

Major turning point of the cold war politics essay



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Everyone thought that World War I was the war to solve all wars, however that did not happen. People also thought World War II will solve the problems left by World War I, and unfortunately that also did not happen. After World War II, another war started: the Cold War, which lasted for forty years. The Cold War started because the two sides, U. S. led North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Soviet Union led Warsaw Pact, distrusted each other. The United States and countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization also known as NATO did not trust the Soviet Union because Soviet Union had a secret treaty with the Germans in World War II. The Soviet Union dislikes the United States because they thought that the United States purposely waited later to join the war to fight the Germans. There were also differences between the forms of government that the two sides had. The United States was a democratic country, but the Soviet Union was a communism country. After World War II, the two sides tried to make peace. In the Potsdam Conference the two sides discussed on how to deal with Germany after World War II. Even though there were many disagreements, they did come to some agreement. They agreed to separate Germany into four parts, one side under the control of France, Britain, and United States and another one under the control of Soviet Union. This setting created a border between the two sides, which caused the two sides to move further away from each other and turn more hostile against each other. This officially started the Cold War. There were numerous conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The one conflict that brought both side closest to direct war was the Cuban Missile Crisis. The most significant turning point in the Cold War was the Cuban Missile Crisis, tensions between both sides decreased after both sides realized the risk of starting a nuclear war.

During the Cold War, tension started to build up between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was like a bomb that could go off at any moment and the Cuban Missile Crisis almost lighted the fuse to that bomb. However, after the Crisis, the bomb started to be dismantled piece by piece. One of the outcomes of Cuban Missile Crisis was that both sides took away missiles placed near each other. The Soviet Union withdrew the missiles in Cuba and United States promised to remove missiles in Turkey as soon as possible. The decision to remove missiles in Turkey and Cuba did not only decreased the tension during the crisis, but ultimately decreased the tension in the Cold War

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, both sides agreed to remove some of the nuclear missiles placed near each other's country. The Cuban Missile Crisis started at the first place because the United States' reconnaissance plane found evidence that there were a military buildup in Cuba, which included Soviet offensive weapons. They discovered Soviet nuclear missiles and bombers in Cuba. During the discussion the military wanted to attack Cuba. " They proposed both an invasion of Cuba and taking out the nuclear missiles, at least those that the United States knew about."(Gelb) After president John F. Kennedy discussed with his advisor for almost six days, they decided to establish a blockade around Cuba to prevent more weapons from entering Cuba. Then on 22 October 1962, the President delivered a speech on the television to inform the public about the Soviet nuclear missiles and bombers in Cuba. At the same time, he announced a naval quarantine around Cuba would be put into effect until the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw the missile from Cuba. After days of argument in the United Nation and through letters

between the two head of states, the Soviet Union Chairman Khrushchev proposed in a letter that United States would pledge not to invade Cuba and lift the quarantine in exchange for the removal of Soviet missiles in Cuba. On the next day, however, the United States received another letter from the Soviet Union. It demanded that the removal of Jupiter missiles in Turkey as part of the deal for the Soviet to remove missiles in Cuba. After a long day of meeting, the president decided to pledge that United States would never invade Cuba publically, while secretly, John F. Kennedy informed Khrushchev that the Jupiter missiles would be removed from Turkey as soon as possible. John F. Kennedy asked his brother, Robert Kennedy to tell Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin that United States will make a public pledge not to invade Cuba and secretly remove missiles in Turkey as soon as possible. In the telegram from Dobrynin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry he said that, "" And what about Turkey?" I asked R. Kennedy. " If that is the only obstacle to achieving the regulation I mentioned earlier, then the president doesn't see any unsurmountable difficulties in resolving this issue," replied R. Kennedy." (Hershberg) This showed that President Kennedy was willing to resolve the crisis as peaceful as possible by letting both the United States and the Soviet Union to move back a step.

The removal of missiles in Turkey reduced the tension between the Soviet Union and the United States. The removal also reduced the risk of fighting a nuclear war. Fifteen Jupiter nuclear missiles were first placed on Turkey in July 1960. However the missiles did not become operational until April 1962. Then in April 1963 the last missile was dismantled in Turkey and the missile warheads were transported back to the United States as part of the secret

agreement between the United States and Soviet Union. Jupiter missiles increased tension because of both its range and speed. The missile is a type of intermediate range ballistic missile with a range of 1, 500 miles. The missile has a speed of 15. 4 Mach and can reach its target within 15 minutes. Not to mention that it also carries a nuclear warhead that could create mass destruction to the targeted area. NATO could easily fire missiles at Moscow, the capital of Soviet Union, within around fifteen minutes. In response to the NATO placing Jupiter missiles in Turkey, the Soviets placed missiles in Krasnovodsk and Kirovabad. This started a arms race in the Eastern Europe with created tension between the NATO and the Soviet Union

Some people believed that the removal of missiles in both Cuba and Italy did not decreased the tension in the Cold War. However the removal did reduce the tension, because it decreased the armament of missiles on both sides. After the Soviet Union found out that the NATO placed nuclear missile in Turkey and Italy, they responded by placing nuclear missiles in Soviet Union facing the west. This showed that by placing nuclear missile near another country starts an arms race between two nations. This greatly increased tension, due to the fact that nuclear missiles could cause server devastation to a region and possibility of starting a nuclear war.

Placing missiles in Turkey and Cuba increased the tension in the region and threatens peace between the Soviet Union and the United States. When missiles were placed in Turkey, the Soviet Union also placed additional missiles facing the west in Soviet Union. Additionally, when Soviet Union placed missiles in Cuba, the chance of starting a nuclear war increased. This led to an arms build up in the region. By taking away the missiles, the

tension could be decreased dramatically. This brought the two sides a step away from having huge armament build-ups.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviet Union and the United States realized how close they were at the verge of starting a nuclear war.

Afterwards, they worked together and signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963. The tension between the U. S. and the U. S. S. R. during the Cuban Missile Crisis highlighted the threat of fighting a nuclear war. If any of the countries involved, Cuba, Soviet Union, and United States, decided to attack the other first, then a nuclear war many imagined would become reality.

Limiting the nuclear weapon test decreased the tension in the Cold War by limiting nuclear weapon development.

The first attempt on limiting the nuclear test ban started in 1955. At that time, the United Nations Disarmament Commission brought together the United States, Soviet Union, France, Canada, and United Kingdom to start a discussion on the topic of banning nuclear testing. However there were no obvious results from the discussion because there was disagreement on how to verify underground testing and how many on site inspection is allowed.

" The Soviet Union placed a limit on permitted inspections in its territory, refusing to allow more than three per year. The United States and the United Kingdom held that the number must be determined by scientific fact and detection capability. As new information became available, the United States eventually indicated that it could accept a minimum of seven, but the Soviet Union rejected this quota." (U. S. Department of State)

This showed that the Soviets tried to limit the amount of times on site inspection is allowed. The Soviets also feared that on site inspection would lead to spying on the military structures and might reveal the actual number of deliverable nuclear weapons.

John F. Kennedy once said that "surely the acquisition of such idle stockpiles -- which can only destroy and never create -- is not the only, much less the most efficient, means of assuring peace." (Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center) This shows that John F. Kennedy believed that an arms build up was not an efficient way to maintain peace. This treaty did not only stopped an arm buildup, it also prevented radioactive substance from polluting the environment. "In accepting limitations on testing, the nuclear powers accepted as a common goal 'an end to the contamination of man's environment by radioactive substances.'" (U. S. Department of State) In June 10, 1963, about a year after the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy announced in a speech in American University that Chairman Khrushchev, Prime Minister Macmillan and himself have agreed to start negotiation on the topic of forming a comprehensive test ban treaty. Even though, the agreement was discussed over a long period of time, after the Crisis the process speed up significantly. The three countries started negotiation on July 15, 1963 and reached a conclusion within ten days. On July 25 that year, the three sides reached an agreement. It was then ratified by the president on October 7, and entered into force on October 10. This Nuclear Test Ban Treaty banned nuclear testing in the atmosphere, sea, and outer space for any reason.

Some people thought that the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty could not really limit nuclear testing and improve the environment, since underground testing was not part of the treaty. However, with a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the speed of developing nuclear weapon could be greatly decreased. It could also prevent nuclear contamination of the environment, because nuclear fallout from the nuclear weapon would not fall into another country's border. The treaty was the first step in limiting the development of nuclear weapon, by means of limiting the testing of such weapons

The treaty greatly decreased the tension between both countries. The treaty banned any nuclear explosion that would cause radioactive substances to fall into another country. Limiting nuclear explosion test could prevent nuclear pollution and ultimately prevent the development of new nuclear weapons. John F. Kennedy said in Commencement Address at the American University, on 10 June 1963,

" The conclusion of such a treaty...would check the spiraling arms race in one of its most dangerous areas. It would place the nuclear powers in a position to deal more effectively with one of the greatest hazards which man faces in 1963, the further spread of nuclear arms. It would increase our security--it would decrease the prospects of war. Surely this goal is sufficiently important to require our steady pursuit, yielding neither to the temptation to give up the whole effort nor the temptation to give up our insistence on vital and responsible safeguards." (John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum)

This showed that President Kennedy was willing to bring peace between nations and believes that this goal was important and needed both United States and Soviet Union's attention. The treaty brought the two countries under a milder situation and they started to rebuild trust by following the treaty and keeping promises. After limiting the nuclear test United States and the Soviet Union formed direct communication between each other.

Tension increased between both sides because of distrust and lack of communication. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, this problem became less significant. United States and the Soviet Union signed the Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communications Link a year after the Cuban Missile Crisis. The treaty provided direct communication between the head of two states at Washington D. C. and Moscow. This greatly decreased the chance of miscommunication thus decreasing tension between United States and Soviet Union.

There was a long process in the negotiation of a direct communication link between the United States and Soviet Union. The first attempt in this topic was made by the Soviet Union in 1954. Soviet Union proposed safeguards against surprised attack and expressed concern over accident war that may happen due to miscommunication. The Cuban Missile Crisis demonstrated that an accidental war could happen due to miscommunication and inefficient communication between the head of two states. In the crisis, it took the United States hours to receive and decode a message from the Soviet Union. " During those tense, incommunicado hours, plans were put into motion that many speculate would have catapulted the United States

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and a nuclear Soviet Union into all out war." (Merica) The crisis convinced the both side that an efficient and secure direct communication was needed to resolve crisis faster. The communication during the crisis proved to be too slow, creating unnecessary tension.

On December 12, 1962, the same year Cuban Missile Crisis happened, United States submitted a working paper to the Eighteen-nation Disarmament Committee urging to develop measures to reduce risk of war. In the working paper, it included a proposal of direct communication between major capitals to make sure that there is a direct and fast communication in time of crisis. Then on June 20, 1963, United States and Soviet Union finished negotiation and signed the Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communications Link. The memorandum that was signed by both countries states the following,

" Each Government shall be responsible for the arrangements for the link on its own territory. Each Government shall take the necessary steps to ensure continuous functioning of the link and prompt delivery to its head of government of any communications received by means of the link from the head of government of the other party." (U. S. Department of State)

This outlined the basic agreement that was made between the two countries on direct communication. Both the United States and the Soviet Union believed that a direct communication decreased tension between both countries. President Kennedy believed that in order for United States and

Soviet Union to have peace they needed to have more understanding and communication. He said in the Commencement Address at the American University, 10 June 1963 that, " One step in this direction is the proposed arrangement for a direct line between Moscow and Washington, to avoid on each side the dangerous delays, misunderstandings, and misreadings of the other's actions which might occur at a time of crisis."(John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum) Soviet Union Chairman Nikita Khrushchev also believed that direct communication benefits Soviet Union in that it simplified the diplomatic procedures. According to a memoir by Nikita Khrushchev it said,

" We also made an agreement with Kennedy to establish direct telephone communication, so that there would be a " hot line" in the event that an emergency situation arose and personal talks between the president and the head of the Soviet government were necessary.... This detail gave us some reassurance that at a critical movement there could be direct talks, direct talks that wouldn't have to go through the diplomatic labyrinth." (Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center)

This showed that both the Soviet Union and the United States believed that a direct communication link could decrease the tension of the possibility of starting a war. President Kennedy believes that it is the first step of maintaining peace, while Chairman Khrushchev thought that the direct communication simplified the communication between both nations.

Some people believe that the direct communication between the United States and Soviet Union was used rarely and almost never used. However,

the direct communication was used a few times to prevent misinterpretation of military movements and decreased tension. In the Arab-Israel war of 1967, the United States used the hotline to notify the Soviet Union on United States fleet movement in the Mediterranean Sea. This prevented the possible misunderstanding of military movement. President Richard Nixon used the hotline during the India-Pakistan conflict in 1971. The hotline was used again in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. The hotline was modernized by the agreement made in 1971, 1984 and 1988. This showed that the hotline was used significantly to the point that there were three agreements within twenty years to modernize the hotline. This proved that the hotline decreased the chance of miscommunication and suspicion during the later parts of the cold war.

The direct communication formed between the United States and the Soviet Union decreased the tension caused by inefficient communication and misinterpretation of military movements. The Cuban Missile Crisis showed both nations the problem of not having a direct communication. During the crisis it took hours to receive and decode the three thousand words message from the Soviet Union. New events could happen much faster than the speed of their communication. This could easily lead to miscommunication that could start a war. With a direct communication the time needed greatly decreased, thus decreasing tension.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis the tension between the United States and Soviet Union decreased. The threat of starting a nuclear war was no longer high. The outcome of the Crisis was removing nuclear missiles near each country. Publicly, the Soviet Union agreed to remove missiles in Cuba and as <https://assignbuster.com/major-turning-point-of-the-cold-war-politics-essay/>

a secret deal between the both countries, United States agreed to remove nuclear missiles placed in Turkey. This decreased the arms build up between the countries. Within one year after the Cuban Missile Crisis two major agreements were made between the United States and the Soviet Union. On June 20, 1963, United States and the Soviet Union signed the Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communications Link. This agreement set up a direct communication between the United States and the Soviet Union for emergency and prevents misinterpretation of events. The direct communication was used in many occasions to prevent interpretation of United States military movements. This decreased the tension between the two countries, and prevented accidental conflict. Another agreement made by the two sides was the limited test ban treaty. The treaty banned nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. This limited the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union to a degree since countries could no longer test nuclear weapon except testing it under ground. This all showed that Cuban Missile Crisis was the most significant turning point of the Cold War. If we see the entire Cold War as a story, the resolution of World War II would be the conflict, the Cuban Missile Crisis would be the climax and the Limited Test Ban Treaty and direct communication agreement would be the falling action. The Crisis marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War.

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