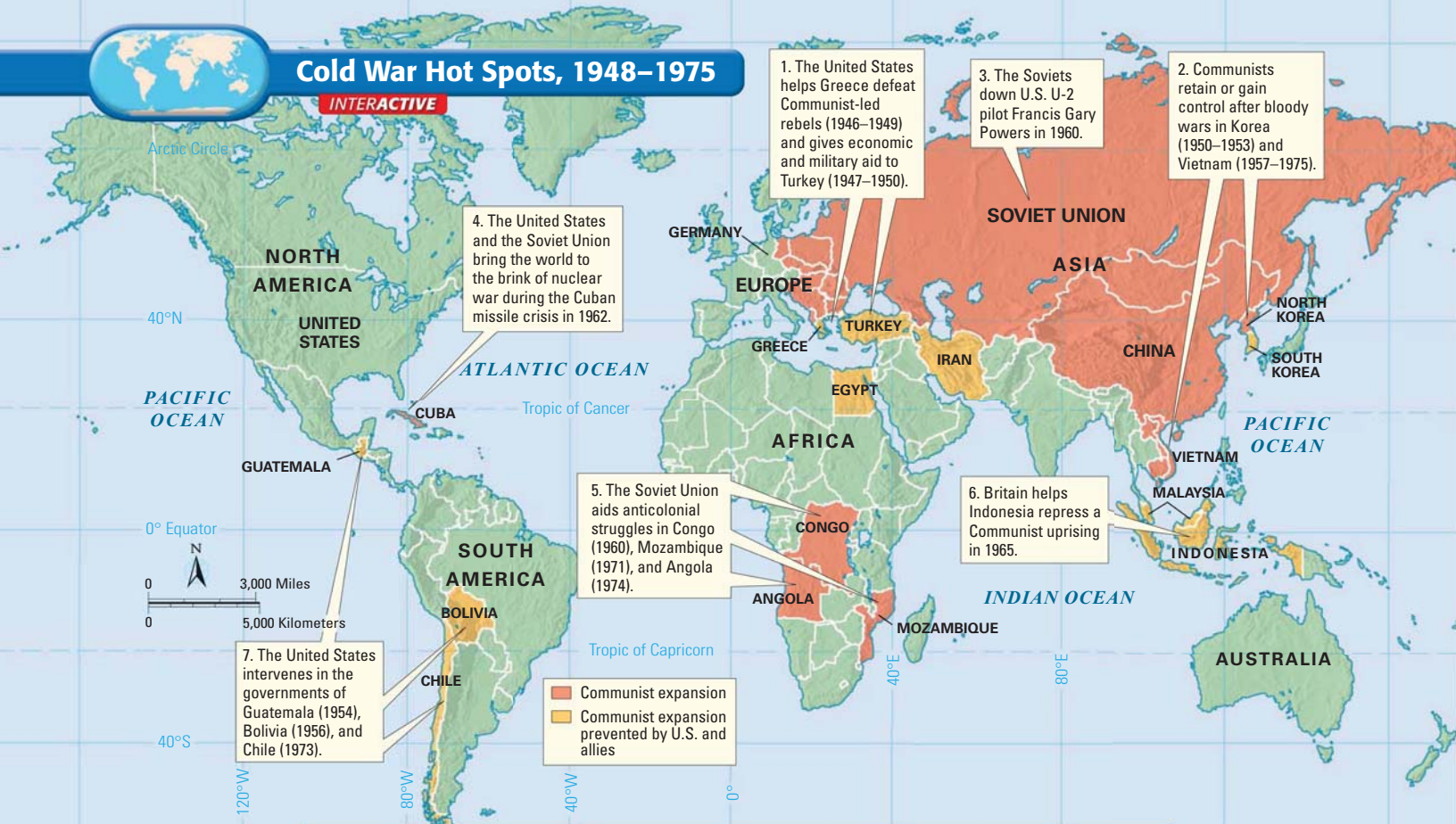


Cold War Hot Spots, 1948–1975

INTERACTIVE



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- Location** On what continents identified on the map did Cold War conflicts not occur?
- Region** About what fraction of the globe did Communists control by 1975?

Confrontations in Latin America

After World War II, rapid industrialization, population growth, and a lingering gap between the rich and the poor led Latin American nations to seek aid from both superpowers. At the same time, many of these countries alternated between short-lived democracy and harsh military rule. As described in Chapter 28, U.S. involvement in Latin America began long before World War II. American businesses backed leaders who protected U.S. interests but who also often oppressed their people. After the war, communism and nationalistic feelings inspired revolutionary movements. These found enthusiastic Soviet support. In response, the United States provided military and economic assistance to anti-Communist dictators.

Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution In the 1950s, Cuba was ruled by an unpopular dictator, Fulgencio Batista, who had U.S. support. Cuban resentment led to a popular revolution, which overthrew Batista in January 1959. A young lawyer named **Fidel Castro** led that revolution. At first, many people praised Castro for

bringing social reforms to Cuba and improving the economy. Yet Castro was a harsh dictator. He suspended elections, jailed or executed his opponents, and tightly controlled the press.

When Castro nationalized the Cuban economy, he took over U.S.-owned sugar mills and refineries. In response, Eisenhower ordered an embargo on all trade with Cuba. Castro then turned to the Soviets for economic and military aid.

