syngman Rhee-South
Korean War

Overview map of Korean War
(U.S. Military Academy West Point, 2006)

Medical corpsmen helping wounded infantrymen, following fight for Hill 598, 14 Oct. 1952
(Sylvester, 1952)
Korean War

- North Korea attacks South Korea June 25, 1950
- UN votes to send troops
- June 27th Truman orders troops in support of South
- 16 nations sent 520,000 troops
- General MacArthur sent in as Commander of the UN forces in Korea
- China sends 300,000 troops to help North Korea November 1950

- Truman fires MacArthur (4-11-51)
- Matthew Ridgeway named Commander of the UN forces in Korea
- Stalemate
- July 1953 armistice signed
- The 38th Parallel is officially recognized as the border between North and South Korea after WWII and again at the end of Korean War
Dwight D. Eisenhower

• Elected President of the United States, 1952
• Interstate Highway and Defense System Act were promoted as essential to national defense and an impetus to economic growth
Cuba & The Bay of Pigs

Dec. 1962 President and Mrs. Kennedy greet members of Brigade 2506 Cuban Invasion
(Stoughton, 1962)

Map of Cuba, showing the Bay of Pigs
(Zieitzen, n.d.)
Bay of Pigs

- March 1960 Eisenhower has Cuban exiles trained for an invasion to overthrow Castro
- Kennedy found out 9 days after election and went ahead and approved it
- April 17, 1961, invasion fails - JFK accepts responsibility
Cuban Missile Crisis

- Nikita Khrushchev promised to defend Cuba with Soviet arms
- America would not tolerate nuclear weapons in Cuba
- October 14, 1962 missile bases located
- U.S. blockades Cuba
- Ends 6 tense days later when “Khrushchev blinked.”

Soviet Military Sites on Cuba 1962
(United States Department of Defense, 1962)
America Involved

- 1950s America became involved in the French Indochina War
- We were following the Containment Policy and trying to stop the spread of Communism
The French failed to retake Vietnam even with vast amounts of aid from the U.S.

Vietminh declares independence from France, 1945

Forced to surrender May 1954

At the Geneva Accords July 1954 removes democratic French control

Vietnam was divided along the 17th parallel. With Communists in the North and democratic nationalists in the South

Cuchitunnels: Tunnels used by Vietnamese soldiers to hide and get around

(U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, n.d.)
U.S. Steps In

- Ngo Dinh Diem (S. Vietnam’s President) refused to take part in countrywide elections 1956
- By 1957 the Vietcong (National Liberation Front) began attacks on the Diem government

Ngo Dinh Diem before death in a military coup
(U.S. Air Force, 1957)
Ho Chi Minh Trail

- Paths along the borders of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia
- This was how Ho supplied arms to the Vietcong
1961 when JFK entered the White House he decided to stick with Diem

He sent more financial aid and thousands of military “advisors”

Nov. 1, 1963 a U.S. backed military coup toppled Diem’s regime
Brown v. Board of Education

- Overturned the “separate but equal” precedent established in Plessy v. Ferguson
- Linda Brown (8yrs) was denied admission to an all-white elementary school 4 blocks from her home. The nearest all black elementary was 21 blocks away
- Earl Warren stated that “in the field of public education, the doctrine of separate but equal has no place.”
Civil Rights Act of 1957

• This was the first federal Civil Rights legislation since the Reconstruction Era
• Primarily a Voting Rights bill
• Considered Congress’ show of support for the Supreme Court’s Brown v. Board of Ed decisions
• Established July 1958
• National Aeronautics and Space Administration
• Mostly civilian rather than military in its applications

Project Apollo patch
(National Aeronautics and Space Administration, n.d.)
The Kitchen Debate

- 1959
- Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev debating at the American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959
- This debate became known as the “Kitchen Debate”
Helen Gahagan Douglas

- Congressperson from California who wanted disarmament but by the end of the Cold War came around to the Truman Doctrine
Latino Presence Grows

- Population grows from 3 million to more than 9 million
- The largest Latino groups are made up of Mexican Americans living mostly in the Southwest and California
- Many came as braceros or temporary laborers during the 40’s and 50’s
- Large Cuban communities formed in New York City, Miami and New Jersey
Fight or Change

- Latinos demand equal opportunity along with respect for their culture and heritage
- Cesar Chavez believed that farm workers had to unionize
- Latinos began a “brown power” movement (began demanding that schools offer Spanish-speaking children classes taught in their own language)
- They also began organizing politically during the 60’s
Native Americans

- Native Americans are often seen as one large group even though they are of many tribes and nations
- In 1954 Eisenhower enacted a “termination” policy relocating Native Americans from isolated reservations into mainstream urban American life
- Declaration of Indian Purpose (1961) stressed the determination of Native Americans to “choose our own way of life”
- National Council on Indian Opportunity (1968)
Women Go To Work

• 1950 1 out of 3 women worked
• By 1960 40%
• Jobs allowed: clerical work, domestic service, retail sales, social work, teaching & nursing
• Paid poorly

Ms. Main Honour, a math major at Auburn University and the first woman accepted into Redstone Arsenal’s Cooperative Training Program (U.S. Army, 1956)
References


National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (n.d.) *Apollo program insignia* [Image]. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apollo_program_insignia.png


