

Honors World History II

(Honors World History, 1500 - Present)

Learning in Place, Phase II

April 6-10, 20-24



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Name: _____

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Honors World History II (Honors World History, 1500-Present) Learning in Place, Phase II

April 6-10

✓	Task	Text	Write
	Why might the Cold War be considered a “war?”	Performance Task 1, Documents A-H	1. Complete Performance Task 1, including all guiding questions. In your response, cite evidence from at least 4 different documents in support of your claim. Your response to the Driving Historical Question should demonstrate your understanding of the documents, as well as all other work you’ve completed on the Cold War era.
	What makes a war?	Passage 2	2. After reading Passage 2 about the “war” against the coronavirus (COVID-19), reflect upon the teachings in this course. Specifically, think about the major wars you’ve learned: World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. Write a paper that answers the question, “what is a war?” Include factors from each of the 3 wars mentioned above, as well as details from Passage 2. Make sure to take a stance on which of the wars, including the so-called “war on the coronavirus” would fit your established criteria. If typed , the paper should be at least 3 pages in length, 12 point font and double-spaced. If handwritten , the paper should be at least 6 pages in length, single-spaced.

April 20-24

✓	Task	Text	Write
	How did Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi gain independence for India?	Task 3	1. Complete Performance Task 3, including all guiding questions. In your response, cite evidence from at least 4 different documents in support of your claim.
	Describe important people and events in India’s modern history.	Passage 4	2. As you read, create a timeline of important people and events in India’s modern history. Then, determine which person you’ve studied had the largest influence on the development of India. Write one paragraph justifying your response.
	Describe the effects of decolonization in Asia and Africa.	Passage 5	3. As you read: Underline <u>positive</u> effects of the decolonization that occurred in Africa and Asia between 1945-1960, and highlight (or circle) negative effects of the decolonization process. Then, write a paragraph explaining whether the positive effects outweigh the negative consequences.

Task 1

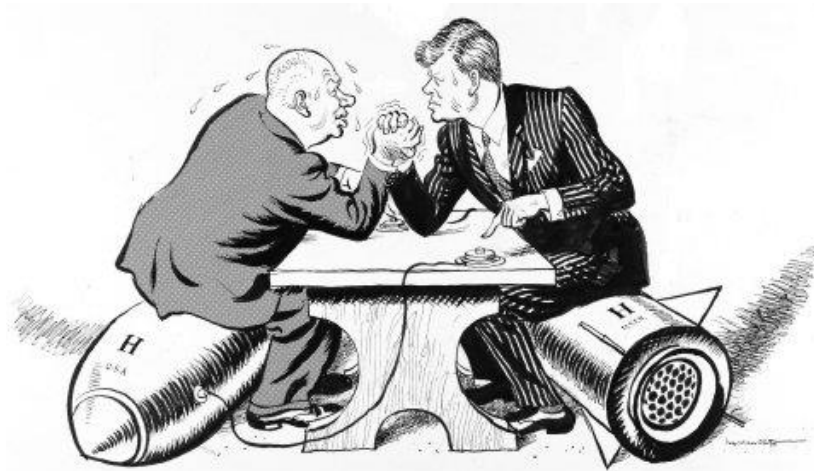
Use the documents to address the following question:

Despite the fact that no physical fighting took place, the time period between 1947-1991 became known as ‘The Cold War.’

Driving Historical Question: *Why might historians refer to this time period as a time of war?”*

Part A. Closely read documents A-H and determine what is important in each document by answering the accompanying question(s).

Document A



“OK Mr President, let’s talk” - Daily Mail, October 29, 1962. Leaders of the USSR [left] and USA [right] during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Based on Document A, discuss the message of the political cartoon.

Document B

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, CO-OPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE Between the People's Republic of Albania, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Rumanian People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Czechoslovak Republic

Article 4

In the event of an armed attack in Europe on one or several states that are signatories of the treaty by any state or group of states, each state that is a party to this treaty shall... render the state or states so attacked immediate assistance, individually and in agreement with other states that are parties to this treaty, by all the means it may consider necessary, including the use of armed force.

Source: Warsaw Pact, 1 May 1955

Based on Document B, describe the effect of the Warsaw Pact.

Document C

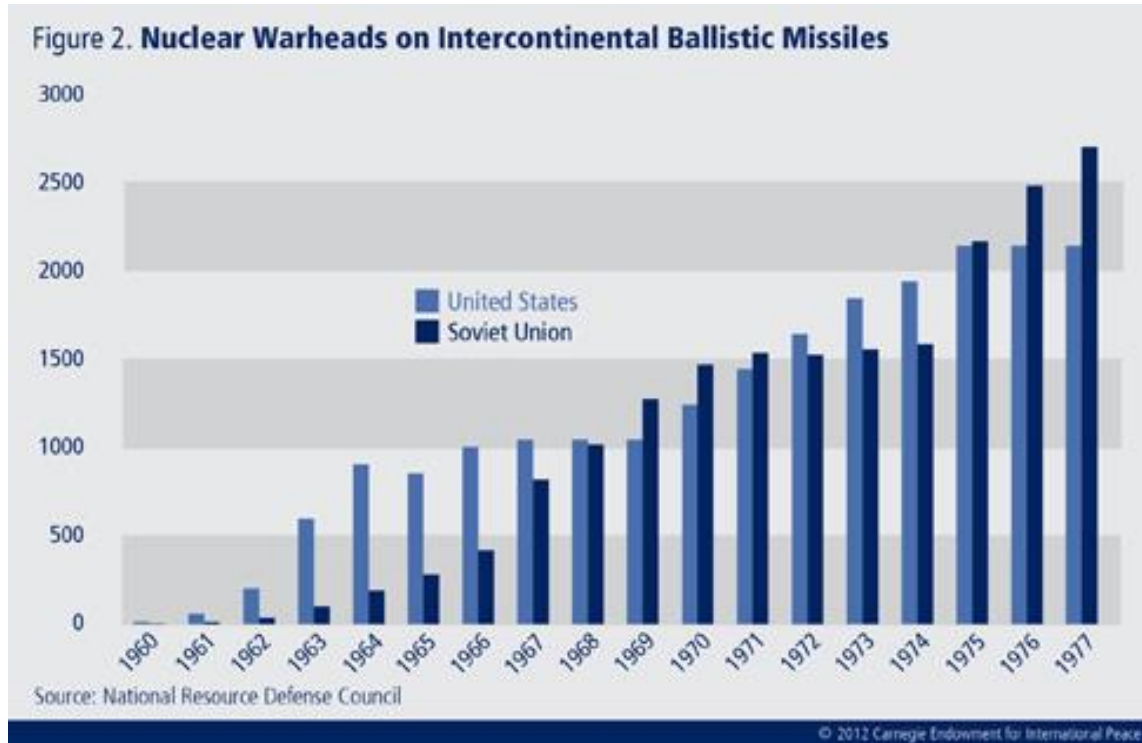
The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion [force] and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. I must also state that in a number of other countries there have been similar developments.

... I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation [conquest] by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

Source: Truman Doctrine, 12 March 1947

Based on Document C, describe how President Truman's belief may lead to conflict and/or war.

Document D



Based on Document D, describe one trend in the graph.

Document E

It is my duty, however, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe. From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent... Surely we should work with conscious purpose for a grand pacification [nonaggression] of Europe within the structure of the United Nations and in accordance with our Charter. In a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers and throughout the world, Communist fifth columns are established and work in complete unity and absolute obedience to the directions they receive from the Communist center. Except in the British Commonwealth and in the United States where Communism is in its infancy, the Communist parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilization... I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines. But what we have to consider here today while time remains, is the permanent prevention of war and the establishment of conditions of freedom and democracy as rapidly as possible in all countries. Our difficulties and dangers will not be removed by closing our eyes to them. They will not be removed by mere waiting to see what happens; nor will they be removed by a policy of appeasement [giving in to one's demands].

Source: Winston S. Churchill "Iron Curtain Speech", 5 March 1946

Based on Document E, describe two beliefs/ideas set forth by Winston Churchill.

Document F



Based on Document F, describe one impact of the Cold War on Germany.

Document G



Military May Day Parade in Moscow, U.S.S.R. May 1965

Based on Document G, describe one threat an American may perceive.

Document H

On August 13, East German authorities put into effect several measures regulating movement at the boundary of the western sectors and the Soviet sector of the city of Berlin. These measures have the effect of limiting, to a degree approaching complete prohibition, passage from the Soviet sector to the western sectors of the city. These measures were accompanied by the closing of the sector boundary by a sizable deployment of police forces and by military detachments brought into Berlin for this purpose.... By the very admission of the East German authorities, the measures which have just been taken are motivated by the fact that an ever increasing number of inhabitants of East Germany wish to leave this territory. The reasons for this exodus are known. They are simply the internal difficulties in East Germany.

Source: Note from the United States to Soviet Union on the Berlin Wall

17 August 1961.

The Soviet Government fully understands and supports the actions of the Government of the German Democratic Republic which established effective control on the border with West Berlin in order to bar the way for subversive activity being carried out from West Berlin against the G.D.R. and other countries of the socialist community. . . . West Berlin has been transformed into a center of subversive activity diversion, and espionage, in to a center of political and economic provocations against [East Germany], the Soviet Union, and other socialist countries... The Government organs and concerns of the F.R.G. led from West Berlin an entire army of recruiters who, by means of deception, bribery, and blackmail, instigated a certain part of the residents of the G.D.R. to migrate to West Germany, There, these people were compelled to enter into service in the Bundeswehr and to work in the war-production industry; they were drawn into various subversive organizations.

Source: Note from Soviet Union to the United States on the Berlin Wall

18 August 1961.

Based on Document F, describe two points of view on the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Part B.

- Write a claim that answers the Driving Historical Question.
- Support your claim with evidence from **at least 4** different documents. These are facts that support your claim.
- In complete sentences, provide your reasoning/argument for why the evidence supports your claim.

Passage 2

The Problem with Being ‘at War’ With the Coronavirus

Leaders invoking battle terminology to galvanize national action risk achieving the opposite.

YASMEEN SERHAN

If curbing the spread of the coronavirus is akin to being “at war,” then it is unlike any war the world has ever fought. Still, the irregularity of this particular fight hasn’t stopped leaders from invoking wartime imagery. In China, where the outbreak began earlier this year, Xi Jinping vowed to wage a “people’s war” on the coronavirus. As the disease spread across the globe, the battle allusions followed. France’s Emmanuel Macron declared the country at war with an “invisible, elusive” enemy. Italy’s special commissioner for the coronavirus emergency said the country must equip itself for a “war economy.” British Prime Minister Boris Johnson told Britons that theirs was a fight in which each and every citizen was “directly enlisted.” In the United States, Donald Trump refashioned himself as a “wartime president.”

By choosing to frame the pandemic in military terms, governments are clearly trying to communicate the gravity of this public-health crisis—one that requires the type of state intervention and personal sacrifice most nations haven’t experienced in peacetime. But drawing this imperfect parallel can have the unintended consequence of causing fear and panic too. One look at the barren supermarket shelves and the surge in U.S. firearm sales suggests that it may have already had that impact. If the aim of such imagery is to compel the public to act in the national interest, framing this crisis in war terms may achieve just the opposite. In this “war,” after all, most people aren’t being asked to mobilize; they are being asked to stay home.

The last time the world faced a pandemic of this scale, it was in the middle of an actual war. The Spanish flu appeared during the waning months of World War I, before quickly spreading around the world, infecting a third of the global population and killing tens of millions of people. Unlike with the current pandemic, invoking wartime imagery wasn’t necessary to spur action against the Spanish flu. By that point in the war, “everyone had already been making all these sacrifices,” Mark Honigsbaum, a medical historian and the author of *The Pandemic Century*, told me, noting that many countries were already united against a common enemy, Germany, “before this unseen enemy, the Spanish flu, came along.”

There is a long history of world leaders framing fights against disease within the context of war. From Richard Nixon’s “war on cancer” to the “Ebola wars,” politicians have invoked battle analogies to communicate the seriousness of an issue and galvanize a national response. (The same can be said for matters that have nothing to do with disease, such as Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty and the global War on Terror.)

In some ways, these wartime metaphors make sense. John Baugh, a linguist at Washington University in St. Louis, told me that when politicians and health officials invoke this language, it’s often because “they feel that the public has not yet taken the problem seriously,” an issue that, until very recently, was almost certainly the case with the coronavirus pandemic. Many countries were slow to figure out how best to respond to the crisis, while large swaths of their populations openly flouted social-distancing guidance. When the severity finally began to sink in, world leaders seized on terms such as *battle plan*, *enemy*, and *frontline* as a means of waking people up to the urgency of the situation and fostering a sense of solidarity.

But while wartime imagery can promote national cohesion, it can also breed fear, which can in turn drive anxiety and panic. The myriad changes being made to wage this “war”—including enforced lockdowns, closures of schools and businesses, and the postponement of major events, such as elections—and the looming prospect of a global recession has not only created uncertainty, but stripped many people of any sense of control. One

of the most visible ways this fear has manifested has been in the increasing prevalence of empty supermarkets—a by-product of what appeared to be a surge in panic-buying that made newly precious commodities such as hand sanitizer, face masks, and toilet paper scarce or, in some cases, prohibitively expensive. (Other items, such as illicit drugs and firearms, experienced a similar increase in demand.) In this case, evoking war didn't just alert people to the severity of the situation. For some of the most vulnerable members of society, including the elderly and health-care workers, it made the crisis much, much worse.

Another problem with using battle analogies is that they aren't particularly well suited for telling people what *not* to do. “War metaphors call for mobilization, for action, for doing something,” Veronika Koller, a linguist at Lancaster University in England, told me. In this pandemic, governments are asking people to do the opposite: to forego normal routines and avoid going outside. Put simply, to do nothing.

War metaphors also tend to be, well, metaphorical. They lack precision and clarity, both of which are in desperately short supply right now. In Britain, where the response to the coronavirus outbreak was slow and ill-defined, Johnson's announcement that the country would be put on a wartime footing didn't explain what that actually meant. “From a linguistic point of view, it's still not clear,” Koller said in reference to the prime minister's televised address last week announcing further restrictions as part of a nationwide lockdown. When it comes to what Britons should or shouldn't do, Koller added, “there are still lots of modifiers in there, like *if possible* and *ideally* or *only if necessary*. And that muddies the message.”

War is also, by its very nature, divisive—which is not particularly helpful amid a crisis that requires global cooperation. These divisions have already begun playing out among people, most notably with the rise of xenophobia against East Asian communities and those perceived to be likely carriers of the virus. But they have started to appear at the diplomatic level too, in the form of a blame game between the U.S. and China over which country is responsible for the pandemic.

If wartime terminology isn't suitable for explaining a pandemic, then what is? When I put this question to Koller, she said there probably isn't just one correct framing or metaphor. Rather, “it's about finding a balance between galvanizing people and making them aware that they have to take this seriously and ... not sending them into complete panic.”

Some leaders have already demonstrated ways of reframing the pandemic that are less likely to spur panic. In Denmark, Queen Margrethe II likened the virus to a “dangerous guest,” and urged Danes to “show our togetherness by keeping apart.”

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the World Health Organization, invoked perhaps the one thing that is better than any war at rallying nations: sport. “You can't win a football game only by defending,” he wrote on Twitter. “You have to attack as well.”

Task 3

Task: Use the documents to address the following question:

Driving Historical Question: How did Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi gain independence for India?

Part A. Closely read documents A-H and determine what is important in each document by answering the accompanying question(s).

Document A

Before embarking on Civil Disobedience and taking the risk I have dreaded to take all these year, I would approach you and find a way out. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less human beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine. Whilst therefore I hold the British rule to be a curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any interest he may have in India. . . And why do I regard the British rule a curse? . . . Even the salt [the peasant] must use to live is so taxed as to make the burden fall heaviest on him. . . The tax shows itself still more burdensome on the poor man when it is remembered that salt is one thing he must eat more than the rich man. . . My ambition is no less than to convert the British people through nonviolence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. . . But if you cannot see your way to deal with these evils and if my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the eleventh day of this month I shall proceed with such coworkers of the Ashram [community] as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the Salt Laws. . . - Gandhi

Based on Document A, describe one expectation that Gandhi had of his protesting followers.

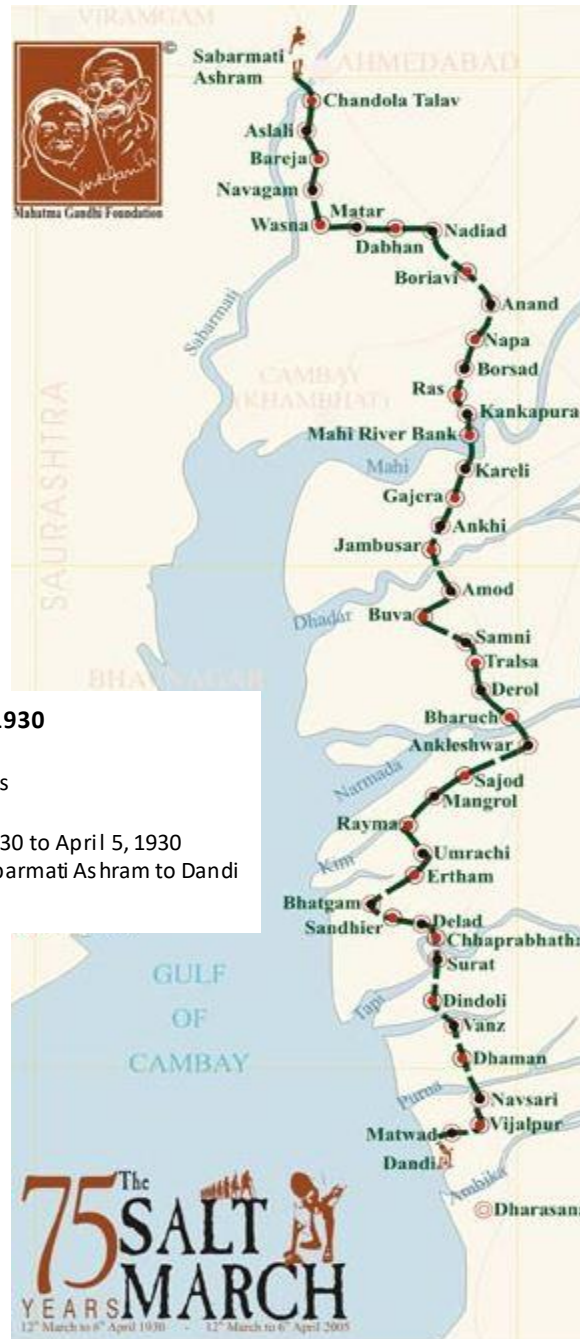
Document B

Madras, India. March, 1919: The idea came to me last night in a dream that we should call on the country to observe a general hartal. . . (O)urs is a sacred fight, and it seems to me to be in the fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people in India, therefore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer.

-Mohandas Gandhi

Based on Document B, describe one way that Gandhi called on Indians to show their displeasure with British rule.

Document C



The Salt March, 1930

Distance: 241 miles

Participants: 79

Date: March 12, 1930 to April 5, 1930

Location: From Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi

Based on Document C, discuss the event depicted above as a method of mobilization and/or motivation.

Document D

THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE, SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1921. 13

BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTHES
BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTHES

Shall take place at the Maidan near Elphinstone Mills
Opp. Elphinstone Road Station on Sunday, 31st July, 1921.

THE CEREMONY WILL BE PERFORMED BY
MAHATMA GANDHIJI

All are requested to attend in Swadeshi Clothes of Khadi. Those who have not
given away their Foreign Clothes are requested to bring them to the Meeting.

**SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT IS MADE FOR LADIES
AND CHILDREN**

IN MEMORY OF
LOKMANYA TILAK

PUBLIC MEETING AT CHAUPATI, 1st AUGUST 1921, AT 6-30 P. M.

LONDON LETTER.

INDIANS AT IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

"NEW SOLUTIONS AT HAND"

INDIVIDUAL URBANI.

(Special News Service)
LONDON, June 29.

The new line is a good work for the British Empire. "The most important in history" as the words of Mahatma Gandhi...

...to reach the Indian in their native land... the Imperial Union, and not the Majesty... the British Government more important... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people...

...the Imperial Union, and not the Majesty... the British Government more important... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people...

...the Imperial Union, and not the Majesty... the British Government more important... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people...

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...the Imperial Union, and not the Majesty... the British Government more important... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people... the rights of the Indian people...

Based on Document D, explain the strategy depicted.

Document E



Based on Document E, explain the strategy depicted above.

Document F

...it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles [French and Russian Revolutions] were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between the Hindus and Muslims, and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence

--- Gandhi

Based on Document F, explain one issue that Gandhi feels his people must overcome in order to defeat British rule.

Document G



Based on Document G, describe the strategy depicted.

Document H

On 10 January 1908 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested for the first time in South Africa for refusing to carry an obligatory identity document card commonly known as the 'pass'. Gandhi was released in February after negotiations with the government. A few days later, Gandhi was beaten up and severely injured by a compatriot, who accused him of betraying the Indian cause.

In 1906, the Transvaal government promulgated a new Act forcing registration of the colony's Indian population. At a mass protest meeting held in Johannesburg on 11 September 1906, Gandhi adopted his approach to non-violent protest commonly known as satyagraha (loyalty to the truth) for the first time. He called on his fellow Indians to defy the new law and suffer the punishments for doing so, rather than resist through violent means.

This plan was adopted, leading to a seven-year struggle in which thousands of Indians were jailed including Gandhi; some were even shot for striking, refusing to register, burning their registration cards, and engaging in other forms of non-violent resistance.

While the government was triumphant in repressing the Indian protesters, the public outcry stemming from the ruthless methods employed by the South African government in the face of peaceful Indian protesters finally forced South African government under General Jan Christiaan Smuts to negotiate a compromise with Gandhi.

Based on Document H, explain one reason that Gandhi's methods gained the support of the public.

Part B.

- Write a claim that answers the Driving Historical Question.
- Support your claim with evidence from **at least 4** different documents. These are facts that support your claim.
- In complete sentences, provide your reasoning/argument for why the evidence supports your claim.

Passage 4

Jawaharlal Nehru & Indira Gandhi

(Adapted from History.com)

An influential leader in the Indian independence movement and political heir of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru became the nation's first prime minister in 1947. Although faced with the challenge of uniting a vast population diverse in culture, language and religion, he successfully established various economic, social and educational reforms that earned him the respect and admiration of millions of Indians. His policies of non-alignment and Panchsheel—principles of peaceful coexistence—guided India's international relations until the outbreak of the Sino-Indian War in 1962, which contributed to his declining health and subsequent death in 1964, ending his 17-years in office. His daughter, Indira Gandhi, and grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, later served as prime ministers.

During the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) led by Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru was imprisoned for the first time for activities against the British government and, over the course of the next two and a half decades, spent a total of nine years in jail.

In 1929, Jawaharlal was elected president of the Indian National Congress—his first leadership role in politics—whereby he promoted the goal of complete independence from Britain as opposed to dominion status. In response to Britain's declaration of India's participation in the war against Germany at the onset of World War II without consulting Indian leaders, members of Congress passed the Quit India resolution on August 8, 1942, demanding political freedom from Britain in exchange for support in the war effort. The following day, the British government arrested all Congress leaders, including Nehru and Gandhi.

On August 15, 1947, India finally gained its independence and Nehru became the nation's first prime minister. Amid the celebration of newly acquired freedom, there was also considerable turmoil. The mass displacement that followed partition into the separate nations of Pakistan and India, along with disputes over control of Kashmir, resulted in the loss of property and lives for several hundred thousand Muslims and Hindus.

In 1950, Nehru was integral in passing a new constitution for India, one that attempted to abolish the caste system. Throughout his 17-year leadership, Nehru advocated democratic socialism and secularism and encouraged India's industrialization beginning with the implementation of the first of his five-year plans in 1951, which emphasized the importance of increasing agricultural production. He also promoted scientific advancements through the establishment of higher learning,

and instituted various social reforms such as free public education and meals for Indian children, legal rights for women—including the ability to inherit property and divorce their husbands—and laws to prohibit discrimination based on caste, as previously mentioned.

During the Cold War, Nehru adopted a policy of non-alignment in which he professed neutrality, but was criticized when he refused to condemn the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and later requested foreign aid after China invaded India's northern border in 1962. The conflict, known as the Sino-Indian War, had a deleterious effect on Nehru's health, resulting in a severe stroke in January of 1964 and his death a few months later on May 27.

Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru. She became a national political figure in 1955, when she was elected to the executive body of the Congress Party. In 1959, she served as president of the party and in 1964 was appointed to an important post in Lal Bahadur Shastri's ruling government. Soon after becoming prime minister, Gandhi was challenged by the right wing of the Congress Party, and in the 1967 election she won only a narrow victory and thus had to rule with a deputy prime minister.

In 1971, she won a resounding reelection victory over the opposition and became the undisputed leader of India. That year, she ordered India's invasion of Pakistan in support of the creation of Bangladesh, which won her greater popularity and led her New Congress Party to a landslide victory in national elections in 1972. During the next few years, she presided over increasing civil unrest brought on by food shortages, inflation, and regional disputes. Her administration was criticized for its strong-arm tactics in dealing with these problems.

Indira Gandhi built upon the foundations laid by Jawaharlal Nehru to convert India into a growing nuclear power. India conducted its first "peaceful nuclear experiment" as she described it on May 18, 1974, building up the country's capability without anyone finding out. Without this the nuclear tests of May 1998 would not have been possible and India's achievements in nuclear science, technology and energy would have been far from strong and self-reliant. Yet, like her father, she was a firm believer in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

In 1984, the Sikh leaders set up base in their sacred Golden Temple in Amritsar. Gandhi responded by sending the Indian army in, and hundreds of Sikhs were killed in the government assault. In retaliation, Sikh members of Gandhi's own bodyguard gunned her down on the grounds of her home on October 31, 1984.

Passage 5

Decolonization of Asia and Africa, 1945–1960

Between 1945 and 1960, three dozen new states in Asia and Africa achieved autonomy or outright independence from their European colonial rulers.

There was no one process of decolonization. In some areas, it was peaceful, and orderly. In many others, independence was achieved only after a revolution. A few newly independent countries acquired stable governments almost immediately; others were ruled by dictators or military juntas for decades, or endured long civil wars. Some European governments welcomed a new relationship with their former colonies; others contested decolonization militarily. The process of decolonization coincided with the new Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States, and with the early development of the new United Nations. Decolonization was often affected by superpower competition, and had a definite impact on the evolution of that competition. It also significantly changed the pattern of international relations in a more general sense.

The creation of so many new countries, some of which occupied strategic locations, others of which possessed significant natural resources, and most of which were desperately poor, altered the composition of the United Nations and political complexity of every region of the globe. In the mid to late 19th century, the European powers colonized much of Africa and Southeast Asia. During the decades of imperialism, the industrializing powers of Europe viewed the African and Asian continents as reservoirs of raw materials, labor, and territory for future settlement. In most cases, however, significant development and European settlement in these colonies was sporadic. However, the colonies were exploited, sometimes brutally, for natural and labor resources, and sometimes even for military conscripts. In addition, the introduction of colonial rule drew arbitrary natural boundaries where none had existed before, dividing ethnic and linguistic groups and natural features, and laying the foundation for the creation of numerous states lacking geographic, linguistic, ethnic, or political affinity.

During World War II Japan, itself a significant imperial power, drove the European powers out of Asia. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, local nationalist movements in the former Asian colonies campaigned for independence rather than a return to European colonial rule. In many cases, as in Indonesia and French Indochina, these nationalists had been guerrillas fighting the Japanese after European surrenders, or were former members of colonial military establishments. These independence movements often appealed to the United States Government for support.

While the United States generally supported the concept of national self-determination, it also had strong ties to its European allies, who had imperial claims on their former colonies. The Cold War only served to complicate the U.S. position, as U.S. support for decolonization was offset by American concern over communist expansion and Soviet strategic ambitions in Europe. Several of the NATO allies asserted that their colonial possessions provided them with economic and military strength that would otherwise be lost to the alliance. Nearly all of the United States' European allies believed that after their recovery from World War II their colonies would finally provide the combination of raw materials and protected markets for finished goods that would cement the colonies to Europe. Whether or not this was the case, the alternative of allowing the colonies to slip away, perhaps into the United States' economic sphere or that of another power, was unappealing to every European government interested in postwar stability.

Although the U.S. Government did not force the issue, it encouraged the European imperial powers to negotiate an early withdrawal from their overseas colonies. The United States granted independence to the Philippines in 1946.

However, as the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union came to dominate U.S. foreign policy concerns in the late 1940s and 1950s, the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations grew increasingly concerned that as the European powers lost their colonies or granted them independence, Soviet-supported communist parties might achieve power in the new states. This might serve to shift the international balance of power in favor of the Soviet Union and remove access to economic resources from U.S. allies. Events such as the Indonesian struggle for independence from the Netherlands (1945–50), the Vietnamese war against France (1945–54), and the nationalist and professed socialist takeovers of Egypt (1952) and Iran (1951) served to reinforce such fears, even if new governments did not directly link themselves to the Soviet Union. Thus, the United States used aid packages, technical assistance and sometimes even military intervention to encourage newly independent nations in the Third World to adopt governments that aligned with the West. The Soviet Union deployed similar tactics in an effort to encourage new nations to join the communist bloc, and attempted to convince newly decolonized countries that communism was an intrinsically non-imperialist economic and political ideology. Many of the new nations resisted the pressure to be drawn into the Cold War, joined in the “nonaligned movement,” which formed after the Bandung conference of 1955, and focused on internal development.

The newly independent nations that emerged in the 1950s and the 1960s became an important factor in changing the balance of power within the United Nations. In 1946, there were 35 member states in the United Nations; as the newly independent nations of the “third world” joined the organization, by 1970 membership had swelled to 127. These new member states had a few characteristics in common; they were non-white, with developing economies, facing internal problems that were the result of their colonial past, which sometimes put them at odds with European countries and made them suspicious of European-style governmental structures, political ideas, and economic institutions. These countries also became vocal advocates of continuing decolonization, with the result that the UN Assembly was often ahead of the Security Council on issues of self-governance and decolonization. The new nations pushed the UN toward accepting resolutions for independence for colonial states and creating a special committee on colonialism, demonstrating that even though some nations continued to struggle for independence, in the eyes of the international community, the colonial era was ending.