

The Spread of Communism

Enduring Understanding: You should understand how international developments during the Cold War affected the world politically, socially, and economically. Be able to explain the spread of communism in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America including the ideas of the satellite state containment and the domino theory.





At the end of World War II, the Soviet Union wanted to spread communism, while the U.S. wanted to stop the spread of communism and promote democracy. President Truman instituted a policy of **containment** in which the U.S. would give economic assistance to countries in Eastern Europe trying to fight communism. This strategy was called the **Truman Doctrine**. The nations in Eastern Europe that the USSR kept control over after WWII were called '**satellite**' nations, because they clustered around the Soviet Union and 'orbited' with Soviet control and influence. Stalin refused to let them have free elections. He established communist governments there. Some of these satellite states were Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Albania, and Hungary. The Soviet Union began to spread communism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They focused on countries where revolutions were occurring or likely to occur, offering any rebels money and military support if they would become communist. The Soviet Union even sent representatives into these areas to discuss the benefits and successes of communism.

Section Review

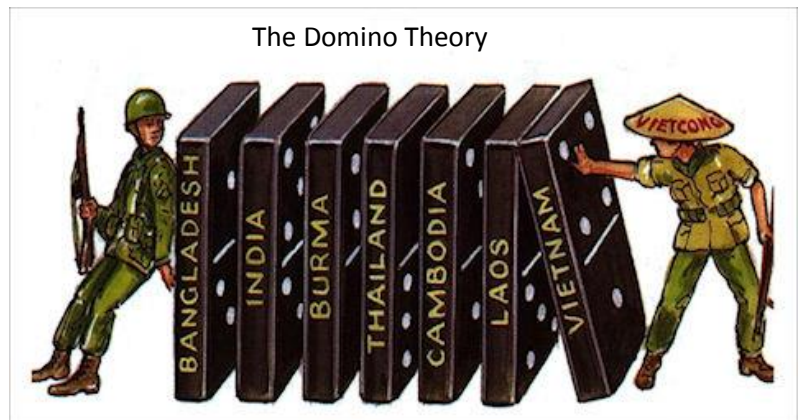
1. What is the Truman Doctrine?
2. What are satellite nations?
3. What did Stalin refuse to allow the satellite nations to do?
4. How were satellite nations rewarded if they became communist?

Communism in Asia



China was the first Asian nation to become communist. There was a civil war, but during WWII, the two sides joined together to fight the Japanese. After World War II ended, the Chinese Civil War resumed. The Communists, led by **Mao Zedong**, using guerilla warfare, fought against the democratic Nationalists, led by **Chiang Kai-shek**. After three years of fighting, the communists won (1949). The new country was called the People's Republic of China.

After the World War II, Japan was required to give up all of its colonies, and this included Korea. The USSR wanted Korea to become communist, and the U.S. wanted it to become democratic. The U.S. adopted a foreign policy centered on the “**Domino Theory**.” The “Domino Theory” states that if one nation falls to communism, others would also fall. To help avoid a civil war, Korea was divided into two parts: North Korea was communist, and South Korea was democratic. There would be a Korean War later in 1950 over these conflicting political ideologies. The same thing happened in Indochina Vietnam. There were rebels that wanted to break away from the mother country of France. These rebels were supported by the Soviet Union. The United States supported democratic leaders. This would later lead to the Vietnam War. Laos and Cambodia would fall to communism, but not all nations in Asia would fall to communism.



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5. Why were the Communists and the Nationalists on the same side during World War II?
6. Who won the Chinese Civil War?
7. How was Japan punished after World War II?
8. How did the U.S. and Soviet Union differ in their plans for Korea after World War II?
9. What did the Domino Theory predict?
10. What European nation controlled Vietnam prior to World War II?
11. What two nations fell to communism after Vietnam became communist?

Communism in Africa and Latin America

After World War II, many parts of Africa that were European colonies demanded independence. The USSR promised military aid in exchange for becoming communist. It gave military support and educational scholarships to many African nations, like Angola and Mozambique. Other African nations that received Soviet military or diplomatic aid included Guinea, Egypt, Congo, Uganda, Ethiopia, Benin, and Somalia. The United States also gave military and economic aid in an attempt to stop the spread of communism.

In Latin America, Cuba was the first nation to become communist. The communist leader, **Fidel Castro**, came to power in 1959. Tensions between the United States and Soviet Union would later be fueled by a missile crisis in Cuba in the 1960s. The 1970s and 1980s were years of tension in the region as Castro, with the aid of the Soviet Union, tried to spread communism in Latin America, and the U.S. tried to prevent it. El Salvador was one area where Soviet and Cuban forces clashed with American troops. Nicaragua was another area where conflict occurred as Communist rebels who were known as **Sandinistas** and supported by the Soviets fought soldiers known as **Contras**, who were supported by the United States.



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12. Identify two ways that the Soviet Union rewarded countries in Africa that agreed to become communist?
13. What are some African nations that received support from the Soviet Union?
14. Which of the Latin American countries was the first to become communist?
15. In what two decades were there increased tensions between communist and democratic forces in Latin America?
16. Who were the Sandinistas and the Contras?

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