THE WESTERN BLOC (notes)

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* the term referring to the countries allied with the USA mainly during the Cold War as the opposite to the Eastern Bloc
* GERMANY AFTER WWII:
* after the capitulation, the area of Germany divided into 4 occupied zones
* 23 May, 1949 –western zones occupied by the USA, the UK and France were merged and the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY (FRG) with Bonn as its capital city was created
* a federal republic
* the main receiver of financial and material aid
* Chancellor: Konrad Adenauer –contributed to a rapid economic growth
* 1955- FRG joined the NATO
* 7 October,1949- the GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (GDR) created from the Soviet occupation zone with East Berlin as its capital
* efforts to escape from to FRG to gain freedom and prosperity–prevented by the Berlin Wall (1961-1989)
* FRANCE AFTER WWII:
* the situation after the liberation of Paris::
* the new president : Vincent Auriol
* the new government in the spirit of tripartisme –the cooperation of the communists, socialists and the popular republicans, the communists rebelled against the government => the government was unstable and often changed its composition
* THE THIRD FORCE – a common programme – the defence against the regime and support for the creation of the Atlantic Treaty to provide security against the soviet threat
* The Fourth Republic (21 October, 1946 – 4 October, 1958)
* managed to guide France through numerous social and political crises
* 1951- a  new prime minister –an independent Antoine Pinay- he stabilized the franc and economy
* it started the reconciliation with Germany
* its instability and the weakness of the regime led to its demise
* the Mendes government :
* Pierre Mendes France went down in the French politics as the embodiment of the crisis of the Fourth Republic
* he relied on referendums – he was interested in the nation´s opinion not a political viewpoint
* contributions: he improved the educational system, the peace treaty with Indo-China and the Viet Minh
* Charles de Gaulle (22 November, 1890 – 9 November, 1970)
* a French soldier, general and a politician
* the leader of the Free French Forces in WWII and head of the provisional government from 1944 to 1946
* in 1958 he was asked to create the government and he became the first president of the Fifth Republic and the co-Prince of Andorra (1958-1969)
* in 2005 he was voted the France's greatest personality –an airport, an aircraft carrier and many streets are named in his honour
* THE UNITED KINGDOM AFTER WWII:
* The UK lost majority of its colonies but handled the situation well, even offered economic help within the Commonwealth (an association of former British colonies with the British Queen as a former head of state)
* The conservatives and labourists tried to implement reforms to enhance the quality of life
* 1944- free secondary school education
* 1946- free health care
* 1948- financial support for the elderly, unemployed and sick
* new trends in clothing and music – culture presented mostly by the Beatles
* the popularity of the monarchy increased – the sovereign perceived as the symbol of the country (Elizabeth II since 1952)
* Winston Churchill (1874-1965)
* a British politician, prime minister, writer (1953 Nobel Prize in Literature), historian, soldier and a lawmaker
* one of the most important statesmen of the 20th century
* the British prime minister from 1940 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1955
* known also for his speech in Fulton (1946) where he addressed the situation in the post-war world and the opposition to communism
* Margaret Hilda Thatcher (1925-2013)
* a British politician, the prime minister during the Conservative Party government (1979-1990)
* nicknamed “the Iron Lady“ owing to her uncompromising nature and resolution
* after she finished her political career, she became a peer in the House of Lords
* conservative values, low taxes, restriction on immigration, etc.
* THE USA AFTER WWII:
* THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE (Containment)
* 12 March, 1947
* the effort to contain communism
* first step – the support to Greek democrats in the civil war
* THE MARSHALL PLAN
* signed into law on 3 April, 1948 (announced by Marshall on 5 June, 1947)
* Goals:
1. to secure American aid to the post-war Europe in an organised fashion
2. to solve economic problems of the US (“huge war income“)
* Stalin forced eastern European countries to refuse the aid
* western European countries accepted the help – they restore their economy and democracy
* in 1948,18 countries joined and created the The Organisation for European Economic Cooperation–later The European Economic Community (1957)–the predecessor of the European Union
* American presidents:
* Harry Truman (1884-1972)
* the 33rd president of the United States (1945-1953)
* his wife was Bess Truman
* went down in history for his approval of the use of atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki
* a member of Ku Klux Klan - he denied it
* Dwight Eisenhower (1890-1969)
* the 33rd president of the United States (1953- 1961)
* a republican
* the modernization of industry, urbanization, technical advancement
* established the civil rights movement
* ended the Korean War
* John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917- 1963)
* the 35th president of the United States (1961-1963)
* efforts to spread democracy, restrict unemployment and inflation, care for the black and the poor
* his wife was Jacqueline (Jackie) Kennedy
* assassinated on 22 November, 1963 in Dallas – the assassination carried out by Lee Harvey Oswald, the fatal shot to the head fired from a rifle –many conspiracy theories
* a number of mistresses : Audrey Hepburn, Merilyn Monroe
* Lyndon Johnson (1908-1973)
* the 36th president of the United States (1963-1969)
* a democrat
* co-responsible for a not very successful military intervention in Vietnam
* Richard Milhous Nixon (1913-1994)
* the 37th president of the United States (1969-1974)
* established so called the New Economic Policy
* the Nixon doctrine- reducing the hostility between the US and the Eastern Bloc
* intensified American involvement in the Vietnam War
* resigned after the Watergate scandal
* Gerald Rudolph Ford (1913-2006)
* the 38th president of the United States (1974-1977)
* a republican
* the only president to serve without being previously elected to either the vice presidency or presidency
* Jimmy Carter (1924- )
* the 39th president of the United States (1977-1981)
* created the national energy policy, the government reform =>established the Department of Energy and the Department of Education, contribution to the environment
* mediated the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel, signed the Panama Canal Treaty, established full diplomatic relations with China and negotiated SALT II
* Ronald Winston Reagan (1911-2004)
* the 40th president of the United States (1981-1989)
* signed arms control agreements
* a republican
* before entering politics an actor and a radio host
* George Herbert Walker Bush (1924- )
* the 41st president of the United States (1989-1993)
* a republican
* the Berlin Wall fell and the Estern Bloc disintegrated during his presidency
* contributed to the creation of an international coalition against Iraq´s annexation of Kuwait which led to the Gulf War
* Bill Clinton (1946- )
* the 42nd president of the United States (1993-2001)
* a democrat
* George Walker Bush (1946- )
* the 43rd president of the United States (2001-2009)
* a democrat
* Barack Hussein Obama (1961- )
* the 44th president of the United States (2009-2017)
* 9 October, 2009 the Norwegian Parliament Committee awarded Obama the Nobel Peace Prize for his "extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples".

NATO

* established 4 April, 1949 in Washington
* its original members: Belgium, Denmark, Canada, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the UK, the USA
* the governing body - the North Atlantic Council
* each country has their own representative
* an intergovernmental military and political organisation
* at present 28 members including Slovakia

UN

* at the end of the war the countries of the anti-fascist bloc founded the United Nations
* focused on social issues
* the UN Charter was signed in San Francisco by 51 states on 26 June, 1945
* the seat is in NY