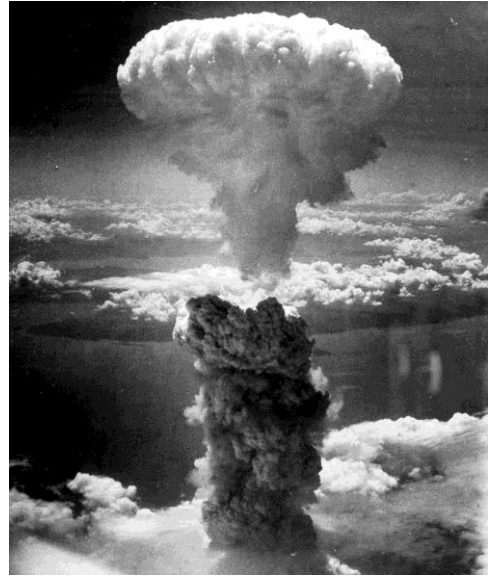


East Vs West: The Cold War



Content

This booklet contains an overview of the 4 topics. This is a minimum amount of information you need to know. Use this alongside your exercise book when you revise.

End of the Wartime Alliance

A. The Wartime Alliance:

The wartime alliance (the allies) consisted of Britain, Russia and the USA. Britain had been fighting Germany since 1939, whereas Russia (1941) and the USA (1942) had joined the war at later stages. Britain was led by Winston Churchill, Russia by Josef Stalin and the USA by Roosevelt (FDR). Although the countries had fought together during the war, it was evident that fundamental differences were becoming more obvious towards the end of the war. There was also mistrust between the leaders, especially between Churchill and Stalin; Russia had initially supported Germany in the war, until Hitler had turned on Russia in 1941 and so Churchill was unwilling to fully trust someone who had been allies with Germany.

B. Communism and Capitalism:

Russia's ideology (way of organising a country) was entirely different from Britain and America's ideology. Russia believed in communism: the belief in equality and fairness, no profits, equality of ownership. However, there was also no freedom of speech and no right to vote in Russia: Stalin ran Russia as a dictatorship. Britain and the USA were capitalist countries. They believed in freedom of speech, free elections, profits and the rights of business to dominate the wealth in a country. Historians have claimed that these fundamental differences led to the Cold War.

C. The Yalta Conference

The first meeting of the wartime leaders was at Yalta, in Ukraine, near Russia. This took place during the war (Feb, 1945) though it was clear the war would be won within the next few months. The leaders met to discuss post war Europe, in particular, what was to happen to Poland, the country that Hitler had invaded to begin WW2. It was eventually agreed that Poland should have free elections but Stalin did not stick to this. It was agreed that the UN (United Nations) should be set up, that Germany would be divided into zones (each to be ruled by the allies), and that Eastern Europe should become a 'soviet sphere of influence'. It was also agreed that the Nazi party should be stamped out in all areas of Europe. Although there were many 'agreements' made the meeting was sometimes tense and the future disagreements became noticeable for the first time.

D. The Potsdam Conference

By July 1945 the war in Europe had ended, and the allied leaders met again. Stalin remained as leader of the USSR, but Churchill had been replaced as British PM by Clement Atlee and FDR by Harry Truman. Truman was to become a prominent person in the Cold War; he took a much 'harder line' stance against Stalin than FDR had, resulting in further tensions at the meeting. Truman began to disagree with the idea that Eastern Europe should automatically become a 'soviet sphere of influence', contrary to what had been agreed at Yalta; Stalin had not stuck to the agreement for free elections in Poland (ensuring that a Communist government came to power) and Truman did not like this. There were also disagreements over how to treat Germany: Russia wanted to cripple Germany financially, but Truman rejected this idea. It was clear that Russia and the USA were becoming the two main 'superpowers' by this stage.

E. Why did the alliance breakdown?

The alliance broke down as a result of the fundamental differences between the countries: communism and capitalism. However, Churchill, Truman and Stalin did not help to ensure that the wartime alliance remained intact; Stalin broke the terms of the Yalta agreement, and Truman's approach did more to antagonise (annoy) Stalin than ensure that the alliance continued after the war.

1. Describe two key differences between Communism and Capitalism

2. What was the outcome from the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences?

Yalta:

Potsdam:

3. Explain what event was the main cause of tension during this time period

Soviet Expansionism

A: Reasons for the Soviet take-over of Eastern Europe

Stalin decided to go against the Yalta Agreement and take over countries within Eastern Europe in order to create a 'Soviet sphere of influence' and 'buffer' (protective) states that would protect the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had previously been invaded by Nazi Germany through Eastern Europe (Poland) and so Stalin wanted to ensure that this would not happen again. However, Stalin also felt that the Soviets had done the most to halt the Nazis and believed that he had a right to shape the future of Europe, whilst also ensuring that these areas would be Communist and that the Communists in Europe would have 'safety in numbers'.

B: Countries that were taken over

The 7 countries that were taken over by the Soviets were: Albania (1945), Yugoslavia (1945), Bulgaria (1945), East Germany (1945), Hungary (1947), Poland (1947), Czechoslovakia (1948), Romania (1948)

C: Truman Doctrine

After the death of FDR Harry Truman became President of the USA. Truman took a much harder line with the Soviets, which was very different from FDR's more diplomatic (compromising) approach with the Russians. Truman offered financial support to Turkey and Greece when it looked likely they may be taken over by the Communists. This created a doctrine (a set of ideas) which became known as the Truman Doctrine: the idea that the USA would help any country to prevent themselves from becoming Communist. Because of the Truman Doctrine the Americans created the Marshall Plan: the offer of financial support to countries at risk from Communism. As a consequence of this \$13 billion was invested in European countries.

D: Stalin's response

Understandably, Stalin and the Soviets were angry at the response of Truman to the takeover of Eastern Europe. They gave the Marshall Plan the nickname 'dollar imperialism' as they believed the USA was simply buying the support of European countries. Stalin responded to this by getting rid of the anti-Soviet leaders in Czechoslovakia and stepping up their campaign against Yugoslavia's leader (Tito) who refused to be ruled by the Soviets. Stalin also set up Cominform, which was the office for all communist countries to ensure the effective organisation of Communist countries in Eastern Europe. He also set up Comecon in 1949, which was the USSR's version of the Marshall Plan. This promoted trade between all Communist countries, but favoured the USSR by pushing countries to buy products off the USSR and sell their products to the USSR cheaply.

E: Berlin Blockade, 1947-49

The Truman Doctrine and Stalin's response led to the first 'stand-off' between the USA and USSR: the Berlin Blockade. Germany had been split into an eastern (controlled by the Soviets) and western zone (controlled by USA, Britain and France). Berlin (in the eastern zone) had also been split into Soviet controlled (East) and USA controlled (West). Stalin however, following the Marshall Plan, was uneasy with the increasing influence of the USA on European countries, he believed that the USA would want to turn the whole of Germany into a capitalist country. Therefore, he shut all trade routes into the western sector of Berlin, preventing all supplies getting into western Berlin. Truman was angry at Stalin and some army generals tried to persuade Truman to use the military against Stalin. However, Truman came to the compromise of the 'airlift': using American planes to drop parcels of supplies for the people stranded in western Berlin. Eventually, by 1949 Stalin called off the blockade. As a consequence of the blockade two separate German states were created: East Germany and West Germany. These countries were to last until 1989, when the Berlin Wall was knocked down.

F: Who was most to blame?

Both countries contributed to the beginnings of the Cold War. Stalin's first actions at the end of the war was to take over countries that he saw as being naturally Communist, but he also wanted to protect the Soviet Union by doing this. Stalin also knew that the Americans had an atomic bomb (they had used this to end the war against Japan in Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and could use this should they wish to do so. Truman wanted to prove that capitalism was the most effective method for running a country and so took actions (eg the Marshall Plan) that Stalin saw as being 'overly aggressive'. By 1949 the Cold War was well and truly underway.

1. Explain why the expansion into Eastern Europe was a priority for Stalin to increase the power of the USSR

2. What does Stalin's response to the **Marshall Plan** tell us about tensions during the 1940's?

3. Write an account of the events during the **Berlin Blockade**

Developing hostilities 1949-60

A: Conflicts in Asia

In 1949 China, under the leadership of Mao became Communist. Stalin was pleased as one of the most populated countries in the world had turned against capitalism; Truman believed that the USA would have to take action against any other countries in Asia that wanted to follow China into Communism. In 1950 the Communist North Korea invaded the Capitalist South, and the USA pressurised the UN into agreeing to support the southern forces. China sent 200,000 troops to support the northern forces. The USA's troops were led by General MacArthur, who was strongly anti Communist. The war eventually ended in a stalemate in 1953, when both sides realised that neither could win. America also became involved in the Vietnam War throughout the 1960s and 70s. Vietnam had descended into civil war between the communist north (led by Ho Chi Minh) and capitalist south (led by Ngo Dinh Diem). The Communist forces (the Vietcong) were provided with weapons and supplied by the USSR. This war ended in defeat for the Americans and the withdrawal of troops in 1975.

B: The Space and Arms race

America had signalled their intentions to be the world's leading superpower with their detonation of the first atomic bomb in Japan, at the end of WW2. The Soviets responded to this by creating their own atomic bomb by 1949. This promoted the 'arms' and 'space' race between the two superpowers. America was the first country to detonate a hydrogen bomb in 1952; but the Soviets then shocked America by launching the first man made satellite into space (Sputnik) in 1957, and the development of ICBM (Inter-continental ballistic missiles). The Americans began to pour money into space research; they created the Apollo mission which culminated in the first moon landing in 1969.

C: NATO and the Warsaw Pact

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) was formed by the western allies at the height of the Berlin Blockade. This ensured that all capitalist European countries would support each other in the event of a military attack on one of the countries. By 1955 a similar agreement had been made between eastern, communist countries called the Warsaw Pact. The new leader of the USSR, Khrushchev, (though very different from Stalin in many ways) wanted to continue the policy of the creating protective 'buffer' states that would support each other in the event of a military attack.

D: Hungary, 1956

Throughout the 1950s Hungary had been run by the hard line Communist, Rakosi, whose leadership had led to increasing unrest amongst the population. Following Stalin's death there was increasing opposition to Rakosi's rule, especially following Khrushchev's description of Stalin as a 'wicked tyrant'. Khrushchev replaced Rakosi with Erno Gero, but this plan failed, leading to the placement of Imre Nagy, who was highly respected by the Hungarian public. Nagy immediately announced his plans to moderate communism in Hungary, including his desire to remove Hungary from the Warsaw Pact. Khrushchev refused to allow this to happen and, in November ordered Soviet troops into Hungary to 'restore order'. Nagy was eventually executed, (along with other moderate communists) and Kadar was placed as leader of Hungary, by Khrushchev, who had signalled his intent to refuse to allow the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact.

E: The U2 spy plane crisis

The USA had been flying spy plane missions over Russia throughout the 1950s. Khrushchev was furious when he found out. In 1960, before the Four Powers meeting in Paris, the Soviets shot down an American U2 spy plane, and capture the pilot Gary Powers. Khrushchev refused to attend the meeting and the Americans refused to admit that Powers was a spy, but they eventually did admit this. Powers was sentenced to 10 years in prison but he was released when the USA agreed to free Soviet prisoners in exchange.

1. Explain how the events in Asia was a failure for **Capitalism**

2. Explain how the arms and space race demonstrates tensions between the **superpowers**

3. Explain why the events in Hungary portrayed **Communism** was weak

4. Explain which event was the main cause of tension during the 1960's

The Cold War heats up...and cools down

A: The Berlin Wall, 1961

Germany had been formally divided into East Germany and West Germany at the end of the Berlin Blockade in 1949; Germany, located in central Europe, had become a symbol of the division across the world: East Vs West, Communism Vs Capitalism. During the 1950s West Germany had become a thriving economy, with all the benefits of capitalist culture for the population: such as supermarkets and the latest technology. Many East Germans were deciding to move to the West as more and better jobs were available in the West; meanwhile in the East (under the leadership of the hard line Communist Walter Ulbricht) jobs were decreasing and citizens had no freedom of speech. In 1961 the Soviets decided to respond by constructing the Berlin Wall. Overnight, families had been divided. No East Germans were permitted to cross over into the west. Soviet and American tanks met each other at the newly created border (Checkpoint Charlie) until eventually they began to draw back, metre by metre. The two superpowers had come close to out and out war; Kennedy (USA President) commented (on the wall) that 'it's not a nice solution, but it's better than a war'.

B: Cuban Missile Crisis, 1959-62

In 1959 in Cuba (an island 90 miles off the coast of America) Fidel Castro led a Communist revolution, and managed to turn Cuba into a communist country. This alarmed America and (in 1961) they launched an attack on Cuba, at the Bay of Pigs. The American attack failed, and Cuba continued as a Communist country. In early 1962 America placed missiles in Turkey within range of Russia. The Soviets decided to exploit the situation by placing missiles in Cuba; however, U2 spy planes managed to take pictures of the missile site in Cuba. Khrushchev denied any knowledge of the missile site, so the Americans set up a quarantine around Cuba that allowed them to stop and search Russian ships entering Cuba. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev were urged to use their nuclear missile by their advisors. Instead, Khrushchev wrote a letter to the Kennedy stating that the Soviets would remove their nuclear weapons from Cuba if the USA did not attack Cuba. He then sent a second letter stating that they would remove their missiles from Cuba, if America removed theirs from Turkey. Kennedy responded and agreed to the first letter, and (at a later meeting) it was agreed that the missiles from Turkey would also be removed. Nuclear war had been avoided, and both leaders were alarmed at how close the superpowers had come to nuclear war.

C: Prague Spring

In 1968 Alexander Dubcek was the leader of Czechoslovakia: a strong, Communist country within the Warsaw Pact. Dubcek proposed a 'reform' of communism with less restrictions to be placed on the public and the creation of new political parties. Because of these new ideas the period was given the nickname the 'Prague Spring'. The new Soviet leader, Brezhnev, attempted to intimidate Dubcek into slowing down his reforms, by placing Soviet troops on the border with Czechoslovakia. However, on the 20th August Soviet troops arrived in Prague, and Dubcek was removed from his position. Brezhnev had (like Khrushchev before him) signalled his intention to refuse to allow the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact, leading to the 'poisoning' of relations between east and west.

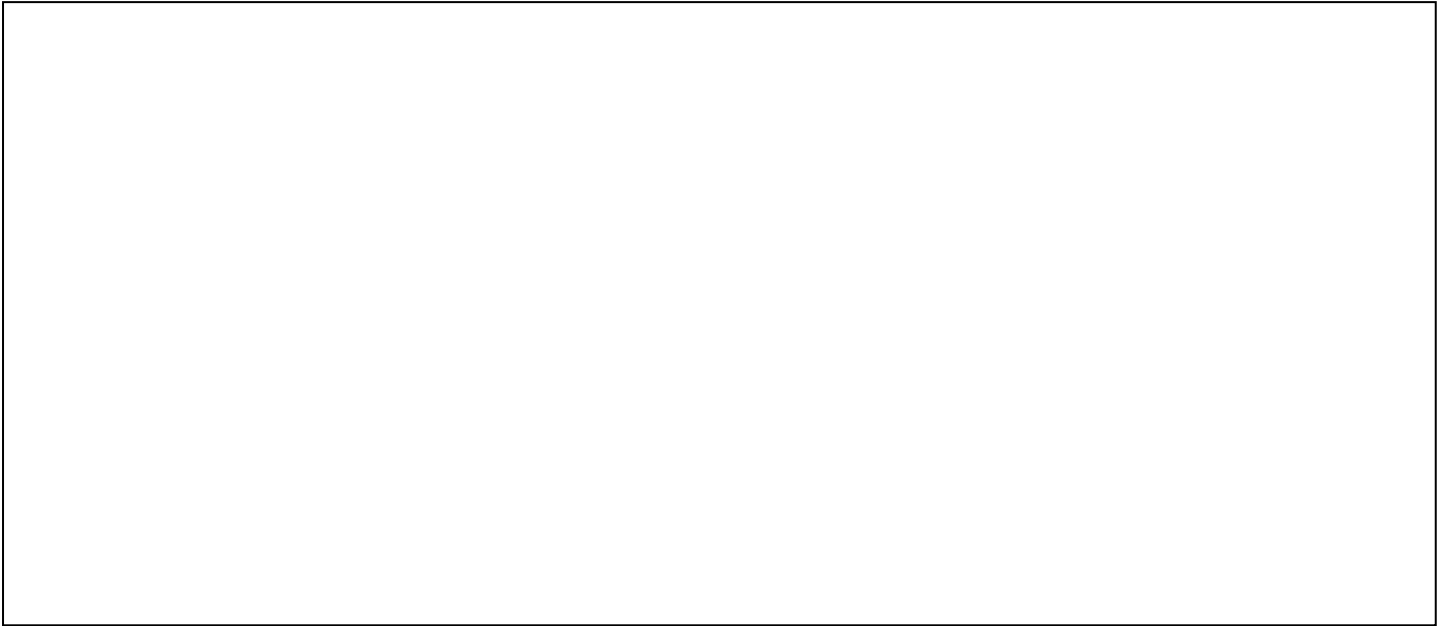
D: Détente and the 'thaw' in relations

In the late 60s and early 70s the word 'détente' (meaning an easing of tensions) became used to describe relations between the USA and Soviets. The USA President Nixon and USSR President Brezhnev were the two leaders at time and have become associated with the idea of 'détente' and the creation of a 'thaw' in relations. Both Presidents had come to realise that the ongoing cost of the Cold War, including the Asian conflicts and arms race, could not carry on forever. In 1969 Britain, USA and USSR signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty; in 1972 SALT (strategic arms limitations talks) began. This signalled a changing relationship between the east and west, and the move to more peaceful relations, based on trade and boosting their economies.

1. Explain why the Berlin Wall was the biggest cause of tension throughout the Cold War



2. Write an account of the **Cuban Missile Crises**



3. Explain why the Cold War 'cooled' down during the 1960/70's

