

The Middle East, Africa, and Latin America (1945-21st Century)

Tensions Arise as New Nations Seek Stability

After World War II new nations emerged into a world dominated by the Cold War. Old rivalries resurfaced and traditional ways clashed with modern ways. The superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—competed for influence by offering economic and military aid to developing nations. In Africa and Latin America, as in Asia (see Unit 10), the United States and the Soviet Union supported opposing sides in local conflicts. This way the superpowers confronted each other *indirectly*, rather than head to head, with their allies doing most of the actual fighting. Some countries chose to remain **nonaligned** and did not side with either superpower.

The Cold War ended in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed (see Unit 12). Many people hoped for a more peaceful world. However, many troubling local, regional, and global issues remained. Ethnic groups pushed for *autonomy*, or self-government. Other clashes were between rival religious groups or different **clans**. Often economic or political struggles were the cause of ethnic clashes.

The Middle East

As in other regions, Cold War rivalries touched the Middle East. The Middle East includes the southwestern part of Asia that stretches from Turkey to Afghanistan. Today, North Africa is also considered part of the Middle East because it has strong ties to the Middle Eastern countries. The region's huge oil resources and strategic waterways, such as the Dardanelle Straits and the Bosphorus, the Suez Canal, and the Persian Gulf, drew the Middle East into Cold War struggles between the superpowers. In the global rivalry, each superpower lined up allies. Each superpower sold arms to its allies in the region.

Egypt

Egypt is an Arab country in northeast Africa. Great Britain ruled Egypt from 1914 until World War I. After World War I, Egypt became an independent country with King Farouk as its ruler. In 1952 the army overthrew the king of Egypt. The **monarchy** was abolished, and a **republic** was proclaimed.

By 1956 a military officer named Gamal Abdel Nasser became president of Egypt. Nasser was a strong Nationalist leader. He was determined to modernize Egypt and end foreign influences in his country. Even though Egypt was an independent nation, Britain had kept control of the *Suez Canal* in order to protect its sea route to the Indian Ocean. The Suez Canal is a shortcut between Europe and Asia. It links the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean so that ships do not have to sail all the way around Africa to reach Europe. One of Nasser's first acts was to take over the Suez Canal, ending British and French control. Great Britain, along with France and Israel, invaded Egypt and retook the Suez Canal. Eventually a settlement was reached. A United Nations (UN) emergency force occupied the Canal Zone and in 1957 removed all troops. The Egyptians regained control of the Suez Canal and allowed all foreigners to use it. Nasser became a hero in the Arab world for having stood up to the European colonial powers.



In the 1960s, with the help of the Soviet Union, Nasser built the *Aswan Dam* on the upper Nile River. It enabled Egypt to control the Nile's floodwaters and allowed farmers to **irrigate** their farms year-round. Nasser also *nationalized* banks and businesses by bringing them under government control. His land reforms resulted in the break-up of large estates and the redistribution of land to the peasants.

Under Nasser, Egypt had two main goals: *Pan-Arabism* (the unification of all Arab countries) and the expansion of Egypt's military in order to destroy Israel. Nasser achieved neither goal. In 1967 the Egyptian army attacked the Israeli army in what is known as the *Six-Day War*. The Israelis *soundly* (completely and thoroughly) defeated Nasser and his army. At the war's end, the Israelis had conquered much Egyptian territory, including



photos of Egyptian cities



the Sinai Peninsula. The Israelis wanted to make sure that there was plenty of land between themselves and Egypt. Unfortunately, this was not the last time the Egyptians and Israelis would go to war.

When Nasser died in 1970, Anwar Sadat replaced him as president. Since Nasser's economic policies had only limited success, Sadat decided to open up Egypt to foreign investment and private business. In 1972 he *expelled* (forced out) all Soviet advisors because they had not supplied Egypt with the weapons

needed to retake territory lost to Israel in the 1967 war. On October 6, 1973, during the Jewish holiday of *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), the Egyptian army again attacked Israel. After some defeats at the beginning of the war, the Israeli army once again soundly defeated the Egyptians and other Arab countries.

Muhammad Anwar el-Sadat (1918-1981)

Anwar Sadat was an Egyptian army officer, statesman, and president of Egypt. He was born in the Tala district of Egypt and graduated from the Cairo Military Academy in 1938. He plotted to expel the British from Egypt during World War II with the help of the Germans. The British arrested and imprisoned him in 1942, but he later escaped. Sadat participated in an armed takeover against the Egyptian *monarchy* in 1952 and supported Nasser's election to the presidency in 1956.

Sadat became acting president upon Nasser's death in 1970 and then was elected president. It was in foreign affairs that Sadat made his most dramatic efforts. In 1973 he launched, with Syria, a joint invasion of Israel that began the Arab-Israeli war. After the war, Sadat began to work toward peace in the Middle East. He made a historic visit to Israel in 1977. This initiated a series of diplomatic efforts that Sadat continued despite strong opposition from most of the Arab world and the Soviet Union. President Jimmy Carter mediated negotiations between Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin that resulted in the Camp David Accords in 1978, a preliminary peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. Sadat's peace negotiations with Israel won him the 1978 Nobel Prize for Peace, which he shared with Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin. Under their leadership, Egypt and Israel made peace with each other in 1979.

Sadat's popularity in Egypt fell because of internal opposition to the peace treaty and a worsening economy. In 1981, while reviewing a military parade commemorating the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973, he was **assassinated** by Muslim extremists.

In 1977 Sadat flew to Israel at the invitation of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (see page 570). Together they began the diplomatic negotiations which would eventually lead to a permanent peace between Egypt and Israel. Sadat came to believe that peaceful negotiations could resolve Egypt and Israel's problems. On March 26, 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a formal peace treaty known as the *Camp David Accords*. The peace treaty ended 30 years of war and established diplomatic and commercial relations between the two nations. For the first time in history, an Arab nation (Egypt) accepted the existence of a Jewish state (Israel). Israel agreed to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt. However, Sadat's policy of peace angered many Muslim extremists and other Arab nations.

In 1981 extremist Muslim soldiers at a parade in Cairo *assassinated* Sadat. Vice President Hosni Mubarak succeeded him as the new president. Mubarak has followed many of Sadat's peace policies but has been more cautious in his dealings with other Arab nations. He has faced serious problems at home. Although Egypt's economy has expanded, it has not been able to keep pace with its rapidly growing population. As in many other *Third World* countries, rural families have crowded into cities seeking a better life. As slums have grown, so has discontent. The government's failure to solve its social and economic problems has led to an increase in **terrorist** activity. Islamic extremist groups have accused the government of being corrupt and anti-religious. In recent years, the government has had to use harsh measures to crack down on these *terrorist* groups.

In 2005 President Mubarak said that he planned to reform Egypt's presidential election laws. It allowed, for the first, time for voters to elect a leader from a list of numerous candidates. However, restrictions on the qualifying procedures for candidates made it unlikely that a well-known candidate for the presidency would be able to successfully run against Mubarak. In the 2005 presidential election, Mubarak won a fifth consecutive term. In recent years, Egypt has tried to play a major role as a mediator in resolving disputes in the Middle East.

The State of Israel Is Established

For thousands of years before the *Holocaust*, Jews had lived in many countries throughout Europe. In these various countries, Jews had often faced *anti-Semitism*, or hostility and **discrimination**. Then they faced the Nazis and their *Final Solution*—a plan to murder all Jews in the world (see Unit 7). After the Holocaust, Jewish leaders from around the world declared that Jews must have a homeland. World War II and Nazi Germany had convinced the Jewish people that they could never depend on others to defend them. From now on, Jews should be able to live in a country of their own and defend themselves. This movement to establish a Jewish national homeland in Palestine was known as *Zionism*. Ever since the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Jews have retained their identity and kept alive this dream of a return from **exile**. In the 19th century, this dream turned into a political movement.



Jewish leaders such as David Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, and Moshe Dayan led the fight for the establishment of the nation of Israel. The Jewish leaders wanted the nation of Israel to be located in Palestine (in the Middle East). Following World War II, Palestine was a poor nation under the control of the British. Palestine was the ancient home of the Jews and the location of the Kingdom of Israel going back 3,000 years, but Palestinians (both Muslims and Christians) had made it their homeland since the Jews were driven out around A.D. 135. This created a problem. To Arabs, the land has belonged to them since the 7th century, when they

conquered the area. If Palestine became a Jewish state, what would happen to the Arabs? If the Arabs remained in Palestine, where would the Jews make their home?

Golda Meir (1898-1978)

Golda Meir, born Goldie Mabovitch, was a founder and the fourth prime minister of the State of Israel. Golda Meir was born in Kiev (Ukraine) and emigrated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin with her family when she was eight years old. She later joined a Zionist youth movement, and married Morris Myerson. In 1921, she and her husband moved to Palestine and joined the Merhavva kibbutz. She became the kibbutz's representative to the Histadrut (a local governing body) and occupied a series of political positions over the next three decades. During World War II, she emerged as a forceful spokesman for the Zionist cause.

In 1948 Golda Meir was appointed Israel's first ambassador to the Soviet Union. She was elected to the Knesset (Israeli **parliament**) in 1949 and served in that body until 1974. As minister of labor (1949-1956), she vigorously supported the policy of unrestricted Jewish immigration to Israel. She was appointed foreign minister in 1956, and she Hebraized her married name of Goldie Meyerson to Golda Meir.

After Israel's victory in the Six-Day War (June 1967) against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, she helped merge Mapai (a political party) with two opposing parties into the Israel Labor Party.

Upon the death of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol in 1969, Golda Meir was chosen to succeed him as prime minister, and she led her party to victory in the October 1969 elections. Meir pushed for a peace settlement in the Middle East by diplomatic means. Her efforts at peace with the Arab states were halted by the outbreak in October 1973 of the fourth Arab-Israeli war, called the Yom Kippur War. Israel's lack of readiness for the war surprised Israelis. In 1974 Meir resigned her post as prime minister but remained in power as head until a new government was formed in June. She remained an important political figure even in retirement and was able to greet Egyptian President Anwar Sadat on his historic visit to Jerusalem in 1977.

The UN Divides Palestine

During World War I, the British had promised to allow the Jewish people to make a homeland in Palestine. After the war, the British government went back on its word. The British government did not want to upset the Arabs who were living in Palestine. The promise could not be fulfilled

because the two sides could not live together. Britain called for a *partition* (division) of the country. Britain failed in its many attempts to work out a compromise. Eventually the British government could no longer stand the pressure of world opinion, and the government turned control of Palestine over to the newly formed United Nations. In 1947 the United Nations voted to establish the nation of Israel. To do this, the United Nations divided Palestine. Israel would be home for the Jews, and the rest of Palestine, known as *Trans-Jordan*, would be home for the Palestinian Arabs.

The Jewish people agreed to the plan, but the Arabs did not. The UN plan meant that 750,000 Palestinian Arabs would be uprooted from their homes and forced to move off their land. Palestine's Arabs saw no reason why they should be forced to move off the land they had been living on for centuries. Arabs wanted Palestine to be an Arab state.

Israel became a nation on May 14, 1948. The day after the creation of Israel, the Arab countries of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria attacked Israel. Jews were outnumbered 10 to 1. After a brave struggle, the people of Israel defeated the Arabs. Despite their larger size, the Arab armies were no match for the well-trained, well-equipped, and determined Israeli forces.

Thousands of Palestinian Arab families were forced to migrate from areas under Jewish control, now called *Israel*. Many Arabs settled in UN-sponsored **refugee** camps. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs felt abused and enraged. The seeds of decades of conflict between Arabs and Jews had been sown in the creation of the state of Israel. The Palestinian state that the UN had arranged for Palestinians never came into being. Israel took half the land in the 1948-1949 fighting. Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip and Jordan annexed the West Bank. The 1948 war was only the first of many armed conflicts between Jews and their Arab neighbors.

The Balfour Declaration, 1917

Foreign Office
November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur James Balfour

The Balfour Declaration was a letter from the British foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour to Jewish leader Lionel Walter Rothschild of Great Britain. The statement is often seen as the beginning of the process that led to the establishment of the State of Israel. In the letter, Balfour made a statement of British support for the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. This would help the British in protecting the sea route to India, which passed through the Suez Canal. The Balfour Declaration also gained support of Jewish populations in other countries on the eve of World War I. The Declaration was also endorsed by the principal Allied powers and approved by the League of Nations. On July 24, 1922, the League of Nations set forth terms which entrusted Great Britain with the temporary administration of the country on behalf of its Jewish and Arab inhabitants. The British finally pulled out in 1948, leaving the Arabs and the Jews to fight it out among themselves. As an indirect result of the Balfour Declaration, Israel was established as an independent state in 1948 in the mandated area. The Balfour Declaration provided a reason for the Arab national movement to launch an open and continuing struggle against the Zionist movement.

The PLO: The Palestinian Liberation Organization

A Palestinian *refugee* problem was caused by the 1948-1949 war. Arab nations tried to destroy the state of Israel, and as a result, more than 540,000 Palestinians out of the 750,000 living in Israeli territory were forced to flee to neighboring Arab nations.

After the war, Palestinian refugees were unable to return to their homeland. Israel wanted the refugee problem to be resolved as part of an overall settlement involving the recognition of Israel as a state by the Arab nations and the resolution of boundary disputes. Arab nations refused to allow the Palestinian refugees to live in their countries. Palestinians were forced to live in dirty, overcrowded camps dependent on the charity of international organizations for food and other basic necessities. Eventually this situation led to the rise of various radical **guerrilla** groups committed to the destruction of Israel.



Yasser Arafat

In the mid-1960s the *Palestine Liberation Organization* (PLO), led by Yasser Arafat, became the voice for the homeless Palestinians. Arab nations considered the PLO to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and called for the creation of a Palestinian state. The PLO claimed to represent Palestinians who lived in Israeli-occupied territory and those who lived in *exile* in other Arab countries. The Israeli government considered the PLO to be a terrorist organization and for many years refused to have any dealings with it.

Arab-Israeli Wars: 1956, 1967, and 1973

1956: Egypt Seizes the Suez Canal

Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt proclaimed the *nationalization* (government takeover) of the Suez Canal company, which was owned by British and French stockholders. By nationalizing the canal, he hoped to use the profits from the operation of the canal to build the Aswan Dam. Egypt needed the dam to help irrigate its lands and expand its electric-power facilities.

The British and French depended on the canal for trade with Asia and the transport of oil from the Middle East. With help from Britain and France, the Israelis also invaded Egypt and eventually defeated it. Israel feared Egypt's military buildup and wanted to break Egypt's *blockade* of the Gulf of Aqaba, Israel's outlet to the Red Sea. Most of the world community condemned the invasions. The UN forced an eventual withdrawal of Israel and its European allies from Egypt. Egypt retained control of the canal and the crisis was ended. Nasser emerged a great Arab hero, a symbol of Arab **nationalism** standing up against the colonial powers.

OPEC

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is an association created at the Baghdad Conference of September 10-14, 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. The five founding members were later joined by eight other members: Qatar (1961), Indonesia (1962), Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (1962), United Arab Emirates (1967), Algeria (1969), Nigeria (1971), Ecuador (1973-1992), and Gabon (1975-1994). OPEC's objective is to coordinate and unify petroleum policies among member countries. OPEC's power increased in the 1970s, when many nations became dependent on its oil to run their economies. In 1973 OPEC quadrupled world oil prices and tripled them again between 1974 and 1980. OPEC's power declined in the 1990s because of the inability of its members to agree to limit production.

1967: The Six-Day War

The Six-Day War began when Egypt and its Arab allies, equipped with Soviet tanks and aircraft, moved their armies toward their borders with Israel. Israel quickly responded to the Arab threat by attacking airfields in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Syria. Israeli ground forces moved rapidly to defeat the Arab armies. With this victory, Israel seized the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt. From Jordan, Israel captured the West Bank of the Jordan River, including the Old City of Jerusalem. The Golan Heights were *annexed* from Syria. This was done to create a *buffer zone* to protect Israel from future Arab attacks.

1973: The Yom Kippur War

After the death of Nasser in 1970, Egypt's new leader, Anwar Sadat, planned a surprise attack to regain Egyptian territory lost to Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War. The fourth Arab-Israeli conflict began in October 1973. The attack occurred on Yom Kippur, one of the holiest Jewish holidays. The Israelis were taken by surprise, but with vital supplies provided by the United States, they were soon able to launch a counterattack. They advanced into Egypt and trapped a 20,000-man force in the Sinai Desert. After several weeks of fighting, a *truce* was declared, and the war ended.



During the Yom Kippur War, the Arab oil-producing nations of the *Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries* (OPEC) decided to use their economic power to punish the West for giving aid to Israel. They agreed to drastically reduce the production of oil, causing the price of gasoline to soar. They refused to sell oil to the United States or any other country that supported Israel. The oil **embargo** affected every part of the world. It not only caused gasoline shortages and high prices but also led to an economic **recession**. Arab oil producing countries soon realized that they had the power to hurt the oil-dependent industrialized countries, such as the United States, the countries of Europe, and Japan.

After the Yom Kippur War, the United States worked hard to get Arab and Israeli leaders to negotiate. The American government wanted to reduce Arab-Israeli tensions and reduce the possibility of another oil *embargo* by Arab oil-producing countries. A breakthrough finally came about in 1977, when Egypt's President Anwar Sadat visited Israel and launched the beginning of the peace process between Israel and the Arabs.

Menachem Wolfovitch Begin 1913-1992

Menachem Begin was an Israeli statesman and prime minister born in Brest-Litovsk, Belarus (Russia). He received a law degree from the University of Warsaw in 1935. He was active in the Zionist movement to establish an independent Jewish state in Palestine. In 1938, he became head of the Polish branch of the Betar youth movement. The Betar movement was dedicated to the establishment of a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan River. Upon the invasion of Poland by the Germans in 1939, Begin fled to Lithuania where he was arrested by the Russians and deported to Siberia in 1940. His parents and a brother died in concentration camps. Released in 1941, he enlisted in the Free Polish Army and went to British-mandated Palestine in 1942.

Begin became commander-in-chief of the Irgun Zvai Leumi resistance group from 1943-1948. After Israel's independence in 1948, the Irgun formed the Herut "Freedom" Party. Begin became its head and leader. He formed a temporary alliance in 1977 and he was best known for his uncompromising stand on the question of retaining the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which Israel had occupied during the Arab-Israeli War of 1967.

Prodded by United States President Jimmy Carter, Begin worked with President Sadat of Egypt for peace in the Middle East. He attended peace conferences in Jerusalem in 1977 and at Camp David at the invitation of President Carter in 1978. He shared the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize with President Sadat of Egypt.

Land for Peace: The Camp David Accords

Egypt surprised the world when it offered Israel a peaceful *resolution* to the conflict between Egypt and Israel. In 1977 President Anwar Sadat of Egypt visited Israel at the invitation of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. In an address to the *Knesset*, the Israeli *parliament*, Sadat acknowledged Israel's right to exist and said, "We Arabs welcome you to live among us in peace and security." In return for peace and security,

Sadat emphasized that the Israelis would have to return all Arab lands occupied by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War and recognize the right of Palestinians to have their own homeland.

In 1978 American President Jimmy Carter invited Sadat of Egypt and Begin of Israel to participate in a peace conference at Camp David, a presidential vacation site hidden in the mountains of Maryland. After 13 days of negotiations, the leaders of Israel and Egypt in 1979 signed an agreement called the *Camp David Accords*. This agreement ended 30 years of *hostilities* between Israel and Egypt.



President Jimmy Carter

This framework for peace in the Middle East dealt with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians would receive self-rule; the Israeli government would withdraw its troops from the disputed territory and return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt.

Egypt agreed to guarantee Israel free passage through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba. Egypt was supposed to permit peacekeeping forces to be stationed in the Sinai.

While many nations of the world were pleased that Egypt and Israel had peacefully resolved their hostilities, many Arab countries were angered by the Camp David agreement. They felt that Egypt had betrayed the Arab cause and the Palestinian people. The PLO was especially angry that the future of the Palestinians had been discussed without any Palestinian representatives present.

In 1981 Sadat was assassinated by a group of Muslim extremists. Hosni Mubarak, Sadat's vice president and a former air force commander, became the new Egyptian president. He pledged to continue the peace process.

Palestinians Fight for Independence

Civil War in Lebanon

During the 1970s and 1980s, the PLO began an armed struggle against the Israelis. PLO *commandos*, or military units trained and organized for hit-and-run raids into enemy territory, used Southern Lebanon as a base for attacks against Israel. Israeli aircraft bombed suspected terrorist bases

in Lebanon. In 1982 the Israeli army invaded Lebanon to force out the Palestinian terrorists. Unrest in Lebanon increased as more and more Palestinian refugees poured into the country. Tensions between Lebanese Christian and Muslim factions rose when both Israel and Syria invaded and occupied Lebanon. The civil war that erupted in Lebanon between various religious, ethnic, and political groups lasted from 1975-1991.

In 1987 Palestinians living in Israel began a movement known as the **intifada** or the uprising. Acts of civil disobedience such as **boycotts**, **demonstrations**, and attacks on Israeli soldiers were part of a campaign to express Palestinian frustration and resentment towards Israeli rule. The *intifada* continued until October 1991 when Israeli and Palestinian representatives met for a series of peace talks.

The Oslo Accords: 1993

During the Cold War, efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict met with little success. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 helped speed up the peace process. With the disappearance of financial and military assistance from the Soviet Union, Arab governments began to accept that negotiations with Israel were needed.

Disputes over the Israeli-occupied territories were difficult to resolve. After months of secret talks in Oslo, Norway, an agreement was reached. In a document called the *Declaration of Principles*, also known as the *Oslo Accords*, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin agreed to grant Palestinians self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Israel and the PLO agreed to open formal diplomatic ties. The PLO agreed to accept Israel's right to exist in peace and security and **renounced** the use of **terrorism**. Israel recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Rabin and Arafat signed the historic agreement on September 13, 1993, at the White House in Washington, D.C.

Carrying out this agreement would be difficult. Many issues were left to be resolved later. Negotiations moved slowly, with both sides missing deadlines for reaching a final settlement.

In 1995 Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli who opposed the peace agreement. Benjamin Netanyahu became the next prime minister in 1996. He opposed the Oslo Agreement, claiming it offered too many concessions too fast and jeopardized Israel's safety.

Under Netanyahu's government, the peace process slowed to a halt. Tensions on both sides led to an outbreak of renewed violence between Palestinians and Israelis. In 1999 Netanyahu's government was dissolved, and Ehud Barak of the Labour Party was elected the new prime minister. In July 2000, both Yasser Arafat of the PLO and Ehud Barak of Israel met at Camp David to attempt to resolve the issues that divided them: control of the occupied territories and the city of Jerusalem. The timetable for resolving these issues was important to both parties. Some issues that were particularly difficult to resolve included the right of Palestinians to return to their former homes and the status of Jerusalem. Arabs insisted that the future of Jerusalem must be part of an agreement, since both sides want Jerusalem to be their capital. Peace talks again broke off.

After the collapse of the peace talks, violence erupted when Ariel Sharon, a political opponent of Ehud Barak, visited the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. This religious site is considered a holy site to both Jews and Muslims. Many believe that this visit sparked renewed violence between Israel and the Palestinians; others cite the breakdown in the 2000 Camp David peace talks. The failed peace talks brought an end to Barak's government.



Dome of the Rock—Built 687-691



In Jerusalem the Dome of the Rock was built by Muslims in the center of the Temple Mount during the 7th century. Due to its location, this religious site is considered a holy site to both Jews and Muslims. Controversy exists because 1,500 years before the Dome of the Rock was built, it is believed that Solomon's Temple and a second temple were built on the same site.

Ariel Sharon became Israel's new prime minister in 2001 and was reelected again in 2003. Prime Minister Sharon put a plan in action to withdraw from the Gaza Strip in 2005. To defend their country from attacks from Palestinian terrorist groups, a barrier was built in the West Bank region.

After Sharon suffered a stroke in 2005, Ehud Olmert became the acting prime minister. In 2006, Olmert was elected prime minister. In recent Palestinian elections in early 2006, **Hamas**, a Palestinian Islamic militant group defeated the ineffective and corrupt Fatah party as the democratically elected government of the Palestinian people. *Hamas* is considered a terrorist organization by many nations in the world because of its refusal to recognize the right of Israel to exist and because of its support of violence and *terrorism*. In June of 2006, Hamas militants crossed the border from the Gaza Strip and captured an Israeli soldier, sparking renewed fighting between Israel and the Palestinians.

In July of 2006, **Hezbollah**, a Lebanese militant militia that controls southern Lebanon, captured two Israeli soldiers and killed many others. This sparked another round of fighting when *Hezbollah* launched rocket attacks on northern Israel. As a result, Israel has retaliated by bombing suspected Hezbollah strongholds and destroying Lebanese bridges, power plants, roads, and airports. Many civilians on both sides have been killed. It is believed that Syria and Iran have been secretly arming this militant militia.

Revolution and War in Iran

During the 1960s and 1970s, *Shah* (King of Iran) Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (pah-luh-vee) expanded the Iranian economy with money earned from Iran's thriving oil industry. The Shah had strong ties with the West, especially the United States. The United States had backed a military **coup** in the 1950s that helped keep the Shah firmly in control of Iran's government. During this time, Iran grew into the most powerful military force in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian Muslim leaders, however, did not approve of the increasing Western influence in their country. They rejected Western materialism and values. Many Muslim leaders favored a return to Muslim traditions and values. The Shah of Iran's authoritarian government used *ruthless* tactics, lacking pity or mercy, to silence all of his opponents.



The Azadi Tower is the symbol of Tehran, Iran, and marks the entrance to the city. It was built in 1971 in commemoration of the 2500th anniversary of the Persian Empire.



The Ayatollah (eye-uh-toh-luh) Ruhollah Khomeini (koh-may-nee), an influential *Shiite* Muslim leader of the *Shi'a* branch of Islam, preached an overthrow of the Shah and a return to Muslim values and traditions. As tensions and unrest grew, the Shah became more **repressive**. His secret police arrested, tortured, and executed their opponents. The Kurds, an ethnic minority in Iran, were also persecuted. In January 1979, the Shah's government was overthrown, and he was forced to leave his country and live in exile. He eventually came to live in the United States.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1900-1989)

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was an Iranian political and religious leader, born in Khomeyn, Iran. Khomeini was educated in various Islamic schools. He was bitterly opposed to the pro-Western regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and was outspoken in his advocacy of Islamic purity. Khomeini was exiled to Turkey and Iraq in 1964 and from Iraq to France in 1978. He would send tape-recorded messages to the Iranian revolutionary factions to keep them interested in his cause. He returned to Iran in 1979 after the collapse of the Shah's government and became head of state. Iran underwent a turbulent Islamic Revolution under his leadership. He made everyone strictly observe Muslim principles and traditions—Iranian women were required to wear the veil; Western music and all alcohol was banned. A new Islamic constitution was sanctioned in 1979 and a supreme religious and political position was recognized as belonging to Khomeini, as was the title *Rabhar* (Leader).

A new government based on Islamic principles was put in place. Khomeini soon became the new leader of Iran. His first goal was to purge his country of all Western influences. He eliminated all rival political parties, banned alcohol, Western books, and Western music. Women were forbidden to wear Western-style clothing as well. Islamic law became the legal code for the country. Hatred for the Shah eventually led to hatred of the United States. When the United States refused to return the Shah to Iran to stand trial for his “crimes against the people,” anti-American protests spread throughout Iran. On November 4, 1979, Iranian protestors, with the support of Khomeini, took over the American Embassy in Tehran and held more than 60 American officials hostage. The hostages were not released until January 1981.

Khomeini also encouraged Muslim *fundamentalists* (strict believers) in other Islamic countries to overthrow their *secular* (non-religious) governments. This led to an increase in tensions between Iran and Iraq. The Iraqis, followers of a rival Muslim sect known as the *Sunni* Muslims, already had long-standing differences between themselves and the *Shi'a* Muslims in Iran. Saddam Hussein (hoo-sayn), the military dictator of Iraq, governed his country as a secular state. During the 1980s, Iran and neighboring Iraq went to war over a long-standing territorial dispute over control of the Shatt-al-Arab waterway which forms the southern border between the two countries. Iraqi planes attacked Iranian airfields and oil refineries. Iraqi ground troops invaded Iran and seized large amounts of territory. Although Iranian forces were able to retake Iran's lost territory, neither side was able to dominate the other country. The United Nations eventually called for a cease-fire which ended the war in 1988. After eight years of fighting, more than a million Iraqis and Iranians were dead.

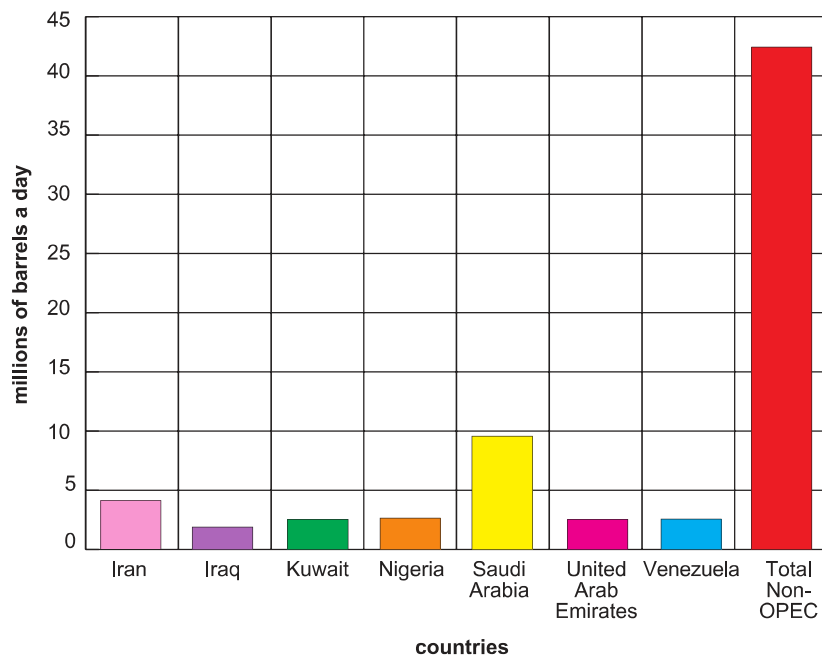
The Ayatollah Khomeini died in 1989 and was succeeded by another conservative religious leader. By 1991 the government of Iran began to become less militant. Moderate leaders began to replace some of the more conservative leaders of the Islamic revolution. Mohammad Khatami, a supporter of greater social and political freedoms, became president of Iran in 1997. In 1999 students and other pro-**democracy** liberals led protests in favor of granting more freedoms. Iran's military, which is still largely controlled by conservatives, has resisted change. Iran's internal conflicts have slowed the reform process. Tensions between *hard-liners* (people who resist change) and *liberals* (people who want change) continue to shape Iran's future. The Iranian presidential election of 2005 resulted in the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Ah-mah-din-uh-jad). Since his election, there has been increased tension between the United States and the new Iranian government. The main reasons for the strained relations are concerns over Iran's nuclear program and its support of terrorist groups. Iran's new president has been widely criticized by the world's leaders for his support of Hezbollah, his call for Israel to be "wiped off the map," and his denial of the Holocaust.

Iraq and the Persian Gulf War

Throughout the 20th century, Iraq had a series of unstable governments and **dictatorships**. In 1968 Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein imposed authoritarian rule in Iraq in order to end the period of instability that followed World War II. Iraq used its abundant oil resources to develop one of the strongest militaries in the Middle East. In 1979 Saddam Hussein succeeded Bakr. Hussein's government used terror tactics and repression to crush its opposition. In 1980 religious tensions and territorial rivalries between Iran and Iraq led to a bloody eight-year war. The UN-sponsored cease-fire that ended the Iran-Iraq War did not bring about a permanent peace in the region.

The Iran-Iraq War drained the resources of Iraq. To solve Iraq's economic problems, Saddam Hussein invaded oil-rich Kuwait in 1990. He claimed that Kuwait was driving down the price of oil by flooding the world market. Iraq also claimed that Kuwait was a province of Iraq, not an independent country. Controlling Kuwait would give Iraq access to Kuwaiti oil and control of the Persian Gulf.

World Crude Oil Production in 2005



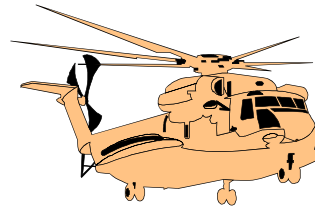
Source: *Official Energy Statistics from the United States Government, Energy Information Administration*



In 1991 a coalition of European, Arab, and American armies drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait after Iraq refused to withdraw and destroyed most of the Iraqi armed forces.

The invasion of Kuwait caused an international outcry. It threatened the security of the region (the Middle East) and the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. In 1991 a coalition of European, Arab, and American armies drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait after Iraq refused to withdraw and destroyed most of the Iraqi armed forces. This military operation was called *Desert Storm* by the Americans.

Although Iraq had been defeated, Saddam Hussein remained firmly in power. After his Gulf War defeat, he ruthlessly crushed a Kurdish rebellion. UN economic **sanctions** kept Iraq from **exporting** and selling its oil on the world market. These measures did little to prevent Iraq from breaking the terms of the cease-fire agreement. Hussein blamed the United States for the poverty and starvation his country suffered rather than meet the terms that were necessary to remove sanctions. The UN would not lift its sanctions unless Iraq agreed to destroy all its nuclear, chemical, biological, and ballistic arms. Under the 1991 UN cease-fire agreement, Iraq had to destroy all its **weapons of mass destruction (WMD)**. *Weapons of mass destruction* are all banned chemical or biological weapons, which are capable of killing large numbers of people. Iraq had refused to cooperate with UN arms inspection teams that were sent to Iraq.



The invasion of Kuwait caused an international outcry.

Because of Iraq's refusal to cooperate with the UN, economic sanctions remained in place. The United States and Great Britain used military **air strikes**, an attack by aircraft, to target missile factories, airfields, and army command centers in order to damage Iraq's weapons buildup. The purpose of this warfare was to weaken the Iraqi military.

British and United States *air strikes* continued through 2001. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, President George W. Bush feared the nations that were hostile to the United States would pose a security threat. (See Unit 12.)

In 2002, Iraq again came under suspicion of developing weapons of mass destruction. President Bush referred to “Iran, Iraq, and North Korea” as “the axis of evil” because these nations were considered to be threats to the world’s security. It was believed that they were building up their weapons capabilities.

The UN Security Council voted to send weapons inspectors back to Iraq. The UN weapons inspectors were unable to find any evidence that Iraq had resumed its weapons of mass destruction program. The United States, however, was skeptical and believed that Saddam Hussein had simply hidden the evidence of his weapons program.

The Iraq War



President Bush abandoned the use of diplomacy.

President Bush abandoned the use of **diplomacy**, or peaceful settlement of disputes. He instead issued an **ultimatum**, or final set of demands, to Saddam. Saddam was ordered to leave the country. When he refused to give up control, the United States, with the support of Great Britain and other countries, made the decision to invade Iraq. Despite the objections of many countries, a coalition led by the United States and Great Britain opted to launch a **preemptive war** against Iraq in March 2003. A *preemptive war* is a military action that is intended to lessen an enemy’s ability to attack first.

Operation Iraqi Freedom began on March 19, 2003 with air strikes and a ground invasion. The Iraqi military was defeated. Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, fell in April of 2003. On May 1, 2003, President Bush told the American people that major combat operations were over. Saddam Hussein was captured in December of 2003.

The Next Stages of the War in Iraq

Coalition forces still remain in Iraq as occupation forces. Their primary goal was to rebuild Iraq’s infrastructure and its oil industry. Another goal was to help establish a democratically elected government in Iraq. However, over time, **insurgents**, or resistance fighters, began to launch a

series of attacks against the Americans and their coalition forces. Some of the *insurgents* were Saddam **loyalists**, or supporters and others were criminals or al Qaeda terrorists that slipped across the Iraqi or Syrian borders. They used “roadside bombs,” or **improvised explosive devices (IED)**, an explosive made with artillery or mortar shells that are attached to a detonator and suicide bombings. The insurgents targeted government buildings, police stations, and market places. The mounting violence has resulted in civilian causality rates of more than 100,000. To date, almost 3,000 American servicemen have lost their lives in Iraq.

In October of 2005, Iraqis turned out in large numbers to vote on a new constitution. A new government had been formed. However, many worry that Iraqi’s ethnic Kurds, a minority people living in parts of northern Iraq, and its religious groups will be unable to work together. Religious extremists among the Shiites and Sunnis, the two major Muslim sects, have escalated their acts of violence against one another. It is feared that a continued insurgency might escalate into a civil war. Saddam Hussein, Iraq’s former leader, stood trial and was charged with war crimes, crimes against humanity, and **genocide** (the deliberate and systematic killing of a racial, national, or religious group) for the ordering of the 1982 killings of 148 men and boys in the Iraqi town of Dujail before the Iraq Special Tribunal. The trial focused on his violent campaign against the Kurds in the north during the Iran-Iraq war and against the Shiites in the south in the 1990s. In December of 2006, the 69-year-old former Iraqi dictator Saddam was sentenced to death and hanged. Also sentenced to death and hanged were the former head of intelligence (his half-brother) and the former chief justice of the Revolutionary Court.

Challenges Facing the Middle East

A peace settlement between the Palestinians and Israelis may lessen religious and ethnic hostilities in the Middle East. For more than 50 years, a peaceful resolution to the problem of a homeland for the Palestinians has not been found. Many Middle Easterners have turned to religious fundamentalism. Muslim religious leaders in Iran still have a great deal of influence on government policy. In some countries, extremist fundamentalist groups have committed acts of violence against their governments and leaders. The quest for peace in the Middle East became even more difficult after the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin by a **right-wing** Jewish extremist. Hostilities between some Arab nations and Israel still exist. The Muslim nations of Iran and Iraq fought a brutal war for eight years. The Persian Gulf War and the refusal of the

Iraqis to dismantle their weapons of mass destruction led to tensions with the UN and the world community. The war in Iraq and Lebanon has increased instability in the region. Religious tensions have heightened among Sunni and Shiite Muslims, along with an increased threat of terrorism.

Oil-producing nations of the Middle East have become wealthy, with a much higher **standard of living** than their non-oil-producing neighbors. This gap between rich and poor countries continues to grow. Solutions for the problems of the Middle East sometimes seem difficult. Since the end of the Cold War, cooperation among the nations of the Middle East has become a necessity.

Saddam Hussein (1937-2006)

Saddam Hussein was born in Tikrit, Iraq in a farming village and raised by his widowed mother. At age 20 he joined the Ba'th party. He had to flee to Egypt after a failed assassination attempt on a political leader. While in Egypt, Hussein attended school, but returned to Iraq when the Ba'thists gained power in 1963. He continued his education and political ambitions. He led movements to modernize the country and oil resources. He took over the presidency in 1979 and ruled with terror as a dictator. In 1980 he launched a war against neighboring Iran for control of a river border, to which he only gained temporary control. In 1988 he devastated the Kurdish region of Iraq and allegedly used poison gas against the Kurds to crush a 40-year rebellion.

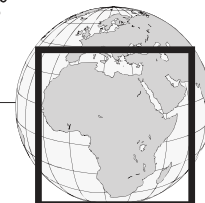
In 1990 Hussein invaded Kuwait, an action which initiated the brief Gulf War. The Iraqis were pushed out of Kuwait and suffered severe loss. By 2002, President George W. Bush identified Iraq as part of an "axis of evil" and feared that they were able to develop weapons of mass destruction, which were never found. In 2003, about 250,000 United States soldiers and 45,000 British soldiers were sent to the region. On March 19, the United States and Great Britain declared war on Iraq and Hussein was driven from power. After nine months in hiding, Hussein was found hiding in an 8-foot hole. He was captured by United States forces, and in 2006 the Iraqi High Tribunal sentenced him to death. On December 30, 2006, Hussein was executed by hanging.

Africa: The Struggle for Freedom

At the start of World War II, nearly all the countries of Africa were colonized by European nations. After World War II, as Europe recovered from the war, colonial Africa began fighting for its independence. Africans were inspired by nationalism and strong leaders who united the people in one goal: to gain self-rule. But Europeans had taken many riches from the African continent. These riches included gold, silver, diamonds, tin, and other precious gems and minerals. Therefore, European nations would not easily give up their control of colonies in Africa.



Africa and Years Marking Independence



Sometimes Africans used nonviolent means to gain independence. In other countries, such as Algeria, fighting between native peoples and their colonial rulers was long and bloody. Regardless of how these African countries gained their self-rule, the years after independence presented difficult struggles. New nations had to form stable governments and unite rival political parties and ethnic groups. Even after gaining independence, these countries did not easily find peace.

Algeria: At War with French Colonists

Located in North Africa, Algeria was more than a colony of France. In fact, the French government thought of Algeria as part of France. Millions of French people lived in Algeria. The French in Algeria ran the government, schools, and most industries. In addition, the French government kept a very large army in Algeria. Even when other French-held colonies were given independence, France kept Algeria under French rule. The Algerian people, however, were eager for independence.

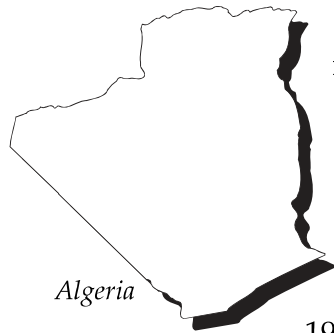
In 1954 a brutal civil war broke out in Algeria between the *Algerian National Liberation Front* or FLN and the French settlers, known as the *colons* or *pieds noirs*. Algerian guerrilla soldiers began a war for independence. In reaction to raids by Algerian guerrilla fighters, French soldiers destroyed Algerian property and committed inhumane acts against the Algerian people. The French government in Paris could not control the uprising in Algeria. The civil war in Algeria soon led to the collapse of France's government, known as the Fourth Republic.

In May 1958, the French people called upon war hero Charles de Gaulle to lead France. With popular support, de Gaulle wrote a new constitution for France. Under the constitution of France's Fifth Republic, the president of France was given a great deal of power and authority. De Gaulle promised to help Algeria establish self-rule, despite the opposition of the *colons*. He used his power to grant independence to the Algerian people. Eventually the French army left Algeria. Algerian independence was proclaimed on July 3, 1962. One million *colons* fled back to France. In 1962 some of the former French generals in Algeria tried to kill de Gaulle and overthrow the Fifth Republic. The coup failed and many were arrested.



The Algerian people were eager for independence.

Algeria after Independence



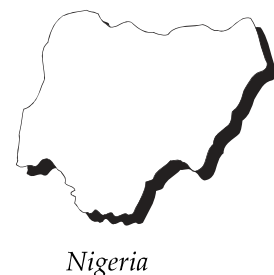
Ahmed Ben Bell, the leader of the FLN, became Algeria's first prime minister after independence in the 1960s. For the next several decades, Algeria worked to modernize and industrialize itself. A drop in oil prices and dissatisfaction among many Islamic leaders led to the riots in 1988. Civil war broke out between the ruling government and the *Islamic Salvation Front* (FIS) when the FIS won parliamentary and local elections in 1990 and 1991. The ruling government and the army refused to

accept the election results. Efforts to restore order resulted in an agreement with militant Islamic groups to release thousands of Islamic political prisoners. In recent years, a truce between the FIS and the government has ended violence that had claimed tens of thousands of lives.

By 2002 the main militant Islamic groups had either been destroyed or had surrendered. Most militants took advantage of an **amnesty** (or a general pardon) program; however, some refused to surrender and sporadic fighting has continued in some areas of Algeria.

Nigeria and the Fight for Democracy

Located in West Africa, Nigeria has the largest population in Africa. Nigeria is a country of many tribes. Its largest tribe, the Yoruba, lives in the south. In the north are the Hausa and Fulani, who are Muslims. The Ibo and the Yoruba are mostly Christians or Animists. The Nigerian people have a long history, rich in culture and tradition. Before the British colonized Nigeria and set up a central



government in Lagos, the Nigerian people were loyal to their local tribal leaders. When the British colonized Nigeria, they ignored the tribal traditions and customs of the local people. When independence was granted to Nigeria in 1960 and the British left the country, the Nigerian leaders were left with an English system of government in a land of tribal customs. The new government could not unite the rival tribes and different religions.

After independence, Nigeria adopted a federal system, a government in which power is shared between state governments and a central authority. Three states were set up, one for each region and ethnic group. One group dominated each state, but ethnic minorities existed in each state. In 1966 a group of army officers, mostly Ibos, demanded their own independent state, Biafra (bee-af-ruh). These army officers abolished the regional governments and declared **martial law**. Before the Biafran Civil War

ended, thousands of Ibos were killed, many of them innocent women and children. Ibo villages were destroyed. In 1970 the Ibos were defeated and Biafra surrendered. Although Nigeria was eventually reunited, the war left Nigeria's government weak and unstable.



Africa is rich in history, culture, and tradition.



Nigeria has been under military rule for all but 10 years since getting independence from Britain. The military has broken its promise to give up power eight times. The army held elections in 1993 after pressure to restore democracy. When a popular leader was elected, the army declared

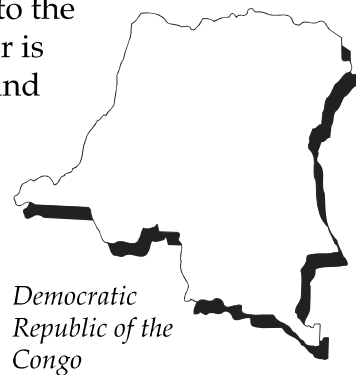
the result invalid and gave power instead to another military dictator, General Sani Abacha. The military government banned all political activities and jailed **dissidents** (opponents of government policy). In November 1995, Nigeria hanged nine political prisoners. All were critics of the military government. One of the nine was Ken Saro-Wiwa, a renowned writer and political activist who protested the environmental hazards of drilling for oil in his native province.

After Abacha died of a sudden heart attack in June 1998, he was followed by another military ruler who promised to allow free elections. In February 1999, free presidential elections gave a huge victory to Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military leader who had spent three years in prison for

speaking out against the military government. Obasanjo promised to strengthen democracy, to fight corruption, to rebuild the economy, and to recover billions of dollars allegedly stolen by the military rulers. In 2003 President Obasanjo was the first civilian president after almost 20 years of military rule to win a second term. His main goals were to work for a unified country and to work to rebuild Nigeria into a modern, prosperous nation.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire and the Belgian Congo): Rich in Minerals

The Congo River flows through central Africa into the Atlantic Ocean. The land around the Congo River is rich in resources, including vast tropical forests and mineral wealth. Belgium's King Leopold *exploited* (took advantage of) his colony's rich resources of rubber, ivory, and copper under a system of forced labor and terror. Belgium provided no social services, such as education, and made no attempt to prepare the Congolese people for independence.



On June 30, 1960, the Belgium government suddenly granted independence to the Congolese people. Their leaders were not prepared to assume the difficult responsibilities of governing a new nation. Warfare broke out between different tribes. Within months after independence, the country split apart. In July 1960, the southeastern province of Katanga, the Congo's richest province, *seceded* (withdrew) from the new republic. Civil war broke out and lasted for three years.

UN peacekeeping forces stayed in the Congo to prevent the involvement of the superpowers. UN forces withdrew in 1964, after Katanga returned to Congolese rule. Conflicts between rival political and ethnic groups continued to divide the country. Army General Joseph Mobuto (also known as *Mobuto Sese Seko*) seized power in 1965 after a military coup overthrew the existing government. He renamed the country Zaire, meaning *big river*. Mobuto, a brutal dictator, ruled Zaire for the next 30 years. He slaughtered his rivals, ruined the country's economy, and was accused of stealing billions from the treasury. He was able to stay in power for decades because his anti-Communist stand won him favor in