

The communist as
bent on subduing
other



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The US-Russia relations had their high and low points; they have been allies in war and at times coming very close to engaging each other in warfare. The Cold War (1947-1991), which seemed to be a struggle between capitalism and socialism, was one of the low points during their long relations. This article will examine the US-Russia relations all through the cold war. Soon after the end of the Second World War, the signs of tensions and mistrust reappeared even though the two nations had been allies during the war and the US had even supplied Russia with military hardware and other items that aided it to push back the Germans. The western democracies, in particular the US and the Soviets clashed mostly about the Eastern European take over by the Soviet Union. The increasing influence of the Soviets over Eastern Europe seemed to worry the Americans, who had stronger political and economic influence over Western Europe. The US and Russia political and social ideologies were contradictory and the two competed along these ideologies.

The US promoted the Marshall economic plan to its Western European allies and not long after, Russia countered with the Comecon plan (Vohra, 176). The Warsaw Pact (1955-1991) was Russia's response to the western nations' 1949 NATO treaty. Joseph Stalin viewed the post-world wars world as divided into two camps namely the capitalist and imperialist camp and the communist and progressive camp. His US counterpart, Harry Truman also had the same view describing them as two opposing systems and portrayed the capitalist as free and the communist as bent on subduing other nations. Nikita Khrushchev took over Russia's leadership and in 1953 stated that capitalism and imperialism could coexist peacefully since he viewed the

Communist system as having become stronger (Gaddis, 84). The 1955 Geneva summit and the 1959 Camp David Summit showed Presidents Eisenhower and Khrushchev had some willingness to cooperate on world issues. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis however, almost brought the two nations to direct engagement in a nuclear war (Scott, 188). This incidence was the lowest point of the US- Russia relations in the whole duration of the Cold War and was a result of the neck to neck arms race between the two.

Russia had felt left behind and decided to build a nuclear base in Cuba, an action that was not taken kindly by the US. If not for the dialogues between the two camps, both formal and secret, they would have most definitely sparked of a nuclear war. During Leonid Brezhnev's regime (1964-1982), also known as the Russian stagnation period, the hostility between the two nations declined.

The numerous negotiations between the two resulted in signing of agreements towards limitation of arms and summit meetings. The 1970s Russian invasion of Afghanistan however increased hostility between them and the US (Kirkpatrick, 250). During the regimes of Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, the relations seemed cordial resulting in more summit meetings that led to a reduction of arms within the two camps. Both the US and Soviet Union announced the end of the Cold war on November 1989 and the two nations began warming up towards each other.

Conclusion

Even though Russia and the US never engaged each other directly in war, they indirectly fought through espionage, technological and economic

competitions, proxy wars, arms race, mentioning but a few. Not only did the Cold War leave a legacy that cannot be easily erased but it also still seen to influence world affairs to date.

Works cited

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