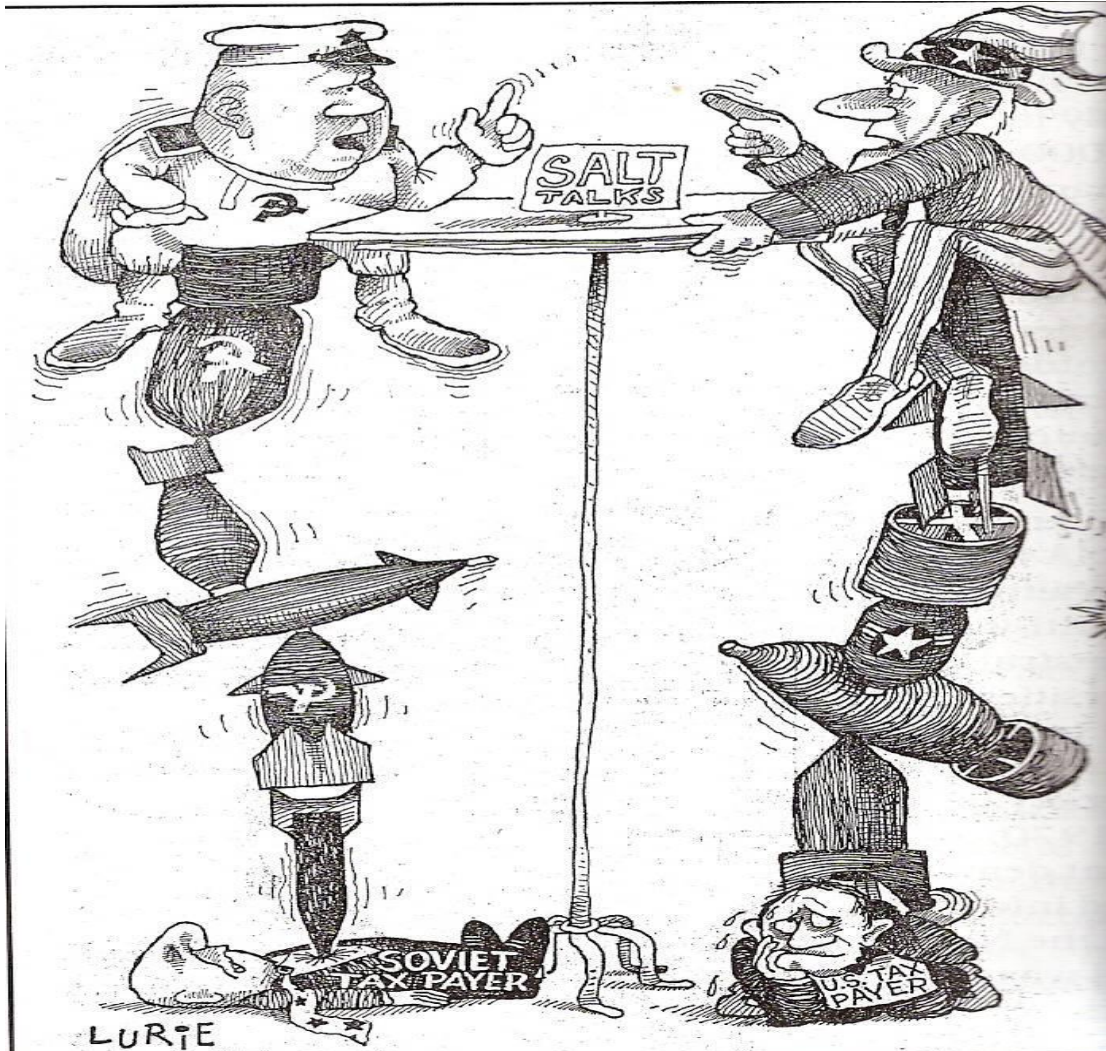


# The Cold War, c1945 – 1991



## The Origins of the Cold War, c.1945-1949

Why were relations between the US, Britain and USSR difficult in 1945?

The Cold War, a period of international tension between the USA and the USSR, developed out of the end of the Second World War in 1945. It dominated international relations for over forty years. Although the tensions between the two superpowers came to the fore in 1945, the seeds of conflict were in existence in 1939. The Second World War may have smoothed over the causes of the tension but it was only a temporary development. Far from removing the factors which produced tension, the Second World War ultimately created an environment in international relations generated far more tension, hostility and rivalry between the USA and the USSR than had been seen before 1939.

### How do the ideologies of Capitalism and Communism differ?

The origins of the Cold War conflict can be traced back to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. The Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia was to lead the establishment of the world's first socialist state, a state whose government saw the ideas of communism as their guiding principles. Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution, represented all that was feared by the governments of the West: a threat to the freedoms of democracy and capitalism. Thus the Cold War was a conflict between opposing ideologies.

| <b>Capitalism and Communism ideological differences.</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Capitalism</b>   | <b>Communism</b>  |
| <p><i>Upheld as the guiding principles of the West</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Enterprise: businesses, factories and land owned by individuals or groups of individuals with the minimum of government interference.</li> <li>• Liberal democracy: a political system where each person has the freedom to vote, freedom to stand for election, freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom of the press.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Upheld as the guiding principles of the Soviet Union</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State-owned economy: an economy where all industries and agriculture are owned by the government on behalf of the people.</li> <li>• One Party State: a political system where there is only one political party to represent the people. In the Soviet Union all political parties other than the Communist Party were banned. Elections were contested between individuals who had to members of this party.</li> </ul> |

## The Emergence of Cold War

## Yalta & Potsdam Conferences

| Yalta, Feb. 1945  |  | Potsdam, July-Aug. 1945   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Agreement   | Tension  | Agreement   | Tension   |
| <p><b>Military</b></p> <p>Russia agreed to enter war against Japan following German surrender<br/>In return Russia would receive territory in Manchuria &amp; Sakhalin Island</p> <p><b>Germany</b></p> <p>Germany temporarily divided into four zones, which each of the occupying powers controlling one zone (USA, USSR, UK, France)<br/>The capital Berlin was divided into four zones.</p> <p><b>Eastern Europe</b></p> <p>'Declaration of Liberated Europe' (to set up democracies in East Europe).<br/>Set up Polish Government of National Unity</p> <p><b>International organizations</b></p> <p>Setting up of UNO (to replace League of Nations), to which Russia was invited<br/>International War Tribunal to put Nazi war criminals on trial</p> | <p><b>Reparations</b></p> <p>Stalin wanted Germany to pay USSR reparations<br/>Stalin wanted payments in coal, US wanted coal to rebuild Europe, Russian demands ignored.</p> <p><b>Poland</b></p> <p>USSR wanted to extend Polish border too far West for western allies<br/>Stalin disregarded calls for free elections and arrested non-communists</p> <p><b>Germany</b></p> <p>USSR forced Germans to sell food &amp; raw materials to Soviet Union<br/>Some German factories dismantled &amp; moved to USSR</p> | <p><b>Eastern European</b></p> <p>New boundaries agreed (Oder-Niesse rivers formed border between Germany &amp; Poland)</p> <p><b>Germany</b></p> <p>Germany &amp; Berlin divided into separate sectors and zones as agreed at Yalta<br/>Demilitarisation<br/>Democracy re-established – free press &amp; freedom of speech</p> <p><b>International organizations</b></p> <p>Nazi Party was to be banned in Germany<br/>Legal trials at Nuremberg of 21 Nazi leaders for war crimes<br/>Allies agreed to participate fully in UNO</p> | <p><b>Military</b></p> <p>Stalin denied a naval base in the Mediterranean</p> <p><b>Reparations</b></p> <p>Stalin demanded more in reparations than US or GB<br/>US didn't want to cripple Germany (as in WWI)<br/>Stalin suspicious about why West wanted to protect Germany &amp; help it recover</p> <p><b>Poland</b></p> <p>Stalin set up Communist govt. in Poland<br/>GB preferred non-Communist Polish govt. which had lived in London<br/>US &amp; USSR suspicious of Stalin's intentions in setting up Communist govt. in Lublin</p> |

**What were the attitudes of the main powers in Europe after WWII?**

## **Soviet Attitudes in 1945**

- Rebuild & safeguard his country, which had lost 20 million citizens as a result of the war
- The leader wanted to strengthen the country and prevent the threat of future invasions.
- The occupation of as many Eastern European countries as possible to create a buffer zone around its borders
- The country had been invaded 3 times by the West, during WWI, the Civil War and WWII
- To spread Communism around the world, although this may not have been a primary aim immediately after WWII
- Gains after the war should be in proportion to the losses it had endured

## **US attitudes in 1945**

- The leader wanted to confront his opponents head on, especially over human rights and democratic values
- His aims was influenced by the fact he was poorly informed on foreign policy matters and aware of the strength of anti-communist feeling in his own country
- His foreign policy was strongly influenced by George Kennan's deeply suspicious 'Long Telegram' (1946) and the policy of containment it inspired
- The leader adopted an 'Iron Fist' approach towards foreign policy, in contrast towards Chamberlain's Appeasement policy of the 1930s
- The government was keen to protect free trade in Europe to provide a market for US goods
- Arms industry were keen to keep tensions high, to avoid a downturn in demand after WWII
- Some within the country favoured a return to isolationism

## **British Attitudes in 1945**

- Their leader saw the need for an agreement with Stalin
- Domestic policy and the setting up of the welfare state was the main consideration
- They wanted to their allies to stand firm over the threat of Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe

## **Why did tensions continue to develop between the communists and capitalists?**

### **What impact did eastern and southern Europe turning red have on the tensions?**

At the end of the Second World War the Soviet Red Army was stationed in large parts of Eastern Europe. Its presence was a source of anxiety for the West who realized that it provided Stalin with a powerful weapon. Pro-Communist governments were set up in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. By the end of 1947 every state in Eastern Europe was controlled by a communist government, except Czechoslovakia. The US government was suspicious of Stalin's intentions and was worried that there was a threat

of Soviet expansion across Europe. These fears were also raised by Churchill.

### **Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe**

| <b>Country</b>     | <b>Influence of Communism – steps taken to set up Communist regimes</b>  |
|--------------------|--|
| Poland             | Communists joined a coalition government after the war, becoming outright leaders in 1947, forcing non-communist leader into exile   |
| Romania & Bulgaria | Romania: Communist elected PM, 1945 within a left-wing coalition. 1947, Communists also abolished the monarchy<br>Bulgaria: left-wing coalition won elections, 1945. Communist members of coalition executed leaders of other parties    |
| Yugoslavia         | Marshal Tito led war-time resistance to the Nazis, elected President in 1945, determined to apply Communism in his own way & expelled from Cominform in 1948   |
| Greece             | Britain and USA supported Royalist side in a civil war, defeating Communist opposition   |
| Hungary            | Communists became second largest party in 1947 elections. Imprisoned opposition politicians, attacked Church leaders   |
| Czechoslovakia     | Left-wing coalition won elections in 1945. Communists became largest single party, but still in a coalition. In 1948, when their position was threatened, banned other parties and made Czechoslovakia a Communist, one-party state      |
| Finland            | Initially the WWII leader Marshal Mannerheim allowed to stay in power despite cooperating with Hitler, while only one Communist remained in power<br>Stalin was keen to be moderate in his approach to demonstrate 'ideological détente' |

### **Speeches and telegrams: Why did these make matters worse?**

#### **Iron Curtain speech**

The call for firmer action by the West against the threat of communism was made by Churchill, the ex-Prime Minister of Britain. In a speech Churchill declared that "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent". In order to meet this Soviet expansion, Churchill called for an alliance between Britain and the USA. Churchill gave the speech as a private individual; Atlee was not informed, but did not disagree. In Moscow the speech received a hysterical response. Stalin saw it as a deliberately provocative and accused Churchill of being a warmonger.

#### **Kennan's Long Telegram**

George Kennan, the American charge d'affaires in Moscow, sent an 8,000-word telegram to the Department of State detailing his views on the Soviet Union, and U.S. policy toward the communist state. Kennan's analysis provided one of the most influential underpinnings for America's Cold War policy of containment. Throughout World War II he was convinced that President Roosevelt's spirit of friendliness and cooperation with Stalin was completely misplaced. Less than a year after Roosevelt's death, Kennan

released his opinions in what came to be known as the “long telegram.” Kennan was convinced that the Soviets would try to expand their sphere of influence, and he pointed to Iran and Turkey as the most likely immediate trouble areas.

## **Truman Doctrine**

By 1947 the draining impact of WWII was being felt. The British government owed £3000 million in debts and the economy was in a state of crisis. The British government was forced to admit that it could no longer sustain its overseas commitments. In February 1947 they warned the USA that they could not maintain troops in Greece. Faced with the prospect of British withdrawal leading to a communist takeover, the USA issued the Truman Doctrine. In March 1947 Truman issued a statement which declared that ‘It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures’. The Truman Doctrine as it became known, was a response to the situation in Greece. Wherever communist forces were attempting to overthrow a democratically elected government the USA would take action to support any government providing it was anti-communist.

## **Marshall Plan**

The Marshall Plan committed large sums of US financial assistance in Europe. It was, according to Churchill, “The most unselfish act in history”. Whilst providing much needed aid for economic recovery, the motives behind the plan were not merely humanitarian. There were concerns that unless the economies of Europe recovered there would be a danger of economic recession in the USA. In theory the plan was available for any European country to apply for but in practice it went to Western Europe only.

## **Soviet reaction**

The Soviet Union viewed Marshall aid as an attack on communism. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, condemned it as foreign interference and labelled the plan dollar imperialism, suggesting it was a mechanism by which the USA would gain control over Europe and exploit it for US economic interests. Under Soviet pressure, the countries of Eastern Europe declined the offer of financial aid. The USSR effectively declared war on the Marshall Plan by tightening their hold over Eastern Europe through setting up the Cominform, an organisation to coordinate communist parties and groups throughout Europe, and Comecon, an organisation that provided economic assistance to the countries of Eastern Europe.

## **Berlin Blockade**

**Reasons Berlin so important:** Capital of Germany - cause of two world wars; place where East met West, communism v. capitalism; focus of world events at Yalta & Potsdam (1945), Berlin Blockade (1948-9), Berlin Wall (1961, 1989)

**Causes of Berlin Blockade:** Divisions over future of Berlin dating back to Yalta & Potsdam; tensions of economic differences – West zones benefited from Marshall Aid; differences in living standards; failure of Council of Ministers; introduction of new currency – Deutsche Mark; merger of Western zones

**Consequences:** 1<sup>st</sup> major flashpoint of Cold War; 1949, Western allies estd. Federal Republic of West Germany; 1949, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) founded; end to US isolationism; divisions between East & West Germany became permanent