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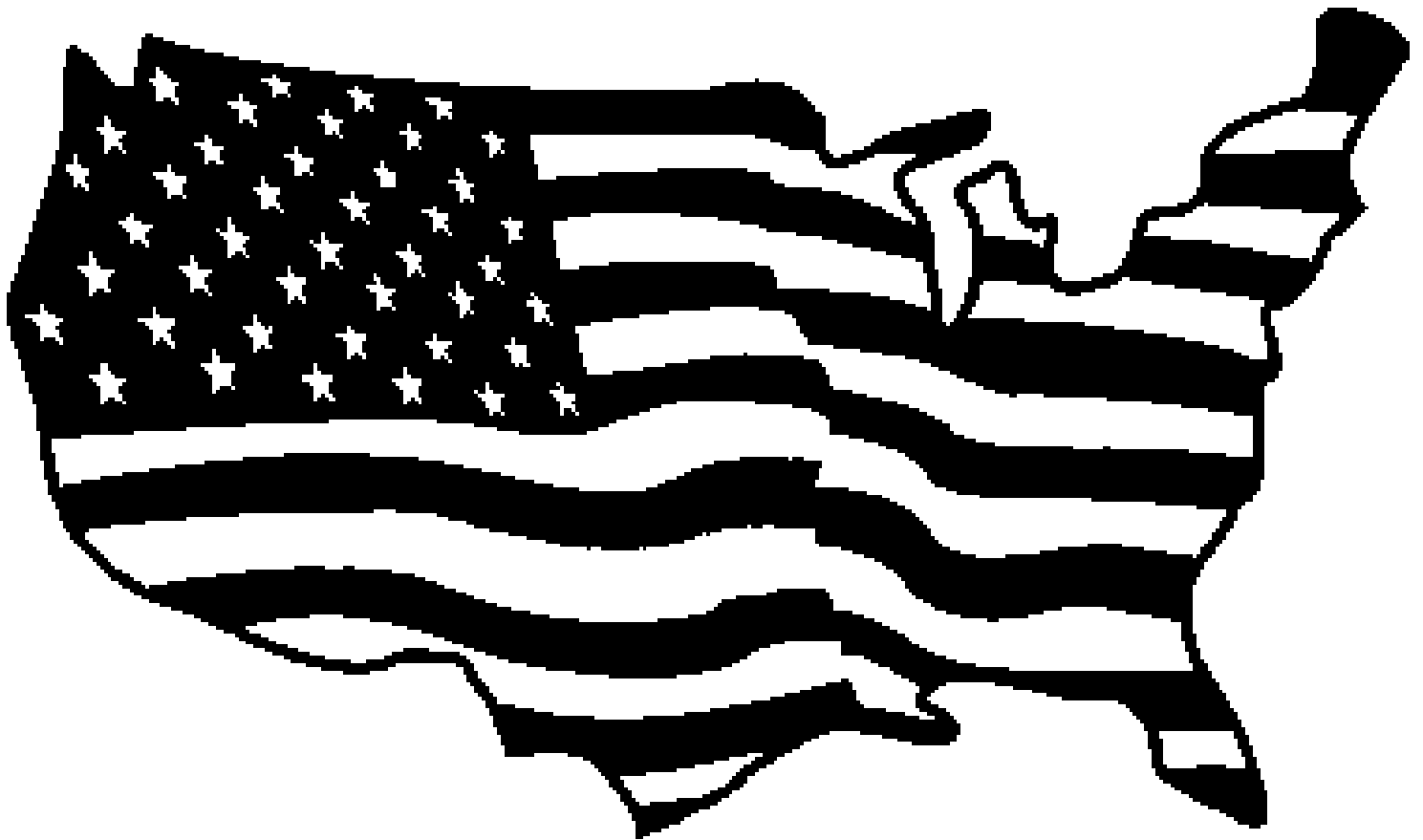
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# i Think = U.S. History

## Cold War Era



by Sharon Coletti

\*\* It is the goal of InspirEd Educators, Inc. to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

Edited by Kendra Corr

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## An Iron Curtain

### Springboard:

Students should read “\_\_\_\_\_” and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain how and why the Iron Curtain divided the world into East and West after World War II.

**Materials:** “\_\_\_\_\_” (Springboard handout)  
A Long List of Differences (handout)

**Terms to know:** **communism** - form of government that exerts strict control over people and all property and business, which are owned “in common” in a classless society

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *after Churchill used the term in his 1945 speech, the division between the Communist East and the Anti-Communist West (also referred to as “the Free World”) became known as the Iron Curtain. The two sides of the Iron Curtain were very different; and they strongly disliked and completely mistrusted each other.* Go on to explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will examine the differences.*
- Distribute “A Long List of Differences” and explain that *the editorial cartoon in the middle shows President Harry Truman.* Have the student(s) try to explain the cartoon. *(After the war the president had his hands full with the threat posed by the spread of communism and the tremendous differences that divided the two sides.)* Then have the student(s) work in groups or independently, using their knowledge and researching as needed to identify as many distinct differences between the East and West as possible. Encourage them to fill the page with differences in various areas (government, economics, culture, resources, problems, etc.) as they can. (**NOTE:** A small prize could be offered to build enthusiasm.)
- Have the student(s) share their ideas and discuss, adding to their lists of differences and/or noting key points, as appropriate. *(Answers may vary if they make sense and are justified and include:*
  - *The “Free World” was Western Europe, the U.S., Canada, and any countries under their control; India, for example, was ruled by Britain. At war’s end the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and mainland China were communist.*
  - *The West, except in regards to its remaining colonial possessions, valued and protected individual rights including protection from unfair imprisonment. Businesses, homes, and many hospitals and schools were privately owned, and people could choose to live, work, and travel as desired. Under communism rights were not protected. The government had full authority and control.*
  - *In the West people could be rich or poor. Those with less though, could dream of “making it.” The goal of communism was a classless society.)*



In February 1945, as the Allies closed in on Germany in the months following the D-Day invasion, leaders of the “Big Three” met at Yalta in the Soviet Union. By the time of the meeting Joseph Stalin (*the Soviet leader, pictured far right*) had already taken control of much of Eastern Europe. Fighting their way westward, the Soviets occupied lands as they freed them from their German captors.



Disagreements were expected as Winston Churchill of the U.K. (*left*), U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt (*center*), and Stalin held a week of discussions about post-war Europe. Indeed, while they did agree on a few points, they clashed on far more. One of the biggest sticking points was Roosevelt and Churchill wanted the Soviets to withdraw from Eastern Europe. The two leaders wanted to re-establish countries that had been taken over by Germany.

But Stalin refused to leave; he obviously intended to rule the lands he seized from Germany. And no amount of **negotiation** seemed to make a difference. Stalin’s hard-nosed stand offered the other Allies only two options. They could accept Stalin’s actions or go to war with the Soviet Union. Since W.W. II had not yet ended, the second choice held no appeal at all. Therefore, most of Eastern Europe became communist nations and puppets of the Soviet Union.

The world was divided into two sides led by the two superpowers that emerged from the war, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The name for the split came from a speech given in Missouri in 1946 by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. In it he said, “*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.*”

Which title choice **BEST FITS** the content of this reading?

- A. “The Big Three”
- B. “A Meeting at Yalta”
- C. “An Iron Curtain Descends”
- D. “When Winston Churchill Speaks”

Why?

Which word(s) mean **MOST NEARLY** the same as “negotiation”?

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| A. important meeting | C. sticking point |
| B. disagreement      | D. discussion     |

The dilemma Roosevelt and Churchill faced at Yalta would **BEST** be described as

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| A. controlled. | C. communist.  |
| B. impossible. | D. hard-noted. |

In February 1945, as the Allies closed in on Germany in the months following the D-Day invasion, leaders of the “Big Three” met at Yalta in the Soviet Union. By the time of the meeting Joseph Stalin (*the Soviet leader, pictured far right*) had already taken control of much of Eastern Europe. Fighting their way westward, the Soviets occupied lands as they freed them from their German captors.



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Which title choice **BEST FITS** the content of this reading?

- A. “The Big Three”
- B. “A Meeting at Yalta”
- C. “An Iron Curtain Descends” \*
- D. “When Winston Churchill Speaks”

*(See below.)*

Why? *While the main idea of the reading was about how the “iron curtain descended,” other answers COULD BE O.K., if reasonably justified.*

Which word(s) mean **MOST NEARLY** the same as “negotiation”?

- A. important meeting
- B. disagreement
- C. sticking point
- D. discussion \*

*(Negotiation is the give-and-take involved in getting PAST sticking points, or points of disagreement at a meeting. A-C relate, but D is the best choice.)*

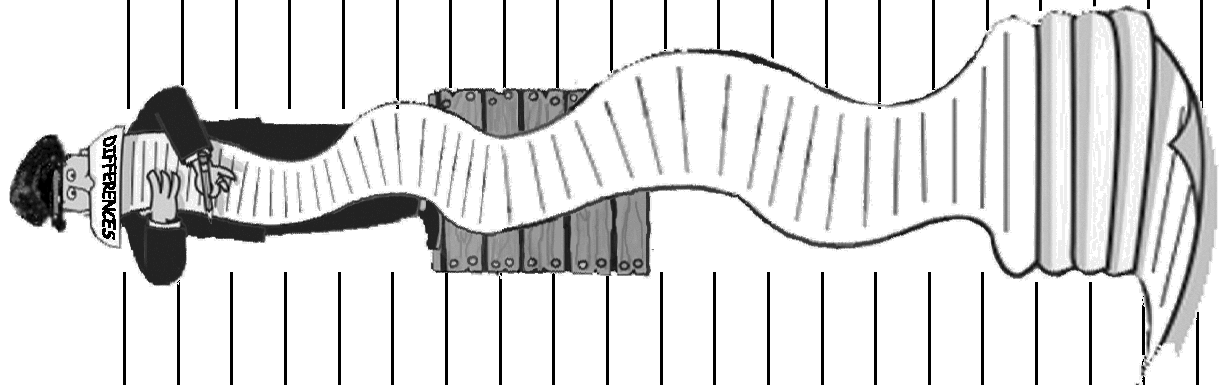
The dilemma Roosevelt and Churchill faced at Yalta would **BEST** be described as

- A. controlled.
- B. impossible. \*
- C. communist.
- D. hard-noted.

*(There was no good choice; they had to decide between two terrible options.)*

# A LONG LIST THE "FREE WORLD"

# OF DIFFERENCES THE COMMUNIST EAST







## Here We Come to Save the Day!

### Springboard:

Students should study the “Europe in 1945” map and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain the circumstances surrounding the Berlin Airlift of 1948-49.

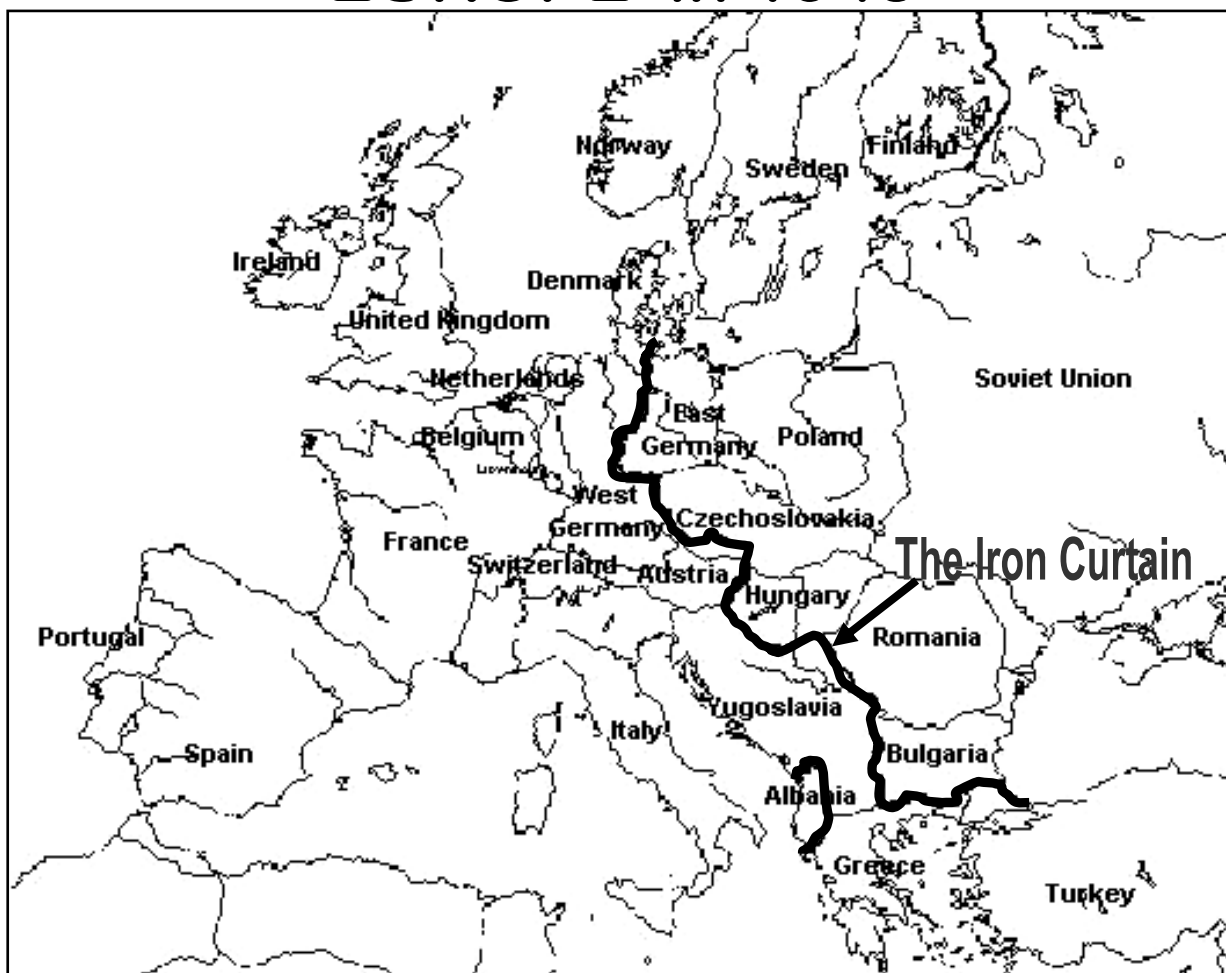
**Materials:** Europe in 1945 (Springboard handout)  
In the News... (2-page handout)  
“Real People” of Berlin (handout)

**Terms to know:** **republic** - government with elected leaders (though not necessarily FREELY elected!)  
**blockade** - prevent supplies, food, etc. from entering or leaving a place

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will learn about the first showdown that occurred between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union in the newly-divided Europe.*
- Distribute “In the News” and ““Real People’ of Berlin.” The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to read the news reports about the Soviet blockade of Berlin and the Allied airlift and complete the journal entries. Encourage them to make their writings seem as “real” as possible, reflecting what they imagine their reactions to events around them would have been. (**FYI:** The U.S. and Britain continued the airlift for several months. The last American planes flew on September 30, 1949 and the Brits’ on October 6<sup>th</sup>.)
- Have them share their writings and discuss. Include these questions in the follow-up discussion:
  - ? Explain the purpose of the Soviet blockade. (*The Soviets tried to take control of West Berlin, which was located completely within the Soviet sector of Germany.*)
  - ? Why do you think the U.S. and Great Britain were SO determined that the Berlin airlift succeed? (*They confronted the first major act of aggression by the Soviets and knew from past experience that leaders become more aggressive if not stopped.*)
  - ? What words would you use to describe the Berlin airlift? (*Answers may vary: heroic, dangerous, etc. Encourage MANY answers.*)

# EUROPE in 1945



According to the map, in 1945 France, Switzerland, and the U.K. were

- A. democratic nations.
- B. behind the Iron Curtain.
- C. located in Western Europe.
- D. controlled by the Soviet Union.

After the war the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was ruled by Prime Minister Josip Tito. Though the nation was \_\_\_\_, it \_\_\_\_.

- A. communist ... did not join the Soviet Bloc
- B. free ... was one of the Soviet Socialist Republics
- C. socialist ... not considered a real country
- D. western ... was within in the Soviet sphere of influence

Based on your knowledge of the world at the time, which sentence explains the countries of East and West Germany?

- A. The United States occupied and ruled West Germany.
- B. East Germany was taken over by the Soviets.
- C. Josip Tito took over the eastern part of Germany.
- D. West Germany was part of the Netherlands.

Based on the map, it is likely that after World War II Europe was

- A. communist.
- B. freed.
- C. excited.
- D. tense.

# EUROPE in 1945 - Answers & Explanations



According to the map, in 1945 France, Switzerland, and the U.K. were

- A. democratic nations.
- B. behind the Iron Curtain.
- C. located in Western Europe. \*
- D. controlled by the Soviet Union.

*(B and D are false and while A is true, its cannot be determined from the map.)*

After the war the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was ruled by Prime Minister Josip Tito. Though the nation was \_\_\_\_, it \_\_\_\_.

- A. communist ... did not join the Soviet Bloc \*
- B. free ... was one of the Soviet Socialist Republics
- C. socialist ... not considered a real country
- D. western ... was within in the Soviet sphere of influence

*(In fact Yugoslavia WAS communist, but Tito's army drove the Germans out. Tito then refused to be a Soviet puppet.)*

Based on your knowledge of the world at the time, which sentence explains the countries of East and West Germany?

- A. The United States occupied and ruled West Germany.
- B. East Germany was taken over by the Soviets. \*
- C. Josip Tito took over the eastern part of Germany.
- D. West Germany was part of the Netherlands.

*(The Allies occupied Germany to get it back on its feet, but then the Soviets refused to leave.)*

Based on the map, it is likely that after World War II Europe was

- A. communist.
  - B. freed.
  - C. excited.
  - D. tense.\*
- (This question reinforces content from the last lesson to be built upon in this one.)*

# IN THE NEWS...

InspirEd News Agency

June 5, 1945

## ALLIES ISSUE JOINT DECLARATION

WASHINGTON - The Allies, who held meetings for months about post-war Germany, announced today that the country would be governed in four zones by the major Allies in the war. The U.S., Great Britain, France, and Soviet Union will each control a portion of Germany.

The purpose of the occupation is to help the devastated nation rebuild its infrastructure and economy. They do not want to leave the country weak and open

to having another dictator seize power.

Germany's capital city of Berlin, which lies deep in the Soviet zone, is to be divided into four zones as well. The zones on the west side of the city are to be controlled by Britain, France, and the U.S., and East Berlin is to be occupied by the Soviets. All involved, including the public, recognize that this means Germany is now divided into a communist sector and three free zones.

InspirEd News Agency

March 5, 1946

## "AN IRON CURTAIN HAS DESCENDED!"

FULTON, MO - Today former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill told students in a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, that "an iron curtain has descended across the Continent [of Europe]." He was referring of course to the split between Eastern and Western Europe, as well as to the division of Germany and Berlin.

Reports from behind the "Iron Curtain" say the region is under tight control by the Soviet Union. While the Communist

superpower has helped countries in its sphere of influence form republics, leaders there are mere puppets of the Soviets. Western Europe, on the other hand, received massive aid from the U.S. to help restart those nations' economies.

Western Germany also gets help to rebuild. Available jobs in the west are drawing workers from the east. Though the four Allies were supposed to work together, the Soviets have yet to cooperate with the Western Allies.

InspirEd News Agency

June 27, 1948

## SOVIETS BLOCKADE BERLIN; TRUMAN O.K.'S AIRLIFT

WASHINGTON - After months of problems between the Western Allies and Soviets, the situation is now dire. Yesterday, Soviet soldiers closed off all traffic and supply routes to the Western sectors of Berlin. Within hours, President Truman approved a plan to airlift supplies to the people in the western half of that city.

Since Germany and Berlin are



divided, Germans from the eastern sectors have been leaving through West Berlin for jobs and better conditions in the West. As the map shows, free lanes in and out of West Berlin have now been blocked off. No one knows yet how long the blockade will last, but the U.S. military is hoping it won't be long.

# IN THE NEWS...

InspirEd News Agency

July 11, 1948

## HERE THEY COME TO SAVE THE DAY!

**BERLIN** - What might have been a lost cause for the city may yet be won. A week ago the Soviets sealed off West Berlin. Their plan seems to be to starve people into giving up and accepting communist rule. But valiant efforts on the parts of the U.S. and the U.K. could save the day after all.

America's "Operation Vittles" and the British "Operation Plane Fare" are airlifting supplies to the city's two million people. Only two airfields are

being used to send shipments at this time, but both the U.S. and U.K. are working on plans for adding runways.

To meet the basic needs of West Berlin, 4,500 tons of food per day is needed, and fuel must also be airlifted. As of now 70 aircraft are flying in only 225 tons, which explains the very difficult conditions the city faces. Even so, while fears of starvation and communism loom large, the people of Berlin still have hope.

InspirEd News Agency

October 5, 1948

## ALLIED SUPPLIES EXCEED REQUIRMENTS!

**WASHINGTON** - The White House announced today that the Berlin Airlift is now a complete success. A report from U.S. General William Turner revealed that as of this week, the level of supplies airlifted into West Berlin is more than enough to supply the city.

General Turner was sent to Berlin in July to ramp up the Allied airlift. Having run a supply operation to Chinese forces during W.W. II, Turner came to set up what he refers to as "a

cowboy operation." His plan calls for supply planes to take off and land every three minutes, round the clock from several air bases in West Germany. Though it has taken slightly more than three months to fully enact the plan, the Western Allies can now meet the needs of this city held hostage.

U.S. officials hope the Soviets will now lift the blockade. In the meantime, they must wait and continue the daily flights in and out of West Berlin.

InspirEd News Agency

May 13, 1949

## SOVIETS GIVE UP; END BERLIN BLOCKADE!

**BERLIN** - Spirits are soaring all around West Berlin today. Yesterday the Soviet Union finally ended its long blockade of the city. For almost a year, Allied airlifts supplied the city with needed goods. The Soviet plan to starve people into submitting to communism has failed.

In the past year over 2 million tons of food, 1 1/2 million tons of coal, and more than 200,000 tons of other goods were flown into the city on 280,000 flights.

According to military sources, the Americans and Brits plan to continue the airlift for a few months to ensure the Soviets do not change their minds.

Of course the end of this year-long standoff does not end tensions between the Communist Bloc and the West. As of today, it is clear that East Germany will not join the western sectors. This split in essence creates two German nations and two cities.