

HARRY TRUMAN'S PRESIDENCY AND THE COLD WAR

The U.S. struggle to contain Soviet communism worldwide resulted in what came to be known as the "Cold War". Although full-scale war between the U.S. and Soviet Union did not occur, two major wars—Korea and Vietnam—and many smaller conflicts occurred between 1946 and 1991 over the battle between democracy and communism.

I. Roots of the Cold War

A. U.S. point of view

1. Stalin seemed intent on creating "spheres" of influence in Eastern Europe
 - a. Yalta Conference: Soviet pledge to allow democratic elections in East Europe was broken incl. Poland, Romania, Bulgaria. Later Czechoslovakia & Hungary dominated by Moscow.
 - b. USSR refused to release E. Germany while the US, British and French allowed their western zones to be unified into a new democratic West Germany.
2. US wanted democracy spread throughout the world with a strong international organization to maintain global peace (United Nations)
-- Soviet Union eventually supported resistance to democracy throughout the world.
3. Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech warned Americans of Soviet expansion (March 1946 in Fulton, Missouri)
-- Americans now realized that a protracted conflict with the USSR was a reality.

B. Soviet point of view

1. US did not open western front in W. Europe early enough; millions of Soviet soldiers died fighting the brunt of Nazi armies alone until mid-1944.
2. The US and British froze Russia out of the atomic bomb project.
3. US terminated lend-lease to Moscow in 1945 and refused \$6 billion plea from Stalin while granting Britain \$3.75 billion in 1946.
4. Soviets wanted a security guarantee for the Soviet western border, especially in Poland
 - a. USSR twice attacked by Germany in 20th century.
 - b. Eastern Europe would become a "buffer zone"

C. Partitioning

1. Korea & Vietnam split into northern and southern zones controlled by communists in the north and pro-democracy forces in the south. -- Two major wars would be fought by U.S.: Korean War (1950-53); Vietnam (1964-1973)
2. Germany split into 4 zones with Berlin also being split in to quadrants. Issue of Berlin nearly resulted in full-scale war in 1948-49

II. Shaping the Postwar World

A. Bretton Woods Conference (1944): International Monetary Fund (IMF) created by western Allies

1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) founded to promote economic growth in war-torn and underdeveloped areas; stabilize currencies
2. Soviets declined to participate

B. United Nations

1. Yalta Conference -- "Big Three" had called for a conference on world organization to meet in April 1945 in the United States
2. Dumbarton Oaks Conference (August 21-October 7, 1944)
 - a. Laid the basis for the United Nations Charter
3. San Francisco Conference opened on April 25, 1945.
 - a. UN Charter created a General Assembly composed of all member nations which would act as the ultimate policy-making body.
 - b. In reality, had the power to recommend but not enforce.
 - c. Security Council composed of US, USSR, China, Britain, and France (+ 6 additional nations elected by the General Assembly for 2 year terms)
 - i. Any single veto would overrule a proposal
 - ii. Responsible for settling disputes among UN member nations.

III. The German Question

A. Nuremberg Trials

1. Potsdam Conference had decided on punishing war crimes and for a program of denazifying Germany.
2. Allies tried 22 top Nazis at Nuremberg, Germany during 1945 and 1946.
3. 12 Nazis hanged and seven sentenced to long jail terms.
4. Legal critics in U.S. condemned proceedings as judicial lynchings because the victims were tried for offenses that had not been clear-cut crimes when the war began.

B. Partition of Germany

1. Soviets dominated their Eastern German zone after WWII.
 - a. Sought to strip E. German resources and ship them to Russia as compensation for war losses.
 - b. Did not want revitalized Germany that could once again pose a threat
2. U.S. and W. Europeans felt German economy vital to recovery of Europe
3. West Germany eventually became an independent country when US, France and Br. gave back each of their occupation zones.
4. 1949, a democratic West Germany created; East Germany created under Soviet domination.

IV. Reconstruction of Japan

- A. Despite Soviet protest, US led by Gen. Douglas MacArthur implemented democracy in Japan (Allied Control Council)
- B. Japanese war criminals tried between 1946-48; 7 hanged (including Tojo), 18 sent to prison
- C. A constitution adopted in 1946 renouncing militarism & introducing Western-style democracy.
- D. Within decades, Japan would become an economic powerhouse.

V. Policy of "Containment"

- A. 1947, US Ambassador to Russia, George Kennan, warned Truman that Russia sought to expand its empire.
 1. Soviet leaders had an ideology that "the outside world was hostile and that it was their duty eventually to overthrow the political forces beyond their borders."

2. Soviet policy in E. Europe, Germany, and Middle East of great concern.
 3. Kennan's ideas became the basis for Truman's "containment" policy.
 4. Kennan made the following three points:
 - a. The history of Russia has been one of hostile neighbors and a constant fear of attack; it's inevitable that Russia will try to take over its neighbor states to provide a buffer zone.
 - b. The U.S. has a duty to confront Soviet aggression with "unalterable counterforce."
 - c. The U.S. must maintain a policy of long-term containment of Soviet aggression.
- B. Truman Doctrine -- Defined US foreign policy for next 20 years.
1. "It must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."
 2. Truman doctrine initiated a policy of "containment": prevent the spread of communism
 3. March 12, 1947, Truman asked Congress for \$400 million to support democracy in Turkey and Greece since the British were no longer able.
 4. Result was positive for democracy in both countries
 5. Truman quickly recognized Israel in 1948 as the new country would be a bastion of democracy in the Middle East.
- C. Marshall Plan (1947)
1. France, Italy and Germany were still suffering from economic chaos after WWII.
 2. US feared Communist parties could exploit these hardships and take control.
 3. Sec. of State George C. Marshall invited Europeans to create a joint plan for economic recovery. US would provide financial assistance.
 - a. Soviets walked out of the conference in Paris in July, 1947.
 - b. Criticized it as US plan to take over Europe
 - c. Congress at first balked at huge monetary proposal but changed course after the Soviet-sponsored coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia in Feb. 1948 which extended the influence of communism in Eastern Europe.
 4. Plan allocated \$12.5 billion over four years in 16 cooperating countries.
 5. Within a few years, most recipients of the plan's aid were exceeding prewar output; seen as "economic miracle."
 6. Communism lost ground in Italy and France
 7. Czechoslovakia initially interested but pressure from Moscow forced a veto.
 8. E. European nations prohibited from accepting aid from US & W. Europe.
- D. Organization of American States (OAS) created to prevent communism in Latin America
- E. U.S. government reorganization and rearmament
1. National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense
 - a. Headed by new cabinet post – Sec. of Defense
 - b. Housed in new Pentagon
 - c. National Security Council (NSC) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) created by Truman in 1948 and 1949.
 - d. NSC-68 (1950)
 - i. remained a secret document for twenty years
 - ii. it dictated American foreign policy for decades

- iii. This policy statement viewed conflict between East and West as inevitable, but in the gravest of terms
 - iv. any such conflict threatened not just the United States, but also all of civilization.
 - v. advocated
 - 1. increase in defense spending from 5% of the federal budget to 20%
 - 2. an increase in American aid to foreign nations
 - vi. Issued in response to the fall of China and onset of hostilities in Korea
 - vii. U.S. would implement a rigorous worldwide defense of Communism with "an immediate and large-scale build up of our military."
- 2. 1948, peacetime military draft enacted
 - 3. "Voice of America" authorized by Congress beamed US broadcasts behind iron curtain
 - 4. Atomic Energy Commission created in 1946 -- established civilian control over nuclear development and gave president sole authority over the use of atomic weapons in warfare.
- F. Berlin Airlift (1948-49)
- 1. Berlin, deep inside E. Germany, was cut off from the west by Soviet forces in 1948.
 - a. Russian response to the creation of the Federal Republic of German (West Germany)
 - b. US, French, & British zones in Berlin became an "island" inside E. Germany
 - i. Soviets also shut off electric power
 - ii. 2 million W. Berliners became hostages
 - iii. Berlin became a symbolic issue for both sides.
 - 2. US organized massive airlift for nearly a year; 277,000 flights, 2 million tons of supplies
 - 3. Many thought World War III was inevitable
 - 4. Soviets lifted blockade in May 1949.

VI. The Cold War during Truman's second term under Secretary of State Dean Acheson

- A. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
 - 1. Created April 4, 1949 by 12 nations inc. U.S., Fr. Br., It., Belgium, Netherlands, Lux., Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Iceland, and Canada.
 - a. In 1953, Turkey & Greece joined.
 - b. West Germany joined in 1954
 - c. Created in response to Berlin Crisis.
 - 2. Collective security organization that essentially warned Moscow that a threat to any of the signatories would be met with force.
 - 3. In 1955 USSR formed Warsaw Pact as a response to NATO which included all eastern bloc countries -- satellite countries
 - 4. ANZUS - U.S. forged a collective security agreement with Australia and New Zealand to buttress democracy in the Pacific.
 - 5. CENTO - Central Treaty Organization (in Central America)
- B. Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in Sept. 1949; U.S. no longer had monopoly -- The world now had two atomic superpowers
- C. China becomes Communist in 1949

1. US supported Nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi (Chang-Kai-Shek) during WWII
 2. In late 1949, Mao Zedong's (Mao Tse-tung) communist forces defeated Jiang's forces
 3. Nationalists fled to Formosa (Taiwan) - Mao supported by Soviet Union
 4. Loss of China seen as a major defeat for US.
 - a. 25% of world's population became communist in one shot.
 - b. Truman criticized for allowing China to fall to communists.
 - c. Truman replied that China had never been his to lose.
 5. U.S. refused to recognize the People's Republic of China ("Red China") and maintained Jiang's regime on the UN Security Council
 6. U.S.S.R. boycotted the Security Council in protest
 7. People's Republic of China not recognized as a permanent Security Council member until 1973
 8. The United States recognized Chiang's Nationalist government as the rightful and official China
 9. maintained recognition until 1979, when the U.S. established relations with the People's Republic of China.
- D. The Hydrogen Bomb
1. U.S. exploded H-bomb in 1952
 2. Many scientists felt H-bomb had become an instrument of genocide.
 3. In 1953, Soviets successfully exploded an H-bomb; nuclear arms race continued.
 4. For the first time in history, humankind had the ability to end civilization.
- E. Korean War (1950-53)
1. Background
 - a. During WWII, Russian troops occupied northern Korea while US troops occupied southern Korea.
 - b. Before leaving in 1949, both set up rival regimes on each side of the 49th parallel.
 - c. North Korea led by Communist dictator Kim Il-Sung - supported by Soviet Union
 - d. Sec. of State Dean Acheson claimed Korea was outside essential US defense perimeter in the Pacific and U.S. forces were reduced there.
 2. June 25, 1950 - N. Korean army with Soviet-made tanks invaded S. Korea and took nearly all the country.
 3. Truman resurrected NSC-68, a call to quadruple US defense spending, and ordered a massive military buildup well beyond the purposes of the war.
 - a. US soon had 3.5 million men and was spending \$50 billion - 13% of GNP
 4. UN Security Council (with Russia absent) called for members to restore peace and condemned the invasion with a vote of 9-0
 - a. UN votes military aid to South Korea.
 - b. UN votes to establish UN force with Truman's choice, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, as UN commander who took his orders from Washington
 - c. Truman orders US troops into Korean fighting; 4/5 of UN troops

5. By August 1950, North Korea captured virtually all of S. Korea
 - a. North Korea had superior military aid from Soviet Union.
6. MacArthur directs surprise amphibious landing at Inchon behind Korean lines.
7. Within two weeks, UN forces recapture nearly all of S. Korea as North Koreans retreat behind 38th parallel.
8. Although original objectives are complete, MacArthur orders UN forces to cross 38th parallel with support of Truman and UN.
 - a. North Korean forces driven back near Chinese border.
9. UN calls for the establishment of a unified, independent, and democratic Korea.
10. November 1950, 300 thousand Chinese soldiers pour across Yalu River into N. Korea and force UN troops to retreat with heavy losses across 38th parallel.
 - a. Truman and others horrified that Korea might be completely lost
11. Truman fires MacArthur
 - a. Truman seeks limited war (and announces it Nov. 28, 1950)
 - b. US would seek specific objectives rather than total victory
 - c. Nuclear weapons would not be used
 - d. Original objective again to restore border between N. & S. Korea
 - e. Invasion of China might mean Soviet retaliation in Europe or Asia.
 - f. Decision may have averted a world war.
 - g. MacArthur against limited war - "No substitute for victory"
 - h. Asked for nuclear weapons to be used on China and demanded strong military action against Chinese cities.
 - i. Believed political decisions in Washington hampered conduct of war.
12. MacArthur circumvents Truman and demands total N. Korean surrender.
 - a. Undercuts Truman's attempt at negotiations; threat to president's power.
 - b. Truman removes MacArthur from command and orders him back to US.
 - c. MacArthur returns home a hero
 - d. Congressional committee investigates Truman decision
 - e. Truman successfully defends his decision
 - f. Significance: Civilian control of US military is reaffirmed
13. Cease-Fire
 - a. Negotiations begin in July 1951 and continue for 2 years while war continues.
 - b. Presidential candidate in 1952 Dwight D. Eisenhower pledges to personally go to Korea and get stalled negotiations moving again.
 - c. Eisenhower wins in 1952 and within weeks visits Korea.
 - d. Eisenhower threatens to use nuclear weapons unless the deadlocked peace negotiations are successful.
 - e. Cease-fire signed on July 27, 1953 (armistice still in effect today)
 - f. 38th parallel as boundary is restored.
 - g. DMZ along boundary

- h. Americans disappointed at unclear conclusion (WWII had been a clear victory)
- 14. Results of Korean War
 - a. 54,000 US soldiers & 3,000 UN soldiers dead; 103,000 UN soldiers wounded (including Americans); 2 million civilians dead (mostly in South Korea); over 1.5 million dead Chinese and N. Korean soldiers.
 - b. Total casualties as high as 4 million.
 - c. UN successfully repelled N. Korean attack on S. Korea
 - d. US gov't demonstrated its determination to enforce "containment"

VII. Truman's First Term - Domestic Policy

- A. Taft-Hartley Act -- June 1947 (passed by Congress over Truman's veto)
 - 1. Conservative response to powerful labor unions (Republicans gained Congress in 1946)
 - a. In 1946, over 4 million workers went on strike demanding higher wages
 - b. Shutdowns in the auto, steel, electric, railroad, and maritime industries ensued.
 - c. Much striking activity orchestrated by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers,
 - i. who demanded higher pay
 - ii. safer work conditions
 - iii. a small tax on coal to fund worker pensions.
 - 2. Major provisions of Taft-Hartley Act
 - a. Most important: 80 day cooling-off period for strikers in key industries
 - b. Outlawed the "closed-shop" (process of hiring only union members) -- "union shop" allowed (obligated new workers to become union members)
 - c. Unions still flourished; AFL had 8 million in 1950; CIO 6 million
 - 3. By 1954, 15 states passed "right to work" laws outlawing the "union-shop."
- B. Civil Rights: gains for African Americans
 - 1. 1946, Truman created the President's committee on Civil Rights
 - 2. In 1947, committee published *To Secure These Rights*,
 - i. calling for desegregation in American society
 - ii. anti-lynching legislation and an end to poll taxes.
 - 3. 1948, president banned racial discrimination in federal government hiring practices and ordered desegregation of the armed forces; blacks integrated in 1953 - Jackie Robinson first African American in Major League Baseball in 1947
- C. Presidential Succession Act of 1947
 - 1. Created as a contingency for nuclear war.
 - 2. After the vice-president, the Speaker of the House, president pro tempore (Senate) and secretary of state the next in line for succession.
- D. 22nd Amendment (1951)
 - 3. Limited president to two terms; or a maximum of 10 years if he, as vice president, assumed the presidency due to the death or departure of a previous president.
 - 4. Largely a conservative move in the face of over 17 years of continuous Democratic rule in the White House (FDR and Truman) -- FDR had been

elected to four terms and many saw this as an opportunity for the executive branch to consolidate excessive power.

VIII. Anti-Communist Crusade -- "Red Scare"

A. American Fears - Paranoia about communism and its sympathizers began to set in due to:

5. Communism at home: fear of spies infiltrating U.S. gov't:
 - a. Alger Hiss
 - b. Rosenbergs
6. Fear of nuclear war: Soviet A-bomb in 1949; fear of H-bomb in 1953, sputnik in 1957
7. Spread of communism around the world (E. Europe, fall of China in 1949, Korea)
8. Demagogue politicians using fear for gain (HUAC, McCarthy)
9. Fear of another depression (recessions in 1946-47 and early '50s triggered concerns) -- A depression might trigger growth of communism
10. Note: this was the 2nd red scare of 20th century (first occurred after WWI: 1919-1920 during Wilson's presidency.)
11. Culture reflected these fears: movies such as Invasion of the Body Snatchers, The Blob, They

B. Smith Act of 1940

1. Made it illegal to advocate the overthrow of the government by force or to belong to an organization advocating such a position.
2. Used by Truman administration to jail leaders of the American Communist Party. -- 11 communists brought to trial in New York in 1949 and sent to prison for advocating the overthrow of the US gov't by force.

C. Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) indicts Alger Hiss, 1947

1. HUAC created in 1945 to root out communism during the "Red Scare" after WWII that lasted into the mid-1950s.
 - a. Committee was sensationalistic, including going after public figures in Hollywood.
 - b. Liberals and members of the New Deal targeted
 - c. Senate counterpart to HUAC also active in anti-communist investigations.
2. Richard Nixon led the movement to indict Alger Hiss, a distinguished member of the "eastern establishment," prominent ex-New Dealer, and current member of U.S. State Department
3. Hiss denied being a Communist agent in the 1930s but was convicted of perjury in 1950 and sentenced to 5 years in prison.
4. The case brought Nixon national prominence; was elected vice president 5 years later.

D. Truman's "loyalty" program

1. Truman countered HUAC with anti-communist programs of his own.
 - a. Attorney General identified 90 "disloyal" organizations who were not given the right to prove their innocence.
 - b. Truman gave FBI approval & resources to go after suspected "reds"
2. Loyalty Review Board investigated more than 3 million fed. Employees
3. About 3,000 resigned or were dismissed without formal indictment
4. 212 fired
5. Loyalty oaths were increasingly demanded of employees, esp. teachers

6. Many felt civil liberties were being suppressed.
 7. Gov't employees forbidden to:
 - a. Criticize US foreign policy
 - b. Advocate equal rights for women
 - c. Own books on socialism
 - d. Attend foreign films
- E. McCarran Internal Security Bill (1950)
1. Required communist-front organizations to register with the attorney general and prevented their members from defense work and travel abroad.
 2. Truman vetoed this bill which authorized the President to arrest and detain suspicious persons during an "internal security emergency".
 - a. Many felt this bill was a step towards a police state.
 - b. Congress passed it anyway
- F. The Rosenbergs, 1954
1. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted and executed for allegedly giving atomic bomb secrets to the Soviets.
 2. Both were avowed communists.
- G. Blacklisting
1. Many actors, writers, and directors had dabbled with the Communist Party in the 1930's when it was considered fashionable.
 2. 10 of these movie industry people, the "Hollywood Ten" refused to testify and decided to go to prison rather than testifying to the HUAC claiming protection from the Constitution.
 3. The industry responded by denying work to 250 actors, writers, and directors.
- H. McCarthyism
1. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (Republican from Wisconsin) became a demagogue
 2. In Feb. 1950, asserted that scores of unknown Communists were in the Dept. of State
 - a. His technique was to make sweeping accusations, employ guilt by association and documents out of context
 - b. Public convinced he was looking out for national security.
 - c. Was unable to substantiate his claims but ruined many gov't officials.
 - d. Almost no one was safe from his accusations.
 - e. Supporters tended to be Republican and blue-collar
 3. Other Accusations:
 - a. Claimed Democratic party was guilty of 20 years of treason
 - b. Wanted Truman impeached for being soft on communism (despite Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, Berlin Airlift, Korean War)
 - c. Claimed George Marshall was an instrument of Soviet conspiracy.
 - d. Hinted Eisenhower was "soft on communism."
 - e. McCarthy would slander people and claim they were homosexual as well as communist.
 4. McCarthy's Senate hearings created an atmosphere of conformity and fear
 5. Eisenhower despised McCarthy but did little to oppose him
 6. Downfall of McCarthy occurred when he took on the Army in 1954
 - a. McCarthy was intensely examined by Joseph Welch, Army attorney.
 - b. By Dec., 1954, Senate passed a resolution condemning McCarthy 67-22
 - c. McCarthy died three years later from alcohol and exhaustion.

7. Did the end of McCarthy signal the end of the red scare? Not really, but hysteria did mellow.
 - a. Sputnik caused some hysteria in 1957; Americans feared Soviets technologically superior.
 - b. Many Americans built bomb shelters in their back yards fearing nuclear war with Soviets
 - c. School's continued "duck and cover" drills to prepare for a nuclear attack.
 - d. John Birch Society, an ultra-conservative nationalist group, emerged in late 1950s.
 - e. Aggressive rooting out of suspected communists still existed.
8. Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*: popular play in 1950s that used the Salem Witch Trials as a metaphor for McCarthyism.

IX. Election of 1948 - Truman defeats Dewey in a stunning upset (303-189)

1. classical political upset
2. showed liberalism was still alive in the United States
3. Democratic National Convention, forced to nominate Truman
4. The Republican candidate was Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York.
5. There were also two candidates representing groups that had splintered from the Democratic Party:
 - a. Progressive Party
 - i. Candidate: Henry A. Wallace, former VP under FDR
 - ii. not of the same as Teddy Roosevelt
 - iii. leftists seeking nationalized banking and greater socialization of the economy
 - iv. backed by the Communist Party of the United States.
 - b. States' Rights Party - "Dixiecrats"
 - i. Candidate: Strom Thurmond (SC)
 - ii. 1948 Democratic Convention, Hubert Humphrey (MN) introduced a platform plank committing the government to civil rights.
 - iii. In protest, southern delegates stormed out and formed the States' Rights party
6. Harry Truman had progressive views on civil rights and was a strong advocate of Humphrey's proposal
7. Democratic Party split three ways
8. Dewey's win was inevitable
9. Truman went on a whistle-stop campaign across the nation
10. Truman attacked the "do-nothing Congress."
11. Why Truman won:
 - a. Republicans were overconfident
 - b. he had shown courage in the face of incredible odds
 - c. revived the New Deal coalition of labor, farmers, & African-Americans

X. The Fair Deal

1. Truman set out to prove that New Deal liberalism was not yet dead
2. proposed the Fair Deal programs
3. New Deal with its dual policy of relief & reform were no longer what US needed
4. The Fair Deal
 - a. redistribute income among people of various classes

- b. transfer money from the very rich to the very poor
- c. Truman's Fair Deal goals came down to six major federal initiatives:
 - i. Civil rights
 - ii. Federal housing programs
 - iii. Unemployment insurance benefits
 - iv. New tax cuts for poor
 - v. Federal funding for education
 - vi. Federal health care and health insurance program
- 5. The Fair Deal was largely a failure
 - a. few of these initiatives were made into law
 - b. no national health care program
 - c. very little done in education (exception: the G.I. Bill)
 - d. unemployment benefits were extended only slightly
 - e. civil rights legislation would have to wait
- 6. conservative coalition blocked Truman at every turn
- 7. Truman did succeed in getting a major housing initiative passed in 1949
- 8. US was moving further and further to the right

XI. An Economic Shift to the Right

- 1. The economy also showed that the country was moving more to the right
- 2. Aftermath of World War II, two major problems faced the American economy:
 - a. reconversion of the wartime economy
 - b. labor unions

Reconversion - The problem of reconversion had three main parts:

- 1. *Spiraling inflation.* During the war, the Office of Price Administration had controlled prices and wages, but after the war's end, conservatives wanted to eliminate these controls. However, consumers had money-burning holes in their pockets and nothing to buy. When demand outruns supply, prices are driven up and the economy becomes inflationary without controls to keep prices in check. In the spring of 1946, conservatives succeeded in freeing prices. Prices shot up, feeding inflation.
- 2. *Wartime to peacetime production.* One reason for the continued shortage of consumer goods was the transition necessary to move from wartime to peacetime production. Business leaders had not known of the atomic bomb, and weren't prepared for such a quick end to the Pacific war. Industry was still making planes and tanks instead of radios and washing machines.
- 3. *What to do with the returning G.I.s.* To prevent the situation after the First World War, when servicemen came home to find no jobs, few educational opportunities, and a housing crunch, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act was passed in 1944. The G.I. Bill (as it was popularly known) committed billions of federal dollars for support for housing, education, health benefits, and job training and retraining.

Labor - The 2nd crucial post-war issue was labor, as a wave of strikes swept the nation.

- 1. In 1946, 400,000 miners struck not once, but twice.
- 2. In all, 4.6 million workers struck at one time or another that year.

3. Taft-Hartley Act of 1947
 - a. The conservatives' reply to the labor problem
 - b. This act is still on the books and has been invoked by two presidents.
 - c. Act has four main points:
 - i. Prohibited the closed shop
 - ii. Prohibited secondary "sympathy" strikes
 - iii. Prohibited political contributions by unions
 - iv. Gave President power to impose a cooling-off period to avert strikes
 - d. Taft-Hartley Act may have strengthened big labor
 - e. forced various groups to work together in the face of heavy opposition
 - f. Over the next decade, the conservative attack on unions encouraged them to share strategies and resources
 - g. 1955 two competing unions joined forces:
 - i. the American Federation of Labor (AFL)
 - ii. the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)
 - iii. combined AFL-CIO became the largest federation of labor unions in the United States
 - iv. represents over 70% of the unionized labor force

XII. The "Vital Center": 1948-1968

- A. A political consensus developed in America, although bitter political wrangling continued to characterize America.
- B. Three major components to the "vital center" common in both major parties:
 1. Anti-communism; containment
 2. Belief that economic growth can solve all of society's problems -- JFK: "rising tides lift all boats"
 3. Political pluralism: belief that a variety of ideas can compete in America. -- e.g., New Deal becomes accepted by both parties (although it does not expand)
- C. The "vital center" elected Truman in 1948; Eisenhower in 1952 & 1956; Kennedy in 1960; and Johnson in 1964.
- D. Flaws in the "vital center"
 1. Vietnam War exposed problems with containment
 2. As many as 25% of Americans lived in poverty; the economic boom did not "lift all boats"
 3. Jim Crow demonstrated lack of true pluralism in America
- E. "Vital Center" is shattered in 1968
 1. Vietnam War pits hawks against doves; amplifies generation gap
 2. White conservative backlash against liberalism — "Great Society" programs of Johnson, the civil rights movement, and apparent lack of law and order—contributes to Republican control of the White House for 20 of the next 24 years.

XIII. Election of 1952

- A. Truman decides not to run for reelection in 1952
 1. Military deadlock in Korea, war-induced inflation, and White House scandal.
 2. Adlai E. Stevenson runs on the Democratic ticket
 3. Dwight D. Eisenhower the Republican
 3. Election of 1952, Eisenhower defeats Stevenson 442-89. Nixon is VP.

XIV. American Society in the Post-WWII era (1945-1970)

- A. GI Bill of Rights

1. Response to unemployment fears resulting from 15 million returning GIs from WWII.
 2. Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 sent millions of veterans to school.
 - a. Majority attended technical and vocational schools.
 - b. Eventually, about \$14.5 spent on program.
 3. Veteran's Administration (VA) guaranteed about \$16 billion in loans for veterans to buy homes, farms, and small businesses. -- Bill contributed to economic prosperity that emerged in late 1940s
- B. Baby Boom
1. In the 1950s, population grew by over 28 million; 97% in urban and suburban areas.
 2. Between 1946 and 1961, 63.5 million babies were born -- Between 1931 and 1946, only 41.5 million born
 3. Proportional growth in population unprecedented in American history.
- C. Economic boom: 1950-1970 -- "The Affluent Society"
1. National income nearly doubled in 1950s; almost doubled again in 1960s.
 - a. Americans enjoyed about 40% of world's wealth despite accounting for only 6% of population.
 - b. By mid-1950s, 60% of Americans owned their own homes compared with only 40% in the 1920s.
 - c. Majority of postwar jobs went to women in urban offices & shops.
 - i. By 1990s, women would account for about half of total workers.
 - ii. Clash between demands of suburban domesticity and realities of employment sparked the feminist revolt in the 1960s.
 - d. Economy largely fueled by the growth of the defense industry. -- Accounted for over 50% of the national budget by 1960.
 - e. Cheap energy and increased supply of power facilitated growth.
 - f. Rising productivity (due to increases in education and technology) increased the average Americans standard of living two-fold.
 2. Consumerism mushroomed as Americans had more disposable income - Americans bought cars, gadgets for their homes, vacations, etc. in unprecedented numbers
 3. Middle class
 - a. 5.7 in 1947; over 12 million by early 1960s.
 - b. Suburbs
 - i. Grew 6X faster than cities in 1950s.
 - ii. Resulted from increased car production, white flight from urban areas due to black migration into Northern and Midwestern cities, and gov't policies that insured both builders and homeowners.
 - c. Cult of Domesticity re-emerges
 - i. A few advocated that science supported the idea that women could only find fulfillment as a homemaker.
 - ii. The concept of a woman's place being in the home was widespread in magazines, TV, and society in general. - TV shows included Father Knows Best, Ozzie & Harriet, Leave it to Beaver
 - iii. Dr. Benjamin Spock: The Commonsense Book of Baby and Child Care
 - Sold an average of 1 million copies per year between 1946 and -1960
 - Message: Women's primary responsibility was to stay home and nurture their children.

- Also, parents should trust themselves as they attend to their children's physical and psychological needs.

D. Sunbelt vs. Frostbelt (or Rustbelt)

1. Sunbelt is a 15-state area stretching from Virginia through Florida and Texas to Arizona and California (includes all former Confederate states)
2. Advent of air-conditioning spurred enormous growth
 - a. Population increase twice that of the old industrial zones of the Northeast.
 - b. California which became most populous state by 1963.
3. War industries and high-tech industries attracted millions to the west coast.
4. Aerospace industry and huge military installations attracted millions to Texas and Florida.
5. Traditional midwest industrial workers lost ground as many of their jobs were shipped overseas.
6. "Rustbelt" states of the Ohio Valley angered at federal outlays for Southern and Western states
7. Every president elected since 1964 has come from the Sunbelt.
8. Sunbelt's representation in Congress has increased significantly.