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ASSIGNMENT: NATIONALISM AND DECOLONIZATION

The cold war was a period of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union and the united states and their respective allies. These countries became known as superpowers, although the two superpowers never officially declared war on each other, they fought indirectly in proxy wars, the arms race, and the space race.

The cold war began not too long after the WWII ended in 1945, though the Soviet Union was an important member of the allied powers, there was great distrust between the Soviet Union and the rest of the allies. The allies were concerned with the brutal leadership of joseph Stalin as well as the spread of communism. The war came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

After the WWII, European countries lacked the wealth and political support necessary to suppress far-away revolts.

They could not oppose the new superpower the U.S and soviet union’s stands against colonialism.

Strong independence movement in colonies.

Between 1945 and 1960, three dozen new states in Asia and Africa achieved autonomy or outright independence from their European colonial rulers.

The process of decolonization coincided with the new cold war between the Soviet Union and united states and with the early development of the new united nation. Decolonization was often affected by superpower competition and had a definite impact on the evolution of that competition. It also changed the pattern of the international relations in a more general sense. In the mid to late 19th century, the European powers colonized much of Africa and southeast Asia, during the decades of imperialism, the industrializing powers of Europe viewed the African and Asian continents as reservoirs of raw materials, labour, and territory for future settlement. The colonies were exploited, sometimes brutally, for natural and labour resources and sometimes even military conscript, the colonial rule drew arbitrary natural boundaries where none has existed before, dividing ethnic and linguistic groups and natural features and laying the foundation for the creation of numerous states lacking geographic, linguistic, ethnic, or political affinity.

While the united states generally supported the concept of national self-determination, it also had strong ties to its European allies, who had imperial claims on their former colonies. The cold war only served to complicate the U.S position as they support for decolonization was offset by American concern over communist expansion and soviet strategic ambitions in Europe. Some of the NATO allies asserted that their colonial possession provided them with economic and military strength that would otherwise be lost to the alliance.

As the cold war competition with the Soviet Union came to dominate U.S foreign policy concerns in the late 1940s and 1950s, the Truman and Eisenhower administration grew increasingly concerned that as the European powers lost their colonies or granted them independence, soviet supported communist parties might achieve power in the new states. It might serve to shift the international balance of power favour of the Soviet Union and remove access to economic resources from U.S allies. The Soviet Union deployed some tactics in an effort to encourage new nations to join the communist bloc, and attempted to convince newly decolonized countries that communism was an intrinsically non-imperialist economic and political ideology.

The weave of decolonization the ended the European empire:

The colonies suffered badly during the depression of the 1930s. the imperialist European countries had encouraged their colonies to produce raw materials for European factories. The price of raw material fell catastrophically during the depression, it resulted to poverty and great unrest in the colonies.

During the war much of the Asian territory held by the European was conquered by the Japanese forces. The Japanese were defeated but the war had fatally weakened the control of the European, it was now clear to the local people that the European could be beaten.

After the war Britain, France and other European states faced many economic problems, they could no longer afford the cost of keeping their empires.

After the war there was a rising tide of nationalism in the colonies, at the same time there was a decline in imperialist feeling in the European countries.