

# Political science – the cold war assignment

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The Cold War was a period of entrenched, ideological opposition, between the East Bloc-- the Soviet Union ND its allies-- and the West Bloc-- the united States and its allies-- in which both sides did everything to undermine one another, short of outright military conflict. As the age of empire came to its precipice in 1945 CE, the Cold War ensued and lasted for decades, to about 1989 CE.

The Second World War heralded a new international system that was not based on empire; it was based on the diametrically opposed binaries of the East Bloc and West Bloc, which defined the international system for decades thenceforth. The stakes On 08 August 1 945, the United States released atomic bombs in Hiroshima ND Nagasaki, Japan. For those individuals that grew up during the Cold War, the threat of nuclear war was constant. Cold war chronology: the dates Yalta conference: 04-- 11 February, 1 945 Decided on the post-war division of Europe; the Cold War was not meant to occur.

The great powers agreed on the unconditional surrender of Germany; the division of Germany into four zones of occupation; free and fair elections in Poland, the Baltic states, and eastern Europe; the war criminals would be punished; and Europe would be divided into two spheres of influence thence. Potsdam conference: 17 July-- 02 august 1945 Participants were the Soviet union, the united States, and the United Kingdom and they agreed to work together. Germany would be demutualization, democratic, demoralized, decentralized, and identified. Agreement on persecution Of the war criminals.

Germany's eastern border would be shifted west from the Oder-Neisse Line, reducing its size by about 25 percent compared to its 1937 territory. "Orderly and humane" transfer of Germans from eastern Europe and Poland; Germans would be expelled from this area. Winston Churchill iron curtain speech: March 1946 The phrase "iron curtain" was coined by Churchill to describe the division of eastern Europe from the west imposed by the Soviet Union. The key message was that an "iron curtain" descended upon Europe, and that the great cities of Berlin, Budapest, and Prague, among others, were within the Soviet Union sphere of influence.

A spirit of collaboration and cooperation quickly dissolved between the Yalta and Potsdam conferences and Churchill speech. From here, the situation declined. German currency reform: 20 June 1948 Introduced the German Deutsche Mark in the Western occupation zones. The currency reform was the acceptance that there would not be one German economic zone governed by four powers; East and West Germany would have their own currencies and the continent would be divided into two economic blocs. The German economy, suffering from a depression, was transformed.

HOW did we get from 1945 to 1948 CE? Orthodox interpretation Revisionist interpretation George Seaman's thesis. Soviet Union has ingrained tendency for expansion and had to be checked; this tendency was rooted in the Soviet Union's history. Soviet Union had to treat outer world as hostile, as that hostility was key to its existence. Cold War resulted from American reaction to Soviet expansion. The fault of the Soviet Union. William Appleton Williams' thesis. The idea was to invert politics and economics.

American policy was driven by a constant need for markets, explaining the constant expansion across the west in the United States, policy in Latin America, and hostility to the Soviet Union. An economic need determined American economic policy. The fault of the Americans. Political history of the cold war Stalin and Churchill: October 1944 Stalin and Churchill meet without Roosevelt and devise a “ percentages agreement. ” Europe would be divided into spheres of influence. Each power loud be given a certain percentage Of power over a jurisdiction.

America protested against this plan. Stalin violated promises made to Churchill on the percentages. When Stalin went to the Yalta Conference, he had already violated the percentages agreement. Stalin agreed to democratic elections without any intention of adhering to his pledge. Stalin asserted that the Soviet Union would determine policy in any area in which the Red Army occupied. Iran and turkey After the Second World War, the Soviet Union made moves on Iran and Turkey, giving the Soviet Union sovereignty and monopoly over Turkish traits.

The Soviet Union demanded territory from Turkey and pushed troops into northern Iran, and only relinquished its control when the United States took the issue to the United Nations Security Council. Under diplomatic pressure, the Soviet union withdrew from these regions. It was in this politics that George Keenan wrote his “ X” article. Eastern Europe: 1945-1948 CE The Soviet Union went on to install regimes through eastern Europe, including Poland, where a communist government was imposed by force; the Baltic states; Hungary; and in Czechoslovakia, there was briefly a enigmatically elected government, which was overturned by the Soviet Union.

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In this politics, Germany became a line in the sand. German women were sexually assaulted across the Soviet occupied zone. The East German regime lost legitimacy; in response, the Western Allies created West Germany-?? the front line of the Cold War. Western policy toward Germany was highlighted by denationalization and decentralization. In its most extreme, the plan was to restore Germany to agricultural lands-?? making the Germans affluent but powerless. Germany reintegrated into the western canon as an ally. 06

September 1 946: secretary of state James f. Erne Noted in speech that the Americans wanted to assist the Germans work their way out of hardships, to rejoin the international community. A year later, the British pulled out of Greece, and the United States stepped in. “ Stalin has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta. ” -Franklin Roosevelt “ All of Germany must be ours; that is, Soviet communist. ” -Joseph Stalin The Marshall plan: 1947 CE Massive destruction, starvation, and poverty across Europe necessitated an economic recovery plan. Currencies across Europe were severely devalued and raising credit was difficult. The Marshall Plan was announced by George

Marshall in 1947 CE to kick-start the European economy. The economic recovery program provided credits to Europeans to purchase and import North American commodities. This was fundamental to reinvigorating the European economy. The Ignited States gave 13 billion dollars in rehabilitation aid. The plan was offered to the Soviet Union, but it was rejected; thus, all countries allied with the Soviet Union were forced to reject the plan as well. Stalin’s reaction to the Marshall plan First and foremost,

Stalin rejected the Marshall Plan and prohibited all Soviet allies from participating.

In September 1947, Stalin announced the formation of the Cominform, to coordinate actions between communist parties under Soviet direction. Orders would be dictated from Moscow to the capitals in Soviet bloc countries. “ Don’t start throwing your weight around. In Moscow, we know better how to apply Marxism-Leninism. ” -Andrei Cadenzza, spokesperson within the Cominform In February 1948, Stalin approves a plan for a communist takeover of Czechoslovakia. Truman doctrine: 1947 CE The Truman Doctrine was a United States policy to halt the expansion of the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

The policy sought to contain communism in Europe and elsewhere. Truman implored that the United States must support free peoples. The policy also provided military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey as the British pulled out. Berlin: city of binaries Berlin was deep within the Soviet bloc. Initially, in Berlin, there was some effort to collaborate between East and West Berlin. This began to break down as democratically elected officials in the Berlin Parliament were being harassed by communists. Berlin blockade: 24 June 1948 The Soviet Union decided to draw the entirety of Berlin into the Soviet zone.

All land access points to West Berlin were cut off; travel was restricted and things could not be delivered. The Soviets offered to drop the blockade if the Western Allies withdrew the newly introduced Deutsche Mark from West Berlin. Hunger was a strategic political tool. In response to this, the Western Allies

arranged an airlift to carry supplies and necessities to the people of West Berlin. The Western Allies managed to feed Berlin to get them through the winter. In early 1949, the blockade was lifted; effectively, it was a failure for Stalin and a propaganda disaster.

For the Germans, the Americans became saviors and liberators; this cemented the German-American relationship. Battle lines set for the cold war. On 01 October 1949, the Communist Party of China declared victory in the Chinese Civil War, and proclaimed the people's Republic of China. Williams' thesis was that America was ideologically hostile to China; however, there was brief hope that China would be communist but independent, allied to either side—?? the Soviets and Americans. Moscow sought to bring China under its control.

Mao—?? the Chinese Communist party leader—?? allied himself with Stalin and embraced a destructive and unbending version of Marxism-Leninism, which resulted in the obscene starvation of at least 30 million people between 1959 and 1961 when Mao's theories of agriculture were lacking—?? the Great Chinese Famine. During the Korean War, Mao—?? aligned with the Soviet Union and North Korea—?? pitted 300,000 Chinese troops against South Korea, which was defended by the United States and the United Nations. The atomic age: the sass This period exemplifies the evolution of Cold War strategy.

It was believed during the sass and sass that war could be limited and conducted with nuclear weaponry. Policy was based on two ideas: cities would not be bombed, and Europe would be defended through a second

Normandy. Everything would be pulled off the continent, and nuclear bombs would be dropped along the coast. Cuban missile crisis: 1962 The idea of going to war ended with the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis was a basic illustration of international relations: behavior which is used as defensive by one faction is viewed as offensive by the other.

As defense, the Ignited States installed missiles in Turkey; when Khrushchev, the Soviet Union's leader, got word of this, he installed missiles in Cuba. The Americans took images of the missiles in Cuba, and threatened the Soviet union that if the missiles were not withdrawn, war would ensue. In the early sass, the world edged closer to nuclear war than it had to that point. The Soviet Union backed down at the last moment, and the Americans began to draw conclusions from this: no one wants a nuclear war. Paradoxically, the idea of a limited nuclear war was abandoned as an idea; rather, mutual assured destruction would occur.

Thus, any one nuclear assault would result in one response: a massive counterattack, resulting in a total war. The strategy to preserve peace, therefore, would be the constant threat Of the alternative: the risk of total war. This doctrine existed from the early sass o the mid-sass, and emerged again in the 1 9805. The central point was parity: peace can only be achieved in a nuclear world when both sides have an equal number of nuclear arms. The sass and sass: dtent, parity, and eventual dissolution The nuclear bombs race was characterized by the constant need for parity, and not madness on both sides like some peace writers suggest.



Richard Nixon, the United States President, and Henry Kissinger, the United States Secretary of State, believed in the use of “carrots and sticks” to achieve détente—the loosening of tensions—with the Soviet Union. To achieve parity and end the ongoing nuclear race, both factions were to negotiate a reduction in nuclear arms—so they could step back together. The idea behind this was classic realism: states with contrasting interests can only achieve cooperation through international institutions, rather than recognizing inherent state interests.

There was a series of arms reductions in the early 1970s, which dissolved later in the decade, prompted by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the election of Ronald Reagan in the United States, who was ideologically hostile to the Soviet Union. Reagan believed that détente had failed and revealed American weakness, potentially exposing America to attack by the Soviet Union. Thus, Reagan ramped up the rhetoric, called the Soviet Union an “evil empire,” and launched a massive American military expansion to increase defense. Soviet plans in 1979 CE The Soviet Union’s plan was predicated on the assumption of a NATO attack.

The plan was defensive, and in the event of an American attack, the Soviet Union planned to sacrifice Poland; launch nuclear strikes on Vienna, Verona, Munich, Stuttgart, and numerous other cities; launch conventional attacks on Britain and France; assume Budapest destruction; and send Soviet troops to the Rhine. The intention was that the United States would negotiate and the Soviet Union would wage a nuclear war if the United States responded with a nuclear strike. On the brink of nuclear war: 1983 CE On 26 September 1983, the threat of a total nuclear war was imminent.

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Ronald Reagan increased defense spending, which prompted the Yuri Andropov, the General Secretary of the Communist party in Soviet Union, to believe that the Americans were contemplating a preventative strike against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union set-up new technology-?? radar technology-?? to detect attacks. In 1981 and 1983, NATO launched a series of exercises. The most aggressive form was sending bombers near Soviet Union air space, and then having them keel Off. There were naval exercises near Turkey. These exercises were predominately to conduct psychological warfare and to collect intelligence data.

In February 1983, Soviet Union intelligence went into overdrive, convinced that the Americans were prepared to launch an attack. NATO began launching another series of exercises in the summer and autumn of 1983. On 01 September 1983, a Korean Airlines aircraft was shot down by the Soviet Union. Ronald Reagan launched Missile Shield System to intercept potential missiles. This convinced the Soviet Union that the United States had hostile intent. Senior members of the United States defense team participated in a mock nuclear war, further convincing the Soviet Union that the United States intended to strike.

Blips equals missiles equals bomb equals war: the closest point of total nuclear war In the midst of all this, on 26 September 1983, Stanislav Petrov was monitoring the security screen for the Soviet Union. He observed five blips, representing incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles. He was to press a button which would trigger Soviet Missiles to be fired. However, he contemplated why there would only be five missiles-?? if NATO were to

strike, they would send more than five missiles. He paused, and the blips disappeared.

This was the closest point we came to nuclear war. Two years later, Mikhail Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. He launched perestroika economically and reformed communism in order to save it; a result of this reform was a series of arms reductions strategies. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, effectively ending the Cold War. The end of the cold war: different interpretations The end of the Cold War revealed the inherent weakness of the Soviet union-?? the United States did not need to do anything.

The Soviet Union was a flawed economic model and did not produce any growth. Some argue that it was Gorbachev, paradoxically, while he wanted to save the Soviet Union, that led to its collapse by initiating reform, allowing dissent, and announcing the Sinatra Doctrine, allowing East European sovereignty over their affairs. A fading economy and political upheaval led to the end of the Soviet Union. The great hero was Ronald Reagan, because he spurred the Soviet Union into near bankruptcy by causing the Soviet Union's defense spending to surge to unsustainable levels.

Cold war: varying theses as to its cause To the revisionist thesis, America was hostile to the type of government that the Soviet Union imposed on Eastern Europe. The hostility was about politics, not markets. The fundamental failure of W. Williams' argument was that 70-80 percent of America's market was based on domestic consumption; until the 1970s, the American economy produced a surplus. Therefore, the United States was

fundamentally and Ideologically opposed to Soviet Union communism.

Nevertheless, the United States baited, bluffed, and outnumbered the Soviet union.

However, this does not mean that the Cold War was the American's fault.

The Cold War could not be avoided. The revisionist, anti-American thesis is supported by their actions in Latin America, Vietnam, the Middle East. The orthodox, pro-Soviet union thesis denied the terror and believed the Soviet Union was a workers paradise. Despite the depression and absence of democracy, the Soviet Union received massive intellectual support. Imagine, if you will, someone who read only the Reader's Digest between 1950 and 1970, and someone in the same period who read only The Nation or the New Statesman.

Which reader would have been better informed about the realities of

Communism? The answer, I think, should give us pause. Can it be that our enemies were right? -?? Susan Sonata Key terms War is an organized and often prolonged conflict that is carried out by state and non-state actors.

Limited war is a conflict in which the belligerents participating in war do not expend all of each of the participants' available resources at their disposal.

Total war is a war in which a belligerent mobilizes its population for war reduction. The word total refers to the extent of manipulation, not the extent of destruction.