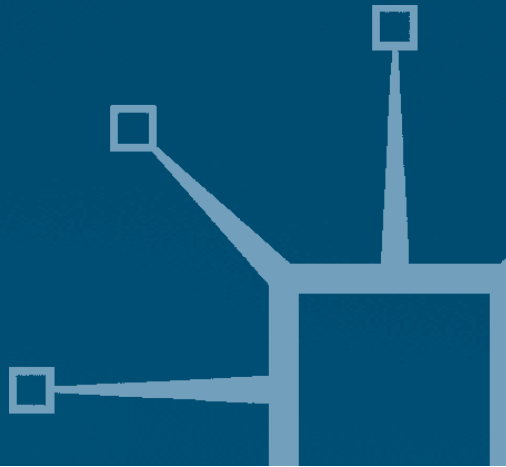


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The Palgrave Concise Historical Atlas of The Cold War

John Swift



THE PALGRAVE CONCISE
HISTORICAL ATLAS
OF
THE COLD WAR

ALSO BY JOHN SWIFT

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HISTORICAL ATLAS
OF
THE COLD WAR

JOHN SWIFT

Lecturer

St Martin's College, Lancaster, UK

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Preface

An historical atlas must depict complex issues in a manner immediately accessible to the reader. This I have attempted to do. It would obviously be a hopeless task to attempt to make such a concise atlas a definitive history of the Cold War. The issues are far too complex. The topics to cover are far too diverse. Instead, the atlas is intended to provide students, and the generally interested, with an affordable visual aid to the geopolitics of the Cold War. The maps are produced in two colours only, which means that only the really essential elements are included. Neither the maps, nor the accompanying text attempts to explore every topic fully. They instead give a broad overview of the elements that shaped the Cold War. This is intended as a supplementary tool to the more comprehensive texts and specialised monographs available. Why the Cold War began, how it was fought, why there were periods of comparative warmth and periods of intense hostility between east and west, and how it ended are the main issues addressed. But there are other factors discussed. How a distinctive Cold War culture operated and how other nations, who wanted no part in it, were often disastrously affected by the Cold War are also addressed.

The Cold War was an intricate period, which, for about 45 years profoundly influenced the lives of every person in the world – often in ways of which they were unaware. There will, therefore, be many gaps in the texts. The question of which topics to include and which to omit was one of the harder parts of this project. Among the possible ideas I eventually rejected were separate maps for the war in Angola, for Marxist inspired terrorists and for Pol Pot's barbaric regime in Cambodia. Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative ('star wars') proved impossible to map in any meaningful way. What is included should provide the reader with the first step on the way to understanding the great issues of the Cold War and a developing insight into just how intricate the whole subject is.

A note on the ordering of the material: rather than stick to a purely chronological layout of the subjects covered, I have at times kept related issues together. Thus NATO and the Warsaw Pact is immediately followed by Other

Regional Security Pacts, when in fact SEATO was of course a product of the rising conflict in Indochina and created in 1954. Hopefully students will find this a more convenient approach.

A couple of points of caution would perhaps be helpful. Russian, Chinese and other names are transliterated. I have tried to be consistent, for example using the pinyin version of Chinese names. Other texts, however, will use their own versions. You might find Boris Yeltsin's name spelt Eltsin for instance. Be aware of such problems – they can cause students real confusion. Also, I have included statistical data in several texts and maps. Any undergraduate student should be aware of just how problematic statistical information can be. In the Cold War, when secrecy was deemed of paramount importance, concealing information became a positive virtue. In Communist states this was often taken to such extremes that information was concealed even from their leaders. It is most unlikely that the Politburo, or indeed anybody else in the USSR had any real idea how much was spent on the military. Estimates of the proportion of GNP devoted to the military by the 1980s vary from 12 to 25, or sometimes even 50 per cent. The Chinese simply ceased to publish any data on defence spending. But this is not a vice limited to Communist states. Reagan might be considered unfortunate that his secret plans to bypass Congressional limitations and arm the Contras was discovered. In Britain, in 1947, Clement Attlee's Labour government concealed the first £100 million of Britain's atomic bomb project and nobody noticed.

In short, much of the statistical data in this atlas should be treated with caution. Where possible I have used data from official sources. But even this is often little more than guesswork. Where a number of estimates were available, for the sake of brevity and clarity I only used the one that I deemed most realistic. I would certainly never suggest differing statistics you may find were in any way less reliable.

John Swift
St Martin's College, Lancaster 2003

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THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

Map 1: The Russian Revolution and the World

Where should we seek the origins of the Cold War? A common misconception is that World War II ended with the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain as close allies, whose relationship only broke down in the following years. In fact the hostility of the west towards the Soviet Union dates back to its foundation. Indeed, a case could be made that this hostility was only an extension of western suspicion of Imperial Russian ambitions, dating back to the nineteenth century. What is unarguable is that from the moment the Bolsheviks seized power, foreign governments sought to bring them down.

During World War I, the Russian armies had performed creditably, if not spectacularly, in tying down large enemy forces on the eastern front. But the strains of keeping huge forces in the field, keeping them supplied and replacing terrible losses, gave rise to crises Nicholas II was ill suited to address. By March 1917 (or February in the pre-revolutionary calendar) support for the Romanov dynasty had evaporated, and it was swept aside with surprising ease. A provisional government was formed, which was intended to pave the way for the foundation of a democratic republic in Russia. But by continuing the war, and proving as incapable of addressing Russia's needs as the Romanovs, support for the provisional government also evaporated very quickly. Parties of the left had feared counter-revolution – the return of the Romanovs – and threw their support behind the provisional government, and lost their own supporters in consequence. Only the Bolsheviks had been uncompromising in their hostility. Russia, a backward, agrarian nation, was hardly suitable ground for a Communist revolution, but Lenin was convinced that revolution was imminent in the west, which would justify an immediate Bolshevik revolution. Also those clamouring for peace, land and bread, no matter what their political opinions, had nowhere else to turn. On the evening of 7 November 1917 (or 26 October using the pre-revolutionary calendar) the Bolsheviks simply occupied key points in Petrograd (now St Petersburg), and proclaimed themselves the government.

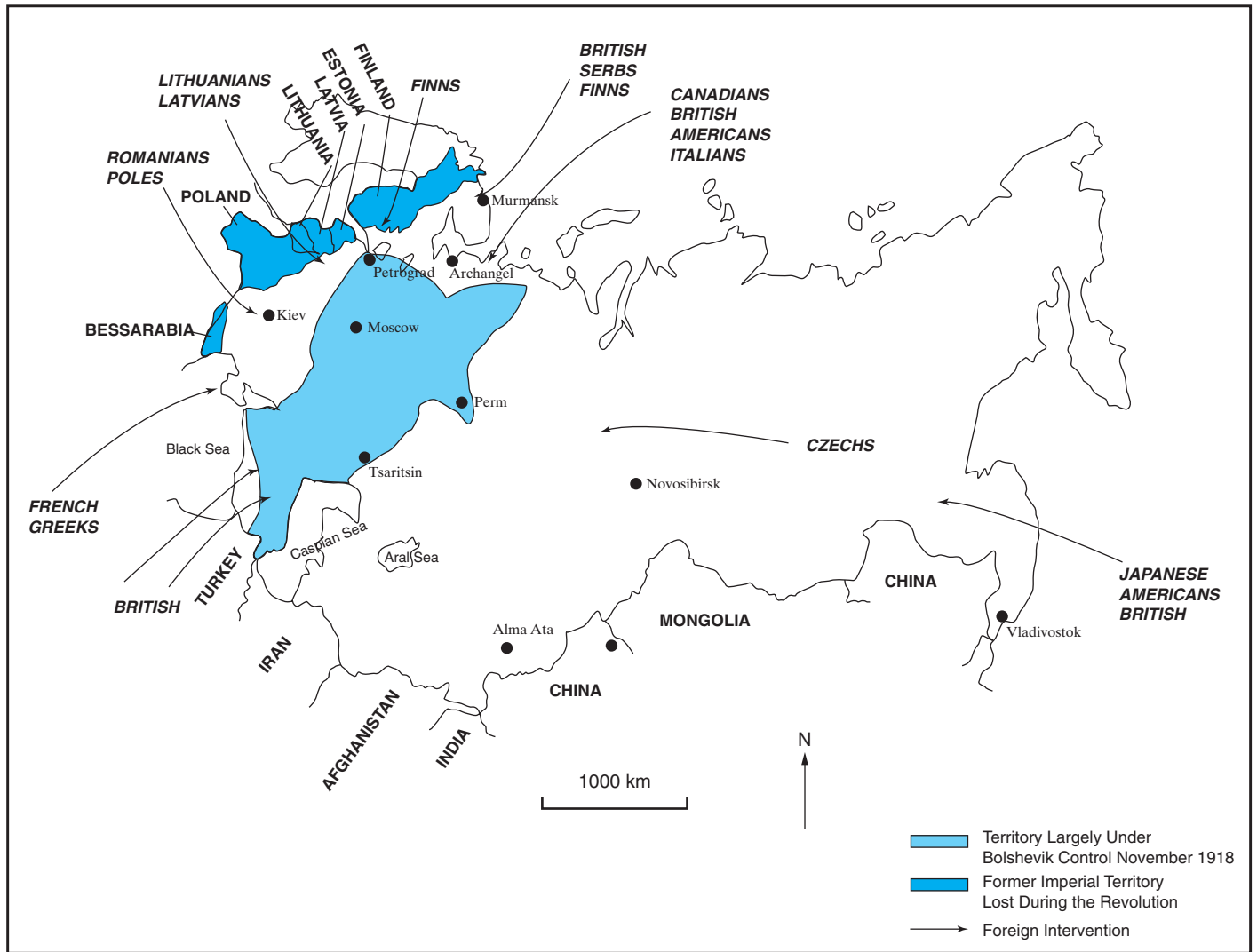
Seizing power was easy for the Bolsheviks, keeping it was anything but easy. Central government control over most of Russia collapsed. Opposition to the Bolsheviks soon gathered. Russia's former allies were quick to offer support to those opponents, collectively called Whites. They only sent token forces, however, as they hoped to form new Russian armies to drive out the Bolsheviks and re-enter the war. Later their aim was clearly to destroy the Bolshevik state. The most effective foreign force was the Czech Legion. Prisoners of war from Austro-Hungarian

forces, who had been recruited to fight for an independent Czech state, had formed this. Intending to withdraw from Russia across Siberia, through Vladivostok, to fight in France, they were persuaded to stay to fight the Bolsheviks. With the end of the war in Europe and the foundation of Czechoslovakia they insisted on leaving – a crippling blow to the Whites. Other intervening powers, notably Britain, sent small forces to bolster the Whites in the north of Russia, the Caucasus and the Crimea. The Whites they had been sent to support proved largely worthless. They were deeply divided, containing an array of political beliefs from republican socialists to reactionary monarchists. The discipline of their troops was poor; officials were corrupt and incompetent. They enjoyed little popular support. Separated by great distances and usually unable to communicate, they could not co-ordinate their actions.

In short the Whites were never able to form a single government the interveners could recognise and support. Supplies were sent to the Whites. British tanks, some crewed by British troops, captured Tsaritsin (now Volgograd) in June 1919. But never enough was sent to ensure a White victory, and much was stolen in transit. All that Britain and France achieved was to make the Whites appear to be the servants of foreign powers. This allowed the Bolsheviks to present themselves as the defenders of Russia. Also they could blame shortages and economic collapse on the foreign blockade. Furthermore intervention was deeply unpopular at home. Worse for the White's cause, the British government concluded that the Bolsheviks were surviving because they had genuine popular support. The White cause therefore seemed hopeless. By the end of 1920, with the Bolsheviks clearly triumphant, Britain and France abandoned the Whites and evacuated their forces.

Other powers intervened for other reasons. The Japanese and Poles launched blatant land grabs. The 70,000 Japanese troops in Siberia established a particularly brutal occupation policy. The 7000 Americans in the region really had no purpose, they were ordered not to interfere in Russian affairs.

In all, 14 nations intervened in Russia. They helped lengthen a civil war, which claimed about 10 million lives. They also had a profound impact on the views of the Bolshevik leaders. They became convinced that the capitalist world would never allow them to survive. Sooner or later they would return, and the Soviet Union must be prepared. Also, alone, isolated and surrounded by bitter enemies, would not the Soviet Union be better protected if proletarian revolution were spread abroad sooner, rather than later?



Map 2: The Comintern and the First Red Scare in the West in the 1920s

Western powers had long tended to be suspicious of Russia and the ambitions of its tsars. But the Bolshevik revolution gave these traditional suspicions an additional ideological dimension, which was to shape attitudes and set the scene for the Cold War to emerge in the 1940s. Bolshevism was, after all, the self-proclaimed vanguard of a world revolutionary movement. When in the 1940s the USSR became recognised as a truly great power, it was easily perceived as a threat on a global scale because of its earlier actions.

The end of the war in 1918 was followed by economic crises throughout the world. These were accompanied by industrial and social unrest. To many governments the Bolsheviks were the obvious cause of this unrest. Several states neighbouring Bolshevik Russia enacted repressive laws to exclude Communist influence. But even distance was no protection from fear. In the United States in the period 1919–20 a national panic erupted – the ‘red scare’. Americans soon recovered their sense of proportion and the scare died down. But it did show the panic which international Communism and the Comintern (the Communist or Third International) could generate. But did the Comintern warrant such fear?

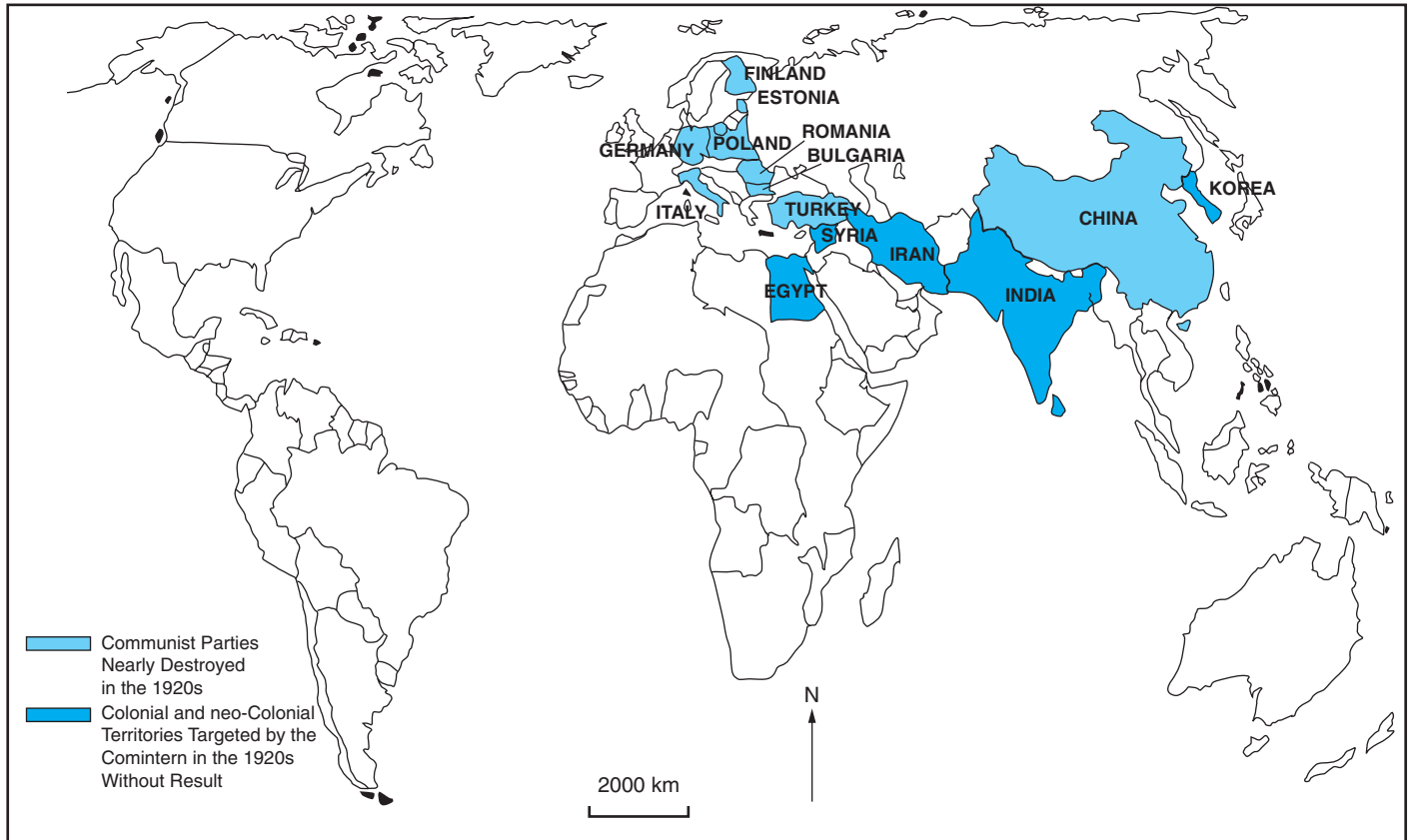
Founded in January 1919, the Comintern was intended to be an international organisation of national Marxist groups, promoting world revolution. Its mere existence horrified foreign governments, who condemned it as a monstrous conspiracy. Supposedly an organisation of equals, it was from the start completely dominated by the Bolsheviks. Lenin was convinced that the world was on the brink of revolution. Furthermore, he had justified seizing power in Russia in the expectation of imminent world revolution. Given the hostility shown by foreign powers to the Bolshevik state, the sooner revolution arrived the better.

The problem was that the Bolsheviks simply did not understand the nations in which these parties operated. Trying to impose tactics, which had worked in Russia, led to ludicrous orders being issued. Communists in Britain and America were instructed to form tactical alliances with a non-existent peasantry. Polish Communists were ordered to organise a rising to support a Russian invasion in 1920 – utterly ignoring deeply ingrained Polish hatred of Russians. Even when the Comintern turned its attention to the less developed world, where conditions were similar in many ways to Russia in 1917, they had no success. In India and the Middle East, Hindu and Moslem beliefs were unsympathetic to the Communist creed. In Korea very effective Japanese repression prevented any real progress.

Perhaps even more disastrous was Lenin’s assumption that foreign Communists should act as auxiliaries to his own revolution. In effect, this meant that other Communist parties were expected to serve the needs of Soviet foreign policy, rather than the interests of world revolution. The orders Moscow issued would change as rapidly and bewilderingly as Soviet foreign policy needs. Risings, such as in Hamburg in 1923, were ordered, which had not the slightest hope of success. Communist parties in several central European states were driven to the edge of extinction. But nowhere was Moscow’s direction more damaging than in the relationship between Communists and other political groups. At times Communists were to seek alliances with other left-wing parties, at others they were to denounce them as traitors. In 1922 the bitter vilification of Socialists by Communists so deeply divided the labour movement in Italy, that it was unable to resist the fascist takeover. The same would happen in Germany in 1933.

Even worse, in China, a working alliance between the Communists and the Guomindang (nationalists), had been formed. It broke down in 1926 when the Guomindang leader, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) turned on his allies and arrested their leaders. Moscow wanted the alliance to continue, and so ordered the Chinese Communists to compromise. This left them utterly helpless when Jiang crushed the party in Shanghai, Canton and Hunan province amidst a ferocious wave of terror.

Stalin, as a conciliatory gesture to his wartime allies, abolished the Comintern in 1943. It scarcely mattered. The Comintern never organised a single successful revolution in its history. It would perhaps appear odd that it was so widely feared. But the fact that this international revolutionary organisation existed was threatening to many. By the end of the 1920s the weak and persecuted American party had less than 10,000 members, but as part of an international movement it was widely portrayed as a threat to the very existence of the United States. The fears that gave rise to McCarthyism had a long history. But the Comintern could also sustain Communists through repression and when there was no prospect of successful revolution. An American or British Communist might be well aware that they would never see revolution in their own country. But as part of an international movement, they could console themselves that they were contributing to success elsewhere. Many of the attitudes that shaped the Cold War had, in short, already been formed.



Map 3: Chaos and Communism in China, 1918–39

There were no successful Communist revolutions during the life of the Comintern. But in the most populous nation on earth Communism became a growing force, and its eventual triumph would make an enormous impact upon the development, course and even outcome of the Cold War. Its growth is, therefore, worthy of study.

In 1911 the thoroughly discredited Qing dynasty of China was overthrown. Unfortunately for China it proved impossible to establish constitutional rule. As China became fragmented local power was seized by anyone who could gather sufficient military strength. China became divided between local warlords, who brutally despoiled their peoples until displaced by another even more ruthless. The suffering caused by floods and famine were as ignored as the suffering caused by local tyrants. Life for Chinese peasants became grim. The Nationalist Party, the Guomindang, did aim to reunite China. Its leader Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), led the northern expedition (1926–28) to complete the work, at least in name. Rather than fight, Jiang was prepared to compromise with many warlords. They nominally accepted his leadership, but in fact remained largely independent. But this did not mean that China's problems were nearly over. Jiang was no more than a warlord himself, and turned the Guomindang into the instrument of a dictatorship, which became a byword for staggering corruption and incompetence.

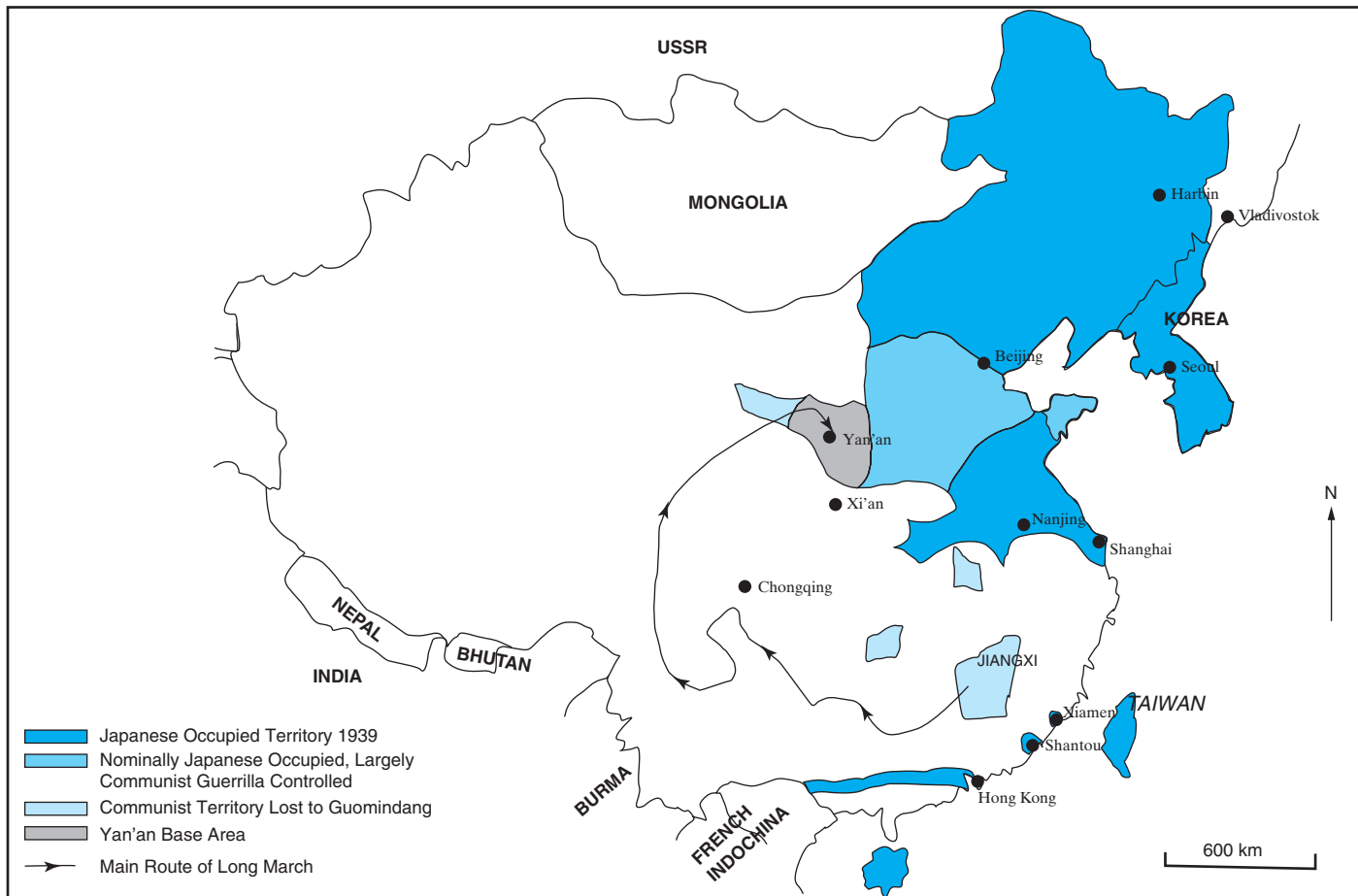
The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had been the ally of the Guomindang. A united and strong China on the Soviet Union's southern frontier was important to Moscow. But the northern expedition had shown considerable popular support for the CCP, which alarmed Jiang. He first moved against the CCP in 1926, but the Comintern insisted the CCP maintain the alliance. This left them helpless when Jiang moved to exterminate them in 1927. The CCP was driven from the cities and became a peasants' party. When surrounded in their Jiangxi base, due to an adviser sent by the Comintern, the CCP undertook the Long March to a new base in northern Yan'an. They also found a new leader in Mao Zedong. In Mao, the CCP found a leader who was not prepared to follow Moscow's will in all things – the seeds of a future rift were being laid.

Mao insisted that winning peasant support must be the first priority. In CCP territory land was redistributed, the tax burden was shared equitably, laws were enforced and justice seen to be done. The highly politicised Chinese Red Army was required to treat the peasants and their property with respect, and would help collect the harvest. The CCP was able to win the active allegiance of peasants, which enabled the Communists to survive a series of extermination campaigns Jiang launched against them.

A time would arise, however, when this priority would become unacceptable to the rest of China. In September 1931 Japanese forces seized Manchuria. Without western support Jiang was humiliatingly forced to accept this. But nationalist sentiment in China was aroused. There were growing demands that Japan must be resisted. Pressure quickly mounted on Jiang to put aside the civil war and join in the anti-Japanese alliance Mao was offering. It culminated in Jiang being kidnapped by his own troops at Xi'an, in December 1936, until he very reluctantly agreed. The Japanese, realising that they might easily lose their grip on Manchuria, began a full-scale war with China in July 1937. They hoped to punish the Chinese enough to convince them to accept Japanese terms, which would reduce China to a colony. They failed because Jiang was indifferent to the suffering of the Chinese people, and the atrocity committed in December 1937, the 'Rape of Nanjing', which left perhaps 200,000 dead, only stiffened Chinese resolve.

Jiang's troops could and did fight courageously. But they lacked modern equipment and were often badly led. Also Jiang only controlled about 30 of the 300 divisions nominally under his command. These divisions were the foundation of his political power. He did not intend to lose them; he still felt the CCP were his main enemy. The Japanese captured vast territory, but never had the manpower to conquer all of China. Within months a stalemate developed which Jiang was prepared to accept. He was confident that eventually the west would rid China of the Japanese, and he would emerge, still as leader, and strong enough to destroy the Communists. He did not seem to realise the consequences of this stalemate. The war economy was a shambles. Inflation was out of control. With growing shortages the Guomindang became even more starkly corrupt. The morale and effectiveness of Jiang's army deteriorated steadily. Popular support for the regime began to evaporate.

The CCP fared better. As the Japanese advanced they only occupied urban centres and railway lines. In the rest of the 'occupied' territory, Guomindang officials and landowners fled, but the Japanese ignored administering the territory until 1939. This left a power vacuum that the CCP, who built the largest guerrilla army in the world, were eager to fill. They continued to put great stress on the need to win over the peasantry, reducing rents and interest rates and collecting just taxes. Careful propaganda exaggerated Communist achievements against the Japanese. In short, as the Guomindang deteriorated, the CCP was growing in the area and population it controlled, and, crucially was succeeding in its appeal to Chinese nationalist feeling.



Map 4: Foreign Policy under Stalin

During World War II, Stalin was popularly referred to in the west as ‘Uncle Joe’, and hailed as a great ally. But many western politicians remembered clearly his unscrupulous and opportunist conduct in the 1930s. He was a man easy for the west to distrust, and he also had his own profound suspicions of the west. In the pre-war world, many of the hostilities that developed in the post-war world were established.

In January 1933 Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. One of the reasons he was able to do this was that, acting on Stalin’s instructions via the Comintern, the German Communists were vilifying the German Socialists as class traitors. The labour movement was too divided and weakened to resist the Nazi takeover. Stalin, however, was fairly quick to realise his ghastly error – even if he never admitted it. Hitler had, after all, never made any secret of his intention of destroying the Bolshevik state. Henceforth Stalin’s foreign policy would focus on protecting the Soviet Union from the Nazi threat. This would require an international coalition to contain Germany, and it must include those states hitherto seen as the USSR’s bitterest enemies: Britain and France.

Communists were ordered to cease attacking other left-wing groups and to press for joint action against fascism. To this end Socialists, Liberals and even anti-fascist Conservatives were to be persuaded to join parliamentary coalitions, or Popular Fronts. To convince their new allies that Communists were trustworthy, henceforth they were to oppose any revolutionary act. In France and Spain this had its effect, and Popular Front governments were formed. In Britain nearly all political parties remained unimpressed.

Diplomatically, the Soviet Union entered the international arena as never before. A series of non-aggression pacts were signed with the USSR’s neighbours. In 1934 the Soviet Union entered the League of Nations. The USSR became one of the foremost supporters of collective security, constantly demanding that the League impose sanctions on aggressors and protect the victims of aggression. Continued Japanese aggression in China and the Italian conquest of Abyssinia, without effective League action, however, showed the organisation to be no protection for the Soviet Union, which soon lost its enthusiasm.

The USSR also entered into alliances with Czechoslovakia and France. The Soviet Union would only defend the Czechs if France acted first, which Stalin saw as a first step in forming his anti-German coalition. He was determined to do nothing to endanger this. Which made events in Spain very difficult for Stalin. The Popular Front government was his creation. When in July 1936 a military revolt led to a brutal civil war, he could hardly abandon

Republican Spain. But a Republican victory risked the foundation of a Soviet Spain, which might alarm Britain and France into joining an anti-Soviet alliance with Germany. In consequence the assistance the Spanish Republic received, which had to be paid for in advance, was designed to prolong resistance, and was never sufficient to secure victory.

For all Stalin’s efforts, the coalition he sought never materialised. Despite his intentions, his own conduct inside the Soviet Union did little to help his cause. The great purges aroused international distaste. When the Red Army was purged, the Soviet Union’s value as a potential ally was compromised. But more importantly, Britain and France lacked the will to contain Germany. Germany remilitarised the Rhineland, annexed Austria and intervened in Spain with no more than protests. But with its alliances with France and the USSR, Czechoslovakia was in a different position. Here an anti-German coalition might be formed. Stalin let the French government know that he stood ready to stand with them in support of the Czechs. If France stood firm, Britain would be unable to stand aside. But the French were frantic to escape their commitment to Czechoslovakia. They were eager to let Britain take the lead in avoiding war by forcing the Czechs to make whatever concessions Hitler demanded. When the final conference met at Munich to settle Czechoslovakia’s fate, Stalin was not invited.

To Stalin this was proof that no coalition could be built. It went further, however, and aroused deep suspicions in the motives of Britain and France. Perhaps they were happy to give Hitler a free hand in the east. They could easily be conspiring with Hitler to destroy the Soviet Union. The USSR must look to its own resources to survive. The Popular Front (and Republican Spain) was abandoned. A major reorganisation of the Red Army was urgently needed; the damage Stalin’s purges had inflicted had left it sadly weakened. This would require time. Stalin sought to buy that time by reaching an understanding with Hitler. In March 1939 Germany occupied the remnants of Czechoslovakia, teaching the west of the folly of appeasing Hitler. They began to show interest in an anti-German coalition, but too late. In August, as a crisis over Poland was developing, the Nazi–Soviet Pact was signed.

This whole shabby episode did much to reinforce existing prejudices and suspicions. To Stalin it confirmed that all foreign powers wanted the USSR destroyed, and that they would go to any lengths to achieve this. To the west, it was proof that Bolshevism was brutal, untrustworthy and utterly lacking in principles. It was bent on expanding by conquest. It was, in short, very similar in practice to Nazism.



Map 5: The Grand Alliance in World War II

Stalin profited from the destruction of Poland, and the fall of France, perhaps shocking in its rapidity, only served to persuade him that his policy of temporary accommodation with Hitler was correct. Convinced he had bought plenty of time from Hitler, he would make no move that might upset their understanding. As far as the west was concerned, he was widely seen as no better than Hitler.

President Roosevelt was concerned by events in Europe. But if more anxious than his countrymen, like they he was determined that the United States would not intervene. Britain was, however, given increasingly generous economic support. Unofficially, also, a strategic understanding was developing between Roosevelt and Churchill, which would easily be transformed into a partnership. But there was no immediate prospect of a British victory. When, in June 1941, Hitler launched operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union, the strategic picture changed. Few thought that the USSR could survive more than a few weeks, but if it did, here was the (non-American) manpower required to defeat Germany.

Suddenly world opinion changed. The Red Army became greatly admired for its heroism. Stalin ceased being a villain, and became a valued and respected ally. Britain and America, fearing an early Soviet collapse, rushed to offer supplies to Moscow. Soviet needs were massive, Stalin wanted aircraft by the thousand and entire factories – far beyond the ability of the west to supply. But much was promised. Far more, in fact, than it proved possible to deliver. An alliance was being forged, but already it contained sources of friction. Stalin was in no mood to accept western excuses for shortfalls in deliveries. He suspected that the west was not acting in good faith. Perhaps they only cared to provide sufficient support to ensure that the Soviet Union and Germany destroyed each other.

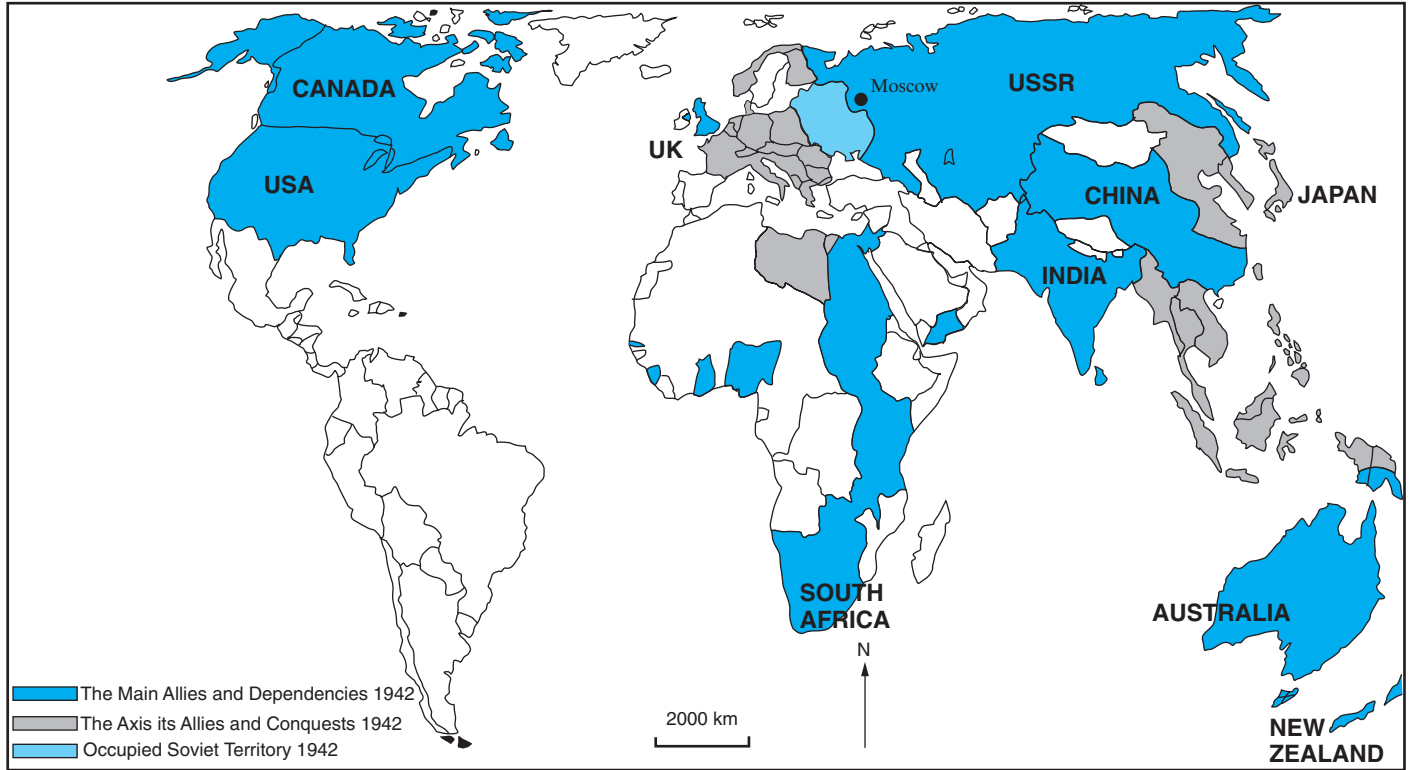
An even more divisive issue was to emerge, however, especially after the United States entered the war in December 1941. This was the timing of the invasion of western Europe. From the first day of the German onslaught, it was obvious to Stalin that landings in the west would take the pressure off the Red Army. Almost the last act of the Comintern was to order Communists everywhere to clamour for an immediate invasion. Stalin cared nothing for the difficulties involved. The problem was that while the Americans generally favoured an early invasion, the British did not. Churchill was only too well aware of how complex an invasion would be: he had been responsible for the Gallipoli landings in 1915. Also an invasion was something Britain had only the resources to undertake once. It could only happen when success was assured.

Roosevelt did suggest to Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov that an invasion might be possible in 1942. Stalin was quick to accept this as an absolute commitment. It was an idea Churchill considered suicidal and futile, but he did agree to accept it as a remote contingency. He did, however, push Roosevelt into diverting the landing to North Africa. Churchill then had to visit Moscow to inform Stalin. It was a difficult meeting, with Stalin blunt and offensive, hinting that the British lacked the courage to fight the Germans. An angered Churchill did at least over-exaggerate the prospects of an invasion in 1943. This, again, Stalin took as an absolute promise. But operations in North Africa dragged on, and Stalin eventually had to be told that no invasion of western Europe would be possible until 1944.

Stalin could see only inexplicable delays and broken promises. They underlined his suspicions that the west intended to leave the Soviet Union to be bled white by the Germans. Nor were suspicions held entirely on one side. Churchill and Roosevelt were continually anxious that Stalin would make a separate peace with Hitler. Indeed he had secretly tried in the early days of the invasion, offering to cede Ukraine in exchange for peace. Hitler's racial obsessions made that impossible. But even as late as 1944, there were fears that Stalin would be willing to make a separate peace once the Germans were driven from Soviet soil.

These mutual suspicions were never publicly aired. Indeed as far as most observers were aware a very close alliance had been forged. Nor should the strength of that alliance be written off. Co-operation did take place. When operation Overlord was launched, in June 1944, the Red Army launched a general offensive, to prevent the Germans reinforcing the west. When the 'Big Three' met, at Teheran in November 1943 and Yalta in February 1945, their discussions were generally cordial. In fact Roosevelt believed he was establishing a personal relationship with Stalin that would guarantee post-war co-operation. Difficult post-war issues were discussed, such as the future frontiers of Poland, and agreements reached. Though, in fact, really contentious issues, such as the future of Germany, were shelved until after the war. The general expectation on all sides was that the partnership that won the war would be maintained in order to secure the peace.

Beneath the surface, however, suspicions remained. A common enemy had brought the three main allies together. With Hitler's defeat obviously approaching, maintaining the alliance was no longer a question of survival. There was little real trust holding it together. Any serious controversy could easily break what unity existed between the three.



Map 6: *The Zonal Division of Germany*

Some of the most controversial questions the Big Three had deferred until the end of the war related to the future of Germany. This is hardly surprising – the questions were extremely complex and potentially highly divisive for the Allies. Perhaps it should not be surprising that after the war, the future of Germany became one of the bitterest disputes that led to the Cold War.

The Allies unsurprisingly had differing needs. The Soviet Union wanted reparations to help them recover from the devastation inflicted by Germany. Stalin was also determined to keep the territory he had seized in 1939 and 1940. He was willing to compensate the Poles by giving them German territory – in effect move the entire country to the west. But he wanted security. To prevent another German attack would seem to require continued co-operation between the Allies. He was prepared to be flexible regarding the future of Germany, providing whatever agreement was reached did provide security. The Americans were undecided. Some, including Roosevelt, favoured a punitive attitude. Others, including the State Department, wanted a rapid rehabilitation of Germany, to include it in a new world order which would favour democracy, private enterprise and American political and commercial interests. All Americans agreed, however, that American troops were not going to be committed to Europe for long. At the Yalta conference in February 1945, Roosevelt spoke of withdrawing in two years. The British wanted security, but not just from a resurgent Germany. German defeat would leave the Red Army occupying all eastern Europe. Many British politicians had little faith in the ability of the new United Nations to restrain Soviet conduct, and little faith in Stalin's future good conduct. To prevent the Soviet Union dominating the entire continent would require very strong forces in front of them. These were forces Britain simply did not have, even if France recovered as a great power as Britain hoped.

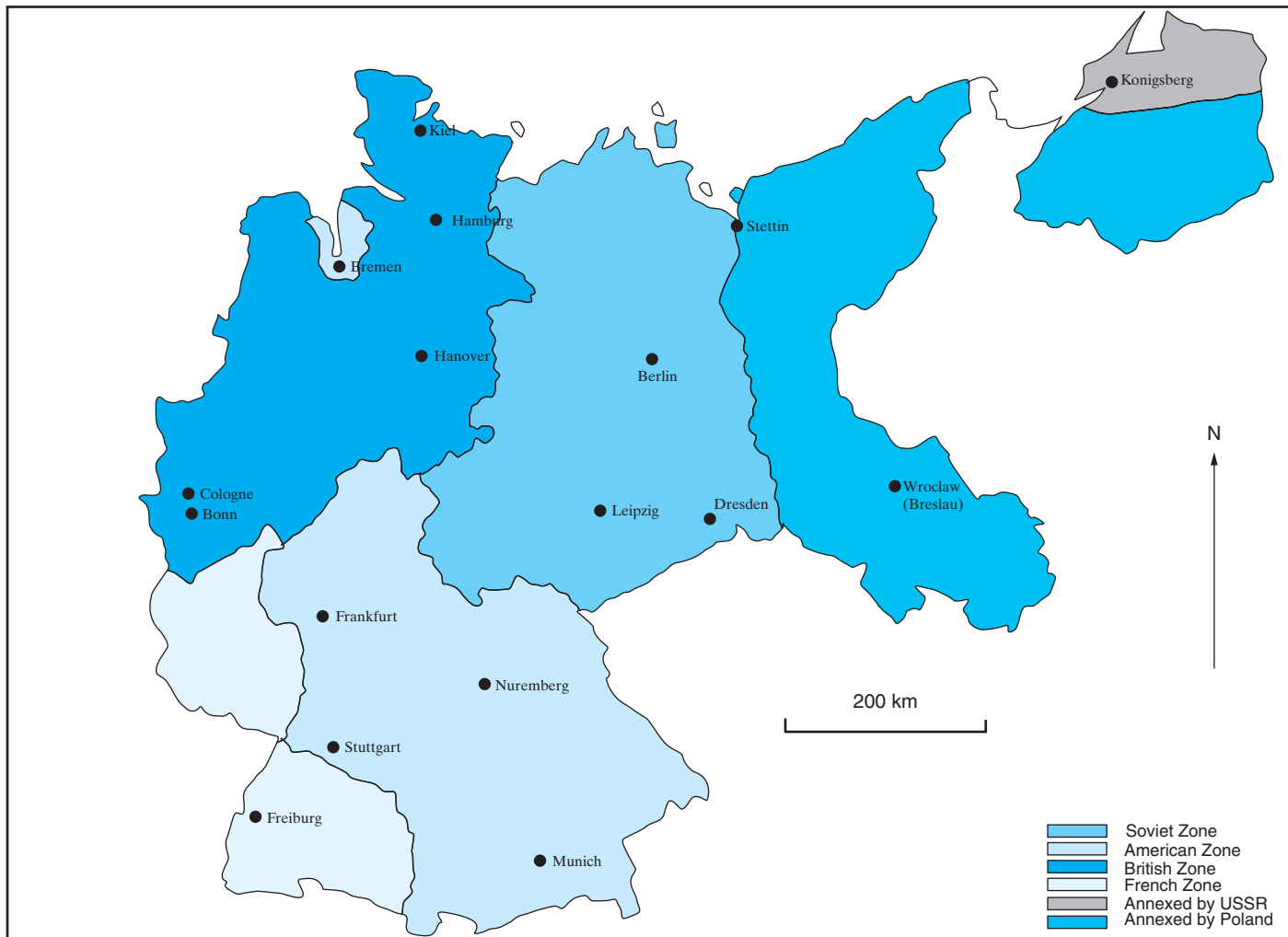
It was agreed that Germany would be jointly occupied, but would be treated as a single political unit, administered by an Allied Control Council. Three zones of military occupation were agreed, giving 40 per cent of the land to the USSR. Later, at British insistence, a fourth zone was added to give France a presence. As Germany was to be treated as a single political unit, the capital, Berlin, which was in the Soviet zone, was also to be jointly occupied. Stalin was content with this arrangement, especially as his plans for Poland's new frontiers were also accepted.

The Big Three toyed with ideas of dismembering Germany. Roosevelt was briefly attracted by the Morgenthau Plan to de-industrialise Germany and turn it into an agrarian nation. But by the time of Germany's surrender these ideas had been dropped as impractical. It would leave

the German people impoverished and embittered. This would feed political extremism. In a few decades a resurgent Germany might be as aggressive as ever before. The seeds of yet another war could easily be laid. Germany was to remain a single nation, demilitarised but not de-industrialised.

Yet Germany soon was divided, and east–west relations quickly deteriorated catastrophically. The main cause of this was reparations. Stalin was flexible over occupation policy, but not over this issue. The USSR's needs were massive. At Yalta in February 1945, Stalin proposed that Germany pay reparations totalling \$20 billion, half going to the Soviet Union. But the Treaty of Versailles had convinced the British that financial reparations were a mistake, being blamed for all German ills and fuelling Nazism. If, alternatively, they were extracted by removing German industrial equipment it would leave the Allies with the disadvantages of the Morgenthau Plan, again fuelling extremism. But if reparations were to be paid by deliveries of manufactured goods, it would require the reconstruction of German industry. This would only revive the potential German threat more rapidly. Another factor was that the American State Department saw doling out reparations and reconstruction loans as a means of controlling Soviet conduct. The new American President, Truman, saw little to gain in being accommodating on the issue.

The lack of any central authority, however, was a crucial weakness in Truman's position. When plans for the Allied Control Council had been drawn up, it had been assumed that it would work through a central German administration. In the event defeat left Germany without any form of government. Without a central government, there was nothing to prevent the occupying power running their zones as they saw fit. The Soviet zone was rapidly being plundered of its resources. The Americans were unable to reach a trade agreement, which would restrain Soviet conduct, and soon goods ceased to move between zones. They were diverging amidst mutual recriminations and accusations of bad faith. To prevent the new Labour government in Britain nationalising industries in their zone, the USA proposed unification of their zones. Britain, finding their zone a great financial burden agreed. Bizonia was created in November 1946. Two years later France joined the agreement. The Soviet Zone was already being administered as a separate entity. Despite the intentions of the Big Three, two separate German states were developing. Mutual hostilities were hardening, and the line on the map that Churchill had already (in March 1946) called the 'iron curtain' was clearly discernible.



Map 7: The End of the War Against Japan

By mid 1945 Japan was, by any rational measure, a defeated country. American bombing had destroyed most industry and urban centres. Both navy and air force were shattered. Millions of civilians were dead or homeless. Communications had broken down and food reserves were dwindling. The Japanese government was aware that their position was hopeless. But while they certainly were desperate to end the war, they were still not ready to accept unconditional surrender. The Japanese hoped they had sufficient forces with reserves of fuel and munitions in their homelands to make an invasion very costly – or at least hoped to convince the Americans that they did. They hoped the Americans might negotiate rather than pay that cost. Japan's leaders approached the Soviet Union; hoping territorial concessions might purchase Stalin's mediation for acceptable terms. They were unaware that Stalin had already secretly promised the USA to enter the war with Japan within three months of the defeat of Germany.

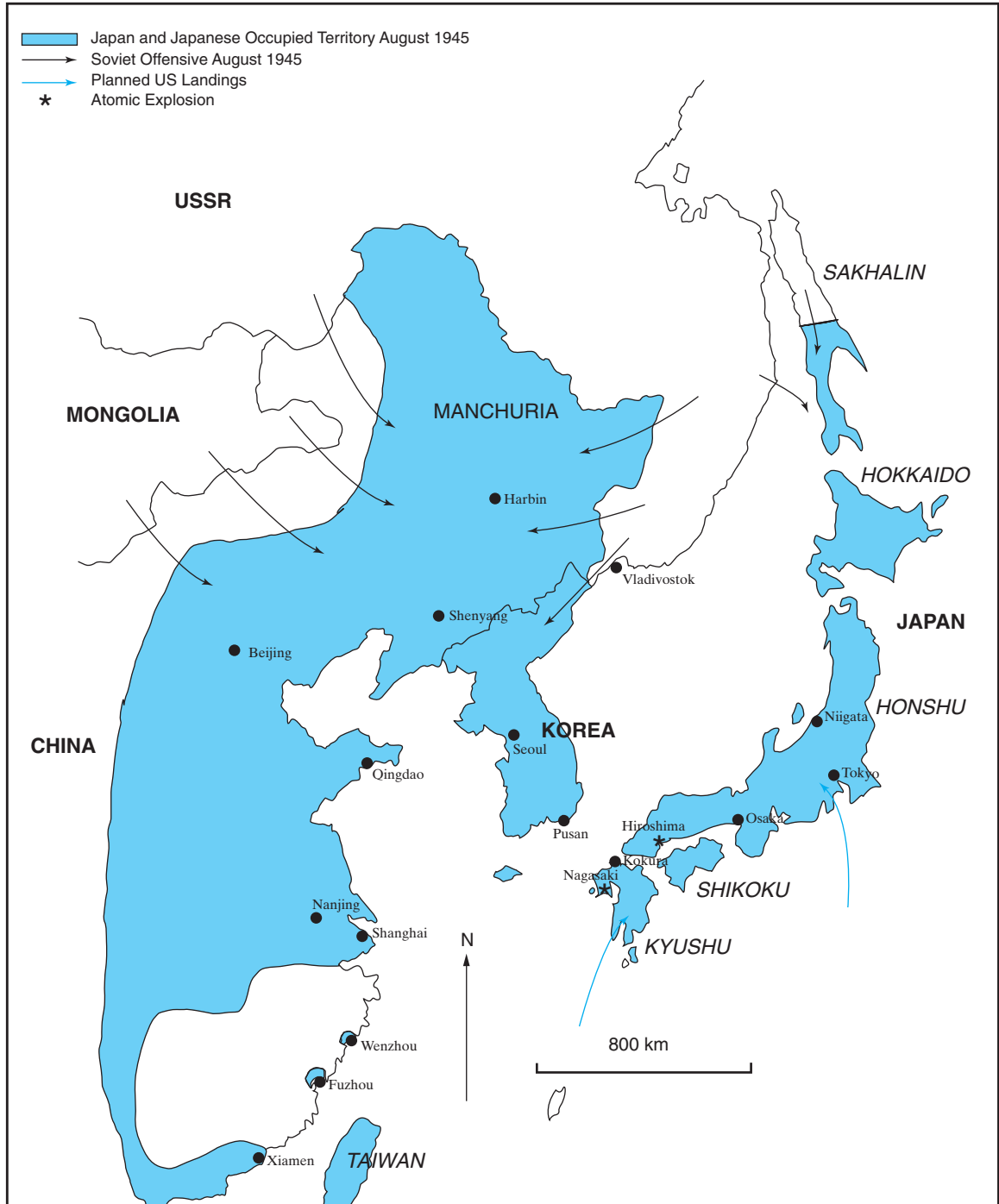
Had Stalin been willing, however, Japan could not have extricated itself from the war through negotiations. From the moment the first bombs landed on Pearl Harbor, the USA would settle for nothing less than the complete defeat of Japan. But while landings were being planned, projected casualties were alarming. It was not only US military casualties which caused unease; during the battle for Okinawa, 150,000 Japanese civilians, or one-third of its population, had died. If the USA inflicted such losses on Japan's home islands, the resulting misery and hatred might make Communism attractive. But a quicker surrender, without the costs of an invasion, was perhaps possible if a massive shock could be delivered on Japan. This must convince Japan's leaders that they had no possibility of avoiding total defeat. The Soviet declaration of war could well serve as such a shock. Another way would be to use the atomic weapon America had been developing. The shock, it was hoped, would cause a rapid surrender and save Japanese as well as American lives. It would also limit the Soviet contribution to the war in the Far East and the rewards Stalin could claim.

It was necessary to reserve targets for the atomic bomb – an atomic explosion over mounds of rubble would have only limited impact. American conventional bombing was so devastating that there was no city that could not be rapidly destroyed. Thus the cities of Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata and Nagasaki were excluded from conventional bombing. The sudden blows that landed on Japan were certainly staggering. On 6 August 1945 Hiroshima was obliterated, with perhaps 80,000 dead. On 8 August the Soviet Union declared war. The next day Nagasaki was destroyed with 35,000 deaths.

Japan hurriedly capitulated, and Truman never had a doubt that he had done the right thing. But questions were soon raised about the morality of using such a weapon on civilians. Also doubts were raised on the need to use them. The Soviet declaration of war was itself staggering to Japan – they were now at war with virtually the entire world. To emphasise Japan's impossible position, the Red Army launched a ferocious offensive into Manchuria, Korea and Sakhalin island. Japanese resistance rapidly collapsed. This itself might well have been enough to convince the Japanese government to capitulate.

The idea has been raised, first by Gar Alperovitz, that the Americans' use of the atomic bomb had little to do with defeating Japan. It was, rather, a warning to the Soviet Union. With the war in Europe over, relations between the USA and the USSR were becoming strained. It had been assumed that co-operation between the two would continue, but this was not happening. There was a growing conviction in Washington that Stalin had been insincere in the various undertakings he had made. He was also rejecting American demands to modify his conduct in eastern Europe and his stance over reparations. Once the atomic weapon had been used, it was assumed, all these issues would be settled to American satisfaction. The USA would not threaten to use the weapon. There was no need. The fact that America had such a weapon would be threatening to Stalin, who would modify his conduct accordingly.

Such a theory is not entirely convincing. Truman, who had been Vice President just 82 days before Roosevelt's death, knew little about foreign policy. He was unlikely to show such sophistication in his thinking. To him the atomic bomb was just another weapon, which had cost the American taxpayer huge sums to produce. It would be used simply because it was ready. But it certainly had an impact on American policy. It was assumed that possession of this weapon must give the United States a decisive diplomatic advantage. It encouraged Truman to be more demanding and less willing to compromise in his dealings with Stalin. But while Stalin was alarmed by the weapon, and ordered his own people to rapidly develop one, he was soon aware of its limits as a diplomatic tool. The USA might use it if he attacked western Europe, which Stalin never seems to have seriously contemplated. But they would not use it to force the USSR out of eastern Europe – American public opinion would not permit it. Rather than solving America's diplomatic problems, the atomic bomb actually compounded them, by heightening antagonism with Russia, and preventing compromise in the areas where compromise might have been possible. The Cold War was developing rapidly.



THE OUTBREAK OF THE COLD WAR

Map 8: Eastern Europe, 1944–49

That the end of the war in Europe would see the Red Army in occupation of half the continent had been foreseen. Roosevelt had hoped that the personal relationship he believed he was forging with Stalin would be the basis of a long-term partnership. This partnership would, he hoped, shape the post-war world and see the creation of democratic governments everywhere. Roosevelt had been aware that there was little he could do if Stalin chose not to co-operate. But he clung to the hope that if Stalin was satisfied that the Soviet Union's security was assured, he would be a reliable partner. Hence Stalin's territorial claims against Poland were accepted.

There were some grounds for optimism. Stalin had repeatedly given assurances that he did not intend to spread Communism at the end of the war. Also after he defeated Finland in 1940, he had seized territory, but had allowed Finland to retain its independence. The Finns had simply been required to renounce foreign relations detrimental to the USSR. There seemed to be no reason to suppose he would not grant the same in eastern Europe. As he had promised at Yalta in February 1945, interim coalition governments were created throughout eastern Europe. Communists were present in these coalitions, but only as a minority. The mutual suspicions of wartime, and the divisive issues raised since victory, meant that east–west relations were going to be difficult. But the problems in 1945 did not appear insurmountable.

Unfortunately wartime negotiations had tended to reach agreement where it was possible, and to defer the controversial questions. Also agreements, where they had been reached, could often be vaguely worded. This was certainly true of the key agreement reached at Yalta, which the west hoped would restrain Soviet conduct in eastern Europe: the Declaration on Liberated Europe. In this, Stalin agreed that liberated nations would have the interim coalition governments of the type he had created. They would be followed by free elections, which would choose representative governments. In return, to satisfy Stalin's security concerns, Roosevelt and Churchill promised him that the governments bordering the Soviet Union would be friendly.

There was much in these undertakings that was dangerously imprecise. New governments were to be freely elected and also friendly to the USSR. But if they could not be both, which should have priority? Stalin, believing that his security concerns had been accepted by the west, had no doubt that he had been promised friendly neighbouring governments. Truman could only see promises of democracy being broken.

This problem had arisen even before the war ended,

when the Red Army entered Poland in 1944. Traditional Polish hostility to Russians was very strong. Furthermore Stalin had joined with Hitler in destroying Poland in 1939. He was also widely (and correctly) suspected of the murder of thousands of Polish prisoners. Finally he had halted the Red Army when the Polish underground had risen in Warsaw, leaving them to be massacred. The idea that a freely elected Polish government would be friendly to the USSR was laughable. Stalin, therefore, simply created his own Polish regime, excluding the government-in-exile in London. Stalin had been promised a friendly government and felt perfectly justified in his conduct.

Stalin had also been excluded from the administration of Italy, and so had no hesitation in excluding the west from the administrations in eastern Europe. But he was concerned by the criticisms of east European émigré lobbies in the west. Churchill's outspoken criticism of the Soviet Union, in Fulton, Missouri, in March 1946, when he declared that 'an iron curtain has descended across Europe', was another cause for concern. That Truman was present during the speech and by implication endorsed it, added to this anxiety. Rather than proceeding with democratic elections, Stalin moved to tighten his grip on eastern Europe. Between 1946 and 1949, a similar pattern was followed. Conservative and Liberal parties were harried and intimidated. Their leaders were imprisoned, murdered or exiled. Their press was silenced. Socialist parties were forced to merge with the Communists, which in fact meant that they were swallowed up. Totally Communist regimes were established by blatantly rigged elections. Thereafter, a police state was quickly established. By 1949, with the creation of a separate east German state, a Soviet empire had been established in eastern Europe.

It was, however, not a monolithic empire. In Yugoslavia and Albania Communist partisans had gained power independently. Not directly neighbouring the USSR, they were able to maintain a degree of independence which angered Stalin. Notwithstanding this, the west tended to see a monolithic empire totally subject to Moscow. Stalin was deemed to have violated every promise he made. He also seemed bent on spreading Communism throughout the world, either by invasion or subversion. In September 1946, an American diplomat, George Kennan, sent a famous telegram to Washington, which did much to shape US policy. Warning that the Soviet regime was brutal, unscrupulous and determined to destroy the capitalist world, he urged his government to undertake a long-term strategy of containment on a global scale. Europe was very much on the brink of Cold War.



Map 9: The Truman Doctrine

In October 1944, Churchill concluded the percentages deal, dividing the Balkans into spheres of influence with Stalin. He had in mind a long-standing British foreign policy objective: excluding Russia from the Mediterranean. Greece was recognised as a British concern. Keeping Greece, along with neutral Turkey, independent and friendly, was central to British strategic thinking in the Mediterranean. To that end Churchill had ordered British forces to intervene when the Greek Communist resistance took up arms to prevent the restoration of the Greek monarchy. As in Yugoslavia, the Greek Communists had grown powerful during the war. They were able to fight a prolonged and bitter civil war. Supporting their preferred government came to be an expensive burden to Britain. It was far from the only one. Stalin was exerting intense pressure on Turkey to cede naval base areas in the Dardanelles, as well as considerable territory in eastern Turkey. The pressure included massing troops on the frontier. Britain therefore had to provide large-scale military aid to bolster the Turkish government. For a deeply indebted and impoverished Britain, with worldwide imperial commitments, these proved unsustainable burdens.

In February 1947, Britain's Labour government unceremoniously dumped the problem on the United States. The American government were informed that Britain could no longer afford to support Greece and Turkey. The British suggested that the Americans would step into the breach, but whatever their decision, British aid would end almost immediately. This message was greeted with some suspicion in Washington. Americans did not want to be tricked into safeguarding the British empire. But one calculation, which was to dominate American and Soviet thinking throughout the Cold War soon came to the fore: the 'domino theory'. If Communism were allowed to triumph in Greece and Turkey, their neighbours would soon be in peril. As a line of dominoes falls when the first is allowed to drop, Communism would triumph elsewhere. Eventually it would triumph everywhere. Reinforced by the arguments presented in the Kennan telegram, which argued for the long-term containment of Communism, there was a strong feeling that Greece and Turkey must be sustained.

There was another reason for the Truman administration to listen sympathetically to such arguments. In the national as well as international arena, Truman lacked the stature of Roosevelt. The Republican Party had just won control of Congress, and was confident they could win the presidential election in 1948. Truman was aware he needed some issue to rally support and gain a standing comparable to Roosevelt's. A strong anti-Communist line could achieve this.

In March 1947 Truman addressed Congress, asking for \$400 million to aid Greece and Turkey. He also used the occasion to enunciate what became the Truman Doctrine. He claimed that it was the duty of the United States to help free peoples everywhere to protect their freedom. Economic and military support to threatened nations was essential to prevent the spread of totalitarian regimes. In their own security interests and for the good of the world, America must supply this support. In short, the United States must commit itself to preventing the further spread of Communism anywhere in the world. It amounted to a declaration of Cold War on the USSR.

For Greece and Turkey the aid was vital. But the programme soon revealed problems, some of which were to plague US foreign policy throughout the Cold War. The Greek government was happy to accept the aid, but utterly ignored US calls for political reforms, which would undermine the appeal of Communism. It was soon clear that there was very little the Americans could do to force them. Cutting aid would simply give victory to the Communists. Containing Communism would require sustaining repressive, often brutal governments simply because they were anti-Communist.

The Truman Doctrine was not intended to provide American taxpayers' money to any government seeking a handout. But it could not be confined to democracies only. Too many repressive states had problems with Communist inspired subversion or guerrilla warfare simply because they were repressive. In fact the Truman Doctrine encouraged many such states to collectively label all of their enemies as Communists, when in fact they were often very disparate groups. This was later to happen in South Vietnam. If the threat could be called Communist the United States might be more generous. But it also increased the prestige of Communism – those seeking to overthrow a regime would seek out the Communists, because the regime itself announced that the Communists were a formidable threat.

But perhaps more significantly, the Truman Doctrine identified the ideological enemy of the 'free' world. In simplistic black-and-white terms it identified Communism as a common enemy of the rest of mankind. It announced that they must put aside other differences and unite in the face of this threat. In short, a line had been drawn on the map, separating the 'free' and 'unfree' worlds, suggesting that the 'free' were under siege and must look to their defences. To the Communist world, of course, it was perceived that they were under siege. These attitudes would persist throughout the Cold War.



Map 10: Marshall Aid

The Truman Doctrine was seen as an answer to Communist subversion. But the Communist problem did not end there. Communists had been at the forefront of several European resistance movements. They also represented the antithesis to fascism. In France and Italy especially, the Communist parties were popular and broadly based. They might perhaps win power legally, through the ballot box. Nor were France and Italy the only states at risk. Communism, it was deemed, was fuelled by want and misery. There were plenty of both in post-war Europe. Unemployment, inflation, homelessness and hunger were commonplace. The winter of 1946–47 was one of the hardest in a century. This merely compounded Europe's problems. The continent simply could not seem to recover from the war. The conditions appeared ideal for the spread of Communism.

Nor was this simply a European problem. Led by exports, the US economy had expanded massively during the war. A large part of the world's gold reserves had accumulated in America. With the abrupt termination of Lend-Lease in August 1945, nobody had the dollars to buy American goods anymore. Unemployment was rising steadily. There seemed to be a real danger that the United States might find itself once more gripped by depression.

Both to contain Communism and safeguard American prosperity, the United States needed to provide massive aid to Europe. In June 1947, Secretary of State, George Marshall, made a major speech to this end. He insisted that piecemeal aid was useless. Europe must come together and draw up a continent-wide recovery programme to present to America. The ultimate aim must be European integration, to provide a bulwark against totalitarianism. British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, seized the offer with both hands. He rushed to organise a European conference to draw up such a plan. He also reached an understanding with the Americans about Soviet participation in the plan – it was not wanted. East European nations could join, but only if they repudiated Communism and Soviet leadership. When he informed the USSR of the conference, Bevin spoke of a central co-ordinating body, setting quotas and priorities for all participants. The Soviet Union would never accept this and declined to attend. They also insisted that their satellites also decline.

After that all talk of a central co-ordinating body, which was very important to America, was quietly dropped. Europe had no interest in integration. The conference was for all of western Europe, with some exceptions. There was too much hostility for Franco's regime for Spain to be invited. Finland, which had still not settled peace terms with the Soviet Union, found it prudent to

decline. The western zones of Germany and Austria, and the city of Trieste were represented by the occupying powers. Drawing up a realistic plan proved extremely complex, and there was much cheating by governments when it came to listing resources and needs. But a plan was hammered out in just eight weeks, naming specific targets to be reached by 1952, and estimating an American contribution of \$16 billion.

Marshall Aid came in the form of commodities rather than cash, which meant that much of the aid benefited the US economy. But its impact could still be dramatic. Assembly line machinery re-equipped Fiat and fuelled Italian recovery. Missouri mules revived Greek agriculture. Nearly three-quarters of French ports, destroyed in the war, were rebuilt in two years. Within a year real earnings in Europe had surpassed pre-war levels by 20 per cent, and rationing was beginning to disappear.

The political impact was equally dramatic. It was made clear to France that no aid would be forthcoming unless Communist-inspired labour unrest was settled. Helped by public revulsion against train sabotage, public opinion turned against Communism, and strikes died down. In Italy elections were due which could well return a Communist government. America again made it clear that no aid would arrive if that happened. The CIA also secretly funded anti-Communist parties and propaganda. Italian-Americans were encouraged to write to their relatives to urge them not to vote for Communists. This was enough to swing the election.

In fact Marshall Aid did much to finally establish the battle-lines of the Cold War in Europe. European nations accepting Marshall Aid were clearly committing themselves to the capitalist west. In the east, the Soviet response was forceful. Marshall Aid was denounced as an imperialist plot by which America intended to dominate Europe. In September 1947 Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) was established, to replace the Comintern. Through Cominform the USSR moved to reduce its satellites to complete subservience, lest they drift into the western camp – the USSR had its own version of the domino theory. In 1949 Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Aid) was established as a Soviet version of Marshall Aid, though acting more directly to the benefit of the Soviet Union. Europe began to diverge economically as well as politically. In Germany recovery required currency reform in the western zones, from which the Soviet zone was excluded. The division of Germany was completed. But it did leave one anomaly, which was to become one of the greatest potential flash points of the Cold War: the continuing joint occupation of Berlin.



Map 11: The Berlin Blockade

The joint occupation of Berlin had made sense when the Allies were expected to co-operate in administering Germany. In June 1948, over strenuous Soviet objections, the western occupying powers decided to create a separate west German state. This left the western presence in Berlin as an anomaly. Stalin certainly wanted to get the west out of Berlin. Like the west, he intended to create a government that would claim sovereignty over all of Germany. This would be far more convincing if it completely controlled the national capital. Berlin voters and politicians in the western sector could not be intimidated into giving the Communists control of the city government. Also the western presence allowed them to disseminate propaganda and conduct espionage. Finally a divided Berlin gave east Germans an escape route to the west. Some effort to drive the west from Berlin was predictable. Truman, by restricting reparation shipments to the Soviet zone had even suggested the way. During 1947 western communications to Berlin were increasingly harassed and on 24 June 1948 they were cut.

The correct western response was far from clear. Militarily their presence in Berlin was valueless and appeared scarcely tenable if the Soviet Union were determined to drive them out. Trying to cling on to their own sectors of Berlin would cause suffering among the city's citizens, which seemed hard to justify, especially as it might drive them into the arms of the Communists. Forcing armed convoys of supplies through by road was an option. Stalin was unlikely to risk a war over the issue, but it was a form of brinkmanship that western governments preferred to avoid. Besides, all the Red Army would need to do was destroy bridges in front and behind a convoy to isolate it without firing a shot. In western capitals there was considerable uncertainty on this subject.

It was the American military governor of the western zones, General Clay, who decided the western response. Without waiting for instructions, he had already decided that American non-combatants would not be withdrawn from Berlin. Such a step, he argued, would be politically disastrous. It would signal to all Germans, not just Berliners, that America had no real commitment to them. They might well race to the Communists, seeking whatever protection they could find. The impact could spread across Europe. Communism could triumph over the entire continent.

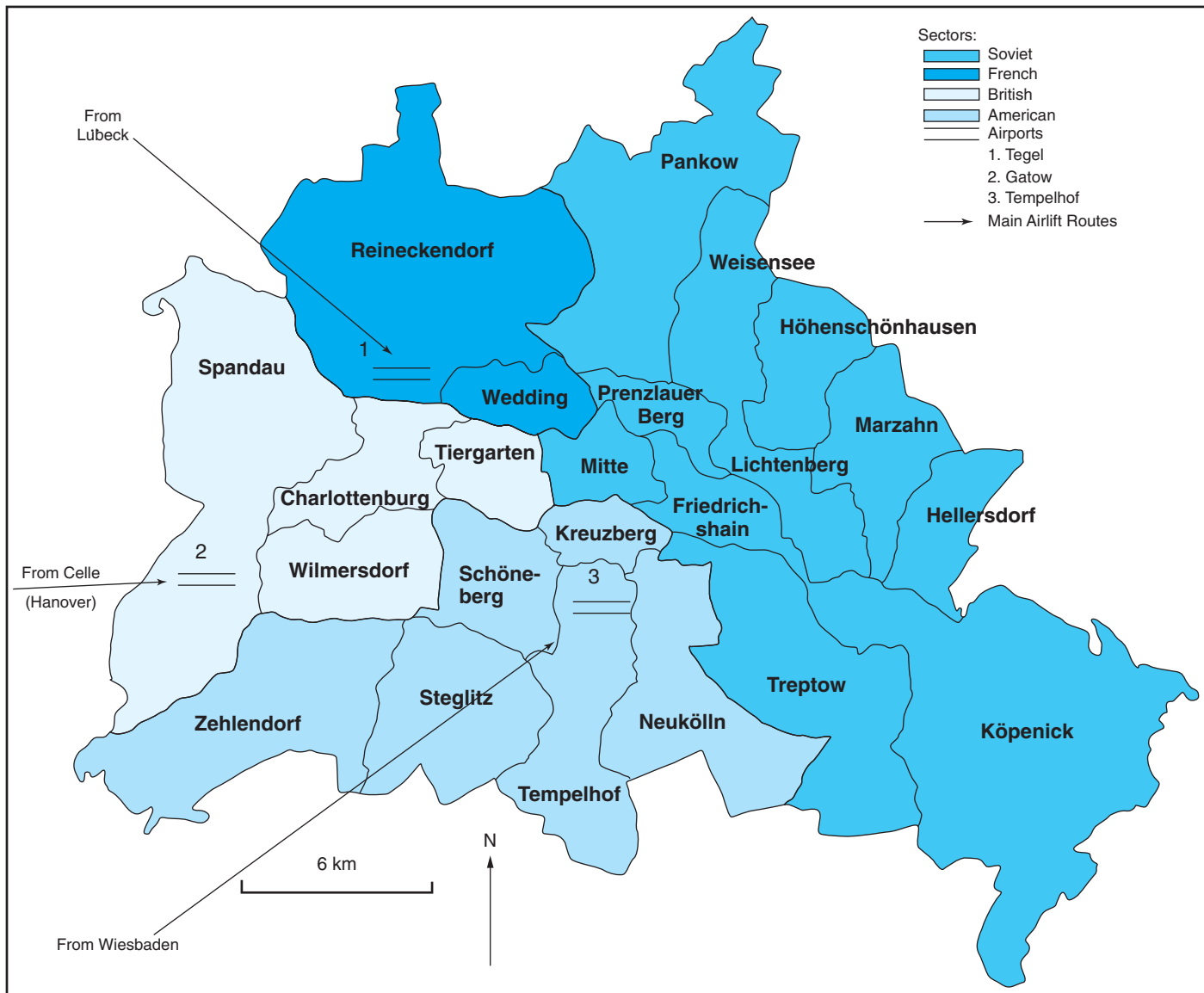
The west did have one option left which might allow them to cling to their sectors of Berlin without seriously risking war. While land and water transport was closed, the air routes were still open. Britain and America had between them over a hundred C47 Dakota transport aircraft and

more could perhaps be found. But it was far from clear whether it would be possible to airlift sufficient supplies to support 2 million people. Clay consulted with the mayor of Berlin (whom the USSR refused to recognise), Ernst Reuter. When asked if Berliners would bear possibly considerable privations for several months, Reuter assured Clay that they would stand firm. Clay therefore resolved to make the attempt.

In Berlin the first cargo of food was delivered by C47 within 24 hours of the blockade commencing. But assembling the aircraft and organising an airlift on such a scale took time. It was also dependent upon the weather, and winter, when fog is common in Berlin, would cause extreme problems. Western Berlin needed 4000 tons of supplies every day simply to survive. To sustain its economy would require twice that amount. At the beginning the west was delivering about 300 tons per day. Initially, therefore, Berliners had to put up with considerable shortages. A collapse of civilian morale, with Berliners abandoning the city to seek food, would have been disastrous for the west. But civilian morale proved extremely resilient. Berliners who had survived the horrors of the Soviet siege in 1945 would suffer much to avoid the return of Soviet rule.

The Soviet Union could have cut the airlift. Even a few strategically placed barrage balloons would have sufficed. But they never attempted it – initially they did not think it could possibly work, later the threat of war was too serious. By March 1949 the airlift was delivering 8000 tons per day and the blockade was broken. In fact a counter blockade was in place preventing goods from western Berlin being shipped to the Soviet zone. The USSR was suffering more than the west from this. The west felt no need to make concessions and established a separate government for a distinct West Berlin. When, in May 1949, after 328 days, Stalin lifted the blockade, the west could celebrate its first Cold War victory.

But the blockade did have a profound impact in the west, which would permanently shape the Cold War. Firstly it persuaded western politicians that the USSR did indeed have enormous ambitions in the west. Swallowing half of Europe did not satisfy Stalin. But also it suggested that a firm stand against aggression would succeed. They must not appease Stalin, as Hitler had been appeased. The west must therefore unite and show resolve and a willingness to defend their territory. In April 1949 NATO was formed – a development seen as very threatening in Moscow. Massive forces were permanently assembled along both sides of the frontier dividing east and west, and any conflict across it could only be on a massive scale.



Map 12: *The Chinese Communist Victory*

By the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the Guomindang was already deeply corrupt, enfeebled and discredited. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), on the other hand, was succeeding in appealing to Chinese national sentiment and attracting support. These were trends that were to continue. US policy, in fact, only worsened the Guomindang's plight.

Weak as the Guomindang was, as a partner with the United States, it offered tantalising possibilities. In the post-war world Europe would be devastated and impoverished. China's 450 million people offered a vast market, from which Europe had been driven. Capturing this market might mean the difference between prosperity and recession in America. Also as a (junior) strategic partner, China could help provide security and stability to the region. Together they could push European influence from the region by turning their colonies into joint Sino-American trusteeships. There was much to gain politically from a Guomindang-led China. The popular American perception of China was, furthermore, utterly unrealistic. American propaganda painted China as a democracy and a strong ally, looking to America for leadership. Such political calculations and popular misconceptions would shape US policy towards China. Bitter recriminations would be levelled at those held responsible for 'losing' China.

Once America was at war with Japan, Jiang, now certain of victory, simply stopped fighting. He would leave the Americans to deal with the Japanese, while he hoarded his strength to destroy his CCP allies. American support, in terms of 'loans', was used to enrich Jiang and his family clique rather than to prosecute the war. Occasionally, hinting that China might soon collapse, he would try to squeeze more money from America. He seemed not to notice the damage his actions were inflicting on the Guomindang. The party had long been corrupt and arbitrary, but as long as it actually fought the Japanese it had some claim to legitimacy. Now, with what amounted to an unofficial truce, that legitimacy was being eroded. Jiang's army was in an even more lamentable state. Corrupt and incompetent conscription meant that only the poorest and weakest served. Unpaid, virtually untrained, it was a force of kidnapped, brutalised peasants. Perhaps one-third died or deserted before reaching the front. Once there, they could only survive by trading with the Japanese and by pillaging the peasantry.

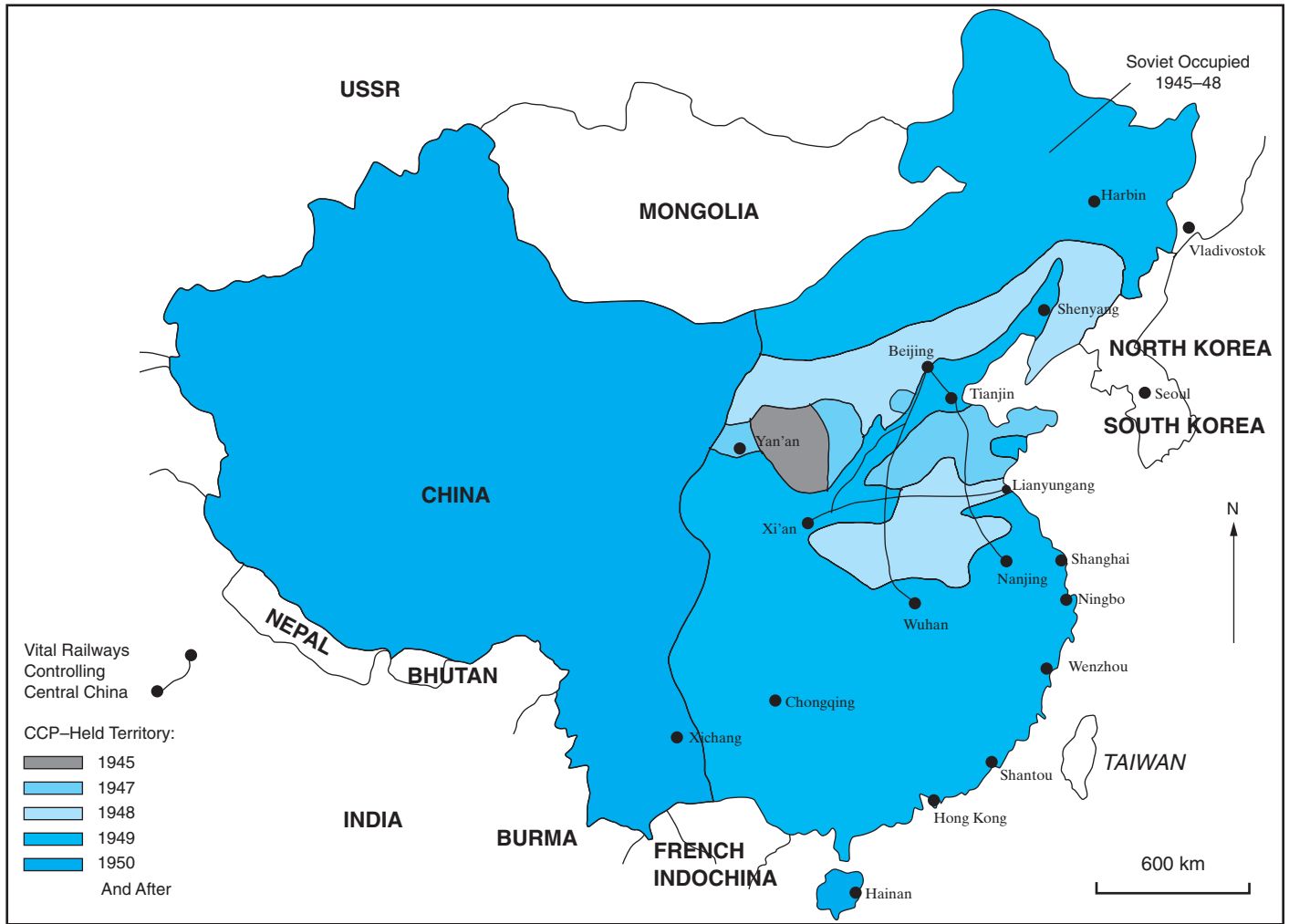
At the same time the CCP was building the largest guerrilla army in the world, which determinedly sought popular support. It could scarcely have survived without such support. The future boded ill for the Guomindang. There was little chance of the alliance surviving. When

Japan surrendered Jiang immediately ordered the Chinese Red Army to hold its positions and accept no surrenders from Japanese troops. He was ignored and the CCP seized a huge stock of Japanese munitions. The Americans attempted to sponsor negotiations for a new coalition between the two parties. Stalin, who had concluded an advantageous treaty with Jiang, supported the negotiations. Soviet forces in northern China showed the CCP few favours. But neither side was sincere in the negotiations, which broke down by July 1946. The civil war was resumed.

Control of China depended largely on control of central China. This in turn depended upon control of a strategically vital network of railway lines. For most of the civil war the Guomindang controlled most of this network. They had the larger army and with US aid it was better equipped. They also had control of the main cities. But by a series of disastrous errors, Jiang managed to squander his advantages. The Red Army, renamed the People's Liberation Army (PLA), had undertaken a great deal of political work in the countryside. The Guomindang were never able to wrest that control away. Their officials were arrogant and grasping – to the peasants the Japanese had been better rulers.

Jiang's first campaign appeared successful. Through 1946 his armies launched a general offensive, which captured 174,000 square kilometres of CCP territory – and inflicted savage reprisals on peasants who had benefited from Communist land reform. The capture of Yan'an, the Communist 'capital' seemed a remarkable achievement. But the PLA had never measured victory in terms of territory, which they were prepared to sacrifice to conserve their strength. They inflicted casualties on the Guomindang, whose numerical superiority was continually dissipating. Also by capturing territory the Guomindang became dispersed, and the offensive ground to a halt. Jiang, for his part, certainly did value territory. He was to order his troops to hold land and cities when he could not hope to reinforce them. American advisers urged him to abandon such wasteful tactics, to no avail.

The decisive year was 1947. The PLA cut vital rail links and surrounded and captured large troop concentrations, often incorporating them directly into the PLA. Thereafter the Communist advance began in earnest. As Jiang's armies evaporated and public support vanished, the PLA's advance became a victory march to popular acclaim. Jiang could do no more than gather what could be salvaged and flee to Taiwan, where the US Navy would protect him. The world's most populous country had become Communist.



Map 13: NATO and the Warsaw Pact

The Truman Doctrine, with its commitment to containing Communism, was to have immense consequences for Europe. The United States had never considered a long-term commitment to Europe. But Soviet conduct in eastern Europe and the blockade of Berlin appeared convincing evidence that western Europe was a primary target of Stalin's aggression. In April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington, creating NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). The treaty included most of western Europe. Some states, such as Sweden, preferred neutrality. It was politically impossible to invite Franco's Spain, which only joined in 1982. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952. NATO was to prove one of the most durable multilateral alliance systems in history.

The alliance, however, did have its problems. The USA had not the slightest intention of defending Europe's colonial possessions, which were excluded from the treaty area. Algeria, which the French insisted was part of France, did cause some potential complications. But Algeria became independent in 1962. By then France, resenting perceived Anglo-American domination of NATO, was detaching itself from the alliance. It was the only member to do so.

Western European defence was seen in Washington as a European problem. Originally there was no American intention of committing ground troops in Europe for long. The outbreak of the Korean War was, however, widely seen as a diversionary attack. Europe could be the real intended victim. American forces were therefore reinforced. This was supposed to be a temporary measure, until European forces were built up sufficiently to defend the continent alone. But the American presence was quickly presented as proof of alliance solidarity and US commitment. It proved politically impossible to withdraw US forces from Europe.

The European contribution to NATO was a source of continual irritation in Washington. There was a common misconception that Soviet forces in Europe so massively outnumbered NATO in conventional forces, that it was useless to try to match them. It is unlikely that from the 1950s the USSR enjoyed any real advantage. But to Europeans nuclear deterrence was preferable to conventional defence. It was to them a cheaper option and high military spending and conscription were very unpopular in Europe. After the USSR acquired nuclear weapons it also meant that destruction would be general. Europeans had no sympathy whatever to any American strategic proposal which might limit a major war to Europe – there was a danger it might become an acceptable option in Washington and Moscow.

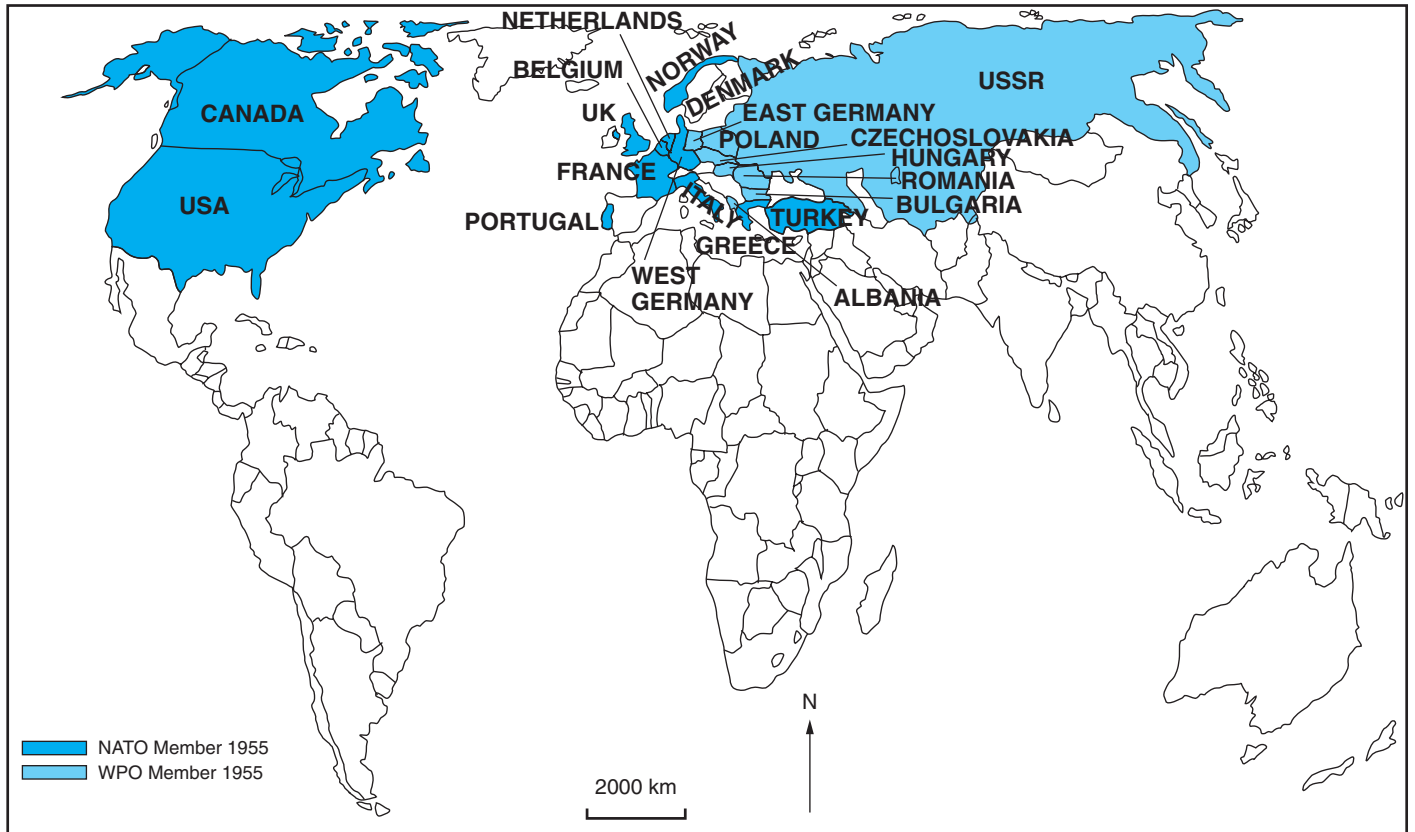
To Europeans NATO was as much a political as a military alliance. Its purpose was to prevent Soviet – or Communist – political domination of Europe. Apart from a few

brief periods, such as early in the Korean War, 1950 and 1951, most European governments rarely felt that a Soviet invasion was a serious prospect. But the threat had to be presented as very real to overcome domestic political opposition; CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) was very strong in Europe. Also it allowed Communism to be presented as a major threat, undermining its possible appeal. But European reluctance to spend on conventional forces had other consequences. The Korean War and their colonial problems had stretched European conventional forces very thinly by 1950. The credibility of NATO required that the newly created West Germany (Federal Republic) contribute to its own defence – a step unthinkable only a few years before and vehemently opposed by the USSR. A West German Army was raised and in May 1955 West Germany became a full member of NATO.

This had its consequences. The Soviet Union was appalled at the prospect of a remilitarised Germany. A united but disarmed and neutral Germany was preferable to the USSR. When proposals on these lines were rejected by the west, some form of political response was necessary. Until 1955 the Soviet Union had relied on a series of bilateral defence treaties with eastern European states. A Soviet-led multilateral alliance system now seemed desirable – it would show Communist unity and resolve to match the NATO challenge. Thus in May 1955 the Warsaw Pact was signed, creating the Warsaw Pact Organisation (WPO). It also proved durable. Yugoslavia was excluded because of its defiance of Moscow. Albania withdrew in 1962 after its own breach with Moscow. The rest remained loyal, even if Romania made little contribution to the WPO. Only Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany (Democratic Republic) really had the population and technology to make them valuable military partners to the USSR.

Its members saw the WPO as purely a defensive organisation. Indeed its planning was defensive. The USSR, however, tended to see attack as the best form of defence – it was the best way to actually win a war. It would, furthermore, keep any conflict as far as possible from Soviet territory. WPO forces, therefore, were prepared for a massive offensive into the west. But this would be done in the event of a war, not to begin one. The pact was presented to the public as a defence against a surprise attack from NATO.

As with the USA in NATO, in the WPO all major strategic decisions, especially concerning nuclear weapons, were reserved by the Soviet Union. Both alliances were basically defensive. This served to provide stability of a sort in east–west relations. It also had its risks. Soviet reliance on the offensive as defence, coupled with western reliance on nuclear deterrence, meant that any serious confrontation would be catastrophic.



Map 14: Other Regional Security Pacts

With the creation of NATO, and after Communist victory in China and the Korean War, the United States moved to complete the defensive ring needed to contain world Communism. This was to prove far more frustrating for the Americans. The regional security pacts they concluded were far weaker than NATO. The commitment of members to these pacts was very limited, and far too many states refused to adhere to them.

In Southeast Asia, the US moved in 1954 to expand its ANZUS pact (a tripartite mutual security treaty) with Australia and New Zealand to encompass all of the newly independent states. The French position in Vietnam was collapsing and they were defeated at Dien Bien Phu in May (see Map 29). America wanted to establish a regional security arrangement that would prevent further Communist aggression or subversion. There were immediate difficulties. Nehru in India, for example, had no intention of replacing recently ended British domination with US domination. Colonialism was more of a threat than Communism to Nehru. He not only refused to discuss American plans for a regional treaty, he encouraged neighbouring states also to refuse. Also at the Geneva Conference, following the French defeat, the terms of the independence agreements of Indo-China meant that Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam were forbidden to join such a pact.

Thus when the pact was signed, in Manila in September 1954, only three Asian states were represented: Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines. The Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty, which created SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation) was, therefore, always going to be a much more limited organisation than NATO. Members of SEATO agreed that an attack on one, including through subversion, was an attack on all, and they would consult to meet the common threat. Indo-China was included in the treaty area to provide the region some protection.

None of the members of SEATO were prepared to commit significant resources to the organisation. British and French interest in the region declined as rapidly as their colonial responsibilities. As for the Asian members, they saw the organisation primarily in political terms. To them it was a useful tool to influence great power policies, and a means of gaining American aid.

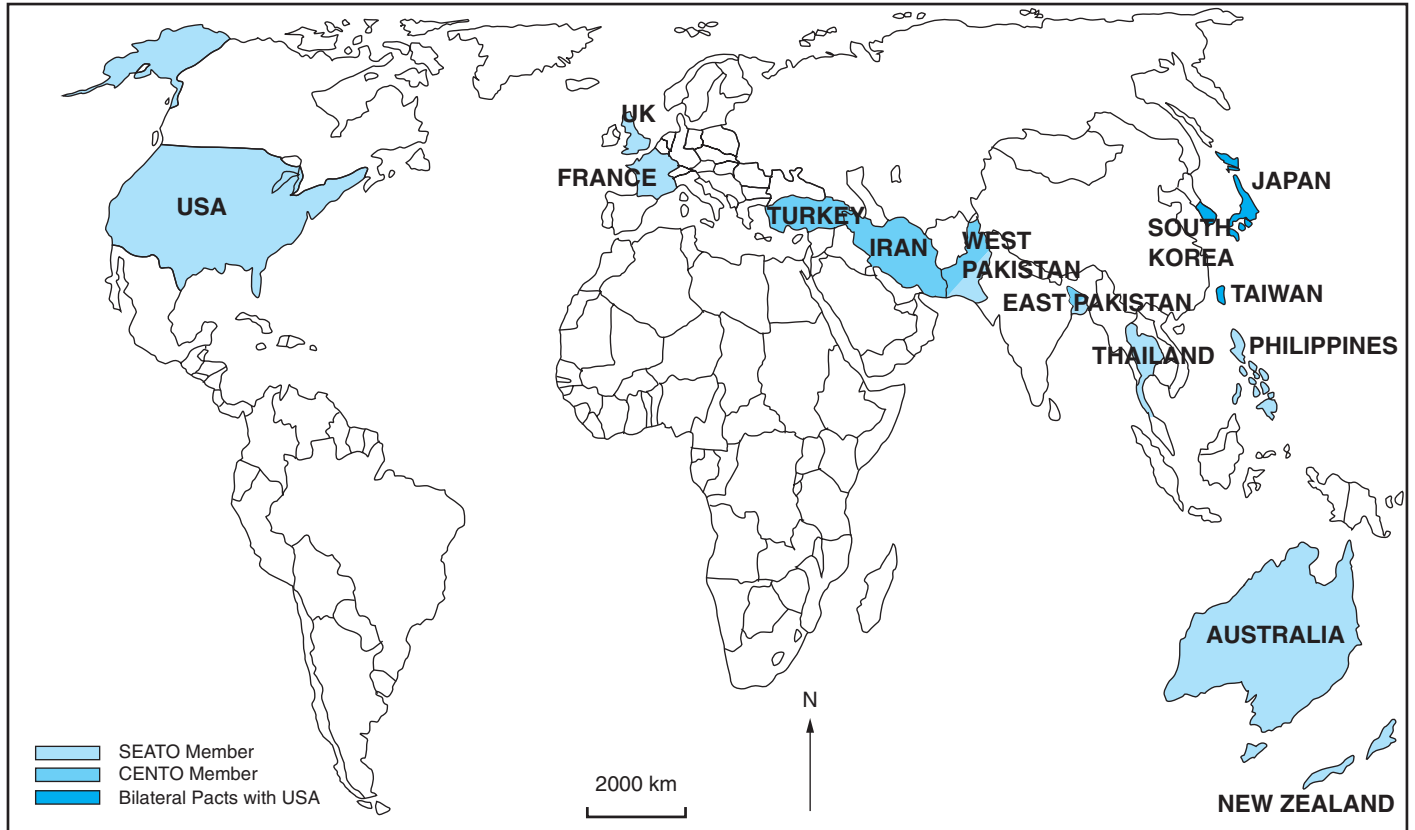
Nor was any member eager to support SEATO if their own interests were not at stake. Pakistan lost interest in the organisation when it received no support in its disputes with India. Thailand was as reluctant as Britain when the USA wanted to activate SEATO to oppose Communist guerrillas in Laos. US wishes to enlarge the responsibilities of the organisation, especially to the nations at the forefront of its Cold War strategy, were vigorously opposed.

There was no interest in offering guarantees to a former enemy such as Japan. As to guarantees for Taiwan and South Korea, there were even greater objections. These countries really were in danger of being attacked by China. SEATO membership, it was clear, was not worth the risk of going to war with China. The USA had to settle for strictly bilateral security pacts with each.

The regional security organisation of the Middle East was worth little more. The United States sponsored, but did not join the Baghdad Pact between Britain, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan in February 1955. They were again unable to form an all-encompassing agreement. What was conspicuously absent from the Baghdad Pact, with the exception of Iraq, were Arab states. In Egypt, Nasser aspired for the leadership of the Arab world, and bitterly denounced the pact as an attempt to restore imperialist control over the region. It was widely seen as no more than an American plot to protect Israel.

Even worse, however, was to follow. In July 1958 a revolution in Iraq brought down the only Arab government supporting the pact. The pact was transformed into CENTO (Central Treaty Organisation) including Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. Again, America was not a member and its commitments to the members were vague. In a series of bilateral agreements the USA would take appropriate, mutually agreed measures in case of Communist aggression. But it did supply considerable aid. This, again, was one of the chief benefits of membership. The threat of Soviet invasion was seen as minimal, and few believed that the existence of CENTO would deter the Soviet Union if it decided to attack. Internal Communist subversion was not deemed a significant problem.

In short, the United States, despite its efforts, never created another regional security organisation comparable to NATO. The military forces available to them, and the commitment of its partners were always frustratingly limited. The nations of the Middle East and Southeast Asia possessed only a fraction of the military might of Europe. They would always be dependants rather than partners of America. They valued the alliances for the benefits involved in terms of aid and influence. They had their own political concerns and disputes, against which containing Communism was a minor concern. The fear that America could inherit the powers of former colonial rulers prevented the alliances gaining widespread adherents. American support for Israel aroused the suspicion of Arab states. CENTO never had much credibility as a military alliance. SEATO members lacked unity and commitment. Its primary role to the USA, to provide the basis for determined coalition action to prevent the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia, never came to fruition.



Map 15: The Malayan Emergency

In June 1948 a state of emergency was proclaimed in Malaya in response to Communist guerrilla activity. Problems had been developing for a considerable time. The British had imported Chinese and Indian labour to work in the tin mines and rubber plantations. They became a majority of the population – a fact deeply resented by Malays. The Chinese had suffered high unemployment in the 1930s, and had then been victimised by the Japanese after their conquest of Malaya. The Malayan Communist Party was in fact overwhelmingly (95 per cent) Chinese. They were determined to fight a restoration of British imperial power. The Communists' main support was in the countryside. Barely scraping a living on the fringes of the jungle were perhaps 600,000 Chinese squatters. Their poverty and insecurity made them an ideal recruiting ground for guerrillas. Their strategy was simple – and potentially war-winning. They would paralyse the economy, by attacking rubber plantations and tin mines. The British would eventually cut their losses and leave.

But the fact that the guerrillas were Chinese shaped Britain's response. Within China the Communists were in the ascendant, with the Guomindang regime collapsing (see Map 12). How great were their ambitions in Asia? Also, Communist inspired guerrillas were challenging colonial rule throughout the region (see for example Map 29). From London this all appeared part of a clearly orchestrated Communist strategy, intended to conquer all of Asia.

Guerrilla warfare in the jungle was a real challenge to British forces. They soon realised that air power had little value. Relying on bombs, napalm and defoliants was an exercise in futility. They could only harass the guerrillas. But ground operations would demand huge numbers of troops. Besides, every civilian killed by a stray shot would merely add to their enemies. Firepower, it was quickly recognised, was no solution. The guerrillas would have to be defeated politically.

The British developed a counter-insurgency strategy that eventually proved remarkably effective. Indeed Malaya was the only guerrilla war of its kind where the guerrillas were clearly defeated. Firstly a process of political reform, answering the demands of nationalists was introduced. This led, in 1957, to Malayan independence under a pro-western government. Also the British recognised that it was vital for them to be upholding the law. Emergency laws were drawn up which were drastic enough for the security forces to act effectively. But they were also clear enough so that the security forces were seen to act within the law themselves. Police work was seen as crucial. Good intelligence was more important than actually killing guerrillas. Generous surrender terms were offered. Cash rewards were

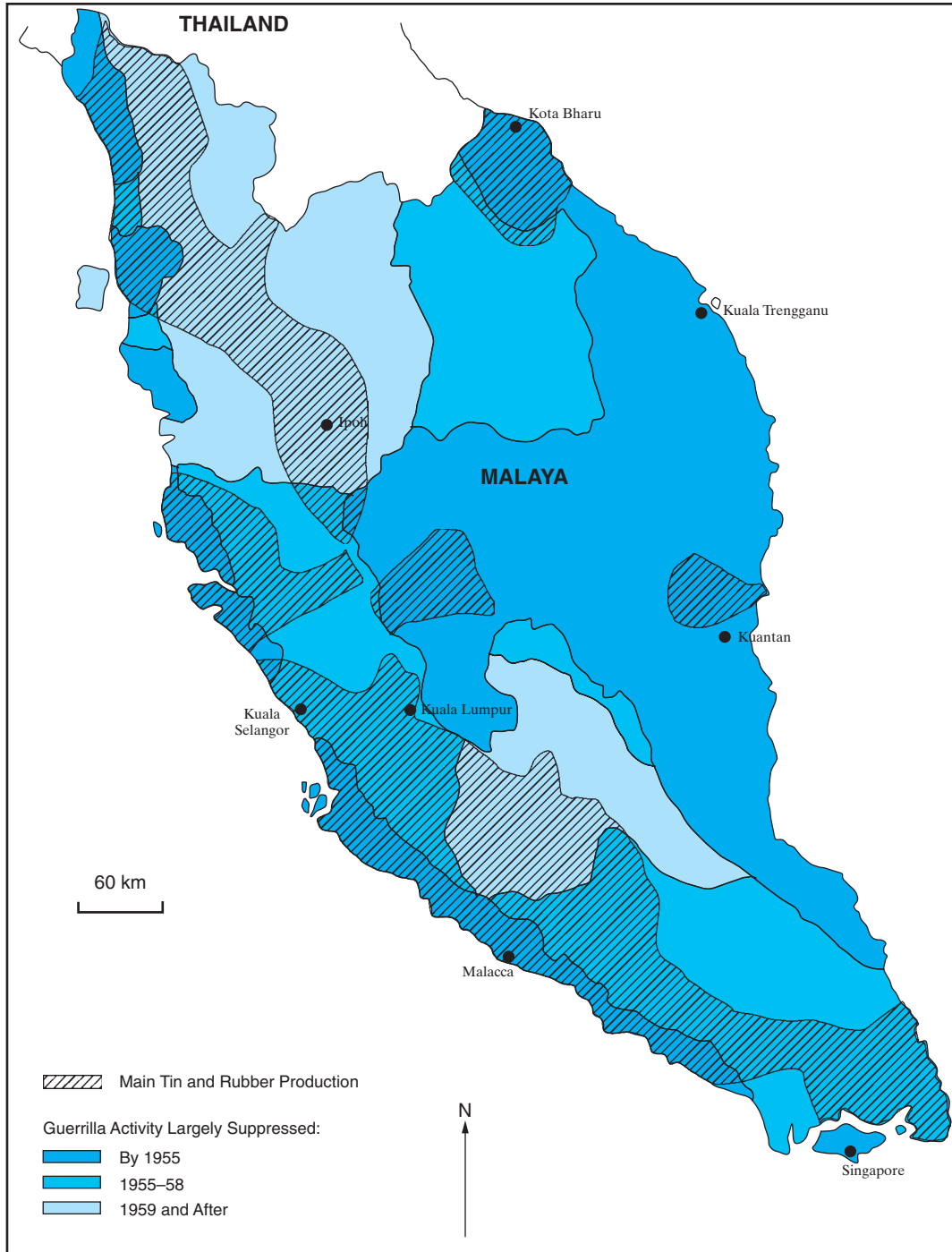
available to those who surrendered weapons or offered information. Guerrillas could also surrender and request deportation to China without facing any questioning.

The most vital element in Britain's counter-insurgency strategy, however, was their drive to win over the civil population. Winning 'hearts and minds', and depriving the guerrillas of popular support was a fundamental requirement of British strategy. The section of the population the British most urgently needed to win over were the 600,000 squatters who provided the guerrillas with most of their support. The strategy the British adopted to achieve this was both novel and ambitious. They decided to resettle the entire squatter population.

Separating the guerrillas from their supporters was an obvious step to make. It would deny the guerrillas supplies, recruits and intelligence. But the British did not consider any form of internment for the squatters. To win the squatters' support they would have to provide very real material improvements in the squatters' lives, far beyond anything the guerrillas could promise. The British provided rehousing, in new villages. Once there the squatters gained a degree of security of land tenure they had never before known. Citizenship rights were extended. In material terms they had luxuries such as electricity and safe water. Teachers and nurses were provided if they were available. Welfare officers, often Australian and New Zealander volunteers, protected their interests. The new villagers were given a degree of self-government, and, crucially, the protection of the security forces that allowed them to exercise it without fear of guerrilla reprisal. Eventually they could be given responsibility for their own protection.

By such tactics the areas in which the guerrillas could operate became ever more constricted. A band of guerrilla-free territory was driven across Malaya, leaving those in the south totally isolated. By the mid 1950s the guerrillas were clearly losing. They were never entirely destroyed. A safe haven in Thailand sustained guerrilla activity in the north. But they were no longer a serious threat. By July 1960 the emergency was declared over.

The British success was due to a number of factors. That the guerrillas were ethnically Chinese and had virtually no Malay support was one. More importantly was the very early recognition that firepower could not succeed alone. The British fought a political battle that was extremely expensive and required enormous patience to gain results. It also required the creation of a representative Malayan state that was responsive to popular needs. Success against Communist guerrillas was possible: but not a quick victory, and certainly not a purely military victory.



THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR

Map 16: Korea – Partition and War

During the war against Japan, the future of the Japanese possession of Korea was rarely discussed. Stalin wanted a friendly government on this frontier as elsewhere. But he was willing to conciliate Roosevelt's desire for a joint occupation of the peninsula. Roosevelt did not want the Red Army too close to Japan. Therefore they divided the peninsula into zones of occupation along the 38th parallel. Roosevelt – a committed anti-colonialist – saw Korea as simply a colony, which must have its independence. But he felt it would need to be supervised for many years until it was ready for independence. He also assumed that a joint Soviet–American trusteeship would undertake that supervision. He was wrong on both counts.

The Korean people wanted independence immediately. They had no intention of waiting until foreigners deemed them ready. In 1945 there was very much a revolutionary spirit across Korea. A radical, left-wing movement emerged, bent on punishing collaborators and addressing urgent social and economic problems. Koreans, in short, were not going to co-operate with American plans for their future.

Also it was soon evident that there would be no Soviet co-operation either. Events in Korea in many ways mirrored events in Europe. Stalin, at Yalta, had been promised friendly governments on his frontier and he was going to have one in Korea. Despite a declared UN policy of a united Korea, the occupation zones soon diverged and, as in Germany, separate states began to emerge. In the north, given the revolutionary spirit, creating a Communist-led state was a simple task. The Communist leader, Kim Il Sung, was able to lead a generally popular and stable government.

In the south, the Americans had greater problems. They were unable to come to terms with the radical movement. The American military commander, General Hodge, was no politician. He saw only a command awash with Communist influence. He decided that any attempt to impose a form of trusteeship would merely nourish Communism. He sought a right-wing movement to counterbalance Communism. Most conservatives, unfortunately, had collaborated with the Japanese and benefited from Korea's social problems, making them deeply detested. Syngman Rhee rescued Hodge from his predicament. Rhee had long been the leader of a self-appointed, conservative, 'government in exile', and put himself forward as a pro-American, democratic leader who could prevent a Communist take-over.

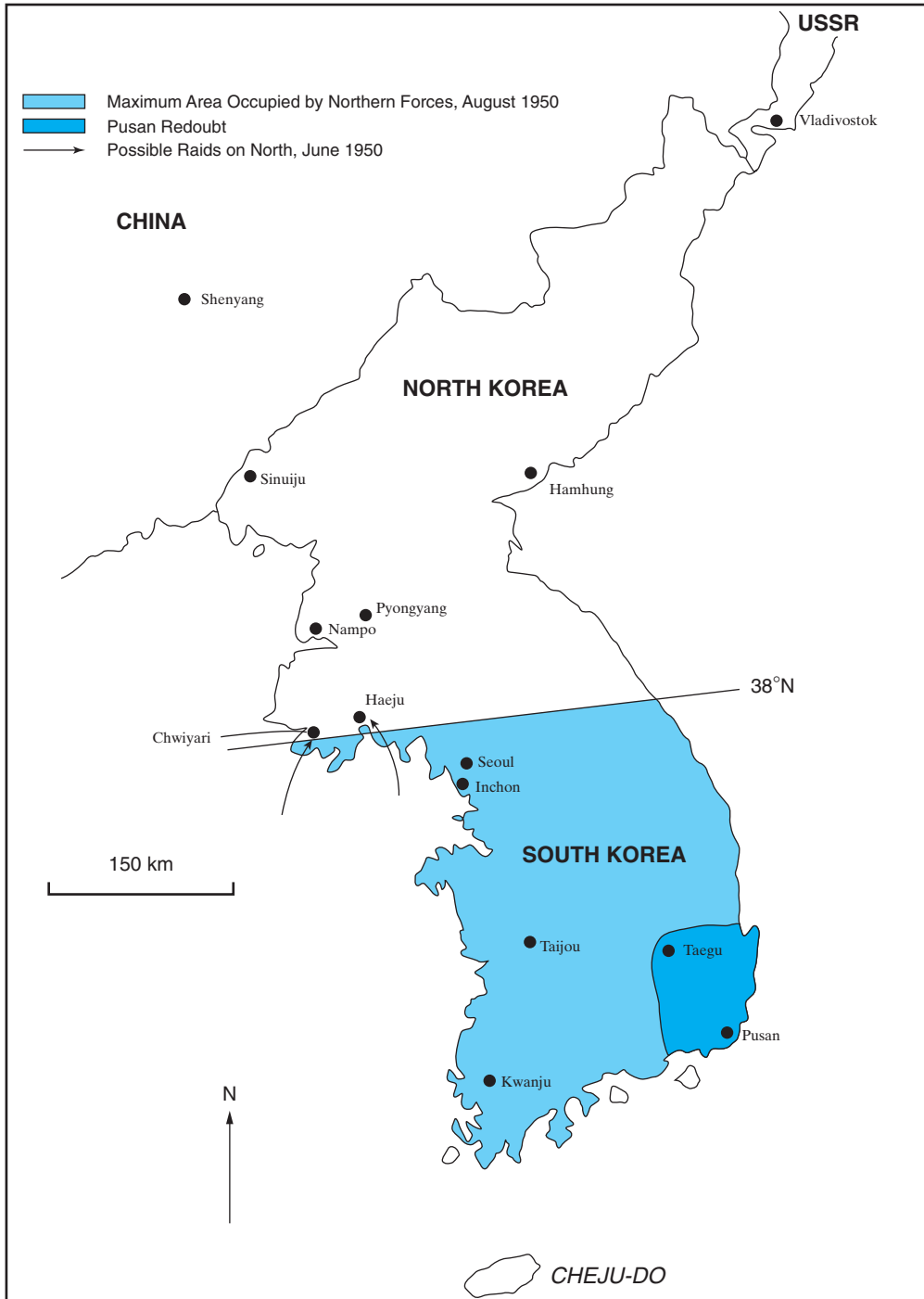
Hodge, with Washington's approval, allowed Rhee to use a rigged electoral system to win an election for an interim assembly. Once this was accomplished, Rhee orchestrated huge, and successful, demonstrations demanding the end of the American military government.

He went on to establish a corrupt, brutal and despotic regime, notably lacking in popular support.

By mid 1949 both the Russians and the Americans had withdrawn from Korea. The Americans made no guarantees to South Korea. Indeed in January 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson publicly described the USA's defence perimeter as including Japan and the Philippines, which were vital to US strategic domination of the Pacific, but not South Korea, which was not. But Rhee's regime was still their creation; it would be humiliating to see it destroyed. Also Truman was by this time a president in trouble. The USSR detonated its first atomic bomb in August 1949, and the Chinese Communist Party won its victory in September. There was a strong feeling that the United States was failing to meet the Communist challenge adequately, that it was showing weakness. In April 1950 a crucial policy document, NSC-68, called for a major expansion of American military might. The feeling was growing that the next Communist challenge must be met by force.

The events of 25 June 1950 remain unclear. Perhaps Rhee launched one cross-border raid too many. There were claims of attacks near Haeju and Chwiyari. But even if this is so, this was simply the pretext for a long-planned North Korean offensive. Kim's tanks stormed across the border and Rhee's forces collapsed. But American strategic thinking had undergone a major reassessment towards Korea since January. NSC-68 had encouraged a growing view in Washington that the USA was in danger and that a great expansion of military spending was urgently needed. It was argued that if Communism was allowed to expand its territory any further, no coalition able to confront it with greater strength could ever be formed. Also it appeared that Communism had now moved beyond subversion to direct invasion. This was a challenge that had to be met. Truman, unable to contemplate yet another Communist victory, ordered American forces to South Korea.

But Truman could do more. The USSR, enraged that Communist China was not given China's seat on the UN Security Council, was boycotting that body. They were therefore not present to veto an American resolution, calling on members of the UN to contribute forces to protect South Korea from aggression. America's European allies cared nothing for Korea, but aggression there, if not challenged, might lead to aggression in Europe. They also had to consider the possible damage to NATO if they ignored America's current needs. Britain, France and 13 other nations, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, sent forces and five other nations sent medical units. A US-led coalition, only nominally acting in the name of the UN, was about to fight the first open battle of the Cold War.



Map 17: Korea – the UN intervenes

The Korean War had an immediate impact on American Cold War policy. Fearing North Korea had launched a diversionary attack under Moscow's orders, the US Seventh Fleet moved to prevent an invasion of Taiwan. This marked a greater commitment to Jiang's regime that would cause trouble in the future (see Map 20).

When the UN Security Council voted to intervene in the Korean War, North Korea appears to have been indifferent. North Korean tanks swept all before them. Most of South Korea's military had been destroyed. What was left, along with American garrison troops hurriedly sent from Japan, was fighting desperately simply to hang on to the Pusan redoubt. But reinforcements arrived, and the situation around Pusan stabilised. It would soon be time for the UN to take the offensive.

An offensive, however, would be a difficult and ugly battle to push the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel. Casualties would be high. American and allied public support for the war could fade quickly. The American commander of the UN forces, General MacArthur, formed a plan to win a quicker, more decisive victory. He decided that a sea-borne landing at Inchon, far behind North Korean lines, could outflank, isolate and destroy North Korean forces, with far fewer casualties.

The operation was a stunning success. The North Koreans appeared paralysed with shock. Forces in the south were reputedly not warned of the danger until too late. It was the turn of the North Korean forces to face catastrophe. By the time troops advancing from Inchon and Pusan converged on Seoul, North Korea was in desperate trouble.

Perhaps that victory was too overwhelming. The defeat of North Korean forces offered tantalising possibilities. The UN mandate had only been to protect South Korea from aggression. The aggressor was driven out. But why not take the opportunity of destroying the Communist state and uniting Korea? That would be a victory over Communism well worth achieving.

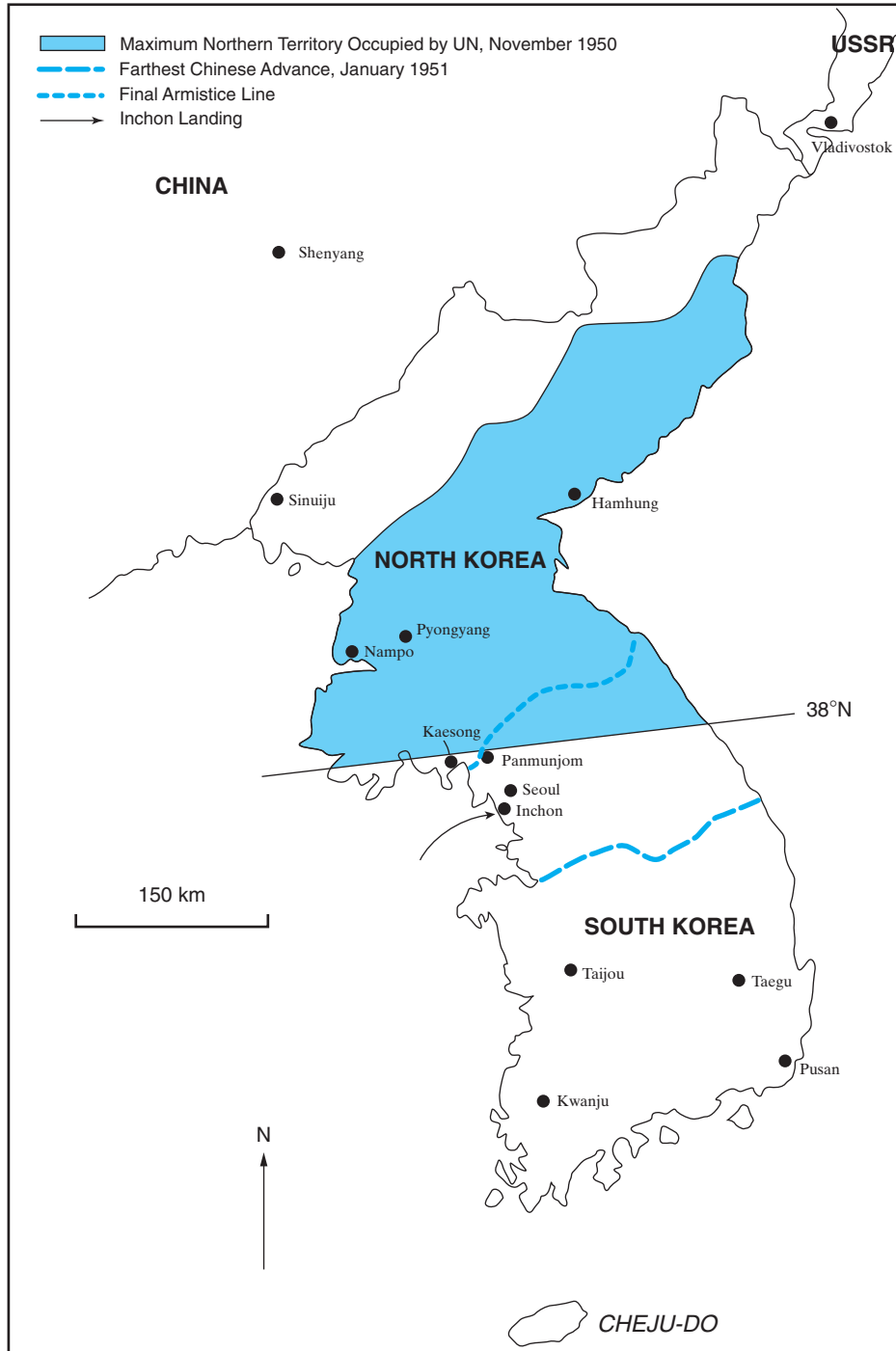
For MacArthur the temptation to press on was irresistible. Truman had ordered MacArthur not to cross the 38th parallel unless he was absolutely certain that there was no danger of intervention by North Korea's neighbours, the USSR and PRC (People's Republic of China). Given his recent success, perhaps MacArthur becoming overconfident in his own judgement was not surprising. He assured Truman that there was no danger of Chinese intervention. But the PRC had scarcely been established. For a hostile army to reach its frontier was utterly unacceptable to Mao Zedong. The prospect that China would be invaded next was far too threatening. The PRC's increasingly pointed warnings were, unfortunately, ignored. Huge numbers of Chinese troops began to cross into North Korea.

On 24 November 1950, MacArthur launched what he thought would be the final offensive of the war. His troops advanced straight into a massive Chinese ambush, and within days were fleeing south. As his strategy collapsed, MacArthur demanded that the war be expanded: China must be blockaded and bombed, nuclear weapons were required to save his forces from destruction. Such rhetoric embarrassed Truman and horrified America's allies. When his demands were rejected MacArthur openly criticised Truman. For this he was dismissed.

Despite MacArthur's alarmism, his successor, General Ridgeway, was able to halt the UN's headlong retreat. Using artillery and air power the UN inflicted massive casualties on the Chinese. The UN pushed the Chinese back to a defensible line just to the north of the 38th parallel. Here the UN halted. The PRC had shown that the invasion of North Korea was not achievable. Further efforts might simply provoke Soviet intervention. Hostilities would henceforth be settled by negotiation rather than by victory. The USA, however, was determined not to make the sort of concessions that the PRC might demand in return for peace. These might include America abandoning the Guomindang on Taiwan, and for the PRC to assume China's seat on the UN Security Council. Rather than a peace treaty, a cease-fire, without major concessions became UN policy.

Negotiations were to prove difficult at Panmunjom, situated between the lines. Fighting still continued as each side strove to gain advantages. The major stumbling block proved to be prisoners. Many North Koreans and Chinese did not want repatriation, and the UN was reluctant to force them. Talks reached a deadlock that lasted for two years. Only the election of Eisenhower, who hinted that tactical nuclear weapons might be used, and a new leadership in Moscow that wanted to reduce tensions pressurised the PRC into making concessions.

The PRC still had cause to celebrate, despite the high cost of the war. They had been treated as a great power by the west. Their forces had fought the west to a standstill. They would henceforth be a major player in the Cold War. To the USA Korea was a lesson that directly bringing down a Communist regime by force was impractical – at least those on the frontiers of the PRC or USSR. But they had avoided having to make embarrassing political concessions through lavish use of firepower. This, perhaps, was the key to upholding even unpopular and corrupt regimes troubled by Communism. Military, rather than political solutions, might be preferable. It was an approach they would try in Vietnam.



Map 18: Budapest, 1956

Eastern Europe was experiencing considerable tension in the early 1950s. Whatever prestige Communists had enjoyed by association with the defeat of Hitler had been lost. Stalin, by imposing Communist regimes, had turned Communists into servants of foreign domination. Such regimes could never have the legitimacy of the Soviet state. Even more harmful were the Stalinist economic programmes these regimes had been required to impose. Five-year plans, requiring rapid development of heavy industry and the collectivisation of agriculture were ordered without heed to the consequences. The social and economic costs were disastrous.

After 1953 the new Soviet leaders did order reforms, but only of the leadership of the Communist parties. They wanted to purge hard-line Stalinists. Hungarian Party leader, Matyas Rakosi, was forced to make Imre Nagy prime minister. Nagy had been responsible for land reform after 1945, and had been disgraced when he had opposed suggestions to collectivise agriculture. He was, in fact, a deeply committed Communist of many years' standing. But he was prepared to be more moderate, flexible and reformist than his peers. He was also jovial, charming and his record gave him an exaggerated reputation for heroism.

Under Nagy a degree of liberalisation was introduced, with greater economic freedom and the release of some political prisoners. But no more: the hated AVH, the secret police, was certainly not reformed. In January 1955, Rakosi felt strong enough to dismiss Nagy, though his reforms were not completely reversed. This did not save Rakosi; Erno Gero soon replaced him. But there was a growing demand for ever greater reforms. Reformers were strongly encouraged by Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin in February 1956.

Gero's government seemed oblivious to the rapidly developing crisis. On 23 October they took no action against a planned student demonstration until it was too late to prevent it. Marching past the Bem statue (a potent nationalist symbol) the students went on to Parliament. Their demands amounted to an open challenge to their government. They called for multi-party elections; the release of political prisoners; the removal of Stalin's statue from the City Park and the removal of Soviet troops from Hungary. What concessions they might have wrung from the government is uncertain, because that evening a crowd attempted to seize control of the radio station, shots were fired, and a rebellion had begun.

The government soon lost control of Budapest and the rising spread into the provinces. Nagy was hurriedly brought into the government, but the situation was too chaotic, and he too hesitant for that to end the rising. Soviet

troops were then invited to intervene, perhaps with Nagy's agreement. It was here that the Red Army made a major error. Believing that a show of force would cow the rebels, tanks, without infantry support, were sent into Budapest.

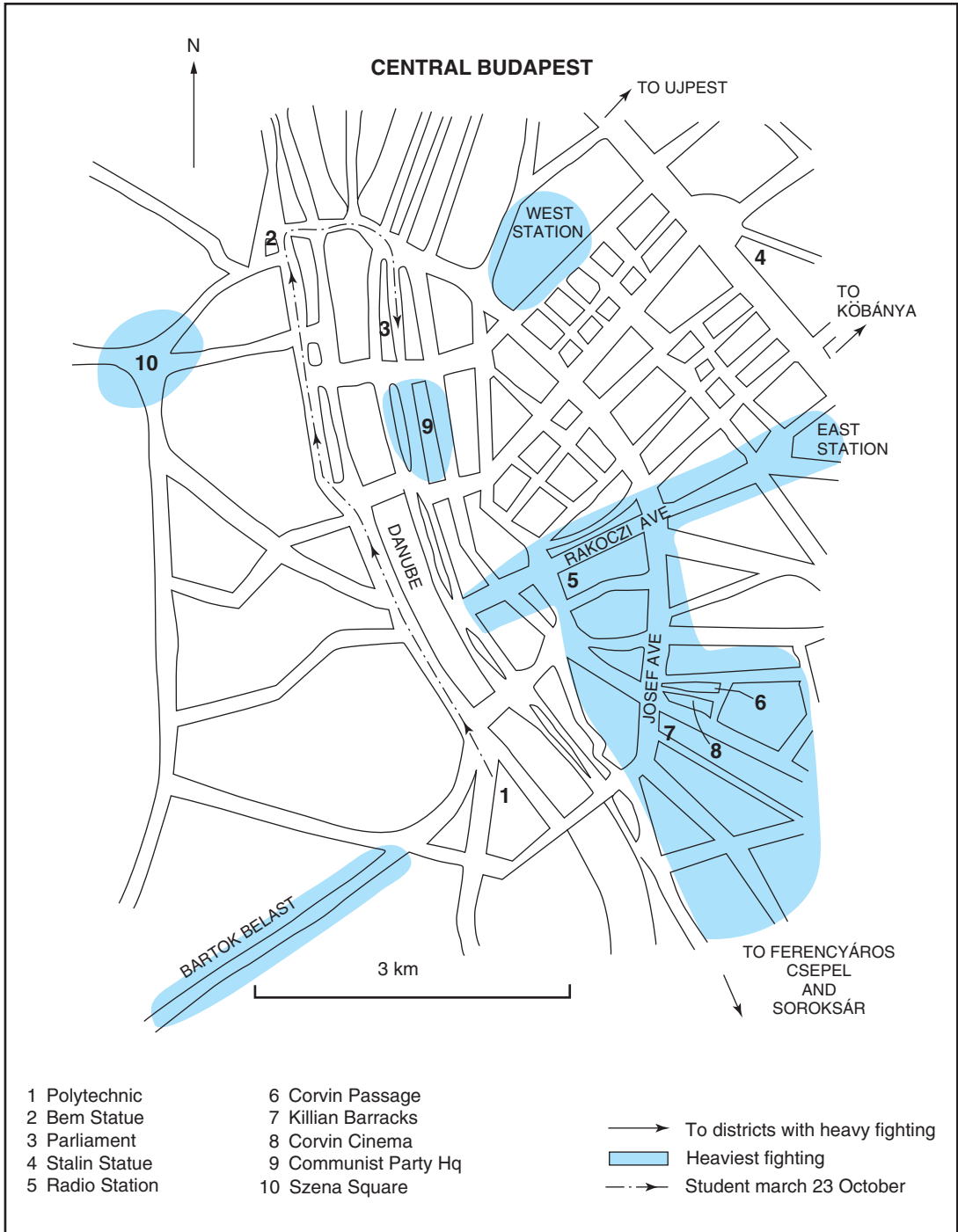
Unable to enter the narrower alleys and lacking infantry, the tanks could only drive past as determined rebels used anti-tank weapons and even Molotov cocktails against them. Rebels fighting from Corvin Passage, the cinema at its end, and nearby Killian Barracks earned renown for their furious resistance. After four days and several tanks lost, the Soviet troops were happy to be ordered out of Budapest. Nagy formed a new government on 27 October, and opened negotiations with Soviet representatives.

The Soviet leadership seems to have been divided on how best to respond to events. Perhaps they were influenced by the Anglo-French attack on Egypt over the Suez Canal, and the expectation of a general war. Whatever the reason, after a few days the USSR concluded that they could not tolerate an undependable regime in Budapest. Preparations to intervene began again, but this time to do it properly. Troops and tanks poured across the frontier.

Nagy was now in an impossible position. He had become identified with a rebel cause that could not hope to prevail. The only chance his government had of survival was from outside intervention. Eisenhower had, after all, talked of 'rolling back' Communism since his 1952 presidential campaign. This appeared to be a promise of American aid for a state attempting to win its freedom from Soviet domination. As Soviet forces encircled Budapest Nagy made a dramatic radio broadcast on 1 November. Announcing that Hungary was withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact and proclaiming its neutrality, he appealed to the world at large for help in securing that neutrality.

Washington was not impressed. Eisenhower had used the rhetoric of 'roll back', but had never intended to go to war to achieve it. With the bloodcurdling threats of nuclear war that the USSR was making over the Suez crisis, it seemed certain any US intervention would lead to war. With Soviet troops poised outside Budapest, Eisenhower chose to use American economic strength to whip Britain and France into line over Suez. It allowed him to ignore increasingly frantic appeals from Hungary.

On 4 November the Red Army invaded Budapest in such force that heroic resistance in the city centre was soon crushed. Outlying districts such as Csepel and Ujpest saw considerable bloodshed, but the fighting was over in a few days. Savage repression followed. The message was clear: no matter what the west said, eastern Europe was accepted as part of the Soviet sphere.



Map 19: Eisenhower and Latin America

Ever since the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, warning European powers not to intervene in the western hemisphere, the United States has viewed Latin America as its own sphere of influence. America, it was held, had not only a right but also a duty to protect its interests throughout the continent. By the 1950s, however, with European colonialism dying and new nations emerging, a new, radical nationalism was developing in the less developed world. It was to add a new dimension to the Cold War.

As a Cold War president, Eisenhower could claim several achievements. He ended the Korean War and started no new wars. He had cut military spending and attempted to ease east–west relations. But he never understood this new, radical nationalism. The new states were often weak and impoverished. To Eisenhower the radicalism of their governments left them vulnerable to Communist penetration. In fact if they tried to nationalise their resources, Eisenhower was only too ready to label them as Communist regimes. He would then order the CIA to overthrow them.

When he applied such practices in Latin America, unfortunately, Eisenhower seriously exacerbated a relationship that was becoming increasingly fraught. Long-standing Latin American resentment of the USA became embittered as social problems worsened. Americans, it was believed, owned too many of the region's assets. Unfair tariffs and subsidies and artificially depressed prices prevented Latin Americans benefiting from the rich resources of their countries. Eisenhower's apparent indifference to such grievances, and his use of force to maintain the status quo, was to cause an explosion of anti-American sentiment.

In Guatemala Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, a radical, was freely elected in 1950. He had received some support from the tiny Communist Party, but they remained banned from employment in the government and security forces. Arbenz had a mandate to address Guatemala's crippling social and economic problems. This would bring him into conflict with the American-owned United Fruit Company. United Fruit owned 550,000 acres of the banana plantations on which the Guatemalan economy was based.

Guatemala's most urgent need was for land reform. Arbenz therefore expropriated 400,000 acres of United Fruit's land, offering slight compensation in return. Nationalising US property was always a Communist act to Eisenhower. He also had Secretary of State Dulles insisting that Arbenz was part of an international Communist plot to infiltrate the western hemisphere and undermine the USA. A threat, Dulles insisted, which could not be ignored.

Convinced Arbenz was a Communist, Eisenhower ordered the CIA to get rid of him. In June 1954 the CIA organised an invasion of Guatemala from Honduras and Nicaragua by a tiny force of exiles, led by Castillo Armas. Propaganda portrayed the force as invincible. Arbenz fled and a military junta was installed. Several hundred left-wingers were murdered and 500,000 'squatters' who had benefited from the land reform were evicted. As a military operation it was a startling success.

In the long term it was to prove a very expensive victory. America was seen to have violated democracy, international law and human rights in a ruthless move to preserve its economic hegemony over the hemisphere. Latin America, it seemed, must remain economically dependent. Any attempt at self-improvement would be crushed. The damage to US prestige was seen when Vice-President Nixon toured South America in May 1958. Heckled in Montevideo, he was confronted with rioting in Lima. In Caracas an enraged mob surrounded his car, threatening to lynch him.

Eisenhower was shocked by these events. He was convinced that they were Communist led and did not represent true popular feelings. But he felt that the Communists were becoming dangerously powerful in Latin America. He therefore made some concessions in terms of trade and aid. In relation to the mountainous social problems Latin America faced, of course, these could have only a trivial impact. Eisenhower's concern over the appeal of Communism was reconfirmed after January 1959, when Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista was overthrown by Fidel Castro – a man Eisenhower again quickly labelled a Communist.

In 1960 Eisenhower made his own tour of South America. The tour was deemed a success in improving relations. Enthusiastic crowds met him. But there were still demonstrations, though lacking the violence experienced by Nixon. There was evidence of strong anti-American feeling. Chilean students claimed America supported dictators to preserve its economic hegemony. Pro-Franco placards were seen.

On the whole Eisenhower was proud of his record in Latin America. American investment had expanded rapidly, he had increased aid, liberalised trade terms and encouraged democratic institutions. But in the final analysis, his administration embraced dictators if they were anti-Communist, and failed even to criticise their misdeeds. Even worse, many political activists despaired of peaceful, democratic reform. The only recourse left to them was guerrilla warfare – which led them to Communism. Eisenhower's Cold War legacy in Latin America was to remain equivocal.



Map 20: *The Two Chinas*

The collapse of the Guomindang regime and Jiang's flight to Taiwan did not end China's civil war. Mao proclaimed the People's Republic (PRC) in Beijing, but Jiang still insisted that his regime was the legitimate government of the Republic of China (ROC). Both sides refused to view Taiwan as a separate state. To the PRC, Taiwan is simply a rebellious province, over which it claims sovereignty. To the ROC, the entire mainland consisted of rebellious provinces.

American policy might have favoured a partition of China, as had happened in Germany and Korea. But this was as repellent to Jiang as it was to Mao. Jiang appears genuinely to have believed that Mao's regime would prove too incompetent and brutal to survive long. The chaos of the Great Leap Forward in 1958 and the Cultural Revolution from 1966 suggest that this view was not entirely fantasy (see Map 25). But more realistically there was always the hope that the USA might defeat the PRC and reinstall his regime. To Mao, who was far more of a nationalist than most Americans realised, the existence of a separate regime in Taiwan was intolerable. There also was the danger that America would indeed attack the PRC from Taiwan. He wanted to invade the island and complete the reunification of China.

The situation was therefore unstable. Other powers were required to choose which to recognise as the legitimate government. Also, given the danger of renewed fighting, how deeply committed dare the USSR and USA become to either side? Britain had always been pragmatic on such questions: the Communists ruled China and were therefore the government. Britain's only interest was Hong Kong, and the PRC found the status quo there useful. Britain recognised the PRC almost immediately. America could not do this. Americans had long held unrealistic views on China, and Truman was widely criticised for 'losing' China. Also, at American insistence, China had been awarded a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. They had no wish to see the PRC inheriting that seat. They continued to recognise the ROC, but hesitated to enter into security commitments that might allow Jiang to drag them into a war in China.

US attitudes changed through the Korean War. Still certain that the Communist world was monolithic; they saw this as part of a global Soviet strategy. The USA decided that their interests would not allow a Communist take-over of Taiwan. It might lead to Communist domination of the western Pacific, and ultimately the entire ocean. Other states, fearing being drawn into a major war, declined to extend collective security to Taiwan via SEATO (Southeast

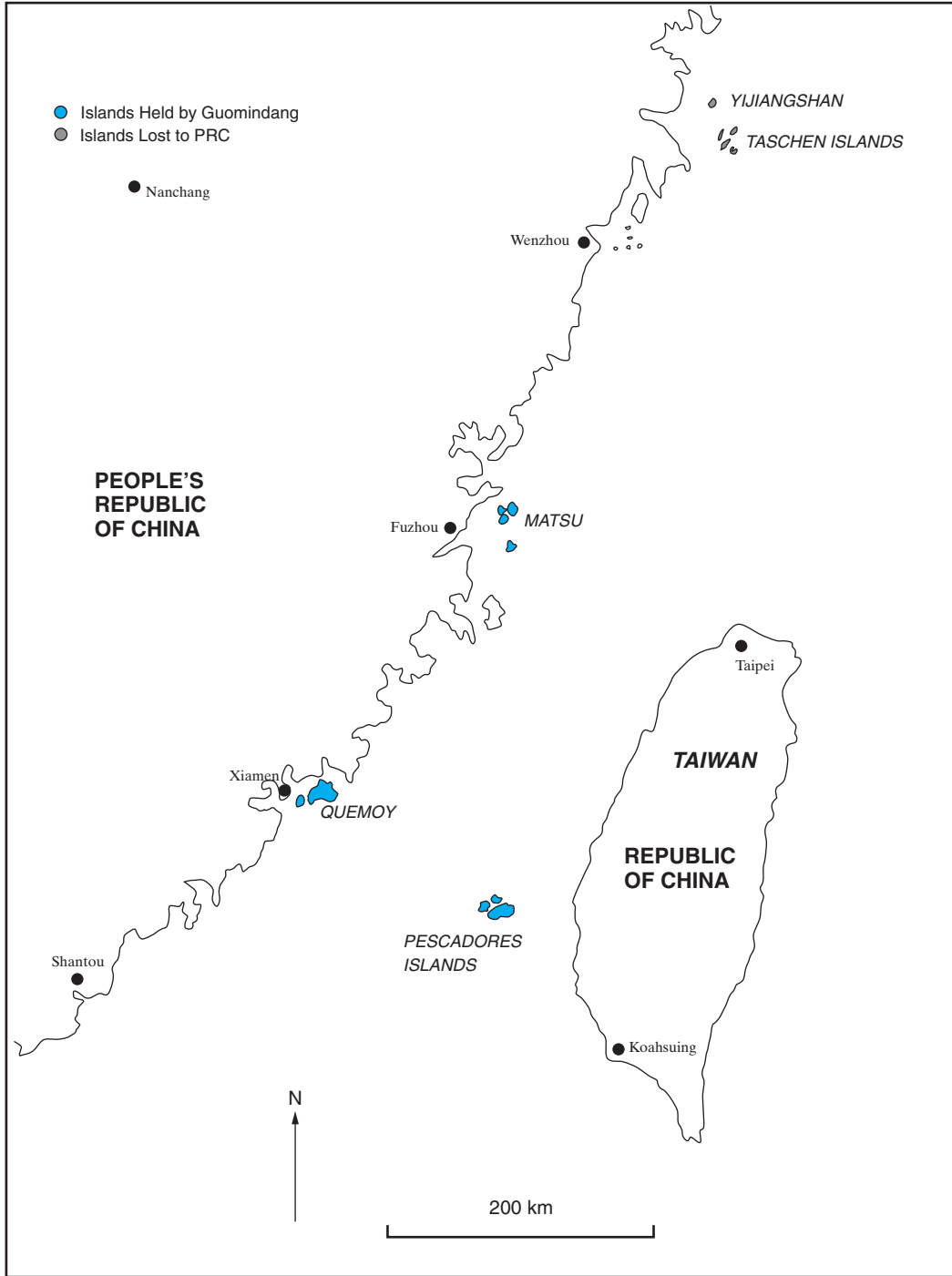
Asia Treaty Organisation). America therefore reached a bilateral security agreement with Jiang in December 1954.

This was a risky step. Mao had planned to invade Taiwan, but his resources had been diverted to Korea. With that war over he could return to Taiwan. The immediate issue was that the Guomindang had clung on to a number of islands off the mainland. They included the Taschen Islands, Matsu and Quemoy – the latter being less than three kilometres from the mainland. They had no military value, but Jiang refused to abandon them. Mao was deeply offended at the PRC's exclusion from the Security Council and the Taiwan–USA security negotiations. He ordered the shelling of Quemoy in March 1954, which suddenly became a massive barrage in September.

Eisenhower realised these islands were worthless but was in a quandary. He did not wish to go to war, but the ROC lobby was clamouring for strong action. Also the loss of these islands would reflect badly on the USA as Taiwan's supporter, which might undermine America's other alliances. It might suggest that America could not stop the advance of Communism in Asia. Eisenhower's European allies, however, had no intention of fighting a war over such a trivial issue. He still hurriedly concluded the security agreement with Taiwan and hinted that America was prepared to use tactical nuclear weapons to defend the islands. The PRC scoffed at these steps, but along with Soviet pressure to avoid escalating tensions they had their effect. The shelling died down. But not before the PRC stormed Yijiangshan Island. This convinced America that the Taschens were untenable and they forced Jiang to evacuate them.

After this, for America to allow the loss of Matsu and Quemoy would be too great a humiliation. Also, as Jiang had crammed them with his best troops, their loss could lead to the loss of Taiwan. When Mao renewed the shelling in 1958, Eisenhower felt he had no choice but to offer US support. His renewed talk of tactical nuclear weapons shocked his allies. Again tensions died down. Jiang was required to make a statement repudiating the use of force in regaining the mainland. Mao responded by shelling Quemoy only on alternate days. This gave the crisis a surreal quality, and one difficult to take too seriously.

As a result of these crises America had made a comprehensive commitment to Taiwan. America was angered at European hesitancy over Taiwan. But the PRC was also deeply angered at the timidity of the USSR, who found the islands a ludicrous issue over which to risk war. This would put far greater strains on Soviet alliances than on American.



Map 21: The Berlin Wall

The end of the Berlin Blockade did not end east–west friction over the city. The issue rumbled on throughout the 1950s. Western occupying powers refused to recognise East Germany or to evacuate the divided city. This was a constant source of irritation to Moscow. Western powers, however, had no intention of submitting to Soviet pressure to leave. Such a sign of weakness might convince West Germans that their allies had no commitment to them. They might seek to reunite Germany by coming to terms with the USSR.

In 1961 tensions over Berlin took a serious turn for the worse. War was again a very serious possibility. West Berlin had ceased to be an irritant to Moscow: it had become a very real threat. A solution had to be found. The problem was not any threat of attack or of espionage by the occupying powers. It was from the escape route West Berlin provided from East to West Germany. The numbers fleeing East Germany had become intolerable.

Between 1949 and 1961 the population of East Germany fell by nearly 2 million to about 16 million. What was worse was that most who fled were young, under 25 years old. Many had valuable technical skills, learned at East German state expense. This was more than just a loss of prestige; it was seriously undermining the East German economy – the strongest economy among Moscow’s satellites. Due to the drain in skills, East Germany was bleeding to death, and the numbers leaving were steadily growing. The state might become unsustainable.

The point was reached where Khrushchev had to act. In November 1958 he announced that he was prepared to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany, terminating allied occupation and transit rights to the city. A disarmed ‘free city’ of West Berlin was possible, he conceded, but agreement must be reached by 27 May 1959, or he would act unilaterally. The implication was, that if the west refused to leave, they would be expelled: war seemed imminent. But Eisenhower, convinced Khrushchev was bluffing, stood firm, and offered negotiations over the possible unification of Germany to give him an opportunity to back down without losing face. Eisenhower succeeded, but Khrushchev’s problem did not go away, it got worse, and a solution simply had to be found. In June 1961 he met Kennedy for a summit in Vienna. Kennedy had been weakened by the Bay of Pigs fiasco (see Map 22) and perhaps Khrushchev felt he could be bullied. When Kennedy refused to surrender western rights to Berlin, Khrushchev threatened war. Kennedy left the meeting deeply troubled. He could not surrender West Berlin – he was convinced the west must be willing to fight over the issue. But he also

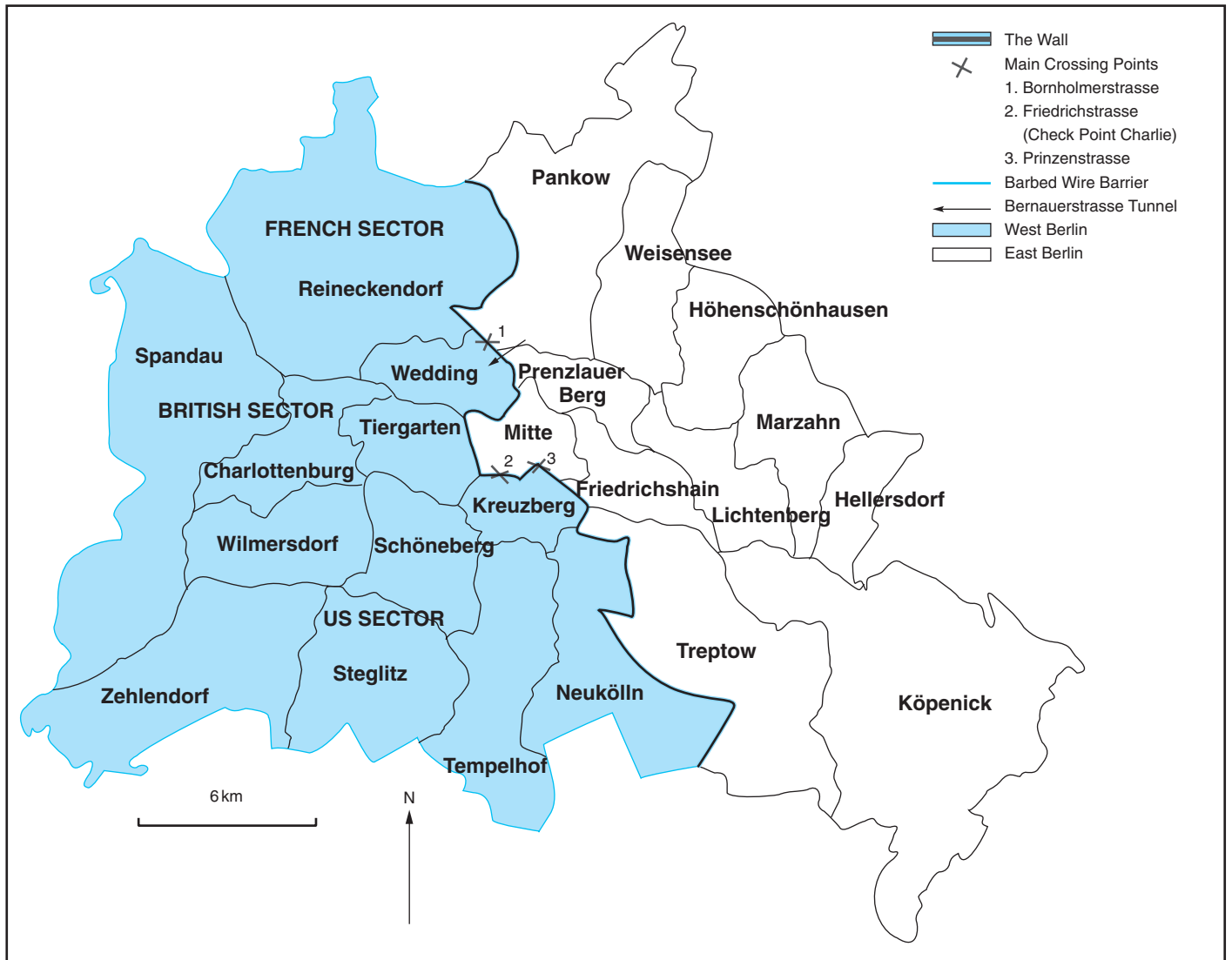
realised that Khrushchev had a serious problem and had to find a solution to it. War might prove unavoidable.

Kennedy’s response to the growing crisis came in a major speech in July 1961. He announced that the west would defend its rights in West Berlin and would build up forces to do so. He also authorised a major civil defence programme, which caused some panic in America. Khrushchev’s response was to bluster that the USSR would win any war. But both men were also aware that Kennedy had offered Khrushchev a peaceful solution to his problem. Kennedy had chosen his words with care. He had spoken of western rights in West Berlin, not in Berlin. This was a major American policy shift. By implication he was not claiming any rights in East Berlin, such as access between the zones. The United States, it was clear, would take no action if the refugee problem were solved outside West Berlin. Kennedy, in short, invited the solution.

On 13 August 1961, East Germany sealed the border to West Berlin. A wall was built to separate permanently the two halves of the city. The main purpose of the Wall was, of course, to keep East Germans out of West Berlin. In this it was successful. From a height of over 3000 a day, the number of refugees shrank to a trickle. East German border guards were soon ordered to shoot escapees. How many died in total is unclear; a figure of up to 300 does not seem unreasonable. The barrier was not impervious. Escapees could be courageous and ingenious. One family employed a homemade hot-air balloon. Tunnels were a common ploy. The most successful, at Bernauerstrasse, was used by 59 people and became famous as the subject of a television documentary. About 5000 crossed the Wall in total. Yet the stability of East Germany was no longer threatened and the vast majority of East Germans had no choice but to come to terms with Communist rule and make the best out of it.

The west expressed outrage at the Wall, but were generally relieved that a constant source of tension, perhaps risking war, had been resolved. That it was a brutal solution, where Communist governments were required to build a wall to keep their citizens from escaping, was to feed western propaganda for the rest of the Cold War.

But in fact the division of Germany had become even more deeply entrenched. With the potential flashpoint of Berlin resolved, there was no longer any urgency in resolving a now stable division. The two Germanies would eventually accept the fact in 1972 (see Map 36). The division of Europe was indeed further entrenched and stabilised, which would make European détente a more realistic policy (see Map 36).



Map 22: Cuba – Castro's Revolution and the Bay of Pigs

In November 1956 Fidel Castro and 82 revolutionaries departed Mexico aboard the yacht *Granma*. Their destination was Cuba. They were one of several groups determined to overthrow Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. Landing at Las Coloradas, they were quickly ambushed, and only a handful escaped into the scarcely accessible Sierra Maestro. Promising justice, land reform, education and health care, Castro won the support of the peasantry. A formidable revolutionary army was formed. After defeating Batista's attempt to destroy their strongholds, the revolutionaries went on the offensive in December 1958. As Castro's forces swept through Santiago de Cuba and through Santa Clara towards Havana, Batista fled Cuba. Castro's revolution had triumphed.

Initially this was generally welcomed in America. Batista had been an embarrassing ally to support. His regime was extremely brutal and corrupt. The economy was stagnating. Major reforms were decades overdue. There were, however, problems in instigating reforms. Nearly all industry and a very large proportion of agriculture was American owned. Reforms, especially land reform, were impossible without harming American interests. But the problem went deeper than this. To Castro, and indeed to a great many Cubans, the USA was a fundamental part of the problems they faced. To them, America had dominated Cuba for far too long. America intervened at will in Cuban politics. The economy was American controlled. A central aim of Castro's revolution was to free Cuba from this domination.

From the very start there was bitter anti-Americanism in Castro's rhetoric. His conduct also showed a scant regard for American democratic values. Castro's defeated enemies were executed in large numbers, with little pretence of proper trials. Moderates were driven from the government and elections postponed as Castro secured his grip on power. This was precisely the sort of conduct likely to convince Eisenhower that he was dealing with a Communist.

Eisenhower could never tolerate a Communist state in the western hemisphere. He decided to repeat his success in Guatemala, and ordered the CIA to bring down Castro. The CIA put out subversive propaganda and reputedly recruited the Mafia to assassinate Castro. They organised raids on Cuba, to sabotage the economy and murder Castroists – schoolteachers proved to be a particularly vulnerable target. They also recruited an anti-Castro brigade of Cuban exiles. An invasion of Cuba by these exiles, it was blithely assumed, would provoke an anti-Castro rising and solve the problem without direct American involvement. Though the plans were drawn up, Eisenhower never gave them his final approval. He had, after all, been

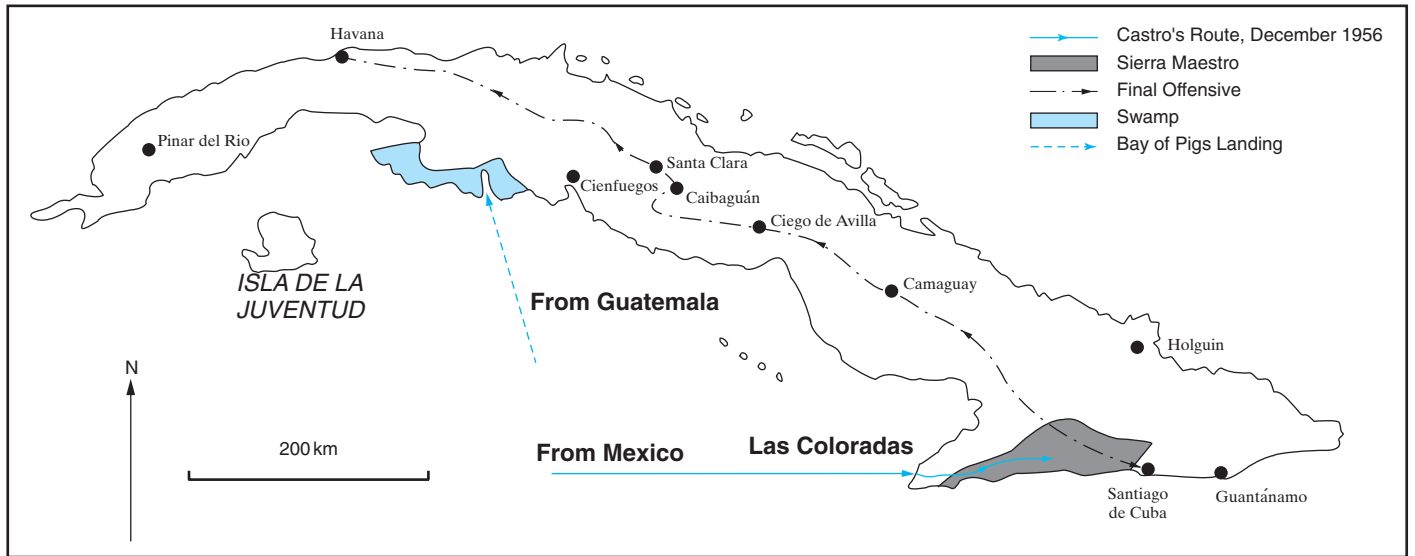
Supreme Allied Commander during D-Day, and was well aware that a sea-borne invasion was a far more risky proposition than driving across the frontier, as had been done in Guatemala. The decision was postponed until newly elected President Kennedy took office.

If Castro hoped that a new president might improve relations, he was quickly disappointed. Kennedy was even more hostile than Eisenhower. Cuba was an issue he had used in the election, winning him extremely vocal Cuban-American support. He also felt that nationalising American property could not go unpunished – it might give ideas to others in Latin America. But far more offensive was that a western hemisphere government was blatantly defying America. In his hostility to Castro, Kennedy employed far more energy than Eisenhower, and much less caution.

On hearing of the proposed landing, Kennedy was enthusiastic. It seemed a quick and easy solution to the problem without overt US involvement. None of the experts he consulted seem to have clearly explained the risks involved. It was assumed the landing would provoke a popular rising; if not, the exiles would withdraw into the interior and fight a guerrilla war identical to Castro's. But the chosen landing-ground, the Bay of Pigs, faced a swamp. Withdrawal into the interior would be impossible. Kennedy did not realise that success depended utterly on a popular revolt. Nor did he realise that Castro was at this time immensely popular in Cuba. Castro was addressing very real needs and very many Cubans entirely agreed with his anti-American rhetoric. There would be no rising.

On 17 April 1961 the exile brigade, numbering about 1400, landed at the Bay of Pigs. The operation was already going seriously wrong. Their airforce had failed to destroy completely Castro's airforce on the ground, sacrificing surprise uselessly. The exiles proved to be poorly trained and equipped. The ship carrying most of their radios and ammunition was destroyed before it reached shore. There was no rising. Castro's experienced troops fought well and enjoyed complete popular support. The exiles found themselves trapped; they received no American military support and surrendered within three days.

For Kennedy the fiasco was a massive humiliation, made worse when Castro sold back the captured exiles for food and medical supplies. He was denounced in America and internationally for the operation. He was condemned by anti-communists for allowing the operation to fail. Others condemned him for an unjustified and reckless gamble that might have provoked a Soviet response leading to nuclear war. One thing was clear, America would never forgive Castro for this humiliation; he had made a permanent enemy.



Map 23: *The Cuban Missile Crisis*

In the wake of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Castro tried to mend his relations with the USA. Kennedy was not interested. But the risks involved made an invasion impossible. Instead the CIA were authorised to launch operation *Mongoose* – renewed attempts to destabilise Castro's regime. This involved more raids on economic targets and new plans to assassinate Castro. To intimidate Cuba, US forces undertook a huge military exercise in 1962, practising invading an imaginary island ruled by a dictator threateningly codenamed *Ortsac*. These steps worried Castro, but they also worried Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Cuba was Communism's only foothold in the western hemisphere: it had to be protected.

Khrushchev also had other worries. He badly wanted to reduce Soviet military spending. But since the launch of *Sputnik* in 1957 he had claimed a totally fabricated Soviet advantage in missile forces. Kennedy's response was to greatly expand US ICBM (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile) forces. This was a move Khrushchev was reluctant to match; ICBMs were extremely costly.

American actions suggested to Khrushchev a simple way both to protect Cuba and to match US missile expansion at little cost. The United States had stationed nuclear missiles in Turkey, and had shown no regard for Soviet sensitivities when they did so. To transfer MRBMs and IRBMs (Medium and Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles) from the USSR to Cuba seemed an entirely reasonable response. It would deter an American invasion and extend Soviet missile capabilities, with most of the USA within range, at a fraction of the cost of building ICBMs.

With Castro's agreement there were soon over 40,000 Soviet servicemen in Cuba, preparing to deploy 80 missiles with 40 nuclear warheads. There were also 12 tactical nuclear weapons for use against any invasion. If the missile bases were completed and missiles installed before the Americans learned of them, they would be unable to do anything. In the event, an American U2 spy-plane found the bases under construction in October 1962.

Kennedy immediately decided the missiles had to be removed. But it was far from clear how to achieve this. Kennedy's first instinct was to launch air strikes, followed by an invasion. He had, however, learned from the Bay of Pigs fiasco to consider very carefully his options before acting in such a crisis. On reflection he realised the problems of such a move. Casualties would be heavy – how heavy Kennedy did not realise. He was unaware of the tactical nuclear weapons on Cuba. Furthermore, air strikes would kill many Soviet citizens, perhaps starting a war. Finally he learned that air strikes would not guarantee the destruction of all the missiles. If only 10 per cent survived

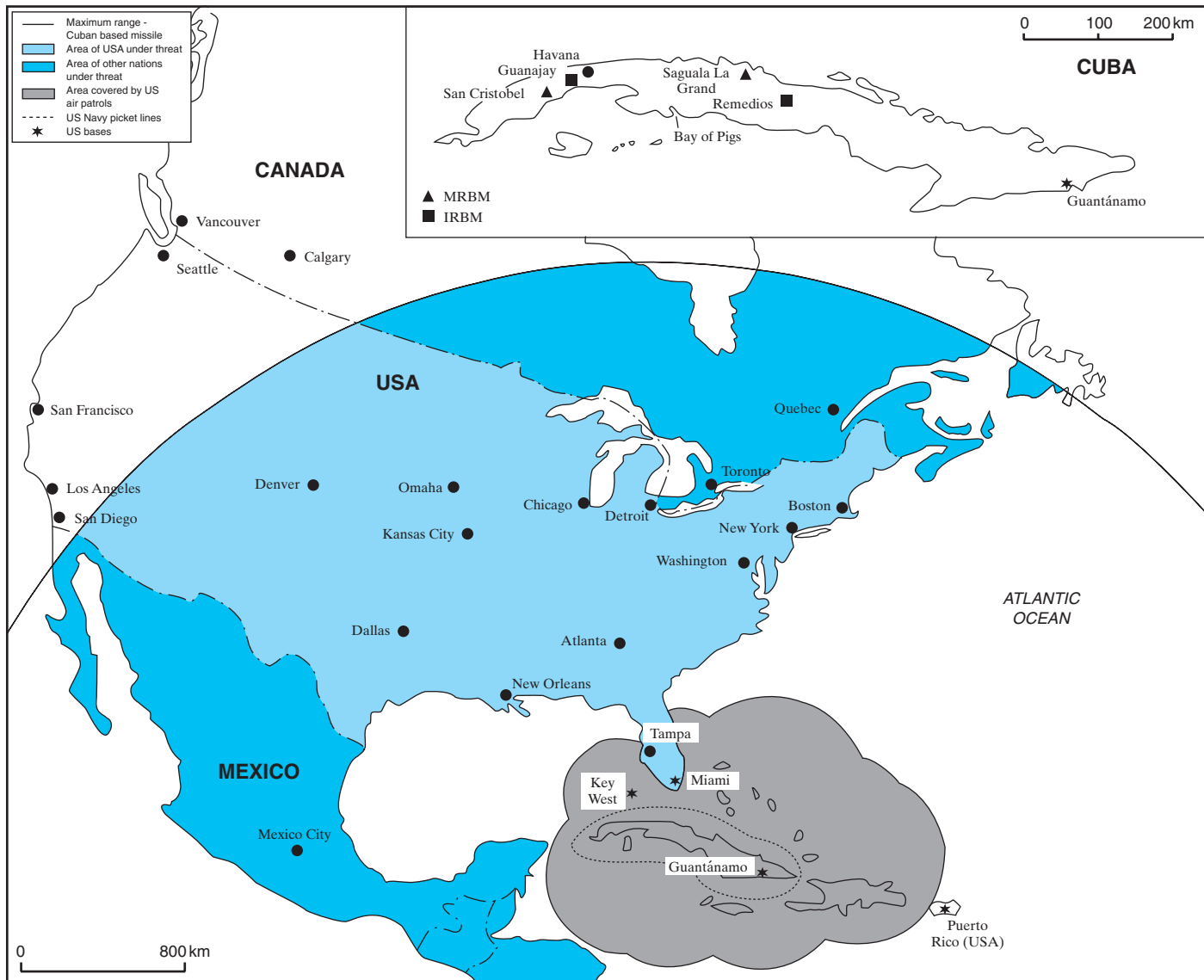
and were launched the consequences for America did not bear contemplating.

Other alternatives were hardly more attractive. Negotiating the removal of the missiles would give the USSR time to make them operational. Besides, America might have to make concessions, perhaps over the US base at *Guantánamo*, or removing the missiles in Turkey. To be seen making such concessions would again be interpreted as weakness. The only alternative was a naval blockade. This would prevent more missiles arriving rather than remove those already there. It was in international law also illegal. On the other hand it would avoid bloodshed and if it failed air strikes were still possible.

The initial Soviet response was belligerent, correctly describing the blockade as illegal; they insisted they would defy it. As Soviet ships steamed towards the blockade line Kennedy had to decide how to react to such defiance. World War III seemed just hours away. Yet at the last moment the Soviet ships turned back. Khrushchev also wrote to Kennedy twice. His first letter was a rambling appeal to reason to avoid a nuclear holocaust. The second was more specific, proposing removing missiles from both Turkey and Cuba, with both nations receiving security guarantees. This was the sort deal Kennedy had already decided was impossible.

The crisis, however, was not over. Missiles were still on Cuba. Pressure on Kennedy to remove them immediately was mounting. Kennedy realised that he would be pushed into an invasion of Cuba within a few days, unless he reached an understanding with Khrushchev.

The agreement Khrushchev offered was equitable and realistic. But it would be too embarrassing to agree openly to it. In his formal reply Kennedy said nothing of the Turkish missiles or a guarantee to Cuba. But his brother Robert, who delivered the letter, informed the Soviet ambassador that a few months after the Cuban missiles were gone, the Turkish missiles would quietly be removed. It was enough to settle the crisis. The Cold War had nearly become a nuclear war through an entirely avoidable crisis. Kennedy's intimidation of Cuba was as provocative as Khrushchev's response. In the relief that followed the crisis few cared to criticise either too harshly. Indeed, one of the ironies of the crisis was that the fright it had engendered forced both nations to reconsider their Cold War strategies. Reinforced by the crisis over the Berlin Wall (see Map 21), the feeling grew that they must never step so near the precipice again. A series of agreements followed, including the 'hotline' so their leaders could communicate directly, and a partial ban on testing nuclear weapons. In short, the entire process of *détente* was born in this confrontation.



THE LATER COLD WAR

Map 24: *The Sino-Soviet Split*

Western observers tended to view the Communist world as monolithic and ruled from Moscow. They were wrong. From the moment the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) gained power, there were problems with their neighbours to the north. The CCP had won power despite Soviet leadership, not because of it. Stalin, who concluded a favourable treaty with Jiang, did not want the CCP to attempt to win power. Moscow's leadership had been disastrous to the CCP in the inter-war years. Mao thought of himself as an ideologist on a par with Marx and Lenin. Stalin's prestige was massive, and Mao respected him, but not to the point of unquestioning obedience.

Naturally, after years of chaos and war, China's needs for recovery were gigantic. With an American-backed Guomindang regime on Taiwan, Mao also had serious security concerns. Only the USSR could supply his needs. While the USSR provided aid and a security treaty, these were, however, far more limited than Mao needed and felt he deserved. He received loans rather than grants, for disappointingly small sums. He received no guarantee of support if attacked by Taiwan, not even if it was US supported. Mao, who was as much a nationalist as a Communist, also deeply resented China's unavoidable dependence on the Soviet Union.

The Sino-Soviet relationship, therefore, had its tensions, which were contained by Chinese dependence and by Mao's respect for Stalin. He had no such respect for Khrushchev. Khrushchev was willing to offer greater aid. In fact he promised more than could be delivered – another point of contention. Even worse the ebullient Khrushchev hardly cut an impressive figure compared to the towering personality of Stalin. He was to undertake policies Mao found highly offensive. Mao soon came to despise the Soviet leader. In consequence simmering resentments came into the open. Relations between Beijing and Moscow eventually became seriously embittered. A Sino-Soviet war seemed a serious possibility.

The issues that led to such hostility were both ideological and practical. Khrushchev caused serious affront with his denunciation of Stalin in 1956. From Mao's perspective, by repudiating Stalin's crimes Khrushchev was by implication repudiating his policies. These were policies Mao himself was following – collectivising agriculture and the planned development of heavy industry. His denunciation of Stalin's cult of personality also reflected on Mao, whose own cult of personality was even more exaggerated than Stalin's.

To end the PRC's dependence on Soviet aid, and also to vindicate Stalin's road to Socialism, Mao instigated the

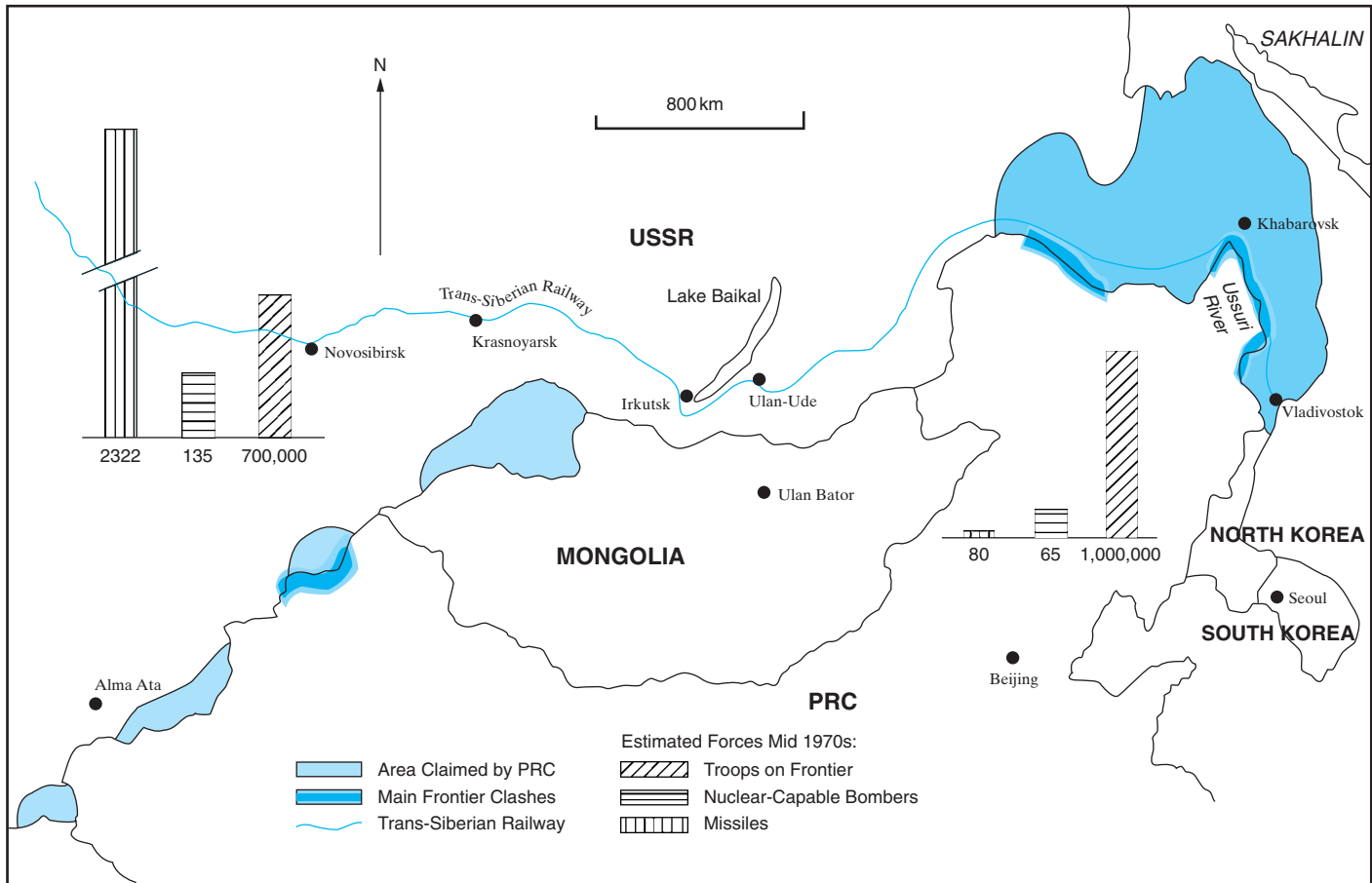
Great Leap Forward in 1958 (see Map 25). He was determined to achieve a complete economic transformation of China overnight. This would also involve the total collectivisation and communalisation of Chinese life. It proved to be a disastrous fantasy. Khrushchev was dismayed. He realised Mao's scheme could not work and feared the USSR would need to rescue Mao from his failure with massive aid. Khrushchev felt he had already sacrificed enough for China, and began to scale down economic co-operation.

In practical terms, Mao seriously misunderstood Khrushchev's rhetoric. The launch of Sputnik in 1957 seemed to suggest that the USSR had technologically outstripped the west. Khrushchev added to this impression by talking of a major advantage the Soviet Union enjoyed in missiles. What Eisenhower realised, and Mao did not, was that Khrushchev was bluffing. Mao simply accepted Khrushchev's bluster without question. To Mao the situation was simple. World Communism was on the ascendant. This was the ideal time to push Communism forward in Africa and Asia.

This made Khrushchev's talk of 'peaceful co-existence' and willingness to reach détente with Eisenhower inexplicable – cowardly at best, perhaps treacherous. To force Khrushchev to use his strength, rather than negotiate with it, Mao instigated a crisis over Quemoy in 1958 (see Map 20). He was enraged by the lack of Soviet support. He therefore decided that the PRC must have its own nuclear weapons. By this time, however, Khrushchev had already concluded that he was dealing with an utter lunatic. He refused to assist the PRC in acquiring nuclear weapons unless the USSR remained completely in control of them.

In 1960 Mao was too outspoken in his criticism of Khrushchev. Peaceful co-existence, Mao claimed, was a betrayal and a revision of Marxist-Leninism – a venomous insult to Khrushchev. The Soviet leader abruptly removed all technicians from China. This damaged the PRC's economy just as it was trying to recover from the Great Leap Forward. Henceforth, the two Communist powers would openly compete for the leadership of the Communist world and for influence throughout the world, but especially in the under-developed world. Their dialogue became reduced to bitter and personal abuse.

In the event both sides shrank from war. Nuclear weapons made it an impossible choice. Even China's comparatively small nuclear force was an effective deterrent. These clashes, however, could not be hidden. Washington could not avoid seeing that there was a deep schism in the Communist world that could be exploited. In 1972 the USA chose to recognise the PRC and treat it as a great power. The USSR was left more isolated and insecure.



Map 25: *The Cultural Revolution*

In September 1949 Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China (PRC). He had united China, restored effective central government and freed it from foreign domination. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) he led was effective and feared, but also generally respected. His personal stature was massive. He towered over his associates and had a 'cult of personality', presenting him as a demigod. But he was not necessarily satisfied. He had not won power for its own sake, but to fundamentally transform China. He felt he had cause to worry that he was failing in this.

Feeling his regime secure, in 1957 he launched the 'hundred flowers' movement: promising immunity to those offering constructive criticism of his state. Instead of the minor complaints he expected, intellectuals actually questioned the very foundations of Communism. Shocked at the scale of opposition, Mao concluded his revolution was not secure after all. He lashed out viciously at the critics. But worse was to follow. With the PRC's friendship with the USSR breaking down, Mao decided that China must race towards socialism, industrialisation and modernisation, lest his revolution fail. In 1958 he launched the 'Great Leap Forward'. The idea was instant modernisation via mass mobilisation. Agricultural collectivisation was completed and peasant communes ordered to produce vast quantities of steel in homemade furnaces. The result was catastrophic. Millions died in the resulting famine. The prestige of the CCP was badly undermined.

Mao could not accept the failure was due to his entire approach being an unrealistic fantasy. The fault, he concluded, was in the CCP and its failure to really change China. The CCP must have lost contact with the proletariat and peasantry. Far too many recruits had been permitted to join the CCP without repudiating fully their bourgeois attitudes. They had sought the privileges of rank, become authoritarian and felt themselves superior. In fact, Mao believed the CCP was in danger of the same failings he perceived in the Soviet Communist Party. It was ceasing to be revolutionary. His achievements would be quietly eroded after his death.

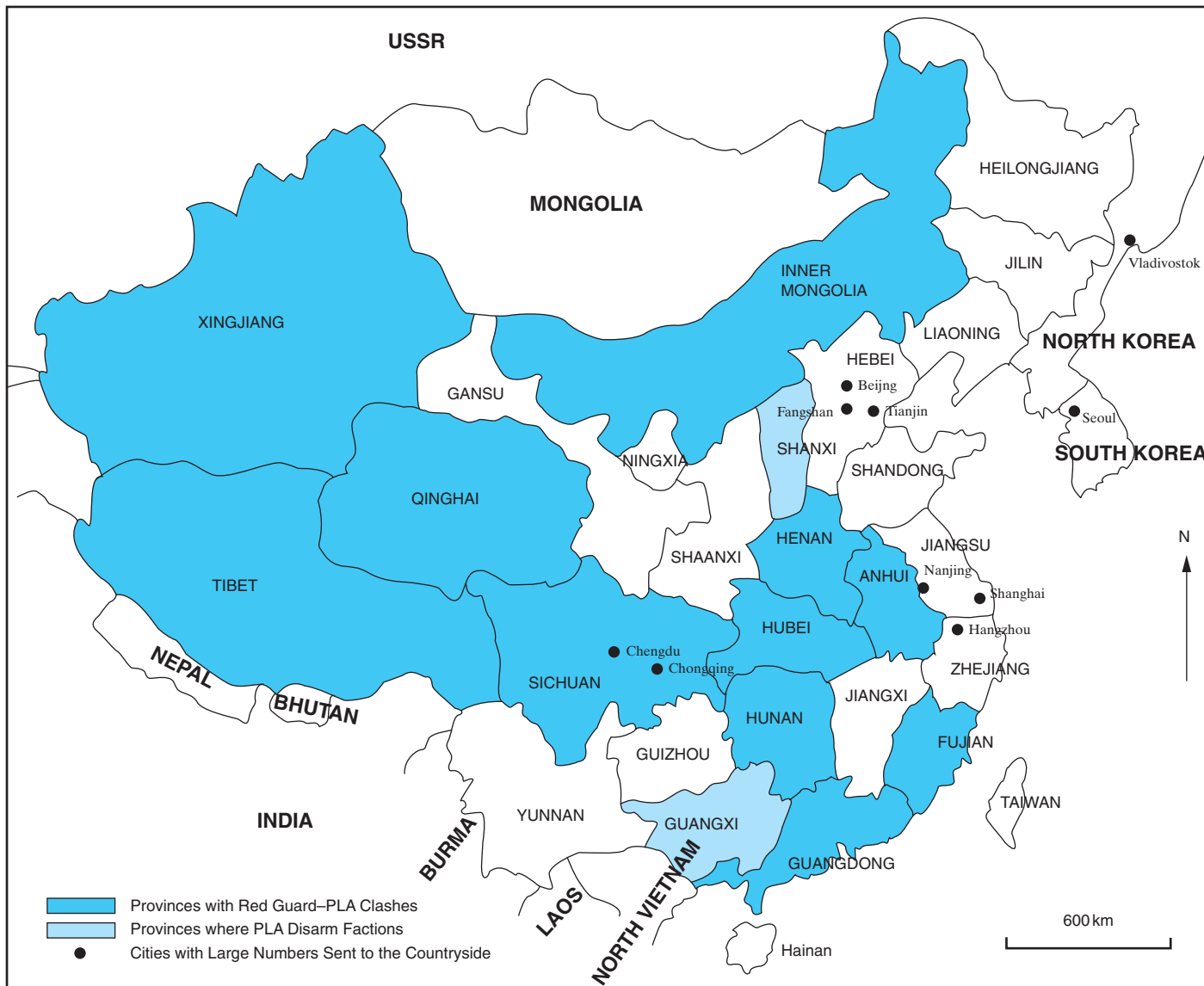
The only solution Mao could see was to launch a new revolution. This revolution would not be led by the Party, but be directed against the bourgeois elements within it and within the government system. Feeling that the young were truly revolutionary, he aimed to mobilise them to this end. The first rallying call to a new revolution came in June 1966, when posters appeared criticising academics at Beijing University. Students, and soon schoolchildren, were urged to defy authority. The Red Guards soon emerged to be the vanguard of Mao's new revolution. They

were urged to denounce academics, writers, indeed any in the arts, who might be peddling bourgeois ideas. Denunciation soon turned to punishment. Some of China's most renowned figures were humiliated, imprisoned, tortured and even murdered. When authorities attempted to restore discipline, they were themselves denounced as counter-revolutionary.

The CCP attempted to defend itself by taking control of the movement. The Red Guards soon became split into hostile factions: 'conservatives', often children of Party members and those with a stake in the existing order, and 'radicals', generally of unprivileged backgrounds. Both claimed to be pursuing the Cultural Revolution in the name of Mao. An element of civil war was introduced into the crisis. By August 1967 the factions were fighting pitched battles in many areas. Mao clearly wanted the radicals to seize power and put his revolution back on course. But given their youth, they were hardly suited for such a role. Also the growing chaos was alienating the Chinese people. There was a danger that the PRC would collapse.

With the Party and the state paralysed, the only institute able to supply any stability was the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Troops had to be deployed to protect essential services and industries from destruction. Mao wanted them to support the radicals. But generally PLA commanders were hostile to the radicals, often arming and supporting conservatives. Clashes between the PLA and radical Red Guards spread across China. The violence in Sichuan was especially severe, but in many places civil strife left hundreds of thousands dead and injured. Having done so much damage, however, Mao could not afford to turn the Red Guards loose against the PLA. From September 1967 the PLA gradually restored a semblance of order in the PRC, for example, disarming fighting factions in Guangxi and Shanxi. Millions of Red Guards, their educations curtailed and lacking any skills, were dispatched to the countryside to be labourers. This did not end the Cultural Revolution. A witch-hunt for class enemies was launched reminiscent of Stalin's purges. Though without the earlier mayhem, it destroyed millions of lives through denunciation, forced confessions and brutal punishment.

The Cultural Revolution only really ended with the defeat of the 'Gang of Four' in the power struggle following Mao's death in 1976. By then China and the CCP were desperately weary of it. In his efforts to reinvigorate the revolutionary spirit of China, Mao in fact destroyed what was left of it. His own image was badly tarnished. The CCP was left divided and weakened and had lost the respect of the Chinese. Thereafter Communist rule in China was endured rather than supported.



Map 26: Culture and the Cold War

The Cold War was more than simply a political confrontation. Each side strove ceaselessly to prove that their respective systems were superior in every possible way. That this competition should involve the field of culture is hardly surprising. Cultural competition is relatively inexpensive; it can attract a worldwide audience, and does not risk escalation to nuclear war. To prove one system is more culturally refined, more artistic, more virile, tougher or better educated is to suggest moral superiority.

All fields of culture could be mobilised to fight the Cold War. Film and literature were often required to serve the needs of governments. They had to present a positive image of their own system and a negative image of the opposition. This would mobilise support from their own citizens and perhaps win over waverers from both neutrals and the opposition. Thus American Cold War films and novels portrayed the Soviet Union as drab, with people afflicted by poor wages and housing, downtrodden by Communist officials and longing for the freedom and consumer luxuries of the west. Conversely Soviet writers and film producers presented an image of a USA torn with class divisions; a cultural desert where racism and poverty was the norm for most and crime and violence a way of life.

Naturally both sides were anxious to prevent the wrong message being heard by their citizens. In America this most famously was seen in the depredations of the House Un-American Activities Committee. In its investigation of Hollywood in 1947 it was determined to root out all Communist influences, which it deemed to be poisoning American minds. As a result ten ended up in prison and hundreds of others had their careers destroyed in the most arbitrary and unjust manner.

In the USSR the purpose of culture was always to serve revolutionary society and was tightly controlled by the state. Though more discreet than America, Soviet treatment of non-conformism was even more ruthless. Several prominent figures were murdered or consigned to mental hospitals. Despite such rigid controls, however, there was one cultural field that the state could not fully control. This was the appeal of western popular music. The Beatles enjoyed a massive Soviet following. This seriously distressed Soviet authorities. They saw such music as a celebration of sick commercial immorality.

Any form of international cultural competition was also seized on as an opportunity for both sides to prove their superiority. The World Chess Championship meeting between Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky received intense coverage simply because Fischer was American and Spassky a Russian. Fischer's victory caused jubilation

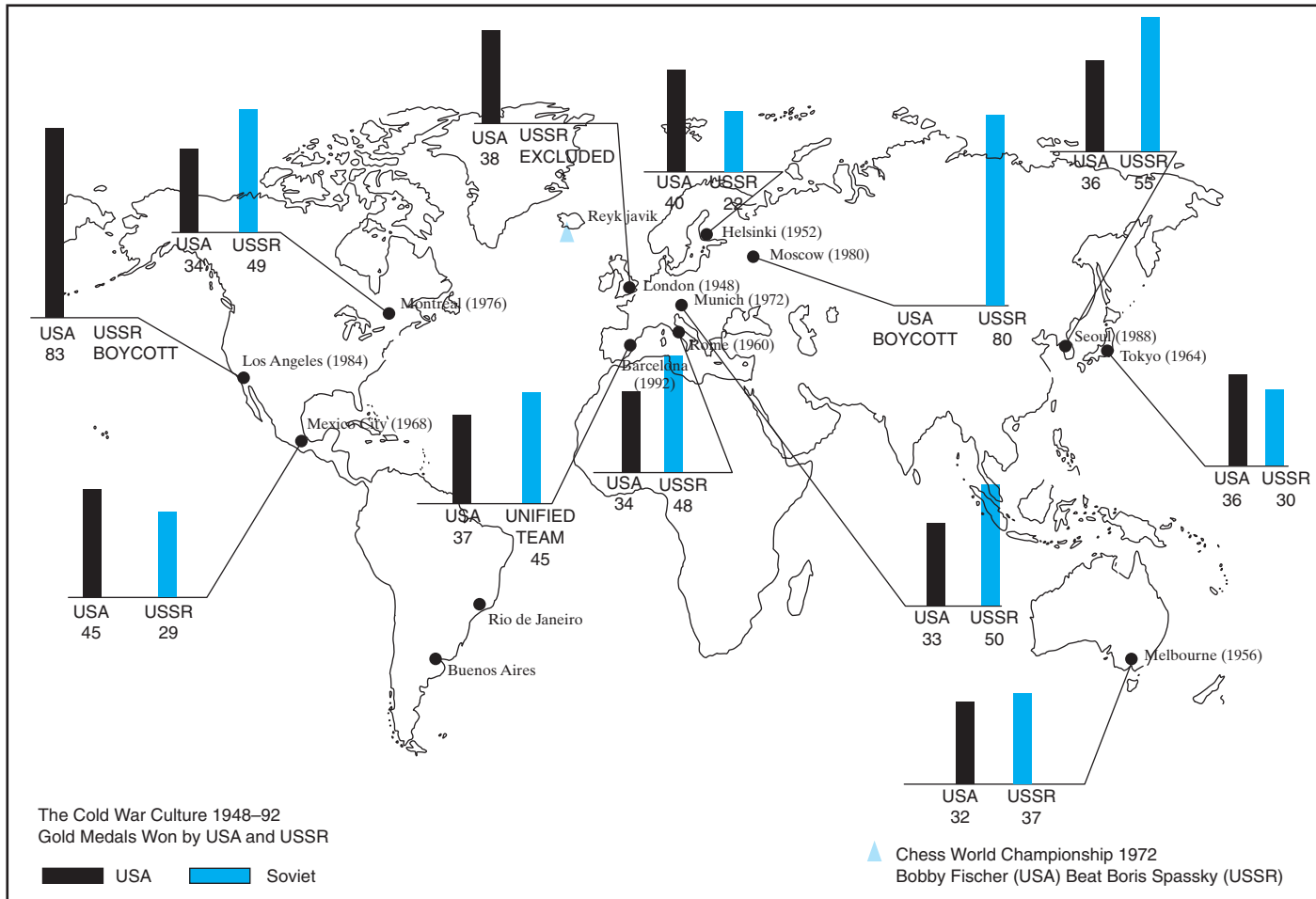
among Americans who had not the slightest interest in the game of chess. It was seen as a Cold War victory.

Sport, of course, attracted far more popular interest. Both sides were desperate to display the physical prowess of their sportsmen. In America physical and moral toughness were seen as essential in generating a winning attitude towards the Cold War. Any sporting event where the two sides met became a battle, in which Cold War prestige was at stake. Nowhere was this more obvious than the Olympic games.

The Olympics were intended to bring people together, promoting international understanding rather than competition. Up to a point this succeeded. Diminutive and immensely popular gymnast, Olga Korbut, presented an image of the Soviet Union that was anything but threatening. Nevertheless politics were always present in the Olympic movement and the Cold War made them far more politicised. For example, there were two Germanys and two Chinas – which were the true representatives of these nations? This was a matter of international legitimacy for these states and they generated extended and acrimonious disputes.

Until the Helsinki games (1952), the USSR was excluded from the Olympic movement and from international sports generally. Stalin was determined that the Soviet team would break American domination of the games. This American domination had been based on men's track and field and women's swimming events – events promoted in American colleges. The Soviet team arrived prepared to compete strongly in nearly every event. In gymnastics especially they enjoyed a sweeping triumph. A scoreboard appeared outside their athletes' quarters, using a points system suggesting they were outstripping the Americans. Americans attempted to dismiss Soviet victories as 'minor events' and disputed the Soviet points system. Nevertheless the State Department was alarmed and surprised at the strong Soviet showing. In the end there was no clear victor, which was enough for the USSR to claim as evidence of the superiority of Soviet culture. Thereafter every Olympics was a vital struggle to win more medals and break more world records.

On the whole, America seems to have had the advantage in the cultural Cold War. Western popular culture always had a strong Soviet following and it remained easily accessible. There was no real western interest in Soviet popular culture. Also, to show their cultural heroes to the west, they had to be allowed to leave the USSR. These were the very individuals who could win great wealth by remaining in the west. The dancer, Rudolf Nureyev was only one of a stream of defectors. There was little to attract a western cultural hero to defect to the east.



Map 27: Capitalism v. Communism in the 1960s

The 1950s had been the decade of Eisenhower and Khrushchev. Both had wanted to reduce military spending and had pursued *détente* – peaceful co-existence. Unfortunately they could never agree what this entailed. To Eisenhower it implied an acceptance of the international status quo. The Communist world must accept its existing boundaries and make no further attempts to expand its territory. To Khrushchev it meant that the two powers would not go to war, but were still free to compete for power and influence throughout the world. Thus he felt free to combine *détente* with fabricated claims of missile superiority, claims given some credibility by the launch of Sputnik in 1957 and Yuri Gagarin's space flight in 1961.

The 1960s saw the emergence of new American leaders, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Kennedy launched a crash programme to expand the USA's strategic missile forces, despite being aware the balance was already in America's favour. He also expanded conventional American forces; being determined that America should have a degree of flexibility in its response to Communist aggression anywhere in the world. To re-establish America's confidence in its own technological pre-eminence, he authorised the Apollo moon programme – choosing a race the USA was certain to win as the USSR had no interest in it. Khrushchev still wanted to pursue *détente* and had a degree of success. Their brush with catastrophe during the Cuban Missile Crisis had shaken both leaders. In its wake they agreed to install a direct communications link (the 'hotline') between the Kremlin and the Whitehouse. Nuclear tests were moved underground to reduce pollution.

Khrushchev, however, was unable to stop American military expansion. *Détente* had also offended ideological purists, hardliners and the military in Moscow. His agricultural policies had failed and his industrial policies were unpopular. In October 1964 he was pushed aside by a new leadership grouped around Leonid Brezhnev. Convinced that their humiliation over Cuba was the result of military weakness, especially lack of naval power, they also undertook a major expansion of both conventional and nuclear forces. A major arms race had begun.

This was an arms race in which the west had every advantage given their technological and economic superiority. America could spend far more per capita on arms than the Soviet Union, while the tax burden on its citizens remained proportionally lower. The USSR's Warsaw Pact partners simply did not have the resources to make a major contribution to the Pact. It was not even clear how reliable their armies would be if war came, especially after the intervention in Prague (1968) (see Map 33). On the other

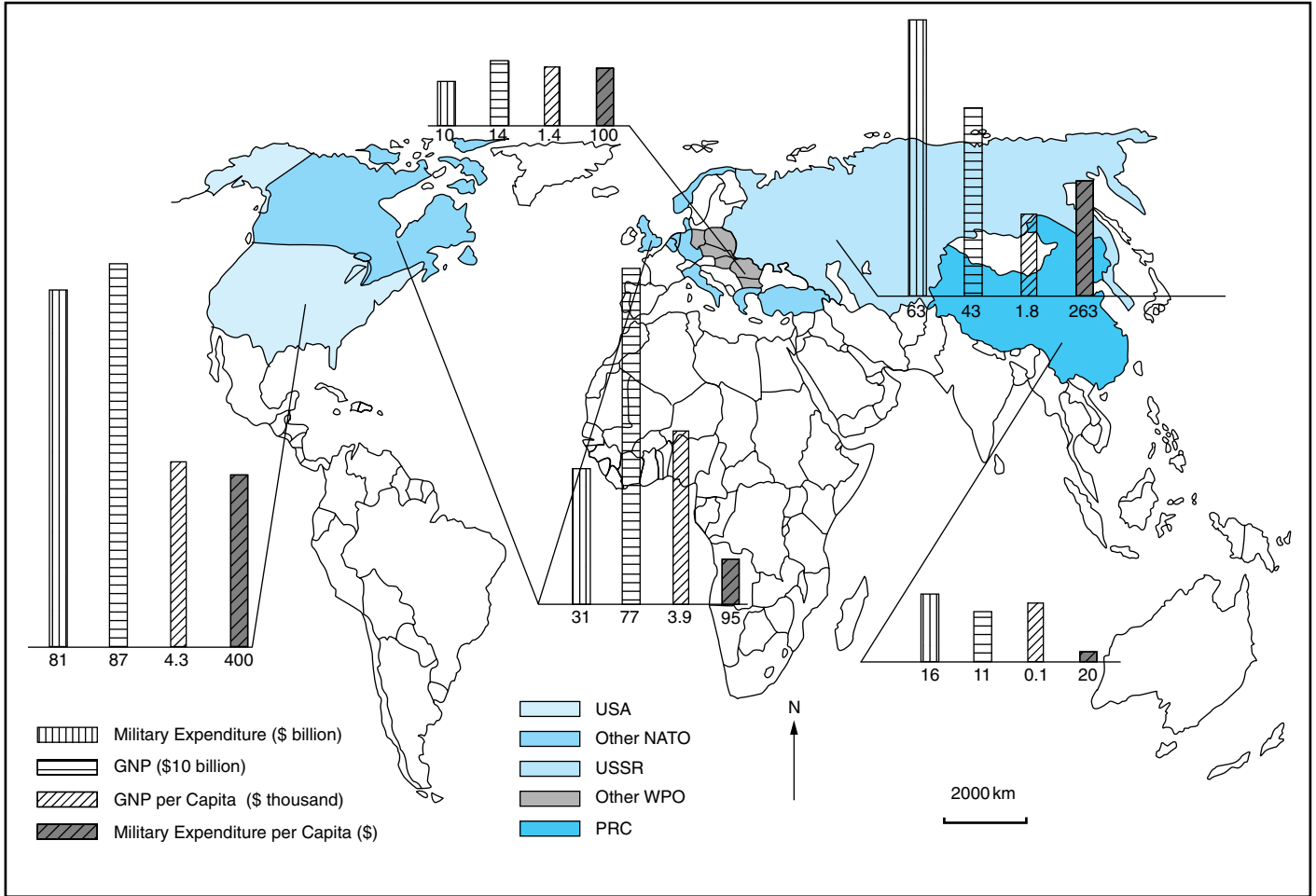
hand, the United States was not entirely satisfied with its own NATO allies. Their military spending remained comparatively low despite the size of their collective economies. Notwithstanding this, NATO's military spending in total in 1968 was equivalent to the entire GNP of the People's Republic of China.

Notably the arms race did not signal any renewed crisis, rather it led to renewed low-level tension and reduced contacts at all levels. The focus of the Cold War was already moving towards the less developed world. As European colonial rule was ended new nations were emerging, chiefly in Africa and Asia. Where colonial powers resisted this trend, armed guerrilla groups were forming to force them out. It was an obvious step for such guerrillas to look to the Soviet Union for ideology as well as arms. The USSR also had an appeal to newly established states, having no associations with former rulers and a clear anti-imperialist record. Soviet influence might perhaps spread very widely indeed.

In the 1960s America had to respond to this new Cold War challenge. Fortunately the new generation of leaders were better suited to the task than the old. Kennedy had different views than Eisenhower, who tended to see Communism wherever he saw radicalism. Kennedy was far more sympathetic to the leaders of the less developed world. Where Eisenhower had begrudged aid, except military aid where American interests were directly involved, Kennedy recognised the very real need for aid for development. He attempted to persuade a sceptical Congress to authorise greater aid. He was not always successful, the sums he requested were cut, and often there were conditions attached, such as undertakings never to expropriate American investments.

There were still some areas where America did not effectively compete with the Soviet Union for influence. Neither Kennedy nor Johnson supported Angolan independence when it would risk costing America bases in the Portuguese Azores. No real action was taken over Apartheid in South Africa, as it was staunchly anti-Communist. Dictatorships in Latin America were supported when they were hostile to Castro's Cuba. Guerrilla movements in such places looked to the Soviet Union by default.

Far more disastrous was American involvement in Vietnam. Kennedy took the first steps through supporting the corrupt dictatorship of Ngo Dinh Diem, which proved to be an ever expanding commitment. Johnson was to send 500,000 troops and still fail. In the final analysis, therefore, the west hardly made a decisive use of its advantages throughout the decade.



Map 28: The Peace Corps

Aware of the need to improve American standing in the less developed world, badly damaged by the Bay of Pigs, Kennedy adopted an idea long discussed in America – the Peace Corps. Volunteers were to be recruited and trained in languages and customs. They would then serve for a three-year tour in a developing country, providing desperately needed skills. Not directly the tools of US foreign policy, they would still serve it by doing good and by presenting a positive image of Americans wherever they served. This would be a low-cost way of winning Cold War victories.

University students were the main source of recruits, particularly those in California and the northeastern states. Despite a very rigorous screening and training programme, volunteers were eager to come forward. The Peace Corps developed a romantic aura of young, idealistic and patriotic Americans enduring and improving harsh conditions. This had a strong appeal to America's self-image. Within six years 14,500 volunteers served in 55 countries. By 2002, over 165,000 had served in 135 countries.

Looking at the first recipients of volunteers reveals some indication of American priorities. There was a strong concentration on Latin America. Eventually virtually every Latin American state received volunteers. The notable exception was Cuba. In Africa and Asia there was something of a bias towards former British colonies – presumably because of language considerations. But this is not the complete picture. The aim was to extend Peace Corps activities throughout the non-Communist developing world. Many states, however, were initially reluctant to accept volunteers. Many Islamic states refused to accept volunteers without assurances that none were Jewish. The Corps refused to discriminate in this way, and these nations consequently never received any volunteers.

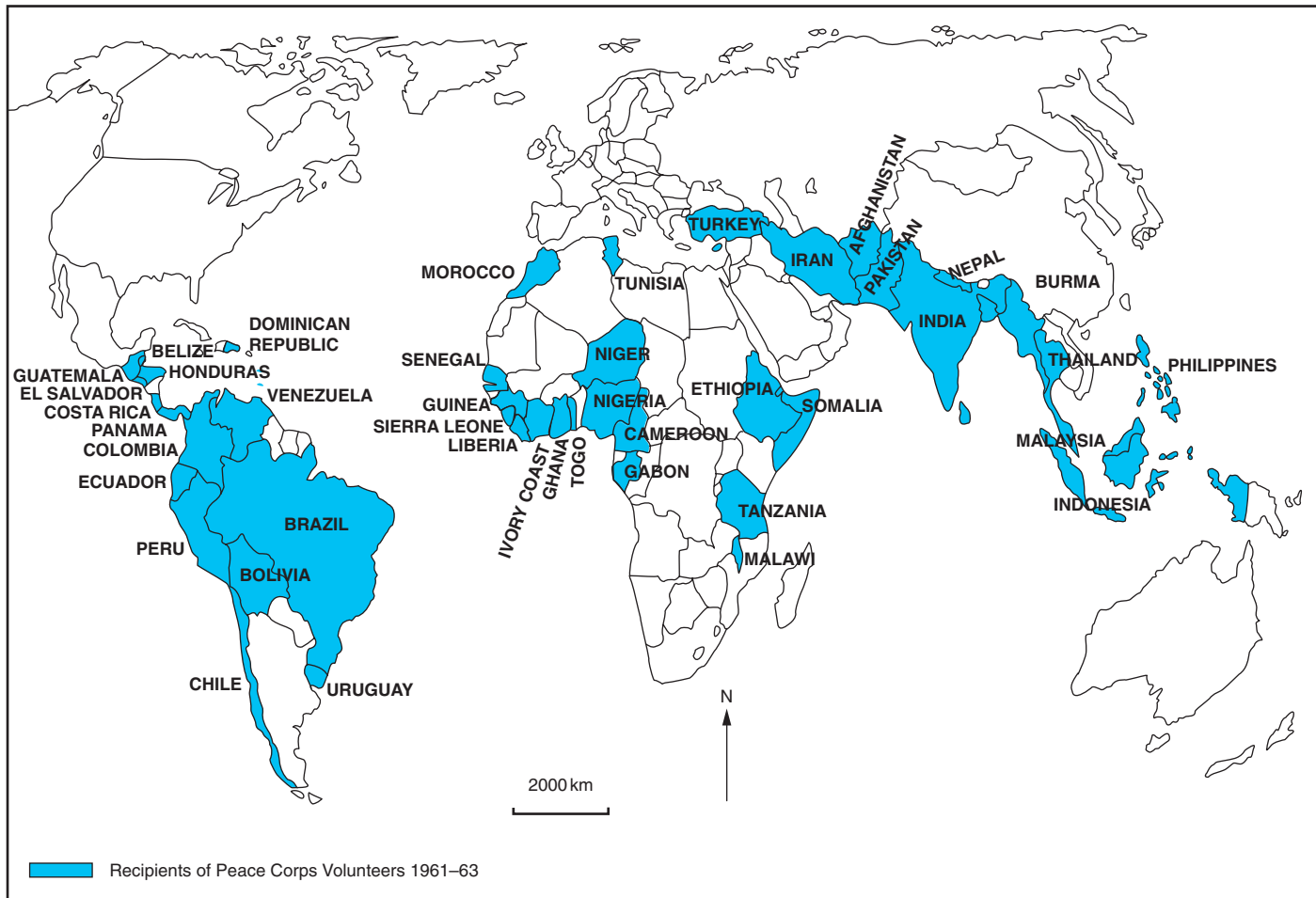
There were more serious problems in persuading states to accept volunteers. The Soviet Union denounced the Peace Corps as a front for the CIA. Many developing countries were willing to believe this. As Eisenhower had used the CIA to bring down regimes he found objectionable, there were, perhaps understandable reservations initially in accepting volunteers. In Afghanistan there were further reservations. The Afghan government were anxious lest accepting Peace Corps volunteers would undermine their neutralism. The Soviet Union might insist on Afghanistan accepting their own Young Pioneers as a counterbalance. The country might end up being flooded with foreigners. In the event this never happened. But such reluctance was widespread. On a more practical level, there was considerable scepticism among developing nations that these young, rich and privileged American volunteers would be

able to endure harsh conditions or make any improvement to them.

Despite such doubts the Peace Corps began its operations, initially in Myanmar (Burma), Ghana, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand. In general the pattern that developed was for Peace Corps volunteers to concentrate largely on teaching in Asia and Africa. In Latin America they tended to be used more in community development projects, often in rural and urban slums. Despite the romantic image, therefore, most volunteers were teachers of English. Also they usually lived comfortably, at least in comparison with the peoples among whom they worked.

The experiences of the volunteers were of course highly diverse. Generalisations need to be treated with caution. Still, some conclusions can be suggested concerning their impact. Schoolteachers encountered unexpected difficulties in dealing with local traditions and practices. In Afghanistan, education was traditionally based on the Holy Koran and learning was by rote. Religious leaders objected to foreigners who might teach anti-Islamic beliefs, Christian or Communist. Also students were expected to pass their courses. It was quite legitimate to use bribery or intimidation to ensure this. In Somalia there was a strong tradition of student strikes, and local authorities were unlikely to support a foreign teacher who became embroiled in such a dispute. In Sierra Leone foreign teachers were resented as proof of the nation's continuing dependence. It was also assumed that volunteers must be incompetent teachers, who were unable to secure employment in their own countries. Also, though the USSR had no answer for the Peace Corps, it is important to note that both Cuba and the People's Republic of China did. Their volunteers were willing to bear the same living conditions as the local people, which was even more impressive than the Peace Corps.

It would be wrong, however, to paint too negative a picture of the Peace Corps. They were very dedicated and worked extremely hard, in often difficult circumstances, to serve the people they were sent to help. Schools, hospitals, public health projects, village co-operatives and a host of other projects did benefit significantly from their presence. Their uncomplaining efforts did make an impact. In many former colonial territories they presented a totally different image of westerners than had ever been seen before. Their efforts, without political proselytising, were appreciated and they made many friends for America. Because they were never used overtly in the service of American foreign policy they did indeed improve America's standing in the developing world.



Map 29: Southeast Asia – Partition and War

The fall of France in 1940 spelt the beginning of the end for the French colonial empire. The Japanese were only too willing to take advantage of French weakness. Initially they demanded to station garrisons in Indo-China. In 1945, with defeat approaching, the Japanese attempted to win Vietnamese support by suppressing the French colonial government. They proclaimed Vietnam independent, under the representative of the former Vietnamese imperial dynasty: Bao Dai. Few were misled by what was a very transparent cover for a Japanese takeover. It did, however, encourage Vietnamese nationalists to attempt to win real independence.

The Vietnamese national liberation movement, known colloquially as the Vietminh, gathered support. Vietnamese Communists led the movement, though they attempted to project a moderate image. The Vietminh built a considerable guerrilla army and prepared to seize power when Japan was defeated. Also they appealed to popular support by offering to address Vietnam's most pressing need – land reform. Far too many landless peasants were paying extortionate rents to absentee landlords. Rural poverty was a massive social evil. Promises of land reform were extremely popular. The Vietminh's Communist leader, Ho Chi Minh, enjoyed enormous prestige.

The French certainly wanted to re-establish colonial rule. They were, in fact, able to regain control of the major ports and urban centres. But the Vietminh was strongest in the countryside, particularly in the north. The two sides attempted to negotiate, but the French could never offer the Vietminh enough to satisfy them. In December 1946 a war broke out which was eventually to drag on for 30 years.

Under US pressure the French finally opted to make one last effort to defeat the Vietminh. They implemented the 'Navarre plan'. This required that they occupy vital communication routes in the North, and deprive the Vietminh of supplies. As part of this effort, French paratroopers occupied the valley of Dien Bien Phu in November 1953. The Vietminh commander, General Giap, decided to destroy them. The French, finally offered a decisive battle, poured reinforcements into the valley. French commanders ignored warnings that the terrain was utterly unsuitable for them to fight a major battle. They failed to detect the scale of the Vietminh build-up, especially in artillery and anti-aircraft guns.

The blow, when it fell, was a staggering shock to the French. Their troops were soon isolated and hemmed in inside a steadily shrinking perimeter. After massive losses on both sides, the Vietminh stormed the French command centre on 7 May 1954. The French, faced with massacre, surrendered. Many more would die in captivity. After this,

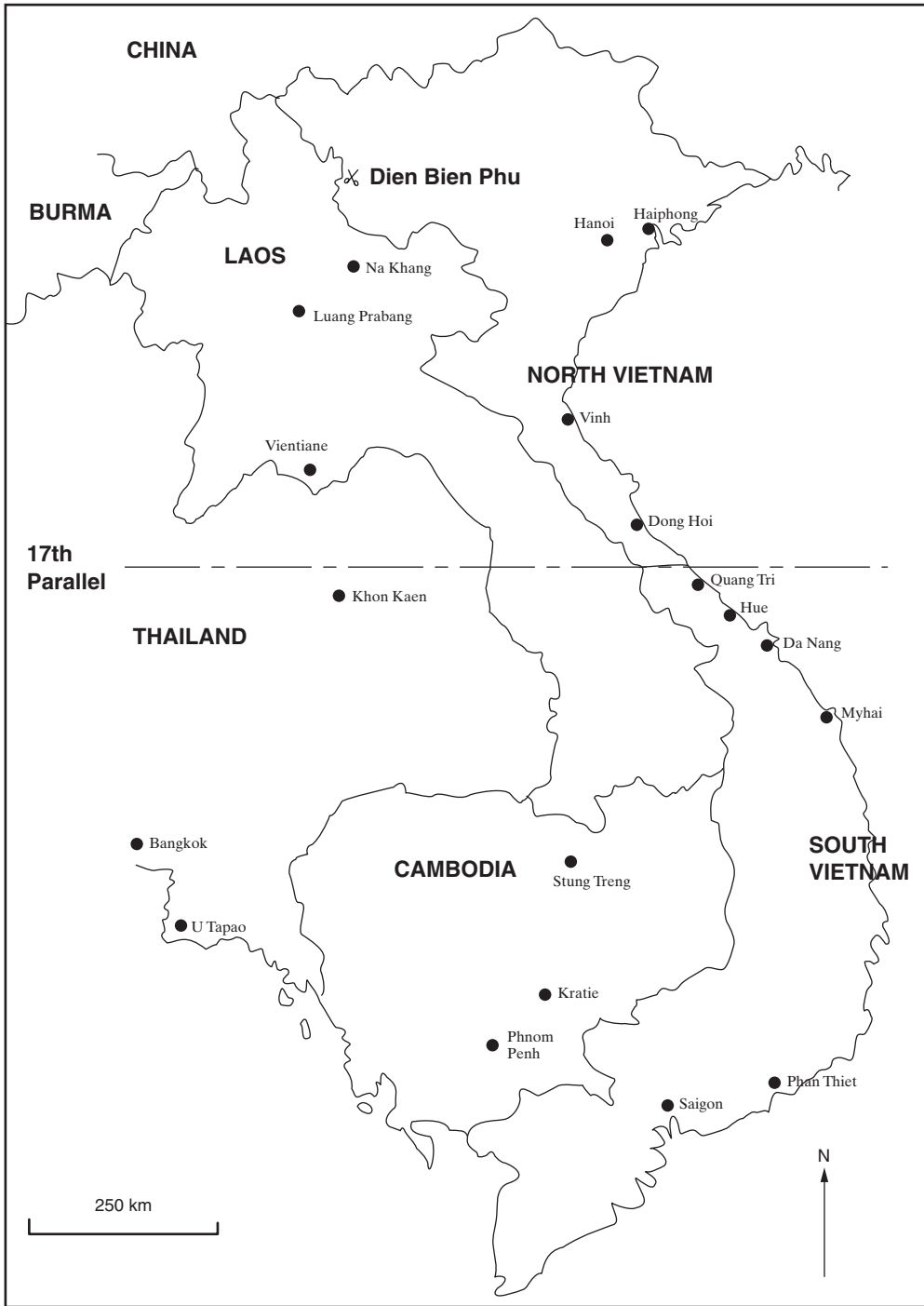
no American argument could dissuade the French government in their determination to withdraw. In Geneva, an international conference on the region began to make progress, in the face of strenuous American objections.

The United States faced a serious dilemma. American opinion would not support direct intervention so soon after the Korean War. Their allies, Britain in particular, offered no encouragement for an international coalition to intervene. Many American observers were still convinced that the war could be won. The problem, they concluded, was not that the task was impossible; it was that the French military was substandard. American troops would surely deal with the Vietminh in a few months.

This being politically impossible, America had to settle for making the Geneva agreement as unobjectionable as possible. The result of American pressure was a clumsy agreement. Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam were given their independence. But they were to be neutral states, forbidden to join the Cold War alliance system. Also Vietnam was to be temporarily divided at the 17th parallel. The Vietminh would rule the north, and a pro-western regime the south. In 1956 all-Vietnam elections would select a single Vietnamese government. As the treaty recognised even a truncated Communist victory, the American government refused even to sign it.

In the event, when it became clear that the Vietminh would win all-Vietnam elections, they were never held. America instead chose to build a separate state of South Vietnam. This was no easy task. The leader who emerged, Ngo Dinh Diem, was no crusader for democracy. Despotic, brutal, corrupt and reactionary, he was not the man to woo popular support. His regime not only ignored the need for land reform, it reversed it wherever the Vietminh had imposed it. Diem's regime was utterly dependent upon massive American aid, and he ignored advice to make reforms. The peasantry began to take up arms under the leadership of the South Vietnamese Communists, generally called the Vietcong.

In North Vietnam, a viable and generally popular one-party state emerged. There was always uncertainty at the viability of South Vietnam. By 1961 an estimated 12,000 Vietcong guerrillas were fighting an American-equipped, but distressingly unenthusiastic regular army 200,000 strong. The Vietcong were winning and held over half of the countryside. The more American aid and military advisers that were poured in, the more American prestige would be damaged by South Vietnam's collapse. The scale of the commitment America should make to save South Vietnam was already being discussed in Washington.



Map 30: Southeast Asia – American intervention

By 1961 American policy towards Vietnam was in a shambles. South Vietnam seemed incapable of surviving by its own efforts. Despite lavish American aid essential reforms, particularly land reform, were ignored. Its army would not fight the Vietcong guerrillas. Diem's government was despotic, corrupt and detested. He was becoming unsupportable. But Kennedy could not tolerate further Communist victories in Southeast Asia.

How then could America save South Vietnam? Kennedy had already sent military advisers far in excess of treaty limits. Yet this was still insufficient. Suggestions of an international coalition to intervene met a distinctly chilly reception in Europe. If America were to intervene it would largely be alone. The potential commitment was unlimited.

Kennedy still thought that victory was possible. The British had defeated Communist guerrillas in similar terrain in Malaya (see Map 15). Strategic hamlets had separated the peasantry from the guerrillas, who had gradually been ground down. America provided large sums to Diem's government to do likewise. Most of the American funds were pilfered; where hamlets were built conditions were so nasty that they provided recruits for the Vietcong.

Eventually Kennedy accepted Diem could never build an acceptable government and authorised his overthrow. His successors were no better and whatever political stability South Vietnam possessed was lost until the leadership of Nguyen Van Thieu in 1967. Kennedy's successor, Johnson, was left with a South Vietnam that seemed to be disintegrating. Only a much-increased American commitment perhaps could save it. In August 1964 North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked USS *Maddox* when it entered their territorial waters in the Gulf of Tonkin. Ironically there was no response to this, but a second, in fact imaginary attack, but which appeared to happen on radar due to bad weather, did provoke response. Describing it as unprovoked aggression, Johnson used the incident to justify air attacks on North Vietnam. He also used it to get the 'Gulf of Tonkin Resolution' through Congress. This gave him an entirely free hand to deal with the situation.

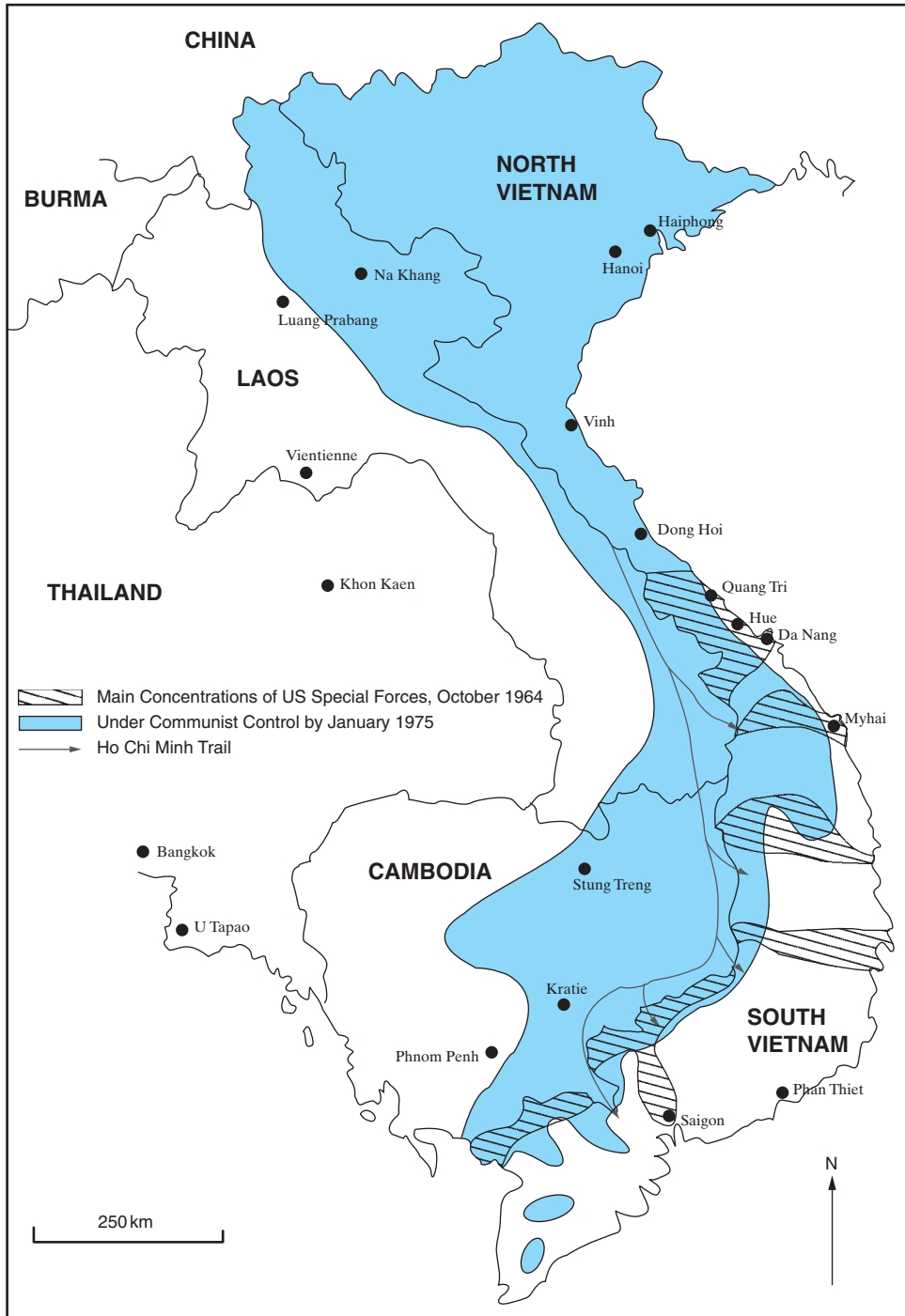
The way was now open for a massive military commitment to South Vietnam. In March 1965 operation Rolling Thunder, a major air campaign, was launched against the North. In April, 40,000 US troops were sent. But only in July did Johnson formally announce that the USA was effectively at war. They were soon to find their mission frustrating. Demoralised and poorly led South Vietnamese troops were only too willing to stand back and let the Americans do the fighting.

There was also the awkward question of how America was to win the war. Restarting the strategic hamlets programme and building a genuinely accepted South Vietnam state was one option. But this was a long-term project winning over the 'hearts and minds' of the peasants. Americans wanted the war won quickly. Besides, this was alien to the American way of fighting wars. American armies had long relied on firepower. To find the enemy and to destroy them seemed an obvious solution. Special forces were diverted from strategic hamlets to 'search and destroy' missions. This was to have serious consequences.

'Search and destroy' missions were difficult and dangerous. The only yardstick of success was the body count – the number of Vietcong killed. But American commanders proved only too willing to assume that any dead Vietnamese was a legitimately killed guerrilla. This helped dehumanise the Vietnamese to the American soldiers. Coupled with the fear of a deadly enemy, impossible to identify, this engendered hatred of the very people the Americans had come to protect. Ugly incidents abounded, the most notorious being the massacre of perhaps 500 villagers at My Lai in 1968. My Lai, and the derisory punishment of Lt. William Calley shocked Vietnamese, world and American domestic opinion alike. By opting for a military victory, the Americans had suffered a political defeat.

Another consequence of American strategy was the frustration of its failure. They were not defeating the Vietcong. The Vietcong always replaced its losses easily – there had not been any serious attempt to separate them from the South Vietnamese peasantry. Americans assumed that the Vietcong only survived through the support of North Vietnam. In fact North Vietnam was providing only limited support to the Vietcong. But Americans wanted to believe that a military victory could be won. They concluded that if they could stop North Vietnamese support for the Vietcong, they could be defeated. An invasion of North Vietnam was impossible. It would simply invite Chinese intervention as it had in Korea. Bombing the North into submission seemed a realistic option.

In fact North Vietnam had already considered the threat and decided not to be intimidated. A huge bombing campaign failed in its purpose. The Vietcong received ever more support along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. With aid from the USSR and the PRC (one of the only issues over which they could co-operate) North Vietnam's air defences became formidable, and American losses heavy. The ferocity of the American campaign aroused further international revulsion. The United States by now resembled a giant, lashing out blindly and savagely out of sheer frustration. By 1967 the war had reached stalemate.



Map 31: Southeast Asia – the Fall of the South

By 1967 the war had reached stalemate. This, however, was a stalemate the Vietcong intended to break. In January 1968 they launched the Tet Offensive. Across South Vietnam and in every city, the Vietcong launched a series of co-ordinated raids. There was even fighting in the grounds of the US embassy in Saigon. It came as a shocking blow to the American people, who had assumed that their forces were winning in South Vietnam.

The Vietcong had intended to reduce South Vietnam to chaos and force the Americans to withdraw. The reality was a major American military victory. The Vietcong were nearly destroyed. Henceforth the North Vietnamese army would bear the brunt of the war. Politically, it was once again an American defeat. US public opinion turned against a war that appeared unwinnable. America began to seek a way to extract itself from Vietnam. The immediate response was ‘Vietnamisation’ – withdrawing US troops and making the South Vietnamese do the fighting. America also agreed to open peace negotiations with North Vietnam in Paris.

In November 1968, Richard Nixon was elected US President. He had promised that he had a ‘secret plan’ to end the war. In fact his plan was to improve relations with Moscow and Beijing, who in turn would pressurise Hanoi into agreeing acceptable terms. This, of course, meant recognising the PRC and awarding it Taiwan’s seat on the UN Security Council, but that was a price Nixon was willing to pay. Indeed both Moscow and Beijing wanted improved relations and were willing to apply some pressure on North Vietnam.

Unfortunately for America, the Communist world was not the monolithic body it had long been depicted. The pressure the USSR and the PRC could apply on North Vietnam was limited. They certainly could not force Hanoi to accept utterly objectionable terms. North Vietnam required an immediate American withdrawal and an end to aid to South Vietnam, as well as a new, fairly elected South Vietnamese government prepared to negotiate the unification of Vietnam. America demanded a joint American–North Vietnamese withdrawal from South Vietnam, which (along with Laos and Cambodia) must survive as a secure, pro-western, independent state. In short, America wanted to gain its full war aims at the negotiating table, ignoring North Vietnamese successes and sacrifices. Negotiations were soon as stalemated as the war.

The fighting continued, but now with the aim of forcing the opposition to make concessions in the negotiations. To this end, in March 1969, Nixon took a fateful decision. He ordered the expansion of the war into Cambodia. American B52 bombers began attacking North

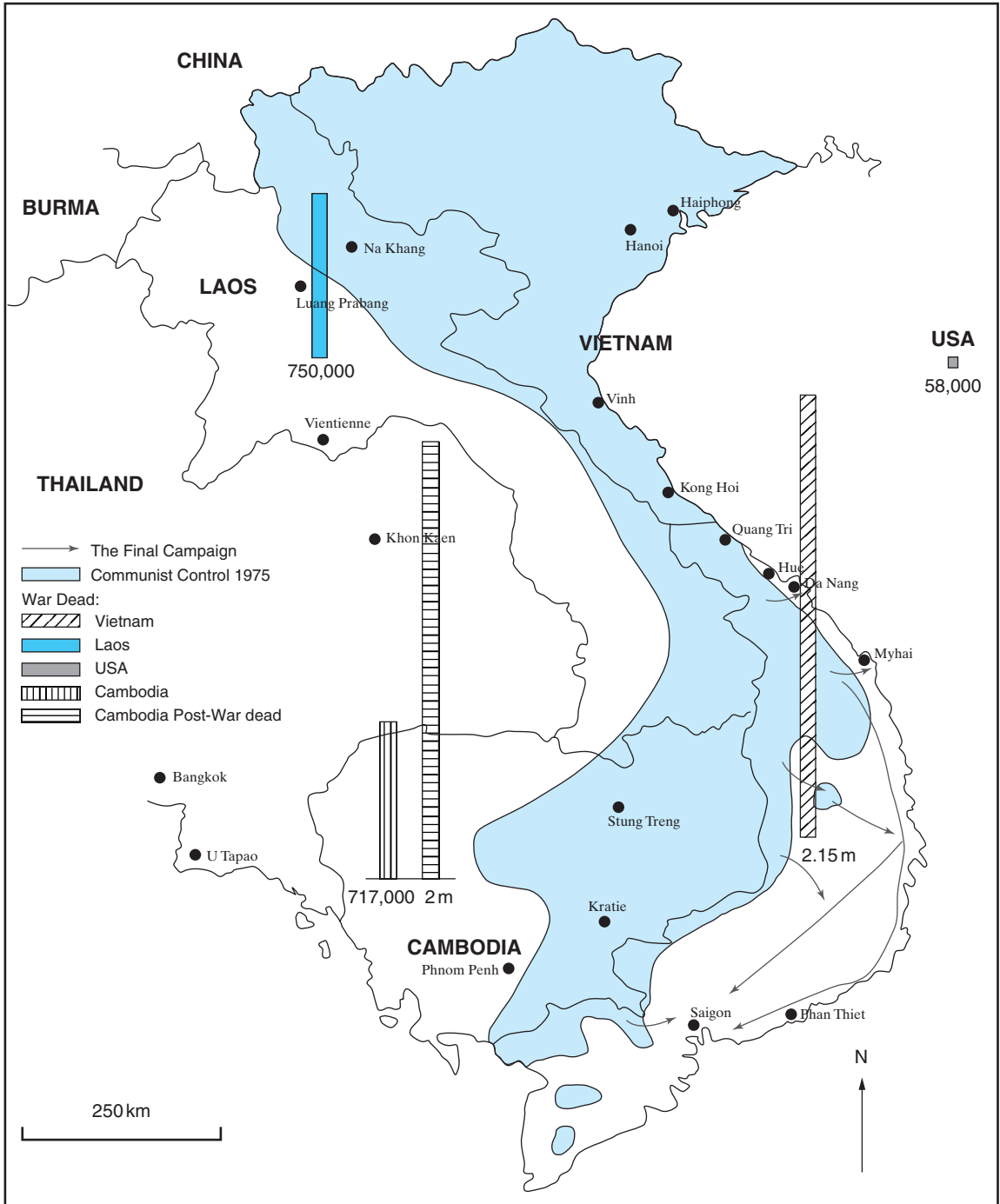
Vietnamese bases near the border. The North Vietnamese response was to move deeper into Cambodia and the Americans followed them, eventually invading with ground troops. The impact on Cambodia was catastrophic. The countryside was devastated; masses of refugees fled and the Khmer Rouge grew into a formidable force controlling much of the country. Outraged anti-war demonstrations were held in America. Negotiations in Paris were unaffected.

In March 1972 North Vietnam delivered another shock by launching a full-scale invasion across the 17th parallel. Tanks supported 200,000 troops in an offensive that again was a complete surprise. South Vietnamese troops collapsed, fleeing south in complete panic. The North Vietnamese were taken by surprise at the ease of their advance and hesitated. This allowed American air power to be used in a brutal counter-attack, which perhaps prevented the total disintegration of South Vietnam.

With painful slowness the negotiations in Paris progressed. By October 1972 a draft agreement had been drawn up, but South Vietnam’s President Thieu refused to accept it. Nixon attempted to force more concessions by taking a step hitherto avoided: massive bombing raids on Hanoi. In the event this antagonised Congress into cutting further funding for the war. Nixon simply had to force Thieu to accept whatever terms America agreed.

On 23 January 1973 North Vietnam and the United States signed a peace agreement. It certainly did not leave secure, pro-western governments in South Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia. The latter two countries were not mentioned and the Pathet Lao and the Khmer Rouge continued their own wars. American bombing in Cambodia was in fact greatly increased. In South Vietnam a ‘cease-fire in place’ was agreed. This allowed for North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces to remain in, and administer, the territory of South Vietnam they controlled.

In short the viability of South Vietnam as a sovereign state was even more doubtful than before the American intervention. Only US aid and the threat of re-intervention provided any security to Thieu. In early 1975 the North Vietnamese struck. South Vietnam collapsed in weeks. Despite the Cold War credibility at stake, America did nothing. Meanwhile the pro-western governments in Laos and Cambodia, similarly abandoned by America, collapsed with equal speed. In Cambodia, under the murderous regime of Pol Pot, the real killing was about to begin. Despite millions of lives destroyed and billions of dollars wasted, all of Indo-China was under Communist rule. America had suffered its most humiliating Cold War defeat.



Map 32: *The Non-Aligned Movement*

Winning allies and friends in the developing world was an obvious Cold War stratagem for both sides. Developing countries could have vital raw materials and strategic base areas. More importantly, the more allies one side had, the more it appeared to be winning – and appearances mattered in the Cold War. A source of frustration was that the developing nations had their own needs and priorities. They were not prepared to accept tamely their prescribed roles as very junior players in an east–west confrontation.

The Non-Aligned Movement was very much a child of the Cold War. As a result of the Korean War and the 1954 settlement of Indo-Chinese affairs at Geneva, a number of Asian leaders met in Colombo. There were newly independent nations and they wanted to protect that independence. The surest way to lose it seemed to be by allowing their countries to be used as Cold War battlefields. Their discussions led to a conference at Bandung (1955), which established the Non-Aligned Movement. The Non-Aligned states were determined to remain neutral in the Cold War and collectively pursue their common interests.

By the mid 1970s the Non-Aligned Movement represented nearly 1 billion people in over 100 nations. It held regular conferences at which issues such as racial and political equality, world poverty and world peace were discussed. Its resolutions frequently offended and enraged the west. The west, it soon became evident, found it harder to come to terms with such neutralism than did the Soviet Union. Neutralism was seen in the west as favouring Communism by default. In 1956, American Secretary of State, John F. Dulles, famously condemned non-alignment as ‘short-sighted’ and ‘immoral’.

The priorities of the Non-Aligned Movement brought it into dispute with the west. The leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement saw themselves as the natural arbiters between east and west. Indian leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, insisted that the Movement had a positive role to play in preserving peace and achieving disarmament, as it stood above east–west rivalries. The west, for their part, detected a distinct pro-Communist bias.

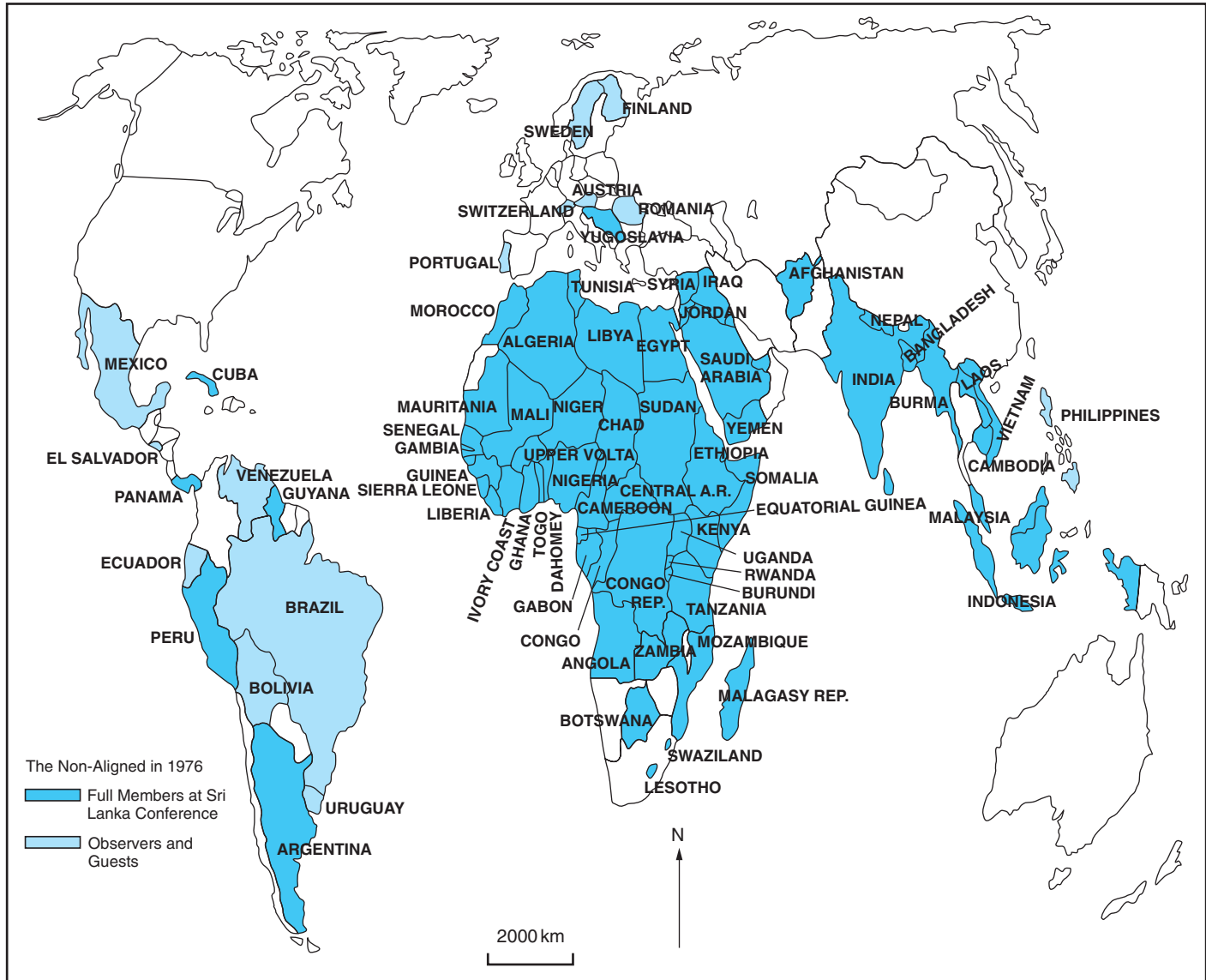
In crises the west was angered when the Movement always seemed to side with the Soviet Union. In the UN General Assembly – the Non-Aligned Movement’s most important platform – the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt of 1956 was denounced bitterly and repeatedly. The USSR’s brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolution, happening at the same time (see Map 18), was treated much more leniently. India abstained in the vote to condemn Soviet actions. Nehru and other Non-Aligned Movement leaders were seen as naive at best. In fact, there was an

element of realism in the Movement’s actions. The west perhaps was more likely to make concessions in many crises. If this prevented war, it seemed a small price to the Movement. Similarly over Hungary, the USSR clearly would never bow to condemnation by the UN. Indeed open resentment of its condemners might destroy any hope of the Movement being accepted as arbiters. Denunciations on this issue seemed pointless. Over Egypt, Britain and France were very likely to respect the UN and therefore warranted censure.

There was also another reason why the west received so much criticism. To the developing world the issue of anti-colonialism was perhaps even more important than the Cold War. The humiliations of colonial rule were both immediate and painful to newly independent nations. A foreign policy stance that emphasised their separation from former colonial rulers was attractive. The Soviet Union had earned prestige for its anti-colonial record. Where it was being repressive, it was mainly being repressive to eastern Europeans, who were distant and white. The United States also had a long record of hostility to colonialism. But its main allies had been, or still were, colonial powers – whose interests had to be protected.

Anything that America did, that appeared tainted with imperialism, was immediately criticised. The Bay of Pigs fiasco, the campaign for Puerto Rican independence and the war in Indo-China, were only three issues over which the Movement savagely rebuked America. Also the Movement used its voting strength in the UN in attempts to force anti-imperialist actions on the west. In 1970, along with the USSR, the Movement had a majority on the Security Council. It tried to force through a vote requiring Britain to bring down the illegal, racist regime of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) – a task far beyond Britain’s resources. America had to use its power of veto for the first time ever – earning renewed reproaches.

The Non-Aligned Movement appeared solidly anti-western. In many ways it was. But it was not pro-Communist. Developing nations wanted to enjoy the wealth the west knew. Nor was the Movement a tightly knit organisation. When it came to competing for aid its members were bitterly divided. America worried that the appeal of neutralism might destroy NATO. That Portugal attended the 1976 conference as a guest, often the first step towards membership, was perturbing. But in the final analysis, the Movement could only represent the aspirations of the poorest. It would only influence the policies of the great powers if they chose to permit it. On the course and outcome of the Cold War, it would be allowed no such influence.



Map 33: The Prague Spring

The 1960s were a time of some uncertainty for the Soviet Union and the WPO nations. The Soviet leadership that replaced Khrushchev in 1964 was still uncertain how best to reply to hostility from both the west and from the PRC. Intellectual and nationalist dissenters were a growing source of irritation. WPO unity was under strain as Romania became increasingly unco-operative. This itself was hardly a major military loss, but if others followed this example it would be serious.

The developing crisis in Czechoslovakia therefore was observed in Moscow with uncertainty and hesitation. Czechoslovakia was the only WPO nation with a strong popular democratic tradition. Economic stagnation and Slovak demands for an answer to their long-standing claims to autonomy, therefore, aroused a widespread demand for political reforms. By 1967 these demands were openly being articulated by intellectuals and students. But there were plenty of members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz) who totally agreed.

Even Moscow agreed that some change was necessary. The CPCz leader, Antonín Novotný, was an unreformed Stalinist, whose over-centralised regime was widely blamed for economic problems by Czechoslovakians and by Moscow alike. Thus the Soviet Union did not demure when the CPCz ousted Novotný in January 1968 and replaced him with Alexander Dubček, who was seen as a loyal Communist. Dubček embarked on a programme of reforms, which soon caused anxiety to Soviet and other WPO regimes.

As the reform movement progressed, under the slogan ‘Socialism with a human face’, these anxieties multiplied. Dubček never intended to threaten Soviet security and never considered leaving the WPO. Nor did he intend to allow the CPCz to lose control of Czechoslovakia. He did, however, want to reinvigorate the economy through improved trade relations with the west. To the horror of East Germany he spoke of normalising relations with West Germany. This would question the legitimacy of East Germany as a state. Also Dubček strongly believed that continued CPCz control was consistent with a degree of political liberalisation. Perhaps turning the National Assembly from a rubber stamp to a genuine legislature, where some opposition was permitted, would make CPCz rule more responsive to popular concerns.

Under Dubček, therefore, censorship was ended. Political reform became the central issue of public debate. Demands for reform, previously suppressed, were now tacitly encouraged. This had an impact beyond Czechoslovakia’s frontiers. Everywhere in the Communist world, intellectual and nationalist dissidents were encouraged. In

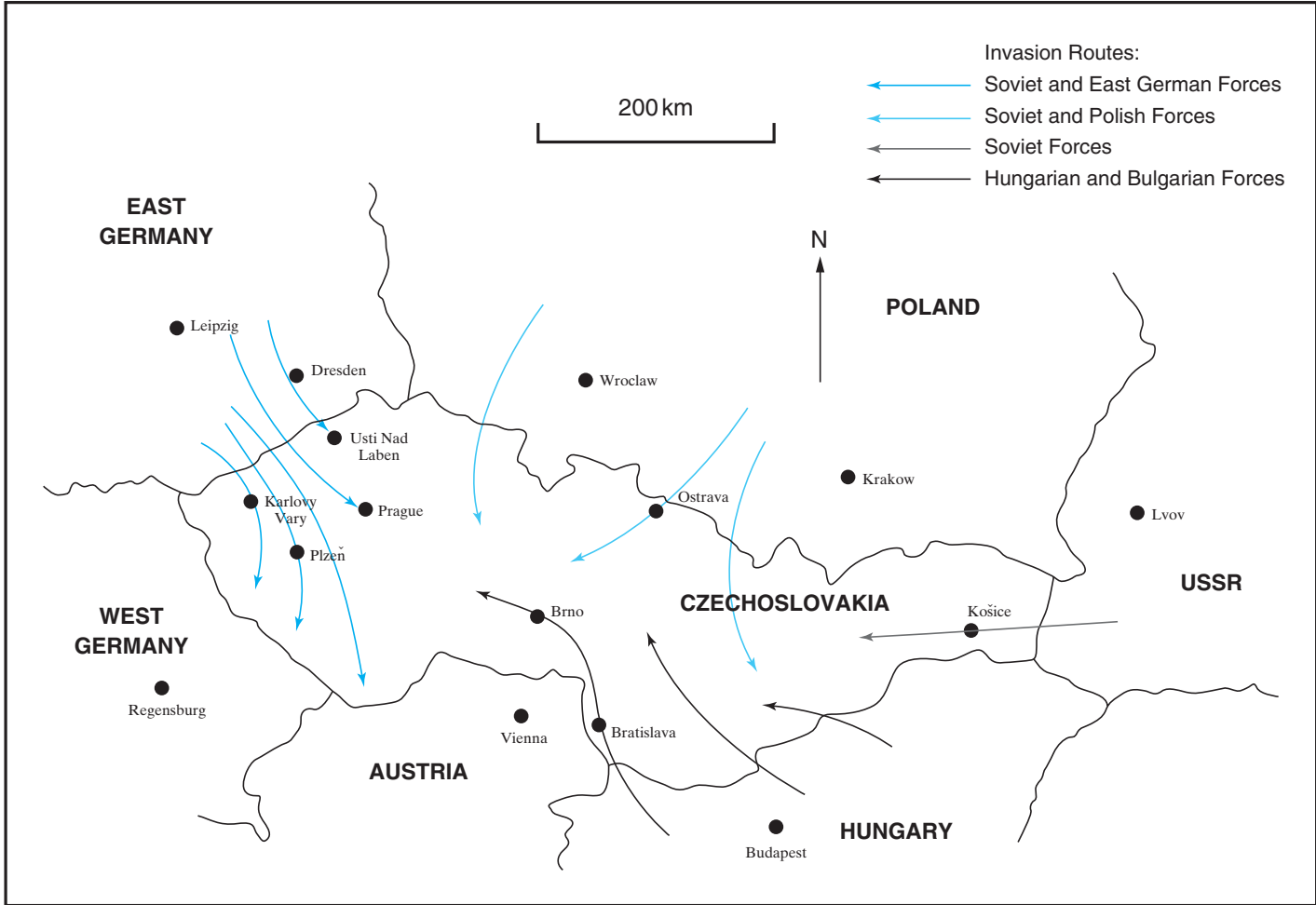
March 1968 in Poland, public demonstrations, demanding similar reforms, ended in rioting. The Polish Communist Party was deeply divided when a reform movement emerged in its own ranks. In Czechoslovakia, ethnic Ukrainians began to agitate for the recognition of their national rights. Moscow was appalled – if this encouraged nationalists in Ukraine, the USSR might be plunged into a serious internal crisis.

A series of high-level government meetings were held to pressurise Dubček’s government into conforming. The tragedy for Czechoslovakia was that Dubček simply did not understand how serious the warnings he received were. In July he was summoned to a summit of WPO leaders gathered expressly to discipline him. He left mistakenly assuming that the assurances he offered satisfied his audience. Perhaps the hesitation of the Kremlin convinced him they intended to take no action.

He was wrong. The debate in the Kremlin was not whether to intervene or not, it was whether to intervene immediately, or to give him more time, in the hope that he would see reason. The more those hopes were frustrated, the more forceful the argument for immediate action became. Dubček blithely proceeded with reforms. He authorised a special Party Congress to remove his remaining opponents in the Presidium – the CPCz’s executive body. This was very much the last straw. The Kremlin decided Dubček must suppress the reform movement and agree to Soviet troops permanently stationed in Czechoslovakia or be removed. When increasingly threatening signals were ignored, an invasion was prepared.

Soviet concerns were greatly eased when neighbouring WPO governments unanimously agreed with the plans. President Johnson, distracted by Vietnam and hoping to restart détente, showed no interest in Czechoslovakia. Though surprised and angered by the invasion, there was no real danger of US reprisals.

The invasion, when it came on 20 August 1968, was an enormous military success. Paratroopers seized the airports and tanks and troops poured across four frontiers. Cities were occupied and the communications network quickly under control. The Czech army had never contemplated resistance. Politically it was chaotic. The remaining anti-reformers in the Presidium proved too weak to form an alternative government. The National Assembly and President were defiant. Civil resistance, including the self-immolation of a Prague student, Jan Palach, paralysed the state. The USSR was forced to reinstate Dubček, though only temporarily and he was unable to save his reforms. Despite this, Soviet control of east Europe was re-affirmed and the limits of reform clearly spelled out.



Map 34: Intelligence Gathering

Naturally in the atmosphere of hostility and mistrust, espionage was seen as a vital tool of the Cold War by both sides. Initially at least, the Soviet Union enjoyed some crucial advantages. Given the conspiratorial background of the Bolsheviks, and their fears of foreign attack, they had lavished far more resources on foreign intelligence in the inter-war years than the west. Under the banners of international revolution and anti-Nazism, they had recruited a number of idealistic young men during the 1930s.

Well-educated and well-connected men, which in Britain included Donald Maclean, Kim Philby and Guy Burgess, became deeply committed agents. They were to rise to important positions in government service. In America and across Europe others like them were recruited. During the war, when the Soviet Union was doing most of the fighting, the urge to help an ally in difficulty attracted more like them. By the beginning of the Cold War the USSR had elaborate and well-established networks of agents in the west. The First Chief Directorate of the KGB was able to divide its responsibilities into areas that reflected Moscow's priorities. Department 4 concentrated on East and West Germany and Austria, symptomatic of Moscow's obsession with the wartime enemy. North America naturally warranted its own department. The whole of Latin America, Francophone and Anglophone Africa had only three departments between them. Department 11, which spied on WPO allies, was euphemistically named 'Liaison with Socialist Countries'. Departments 17 and 18 were later created, reflecting the rising importance of the Arab world and of south Asia.

The west initially had nothing comparable. Not only was little priority given to foreign intelligence, the USSR was a far more hostile environment in which to operate than the west. There were very few spies in the USSR, which is ironic given the vast numbers executed for spying during the purges.

In 1945 much of the wartime intelligence organisations of Britain and America were run down. When the CIA was established in 1947, it had to begin building an intelligence system from virtually nothing. In the early years of the Cold War western intelligence services were to stagger from a series of humiliations. Britain's SIS was fooled into sending a number of agents into the east to contact non-existent resistance groups, where they were captured. The CIA provided arms, radios and money to another such mythical group. Faith in these organisations was eroded by sensational spying scandals in the west. In America Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were controversially executed for spying on American nuclear secrets. In Britain Klaus

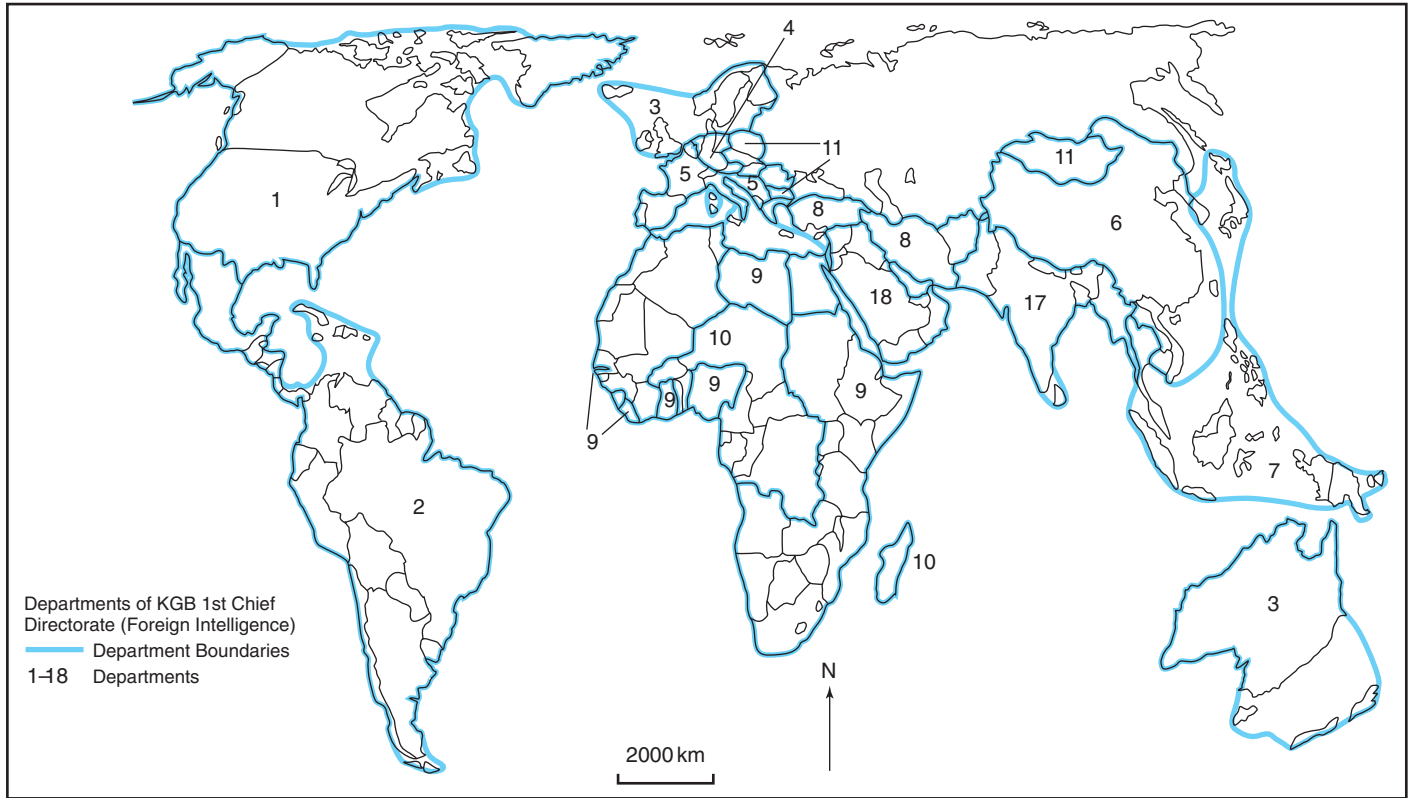
Fuchs and Allan Nunn May were imprisoned for the same offence. Even more painful for Britain was the humiliatingly long list of senior intelligence agents exposed as Soviet spies. It seemed as if British Intelligence was being run from Moscow. Similarly highly placed spies were uncovered throughout NATO. In America a depressing list of middle-rank agents proved willing to accept Soviet money. One, Aldrich Ames, reputedly received \$2.7 million for betraying 25 agents, ten of whom were shot.

Of course the west had its successes. Oleg Penkovsky provided valuable information on Soviet weapons systems during the Cuban Missile Crisis – for which he was tortured and shot. Oleg Gordievsky informed the west of near-hysteria in the Kremlin in the belief that Ronald Reagan was about to launch a pre-emptive nuclear attack. A shocked Reagan moderated his anti-Soviet rhetoric.

Occasionally vital, the role of the spy has been given an overly glamorous image. Perhaps 90 per cent of the information intelligence agencies require comes from published sources. Newspapers are a valuable intelligence source – sometimes presented by agents as from highly confidential sources. Analysis of foreign media could consider both its content and what was absent. What the state was not willing to report could indicate weaknesses or priorities. Questioning émigrés is another routine source of information. The west's greatest advantage, however, was through its use of technology. A valuable source of information was signals intelligence. Intercepting and deciphering Soviet radio traffic became a routine task. The USSR struggled to keep up with western computer technology capable of such tasks.

Surveillance satellites would eventually allow both sides to observe each other freely. Technology also allowed them both to get reliable information from China. The PRC was extremely hostile and dangerous territory for spies. By 1967 both the USA and the USSR had intelligence gathering satellites in orbit. Henceforth it would be possible to observe the disposition, structure and movement of the opposition's military – subject mainly to weather conditions. A surprise attack was becoming an ever more remote possibility.

Perhaps this should have supplied a greater sense of security during the Cold War. But intelligence is of little value if it is not believed. In the early 1980s no amount of negative reports from the KGB could convince the Soviet leadership that Reagan was not preparing for war. At the same time the CIA was unable to convince Reagan that the USSR was not behind all international terrorism. The Cold War, in short, engendered attitudes and assumptions that simple information could not change.



Map 35: The Middle East Wars and the Threat to World Peace

In May 1948 the state of Israel was born. The colonial ruler, Britain, had grown exasperated at the insoluble and rising violence between Zionists and Palestinians. They had unceremoniously dumped the problem into the lap of the UN. The UN drew up a plan of partition, awarding slightly over half of the territory to the Zionists. The plan was reasonably fair, but impractical. Neither side wanted to share the land; they wanted it all. The boundaries of the new state were decided by war.

Neighbouring Arab states immediately invaded. But their armies were small, inexperienced, ill led, inadequately armed and unco-ordinated. They faced a totally mobilised Israel, possessing some modern weapons and, crucially, aware they must prevail or perish. Arab forces were rapidly trounced. The real losers, however, were the Palestinians. Over half the population became refugees. Their own leaders, expecting a quick return behind victorious Arab armies, led many from their homes. Others were ruthlessly driven from their homes by Israeli forces, in a process that would later be termed 'ethnic cleansing'.

It did not take long for the Cold War to enter the region and its conflicts. America for several years pursued the chimera of a regional security alliance to contain Communism. This would include Israel and Arab states. Americans persisted in the illusion that they could be friends to both sides until the 1960s. They failed to see that in the Islamic world Communism was largely an irrelevance. Hostility to Israel was the main unifying force. The Soviet approach was more realistic. In the early 1950s a series of coups installed radical regimes in the region, and the USSR was happy to court their friendship by supplying arms and political support against Israel.

By the 1960s the American commitment to Israel was growing. America was already seen as Israel's ally, which pushed the Arabs towards the USSR. There was a very strong Zionist lobby in Washington and Israel's military prowess was widely admired. Arab states launched a major Soviet-supplied arms build-up. Israel purchased American, British and French weapons. War was clearly coming, but America was still reluctant to commit itself fully to the Israeli cause. The USSR, for its part, was positively encouraging the Arabs to fight. The outcome of a series of air skirmishes between Israel's French-made Mirage jet fighters and Soviet supplied Migs was hotly disputed. Israel's claims were widely accepted, suggesting the superiority of western equipment. The credibility of the USSR's armed forces was at stake. They wanted Soviet equipment used rapidly and victoriously.

In the event, the Six Day War, when it came on 5 June 1967 was an appalling catastrophe for the Arabs. On every

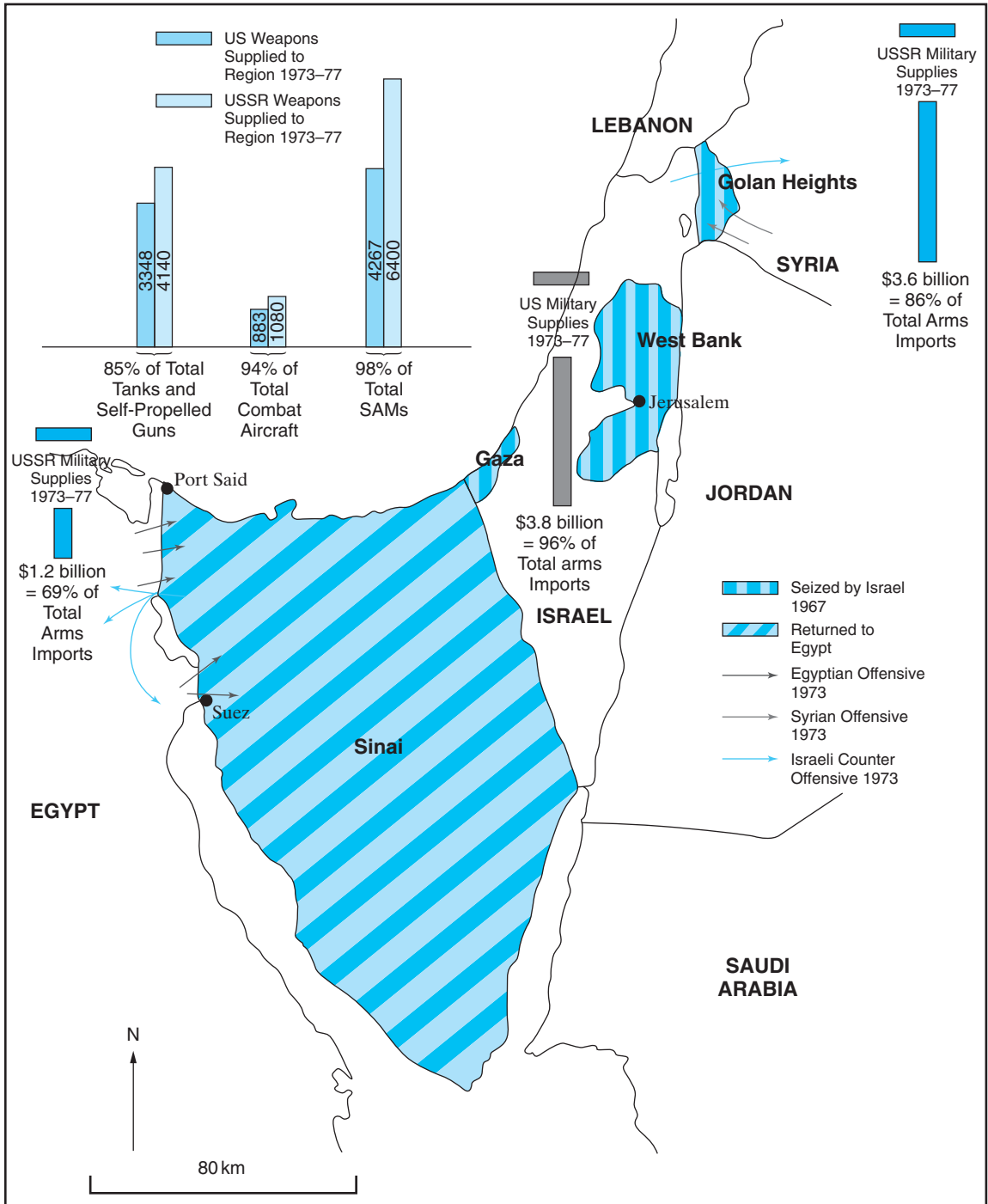
front Arab forces collapsed in the face of Israel's pre-emptive attack. There was a new refugee crisis. There was also a crisis in east-west relations. For the first time since its installation, following the Cuban Missile Crisis, the 'hotline' was used in earnest. The Soviet message was that Israel must accept a cease-fire or they would intervene. Indeed a Soviet naval landing in Israel appears to have been prepared. It was never launched. The US Sixth Fleet would certainly have interfered. The USSR hesitated to risk a world war. The USA also put considerable pressure on Israel to accept the cease-fire.

After this, the USA entered into an informal, but complete strategic partnership with Israel. There was no American pressure to return land captured, to seriously negotiate a peace treaty with its Arab neighbours, or do anything for the refugees. Both American and Soviet weapons flooded into the area. The most modern aircraft, tanks, anti-aircraft (including surface-to-air missiles or SAMs) and anti-tank weapons became available. The region's instability was worsened by the size of the military build-up. Another war was always likely.

In October 1973 Egyptian leader Sadat, frustrated in his efforts to negotiate an Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, joined with Syria in a surprise attack. This was the Yom Kippur (Holy Day) War. They caught Israel unprepared, striking across the Suez Canal and into the Golan Heights. They also used their Soviet supplied anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons to deadly effect. For a short period Israel was in real trouble. Only a huge American airlift of arms to replenish Israeli losses allowed them to stabilise the situation. They were then able to launch devastating counter-attacks. They struck deep into Syria. They also crossed the Suez Canal trapping the Egyptian Third Army on the other bank.

Once again Israel had prevailed, but this time only after a dangerous and costly fight. More threatening was that once again it was a battle that risked great power intervention. The USSR again threatened to interfere to save Egypt from total defeat, reputedly preparing to airlift Soviet troops to the region. Nixon placed US forces on a global nuclear alert to deter this – a move that appalled his allies. He also pressed a new cease-fire on Israel.

The Middle East certainly appeared to be a region in which a world war might break out. The great powers certainly destabilised the region through the scale of their arms transfers. But while both sides wanted influence in the region, they had no desire to fight a war for it. Neither could afford to allow its protégés to be totally defeated and the USSR and made this clear when necessary. In turn America used influence over Israel to limit its victories.



Map 36: *Détente in the 1970s*

The 1970s was a decade of mixed fortunes for both sides in the Cold War. The west in general was deeply troubled by the economic malaise resulting from rising oil prices. In America this was notably worrisome. An adverse trade balance, particularly with Japan, suggested that perhaps the days of American economic pre-eminence were numbered. America was also passing through a period of introspection as a result of failure in the Vietnam War. The Watergate scandal only added to this. The end of the decade would see the fall of the Shah of Iran and the seizure of American embassy staff as hostages by Iranian Islamic fundamentalists. The humiliating failure of an ill-considered rescue attempt seemed to suggest American impotence. Alarming, at the same time, greatly increased Soviet forces were more willing to operate on a world scale.

This apparent impotence was not reflected in American military might. The USA was spending vast sums and maintaining massive forces. Other NATO allies continued to spend far less on defence – a constant source of irritation to American administrations, who felt they were bearing an inequitable load in the Cold War. The Soviet Union was by far the greater military spender of the decade. But its WPO partners remained relatively trivial contributors to Soviet defence. In fact, in order to match military spending in the west, the USSR was placing an inordinately heavy burden on its own citizens. The consequences were dire for the Soviet economy, many sectors of which were stagnating. The PRC was spending relatively small sums on defence, but even this was only achieved by placing a comparatively higher burden on its citizens than the USA.

There were, therefore, good reasons for all parties to seek better relations and reduce military spending. Nixon, who became President in 1969, was a noted anti-Communist. He did, however, have good reasons for reinvigorating détente, which had flagged over Czechoslovakia and Vietnam. He wanted the diplomatic assistance of Moscow and Beijing to extricate America from the Vietnam War. In fact West Germany's Chancellor, Willy Brandt, had pointed the way. In 1969 Brandt launched a new conciliatory policy towards the east in *Ostpolitik*. He signed a non-aggression pact with a delighted Soviet leadership recognising Poland's 1945 frontiers. *Ostpolitik* would result in 1972 with East and West Germany signing a mutual recognition treaty. Warmer relations between east and west were clearly possible and the increasingly evident Sino-Soviet rift provided Nixon with the opportunity. April 1971 saw the first sign of a thaw in Sino-American relations

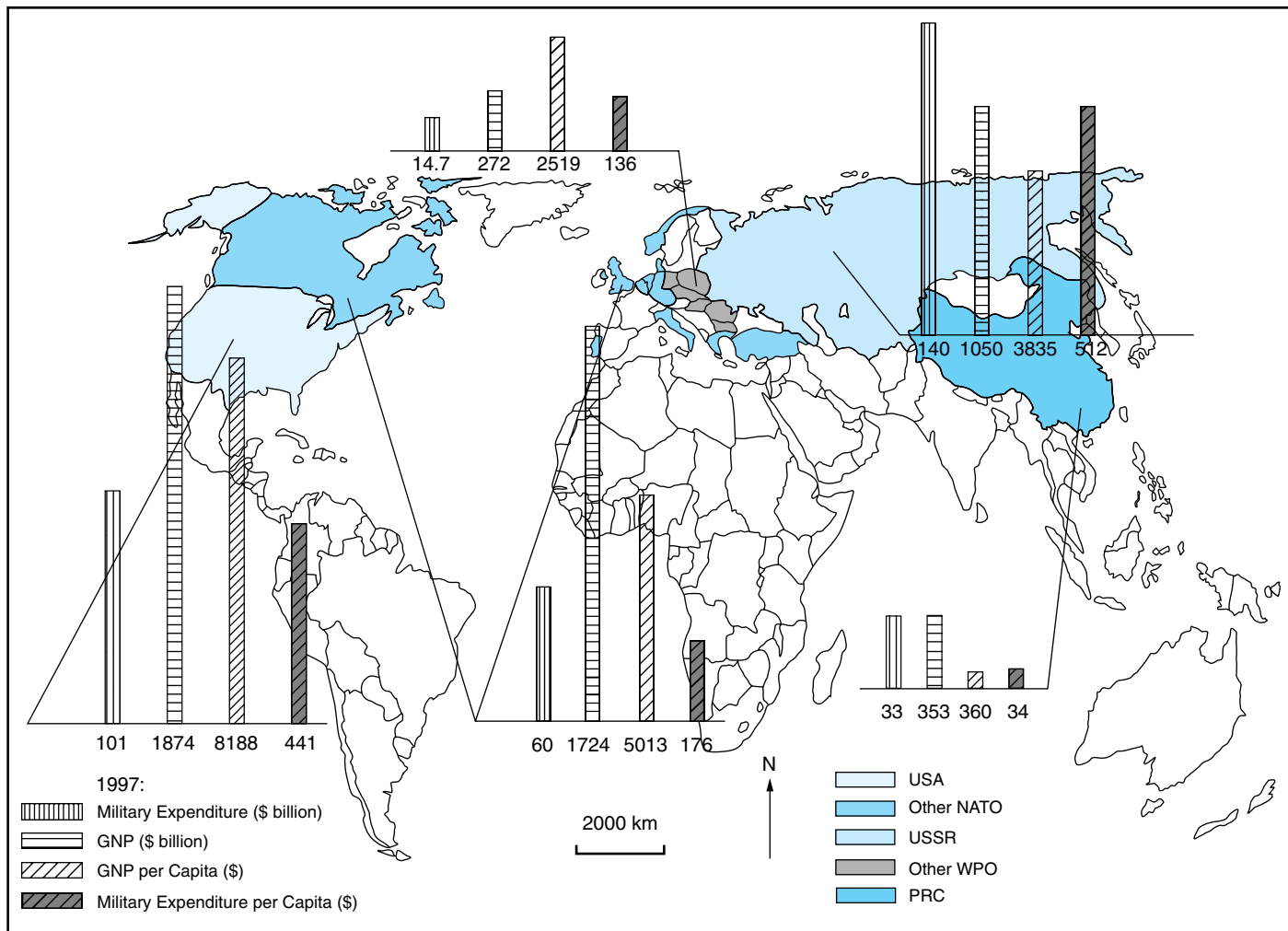
when the US table tennis team was invited to Beijing. This so-called 'ping-pong diplomacy' horrified the Kremlin. An anti-Soviet, Sino-American partnership was seen as a chilling threat in Moscow. As Nixon had hoped, the USSR suddenly rediscovered its enthusiasm for détente.

The first benefit of the Moscow Détente (1972–75) came with a rapid conclusion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT 1) in 1972. This was designed to put limits on the arms race, rather than to end it. Both sides agreed to maximum numbers of nuclear weapon delivery systems (bombers, missiles, etc.). They also agreed to construct only two ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) sites. It was feared that ABMs were a threat to the stability offered by MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction). They might tempt one side to gamble on nuclear war being survivable. Also, in order to swamp an ABM system, they would need greatly to expand stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

Indeed 1975 saw the Helsinki Accords, in which the NATO and WPO nations settled frontier issues, and agreed to co-operate in cultural, economic, scientific and industrial fields. They also agreed on humanitarian questions, such as the free movement of peoples and ideas. This the USSR never took seriously, and US criticism of their failure to abide by them was to cause bitter resentment in Moscow. Indeed, there were already signs that this period of détente was drawing to a close. There was, in fact, an element of the cyclical in détente. Deepening anxieties led each side to make concessions, as those anxieties receded, underlying hostilities once more resurfaced. Relations did not deteriorate to pre-détente level, but they soured.

Growing irritations were to come to a head under President Carter, an outspoken critic of the USSR's human rights record. This was enormously offensive to the Soviet Union, especially as Carter was willing to ignore similar abuses among his allies, for example South Korea, Iran and the Philippines. The terms of SALT 2 were finally hammered out and it was signed in June 1979. This did, among other things, limit permissible nuclear weapon delivery systems to 2400 each, but relations were clearly becoming tense between the two powers and it was not ratified.

The USSR decided that they would gain nothing more from seeking American friendship. In December 1979 the Red Army invaded Afghanistan to rescue its troubled Communist government. This finally ended this period of détente. The Soviet Union was left isolated. Carter, already humiliated by events in Iran, was unable to rally support from his allies for any effective political or economic sanctions. America appeared as impotent as it ever had done. Neither side had anything to celebrate at the end of the decade.



Map 37: The Arms Race

From the moment the first atomic weapon was used in 1945, an arms race between east and west began. Both Britain and the Soviet Union immediately concluded that they too must possess this new, devastating weapon. France and the PRC later reached the same conclusion. As will be seen (Map 39), others would eventually decide the same. Initially it was only possible to deliver these weapons as gravity bombs. But Nazi Germany had already pointed the way forward with its V2 rockets, against which there was no defence. Both the USA and USSR rushed to develop nuclear weapons technology. The first Soviet nuclear test in 1949 came far earlier than expected. The USA responded by developing the far more powerful fusion or Hydrogen bomb by 1952. The USSR caught up within months.

It was becoming increasingly obvious that any future war that saw the use of these weapons, would be so catastrophic that the 'victor' would be indistinguishable from the 'vanquished'. Public anxiety began to grow. CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) became a powerful movement in Europe, which was the likely battlefield. Such concerns were to increase. America first deployed ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) in 1958, the USSR followed suit in 1961. No credible defence was ever developed against them. The only deterrence was through MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction). Nothing could prevent the complete destruction of one side but, equally, nothing could prevent an equally destructive counter-attack. To ensure enough missiles survived to launch this counter-attack, they were dispersed and concealed in hardened silos or on submarines.

This provided stability of a kind. There was no temptation to launch a surprise attack. Indeed both sides agreed not to deploy ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) systems, because they were expensive, inefficient and might tempt one side to take the risk of a surprise attack. MAD seemed to be the only security offered. What alarmed many about the concept was that it deterred surprise attack, but if any confrontation escalated, MAD guaranteed total destruction. Another cause for concern was the sheer number of nuclear weapons being built.

Nuclear weapons were expensive and difficult to maintain and keep safe. More urgently, the more built, the greater the risk of an accident. One missile launched by mistake could have appalling consequences. Obviously it was sensible to build enough, but no more. Yet how much deterrence was enough? Studies varied, but 400 nuclear explosions on target seemed enough to destroy any nation. Of course, some missiles might be destroyed in a surprise attack, others would be being maintained, or would be

intercepted or miss. Perhaps 1500 to 1600 would be more than enough for any situation.

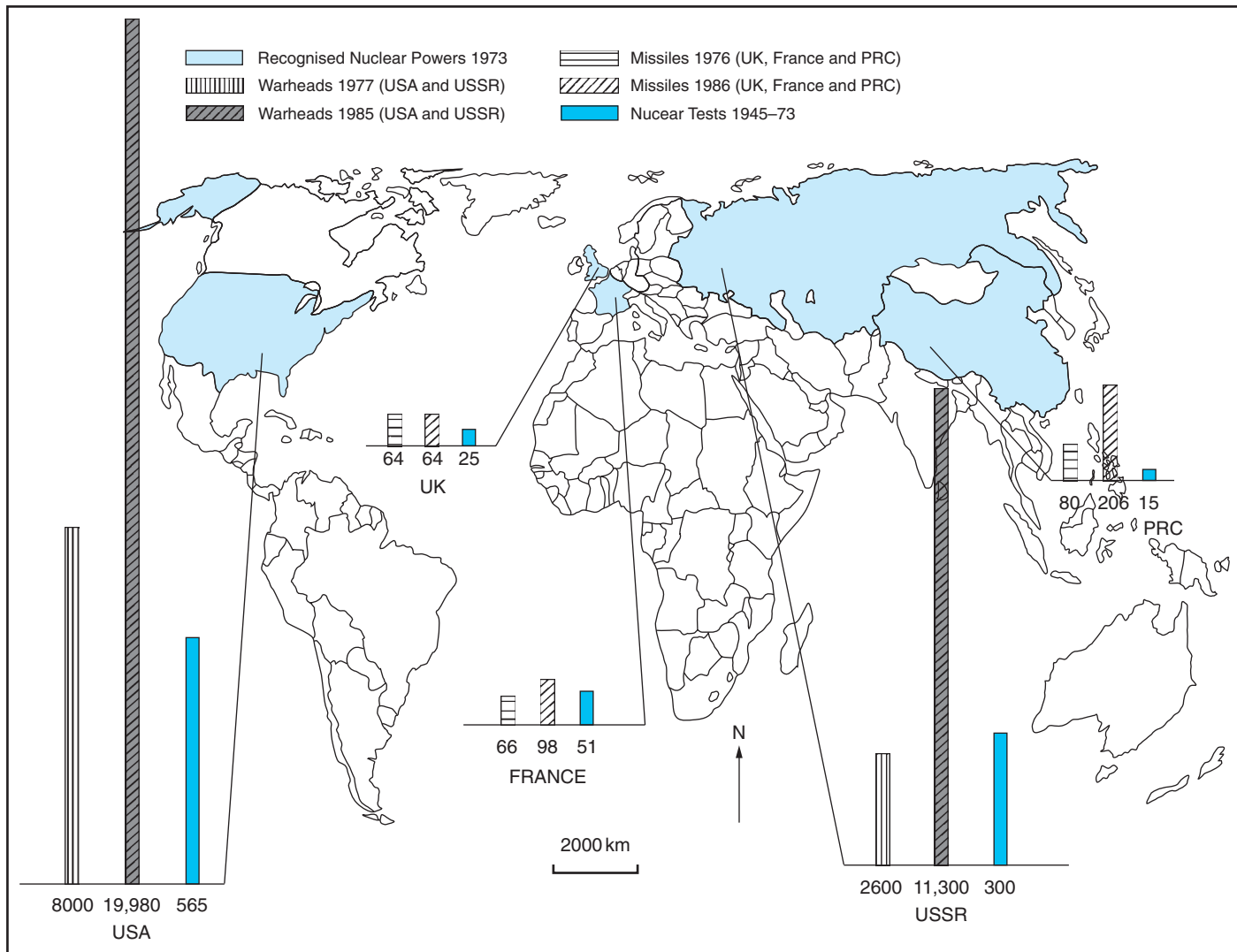
Yet by 1977 the two main powers had (according to one estimate) nearly 11,000 warheads between them. By the time the arms race reached its height, about 1985, they had well over 30,000. Data on the warheads possessed by the other nuclear powers is uncertain. They certainly possessed significant arsenals. Missile resources were relatively small, but many would eventually have MIRV (Multiple Independent Re-entry vehicles) or multiple warheads. Probably they stockpiled a maximum of 400 to 500 warheads each.

The degree of overkill in nuclear weapons appalled many observers. It appeared utter lunacy to CND sympathisers, who variously claimed that there was enough nuclear firepower available for every human to have the equivalent of 15 tonnes of TNT each, or enough to exterminate mankind 690 times over. Nor was this the limit of destructiveness generated by the Cold War. Chemical and biological weapons were also being developed. Some biological weapons, such as glanders and anthrax, could cause up to 100 per cent fatalities. Others could destroy crops or herds and cause famine.

Such information could cause deep gloom for the prospects of mankind. Yet during the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) negotiations, the USA and USSR were only interested in managing, not ending the arms race. The SALT 2 treaty agreed to limits of 2400 delivery systems in 1979, falling to 2250 in 1981. This was not real arms reduction, MIRV technology allowed for no real limits on actual warheads. Congress never even ratified SALT 2, though both sides were willing to abide by it; it hardly amounted to a sacrifice.

Yet appearances were important in the Cold War. A willingness to match any arms programme, new weapon deployment or build-up of warheads displayed commitment and determination to triumph in the Cold War. Indeed, building vast numbers of warheads is a far more rational way of fighting the Cold War than actually using such weapons. In such a competition the risks were also low – it was most unlikely to escalate into real warfare.

If the arms race can be considered rational, however, it cannot be deemed bloodless. There are two elements of deterrence – ability (having the weapons) and also perceived resolve (convincing the opponent they would be used). Millions have died in various wars fought since 1945, almost all in the developing world. In those wars in which America and the Soviet Union intervened, or sponsored one group of combatants, showing a willingness to spill blood and by inference the resolve to use any weapon, was part of their motives.



Map 38: Arms Sales and Military Assistance

The international arms trade has long been the object of intense suspicion. In the 1930s arms dealers, dubbed 'merchants of death' were the object of government inquiries in America and Britain. Allegations of corrupt practices and causing 'wars for profit' received widespread credence. In the Cold War such allegations would be repeated, but criticisms were also directed against the governments, which were now playing a far more direct role in the supply of weapons.

For Britain and France the arms trade was an economic necessity. The costs of developing and producing new weapons systems were spiralling as technology became more sophisticated. Their own armed forces were too small to place orders sufficient to keep their arms industries profitable. Exports were vital for the survival of these industries. These governments took a leading role in promoting arms purchases, creating government agencies to assist them. They had a tendency to show a blithe disregard concerning the type of regimes and the real needs of the states with which they dealt.

For the USSR and the USA, who supplied the greater part of arms transfers, political considerations were often more important than economic. Winning or maintaining influence over other governments, acquiring overseas bases and sustaining friendly regimes were very much the priorities, up to the 1960s at least. Most arms transfers were provided either free or at give-away prices. By 1975 the USA had provided \$167 billion worth of military assistance in the form of grants – much of it to Southeast Asia. In 1970 the Nixon doctrine was formulated to rationalise American withdrawal from Vietnam. Henceforth, it was argued, America would supply weapons rather than troops to strategic partners under threat. With growing balance of payments problems, however, arms sales were an obvious source of foreign currency. Military aid grants were rapidly reduced. In the 1980s, less than 9 per cent of the \$111 billion in US arms transfers were accounted for by grants.

America's main customers for arms were the wealthier nations; NATO allies, wealthy Middle East oil producers and particular regional partners, such as Israel and Taiwan. Strategic considerations did not disappear. Libya was a particular target of American hostility, and its neighbours received favourable treatment. Somalia was showered with American largesse, because its Marxist neighbour, Ethiopia was receiving massive Soviet aid.

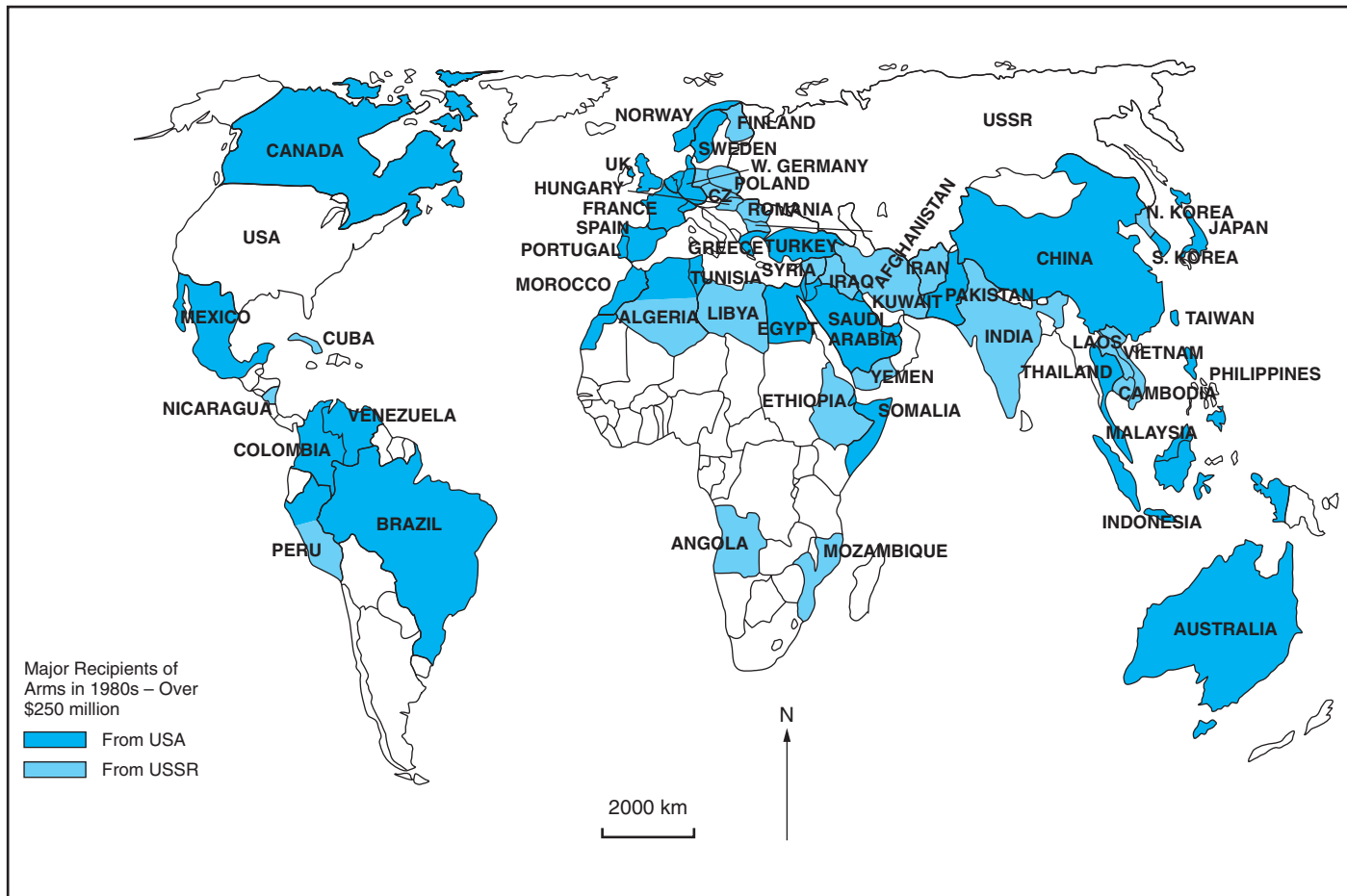
The USSR, which transferred \$121 billion in arms during the 1980s, seems to have maintained a high degree of military aid as grants. The Kremlin claimed that over 46 per cent of arms were provided free in 1990, often with free technical support. The USSR was not above profiting from

the arms trade. Over \$6 billion worth of weapons were sold to oil-rich Libya in the 1980s – weapons for which Libyan leader, Muammar Qadhafi, had no conceivable need and was often unable to maintain. But strategic factors remained over-riding. Iran was sustained because of its hostility to the USA. Sustaining struggling socialist regimes was seen as a moral responsibility. Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam and Ethiopia were all generously armed by the Soviet Union.

The effect of arms transfers has been calamitous. This is particularly so in the developing world – where the wars of the Cold War were fought. In the 1960s the developing world's arms imports soared from \$1 billion to \$4 billion. Yet by 1964 the developing world was already collectively paying \$4 billion every year to service existing debts. This simply reinforced the economic dependence of the developing world. Only the most valuable strategic partners, such as India for the USSR and Israel for the USA, received the technology and production licences to build their own weapons. Despite the poverty incurred, nearly every emerging nation proved eager to acquire arms. For many, their armed forces were the main visible proof of their newly won independence. Also many were troubled by internal conflicts. Modern arms could purchase the support of the army. Unfortunately it also strengthened the political power of the military, rendering new states vulnerable to military coups.

Arms sales alone do not cause wars. But they can sharpen existing regional conflicts and arms races. In 1962 both Egypt and Pakistan acquired expensive supersonic military aircraft. In response, Israel in 1963 and India in 1965 gained equally expensive long-range SAM (Surface-to-Air Missile) systems. Possession of such sophisticated weapons, arguably, encouraged the 1965 war between India and Pakistan – both sides then had the option to seek a military solution to their differences.

Despite the problems caused by arms transfers, they were still seen as a vital element in fighting the Cold War. Arms appeared the most effective method of winning influence in the developing world by the United States and the Soviet Union alike. In fact they proved rather ineffective in winning and sustaining influence over foreign governments. Even large-scale customers, such as Peru and Algeria, were happy to receive arms from both sides, simply to diversify their sources and find the best prices. Playing both sides off against each other, rather than remaining dependent, became standard practice. Arms supplies, in short, came at a colossal human and economic cost. Despite this, they proved a disappointingly weak weapon in the Cold War.



Map 39: Nuclear Proliferation

As the Yom Kippur War of 1973 showed, there was always a danger that a regional war could lead to a major confrontation between east and west. If any such confrontation were to involve nuclear weapons, the risks would be much greater. Keeping nuclear weapons out of as many hands as possible was an obvious requirement for both sides in the Cold War. This was not easy. Many nations were eager to acquire nuclear technology for power stations. Given rapidly rising oil prices many felt this essential. Many states possessing such technology were equally eager to sell it, to gain greater return from their research and development costs. Unfortunately nuclear power generation produces plutonium in quite large quantities. Transforming this plutonium into 'weapons grade' material is a highly complex process. But it is possible and not excessively costly. Given enough material (about 10kg), producing a weapon is relatively straightforward.

In July 1968, after several years of negotiations, the USSR and USA hammered out terms for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). All the nations of the world were invited to adhere to this. Those nations possessing nuclear weapons technology agreed not to help others to acquire them. To the USA this meant unstable and unpredictable developing countries. To the USSR the main objective was to prevent West Germany gaining nuclear weapons. Those without nuclear weapons agreed to renounce forever the development or acquisition of them. As a safeguard the use, production and movement of all nuclear material under the control of signatories was to be monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Eventually most of the nations of the world would adhere to the NPT. Those who did so were the nations, like Canada, possessing the technology to produce nuclear weapons, but who had already decided that doing so was not in their interests. Also there were several states like Burkina Faso, too impoverished ever to aspire for such weapons. Yet those who had, or could hope to gain the technology and did aspire to gain nuclear weapons, notably Israel, India, Pakistan and South Africa, simply refused to adhere to the NPT. An even greater weakness of the treaty was that two powers with nuclear weapons, France and the PRC, also refused to adhere to it.

One of the criticisms of the NPT, especially from the Chinese, was that it appeared to have racist overtones. Powerful white nations had agreed to deny nuclear weapons technology to African and Asian nations, seemingly because they could not be trusted to behave rationally. Also, it was argued, the USSR and USA were hardly in a position to lecture others on the dangers of nuclear pro-

liferation, given the colossal stockpiles of warheads they possessed and could not agree to reduce (see Map 37).

The United States and the Soviet Union co-operated over the NPT even when their relations were strained over other issues. Others were less willing to co-operate. There were, in fact, far too many suppliers of uranium and of technology for the complete prevention of nuclear proliferation. Most of the suppliers outside the NPT, it must be said, did accept that nuclear proliferation was not in their own interests. Controls and conditions were imposed on recipients. The unfortunate fact remained that a nation willing to devote the time, effort and resources to the task, had a reasonable chance of acquiring nuclear weapons. NPT safeguards were unlikely to stop them. Neither was adherence to the NPT.

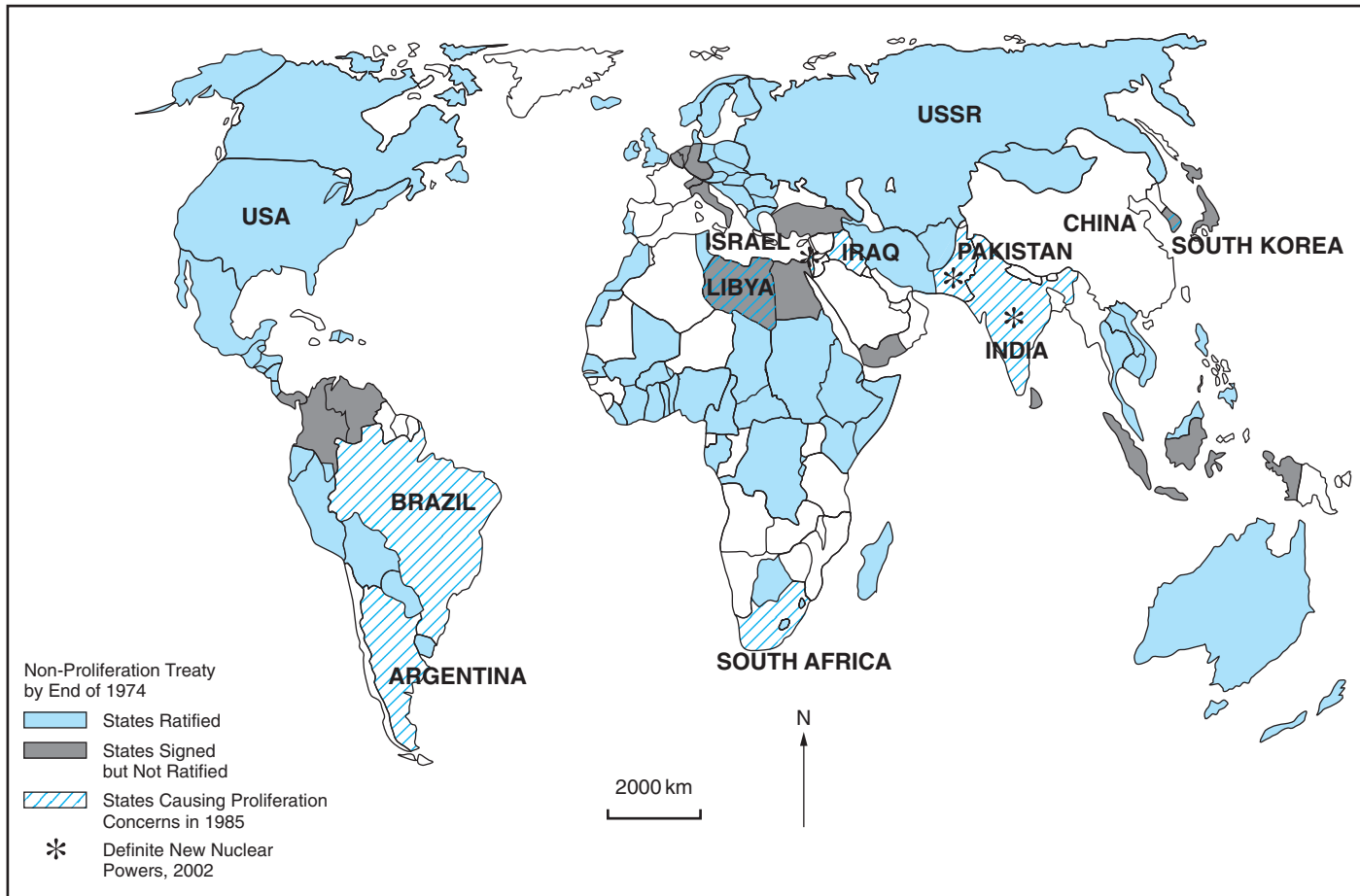
Both Iran and Iraq became full members of the NPT. Yet both attempted to acquire nuclear weapons. Iranian efforts appear to have foundered due to the 1979 revolution. Saddam Hussein's Iraq showed more perseverance. Its Osirak reactor was subject to NPT safeguards. But in June 1981 the Israeli air force destroyed it, claiming it was a threat to the survival of Israel. In this, Israel showed utter distrust in NPT safeguards it refused to accept itself.

India succeeded in evading NPT safeguards. Canada provided nuclear technology, but only under guarantees that it would never be used for military purposes and under the supervision of Canadian technicians. The Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 appears to have persuaded the Indian government to violate its undertakings. In 1974 it detonated what it coyly called a 'peaceful nuclear explosion'. Thereafter it was only a matter of time before Pakistan evaded safeguards and secretly gained the enrichment technology to develop its own weapons.

The pressures of the Cold War led America itself to violate the NPT. Both South Africa and Israel secretly received US technical assistance in their nuclear weapons programmes. They were too valuable as regional strategic partners to refuse.

The NPT did have its successes. Taiwan and South Korea were persuaded by US pressure not to gain the reprocessing technology that could be used to manufacture weapons. Despite the vast sums he was willing to spend, Libya's Muammar Qadhafi failed in his ambition to gain nuclear weapons. Nobody could be convinced to trust the unpredictable dictator with the relevant technology.

Nuclear proliferation has occurred. But it has been much slower with the NPT than otherwise. This prevented serious additional destabilising influences being felt during the height of the Cold War. For this alone it must be considered one of the successes of the Cold War.



Map 40: Capitalism v. Communism in the 1980s

The 1980s were certainly confused years. During the first half of the decade the Cold War was as tense as ever. War seemed a real possibility, especially in the Kremlin, where fears of an impending attack created an atmosphere of panic. Yet the second half of the decade saw the Cold War being speedily resolved and Communist regimes collapse with bewildering rapidity.

The decade opened with the United States seeming and feeling weak and confused, and its allies sceptical and unreliable. Reagan's answer to America's apparent weakness was to launch a gigantic rearmament programme, and to be far more willing to use American military might wherever it could be used decisively. This was to alarm the USSR and antagonise his NATO allies. With SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative), the so-called 'star wars' plan, Reagan proposed to build an effective defence against missile attack.

Reagan's military spending caused the American national debt soar to a scarcely credible \$4 trillion. Again, the relatively trivial sums other members of NATO were willing to spend on defence was a source of irritation, particularly as their collective GNP had actually surpassed America's. Mass demonstrations against the deployment of cruise missiles, the lack of support for sanctions against the WPO after the Polish government crackdown against Solidarity in 1981 and constant criticism of American foreign policy, all suggested a weakening alliance.

Reagan's simplistic view of Communism and his eagerness to use force led him into policies his allies often found reprehensible. If, as Reagan believed, Communism was the cause of all the ills of the world, logically anybody fighting Communism was a crusader, meriting US support. Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola, right-wing 'death squads' in El Salvador, the Contras in Nicaragua and astonishingly the homicidal Khmer Rouge (after they had been ousted by the Vietnamese in Cambodia), were all recipients of American funds. Whenever there was opportunity to use US forces with visible success Reagan was willing to do so. Troops were sent to Honduras to prevent an (imaginary) Sandinista invasion, Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf were shelled, Libya was bombed and Grenada invaded. Where force proved indecisive, as in Beirut, troops were quickly withdrawn. American self-confidence surged, but allied public opinion was outraged and Soviet fears multiplied at the lack of discrimination.

Besides fear of imminent war, the Communist world had other, severe troubles. In attempting to match US military spending, the USSR was placing intolerable burdens on its citizens – as Reagan intended. The Soviet economy

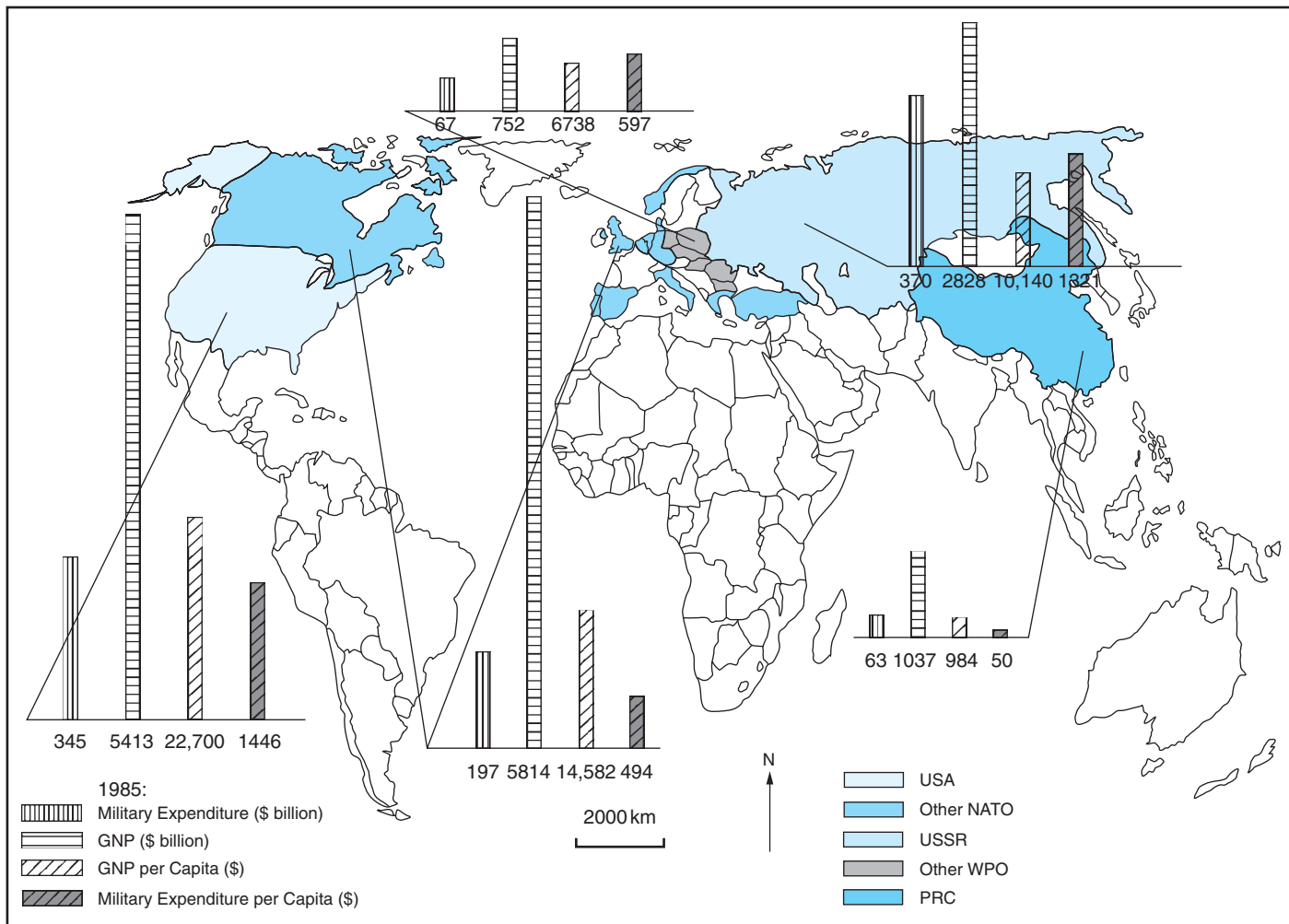
was stagnant, industry was chronically inefficient and alcoholism reaching epidemic proportions. Everywhere there was growing resentment at the corruption and excessive privileges of Communist parties. Other WPO states were still only a minor asset to Moscow. Yet even they were spending more per capita on the military than European NATO members – with a per capita GNP less than half the size.

The first serious signs of trouble since the Prague Spring were seen in Poland. In July 1980 the Polish government ordered a sharp increase in meat prices. This provoked a strike in the Gdansk shipyards, which in turn led to the formation of Solidarity – an independent trade union. This was a serious challenge to the authority of the Polish Communist Party. Soon Solidarity had become a mass movement, and its demands were moving from issues of pay and prices and entering the forbidden realm of political reform.

The USSR, committed in Afghanistan and anxious not to worsen relations with the west, hesitated to intervene as they had in Czechoslovakia. Large-scale joint manoeuvres on the frontier were a blunt warning, however, that intervention was imminent. The new Polish premier, Wojtech Jaruzelski, took the hint and in December 1981 imposed martial law. Solidarity was suppressed, but even with martial law, Jaruzelski was unable to cure the economic problems that had given rise to it. The long-term viability of Communist Poland, and indeed of other WPO states, was uncertain.

Mikhail Gorbachev more than anybody else ended the Cold War. He accepted that fundamental reform was a necessity. He also realised that reform would require a major reduction in tensions and was willing to make concessions to achieve this. Over the next few years, east-west relations were totally transformed. What was not transformed successfully was the Soviet Union. The economic and nationalities problems were too intractable (see Map 47). By 1990 Gorbachev was losing public support and some of his own comrades were dithering over whether to remove him or not.

By 1989, as it became clear that the days of Soviet intervention were over, Communist regimes in Europe began to crumble. Most surrendered power meekly. In Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu attempted to defy opposition and was shot for his pains. In the PRC political opposition and demands for reform raised great expectations, until the Chinese Communist Party crushed protest in the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 1989. Communism was clearly in crisis, but it was not ready to die everywhere quite yet.



Map 41: Nicaragua and the Sandinistas

In July 1979 the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, or Sandinistas, toppled the brutal and corrupt dictator of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza. Popular hatred of Somoza's regime had been exacerbated by a world recession, which had reduced many Nicaraguans to utter destitution. The explosion of popular resentment, when it came, was centred in the slums of cities such as Estelí, Matagalpa, León and Masaya. Only after particularly bitter fighting was it ended in Managua.

Somoza's bitterly hated National Guard, essentially a private army, put up a strong resistance. As well as killing about 50,000 people, they went out of their way to inflict as much material damage as they could, before their defeat. The revolution left several urban centres devastated. Somoza's clique had also plundered the nation of much of its wealth. These factors only added to the long-standing grievances that the Sandinistas needed to address. Child-mortality and illiteracy rates were particularly high. Much was expected of this new regime: in housing, education and health reforms, as well as a significant improvement in living standards.

They were also committed to political plurality. Unfortunately they were not above imprisoning some political opponents. They also alienated some groups. In northeast Nicaragua, the Miskito peoples' demands for autonomy were treated with heavy-handed intolerance. Also they insisted on the importance of 'popular power', through mass organisations, such as the Sandinista Defence Committees and the Rural Workers' Associations. They felt that mobilising the population to participate in economic, political and social decision-making was more important than simply voting in elections. This made it seem that their commitment to democracy was uncertain.

While Carter was unhappy that the Sandinistas accepted Soviet and Cuban aid and limited volunteers, he maintained a generally benevolent attitude towards the regime. A limited amount of American aid was extended to Nicaragua. This was to change completely with the inauguration of Reagan. His priorities were for America to recover its self-confidence and reassert its leadership of the west. He had no patience with Carter's fixation with human rights. America, Reagan decided, must defend its national interests wherever they were threatened. Like Eisenhower, he tended to see radical regimes and movements in Latin America as Communists.

Furthermore, Nicaragua was not the only Central American nation with internal problems. Guerrillas in El Salvador and Guatemala, and to a lesser extent, Honduras, were tremendously encouraged by the success of the Sandinistas. To Reagan the cause was not that these regimes were brutal and hated, the cause was Cuban and

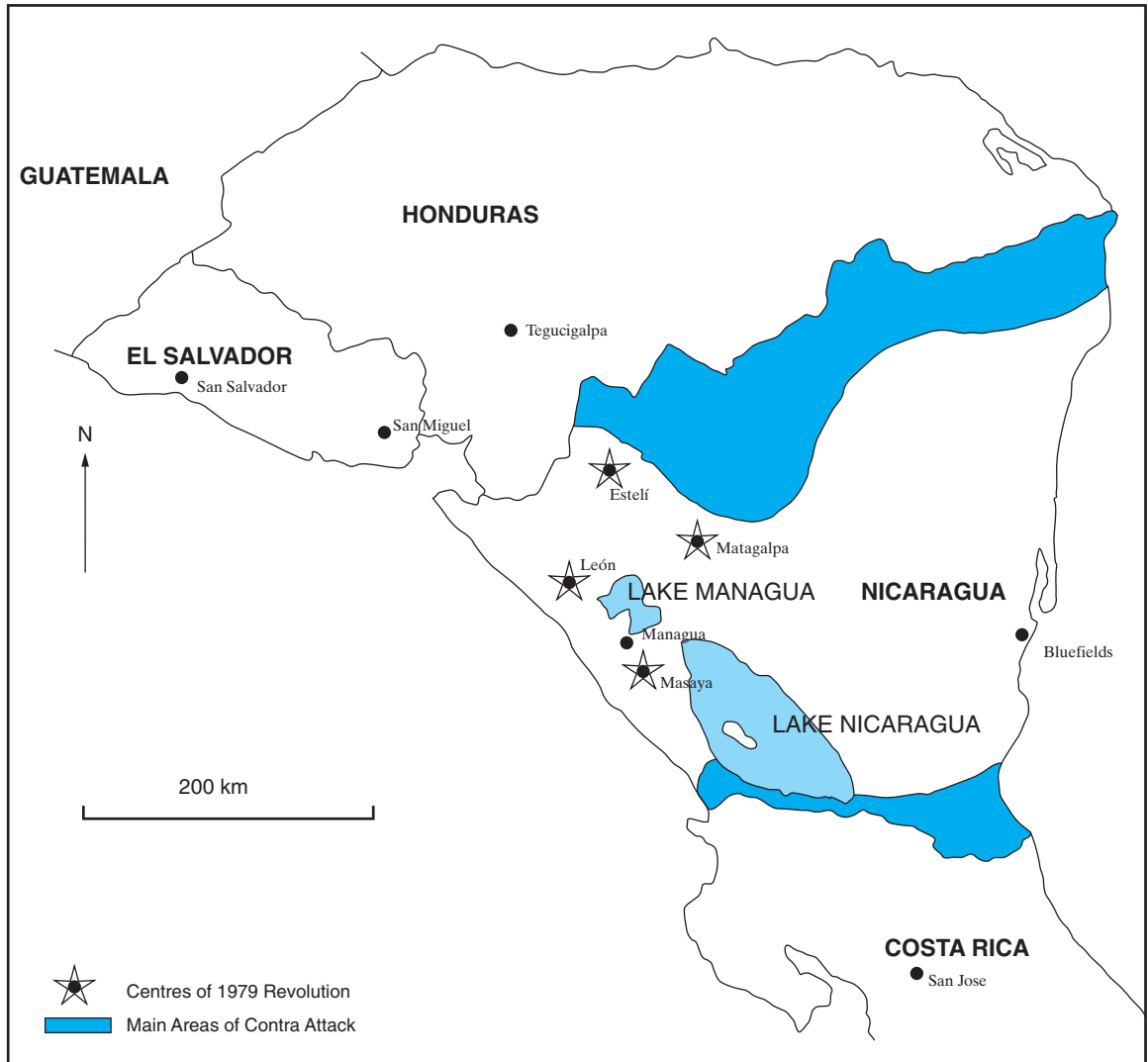
Soviet subversion. America, he felt, must not only support friendly regimes, it must excise the source of the infection. In Reagan's eyes the Sandinistas were Communist and Nicaragua was a new Cuba.

Firstly Reagan moved to strengthen regimes near Nicaragua. American arms, money and advisers were sent to bolster counter-insurgency forces. Their opposition to Communism made them, in Reagan's eyes, champions of democracy. In fact they were widely seen as 'death squads'. Kidnapping, rape, torture and murder were standard practices. Even with American help they could not defeat the guerrillas. They did, however, prevent a guerrilla victory. By 1987 60,000 Salvadorians and 75,000 Guatemalans had died, but pro-American governments had survived.

Reagan was also determined that the Sandinistas had to be brought down. He assumed that Salvadorian and Guatemalan guerrillas could not survive without Nicaraguan aid. If not defeated, he assumed, they would export their revolution throughout Latin America and eventually threaten the USA itself. The similarities to earlier American views of Cuba are obvious. But unlike Cuba, Nicaragua had land frontiers with pro-American states. Both Honduras and Costa Rica were willing to co-operate with Washington. They also contained the surviving remnants of Somoza's National Guard.

It was these National Guardsmen, who already had a dreadful history of atrocities, who were to form the nucleus of the Contras. To Reagan they were freedom fighters, but they acted like death squads. The groups in Honduras were the more powerful and received the bulk of American aid. Reagan intended to deny the Sandinistas aid, trade and diplomatic support. Coupled with Contra military action this would undermine the Sandinistas by making life for the Nicaraguan people intolerable. They were to be punished until they accepted a government acceptable to Washington. When it proved difficult to extract money from Congress, Reagan even resorted to unlawful means to acquire it in the Iran-Contra Affair (see Map 44).

The Contras failed in their main task: they never secured permanent control of part of Nicaragua in which to establish an alternative government. Notwithstanding this, they proved an effective tool. Kidnapping, torture and murder drove peasants from the frontier areas. The war effort crippled the economy and the social gains of the revolution were lost. In March 1988, after 40,000 deaths, the Sandinistas agreed to a cease-fire with the Contras and new elections for 1990. Despite this Contra raids continued. When the elections came the message was clear: if the Nicaraguans did not vote the right way, America would ensure that the war continued. The Sandinistas were rejected. America had secured another Cold War victory.



Map 42: *The Cold War in Africa*

Africa, as a theatre of the Cold War, seemed to offer ample opportunities to both sides. The needs of newly independent African states were certainly great. Colonial powers at best only provided the minimum basis for building nations. Health and education systems were rudimentary. Economies were woefully underdeveloped. Political elites were miniscule and inexperienced. Political instability, recurrent humanitarian crises associated with war and climate change, ever deepening debt and poverty and finally the scourge of AIDS were the experiences of independent African nations. Africa's needs, in short, were massive. Yet African nations were reluctant to rely completely on former colonial rulers for aid. Not only was such aid utterly inadequate, accepting it suggested continuing dependence and offended national pride.

The USA and USSR, therefore, with long-standing records of opposing colonialism, were well placed to extend influence in the continent. Many new states were committed to non-alignment, but vital raw materials might be acquired. If they could be weaned away from non-alignment so might valuable bases.

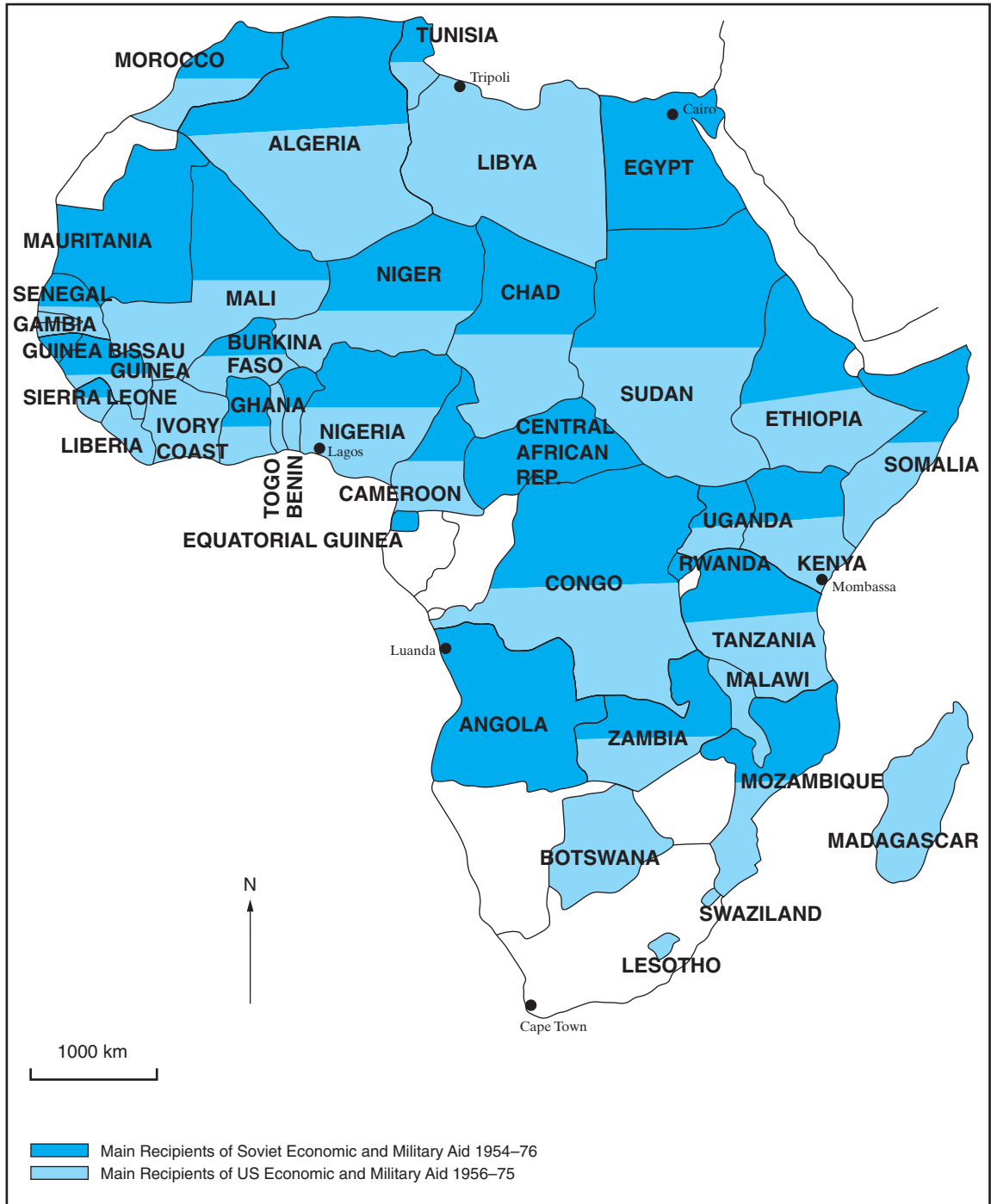
But America was widely suspected of complicity in the murder of Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba in 1961. Even worse was American policy in southern Africa. Despite UN sanctions against South Africa, America maintained large-scale investment in, and trade with the apartheid state. Portugal, a NATO ally, received a great deal of American support in its attempts to cling on to its colonial empire. Portugal was given \$162 million in arms by America by 1976, much of which was used against guerrillas in Africa. American denunciations of apartheid were very unconvincing in such circumstances.

Soviet anti-colonial credentials were perhaps more convincing. They at least had no damaging associations with former colonial powers. For this they were made welcome in several African states. Yet they proved unable to sustain friendly relations. In part this was due to the type of aid they offered. They preferred highly visible projects of questionable value. In Guinea they wanted to build a sports stadium and a theatre when the desperate need was to develop the economy. Their only suggestion for agriculture was collectivisation, which proved deeply unpopular. They also tended to offend their hosts by flooding them with advisers, some of whom showed arrogance and racism, others were suspected of meddling in internal affairs. Economic opportunism was another grievance. The price they were willing to pay for Ghanaian cocoa and Guinean bauxite was to embitter both nations. Ghana, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and others finally lost patience with Soviet advisers and expelled them.

When considering the pattern of aid distribution, the extent of aid dependency is noteworthy. By the 1970s only two African nations were not reliant on aid: South Africa and, after the development of its oil industry by the mid 1960s, Libya. This despite the vast mineral wealth of the continent. Zaire and Zambia have deposits of cobalt, tin, tungsten, uranium and a host of other valuable metals. Nigeria has large oil reserves. It is a constant source of grievance that the outside world exploits Africa's resources and fails to pay equitably for them. Both sides often directed aid to the nations that have the most desirable minerals, leaving non-recipients embittered. Despite Soviet rhetoric of freedom and American propaganda of democracy, Africans noted that neither had much interest in promoting these ideals in Africa. Murderous dictators such as Jean-Bédel Bokassa in the Central African Republic and Idi Amin in Uganda were tolerated. Nothing was done to promote democracy.

The experiences of Houari Boumédiène's Algeria and Tanzania under Julius Nyerere are, however, more typical. Both leaders were entirely cynical about the Cold War. They saw it as an opportunity to let the USSR, USA and Europeans compete for their friendship through aid packages. They hoped to avoid giving anything substantive in return. Perhaps the Cold War might have benefited Africa in some ways. It possibly made both sides more open with aid than they might otherwise have been. Yet this argument should not be pressed too far. Between 1956 and 1975 America awarded grants and loans to Africa of less than \$5.5 billion, in roughly the same period the USSR awarded just over \$3 billion. Compared to the \$23.5 billion that Israel and the \$13.2 billion that South Korea received in American military and economic aid by 1980, this shows the sums involved for Africa to be relatively trivial. Certainly Africa never received enough aid to seriously address chronic poverty, illiteracy and mortality rates.

Also, as in the case of Somalia and Ethiopia, Cold War rivalry has fuelled wars that have wrought devastation on several nations. Cuban intervention saved the left-wing MPLA in the Angolan civil war, but it aroused American hostility. In response, South Africa and America supported Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, ensuring that the war would continue as would the suffering of the Angolan people. Africa was, in fact, a very minor theatre of the Cold War. Neither side was willing to make anything more than a gesture towards addressing its needs. But they were both willing to support vicious dictators and fuel wars. Africans, for their part, generally cared nothing for Soviet and American Cold War obsessions.



Map 43: The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

Afghanistan was an unlikely battleground of the Cold War. Isolated, inhospitable and lacking natural resources, it was too impoverished to attract much outside attention. Its government had preserved its independence from its Soviet neighbour by maintaining cordial relations with Moscow, espousing non-alignment and by accepting only US economic but not military aid. This was a situation acceptable to both the USA and USSR.

The origins of the disastrous instability, which led to about 25 years of bloodshed, were largely internal. The nation had a number of deep divisions. These divisions were in part regional, ethnic and religious. Several ethnic groups made up Afghanistan. The Uzbeks and Tajiks in the north tended to dislike southern Pashtun. The Sunni branch of Islam predominated, the Shi'a minority (15 per cent of the population) suffered severe discrimination. The king, Zahir Shah, proved weak and incompetent. Growing dissent developed in two, mutually incompatible directions. One demand was for Afghanistan to become an Islamic republic, ruled by Sharia Law. Others turned in the direction of Socialism. The PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan), strong among the Pashtun, wanted to wipe away feudalism and embrace western modernity. In 1973, three years of drought undermined Zahir Shah, who was deposed. In 1978 the PDPA, perhaps with Soviet approval, launched a coup.

In their rush to sweep aside feudalism, the PDPA rode roughshod over the religious sensitivities of the agrarian people and the economic realities that ruled their lives. Granting equal rights to women, limiting bride prices and setting minimum marriage ages were highly offensive in the countryside. A mass literacy campaign was desirable, but the government caused offence by insisting on teaching both sexes together. Land reform was needed, but due to mismanagement, few were certain of either the legality or the permanence of their claim to the land they were awarded, and much was left unused. Limiting interest rates led to the disappearance of credit, which meant many farmers were unable to buy seed or fertilizer. Growing numbers of Soviet technicians were widely resented.

Unsurprisingly, a massive Islamic backlash developed in the countryside. Islamic clerics called for jihad, or Holy war against the atheist government. The result was chaos. Localised rebellions broke out across the country. The army proved unable to maintain order, in fact large numbers deserted to the rebels. By late 1979 the PDPA had lost control of much of the country and was unlikely to survive long.

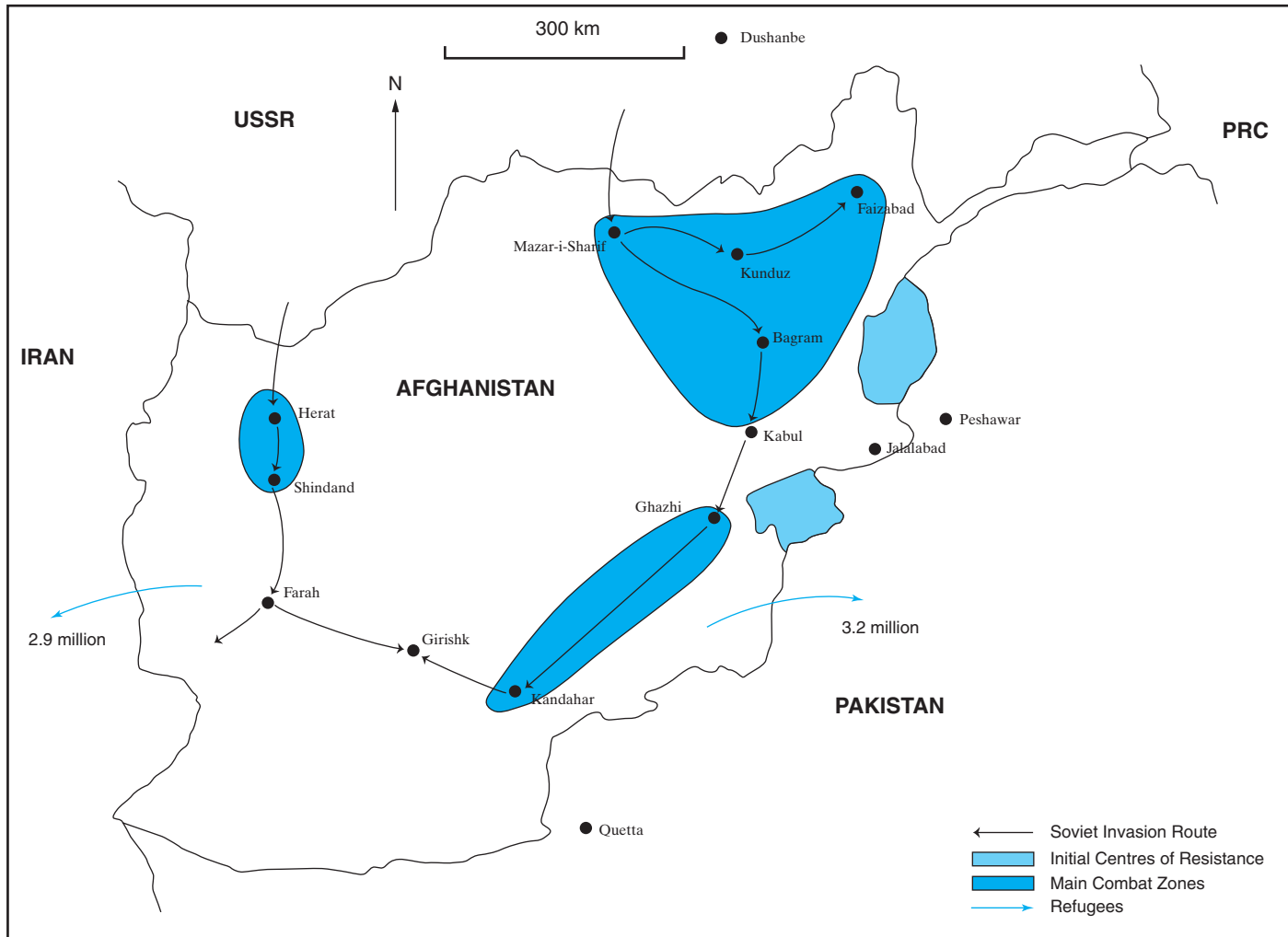
Moscow was left to decide whether or not to abandon the regime. The 1979 Iranian revolution had caused serious

anxiety in Moscow. There was a danger it might spread to Soviet Moslems. Afghanistan could be a vital buffer zone, protecting the USSR from Islamic fundamentalism. An invasion would, of course, seriously exacerbate east-west relations. But relations were souring anyway due to Carter's human rights criticisms. On 10 December NATO decided to deploy cruise missiles in Europe, which suggested there was nothing to be gained from trying to keep détente alive. Besides, the west had done nothing when the USSR intervened to support Communist rule in Czechoslovakia or Hungary. All that Soviet intervention would do would be to install a new, more reliable leader, Babrak Karmal. Soviet troops would only stay long enough for him to secure his regime, rebuild his army and begin to suppress the rebels. The west would denounce the action but soon forget it.

The invasion began on 25 December 1979. Planning was based on the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. Airborne troops secured airfields and motorised forces swept south, locking down the transport system. The incumbent leader, Hafizullah Amin was killed and Karmal, who had already invited Soviet intervention, was installed. The military operation was a complete success, but the USSR soon realised that in political terms they had made disastrous miscalculations.

Initially resistance was urban and in provinces bordering Pakistan. Soon 15 Mujaheddin, or resistance groups, were fighting, concentrated particularly in mountainous areas athwart transport routes. The USA and PRC were happy to arm the Mujaheddin. By 1985 they were receiving the latest American 'stinger' missiles, able to shoot down Soviet helicopters. The war was fought with intense savagery. The Mujaheddin frequently tortured prisoners to death. Soviet forces employed 'migratory genocide': destroying crops to force the population to flee the land.

The war became the USSR's Vietnam. It dragged on endlessly, Soviet troops suffered low morale – drug abuse and poor performance in the field became common. Domestic Soviet opposition became large scale. In 1986 the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, decided to cut his losses. Soviet forces withdrew in 1989, leaving behind a PDPA government under Muhammed Najibullah. Due to feuds between Mujaheddin groups, he survived until 1992, outlasting the USSR. Immediately the Mujaheddin fought between themselves, inflicting yet more misery on Afghanistan. Ironically, given subsequent events, President Clinton is widely suspected of encouraging Pakistani and Saudi support for a new religious militia, which seemed capable of restoring order to Afghanistan. It was called the Taliban.



Map 44: The Early Reagan Years – Renewed Cold War

President Carter's sanctions against the USSR for its invasion of Afghanistan finally ended the détente of the 1970s. The inauguration of Reagan in January 1981 was the beginning of a serious intensification of the Cold War. Reagan's views were very simplistic. He held that Communism was the embodiment of evil and responsible for all of the ills of the world. He was also determined to end the doubts and hesitations, which, he felt, characterised US foreign policy in the years following the Vietnam War.

Reagan was, therefore, eager to employ force wherever it might prove immediately decisive. Where it was not immediately decisive, it was soon ended. A brief foray into the Lebanon rapidly ended after a suicide bomber killed 241 US Marines in October 1983. Nicaragua, which Reagan saw as a victim of Soviet and Cuban aggression, must be 'freed' of the Sandinistas. Conciliatory gestures from both Nicaragua and Cuba he saw as weakness. His response was to increase the pressure on both countries. This was to cause serious problems for Reagan. Congress had limited him in 1982 to supplying only \$24 million in non-military aid to the Contras.

Another source of funds was the Iran–Iraq war. Neither side was a friend of the United States, and Reagan did not want either to win. Stalemate was acceptable, and America quietly armed whichever side was losing. In 1986 support swung to Iran. Reagan authorised arms sales, which violated American law, and used the profits, again unlawfully, to subsidise the Contras. When it became public, the resulting media frenzy threatened to destroy Reagan's presidency.

The Iran-Contra Affair came, of course, fairly late in the Reagan presidency, as did the American bombing of Libya – a reprisal for terrorist attacks on US servicemen. It blatantly violated international law, besides which Syria or Iran were more probable culprits. But it fit with Reagan's approach of using force wherever it could seem effective – Libya was a 'softer' target and Qadhafi an object of particular American hostility.

Such actions were typical of Reagan's determination to pursue a firmer foreign policy. To that end US aid to the Mujaheddin became blatant. Reagan also authorised support for right-wing guerrillas in Angola and Mozambique. In Cambodia he provided aid to the murderous Khmer Rouge, because they were fighting a Vietnamese occupation. In Central America, counter-insurgency assistance led to thousands of deaths.

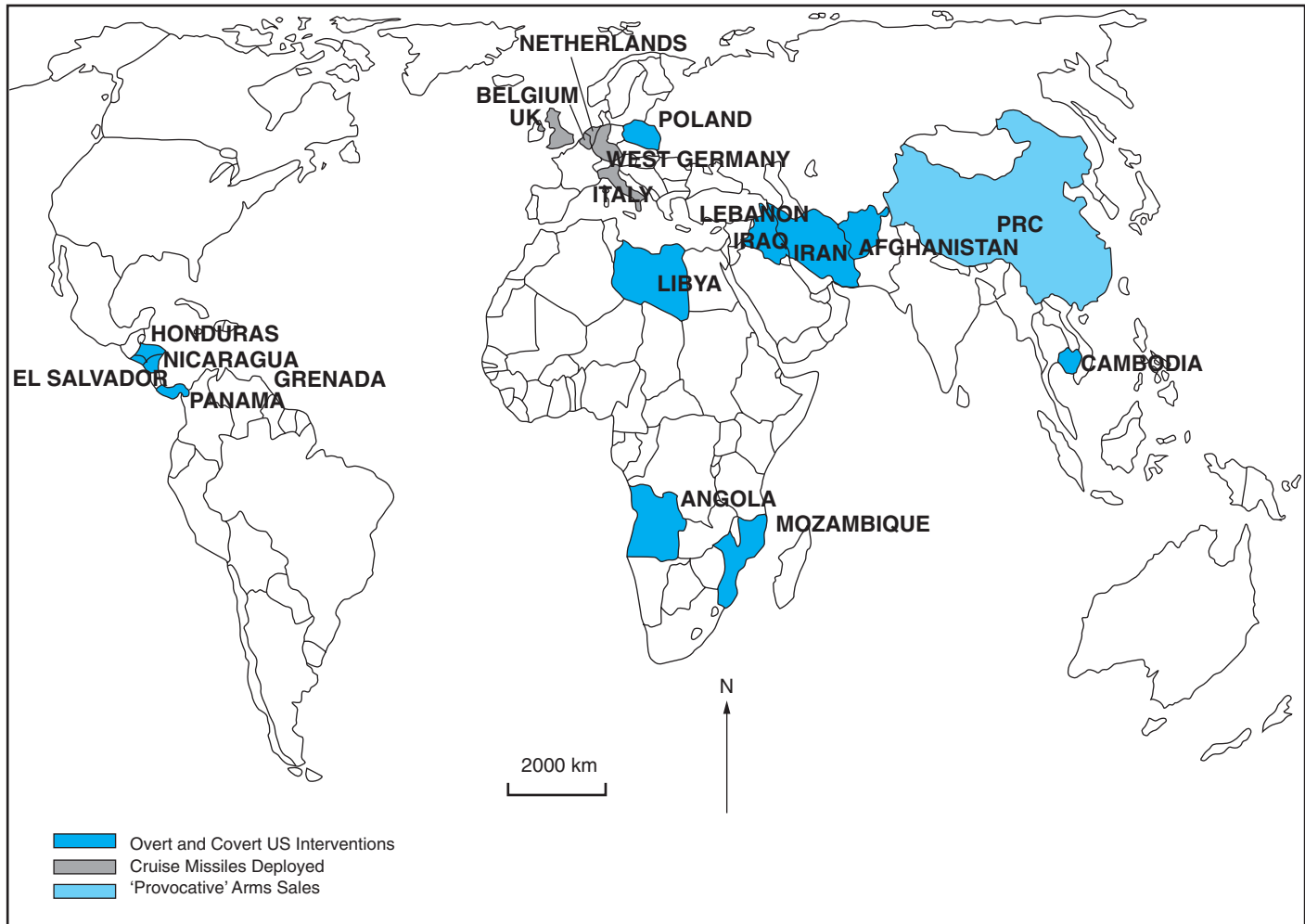
These steps were popular in the USA. American self-confidence surged. Little thought was given to Soviet perceptions of Reagan's policies. The Soviets, in fact, were

becoming increasingly alarmed by such aggression, and began to suspect that Reagan was seriously contemplating war. There were other American acts that added to this perception. In 1983 cruise missiles were deployed in Europe, in the face of strenuous Soviet objections. To America, this was only a response to the SS-20 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile in the 1970s. Given Soviet fears, however, it seemed just another unnecessary act of aggression.

Other acts by Reagan were given far more significance than they warranted by the Kremlin. The first ever American arms sales to the PRC in June 1981 were intended to facilitate co-operation in supplying the Mujaheddin. But it seemed to Moscow to suggest a developing strategic alliance. Reagan's rhetoric, in which he described the USSR as an 'evil empire' was seen as seriously threatening. When a passenger airliner, flight KAL 007, was shot down after violating Soviet airspace, Reagan's denunciation of such 'barbarism', appeared to confirm such fears. It is unclear whether the Soviet leaders were aware that the CIA had been supplying Poland's Solidarity movement with funds. It would certainly have been seen as highly provocative if they had.

Nothing, however, was more threatening to the Soviet Union than Reagan's massive rearmament programme. In the first two weeks of his presidency, Reagan increased defence spending by over \$32 billion. At the same time social spending was slashed, causing rising levels of poverty and homelessness in America. Yet arms spending still burgeoned, leading to massive budget deficits. Reagan wanted an arms race – he believed that the US economy could stand the strains while the Soviet economy could not. To the USSR it looked like serious preparations for war. His comments in November 1981, that a nuclear exchange in Europe need not lead to a strategic nuclear exchange between the USA and USSR, was widely seen as terrifying recklessness.

Brezhnev died in November 1982, his successor, Andropov wanted to negotiate arms reductions. Reagan was not interested in negotiations until his arms programme allowed him to do so from a position of strength. In March 1983, in a televised speech, Reagan unveiled his Strategic Defense Initiative. He insisted that America could and should be defended from nuclear attack. He envisaged a defensive umbrella of satellites, employing particle beams and lasers to destroy enemy missiles in flight. This idea was widely ridiculed in the west, where it was dubbed 'star wars'. But the Soviet Union could not ignore it – there was a remote possibility that it might work. They faced either a ruinously expensive arms race in space, or risked facing an invulnerable USA.



THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND AFTER

Map 45: Gorbachev's Reforms

Mikhail Gorbachev was certainly an unusual Soviet leader. At 54, in March 1985, he was young. He was the first Soviet leader born after the revolution, meaning he was never an active Communist during Stalin's atrocities. He was also well educated, with a degree in law. While a committed Marxist he was also not blind to the failings of the Soviet system. Able to see the growing crisis within the USSR, he was determined to address its problems.

Economic stagnation was causing the Soviet Union deep problems by the 1980s. Discontent at the shortcomings of the Soviet system was coupled with burning resentment at the privileges of the political elite. Dissent was restrained by repression, but unless its causes were dealt with, the state would eventually be faced with a massive crisis that could destroy it. Gorbachev was to pursue a two-fold approach to addressing Soviet problems. *Perestroika*, or restructuring, was intended to reform the entire state and party system, ensuring its long-term stability. At the same time *glasnost*, or openness to scrutiny, would provide more frankness by the state and an end to the concealment of shortcomings and errors. It also would allow citizens to air their grievances and allow public criticism – at least of those who opposed *perestroika*.

Such reforms would, of course, require a massive transfer of resources from the military. This would require much improved relations with the west. With Reagan as US President this might have seemed a forlorn hope. Yet Gorbachev established good personal relations with Reagan. The American had greatly strengthened US military might and felt he could now negotiate from a position of strength. Gorbachev accepted that he would have to make real concessions if he wanted drastically to cut military spending. He began to extract the USSR from the war in Afghanistan. He accepted that arms cuts would have to be unequal, to take greater Soviet forces in Europe into account. He also accepted something no other Soviet leader had seriously considered: the strict verification procedures that the USA had always demanded in arms control negotiations.

The result, in December 1987, was the Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty. This was the first ever nuclear weapon reduction agreement, in which an entire class of weapons, over 2500 intermediate range nuclear missiles were destroyed. In less than two years east-west relations had been totally transformed. Where Moscow had feared an imminent nuclear attack, the Cold War now appeared to be drawing to a close.

Unfortunately for Gorbachev, success abroad was not matched by success at home. He accepted the need to transform the USSR, but he really had no clear idea how to go

about it. Nor did he comprehend the degree to which his policies would be undermined by conservative opposition within the state and the party. Arguably his fatal mistake was in failing to realise that some Soviet problems were simply insoluble.

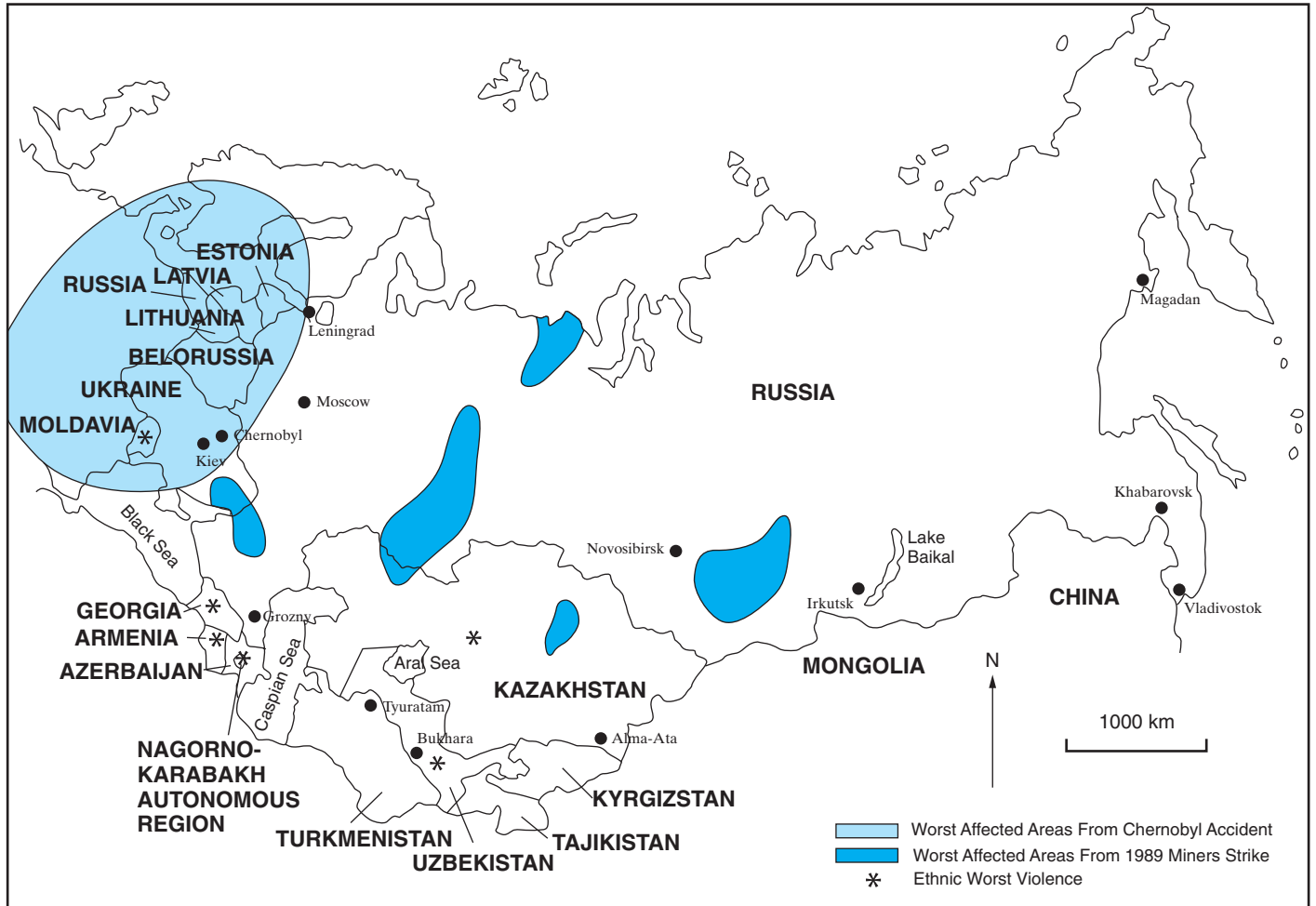
What resulted was a raft of half-measures, introduced by a group of earnest reformers, fumbling with ill-understood economic forces. They wanted to transform the economy, but still maintain overall party control of it – they did not intend to introduce a free market. Yet they wanted enterprises that would be responsive to demand and produce sufficient goods of better quality, at lower prices. At the same time the system was riddled with conservatives who detested these ideas and were determined not to allow them to work. All these measures managed to achieve was to remove the forces of coercion that had kept the Soviet economy creaking along. The result was an economic slow-down.

This was only one of Gorbachev's problems. In a move to reduce the chronic rate of alcoholism and reduce drunkenness in the workplace he introduced a series of extremely puritanical and unwise drinking laws. The number of stores selling alcohol was drastically cut, as were their opening hours and the places and people to whom they could serve. Predictably, as in America, this form of prohibition greatly enriched and enlarged well-entrenched criminal organisations. Gorbachev's popularity suffered severely.

A worse blow followed in April 1986 with the explosion at the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl. Gorbachev appears initially to have panicked into trying to conceal the disaster. Kiev received no warning for days. Yet Gorbachev had been using the term *glasnost* since December 1984; was it a sham?

Glasnost was not in fact a complete sham. Indeed, when it was adopted officially as a policy from 1987, memories of Chernobyl were to help radicalise the term to the public to an unexpected and alarming degree. In July 1989 a major strike by miners proved crippling. Even worse, economic demands soon turned political, with calls for free trade unions. The miners were eventually bought off, but it was a serious warning that the major crisis Gorbachev wanted to avoid was now much closer.

Other, far more dangerous grievances were also being aired. Ancient hostility between Azeris and Armenians exploded into violence in early 1988 over the future of the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. Before long, ethnic violence was appearing in other Soviet republics. The state seemed powerless to halt it. The very survival of the USSR was now in doubt.



Map 46: The Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe

Gorbachev, among his other reforms, wished to transform Soviet relations with other European Communist states. The WPO had already outlived its usefulness in many ways. A NATO invasion was no longer a credible threat. If NATO launched a missile attack, the buffer zone Stalin had built could do nothing. Rather than supporting the Soviet economy, it had long been a considerable burden, as Soviet subsidies were needed to maintain tolerable living standards. A relaxation of the Soviet grip in the east would also help improve Soviet relations with the west.

Transforming the Soviet Union was proving frustrating enough, with resistance by conservatives, economic slow-down, growing public discontent and ethnic violence. But it still had one enormous advantage over east European Communist states. The USSR had been the product of the Russian Revolution. The Russian people themselves had built it. This gave it a legitimacy that even Soviet dissidents did not deny – they wanted to change the USSR, not destroy it. In east Europe, Stalin had forcibly imposed Communist regimes. These regimes were seen as alien, led by collaborators and backed-up by the Red Army. Popular opinion, if allowed articulation, did not want these regimes reformed but abolished.

In East Germany, not only the Communist regime, the nation itself lacked legitimacy. Even 45 years after the fact, Germans did not accept the partition was permanent. In Bulgaria, Romania and Albania, the state sponsored xenophobia, hoping to rally support from fears of foreign threats. Still this could not disguise the fact of the enormous affluence widely enjoyed in the west and the comparative poverty commonplace at home. Economic mismanagement had caused considerable privation. The 1980s saw chronic food shortages in Romania along with regular rationing, or even complete denial of heating in winter.

These states were simply beyond salvage through reform. They relied on ever heavier repression to curb discontent. Any serious reform or political debate would doom them. Gorbachev was baffled by their refusal to follow his example. Yet he had already unwittingly taken the first step that would destroy them. In order to keep relations with the west warm, and to permit his neighbours freely to reform themselves, he had already decided that there could be no repeat of the intervention of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. This denied them the final sanction against political protest. The knowledge that the Red Army would crush any challenge to Communist rule ensured any protest remained muted. By 1989 it was becoming increasingly clear that this would not happen.

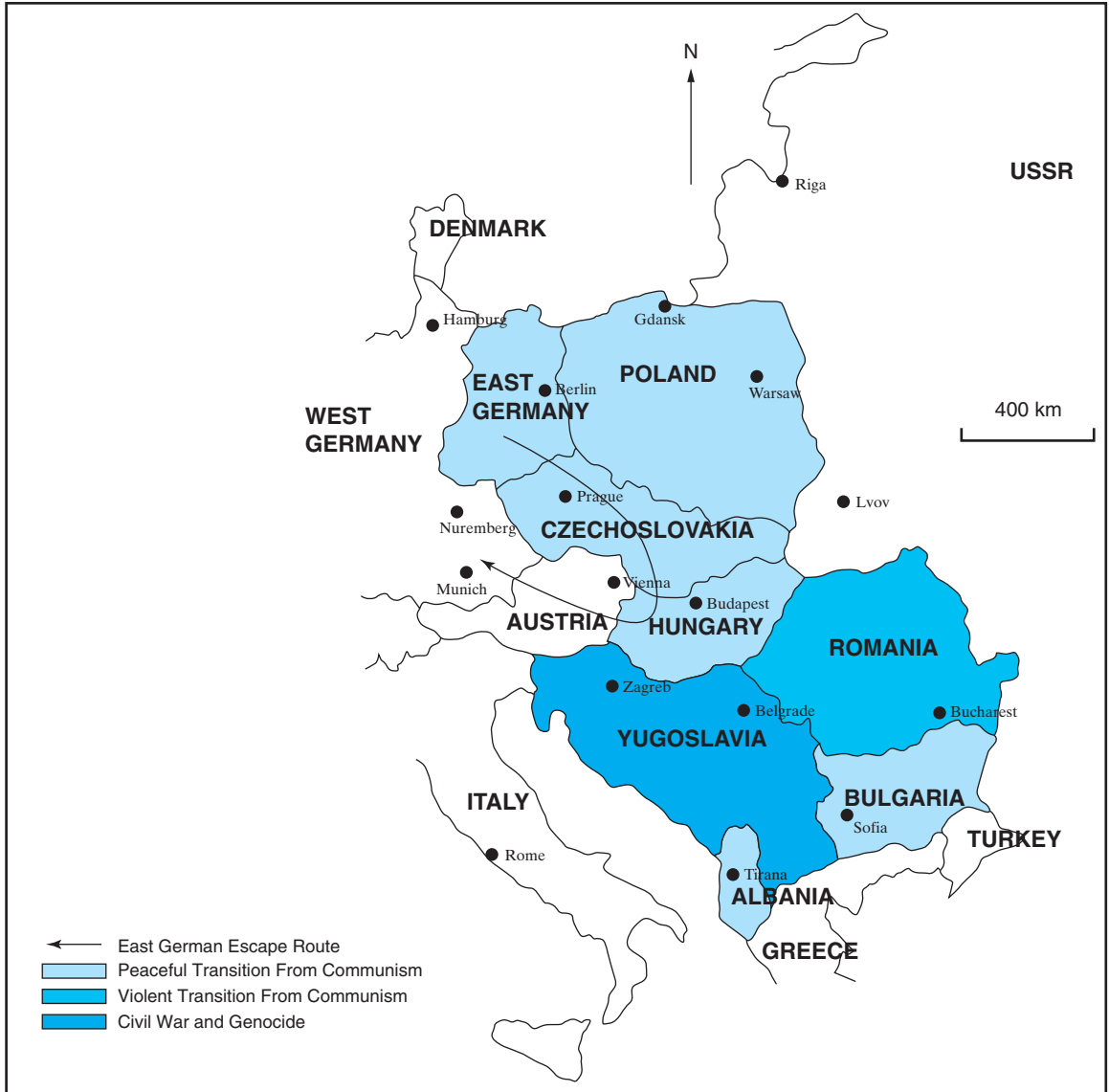
The first cracks in the Communist edifice had already appeared. In May 1988, in Hungary, the Communists accepted that change had to come. The old hard-line leader, Janos Kadar, was forced out by reformers. The rising of 1956 was deemed no counter-revolution, but a popular rising. This accepted that the Communists themselves had acted illegally in suppressing it. When, in January 1989, multi-party elections were announced for the following year, the Communists were effectively abdicating.

In Poland, Wojtech Jaruzelski attempted to gain popular endorsement for his policies through a referendum in November 1987. Instead he found Solidarity rapidly reforming itself and agitating for major change. Jaruzelski entered into direct negotiations with Solidarity, agreeing a raft of radical reforms. Elections were held in April 1989 in which half the seats would be contested. Solidarity won a landslide victory in those seats. In the uncontested seats, most Communists failed to win the 50 per cent of the vote they needed to be elected. Though Jaruzelski remained president, power passed from the Communists easily and peacefully.

In Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia mass demonstrations persuaded the government to negotiate with an opposition that emerged with stunning speed. Honecker in East Germany attempted to cling to power. Unfortunately for him, the Hungarians decided to open their frontiers. This began a stampede as East Germans fled to West Germany through Hungary by the thousand. Communists stood by and dithered as the German people tore down the Berlin Wall. The East German state simply ceased to exist.

In Romania, Ceausescu attempted to cling to power. His army shot down demonstrators in Timisoara in December 1989. But a few days later Ceausescu was shouted down during a public rally. Soon he was chased from his palace by an enraged mob. After a short hesitation the army threw in with the rebels. Ceausescu was caught and shot within days. In Albania a mass flight of refugees, coupled with food riots, looting and anarchy forced the Communists to surrender power in 1992. In Yugoslavia the Communist regime had begun to unravel with the death of Tito in 1980. Growing ethnic tensions were exploited by leading Communists, such as Slobodan Milošević, in an attempt to retain personal power. The nation was already on the road to a vicious civil war.

This was not an instant transition to democracy. In Romania and Bulgaria Communist parties stayed in office for a while longer under new names. But the speed of the collapse of Communism stunned the whole world. It was another humiliation for Gorbachev, whose position was further weakened.



Map 47: The Break-up of the USSR

By 1989 the two intractable problems of the Soviet Union – the economic crisis and the nationalities question – had begun to catch up with Gorbachev. Both imperial and Soviet Russia had only ever had one solution to these questions: coercion. Yet Gorbachev, as a basic element of *perestroika*, had already abandoned this approach. The KGB certainly still existed, but its prestige, authority and morale had plummeted. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) was bitterly divided between conservatives and reformers. Its morale and prestige had never been lower. At the same time Gorbachev, through *glasnost*, had placed political debate in the hands of the public, and that debate was going in directions he had never intended to permit. He was, quite simply, losing control of the USSR.

Too late, Gorbachev realised that the half-measures of his reforms could not work. State controls would have to be fully re-imposed – which was politically impossible – or completely abandoned. To abandon state controls meant abandoning Marxism. A rigid austerity programme might help bring some stability back into the economy, but Gorbachev no longer had the popularity to win support for one. In desperation, he appealed to the United States for a massive aid programme, requesting \$20 billion a year, for five years. Washington was unimpressed; the Soviet economy appeared beyond salvation. Besides, now that tensions were so reduced, did the USA need to sustain yesterday's hero?

Opposition to Gorbachev was growing. Conservatives were coming together to block further reform. Reformists were agitating for changes on a far more radical scale. The latter had a hero in Boris Yeltsin, the former chief of the Moscow CPSU, who had resigned in October 1987 in protest at conservative resistance to reform. Newfound press freedoms kept him in the public eye. In March 1989, in the first ever elections in the USSR with voters given a real choice, he went on to regain office in the Russian republic's parliament. Newfound freedoms also allowed alternatives to Communism to be discussed. Nowhere was this more obvious than among the over 100 nationalities that made up the USSR. Everywhere ethnic tensions mounted. Among many nationalities, especially in central Asia, long-standing resentment at discrimination at Russian hands led to a backlash. Ethnic-motivated rioting and attacks became commonplace.

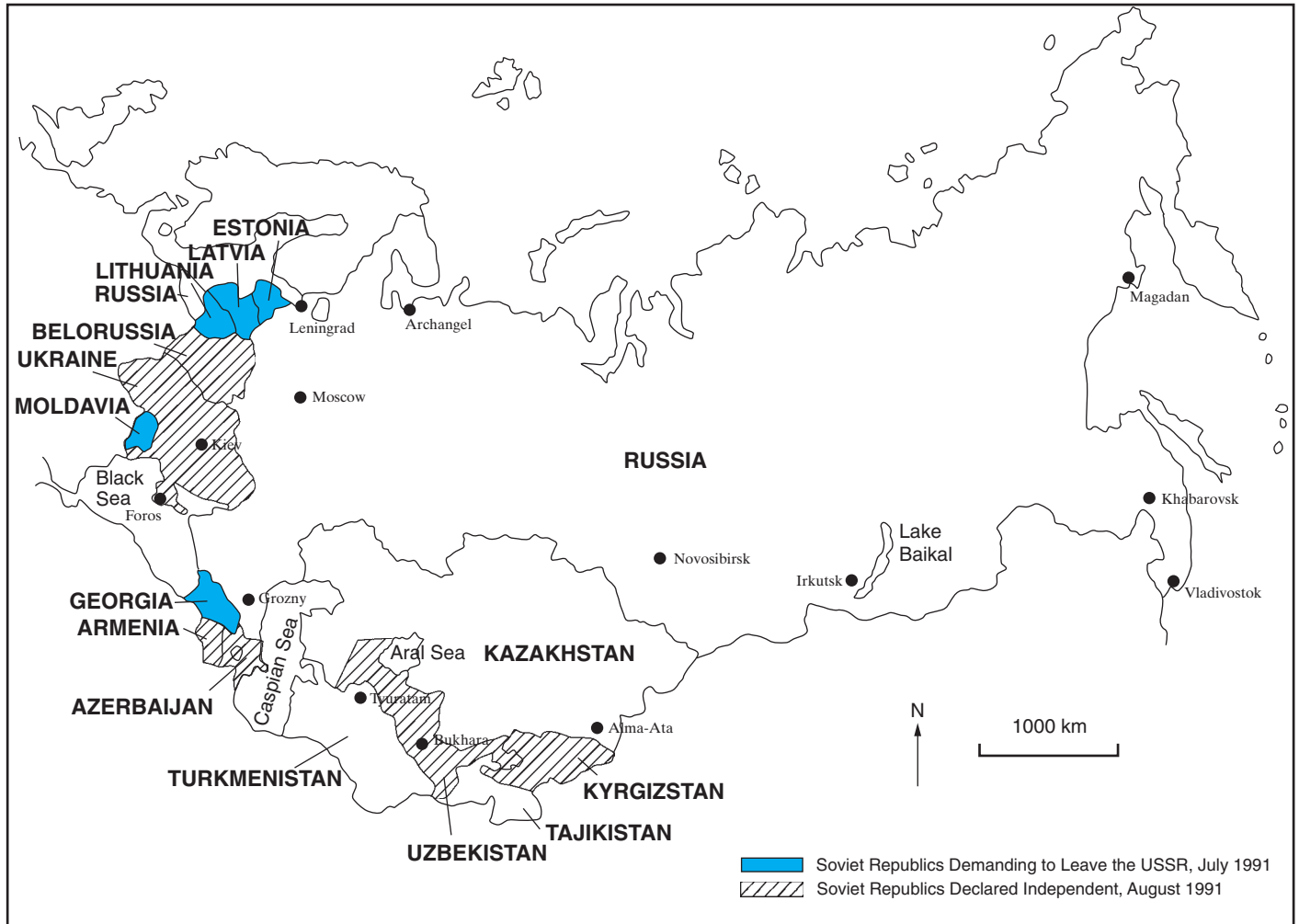
Perhaps more threatening were the republics determined to detach themselves from the USSR. The Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, for instance, had never accepted the legitimacy of their forced incorporation into the Soviet Union. Under the banner of *perestroika*,

nationalists, many of them CPSU members, quietly gained predominance and attempted to declare independence in 1990. They remained unimpressed by Gorbachev's efforts to chivvy them back into the fold through intimidation and economic pressure. Gorbachev's only answer was a new union treaty with the republics, which would re-establish the USSR on a more equitable basis. Few took this project seriously. The Baltic republics at least would settle for nothing less than independence. The collapse of Communist rule in eastern Europe suggested that there was no reason why they should not win it. Other republics, including Ukraine, showed signs of moving in the same direction. The USSR seemed on the verge of disintegrating. Conservatives begged Gorbachev to impose a state of emergency and crackdown on the dissident nationalities. His refusal appears to have convinced them that he had to go.

Gorbachev appeared oblivious to his peril. He departed for his annual holiday in Foros, in the Crimea, in August 1991. While he was there a number of leading CPSU members launched a military coup. Gorbachev found himself under house arrest, but angrily refused demands for his resignation. Tanks appeared in the streets of Moscow. An Emergency Committee announced that they had assumed power while Gorbachev was ill.

Yeltsin was widely seen as the hero of the hour. When tanks surrounded the White House – the Russian parliament building – he emerged in front of the world's press, climbed on top of one, and denounced the Emergency Committee. He called it unconstitutional and warned anyone who obeyed it would be liable to criminal charges. A large crowd gathered outside the White House to protect it and a general strike was called. The coup collapsed in two days. At the time it was hailed as a victory for 'people power'. It does appear, however, that the leaders of the coup showed a pathetic lack of resolve. Though they had sufficient reliable KGB and Interior Ministry troops at their disposal, they never attempted to use force. If they had been ruthless enough to arrest potential opponents and crush the first signs of opposition, they might have prevailed.

They had acted to save the USSR. Instead, they destroyed it. The CPSU was thoroughly compromised. Most of the Secretariat, Central Committee, regional and local party organisations had supported it. Its collapse saw the CPSU and KGB decapitated through arrests and dismissals. Several republics immediately declared their independence. There was nothing left to hold the USSR together. Yeltsin assumed control of Russia. In December he, along with the Belorussian and Ukrainian leaders, in the Belovesh Forest agreement, simply declared the USSR abolished. The Cold War was finally over.



Map 48: The Legacy of the Cold War – Yugoslavia

Communist rule in Yugoslavia began to break down with the death of Tito in 1980. Tito, a Croat, had the stature to rise above the ethnic bickering that had marked the Yugoslav state since its creation after World War I. He had reassured other ethnic groups by restraining the influence of the most powerful group: the Serbs. In 1974 he had amended the constitution to give two regions autonomy within Serbia. These were Vojvodina, with its large Hungarian and Croatian population and Kosovo, 93 per cent Albanian. After Tito's death, growing economic difficulties, including runaway inflation, exacerbated ethnic tensions.

Some of the more far-sighted and ambitious leading Communists, able to predict the demise of Communist rule, began to re-invent themselves as nationalists. In Croatia, Franjo Tudjman took the lead. But by far the most successful in this was Serbia's Slobodan Milošević. From 1986 he went out of his way to whip up Serb grievances, deliberately radicalising Serb nationalism in order to secure his own power.

This began the process of demonising other ethnic groups. Croats were denounced as *Ustaše*, after the Croatian fascists who had sided with the Nazis in World War II. This suggested a desire to exterminate the Serbs. The Albanians were depicted as criminals, who had stolen Serb land and polluted Serb culture. The Serbs in Kosovo, it was suggested, were in constant danger of massacre. The Moslems of Bosnia, the descendants of Serbs and Croats who had converted under Turkish rule, had committed racial betrayal, and were capable of committing any atrocity. They were portrayed as Islamic fundamentalists, intent on introducing their own version of Iran's Islamic revolution.

In 1989 Milošević had reached pre-eminence in Serbia. He persuaded the Serb National Assembly to abolish the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo. With an alliance with Montenegro, he now controlled four out of the eight votes in the Yugoslav presidency. Other nationalities took alarm. In Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia, nationalists prepared to resist any Serb encroachments on their national rights.

In January 1991, Serbs living in the Krajina area in eastern Croatia, attempted to forestall Croatian independence by seizing control of the region themselves, intending it to be included in a Greater Serbia. When Croatian police attempted to interfere they met resistance and the Yugoslav army – by now a thoroughly Serbianised force – intervened on the pretext of restoring order. The break-up of Yugoslavia was henceforth rapid.

The Serbs used tactics there and elsewhere, which others would copy, that ensured the war was fought with

great savagery. Hysteria was whipped up among Serb villages by a barrage of propaganda suggesting they were about to be massacred. Violent incidents would be manufactured to give fear some substance. Arms were provided and they would be directed against non-Serb neighbours. Militias were formed to drive out non-Serbs by terrorism. The most infamous of these was led by Zeljko Raznjatovic, or Arkan. Systematic murder, rape and highly profitable looting became his trademark and helped in the process of 'ethnic cleansing', intended to make the land Serb, and only Serb, forever.

These events were catastrophic for neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina. No single nationality, capable of repressing or expelling its minorities, dominated there. The population was approximately 44 per cent Moslem, 31 per cent Serb and 17 per cent Croat. It was a very weak target for ambitious nationalities. Tudjman and Milošević had already secretly discussed partitioning the nation between them. The Moslem leader, Alija Izetbegovic, frantically tried to establish a coalition government able to hold the nation together. Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, was not interested. By April 1992 civil war had broken out. Bosnian Serb militias, backed up by thinly disguised units of the regular army, made rapid advances.

The Croats and Moslems formed an uneasy alliance, but were unable to drive back the Serbs. As Sarajevo was besieged and atrocities mounted, they looked to the outside world for help. The international response was pathetically weak. An arms embargo on all sides served the interests of the well-equipped Serbs. International public opinion was horrified at the savagery of systematic rape, murder and the destruction of culture, and the failure of their governments to end it. In October 1992, Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, acting for the UN, did suggest a territorial division that amounted to awarding each party the territory it held. The Serbs were encouraged to continue fighting for yet more territory. The Croats turned on their allies to carve out their own territory, and attacked Mostar.

The UN response was to declare six cities, 'safe havens' under UN protection. UN peacekeepers were sent, but so tightly constrained, that they were unable to defend them. Only the fall of the havens at Srebrenica and Zepa, and the ensuing massacres, aroused the international fury that forced NATO to agree to air strikes. These and a successful Croat offensive, which recaptured lost territory, alongside gradually biting sanctions drove the Serbs to agree the Dayton Accords, which awarded them 49 per cent of the land. Further air strikes would be necessary to force the Serbs out of Kosovo in 1999. This legacy of the Cold War has yet to be settled.



Map 49: The Legacy of the Cold War – Russia

The collapse of the USSR in 1991 was widely greeted with immense optimism. Russians assumed that they would have not only the democracy the west enjoyed, but also the affluence. Russia would also remain a great power through the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Only now it would be respected rather than feared. Boris Yeltsin appeared to promise peace, plenty and freedom. The future was viewed with confidence. The disillusion, when it came, was bitter.

One disappointment was the CIS. Other member states simply did not see it as an instrument for maintaining Russia's great power status. The Baltic states refused even to join. To Ukraine and Belarus, it was a means to separate them from Russian domination peacefully. Ukraine was involved in a long and acrimonious dispute with Russia over the disposition of the powerful Soviet Black Sea fleet. Ample oil and gas reserves allow Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan to ignore Russian interests. Only a few, such as Uzbekistan, lacking natural resources and Tajikistan, Georgia and Armenia, troubled by internal or external threats, were willing to accept Russian leadership.

Three new states, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, emerged from the USSR as nuclear powers. Briefly Ukraine was the world's third largest nuclear power. Substantial aid from the west, rather than Russian desires, persuaded them to turn over the warheads to Russia for destruction. In short, the CIS has not maintained Russia's great power status. Russian interests and sensibilities had been repeatedly ignored by the west.

Political reform also proved disappointing. The constitution of 1993 gave Yeltsin great powers not properly balanced by a strong legislature. When the Duma came into conflict with Yeltsin in October 1993, over his use of emergency powers, Russia appeared on the brink of civil war. In an attempted coup disaffected Deputies seized the White House (the parliament building) and tried to make Alexandr Rutskoi president. They were soon defeated, but it was hardly an encouraging introduction to democracy. Even worse was Yeltsin's willingness to ignore the constitution, for instance, rigging elections and intimidating opponents. Russia has never been under the rule of law, but under the rule of the powerful. Yeltsin ignored the opportunity to introduce it. This has always led to arbitrariness and corruption.

In Russia this also led to a degree of corruption of staggering proportions. It has also fed organised crime. In the rush to privatise state enterprises, no thought was given to the fact that only corrupt officials and criminals had the resources to acquire them. This meant that the Russian economy was ruthlessly plundered and Russian citizens

saw no benefit. While the state failed to pay pensioners and its employees, crooks became billionaires. Extortion crippled private enterprise. Murder rates double those of the USA were seen. A perception developed among Russians that if organised crime did not run the state, it was well beyond the ability of the state to control it. They could hope for no protection from the state if they were threatened. Nearly 1 million convicts, the largest prison population in the world after America, serving in appalling conditions, have offered no visible deterrent to crime.

Alongside rampant crime and corruption came massive economic contraction. Several industries, especially defence industries, long reliant on government subsidies and orders, collapsed. Other enterprises were bought up, had their assets stripped, and their employees discarded. With a growing army of unemployed struggling to survive, the black economy burgeoned and state revenues declined. By 1998 near bankruptcy led to a financial collapse. By then 60 per cent of Russians did not receive their pay or pensions regularly. Theft from employers became simply payment in kind.

Some areas were hit harder than others. In the isolated enclave of Kaliningrad, seized by Stalin in 1945, there have been some benefits. German migrants were attracted to this former part of Prussia. Its economic future seems reasonably promising, but how long it will remain part of Russia is uncertain. In Siberia, the picture is very different. For 350 years Russian rulers used force to settle Siberia and exploit its vast resources. They also stood the expense of maintaining settlements in this inhospitable region. After 1991 the Russian state was unable to sustain this effort. The results have been a demographic disaster. Unemployment, poverty and a sense of hopelessness regarding the future have led to a population movement southwards and westwards. Some regions have lost over half their population, particularly the young.

A more widespread response has been to question the value of democracy. If the only choice is between equally corrupt politicians, what purpose does the vote serve? In the Duma elections of December 1993 Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's fascists won 23 per cent of the vote, only narrowly beating the Communists. Thereafter the Communists became the largest single party in the Duma. Zhirinovskiy proved too much of a clown, reputedly starring in his own pornographic films, to be taken too seriously for long. The Communist vote is only strong among older Russians and it is unlikely ever to be elected. But people marginalised in today's Russia would obviously prefer an authoritarian solution to their problems. If their numbers increase, Russian democracy is insecure.



Map 50: The Surviving Communist World

The 1990s were traumatic years for Communists. Where 30 years earlier Communism appeared to be advancing inexorably forwards, it was now struggling to survive in only a handful of countries. Only one, the PRC, was a nation of any real significance. The others were weak, impoverished and unimportant. What is noteworthy is that in order to survive, Communist regimes in all of these states have had to make compromises with the free market in order to fend off economic disaster. Single-party rule survives, but Marxist ideology no longer determines government policy. Perhaps it might be fair to say that Communist rule survives, but it has done so at the expense of abandoning Communism.

In the PRC, pragmatism has guided government policy since Deng Xiaoping became leader, after Mao's death in 1976. This was no coincidence. The Cultural Revolution (see Map 25), had been one upheaval too many for China. Mao's later years were widely seen as disastrous. Pointless political mobilisation had destroyed the revolutionary enthusiasm of the Chinese people. The economy was in a shambles. Collective farms were as inefficient as they were everywhere else. Much heavy industry had been built with Soviet aid in the 1950s, and was now decaying. It was also burdened with massive over-manning and crippled by under-investment.

Economic reform was urgently needed. Deng's approach was to introduce a degree of economic liberalism. Material incentives were supplied to improve efficiency. The collective farms were broken up and a limited free market tolerated. In industry, foreign investment was invited. Over-manning was reduced. The Chinese working-class found they were no longer assured of employment and housing for life. In economic terms, the results were impressive. Exports multiplied – often based on pirated foreign patents – and the PRC was soon running a huge export surplus with the USA, which it refused to reduce.

The CCP earned public contempt for its corruption and overbearing conduct. The one-child family policy, for example, was draconian and intrusive. The resentment, which emerged in the 1980s, gave rise to a vague, but widespread, desire for change. Gorbachev's *perestroika*, therefore, caused intense excitement. In April 1989 a student-led protest movement occupied Tiananmen square in Beijing. The protests were rapidly copied in other cities. When Gorbachev made a state visit to Beijing in May 1989, huge crowds in the square expected imminent change. Once Gorbachev had left, the CCP reacted savagely. PLA tanks attacked the demonstrators, killing perhaps 3000. Across China political activists were rounded up as Taiwanese or American agents; many were shot.

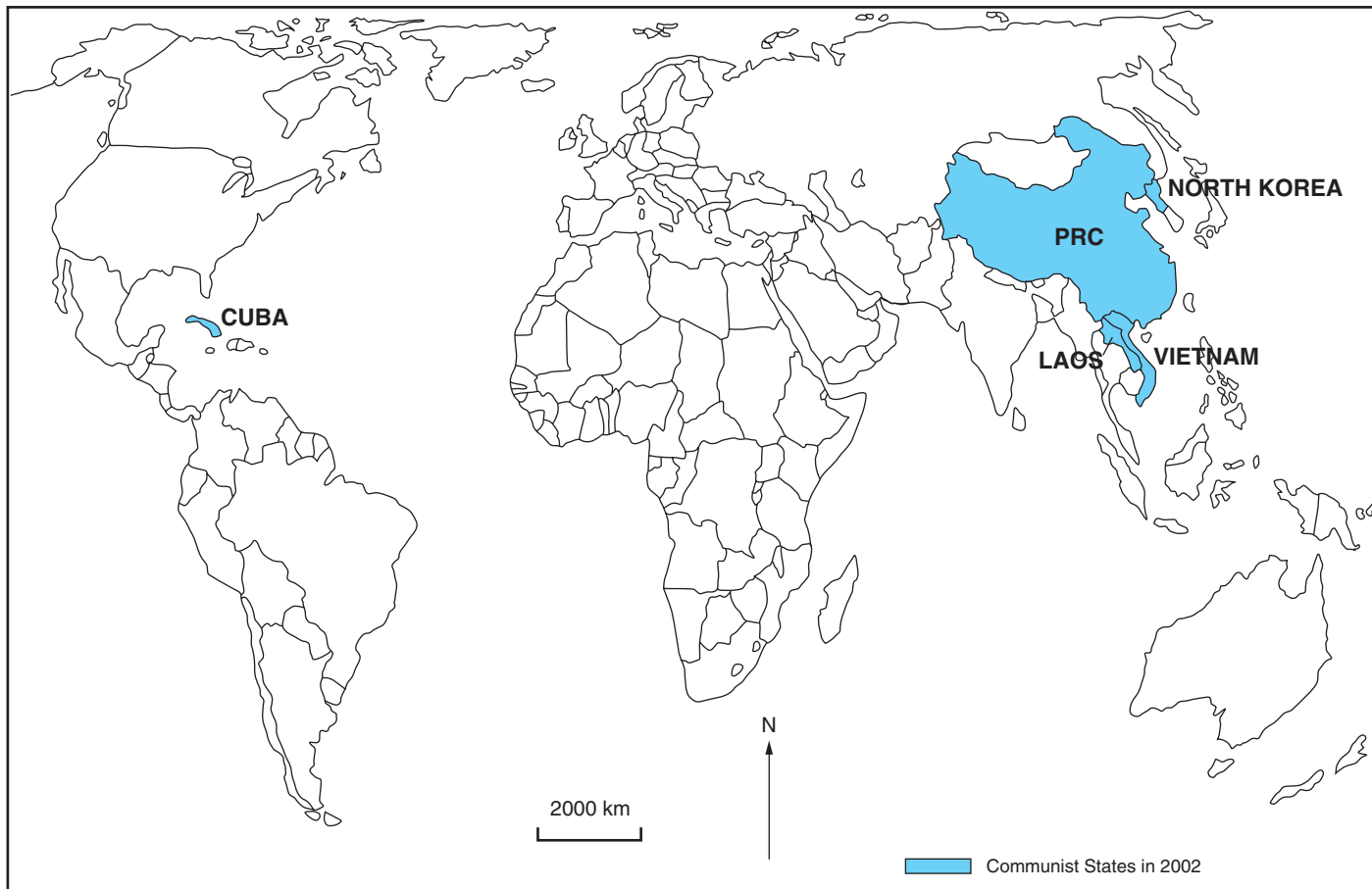
The message was plain. The PRC might introduce an essentially capitalist economy. But the PRC would remain a one-party state. Once the unrest had died down, most Chinese citizens came to terms with this fact. As long as relative prosperity was sustained, CCP rule was bearable. Only a serious economic crisis risks renewed unrest. As long as the PLA remains reliable, the threat should be minor.

Other Communist states have less security. Both Vietnam and Laos suffered from economic mismanagement. Nationalisation and collectivisation proved disastrous. These problems were multiplied by the massive amount of war damage. Nor did American hostility and embargoes help. By 1998 an estimated 37 per cent of Vietnamese suffered serious poverty. Repressive rule and corruption further diminished Communist popularity. Perhaps 1 million ethnic Chinese fled Vietnam as a result. Yet by the mid 1980s economic pragmatism had prevailed, both states moved back towards a free market and material incentives were restored. The American embargo was lifted from Vietnam in 1994. Laos began to receive American aid in 1987 – essentially an inducement to reduce illicit opium production, of which Laos was the world's third largest supplier.

North Korea has long been an economic disaster area. Years of neglect and under-investment have resulted in near industrial collapse. Drought and shortages of fertilizer would have caused mass starvation but for international aid in the 1990s. Foreign aid – often extracted as a reward for de-escalating artificially created crises – and massive repression, have thus far sustained the leadership of Kim Jong-il.

In Cuba, a mixture of repression and American hostility has long sustained Fidel Castro's regime. The loss of Soviet aid was a serious blow, which forced the regime to modify its economic approach. Some agricultural collectives were broken up, tourism was promoted and foreign investment arrived, despite US threats to impose sanctions on any investing in formerly American-owned concerns. There are still serious shortages of food and consumer goods. There appears to be a growing yearning for change and a steady stream of refugees still flee to America. Yet the fear that Cuba might be forced to return to the misery, squalor and humiliation of pre-revolutionary days if America has its way, is still Castro's great asset.

In the final analysis, these regimes will survive as long as the military remains willing to support them. Internal pressure, such as mass protest, can only succeed if the military permit it. At the time of writing they appear secure. This, however, could change very rapidly.



Selected Bibliography

The following list of sources is not intended to be comprehensive – the sheer scale of books on this subject is far too vast for that. The works included have been selected because of their usefulness as studies of the period of the Cold War in general, or because they cover specific issues in depth. No attempt has been made to include primary source material as, again, far too much is now available to make that a useful exercise. Only works written in English are included, as it is assumed that the readership will be English-speaking. Those with greater language talents will have plenty of opportunities to find extra titles in the bibliographies in many of the works cited.

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