**COLD WAR**

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**A diagram of a cold war

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**CHAPTER 7 – REASONS FOR THE COLD WAR**

**REASONS FOR THE COLD WAR**

1. **Growing Mistrust Between the USA and USSR**

**1.1 Competing Ideologies**

* USA and USSR had different beliefs.
* USA is democratic and capitalist.
  + Believed that individual rights such as freedom of speech and the right to vote are important.
  + Practiced a free market economy. -> People are free to start businesses and keep profits.
  + Elections are held for people to choose their government by voting for the party of their choice.
* USSR is communist.
  + Believed in a classless society where everyone should be treated as equals.
  + Wealth and resources should be shared equally.
  + Practiced a command economy -> the government controls all land and businesses.
  + No elections as only the communist party is allowed to rule the country.

**Impact**

* Caused deep mistrust and tensions as both sides thought their ideology was superior. They viewed each other as a threat to their way of life.
* Each side tried to spread their beliefs and influence globally leading to more tensions.

**1.2 History of Suspicion and Mistrust Before 1939 – page 40**

* Tensions between the USA and USSR started even before World War II.
* USA was worried that USSR will encourage communist revolutions worldwide and encourage countries to overthrow democratic/capitalist countries. -> This plan by the USSR would alarm the West and lead to suspicions and mistrust.
* The USA and Britain supported anti-communist forces during the Russian Civil War (1918-1921), which deepened USSR’s suspicions of the West.
* In the 1930s, Western powers adopted a **policy of appeasement** toward Hitler partly because they viewed Nazi Germany as a barrier against Soviet communism.
  + *The Allies felt a strong Germany would prevent USSR from spreading communism.*
  + *For Stalin- Appeasement threatened USSR’s security as Hitler was allowed to take control of Eastern Europe. -> lead to growing suspicions and mistrust.*
* The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 shocked the West, as it demonstrated the USSR’s willingness to cooperate with Germany for strategic gains. It was surprising because the West thought USSR would never agree to sign a pact with Hitler as they were ideological enemies. -> Led to suspicion and mistrust with USSR.

**Impact:**

* These events would worsen the suspicion and mistrust each of them had of each other.
* USSR believed the West was out to destroy them while USA was concerned about the growing influence of communism.
* This will lead to growing tensions and eventually the outbreak of the Cold War after WW2.

**1.3 A “Marriage of Convenience” During WWII**

* Despite their ideological differences, the USA, Britain, and the USSR formed an alliance during World War II, united by a common goal—the defeat of Nazi Germany.
* This alliance, often referred to as the Big Three, included Franklin D. Roosevelt (USA), Winston Churchill (UK), and Joseph Stalin (USSR).
* Delay in Opening second front: Tensions arose during the alliance.
* One key issue was the delay in opening a second front in Europe.
* Stalin repeatedly pressured the USA and Britain to relieve the pressure on Soviet forces fighting Germany in the East since 1941.
* However, the second front was only opened with the D-Day invasion in 1944, as the Allies wanted to wait for the best opportunity to attack Germany.

**Impact:**

* The delay angered Stalin as he felt the Allies wanted Germany to destroy him.
* This led to growing suspicions and mistrust which will lead to the outbreak of the Cold War after WW2.
* When the war ended with the removal of the common enemy Germany, USSR and USA would go back to viewing each other with distrust and this would lead to the collapse of the alliance.

**2. The Breakdown of the Wartime Alliance**

**2.1 The Yalta Conference (February 1945)**

* At Yalta, the Big Three—Roosevelt (USA), Churchill (UK), and Stalin (USSR)—met to discuss the post-war world.
* The conference resulted in several **agreements:**
  + Germany and Berlin were to be divided into four occupation zones controlled by the USA, USSR, UK, and France. This division aimed to ensure that no single power could dominate Germany.
  + Countries such as Poland to be allowed to hold free elections after the war.
  + USSR agreed to help the Allies fight Japan.
  + Eastern Europe would be a Soviet sphere of influence for the security of USSR.
* However, there was also **disagreements**
  + Stalin wanted Poland’s borders to shift westward, giving the USSR territory in the east. While Churchill and Roosevelt reluctantly agreed to this, they insisted on free elections in Poland.

**Impact**:

* + The Yalta Conference highlighted both cooperation and growing tensions among the Allies.
  + While agreements were made, the underlying mistrust and conflicting goals would lead to disagreements at the next conference (Potsdam) which would worsen tensions and lead to the outbreak of the Cold War.

**2.2 The Potsdam Conference (July 1945)**

* By the time of Potsdam, significant changes had occurred.
* Roosevelt had been replaced by Harry Truman, and Churchill was replaced mid-conference by Clement Attlee after losing the general election.
* These new leaders brought different priorities and approaches.
* **Key Developments**:
  + The defeat of Germany had already been achieved, but the war with Japan was still ongoing.
* **Disagreements at Potsdam**:
  + **Future of Eastern Europe**: Stalin had begun establishing communist governments in Eastern Europe as agreed during Yalta. However, Truman strongly opposed this, accusing Stalin of trying to spread communism.
  + **Poland**: Stalin did not allow free elections as agreed in Yalta. He established a communist government.
  + **Germany’s Reconstruction**: Stalin wanted to cripple Germany to prevent future aggression and demanded substantial reparations. Truman and Attlee, however, were wary of repeating the harsh conditions of the Treaty of Versailles and favoured a stronger Germany to act as a buffer against Soviet influence in Europe.
  + **The Atomic Bomb**: USA had developed the first Atomic bomb which made Stalin very suspicious of USA and their intentions as he was not informed.
    - **Truman informed Stalin at the POTSDAM conference about the Manhatten Project and that USA had successfully created an atomic bomb** -> Since Truman did not inform Stalin earlier, Stalin became very suspicious of his intentions.

**Impact:**

* + The Potsdam Conference marked the collapse of the wartime alliance.
  + The growing hostility between the USA and USSR became clearer, and their conflicting visions for Europe set the stage for the Cold War.
  + The failure to resolve key issues during the conference deepened the rivalry and tensions between East and West.

**2.3 Soviet Union’s Atomic Bomb**

* The USSR successfully tested its first atomic bomb in August 1949, marking a significant milestone in the nuclear arms race.
  + The bomb, codenamed “First Lightning,” shocked the United States, which had held a monopoly on nuclear weapons since 1945.
  + Soviet scientists had benefited from intelligence gathered by spies in the Manhattan Project.

**Impact:**

* + The development of the Soviet atomic bomb ended the USA’s nuclear superiority and depened the rivalry and tensions between USA and USSR.
  + It led to a dangerous arms race between the two superpowers, with both nations stockpiling nuclear weapons and increasing the threat of global destruction.

**(3) Impact of World War II on Europe**

**Devastation Across Europe**: By the end of World War II in 1945,

* Europe was left devastated.
* 36 million deaths with significant damage to infrastructure such as buildings and roads.
* Many cities were reduced to rubble, and essential services like electricity, gas, and running water were unavailable in numerous areas.
* Widespread disease, shortage of food and medicine.
* Former great powers Britain and France were weakened significantly.-> There was a power vacuum in Europe.

**Impact:**

* This meant many European countries needed help to rebuild their countries.
* As USA did not suffer as much as countries in Europe, they remained the strongest military and economic power.
* USSR was 2nd strongest.
* Both began to assert their influence in Europe in order to spread their own beliefs and emerged as superpowers.

**Emergence of the Superpowers**:

* The USA and USSR emerged as superpowers due to their vast geographical size, large populations, strong economies, and powerful militaries.
* Each wanted to spread their own beliefs across Europe.
* USA wanted a democratic Europe while USSR wanted to establish a communist control over Eastern Europe.

**Impact:**

* The USA and USSR became the two dominant powers in a bipolar world order, with their rivalry causing more tensions and leading to the outbreak of the Cold War.

**4. Division of Europe After World War II**

**4.1 Soviet Union Establishes Satellite States**

* The USSR expanded its influence over Eastern Europe by establishing communist governments in countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania.
  + Stalin used salami tactics - rigged elections, political purges, and the suppression of opposition - to establish communist governments in Eastern Europe.
  + These countries became known as satellite states, functioning as a buffer zone to protect the USSR from future invasions. USSR had been invaded twice by Germany through Poland, hence he wanted control over Poland to ensure USSR’s security.

**Impact:**

* The USA saw this expansion as a **clear violation of the Yalta Conference agreements (Feb 1945)**, where Stalin had promised to allow **free elections** in Eastern Europe.
* USA felt that the USSR was aggressively trying to spread communism in Europe.
* Led to worsening rivalry, tensions and leading to the outbreak of the Cold War.

**5. Intensification of Superpower Rivalry**

* 1. **The Iron Curtain Speech (1946)**:
* Delivered by Winston Churchill , the speech highlighted the division of Europe into two opposing camps.- Western bloc and Eastern Bloc
* Churchill described the “Iron Curtain” as spreading across Europe, with Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe cut off from the democratic West.
* He warned that the threat of communism will soon spread into Western Europe if nothing was done to stop it.

**Impact:**

* The speech made USA believe that more must be done to stop the spread of communism.
* It set the ball rolling for the start of the American containment policy which will lead to increased rivalry, tensions and the outbreak of the Cold War.
  1. **The Long Telegram (1946)**:
* George Keenan, the American ambassador to the Soviet Union, issued a Long Telegram to the United States in February 1946.
* He viewed the USSR as aggressive and strongly wanted to spread communism.
* He urged for the United States to pursue a containment strategy to stop the rise of Communism in Europe.

**Impact:**

* His telegram, together with Churchill’s Iron Curtain speech, influenced US policies significantly as the US became more worried about the growing strength of Communism.
* In March 1947, the USA launched the Truman Doctrine as part of its containment strategy to stop the spread of communism.
* This led to increased tensions between the USA and the USSR.

**5.2 American Containment Policy**

Truman Doctrine

* After WW2, Greece and Turkey were involved in a civil war and needed economic and military assistance. The communists were battling for power in these countries.
* President Truman believed that weak governments such as these, needed assistance to avoid being corrupted by Communism.
* As a result, the Truman Doctrine was established to assist Greece and Turkey.
* He promised to provide $400 million in money, military equipment to ensure a communist government is not established in these countries.
* Truman also pledged assistance to any other nation endangered by Communism.

**Impact:**

* Stalin was angered by this doctrine as he felt the USA was trying to reduce his influence in Eastern Europe.
* Stalin would respond by creating an organisation called Cominform which worsen the rivalry between the superpowers.
* This would worsen tensions between the two superpowers.

Marshall Plan

* To further ensure communism does not spread in Europe, the USA introduced the Marshall Plan in June 1947.
* $13 billion in financial aid to help Europe rebuild its economies.
* USA believed that if they did not assist these countries, communism may become popular, and this would harm US interests in Europe.
* A strong democratic Europe would mean a strong market for the USA to sell its goods.  Hence the USA had to ensure countries do not turn to Communism.
* Countries who received Marshall aid were extremely grateful and supportive of the USA. -> it helped these countries recover quickly from WW2.
* This helped to ensure communism did not spread in these countries.

**Impact:**

* However, the Marshall Plan worsened tensions with the USSR as they saw the USA trying to increase its influence in Europe using money as a bait.
* The USSR felt the USA was trying to reduce its influence in Europe leading to suspicions and mistrust.

NATO

* Due to the Berlin blockade, the USA became worried about the security of countries in Western Europe. This is because Stalin had proven that he was aggressive in his attempts to spread communism.
* Hence the West formed NATO in 1949, which aimed to strengthen the military security of Western Europe.
* NATO members would assist each other in the event if any of them were attacked. USA would assist countries in NATO in the event of an outbreak of war.

**Impact:**

* This would worsen tensions with the USSR as they saw it as a military threat and an attempt to reduce its influence in Eastern Europe.
* It would lead to the formation of the Warsaw Pact by the USSR in response to the formation of NATO which would worsen the rivalry and tensions between the superpowers.

5**.3 USSR’s Responses to American Containment**

* Stalin was unhappy with US containment in Western Europe.
* He was worried that US influence will spread to Eastern Europe which will reduce his influence and control in this area.

**5.3.1 Cominform**

* Stalin established Cominform in 1947 as a response to the Truman Doctrine.
* The members of the Cominform included communist countries in Eastern Europe.
* Cominform was used to control and coordinate Communist governments in Eastern Europe.
* Propaganda was used to show Soviets that life was improving in Eastern Europe. -> this will ensure loyalty to USSR.
* Opposition was suppressed.
* These states had to reject aid from the Marshall Plan and were not allowed to trade with non-members.
* This was done to tighten his control over the satellite states.
* This is to ensure the USA cannot gain any influence over these states.

**5.3.2 Comecon**

* Comecon was established in 1949 in response to the Marshall Plan to provide economic assistance to satellite states and establish economic policies between satellite states.
* Satellite states were only allowed to trade with each other instead of the West.
* This, however, was unsuccessful because the Soviet Union lacked the financial resources that the USA had.
* Additionally, Comecon was seen to benefit the USSR solely since it drained the resources of satellite governments for the advantage of the USSR. For e.g. Poland had to sell its coal to the USSR for 1/10th the original price.

**Impact:**

* These organisations would increase suspicions the USA had with USSR as they were seen as measures to reduce the influence of USA’s containment policies.
* USA had a growing fear that communism’s influence would be increased beyond Eastern Europe. This led to worsening tensions between the superpowers.

**5.3.3 Warsaw Pact**

* To counter the threat posed by NATO, the USSR formed the Warsaw Pact together with its satellite states.
* USSR was alarmed when West Germany became a member of NATO and felt the West will eventually use West Germany to attack USSR in future.
* The members of Warsaw Pact therefore agreed that if one communist state was attacked, all members would help defend it.
* This would strengthen the USSR as it gave them control over all armies in Eastern Europe.

**Impact:** Tensions worsened between the superpowers as both sides prepared their armies and stationed them in Western and Eastern Europe respectively. The superpowers grew more hostile and suspicious of each other.

Berlin Blockade

* **In 1948 , Britain and USA first merged their zones to form Bizonia. (France would later join in 1949 to form Trizonia)**
* They introduced a new currency to boost the economy in their new zone.
* The intention was to strengthen their zone and become an ally of the West.
* Stalin was alarmed with this development as he saw it as a threat to the USSR. -> he was worried the West would eventually take over East Germany.
* He was unhappy with their efforts to strengthen West Germany -> He wanted Germany to pay reparations to him and that it stays weak since he had suffered immensely during the Nazi invasion of USSR during WWII.
* He was against the idea of a strong Western Germany next to a weak Communist Eastern Germany.
* To force the USA, Britain, and France out of Germany, Stalin blocked all land access to West Berlin. This was known as the Berlin blockade (June 1948).
* He also aimed to starve the Germans in West Berlin and force them to join East Germany.
* The Western world replied by airlifting supplies to West Berlin. For 11 months, they flew in supplies.  More than 2.3 million tons of supplies was sent into West Berlin.
* By May 1949, Stalin saw that his blockade had failed and stopped it.

*Impact:*

* The West were alarmed at Stalin’s aggressive actions which led to increased tensions.
* They realized Stalin could not be trusted and more needs to be done to protect the West from the Communist threats. -> The West would form NATO to protect themselves against future Soviet aggression.
* Cold War tensions would worsen as Germany will be officially divided into West and East Germany.
* Berlin will be divided into West and East Berlin -> a berlin wall would be built in 1961.
* Stalin’s failed Berlin blockade would be humiliating for the USSR.

**Why Did Stalin Start the Berlin Blockade?**

**Point 1: Stalin wanted to prevent the unification of West Germany.**

**Evidence**: In 1948, the USA, Britain merged their zones in Germany to form Bizonia (France would join later to form the Trizone) and introduced a new currency, the Deutsche Mark, to strengthen the economy. This decision was made without consulting the Soviet Union.

**Explanation:** Stalin saw these actions as a direct threat to Soviet influence. The economic and political strengthening of West Germany made it appear more stable and prosperous compared to the Soviet-controlled East Germany, which remained weak and underdeveloped. Stalin feared that a strong West Germany, aligned with the West, could eventually pose a military threat to the USSR.

**Link:** To counter the Western efforts at unification and maintain Soviet control, Stalin initiated the Berlin Blockade, cutting off all land and water access to West Berlin. His goal was to force the Western Allies out of Berlin and stop the formation of a unified, strong West Germany.

**Point 2: Stalin wanted to strengthen Soviet control over Germany.**

**Evidence:** Berlin was deep inside the Soviet-occupied zone, yet it was divided into four sectors controlled by the USA, Britain, France, and the USSR. Stalin saw the Western Allies’ continued presence in the city as a challenge to Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe.

**Explanation:** By blockading West Berlin, Stalin aimed to pressure the Western Allies to abandon their sectors and withdraw from the city. He also wanted to demonstrate Soviet power to the people of East Germany, showing them that the West could not protect them. Additionally, if the blockade succeeded, the USSR could tighten its grip over all of Germany and ensure that it remained weak and under Soviet influence.

**Link:** Stalin’s blockade was a strategic move to force the West out of Berlin, solidify Soviet control over the entire city, and prevent the Western powers from establishing a foothold in East Germany.