

Glossary

38th Parallel

The popular name given to the circle of latitude in the northern hemisphere that separates North Korea from South Korea. The parallel was chosen as the army frontier between the American and Soviet sectors of Korea in 1945 and was originally intended to be a temporary dividing line. The parallel marks the approximate start and finishing positions of the two sides during the Korean War.

Alphabet agencies

Government agencies known for convenience by their initials.

Annexation

The taking over or incorporation of a territory, usually by a more powerful country.

Arab League

An organisation of Arab states designed to encourage collaboration between them and protect their interests in the region. It was established in 1945 to promote the political, economic and cultural interests of the Arab countries. Founder members included Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

Arab Nationalism

Arab Nationalists opposed Western interference in their affairs and were also in favour of a politically united Arab world. They believed that since all Arabs were linked by ties of language, religion, culture, and history there should be a single Arab nation.

Arms race

Germany launched a naval race with Great Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. Britain responded by introducing a new class of battleship, the Dreadnought, in 1905.

Autocracy

A government by an individual with unrestricted authority.

Axis powers

Germany, Italy, Japan, and their allies during the Second World War.

Bakelite

An early plastic that did not conduct electricity and was resistant to heat. As a result of

these properties it was used in products such as saucepan handles and electrical plugs and switches.

Bantustan

Territory set aside as a homeland for black South Africans.

Bloc

A group of countries, tied together by military alliance and/or different ideologies.

Blockade

A form of economic warfare where one country attempts to prevent goods or equipment being imported to its rival.

Bloemfontein Conference

This conference from 31 May to 5 June 1899 aimed to resolve the **Uitlander** problem.

Boers

Descendants of the Dutch-speaking population who settled in southern Africa during the seventeenth century. The word "Boer" means farmer.

Bolsheviks

Members of the left-wing majority group of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party that adopted Lenin's ideas. See also **Mensheviks**.

British Dominions

Self-governing territories within the British Empire such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Broederbond

A secret society that looked after Afrikaner interests in business and the professions.

Capitalist

A form of economic system where most of the economy is privately owned.

CIA

The Central Intelligence Agency of America is the branch of government responsible for monitoring potential threats to the USA. Its actions are highly secretive but it is responsible for spying as well as secret operations within other countries.

Civil rights laws

Laws to reduce or end racial discrimination.

Client state

A state that is effectively controlled or under the influence of another. The form of control or influence might be political, economic or military.

Coalition

A coalition government is made up of representatives from a number of different political parties in order to command a majority.

Collectivisation

A policy, pursued between 1928 and 1933 in Russia, to consolidate individual land and labour into state farms.

COMINFORM

Set up by the USSR to ensure all the communist parties of eastern and western Europe followed the Soviet model of communism.

Communism

An ideology which aims to create an equal society, where the economy is controlled by the people and private ownership does not exist.

Conference of Ambassadors

Established in 1920, this was a group of senior diplomats representing the Allied powers who oversaw matters arising from the peace settlement. As such it duplicated some of the functions of the League. It played a major role in the resolution of the Vilna dispute and the Corfu Incident. After 1925 it became increasingly inactive until it was dissolved in 1931.

Congress

The American law-making assemblies: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Conscientious objectors

After the introduction of the 1916 Military Service Act, which introduced conscription in Britain, thousands of men applied to be exempted from military service on the grounds of their conscience.

Constitution

A set of rules which outline the powers of a country's political institutions and the rights of its citizens.

Containment

Truman developed this strategy 1945–7, which was intended to prevent the USSR expanding any

further. Its main components were the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid.

Covenant of the League of Nations

The Covenant was the name chosen by President Wilson to describe the constitution or charter of the League of Nations. It comprised 26 articles which laid out the structure, rules, procedures, and functions of the League.

Demilitarised

Without troops, armaments or fortifications.

Democracy

A form of political system based on popular consent.

Denazified

An Allied initiative to purge German society and politics of any Nazi influence.

Détente

A period of relaxation of tension during the Cold War, lasting between 1968–79. Its main features included arms control and agreement over human rights.

Diaspora

The mass exodus of Palestinians after the declaration of the state of Israel in May 1948.

Diktat

Something that is imposed or dictated without discussion.

Duma

The Russian parliament created in 1905 under the **October Manifesto**.

Eisenhower Doctrine

In many ways, this updated the 1947 Truman Doctrine. Under its terms, any state under threat of armed aggression could request US military and/or economic assistance.

Empire

Where one country rules over other territories for economic and political control.

Enigma

A machine used to send encrypted signals intelligence to German armed forces during the Second World War. The Germans however did not know that British code-breakers at Bletchley Park were able to break the code.

European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

Created by the 1951 Treaty of Paris, the European Coal and Steel Community created a common market for coal and steel for the six countries who signed the treaty. These were: France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, and West Germany.

Fatah

Formed in the 1950s, it emerged as the largest Palestinian political faction within the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

Formosa

Following the victory of the Communists in the Chinese Civil War (1946–9), the offshore island of Taiwan, formerly known as Formosa, became the base for the nationalist Chiang Kai-Shek's non-communist Republic of China. These circumstances made Taiwan a key American interest in the Far East during the Cold War.

Fundamental Laws

The Fundamental Laws were a way for Nicholas II of Russia to regain control over the country after giving away some power in the manifesto. It ensured the Tsar still had control over the laws passed by giving him an overall veto. He also retained for himself certain rights: that to declare war, to control the church, and to dissolve the Duma whenever he saw fit. The Tsar also had the power to appoint and dismiss ministers.

Gang of Four

The four leading members of the Communist Party who, along with Mao, were the leaders of the Cultural Revolution. They were Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyan and Zhang Chunqiao.

General Secretary

The highest position in Chinese politics. The holder of the position generally is the leader of China.

Geneva Protocol

This was drafted in 1924 on the initiative of MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, together with Herriot, his counterpart in France. League members were required to agree to the compulsory arbitration of disputes by the Permanent Court of International Justice failing agreement between the parties concerned. The decision would be backed up by the economic and military power of all members. If the protocol had been adopted the League would have been significantly strengthened. Macdonald lost a general election

later in 1924 and the incoming government refused to approve the scheme.

Great Leap Forward

Economic plan to increase China's production of materials announced in 1958.

Great Purges

The removal of people who are considered undesirable by those in power from a government, from another organization, or from society as a whole.

Guantanamo Bay

A bay on the south-east corner of Cuba which has a large harbour and is protected on one side by steep hills.

Guerrilla

A type of warfare fought by an irregular armed force who often use methods such as sabotage and secret attacks.

Hamas

Formed in 1987, with a short-term goal of removing Israel from the occupied territories, it aspires to create a united Palestinian homeland.

Hezbollah

Formed in 1982 by Shia Muslim clerics as a vehicle to help drive Israeli forces out of Lebanon, Hezbollah rejects the right of Israel to exist, and has frequently resorted to cross border attacks against Israeli forces.

Hindenburg line

German forces on the Western Front retreated to a shortened defensive position after the Battle of the Somme. Featuring concrete bunkers, fortified villages, underground tunnels and protected by rows of barbed wire, it was meant to provide an impregnable position from which to prevent further Allied advance.

Imperialist

Someone who wants to promote the cause of empire, usually by extending the colonies of the mother country.

Intifada

An uprising against the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, 1987–92.

Iron Curtain

A line dividing Europe into the Soviet-controlled East and the capitalist West.

Israel Defense Force

The armed force of Israel, created out of the major Jewish terrorist groups in 1948.

Japan

When Japan surrendered in August 1945 it was occupied by America and other Allied countries. With the growth in communist influence after 1945, America became committed to ensuring the economic recovery of Japan. During this process Japan became a major trading partner of the US and America's principal ally in the Far East.

Katanga

In 1960, Katanga was the richest and most developed province in the new Democratic Republic of the Congo. Its wealth was based on valuable mineral deposits of copper, gold, and uranium. As a separate state Katanga would be able to keep this wealth for itself, hence Belgian business interests supported the declaration of independence.

Kellogg-Briand Pact

In 1927 Briand, the French Foreign Minister, suggested to the American Secretary of State Kellogg that the two countries should sign a pact renouncing war. Kellogg suggested that the pact be extended to include more countries and by 1928 it had 65 signatories including Germany, Italy, and Japan. The pact amounted to little more than an international statement of good intentions.

KGB

The Russian secret police.

Lend-Lease

From 1941, the USA lent, leased, and sold military equipment to countries fighting Germany, Italy or Japan.

Liberal

A political ideology that seeks to maximise personal freedoms.

Line production

Most manufactured articles are the result of a number of production tasks or processes. In line production these actions are performed in sequence by specialist workers or tools as the product passes through the factory.

Locarno

The Locarno Treaties signed in 1925 were thought at the time to mark the beginning of a new era of international harmony. For the first time since 1918 Germany was treated on a par with the other European powers. The treaties provided guarantees for the frontiers of north-eastern Europe and confirmed the demilitarised status of the Rhineland. They said nothing, however, about the frontiers of eastern Europe.

Mandated territories

Mandates were former German or Turkish colonies handed over to the Allies to be governed by them on behalf of the League of Nations.

Manhattan Project

The US research project tasked to develop an atomic bomb.

Mensheviks

A faction of the Russian revolutionary movement that emerged in 1904 after a dispute between two sides of the party. The party divided into the "Mensheviks" and the "Bolsheviks".

Midwestern states

A portion of the central USA including states such as Illinois, Kansas and Ohio. The region is mostly lowland and provides some of the richest farming land in the world. Chicago is the largest city followed by Indianapolis, Columbus, and Detroit.

Mir

The local commune in Russia. Often a very conservative organisation that restricted peasants from purchasing new machinery and decided what peasants grew.

Moderate

A politician who favours the middle ground of policy, rejecting extreme solutions.

Monopoly

Where there is only one producer, manufacturer or provider.

Mutual assistance pact

An agreement between two or more countries whereby one country promises to help another in return for a promise of a similar kind.

National Liberation Front

Another name for the **Vietcong**.

Nationalisation

The taking over by the state of a privately-run firm or industry so that the profits can be directed into the national treasury.

Nationalist

Someone who strongly identifies with the fortunes of his or her country. A nationalist would be an enthusiastic supporter of foreign policy or international sporting success.

NATO

The western military alliance against the Soviet Union.

Nazi-Soviet Pact

An agreement signed by Ribbentrop (German Foreign Minister) and Molotov (Soviet Foreign Minister) which led both countries to invade Poland.

NKVD

The public and secret police organization of the Soviet Union that directly executed the rule of power of the Soviets, including political repression, during the era of Joseph Stalin.

October Manifesto

The reforms put in place after the 1905 revolution.

Okhrana

The secret police force of the Russian Empire under the Tsars.

Pearl Harbor

A harbor on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. An attack on this port by Japan brought the USA into the Second World War.

People's courts

Courts made up of local people who would "try" people accused of crimes. Those on trial were often landlords.

Petrograd Soviet

Established in March 1917 after the February Revolution as the representative body of the city's workers.

Plebiscite

A vote on a single issue in the manner of a referendum. Plebiscites were held after 1918 in

areas of uncertain nationality to establish which country the populations wished to be governed by.

Potemkin

The Potemkin was a battleship of the Imperial Russian Navy. The ship was made famous by the Battleship Potemkin Uprising, a rebellion of the crew against their oppressive officers in June 1905.

Potsdam

A city 15 miles south of Berlin, where Churchill, Stalin, and President Harry Truman met to discuss the post-war world.

Prague Spring

A period of reform with the government making changes to many aspects of life in Czechoslovakia.

Premier

The head of the Chinese government.

Profit-sharing

Normally the profits of a firm or company go to the owners or shareholders. With profit-sharing, any surplus is often divided among the entire workforce.

Propaganda

A form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of others towards some cause or position.

Prospector

A businessman hoping to make a quick profit.

Provisional Government

The emergency or interim government set up when a political void was created by the collapse of Tsarist rule.

Rationing

A measure designed to ensure the regular supply of food and materials to a population. People would be issued with a ration card and only allowed to purchase a set amount of the rationed goods.

Red Guards

Russian volunteer soldiers made up of factory workers. They supported the Bolsheviks.

Reform

Make changes in an area of society, typically in order to improve it.

Regional Command

The supreme decision-making body of the Ba'ath Party within Iraq.

Reich

Empire or realm.

Reparations

The name given to the compensation that the defeated powers had to pay the Allies for damage caused and for war pensions. Reparations could be paid in cash or in goods such as coal or timber.

Repression

The oppression or persecution of an individual or group for political reasons.

Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)

Set up immediately after the 1968 revolution to become the most important decision-making body in Iraq.

Ruhr

A wealthy, industrial region in the Rhineland area of western Germany.

Russification

A policy that forced people to speak Russian and adopt Russian customs.

Sauer Report

The National Party in South Africa set up the Sauer Commission in 1947 to evaluate the current system of segregation. The resulting report favoured the continuation and extension of segregation across all areas of social and economic activity.

Self-determination

Allowing an area to decide its own political future, usually by means of a vote.

Serfs

Unfree peasants under feudalism; the enforced labour of serfs on the fields of landowners was a key part of nineteenth century Russia.

Share cropper

Farmers who gave a share of their output to the landowner as a form of rent.

Silent dictatorship

As chiefs of the German high command, Hindenburg and Ludendorff were able to create a position by September 1916 where they had the dominant influence over civilian and military

matters in Germany, and both the Kaiser and Reichstag were relegated in importance.

Southern states

Also called the American South or Dixie and includes Florida, Texas, and Louisiana. Until the mid-twentieth century the region relied heavily on farming. Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, and New Orleans are among the major cities of the area.

Sovereignty

Rule or control. A territory brought under British sovereignty is brought under the rule or control of the British crown.

Soviet

A council made up of workers.

Soviet-controlled government at Lublin

Set up during the liberation of Poland in 1944, it was dominated by socialists and refused to acknowledge the authority of the exiled Polish government based in London.

Speak bitterness meetings

Meetings in which the peasants were encouraged to air grievances towards their landlords. Previously they had not been allowed to do so.

Speculators

People who buy and sell shares simply in order to make quick profits. Anyone with a bit of money can become a speculator.

Spheres of influence

A territory where one country has political or economic control.

Stresa Front

A united stand made by Britain, France, and Italy against Hitler's violations of the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles announced in March 1935. The Front issued a strongly worded protest. It was soon undermined when Britain negotiated the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 1935.

Successor states

The successor states from the Versailles Peace Settlement were Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Poland had been eliminated from the map of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century but the peacemakers wanted to recreate the country. In contrast, Czechoslovakia was a completely new state forged out of provinces of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire such as Bohemia

and Moravia. Similarly, Yugoslavia was a new state formed by merging Serbia with south-western provinces of the former empire such as Dalmatia, Croatia, and Bosnia.

Sudetenland

Territory located along the extended border areas of western Czechoslovakia mostly populated by Germans. The area contained many of Czechoslovakia's military defences, together with valuable raw materials and centres of engineering and textile manufacture. The famous Skoda engineering factory was located here.

Superpower

A powerful and influential nation, especially a nuclear power, that dominates its allies or client states in an international power bloc.

Suzerainty

A vague term meaning supremacy, lordship or general control.

Tariffs

Taxes on imports. The effect is to raise the price of the imported item making it more expensive. Tariffs are used partly to raise money and partly to protect home industries from foreign competition.

The Law of Return (1950)

A law giving every Jew the right to live permanently in Israel, and automatic citizenship of the new state. In 1952, this was amended to restrict immigration to those Jews who could be an asset economically or militarily.

Third Reich

The term used to describe the Nazi regime in Germany from 1933 to 1945.

Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation

An agreement designed to promote good relations between USA and Israel, it included reference to cultural links as well as economic aid for Israel.

Treaty of Paris

A treaty ending the conflict between the USA and Spain over Spanish influence in the Americas.

The USA victory meant that they gained influence and some measure of control over Cuba.

Uitlanders

Immigrant businessmen and workers attracted by the mineral wealth of the Transvaal.

United Nations (UNO or UN)

The international organisation founded in 1945 to promote peace, security, and economic development.

UN General Assembly

Comprising all members of the United Nations, the UN General Assembly is the main policy making, deliberative and representative body of the United Nations.

Versailles Settlement

A term used to describe the entire peace settlement of 1919–23. The phrase does not mean the same as Treaty of Versailles which is just one part of the Versailles Settlement.

Vietcong

A political and military group formed to fight the South Vietnamese and then later the USA.

Vietminh

A Vietnamese army founded in 1941 by the Communist Party.

Wall Street Crash

The stock market crash that took place in October 1929, when shares on the New York stock exchange on Wall Street plummeted, and marked the beginning of the World Depression.

Welfare benefits

Payments made by the government to assist the old, sick, and unemployed.

Zionism

A form of Jewish nationalism which supports the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.