4.2.1 TERMS (k)

Uniting for Peace Resolution: U.N. resolution that gave the General Assembly power to deal with issues of international aggression if the Security Council is deadlocked.

Veto: The right to reject a proposal or forbid an action.

Viet Cong: Communists in South Vietnam who opposed the Diem government.

Viet Minh: Vietnamese nationalists who fought against the Japanese and French for Vietnam's independence.

4.2.2 HOTSPOTS (a)

1. Korean War:

Causes:

- Following WWII the **Soviets held North Korea** while the **U.S. held the South**.
- They agreed to divide Korea at the 38th parallel.
- Korea was to be reunited following a peace settlement but, as with Germany, the Cold war intervened and Korea remained divided.
- Unable to get Soviet cooperation the United States turned the issue over to the UN where the General Assembly established a commission to oversee free elections and set up a unified independent government. (**2.3.6**)
- The Soviets held their own election and established North Korea (**Communist**).
- The Americans did the same and formed South Korea (**Democratic**).
- Both Korean governments claimed to speak for all Korea as each leader wanted to unify the country under his rule.
- Neither country could gain admission into the UN because each was **vetoed** by the opposing superpower.
- The North and the South became more deeply divided and increasingly hostile.
- War broke out in June 1950 when Northern forces crossed the 38th parallel and invaded the South.

Results:

- The day after the invasion Truman pledged American military support against any act of communist expansion in Asia.
- At the UN the U.S introduced the **Uniting for Peace Resolution** demanding that the North withdraw (there was no Soviet veto because they were boycotting the UN over America's refusal to allow the new Chinese communist government to take China's seat in the UN).

- With the Soviets out the U.N. Security Council approved military action against the North.
- With U.S. leadership, the UN initiated its first major test of collective security.
- Early in the war the North enjoyed success then the American led UN forces successfully counter attacked (**see page 171**).
- The American military leader wanted to pursue the North Koreans across the 38th parallel even into China but Truman not wanting WWIII ordered him to halt as the UN resolution only gave them authority to restore South Korea.
- For the rest of the war the battle lines shifted back and forth as a stalemate developed.
- In July1953, a truce was reached the country remained divided at the 38th parallel.
- The Korean War demonstrated the United Nations' strength and limitations as a peacekeeping organization.
- It was involved in Korea because the U.S. decided it should be and the Soviets were not in a position to use its veto.
- Finally we saw how effective the U.N. could be when collective action is taken.

2. Cuban Missile Crisis:

- The island of Cuba, 150 Km off the coast of Florida, had long been in the American sphere of influence, most of the wealth in Cuba belonged to American businesses.
- The U.S. supported Cuba's corrupt dictator, **Batista**, while the people lived in poverty.
- In 1959 a young socialist named **Fidel Castro** overthrew Batista and took control in 1959.
- Castro wanted to regain control of Cuba's economy, for Cubans, therefore he nationalized all privately owned businesses.

- American investors were outraged (having lost approximately 1 billion dollars) as a result President Eisenhower imposed a trade embargo that continues to this day.
- Castro succeeded in creating a first class health care and public education system.
- However his socialist policies pitted him against the United States.

Causes:

- Castro's nationalization of American businesses resulted in souring Cuban-American relations.
- In need of economic and military support Castro found a friend in the Soviets who bought huge quantities of Cuban sugar and shipped military weapons to Cuba.
- Threats from the U.S. and economic pressure pushed Cuba closer to the Soviets.
- In April 1961 a small army of Cuban exiles, trained by the American CIA invaded Cuba at the **Bay of Pigs**.
- The invasion failed as the invaders were quickly defeated, more importantly the invasion strengthen Cuba's ties to the Soviets.
- In October 1962 American spy planes revealed that the Soviets were building missile bases in Cuba that could be used to launch nuclear weapons at the U.S. A nuclear war seemed likely.
- President Kennedy ordered a naval blockade of Cuba in order to keep supplies needed to complete the missile bases from reaching Cuba.
- Kennedy secretly sent his brother to meet with the Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. to present an ultimatum to the Soviets.
- Remove the missiles by the following day or the U.S. would remove them by force.
- In return Kennedy guaranteed that the U.S. would not invade Cuba and that the U.S. would remove missiles, aimed at the USSR, in Turkey.

Results:

- The crisis was over and both sides realized there could be no victory in a nuclear war.
- The crisis also demonstrated the need for better communication.
- Between the two countries as a result the famous hotline was established.

3. **Vietnam War:**

- In 1954 the Vietnamese led by Ho Chi Minh defeated their imperialist dictator France at Dien Bien Phu forcing the French to leave Vietnam.
- At the peace conference in Geneva it was agreed that Vietnam would be divided at the 17th parallel until elections would be held in 1956 to reunite the country.
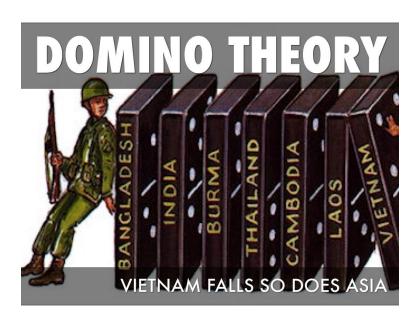
Causes:

- North Vietnam, under Ho Chi Minh, established a communist state while Diem, a strong anti-communist established a government in the South with American support. Diem refused to allow free elections thus Vietnam remained divided.
- North Vietnam began supporting the communist opposition group in the South: Viet Cong.
- The U.S. following its policy of containment became involved.
- The U.S. believed in something called the domino theory.
- According to this theory the fall of one nation to communism would lead to nearby countries becoming communist.
- Thus if Vietnam fell to communism so would nearby countries.
- Thus in 1960 the U.S. began sending (800) military advisors to help the South Vietnamese army.
- Following Kennedy's assassination in 1963(16,000 advisors) the new President Lyndon Johnson did not want to be accused of being soft on communism.
- He got the American Congress to give him the power to use force in Vietnam (Gulf of Tonkin Resolution).
- By 1965 the U.S. 500,000 troops fighting in Vietnam.

Results:

- In 1975 North Vietnam occupied South Vietnam and reunited the country.
- More than a million Vietnamese were killed.
- The economies of the North and South were drained.
- Communism was not contained.
- The war proved that containment through military force was unworkable and that American military power was not invincible.
- Americans were divided over the war: anti-war protests, demonstrations often became violent, public burning of draft cards and American flag, tens of thousands of Americans fled to Canada as draft dodgers.
- 57,000 Americans were killed another 300,000 were wounded and 2500 were listed as Missing in Action.
  Tragically another 50,000 have committed suicide and larger numbers battle substance abuse.
- Financially the U.S. spent 150 billion on the war effort.
- American prestige, popularity and support was diminished in many nations.

- The Vietnam War undermined the trust of Americans in their government, politicians and country.

Was the Korean War a better example of American containment or U.N. peacekeeping? (i)

- To answer this question **read pages 187 to 190** in your textbook and consider the following questions in deciding whether it was American containment or U.N. peacekeeping.
- What were the (a) underlying causes and (b) immediate causes of the Korean War?
- How did the U.N. become involved in the Korean War?
- Was the Korean War more a U.N. or U.S. military action (Fig.6.9 page 189)?
- What was the outcome of the conflict?
- Was the Korean War American containment or U.N. peacekeeping?