



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM  
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

# COMMUNISM:

**ITS IDEOLOGY,**

**ITS HISTORY,**

**and ITS LEGACY**

*Third Edition*





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# COMMUNISM:

ITS IDEOLOGY,

ITS HISTORY,

and ITS LEGACY

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# Introduction

## PREFACE FOR THE CURRICULUM ON COMMUNISM

**I**n many ways, the history of the 20th century is the story of communism, starting with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and ending with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. At the high point of their power, communists controlled one-fifth of the world's population and influenced the course of events on every continent. And yet, the history of communism is an untold story.

The horrors of Nazism and the Holocaust are taught and highlighted in our schools as they should be. But what of communism? Do students know who Karl Marx, Joseph Stalin, and Mao Zedong were? Do they know that communism exacted a death toll of 100 million victims, surpassing that of all the wars of the 20th century? Are they aware there are still five communist regimes in the world today?

*Communism: Its Ideology, Its History, and Its Legacy* is a supplementary high school lesson curricular resource developed by teachers for teachers. It is offered to help fill the knowledge gap about communism and its enormous impact on world history, past and present.

Written with both social studies and common standards in mind, each of the nine lessons focuses on key individuals and key events in the story of twentieth century communism. A background essay presents essential content, while student-centered activities and numerous assessment options offer a wide variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the global impact of communism. Each lesson features a C3 section, Communism's Contemporary Connection, focusing attention on today's communist nations. All lessons draw from an extensive list of on-line resources, thus providing multiple opportunities for further research and study.

It is our hope and our goal that the lessons of *Communism: Its Ideology, Its History, and Its Legacy* will inspire and guide student discussion of such issues as: What are the key tenets of Marxism-Leninism? Who was responsible for the outbreak of the Cold War—the Soviet Union or the United States? Why did we fight the Korean War and the Vietnam War? Why did the Berlin Wall fall?

We are pleased to provide teachers like yourself with an educational resource that will help students—the nation's future leaders—study and understand a critical part of the history of the 20th century and draw valuable lessons for the future.



Lee Edwards, Ph.D.  
Chairman Emeritus  
Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation



# Karl Marx and His Legacy

## OVERVIEW

Perhaps no 19th century figure has had a greater impact on history than the German philosopher and historian, Karl Marx. His “scientific” theory of class warfare and inevitable violent revolution has led, directly and indirectly, to the deaths of over 100 million people, as well as calamitous social, political, and economic change around the globe. A basic understanding of his philosophy and its impact on nations and individuals is a critical component for understanding the world of the 20th and 21st centuries.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

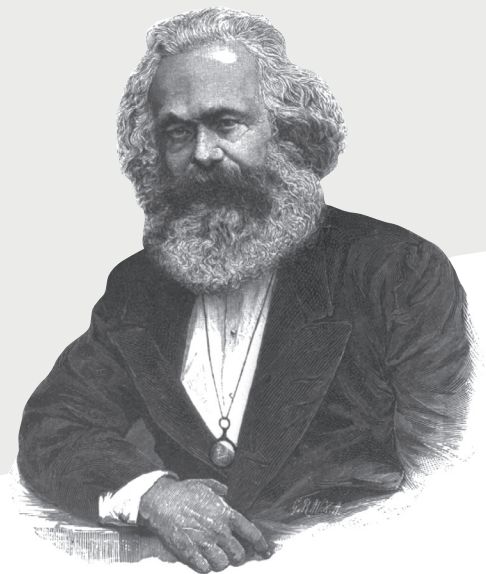
- compare and contrast the views of George Washington, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Karl Marx on liberty, religion, and property
- analyze excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*
- understand elements of Marxist theory
- speculate about life in a Marxist society

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 7: 4B

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: The Legacy of Karl Marx
- Student Handout A: PSA: Excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*
- Teacher Resource: Quote Cards
- Student Handout B: Washington, Marx, and King
- Student Handout C: If I Were A Marxist. . .
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**How does Marxist theory conflict with the Western understanding of basic human rights?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

[for homework or in class the previous day]

- A** Ask students what they know about life today in China, North Korea, Laos, Vietnam, or Cuba. Explain to students that all of these are communist nations and that the government of these countries is based, in part, on the writings of Karl Marx, a 19th century historian and economist.
- B** Have students read **Background Essay: The Legacy of Karl Marx** and answer (or think about) the questions following the essay. (See the **Answer Key** for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Distribute **Student Handout A: PSA: Excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*** to students. Working individually or in pairs, they should paraphrase the excerpts.
- B** Ask students to share their paraphrases, as well as their reaction to these statements.



### ACTIVITY A

- A** Prior to class, duplicate, shuffle, and post around the room at various stations the **Teacher Resource: Quote Cards**. Spend a few minutes gathering from the class what they know (or what they think they know) about Washington, Marx, and King.
- B** Distribute **Student Handout B: Washington, Marx, and King**. Each student (or pair of students) should take his/her handout to a different quote station (there are twenty four quotes.) Circulating in the same direction, students should read the quote; check who they think the author is; write why they think so; and move on to the next quote. As they circulate, encourage students to share their reasoning with each other. When each student has reviewed 5-6 quotes, bring the class back together as a large group.
- C** Ask students to volunteer their answers and/or provide the correct sources (see **Answer Key**.) Encourage students to explain their reasoning. Ask them the following:
  - Were they surprised by any of the correct identifications and, if so, why?
  - Did they see any themes in the quotes? (Suggested answers: liberty, freedom, religion, property, violence)
  - How would they compare and contrast the views of Washington, Marx, and King on these topics? (Accept all thoughtful answers)



## ACTIVITY B

- A** Explain to students that many elements of Marxist thinking became a reality in the 20th and 21st centuries, but at a great human cost.
- B** Distribute **Student Handout C: If I Were a Marxist. . .** Give students a few minutes to read and to rank their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various aspects of Marxist society. Then have students share with a partner.



## WRAP-UP

Ask the class to share their # 1 rankings and, if time permits, others as well. Discuss why they ranked the conditions as they did with the entire class. (Accept all reasoned answers.) Ask the students why they were bothered by these conditions. Ask them if the rankings might be different if they were completed by:

- Their parents
- Their grandparents
- George Washington
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Write an imaginary dialogue between Marx and either George Washington or Martin Luther King, Jr. in which you discuss the value of liberty, religious freedom, and/or private property.
- B** Choose one quote from **Student Handout B** and either illustrate the quote or create a political cartoon based upon it.
- C** In a well-written 3-4 paragraph essay, explain why the conditions presented in **Student Handout C: If I Were a Marxist** concerned you.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about how Marxist theory is practiced in one or more of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

- B** Assign excerpts from Chapters 1-3 of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and have students present a 5 minute book talk to the class in which they a.) summarize the chapter and b.) explain how the events described reflect the thinking of Karl Marx.



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

# THE LEGACY OF KARL MARX

**H**ave you ever thought about the number of people who have died as a result of war or conflict? Nearly 700,000 individuals perished during the American Civil War. 9 million died in World War I. 10 million people were slaughtered as a result of Nazi genocide under Adolf Hitler. 60 million lost their lives during World War II.

However, none of these totals compare with the number of people who have lost their lives as a result of communism. Between 1917-1991, over 100 million people died as a direct result of communist ideas and actions. This legacy of death has its origins in the writings of a nineteenth century German historian, Karl Marx.

Karl Marx is known as the founder of communism. His 1848 book, *The Communist Manifesto*, established the basis for the communist philosophy. Few ideas have been as repressive as communism. Believers in Karl Marx have violated the most basic human rights: the right to property and freedoms of press, assembly, speech, movement, and religion.

In the *Manifesto*, Marx stated, “The theory of the communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.” He knew that depriving individuals of this most basic freedom would not be easy. Force would be necessary.

Marx understood this. “Of course,” he said, “in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads.” Therefore, for at least a time, dictatorship would be necessary. Repression is the essence of communism.

Communists pledged themselves to massive redistribution of wealth. However, Marx realized that his views on property were in direct conflict with the current social and political order. Therefore, revolution alone would bring about his desired social changes.

The *Manifesto* presents specific actions to achieve Marx’s goals. Private property would be abolished. A graduated income tax—the more you make, the more you pay—would be instituted. All rights of inheritance would be abolished. The government would control all means of production, all credit and banking systems, and all communication and transportation systems.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Marx expected that all nations of the world would eventually follow his ideas and implement his plan. “Workers of the world, unite!” was the closing call to arms in his Manifesto. The communists had a “world to win.” The followers of Marx pursued the goal of revolution worldwide. After Marx, history would never be the same.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. How many people have died as a direct result of communism?
2. What was the key element of Marx’s theory of communism?
3. Why did Marx think that revolution was necessary to achieve his goals?
4. Did Marx believe in a right to private property? Do you? Why?
5. Can significant social, political, or economic change occur without violent revolution? If not, why not? If so, how?

## PSA

Excerpts from *The Communist Manifesto*

## DIRECTIONS

Read the following excerpts and paraphrase each in the blanks that follow. Use the Vocab App (if necessary) to help you understand the text.

- 1** “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. . . Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.”

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- 2** “In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.”

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- 3** “Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, Unite!”

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## VOCAB APP

**Bourgeoisie:** middle class

**Proletariat:** working class

**proletarians:** members of the working class

## Quote Cards

### DIRECTIONS

Duplicate and post each of these quotes at various stations around the classroom. An alternative would be to place them on student desks or for the students to pass the quote cards around.



1

“Revolutions are the  
locomotives of history”



2

“Religion is the sign of the  
oppressed creature...It is the  
opium of the people.”




  
3

“The blessing and protection  
of Heaven are at all times  
necessary...”




4

“While we are zealously performing the  
duties of good Citizens...we certainly  
ought not to be inattentive to the  
higher duties of religion.”



5

“ Of all the dispositions and habits,  
which lead to political prosperity,  
religion and morality are  
indispensable supports.”



6

“... religion for me is life.”



---

7

“Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.”



---

8

“A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God.”



---




9

“Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.”



10

“Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”



11

“I say to you that our goal is freedom . . .”





12

“If freedom of speech is taken away,  
then dumb and silent we may be led,  
like sheep to the slaughter.”



13

“Liberty, when it begins to take  
root, is a plant of rapid growth.”



14

“You are free men, fighting for  
the blessings of Liberty . . .”





15

“The establishment of civil and religious Liberty was the motive which induced me to the field.”

16

“Freedom in this field can only consist in socialised man.”

17

“The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether people are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own.”



18

“You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property.”



19

“From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.”



20

“War is an act of violence whose object is to constrain the enemy, to accomplish our will.”





21

“Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time.”



22

“The history of all previous societies has been the history of class struggles.”



# Washington, Marx, and King

## DIRECTIONS

Circulate around the room, reading the quotes. On the chart below, note the number of the quote, place an “X” in the column of the person you think made the statement, and write in the last column the reasons for your identifications.

Quote #	George Washington	Karl Marx	Martin Luther King, Jr.	WHY?

# If I Were A Marxist...

## DIRECTIONS

In *The Communist Manifesto* (Section 2), Marx describes life in Marxist society. If you lived in such a society, all or most of the following would be true. Rank these statements giving #1 to the situation you would be most bothered by; #2 to the situation which would bother you the next most, etc.

## RANK 1-9

- \_\_\_\_\_ I could be ordered to give all of my personal property (clothes, shoes, books, electronics, house, etc.) to the government.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would not inherit money, land, or any type of property from my parents and grandparents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I could only deposit money in a government-controlled bank.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would have to continue working, even if I were old or sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I could not choose my job or profession—the government would choose it for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I could be forced by the government to move from the city to the country, or from the country to the city.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would be required to attend public schools.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I could be required to work in a farm or factory for twelve months in order to graduate from high school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I could be sent to prison by the government because of what I say, what I believe, what I write, with whom I spend time.



# Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution

## OVERVIEW

Vladimir Lenin was the father of the Bolshevik Revolution. His revolution began in October, 1917 and led to nationalization, centralization, collectivization, abolition of property, and restriction of basic freedoms in Russia. These goals were achieved through state-sponsored terror and intimidation. Between 1917-1923, over 200,000 people were executed at the hands of the Bolsheviks. 300,000 more died as a result of execution, imprisonment, and forced relocation to labor camps. Lenin's denial of basic human rights was an integral component of his "dream" of a workers' paradise. His "dream" became a reality under the totalitarian Soviet Union.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- discuss and explain Lenin's statements about liberty
- assess Lenin's understanding of liberty
- compare and contrast Lenin's view of freedom with their own
- apply and evaluate Lenin's criteria for restricting freedom

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 8: 2C
- NCHS US History Era 7: 2C

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: Exterminating Harmful Insects
- Student Handout A: PSA: Lenin
- Teacher Resource: "Criminal" Character Cards
- Student Handout B: Which Harmful Insects Will We Eliminate?
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why did so many Russian people resist Lenin and the Bolsheviks?

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A Ask students to brainstorm what people, places, images, or quotes they think of when they hear the words “liberty” and “freedom,” or when they hear the word “revolution.”
- B Have students read **Background Essay: Exterminating Harmful Insects** and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the **Answer Key** for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas.
- B Distribute **Student Handout A: PSA: Lenin** to students and give them about 5 minutes to paraphrase one quote and answer the question. Spend another five minutes discussing their rankings.



### ACTIVITY

- A Remind students that during the Bolshevik control of Russia, hundreds of thousands of people were denied basic human rights. In today’s activity, students will role-play some typical Russian people to better understand the impact of Lenin and the Bolsheviks on Russian society.
- B Distribute to each student one of the **Teacher Resource: “Criminal” Charactercards** and give students 2-3 minutes to familiarize themselves with the character. Then, distribute **Handout B: Which Harmful Insects Will We Exterminate?** and allow time for students to fill in the boxes for their particular character. (These characters are not real people, but are based upon composite experiences of individuals in pre-Bolshevik Russia.)
- C Form students into groups of six (six different characters per group) and ask them to introduce/interview each other to complete the Handout. Encourage students to use expressions, accents, etc. to make the role-playing realistic.
- D Write the name of each character on the board. Then, ask students, “If you were Lenin or Latsis, which of these people would you hand over for execution and why?” Tally the votes and ask students to defend their decisions. Then, ask students to offer reasons why these “criminals” should not be executed.





## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** What rights did Lenin and the Bolsheviks take away from most Russian people? Why?
- 2** Why did so many people resist being deprived of these rights?
- 3** Why did Lenin and the Bolsheviks resort to terror and intimidation to deprive people of these rights?
- 4** How would you react if you were deprived of the rights to property, free expression, freedom of conscience, and freedom of assembly? Why?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Write 3-4 entries in a daily diary for any one of the characters from the activity, focusing on why they were arrested, how they were treated while under arrest, and how they felt about the Bolsheviks taking away their basic freedoms.
- B** Create a 10-slide Powerpoint presentation illustrating Lenin's restrictions on basic human rights. A brief annotated bibliography (what is the source for the information and/or graphic and why is it credible) should be included.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

**A** Direct students to any of these additional resources. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned.

- Richard Pipes, Russia Under Communism (appropriate for advanced students )  
See Appendix A.
- Timeline of Russia Under Communism  
<https://www.history.com/topics/russia/russia-timeline>
- Biography of Lenin  
See Appendix B.
- Communism and the World: Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution with Dr. Sean McMeekin  
See the “Communism and the World” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.

**B** The entire Romanov family died at the hands of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Nicholas and Alexandra (<http://www.nicholasandalexandra.com/>) contains links to a wide variety of credible websites.

**C** Show excerpts about the Bolshevik regime from the films Dr. Zhivago or Nicholas and Alexandra.

## COMMUNISM’S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on liberties in one or more of today’s communist countries.

**China                  Cuba                  Laos                  North Korea                  Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either

- 1** one paragraph summary;
- 2** five slide Powerpoint presentation; or
- 3** Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

# EXTERMINATING HARMFUL INSECTS

Vladimir Lenin was born in 1870. By his early twenties, he was a devoted believer in the ideas of Karl Marx. By 1917, he was the leader of the Bolshevik (Communist) Revolution. By the time of his death in 1924, he was known as the Father of the Soviet Union. Lenin created the Soviet totalitarian system by eliminating basic freedoms, executing his enemies, and promoting global revolution.

Karl Marx had denied the right to private property and called religion “the opiate of the people.” Lenin, too, was an atheist. As a teenager, he removed a cross from around his neck and “tossed it in the rubbish bin.” As an adult and leader of Bolshevik Russia, Lenin stated, “We do not believe in God.”

Lenin and the Bolsheviks did not believe in rights that many others affirmed as natural rights. When they seized power in October 1917, the Bolsheviks began to abolish private property and restrict speech, assembly, and press. Religious belief and practice were also limited. By the end of 1917, restrictions of basic human rights were underway.

Many Russian people opposed this Bolshevik oppression and took up arms against them. From 1918-21, Russia found itself in a bloody and destructive civil war. Seven million men, women, and children perished. The Bolsheviks won the civil war, seized total power, and began to implement their totalitarian dictatorship. The deaths and destruction had just begun.

Lenin created a secret police force, the Cheka, to eliminate those who opposed him. By 1920, the Cheka had carried out 50,000 executions. By 1923 over half a million people died as a result of execution, imprisonment, and forced relocation to labor camps.

Bolsheviks employed mass terror to remain in power. Lenin wrote countless directives ordering kulaks (wealthy peasants), priests, and other “harmful insects” to be hung or shot.

Martin Latsis, one of the first leaders of the Cheka, carried out these ruthless orders. Bolshevism was driven by class hatred, and Latsis affirmed that the Bolsheviks were in the process of exterminating full classes of human beings:

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

*We are exterminating the bourgeoisie [middle class] as a class. In your investigations don't look for documents and pieces of evidence about what the defendant has done . . . . The first question you should ask him is what class he comes from, what are his roots, his education, his training, and his occupation. These questions define the fate of the accused.*

Like Marx, Lenin was committed to the goal of global communism, and launched the Communist International (Comintern) to achieve that goal. The Comintern was based in Moscow with branches throughout the world. In America, Lenin's supporters formed the American Communist Party in 1919. The world revolution was underway.

The first years of Bolshevik Russia under Lenin (1917-24), were more repressive than any of the centuries under the czars (Russian emperors). When death knocked on Lenin's door in 1924, his chosen successor, Joseph Stalin, was ready to succeed him.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. What is the historical significance of Vladimir Lenin?
2. What were Lenin's goals when he seized power in Russia?
3. What types of people did Lenin want to eliminate?
4. How did Lenin work to make communism international?
5. Briefly describe a society in which private property is abolished and freedoms such as press, religion, and speech are limited by the government.
6. Lenin referred to his opponents as "harmful insects" and his associate, Latsis, talked about "exterminating" people. What does this language reveal about the attitudes of Lenin and Latsis towards others?

## PSA

## Lenin

## DIRECTIONS

*Choose any one of the following quotes of Vladimir Lenin. Rephrase the statement in your own words and then answer the question below. Use the Vocab App on the back to help you understand the text.*

- 1** The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality . . . will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of classes.
- 2** The dictatorship of the proletariat. . . cannot result merely in expansion of democracy. . . the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists.
- 3** We must display determination, endurance, firmness, and unanimity. We must stop at nothing. Everybody and everything must be used to save the rule of the workers and peasants, to save communism.
- 4** When one makes a Revolution, one cannot mark time; one must always go forward — or go back. He who now talks about the 'freedom of the press' goes backward, and halts our headlong course towards Socialism
- 5** It is true that liberty is precious; so precious that it must be carefully rationed.

## QUOTE PARAPHRASE

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On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being low and 5 being high), how much did Lenin value freedom? Explain your response. How much do you value freedom? Explain your response

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### VOCAB APP

**proletariat:** someone who works to produce goods and services

**capitalist:** someone who controls the production of goods and services

**communism:** a political belief in a classless society based upon the abolition of private property

**socialism:** an economic belief in extensive but democratic government control of the economy

**rationed:** distributed on a limited basis

## *“Criminal” Character Cards*

### DIRECTIONS

Duplicate and distribute one card to each student. These characters are not real people, but are based upon composite experiences of individuals in pre-Bolshevik Russia.



### ANATOLY OVECHKIN

I am Anatoly Ovechkin, a wealthy peasant from the city of Yekaterinburg. My father was also a kulak (another name for wealthy peasant.) We have been wheat farmers for several generations and own several hundred acres. We have prospered under the rule of the czars. I have a comfortable home in the countryside. I received a basic education in the village school, but my real education has taken place in the countryside, where I have learned how to nurture my plants to make the land most productive. The country would not survive without my wheat, and I would not survive without my land.



### BORIS MALKIN

I am known as Father Boris Malkin, a member of the clergy of the Russian Orthodox church. I grew up in a small village outside of Moscow, but the village teacher believed that I had great potential. Through the assistance of several wealthy community members, I was able to go to school and eventually studied theology at one of Russia's great universities. I now work here in Moscow where I minister to both the poor and the wealthy. I feel badly for the poor, and encourage the wealthy to be generous in their charity. Obviously, belief in God is central to my life, just as religion has been central to the life of Russia for centuries.





## FYODOR SEMIN

My workers call me Mr. Semin, but you may call me by my nickname, Fedya. I live in Minsk, where I own a factory which manufactures farm equipment. It has not been an easy life for me, but I have worked hard and prospered. I currently employ over 100 people, so you can see that I am making a great contribution to Mother Russia. Some of my workers refer to me as “a member of the bourgeoisie” and say that I am taking advantage of them. Taking advantage?! I am giving them jobs and wages—what more could they ask for? Russia will never become a great nation until she becomes more industrialized. I am helping the country to move along that path.



## SERGEI VARLAMOV

Sergei Varlamov is my name, and I am currently in my third year of studies here at the university in Tsaritsyn. As a student of political science, I had the opportunity to read the works of the great German historian, Karl Marx, and I think I agree with much of what he says. The people in my home village suffered a great deal at the hands of their landlords, and the people here in the cities suffer a great deal at the hands of the factory owners. Marx calls those who suffer the proletariat and those who make them suffer, the bourgeoisie. I sometimes have trouble understanding what Marx is trying to say, but I do know that only drastic action will improve the lives of many in Russia.







## EKATERINA ROMANOVA

I am Countess Ekaterina Romanova, a distant cousin of the ruling family. Growing up in St. Petersburg, I was educated by private tutors. I had a special talent for painting, so my family sent me to Italy and France to learn more about great art. As a child, I always felt close to the children of the kulaks and peasants on my father's great estate. That is why it is so hard for me to understand why so many people in Russia seem so unhappy today. I know that the world is changing, but does it have to change so quickly? And I pray every day for the Czar, his wife, and his five children. Without Cousin Nicki ruling Russia, what will become of us?



## YURI KOZLOV

I am Colonel Yuri Kozlov and was born in the city of Rostov. However, I have not lived there since I was a teenager, for I joined the Imperial Army at the age of 16. I travelled around the empire, from the Black Sea to the Arctic Ocean, in the service of the Czar. My family comes from a people known as the Cossacks, and for generations we have served in the Russian military. My loyalty has been to the Czar, and so I found myself on the losing side of our Civil War. I do not like the Bolsheviks, I do not like how they are trying to change my beloved Russia, and I do not like how they treat those who disagree with them.



# Which Harmful Insects Will We Eliminate?

## DIRECTIONS

Fill in the appropriate boxes for your character. Then, introduce yourself to your group members (using expressive language and accents, if you like). As the other group members introduce themselves, take notes in the appropriate spaces.

Name	Occupation	Class	Family Background	Education and Training
Anatoly Ovechkin				
Boris Malkin				
Fyodor Semin				
Sergei Varlamov				
Ekaterina Romanova				
Yuri Kozlov				

# Stalin and the Soviet Union

## OVERVIEW

Joseph Stalin (1879-1953), the leader of the Soviet Union from the mid-1920s until his death in 1953, employed terror, repression, and execution to maintain his control over the Soviet people. Famine, the worst of which occurred in Ukraine, and executions within the Gulag forced-labor camps resulted in the deaths of millions of people. His purges in the 1930s decimated the political and military leadership of the country, making the Soviet Union ill-prepared for the Nazi invasion in World War II. His cruelty was staggering, and his victims numbered tens of millions of Soviet people. In addition, he led a global campaign to “socialize” the world which resulted in the deaths of countless millions world wide.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- analyze documents to determine the impact of Stalin’s view of individuality
- examine and explain the causes and effects of the Ukrainian famine and the Gulag system
- empathize with the victims of the Gulag
- assess Stalin’s impact

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 8: 2C, 4B, 5A; Era 9: 1B
- NCHS US History Era 9: 2A

## MATERIALS

- Teacher Resource: Poster
- Background Essay: They Will Shoot You Like a Dog
- Student Handout A: PSA: Early “Photoshop”
- Student Handout B: If the government. . .
- Student Handout C: A Letter to Our Leaders
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**How and why did Stalin limit individual liberty in the Soviet Union?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

[for homework or in class the previous day]

- A** Duplicate and distribute several copies of **Teacher Resource: Propaganda Poster**.
- B** Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful answers:
  - How would you describe Stalin's facial expressions? What type of a person does he seem to be?
  - Describe the people in the poster. What do their facial expressions say about their attitude towards Stalin?
  - What is the overall mood or feeling of the poster? Based upon this image, would you want to spend time with Stalin?
- C** Have students read **Background Essay: They Will Shoot You Like a Dog** and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the Answer Key for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas. Discuss the difference between the image of Stalin derived from the poster with the image of Stalin derived from the Essay.
- B** Distribute copies of **Student Handout A: PSA: Early "Photoshop"** and give students about 3 minutes, working in pairs, to discuss the possible reasons for the differences between the two photos. Help students to understand that, just as Yezhov was purged (eliminated) from the photo, so too were millions of people purged from Soviet society because they threatened Stalin's totalitarian regime.



### ACTIVITY A

- A** Remind students that people were purged in a variety of ways, including everything from outright execution to starvation as a result of government policies. Nowhere was there more death from famine than in Ukraine.
- B** Distribute **Student Handout B: If the government...** Give students 5-10 minutes to complete the chart and encourage them to share their responses.
- C** As a large group, ask students to share their thoughts and their actions. Ask students why they might feel and act as they predicted. Suggested responses might include: *it's not fair; the government is acting unjustly; I have a right to food and property; they can't change rules after they've been passed; I have a right to freedom of speech; the government is not treating me as an individual; etc.*



## ACTIVITY B

- A** Review with students the reasons for the Stalinist show trials as well as the conditions in the Gulag camps. Distribute **Student Handout C: A Letter to Our Leaders**.
- B** The entire class can participate in this activity in one of two ways: Option 1: Ask for 6 volunteers, give them the text the day before, and have them take turns reading each line. Option 2: In a round-robin format, each student reads a separate line. Encourage all readers to convey the appropriate emotion as they read.



## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses

- 1** Stalin said that “Death solves all problems.” What problems did his action in Ukraine and in the Gulag “solve”? What problems did these actions create?
- 2** Why did Stalin limit individual liberty in the Soviet Union?
- 3** What would prevent someone like Stalin from coming to power in the United States?
- 4** How would you compare and contrast your view of the worth of individuals with that of Stalin?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** One half of the class will write a letter to Stalin as if they are either victims of the Ukrainian famine or prisoners in the Gulag. The other half of the class will write Stalin’s response to such a letter. When the assignment is due, exchange letters and discuss your reactions.
- B** Search a credible on-line news source (e.g., *the New York Times*, *the Wall Street Journal*, *the Washington Post*) to find an article about limitations on the rights of expression, press, assembly, or the right to a fair trial in contemporary Russia. The article should be accompanied by a brief comparison of the current restrictions with those imposed during Stalinist Russia.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

**A** Direct students to any of these additional resources. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned.

- Richard Pipes, *Russia Under Communism* (appropriate for advanced students)  
See Appendix A.
- *Communism and the World: Stalin and the Bolshevik Revolution* with Dr. Robert Service  
See the “Communism and the World” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.
- *Biography of Stalin*  
See Appendix C.
- *The Great Terror at 40*  
See Appendix D

**B** Students could create a 10-slide Powerpoint presentation illustrating any one of the following:

- The Ukrainian genocide of 1933
- The show trials of the 1930s
- Life in the Gulag
- *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

A brief annotated bibliography (what is the source for the information and/or graphic and why is it credible) should be included.

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on liberties in one or more of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either

- 1** one paragraph summary;
- 2** five slide Powerpoint presentation; or
- 3** Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## “Great Stalin: Banner of Friendship from the People of the USSR”



### SOURCE

<http://www.designsdelight.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/poster-stalin.jpg>



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## THEY WILL SHOOT YOU LIKE A DOG

Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) succeeded Vladimir Lenin as the leader of the Soviet Union. He ruled the Soviet Union with an iron fist for nearly thirty years. Executions, purges, imprisonment, famine, forced relocation, and other methods helped Stalin to stay in power. No government in history, with the exception of Communist China, caused the death of so many of its citizens.

“Death solves all problems,” said Stalin. “No man, no problem.” Stalin was an efficient problem-solver. Experts estimate that tens of millions people died as a result of his actions in Ukraine; the trials and executions of 1936-1938; and the Gulag, a system of forced labor camps.

Stalin believed in the abolition of private property. Throughout the Soviet Union, he seized agricultural land owned by individuals. Then, he turned these properties into collective (group) farms. Stalin believed that collectivization would improve the nation’s overall productivity.

This policy was widely opposed throughout the Soviet Union. Ukraine was a rich agricultural part of the Soviet Union. Many resisted Stalin’s collectivization. In retaliation, Stalin increased the quota (required amount) of grain to be produced by 44%. Individuals could only receive grain after the government quota had been met. Ukrainians would have to work harder but would receive less for their efforts. Most of their crops would be sent elsewhere.

Stalin feared Ukrainian opposition both to himself and his policies. He fully supported actions leading to genocide (the elimination of a race or ethnic group.) From 1932-1933, millions of Ukrainians died as a result of the famine Stalin created. Entire communities starved to death. Individuals were imprisoned or executed for taking even a handful of grain from the government warehouses. Soviet officials stopped starving people from traveling to areas where food was available.

Some Ukrainian and other ethnic opposition leaders were sent to the Gulag. This was a system of forced labor camps throughout Russia. Many of them were located in Siberia. There, the harsh climate and the sadistic treatment of the prisoners resulted in millions of deaths. Political dissidents as well as common criminals made up the work force. They built railroads, dams, and hydroelectric plants. They dug for coal, gold, and salt. A prisoner remembered that the guards would “shoot them like dogs” if they challenged their captors.

In 1931, Stalin was asked how long he was going to go on killing people. “As long as necessary,” he responded. In the mid-1930s, Stalin began a national campaign to eliminate all opposition to his policies. People could not speak out against his policies for fear of arrest and death. Those who did were arrested and sent to the Gulag.

The years from 1936-1938 are known as the “Great Terror.” Stalin wanted to purge (eliminate) anyone who might challenge him, even former colleagues and advisors. Informants

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

reported, evidence was manufactured, and show trials were held. Confessions were obtained through the use of torture and intimidation. All classes of society were subject to Stalin's excesses. Like thousands of others, a theater director reported, "I incriminated myself in the hope that by telling them lies I could end the ordeal."

By late 1938, opposition to Stalin had been eliminated or silenced. Stalin now turned his attention to international events.

In August 1939, he and Adolf Hitler agreed that their countries would never invade each other. With this guarantee, Hitler invaded Poland one week later, precipitating the start of WWII. In June 1941, Hitler betrayed Stalin and sent his armies into the Soviet Union. Because Stalin had ordered the execution of many military leaders during the Great Terror, the Soviet Union struggled to mount an effective defense and lost an estimated 20-30 million men during the war. Stalin was forced to look to the United States and to Great Britain to help him defeat the Nazis.

Stalin believed that "Whoever occupies the territory also imposes on it his own social system as far as his military can reach." By the late 1940s, Stalin forcibly extended Soviet communism throughout Eastern and Central Europe. He did not honor his promise to the Allies to allow free elections throughout Eastern Europe. Instead, Stalin and his men installed puppet governments controlled by the Soviet Union. The communists seized property. They controlled the media. They suppressed religion.

Stalin's actions presented a real threat to Western Europe and the United States. By the time of Stalin's death in 1953, the Cold War was raging. It would last for another 36 years.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. How many people died as a result of Stalin's policies?
2. How did collectivization lead to genocide in Ukraine?
3. Describe life in the Gulag.
4. What was the Great Terror?
5. In your opinion, why did the Ukrainian people oppose collectivization?
6. What basic human rights were violated as Stalin purged his enemies?
7. How did Stalin extend communism throughout Europe?

## PSA

## Early “Photoshop”

This photo was taken in mid-1938, when Nikolai Yezhov (right) was a trusted advisor of Joseph Stalin. Stalin grew to fear Yezhov’s influence and ordered him imprisoned and ultimately executed in 1940.



This version of the photograph was published sometime after 1940.



# If the government. . .

## DIRECTIONS

Imagine that the government of the United States has been taken over by a dictator. Complete the chart below, predicting your thoughts and actions.

If the government...	What would you think?	What would you do?	What might prevent your action?
Prevented the delivery of food and other products to your town			
Seized all products from all store (including grocery stores)			
Refused to allow companies to buy from each other			
Required that your parents immediately pay all money that they owe			
Deported all immigrants, both legal and illegal			
Imprisoned anyone who spoke out against these actions			

# A Letter to Our Leaders

## DIRECTIONS

This activity is based upon an actual letter written in 1926 to the highest officials of the Soviet Union. The letter was written by 3 prisoners from the Solovetsky (Solovki) forced labor camp. Read your assigned section (or listen to the other readers), thinking about why these people were imprisoned and how they were treated. On this sheet, circle the 4 – 5 statements which are most memorable to you

- 1** We appeal to you, asking you to pay a minimum of attention to our request.
- 2** We are prisoners who are returning from the Solovki concentration camp because of our poor health.
- 3** We went to the camps full of energy and good health, and now we are returning as invalids, broken and crippled emotionally and physically.
- 4** We are asking you to draw your attention to your Solovki concentration camp in Kemi and in all other sections of the concentration camps.
- 5** It is difficult for a human being even to imagine such terror, tyranny, violence, and lawlessness.
- 6** When we went there, we could not conceive of such a horror, and now we, crippled ourselves, together with several thousands who are still there, appeal to the ruling center of the Soviet state to curb the terror that reigns there.
- 7** The Security Police, without oversight and due process, sends workers and peasants there who are, by and large, innocent.
- 8** People die like flies. They die a slow and painful death.
- 9** This torment and suffering is placed only on workers who were unfortunate to find themselves in the period of hunger and destruction accompanying the events of the Revolution.

- 10 They committed crimes only to save themselves and their families from death by starvation and they have been punished for these crimes.
- 11 Now because of their past, for whose crime they have already paid, they are fired from their jobs.
- 12 The penniless proletariat dies from hunger, cold, and back-breaking 14-16 hour days under the tyranny and lawlessness of other inmates who are the agents and collaborators of the Security Police.
- 13 If you complain or write anything they will frame you for an attempted escape or for something else, and they will shoot you like a dog.
- 14 They line us up naked and barefoot at 22 degrees below zero and keep us outside for up to an hour.
- 15 It is possible, that you might think that it is our imagination, but we swear to you all, by everything that is sacred to us, that this is only one small part of the nightmarish truth.
- 16 We repeat, and will repeat 100 times, that yes, indeed there are some guilty people, but the majority suffer innocently.
- 17 The word law, according to the life of the concentration camps, does not exist.
- 18 What does exist is only the autocratic power of petty tyrants—other prisoners serving time and working with our jailers—who have power over life and death.
- 19 Everything described is the truth and we, ourselves, are close to the grave, after 3 years in Solovki, in Kemi, and other camps.
- 20 We are asking you to improve the pathetic, tortured existence of those who are there, who suffer under the yoke of the Security Police's tyranny, violence, and complete lawlessness.

## SOURCE

Quotes are taken from Revelations from the Russian Archives: Letter to Bolshevik  
(<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/d2presid.html>)

# Independence, Occupation, and Deportation in the Baltics

## OVERVIEW

The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) were independent from the end of the First World War until 1939, when Joseph Stalin violated a 1920 agreement according to which the Soviet Union would respect their sovereignty. Thus began the general oppression of the Baltic peoples by the Soviets. On the night of June 13, 1941, the Soviets began the mass deportation of all men, women, and children deemed to be enemies of the new communist states, most of whom would perish in the gulags.

## MATERIALS

- A** Background Essay: The History of Independence in the Baltics
- B** Background Essay: The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact
- C** Background Essay: The Soviet Deportation in the Baltics
- D** Student Handout A: PSA: “Strictly Secret Order of the People's Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940”
- E** Teacher Resource: Deportee Character Cards
- F** Student Handout B: Who Gets Deported?
- G** Student Handout C: Deportation Map
- H** Answer Key





## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A** In class. Ask students what they know about Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Focus primarily on where the countries are located geographically, and which countries border them. Have students read **Background Essay: The History of Independence in the Baltics** and answer (or think about) the questions following the essay. (See **Answer Key** for suggested responses.) Have students discuss what it would be like to live in a small country surrounded by larger more powerful countries (e.g., would they feel threatened?).
- B** *In class.* Have students read **Background Essay: The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact** and answer (or think about) the questions following the essay. (See **Answer Key** for suggested responses.) Have students discuss how they would react to the sudden invasion of their country by a larger, more powerful neighbor, and what they would fear might happen to them and their fellow citizens.
- C** *For homework.* Have students read **Student Handout A: PSA: “Strictly Secret Order of the People’s Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940”** and answer (or think about) the questions following the documents.



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Prior to class. Duplicate **Teacher Resource: Deportee Character Cards**, **Student Handout B: Who Gets Deported?** worksheet, and **Student Handout C: Deportation Map**. You should have one set of each per group of students.
- B** In class. Have students read **Background Essay: The Soviet Deportation in the Baltics** and answer (or think about) the questions following the essay. (See **Answer Key** for suggested responses.) Have students discuss why they think the Soviet Union would have engaged in the deportation of Baltic people. Encourage them to think about this question in light of their having read **Student Handout A: PSA: “Strictly Secret Order of the People’s Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940”** and answered the questions following it. Remind students that during the Baltic Deportations, tens of thousands of people were without notice forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to isolated parts of the Soviet Union.
- C** In today’s activity, students will role-play as NKVD assessing whether or not particular characters will or will not be deported. (These characters are not real people but are based upon composite experiences of individuals in the Baltics at the time of the deportations.)
- D** Have the students form groups of 4 or 5 and distribute to each group one set of the **Teacher Resource: Deportee Character Cards** and **Student Handout B: Who Gets Deported?** worksheet.
- E** Students should work together to evaluate each of the characters and to complete the corresponding parts of the worksheet.
- F** Bring the class back together to discuss which characters they decided to deport or not, and the reasons they decided as they did. (See **Answer Key** for suggested responses.)





## ACTIVITY

- A** After having completed the **Primary Resource Activity**, return students to their groups and distribute a copy of **Student Handout C: Deportation Map** to each group. Assign to each group a deported character and have the group discuss where their character might have been sent, what problems they would have faced, how those might vary by season, and have students reflect on how their character would survive. Group discussion should make reference to the **Student Handout C: Deportation Map**. Bring class back together for the last 5 minutes to discuss together. Accept all thoughtful responses.



## WRAP-UP

- A** Provide students with the following scenario: “You and your family are being deported to another part of the country, you have 15 minutes to pack and take what you can carry with you. What do you pack? Why those things?” Have each student reflect individually on the question for 5 minutes, then bring the class together discuss. Accept all thoughtful responses.

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Have students compile their packing list from the **Wrap-Up** and provide a reason for packing each item.
- B** Create a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation explaining the natural challenges deportees would face depending on where they were deported. A brief annotated bibliography (what is the source for the information or graphic and why is it credible) should be included.
- C** Based on one of the deported characters bios from the **Primary Resource Activity**, or one of the characters in *Between Shades of Gray* (or *Ashes in the Snow*) have students write a well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay focusing on why they were deported, how they were treated during the process, and how they felt about the hardships they encountered.

## COMMUNISM’S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C3)

- A** Students could perform an online search to find an article about population control measures in one or more of today’s communist countries: China, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam. Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either: a one paragraph summary; a 5-slide PowerPoint presentation; or, a Facebook or Twitter post. (Students should note the source of their article. Note: Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party and governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

THE HISTORY OF INDEPENDENCE  
IN THE BALTICS

For more than 3,000 years Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have existed on the Eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. While being separate and distinct nations, they are popularly referred to as the Baltic States because of this geographical location.

The Baltic States at various times in history have been conquered by the Germans, the Swedes, and the Russians. Lithuania engaged in many wars from the 13th to the 16th centuries against the Tartars and other invading armies from the East. Estonia and Latvia enjoyed their independence as nations up to the 13th century. At that time Estonia and Latvia were conquered by the Knights of the Sword, a militant Germanic order. And later, as a result of the Great Northern War at the beginning of the 18th century between Sweden and Russia, Estonia and a large part of Latvia fell under Russian domination. The remaining Latvian provinces, Courland and Latgalia, however, came under the condominium of the Lithuanian-Polish



Europe Pre-World War I (1914)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Commonwealth and remained in that state until the partitions in the late 18th century whereupon they passed into Russian hands. Lithuania did not lose its independence until the latter part of the 18th century.

In the middle of World War I, it became evident to patriots of the Baltic States that neither Russia nor Germany could win a decisive victory. It also was apparent that the czarist Russian Empire was disintegrating from within. Consequently, many committees and councils, advocating the independence of the Baltic States, sprang up in various centers of Europe and here in the United States. Private American organizations made substantial contributions to the cause of independence for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. On February 16, 1918, Lithuania officially declared its national independence.



Europe Post-World War I (1918)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

On February 21, 1918, Estonia declared its national independence, and on November 11, 1918, Latvia took similar measures. In the chaos which followed the defeat of Germany in World War I, a newly established Russian Red Army invaded and attempted to destroy the newly established independent states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. In 1919, this large Russian Red Army succeeded in occupying nearly all of Latvia and Estonia and approximately four-fifths of Lithuania. Relatively small armies of

the three respective Baltic States, poorly equipped, but under determined leadership and motivated by the great inspiration of national independence, succeeded in defeating the large Red Russian Army. By the end of 1919, all of the Baltic lands were cleared of the Red Russian invaders.

In 1920, all three of the Baltic States entered into peace treaties with the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. In all of these treaties the Russians recognized the complete independence and sovereignty of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, renouncing forever any claims, territorial or otherwise, in the Baltic States.

These young independent nations were then faced with a gigantic task of reconstruction. They had suffered great devastation as a consequence of wars and invasions by large foreign armies over a period of years. Within 5 years each of the three Baltic States had reached and surpassed their pre-1914 standards of living. This accomplishment was done practically without loans or any foreign aid. The superb energy, the thriftiness, and the determination of the Balts worked this miracle of modern times.

During the period of national independence, the cultural and economic life in the Baltic States progressed at a remarkable pace. Notable accomplishments in education, literature, the arts and sciences echoed the spirited renaissance of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In the field of education alone, the number of students in their universities in 1939 was second only to Switzerland among all the countries of Europe.

Politically and constitutionally, the Baltic peoples had proven their ability to rule themselves competently and effectively.

In the field of international relations, the Baltic States had commanded respect. And within the family of nations they played their role with moderation, fortitude, wisdom, and with great energy. In the League of Nations, they were unstinting in their devotion to advancing the larger concepts of world peace and security. They entered into international engagements

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

with the nations of the world. They received and sent out diplomatic representatives. In short, the Baltic States carried on the conduct of diplomatic relations in a manner befitting an independent and sovereign people. With the U.S.S.R., Baltic statesmen bound their nations in treaties of peace and security, hopeful that Soviet fidelity could be relied upon. A series of agreements concluded with Soviet Russia were based upon two fundamental principles: Soviet acknowledgement and reaffirmation of Baltic independence, national sovereignty, and respect for territorial integrity; and, acceptance of peace, justice, and fidelity as a natural bond of international accord. By 1939, there was established a body of internationally recognized agreements between the Soviet Union' and the Baltic States embodying these principles, but as it will be demonstrated below the Soviet leaders wantonly and willfully destroyed these internationally recognized instruments. Thus, the legal and moral structure of Baltic-Soviet diplomatic relations, so carefully and hopefully created during 20 years of national independence, was crushed with one fell blow. Indeed, Stalin spoke frankly the mind of the Soviet Government and laid bare future Soviet plans when in October 1939 he said of the Baltic Peace Treaties of 1920, by the terms of which Soviet Russia recognized and acknowledged the independence and national sovereignty of the Baltic States: "That which was determined in 1920 cannot remain for eternity."

The rise of the dictators and their struggle for world power brought grave problems for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Like all the smaller nations of Central and Eastern Europe, they could not escape from the diplomatic and military pressures of the dictators Hitler and Stalin. They were finally caught up in and crushed by the powerful political pincers of Nazism and communism. The events which led up to the destruction of the independent nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania should serve as a warning to all the still free nations and the freedom-loving people of the world.

Excerpted from the Select Committee to Investigate Communist Aggression and the Forced Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R Third Interim Report (1954).

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

### THINK ABOUT IT

1. The term Baltic States refers to what three countries?
2. Following their declarations of independence in 1918, what country invaded the Baltic States in 1919, but failed to occupy them?
3. In 1920, what did Soviet Russia recognize in its international agreements with the Baltic States?
4. How would you describe the Baltic States following independence?
5. Were the Baltic States able to thwart the expansive reach of Hitler and Stalin?

### *Between Shades of Gray & Ashes in the Snow*

Reflect on the various characters in the book/film. How did they feel about Lithuanian independence? How aware of the dangers posed by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia were the characters? Which characters were most aware? Which were the least aware? Were there differences between the feelings and awareness of the adults and children? If so, why do you think these differences existed?

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## THE MOLOTOV-RIBBENTROP PACT

On March 25, 1939, Adolf Hitler – the dictator of Germany – ordered his military to prepare for the invasion of Poland. Concerned that Britain and France might try to protect Poland, Hitler decided to seek a partnership with the Soviet Union, Poland's neighbor to the east. General Secretary Joseph Stalin, ruling the Soviet Union, found the idea of a partnership with Germany intriguing. He had tried to reach deals with Hitler earlier, only to be turned down. But now, Hitler was eager for a temporary alliance. With the assent of both dictators, German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow with instructions to conclude a non-aggression pact as quickly as possible. Shortly after midnight on August 23, 1939, they reached an agreement.

Officially called the “Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the USSR,” the arrangement signed by Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav



The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as Planned



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Molotov and German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop was simple. In six brief articles, the two states agreed to “desist from any acts of violence, any aggressive action, and any attack on each other.” While the public text seemed innocent enough, the Soviets and Germans kept the truly important part of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact secret. Its private protocol divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence: to Germany fell the western half of Poland; Stalin claimed control over Finland, the Baltic States, eastern Poland, and Romanian Bessarabia.

The deal with Stalin provided Hitler with exactly the reassurance he needed to attack neutral Poland. On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded. Great Britain and France declared war on him, marking the beginning of the Second World War in Europe. On September 17, honoring his part of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Stalin attacked a weakened Poland from the east. After Poland’s defeat, Germany and the USSR immediately began the extermina-



**Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as Implemented**



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

tion of those who might resist them, killing more than 200,000 people in twenty months.

Poland was only the first victim. A week after the invasion of Poland, Stalin demanded that Estonia sign a “Treaty of Mutual Assistance” which would place Soviet military forces on Estonian soil. The Estonian Government reluctantly signed on September 28. Similar ultimatums were

issued to Latvia and Lithuania, both of which agreed to Soviet demands in early October. The Red Army then dispatched 75,000 soldiers to the three countries. The Baltic States remained technically independent, but were now at the mercy of the Soviet military.

Stalin made similar demands on neighboring Finland. However, the Finnish government chose military resistance, leading to a brief but bloody war which the Soviet Union narrowly won. Even after his victory, Stalin remained concerned that Hitler – whom he mistrusted immensely – might use the Baltic states or Finland as an avenue of invasion towards Leningrad. When Hitler attacked France on May 10, 1940, Stalin opportunistically decided to destroy his Baltic neighbors while the rest of the world was distracted.

Lithuania was the first to fall. On June 4, 1940, the Lithuanian Prime Minister was summoned to Moscow, where Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov told him he must immediately order the arrest of several Lithuanian cabinet members accused of “anti-Soviet acts” (which were not specified) and appoint a new government. After internal discussions, the authoritarian Lithuanian government agreed, only to be told it was too late: now Stalin would send a Soviet official to create a new government, accompanied by more Soviet troops. At that news, the president of Lithuania fled to Germany.

On June 15 and 16, the Red Army began its invasions of the Baltic States. Soviet invasion forces included more than half a million soldiers, far greater than the regular militaries of all three states combined. There was little fighting in the face of such overwhelming odds. The occupiers immediately began imprisoning military and political officials, then created “people’s parliaments” through rigged elections. On July 21, these Soviet puppet parliaments all voted for annexation by the Soviet Union: according to Stalin, the states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were no more.

The Soviet occupation which followed was brutal. Hundreds of potential dissidents were executed. Thousands of men were forcibly conscripted into the Red Army or labor battalions. In total, the Soviet secret police deported

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

at least 120,000 citizens of the Baltic states to the Soviet Union in just eleven months. According to one Lithuanian official, Stalin intended to remove up to a quarter of the populations of each state, but was interrupted: on June 22, 1941, Hitler broke his pact with Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union. The Baltic states would become a battleground between Germany and the Soviet Union for the next four years, witness to the Holocaust and the horrors of total war.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. On what date was the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact concluded?
2. Which countries were affected by the agreement between Hitler and Stalin?
3. What was Stalin's first step in gaining control over the Baltic States?
4. How large was the Soviet army that invaded the Baltic States?
5. Were the Baltic governments that voted for annexation by the Soviet Union legitimate?

## *Between Shades of Gray & Ashes in the Snow*

Lithuania and the other countries affected by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact found themselves squeezed between two totalitarian dictatorships. This situation created a lot of complexities for the Baltic peoples. Using textual examples, discuss how Lina's family and extended family dealt with these complexities. Are there clear-cut, black-and-white rules of behavior in such circumstances? Or, is behavior better characterized as falling into different "shades of gray"? What principles or criteria might help you to assess different actions? Finally, consider how your family and extended family might deal with a similar situation.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

# THE SOVIET DEPORTATIONS IN THE BALTICS

**O**n August 23, 1939, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, also known as the Non-Aggression Treaty, one of the secret provisions of which established a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. This sphere of influence included the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, all of whom the Soviet Union subsequently coerced into signing “military assistance pacts” that allowed USSR troops to establish bases in the Baltic states. In the summer of 1940, the USSR occupied and ultimately annexed the Baltic states. As a means of establishing order, legitimacy, and fear in the Baltic states, the USSR instituted a reign of terror; thousands of citizens, primarily elite and those suspected of resistance to the Soviet regime, were to be deported to Siberia.

The first deportations (known as the June deportation) from the Baltic states occurred during the night of June 13, 1941. Instructions for the deportations were issued on November 28, 1940 with the aim of “depolluting” the Baltics of anti-Soviet and anticommunist persons. Based on the orders handed down by Moscow, 10,187 Lithuanians, 9,546 Latvians, and 5,978 Estonians were exiled to forced settlements in Siberia. In addition, the NKVD arrested approximately 17,500 Lithuanians, 15,000 Latvians, and 10-11,000 Estonians who were sent to prison camps and forced settlements. Furthermore, the Jewish populations of the Baltic States were seriously affected—Jews made up 12% of the Latvian deportees, 5% of the overall Latvian population. In Estonia, 8.3%-10% of the Jewish population was deported. And in Lithuania, 1.3% of Lithuanian Jews were deported. Among the deported in Estonia, more than 7,000 were women, children, and the elderly, and more than 25% of all the deportees were minors. Finally, approximately 60% of those deported from the Baltic states in 1941 died.

This round of deportations ceased when Germany broke the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and invaded and occupied the area.

At the conclusion of the Second World War, the Baltics States were again occupied by the Soviet Union. Following two years of preparations, deportations resumed in 1949. From March 25th to 28th of that year, nearly 100,000 people were dragged from their homes in the Baltic states in what was known as Operation Priboi or the March deportations. These deportations

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

were aimed at ending resistance to the collectivization of farms, and as such primarily affected the farming population.

Instructions for the deportations were issued by the Ministry for State Security, following the Politburo's decision at the January 18, 1949 meeting session. The formal instruction was titled "Concerning the Procedure for Deporting Several Categories of Inhabitants from the Latvian SSR, Lithuanian SSR and Estonian SSR."

More than 2% of the Latvian population and 3% of the Estonian population were deported in cattle cars to Siberian labor camps and special settlements. Nearly 73% of the 11,000 deportees were women and minors, and the ages of deportees ranged from less than one year old to 95 years old in age. Furthermore, these deportees included children who had already been deported to Siberia in the 1941 deportations and returned to Estonia following World War II.

Many of the deportees died during the journey to Siberia due to starvation and unsanitary conditions, and many more died due to the forced labor and the climatic conditions they encountered in Siberia. Among the Estonian deportees, 5,000 were sent to the region surrounding the Semipalatinsk nuclear

### Number of Deportations by Country in 1941

Country	Population	Forced settlements	Prison camps & forced settlements	% of Jewish population deported
Latvia	1,755,000	9,546	15,000	5.0%
Lithuania	2,421,570	10,187	17,500	1.3%
Estonia	1,017,475	5,978	10-11,000	8.3%-10.0%

### Number of Deportations by Country in 1949

Country	Population	Total	Men	Women	Children
Latvia	1,856,419	41,708	11,135	19,535	11,038
Lithuania	2,550,000	28,656	8,929	11,287	8,440
Estonia	1,026,000	20,480	4,566	9,866	6,048

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

test site, where more than 250 nuclear explosions took place between 1949 and 1956. Many fell victim to radiation sickness and were not given medical treatment; as a result, many babies were born with birth defects.

In 1956, Nikita Khrushchev, then the Soviet Premier, decreed that those who had been deported were to be released and permitted to return to their homelands. However, many remained under heavy surveillance by the authorities, and few if any were formally pardoned or had the personal property that had been confiscated from them returned.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Why did the Soviets institute a reign of terror in the Baltic states and deport thousands of its citizens?
2. Given the circumstances that former deportees continued to live under, even after Khrushchev pardoned them, do you believe that the deportees were truly freed? Why or why not?
3. Compare and contrast the June deportation and Operation Priboi.
4. Much has been written and documented about Nazi Germany's anti-Semitic policies. Were you aware of the Soviet Union's anti-Semitic policies as described in the text above?
5. How were the treatment and conditions of Baltic deportees similar to or different from those endured by deportees of Nazi Germany, an enemy of the Soviet Union in World War II?

## *Between Shades of Gray & Ashes in the Snow*

Make a list of characters from the book/film who were on the train with Lina. Next to each name, write the reason for which each of them was deported, whether or not they survived their deportation, and what ended up happening to them in the end. Did they deserve their fate? Why or why not?

# PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY

Strictly Secret Order of the People's Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940

## Introduction

On June 15, 1940, the Soviet Union invaded the Republic of Lithuania with 300,000 soldiers—one for about every 10 or 12 inhabitants. This act was a direct violation of the Soviet-Lithuanian Non-Aggression and Non-Intervention Pacts in which the Soviet Union committed itself to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lithuania.

The continued Soviet colonial occupation of Lithuania (as well as of Estonia and Latvia) after the Second World War violated international law, the recently established United Nations Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris on December 10, 1948.

The United States never recognized the illegal military occupation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union.

The following two documents are translations from Lithuanian and Russian of the actual order issued to N.K.V.D. units engaged in turning Lithuania into a Soviet Republic.

The materials in this section have been excerpted, edited, and reprinted with permission from *Lituanus: Lithuanian Quarterly Journal of Arts and Sciences* (Vol. 34, No. 4, Winter 1988).

## *Strictly Secret Order of the People's Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940 (translated from Lithuanian).*

**Contents:** About negligence in accounting concerning antisoviet and socially alien element.

No. 0054

Kaunas, November 28th, 1940.

In connection with the great pollution of the republic of Lithuania with the antisoviet and socially alien element, the account concerning same acquires an especially great importance.

For the operative work it is important to know how many there are in Lithuanian territory: former policemen, white guardsmen, former officers, members and the like of antisoviet political parties and organizations, and where the said element is concentrated.

This is necessary in order to define the "strength of the counter-revolution and to direct our operative-agencies apparatus for its digestion and liquidation.

Despite the importance of keeping all such accounts, our operative organs did not seriously undertake this work.

The materials cleared by the agencies' investigative apparatus remain scattered in the cabinets of operative collaborators without proper usage.

Executing the order No. 001223 of NKVD of the USSR about the accounting concerning the antisoviet element and concerning the liquidation of negligence in this work.

## ORDER

- 1 Chiefs of operative branches of the Center and of county branches and units to take over within 3 days all files and cases entered on the account of 1st Spec(ial) division — the formulas and persons mentioned therein.
- 2 Within 10 days to take over into the 1st Specdivision all antisoviet element, listed in the alphabetical files (index accounting).
- 3 At the same time to undertake clarification of all antisoviet and socially alien element on the territory of the republic of Lithuania and to transfer same to the jurisdiction of operative account of 1st Specdivision.
- 4 The accounts of persons mentioned in agency files, also in the alphabetical files (index accounting), to be concentrated in the Specdivision of NKVD of LSSR, for which purpose special cards must be filled-in concerning each transferred person by the county branches and units of NKVD and by the City Council of Vilnius, and said cards must be mailed to the 1st Specdivision of NKVD of the LSSR.
- 5 The index account must cover all those persons who by reason of their social and political past, national-chauvinistic opinions, religious convictions, moral and political inconstancy, are opposed to the socialistic order and thus might be used by the intelligence services of foreign countries and by the counter-revolutionary centers for antisoviet purposes.

These elements include:

- a) All former members of antisoviet political parties, organizations and groups: trotskyists, right-ists, essers (socialist revolutionists), mensheviks, social-democrats, anarchists, and the like;
- b) All former members of national chauvinistic antisoviet parties, organizations and groups: nationalists, young Lithuania, voldemarists, populists, Christian democrats, members of nationalist terroristic organizations ("Iron Wolf"), active members of student fraternities, active members of Riflemen's Association, Catholic terrorist organization "White Horse";
- c) Former gendarmes, policemen, former employees of political and criminal police and of the prisons;
- d) Former officers of the czar, Petliura and other armies;
- e) Former officers and members of military courts of the armies of Lithuania and Poland;
- f) Former political bandits and volunteers of the white and other armies;

- g) Persons expelled from the Communist Party and Komsomol for anti-party offences;
  - h) All deserters, political emigrants, re-emigrants, repatriates and contrabandists;
  - i) All citizens of foreign countries, representatives of foreign firms, employees of offices of foreign countries, former citizens of foreign countries, former employees of legations, firms, concessions and stock companies of foreign countries;
  - j) Persons having personal contacts and maintaining correspondence with the abroad, foreign legations and consulates, esperantists and philatelists;
  - k) Former employees of the departments of ministries (from referents up);
  - l) Former workers of the Red Cross and Polish refugees;
  - m) Religionists (priests, pastors), sectants and active religionists of religious communities;
  - n) Former noblemen, estate owners, merchants, bankers, commercialists (who availed themselves of hired labor), shop owners, owners of hotels and restaurants;
- 6 For preparation of index accounts of antisoviet elements all sources must be availed of, including: agencies' reports, special investigative materials, materials of party and soviet organizations, statements of citizens, testimony of the arrested persons, and other data. As a rule, statements, testimony and other official materials must first be verified in an agency manner.
  - 7 Operative branches and county branches and units must prepare separate rosters for accountable persons who had departed elsewhere, and must take steps to clarify same. At the same time, cards of sought persons must be filled in and transferred to the 1st Specdivision.
  - 8 Files-formulars must be introduced and transferred into active agency account concerning the former activists of antisoviet politparties and organizations (trotskyists, mensheviks, essers, nationalist associations and the like), counter-revolutionary authorities Of religionists (priests, mullas, pastors), responsible collaborators of police, ministries, foreign firms and the like, in accordance with available material about antisoviet activity.
  - 9 Chiefs of 1st Specdivision of NKVD or the LSSR are to report to me every day about the progress of this order.
  - 10 The order is to be discussed in operative consultations and concrete means for its execution are to be provided for.



## *Appendix: Strictly Secret Instructions Regarding the Manner of Conducting the Deportation of the Anti-Soviet Element from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (translated from Russian).*

### **1** General Situation.

The deportation of anti-Soviet elements from the Baltic States is a task of great political importance. Its successful execution depends upon the extent to which the county administrative triumvirates and administrative headquarters are capable of carefully working out a plan for executing the operations and of foreseeing in advance all indispensable factors. Moreover, the basic premise is that the operations should be conducted without noise and panic, so as not to permit any demonstrations and other excesses not only by the deportees, but also by a certain part of the surrounding population inimically inclined toward the Soviet administration.

Instructions regarding the manner of conducting the operations are described below. They should be adhered to, but in individual cases the collaborators conducting the operations may and should, depending upon the peculiarity of the concrete circumstances of the operations and in order to correctly evaluate the situation, make different decisions for the same purpose, viz., to execute the task given them without noise and panic.

### **2** Manner of issuing Instructions

The instructing of operative groups should be done by the county triumvirates within as short a time as possible on the day before the beginning of the operations, taking into consideration the time necessary for traveling to the place of operations.

The county triumvirates previously prepare necessary transportation for transferring the operative groups in the village to the scene of operations.

In regard to the question of allotting the necessary number of automobiles and wagons for transportation, the county triumvirates will consult the leaders of the Soviet party organizations on the premises.

Premises in which to issue instructions must be carefully prepared in advance, and their capacity, exits, entrances and the possibility of strangers entering must be studied.

During the time instructions are issued the building must be securely guarded by the administrative workers.

In case anyone from among these participating in the operations should fail to appear for instructions, the county triumvirate should immediately take measures to substitute the absentee from a reserve force, which should be provided in advance.

The triumvirate through its representative should notify the officers gathered of the decision of the government to deport an accounted for contingent of anti-Soviet elements from the territo-

ry of the respective republic or region. Moreover, a brief explanation should be given as to what the deportees represent.

The special attention of the (local) Soviet-party workers gathered for instructions should be drawn to the fact that the deportees are enemies of the Soviet people and that, therefore, the possibility of an armed attack on the part of the deportees is not excluded.

### **3** Manner of Obtaining Documents

After the issue of general instructions to the administrative groups, they should definitely be issued documents regarding the deportees. The personal files of the deportees must be previously discussed and settled by the administrative groups, parishes and villages, so that there are no obstacles in issuing them.

After receiving the personal files, the senior member of the administrative group acquaints himself with the personal files of the family which he will have to deport. He must check the number of persons in the family, the supply of necessary forms to be filled out by the deportee, and transportation for moving the deportee, and he should receive exhaustive answers to questions not clear to him.

At the time when the files are issued, the county triumvirate must explain to each senior member of the administrative group where the deported family is to be settled and describe the route to be taken to the place of deportation. Roads to be taken by the administrative personnel with the deported families to the railway station for embarkation must also be fixed. It is also necessary to point out places where reserve military groups are placed in case it should become necessary to call them out during possible excesses.

The possession and state of arms and munitions must be checked throughout the whole administrative personnel. Weapons must be completely ready for battle, loaded, but the bullet should not be kept in the barrel. Weapons should be used only as a last resort, when the administrative group is attacked or threatened with an attack, or resistance is shown.

### **4** Manner of Executing Deportation

Should a number of families be deported from one spot, one of the operative workers is appointed senior in regard to deportation from that village, and his orders are to be obeyed by the administrative personnel in that village.

Having arrived in the village, the administrative groups must get in touch (observing the necessary secrecy) with the local authorities: chairman, secretary or members of the village Soviets, and should ascertain from them the exact dwelling of the families to be deported. After that the operative groups together with the local authorities go to the families to be deported.

The operation should be commenced at daybreak. Upon entering the home of the person to be deported, the senior member of the operative group should gather the entire family of the deportee into one room, taking all necessary precautionary measures against any possible excesses.

After having checked the members of the family against the list, the location of those absent and the number of persons sick should be ascertained, after which they should be called upon to give up their weapons. Regardless of whether weapons are delivered or not, the deportee should be personally searched and then the entire premises should be searched in order to uncover weapons.

During the search of the premises one of the members of the operative group should be left on guard over the deportees.

Should the search disclose hidden weapons in small numbers, they should be collected by and distributed among the administrative group. Should many weapons be discovered, they should be piled into the wagon or automobile which brought the administrative group, after any ammunition in them has been removed. Ammunition should be packed and loaded together with rifles.

If necessary, a convoy for transporting the weapons should be mobilized with an adequate guard.

Should weapons, counter-revolutionary pamphlets, literature, foreign currency, large quantities of valuables, etc. be disclosed, a short search act should be drawn up on the spot, which should describe the hidden weapons or counter-revolutionary literature. Should there be any armed resistance, the question of arresting the persons showing armed resistance and of sending them to the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security should be decided by the county triumvirates.

An act should be drawn up regarding those deportees hiding themselves before the deportation or sick, and this act should be signed by the chairman of the Soviet-party organization.

After having been subjected to a search the deportees should be notified that upon the decision of the Government they are being deported to other regions of the Union.

The deportees are permitted to take with them household necessities of a weight of not more than 100 kilograms.

- 1 Suits
- 2 Shoes
- 3 Underwear
- 4 Bed linen
- 5 Dishes
- 6 Glasses
- 7 Kitchen utensils
- 8 Food — an estimated month's supply to a family.
- 9 The money at their disposal.
- 10 Haversack or box in which to pack the articles.

It is not recommended that large articles be taken.

Should the contingent be deported to rural districts, they are permitted to take with them a small agricultural inventory: axes, saws and other articles, which should be tied together and

packed separately from the other articles, so that when embarking in the deportation train they are loaded into special freight cars.

In order not to mix them with articles belonging to others, the name, father's name, and village of the deportee should be written on his packed property.

When loading these articles into the carts, measures should be taken so that the deportee cannot use them as means of resistance while the column is moving along the highway.

At the time of loading the administrative groups together with representatives of the Soviet-party organizations shall prepare a list of the property and the manner in which it is to be preserved in accordance with instructions received by them.

If the deportee has at his own disposal means of transportation, his property is loaded into the vehicle and together with his family is sent to the designated spot of embarkation.

If the deportees do not have any means of transportation, wagons are mobilized in the village by the local authorities upon directives of the senior member of the administrative group.

All persons entering the home of the deportees during the execution of the operations or found there at the moment when these operations are begun must be detained until the conclusion of the operations, and their relationship to the deportee should be ascertained. This is done in order to disclose persons hiding from the police, militia and other persons.

After having checked the detained persons and ascertained that they are persons in whom the contingent is not interested, they are liberated.

Should the inhabitants of the village begin to gather around the home of the deportee while the operations are going on, they should be called upon to disperse to their homes, and crowds should not be permitted to be formed.

Should the deportee refuse to open the door of his home in spite of the fact that he is aware that members of the People's Commissariat of Public Security are there, the door should be broken down. In individual cases neighboring administrative groups performing operations in that vicinity should be called upon to assist.

The conveyance of the deportees from the villages to the gathering place at the railway station should by all means be done in daylight; moreover, efforts should be made that the gathering of each family should take not more than two hours.

In all cases throughout the operations firm and decisive action should be taken, without the slightest pomposity, noise and panic.

It is categorically forbidden to take any articles away from the deportees except weapons, counter-revolutionary literature and foreign currency, as well as to use the food of the deportees.

All members of the operations must be warned that they will be held strictly responsible for attempts to appropriate individual articles belonging to the deportees.

## 5 Manner of Separating Deportee from His Family

In view of the fact that a large number of the deportees must be arrested and placed in special camps and their families settled at special points in distant regions, it is necessary to execute the operation of deporting both the members of his family as well as the deportee simultaneously, without informing them of the separation confronting them. After having made the search and drawn up the necessary documents for identification in the home of the deportee, the administrative worker shall draw up documents for the head of the family and place them in his personal file, but the documents drawn up for the members of his family should be placed in the personal file of the deportee's family.

The moving of the entire family, however, to the station should be done in one vehicle, and only at the station should the head of the family be placed separately from his family in a railway car specially intended for heads of families.

While gathering together the family in the home of the deportee, the head of the family should be warned that personal male articles are to be packed into a separate suitcase, as a sanitary inspection will be made of the deported men separately from the women and children.

At the stations the possessions of heads and families subject to arrest should be loaded into the railway cars assigned to them, which will be designated by special administrative workers appointed for that purpose.

## 6 Manner of Convoying the Deportees.

It is strictly prohibited for the operators convoying the column of deportees moving along in wagons to sit in the wagons of the deportees. The operators must follow by the side and at the rear of the column of deportees. The senior operator of the convoy should periodically go around the entire column to check the correctness of movement.

The convoy must act particularly carefully in conducting the column of deportees through inhabited spots as well as in meeting passers-by; they should see that there are no attempts made to escape, and no exchange of words should be permitted between the deportees and passers-by.

## 7 Manner of Embarking.

At each point of embarkation the member of the administrative triumvirate and a special person appointed for that purpose shall be responsible for the embarkation.

On the day of the operations the chief of the point of embarkation together with the chief of the deportation train and of the convoying military forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shall examine the railway cars furnished to see whether they are supplied with all necessities (nary?, unitazy? lanterns, railings, etc.) and shall discuss with the chief of the deportation train the manner in which the latter will take over the deportees.

Embarkation at the station shall be detached by the soldiers of the convoying forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

The senior member of the administrative group shall deliver to the chief of the deportation train one copy of the list of deportees in each railway car. The chief of the deportation train thereupon shall call out the deportees according to this roll and shall carefully check each family and designate their place in the railway car.

The possessions of the deportees should be loaded into the car together with the deportees, with the exception of the small agricultural inventory, which should be loaded into a separate car.

The deportees shall be loaded into railway cars by families; it is not permitted to break up a family (with the exception of heads of families subject to arrest). An estimate of 25 persons to a car should be observed.

After the railway car has been filled with the necessary number of families, it should be locked.

After the people have been taken over and placed in the deportation train, the chief of the train shall bear responsibility for all the persons turned over to him for their reaching their destination.

After turning over the deportees the senior member of the administrative group shall draw up a report to the effect that he has performed the operations entrusted to him and address the report to the chief of the county administrative triumvirate. The report should briefly contain the name of the deportee, whether any weapons and counterrevolutionary literature were discovered, and how the operations took place.

After having placed the deportees on the deportation train and submitted reports of the results of the operations performed, the members of the administrative group shall be considered free and shall act in accordance with the instructions of the chief of the county branch of the People's Commissariat of Public Security.

DEPUTY PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF PUBLIC SECURITY OF THE U.S.S.R.

Commissar of Public Security of the Third Rank

Signed: (SEROV).

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Would native Lithuanian bourgeoisie be safe from deportation?
2. How do the orders take into account the possibility of an armed reaction?
3. What were the deportees allowed to take with them?
4. How do they recommend to separate families?
5. What kind of people were the Soviets trying to purge from Lithuania?

## *Between Shades of Gray & Ashes in the Snow*

What kinds of items did the characters in the book/film pack to take with them? Given what happens to them during the course of the story, were those the appropriate items to take? Why or why not? While the characters in the book/film did not violently resist the NKVD, they did offer resistance. Using examples from the text/film discuss which methods of resistance were used and evaluate how effective they were.

## Deportee Character Cards



### ANDRES KUKK

I am Andres Kukk, a plumber in Kadriorg, a subdistrict of Tallinn, Estonia. I do my best to follow the laws since being released from prison in 1938. When I was a boy, the doctors said my eyes would never focus and I would never learn to read. I stopped attending church when my comrades told me that my loyalties must never be divided, and that is fine with me. I am always grateful to the state for releasing me to make room for other prisoners.



### JUOZAS KUPČINSKAS

My name is Juozas Kupčinskas and I am from Utena, Lithuania. I run a timber company where I do my best to treat the workers fairly. As I pay them almost all of what we make after other expenses, I hope I am not cheating them in any way. I have many responsibilities, and I believe that the loggers are aware that I am not exploiting them, or if I am, I am not trying to do so. I am well-respected and quite capable as a leader, or so they tell me at the Church of the Holy Cross.



### ALVAR KASK

Most people still call me Prime Minister Kask however, I have not served as Estonia's Prime Minister for many years. Under my leadership, Estonia experienced prosperous growth and our citizens were particularly content with our policies and their standard of living. I come from a long line of Estonian politicians and my wife is the daughter of a wealthy Estonian business man. Our eldest child is currently studying law at Oxford, while our youngest is enrolled in a private primary school.







## GRETA KRAŠTAS

I work in my husband's office in the Seimas, Lithuania's Parliament. My duties mostly include typing and record-keeping, and I am well-connected through my family. My father was also a representative, and it was he who guided me to marry Mykolas in 1935. I live a fulfilling life and a happy one, as most people recognize me in Vilnius either through my father or my husband. The other wives at the Church of All Saints indicate that I have an enviable position.



## LILTA BĒRZIŅŠ

My name is Lilta Bērziņš and I live in a family of socialists in Nītaure, Latvia. We are interested to see what kind of future we shall have under the Red Army, as we are very much in support of the ideals of socialism, though we are not sure about the methods Lenin implemented in Russia when we visited. My parents were very critical of the way the dissident thinkers were treated, and they continue to espouse that Latvia would be better off as an independent, socialist country.



## KALEVA RÜÜTEL

My name is Kaleva Rüütel and I work on a small fishery off Osmussaar, an Estonian island. The landlord in town charges high rates and I would not miss him were he to disappear. My father was a deserter from the war for Estonian independence because he too is tired of the landlords and the Finnish markka we have to use in trade. He told me that the banks are controlling purchasing power through the currency.





## ANNA OZOLAS

My name is Anna Ozolas and I am ten years old. My family has become wealthy by growing and selling grain. I am currently enrolled in primary school and I really enjoy it. When I am not in school, I like to play with my friends but, sometimes I have to help my father on the farm. My mother and father always remind me that we are lucky to be able to sell the grain we grow because it has allowed us to become prosperous and maintain a respectable lifestyle. I am very proud of my family and I am very proud to be Latvian.



## PĒTERIS BALODIS

My name is Pēteris Balodis and I am fifteen years old. My father is the Minister of Economics of Latvia. I am currently enrolled in secondary school and hope to further my education at a Western European University, like my father, and study economics. Now that I am almost a man, my father has begun to teach me the ins and outs of the capitalist market and all of the benefits it has to offer for Latvia. I am very focused on my studies and what my father has to say because I hope to be just like him one day.



## AZUOLAS VITKUS

My name is Azuolas but, my friends call me Zu. I am twelve years old and I attend a private school in Kaunas, Lithuania. I have a large loving family but, I don't get to see my father as often as I would like. My father is a Professor of Law at Lithuanian University and is very busy with his students. My mother is the daughter of a politician and does her best to volunteer whenever she can. When I do see my father, it is usually at the dinner table where he discusses how upset he and his students are by the current occupation. Although I don't know much about the Soviets, the soldiers that patrol the town scare my friends and me. We wish they would just leave.



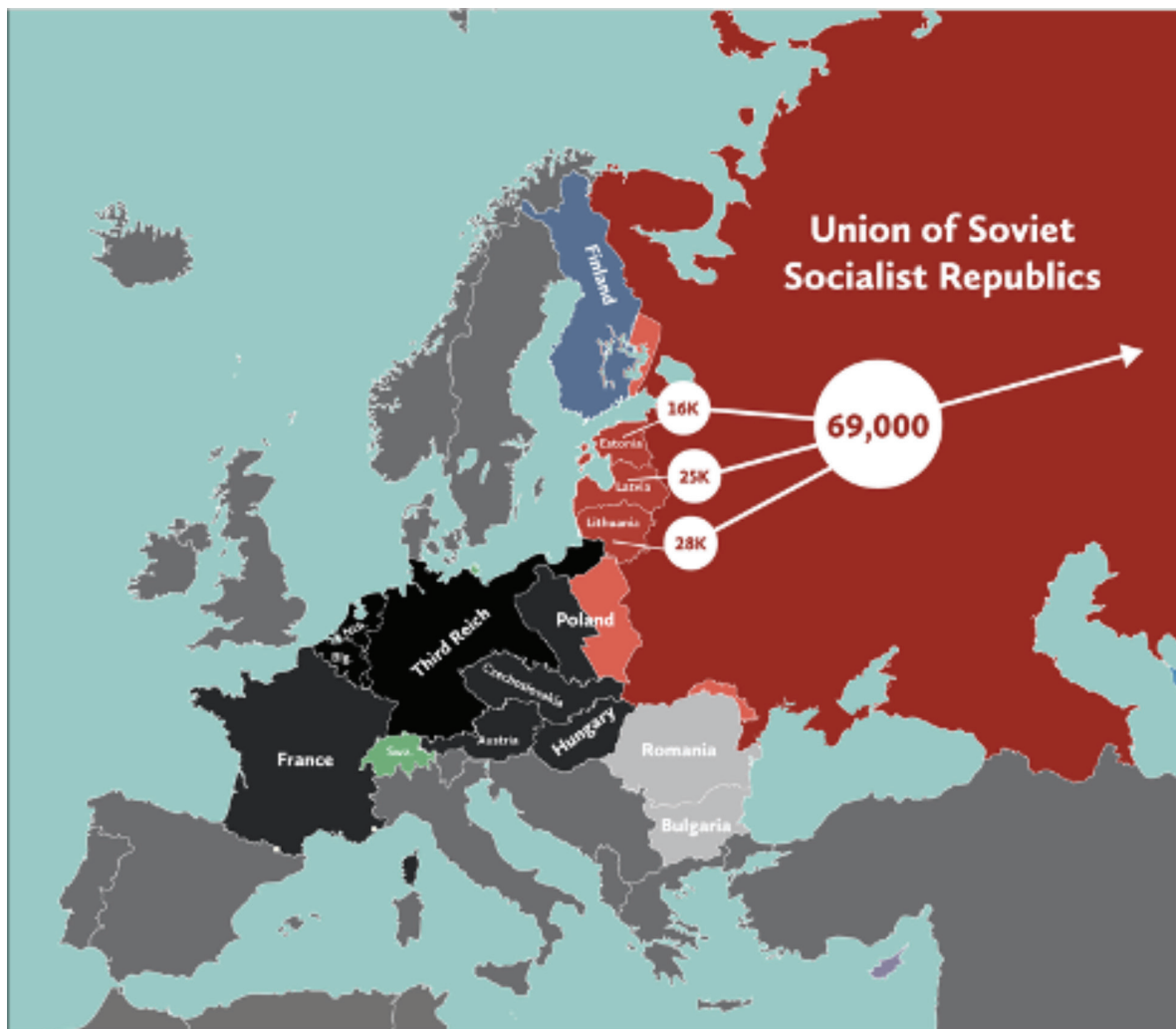
# Who Gets Deported?

## Directions

Fill in the appropriate boxes for your character. Then, introduce yourself to your group members. As the other group members introduce themselves, take notes in the appropriate space.

Name	Occupation	Class	Background	Education	Deport?
Andres Kukk					
Juozas Kupčinskas					
Alvar Kask					
Greta Kraštas					
Lilta Bērziņš					
Kaleva Rüütel					
Anna Ozolas					
Pēteris Balodis					
Azuolas Vitkus					

## Deportation Map



Deportations from the Baltics to the Gulags

# Mao and China

## OVERVIEW

The year 1949 greatly increased already mushrooming fears about global communism. First, the Soviets detonated an atomic bomb, a successful test that few had anticipated would come quite so quickly. The other shock occurred in October when the world's most populous nation, China, became communist. Mao Zedong and the Red Army finally defeated Chiang Kai-Shek and the Nationalists, ending a civil war that had been waged off and on since the late 1920s. Mao's victory had a tremendous impact on the people of China as well as millions of others throughout Asia.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- analyze documents to determine Mao's understanding of individual liberty
- examine and explain the impact of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR)
- empathize with the victims of Chinese collectivization
- assess the impact of collectivization and the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese people

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 9: 1B, 2D

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: Parents May Love Me, But Not As Much As Chairman Mao
- Teacher Resource A: Quote Cards
- Teacher Resource B: Cultural Revolution Scenarios
- Answer Key (in back of book)
- Enough jellybeans for each student to receive 10



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**How and why did Mao Zedong eliminate individual liberty in China?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A** Write/project this poem on the board. It was supposedly written by a 22-year-old soldier, Lei Feng, who died in the line of duty in 1962. Lei's diary and poetry were used to support Maoist policies. Like spring, I treat my comrades warmly. Like summer, I am full of ardor for revolutionary work. I eliminate my individualism as an autumn gale sweeps away fallen leaves. And to the class enemy, I am cruel and ruthless like harsh winter.
- B** Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful answers:• What is the author's attitude towards his friends? The revolution? Those who oppose him?• Under what circumstances would you "eliminate your individualism"? Why?
- C** Have students read **Background Essay: Parents May Love Me, But Not As Much As Chairman Mao** and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the **Answer Key** for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Prior to class, post **Teacher Resource A: Quote Cards**. Under each of these quotes from Chairman Mao Zedong, post a sheet of blank poster paper.
- B** Distribute ten small candies (e.g., M & M, jellybean, etc.) to each student. Let them know that, after the completion of the PSA, they will each receive an additional five jellybeans.
- C** Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts or ideas.
- D** Have students circulate around the room, reading the various quotations from Chairman Mao. After reading each quote, they should sign their initials on the poster paper and write a one sentence response to the quote.
- E** After most students have read 5-6 quotes, reconvene as an entire class and discuss some of their responses.



## ACTIVITY A

- A** Tell students that you were mistaken—you have no more jellybeans to distribute. Instead, you will redistribute the remaining candies (assuming that some of the students have already eaten theirs.) Collect all the candies from all the students; tell them that you are keeping 30 for yourself; and then redistribute so that each student has approximately the same number of candies. If you run out of candies, some students won't receive any.
- B** Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:
  - How many of you ate all or most of the first ten candies you received? Why? Why not?
  - How did you feel when the candies were taken and redistributed? Why?
  - If you knew that your jellybeans would be taken from you again, what would you do and why?
  - How would you feel if other property—your MP3 player, your phone, your computer—were taken from you by the government and given to others?
- C** Help students to appreciate that this collectivization of property is what happened during the Great Leap Forward.



## ACTIVITY B

- A** Review with students the events of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Explain that they will role-play some scenarios (based on historical situations) from the GPCR.
- B** Divide students into groups of 3-4 and give each group one of the scenarios from Teacher Resource B: Cultural Revolution Scenarios. Give students a few minutes to prepare their skits. As each group presents, their classmates should take notes.



## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** Under what circumstances, if any, would you inform on your parents? Your teachers?
- 2** Why did the young people of China initially support Mao?
- 3** Would you ever volunteer to give up some of your freedom or your property? Under what circumstances?
- 4** How would you feel if you were forced to give up some of your freedom or your property?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Give students a few minutes to write a 140 character “Tweet” summarizing one of the scenarios.
- B** Choose one of the Cultural Revolution scenarios and write your own version of the dialogue among the characters.
- C** Choose one of the Mao quotes and create a poster (hard copy or electronic) which illustrates the statement.
- D** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Direct students to any of these additional resources. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook comment about what they learned.
  - Witness Project: Anastasia Lin  
See the “Witness Project” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.
  - Understanding China: China Since the Communist Revolution with Dr. Frank Dikötter  
See the “Understanding China” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.
  - Timeline of China Under Communism  
<https://www.history.com/topics/china/china-timeline>
  - Biography of Mao See  
Appendix E.
- B** Students could read excerpts from one of these memoirs about Mao’s China and write a 250 word response to the selections.
  - Jung Chang, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (especially Chapters 14, 15, and 16). This work is appropriate for sophisticated readers.
  - Ji Li Jiang, *Red Scarf Girl* (especially pgs. 100-108; 199-202). This book would work well for students reading below grade level.
- C** Students could visit the Laogai Research Foundation website (<https://laogairesearch.org>) to learn more about China’s system of forced labor prisons.
- D** Students could create an anti-Mao propaganda poster modeled after actual posters from the Great Leap Forward or the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. An excellent on-line source for these posters is <http://chineseposters.net/gallery>.



## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

PARENTS MAY LOVE ME, BUT NOT  
AS MUCH AS CHAIRMAN MAO

Imagine being forced to turn your parents in to the police because they criticized the president. Imagine being denied a high school education. Imagine being taken from your family and being forced to work on a farm thousands of miles from home. Imagine that no matter how hard you worked, you would never earn more than someone who didn't work at all.

These are not just imaginary situations—all occurred in China during the rule of Mao Zedong. Under Mao (1893-1976), China became a communist nation. In 1949, Mao and his forces finally defeated his opposition after a conflict lasting twenty years. This victory had tremendous consequences for the Chinese people. An entire nation and its people were transformed. Basic liberties such as press, speech, and religion were denied. Private possessions were eliminated— from clothes and hygiene products to pots and pans. The group was more important than the individual.

Mao's government transformed society. 60-70 million people perished within the first four decades of communist China's existence. They died from purges, forced labor, and starvation. This tragedy happened primarily under Mao's Great Leap Forward (1959-1961) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)

A major goal of the Great Leap Forward was to increase agricultural production. Private lands were seized by the government and turned into collective (communal) farms. Peasants and wealthy landowners were forced to work on these farms. Individuals received only meager amounts of food for their efforts. Many people scavenged the fields during the day, looking for seeds, frogs, insects—anything to eat. The result was wide-spread famine. This famine was not caused by weather or natural disaster. This famine was a direct consequence of political decisions.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) was a social, political, and economic movement. Its goal was to rejuvenate the revolutionary ideas of socialism. Private property, economic opportunity, and individual liberty were forcibly suppressed throughout China. Millions of people died. Millions more suffered terribly.

One of the specific goals of the GPCR was to eliminate the "Four Olds": old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas. Groups of high school and college students, known as the Red Guards, took this message to heart. They went throughout the country and destroyed ancient buildings and priceless antiques. They encouraged young people to publicly criticize their parents and teachers. They humiliated and sometimes executed wealthy peasants, landowners, and educated individuals.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Education came to almost a complete stop during the GPCR. Universities did not hold exams. Teachers and professors were sent into the fields to participate in “re education” programs. Young people from the cities were forced to leave school to live in the country.

At the center of this upheaval was Mao Zedong. Parades and propaganda helped him to control society. A little red book, Quotations from Chairman Mao, was required reading for all. Elementary school students were taught to say, “Parents may love me, but not as much as Chairman Mao.”

Mao’s policy was based upon the writings of Karl Marx and Lenin. They believed that the factory workers of the world would unite in violent revolution to overthrow factory owners. Mao applied these beliefs to the agrarian society of China. He encouraged landless peasants to take up arms against the landowners and elite of society.

Mao also supported the efforts of other revolutionary movements throughout Asia. Only one year after Mao came to power, North Korea invaded South Korea to try to make all of Korea communist. Communist movements in Vietnam and Cambodia received significant financial and military support from Mao.

China today has improved economically from the Mao years. However, the country is still not free politically. The leadership of the Communist Party is unchallenged. The government continues to restrict basic civil liberties. Mao’s legacy lives on.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. What were Mao’s two major initiatives? How successful were they?
2. Was collectivization successful? Why or why not?
3. How did the Red Guards try to eliminate the “Four Olds”?
4. If you had lived during the GPCR, would you have joined the Red Guards? Why or why not?
5. How did Mao’s view of communism differ from that of Marx and Lenin?
6. What long-term impact did Mao Zedong have on China and parts of Asia?
7. Why did Mao eliminate personal liberty to achieve his goals?

## Quote Cards

### DIRECTIONS

Duplicate and post each of these quotes at various stations around the classroom. An alternative would be to place them on student desks or for the students to pass the quote cards around.



1

“People of the world, unite  
and defeat the U.S. aggressors  
and all their running dogs!”



2

“People of the world, be courageous,  
and dare to fight, defy difficulties and  
advance wave upon wave. Then the  
whole world will belong to the people.”





---

3

“The individual is subordinate  
to the organization.”



---

4

“A revolution is not a dinner party,  
or writing an essay, or painting a  
picture, or doing embroidery.”



---

5

“Communism is not love.  
Communism is a hammer we use to  
crush the enemy.”



6

“Political power grows out  
of the barrel of a gun.”



7

“All power to the Communists.”



8

“Never forget class struggle.”



# Cultural Revolution Scenarios

## DIRECTIONS

*Distribute one scenario to each group of 3-4 students. Allow them several minutes to prepare. They should draw upon their knowledge of the period and be dramatic in their presentations.*



**GAN SHUNLI** is a university student. Two other students, Lee and Wong, try to persuade Gan to join the Red Guards. She isn't sure that she wants to join.



**AO KUANGMAN** is a high school art teacher. Her principal and department chairman must explain to her why she has to leave her students and go work in the countryside on a farm.





**BAI FURUI** is a high school freshman. Two Red Guards, Chang and Su, have arrested her mother and order Bai to report on her anti-communist activities. Her mother denies the charges, but Bai is fearful of the Red Guards.



**WEI FUKANG** is a Buddhist monk. He tries to persuade several members of the People's Liberation Army not to burn the temple and monastery.



**LIANG RUIBIN** is a farmer whose family has owned land for several generations. Two Red Guards, Shin and Lu, order him to give up 98% of his land so that others may work on it.





# Kim Il-Sung and North Korea

## OVERVIEW

In June 1950, war erupted on the Korean peninsula. Ultimately, the country was divided into two: a communist state in the northern half and a free state in the southern half. South Korea struggled but put itself on the road to political and economic success, thanks in large part to the United States, which prevented its seizure by the communists in the Korean War. In contrast, North Korea became increasingly isolated from the rest of the world, first under Kim Il-Sung (who ruled from 1948-1994) and then under his son, Kim Jong-Il (1994-2011). The two Kims ruled North Korea—which calls itself the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea—for over 60 years, aided in large part by the intentional development of a cult of personality at the expense of freedom, prosperity, and individuality.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- distinguish between Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il
- assess North Korean attitudes towards their leaders
- compare and contrast how North Koreans honor their leaders with ways in which religions venerate their founders
- understand the impact of North Korea’s suppression of religious liberty

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 8: 1B
- NCHS US History Era 9: 2A

## MATERIALS

- Teacher Resource A: Korean Peninsula at Night
- Background Essay: Thank You, Father Kim Il-Sung
- Student Handout: PSA: Paying Their Respects
- Teacher Resource B: Refugee News Conference Quotes
- Answer Key (in back of book)
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**How and why did belief in the Kim family supplant belief in religion?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

[for homework or in class the previous day]

- A** Distribute to students **Teacher Resource A: Korean Peninsula at Night**. Ask them to hypothesize why the territory to the South is filled with light, while the territory to the North is almost completely dark. Suggested responses: The land to the North is a desert; A natural disaster, like a hurricane, wiped out all the power-producing plants; The land is completely rural and agricultural; etc. After a brief discussion, explain that they are looking at the Korean Peninsula, and should keep this image in mind as they read the essay. (A digital image of this photo can be found at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/dprk/dprk-dark.htm>)
- B** Have students read Background Essay: Thank You, Father Kim Il Sung and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the Answer Key for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas. Ask students what reasons they would now offer for the contrasts in the satellite image.
- B** Duplicate and distribute several copies of **Student Handout: PSA: Paying Their Respects**. (On-line version can be found here: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paying\\_Their\\_Respects.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paying_Their_Respects.jpg) )
- C** Give students 3 minutes to discuss what the statue reveals about the attitude of the North Koreans towards their leader, Kim Il-Sung. Suggested responses: *He is larger than life; He is so much bigger and more important than the people; He is like a god*. Explain to the students that, in North Korea, the religion of communism has replaced all other religions.



### ACTIVITY

- A** Draw/project a T-chart on the board. In the left column, have students list the elements they commonly associate with religion. Suggested responses: *gods, churches or temples, saints or holy people, scriptures, liturgies or ceremonies, rules or commandments, etc*. In the right column, have them note how each of those elements exists in the “religion” of North Korea. Suggested responses: *huge statues of Kim, institutes for study, juche, Arirang festival, ceremonial cleaning of Kim’s photos, etc*.
- B** Duplicate and distribute to students one quote each from the **Teacher Resource B: Refugee News Conference Quotes**. Give them a minute or two to read their quote and to think about its significance. Help students to compare and contrast North Korean attitudes towards traditional religion and their attitudes towards their communist leaders.
- C** Explain to students that they will participate in a mock news conference, both as one of the panel members (all refugees from North Korea) and as a reporter. Call students, in groups of

5-6, to sit at the front of the classroom. Each student should read his/her quote to the class. The other students should a.) ask questions of the panel members and b.) take notes about their responses. Continue this process until each student has had the opportunity to serve on the panel.



## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses.

- 1** Which of the refugees' statements affected you the most? Why?
- 2** How do North Korean leaders suppress religion? Why?
- 3** How does a "cult of personality" limit individual liberty?
- 4** Are there any personality cults in the United States today? What impact, if any, do they have on individual liberty?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Write a newspaper article about the press conference, including as many quotes and specific references as possible.
- B** Read and respond to an article about current events and issues in North Korea.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Students could follow current events in North Korea for several weeks and create a Power-Point presentation illustrating these events.
- B** Students could research and present to the class a report about the 1995-1998 famine in North Korea.
- C** Students could research why the Korean War is sometimes referred to as the "Forgotten War."

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

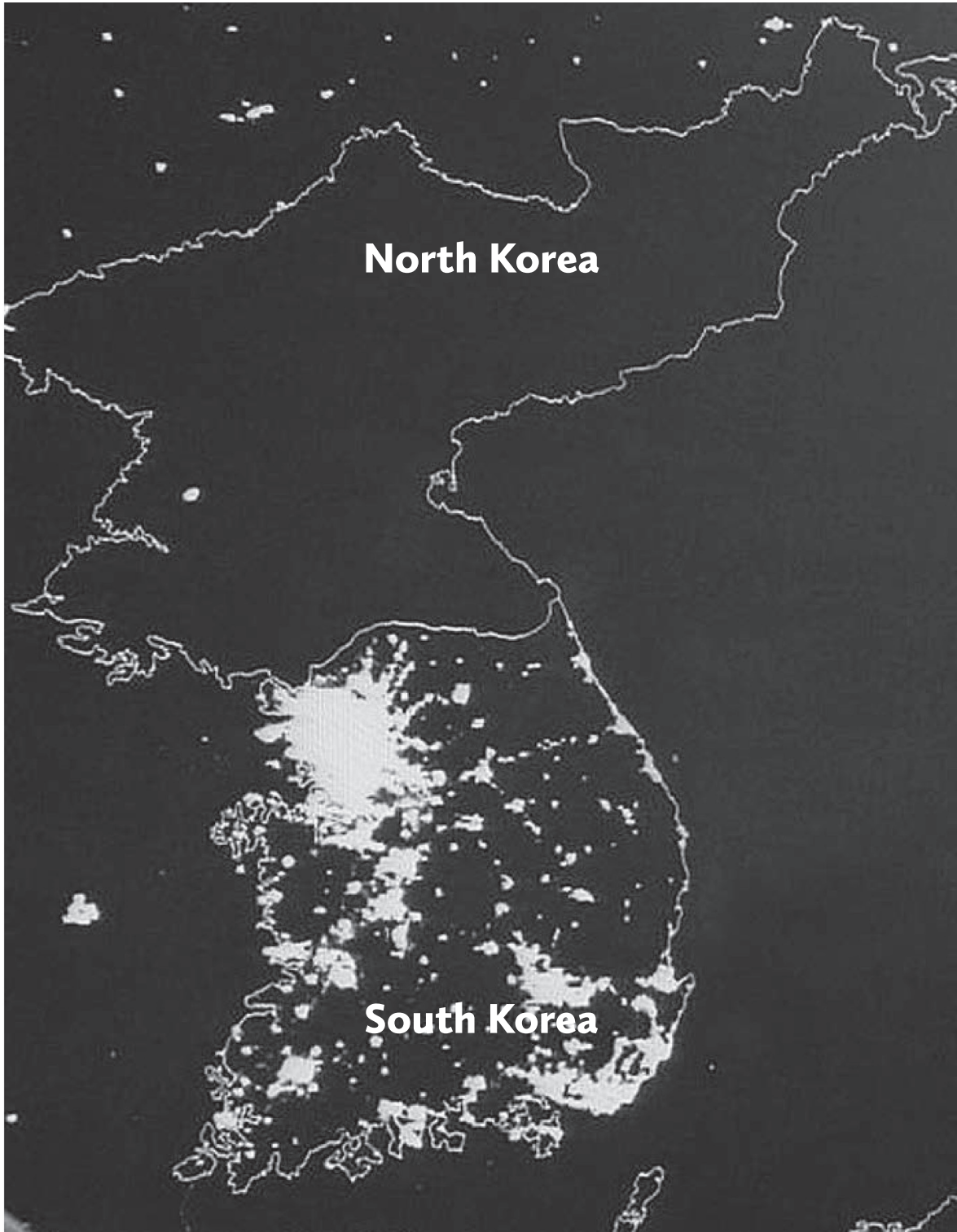
<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## Korean Peninsula at Night



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## THANK YOU, FATHER KIM IL-SUNG

Following World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided into two countries: a democratic republic in the South and a communist dictatorship in the North. The totalitarian regime in the North began under Kim Il-Sung (who ruled from 1948-1994) and was continued by his son, Kim Jong-Il (1994-2011). The two Kims ruled North Korea for over 60 years.

Two years after coming to power, Kim Il-Sung sent North Korean forces across the 38th Parallel, the dividing line between North and South Korea. This invasion launched the Korean War (June 1950-July 1953.) Fearful of the spread of communism, the United Nations, led by the United States, supported the forces of South Korea. Nearly 36,000 American soldiers and over 58,000 South Korean soldiers died fighting the forces of Kim Il-Sung and his Chinese ally, Mao Zedong. Civilian casualties numbered in the millions. When hostilities ended, the country remained divided by the 38th Parallel, and Kim remained the leader of North Korea. North Korea's leaders have elevated themselves to god-like status. They demand near-worship from the North Korean people. There are over 500 statues of Kim Il-Sung throughout North Korea. Newlyweds traditionally go to the nearest statue to lay flowers at his feet. His picture hangs in every household. Families can be fined for not taking good care of his photo. Although he died in 1994, Kim Il-Sung is known as the "Eternal Leader" of North Korea.

Every North Korean attends weekly class at the local Kim Il-Sung Institute of Revolutionary Ideas to study *juche*. This philosophy emphasizes national self-reliance and pride. Compared to the worth of the entire nation, the individual has little value.

*Juche* dominates the annual Arirang spectacle. In a series of performances in a huge stadium, as many as 20,000 individuals flip colored cards to create gigantic images: the North Korean flag; farmers at work; a portrait of Kim Jong-Il. The individual cards disappear as the awe-inspiring national images appear.

The birthdays of North Korea's "Dear Leader" (Kim Jong-Il) and "Beloved Leader" (Kim Il-Sung) are days of celebration. Each February, the birth day of Kim Jong-Il is a national holiday. Parades, floats, and songs all glorify him. One of the floats includes a double rainbow and star. This represents the belief that a double rainbow and new star appeared in the sky at the moment of Kim's birth. Many North Koreans reportedly believe that Kim Jong-Il could control the weather.

Both Kims worked hard to appear as saviors of the Korean people. This strong focus on an individual as the complete embodiment of a nation's values and ideals is known as a cult of personality. The Koreans completely identify the Kims with the North Korean communist way of life. They have created a cult of personality.

Children in North Korea are taught that the Kim's are "perfect" human beings who will create a paradise in North Korea. When something good happens, people say, "Thank you, Father Kim Il-Sung."



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

The North Korean people are taught to be devoted to their leaders. This loyalty is reflected in the lyrics to a popular patriotic song, No Mother land Without You.

*You pushed away the severe storm.  
 You made us believe, Comrade Kim Jong-Il.  
 We cannot live without you.  
 Our country cannot exist without you!  
 Our future and hope depend on you.  
 People's fate depends on you, Comrade Kim Jong-Il!  
 We cannot live without you.  
 Our country cannot exist without you!*

Any challenge to the leadership is considered a challenge to the North Korean way of life. Organized religion has been abolished. Freedom of expression does not exist. Political prisoners and their families are sent to Camp 22, a North Korean concentration camp currently holding over 50,000 people.

Huge sums of money are devoted to maintaining the cult of personality while the nation suffers. From 1995-98, 2-3 million died as a result of a national famine. Cycles of flooding and drought contributed to this tragedy. The inefficient policies of the state-controlled economy laid the foundation for this disaster.

Kim Jong-Il died in December 2011. His son, Kim Jong-Un, succeeded his father. He is known as the "Great Successor."

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Who are the only leaders who have ever ruled communist North Korea? What years did they govern? What are their nicknames?
2. Why did the United States support South Korea during the Korean War?
3. According to the philosophy of juche, which is more important, the individual or the group?
4. What is a cult of personality?
5. How does the North Korean government treat people who disagree with any of its policies?
6. How does the North Korean government violate individual freedom of religion?

PSA

## Paying Their Respects

Mansudae Grand Monument; Pyongyang, DPRK (North Korea) Photographer: John Pavelka





# Refugee News Conference Quotes

## DIRECTIONS

Duplicate, separate, and distribute one quote per student

- 1** In North Korea, you can get away with murder if you have good connections. However, if you get caught carrying the Bible, there is no way to save your life.
- 2** At the Institute, the history of Kim Il-Sung's life is displayed on walls with his picture. They use chapter and verses like the Christian Bibles.
- 3** Everyone must wear the Kim Il-Sung badge on their chest. Otherwise, that person is a political offender.
- 4** My relative brought a Bible from China and gave it to some close friends, but the police heard about it. His entire family was taken to the prison camp.
- 5** Most people who are Christians are sent to the prison camp to serve sentences of between four years and life.
- 6** When I was young, I used to wear my best dress and bow my head in prayer before the portraits of our leaders on national holidays. Even though nobody is watching you, your family members force you to do that. It's like your religion.
- 7** When I was a child, I was taught that Kim Jong-Il was a god of the sun, so I thought he really was a sun.
- 8** Although there is freedom of religion supposedly guaranteed by law, in reality it is considered as a threat to the system.
- 9** Many people believe that Kim Sung-Il is a god. A real God cannot replace him.
- 10** When people experience miraculous happenings, like coming first in a race or not getting hurt from a fall, we say "Thanks to General Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il."
- 11** If we hang our family picture on the wall, the officials order us to take it down. We can't hang anything bigger than Kim Jong-Il's portrait.

- 12 Religion is a poison that can be spread to other people.
- 13 It is compulsory to attend the Institute at least once a week. We study the life and virtues of Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il.
- 14 We are required to worship Kim Il-Sung, the Great Leader who saved us from death and freed us from slavery.
- 15 If a fire breaks out somewhere, people show their loyalty by running into the burning building to save the portraits.
- 16 Worshipping God makes one a political criminal.
- 17 Some Buddhist temples still exist, but they are nothing more than historical remains.

## SOURCE

Quotes are paraphrases of testimony given to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

<http://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/APrisonWithoutBars-FINAL.pdf>

# Pol Pot and Cambodia

## OVERVIEW

In 1975, Cambodia fell under the leadership of Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge. What Cambodia soon experienced under communism was horrific, with the violent death of a huge percentage of the population, perhaps as much as 25% of the people. The Cambodian “killing fields” have become synonymous with genocide, brutality, and inhumanity

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- analyze documents to determine the extent of the Cambodian genocide
- compare Adolf Hitler with Pol Pot
- understand the methods used by Pol Pot to bring about political and social change
- empathize with the victims of Cambodian genocide
- assess the role of violence in bringing about social and political change



## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era: 9: 2d

## MATERIALS

- Student Handout A: Adolf Hitler and Pol Pot
- Background Essay: To Keep You Is No Benefit, To Destroy You Is No Loss
- Teacher Resource A: PSA: Victims of Pol Pot
- Student Handout B: War Crimes Trial
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

To what extent does political and social change justify violence?

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

[for homework or in class the previous day]

- A** Distribute **Student Handout A: Adolf Hitler and Pol Pot**. Ask students to work with a partner to complete as much as possible of the section about Hitler. Student prior knowledge will vary, so allow time to review and/or provide the correct answers. (*Country: Germany and Poland; Time period: 1933-1945; Number of people killed: 6 million Jews, approximately 66% of the entire European Jewish population, as well as 3-5 million other people; Types of people killed: Jews, Romani (Gypsies), homosexuals, the disabled, Russian prisoners of war, Slavic peoples; site of killings: extermination camps such as Dachau, Auschwitz, and Treblinka as well as prisoner of war camps; Political philosophy: National Socialism/Fascism/Nazism.*)
- B** Ask students the following questions:
- What else do they know about Adolf Hitler?
  - What do they know about Pol Pot?
- C** Have students read the **Background Essay: To Keep You Is No Benefit, To Destroy You Is No Loss** and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the **Answer Key** for suggested responses.) They should also complete the right-hand second column on **Student Handout A**.



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas.
- B** Review the second column of **Student Handout A** and provide correct answers (*Country: Cambodia; Time period: 1975-1979; Number of people killed: 2 million people, 20-25% of the Cambodian population; Types of people killed: Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Vietnamese, Thais, Laotians, educated professionals; Site of killings: 196 prisons such as Choeung Ek, Tuol Sleng, S-21; Political philosophy: Communism.*)
- C** Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful answers:
- Were you surprised at the extent of the violence committed by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge?
  - Why did the Communists resort to such violence to achieve their goals?
- D** Duplicate and distribute several copies of Teacher Resource A: PSA: Victims of Pol Pot. Ask students for their comments and reactions



## ACTIVITY A

- A** Explain to the class that they will participate in a scripted drama about the victims of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. Distribute Student Handout B: War Crimes Trial and assign roles. Arrange the classroom like a courtroom and begin the activity. Encourage the students to read their parts dramatically (Note: Some students/classes may prefer to follow the script as written while others might appreciate the opportunity to extemporize.)
- B** Lead the jury deliberation about guilt/innocence or, if the Presiding Judge has the ability, have him/her lead the discussion.



## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** Ask the characters in the drama how they felt about the person they were portraying.
- 2** Ask the members of the jury why they voted as they did.
- 3** Ask students if political or social change justifies violent methods to bring about that change. Would some types of change justify violence and others would not? Is some type of violence justified and others not?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Write a detailed closing argument for the prosecution, summarizing the reasons why Mr. Kaing should be convicted
- B** Illustrate the courtroom scenes.
- C** Answer Question C (from the Wrap-Up) in a thoughtful and well-constructed essay.
- D** Use the statements of any one of the prosecution witnesses as a prompt for writing a short story or poem about that individual's experience under the Khmer Rouge.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Students could research the life of Dith Prang — a Cambodian who helped to bring the Cambodian genocide to the world’s attention — and share the results of their research in a Powerpoint presentation.
- B** Students could view (at home) the film, “The Killing Fields,” and write a 250-word response. (The film is rated “R”.)
- C** Students could follow the proceedings of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) and write a series of news articles reporting on the trials of former high-ranking members of the Khmer Rouge. ([www.eccc.gov.kh](http://www.eccc.gov.kh))
- D** Students could explore the website of the Applied Social Research Institute of Cambodia ([www.asricjustice.com](http://www.asricjustice.com)) and share what they have learned with the class.

## COMMUNISM’S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today’s communist countries.

**China                  Cuba                  Laos                  North Korea                  Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

# Adolf Hitler and Pol Pot

## DIRECTIONS

With a partner, fill in the column on the left with as much as you know about Adolf Hitler. After you have read the essay about Pol Pot, To Keep You Is No Benefit, To Destroy You Is No Loss, complete the column on the right.

Name	Adolf Hitler	Pol Pot
Country/countries where murders took place		
Time period		
Number of people killed (non military deaths)		
Site(s) of killings		
Political philosophy		

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## TO KEEP YOU IS NO BENEFIT, TO DESTROY YOU IS NO LOSS

He was described as “a lovely child.” Pol Pot, the future leader of Cambodia, was born in the late 1920s into a large and comfortable family. He studied at a Buddhist pagoda in the capital city, Phnom Penh. Pot did so well academically that he earned a college scholarship to study “radio electricity” in Paris.

Once in Paris, young Pol Pot became a committed communist. His closest friends were also Cambodian communists who, many years later, helped him to organize the “Red Khmers” (Khmer Rouge.)

Pol Pot left Paris to return to Cambodia in the early 1950s. When Cambodia gained its independence from France, Pol Pot and his Marxist colleagues helped establish the Communist Party in Cambodia. By 1975, he and the Khmer Rouge ruled Cambodia.

Pot and the Khmer Rouge quickly began their attack on the most basic civil liberties. He began by changing the calendar. The year 1975 was rechristened the Year Zero.

In order to bring about the revolutionary changes sought by Pol Pot, the cities and urban areas were immediately evacuated. Phnom Penh became a ghost town. City-dwellers were forcibly relocated into rural areas. In the countryside, their entire lives were regimented. All private property was eliminated. Children were raised collectively. Meals were eaten and prepared communally.

Individuals were re-classified as either full-rights people or “deposited.” These were people who had been “deposited” from the cities into the countryside. They were marked for execution. According to a Khmer Rouge slogan, “To keep you is no benefit, to destroy you is no loss”

Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge quickly focused their energies on the elimination of entire classes and professions. The educated were targeted, and doctors and lawyers were shot. Anyone who had connections with the former government or with foreigners was also executed.

Religion was despised. The vast majority of the Cambodian population was Buddhist. At the start of the Khmer Rouge’s purge (elimination), more than 80,000 monks lived in the country. These monks were forced to marry and renounce their vows of faith—or face execution. As many as 40,000-60,000 monks were executed. Pol Pot’s soldiers were also responsible for mass executions of Muslims and Christians.

Various ethnic groups within Cambodia were also targeted. Nearly all Vietnamese living in Cambodia were forced back to their homeland. Half of the Chinese population (over 225,000 individuals) was eliminated. Ethnic Thais and Laotians living in Cambodia were also executed.

Those set for execution were sent to one of nearly 200 prisons such as Choeung Ek, Tuol Sleng, and S-21. To save ammunition, prisoners were often poisoned, buried alive, im-



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

paled on bamboo sticks, or bashed against trees. The Khmer Rouge was efficient and required prisoners to dig their own graves. These mass graves became known as “killing fields.”

From 1975-79, Pol Pot’s governing Khmer Rouge was responsible for killing approximately 2 million Cambodians—20%-25% of the population. Yet, the human faces behind the statistics tell an even grimmer story.

“My wife held the youngest of our sons in her arms,” recalls one survivor of the Cambodian holocaust. “I held the hands of the other two. Our elbows were then tied. We were blindfolded and I knew we were about to be executed. I was able to untie myself and lift my blindfold. The Khmer Rouge were stuffing the mouths of those they were leading with rags and grass to prevent them from screaming and were cutting their throats like animals—the throats of men, women, old folk, and children alike.”

State-supported starvation contributed to the genocide. Bo Meng, a restaurant owner in Pittsburgh, recalls how single spoonfuls of corn kernels served as family meals. Another survivor, Loung Ung, in her memoir, *First They Killed My Father*, tells of how her older siblings shook the trees at night “hoping to find June bugs” to eat, while she and her younger brothers and sisters scoured the ground to catch frogs and grasshoppers for nourishment.

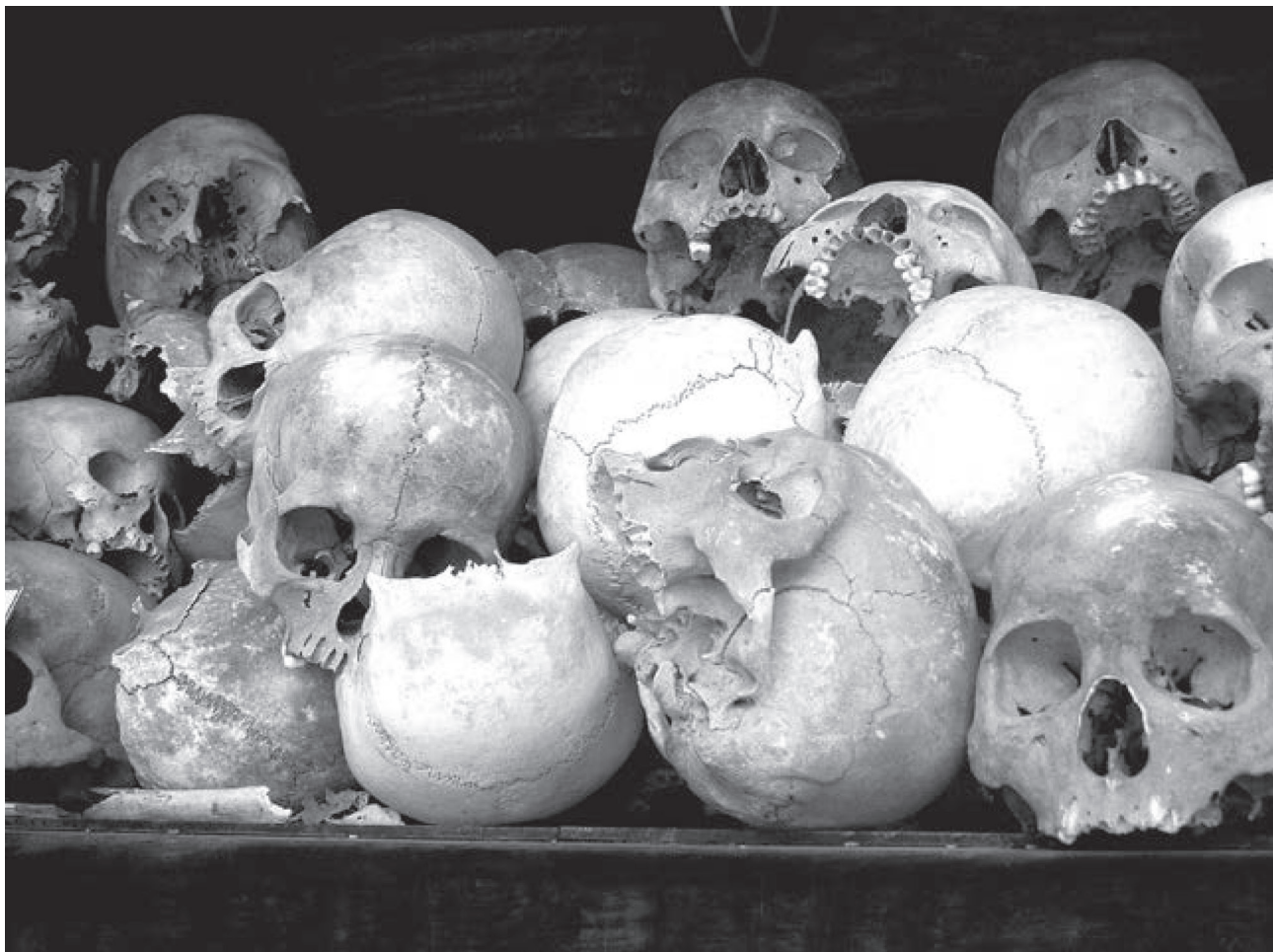
In early 1979, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge were driven from power by the Vietnamese. Pol Pot lived in exile for the next twenty years. He died the night before he was to appear before a war crimes tribunal.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Why was 1975 called the Year Zero?
2. How did Pol Pot transform Cambodian society?
3. What were the killing fields?
4. What methods did the Khmer Rouge use to create a communist society?
5. Why did the Khmer Rouge resort to violence to achieve their goals? Can significant social or political change occur without violence?
6. The United States went to war to stop Hitler and Nazi Germany. What should it have done to stop Pol Pot?

**PSA**

## Victims of Pol Pot



# War Crimes Trial

## ROLES

**Presiding Judge**

**Defendant, Mr. Kaing**

**Defense Attorney**

**Prosecuting Attorney Witnesses for the Prosecution (9)**

**Witnesses for the Defense (3)**

**Jury: The entire class**

**Presiding Judge:** This international court, held under the authority of the United Nations, will come to order. Mr. Kaing, you have been charged in a court of law with the following crimes against humanity:

- murder
- extermination
- imprisonment
- persecution

and other inhumane acts such as

- willfull killing
- willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health
- willful deprivation of rights to a fair trial of prisoners of war or civilians
- unlawful deportation, transfer, or confinement of a civilian
- enslavement
- forced labor
- forcible transfers of the population.

Mr. Kaing, how do you plead?

**Mr. Kaing:** Not guilty, your honor.

**Presiding Judge:** The prosecution may call its first witness.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you, your honor. I call Witness #1 to the stand.

**Witness #1:** I was held at gunpoint with my brother and was forced to watch as my father was executed and then disemboweled, his heart, liver, and stomach ripped out by soldiers.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #2?

**Witness #2:** The Khmer Rouge shot and killed my wife and child. They tortured me with electric shocks and yanked out my toenails. It's a shame we don't have the death penalty anymore.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #3?

**Witness #3:** I hear the voices of my children crying out for me. "We miss you, Mama," the voices cry. I have buried the memories in the ground under 100 layers.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #4?

**Witness #4:** I was raped from dawn until dusk by Khmer Rouge soldiers while 6 ½ months pregnant. I never told my husband.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #5?

**Witness #5:** I think about suicide and suffer from memory loss. I'm terrified of the night—that's when the soldiers would take neighbors away, never to be seen again. Prosecuting Attorney: Thank you. Witness #6?

**Witness #6:** The Khmer Rouge split up my family. I was forced to pull a plow through rice paddies like an ox, and my child later died in a refugee camp.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #7?

**Witness #7:** I'm depressed in my head. I'm depressed in my stomach and in my heart. I have no hope in my body. I have nothing to live for. All I have is just my bare hands.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #8?

**Witness # 8:** My parents and my brother died in a Khmer Rouge labor camp. My baby perished in a refugee camp.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Witness #9?

**Witness # 9:** I try to forget, but it's hard. I want to find justice for myself and for the Cambodian people. I'm here to teach history to the next generation, so this horrific crime will never happen again.

**Prosecuting Attorney:** Thank you. Your honor, the prosecution rests.

**Presiding Judge:** The defense may call its first witness.

**Defense Attorney:** Thank you, your honor. Witness A?

**Witness A:** I was a soldier of the Khmer Rouge, assigned to kill prisoners in Choeung Ek. My hands grew tired from slitting throats, so I switched to stabbing my victims as they lay face down with their hands tied behind them. I was only following orders.

**Defense Attorney:** Thank you. Witness B?

**Witness B:** Mr. Kaing was my teacher and used to advise me to be a good student so I could benefit my family and the entire society. Besides, he's so old now—why do you want to punish him?

**Defense Attorney:** Thank you. Witness C?

**Witness C:** If there had not been a Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese would have stolen our land. I am grateful that he tried to protect us from the invaders.

**Defense Attorney:** Your honor, the defense calls Mr. Kaing to the stand to speak in his own defense. Mr. Kaing?

**Mr. Kaing:** I was not a senior leader at the time these crimes were committed, so I am not responsible for them. I acted on orders from my superior and would have died if I disobeyed him. I survived only because I respectfully and strictly followed orders.

**Defense Attorney:** Thank you, Mr. Kaing. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, my client had no other choice than to implement the orders he was given; otherwise, he would have been killed. If you were in his shoes, what would you do? Your honor, the defense rests.

**Presiding Judge:** Ladies and gentlemen of the jury (the entire class), you have heard the charges, the defense and the prosecution. Please discuss among yourselves whether or not the defendant is guilty of the charges.

*Entire class discusses the issues.*

**Presiding Judge:** All those in favor of conviction, raise your hands. All those in favor of acquittal, raise your hands. The results are \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you. This Court is adjourned.

## NOTE

In 1997, almost 20 years after the Khmer Rouge's crimes, the Cambodian government wrote to the United Nations requesting a trial against the Party's senior leaders for war crimes, international crimes, human rights violations, and genocide. The main purpose of the request was to provide justice to the Khmer Rouge's victims. Funded by more than 35 states, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) were established in 2005, becoming fully operational in 2007.

Included among those being tried by the ECCC:

**Kang Kek Iew**, head of Internal Security under the Khmer Rouge and manager of the Cambodian prison camps. Iew was found guilty of crimes against humanity and was sentenced to life in prison in 2012.

**Nuon Chea**, Pol Pot's right hand man, received a life sentence for crimes against humanity in 2014 and still awaits a separate trial for charges of genocide.

**Ieng Sary**, former Deputy Prime minister of Foreign affairs, and his wife Ieng Thirith were accused of planning, ordering, and overseeing the crimes of the Khmer Rouge. However, he died before he could be tried, and his wife was declared mentally unfit to stand trial.

**Khieu Samphan**, former Head of State and Pol Pot's successor, received a life sentence for crimes against humanity on August 2014.

## SOURCES

<http://www.eccc.gov.kh/>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37947&Cr=Cambodia&Cr1=>

The testimony of the witnesses in this simulated trial is paraphrased from testimony offered to the Applied Social Research of Cambodia ([www.asricjustice.com](http://www.asricjustice.com)) as reported in the following publications:

USA Today (Witnesses #2 and all Defense Witnesses)

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-09-15-1Acambodia08\\_CV\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-09-15-1Acambodia08_CV_N.htm)

Los Angeles Times (Witness #3)

<http://articles.latimes.com/2009/apr/12/local/me-khmer12>

<http://articles.latimes.com/2010/may/01/local/la-me-0502-khmer-trial-20100502>

MSNBC (Witnesses 1, 4-9, and Defense Attorney)

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/33023167/ns/world\\_news-south\\_and\\_central\\_asia/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/33023167/ns/world_news-south_and_central_asia/)

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42314575#>

# Cuba, Castro, and Che

## OVERVIEW

Communism was brought to Latin America by two revolutionaries: Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Castro and Che promised democracy. Instead, they created a totalitarian communist dictatorship and the most militarized and repressive nation in the Western Hemisphere. The Cuban Missile Crisis, which could have led to nuclear war, was a direct result of Castro's symbiotic relationship with the communists of the Soviet Union. An estimated 15,000-18,000 Cubans have been directly killed by the Castro government, and some 100,000 have fled the regime. Cuba's communist philosophy, coupled with its geographic proximity to the United States, continues to have an impact on American domestic and foreign policy, as well as on the lives of millions throughout Latin America.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

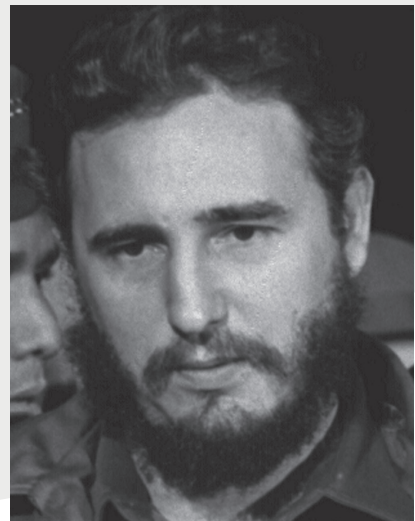
- analyze the iconic Che Guevara poster
- compare and contrast the views of Castro, Che, and John F. Kennedy regarding liberty, revolution, and democracy
- assess the impact of Cuban communism on Latin America

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 9: 1B
- NCHS US History Era 9: 2A, 2B

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: We Must Proceed Along the Path to Liberation
- Student Handout A: Poster 1
- PSA: Student Handout B: Che Guevara Poster
- Student Handout C: Castro, Che, and JFK
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Is Cuban communism a threat to Latin America?**



## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A** Distribute copies of Student Handout A: Poster 1 (or project an image using the URL on the handout). Do not provide any background about the image, and give students five minutes working in pairs to answer the questions. Ask students to share their responses with the entire class and accept all reasoned responses.
- B** Have students read the Background Essay: We Must Proceed Along the Path to Liberation and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the Answer Key for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Distribute copies of Student Handout B: Che Guevara Poster (or project an image using the URL on the handout). Give students five minutes working in pairs to answer the questions on the handout. Ask students to share their responses with the entire class.
- B** Explain to students that nearly 150 people were executed either personally by Che Guevara or under his direct orders during the Cuban Revolution. Ask them if this fact affects their understanding of Che.



### ACTIVITY

- A** Brainstorm with the class, asking them what ideas come to mind when they hear the words liberty, revolution, and democracy. Make a list and post it for reference.
- B** Divide the class into three groups: Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and John F. Kennedy. Working in pairs, each group should follow the directions on Student Handout C: Castro, Che, and JFK. Give students ten minutes working in pairs to complete the graphic organizer.
- C** After the pairs have completed their work, create a graphic organizer for the entire class by drawing a line on the black/whiteboard. Ask students to come forward and write the number of each quote where they think the idea should be placed on the line. Students should explain their placement. Accept all reasoned responses, and encourage students to provide detailed reasons





## WRAP-UP

In a large group, ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** How did Castro, Che, and JFK agree in their understanding of liberty, revolution, and democracy? How did they disagree? What are the most significant disagreements?
- 2** Which of the quotes do you most agree with and why? Which do you most disagree with and why?
- 3** Should Americans be concerned about the existence of a communist country only 90 miles away? Why or why not? Should people in Latin American countries be concerned?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Imagine that you are Castro, Che, or JFK. Write a letter to a family member explaining your support or lack of support for liberty, revolution, or democracy.
- B** Write an newspaper editorial in which you explain to your readers why the United States should/should not be concerned about life in Cuba.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Direct students to any of these additional resources. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned.
  - Ray Walser, *Cuban Communism* (appropriate for advanced students)  
See Appendix F.
  - Brief biographies of Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and Raul Castro  
See Appendices G, H, and I.
  - Witness Project: Rosa María Payá  
See the “Witness Project” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.
  - Witness Project: Mario Diaz-Balart  
See the “Witness Project” playlist on the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation’s official YouTube page.

- B** Students could research the stories of immigrants who have fled Castro's Cuba during the last 50 years. Their research could be presented as a posterboard or Powerpoint presentation.
- C** Students could research how Fidel Castro and Che Guevara influenced Latin American leaders such as Hugo Chavez, Daniel Ortega, Evo Morales, or Rafael Correa. The research could be accompanied by a map of Latin America, indicating which countries are either explicitly communist or which lean towards communism.
- D** Students could view the 2000 film, *Thirteen Days*, and write a 250-word response to the movie, focusing on the impact of Cuban/Soviet actions on the American people.

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China                  Cuba                  Laos                  North Korea                  Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

# WE MUST PROCEED ALONG THE PATH OF LIBERATION

Communism was on the march after World War II, moving from Eastern Europe to Asia to Africa. However, it did not arrive in the Western Hemisphere until 1959 and was brought by two young revolutionaries: Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Castro was a former law student who wanted to transform Cuba into a communist nation. Che was a former medical student who was committed to the global spread of communism.

Two years earlier, Castro and Che were fighting a guerrilla war to depose Cuba's authoritarian ruler. Castro was known for his ability to inspire others while Che was feared for his ruthlessness. Defectors and deserters were shot. Peasants who opposed the communists had their homes and crops burned. Che himself ordered the execution of nearly 150 Cubans who opposed his goals.

Since Cuba was only 90 miles away from the United States, Americans were very interested in Castro's opinion about democracy and communism. He stated, "We are fighting for a democratic Cuba and an end to dictatorship." He said he desired a "free, democratic Cuba."

Castro came to power in January 1959 and visited the United States. He again promised that freedom and democracy were his "ideals" for Cuba. He assured the world that democratic elections would soon follow. F

idel Castro never held those elections. He never implemented a democracy. He created a totalitarian dictatorship during fifty years of repressive rule.

The repression in Cuba was widespread and comprehensive. Rights to property, speech, press, assembly, and religion were all limited, and remain so today. Show trials and purges eliminated Castro's enemies. A prison camp system was constructed for those who disagreed with the Castro regime. Imprisoned "enemies of the state" included poets and priests, journalists and nuns, democracy activists, and gays. Even Christmas was banned in this formerly devout Roman Catholic country.

Castro embraced Soviet dictator Nikita Khrushchev. The Soviets placed nuclear missiles in Cuba. As a result, the world was brought to the edge of nuclear war when the United States challenged this situation in October 1962. War was avoided through the leadership of President John F. Kennedy and

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Khrushchev's decision to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba. The world later learned that both Castro and Che wanted the Soviets to fire the nuclear missiles. According to Castro, "we must proceed along the path of liberation even if this costs millions of atomic victims." He and Che believed that a nuclear holocaust would pave the way for the ultimate triumph of communism.

Since the 1962 missile crisis, the United States government has pressured Cuba to restore the freedoms of its citizens. Trade with Cuba is severely limited. Travel to Cuba—even by American citizens with family members in Cuba—is greatly restricted. Some humanitarian aid such as food and medical supplies has been sent to Cuba by private organizations, but not the U.S. government.

Castro decimated the Cuban economy and blamed American policies for his problems. However, Cuba has been able to trade with every other country around the world and Castro has improved health care and education throughout the country.

Cuba became the Soviet Union's closest ally in Latin America, and Castro's state was a leading supporter of communism around the world. Che, Castro's chief advisor, left Cuba in 1965 to train and support communist guerrilla movements in Africa and Bolivia. He described his African experience as "a history of failure." In Bolivia, he was unable to attract local support for his ideology, and was executed by government forces.

Though Che Guevara died in 1967, Cuban communism continues to have an impact throughout Latin America. Bolivia's president, Evo Morales, redistributed land and nationalized key industries, expressing his belief that "he [Che] inspires us to continue fighting, changing not only Bolivia, but all of Latin America and the world." Morales' close ally, the late President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, believed that Che Guevara is the "infinite revolutionary" and thought of Castro "as a father." Chavez redistributed land, nationalized industries, and limited freedom of expression in order to radically transform Venezuelan society. For three decades, the Peruvian communist movement, Shining Path, waged guerrilla warfare throughout the country, killing 25-35,000 Peruvians. Nicaragua's president, Daniel Ortega, who trained in Cuba to lead guerrilla warfare, became a leader of the Sandinistas, a revolutionary movement that overthrew the government in 1979 and began a process of land redistribution and nationalization of industry. Since 2007, however, Ortega has adopted a policy of democratic socialism.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Castro, the political inspiration for all of these Latin American leaders, did not change his views about communism, even as the Soviet Union began reforming in the late 1980s. He recommitted his country to strict Marxist teaching. His government cracked down on private garden plots and farmers' markets. Castro continued his banishment of private property. Major economic decisions were still made by the government. In recent years, however, limited free enterprise has been permitted, restrictions have been loosened, and religion is more tolerated.

An estimated 15,000-18,000 Cubans were killed by the Castro government. Over the past thirty years, nearly 100,000 Cubans have tried to escape to Florida across a treacherous, shark-infested 70-mile channel in leaky and home-made boats. Often, military helicopters have flown overhead and dropped sandbags upon the refugees. An untold number of people drowned as they were swimming for liberty.

Castro turned over the running of the country to his brother, Raul, in 2008. Yet, his legacy of oppression continues. Countless Cubans have gone to their graves waiting for the "free, democratic Cuba" Castro promised over a half century ago.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. What tactics did Fidel Castro and Che Guevara use to achieve power in Cuba?
2. How has Castro limited political and economic freedom in Cuba?
3. How has the United States attempted to influence Cuban policies?
4. Why did Che Guevara leave Cuba in 1965? Did he achieve his goals?
5. In what ways have the people of Latin America been affected by communism in Cuba?
6. Under what circumstances would you risk your life to leave a country because of political or economic oppression?

## Poster I



- 1 Do you know who this person is?
- 2 Have you seen this image before? If so, where?
- 3 How would you describe the person in this image?
- 4 What, if anything, do you know about this person's life? About his connections to communism in Cuba?
- 5 Have you ever seen any similar images? Of whom?.
- 6 Why would portraits of other individuals be made to look like this person?

### SOURCES

[http://www.caprishop.com/images/poster\\_cheguevara\\_big.jpg](http://www.caprishop.com/images/poster_cheguevara_big.jpg)

## PSA

## Che Guevara Poster



- 1** How does this image differ from the image of Che you saw yesterday?
- 2** What actions did Che Guevara take to support communist revolutions in Cuba, other Latin American countries, and Africa?
- 3** Each picture in this photo mosaic is a photo of an individual who was killed by Che and the Cuban communist government. Why do you think the artist chose to create the mosaic this way?
- 4** In what way has your opinion of Che changed since learning more about him?

## SOURCES

This image comes from the Young America's Foundation's "Victims of Che Guevara" poster  
<https://www.yaf.org/uploadedImages/Webpages/Students/YAF%20Che%20Poster-draft%205.jpg>

# Castro, Che, and JFK

## DIRECTIONS

*Working with a partner, read each of your assigned quotes and rephrase it in your own words. On each of the graphic organizers below, place each quote (by writing its number) where you think the idea belongs.*





## Fidel Castro

- 1 “If a person has a good word for the previous government, that is good enough for me to have him shot.”
- 2 “Warfare is a tool of revolutionaries.”
- 3 “We cannot be sure of having something to live for unless we are willing to die for it.”
- 4 “Capitalism has neither the capacity, nor the morality, nor the ethics to solve the problems of poverty.”
- 5 “I find capitalism repugnant. It is filthy, it is gross, it is alienating.”
- 6 “A revolution is a struggle to the death between the future and the past.”
- 7 “The universities are available only to those who share my revolutionary beliefs.”
- 8 “My idea is that the capitalist system doesn’t work either for the United States or for the whole world.”

## Che Guevara

- 1 “We must struggle every day so that this love for humanity becomes a reality.”
- 2 “It is better to die standing than to live on your knees.”
- 3 “Let’s be realistic and demand the impossible.”
- 4 “Words without deeds are worthless.”
- 5 “The revolution is not an apple that falls when it is ripe. You have to make it fall.”
- 6 “The People liberate themselves.”
- 7 “I won’t rest until I see these capitalist octopuses annihilated.”
- 8 “I fight for the things I believe in . . . and try to leave the other man dead.”

## John F. Kennedy (JFK)

- 1 “Change is the law of life.”
- 2 “Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.”
- 3 “My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”
- 4 “Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.”
- 5 “Forgive your enemies, but never forget their names.”
- 6 “Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival of liberty.”
- 7 “A nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people.”
- 8 “The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it.”

# Germany and the Berlin Wall

## OVERVIEW

The Berlin Wall was one of the only walls in history built to keep people in—not out. Constructed in 1961, the wall physically divided Berlin into East and West for the next twenty-eight years. This tangible expression of communist repression restricted a basic human liberty: the liberty of movement. Less than three years after President Ronald Reagan called upon Mikhail Gorbachev to “Tear down this wall!” the edifice collapsed. East and West Berlin were united, and the Cold War was on its way to a peaceful resolution.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- analyze the geographic expansion of the city of Berlin
- compare and contrast German travel restrictions with other limitations on movement
- evaluate the escape options available to East Berliners
- empathize with the thoughts and emotions of people on both sides of the Wall

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 9: 1B, 2C
- NCHS US History Era 9: 2A; Era 10: 1C

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: Tear Down This Wall
- Student Handout A (1-5): PSA: Maps of Berlin
- Teacher Resource A (1-6): Photos of the Berlin Wall
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Why was the Communist East German limitation on the right to travel a violation of a basic human right?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A** Prior to class, divide the room in half (allowing for safe entry/exit) using either masking tape on the floor or a more significant barrier (e.g., a bookshelf.) As students enter, direct them to sit anywhere they want for this class, but tell them that they cannot change their seat once they have chosen it. Once all seats are chosen, take out a bag of candy (or any other incentive) and offer it only to those on one side of classroom. Keep the room in this configuration for the balance of the lesson.
- B** Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful answers:
- Have you ever been “grounded” by your parents? What were the restrictions? How did you feel about being grounded?
  - Just as parents can limit freedom of movement, so too does government limit this freedom. In what ways is your freedom of movement limited? (Answers might include the following: truancy laws, curfew rules, passport regulations, TSA policies, immigration regulations, the proposed protective barrier along the southern border of the United States, etc.)
  - Which of these limitations, in your opinion, are reasonable? Which are unreasonable? • How do you feel about the “wall” in the classroom?
- C** Have students read Background Essay: Tear Down This Wall and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the Answer Key for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Prior to class, make sufficient copies of Student Handouts A (1-5) PSA: Maps of Berlin so that each of 5-6 small groups has a complete set.
- B** Briefly review the Background Essay to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas.
- C** Divide the class into groups of five and give each group a complete set of Maps of Berlin. In their groups, students should answer the following questions:
- What is the proper chronological order for the creation of the maps? (Answer: 2, 4, 1, 5, 3)
  - How do you know? (Answers might include: an “old” look to the map; smaller cities are older; WW II divisions; #A-5 refers to checkpoints; “Wall Memorial” on A-3 would only exist after the breaking down of the wall, etc.)
  - Which maps show evidence of a wall? (A-4, A-2, A-5, A-3)
  - What other observations do you have about the maps?  
Accept all reasoned answers)
  - (For a whole-class, interactive version of this activity, visit the Berlin section of <http://linuxdev.ats.ucla.edu/>)

- D** Explain to students that walled cities were very common in Western Europe through the Renaissance but that the development of nation-states led to the demolition (or incorporation) of most permanent walls by the beginning of the 20th century. The Berlin Wall was the first urban wall constructed in centuries and was constructed to keep people in—not out.



## ACTIVITY

- A** Prior to class, make two copies of each of the photos in Teacher Resource A (1-6): Photos of the Berlin Wall (see below for on-line sources) and post them on two opposite walls of the classroom. Tape a large sheet of blank paper beneath each photo. (butcher paper, etc.)
- B** Divide each side of the classroom into groups of 3-4 and have the groups circulate and view each of the photos on their side. At the bottom of the paper/poster board, they should write the following:
- What words, phrases, ideas, and/or emotions come to mind when you see the image?
  - What questions come to mind when you see the image?
  - What title would you give to this photo? When done, each group should fold over the paper (from the bottom) and move on to the next photo.
- C** Conduct a brief, whole class discussion of their responses.
- D** With students sitting in the same groups of 3-4, pose these questions for discussion: Imagine that your parents have decided to try to escape from East Berlin into the West. What plan would have the greatest chance of success? Would you go along with them? Would you help them, but stay behind? Would you report them to the authorities?



## WRAP-UP

In a large group, ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** What are your plans for escape? (The class might vote on the plan with the greatest likelihood for success.) Would you go with your parents?
- 2** Many East Berliners died seeking freedom in the West. What would you sacrifice to secure freedom, especially the freedom to travel?
- 3** How was the Berlin Wall a political, economic, and psychological barrier?
- 4** Did you get accustomed to the “wall” in the classroom? Would you eventually come to resent it? Accept it? Not even think about it?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Write a detailed plan for escape. Include not only your plans, but how you would respond to unexpected challenges (e.g, you plan to escape on the night of a full moon so you can find your way but the night is cloudy, etc.
- B** Choose one of the photos from Photos of the Berlin Wall. Use the photo as the inspiration for a poem, personal essay, short story, or song about the Berlin Wall and its impact on the people of Berlin
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Direct students to any of these additional resources. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned.
  - Mark Kramer, Communism and the German Democratic Republic (appropriate for advanced students)  
See Appendix J.
  - Timeline of the Berlin Wall  
<https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/berlin-wall>

- B** Direct students to any of these on-line resources about the Berlin Blockade and the Berlin Wall. For each source, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/airlift/>

[http://content.time.com/time/video/player/0,32068,49315435001\\_1936561,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/video/player/0,32068,49315435001_1936561,00.html)

<https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/berlin-blockade>

<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/presidential-inquiries/blockade-berlin>

- C** Students could research and report on the Secure Fence Act, a resolution supporting the creation of a 700-mile barrier to prevent illegal immigration from Mexico into the United States.

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## MAP SOURCES

### A-1 1948 Map

[http://archives.govt.nz/gallery/v/Walter+Nash+Exhibition/World+Politics+and+Economy/Europe/Germany/Berlin+Crisis\\_001/Berlin+Blockade+Map.html?g2\\_imageViewsIndex=1;](http://archives.govt.nz/gallery/v/Walter+Nash+Exhibition/World+Politics+and+Economy/Europe/Germany/Berlin+Crisis_001/Berlin+Blockade+Map.html?g2_imageViewsIndex=1;)

### A-2 1688 Map

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ZLB-Berliner\\_Ansichten-Januar.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ZLB-Berliner_Ansichten-Januar.jpg);

### A-3 Post-1989 Map (showing Wall, checkpoints, and memorials)

<http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/bauen/wanderungen/en/pix/strecke4/uebersicht.gif>;

### A-4 1789 Map

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/96/ZLB-Berliner\\_Ansichten-Januar.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/96/ZLB-Berliner_Ansichten-Januar.jpg);

### A-5 1961 Map (showing East and West Berlin)

<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ea/Berlin-wall-map.png>

## PHOTO SOURCES

All photos are from the Records of the U.S. Information Agency, 1900 – 2003; Record Group 306; Special Media Archives Services Division, College Park, MD. [on-line versions available through Archival Research Catalogue (see below for individual ARC Identifiers) at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov), September 20, 2011.]

- B-1** Wall at Train Station, March 20, 1962 (ARC Identifier 6003261);
- B-2** Volkspolizei is Building New Barricades in East Berlin, November 20, 1961 (ARC Identifier 6003269);
- B-3** While the Communist Wall Within Berlin is Being Strengthened, the East Germans are Preparing a Line Between the Outskirts of West Berlin (left) and East Germany. . . , October, 1961 (ARC Identifier 6003303);
- B-4** Watchful Communist Border Guard Mans the Berlin Wall and Keeps a Constant Lookout for Persons Attempting to Escape from East Berlin, 1964 (ARC Identifier 6003288);
- B-5** Gap in the Wall: Communist Border Guards Inspect a Gap in the Berlin Wall Where Two East German Construction Workers Escaped and Broke Through, April 1962 (ARC Identifier 6003276);
- B-6** Berlin Wall Reinforced: Under the Watchful Eye of Communist Police, East German Workers . . . Reinforce the Walls Dividing the City, October 1961\* (ARC Identifier 6003284)



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## TEAR DOWN THIS WALL!

On the morning of August 13, 1961, the people of Berlin, Germany awoke to the sounds of hammers. A wall was under construction in their city; a wall which would physically divide Berlin into East and West for the next twenty-eight years. This tangible symbol of communist repression was known as the Berlin Wall. Made of reinforced concrete and barbed wire, it was patrolled 24/7 by secret police with automatic weapons turned on their own citizenry.

The Berlin Wall reflected a communist violation of a basic human liberty: the freedom to travel. Limitations on freedom of movement had been enforced since the end of World War II (1945). The Soviet Union occupied East Germany, turning it into a satellite communist nation. The city of Berlin, located within East Germany, was divided into a free West and a communist East. Freedom to travel between East and West was severely restricted.

In 1948, the Soviet Union blocked the movement of food and fuel into West Berlin. The aim of this blockade was to isolate West Berliners from freedom. In response, the United States and other Western nations launched the Berlin Airlift, sending in over 200,000 flights in one year in order to supply the West Berliners with basic necessities. After a year, the blockade was lifted and the Soviets acknowledged the freedom of West Berlin.

With the formation of the GDR (German Democratic Republic) in 1949, communism ruled in East Germany. Private property was limited. Agriculture was collectivized. Free speech was suppressed, and demonstrators were arrested. Border controls were tightened. Still, over the next twelve years, millions exercised their right to travel and fled to West Germany in search of freedom.

The city of Berlin remained divided in two: East Berlin was part of the GDR and West Berlin was part of the free Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Many of those escaping from East Germany escaped through East Berlin into West Berlin. In 1961, the wall immediately ended that flow of humanity.

The decision to build a wall was made by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and East German communist leader Walter Ulbricht early in August 1961. By Sunday morning, August 13, construction was underway. 200 kilometers (124 miles) of cement and barbed wire divided the German people. This physical barrier — completed days later — denied East Germans the freedom to travel outside their home except for specific cases approved by the government. Onlookers wept as the authorities cemented the “captive” status of those living under communism.

From 1961 until the fall of the wall in 1989, hundreds still tried to exercise their right of travel and sought to escape. They dug tunnels, flew balloons, slid along aerial wires, and even drove full-speed through fortifications in armored cars. Some escaped through the sewer system; others bled to death after being shot.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

East German border guards did not hesitate to shoot those who attempted to flee, killing hundreds of their own citizens. The authorities held the guards accountable by keeping gravel raked neatly each evening. If the guards permitted people to escape, the gravel would show fresh footprints and the guards would be jailed. This was the only wall in all of history patrolled by guards who pointed their guns inside, upon their own unarmed citizens.

In June 1987, President Ronald Reagan went to Berlin and called upon Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to “Tear down this wall!” Reagan understood that since East Germany was under Soviet influence, only Gorbachev possessed the power to remove the wall. Reagan reminded the world that if Gorbachev really believed in freedom, he should prove it by destroying this obvious symbol of repression. Gorbachev initially refused Reagan’s plea. He feared a reunified Germany.

Freedom-lovers everywhere got their wish on November 9, 1989. East Germans themselves scaled the wall with hammers and champagne glasses. The communist authorities did not stop their celebration. The Soviet Red Army was not sent in to silence the chorus of liberty. East and West Berliners could now travel freely throughout the city.

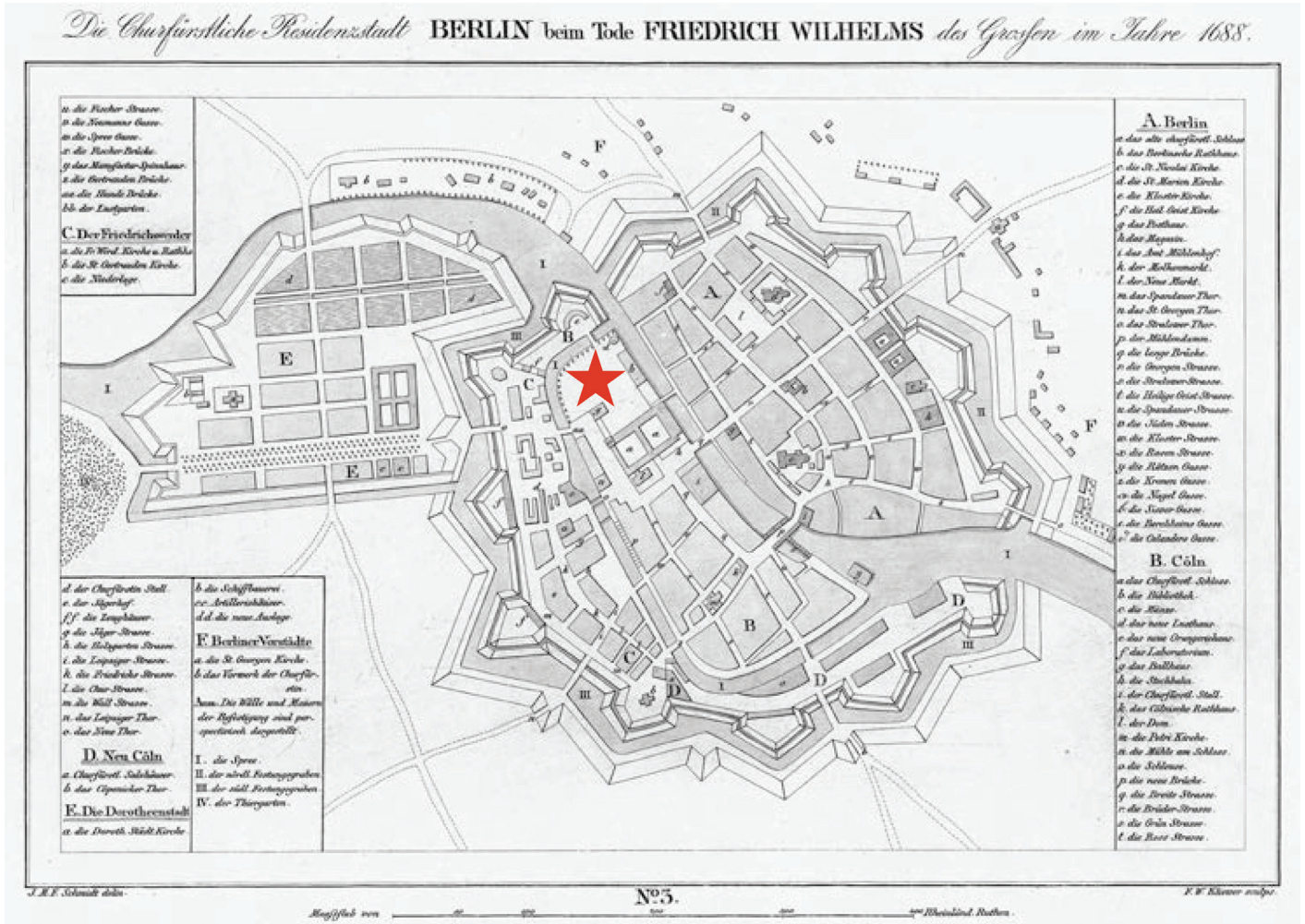
In February 1989 the East German dictator Erich Honecker predicted the wall would remain for another 100 years. It fell nine months later. The fall of the Berlin Wall was a telling sign that the Cold War was coming to a close—peacefully.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Why did the Soviet Union impose a blockade on West Berlin? How did the United States and other nations respond?
2. How and why did the Soviet Union limit freedom of travel in East Germany (GDR) after 1949?
3. Why was the Berlin Wall constructed? How did people react to this limitation of their ability to travel?
4. What role did Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev play in bringing about the fall of the Berlin Wall?
5. In your opinion, under what circumstances would a country be justified in creating a physical wall to limit people’s ability to travel?







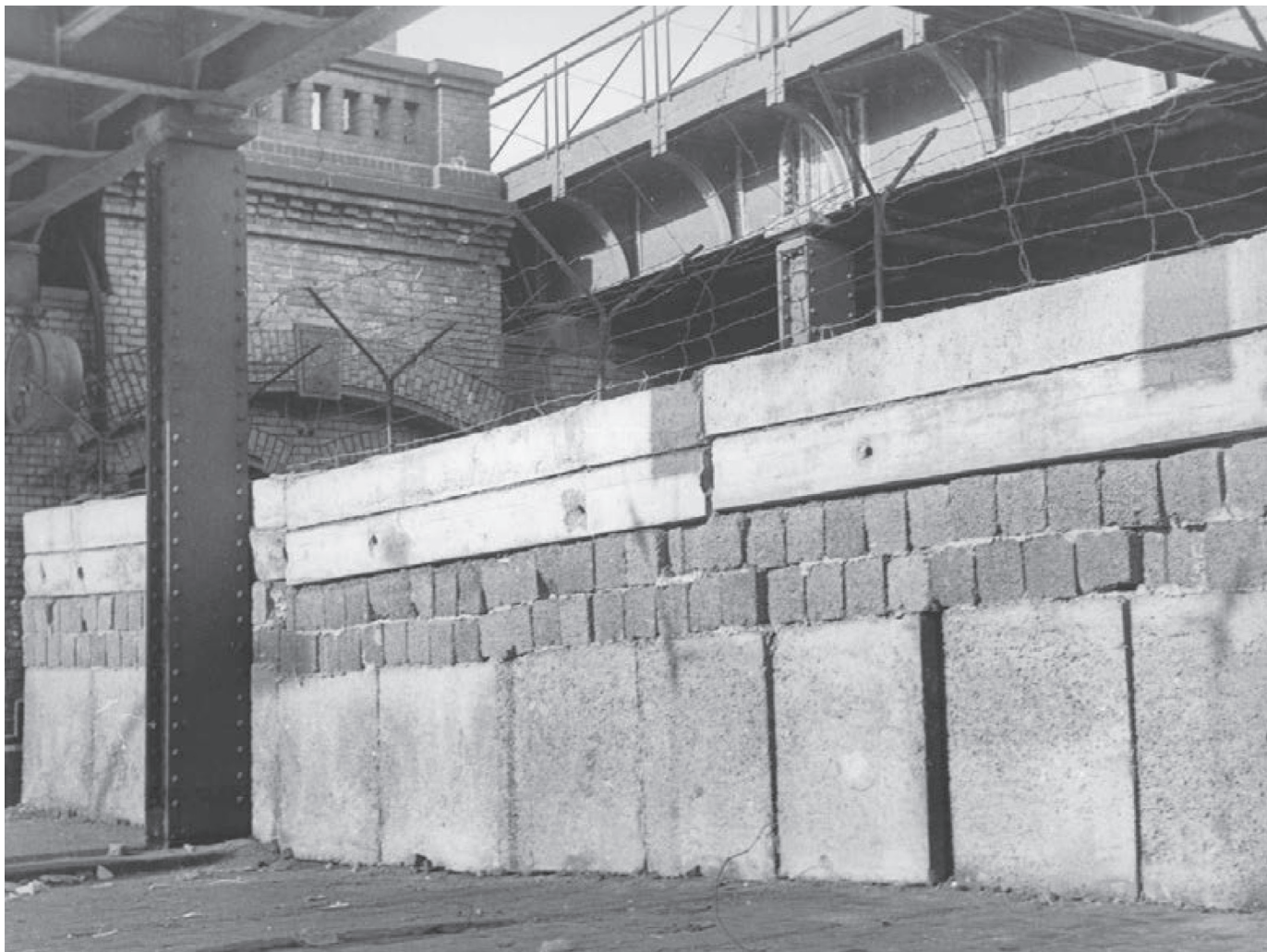




























# America and Vietnam

## OVERVIEW

American involvement in Vietnam can be traced to the Truman administration. High-level involvement began in 1961 with President John F. Kennedy, who sent military advisers to South Vietnam, troops to provide training, combat support, and a massive infusion of new weapons. By 1975, over 58,000 Americans had died in Vietnam; thousands were missing in action; tens of thousands were suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder; and the American people had experienced tremendous social and political upheaval caused, in part, by American involvement in Vietnam.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- empathize with the experience of American prisoners of war
- examine and explain the impact of the Vietnam War on the American people
- appreciate the character traits of American P O W 's

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 9: 1B
- NCHS US History Era 9: 2C

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: Hello, Freedom Man
- Student Handout A: PSA: Tap Code
- Student Handout B: "I Am" Poem
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Did the American people become “victims of communism”  
as a result of the Vietnam War?**



## CREATE THE CONTEXT

*[for homework or in class the previous day]*

- A** Create a space in the classroom that is approximately 7 feet x 7 feet, and ask four volunteers to stand in the space. Explain to students that this was the size of prison cells for many Americans during the Vietnam War. Ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful answers:
- What challenges—both physical and psychological—did prisoners face in North Vietnamese prisons?
  - What character traits would help one survive under such conditions?
  - What other victims (besides prisoners) might be created by war?
- B** Have students read Background Essay: Hello, Freedom Man and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the Answer Key for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Briefly review the Background Essay to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas.
- B** Distribute copies of Student Handout A: PSA: Tap Code. Explain that this code was devised by prisoners of war in 1965 and used throughout the war so prisoners could communicate with those in adjoining cells.
- C** Give students ten minutes, working in pairs, to use the Tap Code to communicate a message to each other
- D** Ask students the following
- How easy or difficult was it to use the code?
  - Did you use any abbreviations, e.g, textspeak? (The POW's used shorthand such as GNST: Good night, sleep tight.)
  - Could you survive for years, relying only on this code to communicate with others?



### ACTIVITY

- A** Divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the following roles: Vietnam POW, PTSD victim, college student, Vietnam veteran, American president. Give each group 5-7 minutes to create a fictional character for the role including such characteristics as: name; his/her experiences related to the war; his/her attitude about American involvement in the war; whether he/she suffered as a result of the war; etc.
- B** Reorganize into groups of five (five different characters per group.) Give students 8-10 minutes to share their identities with each other and to discuss their attitudes about American involvement in Vietnam.





## WRAP-UP

In a large group, ask students the following questions and accept all thoughtful responses:

- 1** What, if any, experiences did these people have in common? How did their experiences differ?
- 2** How did all these types of people respond to American involvement in Vietnam? What accounts for their different responses?
- 3** If you had been living in the 1960's, which of these types of people would you have most closely identified with? Why?
- 4** In what ways were these individuals and other Americans “victims of communism”?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Use Student Handout B: “I Am” Poem to create a poem about the effect of the Vietnam War on the American people.
- B** Draw an editorial cartoon illustrating how the Vietnam War affected a wide variety of Americans.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Direct students to any of the resources at these websites:

- Return with Honor  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/honor/>
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial  
<http://www.nps.gov/vive/index.htm>
- With Documents: The War in Vietnam—A Story in Photographs  
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/vietnam-photos/>

For each individual resource, they could a.) write a brief response to what they learned; b.) make a short presentation about what they learned to the class; or c.) post a Facebook or Twitter comment about what they learned.

- B** Students could interview someone in their family or community who served in Vietnam. They could prepare a report (oral or written) which answers these questions:
- Why did the individual serve in Vietnam?
  - What challenges did the person face during his/her service?
  - What challenges did the person face when he/she arrived back home?
  - In his/her opinion, what have been the long-term impacts on American society as a result of the Vietnam conflict?

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

## HELLO, FREEDOM MAN

*"The North Vietnamese were very cruel, barbaric captors. One time I was kept in solitary confinement for 13 months. They broke my shoulder very badly using rope torture. They also broke one leg and beat me up pretty badly in their spare time over the years (1967-1973)."*

Edward Holmes Martin, a U.S. admiral, was only one of tens of thousands of Americans who suffered at the hands of the communist Vietnamese forces. Prisoners of war, like Admiral Martin; those who lost their lives in combat; the veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and the American people themselves all suffered as a result of communist expansion in Vietnam.

Significant American involvement in Vietnam began under President John F. Kennedy in 1961. His goal was to stop a communist takeover that could be part of a wider "domino effect" with nations throughout Southeast Asia becoming communist. China and North Korea had already fallen to communism. Presidents from Kennedy through Richard Nixon (1961-1974) feared that communism might spread to Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. Americans were concerned these countries might become Soviet allies.

The Soviet Union assisted North Vietnam militarily and politically. It argued that the Vietnam conflict was a nationalist uprising of the Vietnamese people against western domination and not a serious communist threat to American interests. American military and political leaders disagreed.

Under Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, American involvement increased significantly. By the end of his administration, America was in a full-scale war in Vietnam.

During the war, over 800 Americans were captured as prisoners of war and detained in prison camps throughout North Vietnam. Insect-infested rations, physical and psychological torture, and isolation were among the techniques used by the Vietnamese to persuade the prisoners to divulge military information.

Admiral Martin recalled, *"I was there in the famous Hanoi Hilton in a section that we called Heartbreak Hotel. There was slime and mold on concrete beds, with leg irons at the end of them. The room was about 76 inches long and 56 wide. From time to time they moved us to different rooms. One time . . . there were two of us in a room with only enough room for one to sleep in"*

Another POW, Henry P. Fowler, Jr. described similar conditions: *"The cell we lived in was a solid concrete room either without a window, or a window boarded up. Measured 7 ft. wide, 9 ft. long and 10 to 20 ft. high, about like your bathroom. For the first 3 years, that*

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

*was my home 23 hours and 45 minutes a day, for 3 solid years. We never saw a toilet. We had a little black bucket in the corner of each room. We never saw a bed. We either slept on wooden boards or on the cement. We never saw hot water and we never saw shoes."*

The effect of the war on America domestically was tumultuous. As American casualties increased, the nation's universities erupted. What began as educational "teach-ins" in 1965 became campus takeovers by 1968. The country's streets and campuses saw unprecedented unrest. Opposition to the Vietnam War reached a fever pitch. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators protested at military facilities, in front of government buildings, and on college campuses.

Protestors in the United States were in favor of peace, though many were unaware of the international involvement and dimensions of the war. Others were frustrated by the mismanagement of the war and the tremendous loss of life with no clear victory in sight. Protestors marched outside the White House shouting "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?"

Returning veterans were often ignored or vilified. Many were suffering from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) as a result of their Vietnam service. PTSD occurs as a result of having seen or experienced life-threatening experiences. Its symptoms include flashbacks, insomnia, nightmares, and difficulty forming relationships. Approximately 30% of all Vietnam veterans suffered from PTSD at some point in their lives. Their lives were irrevocably changed by their service in Vietnam.

President Johnson declined to seek the Democratic Party's nomination for the presidency in 1968. The Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, won the presidency. He pursued a policy to end the war. In January 1973, the Paris Peace Treaty was signed, though fighting continued. In April 1975, Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese. Soon after, neighboring countries Laos and Cambodia also fell to communism, in part validating the "domino effect."

Over 58,000 American soldiers, sailors, and airmen died in the Vietnam War. 153,000 individuals were hospitalized as a result of their wounds. Nearly 800 men were captured as prisoners of war, and over 1,700 individuals are still considered Missing in Action (MIA). Even today, some American foreign policy decisions are influenced by the military and diplomatic experiences in Vietnam.

President Ronald Reagan remembered victims of the Vietnam War in his January 1989 "Farewell Address." He told a story, paying tribute to what America had tried to stop in Vietnam. Said Reagan:

*I've been reflecting on what the past eight years have meant and mean. And the image that comes to mind like a refrain is a nautical one—a small story about a big ship, and a refugee, and*

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

*a sailor. It was back in the early '80s, at the height of the boat people. And the sailor was hard at work on the carrier Midway, which was patrolling the South China Sea. The sailor, like most American servicemen, was young, smart, and fiercely observant. The crew spied on the horizon a leaky little boat. And crammed inside were refugees from Indochina hoping to get to America. The Midway sent a small launch to bring them to the ship and safety. As the refugees made their way through the choppy seas, one spied the sailor on deck, and stood up, and called out to him. He yelled, "Hello, American sailor. Hello, freedom man!"*

During the Vietnam War, America had tried to play that role: freedom man. The war failed to achieve that objective. Divisions at home were often as bitter and stark as the divisions in Vietnam itself. It was a war that left numerous Americans as well as Vietnamese dead, maimed, and scarred.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. Describe the living conditions of American POW's.
2. Why did the United States become involved in Vietnam?
3. In addition to the prisoners of war, which other Americans suffered as a result of the Vietnam War? How did they suffer?
4. What long-term impacts did the Vietnam War have on American politics and the American people?
5. Why had America tried to be "freedom man"? In your opinion, is that an appropriate role for the United States?

## SOURCES

*Edward Martin Collection (AFC/2001/001/29072), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress*<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.29072/transcript?ID=mvo001>  
*Henry Fowler Collection (AFC/2001/001/52407), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress*<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.52407/transcript?ID=mvo001>

**PSA**

# Tap Code

**DIRECTIONS**

Each letter in the Tap Code is signified by tapping two numbers: the first number indicates the horizontal row and the second indicates the vertical row. For example, the letter P is 5 taps-short pause-3 taps; the letter S is 3 taps-short pause-4 taps. (Longer pauses indicate new words; an X indicates the end of a sentence; and the letter K replaces the letter C.)

First, as practice, use the secret code to tap out your name. Then, compose and write down a brief message (4-7 words) that a prisoner of war might have tapped to another prisoner in the adjoining cell. Use the code to tap out a message to your partner. See if you and your partner can understand each other.

	1	2	3	4	5
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	F	G	H	I	J
3	L	M	N	O	P <sup>(5-3)</sup>
4	Q	R	S <sup>(3-4)</sup>	T	U
5	V	W	X	Y	Z

# “I Am” Poem

## DIRECTIONS

Complete the following statements as if you were ONE of the types of people discussed in the lesson: a prisoner of war, a veteran suffering from PTSD, a college student, a veteran, an American President, or any other American affected by the Vietnam War. Your statements should be historically accurate and emotionally powerful.

**I am** (the character you’ve chosen)

**I wonder . . .**

**I hear . . .**

**I see . . .**

**I want . . .**

**I am** (repeat the character you’ve chosen)

**I pretend . . .**

**I feel . . .**

**I touch . . .**

**I worry . . .**

**I cry . . .**

**I am** (repeat the character you’ve chosen)

**I understand . . .**

**I say . . .**

**I dream . . .**

**I try . . .**

**I hope . . .**

**I am** (repeat the character you’ve chosen)





# Captive Nations and the End of the Cold War

## OVERVIEW

Following World War II, Europe was the focal point for the conflict between communism and freedom. For half a century, nearly all of Eastern and Central Europe suffered under communist rule. However, beginning in Poland in the 1980's and sweeping across the Soviet bloc, nationalistic and anti-communist movements flourished. Relying upon strikes, demonstrations, and even songfests, the peoples of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania asserted their rights, liberated themselves, and peacefully went about the task of creating new governments, thereby ending the longest-running ideological conflict of the twentieth century.

## NOTE TO TEACHERS

*Completion of Student Handout A requires student access to computers and will take 20-30 minutes to complete. If students have access to a computer lab and/or their own devices in school, the activity could be completed in class and the lesson will take two days; if Student Handout A can be completed outside of class, the lesson is more likely to take just one day.*

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Compare and contrast the experiences of Eastern bloc countries during the Cold War
- Analyze a political cartoon
- Examine the role of music in the Eastern bloc uprisings against communism
- Evaluate the role of non-violent protest in effecting political change

## STANDARDS

- NCHS World History Era 9: 1B, 2C, 3A

## MATERIALS

- Background Essay: May God Watch Over You, My Precious Fatherland
- Student Handout A: Captive Nations Graphic Organizer
- Student Handout B: PSA: The Soviet Union and Europe, 1947
- Student Handout C: National Anthems
- Answer Key (in back of book)



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Can non-violent protest effect significant political and social change?**

## CREATE THE CONTEXT

[for homework or in class the previous day]

- A** Play the audio (and video, if possible) of the trailer for *The Singing Revolution* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4njksFKyycY>. Explain to the class that the national anthems of many Eastern European nations inspired citizens to stand up against communism, and that this lesson will focus on those people.
- B** Distribute **Student Handout A: Captive Nations Graphic Organizer** and assign each student one of these six countries: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Students should conduct on-line research to complete the organizer.
- C** Have students read the **Background Essay: May God Watch Over You, My Precious Fatherland** and answer (or think about) the questions which follow the essay. (See the **Answer Key** for suggested responses.)



### PSA (Primary Source Activity)

- A** Briefly review the **Background Essay** to clarify any terms, concepts, or ideas.
- B** Distribute copies (or project an image) of the **Student Handout B: PSA: The Soviet Union and Europe, 1947**: and ask students the following questions:
  - Who is the figure in the cartoon and what is he trying to do?
  - Which countries are within the Soviet bloc? (*Finland\**, *Poland*, *East Germany*, *Bulgaria*, *Romania*.) Point out to students that the unlabeled countries under Stalin's right arm are the Baltic nations: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. (\*Unlike the other nations in the cartoon, Finland was never occupied by the Soviet Army. However, its post-war treaty arrangements with the Soviet Union created close ties between the two countries.)
  - Which countries are within the influence of the Soviets? (*Czechoslovakia*, *Yugoslavia*, *Hungary*)
  - Does the cartoonist have a favorable or unfavorable view of Soviet actions? How do you know? (*Accept all reasoned answers.*)



## ACTIVITY A

- A** Divide the class into groups of six (each student reporting upon a different country) and give the students 5-10 minutes to share 2-3 interesting facts about the country they researched for **Student Handout A: Captive Nations Graphic Organizer**.
- B** Conduct a brief whole-class discussion asking students to share their observations. Then, ask them what they observed about the differences and similarities among the various nations in their efforts to free themselves from communist oppression.



## ACTIVITY B

- A** Explain to the class that many of these nations relied upon songs and cultural traditions to unite their people against communism. Brainstorm with the class about the purposes of national anthems. Likely responses might include the following: *create a sense of unity; develop patriotism; celebrate military victories; inspire action against enemies; etc.*
- B** Ask the students whether or not they sing *The Star-Spangled Banner*; under what circumstances they sing it, how they feel when they sing the anthem, and whether or not they know/understand the historical setting of the song. (Background about the anthem can be found at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/the-lyrics.aspx>) Remind them of what they heard (and saw) at the beginning of class in *The Singing Revolution* trailer.
- C** Regroup students according to the country they researched for the **Captive Nations Graphic Organizer** and distribute **Student Handout C: National Anthems**. Give students 5-7 minutes to review their assigned anthem(s) and answer the questions.
- D** Bring the class back together for a general review of the anthems and their answers to the questions. Ask students what they observed about the differences and similarities among the various national anthems.



## WRAP-UP

Ask students the following questions and accept all reasoned answers:

- 1** How do your parents react to the music you enjoy? Do they (or do you) think of your music as a form of rebellion?
- 2** Would music or poetry ever motivate you to bring about political change? Why and how did music or poetry motivate people in Eastern Europe to revolt against the Soviets?
- 3** Are you surprised that the end of the Cold War was generally non-violent? Why or why not?

## IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT

- A** Choose one of the anthems and listen to the song. Following the same rhyme and rhythm, write two or three additional verses reflecting the country's triumph over communism in the 1980's and 1990's. Additional verses as well as audio recordings of these national anthems can be found on a variety of websites: <http://www.nationalanthems.info/> the <http://www.lyricsondemand.com/miscellaneouslyrics/nationalanthemslyrics>.
- B** Choose any one of the six countries and write a 2 page dialogue between two individuals from that country: One individual supports violent revolution to overturn the communists; one supports non-violence tactics. Include specific historical details in the dialogue.
- C** Answer one (or all) of the questions posed in the Wrap Up in one well-constructed 3-4 paragraph essay per response.

## LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT

- A** Students could prepare a report (written, Powerpoint, or display board) about the country for which they completed the **Captive Nations Graphic Organizer**.
- B** Students could visit The Singing Revolution website to learn more about the power of music to affect change. <http://www.singingrevolution.com/cgi-local/content.cgi?pg=2>
- C** Advanced students may be interested in reading The Bridge at Andau, novelist James Michener's account of the 1956 Hungarian uprising. They may also enjoy the poetry of Václav Havel (<http://www.vaclavhavel-library.org/en/>.)

## COMMUNISM'S CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS (C<sub>3</sub>)

Students could perform an on-line search to find an article about limitations on individual liberties in one other of today's communist countries.

**China**

**Cuba**

**Laos**

**North Korea**

**Vietnam**

Good sources for such articles include:

<http://www.nytimes.com/>

<http://www.humanrightsfoundation.org/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Students could read the article and present the results of their search as either a.) one paragraph summary; b.) five slide Powerpoint presentation; or c.) Twitter entry.

(Students should note the source of their article. Wikipedia and articles written by the Communist Party as well as the governments of these countries are likely to be incomplete, inaccurate, and/or biased.)

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

MAY GOD WATCH OVER YOU,  
MY PRECIOUS FATHERLAND

In July 2013, President Barack Obama issued a proclamation in honor of Captive Nations Week. This commemoration was first celebrated in 1959 “amidst an escalating Cold War, affirming America’s support for the individual liberties of those living under Communist oppression.” The nations of Eastern Europe were held captive by the ideology of the Soviet Union for over fifty years. Nearly 100 million people lived under this ideology. Their story is one of repression and oppression. Their story is also one of liberation.

Following World War II, the Soviet Union refused to withdraw from the lands it had occupied. This action divided Eastern and Western Europe into opposing political and military alliances. The Cold War was on. Many of those living under communism remained captive for five more decades.

By the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union had begun to reform its own political and economic systems. The new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, began a period of rebuilding the nation according to more democratic principles (a process known as *perestroika*). He also encouraged Soviet citizens to share their concerns openly (a policy known as *glasnost*) and to participate in free elections. As the Soviet Union gradually restored some liberties to its citizens, the people of Eastern Europe demanded their rights, too. Over a few short years (1989-1991), the so-called Iron Curtain was torn apart as these nations reclaimed their liberties. The twin legacies of Nazi fascism and Soviet communism disappeared; freedom took their place.

**Poland**

Poland was a focal point for 20th century oppression. The German Nazis first invaded and conquered the nation. Then, the Russian communists conquered the country. During World War II, the Soviets committed many human rights abuses in Poland. Perhaps one of the worst examples was the execution of 22,000 Polish prisoners of war in the Katyn Woods massacre in 1940.

While Western Europe was liberated after Hitler’s defeat in 1945, Poland was not. The Soviet Union created a satellite government that limited and restricted individual liberties. The government tortured and imprisoned those who opposed it. Martial law was frequently imposed. Officials limited religious liberty, though the Catholic Church continued to play a significant role in the lives of the people.

## BACKGROUND ESSAY

Courageous individuals and organizations led various anti-communist efforts during these years. Workers in the shipyards went on strike. Finally, in June 1989, Poland held free elections. One political party triumphed in this election: Solidarity. Solidarity was anti-communist, anti-Soviet, and independent of government control. Its leader, Lech Wałęsa, was elected president of Poland one year later. Communism was dead in Poland.

### Hungary and Czechoslovakia

Hungary and Czechoslovakia fell to communism in the late 1940s. Hungary changed radically. The economy was nationalized. Government officials arrested, tortured, deported, or executed thousands. Religious instruction was banned, and religious leaders were imprisoned. Russian language, culture, and traditions replaced many native Hungarian customs.

Hungary made a dramatic attempt to find its way toward freedom. In 1956, Hungarians rose up against their communist masters. The uprising began as a student demonstration. According to a participant,

*Work in Budapest stopped. Everyone went out on to the streets weeping. People read the points [the students' demands for greater liberty] and then rushed home or to their factories. . . . The Communist Party forbade this in vain. Everyone was talking about it: in conversation, over the telephone, the news spread in a few hours and within a short time all Budapest became an ant-hill. People pinned the Hungarian national symbol to their clothes, and a really fantastic miracle occurred, for I regard it as a miracle that the whole people became unified. . . . On the morning of this day, for the first time, someone had dared to say that the Russian troops should leave Hungary. We had reached the point where we dared to say this publicly. This was what gave us unity, and the point at which the chains were broken which had bound us until then. . . everyone was on familiar terms, everyone could be trusted, everyone had a feeling of complete unity, because the entire system based on lies collapsed in a moment on the morning of 23 October. (Excerpt from the 1957 United Nations Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary.)*

The jubilation did not last. On November 4, Soviet tanks invaded Hungary and crushed the revolution. 20,000 Hungarians perished and another 200,000 fled as refugees. There would be no freedom in Hungary until 1989 when a peaceful transition to democracy began.

The Red Army also occupied Czechoslovakia in 1944. By 1948, Czechoslovakia was another Soviet satellite. Jails and concentration camps held those who challenged government policies.



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

In 1968, the Czechs revolted against the Soviets. This uprising, known as the Prague Spring, was suppressed. Thousands of Czechs fled the nation. Yet, the seeds of revolt had been planted. By the 1980s, failed economic policies and the Soviet Union's more moderate politics led to widespread unrest. In just ten days in 1989, a non-violent uprising, the Velvet Revolution, toppled the government. Its leader, the poet and playwright, Václav Havel, observed, "I really do inhabit a system in which words are capable of shaking the entire structure of government, where words can prove mightier than ten military divisions." The Czech nation had begun its transition to democracy through words—not violence.

The Hungarian and Czech revolts (1956 and 1968) were initially unsuccessful. Communism continued to dominate Eastern Europe through the 1970s. However, these early attempts to bring about political change inspired thousands of people to oppose and eventually overthrow their oppressive governments.

### **The Baltic Nations: Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania**

Nearly fifty years earlier in August of 1939, communist oppression began in the Baltic nations. The Russian occupation in June 1940 initiated a half-century of terror and intimidation. In Latvia, thousands of Russians were moved into the country in an effort to supplant Latvian culture and nationalism. Latvians were arrested, imprisoned, and deported. At least 10-15 percent of the Latvian population was eliminated by the Soviets.

During the next ten years, resistance to the Soviets was carried out by the "forest brothers." This group of 10-15,000 Latvian fighters lived in huts and tunnels in the countryside. Through sabotage, robbery, and sometimes murder they resisted the communist system. The last of the forest brothers surrendered in 1957. It would be thirty more years before the Latvians were no longer victimized by communism.

The people of Estonia also had their own "forest brothers" as they, too, suffered under communist repression. By the late 1980's, demonstrations throughout Estonia called for an end to Soviet domination. The most powerful and persuasive of these demonstrations were the national songfests.

The "Singing Revolution" lasted from 1987-1991. At spontaneous gatherings and at national song festivals, hundreds of thousands of Estonians sang the national and patriotic songs that had been banned under the Soviets. Lyrics such as "May God watch over you, my precious fatherland" fostered a nationalistic spirit that led to increased demands for Estonian independence. In 1991, this goal was achieved.

Lithuanians also endured collectivization, mass deportations, and limitations on their liberties for nearly fifty years. Yet, they retained their commitment to their



## BACKGROUND ESSAY

national heritage and to their strong Catholic faith. Hymns and national anthems were sung throughout the nation in the late 1980s in protest of the Soviet presence.

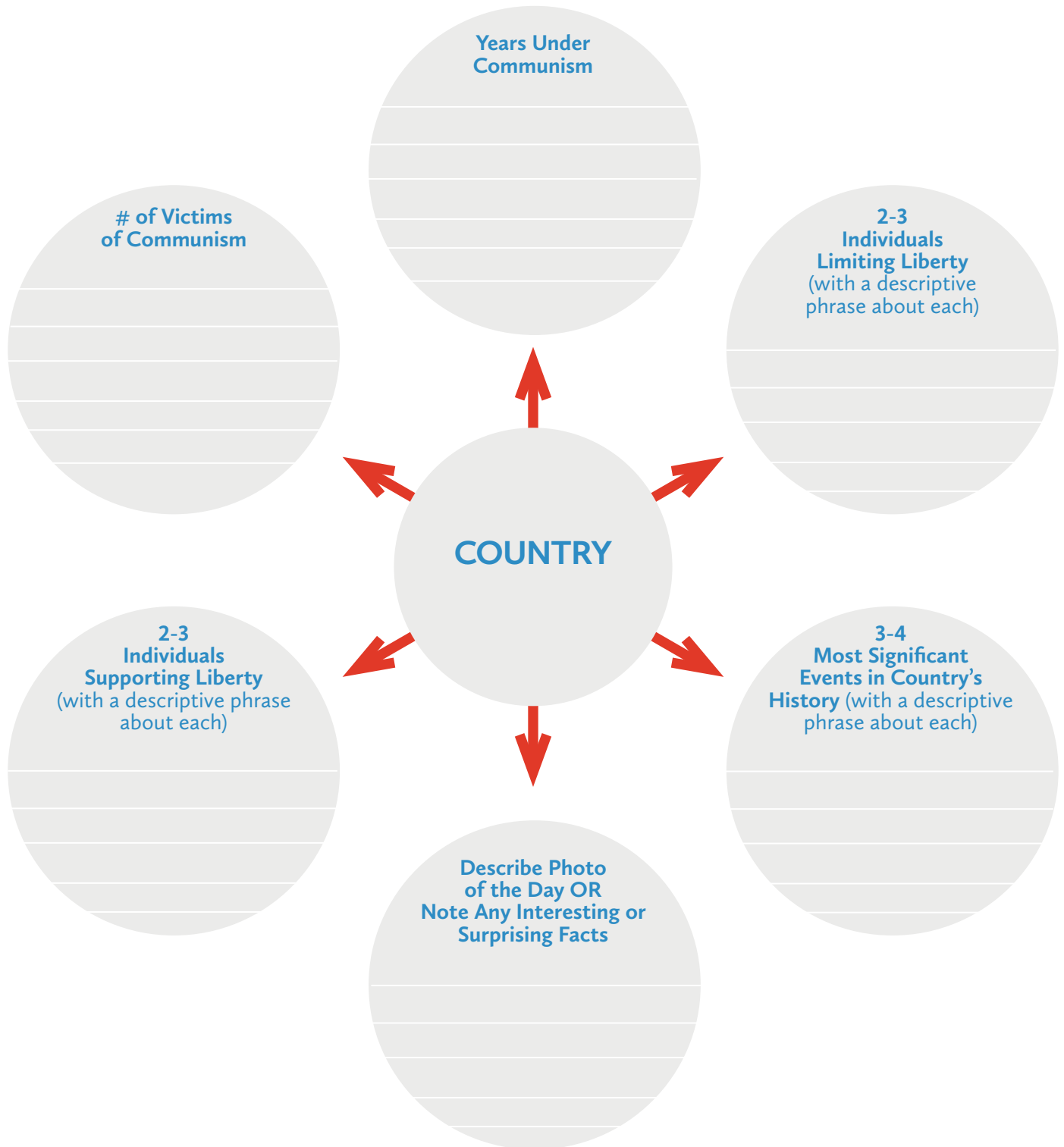
The most memorable singing event took place on August 23, 1989. A human chain of nearly two million people began in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius and stretched almost 400 miles through Riga, Latvia, to Tallinn, Estonia. People from three nations linked hands along this chain, sang national anthems, and remembered those who had died in their struggle against communism. As one Baltic activist commented, “Until now, revolutions have been filled with destruction, burning, killing and hate, but we started our revolution with a smile and a song.” Lithuania declared its independence six months later.

Actions such as these resulted in the disintegration of the Communist bloc in December 1991. The Cold War was over, without a missile fired. An entire totalitarian system went down peacefully. The nuclear world war that humanity had feared was inevitable never happened. Political leaders and millions of average citizens peacefully ended the longest-running ideological conflict of the 20th century, an ideology that left over 100 million dead.

## THINK ABOUT IT

1. What are the Captive Nations? Who held them captive and how?
2. How did Mikhail Gorbachev contribute to political change in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe?
3. How did the Hungarian people suffer under communism?
4. What is the historical significance of Lech Wałęsa and Václav Havel?
5. Describe the various forms of resistance against communism in Eastern Europe.
6. How did singing help to bring about non-violent change in the Baltic nations?
7. In your opinion, why was non-violence ultimately successful in bringing about the end of communism in Eastern Europe?

# Captive Nations Graphic Organizer



## PSA

# The Soviet Union and Europe, 1947

## DIRECTIONS

This cartoon was drawn in February, 1947 by British cartoonist John Illingworth.



# National Anthems

## DIRECTIONS

Read your assigned anthem, and then answer the questions which follow. Then, choose any other anthem and answer the same questions.

### 1 Czech Republic

Where is my home, where is my home?  
Water bubbles across the meadows,  
Pinewoods rustle among crags,  
The garden is glorious with spring blossom,  
Paradise on earth it is to see.  
And this is that beautiful land,  
The Czech land, my home.  
The Czech land, my home.

Where is my home, where is my home?  
If, in a heavenly land, you have met  
Tender souls in agile frames,  
Of clear mind, vigorous and prospering,  
And with a strength that frustrates all defiance,  
That is the glorious race of the Czechs,  
Among Czechs is my home.  
Among Czechs is my home.

### 2 Estonia

My fatherland, my joy and happiness,  
How beautiful you are!  
I shall not find such ever  
In this huge wide world  
Which would be so dear to me  
As you, my fatherland!

You have given me birth  
And raised me up;  
I shall thank you always

And remain faithful to you 'til death,  
To me most beloved are you,  
My precious fatherland!

May God watch over you,  
My precious fatherland!  
Let Him be your defender  
And provide bountiful blessings  
For whatever you undertake,  
My precious fatherland

### 3 Lithuania

Lithuania, our homeland,  
Land of worshiped heroes!  
Let your sons draw their strength  
From our past experience.

Let your children always follow  
Only roads of virtue,  
May your own, mankind's well-being  
Be the goals they work for.

May the sun above our land  
Banish darkening clouds around  
Light and truth all along  
Guide our steps forever.

May the love of Lithuania  
Brightly burn in our hearts.  
For the sake of this land  
Let unity blossom.

## 4 Hungary

O Lord, bless the nation of Hungary  
 With your grace and bounty.  
 Extend toward it your guarding arm.  
 During strife with its enemies  
 Long torn by ill fate  
 Bring upon it a time of relief.  
 This nation has suffered for all sins  
 Of the past and of the future!

You brought our ancestors up  
 Over the Carpathians' holy peaks.  
 By You was won a beautiful homeland  
 For Bendegúz's sons.  
 And wherever flow the rivers of  
 The Tisza and the Duna  
 Árpád, our hero's descendants  
 Will root and bloom.

For us on the plains of the Kuns  
 You ripened the wheat. In the grape fields of  
 Tokaj  
 You dripped sweet nectar.  
 Our flag you often planted  
 On the wild Turk's earthworks.  
 And under Mátyás' grave army whimpered  
 Vienna's "proud fort."

(4 more verses about the Turkish conquest  
 of Hungary)

Redeem, O Lord, the Hungarians  
 Who are tossed by waves of danger.  
 Extend toward it your guarding arm  
 On the sea of its misery.  
 Long torn by ill fate,  
 Bring upon it a time of relief.  
 They who have suffered for all sins  
 Of the past and of the future !

## 5 Latvia

Bless Latvia, O God,  
 Bless Latvia, O God,  
 Our verdant native land sod,  
 Where Baltic heroes trod,  
 Keep her from harm!

Bless Latvia, O God,  
 Our verdant native land sod,  
 Where Baltic heroes trod  
 Keep her from harm!

Our lovely daughters near.  
 Our singing sons appear,  
 May Fortune smiling here  
 Grace Latvia!

Our lovely daughters near.  
 Our singing sons appear,  
 May Fortune smiling here  
 Grace Latvia!

### 3 Poland

Poland is not yet lost  
As long as we remain,  
What the foe by force has seized,  
Sword in hand we'll gain.

CHORUS:  
March! March, Dabrowski!  
March from Italy to Poland!  
Under your command  
We shall reach our land.

Cross the Vistula and Warta  
And Poles we shall be;  
We've been shown by Bonaparte  
Ways to victory.

CHORUS  
  
As Czarniecki Poznan town regains,  
Fighting with the Swede,  
To free our fatherland from chains,  
We shall return by sea.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 How does the anthem describe the people of the nation? the land? the history?
- 2 What information (if any) does the anthem provide (or suggest) about the history of the nation?
- 3 What information (if any) does the anthem provide (or suggest) about the enemies of the nation?
- 4 How would the people of this nation feel when reading these words?
- 5 How would the people of this nation feel when singing this anthem?
- 6 Is this anthem a hymn? a battle song? something else?
- 7 Could this anthem motivate people to revolt against their rulers?

## SOURCES

Additional verses as well as audio recordings of these national anthems can be found on a variety of websites, including <http://www.nationalanthems.info/> and <http://www.lyricsondemand.com/>



# Answer Key

## KARL MARX AND HIS LEGACY

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 Over 100 million people have died as a direct result of communist ideas and actions.
- 2 Abolition of private property was the key element of Marx's theory.
- 3 Because his political views were in direct conflict with the current political order, only revolution would bring about his goals.
- 4 Marx believed that all private property should be abolished. Accepted reasoned responses.
- 5 Accept all reasoned responses.

### STUDENT HANDOUT A: WASHINGTON, MARX, AND KING

Marx: 1, 2, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22;  
Washington: 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15;  
M.L. King, Jr: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 2

## LENIN AND THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 Lenin created the Soviet totalitarian system by banishing basic freedoms, executing his enemies, and promoting global revolution.
- 2 Lenin and the Bolsheviks began to abolish private property and restrict speech, assembly, and press. Religious belief and practice were also limited.
- 3 Lenin wanted to eliminate those who opposed him: kulaks, priests, and other "harmful insects," as well as the middle class.
- 4 Lenin launched the Communist International (Comintern) to achieve that goal. The Comintern was based in Moscow with branches throughout the world.
- 5 Accept all reasoned responses.
- 6 Lenin and Latsis did not value the opinions or the lives of those who opposed them

## STALIN AND THE SOVIET UNION

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 Experts estimate that tens of millions of people died as a result of Stalin's actions.
- 2 Many in Ukraine resisted Stalin's collectivization. In response, individuals could only receive grain after the government quota had been met. Millions of Ukrainians died as a result of the famine Stalin created.
- 3 The Gulag was a system of forced labor camps throughout Russia where the harsh climate and the sadistic treatment of the prisoners resulted in millions of deaths.
- 4 From 1936-1938, Stalin eliminated anyone who might challenge him. Informants reported, evidence was manufactured, and show trials were held. Confessions were obtained through the use of torture and intimidation.
- 5 Accept all reasoned responses.
- 6 Stalin violated these human rights: the right to life; the right to liberty; the right to property; the right to freedom of speech and the press; the right to a fair trial; and the right to food.
- 7 Stalin forcibly extended communism into Eastern and Central Europe by installing puppet governments controlled by the Soviet Union.

## The Baltic States

### BACKGROUND ESSAY: The History of Independence in the Baltics

- 1 Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
- 2 Soviet Russia.
- 3 Russia recognized their complete independence and sovereignty – they forever renounced any territorial claims in the Baltic States.
- 4 Prosperous, high standard of living and socioeconomic status, energetic, culturally sound,



intellectually innovative, commanded respect on the international stage.

5 No.

#### BACKGROUND ESSAY:

##### The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

- 1 August 23, 1939.
- 2 Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romanian Bessarabia.
- 3 Having their governments sign a “Treaty of Mutual Assistance” which would place Soviet military forces on their soil.
- 4 More than 500,000.
- 5 No.

#### BACKGROUND ESSAY:

##### The Soviet Deportation in the Baltics

- 1 To secure its rule over the countries. To eliminate sources of resistance. To eliminate national leaders.
- 2 Accept all thoughtful responses.
- 3 Accept all thoughtful responses.
- 4 Accept all thoughtful responses.
- 5 Accept all thoughtful responses.

#### PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY:

##### Strictly Secret Order of the People's Commissar for the Interior of Lithuanian SSR of year 1940

- 1 No, the soviets deported nobleman, estate owners, merchants, bankers, commercialists, shop owners, owners of hotels and restaurants, etc.
- 2 The orders reference weapon confiscation, maintaining order at every step, and keeping what is happening secret.
- 3 They were allowed to take 100 kg (approximately 220 lbs) of basic necessities such as clothes, utensils, food, money, small farming equipment (if they're headed to a rural area).
- 4 Tell the men they must pack in a different suitcase for the purposes of screening, use one vehicle to the train station, and only separate them once they have arrived at the train station.
- 5 Powerful people, influential people, potentially disloyal individuals, people who belong to the bourgeoisie class, reformers, political dissidents, and religious leaders, as well as anyone else who could lead resistance to Soviet tyranny.

#### DEPORTEE CHARACTER CARDS

**Name** ANDRES KUKK; **Occupation** Plumber; **Class** Working/Proletariat; **Background** Estonian – lower working class; **Education** Uneducated; **Deport?** No.

**Name** JUOZAS KUPČINSKAS; **Occupation** Owner of Logging Company; **Class** Bourgeoise; **Background** Lithuanian Bourgeoise; **Education** College educated; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** ALVAR KASK; **Occupation** Former Prime Minister/Politician Company; **Class** Bourgeoise/government; **Background** Bourgeoise – long line of Estonian Politicians; **Education** College educated; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** GRETA KRAŠTAS; **Occupation** Secretary in Lithuanian Parliament; **Class** Bourgeoise/government; **Background** Bourgeoise/government – comes from a line of Politicians ; **Education** Secondary School ; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** LILTA BĒRZIŅŠ; **Occupation** Activist; **Class** Bourgeoise; **Background** Bourgeoise/Socialist ; **Education** Secondary School; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** KALEVA RÜÜTEL; **Occupation** Fisherman; **Class** Proletariat/Working; **Background** Proletariat/Working – not loyal to Estonian; **Education** Limited; **Deport?** No.

**Name** ANNA OZOLAS; **Occupation** Student; **Class** Bourgeoise/land owning farmers; **Background** Bourgeoise / land owning farmers; **Education** Incomplete – still in school ; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** PĒTERIS BALODIS; **Occupation** Student; **Class** Bourgeoise/Government; **Background** Bourgeoise/Government – dad is the Minister of Economics; **Education** Incomplete – still in secondary school/wants to go to University; **Deport?** Yes.

**Name** AZUOLAS VITKUS; **Occupation** Student; **Class** Bourgeoise; **Background** Bourgeoise/educated/ politician; **Education** Incomplete – still in private school; **Deport?** Yes.

#### MAO AND CHINA

##### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 His two major initiatives were the Great Leap Forward (1959-1961) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76). Neither initiative was successful.

- 2 Collectivization was not successful. Individuals received only meager amounts of food for their efforts, and the result was widespread famine: a direct consequence of political decisions.
  - 3 The Red Guard tried to eliminate the “Four Olds” by destroying ancient buildings and priceless antiques. They encouraged young people to publicly criticize their parents and teachers. They humiliated and some times executed wealthy peasants, landowners, and educated individuals.
  - 4 Accept all reasoned responses.
  - 5 Marx and Lenin believed that the factory workers of the world would unite in violent revolution to over-throw factory owners. Mao applied these beliefs to the agrarian society of China.
  - 6 Mao supported other revolutionary movements throughout Asia. Communist movements in North Korea, Vietnam, and Cambodia received financial and military support from Mao.
  - 7 Accept all reasoned responses.
- 2 The United States supported South Korea because it feared the spread of communism.
  - 3 Juche emphasizes national self-reliance and pride. The group (or the nation) is much more important than the individual.
  - 4 A cult of personality is a belief that one individual is the complete embodiment of a nation’s values and ideals.
  - 5 Any challenge to the leadership is considered a challenge to the North Korean way of life. Political prisoners and their families are sent to Camp 22, a North Korean concentration camp.
  - 6 North Korea’s leaders have elevated themselves to god-like status, and demand near-worship from the North Korean people. Organized religion has been abolished. Koreans believe that both Kims are “perfect” human beings who will create a paradise in North Korea.

## CUBA, CASTRO, AND CHE

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 To achieve power in Cuba, Castro and Che fought a guerrilla war in which defectors and deserters were shot, land was taken from peasants, and the government was overthrown.
- 2 Castro limited political and economic freedom by limiting rights to property and free speech, assembly, and press. Purges eliminated many of his enemies and other members of the opposition were sent to prison.
- 3 The United States challenged the placement of Soviet missiles in October 1962. The government has also pressured Cuba to restore the freedoms of its citizens; has limited trade with Cuba; and has restricted travel to Cuba.
- 4 Che left Cuba to train and support communist guerrilla movements in Africa and Bolivia. He described his African experience as “a history of failure.” In Bolivia, he was unable to attract local support and was executed.
- 5 Bolivia’s president redistributed land and nationalized key industries. Hugo Chavez of Venezuela thought of Castro “as a father” and redistributed land, nationalized industries, and limited freedom of expression. The Peruvian communist movement, Shining Path, waged guerrilla warfare throughout the country.

## POL POT AND CAMBODIA

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 The Khmer Rouge had achieved power.
- 2 Evacuated cities and urban areas. Lives were regimented. Private property eliminated. Home life (children, meals, etc.) collectivized.
- 3 Mass graves dug by those who were then executed.
- 4 Forced collectivization, reclassification of individuals, wholesale elimination of entire classes and professions, purging of religious and ethnic groups, state sponsored starvation.
- 5 Accept all reasoned answers.
- 6 Accept all reasoned answers.

## KIM IL-SUNG AND NORTH KOREA

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 Kim Il-Sung ruled from 1948-1994 and was called “Beloved Leader.” Kim Jong-Il ruled from 1994-2011 and was known as “Dear Leader.” Kim Jong-Un has ruled since 2011 and is known as the “Great Successor.”

Nicaragua's current president trained in Cuba to lead guerrilla warfare and began a process of land redistribution and nationalization of industry.

- 6 Accept all reasoned responses.

## GERMANY AND THE BERLIN WALL

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 The Soviet Union imposed the blockade to isolate West Berliners from freedom. In response, the United States and other nations launched the Berlin Airlift to supply the West Berliners with basic necessities.
- 2 The Soviet Union tightened border controls, divided the city of Berlin, and built the Berlin Wall in 1961.
- 3 The Berlin Wall was constructed to deny East Germans the freedom to travel outside their home. Thousands still tried to exercise their right of travel and sought to escape by digging tunnels, flying balloons, etc.
- 4 President Ronald Reagan went to Berlin and called upon Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to "Tear down this wall!" Gorbachev did not stop the wall from crumbling.
- 5 Accept all reasoned responses.

## AMERICA AND VIETNAM

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 American POW's suffered from solitary confinement, broken bones, torture, confined spaces.
- 2 The United States became involved in Vietnam to stop a communist takeover that could become part of a wider "domino effect" with nations throughout Southeast Asia becoming Soviet allies.
- 3 Family members of POW's suffered; university students and teachers suffered because classes were disrupted or canceled; protestors suffered as a result of clashes with the police; many returning veterans suffered as they dealt with the symptoms of PTSD.
- 4 Some American foreign policy decisions are still influenced by the military and diplomatic experiences in Vietnam.5 | Accept all reasoned responses.

## CAPTIVE NATIONS AND THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

### BACKGROUND ESSAY

- 1 The Captive Nations include the nations of Eastern Europe: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania. They were held captive by the Soviet Union through repression and oppression.
- 2 Gorbachev began a period of rebuilding the Soviet Union according to more democratic principles (perestroika) and encouraged citizens to share their concerns openly (glasnost). As the Soviet Union gradually restored liberties to its citizens, the people of Eastern Europe demanded their rights, too.
- 3 The economy was nationalized. Government officials arrested, tortured, deported, or executed thousands. Religious instruction was banned and religious leaders were imprisoned. Russian language, culture, and traditions replaced many native Hungarian customs.
- 4 Lech Wałęsa was the leader of Solidarity, a Polish political party which was anti-communist, anti-Soviet, and independent of government control. He was the first post-communist President of Poland. Václav Havel, a poet and playwright, helped to lead the 1989 Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia.
- 5 Forms of resistance included the following: strikes, student demonstrations, poetry, the "forest brothers", and national songfests.
- 6 At national song festivals, Estonians sang patriotic songs banned under the Soviets, fostering a nationalistic spirit leading to increased demands for independence. Lithuanians sang hymns and national anthems. A human chain of singers stretching 400 miles through the Baltic nations united people in their opposition to communism.
- 7 Accept all reasoned responses.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Russia Under Communism

*Richard Pipes*

According to the Marxist doctrine, which underpins Communism, Russia should not have been an early convert to Communism because Communism should have originated in capitalist countries with advanced industrial economies. Russia, by contrast, in the early years of the twentieth Century was an agricultural Society with some 80 percent of its population living on and off the land. Her industries could not stand comparison with those of England, Germany or the United States.

If, nevertheless, Russia turned out to be the world's first country to undergo a Communist revolution and establish a Communist regime, the reason must be sought in politics rather than economics. Russia had traditionally lived under an autocracy which ruled without public consent: except for a brief and not very successful constitutional period lasting barely one decade (1906-1916), the monarchy never consulted the Russian public. This autocratic tradition had two consequences. One, that society at large (a small minority excepted) never developed an understanding of political processes and a sense that government matters. And second, that it considered autocracy to be the natural form of conducting political affairs.

In striving for absolute power over Russia, Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) exploited this apolitical culture. To opponents who argued that Russia was not ready for Communism because of her backward economy he responded that in fact she had already attained a level of economic development that made her ripe for revolution. Personally, his primary concern was not so much to construct a Communist Russia as to use Russia as a springboard for launching a revolution in the advanced countries of the West. His instincts told him that his countrymen would accept a dictatorship which would carry out a

socialist revolution from above.

In November, 1917, following the abdication of the tsar Nicholas II and the breakdown of the democratic Provisional Government which had tried to govern in his stead, Lenin, with the assistance of Leon Trotsky (1879-1940), seized power. This power seizure was not a "revolution," a term which conveys mass participation, but a classical coup d'état carried out by Red Guards at night in the capital city of Petrograd, action of which the population at large was quite unaware. Resistance was minimal for the Provisional Government was quite paralyzed. Formally, Lenin and his associates took power on behalf of "soviets," organs of self-rule run by workers, soldiers, and peasants; in fact, the soviets had no say and were soon relegated to the Status of rubber-stamps of the Bolshevik Party. Formally, too, the state was a free union of independent republics, but in reality it was an empire, the "union republics" being colonies of Russia.

From day one, Lenin ruled dictatorially, dealing with all Opposition by means of terror, the main instrument of which was the political police called Cheka. He made no secret of his undemocratic methods stating on one occasion that "the dictatorship of the Proletariat," as he dubbed his regime, was "limited by nothing, by no laws... restrained by absolutely no rules" and resting "directly on coercion." This principle defined the Communist regime in Russia and all other countries that emulated its example.

Lenin died in 1924, disappointed in his failure either to shape Russia as he had planned or to spread the revolution worldwide. After a brief struggle for succession between Trotsky and Joseph Stalin (1878-1953), power passed into the hands of the latter. By the end of the 1920's, Stalin was in complete control of the Communist empire, labeled Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or USSR. He proceeded ruthlessly to implement Lenin's program.



He robbed the peasants of their land, livestock and implements, "collectivizing" farming: in the process millions of peasants perished. Next, he carried out a program of forced industrialization, ostensibly meant to transform Russia into a great industrial power but in reality to make her military force second to none for he counted on provoking a new world war as a means of exporting Communism abroad. In 1937-38 he carried out an unprecedented massacre of hundreds of thousands of opponents, real or imaginary, among them most of Lenin's closest associates, having them tried and convicted in show trials or else summarily shot or confined to concentration camps.

In August, 1939 Stalin realized his intention of starting another global war by signing a non-aggression treaty with Hitler which enabled the German dictator, with his eastern border secure, to launch a war of conquest in the west. During their two-year alliance, Stalin supplied the Nazis with all the raw materials they needed to conquer Europe. He believed, not unreasonably, that this vital assistance assured him of Hitler's good will. But contrary to his expectations, in June 1941, Hitler, having given up his attempt to conquer the British isles, sent his vast army against the USSR. The invasion, initially successful, eventually bogged down and the Red Army pushed the Wehrmacht out of Russia to the very center of Berlin. According to recent estimates, Soviet losses in the war, both military and civilian, amounted to 43 million.

Contrary to the expectations of many Soviet Citizens, their sacrifices in the war did not bring them relief from Communist deprivations and despotism. On the contrary: abandoning the war-time Alliance with the West, Stalin launched what came to be known as the "Cold War," a State of unrelenting tension with Europe and the United States which required a military buildup well beyond the Soviet Union's resources that drained its economy further, inflicting still greater hardships on its population.

When Stalin died in March 1953, the country was exhausted. His immediate successors, led by Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971), relaxed the terror and somewhat eased the Cold War but the country stagnated. By the mid-1980's it became apparent to the Soviet leadership that the Situation called for major reforms.

To carry them out, it appointed as the General Secretary of the Communist Party the relatively

young and open-minded Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931). Gorbachev at first tried to carry out the reforms within the existing system but before long he discovered that the entrenched Communist apparatus resisted all change. So he launched an ambitious program of "rebuilding" (perestroika) by inviting Soviet Citizens to express their grievances and wishes through a policy of openness (glasnost') and elections to a genuine parliament. Unexpectedly, once released, the force of public opinion swept aside the entire rigid political edifice built by the Communists over seven decades.

In 1991, led by the newly elected President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin (1931-2007), the Soviet Union fell apart into its 16 constituent republics. The Russian Federation became formally a democratic republic but in fact turned into a quasi-dictatorship disguised by a democratic facade.

Richard Pipes is an American historian who specializes in Russian history, particularly with respect to the history of the Soviet Union. During the Cold War era he headed Team B, a team of analysts which analyzed the strategic capacities and goals of the Soviet military and political leadership.

## Appendix B: Vladimir Ilich Lenin

Vladimir Ilich Lenin (1870-1924) was born in a conventional bureaucratic family, his father serving as inspector of schools. He however, like his brothers and sisters, found himself attracted to the revolutionary movement. Expelled from the university for participating in a Student demonstration, he developed an abiding hatred for the tsarist regime and the "bourgeoisie". Originally sympathetic to the terrorist "Peoples' Will," in time he became a Marxist, convinced that the revolution would come to Russia as a result of capitalist development that would impoverish and thus radicalize the industrial working class.

Lenin spent some time in Siberian exile and on his return from it, in 1903 broke with the majority of Russian Social-Democrats who expected the revolution to be a mass movement by forming a Bolshevik faction based on strict discipline and prepared to take power so as to carry out a revolution "from above." The opportunity presented itself in the fall of 1917 when, following the abdication of tsar Nicholas II, Russia became mired in anarchy. In November of that year his followers seized power and established a Communist State.

This state, of which Lenin was the unquestioned dictator, nationalized most industries, eliminated rival parties and established a regime subsequently labeled "totalitarian." It repelled all attempts, both domestic and foreign, to topple it. Nevertheless Lenin died in 1924 a deeply disappointed man, frustrated by his inability to make Russia truly socialist and to export the revolution abroad.

## Appendix C: Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin

Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin (1878-1953) was Lenin's successor as undisputed leader of the Soviet Union. Born in Georgia in a poor family, he joined Lenin's Bolshevik party. He played a minor role in the November 1917 Bolshevik seizure of power but subsequently rose in influence and power by virtue of his administrative talents and unquestioned obedience to Lenin. In 1922 Lenin recommended him to the post of the party's General Secretary. This placed Stalin in a position to rally around himself loyal cadres with the help of which he defeated his much abler and better known rival, Leon Trotsky.

By the end of the 1920's Stalin was in complete command of the Soviet party and State apparatus which enabled him to carry out an ambitious and very costly program of "collectivization" of agriculture and industrialization. He surrounded himself with toadies and demanded something in the nature of personal deification. Progressively paranoid, in 1937-38 he carried out massive "purges" in which perished through executions or confinement to concentrations camps millions of people.

Convinced that Communism could spread globally only as the result of another world war, in August 1939 Stalin signed a so-called "non-aggression" pact with Hitler which enabled Germany to attack Poland and then conquer most of Continental Europe. To his shock, Hitler repaid him the favor two years later by attacking the USSR. After immense human losses, the Red Army ultimately broke the back of the German army, enabling Stalin to occupy most of Eastern Europe. He died in 1953 and is today highly regarded by the Russian population as someone who had made Russia a world power.



## Appendix D: *The Great Terror at 40*

Robert Conquest

[As his classic work is republished, Robert Conquest reflects on how it threw open the doors of the Gulag's secrets.]

In the late Sixties when my book *The Great Terror* came out, it was still true that, as the great historian François Furet noted, after the war and the demise of fascism, “all the major debates on postwar ideas revolved round a single question: the nature of the Soviet regime.” He adds the paradox that communism had two main embodiments—as a backward despotism and as a constituency in the West that had to be kept unaware of the other’s reality. And, up to the last, this was often accompanied by a view of the Cold War as an even exchange—with the imputation that any denigration of the Soviet regime was due to peace-hating prejudice.

What was the condition of our previous knowledge of Stalinist actuality before, let us say, 1956? We had for decades had a large amount of real information about the purges, all often rejected or ignored, while little truth and much falsehood had emerged from Moscow. However, since 1956, starting with the revelations of Nikita Khrushchev’s Secret Speech it was (or seemed) indisputable that a regime of lies and terror had indeed been in existence. Over the years that followed came the publication of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* [by Alexander Solzhenitsyn], which, as Galina Vishnevskaya put it, “let the genie out of the bottle, and however hard they tried later, they couldn’t put it back in.”

So by 1964 or 1965 it had gradually become plain that a huge gap in history needed to be filled, and that the facts released over the past few years, plus the often denied testimony of some of the regime’s hostile but increasingly justified witnesses, could be put together, if carefully done, to produce a veridical story, a real history.

When my book came out in 1968, the publishers were surprised to have to reprint it time and time again to meet demand. Reviews, from left and right, were almost all very favorable. And it was soon published in most Western languages—and also Hindi, Arabic, Japanese, and Turkish.

Over the decades that followed, “the period of stagnation” as it became known in Russia, there was little further public addition to our knowledge—or to that of the Soviet citizen. But in those years came many breaches of the official silence. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn “illegally” gave us *The Gulag Archipelago*. From Andrei Sakharov came striking interviews and interventions. There was a flowering of samizdat and, to counter it, many arrests (and confinement in penal “psychiatric” wards— as reported by my friend Vladimir Bukovsky and others—as well as the Gulag). And there was Roy Medvedev’s *Let History Judge*—from, what is more, a devoted Leninist: a deeply detailed blow at the Stalin terror. There was a liberalism of the catacombs.

Above all, the old falsifications lost credibility among anything describable as an educated class in Russia. The public acceptance of what they knew to be not merely falsehoods, but stupid and long-exposed falsehoods—the mere disgrace of it ate into the morale of even the official intelligentsia, as I remember noting in conversations with Soviet diplomats. Meanwhile, the original 1968 edition of *The Great Terror* had been published in a Russian version (in Florence, in 1972) and was soon being smuggled into the USSR, where it was welcomed by many outside—and, as we now know, inside—official circles.

In the early 1980s came the realization by some in Moscow that the whole regime had become nonviable economically, ecologically, intellectually— and even militarily—largely because of its rejection of reality. When it came to Soviet history, and Stalin’s Terror, there was, as on other themes, some sharp disagreement in the Politburo—later to produce the attempted coup of 1991. The highest leadership itself had not managed to find the facts about the fate of its own relatives! It is only years later that records of these disputes have been published.

One finds Mikhail Gorbachev telling his colleagues, “Millions rehabilitated— that is the great service done by Nikita Khrushchev.” Why did this “stop short?” he asked. “Because Khrushchev too had blood on his hands.” As to his successors, they had done their best to keep the truth unknown: “Under Brezhnev, under Andropov, under Chernenko, even members of the Politburo had no information.” As to what followed, Stalin’s “use of the Kirov murder to bring in repression,” the only motive was “the struggle for power.” And Gorbachev adds: “Plots against him—that’s all rubbish (chepukha).”

*“And this was Stalin,” Gorbachev told his colleagues. “How can that be accepted, let alone forgiven?”*

He then speaks of “3 million sentenced, and that the most active part of the nation. A million shot. And that is not counting the share of dekulakization and the fate of people at the time of deportations. And this was Stalin. How can that be accepted, let alone forgiven?”

This was not for publication. But the whole direction of glasnost, amongst other things, brought a mass of officially banned knowledge out of hiding. The first public mention in Russia of my book was when Katrina vanden Heuvel interviewed me for *Moskovskie Novosti* in April 1989. When I was in Moscow later that year, it was all over. Through the decade there had been little reply to the book from the party establishment. But now the Stalinist writer Aleksandr Chakovsky called me “anti-Sovietchik number one” at the last plenum of the Central Committee. By that time the Russian edition was being serialized (in a million copies each month) in *Neva*.

The new openness had produced so much new material that it became possible, and even necessary, to produce a new edition of this book. *The Great Terror: A Reassessment* was published in 1990. Over the next four or five years, I was welcomed in Russia, making many friends, speaking to cultural and other groups and at conferences hosted by the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Going into *Izvestiya* to collect payment for a contribution to a Moscow journal, I saw a portrait of Nikolai Bukharin (purged and executed in 1938) hanging alongside those of the other former editors. I spent some weeks being filmed there for the documentary series *Red Empire*, made by Granada Television. As I encountered those I had met earlier abroad, it was hard not to relish Andrei Voznesensky’s saying he could hardly believe I was there: could he pinch me to make sure?

*Russians’ acceptance of what they knew to be not merely falsehoods, but stupid and long-exposed falsehoods—the mere disgrace of it ate into the morale of even the official intelligentsia.*

The information now available established the story clearly as to historical essentials, and in a generally correct way as to almost all crucial details. But we were soon like modern historians of an ancient empire who have had to rely on a few inscriptions, some only recently deciphered, when a huge store of firsthand records is discovered under some pyramid.

It was enough for generations of archaeologists. . . . So eventually we come to the 2008 edition.

By far the most substantial additions, or amendments, to our knowledge have been the set of decrees on “Mass Operations” in 1937–38. The lists of those sentenced by the Military Collegium were sent to Stalin, and given his approval, with only a few Politburo members also signing. Nor did this informal leadership group have much time to spare. Records show that they had to make so many decisions on other urgent matters of policy that these terror orders were usually handled in twenty or thirty minutes. But when it comes to the Mass Operations, one finds that the number of victims in these accounted for *nearly twenty times* the number of victims of the Military Collegium and other lesser tribunals.

The mass terror was ordered in detail from the top, and was directed, with the numbers to be repressed laid down for each province and republic, for each stratum of the population—with individual crimes of terrorism, espionage, and so on added later by the local troika—and the lists of names then submitted to Moscow for final approval. That is to say, the strata were condemned as such, and the mass terror was seen as a removal of all that seemed unassimilable to the Stalinist order. Stalin’s mass action against a section of the population was thus taken on “ideological” grounds, merely disguising it as a purge of terrorists, spies, and saboteurs necessary to the safety and survival of the regime.

In the 2008 edition we have much new material on the personalities and activities of the key secret police operators and of the whole mechanism of terror.

*Stalin’s terror was ordered at the top. Mass action against a section of the population was taken on “ideological” grounds, disguising it as a purge of terrorists, spies, and saboteurs.*

My book has been faulted for giving too little attention to the context of Russia and of the Russian historical and mental backgrounds. We find what seem to be contradictions. Any reader of the country’s great literature may feel an especially Russian humanism arising from the depths of the “national character.” On the other hand, Ronald Hingley (in his classic *The Russian Mind*) saw the fictional and the real Russian as living in great dullness interspersed with, or accompanying, extreme outbursts, but also possessed by a view of the country’s past and present as

deplorable yet containing as recompense a wonderful future with some sort of national glory compensating for everything. A complementary trait often reported is the fear that a Russian, or Russia, is being deceived or cheated—the sort of thing we see in Nikolai Gogol's *Dead Souls* and in Soviet xenophobia.

But this does downgrade Russia's other options—liberalism or pluralism. As Boris Pasternak put it, in the 1880s came “the birth of an enlightened and affluent middle class, open to occidental influences, progressive, intelligent, artistic.” There are many historical and modern examples of this more “Western” style of thought in Russia, deep-set, and though often disenchanting continuing to present a more viable and civilized future. The present leadership has, at least to a large extent, given up Soviet-type economics. But one can have “reform” without liberalism—as with Peter the Great and Pyotr Stolypin. Above all, we are still far from the rule of law—much more important than “democracy.” As elsewhere, the problem seems to be to free the idea of the “nation” from both archaic barbarism and from the more recently bankrupted verbalisms that have partly melded into it.

*One can have “reform” without liberalism. Above all, Russia today is still far from the rule of law—much more important than “democracy.”*

The history of the period covered by *The Great Terror* sees the enforcement of Stalin's totally intolerant belief system—with terror as the decisive argument. Terror means terrorizing. Mass terror means terrorizing the whole population, and must be accompanied by the most complete public exposure of the worst enemies of the people, of the party line, and so of the truth. We know the results. One of the strangest notions put forward about Stalinism is that in the interests of “objectivity” we must be—wait for it—“nonjudgmental.” But to ignore, or downplay, the realities of Soviet history is itself a judgment, and a very misleading one.

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## Appendix E: Mao Zedong

Mao Zedong (26 December 1893 – 9 September 1976) was a Chinese Communist leader. Mao led the Communist Party of China (CPC) to victory against the Kuomintang (KMT) in the Chinese Civil War, and was the leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC) from its establishment in 1949 until his death in 1976.

Chairman Mao has been regarded as one of the most important figures in modern world history and named by Time Magazine as one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. He is officially held in high regard in China where he is known as a great revolutionary, political strategist, and military mastermind who defeated Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in the Chinese Civil War, and then through his policies transformed the country into a major world power. Additionally, Mao is viewed by many in China as a poet, philosopher, and visionary.

However, Mao remains a controversial figure to this day, with a contentious and ever-evolving legacy. Critics blame many of Mao's socio-political programs, such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, for causing severe damage to the culture, society, economy, and foreign relations of China, as well as a death toll in the tens of millions. His adoption of Marxism ideals applied to a largely agricultural society ultimately failed.



## Appendix F: Cuban Communism

*Ray Walser, Ph.D.*

On January 1, 1959, a combination of popular resistance and military actions forced an unpopular Cuban dictator to flee the island. Cubans were hopeful of a turn to constitutional government, prosperity and greater freedom. With terrible irony, the Cuban people opened the door to a dictatorship and the imposition of totalitarian communism few could have envisioned as they welcomed Fidel Castro and his guerrilla force as national liberators and harbingers of hope.

Cuba's proximity to the U.S. since the 1850s has long exercised a major psychological influence on the development of Cuba's national politics. Independence from Spain came late to Cuba and required U. S. military intervention in the Spanish-American War to break Spain's hold on the island.

From 1898 until the 1930's, the U.S., to the discomfort of Cuba's independent-minded nationalists, exercised strong political and economic control over Havana. Cuba's economy – heavily reliant on sugar, foreign companies, and tourism – was closely linked to the U.S. market. Experiments in Cuban democracy deteriorated into dictatorships such as that of Gerardo Machado (1925-1933) and Fulgencio Batista (1952-1959). Cubans tended to blame the U.S. for the failures of their democracy and for U.S. willingness to “prefer” the stability of a strong man over the disorder and uncertainty of democracy. Nevertheless, by 1959, Cuba was one of Latin America's best educated, most prosperous nations.

Credit for the success of the revolutionary movement and building Cuban communism belongs to Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz. Son of a Spanish immigrant who owned 10,000 acres and employed 500, Castro was born in 1926 and was educated in Cuba's elite schools. As a law student in the 1940's, Fidel demonstrated a restless intellect coupled with the instincts of a strategist and a street fighter. At an early age, he discovered radical politics and the utility of political violence.

On July 26, 1952, Fidel helped lead a bloody, unsuccessful assault on Batista's troops garrisoned in the Moncada Barracks in Santiago. Captured after the attack, Castro converted his trial into a propaganda

victory. After less than two years in prison, Castro received an amnesty and traveled to Mexico where he recruited a small revolutionary army. Founding members included brother Raúl (b. 1931) and the Argentine doctor, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, (1928-1967). The guerrilla band landed in Cuba on the yacht Granma in December 1956. After several bloody clashes a handful of survivors disappeared into the Sierra Maestra Mountains.

Like many other Communist leaders, a ruthless but pragmatic Castro set as his primary objective the overthrow of the Batista regime and the armed seizure of power. Putting aside divisions over ideology, he forged broad alliances with historic opposition parties, organized labor and radical elements in the cities.

The press often portrayed Fidel and his band as young idealists fighting a corrupt, unpopular tyranny. Castro promised a “democratic Cuba,” restoration of the Cuban constitution, free elections, and claimed to harbor “no animosity toward the U.S.” A positive image of the rebels coupled with repugnance for Batista's strong-arm methods, led the U.S. to impose an arms embargo on the Batista regime.

By late 1958, the Batista government began to crumble. On New Year's Eve, Batista escaped to the Dominican Republic. On January 9, 1959, Fidel Castro arrived in Havana to tumultuous acclaim. Within weeks, Castro commenced maneuvering against liberals and democrats, breaking alliances and power sharing deals to solidify personal power and set Cuba on the path to communist dictatorship.

Frictions swiftly developed between the U.S. and Fidel. The U.S. challenged the use of summary “people's courts” proceedings and firing squads that executed hundreds of former Batista officials and soldiers. Fidel defended “revolutionary justice,” explaining that moral conviction had replaced legal precepts as a guiding rationale. A system of prisons expanded as Fidel took over Batista's old prisons and built new ones. Thousands passed into Fidel's “tropical Gulag.” In the coming years, millions of Cubans believed themselves to be trapped in an immense, open air prison.

To try to leave the island without government permission became a criminal offense. Nonetheless a massive diaspora of Cubans was underway by 1960 to the benefit of the U.S. It is estimated that more

Cubans were killed by fellow Cubans while trying to escape than the number of Germans killed by East German border guards manning the Berlin Wall.

Although Castro promised democratic elections, none were ever held. The free press was muzzled; judicial independence was lost. Nationalization and confiscation of foreign and domestically-owned property shifted wealth and power from the city and the middle class to the peasants and the working class. Agrarian reforms targeted large private and foreign-owned estates, paving the way for the creation of cooperatives. State planning and bureaucratic controls became omnipresent in all aspects of economic life.

Starting from a relatively advantaged position, the Cuban revolution sought to combat illiteracy, broaden health care coverage, and reduce extreme want. The key debate to this day focuses on the terrible costs paid in the curtailment of individual freedoms and the regimentation of daily life, especially when one recalls that Cuba in 1959 stood on an economic par with a Portugal or Spain.

The utopian aspirations of Cuba's revolution reflected a promise to establish a just society on earth and create what "Che" Guevara called a New Man, a politically-conscious individual free from the taint of bourgeois materialism and personal ambition. Foreign policy would put Cuba at the service of anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism throughout the world, which meant close collaboration with the Kremlin leadership. While experts quibbled whether socialism or communism was practiced on the island, Fidel left no doubt that he was committed to the same trail blazed by Lenin, Stalin, and Mao.

With the U.S. always just over the horizon, Fidel gambled on replacing ties with the U.S. with a new geopolitical protector, the Soviet Union. In February 1960, Cuba and the Soviet Union signed a multi-year contract for the purchase of Cuban sugar and massive credit. In the next two decades, Soviet military trainers and equipment converted Cuba's military into a formidable expeditionary force. Economic dependency on the U.S. yielded to economic vassalage to the Soviet Union.

In 1961, the U.S. backed an ill-fated attempt by Cuban exiles to overthrow the new Castro regime. The Bay of Pigs was a major foreign policy fiasco for President John F. Kennedy and allowed Fidel to crack down on all internal opposition. Henceforth fear of invasion and

equating opposition to Cuban communism with acts of treason were essential weapons in Castro's political arsenal. They remain so today. On May 1, 1960, Fidel proclaimed Cuba a socialist state; less than a year later, he swore allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, forever.

Under Premier Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviets gambled in 1962 on a shift in the correlation of international power as they attempted to station nuclear missiles and 22,000 Russian troops in Cuba. The missile crisis of October 1962 carried the U.S. and the Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear conflict. Fidel urged a preemptive strike against the U.S. and announced he was ready to sacrifice Cuba for the global triumph of socialism. Khrushchev did not give Fidel a chance for nuclear self-immolation. The U.S.-Soviet deal resulted in the removal of Soviet missiles in exchange for a U.S. promise not to invade Cuba.

While his leadership style blended elements of nationalism, utopianism, and anti-Americanism, Fidel constructed a Leninist-style dictatorship. The central institutional pillars include the Cuban Communist Party, serving as the vanguard of the people; the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, which embody a commitment to defend and advance the revolution; and a world-class intelligence and security service able to protect the leadership from all enemies and ferret out any organized opposition. Mass organizations such as the Committees for Defense of the Revolution (CDR) served as conduits for top-down leadership and a means to preserve revolutionary consciousness within the masses.

For decades, Fidel relied heavily upon creating conditions of psychological bondage, where the highest social values are political conformity, loyalty to the system, the denial of individualism, and the rejection of critical or independent thought.

Cuban communism is also remembered for its aggressive advocacy and support of international anti-imperialist revolution. The turbulent rise of liberation movements in Africa and Asia and the emergence of the Third World found ready supporters in Havana. Fidel sent tens of thousands of Cuban troops to fight in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Yemen in the 1970s and 1980s. Fidel's support for Nicaragua's Sandinista Liberation Front and guerrilla movements elsewhere in Central America convulsed the region and contributed to the deaths of tens of thousands.

While the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break-up of the Soviet Union sounded the death knell of communism in Eastern Central Europe, Castro swam steadfastly against the historical tide. To save Cuban Communism, Fidel embarked on the “special period.” A new 1992 constitution allowed some flexibility on freedom of worship and property holding, but recognized only one party, kept the media in the hands of the state, and assigned Cuban citizens the responsibility to work for the creation of a “socialist society.”

Cuba’s economic policies evolved in a desperate attempt to stave off collapse, earn foreign exchange, attract foreign investment, and discover new value-added exports. A tourist sector under the close supervision of the Cuban military attracted Canadians and Europeans to Cuba’s beaches.

With the influx of tourism, however, came changes hardly in keeping with the ideals of Cuban communism – economic “apartheid,” prostitution, sexual tourism, and corruption. Cuba’s sugar economy largely vanished. Lacking foreign exchange for agricultural machinery and fertilizer, Cuban agriculture turned to oxen to till their farms.

Once the U.S. dollar was allowed legally to circulate, Cuba resorted to a dual currency system. Dollar-earners lived well, while a majority of Cubans survived on ration cards. Black markets and petty corruption flourished as resentments grew. Cuba’s leaders have temporized on allowing independent profit centers like home restaurants, independent taxis, and small private farms to exist.

After 10 years of modest reforms, Cuba’s communism could not restore the levels of economic well-being enjoyed in the late 1980s. The average wage of a Cuban is less than \$US 25 per month. Over 80% of Cuba’s food is imported. Access to social and health services has suffered. Zigzags in economic policy and fear of expanding private interests coupled with deep distrust of individual enterprise have weakened the impact of modest economic reforms.

Relations with the U.S. scarcely improved during the 1990s and 2000s. Incidents such as the deliberate sinking of a Cuban ferry in 1994, drowning 32; the 1996 shoot-down of two unarmed aircraft belonging to the Brothers-to-the-Rescue; and the 2003 crackdown on human rights activists reminded U.S. citizens in that Cuba has always been under of an unelected leader callously indifferent to the human costs and consequences of his rule.

In February 1994, Fidel welcomed a young Venezuelan colonel who was the architect of a failed coup in Caracas. Fidel had the vision to take the Venezuelan officer under his wing. Elected president of Venezuela in 1998, Hugo Chávez has embraced Fidel as a father figure, giving Cuba billions in cheap Venezuelan oil and an economic lifeline.

In 2009, amid economic uncertainty many in Cuba and Latin America’s left feel that history is again on the march and favor a return to Fidel Castro’s revolutionary ideas to fight globalization, advance equality, social justice, and end “savage capitalism.” Key elements of Cuba’s brand of communism – nationalism, anti-Americanism, state control of the economy, and limits on individual freedoms and rights – constitute the underpinnings of Chávez’s “Bolivarian Revolution” and plans for “Socialism of the 21st Century.”

In July 2006, following surgery, a gravely weakened Fidel surrendered temporary authority over the government to brother, Raúl, then the 75-year old Minister of Defense. On February 24, 2008, Raúl became president of the Council of State, while Fidel retained the post of Secretary General of the Cuban Communist Party. A 77-year old communist hard-liner, José Ramón Ventura Machado, was next in line of political succession. Raúl introduced modest economic changes and permitted some private incentives to bolster sagging agricultural production.

Raúl promised a party congress in late 2009 to review communist doctrine, structures, and practices. He traveled abroad to Caracas in December 2008 and to Moscow in February 2009, recalling memories of Cuba-Soviet era ties. A March 2009 purge of Carlos Lage and Perez Rocque – considered candidates to lead Cuba after Raúl’s death - raised fresh uncertainty about succession and regime survival in post-Castro Cuba.

The political and human rights situation under Raul Castro remains bleak. A few dissidents such as Generation Y blogger Yoani Sanchez or Oswaldo Payá, the founder of the Varela Project, are tolerated within strict limits. Access to the Internet, freedom of travel, unrestricted public discussion or press freedom are denied by the regime. Approximately 205 political prisoners remain in Cuba’s prisons. Cuban citizens are harassed by the police and fellow citizens, and deviation from the party line is denounced as a crime and opposition to regime linked to treasonable relations to the U.S.



At 50 years, the Cuban Revolution and Cuban communism stand as a powerful anachronism, a throwback to the heyday of the world communist movement. Yet, Cuba is no longer viewed by its neighbors as a strategic threat aligned with a hostile superpower or committed to exporting armed revolution. The nations of the world, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, have made their peace with Cuba. Latin American leaders, steeped in decades of anti-interventionism, urge the U.S. to normalize relations by lifting the economic embargo and promote evolution toward some unspecified state of moderation and pluralism in Cuba.

Ten former U.S. presidents have occupied the White House since Fidel Castro seized power. Each of them has resisted the idea of yielding ground on the fundamental principle of democracy and overlooking, as realism might dictate, the continued repression of the Cuban people. Now substantial pressure from within the U.S. and abroad is being applied on President Barack Obama to end all sanctions and grant the Castroite dictatorship the international recognition it believes it merits.

After 50 years of revolution, the spectacle of an island in chains persists. Cuba's aging and risk adverse citizenry is experiencing negative population growth. Over two million Cubans raised in the "Special Period" are disenchanted with an exhausted ideology, a repressive political machine, and a dysfunctional economy. The watchdogs of the police state prevent freedom from rising in the island.

Cuba is no country for young people. The heroic myths of Fidel's brand of communism are constantly exposed by the realities of a bureaucratic, inefficient, mean-spirited dictatorship run by a coterie of old men with no clear visions of the future.

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## Appendix G: Fidel Castro Ruz

Fidel Castro Ruz was born in 1926 to a Spanish immigrant sugar farmer and his Cuban consort. As a young lawyer, he emerged in the 1950s as an opponent of Cuba's dictator Fulgencio Batista. With a small group of revolutionaries, in 1953 Castro organized a bold attack on the Moncada military Barracks in Santiago de Cuba. The attack failed but Castro's trial made him a figure of national importance.

After two years in prison and amnesty, Castro traveled to Mexico where he organized a new guerrilla movement to overthrow Batista. Castro with 85 others landed in Cuba in late 1956. Within three years, Castro orchestrated the overthrow of President Batista, who fled Cuba on New Year's Eve, 1958.

Following Batista's ouster, Castro maneuvered past those calling for an elective democracy to gain control over the Cuban state. He began to expropriate property, nationalize industry, and build political and military ties with the Soviet Union. In 1960, Castro officially declared Cuba a socialist state, purged media opposition and imprisoned political dissenters.

In 1961, newly-elected U.S. President John F. Kennedy authorized the CIA-supported Bay of Pigs invasion by Cuban exiles to topple the Castro regime. In 1962, after the abject failure of the Bay of Pigs, the U.S. imposed a severe trade embargo and went to the brink of nuclear war following the Soviet placement of nuclear missiles on Cuban soil.

Throughout his fifty-year regime, Fidel's ideas about politics, economics, and international affairs reigned supreme in Cuba. The island became an economic dependency of the Soviet Union for decades and with the help Soviet arms projected power and exported revolution in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990's and transformations in world communism left Cuba and Castro stranded in the backwash of the modern world.

Castro saved Cuba from complete economic collapse by opening the island to foreign investment and tourism but preserved total control over politics and society. In July 2006, Castro suffered a grave health crisis and surrendered temporary authority to his brother, Raul. In February 2008, Fidel officially surrendered the role of President of the Council of State to his brother Raul, although he remains a strong influence over Cuba's totalitarian government.

## Appendix H: Ernesto “Che” Guevara

Ernesto “Che” Guevara [1928 - 1967] was born in Argentina and trained as a medical doctor. Guevara became involved in politics in turbulent Guatemala in the 1950s and joined the Castro brothers in Mexico in 1955. He landed with the Castro brothers in Cuba in late 1956. In the guerrilla campaign, Guevara earned a reputation as a capable but ruthless commander.

Made a Cuban citizen after the triumph of the revolution, Guevara was at the center of the application of revolutionary justice against Batista’s supporters and involved in early communist economic planning. He frequently traveled abroad to represent the new Cuban government.

Guevara envisioned the formation of an anti-capitalist, “New Man,” endowed with political consciousness, anxious for moral rewards, and willing to live free of markets and material incentives. He also believed the Cuban revolution could be replicated by creating centers of resistance [focos] in other under-developed countries.

In 1965, Guevara’s relations with the official Havana-Moscow line communism faltered and Guevara left Cuba to participate in a civil war in Congo, fighting unsuccessfully beside Marxist rebels. By 1967, Guevara was operating with a band of guerrillas in Bolivia. Again failure dogged his efforts. Guevara was captured by Bolivian forces and executed in October 1967.

Despite significant ideological divisions between the Castro brothers and Guevara, “El Che” became an iconic martyr for the cause of the Cuban and Third World Revolutions. Guevara’s posthumous reputation as an humanistic, anti-capitalist rebel must be balanced by the memory of his life-long addiction to violence and ruthless revolution, his deep misunderstanding of ordinary human psychology, and his adherence to the outdated tenets of Marxism.

## Appendix I: Raul Castro Ruz

Raul Castro Ruz, born 1931, has lived long in the shadow of brother Fidel. Raul joined Fidel in the attack on the Moncada barracks and spent nearly two years in prison. He commanded a guerrilla column in the campaign against Batista. Raul's conversion to Marxist-Leninist ideology appears to have preceded that of Fidel and for decades Raul was considered a hard-line communist.

Following the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, Raul became Minister of Defense, a position he held until 2008. As a soldier, Raul worked closely with the Soviets to develop Cuba's military power. Under his command as many as 50,000 Cuban soldiers at a time fought in liberation wars in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. The execution of the popular Cuban General Arnaldo Ochoa in 1989, allegedly for drug trafficking, was widely interpreted as Raul's way of eliminating a feared rival.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Raul and the Cuban Armed Forces played a critical role in managing Cuba's "new economy" of tourism and foreign investment. In 1997, Fidel designated Raul as his successor. Raul was never the charismatic equal of his brother, preferring to remain out of the limelight and off the podium.

In February 2008, after almost two years of provisional leadership, Raul became the official head of the Cuban state. Under Raul modest reforms have occurred and some restrictions lifted on such things as ownership of cell phones and computers. Cuba has engaged in modest efforts to foster private agricultural production and self-employment. Cubans look to Raul and a Cuban Communist Party Congress later in 2009 to establish new ideological directions for the island's currently bleak future.

## Appendix J: Communism and the German Democratic Republic

*Mark Kramer*

The German Democratic Republic (GDR), often known as East Germany, was formed in October 1949 out of what had been the Soviet Zone of Occupation in Germany. At the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945, the three main Allied powers — the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain — had agreed that Germany would be divided temporarily into four zones (under American, Soviet, British, and French rule, respectively) until the fate of the country was permanently settled.

Over the next few years, as Cold War divisions intensified, it became clear that no lasting settlement on Germany was going to be feasible. The USSR and the three Western countries began preparing to set up separate German states — one aligned with the Soviet Union and the other tied to the West. In May 1949 the United States, Britain, and France merged their sectors to form the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which, though an independent country, was still formally under American, British, and French occupation. The establishment of the GDR five months later under Moscow's auspices consolidated the bifurcation of Germany.

The Soviet occupation of eastern Germany from 1945 to 1949 was unusually harsh and violent. Although some hostility and excesses were inevitable after a rampantly destructive war, the Soviet reprisals against the German population went far beyond what could be regarded as the “normal” abuses under occupation. Soviet forces embarked on summary executions and torture of perceived enemies and “hostile” elements, and Soviet soldiers raped hundreds of thousands, and perhaps as many as two million, German women. The sheer brutality of the Soviet occupation left long-term scars on the public psyche of the GDR.

The Soviet occupation forces and administrators did not immediately move to establish a full Communist system in the eastern zone of Germany, and the Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin initially urged the leaders of the Communist party in the region (known after April 1946 as the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, or SED) to adopt a “cautious approach.” Nonetheless, from the beginning, the Soviet occupation authorities took a number of steps that — perhaps unintentionally at first — ensured that the SED would eventually gain preeminent power and eliminate all poten-

tial challengers. By the time the East German state was formally created in October 1949, a Soviet-style polity was firmly entrenched under the SED leader, Walter Ulbricht, a devoted Stalinist. Stalin himself by that point had abandoned any further hope of creating a unified German polity that (he believed) would gravitate toward Moscow, and he was willing to move vigorously ahead with the establishment of a Communist system in the GDR.

Under Ulbricht's iron hand, the GDR conducted Stalinist show trials and mass repressions. In July 1952, at Stalin's behest, the East German regime embarked on a crash program for the “Construction of Socialism” (*Aufbau des Sozialismus*). This program, as endorsed by the SED's Second Conference, called for much higher output targets, an all-out campaign against private enterprise, a further shift toward heavy industry at the expense of consumer production, forcible collectivization of agriculture, and the formation of an East German army. These measures were accompanied by a stepped-up “class struggle” (i.e., harsh repression) against “bourgeois” and dissenting elements, as well as a crackdown on the Protestant church. The program quickly led to severe hardships and deprivation, including widespread hunger and food shortages, rationing and higher prices for basic consumer goods, and prolonged interruptions of heat and electricity during the winter. East Germans had been fleeing to West Germany in large numbers from the time the GDR was founded, but the “Construction of Socialism” program spurred a vastly increased flow of refugees, causing even greater strains and economic dislocation in the GDR.

### *The Advent of the Post-Stalin Era*

Stalin's death in March 1953 had far-reaching repercussions in the Communist world, but initially it seemed to make little difference in the GDR. The mass exodus of East Germans to the West continued and indeed escalated. Among those fleeing in the spring of 1953 were many hundreds of East German police, internal security troops, paramilitary soldiers, and border guards, whose morale had plummeted amid growing hardships. The East German authorities had tried to combat the problem by imposing strict border controls and a “prohibited zone” along the demarcation line with the FRG (an area that until mid-1952 had been largely open on both sides), but the closing of the border failed to stem the efflux.

The situation in East Germany deteriorated even further in mid-May 1953 when the SED Politbüro, headed by Ulbricht, suddenly announced a 10-per-



cent increase in the stringency of work quotas, effective on 1 June. Some industrial ministry officials and plant managers in the GDR used the SED's announcement as an excuse to raise their own norms by as much as 60 percent. By mid-June 1953, when the new quotas were implemented, another 65,000 people had left East Germany for the West, an average of more than 10,000 a week.

The group of leaders in Moscow who had come to power after Stalin's death had quickly adopted major political and economic reforms in the USSR that did away with some of the worst features of Stalinist tyranny. They watched the situation in the GDR with growing alarm. By late May 1953 they were so worried that they ordered Ulbricht and a few other East German leaders to come to Moscow for secret talks. At those negotiations, held on 2-4 June, the Soviet authorities condemned the SED's "false course" and warned that "a catastrophe will soon occur [in the GDR] if corrective measures are not implemented" as quickly as possible. They gave the East Germans a document outlining a reformist New Course for the GDR, and they ordered Ulbricht and the others to carry it out after they returned to East Berlin.

Faced with this ultimatum, the East German leaders had little choice but to reverse their earlier policies and to introduce sweeping reforms, if only grudgingly. On 11 June the main SED daily, *Neues Deutschland*, published a communiqué at the top of its front page pledging that the party would rectify the "grave mistakes" of recent years by adopting a liberal New Course that would abolish forced collectivization, shift emphasis from heavy industry to consumer production, safeguard private enterprise, encourage free political debate and participation, restore "bourgeois" instructors and students to the schools from which they had been expelled, guarantee freedom of religion, rehabilitate the victims of the Stalinist political trials, and reaffirm the "great goal of German unity." This sudden announcement, after a year of unrelenting austerity and oppression in the GDR, came as a thunderbolt to the East German population.

### ***The East German Rebellion, June 1953***

Unrest in East Germany continued to mount in mid-June 1953 despite the SED's proclamation of a New Course. Indeed, the announcement on 11 June, far from helping the situation, seemed only to make things worse. A secret report prepared by the SED Central Committee apparatus in July 1953 conceded that "when the communiqué was published, a large proportion of workers regarded it as a sign of weak-

ness and even impotence on the part of the SED and the government." Any benefits the East German authorities had hoped to gain from the announcement were nullified by their decision to retain the increased work norms.

Strikes and protests erupted in East Berlin on 15-16 June. Many of the demonstrators openly voiced political grievances and held banners aloft that denounced the government and the SED, called for free elections and the elimination of censorship, opposed the creation of an East German army, supported the formation of non-Communist parties, urged the adoption of a "genuinely democratic constitution," and demanded that the East German population be treated as "free people, not slaves."

When Ulbricht and his colleagues received news of the unrest, they initially were extremely reluctant to give in to the strikers' demands. But under mounting pressure the SED Politbüro finally voted on the evening of 16 June to do away with the increased work quotas. Nonetheless, this gesture came much too late to have a positive effect. When the workers realized that they had won a major concession, it merely reinforced their sense of the regime's growing vulnerability. The demands of the protesters escalated and became more overtly political. Many of the demonstrators threw rocks and bottles at the giant monument to Stalin in central Berlin and called for the East German government to resign.

Although most of the demonstrators eventually returned home on the evening of 16 June, they were determined to resume and expand their activities the following day. For the first time since 1945, East Germans were eager to vent long-standing grievances in public, blaming the SED for "turning us into slaves" and "keeping Germany divided" under Soviet domination. The sense of fear that had long deterred protests in the GDR was suddenly gone. Popular defiance rapidly increased, culminating in a full-scale rebellion on the 17th that spread to more than 450 cities and towns around the country. At least 600,000 people — roughly 10 percent of the adult population in East Germany — took a direct part in the uprising.

Coming so soon after Stalin's death, the rebellion in the GDR threatened the very existence of the SED regime and, by extension, vital Soviet interests in Germany. When the leaders of the Soviet Communist Party realized that the East German police and security forces would be unable to cope with the unrest, they decided that some of the several hundred thou-

sand Soviet troops on East German soil would have to intervene to crush the revolt. Seventeen Soviet tank and mechanized infantry divisions, supplemented by artillery, communications, and logistical regiments and battalions, moved into action. Although the Soviet army put down the rebellion rather easily and with relatively little bloodshed — roughly three dozen demonstrators were killed, several hundred wounded, and many thousands arrested — the military intervention was crucial both in forestalling an escalation of the violence and in reasserting Soviet control.

### *From Ulbricht to Honecker*

The uprising in East Germany and the subsequent arrest and denunciation of Lavrenty Beria in Moscow ended up saving and strengthening Ulbricht. For several days after the rebellion was over, Soviet leaders were inclined to get rid of Ulbricht and bring in a new official who would act more boldly in introducing reforms. But the post-Stalin succession struggle in Moscow unexpectedly changed Soviet policy toward Germany. The timing of Beria's downfall was such that his rivals decided they could blame him for the situation in East Germany as well as for other imaginary (and some real) crimes. This domestic maneuvering had the effect of rigidifying Soviet foreign policy and restoring Soviet support for Ulbricht.

With Moscow's renewed backing, Ulbricht moved forcefully to strengthen his hold over the SED. With the endorsement of the Soviet High Commission in Germany (SVKG), he launched a sweeping purge to eliminate "hostile and anti-party elements" at all levels of the party. In the latter half of 1953 alone, some 15,370 people were expelled from the SED. Many of the senior East German officials who were dismissed from their posts were also brought up on charges of "un-partylike behavior during the fascist provocations" of 17 June 1953. On the SED Politbüro and Secretariat, too, Ulbricht gradually removed the last few officials who dared to stand against him.

Although some degree of high-level rivalry in East Germany persisted until February 1958 (when Ulbricht dislodged Karl Schirdewan, Ernst Wollweber, and Fred Oelssner), the most serious challenge to Ulbricht's position had been surmounted in mid-1953. This remarkable turnaround, from imminent defeat to clear-cut supremacy, was a telling indication of how crucial the Soviet Union's influence was — and would remain — in the politics of the GDR.

Under Ulbricht's leadership, East Germany entered the Warsaw Pact in 1956 (a year after the Pact was

founded), built a sizable army, and became a steadfast Soviet political and military ally. During the 1968 Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, Ulbricht was among the earliest proponents of military intervention to put an end to the Czechoslovak reforms, which he feared might spark political ferment in the GDR.

When Soviet leaders decided to invade Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and bring a halt to the Prague Spring, Ulbricht wanted to contribute East German combat troops to the invasion. But Soviet leaders ultimately decided (in consultation with Polish officials) that the GDR's contribution should be limited to communications and logistical personnel. The morale of these East German troops declined when Czech protesters accused them of serving as a "new Gestapo," and the East German units were soon pulled out. But Ulbricht was pleased that the reformist "virus" in Czechoslovakia had finally come to an end.

In the aftermath of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which had solidified the Eastern bloc, the Soviet Politburo decided to move ahead with détente in Europe, including an improvement of relations with West Germany. Ulbricht was averse to this new approach, and Soviet leaders ultimately concluded that he would have to go. In May 1971, Ulbricht was forced to step down "for reasons of ill health," and Erich Honecker took over all the top posts in the SED, with Moscow's backing.

Over the next fifteen years Honecker hewed closely to Soviet foreign policy, including the establishment of diplomatic ties with the FRG and other Western countries. Honecker was vehemently opposed to the rise of the Solidarity independent trade union in Poland in 1980-1981, and he urged Soviet leaders to crush the Polish union with military force. Although the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981 eliminated any need for external military intervention, Honecker showed during the eighteen-month-long Polish crisis that he was no more tolerant than Ulbricht had been of sweeping liberalization in a Warsaw Pact country.

### *Collapse of the GDR*

The seeming stability of the East German regime was irrevocably altered by the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev to power in Moscow in March 1985. Gorbachev's policies of perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (greater openness) brought far-reaching changes in Soviet politics and society and increasingly moved toward demokratizatsiya (democratization). During the



first four-and-a-half years of the Gorbachev period, Honecker and other SED leaders staunchly resisted the “winds of change” emanating from Moscow. They did their best to retain stringent political control and to quash all signs of dissent.

Although Honecker benefited from the new climate in Moscow when he finally got to travel to West Germany in October 1987 (thus making up for a visit he cancelled in 1984 under Soviet pressure), he used the trip mainly to promote his view that peace and stability in Europe depended on the existence of a separate, “socialist” German state:

*Unification of the two German states is just as impossible to achieve as the uniting of fire and water. This comes about simply from the fact of the differing social systems. Socialism and capitalism cannot be united. This may occur in fireside dreams, but in real life such dreams have no substance.*

Soon after Honecker returned from the FRG, he ordered a crackdown by the East German security forces to prevent any domestic spill-over from the improved East-West climate. A wave of repression, including arrests, show trials, and expulsions, ensued in late 1987 and early 1988, even as reforms in the USSR were gaining pace.

Yet despite Honecker’s efforts to seal off his country from Soviet (and Hungarian and Polish) reformist influences, the repercussions from “perestroika” and “glasnost” directly contributed to the growth of popular unrest in East Germany, starting as early as 1987. By the late summer of 1989, two developments greatly magnified the political turmoil in the GDR. The first was the hospitalization of Honecker in mid-July for what was officially described as an acute gallstone attack. Although Honecker was soon released, his physical ailments over the next few months created a political vacuum in East Germany that was conducive to the rapid growth of popular unrest. The other factor was a huge efflux of East German citizens to the West via Hungary, a Warsaw Pact country that (unlike East Germany) had adopted sweeping reforms and liberalization (even bolder than in the USSR) and had become a magnet for East Germans seeking to escape repression. By August 1989, more than 5,000 East Germans were fleeing to West Germany via Hungary every week, and the rate was increasing daily.

The mass exodus was not reported in the East German media, but almost everyone in the GDR knew about it from nightly broadcasts on West German television. Although the East German

authorities belatedly restricted travel to Hungary, the problem merely grew worse as throngs of East Germans began seeking asylum in the West German embassies in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Until Honecker reappeared in late September, however, no one in the East German government seemed willing or able to take drastic measures to halt the departures.

Even at this late date, Honecker was still convinced that the Soviet Union would never permit the East German Communist regime to collapse. He and other SED officials also were confident that the East German State Security (Stasi) apparatus would be able to quell any unrest, just as Chinese troops had crushed the resistance around Tiananmen Square in June 1989. East German leaders warmly praised the crackdown in Beijing, prompting the Chinese authorities to thank “the comrades in the GDR for their support and understanding of the steps China took to crush the counterrevolutionary disorders.”

Within a few days of the massacre, high-ranking officials in the GDR began secretly planning for what they described as their own “Chinese solution” (chinesische Lösung). Three months later, when widespread political unrest erupted in East Germany, the authorities there prepared to move ahead with a “Chinese solution.” On 5 October 1989 the head of the Stasi, Erich Mielke, sent an “extremely urgent” directive to all Stasi branches ordering them to take “decisive action to smash inimical enemy activities.” At Honecker’s behest, Mielke followed up on this directive three days later by ordering Stasi units to use “all appropriate means” and “offensive measures,” including deadly force, to “rout and eradicate conspiratorial gatherings.”

After preliminary disturbances were forcibly suppressed in Dresden and Berlin on 8 October, the prospect of much larger unrest in Leipzig on the 9th prompted the dispatch of a vast number of combat-ready army troops, security forces, motorized police, and airborne commandos, along with the stockpiling of emergency medical supplies and blood plasma. Shortly before these heavily-armed units were sent to confront the demonstrators, they were given stern instructions:

*Comrades, from now on this is class war. The situation corresponds to [the uprising on] 17 June 1953. Today it will all be decided: either them or us. Class vigilance is essential. If truncheons are not enough, use firearms. [If you encounter children], that’s too bad for them. We have guns, and we don’t have them for nothing!*

If the East German authorities had resorted to large-

scale force and repression in Leipzig with political support from Moscow, and if they had been backed by the nineteen Soviet Army divisions in the GDR, they undoubtedly could have quelled the unrest rather swiftly. Before any repressive measures could be adopted on 9 October, however, Soviet officials urged the East German authorities to avoid the use of large-scale force. They directed Soviet military commanders to have Soviet troops in the GDR remain in their barracks and to refrain from supporting any move against unarmed demonstrators. Without backing from Moscow and the opportunity to rely on Soviet troops, the East German authorities reluctantly abandoned their plans for a violent crackdown and allowed protests to continue all over the GDR.

Shortly thereafter, on 18 October, the SED, with Moscow's approval, removed Honecker and brought in Egon Krenz to replace him as SED General Secretary. The removal of Honecker emboldened the burgeoning protest movement, but the appointment of Krenz, who had been a protégé of Honecker and had long been responsible for overseeing the security apparatus, merely heightened the demands for much more far-reaching change.

Demonstrations in Leipzig, Dresden, and East Berlin continued to grow, reaching more than 300,000 people by late October. Although Krenz, unlike Honecker, made some attempt to establish a dialogue with the protesters, he was unable to satisfy their increasingly radical demands. By early November, demonstrations in East Berlin were drawing upward of 500,000 people, and nightly protest marches also were being held in Leipzig and Dresden. Moreover, thousands of East Germans were fleeing every day to the West via Czechoslovakia, compounding the sense of crisis in the GDR.

When Krenz traveled to Moscow on 1 November for several hours of meetings with Gorbachev, the Soviet leader stressed that "at this stage of changes it is certainly important for the SED to consider the USSR's experiences with reforms. . . . It is important to act decisively and with initiative and not to lag behind life." Krenz, in turn, pledged that the SED would "take advantage of the positive experience of Soviet perestroika to solve the new tasks arising from the turning-point that has begun in the GDR."

A week later, the East German authorities fulfilled one of the protesters' key demands by granting permission for free travel; and they immediately followed up on that pledge by allowing nearly unrestricted

passage through the Berlin wall. This historic move, on 9 November, prompted a formal diplomatic note from the Soviet Union claiming that East German officials had not informed Moscow in advance of the decision, as they were required to do under the Four-Power arrangements for Berlin left from World War II. But it later emerged that the opening of the Wall had occurred largely by accident (when an East German border guard misunderstood his orders) and far more suddenly than anyone had anticipated.

Despite the remarkable turn of events that helped bring down the Wall, the crisis in the GDR and the potential for escalating violence were far from over. By early December, after revelations had surfaced of the luxuries and extravagant fringe-benefits that Honecker and his associates, including Krenz, had enjoyed, Krenz was forced to resign.

The main phase of the crisis in East Germany thus ended, as the country moved rapidly toward a non-Communist system and the whole question of German reunification came back onto the agenda. The potential for violence still existed after December 1989, and demonstrations around Soviet military bases in East Germany induced the Western Group of Soviet Forces to prepare for an emergency. Moreover, several attacks took place against East German military bases, and a brief period of uncertainty in January 1990 even gave rise to unfounded rumors of coups and civil war.

Nevertheless, by that point the decisive stage of the crisis was over, and the Communist system in the GDR was gone. The East German state itself followed the SED into oblivion in October 1990 when West Germany absorbed the provinces of the GDR. The division of Germany — and of Europe — was over.

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### Catherine O'Connor

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### Tom O'Hare

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### Jay Shackett

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Wellington, Kansas

## NOTE ON STANDARDS

National content standards referenced in this publication come from the National Council for History in the Schools (NCHS). <http://www.nchs.ucla.edu>

Many of the activities will help students to achieve the Common Core English Language Arts Standards for high school History and Social Studies:

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10>

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12>

What Teachers from Around the Country are Saying about the Third Edition of

# COMMUNISM:

**ITS IDEOLOGY, ITS HISTORY, and ITS LEGACY**

**KARL MARX AND HIS LEGACY** – Students reflect upon “If I Were a Marxist”

*A good lesson that meets objectives, is stimulating, and is “plug-and-play.”*

GOLDEN, COLORADO

**LENIN AND THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION**

– Students role-play fictional characters from the Russian Revolution

*I would not hesitate to recommend the lesson as designed. I found it to be a useful and engaging exercise that enlightened students about communism and the early Soviet Union.*

SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA

**STALIN AND RUSSIA** – Students analyze a letter written by victims of famine in Ukraine

*I am usually a “tinkerer” when it comes to prepared lessons, but I can really see myself using this lesson as is.*

BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

**MAO AND CHINA** – Students experience collectivism when their jellybeans are appropriated

*The C3 section (Communism’s Contemporary Connections) has great educational value, as it connects Mao’s China with modern communist countries.*

BURNT HILLS, NEW YORK

**KIM IL-SUNG AND NORTH KOREA** – Students analyze a satellite photo of North Korea at night

*The background essay was informative and an easy, quick read for my students.*

WELLINGTON, KANSAS

**GERMANY AND THE BERLIN WALL** – Students plan an escape from East Berlin

*Common core curriculum is all the rage now, and the assessments provide students with an opportunity to develop their informative and persuasive writing skills.*

HAYS, KANSAS

**AMERICA AND VIETNAM** – Students use the POW tapcode to communicate with each other

*The lesson is simple, short, and easy to follow—and would appeal to my colleagues.*

BILLINGS, MONTANA

**CUBA, CASTRO, AND CHE** – Students analyze a photomosaic portrait of Che Guevara

*The assessment met the needs of multiple intelligences, gifted learners, and differentiated instruction.*

WESTON, FLORIDA

**CAPTIVE NATIONS AND THE FALL OF COMMUNISM** – Students listen to national anthems of the Captive Nations

*These materials would lend themselves nicely to a homeschool co-op setting.*

SPOTSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA

*Third Edition*