

President Kennedy and the cold war

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Introduction The world has certainly suffered through its fair share of wars throughout history that it is understandable that many would question the labeling of the Cold War as one of the most dangerous situations that the modern world has faced. It is true that military strikes never occurred throughout this era, yet residents of the countries involved live in fear that everyday would bring the end of the peaceful society that they had respectively grown to love and expect. During this Era, President Kennedy developed a doctrine that focused on reasserting America's right to defend itself and to eliminate the threat, as he saw of it, of Communism spreading into the region. The Doctrine exerted military strength, while simultaneously advocating for diplomatic resolve to end the Cold War peacefully and without either side taking military action.

Russia's Pre-Cold War Relations with America Prior to the Cold War, American and Russia certainly did not see eye to eye. The respective types of government were as far apart ideologically as they could be. Both countries were interesting in expanding their reach throughout the world, so each saw the other as potential threats to achieving that objective. Regional issues engulfed both countries and their dislike for one another on a diplomatic level continued to grow (Kuniholm, 1980).

Previous administrations attempted to deal with Russian threats. Consider the Truman Doctrine as an example. Truman began to work feverishly to control the spread of Communism, largely in response to the perceived threat from Russia, so Kennedy continued that policy as well (Gurman, 2012). He was concerned not only with the spread of Russian thinking and its effect on the American ideals of freedom and personal liberty, but he was increasingly cognizant of the fact that he may have to use military force in

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order to maintain those principles. Russia and the United States Today Relations between the United States and the former Soviet Union have certainly come a long way since the end of the Cold War. While there were some initial rocky patches in the initial years, every Presidential administration since Kennedy has at least maintained an open dialogue with various Russian premiers. During the Reagan administration, the world witnessed the fall of Communism in Russia, which of course was the basis of the doctrine discussed in this paper. Today, Russia and America both espouse democratic principles, although they certainly remain diametrically opposed ideologically from one another on numerous global issues (Roskin & Berry, 2010). In the end, however, it is not the differences that define us, but how we learn to deal with those differences that makes us great. Russia and the United States have, largely as a result of the Doctrines of Kennedy and Truman, learned to put those differences aside and have developed the strengthened diplomatic relationships that we see in force today. Kennedy's Doctrine and its Impact on the World This Doctrine had an enormous impact of global and regional affairs. Cuba learned that America would go to any length necessary to defend itself. The world saw America in the same light, but also witness the power of diplomacy. In the end, the region is much safer today because of the diffusion of the Cold War. While the countries still possess extreme military might, the Kennedy Doctrine paved the way for a safer future in the global community, as countries have gradually sought to reduce the threat that they pose to one another. The Doctrine and the end of the Cold War, as mentioned, as contributed to the eventual fall of Communism throughout much of the world, to the point that very few governments today still support the principles and ideologies that

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Communism purports. Conclusion The Kennedy Doctrine was effective because it was a balanced approach to global diplomacy. It asserted the right of a nation to defend itself, but it also pleaded for caution and wise decision making. Great restraint was exhibited in avoiding the Cuban Missile Crisis, and valuable lessons can be learned from having a set policy and strategy in place for dealing with threats of this nature. While neither country should claim victory or defeat, it reminds us of the importance of talking through our differences and trying to make the global community a safer place in which to live. A Doctrine such as this provided the country with a roadmap that guided the decisions that the government eventually made. Strategies were mapped out ahead of time, and definitive action was taken by the President as a result (Graebner, 2002). This, tempered with that sense of diplomacy, has caused history to reflect on the Kennedy Doctrine as being effective and successful.

References

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