

## Post War Europe

After World War II had ended Soviet troops continued to occupy Eastern Europe. Their presence and rigged elections in Poland and Hungary brought Communists to power. In 1946 Winston Churchill said that an “**Iron Curtain**” has descended across the continent of Europe. These Eastern European nations became known as **Satellites**. With Western Europe devastated due to World War II resisting Soviet expansion relied on the United States. The United States adopted a policy of **Containment**, meaning that the United States would consistently try to stop Soviet expansion.

### The Truman Doctrine

In 1947 a civil war in Greece was the first major test of containment. It was thought that the Greek Communist Part would soon come under the influence of the Soviets and in turn so would Turkey. U.S. President Harry S. Truman granted Greece and Turkey \$ 400 million in military aid. This program was called **The Truman Doctrine**. As hoped this aid helped Greece and Turkey overcome the threat of communism.

### The Marshall Plan

In postwar France and Italy the communist parties were gaining large numbers of supporters in local elections. All of the economies in Western Europe were at an all time low. In 1947 U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall proposed a plan for \$ 12 billion in economic assistance to Western European countries. The goal of **The Marshall Plan** was for these countries so that they could become financially stable on their own. The plan worked and by 1951 communist control of France and Italy was no longer a major threat even though the parties existed in these countries.

### The Division of Germany

After the war Germany was occupied by four wartime allies – Great Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union. Each occupied a different section of the country and also a different section of the German capital Berlin. It soon appeared that the Soviet approach was much different to the other three nations. The Soviets forced East Germans into communism, a very harsh and undemocratic way of life. As a result of these differences by 1949 Germany was divided into parts. West Germany became an independent state with free elections. East Germany became a communist-controlled Soviet satellite.

### The Berlin Blockade and Airlift

The city of Berlin was situated within that part of Germany that was under Soviet control. In 1948 the Soviet Union told the British, French and Americans that they could no longer use existing land routes to Berlin from Western Europe. Food and vital supplies would no longer be able to reach the people of West Berlin (the part not under Soviet control) by train or truck. President Truman ordered the U.S. Air Force to fly in the supplies. This operation was known as the **Berlin Airlift**. It continued day after day for almost a year until the Soviets yielded to Western determination. The conflict over Berlin was an example of the **Cold War – the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. There were threats and competition between the two countries but not actual warfare.**

Every day for almost a year the United States Air Force flew in supplies to West Berlin. This is one of the many famous photographs taken during this time. Note how low the DC6 freighter is to the people at the end of the runway.



## NATO

The Soviet Union and its **bloc** (group) of satellites in Eastern Europe threatened the security of Western Europe. In 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was signed by 12 countries: Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Luxembourg, Iceland, Canada and the United States. In 1952 Greece and Turkey joined NATO, West Germany in 1955 and Spain in 1982. An armed attack against one or more shall be considered an attack against all. The common defense of NATO members rested on a **shield-and-sword concept**. European and U.S. Troops would act as a “**shield**” against any Soviet attack. U.S. atomic weapons would act as the “**sword**.”

## The Warsaw Pact

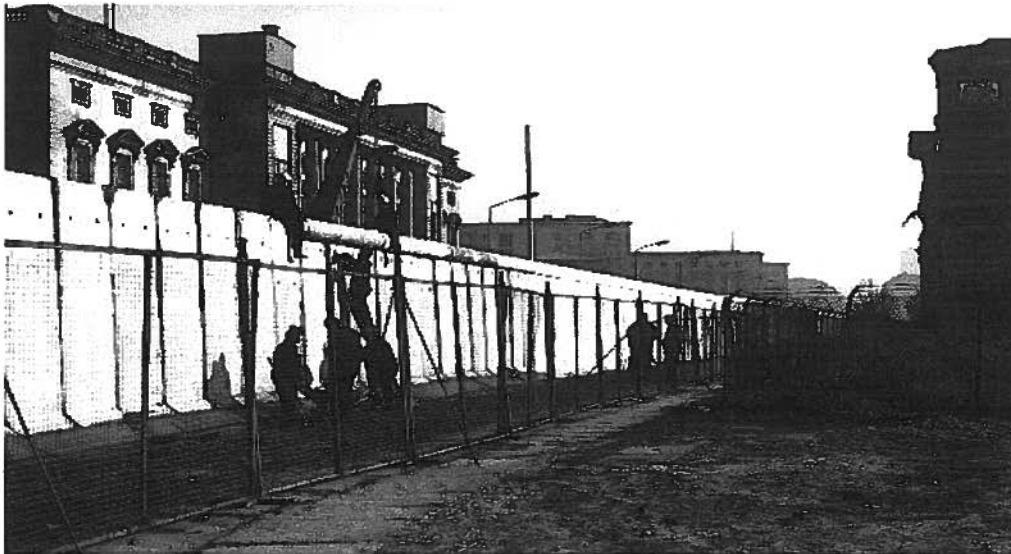
In response to Western Europe forming NATO this alliance was set up in 1955 consisting of the satellites countries under Soviet control in Eastern Europe. ANTO still exists today but the Warsaw Pact was dissolved in 1991.

## The Berlin Wall

During the 1950's many East Germans escaped their country by crossing into East Berlin, and from there into West Berlin. This exodus hurt the East German economy and embarrassed the Communist regime. In 1961 East Germany built a barrier of concrete and barbed wire to separate East and West Berlin. The flow of refugees dwindled.



**The Berlin Wall became a symbol of the failure and repression of the Communist East German dictatorship as well as Soviet Communism.**



### German Reunification

In 1989 the Berlin Wall was torn down by Berlin residents as part of an anti-Communist revolution against the East German government. The East German rulers fell from power. In 1990 East Germany joined with West Germany to form a reunified Germany.