

# Changes that the cold war have brought



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Beginning after World War II in 1947 and ending with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, The Cold War was a war over true freedom and power. While the Soviet Union spread their communist ideas around, the United States fought on the side of capitalism. Give Me Liberty states Among other things, the Cold War was an ideological struggle, a battle, in a popular phrase of the 1950s, for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world.

The Cold War was a major defining moment for the world but mostly the United States. Following the war, America became the superpower it intended to be. Yes, the United States did win the Cold War because the war and its link to freedom changed the way America looked at freedom. This redefinition of freedom caused a rise in the fight for human rights, the civil rights movement and new revolutions that reshaped America to be what it is today.

The Cold War did not end in a fair fight but in the ending of the Soviet Union due to their financial inabilities. The United States was and still are against communism and ultimately the war was one of communism vs capitalism. America became a superpower over the other countries in the world, but the war woke up something in the American Society. During the Cold War, America was split between communists and capitalists. This split put emphasis on the freedom of speech and freedom of idea. During the 1950s, freedom became an inescapable theme of academic research, popular journalism, mass culture, and official pronouncements. (Foner).

Both parties in the war claimed to be fighting for freedom and social justices. President Truman created the Truman Doctrine, persuaded democrats and

republicans to support his policy, making it known that the United States was the leader of the free-world, and as the leader it is its job to support freedom-loving people. He believed communists were a threat to that. The Anticommunists Crusade began in America showing its divide.

Anticommunist movies like *The Red Menace* and *I Married a Communist* were made, and movie writers were urged to eliminate the bad parts of American history to persuade America and other countries against communism.

Capitalists' questioning of American's loyalty only made American's speak out more. What do men know of loyalty who make a mockery of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights? (Commager).

With the Anticommunist Crusade happening, people were being threatened with losing their jobs and sent to prison for promoting communism or being believed to be spies through. President Truman launched a loyalty review system, requiring government employees to prove their patriotism. More people lost their jobs than those sent to prison, but most felt this was an act against the founding fathers. The House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) also managed to send what became to be called the Hollywood Ten and 200 others to jail for promoting communism in movies.

The aftermath of World War II and the Four Freedoms raised the issue of human rights. Individuals were for the first time, being held accountable for violating human, many being Nazi officials. Violators were placed on trial and even sentenced to prison; some execution. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, drafted by Eleanor Roosevelt and her committee, was approved by the Un General Assembly. This doctrine was written to speak out for the rights that everyone deserved. These rights

included freedom of speech, religious toleration, protection against arbitrary government, adequate standard of living and access to housing, education, and medical care. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and right. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Some may have felt this doctrine was an empty rhetoric but its principle that how a nation treats its own citizens should be subject to outside evaluation became the bases of freedom.

Blacks and other minorities were speaking out against the inequalities of man prior to the Civil War, but the increased talk of freedom and the rise in the fight for human rights during and after the war birthed a new voice. Prior to the approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the NAACP spoke out and filed a petition to the United Nations seeking an investigation into the racism within the United States, a clear violation of human rights. The United Nations did not follow through, but this petition was only the beginning. For decades blacks were the last to benefit from any of the progressive changes in America; if they benefitted at all. From slavery to segregation, blacks faced many facial discriminations. Blacks were given lower wage employment than unskilled workers, subpar access to education, and forced to live in packed ghettos that lacked many necessities for survival. Yet despite the apparent extra effort being made by the poorest districts, they are unable even to begin to make the richest districts in terms of the production of revenue. (Marshall).

The Golden Age began after the ending of World War II and marked a time of economic expansion, stable prices, low unemployment rates, and a rise in <https://assignbuster.com/changes-that-the-cold-war-have-brought/>

the standard of living. Even southern living progressed from its years of being behind the North. With the Golden Age came higher incomes that brought the ability to afford better living which in turn began the creation of suburban neighborhoods, neighborhoods blacks were not allowed in. Suburbs like the Levittown Suburbs created by William and Alfred Levitt, refused to allow non-whites entry. Urban renewal programs that tore down poor neighborhoods to build retail centers, white-only middle-class housing and universities, displaced tons of residents. While the whites in those areas moved to the suburbs or into white-only housing complexes, blacks were forced to move to other already crowded ghettos or create new ones. Employment discrimination and exclusion from educational opportunities left blacks and other non-whites in unskilled jobs, unable to advance to a better standard of living.

Following the end of World War II and throughout the Cold War, there was a civil rights upsurge. The NAACP and civil rights coalitions involving labor, religious groups and back organizations fought for big changes for the black communities all over the country, especially the South. Twenty percent of blacks in the South were registered to vote by 1952. There was also reported to be no lynching's that took place that year in the entire United States. In 1947, the Brooklyn Dodgers challenged the long-standing exclusion of blacks in major league baseball by adding Jackie Robison, who would decades later become a hall of famer, to their team. The success of Jackie Robinson lead to other teams adding black players and the soon demise of the Negro League. That same year, President Truman appointed a Commission on Civil Rights to

issue To Secure These Rights, a publishing of the racial inequalities in America.

This publishing called out the federal government and demanded they assume the responsibility of ending segregation and ensuring equal treatment in housing, employment, education and the criminal justice system. President Truman also made a great change for blacks when, in July of 1948, he issued an executive order to desegregate the United States Military, making it the largest institution in America to promote racial integration actively. Prominent black leaders like W. E. B Du Bois spoke out against the Civil War but many others and organizations like the NAACP felt that it was in the best interest of blacks to go along and speak out against communism. With the Truman administration actively behind civil rights, blacks were seeing a time of hope and prosperity but laws banning discrimination remained unenforced towards the end of Truman's presidency. The 1952 elections showed blacks how quickly their issues could become nonexistent when the democrats nominated a candidate who could care less about civil rights. But this was not the end. The rise of what became known as the affluent society, changed American life with new opportunities for whites living in the expanding suburbs. Blacks were again left out, living in declining rural areas of the South and urban ghettos of the North. This prosperity for whites and the continued discrimination for blacks would become the inspiration for the civil rights movement that in turn redefined American freedom.

Extreme acts of segregation in America birthed a voice in blacks like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks and iconic moments in history like the

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Montgomery Bus Boycotts, that has changed the history of blacks all over and is continuing to change. With segregated public buildings, water fountains and buses, the urban ghettos they were forced to live in, low wages, and subpar schools and educations their children were receiving, blacks were becoming more and more agitated with the land of the free. The NAACP stood behind cases like *Brown v. Board of Education*, where black parents challenged the unfair school policies. The separate but equal doctrine adopted in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U. S. 537, has no place in the field of public education. (*Brown v. Board of Education*). Cases like this one paved the way for the desegregation of schools in America and are the reason why every child can receive the same education as any other child today.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a black woman in Montgomery, Alabama, one of the most racist cities in America, made history when she refused to give up her seat after a long day of work, to a white person. During these times, it was the law for blacks to enter the bus via the back door, sit in the back and give their seats to white riders if there were none left. On this day, Rosa Parks started a 381-day movement. For those 381 days, blacks refused to use public transportation, facing loads of harassment and violence. In November of 1956, the Supreme Court ruled segregation in public transportation unconstitutional, ending the boycott and the segregation of buses. Blacks in the South began to stand up and speak out against segregation more and more. Nonviolent protests following the lead of leaders like Dr. King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference, began to pop up all over, demanding change. Young activists in Raleigh,

North Carolina formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960.

Black and even some white college students started sit-ins in segregated diners and in 1961, the Freedom Rides was launched, and integrated groups of college students traveled through the deep south forming sit-ins, protesting the segregation. They were harassed by angry mobs with no police protection. The civil rights movement brought a strength and the young and old who were tired and ready for a change. On August 28, 1963, weeks before the Birmingham church bombing that killed innocent black girls, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lead the March on Washington and gave his famous I have a Dream speech. Because of these brave indivial, those who followed them and the organizing of protests, the lives of blacks and other minorities drastically changed for the better. The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, prohibiting discrimination in employment, institutions like hospitals and schools and privately-owned public places like restaurants, hotels and theaters. Dr. King launched a voting rights campaign in 1965 that lead to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the 24th Amendment which outlawed poll tax and gave blacks a fair chance at voting.

The ending of World War II and the starting of the Cold War also woke up a voice in white Americans all over. Not only were whites facing losing their jobs and even Hollywood fame for even being accused of being disloyal, they were becoming fed up with the government and the way everyone was being treated. The 1950s birthed a new form of thinking for whites in America. A group of thinkers started the task of making changes to conservatism and reclaiming the idea of freedom from liberals. They strongly opposed the idea

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of a strong national government. We as young conservatives, believe: That foremost among the transcendent values the individuals use of his God-given free will whence derives his right to be free from the restrictions of arbitrary force; (The Sharon Statement, Young Americans for Freedom). Freedom to them, meant individual autonomy, limited government, and unregulated capitalism. Insisting that toleration of difference was not offering any substitute in the search of absolute truth, believed the Free World needed to arm itself morally and intellectually. Writers and socialist started speaking out in their work, concerned with what America really viewed as freedom. An insert by Life magazine suggested that American freedom could be in more danger from the nonuse of it than the threat of communism.

The 1950s saw of time where white youth were known as rebels without a cause. All around white teens were forming gangs and wearing leather jackets, dancing to rock n roll and sexual music. People like the poet group, the Beats rejected the materialism of the suburbs and celebrated impulsive action, pleasure through drugs and sexual experimentation. This was only the beginning. By the 1960s, young white Americans were standing up against the government and many were standing with blacks during the civil rights movement. Many did not understand the rise of protesting white college students that began to appear. This sparked what came to be called, the New Left. The New Left was inspired by the civil rights movement, especially the sit-ins. Young whites felt it was their duty to stand up for what was right and fight for true freedom in the world. They mostly stood up against poverty and the war. Books like *The Other America* and *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* showed the side of America they didn't

glorify and criticized urban renewal and the destruction of neighborhoods to build highways. Groups like Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) formed in the 60s as a voice for the people.

Although feminism seemed to disappear after the baby boom, women once again arose and spoke out. The reawakening of the feminist movement began with the publication of Betty Friedan's 1963 *The Feminine Mystique*. Her book emphasized that women are more than being wives and mothers and the world needed to get with the program. Women started waking up again and fighting for their rights. In 1963, the Equal Pay Act was passed, ending sex discrimination between men and women who work the same jobs. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 also prohibited discrimination based on sex. The National Organization for Women (NOW) was formed in 1966, demanding equal opportunities for women in all walks of life. Young women were starting to embrace the civil rights movement and ideologies of organizations like the SDS and SNCC. By 1967, conscious groups were being formed by women all over that focused on their dissatisfaction with the state of women in America. By appealing to conscience and standing on the moral nature of human existence, nonviolence nurtures the atmosphere in which reconciliation and justice become actual possibilities. (Committee). Protests like the one at the 1968 Miss America beauty pageant, gave a new voice for what has come to be known as new feminism.

The Cold War may have been a war of capitalism vs. communism, but it also brought about a change in the world that we see today. America saw a major change that would only continue to make it a superpower. Although it ended because of the financial inabilities of the Soviet Union, the United States still

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won the Cold War because it faced a change that birthed a new meaning to freedom. This new meaning of freedom sparked a voice in Americans that changed human rights, created the civil rights movement, and woke up a voice in young white men and women that soon changed the meaning of equality for all. Human rights played a prominent role in world affairs after the Cold War and continues to play such role today.