

### **PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN:**

- Decided to drop atomic bombs on Japan (Hiroshima & Nagasaki) because the bombs' destructive power might end the war quickly.

### **POST WORLD WAR II:**

- After WWII, the U.S. was better able than its allies to adjust its economy from wartime to peacetime because the U.S. had suffered no widespread wartime destruction (the war was not fought on U.S. soil, so U.S. cities and factories were not destroyed, unlike Europe and Japan).
- **Nuremberg Trials**- Held to make German leaders accountable for the Holocaust (mass genocide against Jews and other minorities). Established the principle that leaders of a nation may be held accountable (put on trial) for crimes against humanity/ war crimes.
- **United Nations**- Replaced the League of Nations in order to prevent international disputes from escalating into major wars. Unlike the League of Nations, the U.S. joined the United Nations because it recognized that efforts to achieve world peace required U.S. involvement.

### **COLD WAR: (1946-1989)**

- An era of political tension and military rivalry between the U.S. and Soviet Union (Communist Russia) after WWII that stopped short of full-scale war (the two nations never directly fought each).
- During the Cold War era, the U.S. and Soviet Union were hesitant to become involved in direct military conflict because of the potential for global nuclear destruction. The superpowers supported opposing sides in conflicts, but did not confront each other directly.
- **Iron Curtain**- Nickname given to the boundary of Soviet domination in Europe during the Cold War.

### **CONTAINMENT IN EUROPE:**

- **Containment**: U.S. foreign policy to stop the spread of communism (Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, Berlin Airlift).
- **Truman Doctrine**- Originally designed to contain communism by giving aid to Greece and Turkey.
- **Marshall Plan** (1948-1952) - U.S. provided economic aid to help Europe's economic recovery after WWII.
- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (NATO) - Formed in 1949 in order to protect Western Europe from the Soviet Union and provide collective security against Communist aggression.

## **BERLIN BLOCKADE AND AIRLIFT**

- The USSR blockaded West Berlin in an attempt to take over all of Berlin.
- Truman avoided war by airlifting in supplies until the Soviets ended the blockade
- Containment: Communism stayed in East Berlin, but it did not spread to West Berlin

## **CONTAINMENT IN ASIA**

- **Korean War** (1950-1953)-Civil war between Communist North Korea (supported by Communist China & Soviet Union) and South Korea (supported by the U.S and United Nations).
  - U.S. intervened in the war because of its policy of containment (stop the spread of communism).
  - Marked the first time that the United Nations used military force to oppose aggression.
  - Harry Truman fires General Douglas for insubordination.
  - Major outcome of the Korean War was that Korea continued to be a divided nation (neither side was able to win).

## **MCCARTHY ERA:**

McCarthyism- Fear of communist influence in the U.S. The term has since been applied to events that are related to reckless accusations unsupported by evidence.

- Resulted from charges that Communists had infiltrated the U.S. government.
  - Senator Joseph McCarthy- Led a “witch hunt” for Communist spies in the U.S. government during the early 1950’s.
  - Opponents of the Senate hearings led by McCarthy during the 1950’s argued that these investigations violated the constitutional rights of many people.
  - The reputations of many people were ruined by false accusations of disloyalty.
- **House Un-American Activities Committee** – investigated people & organizations suspected of having communist ties.
  - **Execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg** - reflected the post-WWII concern over spying by communists in the U.S. (the Rosenberg’s were executed in the U.S. for being Soviet spies.)