

HOW CHINA SPLIT INTO TWO COUNTRIES

What is Communism?

Communism is a system where the government owns all property and businesses. There is no private or individual property. The main goal of communism is to create a classless society where everything belongs equally to everyone. Today, China is one of only five countries in the world with a communist government.

The Chinese Civil War (1945–1949)

After World War II, a major civil war broke out to decide who would rule China. Two main groups fought against each other: the **Chinese Communist Party (CCP)** led by Mao Zedong and the **Kuomintang (The Nationalists)** led by Chiang Kai-shek. During World War II, these two enemy groups united to fight off an invasion by Japan. However, once Japan was defeated, they broke apart and fought each other for total control.

Why Did the Communist Party Win?

Mao Zedong and the Communists won the war because they had the support of the Soviet Union (USSR) and millions of Chinese peasants.

The Communists promised to take land away from wealthy landlords and redistribute it to poor peasants. This idea was incredibly popular. Mao also gained support by giving women more rights and letting captured Nationalist soldiers go home instead of keeping them as hostages.

The Nationalists became very unpopular. They forced regular citizens to fight in the army against their will and spent the people's tax money on the war instead of their needs. They also punished peasants for participating in land redistribution.

One War, Two Chinas

In 1949, the Communist Party won the war and established the **People's Republic of China (PRC)** on the mainland. Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists fled across the ocean to the island of **Taiwan**. There, they established the **Republic of China (ROC)**. Both groups claimed to represent China's true government, and a peace treaty to officially end the war was never signed. Today, Taiwan governs itself independently, but it is not recognized as an independent country by most of the world. In 1979, the U.S. issued the One China Policy, a statement recognizing the People's Republic of China on the mainland as the official government of China and acknowledging that Taiwan is a part of China. While the U.S. has a separate trade agreement with Taiwan, it does not officially recognize Taiwan as the true government of China today.

Meaningful Facts	Important Terms
Surprising Information	Questions You Have