Specific Objective: Analyze the causes of the Cold War, with the free world on one side and Soviet client states on the other, including competition for influence in such places as Egypt, the Congo, Vietnam, and Chile.

For nearly 45 years (about 1945 to 1991), the United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in hostility that consumed resources and affected world politics as surely as any war. The period became known as the Cold War.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The United States</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>The Soviet Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>was committed to democratic and capitalist systems</em></td>
<td><em>wanted to be the dominant power in the world</em></td>
<td><em>was committed to communist political and economic systems</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>believed the Soviet Union wanted to spread communism to other countries</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>believed the U.S. wanted to suppress revolution in other countries</em></td>
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During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the United States competed for dominance—especially in newly independent Asian and African nations:

_1960 Congo_  Patrice Lumumba, prime minister of the newly independent nation, receives support from the Soviet Union.

_1954–1979 Egypt_  Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser receives support from the Soviet Union.

_1964–1973 Vietnam_  In what begins as a civil war, the United States supports the anti-communist regime of South Vietnam.

_1973 Chile_  The United States supports a bloody overthrow of the socialist government of president Salvador Allende.

As the Cold War became global, many feared the possibility of a third world war, or a full scale nuclear war. The “hottest” or most direct confrontation came during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The U.S. response in the Cuban Missile Crisis was an example of brinkmanship—the willingness to go to the brink, or edge, of war in order to force an end to a crisis.

_The United States discovered Soviet missile sites on the island of Cuba._

_The United States blockaded Cuba and threatened to attack the Soviet Union._

_The Soviet Union agreed to remove the missiles._