Chapter 24
Coexistence, Confrontation, and the New European Economy

Chapter Summary
By the late 1950s, the world had been transformed in many ways, but the Cold War continued to threaten the prospects for global peace. Many Soviet leaders proved more open to the possibilities of arms control and peaceful coexistence, but tensions flared up under Khrushchev’s rule. The presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba provoked a dangerous confrontation. The U.S. battled communism in Vietnam, but public outcry and the impossibility of victory eventually led to withdrawal. Under Nixon, the U.S. established friendlier relations with both the Soviet Union and China. However, the world was soon troubled by other problems, namely a recession which was accompanied by stagflation and structural unemployment. Conservative governments scaled back the social spending of previous years in efforts to stimulate the economy. Reagan’s hard-line policies toward the Soviet Union renewed the threat of nuclear war after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had rekindled Cold War tensions.

Chapter Outline
24.112 Confrontation and Détente, 1955-1975
   i. Periods of détente
   ii. Pressures for coexistence
   iii. Cooperation fades
   iv. American Cold War policy
   v. A new kind of arms race
   a. The Cold War in the 1960s
      i. The Berlin Wall
      ii. Cuban missile crisis
      iii. An eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation
      iv. Critiques of Vietnam War
   b. Brezhnev and the Prague Spring in Eastern Europe
      i. The Brezhnev Doctrine
   c. Brezhnev and Nixon
      i. Nixon and détente
      ii. New American Policies
iii. SALT I
iv. The Helsinki accords

24.113 Collapse and Recovery of the European and Global Economy: The 1970s and 1980s

i. OPEC
ii. Dependence on oil
   a. The Recession: Stagnation and Inflation
      i. Effects of recession
      ii. Structural Unemployment
      iii. Stagflation
      iv. Faith in Keynes shaken
   v. Supply side economics

b. Economic and Political Change in Western Europe
   i. Margaret Thatcher
   ii. New Labour
   iii. Mitterand and “Changer la vie”
   iv. “Cohabitation”
   v. West European Socialists
   vi. “One nation and two states”
   vii. Relative decline in growth

c. The Enlarged European Community: Problems and Opportunities
   i. Growing pains

d. Toward a “Single Europe”: the European Union
   i. The postindustrial age
   ii. The Single European Act
   iii. Dangers of protectionism

24.114 The Cold War Rekindled and Defused

i. Human rights
ii. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
iii. Reagan and the “evil empire”

a. Nuclear Arms Control
   i. The ultimate threat
   ii. MAD: Mutually assured destruction
   iii. Overkill
   iv. New missiles and European protests
   v. New arms negotiations
   vi. Removal of missiles
   vii. End of Cold War conflicts

**Learning Objectives**
Chapter 24 teaches students about:

1. the stabilization of the Cold War by about 1955, despite the continuation of the arms race and global competition between the two superpowers.
2. the escalation of tensions between the Soviet Union and the U.S. during the Cuban missile crisis.
4. détente under Nixon, which led to the opening of China and pressure on the Soviet Union to reciprocate.
5. the causes of and responses to the economic recession of 1974.
6. the waning faith in Keynesian economics and the rise of conservative governments in the U.S. and western Europe that scaled back social spending.
7. the renewed escalation of the Cold War in the late 1970s.
8. the enlargement of the European Community and efforts to increase integration and revitalize the European Community’s economy.
9. the Reagan years, which entailed the expansion of nuclear capabilities, and the end of the Cold War conflict.

Lecture/Discussion Topics

1. How did relations between the Soviets and Americans change after 1955?
2. What was De Gaulle’s view of the arms race and western Europe’s role in the Cold War?
3. Narrate the events of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. In what ways was the crisis a defeat for both the U.S. and the Soviet Union?
4. What role did the U.S. play in the Vietnam War?
5. Why did public opinion turn against the Vietnam War?
6. How did Leonid I. Brezhnev approach the Cold War? How did his approach influence events in eastern Europe?
7. How did U.S.-Soviet relations change during Nixon’s presidency?
8. What were the Helsinki accords? Did they have a lasting impact upon the European signatories?
9. How did OPEC policies affect economies around the world in the 1970s?
10. What were the causes and effects of the recession that began in 1974?
11. How did conservative governments address the recession? Were their policies successful?
12. Describe Margaret Thatcher’s career. Why was she initially popular? What criticisms were later made of her policies?
13. Why was Mitterrand considered a moderate Socialist? How did policies introduced
under his government reflect his moderation?

14. What was meant by the term “cohabitation” in French politics in the 1980s and 1990s?

15. What kinds of policies were promoted by west European socialists?

16. What difficulties did enlarging the European Union bring?

17. What were the goals of the Single European Act?

18. How did events in Afghanistan escalate the Cold War once again in the late 1970s?

19. Why did concerns about nuclear power continue to build in the last decades of the twentieth century?

**Paper Topics**

1. How did the U.S. attempt to destabilize Fidel Castro’s government in Cuba in the 1960s?

2. Research how Leonid I. Brezhnev’s doctrine effectively crushed out the Prague spring movement.

3. Investigate Nixon’s presidency. Why did he pursue a radically different policy toward the Soviets and the Chinese?

4. Examine Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. Why did their presence there lead to a rekindling of the Cold War? What has been the legacy of that conflict?

**Historical Interpretations and Debates**

**The Nature and Legacy of the Cold War**

Europeans emerged from the devastating human and material losses of the Second World War in a weakened position between the ascendant American and Soviet superpowers. The competing ambitions of the United States and the Soviet Union often played out after 1945 on the European continent as both sides developed spheres of influence and also used their European bases in the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries as a front line in their global military strategies. After several decades of conflict and confrontation, however, the Soviet system in eastern Europe collapsed, creating a sense of triumph in the Western countries and opening new opportunities for the increasingly unified European economy. This “Historical Interpretation and Debates” feature asks the readers to compare the views of Eric Hobsbawm and John Lamberton Harper as they explain how the Cold War affected Europeans and why the Western powers ultimately prevailed.

Multimedia Resources

Web Sources

Instructors should check the validity of each URL.

1. This site chronicles the Cuban missile crisis, and includes aerial reconnaissance photos among other resources.
   - http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/index.htm

2. An overview of the Prague Spring and photos can be found at the following sites:
   - http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/prague_spring_1968.htm
   - http://www.google.co.in/search?q=prague+spring&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=1CvJUc6KM2wPLe-gaAI&sqi=2&ved=0CD0QsAQ&biw=1366&bih=664

Films

1. Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1964). This black comedy was directed by Stanley Kubrick and starred Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, and Slim Pickens. This masterful political film satirizes the threat of nuclear holocaust and cold war crisis.

2. Good Morning, Vietnam (1987). This war-comedy film was directed by Barry Levinson and starred Robin Williams, Forest Whitaker, Tung Thanh Tran, Chintara Sukapatana, and Bruno Kirby. This popular film explores the U.S.’s involvement in the mid-1960s, with an emphasis on attempts to control the media’s reporting of the war.

3. Riff-Raff (1991). This British film was directed by Ken Loach and starred Robert Carlyle, Emer McCourt, Ricky Tomlinson, Jimmy Coleman, and George Moss. It presents an account of British working class life under Margaret Thatcher.

4. Platoon (1986). This American war film was directed by Oliver Stone and starred Tom Beringer, Willem Defoe, Charlie Sheen, Johnny Depp, and Forest Whitaker. A cynical look at the Vietnam War, this movie received critical acclaim.