

**U.S. HISTORY: 1865 TO THE PRESENT**  
**STUDY GUIDE – POST-WWII CHANGES – 2020 UPDATE**  
HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS OF LEARNING CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK –2015 STANDARDS  
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## STANDARD USII.8A – REBUILDING EUROPE & JAPAN

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the economic, social, and political transformation of the United States and the world between the end of World War II and the present by

- a) describing the **rebuilding of Europe and Japan** after World War II, the emergence of the United States as a **superpower**, and the establishment of the **United Nations**.

**The Allied victory in World War II led to the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as global superpowers.**

**The United States' involvement in World War II reshaped America's role in world affairs.**

### United States helps rebuild postwar Europe and Japan

Much of **Europe was in ruins** following World War II.

- **Soviet forces** occupied most of Eastern and Central Europe and the eastern portion of Germany.
- The United States felt it was in its best interest to help **rebuild Europe** and prevent political and economic instability.

### Rebuilding efforts

- The United States instituted George C. Marshall's **plan to rebuild Europe** (the **Marshall Plan**), which provided massive **financial aid** to rebuild European economies and **prevent the spread of communism**.
- Germany was **partitioned into East and West Germany**.
  - **West Germany** became **democratic** and resumed self-government after a few years of American, British, and French occupation.



- **East Germany** remained under the **domination of the Soviet Union** and did not adopt democratic institutions.
- Following its defeat, **Japan was occupied by American forces**.
  - It soon adopted a **democratic** form of government, resumed self-government, and became a **strong ally** of the United States.

### Establishment of the United Nations

- The **United Nations** was formed near the end of World War II to create a body for the nations of the world to try to **prevent future global wars**.



## STANDARD USII.8B – WARTIME TO PEACETIME ECONOMY

- b) Conversion from a wartime to a peacetime economy.
- The economic, social, and political climate of the United States changed after World War II because of the development of new technologies, changes in mass media, and growth of mass markets.**

### Reasons for rapid growth of the American economy following World War II

- With rationing of consumer goods over, businesses converted from production of war materials to **consumer goods**.
- Americans purchased goods on **credit**.
- The work force shifted **back to men**, and most women returned full time to **family responsibilities**.
- **Labor unions** merged and became more powerful; workers gained new benefits and higher salaries.

# STANDARD USII.8C – COLD WAR

c) The role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam, the Cuban missile crisis, the collapse of communism in Europe, and the rise of new challenges.

**The United States and the Soviet Union emerged from World War II as world powers, triggering a rivalry over ideology and national security.**

**The Cold War was the central organizing principle in foreign affairs for 40 years.**

## Terms to know

- **Cold War:** The state of tension without actual fighting between the United States and the Soviet Union, which divided the world into **two camps**



**The Cold War**

## Origins of the Cold War

- Differences in goals and **ideologies** between the United States and the Soviet Union (the two superpowers).
  - The **United States** was **democratic and capitalist**;
  - the **Soviet Union** was **dictatorial and communist**.
- The Soviet Union's **domination** over **Eastern European** countries (**Iron Curtain**)
- American policy of **containment** (to stop the spread of **communism**)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (**NATO**) vs. **Warsaw Pact** (defense alliances)

## Major conflicts in the post-World War II era

- South Korea and the United States resisted Chinese and **North Korean aggression**. The conflict ended in a **stalemate**.
- Disagreements arose between the United States and the Soviet Union over the **status of Berlin**, eventually leading to the construction of the **Berlin Wall**
- The **Cuban Missile Crisis** occurred when the Soviet Union placed missiles in Cuba.
  - The Soviets **removed the missiles** in response to a United States **blockade** of Cuba, and the United States removed missiles from Turkey

- The United States intervened to stop the spread of communism into **South Vietnam (Domino Theory)**.
  - Americans were **divided** over whether the United States should be involved militarily in **Vietnam**.
  - The conflict ended in a **cease-fire** agreement in which **U.S. troops withdrew**.



**Domino Theory**

- The **Space Race** between the United States and the Soviet Union was a contest to gain technological superiority (e.g., **Sputnik**, **landing on the moon**).
- The **Arms Race** was the stockpiling of **nuclear weapons** as a deterrent to nuclear war.



## Collapse of communism in Europe

- **Breakup of the Soviet Union** into independent countries
- Destruction of the **Berlin Wall**

## New challenges

- Role of United States **military intervention**
- **Environmental** challenges
- **Global issues**, including trade, jobs, diseases, energy
- Rise/emergence of **China** as a global economic and military power

## STANDARD USII.8D –CHANGING SOCIETY

d) describing the changing patterns of society, including expanded educational and economic opportunities for military veterans, women, and minorities.

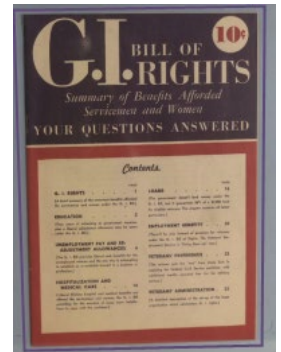
The United States experienced an economic boom and social transformation after World War II that changed the way most Americans lived and worked.

### Factors leading to changing patterns in United States society

- **Strong economy** (healthy job market, increased productivity, increased demand for American products)
- Greater investment in **education** so Americans would have the ability to compete globally (National Defense Education Act)
- The “**Baby Boom,**” which led to changing demographics
- Interstate **highway** system
- Evolving **role of women** (expected to play a supporting role in the family while increasingly **working outside** the home)
- Large number of **women** entering the **labor force**
- Increased **urbanization** and expansion of **cities**, resulting in a **housing boom**, which did not largely

benefit African Americans. Expansion of **human rights**

- African Americans’ aspirations for **equal opportunities**; they pushed to end all forms of **segregation** and **discrimination** against them.



### Policies and programs expanding educational and employment opportunities

- **G.I. Bill of Rights** gave educational, housing, and employment benefits to **veterans**. The GI bill enabled many to **enter professions**, such as medicine, law, and academics.
- Harry S. Truman **desegregated** the armed forces.
- **Civil Rights legislation** led to increased educational, economic, and political opportunities for women and minorities

## STANDARD USII.8E – TRADE & GLOBALIZATION

e) describing how international trade and globalization have impacted American life.



After World War II, there was an increase in globalization, international trade, and interdependence.

Globalization is the linking of nations through trade, information, technologies, and communication.

Globalization involves increased **integration** of different societies.

**Interdependence** involves nations, countries, and societies **depending on one another** for goods, services, action, or influence.

During the two decades following World War II, **international trade** expanded at a rapid pace.

### Impact of globalization and international trade on American life

- Improvement of all **communications** (e.g., travel, telecommunications, Internet)
- Availability of a wide variety of **foreign-made goods** and services
- **Outsourcing** of job and decline of some American cities and industries
- Rise of **international corporations**
- Shift from manufacturing to a **high-tech** and **service** economy

