

The Cold War, c1945 – 1991



The Widening of the Cold War: 1949-1955

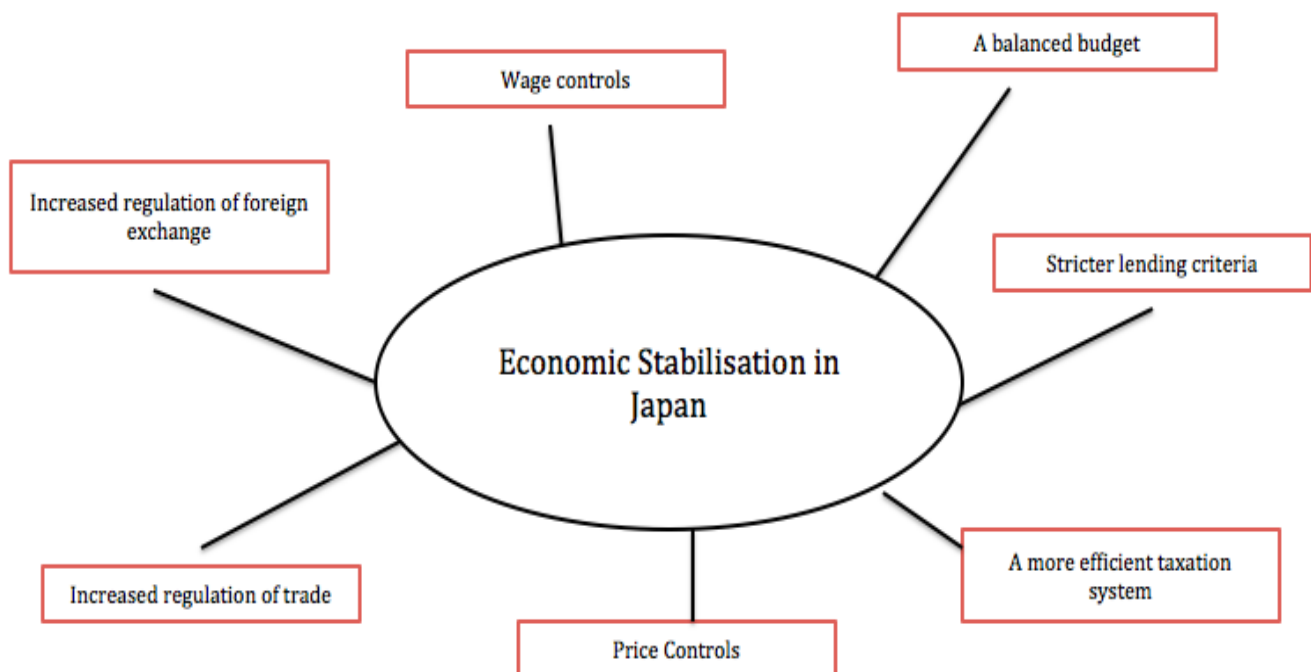
What US containment developments took place in Asia?

In the 1950s, there was a significant growth in tension in Asia, as the Cold War spread to a new area of the globe. For the United States, this became a matter of major concern and led to a serious increase in American fears of Communist expansion.

How did US occupation of Japan increase Cold War tension?

The Reconstruction of Post-War Japan

As early as 1947, the USA introduced what became known as its 'reverse course' towards Japan. This policy meant that the USA was not focused on the punishment of Japan. Instead, it wanted an emphasis on reconstruction, which was seen by the USA as an essential element of its power base in eastern Asia. By the start of 1949 MacArthur, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), had received a clear directive from Washington on the measures that had to be taken to ensure Japan's economic stabilisation. Economic stabilisation was a central element of the USA's planning for post-war Japan.



This economic programme was designed to accelerate economic growth and align Japan with the USA and its capitalist economic system. A former Detroit banker, Joseph Dodge, was appointed as economic advisor to SCAP and produced a 'super balanced' budget. This set a target of a surplus of nearly 157 million yen (just over \$4 million). However this initially led to increased unemployment due to business closures.

Japan wanted to become an active member of world institutions and particularly those linked to the West. The USA demanded that Japan joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This strengthened Japan's access to Western trade but it also prevented trade with communist China from late 1950.

US-Japanese relations

Japan's geopolitical significance to the USA entered a new phase when, in February 1950, Communist China's leader, Mao Zedong, formed an alliance with the USSR. Suddenly Japan became a crucial component in the USA's quest to contain communism in the Far East. Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida saw an opportunity to negotiate a peace treaty providing security and sovereignty in return for its acceptance of US troops on Japanese territory.

This treaty (San Francisco Peace Treaty) between Japan and the Allied Powers was drawn up in September 1951. Only the USSR and the People's Republic of China refused to sign this agreement which:

- Recognised the full sovereignty of the Japanese people
- Forced Japan to renounce any claims to a wide range of neighbouring territories including Korea and Formosa (Taiwan).

In return for this treaty, the USA required Japan to sign a bilateral security agreement known as the US-Japan Security Treaty (1951). This gave the USA:

- Unrestrictive use of military bases in Japan
- The right to use military force to intervene in any internal order in Japan
- The right to veto Japan offering military bases to other states.

Japan's rearmament

MacArthur ordered Japan to establish a 75,000 strong National Police Reserve (NPR), to be trained by a US military advisory team. US policy towards Japan up to 1954 had been driven by the threat of Communism in Korea. Rearmament had been an economic asset to Japan but it had also created some internal instability.

How supportive were the US towards Jiang Jieshi and China?



The Chinese Communists, under the leadership of Mao, won victory in 1949 in the long-running Civil War, and created the People's Republic of China. The USA saw this as a major challenge to its position in Asia, and began to develop policies of checking the advance of Communism in that part of the world. In particular, the USA became concerned that Russia and China would act together to extend Communism to other Asian countries.

The USA increasingly developed the view that it was its role to check the advance of Communism in Asia, by whatever means possible. Accordingly, the USA did not extend diplomatic recognition to Communist China, and instead gave support to Nationalist China under Jiang

Jieshi and his forces (KMT), based on the island of Taiwan.

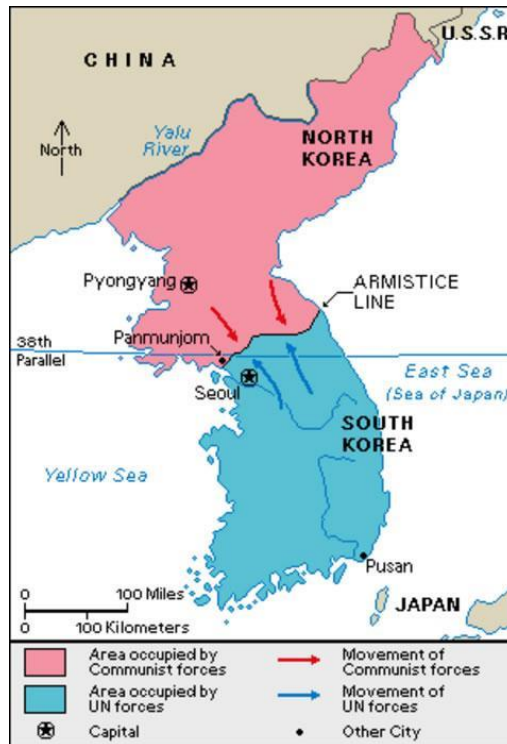
The USA's strategy was defined in the China White Paper in July 1949. Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, was committed to supporting the KMT in Taiwan, but this was done secretly so that the USA did not appear as a 'imperialist menace' to China.

How significant is NSC-68?

National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68) was a 58-page top secret policy paper by the United States National Security Council presented to President Harry S. Truman on April 14, 1950. It was one of the most important statements of American policy in the Cold War. It stressed the urgency of building the USA's political, economic and military power. It was

focused on the globalization of the Cold War and there was a powerful military emphasis on the application of containment.

What were the causes and developments of the Korean War?



For many years, Korea had been controlled by the Japanese Empire. With the collapse of Japan in 1945, the country was partitioned into two states. The communist state of North Korea was established with Soviet support, under the leadership of Kim Il Sung. In South Korea, elections were held and the anti-communist Syngman Rhee emerged as leader. Stalin provided extensive military support to North Korea, and the USA gave aid and support to South Korea. Both leaders were committed to the restoration of a united Korea under a single leader.

What was the position and aims of Kim Il Sung and Syngman Rhee?

<u>Syngman Rhee</u>	<u>Kim Il Sung</u>
	
Nationalist and anti communist	Joined the Korean Communist Party in 1931 and led resistance to the Japanese occupation of Korea.
Aimed to reunite Korea as a sovereign country that would not tolerate communism.	Committed to using force in order to achieve unification – this led to the development of guerrilla warfare.
He had lived in America for 40 years	Went to the USSR to receive military training.
Set up the Republic of South Korea (ROK)	Led the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

What were the attitudes and actions of the UN, USA, USSR and China?

USSR

- In March 1949, Kim Il Sung turned to Stalin for support for a North Korean assault on South Korea.
- At first Stalin rejected Kim Il Sung’s pleas and suggested he needed to strengthen the guerrilla forces in the south.
- By February 1950 Stalin agreed to provide 1600 pieces of artillery, 178 military aircraft and 258 T-34 tanks. This was because of the wider international context e.g. the formation of the People’s Republic of China. He also believed a united communist Korea would be a positive ally for the USSR.
- In April 1950 Stalin made it clear that he would not commit Soviet forces if North Korea faced conflict with the USA.



China

- Mao’s immediate priority in 1949 was focused on consolidating communist control in China. He was not particularly concerned with the future of Korea.
 - It was in response to the USA’s defence of Taiwan that China became involved in the war. He argued that if the USA won the war in Korea they would threaten China.
 - He committed to sending military ‘volunteers’ to North Korea.

The United Nations

- As the USSR was boycotting the Security Council it could not veto their actions, therefore an immediate ceasefire was passed.
- Truman was able to legitimise intervention in Korea by turning the process into a UN intervention.



The USA

- Until 1949, the USA's national security priority in Asia was Japan.
- The North Korean invasion fundamentally re-orientated the USA towards Korea.
- In May 1951, Dean Acheson took the view that North Korea's purpose was to destabilize Japan, South-East Asia and the Philippines.

Events of the Korean War:

- North Korea was very successful at first and quickly captured most of South Korea except for a small area of land the south east of the country called the Pusan Pocket.
- South Korea appealed to the United Nations (UN) for help the UN Security Council declared North Korea to be the aggressor and promised to send help.
- The US and 16 other countries (later joined by 32 countries) landed soldiers in Korea to support the South Korean government.
- The US General Douglas MacArthur, organised a successful surprise seaborne landing at Inchon behind the North Korean frontline.
- The North Koreans were forced to retreat and UN forces marched deep into North Korea towards the Chinese border.
- Communist China fearing for its own security joined the war on North Korea's side sending 200,000 soldiers into the Korean Peninsula.
- The UN forces were pushed back to the original border between North and South Korea and stalemate followed until a ceasefire was agreed.

What were the consequences of the Korean War?

- In one-tenth of the population was dead and the country remained divided.
- The UN proved to be much stronger than its predecessor the League of Nations.
- China had shown that it had once again become a strong country to be reckoned with.
- The US following the Truman Doctrine to contain Communism showed that it was prepared to go to war to prevent the further spread of Communism.
- In 1954 the US set up the South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO), which was a military alliance like NATO, to protect the Far East from Communism.

Why did Cold War tensions increase?

By 1950, the USA was under pressure from the perceived threat of communism. The USSR had successfully tested atomic technology in 1949, the same year China became a communist state. In 1950, China formed an alliance with the USSR. NSC-68 had warned that the Cold War was a 'real war' in which the survival of the free was at stake.

McCarthyism and the USA

There was a growing mood of anti-communism among the general US public after the war. There was already a committee in place that had carried out extensive investigations on patriotism and affiliations of Hollywood filmmakers. This was called the House of Un-American Activities Committee and it investigated a large number of high profile movie figures.



Senator Joseph McCarthy orchestrated pressure on Truman's administration and this was designed to tighten the government's attitude towards the notion of communism. He promoted the idea that there was an army of communist conspirators working within the US government, influencing its policies.

What was the influence of McCarthyism on Britain and Europe?

McCarthyism emphasised the urgency of moving US policy away from a Eurocentric focus and towards policies with a more 'Asia first' viewpoint. This prioritisation was particularly urgent in view of the new communist state in China. The USA's 'Asia-first' policy was dangerous as far as Britain was concerned. However Britain's primary concern was to remain a close ally of the USA, as such Britain made a significant military contribution to the allied war effort in Korea.

How dominant was the USA in the United Nations?

The headquarters of the United Nations has always been in New York. Its location was significant in terms of US dominance when the organisation was established.

The United Nations Charter was agreed in June 1945 with the majority of initial members being pro-western. This served to protect the USA's dominance in the United Nations. This dominance was further enhanced by the USA insisting that Mainland China, which turned communist in 1949, could not take China's seat in the United Nations. Furthermore, the only Eastern European state that joined in 1945 was Poland. Clearly the membership was profoundly weighted in favour of pro-Western, capitalist, and therefore US interests. However the power to veto did allow the permanent members of the Security Council (USA, Britain, France, China and the USSR) to block UN intervention. This did serve to control US

control. Between 1946 and 1955 the pattern of use of the veto was: China – 1; France – 2; Britain – 0; USA – 0; USSR – 75.

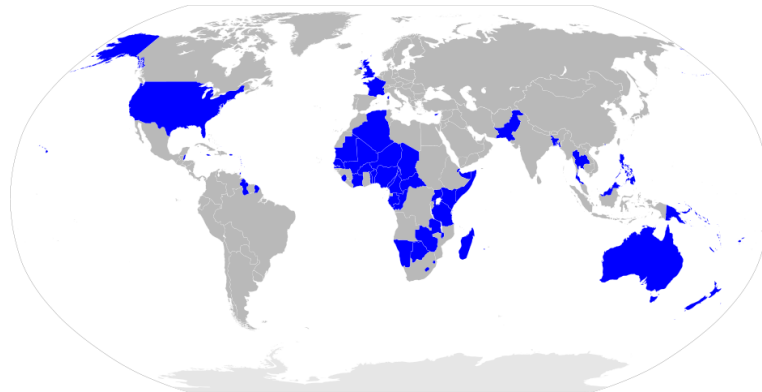
The isolation of China

When the communists won the civil war against the Chinese nationalists there was no guarantee of continued support for the nationalists. Truman favoured the avoidance of any military conflict with communist China as a consequence of supporting Jiang Jieshi. The alliance between the USSR and China shifted the USA's policies away from Europe and towards Asia. The Korean War reinforced China's isolation.

What alliances and shifts took place?

Eisenhower placed much greater importance on developing allies than Truman had done. Eisenhower's strategy was to create a global network of alliances in order to encircle the USSR and China in pro-US allies. The strategy was based on the USA providing a nuclear umbrella.

The Southeast Asia collective defence treaty (SEATO), September 1954



It was in response to close Sino-Soviet relations that John Foster Dulles brokered a defensive alliance based on Southeast Asia in September 1954. SEATO was a collective defence treaty. Many of its members were not Southeast Asian countries. Unlike NATO, they had few common borders.

FRG and NATO

Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the FRG, recognised that the best way of strengthening his country was to align West Germany to the Western Powers. In 1949 the FRG joined the Council of Europe. He agreed to renounce nuclear weapons and keep the German army limited in size and under strict control. In 1955 West Germany was admitted to NATO, immediately the GDR created the Warsaw Pact. The FRG's entry into NATO underlines the commitment the USA had.

The Warsaw Pact

This organisation was seen by the Soviet Union as a means of legitimising its influence in Eastern Europe, just as NATO had legitimised US influence in Western Europe. The Warsaw Pact was presented as a collective security strategy; and therefore a non-threatening alliance.



Eisenhower, Dulles and Brinkmanship

There was much continuity of policy when the Eisenhower administration took over from Truman, Eisenhower accepted much of what formed the basis of his predecessors national security policy:

- The USA must retain sufficient influence in Western Europe and there should be a collective Western defence strategy.
- The USA must retain its influence in Asia.
- The Soviet threat was significant and real and the containment of Soviet territorial expansion was fundamental to US security interests.

However, Eisenhower rejected Truman's commitment to major expansion regardless of cost, of the USA's conventional forces. He believed containment had simply created a stalemate. Secretary of State Dulles believed that international peace depended on reducing the dominance of Soviet communism globally. This became a fundamental strand of Eisenhower's New Look policy. Under Eisenhower nuclear weapons assumed much greater significance.

Brinkmanship

The USA's nuclear arsenal was not only a source of deterrence; it was also a diplomatic tool. The USA could use its nuclear strength to attempt force agreements from communist opponents, up to the point when a nuclear war might break out. This was referred to as brinkmanship.

French Indochina



By 1950, the USA supported independence from France for Indochina. In 1949 the exiled Vietnamese emperor, Bao Dai, was returned to power in the Vietnamese part of Indochina. In 1950, the more popular Vietnamese nationalist and communist leader Ho Chi Minh, supported by Stalin and China, proclaimed the existence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The communist and nationalist forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam placed increased pressure on the French. By 1952, France had suffered 90,000 casualties in its bid to hold on to Vietnam. Eisenhower was committed to supporting the French in Vietnam. Vietnam was geostrategically important within the context of Southeast Asia and the domino theory.

Eisenhower was opposed to using conventional forces to support the French, but by 1954 the USA was paying 75 per cent of the costs of war. Eisenhower refused to commit the USA to military action so he was left with little alternative other than to accept a diplomatic solution.

By April 1954, the French were on the point of military defeat at the hands of the Vietminh at Dien Bien Phu. It was at this point that negotiations were convened in Geneva.

The Geneva Conference, July 1954

The agreement at the Geneva Conference, called in response to developments in Vietnam, paved the way for ceasefire rather than a long-term solution to the question of Vietnam's independence as a unified state. It was agreed that two zones were created, with the 17th parallel serving as the dividing line between the two. French forces were to move out of the northern zone while the nationalist forces were to withdraw from the southern zone. The division was not intended to be permanent and national elections were to take place in two years.

The USA and the regime that was set up in the southern zone, refused to sign the agreements. The new president of South Vietnam was Ngo Dinh Diem. The USA pledged to support the regime.

Glossary

Brinkmanship	A strategy designed to convince one's opponent that there is a risk of war; one side shows no sign of backing down and this is used to force the other side into having to back down or face the prospect of actual conflict.
Geostrategic	Those geostrategic areas that have some degree of strategic importance to a state.
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.
Indochina	A geographical entity used when collectively referring to Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam and South Vietnam, all of these countries had been French colonies prior to the Geneva Agreement of 1954.
Isolationism	An approach to foreign policy favoured by the USA before its intervention in the Second World War; it was on minimal involvement in external affairs beyond those seen to relate to US interests in places geographically close to the USA.
Nuclear Umbrella	This defined a nuclear capacity that could be used to protect a range of allies; it would be sufficiently wide reaching to ensure that no ally would be endangered and would therefore act as a form of collective deterrence.
Sovereignty	The recognition by the international community of a states independence and its right to govern itself without external interference.
Veto	The right to vote against something
Vietcong	This name was used by President Diem to describe the National Liberation Front members; it suggests that they were communists in that it means 'Vietnamese communists'.

Basic Timeline

1949	August September November	The USSR tests its first nuclear weapon Truman approves NSC-68 recommendations. FRG joins the Council of Europe.
1950	January February April June November	The idea of a strategic perimeter is suggested. China forms a military alliance with the USSR. Stalin agrees to provide North Korea with military equipment. NSC-68 is presented. North Korea invades South Korea; the UN demands the withdrawal of North Korea troops. China joins North Korea in its war against South Korea.
1951	April June September	Truman dismisses McArthur The first attempts at peace negotiations for Korea are proposed. The San Francisco Peace Treaty between the USA and Japan is signed.
1952	November	Eisenhower is elected as US president
1953	March July	Stalin dies A final peace agreement is reached for Korea
1954	January July September	Dulles announces the 'massive retaliation' strategy The Geneva Conference SEATO alliance is established.
1955	May	West Germany joins NATO; the Warsaw Pact is set up.