

# The positive aspects of the cold war assignment

[History](#)



The implementation of the American “ Marshall Plan” and the Communist “ Molotov Plan”, the nuclear arms race, and the global military build-up all served to create global political stability and economic prosperity. The “ Marshall Plan” created by United States Secretary of State George Marshall and the “ Molotov Plan” created by Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov were both designed to increase their respective country’s “ spheres of influence”. Both plans called for the creation of alliances, treaties, and pacts with as many other countries as possible in order to weaken the enemy’s political strength on the world stage.

In order to do this, both the United States and the Soviet Union provided large amounts of financial aid and weapons, and signed bi-lateral trade agreements with countries and/or ethnic groups with whom which they wanted to be allied. They also provided funding to revolutionaries in other countries that were not in their sphere of influence. For example, in the Vietnam War, which was a war of the communist North against the democratic South, the North Vietnamese armies were mostly trained and equipped with weapons by the Soviet Union because North Vietnam was governed by a Communist dictatorship loyal to the U. S. S. R.

The United States, on the other hand, started out sending 800 military advisors to help the South Vietnamese, whose government was led by Ngo Dinh Diem , an anti-communist and willing servant of American policies. But gradually, the Americans became more and more involved directly in the war, with American involvement climaxing in 1965 when over 500 000 American troops were in Vietnam. The war essentially became a war of Communism versus Capitalism and Democracy. The Americans were

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eventually forced to pull out from the war after suffering large numbers Of casualties and with support of the war at home diminishing rapidly.

South and North Vietnam were quickly unified under the communist government. As a result of both superpowers' efforts to expand their spheres of influence, the world became largely popularized, with very few nations managing to remain neutral during the Cold War. This popularization led to unprecedented stability and peace, as a deep distrust developed on both sides, and helped to ensure the loyalty of the otherwise volatile nation-states. The nuclear arms race and the development of nuclear-capable missiles that could travel great distances significantly influenced American and Soviet elicits of non-confrontation.

Both superpowers rightly believed that a nuclear war would lead to mutual holocaust and most likely global annihilation. Thus they attempted to stay out of direct confrontation with each other, preferring instead to indirectly support other governments and/or revolutionaries that were aligned with their own political beliefs. An excellent example of how much both superpowers would sacrifice to prevent a nuclear war is the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 . The Cuban Missile Crisis was caused primarily by the failed “ Bay of Pigs” invasion of Cuba in 1 959 . Prior to that time, much Of Cuban industry and mineral wealth was owned by Americans.

But in 1 959, Fidel Castro and his socialist revolutionaries succeeded in overthrowing the corrupt dictatorship that had been in power in Cuba and that had been loyal to American policy. Fidel Castro had promised his people that he would end the economic hardship and depression, and in an attempt

to help Cuba's economic recovery, he decided to nationalize most of the foreign-owned business. This greatly angered the Americans, and in 1961, 1500 U. S. -backed Cuban exiles landed at the Bay of Pigs. The invasion attempt was a disaster and greatly embarrassed the American government.

The Missile Crisis developed in 1962 because Fidel Castro believed that America would soon try again to invade his country. He asked the Soviet Union for help in defending his island nation. The Soviet Union replied by sending small arms, tanks, and infantry units to Cuba, as well as secretly transferring nuclear missiles to missile silos that were under construction in Cuba. The Americans were shocked when one of their U-2 spy planes discovered the nuclear silos under construction in Cuba because it meant that for the first time the Soviet missiles were within range of most major U. S. Cities, including Washington, D. C. This created a very difficult problem for American President John F. Kennedy for which he needed to find a solution. He could not allow the missile silos to finish being constructed because that would place the United States in danger. That meant that either he would have to try diplomatic means to attempt to negotiate the removal of the weapons, or he would have to use the might of the American military to remove the weapons by force. Neither option looked particularly favorable.

The Joint Chiefs Of Staff (the president's military advisors) urged a swift and strong military invasion to destroy the silos before the Soviets could react. Kennedy was concerned, however, of the possibility of Soviet nuclear retaliation for the invasion because invasion was clearly an act of war. Up until that point, neither side had been willing to risk direct confrontation for a

nuclear war. Because of the nuclear threat, Kennedy instead decided on a compromise. He would not invade Cuba, but he would set up a naval blockade around the island, preventing further military supplies from the Soviet Union from reaching Cuba.

Khrushchev, the Russian Premier, threatened retaliation for what he called a “ crude form of blackmail”, but privately he knew that because the Americans had exposed the silos in Cuba before they were operational, the only option for him was to withdraw the weapons, or else he would be forcing the Americans to invade Cuba to destroy the silos. If the Americans invaded, he would be obligated to use Cubism (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) armed with nuclear warheads in retaliation, which would be the start of a full-scale nuclear war.

Premier Khrushchev sent a telegraph directly to Kennedy, offering to withdraw the weapons in return for America’s guarantee that it would not invade Cuba. For both Kennedy and Khrushchev, the telegraph was a face-saving measure so that both sides could withdraw from the conflict without appearing to weaken their political resolve. Along with these other developments came a military build-up by both the United States and the Soviet Union in anticipation of impending war that helped to re-vitalise the collapsed economies of both nations.

On March 12th, 1947 American President Harry Truman delivered his declaration of “ Cold War”, calling on the nation to resist Communism throughout the world. What he was really hoping to accomplish through the speech was to gain support for an American pledge of \$400 million to help

support foreign governments (mostly European). He feared that the post-war depression that was rampant in the democratic European countries would drive them to a Communist revolution.

This policy of fighting Communism, known as the “ Truman Doctrine”, was the basis for millions of dollars of military and defense spending throughout the Cold War by the American government. The government awarded multi-million dollar contracts to defense contractors, which in turn helped to lower the high post-war unemployment rate, creating any new jobs. Many factories that had been previously used to produce civilian goods were converted for military use, and many factories that had lain dormant since the World War were put back into use producing weapons.

The military spending by the Western Capitalist and Eastern Bloc governments helped to reduce the high post-war unemployment figures, as well as helped to boost their economies which had entered a post-war depression. The nuclear arms race and the policies of expanding each country’s spheres of influence helped to polarize the world into a “ good versus evil” situation, which created an unprecedented level of international lattice security.