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The Cold War

Since the end of the First World War, the United States had emerged as the strongest power in the world. After the Second World War, her power had grown still more compared with the European powers who had dominated the world for centuries. This was both in the spheres of economic and military strength. After she acquired the atom bomb, the awareness of her power was further strengthened. The United States at that time was the only country which possessed the atom bomb. Next to the United States the mightiest power in the world after the Second World War was the Soviet Union. She had suffered more than any other country in the war. Besides the 20 million people that she lost during the war, hundreds of her towns and thousands of factories had been completely destroyed. However, in spite of these losses, her power and prestige had increased. This was to some extent due to the very important role that she had played in defeating Germany. Since the revolution, she had been ostracized and boycotted and had faced the open hostility of the other big powers. However, after the war, a number of countries in Europe, as has already been mentioned, were ruled by communist parties. The Soviet Union exercised a lot of influence over the governments of these countries. As a result of these developments, the isolation of the Soviet Union had come to an end. Also, in many countries of Europe, as well as of Asia, communist parties had emerged stronger after the war. These parties were generally supporters of the Soviet Union. Some of these parties were actively engaged in organizing revolutions in their countries. For example, the communists had been a major force in the resistance against German occupation of Greece. A large part of the country came under their control when the German army retreated from there. However, after the war was over, monarchy was restored in Greece and the new government began to suppress the communists. This resulted in a civil war which lasted till 1949 when the communists were finally defeated.

During the war, Britain, the United States and

the Soviet Union had together fought against the fascist countries. Many declarations issued during the war had emphasized that the unity among these countries would continue after the war also and would be the basis of a durable peace and international brotherhood. These declarations had aroused hopes all over the world. However, the war was hardly over when conflicts and tensions began to emerge between Britain and the United States on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. The relations between them began to deteriorate and came to be characterized by what has been called the Cold War. Gradually, the Cold War became more and more intense and the world was divided into two major blocs -the United States and West European countries forming one bloc and the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe forming the other. Sometimes the 'cold' war became 'hot' but the hostilities remained confined to specific areas.

The most important reason for the 'out- break' of the Cold War was the Western countries' fear of communism. With the increase in the might of the Soviet Union, the emergence, of governments ruled by communist parties in Eastern and Central Europe and the growing strength of communist parties in many parts of the world, alarmed the governments of the United States, Britain and other West European countries. In 1949, the victory of the Communist Party of China in the civil war which had been raging there for about two decades added to the alarm. The United States openly declared that her policy "was to prevent the spread of communism. One of the objectives of the massive economic aid that the United States gave to West European countries was also to 'contain' communism. The United States began to look upon every development in the world from this standpoint, whether it promoted or helped in checking communism, Britain and West European countries became aligned with the United States and began to follow a policy mainly aimed at curbing the growth of communism. This had many adverse consequences for democracy, and freedom movements in the colonies. Restrictions were imposed on the liberties of the people, for

example, in the United States, and justified on the ground of national security and preventing communist influence. The freedom movements in many countries began to be considered unsympathetically by countries which not themselves colonial powers but aligned to the colonial powers. For ample, the United States supported Fr in suppressing the freedom movement in Indo-China. Countries which wanted pursue an independent policy and mote relations with the Soviet Union looked upon with suspicion. All factors made the international situation tense. In some areas it resulted in wars in many other areas it led to prolonging conflicts.

The growing tension in the world worsened by the setting up of military blocs. In 1949 was formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for fence against the Soviet Union. The members of this alliance were the United State Canada, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Portugal, Britain, France, Belgium, Hall and Luxemburg. Turkey, Greece, the Federal Republic of Germany and Spain came its members later. A NATO army was created which established its bas many countries of Europe. Similar military alliances were set up by the United State and Britain in other parts of the world. 1954 was set up the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEA TO) with the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan as members. In 1955 the Baghdad Pact was brought into being. It consisted Britain, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan and The United States established its military bases all over the world for use against what she considered the danger of communist aggression. The formation of the alliances and the establishment of military bases worsened the already tense international situation. These alliances and military bases came to be looked upon countries, which were not members of the alliances, as a danger to peace and to their independence. In some countries which were members of these alliances, these alliances were very unpopular. For example, when there was a revolution in Iraq in 1958, that country withdrew from the Baghdad Pact which had been named after capital of Iraq. The name of Baghdad

Pact was then changed to the Central Treaty organization (CENTO). These alliances were generally unpopular in the countries Asia and Africa as all the imperialist were of Europe were members of these alliances and used it to suppress the movements for freedom. Most of the countries of Asia and Africa which had won their freedom refused to join these alliances. As against these Western and Western sponsored alliances, the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Europe- Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic formed the Warsaw Pact. Under this act, the Soviet Union stationed her troops these countries. However, the Soviet Union and the other members of the War saw Pact did not if, have any military bases in other parts of the world. The Soviet Union had treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with China.

The formation of the military alliances accompanied by another dangerous development. This was the race for deadlier weapons of % destruction. You have already read about the use of two atom bombs against Japan towards the end of the and World War. For about four years the Second World War, only the United States possessed atomic weapons. In 1949, the Soviet Union tested her first atom bomb. A few years later nuclear weapons which were thousands of times more destructive than the atom bombs used against Japan, were developed. These were the thermonuclear or hydrogen bombs. The testing alone of these bombs created serious hazards to life. Many movements were launched in all parts of the world to demand a ban on the testing and manufacture of nuclear weapons. Most of the leading scientists such as Einstein and Linus Pauling also supported this demand. However, the arsenals of nuclear weapons in the world went on increasing. There are so many nuclear weapons in the world today that the world can be destroyed many times over. Along with the nuclear weapons and many other kinds of weapon new bombers, submarines and missiles have been developed which can carry these weapons over thousands of kilometres. The race for armaments which was

a part of the Cold War has created the danger to the very survival of human race. Vast resources have been spent on developing these weapons. These resources, if they had been utilized for peaceful purposes, would have gone a long way in abolishing want and poverty of which millions of people all over the world are victims.

Many newly independent nations of Asia and Africa as well as many nations in other continents did not join the military blocs. They began to follow a policy of non-alignment with any military bloc. Their emergence played a very important role in reducing the intensity of the Cold War and in creating an atmosphere of peace. A crucial role in promoting non-alignment and peace was played by India after her independence.

Rise of Asia and Africa

The period after the Second World War saw the emergence of most countries of Asia and Africa as independent nations. One country after another in these continents became independent. They won their independence through long and hard struggles against colonial powers. To some countries independence came only after long and bitter armed struggle; to others without much bloodshed but not without a long period of strife. Generally, the colonial powers were not willing to give up their hold on the colonies and left only when they found that it was not possible to maintain their rule any more. During the Second World War, many imperialist countries had been ousted from their colonies, but after the war they tried to re-establish their rule. For some time they succeeded in doing so but were ultimately forced to withdraw.

The achievement of independence was the result primarily of the struggles of the peoples of the colonies. However, the changes in the international climate which followed the Second World War helped the peoples struggling for independence. Imperialism as a whole had been weakened as a result of the war. The economies of many imperialist countries had suffered. Forces within the imperialist countries which were friendly with the peoples struggling for independence also had grown powerful. Freedom and democracy

were the major aims for which the Allies had fought against the fascist countries and these aims had been made the basis for arousing peoples all over the world against fascism. The fulfillment of these aims could no longer be confined only to Europe, had been done after the First World War. In many colonies which fascist countries occupied by ousting the older colonial powers, the freedom movements had played important role in the struggle against fascist occupation. For example, Japan had to face the resistance of the freedom movements in the countries of East and So East Asia which she had occupied. It not easy to restore the rule of the for colonial powers over these countries.

Another major international factor which facilitated the end of imperialism was the emergence of the Soviet Union other socialist countries as a major force these countries were inimical to imperialism and often gave aid and support to freedom movements in the colonies. Similarly, the movements of socialism which had grown powerful the world over, including in the colonial countries, also ported the movements of freedom in colonies.

The entire international context which the freedom movements were launched had changed after the Second World War. At the international forums, particularly at the United Nations, the idea of the independence of colonies began gain popularity. The international opinion was clearly against the continuation of imperialism. Imperialist countries resorted to various means to maintain their rule. They tried to create divisions in the freedom movements. They resorted to the use of terror. In some countries they tried to install governments which were nominally free but were in fact their puppets. However, most of the freedom movement were able to defeat these methods of disruption.

An important role in the achievement independence by the countries of Asia and Africa was played by the unity which freedom movements in various countries achieved. The freedom movement in one country supported the freedom movements in other countries. The role of countries

In which had achieved their independence was very crucial in this regard. These countries supported the cause of those peoples who were still under colonial rule at the United Nations and other international forums. They also gave active help to the freedom movements. India played a crucial role in promoting the cause of freedom in Asia and Africa. Besides the movements in the colonies for independence, there were also movements in Asian and African countries to oust out dated political systems, to modernize the social and economic systems and to assume control over the resources of one's country which had remained under foreign control even after freedom. These movements expressed the resolve of the peoples of Asia and Africa to become fully independent as well as to launch programmes of rapid social and economic development. Within two decades of the end of the Second World War, the political map of Asia and Africa had been completely changed.

Emergence of Independent Nations in Asia

Within a few years after the Second World War, a large number of Asian countries became independent. One of the first to win her independence was India about which you will read in detail in Chapter 16. India had, however, been partitioned and along with India, another independent state, Pakistan, also came into being (Pakistan broke up in 1971 when her eastern part -now Bangladesh -became independent.) The independence of India was of great importance in the history of freedom movements in Asia and Africa. The policies pursued by the government of independent India under the leadership of her first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, helped in strengthening the freedom movements in other countries and in hastening the achievement of independence by them.

Burma, renamed Myanmar recently, achieved her independence from Britain a few months after India became independent. In 1944, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) had been formed in Burma. Its aim was to resist the

Japanese invasion of Burma and to win independence for Burma. After the war, the British tried to restore their rule over Burma. This led to the intensification of the movement for freedom. In the course of the struggle, many leaders of the Burmese freedom movement were assassinated. However, Britain was forced to agree to the demand for freedom and Burma became independent on 4 January 1948.

The beginning of the nationalist movement in Indonesia has been referred to in the previous chapter. After the defeat of Japan, Sukarno, one of the pioneers of the freedom movement in Indonesia, proclaimed the independence of Indonesia. However, soon after the British troops landed there in order to help the Dutch to restore their rule. The government of independent Indonesia which had been formed by Sukarno resisted the attempt to reestablish colonial rule. There were demands in many countries of the world to put an end to the war which had been started in Indonesia to restore the Dutch rule. In Asian countries, the reaction was particularly intense. The leaders of the Indian freedom movement demanded that Indian soldiers who had been sent to Indonesia as a part of the British army should be withdrawn. After India became free, she convened a conference of Asian nations in support of Indonesia's independence. The conference met in New Delhi in January 1949 and called for the complete independence of Indonesia. The resistance of the Indonesian people and the mounting pressure of world opinion and Asian countries compelled Holland to set the leaders of Indonesian people free. On 2 November 1949, Holland recognized the independence of Indonesia.

Within a few months of India's independence, Sri Lanka (Ceylon) also became free in February 1948. Thailand had been occupied by Japan and after the defeat of Japan became independent. During the war, Japan had driven out the American forces from the Philippines. In 1946, the government of the United States agreed to independence of the Philippines. In Malaya British rule had been reestablished after the war. In 1957,

Malaya (now Malaysia) became an independent nation.

The Revolution in China

You have read earlier about the between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China which had been b under the leadership of Dr Sun YatSen for the complete independence and unification of China. This unity had been broken after the death of Sun YatSen and a civil war started in China between Kuomintang under the leadership Chiang KaiShek and the Communist Part of China whose most important leader Mao Zedong. After the Japanese invasion of China, the two parties and their armies rated for some time to resist the Japan aggression. However, the conflicts between the two never ceased. The Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-Shek was a which mainly represented the interest capitalists and landlords. The Communist Party, on the other hand, was a party of workers and peasants. In the areas under Communist Party's control, the estates of landlords had been expropriated the land distributed among the peasants. Because of the policies pursued by the Communist Party, it gradually had won over millions of Chinese people to its side. Communist Party had also organized a huge army called the People's Liberation, after the defeat of Japan and the driving out of the Japanese forces from, the civil war again broke out. The government of the United States gave massive aid to Chiang Kai-Shek, but by 1949 his armies were completely routed. With the remnants of his troops, Chiang Kai-Shek went to Taiwan (Formosa), an island which had been occupied by Japan after she had defeated China in 1895. On 1 October 1949, the People's Republic of China was proclaimed and the Communist party of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong came to power.

The victory of the Communist revolution in China was a world-shaking event. The most populous country in the world had come under communist rule. Besides the socialist countries of Europe, there were now two mighty powers in the world the Soviet Union and China -which were ruled by communist parties. Imperialism was further

weakened in Asia as a result of the Chinese revolution.

The establishment of the People's Republic of China was a defeat for the United States. She refused to recognize the government of China for over two decades. According to the United States, the legal government of China was that of Chiang Kai-Shek in Taiwan (Formosa). Because of the US attitude, the most populous country in the world was denied even membership of the United Nations for over two decades.

For many years, friendly relations existed between India and China. Together the two countries played a very important role in the freedom movements of the peoples of Asia and Africa and in bringing about the unity of the Asian and African nations. However towards the end of the 1950s, the foreign policy of the Chinese government began to change. In 1962, China committed aggression against India which dealt a severe blow not only to the friendship between India and China but also to the unity of Asian African nations. China's relations with the Soviet Union also began to deteriorate. She supported Pakistan against India over various issues. After 1970, her relations with the United States began to improve. She was admitted to the United Nations and is now one of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The Korean War

Korea, as you have read before, had come under Japanese rule in 1910. After Japan's defeat in the Second World War, she was divided into two zones, the northern zone under Soviet occupation and the southern zone under American occupation, to bring about the surrender of Japanese troops. The aim was to make Korea an independent state. However, as in the case of Germany in Europe, two different governments in Korea were formed in 1948 -the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) under the leadership of Korean Communists and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) by a group of parties under the leadership of Syngman Rhee. Rhee was an anti-communist and wanted an

alliance with Chiang Kai-Shek to prevent the spread of communism. Both the states organized their armies and there were frequent clashes between them. In 1948, the Soviet troops withdrew from Korea followed by the American troops who withdrew in 1949. Both the government of Korea favoured unification of the country but there was no meeting ground between them.

In June 1950 war broke out between North and South Korea. The Chinese revolution had already taken place and the United States feared further expansion of communism in this area. The United States sent troops to support South Korea in the war. Troops from some other countries aligned with the United States also fought in Korea. These troops fought as the troops of the United Nations because the Security Council of the United Nations had passed a resolution condemning North Korea and had asked members of the United Nations to aid South Korea. After the entry of the American forces in the war, the Chinese forces also entered the war and the situation took a very serious turn. There was a real danger of another world war breaking out, as by this time the Soviet Union also had acquired atomic bombs. However, though the war in Korea raged for three years, it did not turn into a world war. The armistice was signed in 1953. Korea remained divided into two separate states. India played a very important role in bringing the war in Korea to an end. Even though the war was confined to Korea, hundreds of thousands of people killed, including over 142,000 Americans. The Korean war added to the danger another world war. It also worsened tensions in the world and led to the intensification of the Cold War.

The Struggle in Vietnam

One of the most heroic battles for freedom was fought by the people of Vietnam, country along with Laos and Cam comprised Indo-China which had under French colonial rule. After the French government surrendered to Germ many parts of Indo-China were occupied by Japan. The movement for the freedom of Indo-China from

French rule had started many years earlier. The greatest lead the people of Vietnam was Ho Chi-Minh. He had been engaged in organizing communist and the nationalist movement in Vietnam since soon after the end of First World War. The Vietnamese p under Ho Chi-Minh's leadership resisted the Japanese occupation and organized a people's army called the Viet Minh. By time the Second World War ended, the Minh controlled a large part of Vietnam August 1945, the Democratic Republic Vietnam was proclaimed with Ho Chi-Minh as President. However, the British troops as well as the troops of Chiang Shek arrived in Vietnam on the pretext completing the surrender of Japanese troop there. In October 1945, the French troops also arrived with the aim of restoring French rule. In 1946, the French army started fighting against the Viet Minh. They set up a government with Bao Dai, who headed the puppet government under pan earlier, as the ruler. The war between the Viet Minh and France continued eight years. In 1954, the French forces suffered a severe blow at the hands of the Viet Minh at the fortress of Dien Bien Phu. The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu has become famous because a people's army without any sophisticated weapons had defeated the army of a powerful imperialist country. The debacle at Dien Bien Phu compelled the French government to start negotiations with the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In July 1954, an international conference was held at Geneva. It was agreed to partition Vietnam temporarily into North Vietnam and South Vietnam and to hold elections all over Vietnam within two years to unity the country under a single government. Cambodia and Laos, the other two countries of Indo-China, were made independent.

With the partition of Vietnam, another phase in the freedom movement in Vietnam began. The government that was established in South Vietnam, with the support of the United States, refused to abide by the decisions of the Geneva conference with regard to the holding of elections and the unification of Vietnam. It came to be increasingly regarded as being under the control of the United States which was opposed to the unification of

Vietnam under the leadership of the communist party. In the early 1960s, uprisings broke out in South Vietnam against the government there. This was followed by the massive military intervention of the United States in Vietnam. Hundreds of thousands of American troops were sent there with some of the most advanced weaponry to suppress the popular uprising. The war continued for a number of years. The South Vietnamese people led by the National Liberation Front carried on guerilla warfare. They had the support of North Vietnam. The American troops carried the war into North Vietnam. Incalculable damage was done to Vietnam as a result of the heavy bombings by American forces. The American troops also used weapons of bacteriological warfare. Vast areas of Vietnam were devastated and hundreds of thousands of people killed. The American forces also suffered heavy casualties.

The United States was almost completely isolated in the world over the war in Vietnam. Besides the opposition to this war by scores of governments, there was a worldwide movement of protest against the U.S. government and of solidarity with the people of Vietnam. The only movement of this kind had emerged in the 1930s in support of the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War and against Germany and Italy who were actively helping the fascists in Spain. The opposition to the war grew in the United States itself on an unprecedented scale. Thousands of Americans refused to be drafted in the U.S. army and many American soldiers deserted. No other single issue had united millions of people all over the world as the war in Vietnam. However, the U.S. government continued the war even though it was clear that she could not win it.

Early in 1975, the war took a decisive turn. The armies of North Vietnam and of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam swept across the country routing the American supported troops of the government of South Vietnam. In January 1973, the American troops had begun to withdraw from Vietnam. During the war in Vietnam, 58,000 of them had lost their lives. By 30 April 1975, all the American troops had withdrawn and the capital

of South Vietnam, Saigon, was liberated. North and South Vietnam were formally united as one country in 1976. The city of Saigon was renamed Ho Chi-Minh City after the great leader of the Vietnamese people who had died a few years earlier in 1969.

The emergence of Vietnam as a united and independent nation is an historic event in the history of the world. A small country had succeeded in winning her independence and unification in the face of the armed opposition of the greatest power in the world. The help given to Vietnam by the socialist countries, the political support extended to her by a large number of Asian and African countries, and the solidarity expressed by the peoples in all parts of the world had helped in bringing victory to the people of Vietnam.

The war in Vietnam had also spread to Cambodia. In 1970, the government of Prince Norodom Sihanouk was overthrown and a puppet government was installed there. The troops of the USA and South Vietnam had carried the war to Cambodia on the ground that the Vietnamese were receiving their supplies from bases in Cambodia. By the time the United States withdrew from the war in 1975, a party which called itself Khmer Rouge had taken control of Cambodia under the leadership of Pol Pot. The government of Pol Pot established a regime of terror in Cambodia and started following a policy of genocide against its own people. The estimates of people murdered by the Khmer Rouge vary from one million to three million. In 1979, Pol Pot's government was overthrown with the help of Vietnamese troops. However, the war in Cambodia continued as the Khmer Rouge still had some areas under its control inside the country. It also operated from across the border with Thailand. In the meantime, three groups, including the Khmer Rouge and the group led by Norodom Sihanouk, came together in opposition to the government in Cambodia which was supported by Vietnam.

Peace was restored in Cambodia recently. The United Nations brought the various warring factions together and an agreement was signed under the auspices of the United Nations. The

Vietnamese troops were withdrawn from Cambodia. In 1993, elections were held and a coalition government was formed. The Khmer Rouge, however, remained outside the government and its troops continued their armed attacks in some parts of the country.

Developments in West Asia and North Africa

Syria and Lebanon Become Independent: As in other parts of Asia, there was an upsurge for freedom in West Asia also immediately after the Second World War. You have read in the previous chapter about the movement of the people of Syria against the French rule. After the war, the French tried to restore their authority over Syria and Lebanon but, in the face of opposition from the people of these countries and the world opinion, they were forced to withdraw. Both Syria and Lebanon became independent by the end of 1946. There was an upsurge in all the Arab countries at this time and the 1950s saw their emergence as independent nations. Some countries which had been nominally free asserted their independence. There were also movements to overthrow the outdated political systems which existed in some countries. All these led to conflicts and, in some cases, prolonged wars between the Arab countries and the imperialist powers. The period saw the growing power of Arab nationalism which led to efforts by the Arab people and governments to come together to face and solve common problems. The Arab League was formed comprising all the Arab states.

However, before many of the Arab countries could gain their independence, a development took place in West Asia which was to become a source of tension and lead to many wars in the years to come. This was the creation of the state of Israel.

The State of Israel : Palestine, as has been mentioned before, had become a British mandate in 1919. The British troops again occupied the country in 1945. Palestine was inhabited by Arabs and Jews. A movement called the Zionist movement claimed that Palestine was the homeland

of all the Jews, wherever they may be living, and should be restored to them. The persecution which the Jews in Europe had suffered for centuries had culminated in the Nazi Germany's policy of exterminating them. Millions of Jews were killed in Germany and in those countries of Europe which had been occupied by Germany. The terrible tragedy had won them the sympathy and support of the world.

The British in Palestine had permitted some Jews from outside Palestine to settle there. The Zionists had, meanwhile, been campaigning for a Jewish state there. This had complicated the freedom movement in Palestine the majority of whose inhabitants were Arabs. In 1947 the United Nations passed a resolution according to which Palestine was to be divided into an Arab state and a Jewish state. However, in 1948, the British withdrew their troops from Palestine and soon after the state of Israel was proclaimed. This led to a war between the Arab states and Israel. The Arab states were defeated in the war. The creation of Israel became a source of tension in West Asia. The Arab states refused to recognize her as a legitimate state. The policies pursued by the government of Israel further added to the bitterness. About 900,000 Arabs were forced to leave their homes and lands in Palestine and were rendered homeless. They found shelter in various refugee camps in Arab states. Most countries of Asia and Africa condemned the Israeli government's treatment of the Arabs of Palestine and for following racist policies. In 1956 Israel joined Britain and France in invading Egypt. Later there were other wars between Israel and the Arab states as a result of which Israel occupied large parts of the territories of other Arab states.

These territories include the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the West Bank. More than a million Palestinians live in the occupied territories. In spite of the resolutions of the United Nations, Israel refuse to vacate Arab territories and restore the rights of the Palestinian Arabs many of whom live as refugees in various Arab states. In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed to fight for the establishment of a Palestinian

state. It enjoys the status of a member-state of the Non-Aligned Movement. Recently an agreement was signed between the government of Israel and the PLO. Under this agreement, the PLO recognized the state of Israel and the government of Israel agreed to give the Palestinians autonomy in some areas presently under Israeli occupation.

The Revolution in Egypt : After the First World War, Egypt had become a British 'mandate'. However, under the pressure of the nationalist movement, Egypt had been declared independent in 1922 though British troops continued to remain there. After the Second World War, the demand for the withdrawal of British troops gained strength. There were serious clashes between the Egyptians and the British soldiers in which hundreds of Egyptians were killed. The discontent was also directed against the king of Egypt who had been installed by the British. The discontent against the British and the king led to a revolution in 1952 when the Egyptian army under the leadership of Lt Colonel Gamal Abdal Nasser and General Muhammad Naguib overthrew the monarchy and declared Egypt a republic. The new Egyptian government demanded the withdrawal of British troops and they were withdrawn in June 1956.

The government of Egypt under the leadership of Col Nasser began the economic reconstruction of the country. Egypt refused to be aligned with the United States and the latter stopped the sale of arms to Egypt. Egypt, however, began to receive military and economic aid from the Soviet Union. In 1956, Egypt announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal which had been under the control of Britain and France. Three months later, Israel, Britain and France, according to a plan, invaded Egypt. The aggression committed against Egypt led to world-wide protests. The countries of Asia voiced their vehement condemnation of the invasion. There were massive protest demonstrations against the British government inside Britain also. The Soviet Union warned the aggressor countries unless they withdrew from Egypt she would send her forces to crush the aggressors. Almost every country in the world including the United States, denounced Britain,

France and Israel in the United Nations. The universal condemnation of aggression led to the withdrawal of British and French forces from Egypt. The ending of aggression strengthened further the unity of Asian and African countries in general and of Arab countries in particular. It also showed the growing strength of the countries which had won their independence only a few years ago. The Suez War also added to the prestige and influence of the Soviet Union as a friend of the peoples who were trying to assert their independence.

Libya Gains Independence : You have read before that Libya had come under Italian rule in 1911. During the Second World War, some of the most ferocious battles between German and British troops were fought in Libya. At the end of the war, the country was occupied by Britain and France. In 1951, Libya became independent with a monarchical form of government. From 1960 she became one of the largest petroleum producing countries in the world and as a result some sections of Libyan society grew very rich while the majority of the population remained extremely backward. The king did not permit any opposition to his rule. The United States built one of its strongest air bases on Libyan territory. In 1969, a group of army officers captured power and soon after abolished the monarchy. The new government proclaimed that it would give primacy to the unity and solidarity of the Arab people. Freedom Struggle in Algeria: The 1950s saw the emergence of a number of independent nations in North Africa. However, the independence was preceded by years of struggle against the imperialist countries which wanted to retain their colonial possessions. As in Indo-China, the French returned to Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria. However, in 1956 Tunisia and Morocco won their independence. The North African country which had to wage the longest and the hardest battle for freedom was Algeria. She had been conquered by France as early as 1830 though it had taken France another four decades to fully establish her rule there. As in Indo-China, the struggle against French rule in Algeria had a long history behind it. In 1954 the nationalist organization of the people of Algeria called the

FLN (National Liberation Front) gave a call for an armed struggle against the French rule. Armed clashes resulted in thousands of casualties on both sides. By 1958, the Algerian nationalists had organized a large army of their own and proclaimed the formation of a government of the republic of Algeria. The war in Algeria had serious consequences inside France. It created political instability in France. The Communist Party of France along with many other French leaders had been supporting the cause of Algerian independence. However, many sections in the French army were under the influence of the French settlers in Algeria who were opposed to any negotiations with the Algerian leaders over the question of independence. In 1958, General de Gaulle became the President of France. He conceded the right of the Algerian people to self-determination and opened negotiation with the leaders of the FLN. This policy was opposed by some sections of the French army in Algeria who revolted against de Gaulle and even made attempts to assassinate him. However, the revolt was suppressed. On 1 July 1962 a referendum was held in Algeria and the people of Algeria voted almost unanimously for independence. On 4 July 1962 Algeria became an independent republic. The independence of Algeria had been won at the cost of over 140,000 Algerian lives.

Achievement of Freedom by African Nations : As we know with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia, almost every part of Africa had been conquered by European imperialist power by the end of the nineteenth century. After the First World War, the only change that took place there was the transfer of the former German colonies in Africa to the victorious Allied powers. However, the period after the First World War saw, as in Asia, a resurgence of nationalist movements in Africa. After the Second World War, the disintegration of the colonial rule in Africa began. The achievement of independence by North African countries has been mentioned already. The countries of southern Africa began to gain their independence after the mid-1950s. Within two decades, almost every country in

Africa, with the exception of South Africa and South-West Africa (Namibia), became independent. The freedom movements in Africa, as in other parts of the world, were the consequence of the growth of nationalism and the increasing resentment against the exploitation and oppression by the colonial countries. The international situation further strengthened these movements. The Second World War had resulted in the general weakening of imperialism. It had also shattered the myth of the invincibility of some major colonial powers in Africa such as France and Belgium which had suffered defeat in Europe during the war. The collapse of colonialism in Asia within a few years after the war also had a tremendous impact on freedom movements in Africa. The question of Africa's freedom gradually became one of the major issues in the world.

The first country in southern Africa to gain independence was Ghana, the powerful kingdom of Ghana in West Africa during the eighth to the twelfth centuries. The British had conquered a part of this region to which they gave the name Gold Coast. The most prominent leader of the people of the Gold Coast colony was Kwame Nkrumah who in 1949 had organized the Convention People's Party. A strong trade union movement had also emerged in Gold Coast. The Convention People's Party and the trade unions joined together to demand independence from Britain. However, most of their leaders were arrested and attempts were made to suppress the demand for freedom. After 1950, the British government started introducing certain constitutional reforms. Under pressure from the People's Party which had won a resounding victory in elections, the British government agreed to the independence of Gold Coast. The new independent state which came into being on 6 March 1957 called itself Ghana, after the name of the old West African kingdom. The part of Togoland which had been under British control also joined Ghana.

The next country to achieve her independence was the French colony of Guinea in West Africa. In 1958, while embroiled in the war in Algeria, France held a referendum in her colonies which

had been grouped together as French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. The people of Guinea voted for complete independence and Guinea was proclaimed a republic on 2 October 1958.

The achievement of independence by Ghana and Guinea gave additional confidence to the freedom movements in other parts of Africa and accelerated the pace of achievement of independence by other nations. The promotion of the cause of African freedom was a major objective of India's foreign policy from the time India won her independence. India's struggle for freedom had also been a source of inspiration to African nationalists.

The year 1960 is generally regarded as the Africa Year. In that year, seventeen countries in Africa gained their independence. These included all the French colonies in French West Africa and Equatorial Africa, Nigeria and Congo (formerly Belgian Congo, now called Zaire).

Between 1961 and 1964, a number of countries in East and Central Africa also became independent. These were Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia, Rwanda and Burundi. Sierra Leone, Gambia, Lesotho (formerly Basutoland) and Botswana (formerly Bechuanaland) also gained their independence. The freedom movement in Kenya was led by Jomo Kenyatta, leader of the Kenya African Union. In 1952, a revolt by peasants had broken out. This is known as the Mau Mau rebellion. It was directed against the seizure of land by the British colonial authorities. To suppress the rebellion, 15,000 Kenyan were killed and about 80,000 sent to concentration camps. Jomo Kenyatta was imprisoned in 1953 on the charge supporting the Mau Mau rebellion. Having failed to suppress the freedom movement, Britain had to give in and Kenya became independent in 1963.

Many of the newly independent countries of Africa faced serious problems during the years following their independence. The imperialist powers tried their best to maintain their hold over their former colonies by direct intervention and by creating dissension. In Congo, for instance,

Belgium, with the help of some other countries and the mercenaries from various countries, brought about the secession of the rich province of Katanga. On the appeal of Patrice Lumumba, Prime Minister of Congo, United Nations troops were sent to bring about the withdrawal of foreign troops and mercenaries. However, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated and the country thrown into chaos for a number of years.

Before the end of the 1960s, almost entire Africa, with the exception of Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Islands, and South Africa, South-West Africa and Rhodesia, had become free. Powerful freedom movements had started in the Portuguese colonies. They had organized their liberation forces and had secured the help of many countries in their struggle for freedom. In April 1974, the Portuguese army, which had been mainly used to suppress the freedom struggles in the colonies, overthrew the 50-year old dictatorship in Portugal with the support of the people. The communists, socialists and other radical elements in the armed forces and the new government of Portugal were opposed to the continuation of the Portuguese rule in Africa. They entered into negotiations with the freedom movements in the Portuguese colonies and by 1975 all the former Portuguese colonies in Africa became independent. Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) became independent in April 1980.

The last country in Africa to become independent was Namibia, formerly South-West Africa. It was a German colony before the First World War and was handed over to South Africa as a 'mandate' after the defeat of Germany in that war. South Africa treated South-West Africa as her colony and refused to withdraw from there in spite of the resolutions of the United Nations. The freedom movement there was led by the South-West Africa People's Organization (SW APC) which was formed in 1960. It gained momentum when SW APC started a war with the help of its guerilla forces to liberate the country. It was made a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Non-Aligned Movement, the African governments

and the United Nations played an important role in the success of the freedom movement in Namibia. The war in Namibia came to an end in 1989 when South Africa agreed to a plan for the independence of the country. SW APC won a majority of seats in the elections which were held in November 1989 and on 21 March 1990 Namibia became independent.

South Africa-Union of South Africa since 1910 and Republic of South Africa since 1961 -has been an independent country in the sense that she was not ruled from another country. The government of South Africa was, however, among the most oppressive regimes in the world in the twentieth century. It was under the exclusive control of the white minority practising the worst form of racism. Under the system of apartheid established in South Africa, all people were classified and separated on the basis of race. Each group had to live in a separate area. There were separate schools and universities, separate theatres, separate shopping centres, separate coaches in trains for whites and blacks and others. The teams for sports also were formed on the basis of race. Marriage between persons belonging to different races was a criminal offence. There were restrictions on movement from one place to another. The best lands in the country were under the control of the whites who had all the economic and political power. The non-whites had no vote and no say in the governance of the country. The system of apartheid was used to maintain the rule of the white minority over about 80 per cent of the population which comprised black and coloured people; well as people of Indian origin. This system, in the name of separation of the races, denied human rights to the majority of the population. It may be recalled that Mahatma Gandhi had started the fight against racial discrimination in South Africa long before he became a leader of the freedom movement in India.

The main organization of the South African people which led the movement for ending the rule of the white minority and establishing a non-racist democratic South Africa was the African National Congress (ANC). It was set up in 1910. The movement against the obnoxious system of

apartheid was intensified in the 1950s. The government depended on the use of terror to maintain its rule. There were incidents of massacres of peaceful protestors. In 1960, the African National Congress was banned and most of its leaders were arrested. The ANC then organized its own army to fight against the racist regime.

South Africa was increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. India had been from the beginning in the forefront in support of the struggle to dismantle the apartheid regime. She was the first country in the world to sever relations with South Africa and to extend her full support to the people of South Africa. Many other countries followed suit. The United Nations also condemned the policies of South Africa. In the 1980s some Western countries which had maintained military and economic relations with South Africa also imposed sanctions against her. By the end of the 1980s, the international isolation of the South African regime was complete.

From the end of the 1980s the process of ending the system of apartheid began. The ban on the African National Congress was lifted and its leaders released. Among them was Nelson Mandela who had been in prison for 26 years and had become a symbol of the struggle against apartheid. Many apartheid laws were abolished and negotiations were started between the ANC and the South African government for framing a new constitution which would give all South Africans the right to vote. Elections in which all South Africans for the first time were given the right to vote were held in April 1994. After these elections, a new non-racist and democratic government came to power in South-Africa. Nelson Mandela was elected president of the country.

Thus within the last three decades, most of Africa has become independent and the independence of the remaining parts cannot be deferred for long. Many African countries have changed their names. The colonial powers had given them names which had little to do with their past history and culture. Some countries and cities had been named after colonial adventurers, for

example, Rhodesia, Leopoldville, Stanleyville, etc. The African peoples are trying to overcome the damage caused to them during the colonial rule. Renaming their countries and cities after their original names is a part of their effort to reestablish and assert their independence and national identity. The need to unite in the face of common tasks and for achieving common aims led to the emergence of the unity of all African states. These aims included the safeguarding of their independence and to help the liberation movements in those countries in Africa which were still fighting for their independence. The most significant step taken in this direction was the formation of the organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963.

Non-Aligned Movement : The emergence of the countries of Asia and Africa as independent nations marked a new phase in the history of the world. These countries which had been suppressed and kept under subjugation for a long time came to their own and began to play an important role in the world. Similar developments have also taken place in Central and South America and the Caribbean. The countries which were under European colonial rule in this part of the world have become independent. The United States frequently interfered in the internal affairs of these countries, particularly when radical governments came to power and tried to assert their political and economic independence. One of the significant developments in this region was the Cuban revolution which overthrew the corrupt and dictatorial government headed by Batista on 31 December 1958. In 1961, the United States sent mercenaries to Cuba but the invasion ended in a fiasco and was crushed in less than three days.

Having common problems and sharing common aspirations, the peoples of these countries began to act together although there was no organization binding them. However, they began to develop some common understanding on world affairs, particularly on the question of the independence of nations which were still under foreign rule. In 1955, an important event took place which helped to strengthen the unity of African and Asian countries. This was the Afro-

Asian conference which was held at Bandung in Indonesia. The conference was attended by 23 Asian and 6 African countries. The leaders of three Asian nations, India, China and Indonesia played an important role in the deliberations of this conference. The growing importance of the Afro-Asian countries was reflected in the United Nations where on a number of issues the countries of Asia and Africa functioned as a group.

Another significant development in the world after the independence of Asian and African countries was the emergence of Non-Aligned Movement. You have read before about the Cold War and the formation of military blocs and the growth of tension in many parts of the world. Most of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa refused to join the Cold War. They considered the formation of military blocs as a serious danger to peace and to their independence. These countries were faced with the enormous task of social and economic reconstruction which could be done only in a world free from war and tension. Some countries in Asia had joined the military alliances and had allowed foreign bases to be set up on their soil. The extension of military alliances and the setting up of foreign bases were considered by most Asian countries as a threat to their independence and a source of tension. Hence, they opposed these alliances. They were also aware of the danger which the continuance of imperialism in some parts of Asia and Africa posed to them and to world peace. The non-aligned nations of Asia and Africa, therefore, were in the forefront of the struggle for the liquidation of colonialism. Non-alignment has primarily been a policy aiming at the strengthening of independence, ending of colonialism and promoting world peace. It was not merely a policy of non-involvement with military blocs but a policy for creating a better world.

India under the Prime Ministership of Jawaharlal Nehru played a pioneering role in making non-alignment a major force in the world. Then other leaders who played an important role in the non-aligned movement were President Sukarno of Indonesia, President Nasser of Egypt and President Tito of Yugoslavia. The first summit

conference of non-aligned nations was held at Belgrade in Yugoslavia in September 1961. It was attended by heads of state or government of 25 countries. Besides Yugoslavia and Cuba, from Europe and the Americas, respectively, the other participating countries were from Asia and Africa. Three other countries attended as observers. The statement issued at the end of this conference affirmed the basic principles of non alignment such as the stabilization of peace, liquidation of colonialism and imperialism in all their forms, peaceful coexistence between nations, condemnation of racial discrimination, opposition to military alliances, disarmament, respect for human rights, establishment of economic relations between nations based on equality and free from exploitation, etc.

The popularity of the policy of non-alignment was reflected by the number of countries which joined the group of non-aligned nations. Beginning with 25 countries which attended the Belgrade conference in 1961, there are today 109 countries which, are following the policy of non-alignment. They are drawn from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. The Tenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement was held at Jakarta, in Indonesia in September 1992. The Seventh Summit had been held at New Delhi with India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as the Chairperson and the Sixth Summit at Havana in Cuba in, 1979 under the Chairmanship of President Fidel Castro. Two movements of national liberation -the Palestine Liberation Organization and South- West Africa People's Organization -were made fullfledged member-states of the Non- Aligned Movement. (As mentioned earlier, Namibia, whose struggle for independence was led by SW APO, has already become independent.) AU countries of Africa, including South Africa, are members of the Non- Aligned Movement. The Non-Aligned

Movement has played a very important role in world affairs, particularly in ending colonialism and in promoting peace. The non-aligned countries are also working for the creation of a new international economic order in which the economic relations between nations would be based on equality, non

exploitation of one nation by another and the narrowing down of economic disparities between nations.

Recent Developments: Some of the changes that have taken place, in recent years such as those in Cambodia, Israel (Palestine), Namibia and South Africa have been mentioned in this chapter. Many other changes which have taken place in the world, along with these, are so far-reaching that they can be said to mark the beginning of a new phase in the history of the world after the Second World War. Some of them have been so sudden that it would take some time to fully comprehend their significance.

A major feature of the history of the world for almost four decades after the end of the Second World War was the antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union and the armed confrontation between the military blocs headed by them. This was the period of the Cold War and the race in the designing and production of ever new weapons of mass destruction. It posed a danger to the very survival of humankind. In the 1970s and early 1980s, some beginnings were made to end the 'Cold War: Agreements were reached between the United States and, the Soviet Union to eliminate some categories of carriers of nuclear weapons and to reduce the number of certain types of weapons installed in certain areas. The process of ending the Cold War, however, suffered many setbacks. In 1979, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. This development in. creased the tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States launched a programme of developing new and even more deadly weapons, popularly known as the Star Wars. These weapons would have meant taking the conflict into outer space and launching attacks from there. However, the world situation began to improve after the mid. 1980s and by the end of the 1980s it could be said with much certainty that the era of Cold War had come to an end. By early 1989, Soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan. Many other changes took place from the late 1980s and it is generally agreed that we are now living in a post Cold War world. This can

be considered a the most significant and positive development that has taken place in recent years.

Many changes of great historical importance have taken place in the Soviet Union and in countries of Eastern and Central Europe. The most significant of these has been the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ending of the communist regimes there and in other countries of Europe. In 1956, three years after the death of Stalin the Communist Party of Soviet Union had denounced the excesses and crimes committed by Stalin. From 1985, many important reforms began to be introduced in the political system of the Soviet Union with a view to promoting political democracy There was free and open discussion on every issue and curbs on the freedom of thought and expression were lifted.

Reforms in economy were also initiated to end the stagnation that had set in and to improve the living conditions of people. The importance of these reforms was recognized the world over. Two Russian words -perestroika, meaning 'restructuring', and glasnost, meaning 'openness' which were used to describe these reforms gained international currency. The hold of the Communist Party over the political life of the country was loosened and other political parties were allowed to function. In the meantime, there was a demand for greater autonomy by the republics which constituted the Soviet Union. Some republics wanted to become independent. Attempts were made to frame a new treaty which would provide greater autonomy to, the republics and at the same time preserve of the Union. However, in August 1991, there was an attempt to stage a coup by some leaders of the Communist Party. Though the coup collapsed, the Soviet Union began to break up. Many republics declared their independence. On 25 December 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev, who was the President of the Soviet Union during this period and had initiated the reforms mentioned earlier, resigned and the Soviet Union formally ceased to exist. In place of the Soviet Union which had been a major influence on world historical development for about seven decades, there emerged 15 independent republics. Though the

rule of the communist parties has ended in all these republics, many of them are faced with serious political and economic problems. There are also many problems between the republics although 12 of them have formed a loose federation called the Commonwealth of Independent States. The new names are Russian Federation (formerly RSFSR), Kazakhstan (formally Kazakh SSR), Estonia (formerly Estonian SSR), Latvia (formerly Latvian SSR), Lithuania (formerly Lithuanian SSR), Ukraine (formerly Ukrainian SSR), Moldova (formerly Moldavian SSR), Armenia (formerly Armenian SSR), Georgia (formerly Georgian SSR), Azerbaijan (formerly Azerbaijan SSR), Turkmenistan (formerly Turkmen SSR), Uzbekistan (formerly Uzbek SSR), Tajikistan (formerly Tajik SSR), Belarus (formerly Byelorussian SSR) and Kyrgystan (formerly Kyrghiz SSR)]

Equally important changes have taken place in those countries of Europe which were ruled by communist parties. There had been outbursts of resentment in some of these countries against Soviet control and against the Soviet supported communist governments since the 1950s. There were occasions when Soviet troops were used to suppress the unrest in these countries. The changes in the Soviet Union affected these countries directly. There were mass upheavals in all these countries in the late 1980s. By 1989, Soviet control over them came to an end. The monopoly of political power enjoyed by the communist parties in these countries was ended. There were free elections and new governments were formed. It is notable that these far reaching changes took place in most countries without the use of violence. In some countries, leaders who had misused their position for personal gain and power were tried and jailed. Many communist parties no longer ruling parties in their countries expelled some of their former leaders who had committed excesses when they were in power. In one country, Rumania, the Communist Party leader who for about, 15 years had been the virtual dictator was executed. The Warsaw Pact, the military alliance which was headed by the Soviet " Union and of which the

communist-ruled states of Europe were members; was dissolved in 1991.

The changes which took place in Germany were even more far-reaching. The division of Germany into two independent states a few years after the end of the Second World War has been mentioned in this chapter. The division of Germany had been a source of tension in Europe and a major factor in the Cold War. East Berlin was the capital of East Germany (German Democratic Republic or GDR) while West Berlin which was located within the GDR territory was treated as a part of West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany or FRG). In 1961, the GDR authorities built a wall between East and West Berlin to prevent East Germans from going away to West Berlin. The building of the wall became a further source of tension in Europe. The process of ending communist rule in GDR and of the reunification of Germany began in 1989 when the Berlin Wall was opened and political parties which were outside the control of the communist party (called the Socialist Unity Party) were allowed to function. In early 1990 elections were held and a new government came to power. On 3 October 1990, the division of Germany was ended and a unified Germany again emerged.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and of communist governments in Europe has been a major factor in ending the Cold War. It has also been seen as marking the retreat of socialism. It can, however, be said that the system which was built in these countries was only a distorted version of the socialist ideal and that social justice which was fundamental to that ideal has become a part of the consciousness of the people the world over.

The changes in Eastern and Central Europe, as in the former Soviet Union, have not been without problems, both economic and political. Czechoslovakia which emerged as a new state after the First World War has broken up into two independent states -the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. In unified Germany, there have been many instances of violence by neo Nazis against immigrants.

Developments of a tragic nature have taken place in Yugoslavia in recent Yugoslavia which had emerged as a state after the First World War was ruled by communist party since the end of the Second World War. The communist government of Yugoslavia had kept itself from the Soviet Union almost from beginning. Yugoslavia was one of founders of the Non-Aligned Movement. She was a federation of six republics. In four of these republics, the rule of communist parties came to an end in 19 by 1992, Yugoslavia broke up into five independent states-the new state of Yugoslavia comprising Serbia and Montenegro Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Bosnia. Herzegovina. However, the problems Yugoslavia did not end with its break-up. A large party of Bosnia-Herzegovina under the control of Serbians and Croats. A bloody war has been going on between Bosnian Croats, Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Muslims, particularly between the latter two, causing terrible sufferings to the people.

While these developments have take place in one part of Europe, in another, Western, part (including Germany), there had been a move towards European unity It consists in creating a Europe without borders, with a common currency and unrestricted movement of goods and people and ultimately a political union with a common parliament. Some steps have already been taken in this direction. It may, ever, be remembered that the concept European unity at present excludes all European countries and some others. Significant changes have also taken place other parts of the world. There were many turmoils in the political and economic life of China after the establishment communist rule there. After the death of Mao Zedong in 1975, many changes have en place in the economic policies of the country. These are aimed at modernizing economy. For this, foreign companies d foreign capital have been invited and playing an important role. Many practice which were at one time considered basic to the concept of socialism have been 'yen up. There have also been changes in China's foreign policy. There has been an improvement in China's relations with India, In the political life of China, however, ere

has been little change and it continues to be under the exclusive control of the Communist Party. The demand for democracy voiced by students and others some years ago was suppressed.

In spite of the many positive changes that have taken place in recent years, the world in the 1990s is not without tensions and conflicts. While the danger of war involving the use of nuclear weapons has ended, or at least receded, there has been no reduction in the arsenals of weapons of mass annihilation. Their very existence is a source of threat to the survival of human-kind. Similarly, with the end of the Cold War, whether the world has moved, irreversibly, to a period of detente and, much more importantly, cooperation is still to be seen. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States became the only super power in the world. While the Warsaw Pact has been dissolved, NATO, the military bloc headed by the United States, has continued to exist. There have been misgivings that the present situation would make it possible for the United States, the only super power now, to dictate to others.

The world in the 1990s, with all its problems, is a very different place to live in compared with any preceding age. People the world over have a much greater say in shaping their destiny than ever before. For the first time in human history, the creation of One World has become a possibility in which all peoples would cooperate with one another and would contribute their best to enrich their own lives and of the entire humankind.

Important incidents :

Middle East crisis and fall of USSR

Arabs nationalism

They all speak the Arabic language, they are all Muslims (followers of the religion known as Islam), except for about half the population of Lebanon who are Christian; and most of them wanted to see the destruction of Israel so that the Palestinian Arabs could have back the land which they feel is rightfully theirs. Many Arabs wanted

to see the unity carried much further into some sort of political and economic union, like the European Community. As early as 1931 an Islamic conference in Jerusalem put out this announcement: 'The Arab lands are a complete and indivisible whole. ...all efforts are to be directed towards their complete independence, in their entirety and unified'.

Several attempts were made to increase unity among the Arab states.

- The Arab League, founded in 1945, included Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Yemen; membership later expanded to include twenty states in 1980. However, it achieved very little politically and was constantly hampered by internal squabbles.
- In the mid-1950s Arab unity (sometimes known as pan-Arabism, 'pan' meaning 'all') received a boost with the energetic leadership of Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, who gained enormous prestige in the Arab world after the 1956 Suez Crisis. In 1958 Syria joined Egypt to form the United Arab Republic with Nasser as President. However, this only lasted until 1961, when Syria withdrew because of resentment at Nasser's attempts to dominate the union.
- After Nasser's death in 1970, his successor, President Sadat, organized a loose union between Egypt, Libya and Syria, known as the Federation of Arab Republics; but it never amounted to much.

In spite of their similarities, there were too many points on which the Arab states disagreed for unity ever to be really close. For example:

- Jordan and Saudi Arabia were ruled (and still are) by fairly conservative royal families who were often criticized for being too pro-British by the governments of Egypt and Syria, which were pro-Arab nationalist as well as socialist.
- The other Arab states fell out with Egypt in 1979 because Egypt signed a separate peace treaty with Israel. This caused Egypt to be expelled from the Arab League.

Other countries interference in middle East

This took place for several reasons.

- Britain and France had been involved in the Middle East for many years. Britain ruled Egypt from 1882 (when British troops invaded it) until 1922 when the country was given semi-independence under its own king. However, British troops still remained in Egypt and the Egyptians had to continue doing what Britain wanted. By the Versailles Settlement at the end of the First World War, Britain and France were given large areas of the Middle East taken from the defeated Turks, to look after as mandates. Map 11.2 shows which areas were involved. Although Britain gave independence to Iraq (1932) and to Jordan (1946), both remained pro-British. France gave independence to Syria and Lebanon (1945) but hoped to maintain some influence in the Middle East.
- The Middle East held a very important strategic position in the world -it acted as a sort of crossroads between the Western nations, the communist bloc and the Third World countries of Africa and Asia.
- At one time the Middle East produced over a third of the world's oil supplies, the main producers being Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In the days before North Sea oil was available, and before nuclear power, the European nations were heavily dependent on oil supplies from the Middle East and wanted to make sure that the oil-producing states had friendly governments which would sell them oil cheaply.
- The lack of unity among the Arab states encouraged other countries to intervene in the Middle East.

Most of the Arab states had nationalist governments which bitterly resented Western influence. One by one, governments which were thought to be too pro-West were swept away and replaced by regimes which wanted to be non-aligned; this meant being free to act independently of both East (communist bloc) and West.

Egypt : At the end of the Second World War,

British troops stayed on in the canal zone (the area around the Suez Canal). This was to enable Britain to control the canal, in which over half the shares were owned by the British and French. In 1952 a group of Egyptian army officers, tired of waiting for the British to leave, overthrew Farouk, the king of Egypt (who they thought was not firm enough with the British), and seized power themselves. By 1954 Colonel Nasser had become President and his policy of standing up to Britain soon led to the Suez War of 1956 (see Section 11.3 for full details). This brought complete humiliation for Britain and was the end of British influence in Egypt.

Jordan : King Abdullah had been given his throne by the British in 1946. He was assassinated in 1951 by nationalists who felt that he was too much under Britain's thumb. His successor, King Hussein, had to tread very carefully to survive. He ended the treaty which allowed British troops to use bases in Jordan (1957) and all British troops were with-drawn.

Iraq : King Faisal and his Prime Minister, Nuri-es-Said, were pro-British; in 1955 they signed an agreement with Turkey (the Baghdad Pact) to set up a joint defence and economic policy. Pakistan, Iran and Britain also joined, Britain promising to help Iraq if she was attacked. The British humiliation in the 1956 Suez War encouraged the anti-British movement in Iraq to act: Faisal and Nuri-es-Said were murdered and Iraq became a republic (1958). The new government was sympathetic towards Egypt and it withdrew Iraq from the Baghdad Pact. This marked the end of Britain's attempt to play a major role in Arab affairs.

Iran : In Iran important changes were taking place. Iran was the only Middle East state which had a frontier with the USSR. In 1945 the Russians tried to set up a communist government in northern Iran, the part which bordered on the USSR and which had a large and active communist party. The Western-educated Shah (ruler) of Iran, Reza Pahlevi, resisted the Russians and signed a defence treaty with the USA (1950); they provided him with economic and military aid, including tanks and jet fighters. The American's saw the situation as

part of the Cold War -Iran was yet another front on which the communists must be prevented from advancing. However, there was a strong nationalist movement in Iran which resented all foreign influence. This soon began to turn against the USA and against Britain too. This is because Britain held a majority of the shares in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and its refinery at Abadan. It was widely felt that the British were taking too much of the profits, and in 1951 the Premier of Iran, Dr Mussadiq, nationalized the company (took it under the control of the Iranian government). However, most of the world, encouraged by Britain, boycotted Iran's oil exports and Mussadiq was forced to resign. In 1954 a compromise was reached in which British Petroleum was allowed 40 per cent of the shares. Iran now took 50 per cent of the profits, which the Shah was able to use for a cautious modernization and land reform programme.

This was not enough for the left and for the devout Muslims. They resented the Shah's close ties with the USA which they considered to be an immoral influence on their country; they also suspected that a large slice of the country's wealth was finding its way into his private fortune. In January 1979 he was forced to leave the country, and an Islamic republic was set up under a religious leader, the Ayatollah (a sort of High Priest) Khomeini. Like Nasser, he wanted his country to be non-aligned.

The creation of Israel and the Arab-Israeli war 1948-49

1. The origin of the problem went back almost 2000 years to the year AD 71, when most of the Jews were driven out of Palestine, which was then their homeland, by the Romans. In fact, small communities of Jews stayed behind in Palestine, and over the following 1700 years there was a gradual trickle of Jews returning from exile. Until the end of the nineteenth century though, there were never enough Jews to make the Arabs, who now looked on Palestine as their homeland, feel threatened.
2. In 1897 some Jews living in Europe founded

the World Zionist Organization at Basle in Switzerland. Zionists were people who believed that Jews ought to be able to go back to Palestine and have what they called 'a national homeland'; in other words, a Jewish state. Jews had recently suffered persecution in Russia, France and Germany, and a Jewish state would provide a safe refuge for Jews from all over the world. The problem was that Palestine was inhabited by Arabs, who were alarmed at the prospect of losing their land to the Jews.

3. Britain became involved in 1917 when the Foreign Minister, Arthur Balfour, announced that Britain supported the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine. After 1919, when Palestine became a British mandate, large numbers of Jews began to arrive in Palestine, and the Arabs protested bitterly to the British that they wanted:

- (a) an independent Palestine for the Arabs;
- (b) an end to the immigration of Jews.

The British government stated (1922) that there was no intention that the Jews should occupy the whole of Palestine and that there would be no interference with the rights of the Palestinian Arabs. The British hoped to persuade Jews and Arabs to live together peacefully in the same state; they failed to understand the deep religious gulf between the two.

4. Nazi persecution of Jews in Germany after 1933 caused a flood of refugees, and by 1940 about half the population of Palestine was "Jewish: In 1937 the British Peel Commission proposed dividing Palestine into two separate states, one Arab and one Jewish, but the Arabs rejected the idea. The British tried again in 1939, offering an independent Arab state within ten years, and Jewish immigration limited to 10000 a year; this time the Jews rejected the proposal.
5. The Second World War made the situation much worse: there were hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Hitler's Europe desperately looking for somewhere to go. In

1945 the USA pressed Britain to allow 100 000 Jews into Palestine; this demand was echoed by David Ben Gurion, one of the Jewish leaders, but the British, not wanting to offend the Arabs, refused.

6. The Jews, after all that their race had suffered at the hands of the Nazis, were determined to fight for their 'national home'. They began a terrorist campaign against both Arabs and British; one of the most spectacular incidents was the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, which the British were using as their headquarters; 91 people were killed and many more injured. The British responded by arresting Jewish leaders and by turning back ships such as the Exodus, crammed with Jews intending to enter Palestine.
7. The British, weakened by the strain of the Second World War, felt unable to cope. Ernest Bevin, the Labour Foreign Secretary, asked the United Nations to deal with the problem, and in November 1947 the UN voted to divide Palestine, setting aside roughly half of it to form an independent Jewish state. Early in 1948 the British decided to come out altogether and let the UN carry out its own plan. Although fighting was already going on between Jews and Arabs (who bitterly resented the loss of half of Palestine), the British withdrew all their troops. In May 1948 Ben Gurion declared the independence of the new state of Israel. It was immediately attacked by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon.

The country which has the responsibility for tragedy

Most of the scholars rest of the world seemed to blame Britain for the chaos in Palestine: many British newspapers which supported the Conservative party also criticized Bevin and Britain's Labour government for its handling of the situation. It was said that British troops should have stayed on to ensure that the partition of Palestine was carried out smoothly. The Arabs accused the British of being pro-Jewish for letting far too many Jews into Palestine in the first place

and for causing them to lose half their, homeland. The Jews accused the British of being pro-Arab for trying to limit Jewish, immigration.

Bevin blamed the USA for the chaos, and there is some evidence to support his case. It was US President Truman who pressurized Britain to allow 100 000 extra Jews to go to Palestine in April 1946. Although this was bound to upset the Arabs even more, Truman refused to provide any American troops to help keep order in Palestine, and refused to allow any more Jews to enter the USA. It was Truman who rejected the British Morrison Plan (July 1946) which would have set up separate Arab and Jewish provinces under British supervision. It was the Americans who pushed the plan for partition through the UN, even though all the Arab nations voted against it; this was bound to cause more violence in Palestine.

Some historians have defended the British, pointing out that they were trying to be fair to both sides, and that in the end, it was impossible to persuade both Arabs and, Jews to accept a peaceful solution. The British withdrawal was understandable. It would force the Americans and the UN to take the responsibility for the situation they had helped create. It would save the British a lot of expense since 1945 they had already spent over £100 million trying to keep the peace, and they could not afford to continue.

Result of the war : Most people expected the Arabs to win easily, but against seemingly overwhelming odds, the Israelis defeated them and even captured more of Palestine than the UN partition had given them. They ended up with about three-quarters of Palestine plus the Egyptian port of Eilat on the Red Sea. The Israelis won partly because they fought desperately, and partly because the Arab states were divided among themselves and poorly equipped; King Abdullah of Jordan was more interested in seizing the area of Palestine west of the River Jordan (known as the West Bank) so that he could make it part of his own state, than in giving it to the Palestinian Arabs. The most tragic outcome of the war was that the Palestinian Arabs became the innocent victims who found themselves without a state or a

homeland. Some were in the new Jewish state of Israel, others who lived in the area seized by King Abdullah, found themselves living in Jordan. After some Jews had slaughtered the entire population of an Arab village in Israel, nearly a million Arabs fled into Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria where they had to live in miserable refugee camps. Jerusalem was divided between Israel and Jordan. The USA, Britain and France guaranteed Israel's frontiers, but the Arab states did not regard the ceasefire as permanent. They would not recognize the legality of Israel, and they regarded this war as only the first round in the struggle to destroy Israel and liberate Palestine.

The Suez War an important event in intrernational relation

It is possible to blame different countries depending on one's point of view:

the Arabs blamed the Israelis, who actually began hostilities by invading Egypt; the communist bloc and many Arab states blamed Britain and France, accusing them of imperialist tactics (trying to keep control in the Middle East against the wishes of the Arab nations) by attacking Egypt. They accused the Americans of encouraging Britain to attack;

the British, French and Israelis blamed Colonel Nasser of Egypt for being anti Western. However, even the Americans thought that Britain and France had overreacted by using force, and most British historians agree.

Colonel Nasser, the new ruler of Egypt, was aggressively in favour of Arab unity and independence, including the liberation of Palestine from the Jews; almost everything he did irritated the British, Americans or French:

He organized guerrilla fighters known as fedayeen (self-sacrificers) to carry out sabotage and murder inside Israel, and Egyptian ships blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba leading to the Israeli port of Eilat.

In 1936 Britain had signed an agreement with

Egypt which allowed the British to keep troops at Suez. This treaty was due to expire in 1956, and Britain wanted it renewed. Nasser refused and insisted that all British troops should withdraw immediately the treaty ended.

He sent help to the Algerian Arabs in their struggle against France, prodded the other Arab states into opposing the British-sponsored Baghdad Pact, and forced King Hussein of Jordan to dismiss his British army chief-of-staff.

He signed an arms deal with Czechoslovakia (September 1955) for Russian fighters, bombers and tanks, and Russian military experts went to train the Egyptian army.

The Americans were outraged at this, since it meant that the West no longer controlled arms supplies to Egypt. Egypt now became part of the Cold War: any country which was not part of the Western alliance and which bought arms from Eastern Europe was, in American eyes, just as bad as a communist country. It was seen as a sinister plot by the Russians to 'move into' the Middle East. The Americans therefore cancelled a promised grant of 46 million dollars towards the building of a dam at Aswan (July 1956); their intention was to force Nasser to abandon his new links with the communists.

Crisis point was reached when Nasser immediately retaliated by nationalizing the Suez Canal, intending to use the income from it to finance the dam. Shareholders in the canal, the majority of whom were British and French, were promised compensation.

Anthony Eden, the British Conservative Prime Minister, took the lead at this point. He believed that Nasser was on the way to forming a united Arabia under Egyptian control and communist influence, which could cut off Europe's oil supplies at will. He viewed Nasser as another Hitler or Mussolini, and according to historian Hugh Thomas, 'saw Egypt through a forest of Flanders poppies and gleaming jackboots'. He was not alone in this: Churchill remarked: 'We can't have this malicious swine sitting across our communications', and the new Labour leader, Hugh

Gaitskell, agreed that Nasser must not be appeased in the way that Hitler and Mussolini had been appeased in the 1930s. Everybody in Britain ignored the fact that Nasser had offered compensation to the share holders and had promised that the ships of all nations (except Israel) would be able to use the canal.

Secret talks took place between the British, French and Israelis and plan was hatched: Israel would invade Egypt across the Sinai peninsula, whereupon British and French troops would occupy the canal zone on the pretext that they were protecting it from damage in the fighting. Anglo-French control of the canal would be restored, and the defeat, it was hoped, would topple Nasser from power.

Recent research has shown that the war could easily have been avoided and that Eden was more in favour of getting rid of Nasser by peaceful means. In fact there was a secret Anglo-American plan (Omega) to overthrow Nasser using political and economic pressures. In mid-October 1956 Eden was still willing to continue talks with Egypt; he had called off the military operation, and there seemed a good chance of compromise being reached over control of the Suez Canal. However, Eden was under pressure from several directions to use force. MI6 (the British intelligence service) and some members of the British government, including Harold Macmillan (Chancellor of the Exchequer), urged military action. Macmillan assured Eden that the USA would not oppose a British use of force. In the end, it was probably pressure from the French government which caused Eden to opt for a joint military operation with France and Israel. The war: The war began with the planned Israeli invasion of Egypt (29 October). This was a brilliant success, and within a week the Israelis had captured the entire Sinai peninsula. Meanwhile the British and French bombed Egyptian airfields and landed troops at Port Said at the northern end of the canal. The attacks caused an outcry from the rest of the world, and the Americans, who were afraid of upsetting all the Arabs and forcing them into closer ties with the USSR, refused to support Britain, although

they had earlier hinted that support would be forthcoming. At the United Nations, Americans and Russians for once agreed: they demanded an immediate ceasefire, and prepared to send a UN force. With the pressure of world opinion against them, Britain, France and Israel agreed to withdraw, while UN troops moved in to police the frontier between Egypt and Israel.

The result of the wars

This was a complete humiliation for Britain and France, who achieved none of their aims, and it was a triumph for Nasser.

- The war failed to overthrow Nasser, and his prestige as leader of Arab nationalism against interfering Europeans was greatly increased; for the ordinary Arab people, he was a hero.
- The Egyptians blocked the canal, the Arabs reduced oil supplies to western Europe where petrol rationing was introduced for a time, and Russian aid replaced that from the USA.
- The British action soon lost them an ally in Iraq, where premier Nuri-es-Said came under increasing attack from other Arabs for his pro-British attitude; he was murdered in 1958.
- Britain was now weak and unable to follow a foreign policy independently of the USA.
- The Algerians were encouraged in their struggle for independence from France which they achieved in 1962. The war was not without success for Israel: although she had been compelled to hand back all territory captured from Egypt, she had inflicted heavy losses on the Egyptians in men and equipment, which would take years to make good. For the time being the fedayeen raids ceased and Israel had a breathing space in which to consolidate.

The Six-Day War of 1967

The Arab states had not signed a peace treaty at the end of the 1948-9 war and were still refusing to give Israel official recognition. In 1967 they joined together again in a determined attempt to destroy Israel. The lead was taken by Iraq, Syria and Egypt.

Causes of the war

In Iraq a new government came to power in 1963 which was influenced by the ideas of the Ba'ath party in neighbouring Syria. Supporters of the Ba'ath (meaning 'resurrection') believed in Arab independence and unity and were left-wing in outlook, wanting social reform and better treatment for ordinary people. They were prepared to cooperate with Egypt, and in June 1967 their president, Aref, announced: 'Our goal is clear -to wipe Israel off the map'.

In Syria political upheavals brought the Ba'ath party to power in 1966. It supported El Fatah, the Palestinian Liberation Movement, a more effective guerrilla force than the fedayeen. The Syrians also began to bombard Jewish settlements from the Golan Heights which overlooked the frontier.

In Egypt Colonel Nasser was immensely popular because of his leadership of the Arab world and his attempts to improve conditions in Egypt with his socialist policies. These included limiting the size of farms to 100 acres and redistributing surplus land to peasants. Attempts were made to industrialize the country, and over 1000 new factories were built, almost all under government control. The Aswan Dam project was vitally important, providing electricity, and water for irrigating an extra million acres of land. After early delays at the time of the Suez War in 1956, work on the dam eventually got underway and the project was completed in 1971. With all going well at home and the prospect of effective help from Iraq and Syria, Nasser decided that the time was ripe for another attack on Israel. He began to move troops up to the frontier in Sinai and closed the Gulf of Aqaba.

The Russians encouraged Egypt and Syria and kept up a flow of anti-Israeli propaganda (because Israel was being supported by the USA). Their aim was to increase their influence in the Middle East at the expense of the Americans and Israelis. They hinted that they would send help if war came.

Syria, Jordan and Lebanon also massed troops along their frontiers with Israel, while contingents from Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Algeria joined them.

Israel's situation seemed hopeless.

The Israelis decided that the best policy was to attack first rather than wait to be defeated. They launched a series of devastating air strikes which destroyed most of the Egyptian air force on the ground (5 June). Israeli troops moved with remarkable speed, capturing the Gaza Strip and the whole of Sinai from Egypt, the rest of Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. The Arabs had no choice but to accept a UN ceasefire order (10 June), and it was all over in less than a week. Reasons for the spectacular Israeli success were:

- The slow and ponderous Arab troop build-up which gave the Israelis plenty of warning;
- Israeli superiority in the air;
- Inadequate Arab preparations and communications.

Outcome of the war

For the Israelis it was a great success: this time they had ignored a UN order to return the captured territory; this acted as a series of buffer zones between Israel and the Arab states, and meant that it would be much easier to defend Israel. However, it did bring a new problem how to deal with about a million extra Arabs who now found themselves under Israeli rule. Many of these were living in the refugee camps set up in 1948 on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

It was a humiliation for the Arab states, and especially for Nasser, who now realized that the Arabs needed outside help if they were ever to free Palestine. The Russians had been a disappointment to Nasser and had sent no help. To try to improve their relations with Egypt and Syria, the Russians began to supply them with modern weapons. Sooner or later the Arabs would try again to destroy Israel and liberate Palestine. The next attempt came in 1973 with the Yom Kippur War.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973

Several things combined to cause the renewed conflict:

1. Pressure was brought to bear on the Arab states

by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under its leader Yasser Arafat, for some further action. When very little happened, a more extreme group within the PLO, called the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, embarked on a series of terrorist attacks to draw world attention to the grave injustice being done to the Arabs of Palestine. They hi-jacked airliners and flew three of them to Amman, the capital of Jordan, where they were blown up (1970). This was embarrassing for King Hussein of Jordan, who now favoured a negotiated peace, and in September 1970 he expelled all PLO members based in Jordan. However, terrorist attacks continued, reaching a horrifying climax when some members of the Israeli team were murdered at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

2. Anwar Sadat, the President of Egypt since Nasser's death in 1970, was becoming increasingly convinced of the need for a negotiated peace settlement with Israel, before PLO terrorism turned world opinion against them. He was prepared to work either with the USA or the USSR, but he hoped to win American support for the Arabs, so that the Americans would persuade the Israelis to agree to a peace settlement. However, the Americans refused to get involved.
3. Sadat, together with Syria, decided to attack Israel again, hoping that this would force the Americans to act as mediators. The Egyptians were feeling more confident because they now had modern Russian weapons and their army had been trained by Russian experts.

The war began: Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked early on the feast of Yom Kippur, a Jewish religious festival, hoping to catch the Israelis off guard. After some early Arab successes, the Israelis, using mainly American weapons, were able to turn the tables. They succeeded in hanging on to all the territory they had captured in 1967 and even crossed the Suez Canal into Egypt. In one sense Sadat's plan had been successful -both the USA and the USSR decided it was time to intervene to try to bring about a peace settlement.

Acting with UN co-operation, they organized a ceasefire which both sides accepted.

The result of the war: The end of the war brought a glimmer of hope for some sort of permanent peace. Egyptian and Israeli leaders came together (though not in the same room) in Geneva. The Israelis agreed to move their troops back from the Suez Canal (which had been closed since the 1967 war) enabling the Egyptians to clear and open the canal in 1975 (but not to Israeli ships).

An important development during the war was that the Arab oil-producing states tried to bring pressure to bear on the USA and on Western European states which were friendly to Israel, by reducing oil supplies. This caused serious oil shortages, especially in Europe. At the same time producers, well aware that oil supplies were not unlimited, looked on their action as a way of preserving resources. With this in mind, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) began to raise oil prices substantially. This contributed to inflation and caused an energy crisis in the world's industrial nations.

Camp David (1978-79)

Reasons for talk

1. President Sadat had become convinced that Israel could not be destroyed by force, and that it was foolish to keep on wasting Egypt's resources in fruitless wars. But it took great courage to be the first Arab leader to meet the Israelis face to face. Even to talk with Israeli leaders meant conceding that Egypt recognized the lawful existence of the state of Israel. He knew that the PLO and the more aggressive Arab states, Iraq and Syria, would bitterly resent any approach. In spite of all the dangers, Sadat offered to go to Israel and talk to the Knesset (the Israeli parliament).
2. The Israelis were suffering economic problems, partly because of their enormous defence expenditure, and partly because of a world recession. The USA was pressing them to settle their differences with at least some of the Arabs. They accepted Sadat's offer; he visited Israel in November 1977, and Menachem Begin, the

Israeli Prime Minister, visited Egypt the following month.

3. President Carter of the USA played a vital role in setting up formal negotiations between the two sides at Camp David (near Washington) which began in September 1978.

The Peace Treaty and its aftermath: With Carter acting as intermediary, the talks led to a peace treaty being signed in Washington (March 1979).

The main points agreed were:

- The state of war which had existed between Egypt and Israel since 1948 was now ended;
- Israel promised to withdraw its troops from Sinai;
- Egypt promised not to attack Israel again and guaranteed to supply her with oil from the recently opened wells in southern Sinai; Israeli ships could use the Suez Canal.

The treaty was condemned by the PLO and most other Arab states (except Sudan and Morocco) and there was clearly a long way to go before similar treaties could be signed by Israel with Syria and Jordan. World opinion began to move against Israel and to accept that the PLO had a good case; but when the USA tried to bring the PLO and Israel together in an international conference, the Israelis would not co-operate. In November 1980 Begin announced that: Israel would never return the Golan Heights to Syria, not even in exchange for a peace treaty; and they would never allow the West Bank to become part of an independent Palestinian state; that would be a mortal threat to Israel's existence.

At the same time resentment among West Bank Arabs mounted at the Israeli policy of establishing Jewish settlements on land owned by Arabs. Many observers feared fresh violence unless Begin's government adopted a more moderate approach.

The peace also seemed threatened for a time when President Sadat was assassinated by some extremist Muslim soldiers while he was watching a military parade (October 1981). They believed that he had betrayed the Arab and Muslim cause by doing a deal with the Israelis. However, Sadat's

successor, Hosni Mubarak, bravely announced that he would continue the Camp David agreement.

For most of the 1980s the Arab-Israeli feud was overshadowed by the Iran-Iraq War which occupied much of the Arab world's attention. But in 1987 there were massive demonstrations by Palestinians living in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. They were protesting against Israeli repressive policies and the brutal behaviour of Israeli troops in the camps and in the occupied territories. An Israeli clampdown failed to quell the unrest, and the Israelis' tough methods earned them UN and worldwide condemnation.

Peace between Israel and the PLO: The election of a less aggressive government (Labour) in Israel in June 1992 raised hopes for better relations with the Palestinians. Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres both believed in negotiation, and were prepared to make concessions in order to achieve a lasting peace. Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, responded and talks opened. But there was so much mutual suspicion and distrust after all the years of hostility that progress was difficult. However, both sides persevered and by early 1996, remarkable changes had taken place.

The peace accord Of September 1993: This was the first major breakthrough. It was agreed that:

- Israel formally recognized the PLO;
- The PLO recognized Israel's right to exist and promised to give up terrorism;
- The Palestinians were to be given limited self-rule in Jericho (on the West Bank) and in part of the Gaza Strip, areas occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. Israeli troops would be withdrawn from these areas.

Extremist groups on both sides opposed the agreement. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine still wanted a completely independent Palestinian state. Israeli settlers on the West Bank were against all concessions to the PLO. However, the moderate leaders on both sides showed great courage and determination, and two years later they took an even more momentous step forward.