

COLD WAR 1945-1960

A. INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THE 'COLD WAR'?

Cold War is the conflict between the Communist nations led by the Soviet Union and the democratic nations led by the United States. It is fought by all means - propaganda, economic war, diplomatic haggling and occasional military clashes. It is fought in all places - in neutral states, in newly independent nations in Africa, Asia and even in outer space.

The historians have so far not reached any agreement on the time in which the Cold War began. It is, however, quite safe to say that since 1947 when President Truman of the United States declared an anti-communist policy, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union has begun.

B. CAUSES OF THE COLD WAR

There were deep-rooted ideological, economic and political differences between the United States and the Soviet Union before the Second World War. These differences were intensified as a result of their mutual suspicions immediately after the Second World War.

(1) Underlying Causes

a) **Ideological:**

The United States and the Soviet Union represent two opposing systems of government. In the United States, the government is elected by free elections. The people can form political parties to voice their political opinions. They also possess the right of assembly, of speech and of the press. In the Soviet Union, the government is formed by the Communist Party. The people do not have the right to form their own political parties. They do not enjoy the right of assembly, of speech and of the press. Since these two systems of government are diametrically opposed to one another, there can be little compromise between the United States and the Soviet Union.

b) **Economic:**

The United States wanted to encourage free trade throughout the world. The Soviet Union wanted to shield off her own sphere from international commerce. Russia feared that trade with the West would involve the risk of Russia being opened to western influences which would have eroded the strength of the totalitarian regime. These differences led to much ill feeling between the United States and the Soviet Union.

c) **Power rivalry:**

After the Second World War, with the decline of Europe, power was largely shared between the Soviet Union and the United States. As one wanted 'to dominate the other, conflicts were inevitable.

(2) Immediate Causes Leading to the Cold War

Incipient conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States began at the peace-time conferences. Their conflict was intensified after President Truman declared the Truman Doctrine and launched the Marshall Plan in 1947.

a) **Extension of Russian influence in Europe:**

Even before the end of the war, the Soviet Union had gradually extended her influence in Europe. By the fall of 1944, the Red Army had liberated and controlled a large part of eastern Europe. By 1945, at the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union obtained the Curzon Line as her new boundary line with Poland and also the control of the eastern zone of Germany.

As the war was drawing to a close in May 1945, the Soviet Union quickly consolidated her control of eastern Europe. The Red Army began by influencing the post-war elections. They intimidated the voters and changed the voting lists as they desired.

Although the non-communists could still gain some votes, most of the votes went to the communists. Thus the coalition governments formed immediately after the war were largely dominated by the communists. Two of the key ministries - Defence and Military (Police) - were always under communist control.

Stalin was not satisfied with communist control of eastern Europe. In the meantime, he encouraged the communists to take an active part in the immediate post-war elections in western Europe. In late 1946, the French and Italian Communists were becoming the most powerful parties in France and Italy.

b) The reactions of the United States:

Despite the increasing Russian influence in eastern and central Europe, many politicians in the United States were optimistic about the chances of co-operation with the Soviet Union after the war and did not advocate strong resistance against Russian expansion.

But from May 1945 onwards, the situation was changed. The U.S. government favoured a policy of strong resistance against Russia.

The **first reason** was that President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. He was succeeded by Harry S. Truman. President Roosevelt was an optimistic man. He seemed to have believed that although Eastern Europe had fallen under the influence of Russia, she would keep her promise (made at Yalta) by setting up freely-elected parliamentary governments in the area. So Roosevelt did not advocate strong resistance against Russian expansion. The new President, Truman, was a complete contrast to Roosevelt. He did not believe the communists. He thought that the communists would not set up democratic governments in Eastern Europe. He also believed that after the Soviet Union had established her control in Eastern Europe, she would continue to extend her influence into Western Europe. Thus President Truman favoured a policy of strong resistance against Russian expansion.

The **second reason** was that just before the Potsdam Conference was to take place, the United States had successfully exploded her atomic bomb. President Truman thought that since the United States alone possessed the atomic bomb, she could adopt a stiff attitude towards Russian expansion in Europe.

The **third reason** was that President Truman was disgusted at the non-co-operative attitude of the Russians at the Potsdam Conference. Russia was determined to exact heavy reparations from Germany. Russia also accused the British of upholding a reactionary monarchy in Greece and supporting an Italian Fascist regime in Trieste. Stalin also blocked Truman's proposal on the internationalization of all principal waterways.

c) Poor relations between the United States and the Soviet Union:

The deteriorating relations between the Soviet Union and the United States were reflected in two minor incidents in the year. Lend-Lease was abruptly terminated by the United States and the Russian request for American economic aid for the purposes of post-war reconstruction was ignored by the government of the United States. *(During the Second World War, the U.S. supplied much war material to the Allied nations through a Lend and Lease programme. As the Lend and Lease programme was suddenly stopped, the war-ravaged Soviet Union could not obtain American material support to help her post-war economic reconstruction.)*

The poor relations between the East and West were also reflected in a speech by Churchill. In March 1946, Churchill made a speech at Fulton, Missouri in which he said, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent Behind that line lie all the capitals of the central and Eastern Europe - all are subject in one form or another not only to Soviet influence but also to a very high and increasing control from Moscow." The Fulton speech increased the American suspicion of Soviet aggressive designs in Europe.

C. Beginning of the Cold War

The American alarm of Russian expansion in Europe greatly increased when Britain declared on February 24, 1947 that she could no longer give the much-needed financial and military aid to the Greek government which was in danger of being overthrown by the communist guerillas. Another country threatened by Russian-directed communist guerillas was Turkey. America did not have any doubt about the great increase in power which domination over Greece and Turkey would give to Russia. *(Both Turkey and Greece had a population composed largely of poor peasants. These two countries were liberated by Anglo-American troops from German control in 1944. After the liberation, the communist guerillas in these two countries threatened to overthrow their governments. The communist guerillas received military aid from Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The government of Greece received military support from the British government.)*

On March 12, 1947, President Truman enunciated the Truman Doctrine. The essence of the Doctrine was that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." This was clearly an anti-communist doctrine. This amounted to an American declaration of war upon Communist Russia. President Truman followed his speech with massive military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. (The communist guerillas were defeated by the American troops in 1948 in both Greece and Turkey.)

The U.S. government also realized that a prosperous Europe would be the most effective barrier to Communism. On June 4, 1947, the U.S. Secretary of State, George Marshall, speaking at the Harvard University, stated that, "It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace." Immediately after the speech the United States invited all European countries to put forward plans for economic reconstruction so that the United States would provide the necessary financial aid to them. The Soviet Union refused to accept the American financial aid.

The first reason was that the state which applied for Marshall Aid was required to disclose her economic records to the American government - this was regarded by the Soviet Union as an American interference in the internal affairs of another state. The second reason was that receiving American aid would involve the risk of opening the Soviet Union to western influences which would weaken the totalitarian system of government. (*In the eyes of the Soviet Union, the United States was giving economic aid to all European countries to make them anti-communist. Shortly after the proclamation of the Marshall Plan, Andrei Zhdanov, one of Stalin's lieutenants, said, "The United States proclaimed a new, frankly predatory and expansionist course. The purpose of this new frankly expansionist course is to establish the world supremacy of American imperialism."*) Because of these two reasons, the Soviet Union also forbade her satellite countries (the eastern European countries) to accept Marshall Aid. In 1949, Russia tried to counter the Marshall Plan -by offering financial aid to her satellites under the Molotov Plan.

With the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine of March 1947 and the launching of the Marshall Plan, the United States was clearly leading the western nations to resist Russian Communist expansionist activities in Europe. Cold War had begun.

There is some misleading information, according to Ozlem Gokakin: The American alarm of Russian expansion in Europe greatly increased when Britain declared on February 24, 1947 that she could no longer give the much-needed financial and military aid to the Greek government, which was in danger of being overthrown by the communist guerillas. Another country threatened by Russian-directed communist guerillas was Turkey. America did not have any doubt about the great increase in power which domination over Greece and Turkey would give to Russia. (*Both Turkey and Greece had a population composed largely of poor peasants. These two countries were liberated by Anglo-American troops from German control in 1944. After the liberation, the communist guerillas in these two countries threatened to overthrow their governments. The communist guerillas received military aid from Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The government of Greece received military support from the British government.*) On March 12, 1947, President Truman enunciated the Truman Doctrine. The essence of the Doctrine was that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." This was clearly an anti-communist doctrine. This amounted to an American declaration of war upon Communist Russia. President Truman followed his speech with massive military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. (*The communist guerillas were defeated by the American troops in 1948 in both Greece and Turkey.*)

During World War II, the Nazi (German) forces have never occupied Turkey. Yes, it is true that Turkey was exposed to a German attack even after the German defeat at Stalingrad. There are claims that Hitler intended to occupy Turkey in his war plan maps with the aim of making his attack on Russia through Turkey from south but he decided to attack Russia directly earlier than it was expected. Turkey against the allied pressure did not enter the war and remained neutral until the very end. It only symbolically declared war on Germany in February 1945. Turkey strictly tried to stay out of the conflict. As Turkey never entered the war and never been occupied, it is impossible to say that it is liberated by Anglo-American forces in 1944. In fact, it was Greece, which was

occupied and saved by the Anglo-American Forces in 1944. By June 1941, Greece came under triple occupation Bulgaria, Germany, and Italy. The Germans controlled all the most critical cities: Athens, Thessalonica, Crete, the Thracian border zone with Turkey, and a number of the Aegean Islands. The Bulgarians got control of Thrace and most of Macedonia. The Italians occupied the rest of Greece. Indeed, the Italians were the principal occupying power, until the Italian armistice of 1943. The Greeks with the help of the Anglo-American special forces resisted against occupying forces. Resistance movement in Greece was not an organized move, it was rather a spontaneous movement organized and carried out by individuals who belonged to different and sometimes competing ideologies. For example, resistance force under the command of Colonel Napoleon Zervas (EDES) was based on pre war army tactics. He organized the remaining Greek units in the mountains of Greece and received support from the British Special Operations Executive (SOE). After liberation, Greece entered into a civil war between 1942-1949. It can even be said that the Second World War and the Axis occupation provided the causes for the rise of the Greek Communists and the Greek Communist Party (KKE), which was outlawed and persecuted under the rule of General Metaxas between 1936 and 1941, fulfilled the political power vacuum of the occupation and resistance years. The increasing role of Greek communists and the growing ties between KKE and Moscow created a cause of concern for the US and Britain. The Soviet government also tried to stir up a communist revolution in Turkey on its southern border. This led to the declaration of Truman Doctrine.

It was the Greek communists who received military aid first from Yugoslavia (Tito) and later from the Soviet Union while the government of Greece received support from the British not the Turkish communists. In your wording it looks as if both countries went through exactly the same experience: the Nazi occupation, liberation by US-British troops and the communist threat of takeover thwarted by American troops. It is true to say that Turkish government was also threatened by a communist takeover in those years, but if you read the books on Turkish history and carefully analyze the historical facts you will see that through close cooperation with the US administration, and with the US financial aid, the Turkish government ruled out the possibility of a communist takeover. Finally by entering into NATO in 1952, Turkey placed itself safely in the Western Camp against the Soviet Union. There were no American military forces or troops directly fighting against the communists in Turkey. In fact there was no foreign military personnel stationed in Turkey in those years. Only after its adherence to NATO, the US-NATO military bases were opened in Turkey and foreign military personnel (and Jupiter missiles) were stationed in the Turkish territory. In addition the communists in Turkey could not be called "guerrillas" As in Greece the Turkish communists were organized under "Turkish Socialist Workers and Peasants party led by Dr. Sefik Husnu Degmer in 1946 but in December 1946 with martial law the communist and social parties were closed down. The Democratic Party government carried out a witch-hunt against the left between 1948-49. There had been skirmishes between some government forces and communists in Turkey and sabotages carried out by communists in the country but not exactly a guerilla warfare or civil war. This happened in later stages towards the end of 1970s and early 1980s. This is a misreading of history.

However, in the case of Greece the British Special Forces and the American ones were directly involved in the resistance and in the civil war. Through British guidance and help the Greeks were able to liberate themselves from Nazi occupation. In the later stages the British policies led both to the breaking of the civil war, and to the prolongation of the war. But at the end with good diplomatic manoeuvres complemented by the US support, the British succeeded in achieving their policies in Greece. With the beginning of the Cold War, the US determined to prevent the Soviet expansion, viewed the developments in Greece as the handiwork of Moscow, and the Truman administration decided to support the British/the Greek government in their fight against the KKE/DAG. The US announced the Truman Doctrine in March 1947. The US Congress agreed to provide an emergency aid of 400 million US dollars to Greece, with later continued with the Marshall Plan. Between 1946 and 1949 the US transferred \$1 billion for military and economic reconstruction of the Greek government. In addition, the US sent a group of advisers and military personnel under General James van Fleet to Greece for training and supporting the Greek national army.

D. IMPORTANT EVENTS UP TO 1954

No part of the world escaped the effects of the Cold War. But up to 1949 the Cold War was mainly confined to Europe and the chief arena was in Germany.

(1) Return to Parliamentary Democracy in the West

When the Cold War began, relations between the East and the West became critically strained. Both the United States and the Soviet Union tried to tighten their control over their 'satellites' within their own spheres of influence. In April 1947, the Communist Party was declared illegal in West Germany. In May 1947, the communist ministers were dismissed from the coalition governments in Italy and France.

In April 1948, the United States government intervened in the Italian election. The American diplomats urged the Italian voters to support the Christian Democratic Party and threatened that if the Communist Party won the election, America would stop her financial aid to Italy. The result was that the Christian Democrats won most of the votes in the election and became the ruling party.

(2) Soviet Control of Eastern Europe

In the meantime, Stalin also intervened in the domestic politics of the eastern European countries. In May 1947, Ference Nagy, the democratically elected Prime Minister of Hungary, was forced to flee for his life. In June 1947, Petkov, a leading opponent of Soviet domination in Bulgaria, was arrested and hanged. One month later, Bulgaria was declared a People's Republic. In October, Mikolajczyk, leader of the democratic Peasant Party in Poland, was forced to flee to the west. In November 1947, Maniu, the 74 year-old head of the Rumanian Peasant Party, was imprisoned and in December Rumania was proclaimed a People's Republic.

The most flagrant example that showed how the Russians disposed of political dissenters took place in Czechoslovakia. The Czech government had followed an independent course in both foreign and domestic affairs - to steer a middle course between the East and the West. (In foreign affairs, the Czech government sided with the Soviet Union. In domestic affairs, the Czech government tried to give some democratic rights to the people as it had done in the inter-war years.)

To assist her economic reconstruction, the Czech government even desired to accept Marshall Aid in spite of Russian objection. In February 1948, the Soviet Union desired to kill the Czech's desire for independence. A coup d'état was carried out in Prague. Stalin ordered the Czech Communists to arrest the leading figures of the democratic parties. A pro-Russian government under the Communist

leader, Gottwald, was soon established. The western nations regarded the forceful seizure of power in Czechoslovakia as a symbol of 'Russian aggression'. They feared that Russia would soon use force to overthrow the other democratic governments in Europe.

In September 1947, the Soviet Union established the Communist Information Bureau (the Cominform). The Bureau was not only to spread communist propaganda to all European countries but also to co-ordinate the activities of the member communist parties in their struggle against 'Anglo-American imperialism'. It also supported the strikes of the workers in France and Italy. Consequently the western nations had increasing fear of Communist conquest of the world.



By 1948, the only country in eastern Europe outside direct Soviet control was Yugoslavia. Here the liberation from the Nazis had been achieved not by the Red Army but by a local communist partisan movement, whose members subsequently occupied major military and police posts. The head of the partisan movement, Tito, had been trained in Moscow. Though a Russian-trained communist, he refused to be a Russian puppet. In 1947-48, Tito made it clear that Yugoslavia would not subordinate her economy to that of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union immediately ordered her satellites in eastern Europe to stop their trade with Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union also tried to create conflicts among the Yugoslav Communist Party leaders. When all these failed, Stalin expelled Yugoslavia from the Cominform in June 1948. The conflict between Yugoslavia and Russia led to a great fear among the western nations that in the near future, Russia would use force to unseat the government of Yugoslavia and if that was successful, Russia would even order the Red Army to advance into western Europe.

(3) The Berlin Crisis - the Climax of the Conflict between the East and the West in Europe

While the western nations were anxious about their own security, Russia stopped all land traffic between Berlin and West Germany. The western nations took this move as the first of a series of Russian attempts to force them to withdraw first from Germany and then from Europe. They were determined to resist and war nearly resulted. This was the well-known Berlin Crisis. The Berlin Crisis marked the climax of the conflict between the East and the West. The origins of that conflict can be traced back to the year 1945.

(i) Early conflict (1945)

The Yalta Conference and the Potsdam Conference had laid down some principles concerning the immediate post-war treatment of Germany; but as soon as these principles were carried out, the western nations and the Soviet Union came into conflict because both sides had different interpretations of the principles.

In accordance with the Potsdam agreement Germany was treated as a single economic unit. Russia would obtain as reparations a proportion of the industrial products currently produced by Germany industry in the western zones; and in return the Russian-controlled eastern zone would deliver food and raw materials to the western zones. (The eastern zone was an agricultural region. The western zones were an industrial region. Russia was to receive the industrial products in the western zones because German armies had destroyed the Russian industries severely.) But Russia wanted to exploit the economic resources of the eastern zone as much as possible and did not supply the western zones with food. So the Americans did not deliver any industrial products to the eastern zone. Thereafter the western occupying powers and Russia handled economic affairs in their zones independently.

In accordance with the Potsdam agreement, the 4 occupying powers also agreed to destroy the Nazi system and to prepare the way for democracy in Germany. To the west, denazification meant that only those persons who had taken an active part in the Nazi regime were to be punished. To the Russians, denazification meant that punishment should be meted out not only to individuals but to the whole bourgeois class, because bourgeois capitalism was regarded as the base for the rise of Nazism. The western nations concluded that Soviet Russia was not only punishing the Nazis, but they were creating a new-regime ruled by a new class the workers and the peasants. Because both sides had carried out different policies in their own occupation zones, they became increasingly suspicious of each other's designs in Europe.

(ii) Economic conflict (1946):

In order to revive West Germany economically as soon as possible, the American and the British governments permitted the West German industries to raise their levels of production. Russia immediately feared that West Germany would re-emerge as a powerful supporter of the western countries.

In December 1946, Russian fear increased when the British and Americans formed 'Bizonia' by putting together their two zones for economic purposes. (In June 1948 France agreed to co-operate with the British and the Americans and so converted 'Bizonia' into 'Trizonia'.) The Americans and the British also intended to cut down the German reparations, expand the German industries, adopt a uniform system for railway and other services and restore the German industrial production to the pre-war level.

(iii) Increasing suspicion (1947):

With enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the launching of the Marshall Plan, (The United States declared to include West Germany in the Marshall Plan.) the Russians felt the U.S. was launching an anti-communist campaign against Soviet Russia.

(iv) Diplomatic conflict (1949):

In February 1948, Russia responded to the pressures of the Cold War by putting forward her claim for the whole of Berlin within her zone. The Russian claim met with a strong reaction in the West. The United States, Britain, France -and the Benelux countries made a London Agreement in June 1948. They declared that they would form a democratic West German Government in the western zones. In the eyes of the Soviet Union, the U.S. was trying to make West Germany an anti-Soviet military spearhead against her.

(v) Confrontation over Berlin (June 1948):

The hostile relations between the Soviet Union and the United States before 1948 had made the Berlin crisis, inevitable. The currency reform carried out by the western powers in 1948 immediately produced the Berlin crisis. The aim of the western powers was to introduce a new currency in order to revive the Germany economy. (Since the end of the war, shortage of food and other necessities led to inflation in Germany (i.e. selling of food and other scarce goods at inflated prices). The amount of money in circulation rose enormously in the post-war years, and the German marks became valueless. Currency reform was an essential step to recreate financial stability in Germany.) The Soviet Union thought differently. She thought that if the currency reform in West Germany was successful, West Germany would become a strong power, threatening Russia's position in East Germany. When the new currency was introduced to West Berlin, the Soviet Union replied by cutting land communications between West Berlin and the western German zones. Thus began the blockade of Berlin on June 24, 1948.

Two million citizens in the western sectors of Berlin seemed likely to be starved to death. The Americans regarded the blockade as a Russian attempt to force the withdrawal of the western powers from West Berlin, to consolidate the Soviet control of central and eastern Europe, to frustrate the Marshall Plan and to encourage the communist parties in western Europe. In short, this was regarded as an overt sign of Communist aggression. General Clay, the Military Governor of the American zone, said, "When Berlin falls, West Germany will be next." He thought that the U.S. should fight a war with Russia.

Although France refused to use force (because she was economically weak), the western nations agreed that they could not give way in West Berlin. They decided to airlift food supplies to the starving million in West Berlin. Every transport plane available in France, Britain and the U.S. was used to transport to West Berlin provisions and materials of every kind. In winter, flying conditions were dangerous -planes often crashed. Even this did not daunt the air-lift organizers. Day and night air-lift went on. This showed the strong determination of the western nations to resist Russian Communism.

In the meantime, the U.S. formed an anti-communist military alliance with the western nations - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. On May 9, 1949, Stalin realized that he could not force the withdrawal of western nations from West Berlin. He admitted defeat by lifting the Berlin Blockade.

(vi) Significance of the blockade:

- (a) It was clear that the western powers would resist with great determination any Russian attempt to dominate Central Europe. They had upheld the Western sectors of Berlin by a vast and costly airlift.
- (b) Though Stalin lifted the blockade, the -western -powers failed to obtain Russian recognition of their rights of a land route to West Berlin. This meant that even in moments of defeat Russia was determined to show strength and determination. A repetition of the Berlin crisis was to be expected in the future.
- (c) Though both sides showed great determination to control their own zones, they would only go to war as a final resort. Both America and Russia possessed atomic bombs. (Russia had developed her atomic bomb in 1949.) A Third World War would be disastrous to both sides.
- (d) Soon after the crisis, it was understood that Germany would not be unified. The following September saw the setting up of a West German Federal Republic through free elections. The Christian Democratic Party won most of the votes in the elections and Adenauer became the Chancellor. The capital of the Republic was at Bonn. In the following month (October), the Democratic People's Republic was set up under Russian auspices in East Germany. Ulbricht was the Prime Minister. *(East and West Germany were separated by strong fortifications on*

both sides. Since 1961, in order to stop the East Germans crossing into West Berlin, East Germany built a high wall across Berlin.)

(e) The Berlin Crisis was over but Russian influence over eastern and central Europe was not shaken. The suspicion of the western nations about Russian aggressions remained.

E. Cold War in East Asia

Meanwhile, events in East Asia moved to a critical stage. The tension of the Cold War seemed to have moved from Europe to East Asia.

On October 1, 1949, the People's Republic, under Mao Zedong, was proclaimed in China. This Communist triumph was a great shock to the United States. Overnight, the Communist influence seemed to have extended into the very heart of Asia and onto the doorstep of occupied Japan. The sheer physical size of Soviet Russia and China, and of their combined populations, gave a double threat to the American policy of containment. It was against this background that a full-scale war broke out in Korea.

After the Second World War, Korea north of 38th parallel had been occupied by the Russians, while south of the 38th parallel by the Americans. As no agreement on a common government for the whole country had been reached, the Russians established a communist regime in North Korea and the Americans a western-oriented democracy in South Korea. Syngman Rhee was elected President of South Korea.

On June 25, 1950 the North Korea troops began to invade South Korea. They attempted to unify Korea and set up a communist regime for the whole nation.

American military leaders had become aware of the importance of a non-communist South Korea for the defence of Japan. When the Security Council of the United Nations condemned the North Korean aggression, on behalf of the United Nations, the United States sent large number of troops under General Douglas MacArthur to fight back the invading North Korean troops. When the Americans advanced to the Yalu River, they met with the strong resistance of the Chinese Communist armies who drove the Americans back to the 38th parallel. The war ended in a virtual stalemate at the 38th parallel.

Finally in July 1953, with the help of the United Nations, an armistice was arranged. It was agreed to restore the status quo ante: Korea remained divided along the 38th parallel.

The effects of the Korean War were that

- (i) Korea was much devastated during the war, particularly North Korea;
- (ii) China was protected by a buffer state, North Korea, in her northeast;
- (iii) China and the Soviet Union became close allies after the war;
- (iv) the western nations had given military assistance to the United Nations to fight against aggression and the authority of the United Nations was upheld.

F. The Formation of Military Alliances

The formation of the military alliances was the direct result of the tension between the East and the West produced by the Cold War.

(i) Treaty of Dunkirk (March 1947) and Treaty of Brussels (March 1948):

Immediately after the Second World War, the western European nations felt threatened by the military power of the Soviet Union because she had emerged from the war stronger than she had been before it. She had an annexed population of about 23 millions and an annexed area of over 180,000 square miles. Moreover, she had more than 3 million men under arms. Undoubtedly, Russia became the strongest military power in Europe. In response to this military threat, Britain concluded a military alliance with France, known as the Treaty of Dunkirk. The chief purpose was to prevent future German aggression. It also provided for economic assistance and military co-operation against the political threat of the other aggressors, such as Russia.

The Prague Coup of February 1948 gave new fear of the Russian threat. Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, immediately called for greater economic and military co-operation among the western European countries. The Treaty of Dunkirk was broadened to include the Benelux countries - Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg - and they signed the Treaty of Brussels. The Treaty of Brussels was not only a military alliance but also an ideological alliance. It provided for collective self-defence, economic and social collaboration in Western Europe.

(ii) The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (N.A.T.O.) (April 1949):

The five western states were increasingly suspicious of the Russian intentions in Europe since the Berlin Blockade. The United States also wanted to find allies in Europe to contain communist expansion.

On April 4, 1949, twelve nations - the United States, Canada, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Italy, Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington. (The Brussels Treaty was not dissolved.) The partners of the Treaty believed that Russian Communism, an anti-democratic ideology, had posed a new threat to the democratic world. Thus they stated that "an armed attack against one or more of them shall be considered an attack against them all." In the event of such an attack, for the preservation of peace and their civilized way of life, they promised to take whatever action deemed necessary, including the use of armed force. This regional security arrangement for the defence of the North Atlantic area was valid for 20 years.

As a result of this Treaty, the nations in western Europe were drawn together under American leadership. The headquarters of NATO known as SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters of Allied Powers in Europe) was established at Paris. The most important organization of the NATO was the Permanent Council. It was established in 1952. The Permanent Council was composed of representatives of all member states and was the decision-making organ of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The decisions of the Council were made by unanimous agreement. The Council took up many functions. It planned not only for the military co-operation but also cultural and economic co-operation among its member states. To carry out these functions, many committees (such as the Financial and Economic Committee and the Defence and Military Committee and planning boards - such as the Regional planning groups) were set up. The NATO Secretariat was set up to do clerical work. The most important work of the Council remained to be military. The Defence and Military Committee was to be in charge of military affairs. It consisted of the Chiefs of Staffs of Britain, France and the United States. The Korean War made the western powers more anxious to strengthen their own defences through unity. In 1950 an integrated force under the supreme command of General Eisenhower was set up, with Paris as its headquarters. This was the first attempt of the western nations to form an integrated force in Europe.

Significance of the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization:

(a) The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was an essential defensive organization against Communist aggression and a successful step towards European and trans-Atlantic co-operation. Soon after the formation of the NATO, the Berlin Blockade was lifted by the Soviet Union and there was no further advance of Communism in Europe (but not in Asia). Many other efforts at co-operation among the western European countries were made after the formation of the NATO.

(b) The United States had committed herself to a military alliance in peace time for the first time in her history ' From 1949 onwards, a large number of American troops was stationed in western Europe. For the next 20 years, her allies could call for American military assistance. This marked an end of the isolationist policy which had always been upheld by the United States.

(c) In response to the formation of the NATO, Russia formed the Warsaw Pact.

(iii) The Warsaw Pact:

Since the end of the war, Russia had set up pro-Russian communist governments in eastern and central Europe. By 1948 the Cominform had been formed and Russia had concluded mutual assistance treaties with Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania. The confrontation over Berlin (1948-49) and the formation of NATO meant that the Cold War would continue. Soon after the Communist victory in Indo-China, the anticommunist nations in Asia formed the South-East Asia Treaty Organization. In Europe, West Germany was admitted to the NATO in 1955 and allowed to re-arm. (West Germany was essential to an overall defence system in Europe. As her economy advanced rapidly after 1950, her rearmament was of great help to the defence of western Europe. Because of Britain's promise not to withdraw her NATO forces from Europe (in order to counterbalance the German forces), France did not object to the admittance of West Germany into the NATO and West Germany's rearmament in the 9 Power Conference of 1954.)

The Soviet Union looked at these anti-communist moves with fear. She concluded the Warsaw Pact with her satellites in May 1955. It included all communist states in Europe except Yugoslavia - Soviet Russia, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. The Pact spoke of peaceful intentions and defence. It precluded its members to participate in any other coalition or alliance but it assured members of immediate assistance, including the use of armed force, in the event of armed aggression. To provide for military

assistance, a Russian Supreme Commander was appointed to lead the combined armed forces of its members. A Consultative Committee was established to foster political understanding of its members.

Significance of the formation of the Warsaw Pact:

(a) The Pact allowed Russia to station her troops in eastern European countries. This meant that Russia could attack western Europe at any moment and could suppress any sign of rebellion in her satellite countries.

(b) By 1955 when the most critical phase of the Cold War was over both Russia and the United States had organized their satellites into opposing alliances. Political tension between the East and the West will continue.

G. THE TENSION EASED AFTER 1953-54

After 1953, the Cold War was waning. There were two reasons which could explain the easing-of the tension. The first reason was that since 1953, both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed hydrogen bombs. Both sides realized that the use of these destructive weapons in war would destroy each other. Thus they were determined to improve their relations in order to avoid direct military clash.

Figure: Kennedy (USA) and Khrushchev (USSR) in negotiation



The second reason was that since 1954, the bonds between the 'Super Powers' and their 'satellites' began to slacken. As their 'satellites' did not fully support their leader - the United States and the Soviet Union, it made political sense for the two Super-Powers to improve their relations.

In Europe, the Far East and Middle East, the interests of the western European nations often conflicted with those of the United States. In Europe, the United States was anxious to increase the share of the western European nations in the defence of Western Europe against Soviet Russia. The western European nations objected to this American demand. They did not want to pay for the heavy military expenditure. In the Far East, President Eisenhower accepted the following domino' theory, - i.e.

the American belief that if one country in Asia fell into the hands of the communists, the others would also become communist. Thus the United States intervened actively in Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand and Laos. The European nations feared the cost of a war and did not like to support the expense of the American troops fighting against the communists in Asia. In the Middle East, the United States wanted to befriend the Arabs in order to counteract the influence of the Russians. This ran contrary to the British and French interests in the area. The Arab policy of nationalizing the remaining French and British oil investments in Egypt was particularly resentful to Britain and France.

In the Soviet bloc, the members were able to enjoy greater freedom of action as a result of a change in Russian policy after the death of Stalin in 1953. Stalin's successors were more willing to give greater freedom to the Russian satellite states. Khrushchev admitted in his speech to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party (1956) that there were different "forms of transition of various countries to socialism." Signs of rebellion quickly appeared in the Soviet bloc. Very soon Poland and Czechoslovakia gained greater independence in their own economic affairs. The Hungarians were greatly encouraged. They demanded not only economic but political autonomy as well. They made an uprising against Russian domination in 1956. Although the uprising was unsuccessful, the Soviet Union wanted to avoid similar rebellions and relaxed her control over the eastern European countries. (On October 23, 1956 before the Polish embassy in Hungary, 50,000 people participated in an anti-Russian demonstration. The Russian-dominated government appealed to the Russians for help. On November 4, Russian troops entered Budapest to put an end to the uprising.) They were treated more as allies than as satellites. In other words, the Soviet Union could not command Eastern Europe to fight against western nations as she might wish. (The eastern European countries were afraid of a costly war with the United States). Because of these two reasons, a period of co-existence seemed to have begun after the armistice in Indo-China in 1954. In 1955 Khrushchev met with President Eisenhower at the Geneva Conference. Although they could not

agree on a specific programme for more peaceful East-West relations, the cordial atmosphere of their informal discussion had suggested a remarkable lessening of the world tension.

The events of October and November 1956 also showed that the relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were improving. In the above-mentioned Hungarian revolt, the United States did nothing to assist the Hungarian rioters. In the Suez crisis of the same year, the United States did not help the British and the French in their attack on Egypt. Instead the United States co-operated with Soviet Russia in condemning the Anglo-French attack.

Up to 1960, peaceful co-existence between the East and the West seemed to have been accepted by both the United States and the Soviet Union.

www.funfront.net/hist/europe/coldwar.htm