

What caused the cold war? assignment

[History](#)



The Soviets did not honor their agreement to allow the people of Eastern Europe to determine their own fates by imposing totalitarian rule on territories unlucky enough to fall behind the "Iron Curtain". Germany had invaded Russia through Poland twice since 1914, Stalin was determined to make sure that such an invasion could never happen again, and insisted that only a Communist Poland, friendly to (and dominated by) the Soviet Union, could serve as a barrier against future aggression from the west.

This conflicted with the agreement which held that the Polish ought to be allowed to make their own decision ever whether or not to become a Soviet satellite. During World War II, the United States poured more than \$2 billion dollars into the Manhattan Project, a crash program to build the world's first atomic bomb before Nazi Germany could acquire the deadly weapon. The Manhattan Project was a closely guarded secret, this information was never shared with Stalin and the detonation of the atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima in 1945 truly shocked the world.

The Americans wanted to ensure a monopoly over the new technology of nuclear weapons and the Soviets were frightened by the idea of one nation even the United States could be trusted with sole and total control over such a powerful weapon. The detonation of a Soviet bomb in 1949 spurred the United States to develop even more powerful bombs, in 1952 the Americans exploded the world's first hydrogen bomb. This new form of nuclear missile was more than 100 times more powerful than the bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

As the number of nuclear weapons in Soviet and American arsenals rose and rose through the 1950s, both sides found themselves desperate to one up each other. During WWII, the Soviet Union suffered more bloodshed and destruction than all of the allied forces combined. After suffering such losses, Stalin wanted to keep Germany weak and disunited forever to ensure that another German invasion of his country would never happen again.

Stalin had little interest in helping to rebuild Germany into a thriving nation-state, the other allied forces had a very different view and wanted to rebuild Germany. By 1948, Britain, France, and the US combined their three zones of occupation under a single administration and created a new currency, the Deutsche Mark, for use in all three zones. Stalin responded by imposing a blockade upon West Berlin cutting off all access to food and electricity.

Resources would have to be airlifted into the city from Britain and America. The Cold War, which lasted from 1948 to 1991, was a competition between two polar ideologies; capitalism and communism. A single shot was never fired between the US and the Soviet Union, this war greatly damaged the political landscape of the world. Both sides were to blame because of their misinterpretations of each other's actions, the US starting the arms race, and the Soviet Union's blockade imposed upon West Berlin.