

Cold war: essential question

[War](#), [Cold War](#)



Essential Question: How did the spread of Communist ideals and power affect American policies during the Cold War? During the 1900's, American's witnessed the largest growth of Communist ideology in Europe, Asia, and finding a new way to seep itself into our government after the fall of totalitarianism in Europe. Americans had only just defeated the rule of totalitarianism in Japan, Germany, and others. The citizens of the United States were prepared to protect our home by employing new policies where capitalism could flourish and prevail, and even spread. The goals of the country were described primarily in the Truman doctrine and achieved with the help of many presidents, including Reagan for military strength. This victory was at the cost of human life. Americans came to the aid of other countries, but were facing a breach at home as well. Communism was a force to be reckoned with and even after the Cold War, our country didn't manage to destroy the ideas from Karl Marx which some countries still follow today. This can be seen as a weakness of our military power, or the power of containment. The Truman Doctrine, created in 1947, gave Americans the foundation to a highly successful military which could power over others. The Truman Doctrine was employed financially and militarily in the aid of Greece and Turkey in protection from the threatening powers of Communism. This was the beginning of the Cuban Missile crisis because Russia began to feel threatened by the nuclear power that came with rebuilding these countries close to home. Americans had originally come to the aid of a small ally, but this policy was so successful, it was used in Korea and Vietnam. This doctrine was formed on the basis of the Domino Theory that a solid ideal with committed followers is sure to spread faster than the speed of light through

other countries and across continents unless driven back to its original region. The Truman Doctrine had three main points: Containment, Deterrence, and the Marshall Plan. Containment means pushing limits within a country to separate it from spanning areas, we used this for communism at the time, but it is currently instituted with Islamic fundamentalist countries. Deterrence is building a supreme military so the enemy will be so frightened of the power, and they will never consider fighting American force. Our military still uses Truman's policies of containment and deterrence in Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. Today, our defense budget makes up for 41% of the world's spending in this department. Americans currently spend five times the amount Chinese do on defense. This is deterrence at its finest, but it was originally put to full use by Ronald Reagan. Reagan did more than most presidents in recent times could ever have done; he flipped the economy to support the military when hope was lost. In eight years, he built up a military superpower that is known globally for its might. Reagan fought for security and helped fund all the government programs previously left behind like the B1 bomber. Lastly, the Marshall Plan was made to rebuild a nation's economy and overall stability to prevent the spread of Communism to carry out any further. This was carried out successfully in Western Germany post World War II and later employed as a type of "Americanization" in Vietnam, Korea, and others. It spanned to rebuilding industry, trade, and the overall atmosphere to make the region more prosperous. Deterrence grew significantly when President Reagan was in office and that contributes to America's economic instability. Americans were essentially at war with the Communist regime within the Soviet Union. After World War II, the four allied

powers were allotted different regions of Germany (France, England, Russia, and The United States). Eventually, Germany fell into the split control between the Soviets and the United States. East Berlin was controlled by Communist Soviets who employed their virtues on the people; while West Berlin was being rebuilt and celebrated by Americans through the rebuilt infrastructure of the Marshall plan. The Soviets requested the withdrawal of American troops who were reinforcing policy, but President Eisenhower refused to draw forces out because he knew that he could not assure the freedom of Western Germany (Berlin inclusive) if our forces couldn't manually protect it. When the Americans refused, the USSR blockaded West Berlin to prevent any travel in or out of the city for any means. This became known as the first Berlin Crisis, or the air lift, and began the "the growth of the United States' Air Force power once again. The Soviets were not deterred at this point in time and the British and Americans teamed up to find the method of transporting 3, 475 tons of necessary goods daily by aircraft that could typically haul 3.5 tons per travel. Truman decided our nation would not abandon Berlin even though there were trials to be faced and no access to the Soviet-controlled electricity across the Berlin border. America brought C-54s over to Berlin and they maximized their cargo to protect the capital from being over-run by Communism. The Russians eventually backed down, fifteen months later, but Americans continued to supply the city with both land and air travels. This began to show the power of the American military through deterrence. Nikita Khrushchev wouldn't use diplomacy to solve the Berlin debacle either, and Khrushchev set up his own form of retaliation. Overnight, a barbed wire fence was constructed to divide East and West

Berlin. Later, a wall would take its place and prevent any communication between the sides over treatment or lifestyle. The wall stood from 1961 to 1989. The Russian economy collapsed due to the expenditure on nuclear weaponry and the space race to combat American forces and innovation. At this time, Americans had beat the Russians at their own game and Russians didn't have the financial support to continue relations. They were forced to leave and the wall was demolished by Americans. The wall is an icon of the Cold War and taking down Communism due to the growth of journalism and the ability to release video. The Warsaw Pact countries allied together in celebration of Communist ideals. These countries included the Soviet Union, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. Since the alliance of these Communist powers was seen as a stress to the freedom of surrounding countries, NATO was formed. NATO is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that was formed in 1949 by fifteen countries. These countries were more successful in aiding each other than the United Nations were, plus they agreed on more aspects. Additionally, NATO combined the strongest militaries in the world in one force, and a meditation between the political systems of all countries rather than precisely focused on one system. NATO helped to protect against nuclear war at the time which became prevalent in the Cuban Missile Crisis. NATO proposed many opportunities for political advancement. However, this power was not enough and instead grew American's need to expand and grow their army into the superpower of the modern day. The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred after underlying tensions with the USSR previously that the Americans were facing and the threat of the Domino theory spanning from Cuba, through

South America, and into the United States. This was very short-lived crisis, about thirteen days in 1962, but the closest Americans ever came to nuclear war. At the time, Soviet nuclear power was not anywhere near as powerful as the U. S. A.'s was. The range was slight, so they must be placed in a country like Cuba in order to target the enemy in North America. Nikita Khrushchev used this possibility as his counter-deterrence to persuade the Americans to vacate foreign lands. Kennedy would not back down. President Kennedy ordered a naval blockade around Cuba to prevent Russian missiles from going in or out of the area. Khrushchev proposed removal of Soviet missiles if Americans wouldn't seize Cuba and invade. His second proposal included the exchange for removal of American missiles in Turkey. Kennedy ignored the second letter and agreed to the first. This agreement was carried out, but brought tension closer to home with Communist Cuba under Fidel Castro. American Capitalism is still condemned by Chinese communists. Communist countries attempt to show the dangers of capitalism and the horrible events in America in an effort to keep their citizens brainwashed and unaware of the possibility of a better life. Americans and President Truman were distraught when Communism became the ruling force in China and released the "China White Paper" to unravel the truth about the events in China. This came back to bite him when the Nationalist party fled to Taiwan. Between 1949 and 1970, the United States and The People's Republic of China, as named by Chairman Mao, had little to no ties, trades, or communication. There was still possibility of resolution between China and America until the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 which forced each side to pick what policy they supported. Today, America is forced to be trading partners with China

because it has developed itself into a power, but if America was truly strong, it would stand on its own and disown China. The Korean War began when the Communist troops of North Korea invaded South Korea with support from the Chinese. President Truman of the United States had feared an invasion leading up to this point, but he had only given our ally, South Korea, little to protect themselves with. Korea became a good investment in our future when they became one of the most industrialized countries in modern times. Since the United States had essentially helped create the free Republic of Korea, the United Nations agreed that they should be able to support it in wartime. The U. N. sent an array of troops, a bulk of which were from the United States, but also from Australia, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, the Netherlands, and other nations. Altogether, the manpower totaled 5.7 million people and 33,627 of them perished in combat within the three year war. The war was never won, but instead was forced with the new American policy of containment of these two bordering ideals. The two countries still fight along the 38th parallel which separates the regions. Korea became known as the "Forgotten War" as a culmination of its length, the common knowledge of the situation, and the fact that this tension is still present today. Vietnam was in a crisis in the sixties. Its government was left in pieces; torn apart by the Viet Cong, the people were confused whether to believe the Communist or Capitalist opinions. North Vietnam was forcing out Communist messages and South Vietnam was supported by the United States for a free government. The Communist leader in North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, had been asking for aid from the Americans for years against the French. Americans wanted to help

a nation which had struggled out of colonization as they had done previously, but they didn't initially have the means or the desire to affect the Domino Theory. When the US ships in the Gulf of Tonkin were fired at near the Vietnam shore, President Johnson took this as his signal to move troops in for combat in 1965. Johnson fought in his policy of limited war within South Vietnam to prevent chasing the enemy in too many regions and carry out the containment policies of Truman. The American troops were fighting a war in the jungle where the upper hand always belonged to the Viet Cong. The Northern Vietnamese would come into the South and tell the citizens that the American rule was only temporary, so the citizen allegiance should remain to the Communists. With their lives at stake, these innocent people would act as if they were unaware of the Viet Cong location to stay alive. This made the identification of the enemy a difficult task. The soldiers were upset by their failures and as seen by the My Lai Massacre. The Communist opinion of equality was winning the Vietnam war and no person had more worth than the next, so they would be expended as such. The members of the Charlie Company were through with being fed lies by the villagers and the enemy extinguishing forces that they massacred innocents. The village of My Lai included women, children, and elderly who were all shot, bayoneted, and mowed down with machine guns. This was an act frowned upon in all areas of the world, but grew special unrest with the protesters in America who thought there shouldn't be troops in Vietnam in the first place. Vietnam became the first war Americans would lose because they had no chance of winning a war like this with containment and still satisfy the citizens of America. Plus, just because we implemented limited war in this scenario, it

didn't make it the best timing. In fact, limited war is best for areas which are more open and the enemy can be identified. Communism reached America and began to take part in domestic politics which led to social unrest.

Senator Joseph McCarthy, made a speech in 1950 claiming to know several members of the Communist party within the United States government and released the list of names. Afraid of the Communist ability to rule the current republic, the Senate immediately made McCarthy in charge of Operations in the Senate. McCarthyism was the term made when McCarthy and his board began to seek out the Communists within the government and strip them of their job titles upon admittance to being part of the Communist party.

Senator McCarthy made harsh accusations which resembled those during the Cultural Revolution in China where conspirators were sought out and unveiled. McCarthyism was ridiculed by world leaders as a failure on the part of government. Marxist communism transformed from some ideas of fascism and totalitarianism which spread earlier in the century. The Russians were the strongest Communist country to interact with Americans, but also crashed the hardest. The Domino Theory was proven and shut down by American containment. The second half of the 20th century's foreign policy was based on trust in President Truman's methods. The military power was expanded as a result of fear, but it seems to have worked well for national security. References: <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1> http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/korean_war.htm <http://history1900s.about.com/od/vietnamwar/a/vietnamwar.htm> <http://www.spiritoffreedom.org/airlift.html> http://www.3ad.com/history/cold_war/nato_mission.htm <http://history1900s.about.com/od/vietnamwar/a/vietnamwar.htm>

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