



THE COLD WAR

The **Cold War** began soon after World War II ended. It was a struggle between the **Western Bloc** nations led by the **United States** and the **Eastern Bloc** nations led by the **Soviet Union**.

The Cold War was not really a war in which there was fighting. It was a war to see if **Communism** or **Democracy** would control the world. Weapons were **propaganda**, **competitions** (including sports) and **diplomacy**. Sometimes there were small military actions.

When World War II ended, the Soviet Union **occupied** Eastern Europe. Countries controlled by the Soviet Union were called **satellites**. The Soviet Union had control of these countries because the Soviets defeated the **Nazis** during World War II.



Soviet Expansion in Europe (1939–1949)

The United States was upset with the Soviet Union because they did not hold **free elections** in the Eastern European countries they freed from the Nazis. Instead, the countries became part of the **Soviet Empire**, which was known as the **Eastern Bloc**. The **Western Bloc** believed that an **“Iron Curtain”** had fallen around Eastern Europe. This meant that no new ideas could get in and people could not get out. The Soviet decision to keep control of Eastern Europe and to make all the nations Communist, was the beginning of the Cold War.

Questions for discussion. Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What is meant by the “Cold War?”
2. Explain how the Cold War began?
3. Define Western Bloc and Eastern Bloc.
4. Look at the map of Europe after World War II. List four nations that were in the Eastern Bloc

