

# A2 The Cold War, c1945 – 1991



Confrontation and  
cooperation 1963-1972

## President Johnson

Lyndon B Johnson was Kennedy's vice president and assumed the role of president upon Kennedy's assassination in 1963. A determined anti-communist, he was constrained by Kennedy's Vietnam legacy, but he is famed for escalating the conflict which led to the USA having to reassess its whole Cold War strategic thinking based on containment.

## Confrontation in the Vietnam War

### Johnson's policies in Vietnam

Johnson's priority in Vietnam was clear; achieve quick victory without the need to commit the USA to major escalation. In January 1964 Johnson agreed to implement the plan OPLAN 34 which progressively escalated pressure in order to inflict increasing punishment on North Vietnam. He did continue President Kennedy's approach by increasing the number of military 'advisers' from 16,300 to 23,300 and stuck to counterinsurgency strategy.

The USA's West European allies were not convinced by Johnson's approach and France's leader, Charles de Gaulle warned that increased involvement could lead to a repeat of France's failed experience in Indochina. As a result Johnson delayed escalation of military action however a key event proved a watershed for Johnson's policies in Vietnam.

### The Gulf of Tonkin Incident

On August 2, 1964, the U.S. destroyer Maddox exchanged shots with North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin. The attack failed and the Maddox called for air support from the aircraft carrier, USS Triconderoga. One Vietnamese torpedo boat was sunk and two more were badly damaged. Two days later, the Maddox and another destroyer reported once again coming under fire. Although most historians, including those employed by the U.S. military, have since concluded that the second of those attacks never actually occurred, it served as the pretext for an immediate ramp-up of the Vietnam War. By the end of the day, President Lyndon B. Johnson had ordered retaliatory air strikes, he said on US TV, 'Repeated acts of violence against armed forces of the United States must be met with a positive reply'.

### The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, August 1964

News reached Washington of an attack on a US naval vessel by a North Vietnamese force in the Gulf of Tonkin. In response to this, on 7 August, Congress agreed upon a resolution which gave Johnson the power to take whatever action he felt necessary to resist an armed attack on US forces in Vietnam. This effectively gave Johnson the power to do whatever he wanted without consulting Congress.



'This will open the flood gates' –  
Robert McNamara, Secretary of  
Defence

By the end of 1964 the situation in Vietnam was deteriorating for the USA:

- China had agreed to provide military supplies to North Vietnam
- The USSR had established diplomatic links with the NLF, in addition military equipment was sent to help North Vietnam.
- The first North Vietnamese military forces – the People’s Army of Vietnam (PAVN) – moved down the Ho Chi Minh Trail.
- The Vietcong had strengthened their positions in many parts of South Vietnam.
- There was a rise in anti-American feeling in South Vietnam.
- The South Vietnamese army (ARVN) had poor leadership, inadequate training and low pay.

Johnson continued armed reconnaissance strikes and had no inclination to move towards a diplomatic settlement, as he believed that the North Vietnamese would back down against the economic and military strength of the USA.

## Escalation

In February 1965 the Vietcong attacked an army barracks and a US helicopter base. As a result Johnson ordered **Operation Rolling Thunder**. This was a bombing campaign that progressed between 1965 and 1968, this marked the start of the escalation.

In addition to Operation Rolling Thunder, the first US combat troops had arrived in Danang in March 1965. As a result North Vietnam offered a four point proposal:


1. US troops must withdraw from South Vietnam, in accordance with the Geneva Agreements.
2. Neither North or South Vietnam may enter into any military alliance with a foreign power during the temporary division of Vietnam, in accordance with the Geneva Accords.
3. South Vietnam’s internal affairs must be settled by the people of South Vietnam.
4. The peaceful renunciation of Vietnam must be settled only by the people of both zones.

Johnson rejected the proposals as he believed acceptance would lead to a unified communist state. Instead he ordered two marine battalions, an air squadron and 20,000 troops to be deployed in Vietnam. He publicly announced his decision to escalate the USA’s military role on 28 July 1965.

Bomb Tonnage	
1965	63,000 tons
1966	136,000 tons
1967	226,000 tons
Ground Troops	
1965	184,310
1966	385,300
1967	485,600
1968	536,000

## Tactics and relative strengths and weaknesses of the two sides

In November 1965, the first significant engagement between the US forces and the forces of North Vietnam took place in the Ia Drang Valley. This was a conventional battle. The USA suffered about 300 deaths whilst the North Vietnamese suffered between 2000-3000. Both sides saw the battle as a victory.

USA	
<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
<p><b><u>Economic Strength :</u></b></p> <p>The economic might of the USA can be seen as a strength as this allowed it to ensure the forces had the most modern equipment. For example by 1967 about one million tons of supplies were arriving into South Vietnam each month.</p>	<p><b><u>ARVN:</u></b></p> <p>The South Vietnamese Army were largely uncommitted to the struggle. It frequently avoided action and its troops were not well trained.</p>
<p><b><u>Bombing:</u></b></p> <p>The American deployed the huge B-52 bombers – the aim was to destroy North Vietnam’s economy. This objective failed due to the agricultural nature of the North. More bombs were dropped on Vietnam during the war than the whole of the Second World War.</p> <p>The Americans also deployed anti-personnel bombs. These so called pineapple bombs caused thousands of pellets to be freed in the explosion.</p> <p>A further weapon delivered y air was napalm – this was a gel that spread over a wide area when it was landed and was set on fire.</p>	<p><b><u>Widespread TV coverage:</u></b></p> <p>This was the first televised war and this meant that the US forces were weakened by the widespread press and TV coverage. Images of South Vietnamese peasants being brutalised heightened the growing anti-war movement in the USA.</p> 
<p><b><u>Chemicals :</u></b></p> <p>As early as 1962 Kennedy had order the spraying of chemicals in order to defoliate the jungles and thereby remove the cover the enemy had used. This was used in Operation Ranch Hand, the chemical used was <b><u>Agent Orange</u></b>. Another chemical known as Agent Blue was also used on crops to deprive the enemy of food.</p>	<p><b><u>Failure to engage the rural peasants as allies:</u></b></p> <p>Military tactics like search and destroy couldn’t discriminate between the enemy and ordinary peasants. Innocent civilians were killed along with the livestock and other sources of food production were destroyed. This contradicted the policy of winning the hearts and minds of the people.</p>
<p><b><u>Search and Destroy:</u></b></p> <p>This was a primary strategy between 1965 and 1968. US forces would arrive by helicopter and raid a village suspected of harbouring Vietcong.</p>	<p><b><u>Opposition:</u></b></p> <p>The Anti-war movement grew during this period. Leading pacifists such as Martin Luther King Jr influenced black Americans.</p>

# North Vietnam

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weakness</u>
<p><b><u>Peasant Support:</u></b></p> <p>The Vietcong were strengthened by its ability to gain recruits amongst the anti-American rural peasantry in South Vietnam. The Vietcong won support by following the principles of Mao Zedung: Do not destroy land or crops ; Always keep your word; Always show the peasants respect; Always support the peasants.</p>	<p><b><u>Dependency on USSR and China:</u></b></p> <p>The North's economy could not sustain a prolonged war, even one based on guerrilla tactics and therefore they became dependant on the USSR and China.</p>
<p><b><u>The Ho Chi Minh Trail:</u></b></p> <p>This route supplied both men and equipment and travelled through Cambodia and Laos into South Vietnam.</p>	<p><b><u>No guaranteed peasant support:</u></b></p> <p>There was no guaranteed support amongst the South Vietnamese. This was apparent when the planned uprising of the Tet Offensive never materialised.</p>
<p><b><u>Guerrilla tactics:</u></b></p> <p>North Vietnamese forces adopted a wide range of sophisticated guerrilla tactics to undermine the resolve and morale of the US forces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complex tunnel systems were constructed to hide Vietcong troops.</li> <li>● Booby traps of all kinds were deployed in the dense forces.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Support from USSR and China:</u></b></p> <p>The Northern forces were strengthened by the continued commitment from China and the USSR. In 1964 China supplied 80,000 guns and this steadily increased to 140,000 by 1989. The USSR supplied surface-to-air missiles, MiG-21 jets and artillery systems.</p>	



## The Tet Offensive, January-February 1968

During the traditional holiday period of Tet, the Vietcong launched a series of attacks of simultaneous military attacks against US targets in over a hundred towns and cities. The plan was to stimulate a mass uprising against the Americans in South Vietnam. The US embassy in Saigon was a focus of the attack. The US film crews televised the events. The most ferocious fighting took place around Hue and there was a rapid US victory. On 31 January, communist troops had entered the city and it was not until 24 February that the South Vietnamese flag was able to fly over the city again.

For the Vietcong it was a huge military defeat, around 25,000 were killed and 5000 captured. However for America it was a huge turning point, as the anti-war movement grew significantly. The famous broadcaster Walter Cronkite commented that Tet had shown the US was facing stalemate. This represented the growing view in America – how were they going to win this war? Therefore Tet was seen as a psychological defeat for America. In March 1968 Johnson announced he would not stand for re-election.

### The anti-war movement demonstrations

In the early 1960s the peace movement was largely an intellectual movement that consisted mostly of university faculty and graduate students. There were some militant groups such as the Students for a Democratic Society, which demonstrated publically against US escalation, but it was the October 1967 protest in Washington DC that showed the anti-war movement had become mainstream: over 100,000 participated. Most historians see the broadcast of the Tet Offensive as the reason for the escalation of the anti-war demonstrations.

## President Nixon's policies in Vietnam

When Richard Nixon took office in January 1969, he promised, "I'm not going to end up like LBJ. I'm going to stop that war, fast." The USA's credibility as a global power was under threat due to its inability to achieve a military victory in Vietnam. Nixon wanted 'peace with honour' in Vietnam. This tried to ensure that South Vietnam remained an independent non-communist state.





## Vietnamisation

A crucial element to Nixon's plan was Vietnamisation, this amounted to the withdrawal of US forces and their replacement by South Vietnamese forces. This strategy was designed to encourage North Vietnam to negotiate. Nixon began the process of withdrawing troops in June 1969.

Date	Troops
June 1969	543,000
January 1972	156,800
June 1972	47,000

This was in order to transform the South Vietnamese military into an effective fighting force. This was tested in 1972 when the North Vietnamese launched its Spring Offensive. The ARVN resisted and although suffered 8000 casualties, the North suffered almost five times that number. The ARVN was supported by the US bombing campaign and during May to October, Operation Linebacker I saw 150,000 tons of bombs dropped on North Vietnam.

However despite some successes, problems with the ARVN continued. The morale remained low and the high casualty rates increased this. In addition, the process of Vietnamisation was rushed. The process also made the ARVN reliant on the USA and it remained corrupt. Therefore Vietnamisation did little to strengthen the aim of achieving 'peace with honour' in Vietnam.

## The extension of the war into Cambodia and Laos

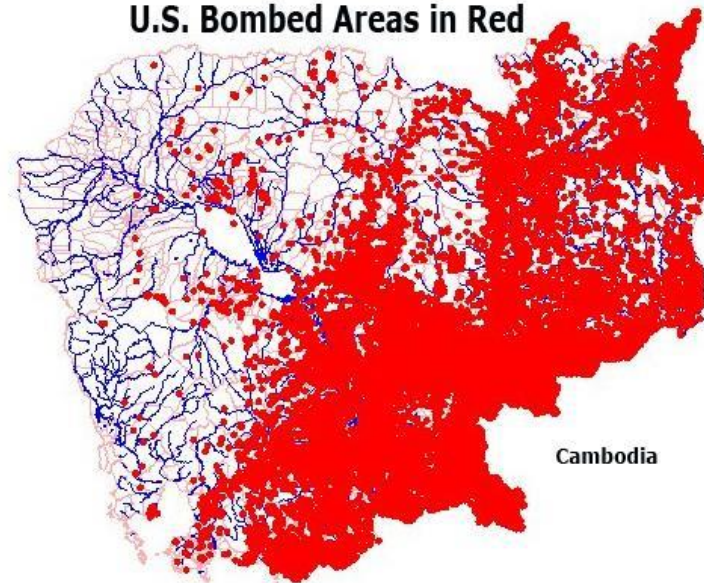
### Cambodia

In March 1969, Nixon instigated a military offensive in Cambodia, Operation Menu was a bombing offensive designed to target those parts of Cambodia

regarded as safe by the North Vietnamese Army and the Vietcong. It was hoped that it would:

- Sever the supply lines based on the Ho Chi Minh Trail
- Pressurise North Vietnam into agreeing to an acceptable peace settlement for South Vietnam
- Compensate for the planned Vietnamisation programme and so retain the confidence and commitment of South Vietnam.

**U.S. Air Force data of American bombings in Cambodia**  
**U.S. Bombed Areas in Red**



**The United States dropped 2,756,941 tons of bombs  
in 230,516 sorties on 113,716 sites.  
11,738 bombing sites were indiscriminate.  
United States B52 Holocaust Museum**

In March 1970, Cambodia's Head of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk was overthrown by the pro-US General Lon Nol. North Vietnam increased its presence in Cambodia by backing the anti-Nol communist movement, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot.

## The Khmer Rouge

The Khmer Rouge was the Communist Party in Cambodia. In 1975, it became the ruling party and up until 1979 it implemented social engineering policies. Enforced self-sufficiency and the random execution of so-called subversive elements formed the basis of their policies. The educated and professional classes of Cambodia were almost wiped out in what came to be seen as genocide.

Nixon feared the possibility of a communist regime being established in Cambodia, as this would undermine the policy of Vietnamisation. He believed that a show of force in Cambodia would also demonstrate to the USA's continued commitment to South Vietnam. This resulted in South Vietnamese forces, with US air support carrying out cross border raids into Cambodia. In April 1970, the USA committed 20,000 ground troops to Cambodia.

Extending the war into Cambodia had a variety of consequences:

- The ability of the Vietcong to operate in Cambodia was seriously undermined as large areas of jungle were destroyed as well as equipment and supplies.
- The North Vietnamese moved deeper into Cambodia and strengthened their support of the Khmer Rouge in order to overthrow Lon Nol and establish a pro-communist regime under Pol Pot.
- Opposition to the war at home increased. The press led opposition to what Nixon described as an 'incursion' into Cambodia. In May 1970 widespread student protest erupted. On the campus of Kent State University of Ohio four students were shot by US National Guards. This led to further protests.
- In June the US Senate voted to remove the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and with it the president's control of the conduct of the war in Vietnam.

## Laos

Nixon feared a massive communist push in advance of 1972 – the year of the presidential election. Disabling the Ho Chi Minh Trail on its route through Laos could stop the support that the North Vietnamese were dependant upon. Since the US Congress had banned US ground troops after the Cambodian 'incursion' this meant that assault into Laos had to be carried out by South Vietnamese forces with US air support.

In February 1971, President Nixon activated Operation Lam Son 719. This was a plan to support an ARVN invasion of Laos with US air support. It aimed to disrupt the supply line along the Ho Chi Minh trail. An inadequate force of 30,000

ARVN troops attacked however was forced to withdraw due to the superior North Vietnamese forces. This proved that the ARVN could only have a chance of matching the North Vietnamese forces when it had the support of the US. Therefore Vietnamisation was failing, as was the policy of 'peace with honour'.

### Relations with China

President Nixon and his principle advisor on foreign policy, Henry Kissinger, recognised the advantages open to the USA through improved Sino-Soviet relations. Equally the Chinese came to realise that self-imposed isolation was of no advantage to them, also the worsening Sino-Soviet relations (after their split in 1960) improved relations with America.

#### Henry Kissinger

Henry Kissinger pioneered détente (easing of hostilities between countries) and he particularly promoted the USA's relationship with China. He was a skilful diplomat and developed the idea of linking international problems in order to create a collective solution. He referred to this idea as linkage.

The first steps towards discussion with China occurred in 1969, when the US removed some trade controls and relaxed some travel restrictions. These were part of what was termed the 'artichoke' approach. This was based on the gradual peeling-off of restrictions layer by layer, rather than whole scale removal of controls.

Between August and September 1970 China's Prime Minister achieved a major victory over those opposed to China's improved relations with the USA. There was a policy shift towards viewing the USSR as a greater threat to China than the USA – therefore it made sense to make an alliance America. In July 1971 Henry Kissinger visited Beijing this agreed a presidential visit and Sino-American summit meeting in early 1972.



### The beginning of the Paris Peace Talks

In May 1968 tentative talks began in Paris to end the bombing in Vietnam. Johnson and his Secretary of Defence, Clark Clifford, led this. However there were unresolved issues over who would be represented at these talks and this meant the talks reached a stalemate. Furthermore the events after Tet represented the North's continued defensive stance and that they would not commit to any decision. As a result Johnson remained committed to the bombing of Vietnam.

In February 1970 Kissinger met in Paris with Le Duc Tho, a communist politician who served as a special advisor to the North Vietnam during the negotiations. Le Duc Tho insisted that an armistice must trigger a replacement of the current Saigon (Southern) regime and the introduction of a coalition government with Vietcong representatives. Nixon and Kissinger saw this as unrealistic. Talks continued and a turning point was reached in October 1972.

## Cooperation



The logo of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament movement which came to be the symbol of universal protest; the central motif was meant to be to show the despair of humanity.

## Attitudes of Khrushchev and Kennedy after the Cuban Missile Crisis

Kennedy and Khrushchev both had pressures that affected the way they approached foreign policy before the Missile Crisis. Khrushchev was interested in improving the USSR's economy and standards of living, but had to contend with the challenges of Mao Zedong. Kennedy, like Khrushchev was initially inclined towards cooperation (peaceful coexistence) but had to demonstrate a strong anti-communist stance to appease his opposition. However, both became more interested in engagement and discussions after the crisis.

Kennedy's attitude towards the USSR	Khrushchev's attitude towards the USA
<p>The Cuban Missile Crisis had a profound effect on Kennedy. However even before this he made pleas for peace, understanding the effects of nuclear weapons on society and the economy.</p> <p>Kennedy's thinking on nuclear weapons was confirmed in 1963 as the National Security Council's Net Evaluation Subcommittee (top secret branch of NSC which provided reports considering the impact of nuclear war) concluded that 'neither the USA or USSR can emerge from a full scale nuclear exchange without suffering very severe damage and high casualties.' This estimated that the two countries would have a combined loss of 93 million casualties in the event of nuclear war in 1963 or 1964. Therefore Kennedy realised that the US objective should be to avoid nuclear war.</p> <p>This led to the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which stated that it was advantageous for both the USA and USSR to have nuclear equality. Kennedy also believed the spread of nuclear weapons should be stopped. In 1963, the only nuclear powers were the USA, USSR, France and the UK and he believed this should remain.</p>	<p>Khrushchev presented his withdrawal from Cuba as a triumph. After the Crisis, Khrushchev was amenable to a US-Soviet relationship based on mutual restraint rather than brinkmanship.</p> <p>Khrushchev embraced Kennedy's idea of common agreements. He agreed with Kennedy that the number of countries with nuclear capabilities should be limited. However like Kennedy he didn't see this idea to its conclusion as he was ousted in October 1964.</p>

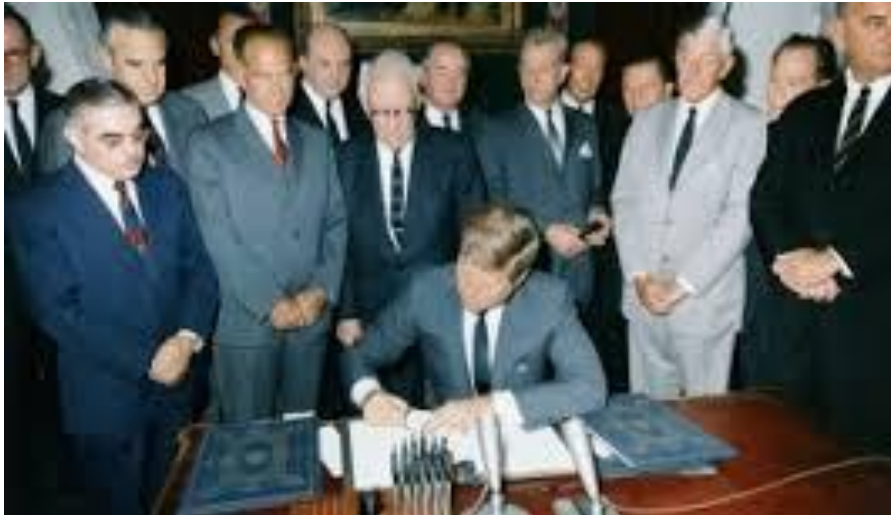
### The Washington-Moscow Hotline

In June 1963, a direct communication was set up between the leaders of the USA and USSR. Kennedy and Khrushchev could reach each other 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The aim was to avoid the kind of delays that had occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis. It symbolised a new spirit of cooperation. However neither Kennedy or Khrushchev used the hotline, it was Johnson who made the first call when he alerted the USSR that the USA was considering air support to Israel.

### The Moscow Test Ban Treaty, August 1963

In August 1963, the USA and USSR signed the Moscow Test Ban Treaty, which officially prohibited above ground, underwater and outer space nuclear weapons testing (it did not include underground tests). The treaty was signed by the USA, USSR and the UK. Significantly France and China refused to sign the agreement and continued to test its weapons well into the 1990s.





The treaty was extremely significant:

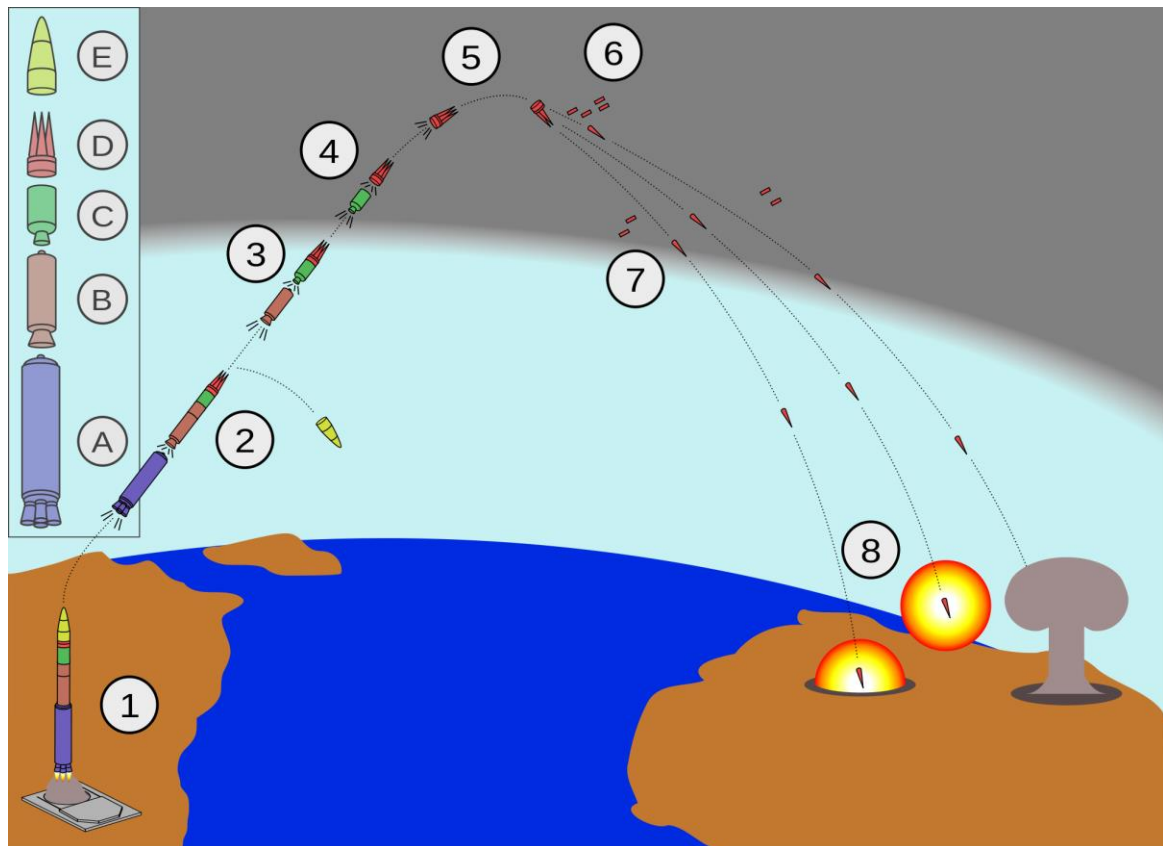
- It was the first collective agreement to establish some limitations on the nuclear arms race.
- It confirmed that Britain, the USA and the USSR were committed to the principle of some form of easing of tension in the Cold War.
- It demonstrated each party saw nuclear war as a real possibility and wanted to diminish the chances of this happening.
- This led to further treaties that included more countries.

## The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, July 1968

Despite a test ban, the Kennedy administration continued to produce ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) and SLBMs (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles) which gained them superiority over the USSR in the arms race. However by the late 1960s this disparity ended.

The Soviet Union developed the technology to intercept nuclear missiles and prevent them from reaching their target. These Anti-ballistic Missiles (ABMs) represented a shift away from MAD.

In early 1967, Robert McNamara persuaded President Johnson to delay the development of American ABM system prior to negotiations with the USSR over weapons. Instead they developed Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs). The USSR's ABMs could not stop these and therefore they lost their advantage in the race.



A diagram showing an MIRV in action; as the MIRV (1) goes into space (2), the multiple warheads split off from the explosive device (3, 4 and 5) and then re-entry vehicles (6) land at different targeted areas (7).

In October 1964 China successfully tested a nuclear bomb and thereby entered the elite club of nuclear powers. As a result the UK, USA and USSR worked to introduce a means of checking the spread of nuclear weapons. This was finalised in June 1968 with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in which all signatories agreed that they would not 'transfer to any recipient nuclear weapons or assist, encourage or induce any non-nuclear state to manufacture nuclear weapons'. However the nations could continue to develop and research the weapons for peaceful purposes.

In effect this meant that non-nuclear states would never be able to establish nuclear weapons. These countries were encouraged to sign this and most countries in the UN became signatories. However France and China did not sign until 1992.

### Cut back in materials for nuclear weapons

Further discussions on arms limitations occurred due to the economic and social costs of nuclear weapons. However discussions were halted after Johnson's decision to not run for re-election and the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. With the election of Nixon in 1969 the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) began.



## Pressures on the USSR

The Khrushchev era was seen as allowing differentiation within communism as long as countries remained in the Warsaw Pact. However events such as the Missile Crisis and the Berlin Crisis were seen as failures of Khrushchev's leadership. In his absence between January and September 1964 Party insiders led by Leonid Brezhnev planned his removal. On his return, Khrushchev was summoned to a special meeting where he was attacked by the members of the Soviet Leadership and was forced to accept retirement, citing poor health and age. Upon his resignation Brezhnev was appointed General Secretary. His regime was interested in stabilising the Soviet Union, both domestically and internationally, but was associated with corruption and stagnation. Economic decline and political repression continued and discontent arose most notably in Czechoslovakia.

### The Crisis in Czechoslovakia

Brezhnev wanted stability in Eastern Europe; he believed that economic progress was the key to stability in the Eastern Bloc countries. In turn he saw this stability as necessary for Soviet prosperity.

In 1963 Czechoslovakia recorded negative growth after many prosperous years. This led the people of Czechoslovakia to reconsider its relationship with the Communist Party, which was a source of corruption and inefficiency.

Signs of revolt against the Communist Party began in the mid 1960s. An influential Czechoslovakian economist, Professor Ota Sik, proposed reforms to the planned command economy. These included:

- An end to centrally planned economic targets for the whole country
- Allowing individual enterprise to function
- The existence of consumer rights
- The workforce having more power, for example workers could replace factory managers.

The Communist party was not going to allow these changes to take place and in 1966 Sik argued for political reform, seeing that as the only possibility for economic improvements. This gathered support from students intellectuals and then the wider public.

### The Prague Spring, 1968

The Prague Spring of 1968 is the term used for the brief period of time when the government of Czechoslovakia led by Alexander Dubček seemingly wanted to democratize the nation and lessen the stranglehold Moscow had on the nation's affairs. The Prague Spring ended with a Soviet invasion, the removal of Alexander Dubček as party leader and an end to reform within Czechoslovakia.

In January 1968, Party leader Antonin Novotny was pressurised into resigning by the USSR and was replaced by Alexander Dubček. He appeared to be a typical party bureaucrat so the Soviets hoped he would prevent protest. In reality he turned out to be an advocate of political reform. He stated this was a 'new start for socialism'. He quickly began to replace key officials without consulting the Soviets.

Amongst his reform Dubček eliminated press censorship. In Poland the phrase 'Poland awaits her own Dubček' echoed throughout the country.

In August 1968 Dubček announced the Action Program, which stated the Communist Party's determination to achieve socialism distinct to Czechoslovakia. TO do so the government allowed freedoms of speech, press and movement. It also formally recognized the state of Israel and acknowledged the legitimacy of trade unions. To protect these reforms Dubček assured Moscow that Czechoslovakia would remain in the Warsaw Pact.

When no opposition emerged to the Action Program, the Czechoslovakian Communist Party took this one step further and ended all press censorship and began trade discussions with West Germany.

Hoping to intimidate Dubček, the Warsaw Pact countries conducted military exercises in Czechoslovakia in late June 1968. They held a meeting of leaders of the USSR, Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary and Poland on 14-15 July and expressed their concerns regarding the reform in Czechoslovakia. In the subsequent Warsaw Letter they regarded the challenged to socialism in Czechoslovakia as a threat to the entire socialist movement and should not be tolerated.

At the end of July 1968 Brezhnev and Dubček had the last of six meetings regarding the action in Czechoslovakia. Brezhnev pressured Dubček to repeal his reforms, but despite promises to do so Dubček continued with these. As a result the 500,000 Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia on 20-21 August 1968.

The reforms of Dubček were abandoned. He was arrested and sent to Moscow. Here he was told what was expected of Czechoslovakia and he was released and sent back to Prague. Dubček announced that the talks in Moscow had been "comradely" and he returned still as First Secretary of the Party. Dubček did as was required and announced that all reforms were ending. However, his days were numbered and in April 1969, Dubček was removed from office. The new government, led by Gustav Husak, conformed to the Soviet line and remained in power until the collapse of communism in 1989.

In November 1968 Brezhnev released a statement justifying the action in Czechoslovakia and outlined the rational for future Soviet actions. He explained the responsibility of the Soviet Union to protect the actions of the whole communist community.

## Relations with China



The Sino-Soviet alliance, formed in 1950 was defunct by 1962. The alliance had represented global communist unity but tensions rose between Khrushchev and Moa. Mao accused Khrushchev of revisionism especially with his attempts at peaceful coexistence. According to the Chinese Khrushchev had abandoned the struggle against capitalist imperialism. In July 1963 talks between China and the USSR broke down. This was after a series of events on both sides:

Khrushchev	Mao
Supported India in its dispute with China in 1959	Provoked the USA through bombing the Taiwanese held islands of Quemoy and Matsu in 1958
Withdrew technological aid from the Chinese by removing Soviet experts in 1960	Criticised Khrushchev for being unwilling to use nuclear weapons.
Refused to fulfil his agreement to provide prototype atomic bombs in addition to undermining the Chinese embryonic nuclear weapons programme.	Criticised Khrushchev for removing the missiles in Cuba.

As a result of the breakdown in relations, in 1964 China called for the return of its territory that it claimed the USSR had occupied historically, particularly parts of Siberia. Khrushchev rejected this but after his resignation Brezhnev advocated the restoration of positive relations with China. Brezhnev believed that the USSR and China had to settle their differences and support North Vietnam in

opposition to 'US imperialism'. A representative was sent to China to meet Mao seeking to establish a degree of unity. However the attempt failed and relations were further strained by the Malinovsky incident.

### Malinovsky Incident

At Sino Soviet talks held in Moscow in late 1964, the Soviet Defence Minister, Rodion Malinovsky suggested to a Chinese delegate, Marshal He Long, that the Chinese should get rid of Mao just as the USSR had removed Khrushchev. The talks immediately collapsed despite Soviet apologies. The rift between the two sides widened.

### Vietnam's influence of relations

In April 1965, the USSR requested a meeting with both China and North Vietnam to develop a collective response towards the USA's escalation of the war in Vietnam. The Chinese met this proposal with resistance and the meeting never took place. Mao wanted North Vietnam to be dependant on China.

The USSR also proposed establishing a Soviet air base in Southern China at Kunming in order to protect the Sino-Vietnamese border. China viewed this proposal as a Soviet military intrusion on its territory.

### Cultural Revolution

In 1966, Mao embarked in the Cultural Revolution. This intended to return China to its revolutionary communist roots. In so doing there were attacks against anything considered remotely Western, capitalist or dynastic. This led to a purging of high ranking communist, the removal of anyone in positions of power, and an empowerment of youth who were charged with carrying out the revolution. Boys and girl between the ages of 9 and 18 formed the Red Guard. They justified their actions by citing quotations from Chairman Moa from the Little Red Book. The revolution span out of control and Mao had to call in the Red Army to end it and restore order in 1969.

Mao used the Red Guard to intimidate the USSR. This was graphically illustrated when the Soviet Union's embassy in Beijing was besieged by the Red Guard mob, led by a 16 year old girl. The mob even threatened to burn the embassy down.



## Border disputes

In the face of this increasing hostility from China, the USSR decided to station military forces in Mongolia and Eastern Kazakhstan in 1967. This alarmed the Chinese and reinforced their view that the USSR intended to attack. As a result they began 'active defence'. This was activated on 2 March 1969 when a Soviet border patrol near Zhenbao Island in eastern USSR was ambushed by Chinese forces.

Border talks took place in 1969. As a result Mao began to establish a rapport with the USA. All efforts to reconcile the Sino-Soviet alliance in the 1970s had failed.

## Glossary

ABMs	Short for Anti-Ballistic Missiles, missiles designed to destroy a ballistic missile.
Agent Orange	This chemical contains dioxin, a toxic defoliant which destroys trees and is also associated with causing deformities in children.
Americanised	A situation which the USA would have direct control of the conduct of the war; the South Vietnamese government and its army would serve as functionaries for US policies and strategies in the conflict.
Counterinsurgency	Tactics that are used to defeat guerrilla or unconventional warfare; they focus on intelligence gathering, targeting individual leaders and methods aimed at infiltrating the enemy rather than confronting it head on.
Détente	Easing hostility or strained relations, especially between countries.
Guerrilla Action	Fighting involving 'undercover' methods of attacking a stronger enemy; guerrillas often set traps and use ambush tactics, rather than engaging their opponents using traditional methods, to give them a greater chance of victory.
Guerrilla	A member of a small independent group taking part in irregular fighting often in unplanned ways.
Linkage	In the diplomatic sense, this means connecting one set of concessions related to one issue; in effect diplomacy becomes a package of issues rather than simply focused on a single unit.
MIRVs	Sort for Multiple Independent Targetable Re-entry Vehicles, ballistic missiles that have several warheads, each of which is aimed at different targets.
Revisionism	In the communist world, this was a disparaging term used against the governments or individuals who were seen as deviating from the revolutionary path of socialism usually towards the adaptation of capitalist policies.

## Basic Timeline

1963	June August November	Kennedy's American University speech; the 'hot line is set up' Moscow Test Ban Treaty Kennedy is assassinated Lyndon B. Johnson US President
1964	August October	US Congress agrees the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution Khrushchev is removed from office Brezhnev becomes leader of the USSR
1965	May	Operation Rolling Thunder starts.
1968	Jan-Feb  March April May July August November	The Tet Offensive Alexander Dubcek is appointed leader of Czechoslovakia. Johnson announces his intention not to run for re-election Dubcek's Action program Preliminary peace talks begin in Paris. Non-Proliferation Treaty Soviet troops and tanks move into Prague. The Brezhnev Doctrine is clarified
1969	March  November	Operation Menu is activated in Cambodia Sino-Soviet border fighting Vietnamisation is announced to the US Public US-Soviet arms limitation discussions begin.
1970	April	ARVN and US ground forces invade Cambodia
1971	February	Nixon backs the ARVN's invasion of Laos
1972	June	Lowest number of US troops in Vietnam since 1965 SALT 1 is signed