

Cold War 1945-49 - A Game of Consequences

Origins of the Cold War 1941-58

Event	Key Features	Consequences
Tehran Conference November 1943	Meeting of the Grand Alliance. Mainly supported Stalin eg Britain and France agreed to open a second front by invading France in 1944; USSR agreed to fight Japan once war ended in Europe; United Nations was planned for after the War; an area of eastern Poland was added to USSR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive plan to end WWII in place eg 1944 opening of second front did help defeat Germany by May 1945; Stalin's Red Army has a free reign in Eastern Europe as they liberate from Nazism; USSR is gaining land from Poland meaning Stalin can assume Soviet control in Poland would be acceptable.
Yalta Conference February 1945	Grand Alliance met as Germany was close to defeat. Germany was the main topic under discussion – agreed Germany would be divided into four zones, as would Berlin; on the treatment of Nazi war criminals; USSR would help fight against Japan; importance of free elections for liberated countries; USSR would have a sphere of influence in the east. BUT disagreement re level of reparations Germany should pay and Poland i.e. the location of the western border with Germany and the nature of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement on the division of Germany i.e. four zones of occupation – Britain, USA, France and the USSR. Berlin would also be divided into four sectors. Stalin felt aggrieved that he had the poorer section of Germany and that the west had the wealthiest and industrial areas. This created greater tension between the allies The situation on Poland created tension as the west believed there should be free elections in Poland, yet Stalin wanted to ensure the coalition government established in 1945 had more “Lublin poles” that were sympathetic to the USSR than “London Poles” who were supporters of the USA. Stalin's plan to build a buffer zone against future attack meant that there were increased tensions around Poland.
Potsdam Conference July 1945	Grand alliance met one last time. The atmosphere had changed – Stalin's army had liberated Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania; he had set up a communist government in Poland; the Red Army remained intact and powerful unlike the demilitarisation in the west. In the case of the USA, they had successfully tested the A Bomb without sharing secrets with the USSR. Also a change in leadership – no longer Roosevelt and Churchill but Truman and Atlee. Agreed on the division of Germany as at Yalta; democracy to be re-established in Germany; reparations to be paid by Germany – most would go to the USSR to repair their nation; Nazi Party banned; UN established; Poland's frontier moved westwards to the rivers of Oder and Niesse. BUT no agreement on Germany in the long term – Stalin wanted them crippled with reparation so never strong enough to attack again; Truman refused. Also the interpretation of “free elections” differed between the USA and USSR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differences were exposed about free elections. Truman expected democratic elections in eastern Europe and eventually in Germany. Whereas Stalin viewed the east of Europe as his “sphere of influence”. Insistence on free elections was seen as interference from the west. Instead he slowly took control of the eastern European countries through control of coalitions, control of state administration and eventually rigged elections to establish loyal communist governments. Germany was divided into four sectors each to be administered by Britain, France, USA and the USSR. The Soviet sector was in the east of Germany; Berlin was in this sector but subdivided among the allies. The three western allies had control over the west of the country. This deepened the east-west divide.

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Stalin's takeover of Eastern Europe 1945-1948	Stalin helped to orchestrate the takeover of eastern Europe with Communist governments loyal to the USSR. This involved coalition governments being formed; the Communist takeover of main offices in the countries eg civil service and the media; the removal of opposition leaders and then rigged elections to consolidate Communist rule. By 1948 all countries behind the so called "iron curtain" (Churchill, March 1946) were Communist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through ensuring that there was a buffer zone between the USSR and Germany loyal to the soviet state, Stalin effectively divided east and west as his insistence of communism and no free elections in these countries broke the Yalta and Potsdam agreements and alerted the USA to the fear of Communism spreading. The Long Telegram sent by George Kennan in 1946 also showed his fears of the spread of communism; Novikov responded later the same year showing Soviet fear of imperialism March 1946 Churchill crystallised the separation of east and west in the Iron Curtain speech – this made both Stalin and Truman more determined to preserve their way of life. Following the Iron Curtain speech and British requests for financial support over supporting the Greek government against the Communist rebels in the Greek Civil War, led to the US policy of Containment.
Truman Doctrine March 1947	On 12 March 1947, Truman made a speech in which he outlined the new policy of containment i.e. that the USA would intervene financially and militarily where needed to protect the free. This was a direct result of the British plea for help over supporting the Greek government in the civil war against the Communist rebels. NB this was a major change in US foreign policy from isolationism and non- interest in European affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Truman became involved in European affairs which for many was positive eg Greek Civil War ended in 1950; Marshall Plan introduced in 1948-53 to support European economies with regards to free trade and rebuilding their infrastructure after the war. \$17billion was invested. This built the west up and ensure economic growth It accelerated the cold war tensions – the west benefitted and Stalin in the east felt threatened and so forbade the eastern European countries from applying for Marshall Aid. The setting up of Cominform in 1947 established an eastern bloc against the capitalist west.
Cominform 1947	Communist Information Bureau was set up in 1947 to enable the Soviet Union to co-ordinate communist parties throughout Europe. It was a response to the TD. This ensured that all eastern European countries followed the same foreign policy and economic systems eg collectivisation of agriculture and nationalisation of state industry. There was also an element of terror attached as the organisation was use to purge any potential rivals eg Marshall Tito in Yugoslavia was expelled from Cominform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The east were unable to accept Marshall Aid – they were bound to the USSR economically and politically, especially after the establishment of COMECON in 1949, which shared a joint economic plan for the eastern bloc. This meant the east remained economically weaker than the west. Cominform established a deeper divide between east and west as a response to the policy of containment from the USA. There was little chance of a common aim; this was particularly clear in 1948-9 over the Berlin Crisis where the division of the city was solidified.

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Marshall Plan 1948-53	<p>Economic aid given to Europe to support the US policy of containment – European Recovery Plan. Based on the belief that countries threatened with economic crisis were more likely to become Communist, George Marshall (Secretary of State) argued money should be given to protect from the spread of communism. The aid was available for all – Stalin even considered it but would have needed to admit how financially insecure he was so he refused and forbade any of his eastern bloc in Cominform accepting aid.</p> <p>\$17 billion in aid was given over a five year period 1948-53. No further countries fell to communism, including west Germany and west Berlin in 1948-9.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positively 16 countries met to discuss how to put the plan into action – OEEC(Organisation for European Economic Recovery). By 1953 \$17 billion had been given to help rebuild economies and to raise the standard of living. US machinery helped European factories to recover from the effects of war. US advisors helped rebuild transport systems. Politically none fell to Communism. Politically this meant the east-west rivalry was heightened – he prevented countries like Czechoslovakia and Hungary from applying for aid as they were part of Cominform. Stalin viewed the Marshall Plan as a means to meet their own selfish interests i.e. to dominate Europe and so boost the US economy. Propaganda made this view point very clear.
COMECON 1949	<p>Council for Mutual Assistance funded in 1949 – a response to the Marshall Plan. The plan was the Soviet Union supported the eastern bloc countries financially. In reality it was used to control the economies of the eastern bloc; give the Soviet Union access to their resources and to build up a specialism system in which parts of the eastern bloc had specialist areas intended to support the whole so Czechoslovakia and East Germany concentrated on heavy industry; Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria specialised on the production of food and raw materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politically this meant the east-west rivalry was heightened – Stalin ensured there could be no economic trade with the west; Cominform also ensured political control. This spilled over in 1948-9 in the Berlin Crisis Economically the east were weakened – they did not benefit from the injection of aid from the USA; they were weakened by Soviet control and their need to specialise markets, which led to shortages and a much poorer standard of living than in the west as well as a lack of political freedom. Through the period 1949 – fall of the Soviet Union in 1990 there were uprisings against this way of economy and life eg Hungary in 1956
Berlin Crisis 1948-9	<p>Berlin's division following the Potsdam Conference in 1945 meant there was an issue. The western sectors were united in their desire for free elections; trade and access to the Marshall Plan. In the western zones in Germany, this was encouraged as it was within Berlin. Between January 1948 and June 1948, the Soviets were angered by the aid coming into the West; in March 1948 the Soviet representative walked out of the Allied Control Commission that had been established to rule Germany. By June, the west had united their zones administratively and then economically, introducing a new currency, the Deutschmark, for use in the west – this had not been discussed with Stalin. On 24th June Stalin blockaded Berlin by road, canal, and rail transport in an attempt to force the allies to surrender control of their zones in Berlin. The western response was the Berlin Airlift – June 1948-May 1949 flying 275 000 flights with an average of 4000 tonnes of food a day. The west Berliners survived; the allies won when Stalin called the Blockade off in May 1949</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed the division of Germany was divided into two halves i.e. in May 1949 the three western zones were known as the Federal Republic of Germany with its own capital city, Bonn and parliament (Bundestag). The first freely elected chancellor was Adenauer. In the East by October 1949 the German Democratic Republic was set up. Formation of a military alliance of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) was formed in April 1949 – a defensive organisation set up by the USA with Britain, France and nine other nations signed up. The idea was to protect themselves from Soviet aggression. The Soviet Union viewed this as an aggressive action so further deepening division and mistrust, socially when West Germany was admitted to NATO in 1954.

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Warsaw Pact 1955	Established in 1955 by the Soviet Union. It was a military alliance of 8 nations headed by the USSR and designed to counter the threat of NATO. Members included USSR, Albania, Poland, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Aimed to mutually support each other if there was an attack. A joint command structure was set up under the Soviet Supreme Commander.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nagy's promise to the people of Hungary in October 1956 that they would be able to leave the Warsaw Pact was a key reason for the Soviet Union invading Hungary and suppressing the uprising so decisively. Hungary was geographically central to the Warsaw Pact being able to support the USSR so the Warsaw Pact made it possible to hold control in the east but also crucial to retain a tight control. • The importance of the Warsaw Pact being used to keep tight control of the Soviet satellite states in E Europe was evident in 1968 when Warsaw Pact troops were used to put down the Prague Spring when Czechoslovakia sought to reform their country. • Intensified the rivalry between the east and the west and led meant the Arms' Race increased in pace. The development of new technology such as the inter - continental and medium range ballistic missiles, plus the aircraft and submarines to fire these missiles meant that each side guarded their allies carefully and also sought to extend their influence worldwide eg into Cuba in 1960s
Arms Race	The Arms Race was a key symptom and also cause of the Cold War intensifying. The development of new technology and the quantity of weapons needed meant that the conflict would continue as neither side trusted the other. In 1945 the USA detonated the first Atomic Bomb; the USSR followed in 1949. The USA funded research to develop the Hydrogen Bomb by 1953; the USSR exploded their first H Bomb in the same year. Missiles were developed that be fired from country to country (Medium Range Ballistic Missiles) and across continent (Inter- Continental Missiles) . Conventional weaponry was also kept at a high level as both sides felt they needed to be prepared for localised conflict eg in places like Korea; Vietnam. To protect nations eg Warsaw Pact countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensification of the Cold War – meant there were two military alliances and that there was fear that the military might would threaten each other's way of life but also their national security eg NATO allowing West Germany to join in 1954 and then having missile sites in W Germany facing eastern Europe; also having missile sites in Turkey which could reach the USSR. The USSR then sought a base from which to be able to hit US mainland – Cuba. The idea of brinkmanship. • Positively, race for nuclear weaponry led to the MAD principle i.e Mutually Assured Destruction as seen in Cuba as while both sides were stockpiling nuclear weapons and playing brinkmanship they were afraid to use these weapons which meant hot war was unlikely. See the thaw in cold war after 1962 as an example eg the introduction of the telephone hotline between the White House and Kremlin; Test Ban Treaties

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Uprising in Hungary in 1956	<p>Many in Hungary were hostile to Soviet interference – they had welcomed the Nazis in the 1940s and from the elections in November 1945 an independent Smallholders Party won the election. Communist government was forced upon the Hungarians under the dictatorial leadership of Rakosi. Even the USSR accepted how harsh he had been and the economic hardship that had been brought to Hungary. He was replaced by Imry Nagy in March 1953 following Stalin’s death. Yet by 1955 the USSR feared they were losing influence in E Europe, especially with W Germany joining NATO in the West so Nagy was replaced by Rakosi again in April 1955 at a similar time to the creation for the Warsaw Pact showing a rapid return to centralised Soviet control.</p> <p>By July 1956 there seemed to be a different attitude and Rakosi was removed and replaced by Erno Gero a friend to Khrushchev – he seemed to signal there could be reform and that there was regret for the harsh rule of Rakosi.</p> <p>In October 1956 there were demonstrations from many students and others in Hungary – the USSR sent tanks to keep control. 25 October - Gero resigned and then Nagy became Prime Minister again.</p> <p>Nagy and the USSR appeared to reach an agreement – the tanks left. Political prisoners were released; new reforms were planned eg free elections; trade links with the west; freedom of speech, worship, the press; Hungary to leave the Warsaw Pact and to become a neutral state.</p> <p>The USSR responded by sending 6,000 tanks and 2000, 000 troops into Hungary on 6th November 1956. Ant reform was suppressed. Believing they would get help from the UN, the Hungarians tried to hold out. 7000 Soviet troops were killed; 20, 000 Hungarians. No help came and a ceasefire was agreed on 10th November 1956.</p> <p>Nagy was removed from power (Later hanged in 1958 despite promises of immunity). Soviet backed Kadar took up the leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USSR had maintained her empire and sent out a clear warning signal to any other states planning to revolt. De-Stalinisation did not mean any less control in Eastern Europe. Poland and Hungary only managed very small reforms from 1956 to the fall of the eastern bloc in the 1990s. Also when the Warsaw Pact troops threatened to come into Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring in 1968, the Czechs called off any reforms having remembered what happened in Hungary • Cold War tensions between the east and west deepened after Hungary – The USA and Britain had demonstrations in favour of the Hungarians and there were public statements of support eg “Time” magazine named a Hungarian freedom fighter their “man of the year”. USSR tightened their grip of Eastern Europe – had appointed a loyal prime minister in Hungary in Kadar.