Cold War and Decolonization

Overview
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From Allies to Enemies:

- ‘Big Three’ (Truman, US; Churchill/Atlee, UK; Stalin, Soviet Union) met at Potsdam July 17- August 2 1945
- purpose: discuss reconstruction of Europe
- war continued in Pacific but already lack of common enemy in Europe led to difficulties
- main disagreement: reparations for Germany
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Atlee, Truman, Stalin at Potsdam (1945)
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- Stalin wanted high payments, half to Soviet Union
- Truman (unlike predecessor Roosevelt) argued for ‘mitigation’: belied that post-WWI reparations had led to rise of Nazis
- British (and major ally France) exhausted by war: power lay with US and Soviet Union
- agreement reached on division Germany into ‘zones’ managed by Allies but little else
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Germany: Zones of Occupation 1946
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Apparent that Soviet Union was ‘Winner’:

- although Stalin did not achieve all he wished in Potsdam, clear that Soviet Union had gained most from war
- in move West to take Berlin: had re-established control over much Eastern Europe – ‘liberated’ territories from Fascism, offered them Soviet ‘socialist’ assistance
- in coming year solidified control
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Differences Between former Allies: Economic and Political

Capitalism-Socialism: opposing concepts of how economy should function

- ‘West’ looked to market (supply-demand) to shape economy [Text: some differences between post-war Europe, America in this respect]

- 1944 Bretton Woods: established International World Monetary system based on US$ with fixed exchange rate, backed by International Monetary Fund and World Bank
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- Soviet Union ‘courted’ by US: seen as counterweight to Germany, potential trading partner (resource, labour wealth)
- spoke to concerns that this was ‘capitalist’ more than ‘internationalist’ enterprise
- delegates signed Bretton Woods agreement but in 1945 Stalin refused to join IMF: feared control by US, now recognized as ascendant power (vis-à-vis Britain)
- established closed monetary system for Soviet Union and communist allies
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Differences Between former Allies: Economic and Political

Democracy-Communism: opposing concepts of how government should function
- ‘West’ (including Britain, European allies) followed forms of elected government: systems differed (e.g. US Presidential, ‘Social Democracy – tending to forms of welfare state, reflecting post-war destruction and poverty in Europe)
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- ‘East’ : Communism as developed by authoritarian leadership (e.g. Stalinist Soviet Union, Maoist China)
- Soviet Union just beginning its experience of Empire in central Europe: ‘buffer states’ to be managed from Moscow
- had acknowledged 1941 Atlantic Charter (US,Britain) laying out post-war goals of ‘democracy’ and ‘self- determination’ [see below, ‘Decolonization’] but had no intention of participating
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“The Rescue of Europe and The Rise of Capitalism”
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‘The Iron Curtain’: ideological boundary dividing Europe

- even as war in Pacific ending, clear that America’s economic, political vision for the post-war world was in direct conflict with the Soviet Union’s [also Britain’s, see below]

- six months later Churchill (recently defeated as Prime Minister) characterized Europe as facing a new challenge: the symbolic emergence of an ‘iron curtain’ dividing the West from the East:
"From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow."

Sir Winston Churchill (Missouri, USA – Mar. 6, 1946)
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Churchill’s ‘Iron Curtain’ speech
The Marshall Plan: rebuilding Western Europe
- 1948: US congress approved plan to fund rebuilding Europe over coming years [amounts vary from 12 to 20 billion USD]
- reflected fear of Communist aggression into and attraction for, decimated countries European countries, including Germany
- not only failed by Facism but also by Democracy: vulnerable
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- plan initially discussed including Soviet Union, Eastern Europe: problematic
- Soviet Union suspicious of US motives
- US worried that Congress would not approve $$ if Soviets involved
- in the end: plan delivered solely to ‘allies’
- as Soviets predicted: used as ‘tool’ to attract newly Communist regimes
- intended as ‘protection’, acted as ‘provocation’ in shaping Cold War
On June 5, 1947, speaking to the graduating class at Harvard University, Secretary of State George C. Marshall laid the foundation, in the aftermath of World War II, for the Marshall Plan. This plan aimed to provide economic assistance to the countries of Europe. At a time when great cities lay in ruins and national economies were devastated, Marshall called on America to "do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace."

A delivery of wheat bearing the words "For European Recovery Supplied by the United States of America" is unloaded at Rotterdam, The Netherlands. (Courtesy of the George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Virginia)
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Marshal Plan Aid to Western Europe 1948-52
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‘Cold War in Europe’ Spreads: Korean War


- US, Canada, UK, Belgium, France and several western European countries: agreed to consider ‘attack against one an attack against all’ [another provocation to Soviet Union]

- called into play shortly after formation in Korea
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Korean War:

- Korea victim Japanese imperialism 1910-45: Soviet Union and US drove out Japanese troops, divided former colony (north/south, respectively) between them
- post war danger: rise Mao’s Communist China, weakened Japan in context of rapidly developing non-declared ‘war’ (cold war)
- clear neither Korean ally would be allowed to reunify
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Korean War:

- 1950: north saw south as weak (US forces had withdrawn)
- invaded: almost took back whole peninsula
- United Nations (formed 1944) condemned invasion
- NATO forces called upon
- first ‘real war’ of Cold War: ended in 1953 with ‘truce’ leaving division (still existing) in place
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MASH Unit [a real one…]
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Cold War Continues:

- concern about stability in Korea: had led to plan similar to Marshal Plan for Japan late 1940s

- 1950-51: reparations forgiven, agreement signed allowing for US military troops to be based in islands

- Japan important ally, strategic role in Asian-Pacific for US containment Soviet interests
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Cold War: NATO vs Warsaw Pact

- in Europe: Marshal Plan helped Greece, Turkey – admitted to NATO 1952
- 1955: recovering Germany also became member
- clear ‘bolstering’ of US political, military position
- Soviet Union responded with Warsaw Treaty Organization: bound Soviet Union and Eastern/Central European allies in defensive ‘Pact’ comparable to NATO
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‘Non-Alignment’: search for neutrality

- whole ‘cold war’ discussion [Text] suggests overwhelming dominance of ‘Super Powers’
- non-alignment movement characterized as being ‘beyond the bi-polar world’
- in fact: given formal legitimacy at Bandung Conference, 1955
- meeting of Asian and African former colonies, spoke for those still seeking independence especially in Africa
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Bandung Conference:
- goal to establish path forward that reduced dependence on former colonial powers and new ‘super powers’: concept of ‘Third World’
- called for:
  promotion economic, cultural cooperation
  protection human rights
  principle of self-determination
  end to racial discrimination
  importance of peaceful coexistence
- origin of formal Non-Aligned Movement (1961)
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Regarded with suspicion by US:
- many colonies still fighting for independence (several in Africa) supported by Soviet Union: non-aligned movement seen as ‘leaning left’
- underscored fact that US also involved: supporting colonial forces because it needed them as part of NATO, bulwark against Soviet Union
- statements about ‘racial equality’: sensitive issue in 1950s US – Civil Rights movement
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Concept of Non-Alignment: ideology or exigency?

[Text] largely cynical: argues movement “implied very little about true ideological orientation” and was really about “manipulating the superpowers” to achieve their goals – playing one off against the other for financial, development, military support while claiming to be ‘aligned’ to neither
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Non-Alignment: ideology or exigency?
- cannot ignore reality of Colonialism: exercised by Dutch, British, French, Portuguese
- after WWI: well-educated generation began looking at alternatives to ‘capitalism and democracy’ as they experienced it under colonialism
- developing their own ideas about forms of socialism, non-racialist societies
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‘Ideological’ commitment of many Asian, African leaders at Bandung was real:

- shared and developed by those engaged in struggles for independence through 1950s, 1960s, 1970s
- formal creation NAM (1961) gave voice to those seeking a ‘middle road’ in the Cold War: India's Nehru; Burma's U Nu; Indonesia's Sukarno; Egypt’s Abdel Nasser; Ghana’s Nkrumah; Yugoslavia’s Tito
Jawaharlal Nehru

1946

1934
Kwame Nkrumah

1961

1963

1968
Gamal Abdel Nasser

1955
Decolonization ‘now’: why?

- impact WWII on Colonial Troops fighting in all three ‘theatres’
- impact WWII on Civilians; extent of Civilian contributions
- promises of Colonial Powers (Atlantic Charter, Brazzaville); resulting expectations
- nationalism: impact of war, promises, on well-developed local nationalist movements
- Pan-Africanism: became ‘anti-colonialism’
Impact Returning Troops, Combat Experience:

- both British and French used African troops in Europe, Asia
- Africans were fighting in Burma, as well as France, Germany
- North Africa: French, Italian, Egyptian
  Africans drawn into battles on both sides
  (‘Vichy French’ Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Italian Libya with Axis powers; Egyptians with Allies)
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French West Africa:
- part of collaborative Vichy regime until 1942 when Allies took North Africa
- thereafter, supported “Free French” effort

‘Free French’ Flag
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French West Africa
French Equatorial Africa
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French Equatorial Africa:
- supported ‘government in exile’:
  “Free French” under General Charles de Gaulle
- Chad critical in preventing Axis base in Africa
- 15,000 Chadian soldiers joined war effort
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African Troops in WWII: map does not show full range of North African Vichy engagement

‘Free French’ area comprises majority French West and French Equatorial Africa

Source: Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War, Spring 2010
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Impact On, Contributions of Civilians: inestimable

- areas actively involved in battles: demands for food, hosting; ‘civilian casualties’
- colonies in general: forced labour demands
- shortages of imported goods (food, cloth, other manufactured goods/equipment)
- localized hunger as food diverted to ‘war effort’; extra taxes
- following sarcastic poem references part of perceived impact:
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“The European merchant is my shepherd,
   And I am in want;
   He maketh me to lie down in cocoa farms,
   He leadeth me beside the waters of great need;
The general managers & profiteers frighten me.
   Thou preparedst a reduction in my salary
      In the presence of my creditors.
   Thou anointest my income with taxes;
      My expense runs over my income
   And I will dwell in a rented house forever!”

[The ‘African Morning Post’ of Accra, as submitted by Gold Coast (West Africa) serviceman, c.1944]
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1945: Nigerian serviceman writing to Nigerian Nationalist leader Herbert Macaulay --

“We all overseas soldiers are coming back home with new ideas. We have been told what we fought for. That is ‘freedom’. We want freedom. Nothing but freedom”

[see also ‘Atlantic Charter’, Add’l Rdgs.]
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Clear that both British and French ex-servicemen had expectations of markedly different post war world than their Colonial Masters:

- expected jobs, employment
- conditions equal to European co-workers
- pension payments

“freedom and democracy“
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Expectations furthered by:
- Atlantic Charter, 1941
- creation of United Nations 1944 (replacing ineffective League of Nations formed after WWI) [see Text, p.794]
- commitment of Pan-Africanist movement to anti-colonial struggles, Manchester Conference, 1945
- Brazzaville Conference, 1946
- Independence India, 1947
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Promises of Colonial Powers: 1941 and 1946

- Atlantic Charter: 1941

The Atlantic Charter

The President of The United States of America and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, drawn to this common task of unification after their respective countries, on which they have their hopes for a better future for the world.

1. These two countries seek to further the cause of world peace, security, and freedom.
2. They believe in the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they live and to the right to live in freedom from fear and want.
3. They respect the right of all peoples to choose their own form of government, to live in freedom and to determine their own destiny without intervention or interference.
4. They will endeavor, with the consent of the other nations, to maintain the same principles, to secure the safety and security of their respective territories, and to promote the peace and stability of the world.
5. They believe in the right of all peoples to choose their own forms of government, to live in freedom and to determine their own destiny.
6. After the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, the two countries, together with all other peoples, have the right and the duty to establish a peace which will afford to all nations the means of living in safety under conditions of their own choice.

Franklin D. Roosevelt
Winston S. Churchill
August 14, 1941
Agreement between Churchill and Roosevelt: signed during early years of WWII setting out ‘goals’

- Article Three:

  “They [President of the United States, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom] respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them...”
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Fifth Pan-African Congress (Manchester, 1945):
- strongly reflected post-war politics, emphasis on ‘freedom and democracy’
- pronounced that armed struggle could be justified to overthrow colonialism
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Brazzaville Conference, French Equatorial Africa
- 1944: ‘improvements to colonialism’

Congolese Leader
Felix Eboue, de Gaulle

1974 commemorative stamp
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Key Passage:

“.. the colonizing work of France makes it impossible to accept any idea of autonomy for the colonies, or any possibility of development outside of the French empire. Even at a distant date, there will be no self-government in the colonies.”

- this qualifier tended to be lost in the overall post-war enthusiasm for ‘Allied Victory’
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India: [refer to ‘case study’ for first Discussion Paper]
- over 2 million Indian soldiers fought in WWII
- enormous amounts of resources, especially timber, drawn upon
- unlike WWI: most felt they were fighting for India, not for Empire
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- Ghandi had launched his ‘Quit India’ campaign: British promised to do so when war ended
- 1947: Britain reluctantly accepted to grant independence to partitioned India – Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan
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[Map showing the India-Pakistan Partition with highlighted areas of Jammu and Kashmir and some fighting near the cease-fire line 1949.]

1947 Date of Independence

N India-Pakistan Partition
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Impact:
- in India and Pakistan: Hindu-Muslim violence
- 12 million people forced to leave homes: half-million died in violence,
  rest refugees
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Impact:
- in India and Pakistan: Hindu-Muslim violence
- 12 million people forced to leave homes: half-million died in violence, rest refugees
- but elsewhere, consequences of partition less significant than Independence of India: if India was no longer a colony, why should anyone else remain under Colonial Rule?
- impact most acute in Africa where nationalist movements strong and increasingly radical following WWII
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Process of Decolonization: inextricably intertwined with Cold War

- in some instances, colonial powers resisted nationalist demands (e.g. settler colonies in Africa – British, French, Portuguese; Indo-China – French): led to wars, often long
- US generally supported ‘ally’, sometimes with military equipment, troops
- Soviet Union sometimes supported nationalists who were often Communist or Socialist
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No matter how ‘independence’ gained (negotiation or battle): new states became ‘potential prizes’ in competition between US and Soviet Union

- US in particular seeking to gain economic and political footholds in former British and French colonies: had been point of contention back at Bretton Woods
- US ‘backing’ of decolonization not necessarily about assuring ‘democracy and freedom’!