

**Idealist**

**Big Three**

**Fourteen Points**

**Realist**

**free trade**

**self-determination**

**open diplomacy**

**disarmament**

The Big Three had conflicting aims: Wilson wanted peace based on his Fourteen Points, Clemenceau wanted to punish Germany, and Lloyd George wanted a balance between revenge and economic recovery.

Woodrow Wilson is often described as an idealist for prioritizing his Fourteen Points over territorial gains.

Georges Clemenceau was a realist who prioritized French security over Wilson's idealistic vision.

Wilson's Fourteen Points promised self-determination for oppressed nationalities, but many were ignored at Versailles to satisfy European powers.

The principle of self-determination was applied to create new nations like Poland and Czechoslovakia but was ignored for German-speaking populations in Austria and the Sudetenland.

Wilson's Fourteen Points called for free trade, but post-war protectionism undermined this goal.

Wilson believed global disarmament would prevent future wars, but European powers were reluctant to reduce their own militaries.

Wilson's call for open diplomacy directly challenged the pre-war system of secret alliances and treaties.

**reparations**

**secret treaties**

**conscription**

**war guilt**

**demilitarized  
zone**

**Rhineland**

**Polish Corridor**

**Saar**

The 1915 Treaty of London promised Italy territory from Austria-Hungary, creating tension at Versailles when Wilson opposed these secret agreements.

Germany was forced to pay £6.6 billion (later reduced to 132 billion gold marks) in reparations under the Treaty of Versailles, crippling its economy.

The war guilt clause (Article 231) was deeply resented by Germans and used by Hitler to gain support for overthrowing the treaty.

The Treaty of Versailles banned conscription in Germany, but Hitler reintroduced it in 1935, breaking the treaty.

German troops were forbidden from the Rhineland until Hitler remilitarized it in 1936, a direct violation of Versailles.

The Rhineland was established as a demilitarised zone to create a buffer between Germany and France.

An industrial region of Germany placed under League of Nations control for 15 years, with its coal mines given to France. In 1935, a plebiscite returned the Saar to Germany, a major propaganda victory for Hitler.

A strip of land given to Poland granting it access to the Baltic Sea, separating East Prussia from the rest of Germany. The Polish Corridor, containing the city of Danzig (a free city), was a major source of German resentment.

**Alsace-Lorraine**

**territories**

**plebiscite**

**Danzig**

**mandates**

**Treaty of Brest-Litovsk**

**November Criminals**

**Treaty of Versailles**

Lands or regions, often disputed or transferred between nations following war. Germany lost 13% of its European territory, including Alsace-Lorraine to France and large areas to the new nation of Poland.

Territory taken by Germany from France in 1871 and returned to France by the Treaty of Versailles. The return of Alsace-Lorraine was Clemenceau's greatest symbolic victory at Versailles.

A major Baltic port city with a predominantly German population, made a "Free City" under League protection. Danzig's status as a free city, separated from Germany, was a key grievance exploited by Hitler.

A direct vote by the people of a region to decide a political question, such as which country to belong to. Plebiscites were held in Schleswig, Upper Silesia, and the Saar to determine borders according to self-determination.

1918 treaty between Germany and Bolshevik Russia, forcing Russia to surrender vast territories. Germany's harsh treatment of Russia at Brest-Litovsk was used by critics to argue that Versailles was not unusually cruel.

Territories formerly owned by Germany and the Ottoman Empire that were handed over to Allied powers to administer on behalf of the League of Nations.

The 1919 peace treaty that officially ended WWI between Germany and the Allied Powers. The Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to accept war guilt, lose territory, pay reparations, and severely limit its military.

German politicians who signed the armistice in November 1918 and were blamed by nationalists for Germany's surrender. The "stab-in-the-back" myth claimed the November Criminals betrayed the undefeated German army.

**hindsight**

**public opinion**

**Georges Clemenceau**

**armistice**

**Woodrow Wilson**

**David Lloyd George**

**John Maynard Keynes**

The collective attitudes and beliefs of the general population on political issues. Lloyd George was constrained by British public opinion, which demanded harsh treatment of Germany ("Hang the Kaiser").

Understanding of a situation or event only after it has happened. With hindsight, historians recognize that Versailles was too harsh to be accepted but too lenient to permanently weaken Germany.

An agreement to stop fighting while a peace treaty is negotiated. The November 11, 1918 armistice ended WWI fighting, though the peace treaty came months later.

Known as "The Tiger," Clemenceau wanted to punish Germany severely to ensure France's security. He pushed for harsh reparations, the return of Alsace-Lorraine, and the creation of a buffer state in the Rhineland. His determination reflected French suffering during WWI.

Lloyd George represented British public opinion demanding a harsh treaty ("Hang the Kaiser") but privately worried about creating a vengeful Germany. He sought a middle ground between punishing Germany and preserving it as a trading partner.

Wilson brought his idealistic Fourteen Points to Paris, emphasizing self-determination, open diplomacy, and the League of Nations. He compromised on many points to secure the League but failed to get US Senate approval for membership.

A British economist and the Treasury's representative at the conference. He strongly opposed the level of reparations, warning they would cripple the European economy. He later wrote a famous book, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (1919), criticising the treaty



**Assembly**

**Covenant**

**Secretariat**

**Council**

**mandates**

**Treaty of Commissions**

**Article 10**

**collective security**

The constitution or founding document of the League of Nations. The Covenant outlined the League's structure, aims, and member obligations, including collective security.

The main debating chamber of the League, where all member nations met annually. The Assembly could make recommendations but required unanimous votes to take action, making it slow and ineffective.

The executive body of the League, with permanent members (Britain, France, Italy, Japan) and temporary members. The Council met more frequently than the Assembly and handled crises, but unanimous votes were still required.

The permanent civil service of the League, responsible for administrative tasks. The Secretariat prepared reports and organized meetings but had no power to enforce decisions.

Specialized agencies of the League dealing with specific issues like health, labour, and mandates. The Mandates Commission supervised former German and Ottoman territories administered by Allied powers.

See Unit 1 – territories administered on behalf of the League. The mandate system was criticized as colonialism under a new name.

The principle that an attack on one member nation would be considered an attack on all. Collective security was the League's core idea, but it failed when members prioritized national interests over collective action.

Section of the Covenant requiring members to respect and preserve the territorial integrity of other members. Article 10 committed members to protect each other's borders, but without military force, it was unenforceable.

**moral condemnation**

**unanimous**

**military force**

**trade sanctions**

**Upper Silesia**

**Aaland Islands**

**Corfu Crisis**

**Greek-Bulgarian Crisis**

Requiring the agreement of all voting members to make a decision. The League's requirement for unanimous votes meant that any single nation could block action.

Working together toward shared goals, especially between nations. The League's humanitarian agencies achieved some success through international co-operation on health and labour issues.

Public criticism by the League of a nation's actions, intended to shame it into compliance. Moral condemnation failed against major powers like Japan (Manchuria) and Italy (Abyssinia), who simply ignored it.

Economic penalties, such as banning trade, to pressure a nation into following League decisions. Sanctions were applied against Italy during the Abyssinian Crisis but excluded key items like oil, making them ineffective.

1921 dispute between Sweden and Finland resolved peacefully by the League. The League awarded the islands to Finland but demilitarized them, and both nations accepted the decision.

1921 plebiscite and partition between Germany and Poland, preventing conflict. The League oversaw the plebiscite and divided the region fairly, with both sides accepting the outcome.

1925 border conflict resolved swiftly by League intervention. The League's rapid response forced Greece to withdraw and pay compensation, demonstrating its effectiveness with small powers.

1923 Italian invasion of Corfu after an Italian general was killed on the Greek border. The League's weak response, allowing Italy to occupy Corfu and extract compensation, showed its impotence against major powers.

**Abyssinian Crisis**

**Manchurian Crisis**

**Hoare-Laval Pact**

**Lytton Commission**

**Washington  
Conference**

**Conference of  
Ambassadors**

**Kellogg-Briand Pact**

**Geneva Protocol**

1931 Japanese invasion of Manchuria, exposing the League's inability to stop aggression. The Lytton Commission condemned Japan, but Japan simply left the League and continued its occupation.

1935 Italian invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), the League's final catastrophic failure. Sanctions were weak and not enforced, and the Hoare-Laval Pact secretly proposed rewarding Italy, destroying the League's credibility.

League investigation into the Manchurian Crisis, which condemned Japan but took no action. The Lytton Commission's report took a year to produce, by which time Japan had already established its puppet state of Manchukuo.

Secret 1935 agreement to give most of Abyssinia to Italy, exposed and abandoned after public outrage. The Hoare-Laval Pact destroyed the League's moral authority and showed that Britain and France prioritized their own interests.

Allied diplomatic body that sometimes overruled League decisions, undermining its authority. The Conference of Ambassadors often settled disputes without involving the League, showing its weakness.

1921-22 naval disarmament conference, more successful than League efforts. The Washington Conference secured agreements on naval limits without League involvement, highlighting the League's limitations.

1924 proposal to strengthen the League through compulsory arbitration, never ratified. The Geneva Protocol failed when Britain's new Conservative government rejected it in 1925.

1928 agreement renouncing war as an instrument of national policy, signed by 65 nations. The Kellogg-Briand Pact had no enforcement mechanism and proved worthless when Japan invaded Manchuria.

**economic depression**

**disarmament**

**tariffs**

**Wall Street Crash**

**Haile Selassie**

**isolationism**

**Henry Cabot Lodge**

The League's goal of reducing global weapons. The World Disarmament Conference (1932-34) failed when Germany demanded equality and then withdrew.

Global economic crisis following the 1929 Wall Street Crash, worsening international tensions. The Depression made nations focus on domestic problems, reducing commitment to international cooperation and League ideals.

1929 US stock market collapse triggering the Great Depression worldwide. The Crash led to unemployment, nationalism, and aggression as countries sought to protect their economies.

Taxes on imported goods, used to protect domestic industries but harming international trade. Tariffs increased during the Depression, making League members less willing to trade with or help each other.

US policy of avoiding involvement in European affairs, despite Wilson creating the League. US isolationism crippled the League, as the world's strongest power never joined, reducing its credibility and power.

Emperor of Abyssinia (Ethiopia). He appealed to the League of Nations in 1936 for help against the Italian invasion. His powerful speech, warning that "God and history will remember your judgment," became a symbol of the League's impotence as the world failed to act

US Senator and Republican leader. He led the "Irreconcilables" who opposed US membership in the League of Nations. His opposition in the Senate was a primary reason why the United States never joined the League, significantly weakening its power and credibility



**Lebensraum**

**Mein Kampf**

**Bolshevism**

**November Criminals**

**conscription**

**rearmament**

**Rhineland**

**remilitarisation**

Hitler's autobiography and political manifesto, written during his 1924 imprisonment. Mein Kampf outlined Hitler's plans for Lebensraum, anti-Semitism, and the overthrow of the Treaty of Versailles.

"Living space" – the Nazi belief that Germany needed to expand eastward to acquire territory for the Aryan race. Hitler's demand for Lebensraum led to the invasion of Czechoslovakia and Poland, triggering WWII.

Part of Hitler's justification for overthrowing Versailles. Hitler repeatedly blamed the "November Criminals" for signing the hated treaty.

Another term for communism, used by Hitler to describe the Soviet threat. Hitler presented his eastern expansion as a crusade against Bolshevism.

The process of rebuilding a nation's military strength after a period of disarmament. Hitler's rearmament program violated Versailles, created jobs, and restored German military power.

Reintroduced by Hitler in 1935. Hitler's reintroduction of conscription expanded the German army to 500,000 men, breaking the Treaty of Versailles.

The act of moving military forces into an area previously demilitarized. Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936 was a gamble that succeeded due to French and British inaction.

This region was remilitarized by Hitler in 1936. The remilitarization of the Rhineland was Hitler's first major foreign policy gamble, and it paid off.

**Anschluss**

**Spanish Civil War**

**Polish Corridor**

**Sudetenland**

**Munich Agreement**

**appeasement**

**Molotov-Ribbentrop  
Pact**

**Anti-Comintern Pact**

1936-39 conflict between Republican (left-wing) and Nationalist (right-wing) forces in Spain. Hitler used the Spanish Civil War as a testing ground for new weapons and tactics, including the bombing of Guernica.

The political union of Germany and Austria, achieved by Hitler in March 1938. Anschluss was forbidden by the Treaty of Versailles, but Britain and France took no action when Hitler invaded Austria.

A region of Czechoslovakia with a large German-speaking population, annexed by Germany in 1938. Hitler demanded the Sudetenland, claiming to protect German minorities, leading to the Munich Agreement.

Hitler's demand for its return triggered the invasion of Poland. Hitler demanded the return of the Polish Corridor and Danzig, and when Poland refused, Germany invaded on September 1, 1939.

The policy of giving in to an aggressor's demands to avoid conflict. Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler at Munich is criticized for emboldening Hitler to demand more territory.

1938 agreement allowing Germany to annex the Sudetenland, signed by Germany, Britain, France, and Italy. The Munich Agreement is the classic example of appeasement, as Britain and France hoped to avoid war by giving in to Hitler's demands.

1936 agreement between Germany and Japan (later Italy) to oppose the Communist International (Comintern). The Anti-Comintern Pact strengthened the Axis alliance and signaled shared opposition to the USSR.

1939 non-aggression agreement between Germany and the USSR, secretly dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. The Nazi-Soviet Pact shocked the world and enabled Hitler to invade Poland without fear of Soviet intervention.

**Blitzkrieg**

**Rome-Berlin Axis**

**Winston Churchill**

**Neville Chamberlain**

**Benito Mussolini**

1936 alliance between Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. The Rome-Berlin Axis formalized the partnership between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.

"Lightning war" – a swift, intense military attack using tanks and aircraft to quickly overwhelm opponents. Blitzkrieg tactics allowed Germany to conquer Poland in weeks and France in six weeks in 1940.

British Prime Minister (1937-1940). He is most associated with the policy of Appeasement. He held three meetings with Hitler in September 1938, culminating in the Munich Agreement, which he believed would secure "peace for our time."

A vocal backbench MP who consistently warned against the Nazi threat and criticised the appeasement policy. He became Prime Minister in May 1940, leading Britain through the war after Chamberlain's resignation. Unlike Chamberlain, Winston Churchill had long warned that Hitler could not be trusted and that rearmament was essential.

Fascist dictator of Italy (1922-1943). Although initially wary of Hitler, he was drawn into alliance, forming the Rome-Berlin Axis (1936). He played the role of mediator at the Munich Conference in 1938.



**Freikorps**

**Weimar Republic**

**Kapp Putsch**

**Spartacist Uprising**

**Ruhr**

**general strike**

**right-wing**

**hyperinflation**

Germany's democratic government established in 1919, lasting until Hitler became Chancellor in 1933. The Weimar Republic faced challenges from both left and right, including the Spartacist Uprising and the Kapp Putsch.

Right-wing paramilitary units composed of ex-soldiers used to crush communist uprisings. The Freikorps brutally suppressed the Spartacist Uprising in 1919 and later participated in the Kapp Putsch against the Weimar Republic.

1919 communist revolt in Berlin led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The Spartacist Uprising was crushed by the Freikorps, deepening the split between communists and socialists.

A 1920 right-wing attempt to overthrow the Weimar government led by Wolfgang Kapp. The Kapp Putsch failed when German workers launched a general strike, paralyzing the country.

A strike by workers in multiple industries simultaneously to paralyze the economy and achieve political goals. A general strike by Berlin workers defeated the Kapp Putsch when the government called on citizens to refuse cooperation.

Germany's industrial heartland, occupied by French and Belgian troops in 1923 when Germany failed to pay reparations. The occupation of the Ruhr led to hyperinflation as the German government printed money to fund passive resistance.

Extremely rapid and out-of-control price rises, rendering currency worthless. In 1923, German prices rose so fast that workers were paid daily and money was burned for fuel.

Political groups favoring traditional values, strong nationalism, and opposition to communism. The Nazi Party was a right-wing movement that gained support from nationalists, industrialists, and the middle class.

**democracy**

**communism**

**Dawes Plan**

**Young Plan**

**Gleichschaltung**

**Munich Putsch**

**SS**

**Gestapo**

a political ideology advocating for a classless society. Fear of communism drove many Germans to support the Nazis as a bulwark against Soviet-style revolution.

A system of government where power is vested in the people, who rule either directly or through elected representatives. The Weimar Republic was Germany's first experiment with democracy, but it was weakened by proportional representation and Article 48.

1929 agreement reducing German reparations to £2 billion and extending payment deadlines. The Young Plan was opposed by nationalists, who collected signatures for a referendum against it.

1924 agreement restructuring German reparations and providing US loans to stabilize the economy. The Dawes Plan helped Germany recover economically, leading to the "Golden Twenties."

1923 failed Nazi attempt to seize power in Munich, also called the Beer Hall Putsch. The Munich Putsch failed, but Hitler used his trial to gain national attention and wrote *Mein Kampf* in prison.

"Coordination" – the Nazi process of bringing all aspects of German life under party control. Gleichschaltung eliminated independent trade unions, political parties, and local government autonomy.

Geheime Staatspolizei – the Nazi secret police responsible for crushing opposition. The Gestapo could arrest citizens without trial and send them to concentration camps.

Schutzstaffel – Nazi elite guard responsible for security, racial policies, and running concentration camps. The SS, led by Heinrich Himmler, grew into a massive organization controlling police, intelligence, and the camps.

**concentration camps**

**SA**

**Führer**

**Night of the  
Long Knives**

**Nuremberg Laws**

**Third Reich**

**Lebensborn**

**Kristallnacht**

Sturmabteilung – Nazi paramilitary "brownshirts" who intimidated opponents. The SA had over 3 million members by 1934 but was purged during the Night of the Long Knives.

Prisons where Nazi opponents and persecuted groups were imprisoned without trial. Dachau, opened in 1933, was the first permanent concentration camp for political prisoners.

June 1934 purge of the SA leadership and other opponents to secure Hitler's power. Hitler used the SS to murder Ernst Röhm and other SA leaders, winning army support.

"Leader" – the title Hitler adopted after Hindenburg's death in 1934, combining President and Chancellor. After Hindenburg died, Hitler declared himself Führer, and the army swore a personal oath of loyalty to him.

The Nazi term for their regime, which they claimed would last a thousand years. The Third Reich lasted from 1933 to 1945, ending with Germany's defeat in WWII.

1935 anti-Semitic laws stripping Jews of citizenship and banning marriage with Aryans. The Nuremberg Laws legalized racial discrimination and laid the foundation for the Holocaust.

"Night of Broken Glass" – November 1938 pogrom against Jewish communities across Germany. Kristallnacht saw 91 Jews murdered, 200 synagogues destroyed, and 20,000 Jews sent to concentration camps.

SS program to increase the Aryan birth rate through homes for unmarried mothers and child kidnapping. Lebensborn homes encouraged "racially pure" women to bear children for the Führer.

**League of  
German Maidens**

**Hitler Youth**

**Beauty of Labour**

**Strength Through Joy**

**Four Year Plan**

**autarky**

**Confessing Church**

**White Rose**

Nazi organization for indoctrinating and training young people. The Hitler Youth became compulsory in 1939, preparing boys for military service and girls for motherhood.

BDM – Nazi girls' organization teaching domestic skills and Nazi ideology. The BDM prepared girls for their roles as mothers and wives in the Nazi state.

KDF – Nazi program providing leisure activities and rewards for workers. KDF offered cheap holidays, concerts, and the opportunity to save for a Volkswagen car.

Nazi program to improve working conditions in factories. The program encouraged better facilities like washrooms and canteens to keep workers productive.

Economic self-sufficiency, a key Nazi goal to prepare Germany for war. The Four Year Plan aimed to make Germany self-sufficient in key resources like oil and rubber.

1936 program under Göring to accelerate rearmament and achieve autarky. The Four Year Plan prioritized military production over consumer goods, straining the economy.

Non-violent student resistance group in Munich, executed for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets. Hans and Sophie Scholl were executed in 1943 for their White Rose resistance activities.

Protestant movement opposing Nazi control of the churches. Pastors like Martin Niemöller and Dietrich Bonhoeffer resisted Nazi interference in religious life.

**Heinrich Himmler**

**Joseph Goebbels**

**Hermann Goering**

**Pastor Martin Niemöller**

**Rudolf Hess**

As Minister of Propaganda, he was responsible for controlling the media, arts, and information. He created the Führer cult, organised the book burnings (1933), and used propaganda to maintain public support for the regime.

Leader of the SS (Schutzstaffel), which grew to control the Gestapo, the security service (SD), and the concentration camps. He was the chief architect of the Final Solution.

A prominent Protestant pastor and leading figure in the Confessing Church, which resisted Nazi attempts to control the Protestant church. He was imprisoned in concentration camps from 1938-45.

He was Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe, Prime Minister of Prussia, and from 1936, Plenipotentiary of the Four Year Plan, making him the economic dictator of the Reich . in charge of the Gestapo before Himmler in 1934 . Central role in the Anschluss with Austria, the persecution of Jews (ordering the billion-mark fine after Kristallnacht).

Early Nazi Party member. Munich Putsch and was imprisoned with Hitler, assisting him in writing Mein Kampf . became Hitler's private secretary and later Deputy Führer, overseeing party administration . He signed key legislation, including the Nuremberg Laws (1935). His influence waned as other figures rose, and in a bizarre solo mission in May 1941, he flew to Scotland hoping to negotiate peace with Britain.



**Friedrich Ebert**

**Swing Youth**

**Wolfgang Kapp**

**Rosa Luxemburg &  
Karl Liebknecht**

**Gustav Stresemann**

**Walther Rathenau**

**General Ludendorff**

**Paul von Hindenburg**

Youth subculture rejecting Nazi conformity by listening to banned jazz music. Swing Youth were persecuted for their "degenerate" music and lifestyle.

Leader of the SPD and the first President of the Weimar Republic (1919-1925). His government faced multiple existential threats from both the extreme left and the extreme right. He was forced to use the right-wing Freikorps to crush communist revolts, which undermined his democratic credentials.

Co-founder and leader of the German Communist Party (KPD) and the Spartacist League. In January 1919, led the Spartacist Uprising, attempting to overthrow Ebert's government. Was captured and murdered by the Freikorps after the revolt was crushed.

A right-wing nationalist civil servant who led the Kapp Putsch in March 1920. He marched Freikorps units into Berlin and declared a new government. The putsch only failed because of a general strike by German workers.

Germany's wealthy, Jewish Foreign Minister (1922). He was assassinated by right-wing extremists in June 1922. His murder showed the Weimar Republic's vulnerability to political violence.

As Chancellor (1923) and then Foreign Minister (1923-1929), he was the key figure in stabilising the Weimar. He ended hyperinflation w/the Rentenmark (1923). His policy of "fulfilment" led to the Dawes Plan (1924) and Young Plan (1929). He signed the Locarno Treaties (1925) secured Germany's entry into League of Nations (1926), for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

WWI general who was elected the second President of the Weimar Republic in 1925. A conservative monarchist, his presidency lent credibility to the Republic among right-wing nationalists. However, his use of Article 48 and his appointment of Hitler as Chancellor in January 1933 ultimately paved the way for the Nazi dictatorship.

A highly respected WWI general who joined forces with Hitler for the Munich Putsch (1923). His presence gave the putsch an air of legitimacy.

**Potsdam Conference**

**Yalta Conference**

**superpower**

**atomic bomb**

**satellite state**

**Soviet sphere  
of influence**

**Berlin Blockade**

**Iron curtain**

February 1945 meeting of the Big Three (Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill) to plan post-war Europe. At Yalta, agreements were made on dividing Germany, holding free elections in Eastern Europe, and Soviet entry into the Pacific war.

July-August 1945 meeting of the Big Three (Truman, Stalin, Attlee) to implement Yalta decisions. At Potsdam, tensions emerged over reparations, Poland's borders, and Germany's future as the atomic bomb gave Truman leverage.

A nuclear weapon whose immense destructive power comes from the fission of atoms. The US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended WWII and began the nuclear arms race.

A nation with dominant military, economic, and political power on a global scale. After WWII, the USA and USSR emerged as the world's two superpowers, leading to bipolar Cold War rivalry.

Eastern European countries under Soviet domination after WWII. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and others became Soviet satellite states with communist governments.

A country that is formally independent but politically and economically dominated by a more powerful nation. East Germany was a Soviet satellite state, following Moscow's policies and hosting Soviet troops.

Winston Churchill's term for the ideological and physical division between Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe and the democratic West. Churchill's 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri, popularized the term and signaled the start of the Cold War.

1948-49 Soviet attempt to cut off Western access to Berlin, hoping to force the Allies out. Stalin blocked all land routes to West Berlin, but the Allies responded with the Berlin Airlift, flying in supplies for 11 months.

**Berlin Wall**

**Berlin airlift**

**capitalism**

**Checkpoint Charlie**

**democracy**

**communism**

**co-existence**

**dictatorship**

The 1948-49 Allied operation flying food, fuel, and supplies into West Berlin during the Soviet blockade. The Berlin Airlift was a major propaganda victory for the West, demonstrating commitment to defending democracy.

1961 barrier built by East Germany to prevent citizens from fleeing to the democratic West. The Berlin Wall became the ultimate symbol of the Cold War and the division between communism and democracy.

The most famous crossing point between East and West Berlin during the Cold War. In October 1961, US and Soviet tanks faced off at Checkpoint Charlie in a tense standoff.

An economic system based on private ownership, free markets, and profit. The USA championed capitalism, believing economic freedom led to political freedom and prosperity.

An economic and political system advocating for collective ownership and the abolition of private property. The USSR promoted communism, claiming it would create a classless society, though in practice it meant one-party dictatorship.

A system of government where citizens participate in decision-making, usually through free elections. The Cold War was often framed as a struggle between Western democracy and Soviet-style communism.

A form of government where absolute power is held by a single ruler or small group. Many Soviet satellite states were effectively dictatorships, with no opposition parties or free elections.

Peaceful coexistence – the idea that capitalist and communist nations could live together without war. Khrushchev promoted "peaceful coexistence" after Stalin's death, though competition continued through proxy wars.

**isolationism**

**Alliance**

**Joseph Stalin**

**blockade**

**Nikita Khrushchev**

**Harry S. Truman**

**John F. Kennedy**

A formal agreement or union between nations for mutual benefit, especially for military purposes. NATO and the Warsaw Pact were rival Cold War alliances, each pledging to defend member nations.

A policy of avoiding involvement in international alliances and conflicts. US isolationism after WWI contributed to the League of Nations' failure, but after WWII, America embraced global leadership.

The isolation of a place by hostile ships or troops to prevent passage of people or supplies. The Berlin Blockade (1948-49) attempted to cut off West Berlin from Allied supply routes.

The dictator of the Soviet Union from the late 1920s until his death. His determination to create a buffer zone of satellite states in Eastern Europe after WWII, violating promises of free elections made at Yalta, was a primary cause of the Cold War. He blockaded Berlin in 1948, leading to the Berlin Blockade and subsequent Berlin Airlift

US President (1945-1953). He adopted a firm stance against Soviet expansion, announcing the Truman Doctrine in 1947, which committed the US to a policy of containment. He also approved the Marshall Plan to rebuild Western Europe and responded to the Berlin Blockade with the successful Berlin Airlift

Leader of the USSR after Stalin's death (1953-1964). He pursued a policy of peaceful co-existence but also risked war by placing missiles in Cuba, triggering the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. He also built the Berlin Wall in 1961 to stop East Germans fleeing to the West

US President (1961-1963). His presidency was dominated by Cold War crises, including the failed Bay of Pigs invasion, the construction of the Berlin Wall, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, during which he successfully negotiated the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba



**containment**

**Truman Doctrine**

**Marshall Aid**

**Marshall Plan**

**West/  
The Western Powers**

**NATO**

**SEATO**

**CENTO**

1947 US policy pledging to support "free peoples" resisting communist subjugation. The Truman Doctrine provided \$400 million in aid to Greece and Turkey to prevent communist takeover.

US Cold War strategy of preventing the spread of communism through diplomatic, economic, and military measures. The policy of containment, outlined by George Kennan, guided US actions from the Truman Doctrine to the Vietnam War.

US program (1948-52) providing \$13 billion in economic aid to rebuild Western Europe. The Marshall Plan revived European economies, created strong trading partners, and reduced communist appeal in countries like France and Italy.

Another term for the Marshall Plan's financial assistance. Marshall Aid was offered to all European nations, including the USSR, but Stalin refused and forbade Eastern bloc countries from participating.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization – 1949 military alliance of Western nations pledging collective defense. NATO's Article 5 stated that an attack on one member would be considered an attack on all, deterring Soviet aggression.

Democratic capitalist nations aligned with the USA during the Cold War. The Western Powers included the USA, UK, France, Canada, and other NATO members.

Central Treaty Organization – Cold War alliance of Middle Eastern countries backed by the US and UK. CENTO (also called the Baghdad Pact) aimed to contain Soviet influence in the Middle East.

Southeast Asia Treaty Organization – Cold War alliance of nations committed to containing communism in Asia. SEATO included the US, UK, France, Australia, and several Asian nations, though it lacked the strong commitments of NATO.

**ICBM**

**arms race**

**MAD**

**nuclear deterrent**

**Bay of Pigs**

**missile gap**

**Tet Offensive**

**Cuban Missile Crisis**

Competition between nations to build superior military forces, especially nuclear weapons. The Cold War arms race saw the US and USSR accumulate thousands of nuclear weapons capable of destroying the world.

Intercontinental Ballistic Missile – a long-range missile capable of delivering nuclear warheads across continents. ICBMs made the nuclear threat immediate and global, as missiles could reach targets in minutes.

The possession of nuclear weapons to discourage enemy attack through fear of devastating retaliation. MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) was the ultimate nuclear deterrent, ensuring neither superpower could win a nuclear war.

Mutually Assured Destruction – the doctrine that full-scale nuclear war would destroy both attacker and defender. MAD paradoxically kept the Cold War "cold" by making nuclear war unthinkable for both sides.

The perceived superiority of Soviet missile technology, used by Kennedy in the 1960 US election. The missile gap was later revealed to be exaggerated, but it fueled the arms race and defense spending.

Failed 1961 CIA-backed invasion of Cuba by Cuban exiles attempting to overthrow Castro. The Bay of Pigs humiliation pushed Castro closer to the USSR and led to Soviet missiles being placed in Cuba.

1962 confrontation over Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, bringing the world to the brink of nuclear war. The crisis was resolved when Khrushchev agreed to remove missiles in exchange for Kennedy's promise not to invade Cuba.

Massive 1968 surprise attack by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces across South Vietnam. Though a military failure for communists, the Tet Offensive shocked Americans and turned US public opinion against the war.

**Viet Minh**

**Indochina**

**Domino theory**

**Viet Cong**

**search and destroy**

**Ho Chi Minh Trail**

**napalm**

**Operation  
Rolling Thunder**

Former French colonial territory in Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. France's defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 ended French rule and led to the division of Vietnam.

Communist-led nationalist movement fighting for Vietnamese independence from France. The Viet Minh, led by Ho Chi Minh, defeated the French at Dien Bien Phu and established communist rule in North Vietnam.

Communist guerrilla forces in South Vietnam fighting against the US-backed government. The Viet Cong used guerrilla tactics, including ambushes and tunnels, to frustrate American and South Vietnamese forces.

The belief that if one Southeast Asian nation fell to communism, others would follow like falling dominoes. The domino theory justified US intervention in Vietnam, fearing communist takeover of Laos, Cambodia, and beyond.

A network of supply routes from North Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia to South Vietnam. Despite massive bombing, the Ho Chi Minh Trail kept communist forces supplied throughout the war.

US military tactic of sending troops into villages to find and eliminate Viet Cong fighters. Search-and-destroy missions often alienated Vietnamese civilians and created more support for the Viet Cong.

Sustained US bombing campaign against North Vietnam (1965-68). Rolling Thunder failed to destroy North Vietnam's will to fight and resulted in heavy civilian casualties.

A highly flammable jelly used in bombs, causing severe burns and destruction. Napalm became a symbol of the brutality of the Vietnam War, horrifying global public opinion.

**draft**

**Agent Orange**

**conventional weapons**

**guerrilla warfare**

**CIA**

**Vietnamisation**

**surveillance**

**intelligence**

A toxic herbicide used by the US to destroy jungle cover and crops. Agent Orange caused long-term health problems for Vietnamese civilians and US veterans.

Compulsory military conscription, especially used during the Vietnam War. The draft was deeply unpopular in the US, sparking widespread protests and draft resistance.

Irregular warfare using ambushes, sabotage, and hit-and-run tactics rather than conventional battles. The Viet Cong's guerrilla warfare neutralized America's technological and firepower advantages.

Traditional military weapons and tactics used in open battle between opposing forces. The US struggled to adapt conventional weapons to the guerrilla warfare conditions of Vietnam.

Nixon's policy of gradually withdrawing US troops while strengthening South Vietnam's army to fight alone. Vietnamisation failed when South Vietnamese forces proved unable to withstand the 1975 North Vietnamese invasion.

Central Intelligence Agency – US agency responsible for foreign intelligence gathering and covert operations. The CIA conducted numerous covert operations during the Cold War, including in Iran, Guatemala, and Cuba.

Information gathered about enemies or potential threats, often by secret services. CIA and KGB intelligence operations were central to the Cold War, with both sides spying extensively.

Close observation and monitoring, especially of suspected opponents by state security forces. Both superpowers engaged in extensive surveillance of each other's military and diplomatic activities.

**Võ Nguyên Giáp**

**Ho Chi Minh**

**George F. Kennan**

**Ngo Dinh Diem**

**Lyndon B. Johnson**

**Dwight Eisenhower**

**Henry Kissinger**

**Robert S. McNamara**

The founder and leader of the Viet Minh and later the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). A nationalist and communist, he led the struggle against French colonial rule and later against the US-backed government in South Vietnam, becoming the face of the enemy for the United States

Ho Chi Minh's premier general. He was a military genius who perfected guerrilla warfare tactics and led the Viet Minh to victory against the French at Dien Bien Phu (1954). He later masterminded the communist military strategy against the US and South Vietnam

The authoritarian, Catholic President of the US-backed Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) from 1955 until his assassination. His corrupt and repressive regime, which alienated the Buddhist majority, was a key factor in the growing strength of the Viet Cong insurgency

An American diplomat and Soviet expert. He authored the "Long Telegram" (1946), which argued that the USSR was inherently expansionist and should be met with a policy of firm containment. This analysis became the foundation of US Cold War strategy

US President (1953-1961). He articulated the Domino Theory, warning that if one Southeast Asian nation fell to communism, its neighbors would follow. This theory became a key justification for US involvement in Vietnam

US President (1963-1969). After the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, he secured the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution from Congress, which gave him broad authority to escalate US military involvement in Vietnam. He launched Operation Rolling Thunder and committed hundreds of thousands of combat troops

US Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson (1961-1968). He was a key architect of the escalation of the Vietnam War, using statistical analysis to measure progress. He later grew disillusioned and resigned after the Tet Offensive

US National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State under President Nixon. He was Nixon's closest advisor on Vietnam and together with Le Duc Tho negotiated the Paris Peace Accords (1973). He also authorized the secret bombing of Cambodia

**William Westmoreland**

**Richard Nixon**



US President (1969-1974). He pursued a policy of Vietnamisation, gradually withdrawing US troops while strengthening the South Vietnamese army. He also authorized secret bombing campaigns in Cambodia and Laos, expanding the war beyond Vietnam's borders

The US General commanding American military operations in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968. He implemented search and destroy tactics and pursued a strategy of attrition, aiming to inflict so many casualties that the communists would give up

**Comecon**

**Cominform**

**satellite state**

**Soviet sphere  
of influence**

**Red Army**

**Warsaw Pact**

**socialism**

**one-party state**

Communist Information Bureau – 1947 organization coordinating communist parties across Europe under Soviet control. Cominform was Stalin's response to the Marshall Plan, tightening ideological control over Eastern bloc countries.

Council for Mutual Economic Assistance – 1949 Soviet-led economic organization for Eastern bloc countries. Comecon aimed to coordinate economic development and trade within the Soviet sphere, though it favored Soviet interests.

the territories under Soviet domination. The USSR maintained its sphere of influence through military presence, economic control, and political manipulation.

a country dominated by a more powerful neighbor. Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia were satellite states with governments following Moscow's orders.

1955 military alliance of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellite states. The Warsaw Pact was created in response to West Germany joining NATO, formalizing the division of Europe into two armed camps.

The Soviet military, which occupied Eastern Europe at the end of WWII. The presence of the Red Army ensured that Eastern European governments remained loyal to Moscow.

A political system where only one political party is legally allowed to hold power. The USSR and its satellite states were one-party states where the communist party controlled all aspects of government.

A political and economic theory advocating for collective or governmental ownership of production. Eastern European states were officially "people's democracies" building socialism under Soviet guidance.

**KGB**

**secret police**

**censorship**

**Stasi**

**Hungarian Uprising**

**gulags**

**Brezhnev Doctrine**

**Prague Spring**

Government-controlled police force operating secretly to suppress political opposition. The Soviet KGB and East German Stasi were feared secret police organizations that monitored citizens and crushed dissent.

Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti – the Soviet secret police and intelligence agency. The KGB operated both at home, suppressing dissent, and abroad, conducting espionage.

Ministerium für Staatssicherheit – East German secret police, one of the most pervasive in history. The Stasi employed tens of thousands of informers, monitoring nearly every aspect of East German life.

The suppression or control of speech, writing, and media considered harmful to the state. In East Germany, all publications were censored, and listening to Western radio was a crime.

Soviet forced labour camps where millions of prisoners were held under brutal conditions. The gulag system imprisoned political opponents, intellectuals, and ordinary criminals.

1956 popular revolt against Soviet control, brutally crushed by Soviet tanks. The Hungarian Uprising was suppressed within days, with thousands killed and many more fleeing to the West.

1968 period of political liberalization in Czechoslovakia, crushed by Soviet invasion. The Prague Spring's reforms ("socialism with a human face") threatened Soviet control, leading to the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Soviet policy asserting the right to intervene in any socialist country threatening the communist bloc. The Brezhnev Doctrine justified the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and the suppression of reform movements.

**trade union**

**Solidarity**

**people power**

**martial law**

**Glasnost**

**De-Stalinisation**

**Soviet republics**

**Perestroika**

Polish trade union movement that became a major anti-communist force in the 1980s. Solidarity's 10 million members challenged communist rule, leading to martial law and eventual free elections.

An organized association of workers formed to protect their rights and interests. The Solidarity trade union in Poland, led by Lech Wałęsa, became a major anti-communist movement.

Temporary military rule imposed during emergencies, suspending ordinary law. Martial law was declared in Poland in 1981 to crush the Solidarity trade union movement.

The use of mass demonstrations and non-violent resistance to achieve political change. People power movements across Eastern Europe in 1989 toppled communist governments, culminating in the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Khrushchev's policy of denouncing Stalin's crimes and relaxing some controls after 1956. De-Stalinisation led to limited freedoms but also caused unrest in Hungary and Poland.

"Openness" – Gorbachev's policy of allowing greater freedom of speech and information in the USSR. Glasnost encouraged public debate and exposed the failures of the Soviet system, accelerating reform.

"Restructuring" – Gorbachev's economic and political reforms to revitalize the Soviet system. Perestroika introduced limited market mechanisms but failed to solve Soviet economic problems.

The 15 constituent republics of the USSR, which declared independence in 1991. The collapse of the USSR saw republics like Ukraine, Latvia, and Georgia become independent nations.

**Berlin Wall**

**Reunification**

**Nikita Khrushchev**

**Nobel Peace Prize**

**Mikhail Gorbachev**

**Leonid Brezhnev**

**Alexander Dubček**

**Imre Nagy**

The process of bringing together divided territories, especially East and West Germany in 1990. German reunification occurred in October 1990, less than a year after the Berlin Wall fell.

its fall in 1989 symbolized the end of Cold War divisions. The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, became the iconic moment of communism's collapse.

Prestigious international award given for contributions to peace. Lech Wałęsa (Solidarity) and Mikhail Gorbachev both received the Nobel Peace Prize for their roles in ending communist control.

Leader of the USSR after Stalin's death (1953-1964). He initiated De-Stalinisation, denouncing Stalin's crimes in his "Secret Speech" of 1956. However, he crushed the Hungarian Uprising in 1956 with the Red Army, proving that Soviet control would not be relaxed.

Leader of the USSR (1964-1982). He sent Warsaw Pact troops to crush the Prague Spring in 1968 and announced the Brezhnev Doctrine, claiming the right to intervene in any socialist country that threatened the communist bloc.

Leader of the USSR (1985-1991). His policies of Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring) encouraged public debate and economic reform. Crucially, he refused to intervene when Eastern European nations overthrew communist rule in 1989, leading to the fall of the Berlin Wall and German Reunification.

Hungarian communist leader who became the symbol of the Hungarian Uprising (1956). He announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and appealed for Western help. He was arrested, secretly tried, and executed by the USSR after the uprising was crushed.

First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1968). He launched the Prague Spring, a reform movement promising "socialism with a human face." His liberalization was crushed by Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968, ending the reform movement.

**General  
Wojciech Jaruzelski**

**Lech Wałęsa**

**Helmut Kohl**

**Pope John Paul II**

Polish electrician and leader of the Solidarity trade union movement (founded 1980). He became the face of the anti-communist opposition in Eastern Europe, leading millions of workers in protest against the communist government. He later became President of Poland (1990-1995).

Polish communist leader. In December 1981, he declared martial law, arresting Solidarity leaders and crushing the opposition in an attempt to prevent Soviet invasion. He served as the Soviet-controlled leader throughout the 1980s.

Polish-born pope (1978-2005). His first visit to Poland in 1979 inspired millions of Poles and gave moral legitimacy to the Solidarity movement, helping to undermine the communist government's authority.

Chancellor of West Germany (1982-1998). He skillfully navigated the collapse of East Germany in 1989, leading the push for reunification and negotiating the terms with the USSR, the USA, and other allies.

