

# Cold War 1945–1991

Hayden England



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## **Chapter 1**

# **Introduction**

The Cold War was a period of geopolitical tension between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies, the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc, which began following World War II. Historians do not fully agree on its starting and ending points, but the period is generally considered to span the 1947 Truman Doctrine (12 March 1947) to the 1991 Dissolution of the Soviet Union (26 December 1991). The term "cold" is used because there was no large-scale fighting directly between the two superpowers, but they each supported major regional conflicts known as proxy wars.

The conflict was based around the ideological and geopolitical struggle for global influence by these two superpowers, following their temporary alliance and victory against Nazi Germany in 1945. Aside from the nuclear arsenal development and conventional military deployment, the struggle for dominance was expressed via indirect means such as psychological warfare, propaganda campaigns, espionage, far-reaching embargoes, rivalry at sports events and technological competitions such as the Space Race.

The Western Bloc was led by the United States as well as the other First World nations of the Western Bloc that were generally liberal democratic but tied to a network of the authoritarian states, most of which were their former colonies. The Eastern Bloc was led by the Soviet Union and its Communist Party, which had an influence across the Second World. The US government supported right-wing governments

and uprisings across the world, while the Soviet government funded communist parties and revolutions around the world. As nearly all the colonial states achieved independence in the period 1945–1960, they became Third World battlefields in the Cold War.

The first phase of the Cold War began shortly after the end of the Second World War in 1945. The United States created the NATO military alliance in 1949 in the apprehension of a Soviet attack and termed their global policy against Soviet influence *containment*. The Soviet Union formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955 in response to NATO. Major crises of this phase included the 1948–49 Berlin Blockade, the 1927–1949 Chinese Civil War, the 1950–1953 Korean War, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the 1956 Suez Crisis, the Berlin Crisis of 1961 and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The USA and the USSR competed for influence in Latin America, the Middle East, and the decolonizing states of Africa and Asia.

Following the Cuban Missile Crisis, a new phase began that saw the Sino-Soviet split between China and the Soviet Union complicate relations within the Communist sphere, while France, a Western Bloc state, began to demand greater autonomy of action. The USSR invaded Czechoslovakia to suppress the 1968 Prague Spring, while the US experienced internal turmoil from the civil rights movement and opposition to the Vietnam War. In the 1960s–70s, an international peace movement took root among citizens around the world. Movements against nuclear arms testing and for nuclear disarmament took place, with large anti-war protests. By the 1970s, both sides had started making allowances for peace and security, ushering in a period of *détente* that saw the Strategic

Arms Limitation Talks and the US opening relations with the People's Republic of China as a strategic counterweight to the USSR. A number of self-proclaimed Marxist regimes were formed in the second half of the 1970s in the Third World, including Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Nicaragua.

Détente collapsed at the end of the decade with the beginning of the Soviet–Afghan War in 1979. The early 1980s was another period of elevated tension. The United States increased diplomatic, military, and economic pressures on the Soviet Union, at a time when it was already suffering from economic stagnation. In the mid-1980s, the new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the liberalizing reforms of *glasnost* ("openness", c. 1985) and *perestroika* ("reorganization", 1987) and ended Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. Pressures for national sovereignty grew stronger in Eastern Europe, and Gorbachev refused to militarily support their governments any longer.

In 1989, the fall of the Iron Curtain after the Pan-European Picnic and a peaceful wave of revolutions (with the exception of Romania and Afghanistan) overthrew almost all communist governments of the Eastern Bloc.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union itself lost control in the Soviet Union and was banned following an abortive coup attempt in August 1991. This in turn led to the formal dissolution of the USSR in December 1991, the declaration of independence of its constituent republics and the collapse of communist governments across much of Africa and Asia. The United States was left as the world's only superpower.

The Cold War and its events have left a significant legacy. It is often referred to in popular culture, especially with themes of espionage and the threat of nuclear warfare.

## **Origins of the term**

At the end of World War II, English writer George Orwell used *cold war*, as a general term, in his essay "You and the Atomic Bomb", published 19 October 1945 in the British newspaper *Tribune*. Contemplating a world living in the shadow of the threat of nuclear warfare, Orwell looked at James Burnham's predictions of a polarized world, writing:

Looking at the world as a whole, the drift for many decades has been not towards anarchy but towards the reimposition of slavery... James Burnham's theory has been much discussed, but few people have yet considered its ideological implications—that is, the kind of world-view, the kind of beliefs, and the social structure that would probably prevail in a state which was at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of "cold war" with its neighbours.

In *The Observer* of 10 March 1946, Orwell wrote, "after the Moscow conference last December, Russia began to make a 'cold war' on Britain and the British Empire."

The first use of the term to describe the specific post-war geopolitical confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States came in a speech by Bernard Baruch, an influential advisor to Democratic presidents, on 16 April 1947. The speech, written by a journalist Herbert Bayard Swope, proclaimed, "Let us not be deceived: we are today in the midst

of a cold war." Newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann gave the term wide currency with his book *The Cold War*. When asked in 1947 about the source of the term, Lippmann traced it to a French term from the 1930s, *la guerre froide*.

## **Background**

### **Russian Revolution**

While most historians trace the origins of the Cold War to the period immediately following World War II, others argue that it began with the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 when the Bolsheviks took power. In World War I, the British, French and Russian Empires had composed the Allied Powers from the start, and the U.S. joined them in April 1917. The Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in November 1917 and fulfilled their promise to withdraw from WWI, and German armies advanced rapidly across the borderlands. The Allies responded with an economic blockade against all of Russia. In early March 1918, the Soviets followed through on the wave of popular disgust against the war and accepted harsh German peace terms with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. In the eyes of some Allies, Russia now was helping Germany to win the war by freeing up a million German soldiers for the Western Front and by

relinquishing much of Russia's food supply, industrial base, fuel supplies, and communications with Western Europe.

According to historian Spencer Tucker, the Allies felt, "The treaty was the ultimate betrayal of the Allied cause and sowed the seeds for the Cold War. With Brest-Litovsk the spectre of German domination in Eastern Europe threatened to become

reality, and the Allies now began to think seriously about military intervention," and proceeded to step up their "economic warfare" against the Bolsheviks. Some Bolsheviks saw Russia as only the first step, planning to incite revolutions against capitalism in every western country, but the need for peace with Germany led Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin away from this position.

In 1918 Britain provided money and troops to support the anti-Bolshevik "White" counter-revolutionaries. This policy was spearheaded by Minister of War Winston Churchill, a committed British imperialist and anti-communist. France, Japan and the United States invaded Russia in an attempt to topple the new Soviet government. Despite the economic and military warfare launched against it by Western powers, the Bolshevik government succeeded in defeating all opposition and took full control of Russia, as well as breakaway provinces such as Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

Western powers also diplomatically isolated the Soviet government. Vladimir Lenin stated that the Soviet Union was surrounded by a "hostile capitalist encirclement" and he viewed diplomacy as a weapon to keep Soviet enemies divided. He set up an organization to promote sister revolutions worldwide, the Comintern. It failed everywhere; it was crushed when it tried to start revolutions in Germany, Bavaria, and Hungary. The failures led to an inward turn by Moscow.

Britain and other Western powers—except the United States—did business and sometimes recognized the new Soviet Union. By 1933, old fears of Communist threats had faded, and the American business community, as well as newspaper editors,

were calling for diplomatic recognition. President Franklin D. Roosevelt used presidential authority to normalize relations in November 1933. However, there was no progress on the Tsarist debts Washington wanted Moscow to repay. Expectations of expanded trade proved unrealistic. Historians Justus D. Doenecke and Mark A. Stoler note that, "Both nations were soon disillusioned by the accord." Roosevelt named William Bullitt as ambassador from 1933 to 1936. Bullitt arrived in Moscow with high hopes for Soviet–American relations, but his view of the Soviet leadership soured on closer inspection. By the end of his tenure, Bullitt was openly hostile to the Soviet government, and he remained an outspoken anti-communist for the rest of his life.

## **Beginnings of World War II**

In the late 1930s, Stalin had worked with Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov to promote popular fronts with capitalist parties and governments to oppose fascism. The Soviets were embittered when Western governments chose to practice appeasement with Nazi Germany instead. In March 1939 Britain and France—without consulting the USSR—granted Hitler control of much of Czechoslovakia at the Munich Agreement. Facing an aggressive Japan at Soviet borders as well, Stalin changed directions and replaced Litvinov with Vyacheslav Molotov, who negotiated closer relations with Germany. After signing the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and German–Soviet Frontier Treaty, the Soviet Union forced the Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—to allow it to station Soviet troops in their countries. Finland rejected territorial demands, prompting a Soviet invasion in November 1939. The resulting Winter War ended in March 1940 with

Finnish concessions. Britain and France, treating the Soviet attack on Finland as tantamount to its entering the war on the side of the Germans, responded to the Soviet invasion by supporting the USSR's expulsion from the League of Nations.

In June 1940, the Soviet Union forcibly annexed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. It also seized the disputed Romanian regions of Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, and Hertza. But after the German Army invaded the Soviet Union in Operation Barbarossa in June 1941 and declared war on the United States in December 1941, the Soviet Union and the Allied powers worked together to fight Germany. Britain signed a formal alliance and the United States made an informal agreement. In wartime, the United States supplied Britain, the Soviet Union and other Allied nations through its Lend-Lease Program. However, Stalin remained highly suspicious, and he believed that the British and the Americans had conspired to ensure that the Soviets bore the brunt of the fighting against Germany. According to this view, the Western Allies had deliberately delayed opening a second anti-German front in order to step in at the last minute and shape the peace settlement. Thus, Soviet perceptions of the West left a strong undercurrent of tension and hostility between the Allied powers.

## **End of World War II (1945–1947)**

### **Wartime conferences regarding post-war Europe**

- The Allies disagreed about how the European map should look, and how borders would be drawn,

following the war. Each side held dissimilar ideas regarding the establishment and maintenance of post-war security. Some scholars contend that all the Western Allies desired a security system in which democratic governments were established as widely as possible, permitting countries to peacefully resolve differences through international organizations. Others note that the Atlantic powers were divided in their vision of the new post-war world. Roosevelt's goals—military victory in both Europe and Asia, the achievement of global American economic supremacy over the British Empire, and the creation of a world peace organization—were more global than Churchill's, which were mainly centered on securing control over the Mediterranean, ensuring the survival of the British Empire, and the independence of Central and Eastern European countries as a buffer between the Soviets and the United Kingdom.

The Soviet Union sought to dominate the internal affairs of countries in its border regions. During the war, Stalin had created special training centers for communists from different countries so that they could set up secret police forces loyal to Moscow as soon as the Red Army took control.

Soviet agents took control of the media, especially radio; they quickly harassed and then banned all independent civic institutions, from youth groups to schools, churches and rival political parties. Stalin also sought continued peace with Britain and the United States, hoping to focus on internal reconstruction and economic growth.

In the American view, Stalin seemed a potential ally in accomplishing their goals, whereas in the British approach Stalin appeared as the greatest threat to the fulfillment of their agenda. With the Soviets already occupying most of Central and Eastern Europe, Stalin was at an advantage, and the two western leaders vied for his favors.

The differences between Roosevelt and Churchill led to several separate deals with the Soviets. In October 1944, Churchill traveled to Moscow and proposed the "percentages agreement" to divide Europe into respective spheres of influence, including giving Stalin predominance over Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria and Churchill carte blanche over Greece. This proposal was accepted by Stalin. At the Yalta Conference of February 1945, Roosevelt signed a separate deal with Stalin regarding Asia and refused to support Churchill on the issues of Poland and Reparations. Roosevelt ultimately approved the percentage agreement, but there was still apparently no firm consensus on the framework for a post-war settlement in Europe.

At the Second Quebec Conference, a high-level military conference held in Quebec City, 12–16 September 1944, Churchill and Roosevelt reached agreement on a number of matters, including a plan for Germany based on Henry Morgenthau Jr.'s original proposal. The memorandum drafted by Churchill provided for "eliminating the warmaking industries in the Ruhr and the Saar ... looking forward to converting Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in its character." However, it no longer included a plan to partition the country into several independent states. On 10 May 1945, President Truman signed the US occupation

directive JCS 1067, which was in effect for over two years and was enthusiastically supported by Stalin. It directed the US forces of occupation to "...take no steps looking toward the economic rehabilitation of Germany".

Some historians have argued that the Cold War began when the US negotiated a separate peace with Nazi SS General Karl Wolff in northern Italy. The Soviet Union was not allowed to participate and the dispute led to heated correspondence between Franklin Roosevelt and Stalin. Wolff, a war criminal, appears to have been guaranteed immunity at the Nuremberg trials by Office of Strategic Services (OSS) commander and future CIA director Allen Dulles when they met in March 1945. Wolff and his forces were being considered to help implement Operation Unthinkable, a secret plan to invade the Soviet Union which Winston Churchill advocated during this period.

In April 1945, President Roosevelt died and was succeeded by Vice President Harry S. Truman, who distrusted Stalin and turned for advice to an elite group of foreign policy intellectuals. Both Churchill and Truman opposed, among other things, the Soviets' decision to prop up the Lublin government, the Soviet-controlled rival to the Polish government-in-exile in London, whose relations with the Soviets had been severed.

Following the Allies' May 1945 victory, the Soviets effectively occupied Central and Eastern Europe, while strong US and Western allied forces remained in Western Europe. In Germany and Austria, France, Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States established zones of occupation and a loose framework for parceled four-power control.

The 1945 Allied conference in San Francisco established the multi-national United Nations (UN) for the maintenance of world peace, but the enforcement capacity of its Security Council was effectively paralyzed by the ability of individual members to exercise veto power. Accordingly, the UN was essentially converted into an inactive forum for exchanging polemical rhetoric, and the Soviets regarded it almost exclusively as a propaganda tribune.

### **Potsdam Conference and surrender of Japan**

At the Potsdam Conference, which started in late July after Germany's surrender, serious differences emerged over the future development of Germany and the rest of Central and Eastern Europe. The Soviets pressed their demand made at Yalta, for \$20 billion of reparations to be taken from Germany occupation zones. The Americans and British refused to fix a dollar amount for reparations, but they permitted the Soviets to remove some industry from their zones. Moreover, the participants' mounting antipathy and bellicose language served to confirm their suspicions about each other's hostile intentions and to entrench their positions. At this conference Truman informed Stalin that the United States possessed a powerful new weapon.

The US had invited Britain into its atomic bomb project but kept it secret from the Soviet Union. Stalin was aware that the Americans were working on the atomic bomb, and he reacted to the news calmly. One week after the end of the Potsdam Conference, the US bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Shortly after the attacks, Stalin protested to US officials when Truman offered the Soviets little real influence in occupied Japan.

Stalin was also outraged by the actual dropping of the bombs, calling them a "superbarbarity" and claiming that "the balance has been destroyed...That cannot be." The Truman administration intended to use its ongoing nuclear weapons program to pressure the Soviet Union in international relations.

Following the war, the United States and the United Kingdom used military forces in Greece and Korea to remove indigenous governments and forces seen as communist. Under the leadership of LyuhWoon-Hyung, working secretly during the Japanese occupation, committees throughout Korea formed to coordinate the transition to Korean independence. Following the Japanese surrender, on August 28, 1945, these committees formed the temporary national government of Korea, naming it the People's Republic of Korea (PRK) a couple of weeks later. On September 8, 1945, the United States government landed forces in Korea and thereafter established the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGK) to govern Korea south of the 38th parallel north. The USAMGK outlawed the PRK government. The military governor Lieutenant-General John R. Hodge later said that "one of our missions was to break down this Communist government." Thereafter, starting with President Syngman Rhee, the U.S supported authoritarian South Korean governments, which reigned until the 1980s.

## **Beginnings of the Eastern Bloc**

During the opening stages of World War II, the Soviet Union laid the foundation for the Eastern Bloc by invading and then annexing several countries as Soviet Socialist Republics, by agreement with Germany in the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.

These included eastern Poland (incorporated into the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR), Latvia (which became the Latvian SSR), Estonia (which became the Estonian SSR), Lithuania (which became the Lithuanian SSR), part of eastern Finland (which became the Karelo-Finnish SSR) and eastern Romania (which became the Moldavian SSR).

Central and Eastern European territories that the Soviet army liberated from Germany were added to the Eastern Bloc, pursuant to the Percentages Agreement between Churchill and Stalin. The Soviet Union converted the territories it occupied into satellite states, such as:

- People's Republic of Albania (11 January 1946)
- People's Republic of Bulgaria (15 September 1946)
- Polish People's Republic (19 January 1947)
- People's Republic of Romania (13 April 1948)
- Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (9 May 1948)
- Hungarian People's Republic (20 August 1949)
- German Democratic Republic (7 October 1949)

The Soviet-style regimes that arose in the Bloc not only reproduced Soviet command economy, but also adopted the brutal methods employed by Joseph Stalin and the Soviet secret police in order to suppress both real and potential opposition. In Asia, the Red Army had overrun Manchuria in the last month of the war, and it went on to occupy the large swathe of Korean territory located north of the 38th parallel.

As part of consolidating Stalin's control over the Eastern Bloc, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), led by Lavrentiy Beria, supervised the establishment of Soviet-style secret police systems in the Bloc that were supposed to crush

anti-communist resistance. When the slightest stirrings of independence emerged in the Bloc, Stalin's strategy matched that of dealing with domestic pre-war rivals: they were removed from power, put on trial, imprisoned, and in several instances, executed.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was concerned that, given the enormous size of Soviet forces deployed in Europe at the end of the war, and the perception that Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was unreliable, there existed a Soviet threat to Western Europe. After World War II, US officials guided Western European leaders in establishing their own secret security force to prevent subversion in the Western bloc, which evolved into Operation Gladio.

## **Containment and the Truman Doctrine (1947–1953)**

### **Iron Curtain, Iran, Turkey, and Greece**

In late February 1946, George F. Kennan's "Long Telegram" from Moscow to Washington helped to articulate the US government's increasingly hard line against the Soviets, which would become the basis for US strategy toward the Soviet Union for the duration of the Cold War. The Truman Administration was receptive to the telegram due to broken promises by Stalin concerning Europe and Iran. Following the WWII Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran, the country was occupied by the Red Army in the far north and the British in the south. Iran was used by the United States and British to supply the Soviet Union, and the Allies agreed to withdraw from Iran

within six months after the cessation of hostilities. However, when this deadline came, the Soviets remained in Iran under the guise of the People's Republic of Azerbaijan and Kurdish Republic of Mahabad. Shortly thereafter, on 5 March, former British prime minister Winston Churchill delivered his famous "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri. The speech called for an Anglo-American alliance against the Soviets, whom he accused of establishing an "iron curtain" dividing Europe from "Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic".

A week later, on 13 March, Stalin responded vigorously to the speech, saying that Churchill could be compared to Hitler insofar as he advocated the racial superiority of English-speaking nations so that they could satisfy their hunger for world domination, and that such a declaration was "a call for war on the U.S.S.R." The Soviet leader also dismissed the accusation that the USSR was exerting increasing control over the countries lying in its sphere. He argued that there was nothing surprising in "the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, [was] trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries".

In September, the Soviet side produced the Novikov telegram, sent by the Soviet ambassador to the US but commissioned and "co-authored" by Vyacheslav Molotov; it portrayed the US as being in the grip of monopoly capitalists who were building up military capability "to prepare the conditions for winning world supremacy in a new war". On 6 September 1946, James F. Byrnes delivered a speech in Germany repudiating the Morgenthau Plan (a proposal to partition and de-industrialize post-war Germany) and warning the Soviets that the US

intended to maintain a military presence in Europe indefinitely. As Byrnes admitted a month later, "The nub of our program was to win the German people ... it was a battle between us and Russia over minds ..." In December, the Soviets agreed to withdraw from Iran after persistent US pressure, an early success of containment policy.

By 1947, US president Harry S. Truman was outraged by the perceived resistance of the Soviet Union to American demands in Iran, Turkey, and Greece, as well as Soviet rejection of the Baruch Plan on nuclear weapons. In February 1947, the British government announced that it could no longer afford to finance the Kingdom of Greece in its civil war against Communist-led insurgents. The US government responded to this announcement by adopting a policy of containment, with the goal of stopping the spread of Communism. Truman delivered a speech calling for the allocation of \$400 million to intervene in the war and unveiled the Truman Doctrine, which framed the conflict as a contest between free peoples and totalitarian regimes. American policymakers accused the Soviet Union of conspiring against the Greek royalists in an effort to expand Soviet influence even though Stalin had told the Communist Party to cooperate with the British-backed government. (The insurgents were helped by Josip Broz Tito's Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia against Stalin's wishes.)

Enunciation of the Truman Doctrine marked the beginning of a US bipartisan defense and foreign policy consensus between Republicans and Democrats focused on containment and deterrence that weakened during and after the Vietnam War, but ultimately persisted thereafter. Moderate and conservative

parties in Europe, as well as social democrats, gave virtually unconditional support to the Western alliance, while European and American Communists, financed by the KGB and involved in its intelligence operations, adhered to Moscow's line, although dissent began to appear after 1956. Other critiques of the consensus policy came from anti-Vietnam War activists, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and the anti-nuclear movement.

### **Marshall Plan and Czechoslovak coup d'état**

In early 1947, France, Britain and the United States unsuccessfully attempted to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union for a plan envisioning an economically self-sufficient Germany, including a detailed accounting of the industrial plants, goods and infrastructure already removed by the Soviets. In June 1947, in accordance with the Truman Doctrine, the United States enacted the Marshall Plan, a pledge of economic assistance for all European countries willing to participate, including the Soviet Union. Under the plan, which President Harry S. Truman signed on 3 April 1948, the US government gave to Western European countries over \$13 billion (equivalent to \$189.39 billion in 2016) to rebuild the economy of Europe. Later, the program led to the creation of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation.

The plan's aim was to rebuild the democratic and economic systems of Europe and to counter perceived threats to Europe's balance of power, such as communist parties seizing control through revolutions or elections. The plan also stated that European prosperity was contingent upon German economic recovery. One month later, Truman signed the National

Security Act of 1947, creating a unified Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the National Security Council (NSC). These would become the main bureaucracies for US defense policy in the Cold War.

Stalin believed that economic integration with the West would allow Eastern Bloc countries to escape Soviet control, and that the US was trying to buy a pro-US re-alignment of Europe. Stalin therefore prevented Eastern Bloc nations from receiving Marshall Plan aid. The Soviet Union's alternative to the Marshall Plan, which was purported to involve Soviet subsidies and trade with central and eastern Europe, became known as the Molotov Plan (later institutionalized in January 1949 as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). Stalin was also fearful of a reconstituted Germany; his vision of a post-war Germany did not include the ability to rearm or pose any kind of threat to the Soviet Union.

In early 1948, following reports of strengthening "reactionary elements", Soviet operatives executed a coup d'état in Czechoslovakia, the only Eastern Bloc state that the Soviets had permitted to retain democratic structures. The public brutality of the coup shocked Western powers more than any event up to that point, set in motion a brief scare that war would occur, and swept away the last vestiges of opposition to the Marshall Plan in the United States Congress.

The twin policies of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan led to billions in economic and military aid for Western Europe, Greece, and Turkey. With the US assistance, the Greek military won its civil war. Under the leadership of Alcide De

Gasperi the Italian Christian Democrats defeated the powerful Communist–Socialist alliance in the elections of 1948.

## **Espionage**

All major powers engaged in espionage, using a great variety of spies, double agents, and new technologies such as the tapping of telephone cables. The most famous and active organizations were the American CIA, the Soviet KGB, and the British MI6. The East German Stasi, unlike the others, was primarily concerned with internal security, but its Main Directorate for Reconnaissance operated espionage activities around the world. The CIA secretly subsidized and promoted anti-communist cultural activities and organizations. The CIA was also involved in European politics, especially in Italy. Espionage took place all over the world, but Berlin was the most important battleground for spying activity.

So much top-secret archival information has been released so that historian Raymond L. Garthoff concludes there probably was parity in the quantity and quality of secret information obtained by each side. However, the Soviets probably had an advantage in terms of HUMINT (espionage) and "sometimes in its reach into high policy circles." In terms of decisive impact, however, he concludes:

- We also can now have high confidence in the judgment that there were no successful "moles" at the political decision-making level on either side. Similarly, there is no evidence, on either side, of any major political or military decision that was prematurely discovered through espionage and

thwarted by the other side. There also is no evidence of any major political or military decision that was crucially influenced (much less generated) by an agent of the other side.

In addition to usual espionage, the Western agencies paid special attention to debriefing Eastern Bloc defectors.

### **Cominform and the Tito–Stalin Split**

In September 1947, the Soviets created Cominform to impose orthodoxy within the international communist movement and tighten political control over Soviet satellites through coordination of communist parties in the Eastern Bloc. Cominform faced an embarrassing setback the following June, when the Tito–Stalin Split obliged its members to expel Yugoslavia, which remained communist but adopted a non-aligned position and began accepting money from the United States.

Besides Berlin, the status of the city of Trieste was at issue. Until the break between Tito and Stalin, the Western powers and the Eastern bloc faced each other uncompromisingly. In addition to capitalism and communism,

Italians and Slovenes, monarchists and republicans as well as war winners and losers often faced each other irreconcilably.

The neutral buffer state Free Territory of Trieste, founded in 1947 with the United Nations, was split up and dissolved in 1954 and 1975, also because of the *détente* between the West and Tito.

## **Berlin Blockade and Airlift**

The United States and Britain merged their western German occupation zones into "Bizonia" (1 January 1947, later "Trizonia" with the addition of France's zone, April 1949). As part of the economic rebuilding of Germany, in early 1948, representatives of a number of Western European governments and the United States announced an agreement for a merger of western German areas into a federal governmental system. In addition, in accordance with the Marshall Plan, they began to re-industrialize and rebuild the west German economy, including the introduction of a new Deutsche Mark currency to replace the old Reichsmark currency that the Soviets had debased. The US had secretly decided that a unified and neutral Germany was undesirable, with Walter Bedell Smith telling General Eisenhower "in spite of our announced position, we really do not want nor intend to accept German unification on any terms that the Russians might agree to, even though they seem to meet most of our requirements."

Shortly thereafter, Stalin instituted the Berlin Blockade (24 June 1948 – 12 May 1949), one of the first major crises of the Cold War, preventing food, materials and supplies from arriving in West Berlin. The United States, Britain, France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and several other countries began the massive "Berlin airlift", supplying West Berlin with food and other provisions.

The Soviets mounted a public relations campaign against the policy change. Once again the East Berlin communists attempted to disrupt the Berlin municipal elections (as they had done in the 1946 elections), which were held on 5

December 1948 and produced a turnout of 86.3% and an overwhelming victory for the non-communist parties. The results effectively divided the city into East and West, the latter comprising US, British and French sectors. 300,000 Berliners demonstrated and urged the international airlift to continue, and US Air Force pilot Gail Halvorsen created "Operation Vittles", which supplied candy to German children. The Airlift was as much a logistical as a political and psychological success for the West; it firmly linked West Berlin to the United States. In May 1949, Stalin backed down and lifted the blockade.

In 1952, Stalin repeatedly proposed a plan to unify East and West Germany under a single government chosen in elections supervised by the United Nations, if the new Germany were to stay out of Western military alliances, but this proposal was turned down by the Western powers. Some sources dispute the sincerity of the proposal.

### **Beginnings of NATO and Radio Free Europe**

Britain, France, the United States, Canada and other eight western European countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty of April 1949, establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). That August, the first Soviet atomic device was detonated in Semipalatinsk, Kazakh SSR. Following Soviet refusals to participate in a German rebuilding effort set forth by western European countries in 1948, the US, Britain and France spearheaded the establishment of West Germany from the three Western zones of occupation in April 1949. The Soviet Union proclaimed its zone of occupation in Germany the German Democratic Republic that October.

Media in the Eastern Bloc was an organ of the state, completely reliant on and subservient to the communist party.

Radio and television organizations were state-owned, while print media was usually owned by political organizations, mostly by the local communist party. Soviet radio broadcasts used Marxist rhetoric to attack capitalism, emphasizing themes of labor exploitation, imperialism and war-mongering.

Along with the broadcasts of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Voice of America to Central and Eastern Europe, a major propaganda effort begun in 1949 was Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, dedicated to bringing about the peaceful demise of the communist system in the Eastern Bloc.

Radio Free Europe attempted to achieve these goals by serving as a surrogate home radio station, an alternative to the controlled and party-dominated domestic press. Radio Free Europe was a product of some of the most prominent architects of America's early Cold War strategy, especially those who believed that the Cold War would eventually be fought by political rather than military means, such as George F. Kennan.

American policymakers, including Kennan and John Foster Dulles, acknowledged that the Cold War was in its essence a war of ideas. The United States, acting through the CIA, funded a long list of projects to counter the communist appeal among intellectuals in Europe and the developing world. The CIA also covertly sponsored a domestic propaganda campaign called Crusade for Freedom.

## **German rearmament**

The rearmament of West Germany was achieved in the early 1950s. The main promoter was Adenauer, with France the main opponent. Washington had the decisive voice. It was strongly supported by the Pentagon (the U.S. military leadership), and weakly opposed by President Truman; the State Department was ambivalent. The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 changed the calculations and Washington now gave full support. That also involved naming Dwight D. Eisenhower in charge of NATO forces, and sending more American troops to West Germany. There was a strong promise that West Germany would not develop nuclear weapons.

Widespread fears of another rise of German militarism necessitated the new military to operate within an alliance framework, under NATO command. In 1955, Washington secured full German membership of NATO. In May 1953, Beria, by then in a government post, had made an unsuccessful proposal to allow the reunification of a neutral Germany to prevent West Germany's incorporation into NATO. The events led to the establishment of the *Bundeswehr*, the West German military, in 1955.

## **Chinese Civil War, SEATO, and NSC-68**

In 1949, Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army defeated Chiang Kai-shek's United States-backed Kuomintang (KMT) Nationalist Government in China. The KMT moved to Taiwan. The Kremlin promptly created an alliance with the newly formed People's Republic of China. According to Norwegian historian Odd Arne Westad, the communists won the Civil War

because they made fewer military mistakes than Chiang Kai-Shek made, and because in his search for a powerful centralized government, Chiang antagonized too many interest groups in China. Moreover, his party was weakened during the war against Japan. Meanwhile, the communists told different groups, such as the peasants, exactly what they wanted to hear, and they cloaked themselves under the cover of Chinese nationalism.

Confronted with the communist revolution in China and the end of the American atomic monopoly in 1949, the Truman administration quickly moved to escalate and expand its containment doctrine. In NSC 68, a secret 1950 document, the National Security Council instituted a Machiavellian policy while proposing to reinforce pro-Western alliance systems and quadruple spending on defense. Truman, under the influence of advisor Paul Nitze, saw containment as implying complete rollback of Soviet influence in all its forms.

United States officials moved to expand this version of containment into Asia, Africa, and Latin America, in order to counter revolutionary nationalist movements, often led by communist parties financed by the USSR, fighting against the restoration of Europe's colonial empires in South-East Asia and elsewhere. In this way, this US would exercise "preponderant power," oppose neutrality, and establish global hegemony. In the early 1950s (a period sometimes known as the "Pactomania"), the US formalized a series of alliances with Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and the Philippines (notably ANZUS in 1951 and SEATO in 1954), thereby guaranteeing the United States a number of long-term military bases.

## **Korean War**

- One of the more significant examples of the implementation of containment was US intervention in the Korean War. In June 1950, after years of mutual hostilities, Kim Il-sung's North Korean People's Army invaded South Korea at the 38th parallel. Stalin had been reluctant to support the invasion but ultimately sent advisers. To Stalin's surprise, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 82 and 83 backed the defense of South Korea, although the Soviets were then boycotting meetings in protest of the fact that Taiwan, not the People's Republic of China, held a permanent seat on the council. A UN force of sixteen countries faced North Korea, although 40 percent of troops were South Korean, and about 50 percent were from the United States.

The US initially seemed to follow containment when it first entered the war. This directed the US's action to only push back North Korea across the 38th Parallel and restore South Korea's sovereignty while allowing North Korea's survival as a state. However, the success of the Inchon landing inspired the US/UN forces to pursue a rollback strategy instead and to overthrow communist North Korea, thereby allowing nationwide elections under U.N. auspices. General Douglas MacArthur then advanced across the 38th Parallel into North Korea. The Chinese, fearful of a possible US invasion, sent in a large army and defeated the U.N. forces, pushing them back below the 38th parallel. Truman publicly hinted that he might use his "ace in the hole" of the atomic bomb, but Mao was unmoved.

The episode was used to support the wisdom of the containment doctrine as opposed to rollback. The Communists were later pushed to roughly around the original border, with minimal changes. Among other effects, the Korean War galvanised NATO to develop a military structure. Public opinion in countries involved, such as Great Britain, was divided for and against the war.

After the Armistice was approved in July 1953, North Korean leader Kim Il Sung created a highly centralized, totalitarian dictatorship that accorded his family unlimited power while generating a pervasive cult of personality. In the South, the American-backed dictator Syngman Rhee ran a violently anticommunist and authoritarian regime. While Rhee was overthrown in 1960, South Korea continued to be ruled by a military government of former Japanese collaborators until the re-establishment of a multi-party system in the late 1980s.

## **Crisis and escalation (1953–1962)**

### **Khrushchev, Eisenhower and de-Stalinization**

In 1953, changes in political leadership on both sides shifted the dynamic of the Cold War. Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated president that January. During the last 18 months of the Truman administration, the American defense budget had quadrupled, and Eisenhower moved to reduce military spending by a third while continuing to fight the Cold War effectively.

After the death of Joseph Stalin, Georgy Malenkov initially succeeded him as leader of the Soviet Union only to be quickly

removed and replaced by Nikita Khrushchev. On 25 February 1956, Khrushchev shocked delegates to the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party by cataloguing and denouncing Stalin's crimes. As part of a new campaign of de-Stalinization, he declared that the only way to reform and move away from Stalin's policies would be to acknowledge errors made in the past.

On 18 November 1956, while addressing Western dignitaries at a reception in Moscow's Polish embassy, Khrushchev infamously declared, "Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you", shocking everyone present. He would later say he had not been referring to nuclear war, but the historically fated victory of communism over capitalism. In 1961,

Khrushchev boasted that, even if the Soviet Union was currently behind the West, its housing shortage would disappear within ten years, consumer goods would be made abundant, and the "construction of a communist society" would be completed "in the main" within no more than two decades.

Eisenhower's secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, initiated a "New Look" for the containment strategy, calling for a greater reliance on nuclear weapons against US enemies in wartime. Dulles also enunciated the doctrine of "massive retaliation", threatening a severe US response to any Soviet aggression. Possessing nuclear superiority, for example, allowed Eisenhower to face down Soviet threats to intervene in the Middle East during the 1956 Suez Crisis. US plans for nuclear war in the late 1950s included the "systematic destruction" of

1,200 major urban centers in the Eastern Bloc and China, including Moscow, East Berlin and Beijing, with their civilian populations among the primary targets.

In spite of these threats, there were substantial hopes for detente when an upswing in diplomacy took place in 1959, including a two-week visit by Khrushchev to the US, and plans for a two-power summit for May 1960. The latter was disturbed by the U-2 spy plane scandal, however, in which Eisenhower was caught lying to the world about the intrusion of American surveillance aircraft into Soviet territory.

### **Warsaw Pact and Hungarian Revolution**

While Stalin's death in 1953 slightly relaxed tensions, the situation in Europe remained an uneasy armed truce. The Soviets, who had already created a network of mutual assistance treaties in the Eastern Bloc by 1949, established a formal alliance therein, the Warsaw Pact, in 1955. It stood opposed to NATO.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 occurred shortly after Khrushchev arranged the removal of Hungary's Stalinist leader MátyásRákosi.

In response to a popular uprising, the new regime formally disbanded the secret police, declared its intention to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and pledged to re-establish free elections. The Soviet Army invaded. Thousands of Hungarians were arrested, imprisoned and deported to the Soviet Union, and approximately 200,000 Hungarians fled Hungary in the chaos. Hungarian leader Imre Nagy and others were executed following secret trials.

From 1957 through 1961, Khrushchev openly and repeatedly threatened the West with nuclear annihilation. He claimed that Soviet missile capabilities were far superior to those of the United States, capable of wiping out any American or European city.

According to John Lewis Gaddis, Khrushchev rejected Stalin's "belief in the inevitability of war," however. The new leader declared his ultimate goal was "peaceful coexistence". In Khrushchev's formulation, peace would allow capitalism to collapse on its own, as well as giving the Soviets time to boost their military capabilities, which remained for decades until Gorbachev's later "new thinking" envisioning peaceful coexistence as an end in itself rather than a form of class struggle.

The events in Hungary produced ideological fractures within the communist parties of the world, particularly in Western Europe, with great decline in membership as many in both western and socialist countries felt disillusioned by the brutal Soviet response. The communist parties in the West would never recover from the effect the Hungarian Revolution had on their membership, a fact that was immediately recognized by some, such as the Yugoslavian politician Milovan Đilas who shortly after the revolution was crushed said that "The wound which the Hungarian Revolution inflicted on communism can never be completely healed".

### **Berlin ultimatum**

During November 1958, Khrushchev made an unsuccessful attempt to turn all of Berlin into an independent, demilitarized

"free city". He gave the United States, Great Britain, and France a six-month ultimatum to withdraw their troops from the sectors they still occupied in West Berlin, or he would transfer control of Western access rights to the East Germans. Khrushchev earlier explained to Mao Zedong that "Berlin is the testicles of the West. Every time I want to make the West scream, I squeeze on Berlin." NATO formally rejected the ultimatum in mid-December and Khrushchev withdrew it in return for a Geneva conference on the German question.

### **American military buildup**

Kennedy's foreign policy was dominated by American confrontations with the Soviet Union, manifested by proxy contests. Like Truman and Eisenhower, Kennedy supported containment to stop the spread of Communism. President Eisenhower's New Look policy had emphasized the use of less expensive nuclear weapons to deter Soviet aggression by threatening massive nuclear attacks on all of the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons were much cheaper than maintaining a large standing army, so Eisenhower cut conventional forces to save money. Kennedy implemented a new strategy known as flexible response. This strategy relied on conventional arms to achieve limited goals. As part of this policy, Kennedy expanded the United States special operations forces, elite military units that could fight unconventionally in various conflicts. Kennedy hoped that the flexible response strategy would allow the US to counter Soviet influence without resorting to nuclear war.

To support his new strategy, Kennedy ordered a massive increase in defense spending. He sought, and Congress provided, a rapid build-up of the nuclear arsenal to restore the

lost superiority over the Soviet Union—he claimed in 1960 that Eisenhower had lost it because of excessive concern with budget deficits. In his inaugural address, Kennedy promised "to bear any burden" in the defense of liberty, and he repeatedly asked for increases in military spending and authorization of new weapons systems. From 1961 to 1964 the number of nuclear weapons increased by 50 percent, as did the number of B-52 bombers to deliver them. The new ICBM force grew from 63 intercontinental ballistic missiles to 424. He authorized 23 new Polaris submarines, each of which carried 16 nuclear missiles. He called on cities to prepare fallout shelters for nuclear war. In contrast to Eisenhower's warning about the perils of the military–industrial complex, Kennedy focused on rearmament.

### **Competition in the Third World**

Nationalist movements in some countries and regions, notably Guatemala, Indonesia and Indochina, were often allied with communist groups or otherwise perceived to be unfriendly to Western interests. In this context, the United States and the Soviet Union increasingly competed for influence by proxy in the Third World as decolonization gained momentum in the 1950s and early 1960s. Both sides were selling armaments to gain influence. The Kremlin saw continuing territorial losses by imperial powers as presaging the eventual victory of their ideology.

The United States used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to undermine neutral or hostile Third World governments and to support allied ones. In 1953, President Eisenhower implemented Operation Ajax, a covert coup operation to

overthrow the Iranian prime minister, Mohammad Mosaddegh. The popularly elected Mosaddegh had been a Middle Eastern nemesis of Britain since nationalizing the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951. Winston Churchill told the United States that Mosaddegh was "increasingly turning towards Communist influence." The pro-Western shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, assumed control as an autocratic monarch. The shah's policies included banning the communist Tudeh Party of Iran, and general suppression of political dissent by SAVAK, the shah's domestic security and intelligence agency.

In Guatemala, a banana republic, the 1954 Guatemalan coup d'état ousted the left-wing President Jacobo Árbenz with material CIA support. The post-Arbenz government—a military junta headed by Carlos Castillo Armas—repealed a progressive land reform law, returned nationalized property belonging to the United Fruit Company, set up a National Committee of Defense Against Communism, and decreed a Preventive Penal Law Against Communism at the request of the United States.

The non-aligned Indonesian government of Sukarno was faced with a major threat to its legitimacy beginning in 1956 when several regional commanders began to demand autonomy from Jakarta. After mediation failed, Sukarno took action to remove the dissident commanders. In February 1958, dissident military commanders in Central Sumatra (Colonel Ahmad Hussein) and North Sulawesi (Colonel Ventje Sumual) declared the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia-Permesta Movement aimed at overthrowing the Sukarno regime. They were joined by many civilian politicians from the Masyumi Party, such as Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, who were

opposed to the growing influence of the communist Partai Komunis Indonesia party. Due to their anti-communist rhetoric, the rebels received arms, funding, and other covert aid from the CIA until Allen Lawrence Pope, an American pilot, was shot down after a bombing raid on government-held Ambon in April 1958. The central government responded by launching airborne and seaborne military invasions of rebel strongholds Padang and Manado. By the end of 1958, the rebels were militarily defeated, and the last remaining rebel guerilla bands surrendered by August 1961.

In the Republic of the Congo, newly independent from Belgium since June 1960, the Congo Crisis erupted on July 5 leading to the secession of the regions Katanga and South Kasai. CIA-backed President Joseph Kasa-Vubu ordered the dismissal of the democratically elected Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and the Lumumba cabinet in September over massacres by the armed forces during the invasion of South Kasai and for involving Soviets in the country. Later the CIA-backed Colonel Mobutu SeseSeko quickly mobilized his forces to seize power through a military coup d'état, and worked with Western intelligence agencies to imprison Lumumba and hand him over to Katangan authorities who executed him by firing squad.

In British Guiana, the leftist People's Progressive Party (PPP) candidate Cheddi Jagan won the position of chief minister in a colonially administered election in 1953 but was quickly forced to resign from power after Britain's suspension of the still-dependent nation's constitution. Embarrassed by the landslide electoral victory of Jagan's allegedly Marxist party, the British imprisoned the PPP's leadership and maneuvered the organization into a divisive rupture in 1955, engineering a split

between Jagan and his PPP colleagues. Jagan again won the colonial elections in 1957 and 1961, despite Britain's shift to a reconsideration of its view of the left-wing Jagan as a Soviet-style communist at this time. The United States pressured the British to withhold Guyana's independence until an alternative to Jagan could be identified, supported, and brought into office.

Worn down by the communist guerrilla war for Vietnamese independence and handed a watershed defeat by communist Viet Minh rebels at the 1954 Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the French accepted a negotiated abandonment of their colonial stake in Vietnam.

In the Geneva Conference, peace accords were signed, leaving Vietnam divided between a pro-Soviet administration in North Vietnam and a pro-Western administration in South Vietnam at the 17th parallel north. Between 1954 and 1961, Eisenhower's United States sent economic aid and military advisers to strengthen South Vietnam's pro-Western regime against communist efforts to destabilize it.

Many emerging nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America rejected the pressure to choose sides in the East–West competition. In 1955, at the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, dozens of Third World governments resolved to stay out of the Cold War. The consensus reached at Bandung culminated with the creation of the Belgrade-headquartered Non-Aligned Movement in 1961. Meanwhile, Khrushchev broadened Moscow's policy to establish ties with India and other key neutral states. Independence movements in the Third World transformed the post-war order into a more pluralistic world of

decolonized African and Middle Eastern nations and of rising nationalism in Asia and Latin America.

### **Sino-Soviet split**

After 1956, the Sino-Soviet alliance began to break down. Mao had defended Stalin when Khrushchev criticized him in 1956, and treated the new Soviet leader as a superficial upstart, accusing him of having lost his revolutionary edge. For his part, Khrushchev, disturbed by Mao's glib attitude toward nuclear war, referred to the Chinese leader as a "lunatic on a throne".

After this, Khrushchev made many desperate attempts to reconstitute the Sino-Soviet alliance, but Mao considered it useless and denied any proposal. The Chinese-Soviet animosity spilled out in an intra-communist propaganda war. Further on, the Soviets focused on a bitter rivalry with Mao's China for leadership of the global communist movement. Historian Lorenz M. Lüthi argues:

- The Sino-Soviet split was one of the key events of the Cold War, equal in importance to the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Second Vietnam War, and Sino-American rapprochement. The split helped to determine the framework of the Second Cold War in general, and influenced the course of the Second Vietnam War in particular.

### **Space Race**

On the nuclear weapons front, the United States and the USSR pursued nuclear rearmament and developed long-range

weapons with which they could strike the territory of the other. In August 1957, the Soviets successfully launched the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), and in October they launched the first Earth satellite, Sputnik 1. The launch of Sputnik inaugurated the Space Race. This led to the ApolloMoon landings by the United States, which astronaut Frank Borman later described as "just a battle in the Cold War."

### **Cuban Revolution and the Bay of Pigs Invasion**

In Cuba, the 26th of July Movement, led by young revolutionaries Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, seized power in the Cuban Revolution on 1 January 1959, toppling President Fulgencio Batista, whose unpopular regime had been denied arms by the Eisenhower administration.

Diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States continued for some time after Batista's fall, but President Eisenhower deliberately left the capital to avoid meeting Castro during the latter's trip to Washington, DC in April, leaving Vice President Richard Nixon to conduct the meeting in his place. Cuba began negotiating for arms purchases from the Eastern Bloc in March 1960. In March of that year Eisenhower gave approval to CIA plans and funding to overthrow Castro.

In January 1961, just prior to leaving office, Eisenhower formally severed relations with the Cuban government. That April, the administration of newly elected American President John F. Kennedy mounted the unsuccessful CIA-organized ship-borne invasion of the island at Playa Girón and Playa Larga in Santa Clara Province—a failure that publicly

humiliated the United States. Castro responded by publicly embracing Marxism–Leninism, and the Soviet Union pledged to provide further support. In December, the U.S. government began a campaign of terrorist attacks against the Cuban people and covert operations against the administration, in an attempt to bring down the Cuban government.

## **Berlin Crisis of 1961**

The Berlin Crisis of 1961 was the last major incident in the Cold War regarding the status of Berlin and post–World War II Germany. By the early 1950s, the Soviet approach to restricting emigration movement was emulated by most of the rest of the Eastern Bloc.

However, hundreds of thousands of East Germans annually emigrated to West Germany through a "loophole" in the system that existed between East Berlin and West Berlin, where the four occupying World War II powers governed movement.

The emigration resulted in a massive "brain drain" from East Germany to West Germany of younger educated professionals, such that nearly 20% of East Germany's population had migrated to West Germany by 1961. That June, the Soviet Union issued a new ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of Allied forces from West Berlin.

The request was rebuffed, but the United States now limited its security guarantees to West Berlin. On 13 August, East Germany erected a barbed-wire barrier that would eventually be expanded through construction into the Berlin Wall, effectively closing the loophole.

## **Cuban Missile Crisis and Khrushchev's ousting**

The Kennedy administration continued seeking ways to oust Castro following the Bay of Pigs Invasion, experimenting with various ways of covertly facilitating the overthrow of the Cuban government. Significant hopes were pinned on the program of terrorist attacks and other destabilisation operations known as Operation Mongoose, devised under the Kennedy administration in 1961. Khrushchev learned of the project in February 1962, and preparations to install Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba were undertaken in response.

Alarmed, Kennedy considered various reactions. He ultimately responded to the installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba with a naval blockade, and he presented an ultimatum to the Soviets. Khrushchev backed down from a confrontation, and the Soviet Union removed the missiles in return for a public American pledge not to invade Cuba again as well as a covert deal to remove US missiles from Turkey. Castro later admitted that "I would have agreed to the use of nuclear weapons. ... we took it for granted that it would become a nuclear war anyway, and that we were going to disappear."

The Cuban Missile Crisis (October–November 1962) brought the world closer to nuclear war than ever before. The aftermath of the crisis led to the first efforts in the nuclear arms race at nuclear disarmament and improving relations, although the Cold War's first arms control agreement, the Antarctic Treaty, had come into force in 1961.

In 1964, Khrushchev's Kremlin colleagues managed to oust him, but allowed him a peaceful retirement. Accused of

rudeness and incompetence, John Lewis Gaddis argues that Khrushchev was also credited with ruining Soviet agriculture, bringing the world to the brink of nuclear war and that Khrushchev had become an 'international embarrassment' when he authorized construction of the Berlin Wall.

## **From confrontation to détente (1962–1979)**

In the course of the 1960s and 1970s, Cold War participants struggled to adjust to a new, more complicated pattern of international relations in which the world was no longer divided into two clearly opposed blocs. From the beginning of the post-war period, Western Europe and Japan rapidly recovered from the destruction of World War II and sustained strong economic growth through the 1950s and 1960s, with per capita GDPs approaching those of the United States, while Eastern Bloc economies stagnated.

The Vietnam War descended into a quagmire for the United States, leading to a decline in international prestige and economic stability, derailing arms agreements, and provoking domestic unrest. America's withdrawal from the war led it to embrace a policy of detente with both China and the Soviet Union.

In the 1973 oil crisis, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cut their petroleum output. This raised oil prices and hurt Western economies, but helped the Soviet Union by generating a huge flow of money from its oil sales.

As a result of the oil crisis, combined with the growing influence of Third World alignments such as OPEC and the Non-Aligned Movement, less powerful countries had more room to assert their independence and often showed themselves resistant to pressure from either superpower. Meanwhile, Moscow was forced to turn its attention inward to deal with the Soviet Union's deep-seated domestic economic problems. During this period, Soviet leaders such as Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin embraced the notion of *détente*.

## **Vietnam War**

Under President John F. Kennedy, US troop levels in Vietnam grew under the Military Assistance Advisory Group program from just under a thousand in 1959 to 16,000 in 1963. South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem's heavy-handed crackdown on Buddhist monks in 1963 led the US to endorse a deadly military coup against Diem.

The war escalated further in 1964 following the controversial Gulf of Tonkin incident, in which a U.S. destroyer was alleged to have clashed with North Vietnamese fast attack craft. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution gave President Lyndon B. Johnson broad authorization to increase U.S. military presence, deploying ground combat units for the first time and increasing troop levels to 184,000.

Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev responded by reversing Khrushchev's policy of disengagement and increasing aid to the North Vietnamese, hoping to entice the North from its pro-Chinese position. The USSR discouraged further escalation of the war, however, providing just enough military assistance to

tie up American forces. From this point, the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), also known as the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) engaged in more conventional warfare with US and South Vietnamese forces.

The Tet Offensive of 1968 proved to be the turning point of the war. Despite years of American tutelage and aid the South Vietnamese forces were unable to withstand the communist offensive and the task fell to US forces instead. Tet showed that the end of US involvement was not in sight, increasing domestic skepticism of the war and giving rise to what was referred to as the Vietnam Syndrome, a public aversion to American overseas military involvements. Nonetheless, operations continued to cross international boundaries: bordering areas of Laos and Cambodia were used by North Vietnam as supply routes, and were heavily bombed by U.S. forces.

At the same time, 1963–65, American domestic politics saw the triumph of liberalism. According to historian Joseph Crespino:

- It has become a staple of twentieth-century historiography that Cold War concerns were at the root of a number of progressive political accomplishments in the postwar period: a high progressive marginal tax rate that helped fund the arms race and contributed to broad income equality; bipartisan support for far-reaching civil rights legislation that transformed politics and society in the American South, which had long given the lie to America's egalitarian ethos; bipartisan support for overturning an explicitly racist immigration system

that had been in place since the 1920s; and free health care for the elderly and the poor, a partial fulfillment of one of the unaccomplished goals of the New Deal era. The list could go on.

### **French withdrawal from NATO military structures**

The unity of NATO was breached early in its history, with a crisis occurring during Charles de Gaulle's presidency of France. De Gaulle protested at the strong role of the United States in the organization and what he perceived as a special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom.

In a memorandum sent to President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Prime Minister Harold Macmillan on 17 September 1958, he argued for the creation of a tripartite directorate that would put France on an equal footing with the United States and the United Kingdom, and also for the expansion of NATO's coverage to include geographical areas of interest to France, most notably French Algeria, where France was waging a counter-insurgency and sought NATO assistance. De Gaulle considered the response he received to be unsatisfactory and began the development of an independent French nuclear deterrent. In 1966 he withdrew France from NATO's military structures and expelled NATO troops from French soil.

### **Invasion of Czechoslovakia**

In 1968, a period of political liberalization took place in Czechoslovakia called the Prague Spring. An "Action Program" of reforms included increasing freedom of the press, freedom of

speech and freedom of movement, along with an economic emphasis on consumer goods, the possibility of a multiparty government, limitations on the power of the secret police, and potential withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.

In answer to the Prague Spring, on 20 August 1968, the Soviet Army, together with most of their Warsaw Pact allies, invaded Czechoslovakia. The invasion was followed by a wave of emigration, including an estimated 70,000 Czechs and Slovaks initially fleeing, with the total eventually reaching 300,000. The invasion sparked intense protests from Yugoslavia, Romania, China, and from Western European communist parties.

### **Brezhnev Doctrine**

In September 1968, during a speech at the Fifth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party one month after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev outlined the Brezhnev Doctrine, in which he claimed the right to violate the sovereignty of any country attempting to replace Marxism–Leninism with capitalism. During the speech, Brezhnev stated:

When forces that are hostile to socialism try to turn the development of some socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries.

The doctrine found its origins in the failures of Marxism–Leninism in states like Poland, Hungary and East Germany, which were facing a declining standard of living contrasting with the prosperity of West Germany and the rest of Western Europe.

## **Third World escalations**

- Under the Lyndon B. Johnson Administration, which gained power after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the US took a more hardline stance on Latin America—sometimes called the "Mann Doctrine". In 1964, the Brazilian military overthrew the government of president João Goulart with US backing. In late April 1965, the US sent some 22,000 troops to the Dominican Republic for a one-year occupation in an invasion codenamed Operation Power Pack, citing the threat of the emergence of a Cuban-style revolution in Latin America. Héctor García-Godoy acted as provisional president, until conservative former president Joaquín Balaguer won the 1966 presidential election against non-campaigning former President Juan Bosch. Activists for Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party were violently harassed by the Dominican police and armed forces.

In Indonesia, the hardline anti-communist General Suharto wrested control of the state from his predecessor Sukarno in an attempt to establish a "New Order". From 1965 to 1966, with the aid of the United States and other Western governments, the military led the mass killing of more than 500,000 members and sympathizers of the Indonesian Communist Party and other leftist organizations, and detained hundreds of thousands more in prison camps around the country under extremely inhumane conditions. A top-secret CIA report stated that the massacres "rank as one of the worst mass murders of the 20th century, along with the Soviet

purges of the 1930s, the Nazi mass murders during the Second World War, and the Maoist bloodbath of the early 1950s." These killings served US strategic interests and constitute a major turning point in the Cold War as the balance of power shifted in Southeast Asia.

Escalating the scale of American intervention in the ongoing conflict between Ngô Đình Diệm's South Vietnamese government and the communist National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF) insurgents opposing it, Johnson deployed some 575,000 troops in Southeast Asia to defeat the NLF and their North Vietnamese allies in the Vietnam War, but his costly policy weakened the US economy and, by 1975, it ultimately culminated in what most of the world saw as a humiliating defeat of the world's most powerful superpower at the hands of one of the world's poorest nations.

The Middle East remained a source of contention. Egypt, which received the bulk of its arms and economic assistance from the USSR, was a troublesome client, with a reluctant Soviet Union feeling obliged to assist in both the 1967 Six-Day War (with advisers and technicians) and the War of Attrition (with pilots and aircraft) against pro-Western Israel. Despite the beginning of an Egyptian shift from a pro-Soviet to a pro-American orientation in 1972 (under Egypt's new leader Anwar Sadat), rumors of imminent Soviet intervention on the Egyptians' behalf during the 1973 Yom Kippur War brought about a massive American mobilization that threatened to wreck détente. Although pre-Sadat Egypt had been the largest recipient of Soviet aid in the Middle East, the Soviets were also successful in establishing close relations with communist South Yemen, as well as the nationalist governments of Algeria

and Iraq. Iraq signed a 15-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union in 1972. According to historian Charles R.H. Tripp, the treaty upset "the US-sponsored security system established as part of the Cold War in the Middle East. It appeared that any enemy of the Baghdad regime was a potential ally of the United States." In response, the US covertly financed Kurdish rebels led by Mustafa Barzani during the Second Iraqi–Kurdish War; the Kurds were defeated in 1975, leading to the forcible relocation of hundreds of thousands of Kurdish civilians. Indirect Soviet assistance to the Palestinian side of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict included support for Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

In East Africa, a territorial dispute between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Ogaden region resulted in the Ogaden War. Around June 1977, Somali troops occupied the Ogaden and began advancing inland towards Ethiopian positions in the Ahmar Mountains. Both countries were client states of the Soviet Union; Somalia was led by self-proclaimed Marxist military leader Siad Barre, and Ethiopia was controlled by the Derg, a cabal of military generals loyal to the pro-Soviet Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had declared the Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia in 1975. The Soviets initially attempted to exert a moderating influence on both states, but in November 1977 Barre broke off relations with Moscow and expelled his Soviet military advisers. He then turned to the China and Safari Club—a group of pro-American intelligence agencies including those of Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia—for support and weapons. While declining to take a direct part in hostilities, the Soviet Union did provide the impetus for a successful Ethiopian counteroffensive to expel

Somalia from the Ogaden. The counteroffensive was planned at the command level by Soviet advisers attached to the Ethiopian general staff, and bolstered by the delivery of millions of dollars' of sophisticated Soviet arms. About 11,000 Cuban troops spearheaded the primary effort, after receiving a hasty training on some of the newly delivered Soviet weapons systems by East German instructors.

- In Chile, the Socialist Party candidate Salvador Allende won the presidential election of 1970, thereby becoming the first democratically elected Marxist to become president of a country in the Americas. The CIA targeted Allende for removal and operated to undermine his support domestically, which contributed to a period of unrest culminating in General Augusto Pinochet's coup d'état on 11 September 1973. Pinochet consolidated power as a military dictator, Allende's reforms of the economy were rolled back, and leftist opponents were killed or detained in internment camps under the Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (DINA). The Socialist states—with the exception of China and Romania—broke off relations with Chile. The Pinochet regime would go on to be one of the leading participants in Operation Condor, an international campaign of political assassination and state terrorism organized by right-wing military dictatorships in the Southern Cone of South America that was covertly supported by the US government. On 24 April 1974, the Carnation Revolution succeeded in ousting Marcelo Caetano and Portugal's right-wing *Estado Novo* government, sounding the death knell for the

Portuguese Empire. Independence was hastily granted to a number of Portuguese colonies, including Angola, where the disintegration of colonial rule was followed by a violent civil war. There were three rival militant factions competing for power in Angola, the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA). While all three had socialist leanings, the MPLA was the only party with close ties to the Soviet Union. Its adherence to the concept of a one-party state alienated it from the FNLA and UNITA, which began portraying themselves as anti-communist and pro-Western in orientation. When the Soviets began supplying the MPLA with arms, the CIA and China offered substantial covert aid to the FNLA and UNITA. The MPLA eventually requested direct military support from Moscow in the form of ground troops, but the Soviets declined, offering to send advisers but no combat personnel. Cuba was more forthcoming and began amassing troops in Angola to assist the MPLA. By November 1975 there were over a thousand Cuban soldiers in the country. The persistent buildup of Cuban troops and Soviet weapons allowed the MPLA to secure victory and blunt an abortive intervention by Zairean and South African troops, which had deployed in a belated attempt to assist the FNLA and UNITA.

During the Vietnam War, North Vietnam used border areas of Cambodia as military bases, which Cambodian head of state

Norodom Sihanouk tolerated in an attempt to preserve Cambodia's neutrality. Following Sihanouk's March 1970 deposition by pro-American general Lon Nol, who ordered the North Vietnamese to leave Cambodia, North Vietnam attempted to overrun all of Cambodia following negotiations with NuonChea, the second-in-command of the Cambodian communists (dubbed the Khmer Rouge) fighting to overthrow the Cambodian government. Sihanouk fled to China with the establishment of the GRUNK in Beijing. American and South Vietnamese forces responded to these actions with a bombing campaign and a brief ground incursion, which contributed to the violence of the civil war that soon enveloped all of Cambodia. US carpet bombing lasted until 1973, and while it prevented the Khmer Rouge from seizing the capital, it also accelerated the collapse of rural society, increased social polarization, and killed tens of thousands of civilians.

After taking power and distancing himself from the Vietnamese, pro-China Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot killed 1.5 to 2 million Cambodians in the killing fields, roughly a quarter of the Cambodian population (an event commonly labelled the Cambodian genocide). Martin Shaw described these atrocities as "the purest genocide of the Cold War era." Backed by the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation, an organization of Khmer pro-Soviet Communists and Khmer Rouge defectors led by HengSamrin, Vietnam invaded Cambodia on 22 December 1978. The invasion succeeded in deposing Pol Pot, but the new state would struggle to gain international recognition beyond the Soviet Bloc sphere. Despite the previous international outcry at the Pol Pot regime's gross human rights violations, representatives of the Khmer Rouge were allowed to be seated in the UN General

Assembly, with strong support from China, Western powers, and the member countries of ASEAN. Cambodia would become bogged down in a guerrilla war led from refugee camps located on the border with Thailand. Following the destruction of the Khmer Rouge, the national reconstruction of Cambodia would be severely hampered, and Vietnam would suffer a punitive Chinese attack.

### **Sino-American rapprochement**

As a result of the Sino-Soviet split, tensions along the Chinese–Soviet border reached their peak in 1969, and United States President Richard Nixon decided to use the conflict to shift the balance of power towards the West in the Cold War. The Chinese had sought improved relations with the Americans in order to gain an advantage over the Soviets as well.

In February 1972, Nixon achieved a stunning rapprochement with China, traveling to Beijing and meeting with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. At this time, the USSR achieved rough nuclear parity with the United States; meanwhile, the Vietnam War both weakened America's influence in the Third World and cooled relations with Western Europe.

Although indirect conflict between Cold War powers continued through the late 1960s and early 1970s, tensions were beginning to ease.

### **Nixon, Brezhnev, and détente**

Following his visit to China, Nixon met with Soviet leaders, including Brezhnev in Moscow. These Strategic Arms Limitation Talks resulted in two landmark arms control

treaties: SALT I, the first comprehensive limitation pact signed by the two superpowers, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which banned the development of systems designed to intercept incoming missiles. These aimed to limit the development of costly anti-ballistic missiles and nuclear missiles.

Nixon and Brezhnev proclaimed a new era of "peaceful coexistence" and established the groundbreaking new policy of *détente* (or cooperation) between the two superpowers. Meanwhile, Brezhnev attempted to revive the Soviet economy, which was declining in part because of heavy military expenditures. Between 1972 and 1974, the two sides also agreed to strengthen their economic ties, including agreements for increased trade. As a result of their meetings, *détente* would replace the hostility of the Cold War and the two countries would live mutually. These developments coincided with Bonn's "Ostpolitik" policy formulated by the West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, an effort to normalize relations between West Germany and Eastern Europe. Other agreements were concluded to stabilize the situation in Europe, culminating in the Helsinki Accords signed at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975.

Kissinger and Nixon were "realists" who deemphasized idealistic goals like anti-communism or promotion of democracy worldwide because those goals were too expensive in terms of America's economic capabilities. Instead of a Cold War they wanted peace, trade and cultural exchanges. They realized that Americans were no longer willing to tax themselves for idealistic foreign policy goals, especially for containment policies that never seemed to produce positive

results. Instead, Nixon and Kissinger sought to downsize America's global commitments in proportion to its reduced economic, moral and political power. They rejected "idealism" as impractical and too expensive, and neither man showed much sensitivity to the plight of people living under Communism. Kissinger's realism fell out of fashion as idealism returned to American foreign policy with Carter's moralism emphasizing human rights, and Reagan's rollback strategy aimed at destroying Communism.

### **Late 1970s deterioration of relations**

In the 1970s, the KGB, led by Yuri Andropov, continued to persecute distinguished Soviet personalities such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov, who were criticising the Soviet leadership in harsh terms. Indirect conflict between the superpowers continued through this period of détente in the Third World, particularly during political crises in the Middle East, Chile, Ethiopia, and Angola.

Although President Jimmy Carter tried to place another limit on the arms race with a SALT II agreement in 1979, his efforts were undermined by the other events that year, including the Iranian Revolution and the Nicaraguan Revolution, which both ousted pro-US regimes, and his retaliation against Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December.

### **New Cold War (1979–1985)**

The term *new Cold War* refers to the period of intensive reawakening of Cold War tensions and conflicts in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Tensions greatly increased between the

major powers with both sides becoming more militant. Diggins says, "Reagan went all out to fight the second cold war, by supporting counterinsurgencies in the third world." Cox says, "The intensity of this 'second' Cold War was as great as its duration was short."

## **Soviet War in Afghanistan**

- In April 1978, the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power in Afghanistan in the Saur Revolution. Within months, opponents of the communist government launched an uprising in eastern Afghanistan that quickly expanded into a civil war waged by guerrilla mujahideen against government forces countrywide. The Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen insurgents received military training and weapons in neighboring Pakistan and China, while the Soviet Union sent thousands of military advisers to support the PDPA government. Meanwhile, increasing friction between the competing factions of the PDPA—the dominant Khalq and the more moderate Parcham—resulted in the dismissal of Parchami cabinet members and the arrest of Parchami military officers under the pretext of a Parchami coup. By mid-1979, the United States had started a covert program to assist the mujahideen.

In September 1979, Khalqist President Nur Muhammad Taraki was assassinated in a coup within the PDPA orchestrated by fellow Khalq member Hafizullah Amin, who assumed the presidency. Distrusted by the Soviets, Amin was assassinated

by Soviet special forces during Operation Storm-333 in December 1979. A Soviet-organized government, led by Parcham's Babrak Karmal but inclusive of both factions, filled the vacuum. Soviet troops were deployed to stabilize Afghanistan under Karmal in more substantial numbers, although the Soviet government did not expect to do most of the fighting in Afghanistan. As a result, however, the Soviets were now directly involved in what had been a domestic war in Afghanistan.

Carter responded to the Soviet intervention by withdrawing the SALT II treaty from ratification, imposing embargoes on grain and technology shipments to the USSR, and demanding a significant increase in military spending, and further announced that the United States would boycott the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. He described the Soviet incursion as "the most serious threat to the peace since the Second World War".

## **Reagan and Thatcher**

In January 1977, four years prior to becoming president, Ronald Reagan bluntly stated, in a conversation with Richard V. Allen, his basic expectation in relation to the Cold War. "My idea of American policy toward the Soviet Union is simple, and some would say simplistic," he said. "It is this: We win and they lose. What do you think of that?" In 1980, Ronald Reagan defeated Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential election, vowing to increase military spending and confront the Soviets everywhere. Both Reagan and new British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher denounced the Soviet Union and its ideology. Reagan labeled the Soviet Union an "evil empire" and

predicted that Communism would be left on the "ash heap of history," while Thatcher inculcated the Soviets as "bent on world dominance." In 1982, Reagan tried to cut off Moscow's access to hard currency by impeding its proposed gas line to Western Europe. It hurt the Soviet economy, but it also caused ill will among American allies in Europe who counted on that revenue. Reagan retreated on this issue.

By early 1985, Reagan's anti-communist position had developed into a stance known as the new Reagan Doctrine—which, in addition to containment, formulated an additional right to subvert existing communist governments. Besides continuing Carter's policy of supporting the Islamic opponents of the Soviet Union and the Soviet-backed PDPA government in Afghanistan, the CIA also sought to weaken the Soviet Union itself by promoting Islamism in the majority-Muslim Central Asian Soviet Union. Additionally, the CIA encouraged anti-communist Pakistan's ISI to train Muslims from around the world to participate in the jihad against the Soviet Union.

### **Polish Solidarity movement and martial law**

Pope John Paul II provided a moral focus for anti-communism; a visit to his native Poland in 1979 stimulated a religious and nationalist resurgence centered on the Solidarity movement that galvanized opposition and may have led to his attempted assassination two years later. In December 1981, Poland's Wojciech Jaruzelski reacted to the crisis by imposing a period of martial law. Reagan imposed economic sanctions on Poland in response. Mikhail Suslov, the Kremlin's top ideologist, advised Soviet leaders not to intervene if Poland fell under the

control of Solidarity, for fear it might lead to heavy economic sanctions, resulting in a catastrophe for the Soviet economy.

### **The US and USSR military and economic issues**

The Soviet Union had built up a military that consumed as much as 25 percent of its gross national product at the expense of consumer goods and investment in civilian sectors. Soviet spending on the arms race and other Cold War commitments both caused and exacerbated deep-seated structural problems in the Soviet system, which experienced at least a decade of economic stagnation during the late Brezhnev years.

Soviet investment in the defense sector was not driven by military necessity, but in large part by the interests of massive party and state bureaucracies dependent on the sector for their own power and privileges. The Soviet Armed Forces became the largest in the world in terms of the numbers and types of weapons they possessed, in the number of troops in their ranks, and in the sheer size of their military-industrial base. However, the quantitative advantages held by the Soviet military often concealed areas where the Eastern Bloc dramatically lagged behind the West. For example, the Persian Gulf War demonstrated how the armor, fire control systems and firing range of the Soviet Union's most common main battle tank, the T-72, were drastically inferior to the American M1 Abrams, yet the USSR fielded almost three times as many T-72s as the US deployed M1s.

By the early 1980s, the USSR had built up a military arsenal and army surpassing that of the United States. Soon after the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, president Carter began massively building up the United States military. This buildup was accelerated by the Reagan administration, which increased the military spending from 5.3 percent of GNP in 1981 to 6.5 percent in 1986, the largest peacetime defense buildup in United States history.

Tensions continued to intensify as Reagan revived the B-1 Lancer program, which had been canceled by the Carter administration, produced LGM-118 Peacekeeper missiles, installed US cruise missiles in Europe, and announced the experimental Strategic Defense Initiative, dubbed "Star Wars" by the media, a defense program to shoot down missiles in mid-flight. The Soviets deployed RSD-10 Pioneerballistic missiles targeting Western Europe, and NATO decided, under the impetus of the Carter presidency, to deploy MGM-31 Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe, primarily West Germany. This deployment placed missiles just 10 minutes' striking distance from Moscow.

After Reagan's military buildup, the Soviet Union did not respond by further building its military, because the enormous military expenses, along with inefficient planned manufacturing and collectivized agriculture, were already a heavy burden for the Soviet economy. At the same time, Saudi Arabia increased oil production, even as other non-OPEC nations were increasing production. These developments contributed to the 1980s oil glut, which affected the Soviet Union as oil was the main source of Soviet export revenues. Issues with command economics, oil price decreases and large military expenditures gradually brought the Soviet economy to stagnation.

On 1 September 1983, the Soviet Union shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, a Boeing 747 with 269 people aboard, including sitting Congressman Larry McDonald, an action which Reagan characterized as a "massacre". The airliner had violated Soviet airspace just past the west coast of Sakhalin Island near Moneron Island, and the Soviets treated the unidentified aircraft as an intruding US spy plane. The incident increased support for military deployment, overseen by Reagan, which stood in place until the later accords between Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. The Able Archer 83 exercise in November 1983, a realistic simulation of a coordinated NATO nuclear release, was perhaps the most dangerous moment since the Cuban Missile Crisis, as the Soviet leadership feared that a nuclear attack might be imminent.

American domestic public concerns about intervening in foreign conflicts persisted from the end of the Vietnam War. The Reagan administration emphasized the use of quick, low-cost counter-insurgency tactics to intervene in foreign conflicts. In 1983, the Reagan administration intervened in the multisided Lebanese Civil War, invaded Grenada, bombed Libya and backed the Central American Contras, anti-communist paramilitaries seeking to overthrow the Soviet-aligned Sandinista government in Nicaragua. While Reagan's interventions against Grenada and Libya were popular in the United States, his backing of the Contra rebels was mired in controversy. The Reagan administration's backing of the military government of Guatemala during the Guatemalan Civil War, in particular the regime of Efraín Ríos Montt, was also controversial.

Meanwhile, the Soviets incurred high costs for their own foreign interventions. Although Brezhnev was convinced in 1979 that the Soviet war in Afghanistan would be brief, Muslim guerrillas, aided by the US, China, Britain, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, waged a fierce resistance against the invasion. The Kremlin sent nearly 100,000 troops to support its puppet regime in Afghanistan, leading many outside observers to dub the war "the Soviets' Vietnam". However, Moscow's quagmire in Afghanistan was far more disastrous for the Soviets than Vietnam had been for the Americans because the conflict coincided with a period of internal decay and domestic crisis in the Soviet system.

A senior US State Department official predicted such an outcome as early as 1980, positing that the invasion resulted in part from a "domestic crisis within the Soviet system. ... It may be that the thermodynamic law of entropy has ... caught up with the Soviet system, which now seems to expend more energy on simply maintaining its equilibrium than on improving itself. We could be seeing a period of foreign movement at a time of internal decay".

## **Final years (1985–1991)**

### **Gorbachev's reforms**

By the time the comparatively youthful Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary in 1985, the Soviet economy was stagnant and faced a sharp fall in foreign currency earnings as a result of the downward slide in oil prices in the 1980s. These issues prompted Gorbachev to investigate measures to revive

the ailing state. An ineffectual start led to the conclusion that deeper structural changes were necessary, and in June 1987 Gorbachev announced an agenda of economic reform called *perestroika*, or restructuring. Perestroika relaxed the production quota system, allowed private ownership of businesses and paved the way for foreign investment. These measures were intended to redirect the country's resources from costly Cold War military commitments to more productive areas in the civilian sector.

Despite initial skepticism in the West, the new Soviet leader proved to be committed to reversing the Soviet Union's deteriorating economic condition instead of continuing the arms race with the West. Partly as a way to fight off internal opposition from party cliques to his reforms, Gorbachev simultaneously introduced *glasnost*, or openness, which increased freedom of the press and the transparency of state institutions. *Glasnost* was intended to reduce the corruption at the top of the Communist Party and moderate the abuse of power in the Central Committee. Glasnost also enabled increased contact between Soviet citizens and the western world, particularly with the United States, contributing to the accelerating détente between the two nations.

### **Thaw in relations**

- In response to the Kremlin's military and political concessions, Reagan agreed to renew talks on economic issues and the scaling-back of the arms race. The first summit was held in November 1985 in Geneva, Switzerland. At one stage the two men, accompanied only by an interpreter, agreed in

principle to reduce each country's nuclear arsenal by 50 percent. A second summit was held in October 1986 in Reykjavík, Iceland. Talks went well until the focus shifted to Reagan's proposed Strategic Defense Initiative, which Gorbachev wanted to be eliminated. Reagan refused. The negotiations failed, but the third summit in 1987 led to a breakthrough with the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). The INF treaty eliminated all nuclear-armed, ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers (300 to 3,400 miles) and their infrastructure.

East–West tensions rapidly subsided through the mid-to-late 1980s, culminating with the final summit in Moscow in 1989, when Gorbachev and George H. W. Bush signed the START I arms control treaty. During the following year it became apparent to the Soviets that oil and gas subsidies, along with the cost of maintaining massive troops levels, represented a substantial economic drain. In addition, the security advantage of a buffer zone was recognised as irrelevant and the Soviets officially declared that they would no longer intervene in the affairs of allied states in Central and Eastern Europe.

In 1989, Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan, and by 1990 Gorbachev consented to German reunification, as the only alternative was a Tiananmen Square scenario. When the Berlin Wall came down, Gorbachev's "Common European Home" concept began to take shape.

On 3 December 1989, Gorbachev and George H.W. Bush declared the Cold War over at the Malta Summit. A year later,

the two former rivals were partners in the Gulf War against Iraq (August 1990 – February 1991).

### **Eastern Europe breaks away**

By 1989, the Soviet alliance system was on the brink of collapse, and, deprived of Soviet military support, the communist leaders of the Warsaw Pact states were losing power. Grassroots organizations, such as Poland's Solidarity movement, rapidly gained ground with strong popular bases.

The Pan-European Picnic in August 1989 in Hungary finally started a peaceful movement that the rulers in the Eastern Bloc could not stop. It was the largest movement of refugees from East Germany since the Berlin Wall was built in 1961 and ultimately brought about the fall of the Iron Curtain. The patrons of the picnic, Otto von Habsburg and the Hungarian Minister of State Imre Pozsgay, saw the planned event as an opportunity to test Mikhail Gorbachev's reaction.

The Austrian branch of the Paneuropean Union, which was then headed by Karl von Habsburg, distributed thousands of brochures inviting the GDR holidaymakers in Hungary to a picnic near the border at Sopron. But with the mass exodus at the Pan-European Picnic the subsequent hesitant behavior of the Socialist Unity Party of East Germany and the non-interference of the Soviet Union broke the dams. Now tens of thousands of media-informed East Germans made their way to Hungary, which was no longer willing to keep its borders completely closed or to oblige its border troops to use armed force. On the one hand, this caused disagreement among the Eastern European states and, on the other hand, it was clear

to the Eastern European population that the governments no longer had absolute power. In 1989, the communist governments in Poland and Hungary became the first to negotiate the organization of competitive elections. In Czechoslovakia and East Germany, mass protests unseated entrenched communist leaders. The communist regimes in Bulgaria and Romania also crumbled, in the latter case as the result of a violent uprising. Attitudes had changed enough that US Secretary of State James Baker suggested that the American government would not be opposed to Soviet intervention in Romania, on behalf of the opposition, to prevent bloodshed.

The tidal wave of change culminated with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, which symbolized the collapse of European communist governments and graphically ended the Iron Curtain divide of Europe. The 1989 revolutionary wave swept across Central and Eastern Europe and peacefully overthrew all of the Soviet-style Marxist–Leninist states: East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria; Romania was the only Eastern-bloc country to topple its communist regime violently and execute its head of state.

### **Soviet dissolution**

In the USSR itself, *glasnost* weakened the ideological bonds that held the Soviet Union together, and by February 1990, with the dissolution of the USSR looming, the Communist Party was forced to surrender its 73-year-old monopoly on state power. At the same time the union's component republics declared their autonomy from Moscow, with the Baltic states withdrawing from the union entirely.

Gorbachev used force to keep the Baltics from breaking away. The USSR was fatally weakened by a failed coup in August 1991. A growing number of Soviet republics, particularly Russia, threatened to secede from the USSR. The Commonwealth of Independent States, created on 21 December 1991, was a successor entity to the Soviet Union. The USSR was declared officially dissolved on 26 December 1991.

US President George H.W. Bush expressed his emotions: "The biggest thing that has happened in the world in my life, in our lives, is this: By the grace of God, America won the Cold War."

## **Aftermath**

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia drastically cut military spending, and restructuring the economy left millions unemployed. The capitalist reforms culminated in a recession in the early 1990s more severe than the Great Depression as experienced by the United States and Germany. In the 25 years following the end of the Cold War, only five or six of the post-socialist states are on a path to joining the rich and capitalist world while most are falling behind, some to such an extent that it will take several decades to catch up to where they were before the collapse of communism.

Communist parties outside the Baltic states were not outlawed and their members were not prosecuted. Just a few places attempted to exclude even members of communist secret services from decision-making. In a number of countries, the communist party simply changed its name and continued to function.

Stephen Holmes of the University of Chicago argued in 1996 that decommunization, after a brief active period, quickly ended in near-universal failure. After the introduction of lustration, demand for scapegoats has become relatively low, and former communists have been elected for high governmental and other administrative positions. Holmes notes that the only real exception was former East Germany, where thousands of former Stasi informers have been fired from public positions.

Holmes suggests the following reasons for the failure of decommunization:

- After 45–70 years of communist rule, nearly every family has members associated with the state. After the initial desire "to root out the reds" came a realization that massive punishment is wrong and finding only some guilty is hardly justice.
- The urgency of the current economic problems of postcommunism makes the crimes of the communist past "old news" for many citizens.
- Decommunization is believed to be a power game of elites.
- The difficulty of dislodging the social elite makes it require a totalitarian state to disenfranchise the "enemies of the people" quickly and efficiently and a desire for normalcy overcomes the desire for punitive justice.
- Very few people have a perfectly clean slate and so are available to fill the positions that require significant expertise.

The Cold War continues to influence world affairs. The post-Cold War world is considered to be unipolar, with the United States the sole remaining superpower. The Cold War defined the political role of the United States after World War II—by 1989 the United States had military alliances with 50 countries, with 526,000 troops stationed abroad, with 326,000 in Europe (two-thirds of which were in West Germany) and 130,000 in Asia (mainly Japan and South Korea). The Cold War also marked the zenith of peacetime military-industrial complexes, especially in the United States, and large-scale military funding of science. These complexes, though their origins may be found as early as the 19th century, snowballed considerably during the Cold War.

Cumulative US military expenditures throughout the entire Cold War amounted to an estimated \$8 trillion. Further nearly 100,000 Americans lost their lives in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Although Soviet casualties are difficult to estimate, as a share of gross national product the financial cost for the Soviet Union was much higher than that incurred by the United States.

In addition to the loss of life by uniformed soldiers, millions died in the superpowers' proxy wars around the globe, most notably in Southeast Asia. Most of the proxy wars and subsidies for local conflicts ended along with the Cold War; interstate wars, ethnic wars, revolutionary wars, as well as refugee and displaced persons crises have declined sharply in the post-Cold War years.

However, the aftermath of the Cold War is not considered to be concluded. Many of the economic and social tensions that were

exploited to fuel Cold War competition in parts of the Third World remain acute. The breakdown of state control in a number of areas formerly ruled by communist governments produced new civil and ethnic conflicts, particularly in the former Yugoslavia. In Central and Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War has ushered in an era of economic growth and an increase in the number of liberal democracies, while in other parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, independence was accompanied by state failure.

## **In popular culture**

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union invested heavily in propaganda designed to influence people around the world, especially using motion pictures. The Cold War endures as a popular topic reflected extensively in entertainment media, and continuing to the present with numerous post-1991 Cold War-themed feature films, novels, television, and other media. In 2013, a KGB-sleeper-agents-living-next-door action drama series, *The Americans*, set in the early 1980s, was ranked No. 6 on the Metacritic annual Best New TV Shows list; its six-season run concluded in May 2018.

## **Historiography**

As soon as the term "Cold War" was popularized to refer to post-war tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, interpreting the course and origins of the conflict has been a source of heated controversy among historians, political scientists, and journalists. In particular, historians have sharply disagreed as to who was responsible for the breakdown

of Soviet–US relations after the Second World War; and whether the conflict between the two superpowers was inevitable, or could have been avoided. Historians have also disagreed on what exactly the Cold War was, what the sources of the conflict were, and how to disentangle patterns of action and reaction between the two sides.

Although explanations of the origins of the conflict in academic discussions are complex and diverse, several general schools of thought on the subject can be identified. Historians commonly speak of three different approaches to the study of the Cold War: "orthodox" accounts, "revisionism", and "post-revisionism".

"Orthodox" accounts place responsibility for the Cold War on the Soviet Union and its expansion further into Europe. "Revisionist" writers place more responsibility for the breakdown of post-war peace on the United States, citing a range of US efforts to isolate and confront the Soviet Union well before the end of World War II. "Post-revisionists" see the events of the Cold War as more nuanced, and attempt to be more balanced in determining what occurred during the Cold War. Much of the historiography on the Cold War weaves together two or even all three of these broad categories.

## **Chapter 2**

# **Origins of the Cold War**

The Cold War originated in the breakdown of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies, the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc, in the years 1945–1949.

The origins derive from diplomatic (and occasional military) confrontations stretching back decades, followed by the issue of political boundaries in Central Europe and non-democratic control of the East by the Soviet Army. In the 1940s came economic issues (especially the Marshall Plan) and then the first major military confrontation, with a threat of a hot war, in the Berlin Blockade of 1948–1949. By 1949, the lines were sharply drawn and the Cold War was largely in place in Europe. Outside Europe, the starting points vary, but the conflict centered on the US' development of an informal empire in Southeast Asia in the mid-1940s.

Events preceding World War II and even the Communist takeover of Russia in 1917, underlay older tensions between the Soviet Union, European countries and the United States.

## **Russian Revolution**

In World War I, Britain, France and Russia comprised the Allied Powers from the start, and the US joined them in March 1917. The Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in November 1917 but German armies advanced rapidly across the borderlands. The Allies responded with an economic blockade against all of

Russia. In early March 1918, the Soviets followed through on the wave of popular disgust against the war and accepted harsh German peace terms with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. In the eyes of the Allies, Russia now was helping Germany win the war by freeing up a million German soldiers for the Western Front and by "relinquishing much of Russia's food supply, industrial base, fuel supplies, and communications with Western Europe." According to historian Spencer Tucker, the Allies felt, "The treaty was the ultimate betrayal of the Allied cause and sowed the seeds for the Cold War. With Brest-Litovsk the spectre of German domination in Eastern Europe threatened to become reality, and the Allies now began to think seriously about military intervention," and proceeded to step up their economic warfare against the Bolsheviks. Some Bolsheviks saw Russia as only the first step, planning to incite revolutions against capitalism in every western country, but the need for peace with Germany led Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin away from this position.

In 1918 Britain sent in money and some troops to support the anti-Bolshevik "White" counter-revolutionaries. This policy was spearheaded by Minister of War Winston Churchill. France, Japan and the United States also sent forces to help decide the Russian Civil War in the Whites' favor. Lenin made peace overtures to Wilson, and the American leader responded by sending diplomat William Bullitt to Moscow. The Allies ultimately rejected the ceasefire terms which Bullitt negotiated, believing that a White victory was imminent.

However, the Bolsheviks, operating a unified command from a central location, defeated all the opposition one by one and took full control of Russia, as well as breakaway provinces

such as Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Bainbridge Colby, the American Secretary of State, in 1920 announced an American policy of refusing to deal with the new regime.

Soviet Russia found itself isolated in international diplomacy. Lenin stated that the Soviet Union was surrounded by a "hostile capitalist encirclement" and he viewed diplomacy as a weapon to keep Soviet enemies divided. Lenin set up the Comintern, which called for revolutionary upheavals in capitalist countries. Nevertheless Communist revolutions failed in Germany, Bavaria, and Hungary and by the mid-1920s Moscow was no longer fomenting revolution.

## **Interwar diplomacy (1918–1939)**

Differences in the political and economic systems of Western democracies and the Soviet Union—dictatorship by one party versus pluralistic competition among parties, mass arrests and execution of dissidents versus free press and independent courts, state ownership of all farms and businesses versus capitalism, became simplified and refined in ideologies to represent two ways of life.

In 1933 the United States under President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially recognized the Soviet Union.

The long delay was caused by Moscow's repudiation of Tsarist-era debts, the undemocratic nature of the Soviet government, and its threats to overthrow capitalism using local Communist Parties. By 1933 these issues had faded and the opportunity for greater trade appealed to Washington.

## **Start of World War II (1939–1941)**

Moscow was angry with Western appeasement of Adolf Hitler after the signing of the Munich Pact in 1938 which gave Germany partial control of Czechoslovakia after conference in which the Soviet Union was not invited.

In 1939 after conducting negotiations with both the British and French group and Germany regarding potential military and political agreements, the Soviet Union and Germany signed a Commercial Agreement providing for the trade of certain German military and civilian equipment in exchange for Soviet raw materials and the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, commonly named after the foreign secretaries of the two countries (Molotov–Ribbentrop), which included a secret agreement to split Poland and Eastern Europe between the two states.

## **Wartime alliance (1941–1945)**

On June 22, 1941, Germany broke the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact with Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union through the territories that the two countries had previously divided. Stalin switched his cooperation from Hitler to Churchill. Britain and the Soviets signed a formal alliance, but the U.S. did not join until after the Attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Immediately, there was disagreement between Britain's ally Poland and the Soviet Union. The British and Poles strongly suspected that when Stalin was cooperating with Hitler, he ordered the execution of about 22,000 Polish officer POWs, at what was later to become known as the Katyn massacre. Still, the Soviets and the Western Allies were forced

to cooperate, despite their tensions. The U.S. shipped vast quantities of Lend-Lease material to the Soviets.

During the war, both sides disagreed on military strategy, especially the question of the opening of a second front against Germany in Western Europe. As early as July 1941, Stalin asked Britain to invade northern France, but Britain was in no position to carry out such a request. Stalin had also requested that the Western Allies open a second front from the early months of the war—which finally occurred on D-Day, June 6, 1944. The US and Britain initially indicated that they would open the second front in 1942, and then in 1943, but it was postponed both times.

Throughout World War II, the Soviet NKVD's mole Kim Philby had access to high-importance British MI6 intelligence, and passed it to the Soviets. He was able to alert the NKVD about all British intelligence on the Soviets—including what the American OSS had shared with the British about the Soviets.

The Soviets believed at the time, and charged throughout the Cold War, that the Americans intentionally delayed the opening of a second front against Germany in order to intervene only at the last minute so as to influence the peace settlement and dominate Europe. Historians such as John Lewis Gaddis dispute this claim, citing other military and strategic calculations for the timing of the Normandy invasion. In the meantime, the Russians suffered heavy casualties, with as many as twenty million dead. Nevertheless, Soviet perceptions (or misconceptions) of the West and *vice versa* left a strong undercurrent of tension and hostility between the Allied powers.

In turn, in 1944, the Soviets appeared to the Allies to have deliberately delayed the relief of the Polish underground's Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis. The Soviets did not supply the Uprising from the air, and for a significant time also refused to allow American air drops. On at least one occasion, a Soviet fighter shot down an RAF plane supplying the Polish insurgents in Warsaw. George Orwell was moved to make a public warning about Soviet postwar intentions. A 'secret war' also took place between the British SOE-backed AK and Soviet NKVD-backed partisans. British-trained Polish special forces agent Maciej Kalenkiewicz was killed by the Soviets at this time. The British and Soviets sponsored competing factions of resistance fighters in Yugoslavia and Greece, although both ceased after Churchill and Stalin made the Percentages Agreement.

Both sides, moreover, held very dissimilar ideas regarding the establishment and maintenance of post-war security. The Americans tended to understand security in situational terms, assuming that, if US-style governments and markets were established as widely as possible, countries could resolve their differences peacefully, through international organizations. The key to the US vision of security was a post-war world shaped according to the principles laid out in the 1941 Atlantic Charter—in other words, a liberal international system based on free trade and open markets. This vision would require a rebuilt capitalist Europe, with a healthy Germany at its center, to serve once more as a hub in global affairs.

This would also require US economic and political leadership of the postwar world. Europe needed the USA's assistance if it was to rebuild its domestic production and finance its

international trade. The USA was the only world power not economically devastated by the fighting. By the end of the war, it was producing around fifty percent of the world's industrial goods.

Soviet leaders, however, tended to understand security in terms of space. This reasoning was conditioned by Russia's historical experiences, given the frequency with which the country had been invaded over the preceding 150 years. The Second World War experience was particularly dramatic for the Russians: the Soviet Union suffered unprecedented devastation as a result of the Nazi onslaught, and over 20 million Soviet citizens died during the war; tens of thousands of Soviet cities, towns, and villages were leveled; and 30,100 Soviet factories were destroyed. In order to prevent a similar assault in the future, Stalin was determined to use the Red Army to gain control of Poland, to dominate the Balkans and to destroy utterly Germany's capacity to engage in another war. The problem was that Stalin's strategy risked confrontation with the equally powerful United States, who viewed Stalin's actions as a flagrant violation of the Yalta agreement.

At the end of the war in Europe, in May 1945, the Soviets insisted on occupying the Danish island of Bornholm, due to its strategic position at the entrance to the Baltic. When the local German commander insisted on surrendering to the Western Allies, as did German forces in the rest of Denmark, the Soviets bombed the island, causing heavy casualties and damage among a civilian population which was only lightly touched throughout the war, and then invaded the island and occupied it until mid-1946 - all of which can be considered as initial moves in the Cold War.

Even before the war came to an end, it seemed highly likely that cooperation between the Western powers and the USSR would give way to intense rivalry or conflict. This was due primarily to the starkly contrasting economic ideologies of the two superpowers, now quite easily the strongest in the world. Whereas the USA was a liberal, two-party democracy with an advanced capitalist economy, based on free enterprise and profit-making, the USSR was a one-party Marxist–Leninist State with a state-controlled economy where private wealth was all but outlawed. Nevertheless, the origins of the Cold War should also be seen as a historical episode that demarcated the spheres of interests of the United States and the Soviet Union.

### **Wartime conferences**

Several postwar disagreements between western and Soviet leaders were related to their differing interpretations of wartime and immediate post-war conferences.

The Tehran Conference in late 1943 was the first Allied conference in which Stalin was present. At the conference the Soviets expressed frustration that the Western Allies had not yet opened a second front against Germany in Western Europe. In Tehran, the Allies also considered the political status of Iran. At the time, the British had occupied southern Iran, while the Soviets had occupied an area of northern Iran bordering the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, at the end of the war, tensions emerged over the timing of the pull out of both sides from the oil-rich region.

The differences between Roosevelt and Churchill led to several separate deals with the Soviets. In October 1944, Churchill

traveled to Moscow and proposed the "percentages agreement" to divide the Balkans into respective spheres of influence, including giving Stalin predominance over Romania and Bulgaria and Churchill *carte blanche* over Greece. At the Yalta Conference of February 1945, Roosevelt signed a separate deal with Stalin in regard of Asia and refused to support Churchill on the issues of Poland and Reparations. Roosevelt ultimately approved the percentage agreement, but there was still apparently no firm consensus on the framework for a post-war settlement in Europe.

At the Second Quebec Conference, a high-level military conference held in Quebec City, 12–16 September 1944, Churchill and Roosevelt reached agreement on a number of matters, including a plan for Germany based on Henry Morgenthau Jr.'s original proposal. The memorandum drafted by Churchill provided for "eliminating the war-making industries in the Ruhr and the Saar ... looking forward to converting Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in its character." However, it no longer included a plan to partition the country into several independent states. On 10 May 1945, President Truman signed the U.S. occupation directive JCS 1067, which was in effect for over two years, and was enthusiastically supported by Stalin. It directed the U.S. forces of occupation to "...take no steps looking toward the economic rehabilitation of Germany".

Some historians have argued that the Cold War began when the US negotiated a separate peace with Nazi SS General Karl Wolff in northern Italy. The Soviet Union was initially not allowed to participate and the dispute led to heated correspondence between Franklin Roosevelt and Stalin.

General Wolff, a war criminal, appears to have been guaranteed immunity at the Nuremberg trials by Office of Strategic Services (OSS) commander (and later CIA director) Allen Dulles when they met in March 1945. Wolff and his forces were being considered to help implement Operation Unthinkable, a secret plan to invade the Soviet Union which Winston Churchill advocated during this period.

At the February 1945 Yalta Conference, the Allies attempted to define the framework for a postwar settlement in Europe. The Allies could not reach firm agreements on the crucial questions: the occupation of Germany, postwar reparations from Germany, and the fate of Poland. No final consensus was reached on Germany, other than to agree to a Soviet request for reparations totaling \$10 billion "as a basis for negotiations." Debates over the composition of Poland's postwar government were also acrimonious. The Yalta Conference ended with "a declaration on liberated Europe pledging respect for democratic forms and providing a diplomatic mechanism for constituting a generally acceptable Polish government".

Following the Allied victory in May, the Soviets effectively occupied Eastern Europe, while the US had much of Western Europe. In occupied Germany, the US and the Soviet Union established zones of occupation and a loose framework for four-power control with the ailing French and British.

### **Potsdam and the atomic bomb**

At the Potsdam Conference starting in late July 1945, the Allies met to decide how to administer the defeated Nazi

Germany, which had agreed to unconditional surrender nine weeks earlier on May 7 and May 8, 1945, VE day. Serious differences emerged over the future development of Germany and Eastern Europe. At Potsdam, the US was represented by a new president, Harry S. Truman, who on April 12 succeeded to the office upon Roosevelt's death. Truman was unaware of Roosevelt's plans for post-war engagement with the Soviet Union, and more generally uninformed about foreign policy and military matters.

The new president, therefore, was initially reliant on a set of advisers (including Ambassador to the Soviet Union Averell Harriman and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal). This group tended to take a harder line towards Moscow than Roosevelt had done. Administration officials favoring cooperation with the Soviet Union and the incorporation of socialist economies into a world trade system were marginalized. The UK was represented by a new prime minister, Clement Attlee, who had replaced Churchill after the Labour Party's defeat of the Conservatives in the 1945 general election.

The US had invited Britain into its atomic bomb project but kept it secret from the Soviet Union. Stalin became aware that the Americans were working on the bomb through his spy network, however. One week after the end of the Potsdam Conference, the US bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Shortly after the attacks, Stalin protested to US officials when Truman offered the Soviets little real influence in occupied Japan. Stalin was also outraged by the actual dropping of the bombs, calling them a “superbarbarity” and claiming that “the balance has been destroyed...That cannot be.” The Truman

administration intended to use its ongoing nuclear weapons program to pressure the Soviet Union in international relations. The immediate end of war material shipments from America to the USSR after the surrender of Germany also upset some politicians in Moscow, who believed this showed the U.S. had no intentions to support the USSR any more than they had to.

## **Creation of the Eastern Bloc**

After the war, Stalin sought to secure the Soviet Union's western border by installing communist-dominated regimes under Soviet influence in bordering countries. During and in the years immediately after the war, the Soviet Union annexed several countries as Soviet Socialist Republics within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Many of these were originally countries effectively ceded to it by Nazi Germany in the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, before Germany invaded the Soviet Union. These later annexed territories include Eastern Poland (incorporated into two different SSRs), Latvia (became Latvia SSR), Estonia (became Estonian SSR), Lithuania (became Lithuania SSR), part of eastern Finland (Karelo-Finnish SSR and annexed into the Russian SFSR) and northern Romania (became the Moldavian SSR).

Other states were converted into Soviet Satellite states, such as East Germany, the People's Republic of Poland, the People's Republic of Hungary, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Romania and the People's Republic of Albania, which aligned itself in the 1960s away from the Soviet Union and towards the People's Republic of China.

The defining characteristic of the Stalinist communism implemented in Eastern Bloc states was the unique symbiosis of the state with society and the economy, resulting in politics and economics losing their distinctive features as autonomous and distinguishable spheres.

Initially, Stalin directed systems that rejected Western institutional characteristics of market economies, democratic governance (dubbed "bourgeois democracy" in Soviet parlance) and the rule of law subduing discretionary intervention by the state. They were economically communist and depended upon the Soviet Union for significant amounts of materials. While in the first five years following World War II, massive emigration from these states to the West occurred, restrictions implemented thereafter stopped most East-West migration, except that under limited bilateral and other agreements.

## **Further division in the 1940s**

### **"Long Telegram" and "Mr. X"**

In February 1946, George F. Kennan's Long Telegram from Moscow helped articulate the growing hard line against the Soviets. The telegram argued that the Soviet Union was motivated by both traditional Russian imperialism and by Marxist ideology; Soviet behavior was inherently expansionist and paranoid, posing a threat to the United States and its allies. Later writing as "Mr. X" in his article "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947), Kennan drafted the classic argument for adopting a policy of "containment" toward the Soviet Union.

## **"Iron Curtain" speech**

On March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill, while at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, gave his speech "The Sinews of Peace," declaring that an "iron curtain" had descended across Europe. From the standpoint of the Soviets, the speech was an incitement for the West to begin a war with the USSR, as it called for an Anglo-American alliance against the Soviets "

## **Morgenthau and Marshall Plans**

Having lost 20 million people in the war, suffered German invasion twice in 30 years, and suffered tens of millions of casualties from onslaughts from the West three times in the preceding 150 years, the Soviet Union was determined to destroy Germany's capacity for another war.

This was in alignment with the U.S. policy which had foreseen returning Germany to a pastoral state without heavy industry (the Morgenthau Plan). On September 6, 1946, James F. Byrnes made a speech in Germany, repudiating the Morgenthau Plan and warning the Soviets that the US intended to maintain a military presence in Europe indefinitely.

As Byrnes admitted one month later, "The nub of our program was to win the German people [...] it was a battle between us and Russia over minds [...]" Because of the increasing costs of food imports to avoid mass-starvation in Germany, and with the danger of losing the entire nation to communism, the U.S. government abandoned the Morgenthau plan in September 1946 with Secretary of State James F. Byrnes' speech Restatement of Policy on Germany.

In January 1947, Truman appointed General George Marshall as Secretary of State, scrapped Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directive 1067, which embodied the Morgenthau Plan and supplanted it with JCS 1779, which decreed that an orderly and prosperous Europe requires the economic contributions of a stable and productive Germany.". Administration officials met with Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov and others to press for an economically self-sufficient Germany, including a detailed accounting of the industrial plants, good and infrastructure already removed by the Soviets. After six weeks of negotiations, Molotov refused the demands and the talks were adjourned. Marshall was particularly discouraged after personally meeting with Stalin, who expressed little interest in a solution to German economic problems. The United States concluded that a solution could not wait any longer. In a June 5, 1947 speech, comporting with the Truman Doctrine, Marshall announced a comprehensive program of American assistance to all European countries wanting to participate, including the Soviet Union and those of Eastern Europe, called the Marshall Plan.

With the initial planning for the Marshall plan in mid 1947, a plan which depended on a reactivated German economy, restrictions placed on German production were lessened. The roof for permitted steel production was for example raised from 25% of pre-war production levels to 50% of pre-war levels. The scrapping of JCS 1067 paved the way for the 1948 currency reform which halted rampant inflation.

Stalin opposed the Marshall Plan. He had built up the Eastern Bloc protective belt of Soviet controlled nations on his Western border, and wanted to maintain this buffer zone of states

combined with a weakened Germany under Soviet control. Fearing American political, cultural and economic penetration, Stalin eventually forbade Soviet Eastern bloc countries of the newly formed Cominform from accepting Marshall Plan aid.

In Czechoslovakia, that required a Soviet-backed Czechoslovak coup d'état of 1948, the brutality of which shocked Western powers more than any event so far and set in a motion a brief scare that war would occur and swept away the last vestiges of opposition to the Marshall Plan in the United States Congress. In September, 1947 the Central Committee secretary Andrei Zhdanov declared that the Truman Doctrine "intended for accordance of the American help to all reactionary regimes, that actively oppose to democratic people, bears an undisguised aggressive character."

## **Greece and Italy**

In Greece, during a civil war involving the communist-led partisan movement ELAS-EAM, British Special Forces terminated arms supplies to the ELA-ELAM, pro-monarchist armed forces were strengthened. On the political front, Americans, with British encouragement, attempted to dismantle ELAS-EAM socialist structures in the countryside, and an anti-communist swing gradually occurred.

Western Allies conducted meetings in Italy in March 1945 with German representatives to forestall a takeover by Italian communist resistance forces in northern Italy and to hinder the potential there for post-war influence of the civilian communist party. The affair caused a major rift between Stalin and Churchill, and in a letter to Roosevelt on 3 April Stalin

complained that the secret negotiations did not serve to "preserve and promote trust between our countries."

### ***Nazi–Soviet Relations and Falsifiers of History***

Relations further deteriorated when, in January 1948, the U.S. State Department also published a collection of documents titled *Nazi–Soviet Relations, 1939–1941: Documents from the Archives of The German Foreign Office*, which contained documents recovered from the Foreign Office of Nazi Germany revealing Soviet conversations with Germany regarding the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, including its secret protocol dividing eastern Europe, the 1939 German–Soviet Commercial Agreement, and discussions of the Soviet Union potentially becoming the fourth Axis Power. In response, one month later, the Soviet Union published *Falsifiers of History*, this book, edited and partially re-written by Stalin, attacked the West.

### **Berlin blockade and airlift**

The first major crisis in the emerging Cold War was the Berlin Blockade of 1948–49. Historian Carol K. Fink argues that this crisis, "occupies a special place in Cold War historiography, as an emblem of Soviet aggressiveness and Anglo-American resistance." After setbacks to Soviet plans through the Marshall Plan, the successful introduction of a new currency to West Germany, and massive electoral losses for Communist parties, Moscow decided to cut off land access to West Berlin by rail and highway, thereby initiating the Berlin Blockade. Because Berlin was located within the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany, the only available methods of supplying the city were three limited air corridors.

By February 1948, because of massive post-war military cuts, the entire United States army had been reduced to 552,000 men. Military forces in non-Soviet Berlin sectors totaled only 8,973 Americans, 7,606 British and 6,100 French. Soviet military forces in the Soviet sector that surrounded Berlin totaled one and a half million men.

The two United States regiments in Berlin would have provided little resistance against a Soviet attack. Therefore, a massive aerial supply campaign was initiated by the United States, Britain, France and other countries, the success of which caused Stalin to lift their blockade in May 1949. At no time did the Soviet military or the Politburo contemplate a military escalation of the Berlin crisis.

The United States, the Berlin crisis underscored the need to reverse the demobilization of the Army. On July 20, 1948, President Truman reopened the military draft. He called for nearly 10 million men to register for military service within the next two months.

The dispute over Germany escalated after Truman refused to give the Soviet Union reparations from West Germany's industrial plants because he believed it would hamper Germany's economic recovery further. Stalin responded by splitting off the Soviet sector of Germany as a communist state.

The dismantling of West German industry was finally halted in 1951, when Germany agreed to place its heavy industry under the control of the European Coal and Steel Community, which in 1952 took over the role of the International Authority for the Ruhr.

At other times there were signs of caution. Stalin observed his 1944 agreement with Churchill and did not aid the communists in the struggle against the British-supported anti-communist regime in Greece. In Finland he accepted a friendly, non-communist government; and Russian troops were withdrawn from Austria by the end of 1955.

## **Soviet military perspective**

The Soviet military was focused on its main mission, the defense of the Soviet Union. From that perspective, the formation of NATO in 1949 was the decisive threat, and became its starting point for the Cold War. Historian David Glantz argues that:

- Militarily, the Soviets considered themselves threatened by, first, the United States' atomic monopoly (broken in 1949) and, second, by the emergence of United States dominated military alliances, the most menacing of which was NATO. The Soviet Union responded strategically by preserving a large, expandable peacetime military establishment, keeping large military forces in conquered regions of Eastern Europe, and cloaking these forces within the political guise of an alliance (the Warsaw Pact), which could contend with NATO on a multilateral basis. The major thrust of Soviet military strategy was to possess a conventional military force whose offensive capabilities could check Western nuclear and conventional military power.

## **Other regions**

The Cold War took place worldwide, but it had a somewhat different timing and trajectory outside Europe. In Africa, decolonization took place first; it was largely accomplished in the 1950s. The main rivals then sought bases of support in the new national political alignments.

### **Latin America**

During World War II, the United States military operations had widespread support across Latin America, except for Argentina. After 1947, with the Cold War emerging in Europe, Washington made repeated efforts to encourage all the Latin American countries to take a Cold War anti-Communist position. They were reluctant to do so – for example, only Colombia sent soldiers to the United Nations contingent in the Korean War. The Soviet Union was quite weak across Latin America. Not until the late 1950s did Moscow achieve diplomatic or commercial relationships with most Latin American countries. Before then it had only two trade agreements (with Argentina and Mexico.) The communist movements that had existed in Brazil and elsewhere in the 1930s had been disbanded or outlawed. Washington exaggerated the dangers, and decided on a preemptive attack against a possible communist threat. It sought anti-communist resolutions at the annual meetings of the Pan American Union (renamed the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1948) and paid special attention to the growth of left-wing forces in Guatemala. A compromise was reached whereby the Latin American states agreed on vague statements of support for the American Cold War position, and

the United States provided expanded financial grants and loans to stimulate economic growth. In 1954, at the 10th Inter-American Conference in Caracas, Washington demanded a resolution that the establishment of a communist government in any American state was a threat to the peace of the hemisphere. Guatemala cast the only negative vote. Guatemala's military, with CIA encouragement, overthrew its left-wing government later that year. Fidel Castro engineered his revolutionary takeover of Cuba in 1957–58 with very little Soviet support. The United States and the smaller Latin countries, outvoted the larger powers by the required two-thirds majority in 1962 to identify Cuba as a communist regime and suspend it from the OAS.

### **Far East and Pacific**

After the war ended, Malaya was plunged into a state of emergency as British and Commonwealth forces fought a protracted counter-insurgency war against their former communist-led MPAJA ally, who had fought the Japanese and now demanded independence from Britain. In British Hong Kong, which had surrendered to Japan in December 1941, civil unrest occurred after Britain rapidly re-established rule at the end of the war.

Australia's entry into the Cold War came in 1950, when it rushed combat air and sea forces into the Korean War, two days after the Americans did. The Australian Prime Minister received a hero's welcome in Washington. The ANZUS military alliance with New Zealand and the United States was signed in July 1951; it was a plan for consultation and did not involve military planning like NATO. Public opinion in Australia was

intensely hostile to Japan after its wartime atrocities, but Japan was now an ally in the Cold War, so Australia's accepted the very generous soft peace treaty with Japan in 1951. Instead of worrying about a resurgent Japan, Australia now worried more about a possible Chinese threat.

## **Asia**

Following decades of struggle, in 1949 the Chinese Communists under Mao Zedong defeated Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist armies and took control of the mainland. The Nationalist leaders and much of China's upper class fled to Taiwan where they had American protection. Stalin had long supported Chiang Kai-shek, while also giving some help to the Communists. The United States had tried in 1945–1948 to bring the Nationalists and Communists together in a coalition, but had no success. The conflict was not therefore part of the Cold War until 1949–1959. By the late 1950s, however, China and the USSR were at sword's point, and became bitter enemies over ideological control of the Marxist–Leninist orthodoxy. The two set up rival communist organizations in countries across the world. The Cold War then became a three-way conflict.

France for many years had been dealing with a nationalist insurgency in Vietnam in which communists, led by Ho Chi Minh, played a prominent leadership role. In 1949, Mao's Communists took control of the north side of the China-Vietnam border, and began supporting the insurgents, especially by providing sanctuary from French attacks. Mark Lawrence and Frederik Logevall point out that "resurgent French colonialism became inextricably intertwined with Cold

War tensions, especially in the years after 1949." American pressure on France after 1949 tried to force France to give priority to fighting communism, rather than fighting Vietnamese nationalism.

## **Middle East**

The political situation in Iran was a flashpoint between the major players in 1945–46, with the Soviet Union sponsoring two breakaway provinces in northern Iran, adjacent to the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. Soviet troops were stationed in northwestern Iran during the war.

They not only refused to withdraw in 1945 but backed revolts that established short-lived, pro-Soviet separatist national states called the Azerbaijan People's Government and the Republic of Kurdistan.

The issue was debated at the United Nations, and in 1946 Moscow abandoned its position, and the conflict was permanently resolved peacefully, with a pro-western government resuming control. Iran did not become a major battlefield of the Cold War, but it had its own history of confrontation with Britain and the United States.

The long-standing conflict between Arabs and Jews in the Mandatory Palestine region continued after 1945, with Britain and in an increasingly impossible situation as the mandate holder. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 calling for a homeland for the Jews was supported in 1947 by both the Soviet Union and the United States. Both countries promptly Recognize the independent state of Israel in 1948. The Soviet Union later broke with Israel to support its Arab enemies. The region was

more of an independent trouble zone rather than a playing field of the Cold War, and was not a precipitating factor in the Cold War.

By 1953, Arab nationalism based in Egypt was a neutralizing force. The Soviet Union leaned increasingly toward Egypt. The United States based its Cold War coalition primarily on the Baghdad Pact of 1955 which formed Central Treaty Organization (**CENTO**), that included Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

## **Historians on the beginning of the Cold War**

While most historians trace its origins to the period immediately following World War II, others argue that it began with the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 when the Bolsheviks took power. In 1919 Lenin stated that his new state was surrounded by a "hostile capitalist encirclement", and he viewed diplomacy as a weapon that should be used in order to keep the Soviet Union's enemies divided. He began with a new Communist International ("Comintern"), based in Moscow, which was designed to plan for revolutionary upheavals abroad. It was ineffective—Communist uprisings all failed in Germany, Hungary and elsewhere. Historian Max Beloff argues that the Soviets saw "no prospect of permanent peace", with the 1922 Soviet Constitution proclaiming:

- Since the time of the formation of the soviet republics, the states of the world have divided into two camps: the camp of capitalism and the camp of

socialism. There - in the camp of capitalism - national enmity and inequality, colonial slavery, and chauvinism, national oppression and pogroms, imperialist brutalities and wars. Here - in the camp of socialism - mutual confidence and peace, national freedom and equality, a dwelling together in peace and the brotherly collaboration of peoples.

According to British historian Christopher Sutton:

- In what some have called the First Cold War, from Britain's intervention in the Russian Civil War in 1918 to its uneasy alliance with the Soviet Union against the Axis powers in 1941, British distrust of the revolutionary and regicidal Bolsheviks resulted in domestic, foreign, and colonial policies aimed at resisting the spread of communism. This conflict after 1945 took on new battlefields, new weapons, new players, and a greater intensity, but it was still fundamentally a conflict against Soviet imperialism (real and imagined).

The idea of long-term continuity is a minority scholarly view that has been challenged. Frank Ninkovich writes:

- As for the two cold wars thesis, the chief problem is that the two periods are incommensurable. To be sure, they were joined together by enduring ideological hostility, but in the post-World War I years Bolshevism was not a geopolitical menace. After World War II, in contrast, the Soviet Union was a superpower that combined ideological antagonism with the kind of geopolitical threat posed by

Germany and Japan in the Second World War. Even with more amicable relations in the 1920s, it is conceivable that post-1945 relations would have turned out much the same.

The usage of the term "Cold War" to describe the postwar tensions between the U.S.- and Soviet-led blocs was popularized by Bernard Baruch, a U.S. financier and an adviser to Harry Truman, who used the term during a speech before the South Carolina state legislature on April 16, 1947.

Since the term "Cold War" was popularized in 1947, there has been extensive disagreement in many political and scholarly discourses on what exactly were the sources of postwar tensions. In the American historiography, there has been disagreement as to who was responsible for the quick unraveling of the wartime alliance between 1945 and 1947, and on whether the conflict between the two superpowers was inevitable or could have been avoided. Discussion of these questions has centered in large part on the works of William Appleman Williams, Walter LaFeber, Gabriel Kolko and John Lewis Gaddis.

Officials in the Truman administration placed responsibility for postwar tensions on the Soviets, claiming that Stalin had violated promises made at Yalta, pursued a policy of expansionism in Eastern Europe, and conspired to spread communism throughout the world. Historians associated with the "Wisconsin School" of diplomatic history such as Williams, however, placed responsibility for the breakdown of postwar peace mostly on the U.S., citing a range of U.S. efforts to isolate and confront the Soviet Union well before the end of

World War II. According to Williams and later writers influenced by his work—such as LaFeber, author of the popular survey text *America, Russia, and the Cold War* (published in ten editions between 1967 and 2006)—U.S. policymakers shared an overarching concern with maintaining capitalism domestically. In order to ensure this goal, they pursued a policy of ensuring an "Open Door" to foreign markets for U.S. business and agriculture across the world. From this perspective, a growing economy domestically went hand-in-hand with the consolidation of U.S. power internationally.

Williams and LaFeber also dismissed the assumption that Soviet leaders were committed to postwar "expansionism." They cited evidence that Soviet Union's occupation of Eastern Europe had a defensive rationale, and Soviet leaders saw themselves as attempting to avoid encirclement by the United States and its allies. From this view, the Soviet Union was so weak and devastated after the end of the Second World War as to be unable to pose any serious threat to the U.S., which emerged after 1945 as the sole world power not economically devastated by the war, and also as the sole possessor of the atomic bomb until 1949.

Gaddis, however, argues that the conflict was less the lone fault of one side or the other and more the result of a plethora of conflicting interests and misperceptions between the two superpowers, propelled by domestic politics and bureaucratic inertia. While Gaddis does not hold either side as entirely responsible for the onset of the conflict, he argues that the Soviets should be held at least slightly more accountable for the problems. According to Gaddis, Stalin was in a much better position to compromise than his Western counterparts, given

his much broader power within his own regime than Truman, who had to contend with Congress and was often undermined by vociferous political opposition at home. Asking if it were possible to predict if the wartime alliance would fall apart within a matter of months, leaving in its place nearly a half century of cold war, Gaddis wrote in a 1997 essay, "Geography, demography, and tradition contributed to this outcome but did not determine it. It took men, responding unpredictably to circumstances, to forge the chain of causation; and it took [Stalin] in particular, responding predictably to his own authoritarian, paranoid, and narcissistic predisposition, to lock it into place."

Global historian PrasenjitDuara has placed the issue in a global context:

- The Cold War is increasingly treated as a global historical period beginning customarily in 1947 when the Truman Doctrine sought to contain communism and the expansion of Soviet influence, and ending with the decline and fall of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc in the late 1980s.

## Chapter 3

# Satellite State

A satellite state is a country that is formally independent in the world, but under heavy political, economic and military influence or control from another country. The term was coined by analogy to planetary objects orbiting a larger object, such as smaller moons revolving around larger planets, and is used mainly to refer to Central and Eastern European countries of the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War or to Mongolia or Tannu Tuva between 1924 and 1990, for example. As used for Central and Eastern European countries it implies that the countries in question were "satellites" under the hegemony of the Soviet Union. In some contexts it also refers to other countries in the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold War—such as North Korea (especially in the years surrounding the Korean War of 1950–1953) and Cuba (particularly after it joined the Comecon in 1972), and to some countries in the American sphere of influence—such as South Vietnam (particularly during the Vietnam war). In Western usage, the term has seldom been applied to states other than those in the Soviet orbit. In Soviet usage, the term applied to the states in the orbit of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the use of the phrase *satellite state* in English back at least as far as 1916.

In times of war or political tension, satellite states sometimes serve as buffers between an enemy country and the nation exerting control over the satellites. "Satellite state" is one of several contentious terms used to describe the (alleged)

subordination of one state to another. Other such terms include puppet state and neo-colony. In general, the term "satellite state" implies deep ideological and military allegiance to the hegemonic power, whereas "puppet state" implies political and military dependence, and "neo-colony" implies (often abject) economic dependence. Depending on which aspect of dependence is being emphasised, a state may fall into more than one category.

## **Soviet satellite states**

### **Interwar period**

When the Mongolian Revolution of 1921 broke out, Mongolian revolutionaries expelled Russian White Guards (during the Russian Civil War of 1917–1923 following the Communist October Revolution of 1917) from Mongolia, with the assistance of the Soviet Red Army. The revolution also officially ended Manchurian sovereignty over Mongolia, which had existed since 1691. Although the theocratic Bogd Khanate of Mongolia still nominally continued, with successive series of violent struggles, Soviet influence got ever stronger, and after the death of the Bogd Khaan ("Great Khan", or "Emperor"), the Mongolian People's Republic was proclaimed on November 26, 1924. A nominally independent and sovereign country, it has been described as being a satellite state of the Soviet Union in the years from 1924 until 1990.

During the Russian Civil War, the Soviet Red Army troops took Tuva in January 1920, which had also been part of the Qing Empire of China and a protectorate of Imperial Russia. The

Tuvan People's Republic, was proclaimed independent in 1921 and was a satellite state of Soviet Union until its annexation in 1944 by the Soviet Union.

Another early Soviet satellite state in Asia was the short-lived Far East Republic in Siberia.

## **Post-World War II**

At the end of World War II, most eastern and central European countries were occupied by the Soviet Union, and along with the Soviet Union made up what is sometimes called the Soviet Empire. The Soviets remained in these countries after the war's end. Through a series of coalition governments including Communist parties, and then a forced liquidation of coalition members disliked by the Soviets, Stalinist systems were established in each country. Stalinists gained control of existing governments, police, press and radio outlets in these countries. Soviet satellite states in Europe included:

-  People's Republic of Albania (1946–1961)
-  Polish People's Republic (1947–1989)
-  People's Republic of Bulgaria (1946–1990)
-  Romanian People's Republic (1947–1965)
-  Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (1948–1989)
-  German Democratic Republic (1949–1990)
-  Hungarian People's Republic (1949–1989)

The three Communist countries of Eastern Europe which managed to shake off Soviet control were Albania, Romania and Yugoslavia. The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia is sometimes referred to as a Soviet satellite, though it broke

from Soviet orbit in the 1948 Tito–Stalin split, with the Cominform offices being moved from Belgrade to Bucharest, and Yugoslavia subsequently formed the Non-Aligned Movement. The People's Socialist Republic of Albania, under the leadership of Stalinist Enver Hoxha, broke ties with the Soviet Union in the 1960 Soviet–Albanian split following the Soviet de-Stalinization process. In 1961, with Chinese support, Albania managed to wrestle itself from Soviet influence. The last country was Romania, with the de-satellization of Communist Romania starting in 1956 and ending by 1965. Romania was fully aligned with the Soviet Union until the early 1960s, throughout its first 15 years as a Communist state. However, serious economic disagreements with Moscow resulted in a 1964 formal rejection of all Soviet designs and interference in the affairs of other Communist states.

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan can also be considered a Soviet satellite; from 1978 until 1991, the central government in Kabul was aligned with the Eastern Bloc, and was directly supported by Soviet military between 1979 and 1989. The short-lived East Turkestan Republic (1944–1949) was a Soviet satellite until it was absorbed into the People's Republic of China along with the rest of Xinjiang.

The Mongolian People's Republic was a Soviet satellite from 1924 to 1991. It was so tightly controlled by the Soviet Union that it ceased to exist in February 1992, less than two months after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1945–1991); (later the Socialist Republic of Vietnam) was also a satellite state of the Soviet Union from independence day (2nd September 1945) to

the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991). The Soviet Union supplied the North Vietnam with a large amount of weapons, food, ... as well as sent experts to consult during the Vietnam War. After Vietnam War, the Soviet Union maintained billions of dollars in economic aid to Vietnam, which lasted until the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

## **Post–Cold War use of the term**

Some commentators have expressed concern that United States military and diplomatic interventions in the Middle East and elsewhere might lead, or perhaps have already led, to the existence of American satellite states. William Pfaff has warned that a permanent American presence in Iraq would "turn Iraq into an American satellite state". The term has also been used in the past to describe the relationship between Lebanon and Syria, as Syria has been accused of intervening in Lebanese political affairs. In addition, Eswatini and Lesotho have both been described as satellite states of South Africa.

## **Chapter 4**

# **Chinese Civil War**

The Chinese Civil War was a civil war in China fought between the Kuomintang (KMT)-led government of the Republic of China (ROC) and forces of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) lasting intermittently between 1927 and 1949. The war is generally divided into two phases with an interlude: from August 1927 to 1937, the KMT-CCP Alliance collapsed during the Northern Expedition, and the Nationalists controlled most of China. From 1937 to 1945, hostilities were put on hold, and the Second United Front fought the Japanese invasion of China with eventual help from the Allies of World War II. The civil war resumed with the Japanese defeat, and the CCP gained the upper hand in the final phase of the war from 1945 to 1949, generally referred to as the Chinese Communist Revolution.

The Communists gained control of mainland China and established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, forcing the leadership of the Republic of China to retreat to the island of Taiwan. A lasting political and military standoff between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait ensued, with the ROC in Taiwan and the PRC in mainland China both officially claiming to be the legitimate government of all China. No armistice or peace treaty has ever been signed.

## **Background**

Following the collapse of the Qing dynasty and the 1911 Revolution, Yuan Shikai assumed the presidency of the newly

formed Republic of China. Yuan was frustrated in a short-lived attempt to restore monarchy in China, and China fell into power struggle after his death in 1916. The Kuomintang, led by Sun Yat-sen, created a rival government in Guangzhou. After Sun's efforts to obtain aid from Western countries were ignored, he turned to the Soviet Union. In 1923, Sun and Soviet representative Adolph Joffe in Shanghai pledged Soviet assistance to China's unification in the Sun-Joffe Manifesto, a declaration of cooperation among the Comintern, KMT and CCP. Comintern agent Mikhail Borodin arrived in 1923 to aid in the reorganization and consolidation of both the CCP the KMT along the lines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The CCP and the KMT formed the First United Front.

In 1923, Sun sent Chiang Kai-shek, one of his lieutenants for several months of military and political study in Moscow. Chiang then became the head of the Whampoa Military Academy that trained the next generation of military leaders. The Soviets provided the academy with teaching material, organization and equipment, including munitions. They also provided education in many of the techniques for mass mobilization. With this aid, Sun raised a dedicated "army of the party," with which he hoped to defeat the warlords militarily. CCP members were also present in the academy, and many of them became instructors, including Zhou Enlai, who was made a political instructor.

Communist members were allowed to join the KMT on an individual basis. The CCP itself was still small at the time, having a membership of 300 in 1922 and only 1,500 by 1925. As of 1923, the KMT had 50,000 members.

However, after Sun died in 1925, the KMT split into left- and right-wing movements. KMT members worried that the Soviets were trying to destroy the KMT from inside using the CCP. The CCP then began movements in opposition of the Northern Expedition, passing a resolution against it at a party meeting.

Then, in March 1927, the KMT held its second party meeting where the Soviets helped pass resolutions against the Expedition and curbing Chiang's power. Soon, the KMT would be clearly divided.

Throughout this time the Soviet Union had a large impact on the Chinese Communist Party. They sent money and spies to support the Chinese Communist Party. Without their support, the communist party likely would have failed. There are documents showing of other communist parties in China at the time, one with as many as 10,000 members, but they all failed without support from the Soviet Union.

### **Northern Expedition and KMT-CCP split**

In early 1927, the KMT-CCP rivalry led to a split in the revolutionary ranks. The CCP and the left wing of the KMT had decided to move the seat of the KMT government from Guangzhou to Wuhan, where communist influence was strong. However, Chiang and Li Zongren, whose armies defeated warlord Sun Chuanfang, moved eastward toward Jiangxi. The leftists rejected Chiang's demand to eliminate Communist influence within KMT and Chiang denounced them for betraying Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People by taking orders from the Soviet Union. According to Mao Zedong,

Chiang's tolerance of the CCP in the KMT camp decreased as his power increased.

On 7 April, Chiang and several other KMT leaders held a meeting, during which they proposed that Communist activities were socially and economically disruptive and had to be undone for the Nationalist revolution to proceed. On 12 April, in Shanghai, many Communist members in the KMT were purged through hundreds of arrests and executions on the orders of General Bai Chongxi. The CCP referred to this as the *12 April Incident* or Shanghai Massacre. This incident widened the rift between Chiang and Wang Jingwei, the leader of the left wing faction of the KMT who controlled the city of Wuhan.

Eventually, the left wing of the KMT also expelled CCP members from the Wuhan government, which in turn was toppled by Chiang Kai-shek. The KMT resumed its campaign against warlords and captured Beijing in June 1928. Soon, most of eastern China was under the control of the Nanjing central government, which received prompt international recognition as the sole legitimate government of China. The KMT government announced, in conformity with Sun Yat-sen, the formula for the three stages of revolution: military unification, political tutelage, and constitutional democracy.

## **Communist insurgency (1927–1937)**

On 1 August 1927, the Communist Party launched an uprising in Nanchang against the Nationalist government in Wuhan. This conflict led to the creation of the Red Army. On 4 August, the main forces of the Red Army left Nanchang and headed southwards for an assault on Guangdong. Nationalist forces

quickly reoccupied Nanchang while the remaining members of the CCP in Nanchang went into hiding. A CCP meeting on 7 August confirmed the objective of the party was to seize the political power by force, but the CCP was quickly suppressed the next day on 8 August by the Nationalist government in Wuhan led by Wang Jingwei. On 14 August, Chiang Kai-shek announced his temporary retirement, as the Wuhan faction and Nanjing faction of the Kuomintang were allied once again with common goal of suppressing the Communist Party after the earlier split.



*Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, Commander-in-Chief of the National Revolutionary Army, emerged from the Northern Expedition as the leader of the Republic of China.*

Attempts were later made by the CCP to take the cities of Changsha, Shantou and Guangzhou. The Red Army consisting of mutinous former National Revolutionary Army (NRA) soldiers as well as armed peasants established control over several areas in southern China. KMT forces continued to attempt to suppress the rebellions. Then, in September, Wang Jingwei was

forced out of Wuhan. September also saw an unsuccessful armed rural insurrection, known as the Autumn Harvest Uprising, led by Mao Zedong. Borodin then returned to the USSR in October via Mongolia. In November, Chiang Kai-shek went to Shanghai and invited Wang to join him. On 11 December, the CCP started the Guangzhou Uprising, establishing a soviet there the next day, but lost the city by 13 December to a counter-attack under the orders of General Zhang Fakui. On 16 December, Wang Jingwei fled to France. There were now three capitals in China: the internationally recognized republic capital in Beijing, the CCP and left-wing KMT at Wuhan and the right-wing KMT regime at Nanjing, which would remain the KMT capital for the next decade.

This marked the beginning of a ten-year armed struggle, known in mainland China as the "Ten-Year Civil War" (十年内战) which ended with the Xi'an Incident when Chiang Kai-shek was forced to form the Second United Front against invading forces from the Empire of Japan. In 1930 the Central Plains War broke out as an internal conflict of the KMT. It was launched by Feng Yuxiang, Yan Xishan and Wang Jingwei. The attention was turned to root out remaining pockets of Communist activity in a series of five encirclement campaigns. The first and second campaigns failed and the third was aborted due to the Mukden Incident.

The fourth campaign (1932–1933) achieved some early successes, but Chiang's armies were badly mauled when they tried to penetrate into the heart of Mao's Soviet Chinese Republic. During these campaigns, KMT columns struck swiftly into Communist areas, but were easily engulfed by the vast countryside and were not able to consolidate their foothold.

Finally, in late 1934, Chiang launched a fifth campaign that involved the systematic encirclement of the Jiangxi Soviet region with fortified blockhouses. Unlike previous campaigns in which they penetrated deeply in a single strike, this time the KMT troops patiently built blockhouses, each separated by about eight kilometres (five miles), to surround the Communist areas and cut off their supplies and food sources.



*NRA soldiers marching*



*NRA troops firing artillery at Communist forces*

In October 1934 the CCP took advantage of gaps in the ring of blockhouses (manned by the forces of a warlord ally of Chiang

Kai-shek's, rather than regular KMT troops) and broke out of the encirclement. The warlord armies were reluctant to challenge Communist forces for fear of losing their own men and did not pursue the CCP with much fervor. In addition, the main KMT forces were preoccupied with annihilating Zhang Guotao's army, which was much larger than Mao's. The massive military retreat of Communist forces lasted a year and covered what Mao estimated as 12,500 km (25,000 Li); it became known as the Long March. The Long March was a military retreat taken on by the Chinese Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong to evade the pursuit or attack of the Kuomintang army. It consisted of a series of marches, during which numerous Communist armies in the south escaped to the north and west. Over the course of the march from Jiangxi the First Front Army, led by an inexperienced military commission, was on the brink of annihilation by Chiang Kai Shek's troops as their stronghold was in Jiangxi. The Communists, under the command of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, "escaped in a circling retreat to the west and north, which reportedly traversed over 9,000 kilometers over 370 days." The route passed through some of the most difficult terrain of western China by traveling west, and then northwards towards Shaanxi. "In November 1935, shortly after settling in northern Shaanxi, Mao officially took over Zhou Enlai's leading position in the Red Army. Following a major reshuffling of official roles, Mao became the chairman of the Military Commission, with Zhou and Deng Xiaoping as vice-chairmen." This marked Mao's position as the pre-eminent leader of the Party, with Zhou in second position to him.

The march ended when the CCP reached the interior of Shaanxi. Zhang Guotao's army, which took a different route

through northwest China, was largely destroyed by the forces of Chiang Kai-shek and his Chinese Muslim allies, the Ma clique. Along the way, the Communist army confiscated property and weapons from local warlords and landlords, while recruiting peasants and the poor, solidifying its appeal to the masses. Of the 90,000–100,000 people who began the Long March from the Soviet Chinese Republic, only around 7,000–8,000 made it to Shaanxi. The remnants of Zhang's forces eventually joined Mao in Shaanxi, but with his army destroyed, Zhang, even as a founding member of the CCP, was never able to challenge Mao's authority. Essentially, the great retreat made Mao the undisputed leader of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Kuomintang used Khampa troops—who were former bandits—to battle the Communist Red Army as it advanced and to undermine local warlords who often refused to fight Communist forces to conserve their own strength. The KMT enlisted 300 "Khampa bandits" into its Consolatory Commission military in Sichuan, where they were part of the effort of the central government to penetrate and destabilize local Han warlords such as Liu Wenhui. The government was seeking to exert full control over frontier areas against the warlords. Liu had refused to battle the Communists in order to conserve his army. The Consolatory Commission forces were used to battle the Red Army, but they were defeated when their religious leader was captured by the Communists.

In 1936, Zhou Enlai and Zhang Xueliang grew closer, with Zhang even suggesting that he join the CCP. However, this was turned down by the Comintern in the USSR. Later on, Zhou persuaded Zhang and Yang Hucheng, another warlord, to

instigate the Xi'an Incident. Chiang was placed under house arrest and forced to stop his attacks on the Red Army, instead focusing on the Japanese threat.

## **Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945)**

During Japan's invasion and occupation of Manchuria Chiang Kai-shek saw the CCP as the greater threat. Chiang refused to ally with the CCP, preferring to unite China by eliminating the warlord and CCP forces first. He believed his forces too weak to face the Japanese Imperial Army; only after unification could the KMT mobilize against Japan. He ignored the Chinese people's discontent and anger at the KMT policy of compromise with the Japanese, instead ordering KMT generals Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng to suppress the CCP. However, their provincial forces suffered significant casualties in battles with the Red Army.

On 12 December 1936, the disgruntled Zhang and Yang conspired to kidnap Chiang and force him into a truce with the CCP. The incident became known as the Xi'an Incident. Both parties suspended fighting to form a Second United Front to focus their energies and fight the Japanese. In 1937 Japan launched its full-scale invasion of China and its well-equipped troops overran KMT defenders in northern and coastal China.

The alliance of CCP and KMT was in name only. Unlike the KMT forces, CCP troops shunned conventional warfare and instead waged guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. The level of actual cooperation and coordination between the CCP and

KMT during World War II was minimal. In the midst of the Second United Front, the CCP and the KMT were still vying for territorial advantage in "Free China" (i.e., areas not occupied by the Japanese or ruled by Japanese puppet governments such as Manchukuo and the Reorganized National Government of China).

The situation came to a head in late 1940 and early 1941 when clashes between Communist and KMT forces intensified. Chiang demanded in December 1940 that the CCP's New Fourth Army evacuate Anhui and Jiangsu Provinces, due to its provocation and harassment of KMT forces in this area. Under intense pressure, the New Fourth Army commanders complied. The following year they were ambushed by KMT forces during their evacuation, which led to several thousand deaths. It also ended the Second United Front, formed earlier to fight the Japanese.

As clashes between the CCP and KMT intensified, countries such as the United States and the Soviet Union attempted to prevent a disastrous civil war. After the New Fourth Army incident, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent special envoy Lauchlin Currie to talk with Chiang Kai-shek and KMT party leaders to express their concern regarding the hostility between the two parties, with Currie stating that the only ones to benefit from a civil war would be the Japanese. The Soviet Union, allied more closely with the CCP, sent an imperative telegram to Mao in 1941, warning that civil war would also make the situation easier for the Japanese military. Due to the international community's efforts, there was a temporary and superficial peace. Chiang criticized the CCP in 1943 with the propaganda piece *China's Destiny*, which questioned the CCP's

power after the war, while the CCP strongly opposed Chiang's leadership and referred to his regime as fascist in an attempt to generate a negative public image. Both leaders knew that a deadly battle had begun between themselves.

In general, developments in the Second Sino-Japanese War were to the advantage of the CCP, as its guerrilla war tactics had won them popular support within the Japanese-occupied areas. However, the KMT had to defend the country against the main Japanese campaigns, since it was the legal Chinese government, and this proved costly to Chiang Kai-shek and his troops. Japan launched its last major offensive against the KMT, Operation Ichi-Go, in 1944; this resulted in the severe weakening of Chiang's forces. The CCP also suffered fewer losses through its guerrilla tactics. By the end of the war, the Red Army had grown to more than 1.3 million members, with a separate militia of over 2.6 million. About one hundred million people lived in CCP-controlled zones.

## **Immediate post-war clashes (1945–1946)**

Under the terms of the Japanese unconditional surrender dictated by the United States, Japanese troops were ordered to surrender to KMT troops and not to the CCP, which was present in some of the occupied areas. In Manchuria, however, where the KMT had no forces, the Japanese surrendered to the Soviet Union. Chiang Kai-shek ordered the Japanese troops to remain at their post to receive the Kuomintang and not surrender their arms to the Communists.

The first post-war peace negotiation, attended by both Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong, was in Chongqing from 28 August to 10 October 1945. It concluded with the signing of the Double Tenth Agreement. Both sides stressed the importance of a peaceful reconstruction, but the conference did not produce any concrete results. Battles between the two sides continued even as peace negotiations were in progress, until the agreement was reached in January 1946. However, large campaigns and full-scale confrontations between the CCP and Chiang's troops were temporarily avoided.

In the last month of World War II in East Asia, Soviet forces launched the huge Manchurian Strategic Offensive Operation against the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchuria and along the Chinese-Mongolian border. This operation destroyed the Kwantung Army in just three weeks and left the USSR occupying all of Manchuria by the end of the war in a total power vacuum of local Chinese forces. Consequently, the 700,000 Japanese troops stationed in the region surrendered. Later in the year Chiang Kai-shek realized that he lacked the resources to prevent a CCP takeover of Manchuria following the scheduled Soviet departure. He therefore made a deal with the Soviets to delay their withdrawal until he had moved enough of his best-trained men and modern material into the region. However, the Soviets refused permission for the Nationalist troops to traverse its territory. KMT troops were then airlifted by the US to occupy key cities in North China, while the countryside was already dominated by the CCP. On 15 November 1945, the ROC began a campaign to prevent the CCP from strengthening its already strong base. The Soviets spent the extra time systematically dismantling the extensive

Manchurian industrial base (worth up to \$2 billion) and shipping it back to their war-ravaged country.

In 1945–46, during the Soviet Red Army Manchurian campaign, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin commanded Marshal Rodion Malinovsky to give Mao Zedong most Imperial Japanese Army weapons that were captured.

Chiang Kai-shek's forces pushed as far as Chinchow (Jinzhou) by 26 November 1945, meeting with little resistance. This was followed by a Communist offensive on the Shandong Peninsula that was largely successful, as all of the peninsula, except what was controlled by the US, fell to the Communists. The truce fell apart in June 1946 when full-scale war between CCP and KMT forces broke out on 26 June 1946. China then entered a state of civil war that lasted more than three years.

## **Resumed fighting (1946–1949)**

### **Background and disposition of forces**

By the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the power of the Communist Party grew considerably. Their main force grew to 1.2 million troops, backed with additional militia of 2 million, totalling 3.2 million troops. Their "Liberated Zone" in 1945 contained 19 base areas, including one-quarter of the country's territory and one-third of its population; this included many important towns and cities. Moreover, the Soviet Union turned over all of its captured Japanese weapons and a substantial amount of their own supplies to the Communists, who received Northeastern China from the Soviets as well.

In March 1946, despite repeated requests from Chiang, the Soviet Red Army under the command of Marshal Rodion Malinovsky continued to delay pulling out of Manchuria, while Malinovsky secretly told the CCP forces to move in behind them, which led to full-scale war for the control of the Northeast. These favorable conditions also facilitated many changes inside the Communist leadership: the more radical hard-line faction who wanted a complete military take-over of China finally gained the upper hand and defeated the careful opportunists. Prior to giving control to Communist leaders, on 27 March Soviet diplomats requested a joint venture of industrial development with the Nationalist Party in Manchuria.



*Map showing Three Campaigns during the Chinese Civil War*

Although General Marshall stated that he knew of no evidence that the CCP was being supplied by the Soviet Union, the CCP

was able to utilize a large number of weapons abandoned by the Japanese, including some tanks, but it was not until large numbers of well-trained KMT troops began surrendering and joining the Communist forces that the CCP was finally able to master the hardware. However, despite the disadvantage in military hardware, the CCP's ultimate trump card was its land reform policy. The CCP continued to make the irresistible promise in the countryside to the massive number of landless and starving peasants that by fighting for the CCP they would be given their own land to grow crops once the victory was won.

This strategy enabled the CCP to access an almost unlimited supply of manpower for both combat and logistical purposes; despite suffering heavy casualties throughout many of the war's campaigns, manpower continued to pour in massively. For example, during the Huaihai Campaign alone the CCP was able to mobilize 5,430,000 peasants to fight against the KMT forces.



*Nationalist warplanes being prepared for an air raid on  
Communist bases*

After the war with the Japanese ended, Chiang Kai-shek quickly moved KMT troops to newly liberated areas to prevent Communist forces from receiving the Japanese surrender. The US airlifted many KMT troops from central China to the Northeast (Manchuria). President Harry S. Truman was very clear about what he described as "using the Japanese to hold off the Communists." In his memoirs he writes:

It was perfectly clear to us that if we told the Japanese to lay down their arms immediately and march to the seaboard, the entire country would be taken over by the Communists. We therefore had to take the unusual step of using the enemy as a garrison until we could airlift Chinese National troops to South China and send Marines to guard the seaports.

- — *President Truman*

Using the pretext of "receiving the Japanese surrender," business interests within the KMT government occupied most of the banks, factories and commercial properties, which had previously been seized by the Imperial Japanese Army. They also conscripted troops at an accelerated pace from the civilian population and hoarded supplies, preparing for a resumption of war with the Communists. These hasty and harsh preparations caused great hardship for the residents of cities such as Shanghai, where the unemployment rate rose dramatically to 37.5%.

The US strongly supported the Kuomintang forces. About 50,000 US soldiers were sent to guard strategic sites in Hupeh and Shandong in Operation Beleaguer. The US equipped and trained KMT troops, and transported Japanese and Koreans back to help KMT forces to occupy liberated zones as well as to

contain Communist-controlled areas. According to William Blum, American aid included substantial amounts of mostly surplus military supplies, and loans were made to the KMT. Within less than two years after the Sino-Japanese War, the KMT had received \$4.43 billion from the US—most of which was military aid.

## **Outbreak of war**

As postwar negotiations between the Nationalist government in Nanjing and the Communist Party failed, the civil war between these two parties resumed. This stage of war is referred to in mainland China and Communist historiography as the "War of Liberation" (Chinese: 解放战争; pinyin: *JiěfàngZhànzhēng*). On 20 July 1946, Chiang Kai-shek launched a large-scale assault on Communist territory in North China with 113 brigades (a total of 1.6 million troops). This marked the first stage of the final phase in the Chinese Civil War.



*The PLA enters Beijing in the Pingjin Campaign.*

Knowing their disadvantages in manpower and equipment, the CCP executed a "passive defense" strategy. It avoided the strong points of the KMT army and was prepared to abandon territory in order to preserve its forces.

In most cases the surrounding countryside and small towns had come under Communist influence long before the cities. The CCP also attempted to wear out the KMT forces as much as possible.

This tactic seemed to be successful; after a year, the power balance became more favorable to the CCP. They wiped out 1.12 million KMT troops, while their strength grew to about two million men.

In March 1947 the KMT achieved a symbolic victory by seizing the CCP capital of Yan'an. The Communists counterattacked soon afterwards; on 30 June 1947 CCP troops crossed the Yellow River and moved to the Dabie Mountains area, restored and developed the Central Plain. At the same time,

Communist forces also began to counterattack in Northeastern China, North China and East China.

By late 1948, the CCP eventually captured the northern cities of Shenyang and Changchun and seized control of the Northeast after suffering numerous setbacks while trying to take the cities, with the decisive Liaoshen Campaign.

The New 1st Army, regarded as the best KMT army, was forced to surrender after the CCP conducted a brutal six-month siege of Changchun that resulted in more than 150,000 civilian deaths from starvation.



*Chinese FT tanks*

The capture of large KMT units provided the CCP with the tanks, heavy artillery and other combined-arms assets needed to execute offensive operations south of the Great Wall. By April 1948 the city of Luoyang fell, cutting the KMT army off from Xi'an. Following a fierce battle, the CCP captured Jinan and Shandong province on 24 September 1948. The Huaihai Campaign of late 1948 and early 1949 secured east-central China for the CCP. The outcome of these encounters were decisive for the military outcome of the civil war.

The Pingjin Campaign resulted in the Communist conquest of northern China. It lasted 64 days, from 21 November 1948 to 31 January 1949. The PLA suffered heavy casualties while securing Zhangjiakou, Tianjin along with its port and garrison at Dagu and Beiping. The CCP brought 890,000 troops from the northeast to oppose some 600,000 KMT troops. There were 40,000 CCP casualties at Zhangjiakou alone. They in turn killed, wounded or captured some 520,000 KMT during the campaign.

After achieving decisive victory at Liaoshen, Huaihai and Pingjin campaigns, the CCP wiped out 144 regular and 29 irregular KMT divisions, including 1.54 million veteran KMT

troops, which significantly reduced the strength of Nationalist forces. Stalin initially favored a coalition government in postwar China, and tried to persuade Mao to stop the CCP from crossing the Yangtze and attacking the KMT positions south of the river. Mao rejected Stalin's position and on 21 April, and began the Yangtze River Crossing Campaign.

On 23 April they captured the KMT's capital, Nanjing. The KMT government retreated to Canton (Guangzhou) until 15 October, Chongqing until 25 November, and then Chengdu before retreating to Taiwan on 7 December.

By late 1949 the People's Liberation Army was pursuing remnants of KMT forces southwards in southern China, and only Tibet was left. In addition, the Ili Rebellion was a Soviet-backed revolt by the Second East Turkestan Republic against the KMT from 1944 to 1949, as the Mongolians in the People's Republic were in a border dispute with the Republic of China.

A Chinese Muslim Hui cavalry regiment, the 14th Tungan Cavalry, was sent by the Chinese government to attack Mongol and Soviet positions along the border during the Pei-ta-shan Incident.

The Kuomintang made several last-ditch attempts to use Khampa troops against the Communists in southwest China. The Kuomintang formulated a plan in which three Khampa divisions would be assisted by the Panchen Lama to oppose the Communists. Kuomintang intelligence reported that some Tibetan tusi chiefs and the Khampa Su Yonghe controlled 80,000 troops in Sichuan, Qinghai and Tibet. They hoped to use them against the Communist army.

## **Fighting subsidies**

On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China with its capital at Beiping, which was returned to the former name Beijing. Chiang Kai-shek and approximately two million Nationalist soldiers retreated from mainland China to the island of Taiwan in December after the PLA advanced into the Sichuan province. Isolated Nationalist pockets of resistance remained in the area, but the majority of the resistance collapsed after the fall of Chengdu on 10 December 1949, with some resistance continuing in the far south.

A PRC attempt to take the ROC-controlled island of Quemoy was thwarted in the Battle of Kuningtou, halting the PLA advance towards Taiwan. In December 1949, Chiang proclaimed Taipei the temporary capital of the Republic of China and continued to assert his government as the sole legitimate authority in China.

The Communists' other amphibious operations of 1950 were more successful: they led to the Communist conquest of Hainan Island in April 1950, capture of Wanshan Islands off the Guangdong coast (May–August 1950), Zhoushan Island off Zhejiang (May 1950).

## **Aftermath**

The Communist military forces suffered 1.3 million combat casualties in the 1945–1949 phase of the war: 260,000 killed, 190,000 missing, and 850,000 wounded, discounting irregulars. Nationalist casualties in the same phase were

recorded after the war by the PRC 5,452,700 regulars and 2,258,800 irregulars. Most observers expected Chiang's government to eventually fall to the imminent invasion of Taiwan by the People's Liberation Army, and the US was initially reluctant in offering full support for Chiang in their final stand. US President Harry S. Truman announced on 5 January 1950 that the United States would not engage in any dispute involving the Taiwan Strait, and that he would not intervene in the event of an attack by the PRC. The situation quickly changed after the onset of the Korean War in June 1950. This led to changing political climate in the US, and President Truman ordered the United States Seventh Fleet to sail to the Taiwan Strait as part of the containment policy against potential Communist advance.

In June 1949 the ROC declared a "closure" of all mainland China ports and its navy attempted to intercept all foreign ships. The closure was from a point north of the mouth of Min River in Fujian to the mouth of the Liao River in Liaoning. Since mainland China's railroad network was underdeveloped, north–south trade depended heavily on sea lanes. ROC naval activity also caused severe hardship for mainland China fishermen.

After losing mainland China, a group of approximately 3,000 KMT Central soldiers retreated to Burma and continued launching guerrilla attacks into south China during the Kuomintang Islamic Insurgency in China (1950–1958) and Campaign at the China–Burma Border. Their leader, Gen. Li Mi, was paid a salary by the ROC government and given the nominal title of Governor of Yunnan. Initially, the US supported these remnants and the Central Intelligence Agency

provided them with military aid. After the Burmese government appealed to the United Nations in 1953, the US began pressuring the ROC to withdraw its loyalists. By the end of 1954 nearly 6,000 soldiers had left Burma and General Li declared his army disbanded. However, thousands remained, and the ROC continued to supply and command them, even secretly supplying reinforcements at times to maintain a base close to China.

After the ROC complained to the United Nations against the Soviet Union for violating the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance to support the CCP, the UN General Assembly Resolution 505 was adopted on 1 February 1952, condemning the Soviet Union.

Though viewed as a military liability by the US, the ROC viewed its remaining islands in Fujian as vital for any future campaign to defeat the PRC and retake mainland China. On 3 September 1954, the First Taiwan Strait Crisis began when the PLA started shelling Kinmen and threatened to take the Dachen Islands in Zhejiang. On 20 January 1955, the PLA took nearby Yijiangshan Island, with the entire ROC garrison of 720 troops killed or wounded defending the island. On 24 January of the same year, the United States Congress passed the Formosa Resolution authorizing the President to defend the ROC's offshore islands. The First Taiwan Straits crisis ended in March 1955 when the PLA ceased its bombardment. The crisis was brought to a close during the Bandung conference.

The Second Taiwan Strait Crisis began on 23 August 1958 with air and naval engagements between PRC and ROC forces, leading to intense artillery bombardment of Quemoy (by the

PRC) and Amoy (by the ROC), and ended on November of the same year. PLA patrol boats blockaded the islands from ROC supply ships. Though the US rejected Chiang Kai-shek's proposal to bomb mainland China artillery batteries, it quickly moved to supply fighter jets and anti-aircraft missiles to the ROC. It also provided amphibious assault ships to land supplies, as a sunken ROC naval vessel was blocking the harbor. On 7 September the US escorted a convoy of ROC supply ships and the PRC refrained from firing.

The Third Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995–96 escalated tensions between both sides when the PRC tested a series of missiles not far from Taiwan, although, arguably, Beijing ran the test to shift the 1996 presidential election vote in favor of the KMT, already facing a challenge from the opposition Democratic Progressive Party which did not agree with the "One China Policy" shared by the CCP and KMT.

### **Political fallout**

On 25 October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly admitted the PRC and expelled the ROC, which had been a founding member of the United Nations and was one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Representatives of Chiang Kai-shek refused to recognise their accreditations as representatives of China and left the assembly. Recognition for the People's Republic of China soon followed from most other member nations, including the United States.

By 1984 PRC and ROC began to de-escalate their hostilities through diplomatic relations with each other, and cross-straits trade and investment has been growing ever since. The state of

war was officially declared over by the ROC in 1991. Despite the end of the hostilities, the two sides have never signed any agreement or treaty to officially end the war. According to Mao Zedong, there were three ways of "staving off imperialist intervention in the short term" during the continuation of the Chinese Revolution. The first was through a rapid completion of the military takeover of the country, and through showing determination and strength against "foreign attempts at challenging the new regime along its borders." The second was by "formalising a comprehensive military alliance with the Soviet Union," which would dedicate Soviet power to directly defending China against its enemies; this aspect became extensively significant given the backdrop of the start of the Cold War. And finally the regime had to "root out its domestic opponents : the heads of secret societies, religious sects, independent unions, or tribal and ethnic organisations." By destroying the basis of domestic reaction, Mao believed a safer world for the Chinese revolution to spread in would come into existence.

Under the new ROC president Lee Teng-hui, the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion was renounced in May 1991, thus ending the chances of the Kuomintang's conquest to retake the mainland.

With the election in 2000 of Democratic Progressive Party candidate Chen Shui-bian, a party other than the KMT gained the presidency for the first time in Taiwan. The new president did not share the Chinese nationalist ideology of the KMT and CCP. This led to tension between the two sides, although trade and other ties such as the 2005 Pan-Blue visit continued to increase.

With the election of President Ma Ying-jeou (KMT) in 2008, significant warming of relations resumed between Taipei and Beijing, with high-level exchanges between the semi-official diplomatic organizations of both states such as the Chen-Chiang summit series. Although the Taiwan Strait remains a potential flash point, regular direct air links were established in 2009.

## **Reasons for the Communist victory**

The historian Rana Mitter concluded that the Nationalist government in 1945 had been "fundamentally destroyed by the war with Japan."

Historian Odd Arne Westad says the Communists won the Civil War because they made fewer military mistakes than Chiang Kai-shek and also because in his search for a powerful centralized government, Chiang antagonized too many interest groups in China. Furthermore, his party was weakened in the war against the Japanese. Meanwhile, the Communists targeted different groups, such as peasants, and brought them to their side.

Chiang wrote in his diary in June 1948: "After the fall of Kaifeng our conditions worsened and became more serious. I now realized that the main reason our nation has collapsed, time after time throughout our history, was not because of superior power used by our external enemies, but because of disintegration and rot from within."

Although officially the Soviet Union and North Korea were not supporting the Communist forces, they gave logistic support,

transported and helped to deploy the Communist soldiers to fight the Kuomintang, also transported sick and wounded soldiers, gave the weapons of Manchukuo to the Chinese Communist Party. Strong American support for the Nationalists was hedged with the failure of the Marshall Mission, and then stopped completely mainly because of KMT corruption (such as the notorious Yangtze Development Corporation controlled by H.H. Kung and T. V. Soong's family) and KMT's military setback in Northeast China.

The main advantage of the Chinese Communist Party was the "extraordinary cohesion" within the top level of its leadership. These skills were not only secured from defections that came about during difficult times but also coupled with "communications and top level debates over tactics." The charismatic style of leadership of Mao Zedong created a "unity of purpose" and a "unity of command" which the KMT lacked. Apart from that the CCP had mastered the manipulation of local politics to their benefit; this was also derived from their propaganda skills that had also been decentralised successfully. By "portraying their opponents as enemies of all groups of Chinese" and itself as "defenders of the nation" and people (given the backdrop of the war with Japan).

In the Chinese Civil War after 1945, the economy in the ROC areas collapsed because of hyperinflation and the failure of price controls by the ROC government and financial reforms; the Gold Yuan devaluated sharply in late 1948 and resulted in the ROC government losing the support of the cities' middle classes. In the meantime, the Communists continued their relentless land reform (land redistribution) programs to win the support of the population in the countryside.

## **Atrocities**

During the war both the Nationalists and Communists carried out mass atrocities, with millions of non-combatants deliberately killed by both sides. Benjamin Valentino has estimated atrocities in the Chinese Civil War resulted in the death of between 1.8 million and 3.5 million people between 1927 and 1949.

### **Communist atrocities**

During the Siege of Changchun the People's Liberation Army implemented a military blockade on the neutral city of Changchun and prevented civilians from leaving the city during the blockade; this blockade caused the starvation of tens to 150 thousand civilians. The PLA continued to use siege tactics throughout Northeast China.

At the outbreak of the Chinese Civil War in 1946, Mao Zedong began to push for a return to radical policies to mobilize China against the landlord class, but protected the rights of middle peasants and specified that rich peasants were not landlords.

The 7 July Directive of 1946 set off eighteen months of fierce conflict in which all rich peasant and landlord property of all types was to be confiscated and redistributed to poor peasants. Party work teams went quickly from village to village and divided the population into landlords, rich, middle, poor, and landless peasants.

Because the work teams did not involve villagers in the process, however, rich and middle peasants quickly returned to

power. The Outline Land Law of October 1947 increased the pressure. Those condemned as landlords were buried alive, dismembered, strangled and shot.

### **Kuomintang atrocities**

In response to the aforementioned land reform campaign; the Kuomintang helped establish the "Huanxiang Tuan" (還鄉團), or Homecoming Legion, which was composed of landlords who sought the return of their redistributed land and property from peasants and CCP guerrillas, as well as forcibly conscripted peasants and communist POWs. The Homecoming legion conducted its guerrilla warfare campaign against CCP forces and purported collaborators up until the end of the civil war in 1949.

## Chapter 5

# Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Missile Crisis, also known as the October Crisis of 1962 (Spanish: *Crisis de Octubre*), the Caribbean Crisis, or the Missile Scare, was a 1 month, 4 day (16 October – 20 November 1962) confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union which escalated into an international crisis when American deployments of missiles in Italy and Turkey were matched by Soviet deployments of similar ballistic missiles in Cuba.

Despite the short time frame, the Cuban Missile Crisis remains a defining moment in U.S. national security and nuclear war preparation. The confrontation is often considered the closest the Cold War came to escalating into a full-scale nuclear war.

In response to the presence of American Jupiter ballistic missiles in Italy and Turkey, and the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion of 1961, Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev agreed to Cuba's request to place nuclear missiles on the island to deter a future invasion. An agreement was reached during a secret meeting between Khrushchev and Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro in July 1962, and construction of a number of missile launch facilities started later that summer.

Meanwhile, the 1962 United States elections were under way, and the White House denied charges for months that it was ignoring dangerous Soviet missiles 90 mi (140 km) from Florida. The missile preparations were confirmed when an Air Force U-2 spy plane produced clear photographic evidence of

medium-range R-12 (NATO code name SS-4) and intermediate-range R-14 (NATO code name SS-5) ballistic missile facilities.

When this was reported to President John F. Kennedy, he then convened a meeting of the nine members of the National Security Council and five other key advisers in a group that became known as the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (EXCOMM). During this meeting, President Kennedy was originally advised to carry out an air strike on Cuban soil in order to compromise Soviet missile supplies, followed by an invasion of the Cuban mainland. After careful consideration, President Kennedy chose a less aggressive course of action to avoid a declaration of war. After consultation with them, Kennedy ordered a naval "quarantine" on October 22 to prevent further missiles from reaching Cuba. By declaring a quarantine rather than a blockade, the United States was able to avoid a further conflict. This quarantine fell short of a traditional blockade and so avoided the implications of a state of war. The US announced it would not permit offensive weapons to be delivered to Cuba and demanded that the weapons already in Cuba be dismantled and returned to the Soviet Union.

After several days of tense negotiations, an agreement was reached between Kennedy and Khrushchev. Publicly, the Soviets would dismantle their offensive weapons in Cuba and return them to the Soviet Union, subject to United Nations verification, in exchange for a US public declaration and agreement to not invade Cuba again. Secretly, the United States agreed that it would dismantle all of the Jupiter MRBMs, which had been deployed in Turkey against the Soviet Union. There has been debate on whether or not Italy was

included in the agreement as well. While the Soviets dismantled their missiles, some Soviet bombers remained in Cuba, forcing the Naval quarantine to stay in place until November 20 of that year.

When all offensive missiles and the Ilyushin Il-28 light bombers had been withdrawn from Cuba, the blockade was formally ended on November 20, 1962. The negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union pointed out the necessity of a quick, clear, and direct communication line between the two Superpowers. As a result, the Moscow–Washington hotline was established. A series of agreements later reduced US–Soviet tensions for several years until both parties eventually resumed expanding their nuclear arsenals.

## **Background**

### **Cuba and Berlin Wall**

With the end of World War II and the start of the Cold War, the United States had grown concerned about the expansion of communism. A Latin American country openly allying with the Soviet Union was regarded by the US as unacceptable. It would, for example, defy the Monroe Doctrine, a US policy limiting US involvement in European colonies and European affairs but holding that the Western Hemisphere was in the US sphere of influence.

The Kennedy administration had been publicly embarrassed by the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion in April 1961, which had been launched under President John F. Kennedy by CIA-trained forces of Cuban exiles. Afterward, former President Dwight

Eisenhower told Kennedy that "the failure of the Bay of Pigs will embolden the Soviets to do something that they would otherwise not do." The half-hearted invasion left Soviet first secretary Nikita Khrushchev and his advisers with the impression that Kennedy was indecisive and, as one Soviet adviser wrote, "too young, intellectual, not prepared well for decision making in crisis situations... too intelligent and too weak". US covert operations against Cuba continued in 1961 with the unsuccessful Operation Mongoose.

In addition, Khrushchev's impression of Kennedy's weaknesses was confirmed by the President's response during the Berlin Crisis of 1961, particularly to the building of the Berlin Wall. Speaking to Soviet officials in the aftermath of the crisis, Khrushchev asserted, "I know for certain that Kennedy doesn't have a strong background, nor, generally speaking, does he have the courage to stand up to a serious challenge." He also told his son Sergei that on Cuba, Kennedy "would make a fuss, make more of a fuss, and then agree". In January 1962, US Army General Edward Lansdale described plans to overthrow the Cuban government in a top-secret report (partially declassified 1989), addressed to Kennedy and officials involved with Operation Mongoose. CIA agents or "pathfinders" from the Special Activities Division were to be infiltrated into Cuba to carry out sabotage and organization, including radio broadcasts. In February 1962, the US launched an embargo against Cuba, and Lansdale presented a 26-page, top-secret timetable for implementation of the overthrow of the Cuban government, mandating guerrilla operations to begin in August and September. "Open revolt and overthrow of the Communist regime" would occur in the first two weeks of October.

## **Missile gap**

When Kennedy ran for president in 1960, one of his key election issues was an alleged "missile gap" with the Soviets leading.

Actually, the US at that time *led* the Soviets by a wide margin that would only increase. In 1961, the Soviets had only four intercontinental ballistic missiles (R-7 Semyorka). By October 1962, they may have had a few dozen, with some intelligence estimates as high as 75.

The US, on the other hand, had 170 ICBMs and was quickly building more. It also had eight *George Washington*- and *Ethan Allen*-class ballistic missile submarines, with the capability to launch 16 Polaris missiles, each with a range of 2,500 nautical miles (4,600 km).

Khrushchev increased the perception of a missile gap when he loudly boasted to the world that the Soviets were building missiles "like sausages" but Soviet missiles' numbers and capabilities were nowhere close to his assertions.

The Soviet Union had medium-range ballistic missiles in quantity, about 700 of them, but they were very unreliable and inaccurate. The US had a considerable advantage in total number of nuclear warheads (27,000 against 3,600) and in the technology required for their accurate delivery.

The US also led in missile defensive capabilities, naval and air power; but the Soviets had a 2–1 advantage in conventional ground forces, more pronounced in field guns and tanks, particularly in the European theatre.

# **Soviet deployment of missiles in Cuba**

## **Justification**

In May 1962, Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev was persuaded by the idea of countering the US's growing lead in developing and deploying strategic missiles by placing Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Cuba, despite the misgivings of the Soviet Ambassador in Havana, Alexandr Ivanovich Alexeyev, who argued that Castro would not accept the deployment of the missiles.

Khrushchev faced a strategic situation in which the US was perceived to have a "splendid first strike" capability that put the Soviet Union at a huge disadvantage. In 1962, the Soviets had only 20 ICBMs capable of delivering nuclear warheads to the US from inside the Soviet Union. The poor accuracy and reliability of the missiles raised serious doubts about their effectiveness. A newer, more reliable generation of ICBMs would become operational only after 1965.

Therefore, Soviet nuclear capability in 1962 placed less emphasis on ICBMs than on medium and intermediate-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs and IRBMs). The missiles could hit American allies and most of Alaska from Soviet territory but not the Contiguous United States. Graham Allison, the director of Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, points out, "The Soviet Union could not right the nuclear imbalance by deploying new ICBMs on its own soil. In order to meet the threat it faced in 1962, 1963,

and 1964, it had very few options. Moving existing nuclear weapons to locations from which they could reach American targets was one."

A second reason that Soviet missiles were deployed to Cuba was because Khrushchev wanted to bring West Berlin, controlled by the American, British and French within Communist East Germany, into the Soviet orbit. The East Germans and Soviets considered western control over a portion of Berlin a grave threat to East Germany. Khrushchev made West Berlin the central battlefield of the Cold War.

Khrushchev believed that if the US did nothing over the missile deployments in Cuba, he could muscle the West out of Berlin using said missiles as a deterrent to western countermeasures in Berlin. If the US tried to bargain with the Soviets after it became aware of the missiles, Khrushchev could demand trading the missiles for West Berlin. Since Berlin was strategically more important than Cuba, the trade would be a win for Khrushchev, as Kennedy recognised: "The advantage is, from Khrushchev's point of view, he takes a great chance but there are quite some rewards to it."

Thirdly, from the perspective of the Soviet Union and of Cuba, it seemed that the United States wanted to increase its presence in Cuba. With actions including the attempt to expel Cuba from the Organization of American States, placing economic sanctions on the nation, directly invading it in addition to conducting secret operations on containing communism and Cuba, it was assumed that America was trying to overrun Cuba. As a result, to try and prevent this, the USSR would place missiles in Cuba and neutralise the threat. This

would ultimately serve to secure Cuba against attack and keep the country in the Socialist Bloc. Another major reason why Khrushchev planned to place missiles on Cuba undetected was to "level the playing field" with the evident American nuclear threat. America had the upper hand as they could launch from Turkey and destroy the USSR before they would have a chance to react. After the transmission of nuclear missiles, Khrushchev had finally established mutually assured destruction, meaning that if the U.S. decided to launch a nuclear strike against the USSR, the latter would react by launching a retaliatory nuclear strike against the U.S.

Finally, placing nuclear missiles on Cuba was a way for the USSR to show their support for Cuba and support the Cuban people who viewed the United States as a threatening force, as the latter had become their ally after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. According to Khrushchev, the Soviet Union's motives were "aimed at allowing Cuba to live peacefully and develop as its people desire".

## **Deployment**

In early 1962, a group of Soviet military and missile construction specialists accompanied an agricultural delegation to Havana. They obtained a meeting with Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro. The Cuban leadership had a strong expectation that the US would invade Cuba again and enthusiastically approved the idea of installing nuclear missiles in Cuba. According to another source, Castro objected to the missiles' deployment as making him look like a Soviet puppet, but he was persuaded that missiles in Cuba would be an irritant to the US and help the interests of the entire

socialist camp. Also, the deployment would include short-range tactical weapons (with a range of 40 km, usable only against naval vessels) that would provide a "nuclear umbrella" for attacks upon the island.

By May, Khrushchev and Castro agreed to place strategic nuclear missiles secretly in Cuba. Like Castro, Khrushchev felt that a US invasion of Cuba was imminent and that to lose Cuba would do great harm to the communists, especially in Latin America. He said he wanted to confront the Americans "with more than words.... the logical answer was missiles". The Soviets maintained their tight secrecy, writing their plans longhand, which were approved by Marshal of the Soviet Union Rodion Malinovsky on July 4 and Khrushchev on July 7.

From the very beginning, the Soviets' operation entailed elaborate denial and deception, known as "maskirovka". All the planning and preparation for transporting and deploying the missiles were carried out in the utmost secrecy, with only a very few told the exact nature of the mission. Even the troops detailed for the mission were given misdirection by being told that they were headed for a cold region and being outfitted with ski boots, fleece-lined parkas, and other winter equipment. The Soviet code-name was Operation Anadyr. The Anadyr River flows into the Bering Sea, and Anadyr is also the capital of Chukotsky District and a bomber base in the far eastern region. All the measures were meant to conceal the program from both internal and external audiences.

Specialists in missile construction under the guise of "machine operators", "irrigation specialists", and "agricultural specialists" arrived in July. A total of 43,000 foreign troops

would ultimately be brought in. Chief Marshal of Artillery Sergei Biryuzov, Head of the Soviet Rocket Forces, led a survey team that visited Cuba. He told Khrushchev that the missiles would be concealed and camouflaged by palm trees.

The Cuban leadership was further upset when on September 20, the US Senate approved Joint Resolution 230, which expressed the US was determined "to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally-supported military capability endangering the security of the United States". On the same day, the US announced a major military exercise in the Caribbean, PHIBRIGLEX-62, which Cuba denounced as a deliberate provocation and proof that the US planned to invade Cuba.

The Soviet leadership believed, based on its perception of Kennedy's lack of confidence during the Bay of Pigs Invasion, that he would avoid confrontation and accept the missiles as a *fait accompli*. On September 11, the Soviet Union publicly warned that a US attack on Cuba or on Soviet ships that were carrying supplies to the island would mean war. The Soviets continued the *Maskirovka* program to conceal their actions in Cuba. They repeatedly denied that the weapons being brought into Cuba were offensive in nature. On September 7, Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin assured United States Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson that the Soviet Union was supplying only defensive weapons to Cuba. On September 11, the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS: *Telegrafnoe Agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuz*) announced that the Soviet Union had no need or intention to introduce offensive nuclear missiles into Cuba. On October 13, Dobrynin was questioned by former Undersecretary

of State Chester Bowles about whether the Soviets planned to put offensive weapons in Cuba. He denied any such plans. On October 17, Soviet embassy official Georgy Bolshakov brought President Kennedy a personal message from Khrushchev reassuring him that "under no circumstances would surface-to-surface missiles be sent to Cuba."

As early as August 1962, the US suspected the Soviets of building missile facilities in Cuba. During that month, its intelligence services gathered information about sightings by ground observers of Russian-built MiG-21 fighters and Il-28 light bombers. U-2 spy planes found S-75 Dvina (NATO designation SA-2) surface-to-air missile sites at eight different locations. CIA director John A. McCone was suspicious. Sending anti-aircraft missiles into Cuba, he reasoned, "made sense only if Moscow intended to use them to shield a base for ballistic missiles aimed at the United States". On August 10, he wrote a memo to Kennedy in which he guessed that the Soviets were preparing to introduce ballistic missiles into Cuba.

With important Congressional elections scheduled for November, the crisis became enmeshed in American politics. On August 31, Senator Kenneth Keating (R-New York) warned on the Senate floor that the Soviet Union was "in all probability" constructing a missile base in Cuba. He charged the Kennedy administration with covering up a major threat to the US, thereby starting the crisis. He may have received this initial "remarkably accurate" information from his friend, former congresswoman and ambassador Clare Boothe Luce, who in turn received it from Cuban exiles. A later confirming source for Keating's information possibly was the West German

ambassador to Cuba, who had received information from dissidents inside Cuba that Soviet troops had arrived in Cuba in early August and were seen working "in all probability on or near a missile base" and who passed this information to Keating on a trip to Washington in early October.

Air Force General Curtis LeMay presented a pre-invasion bombing plan to Kennedy in September, and spy flights and minor military harassment from US forces at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base were the subject of continual Cuban diplomatic complaints to the US government.

The first consignment of R-12 missiles arrived on the night of September 8, followed by a second on September 16. The R-12 was a medium-range ballistic missile, capable of carrying a thermonuclear warhead. It was a single-stage, road-transportable, surface-launched, storable liquid propellant fuelled missile that could deliver a megaton-class nuclear weapon. The Soviets were building nine sites—six for R-12 medium-range missiles (NATO designation *SS-4 Sandal*) with an effective range of 2,000 kilometres (1,200 mi) and three for R-14 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (NATO designation *SS-5 Skean*) with a maximum range of 4,500 kilometres (2,800 mi).

On October 7, Cuban President Osvaldo DorticósTorrado spoke at the UN General Assembly: "If... we are attacked, we will defend ourselves. I repeat, we have sufficient means with which to defend ourselves; we have indeed our inevitable weapons, the weapons, which we would have preferred not to acquire, and which we do not wish to employ." On October 10 in another Senate speech Sen. Keating reaffirmed his earlier

warning of August 31 and stated that, "Construction has begun on at least a half dozen launching sites for intermediate range tactical missiles."

## **Missiles reported**

The missiles in Cuba allowed the Soviets to effectively target most of the Continental US. The planned arsenal was forty launchers. The Cuban populace readily noticed the arrival and deployment of the missiles and hundreds of reports reached Miami. US intelligence received countless reports, many of dubious quality or even laughable, most of which could be dismissed as describing defensive missiles.

Only five reports bothered the analysts. They described large trucks passing through towns at night that were carrying very long canvas-covered cylindrical objects that could not make turns through towns without backing up and manoeuvring. Defensive missiles could turn. The reports could not be satisfactorily dismissed.

## **Aerial confirmation**

The United States had been sending U-2 surveillance over Cuba since the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion. The first issue that led to a pause in reconnaissance flights took place on August 30, when a U-2 operated by the US Air Force's Strategic Air Command flew over Sakhalin Island in the Soviet Far East by mistake. The Soviets lodged a protest and the US apologised. Nine days later, a Taiwanese-operated U-2 was lost over western China to an SA-2 surface-to-air missile. US officials were worried that one of the Cuban or Soviet SAMs in Cuba

might shoot down a CIA U-2, initiating another international incident. In a meeting with members of the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance (COMOR) on September 10, Secretary of State Dean Rusk and National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy heavily restricted further U-2 flights over Cuban airspace.

The resulting lack of coverage over the island for the next five weeks became known to historians as the "Photo Gap". No significant U-2 coverage was achieved over the interior of the island.

US officials attempted to use a Corona photo-reconnaissance satellite to obtain coverage over reported Soviet military deployments, but imagery acquired over western Cuba by a Corona KH-4 mission on October 1 was heavily covered by clouds and haze and failed to provide any usable intelligence. At the end of September, Navy reconnaissance aircraft photographed the Soviet ship *Kasimov*, with large crates on its deck the size and shape of Il-28 jet bomber fuselages.

In September 1962, analysts from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) noticed that Cuban surface-to-air missile sites were arranged in a pattern similar to those used by the Soviet Union to protect its ICBM bases, leading DIA to lobby for the resumption of U-2 flights over the island. Although in the past the flights had been conducted by the CIA, pressure from the Defense Department led to that authority being transferred to the Air Force. Following the loss of a CIA U-2 over the Soviet Union in May 1960, it was thought that if another U-2 were shot down, an Air Force aircraft arguably being used for a legitimate military purpose would be easier to explain than a

CIA flight. When the reconnaissance missions were reauthorized on October 9, poor weather kept the planes from flying. The US first obtained U-2 photographic evidence of the missiles on October 14, when a U-2 flight piloted by Major Richard Heyser took 928 pictures on a path selected by DIA analysts, capturing images of what turned out to be an SS-4 construction site at San Cristóbal, Pinar del Río Province (now in Artemisa Province), in western Cuba.

### **President notified**

On October 15, the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) reviewed the U-2 photographs and identified objects that they interpreted as medium range ballistic missiles. This identification was made, in part, on the strength of reporting provided by Oleg Penkovsky, a double agent in the GRU working for the CIA and MI6. Although he provided no direct reports of the Soviet missile deployments to Cuba, technical and doctrinal details of Soviet missile regiments that had been provided by Penkovsky in the months and years prior to the Crisis helped NPIC analysts correctly identify the missiles on U-2 imagery.

That evening, the CIA notified the Department of State and at 8:30 pm EDT, Bundy chose to wait until the next morning to tell the President. McNamara was briefed at midnight. The next morning, Bundy met with Kennedy and showed him the U-2 photographs and briefed him on the CIA's analysis of the images. At 6:30 pm EDT, Kennedy convened a meeting of the nine members of the National Security Council and five other key advisers, in a group he formally named the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (EXCOMM) after

the fact on October 22 by the National Security Action Memorandum 196. Without informing the members of EXCOMM, President Kennedy tape recorded all of their proceedings, and Sheldon M. Stern, head of the Kennedy library transcribed some of them.

On October 16, President Kennedy notified Robert Kennedy that he was convinced Russia was placing missiles in Cuba and it was a legitimate threat. This officially made the threat of nuclear destruction by two world superpowers a reality. Robert Kennedy responded by contacting the Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin. Robert Kennedy expressed his "concern about what was happening" and Dobrynin "was instructed by Soviet Chairman Nikita S. Khrushchev to assure President Kennedy that there would be no ground-to-ground missiles or offensive weapons placed in Cuba". Khrushchev further assured Kennedy that the Soviet Union had no intention of "disrupting the relationship of our two countries" despite the photo evidence presented before President Kennedy.

### **Responses considered**

The US had no plan in place because its intelligence had been convinced that the Soviets would never install nuclear missiles in Cuba. EXCOMM, of which Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was a member, quickly discussed several possible courses of action:

- Do nothing: American vulnerability to Soviet missiles was not new.
- Diplomacy: Use diplomatic pressure to get the Soviet Union to remove the missiles.

- Secret approach: Offer Castro the choice of splitting with the Russians or being invaded.
- Invasion: Full force invasion of Cuba and overthrow of Castro.
- Air strike: Use the US Air Force to attack all known missile sites.
- Blockade: Use the US Navy to block any missiles from arriving in Cuba.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff unanimously agreed that a full-scale attack and invasion was the only solution. They believed that the Soviets would not attempt to stop the US from conquering Cuba. Kennedy was skeptical:

They, no more than we, can let these things go by without doing something. They can't, after all their statements, permit us to take out their missiles, kill a lot of Russians, and then do nothing. If they don't take action in Cuba, they certainly will in Berlin.

- Kennedy concluded that attacking Cuba by air would signal the Soviets to presume "a clear line" to conquer Berlin. Kennedy also believed that US allies would think of the country as "trigger-happy cowboys" who lost Berlin because they could not peacefully resolve the Cuban situation. The EXCOMM then discussed the effect on the strategic balance of power, both political and military. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believed that the missiles would seriously alter the military balance, but McNamara disagreed. An extra 40, he reasoned, would make little difference to the overall strategic balance. The US

already had approximately 5,000 strategic warheads, but the Soviet Union had only 300. McNamara concluded that the Soviets having 340 would not therefore substantially alter the strategic balance. In 1990, he reiterated that "it made *no* difference.... The military balance wasn't changed. I didn't believe it then, and I don't believe it now."The EXCOMM agreed that the missiles would affect the *political* balance. Kennedy had explicitly promised the American people less than a month before the crisis that "if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive actions against the United States... the United States would act." Also, credibility among US allies and people would be damaged if the Soviet Union appeared to redress the strategic balance by placing missiles in Cuba. Kennedy explained after the crisis that "it would have politically changed the balance of power. It would have appeared to, and appearances contribute to reality."

On October 18, Kennedy met with the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko, who claimed the weapons were for defensive purposes only. Not wanting to expose what he already knew and to avoid panicking the American public, Kennedy did not reveal that he was already aware of the missile buildup. By October 19, frequent U-2 spy flights showed four operational sites.

## **Operational plans**

Two Operational Plans (OPLAN) were considered. OPLAN 316 envisioned a full invasion of Cuba by Army and Marine units,

supported by the Navy following Air Force and naval airstrikes. Army units in the US would have had trouble fielding mechanised and logistical assets, and the US Navy could not supply enough amphibious shipping to transport even a modest armoured contingent from the Army.

OPLAN 312, primarily an Air Force and Navy carrier operation, was designed with enough flexibility to do anything from engaging individual missile sites to providing air support for OPLAN 316's ground forces.

## **Blockade**

Kennedy met with members of EXCOMM and other top advisers throughout October 21, considering two remaining options: an air strike primarily against the Cuban missile bases or a naval blockade of Cuba. A full-scale invasion was not the administration's first option. McNamara supported the naval blockade as a strong but limited military action that left the US in control. The term "blockade" was problematic. According to international law, a blockade is an act of war, but the Kennedy administration did not think that the Soviets would be provoked to attack by a mere blockade. Additionally, legal experts at the State Department and Justice Department concluded that a declaration of war could be avoided if another legal justification, based on the Rio Treaty for defence of the Western Hemisphere, was obtained from a resolution by a two-thirds vote from the members of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Admiral Anderson, Chief of Naval Operations wrote a position paper that helped Kennedy to differentiate between what they

termed a "quarantine" of offensive weapons and a blockade of all materials, claiming that a classic blockade was not the original intention. Since it would take place in international waters, Kennedy obtained the approval of the OAS for military action under the hemispheric defence provisions of the Rio Treaty:

- Latin American participation in the quarantine now involved two Argentine destroyers which were to report to the US Commander South Atlantic [COMSOLANT] at Trinidad on November 9. An Argentine submarine and a Marine battalion with lift were available if required. In addition, two Venezuelan destroyers (Destroyers ARV D-11 Nueva Esparta" and "ARV D-21 Zulia") and one submarine (Caribe) had reported to COMSOLANT, ready for sea by November 2. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago offered the use of Chaguaramas Naval Base to warships of any OAS nation for the duration of the "quarantine". The Dominican Republic had made available one escort ship. Colombia was reported ready to furnish units and had sent military officers to the US to discuss this assistance. The Argentine Air Force informally offered three SA-16 aircraft in addition to forces already committed to the "quarantine" operation.

This initially was to involve a naval blockade against offensive weapons within the framework of the Organization of American States and the Rio Treaty. Such a blockade might be expanded to cover all types of goods and air transport. The action was to be backed up by surveillance of Cuba. The CNO's scenario was

followed closely in later implementing the "quarantine." On October 19, the EXCOMM formed separate working groups to examine the air strike and blockade options, and by the afternoon most support in the EXCOMM shifted to the blockade option.

Reservations about the plan continued to be voiced as late as the October 21, the paramount concern being that once the blockade was put into effect, the Soviets would rush to complete some of the missiles. Consequently, the US could find itself bombing operational missiles if the blockade failed to force Khrushchev to remove the missiles already on the island.

### **Speech to the nation**

At 3:00 pm EDT on October 22, President Kennedy formally established the Executive Committee (EXCOMM) with National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 196. At 5:00 pm, he met with Congressional leaders who contentiously opposed a blockade and demanded a stronger response. In Moscow, Ambassador Foy D. Kohler briefed Khrushchev on the pending blockade and Kennedy's speech to the nation. Ambassadors around the world gave notice to non-Eastern Bloc leaders. Before the speech, US delegations met with Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, French President Charles de Gaulle and Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, José Antonio Mora to brief them on the US intelligence and their proposed response. All were supportive of the US position. Over the course of the crisis, Kennedy had daily telephone conversations with Macmillan, who was publicly supportive of US actions.

Shortly before his speech, Kennedy called former President Dwight Eisenhower. Kennedy's conversation with the former president also revealed that the two were consulting during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The two also anticipated that Khrushchev would respond to the Western world in a manner that was similar to his response during the Suez Crisis and would possibly wind up trading off Berlin.

On October 22 at 7:00 pm EDT, Kennedy delivered a nationwide televised address on all of the major networks announcing the discovery of the missiles. He noted:

- It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

Kennedy described the administration's plan:

- To halt this offensive buildup, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

During the speech, a directive went out to all US forces worldwide, placing them on DEFCON 3. The heavy

cruiser USS *Newport News* was designated flagship for the blockade, with USS *Leary* as *Newport News*'s destroyer escort.

## **Crisis deepens**

On October 23, at 11:24 am EDT, a cable, drafted by George Wildman Ball to the US Ambassador in Turkey and NATO, notified them that they were considering making an offer to withdraw what the US knew to be nearly-obsolete missiles from Italy and Turkey, in exchange for the Soviet withdrawal from Cuba. Turkish officials replied that they would "deeply resent" any trade involving the US missile presence in their country. Two days later, on the morning of October 25, American journalist Walter Lippmann proposed the same thing in his syndicated column. Castro reaffirmed Cuba's right to self-defense and said that all of its weapons were defensive and Cuba would not allow an inspection.

## **International response**

Three days after Kennedy's speech, the Chinese *People's Daily* announced that "650,000,000 Chinese men and women were standing by the Cuban people." In West Germany, newspapers supported the US response by contrasting it with the weak American actions in the region during the preceding months. They also expressed some fear that the Soviets might retaliate in Berlin. In France on October 23, the crisis made the front page of all the daily newspapers. The next day, an editorial in *Le Monde* expressed doubt about the authenticity of the CIA's photographic evidence. Two days later, after a visit by a high-ranking CIA agent, the newspaper accepted the validity of the photographs. Also in France, in the October 29 issue of *Le*

*Figaro*, Raymond Aron wrote in support of the American response. On October 24, Pope John XXIII sent a message to the Soviet embassy in Rome to be transmitted to the Kremlin in which he voiced his concern for peace. In this message he stated, "We beg all governments not to remain deaf to this cry of humanity. That they do all that is in their power to save peace."

### **Soviet broadcast and communications**

The crisis was continuing unabated, and in the evening of October 24, the Soviet news agency TASS broadcast a telegram from Khrushchev to Kennedy in which Khrushchev warned that the United States' "outright piracy" would lead to war. That was followed at 9:24 pm by a telegram from Khrushchev to Kennedy, which was received at 10:52 pm EDT. Khrushchev stated, "if you weigh the present situation with a cool head without giving way to passion, you will understand that the Soviet Union cannot afford not to decline the despotic demands of the USA" and that the Soviet Union views the blockade as "an act of aggression" and their ships will be instructed to ignore it. After October 23, Soviet communications with the USA increasingly showed indications of having been rushed. Undoubtedly a product of pressure, it was not uncommon for Khrushchev to repeat himself and send messages lacking simple editing.

With President Kennedy making his aggressive intentions of a possible air-strike followed by an invasion on Cuba known, Khrushchev rapidly sought a diplomatic compromise. Communications between the two super-powers had entered into a unique and revolutionary period; with the newly

developed threat of mutual destruction through the deployment of nuclear weapons, diplomacy now demonstrated how power and coercion could dominate negotiations.

### **US alert level raised**

The US requested an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council on October 25. US Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson confronted Soviet Ambassador Valerian Zorin in an emergency meeting of the Security Council, challenging him to admit the existence of the missiles. Ambassador Zorin refused to answer. The next day at 10:00 pm EDT, the US raised the readiness level of SAC forces to DEFCON 2. For the only confirmed time in US history, B-52 bombers went on continuous airborne alert, and B-47 medium bombers were dispersed to various military and civilian airfields and made ready to take off, fully equipped, on 15 minutes' notice. One eighth of SAC's 1,436 bombers were on airborne alert, and some 145 intercontinental ballistic missiles stood on ready alert, some of which targeted Cuba, and Air Defense Command (ADC) redeployed 161 nuclear-armed interceptors to 16 dispersal fields within nine hours, with one third maintaining 15-minute alert status. Twenty-three nuclear-armed B-52s were sent to orbit points within striking distance of the Soviet Union so that it would believe that the US was serious. Jack J. Catton later estimated that about 80 percent of SAC's planes were ready for launch during the crisis; David A. Burchinal recalled that, by contrast:

the Russians were so thoroughly stood down, and we knew it. They didn't make any move. They did not increase their alert; they did not increase any flights, or their air defense posture.

They didn't do a thing, they froze in place. We were never further from nuclear war than at the time of Cuba, never further.

By October 22, Tactical Air Command (TAC) had 511 fighters plus supporting tankers and reconnaissance aircraft deployed to face Cuba on one-hour alert status. TAC and the Military Air Transport Service had problems. The concentration of aircraft in Florida strained command and support echelons, which faced critical undermanning in security, armaments, and communications; the absence of initial authorization for war-reserve stocks of conventional munitions forced TAC to scrounge; and the lack of airlift assets to support a major airborne drop necessitated the call-up of 24 Reserve squadrons.

On October 25 at 1:45 am EDT, Kennedy responded to Khrushchev's telegram by stating that the US was forced into action after receiving repeated assurances that no offensive missiles were being placed in Cuba, and when the assurances proved to be false, the deployment "required the responses I have announced.... I hope that your government will take necessary action to permit a restoration of the earlier situation."

### **Blockade challenged**

At 7:15 am EDT on October 25, USS *Essex* and USS *Gearing* attempted to intercept *Bucharest* but failed to do so. Fairly certain that the tanker did not contain any military material, the US allowed it through the blockade. Later that day, at 5:43 pm, the commander of the blockade effort ordered the

destroyer USS *Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.* to intercept and board the Lebanese freighter *Marucla*. That took place the next day, and *Marucla* was cleared through the blockade after its cargo was checked.

At 5:00 pm EDT on October 25, William Clements announced that the missiles in Cuba were still actively being worked on. That report was later verified by a CIA report that suggested there had been no slowdown at all. In response, Kennedy issued Security Action Memorandum 199, authorizing the loading of nuclear weapons onto aircraft under the command of SACEUR, which had the duty of carrying out first air strikes on the Soviet Union. Kennedy claimed that the blockade had succeeded when the USSR turned back fourteen ships presumably carrying offensive weapons. The first indication of this came from a report from the British GCHQ sent to the White House Situation Room containing intercepted communications from Soviet ships reporting their positions. On October 24, *Kislovodsk*, a Soviet cargo ship, reported a position north-east of where it had been 24 hours earlier indicating it had "discontinued" its voyage and turned back towards the Baltic. The next day, reports showed more ships originally bound for Cuba had altered their course.

### **Raising the stakes**

The next morning, October 26, Kennedy informed the EXCOMM that he believed only an invasion would remove the missiles from Cuba. He was persuaded to give the matter time and continue with both military and diplomatic pressure. He agreed and ordered the low-level flights over the island to be increased from two per day to once every two hours. He also ordered a

crash program to institute a new civil government in Cuba if an invasion went ahead.

At this point, the crisis was ostensibly at a stalemate. The Soviets had shown no indication that they would back down and had made public media and private inter-governmental statements to that effect. The US had no reason to believe otherwise and was in the early stages of preparing for an invasion, along with a nuclear strike on the Soviet Union if it responded militarily, which was assumed. Kennedy had no intention of keeping these plans a secret; with an array of Cuban and Soviet spies forever present, Khrushchev was quickly made aware of this looming danger.

The implicit threat of air strikes on Cuba followed by invasion allowed the United States to exert pressure in future talks. It was the possibility of military action that played an influential role in accelerating Khrushchev's proposal for a compromise. Throughout the closing stages of October, Soviet communications to the United States indicated increasing defensiveness. Khrushchev's increasing tendency to use poorly phrased and ambiguous communications throughout the compromise negotiations conversely increased United States confidence and clarity in messaging. Leading Soviet figures consistently failed to mention that only the Cuban government could agree to inspections of the territory and continually made arrangements relating to Cuba without the knowledge of Fidel Castro himself. According to Dean Rusk, Khrushchev "blinked", he began to panic from the consequences of his own plan and this was reflected in the tone of Soviet messages. This allowed the US to largely dominate negotiations in late October.

## **Secret negotiations**

At 1:00 pm EDT on October 26, John A. Scali of ABC News had lunch with Aleksandr Fomin, the cover name of Alexander Feklisov, the KGB station chief in Washington, at Fomin's request. Following the instructions of the Politburo of the CPSU, Fomin noted, "War seems about to break out." He asked Scali to use his contacts to talk to his "high-level friends" at the State Department to see if the US would be interested in a diplomatic solution. He suggested that the language of the deal would contain an assurance from the Soviet Union to remove the weapons under UN supervision and that Castro would publicly announce that he would not accept such weapons again in exchange for a public statement by the US that it would not invade Cuba.

The US responded by asking the Brazilian government to pass a message to Castro that the US would be "unlikely to invade" if the missiles were removed.

On October 26 at 6:00 pm EDT, the State Department started receiving a message that appeared to be written personally by Khrushchev. It was Saturday at 2:00 am in Moscow. The long letter took several minutes to arrive, and it took translators additional time to translate and transcribe it.

Robert F. Kennedy described the letter as "very long and emotional". Khrushchev reiterated the basic outline that had been stated to Scali earlier in the day: "I propose: we, for our part, will declare that our ships bound for Cuba are not carrying any armaments. You will declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its troops and will not

support any other forces which might intend to invade Cuba. Then the necessity of the presence of our military specialists in Cuba will disappear." At 6:45 pm EDT, news of Fomin's offer to Scali was finally heard and was interpreted as a "set up" for the arrival of Khrushchev's letter.

The letter was then considered official and accurate although it was later learned that Fomin was almost certainly operating of his own accord without official backing. Additional study of the letter was ordered and continued into the night.

### **Crisis continues**

Direct aggression against Cuba would mean nuclear war. The Americans speak about such aggression as if they did not know or did not want to accept this fact. I have no doubt they would lose such a war.

- — *Che Guevara, October 1962*

Castro, on the other hand, was convinced that an invasion of Cuba was soon at hand, and on October 26, he sent a telegram to Khrushchev that appeared to call for a pre-emptive nuclear strike on the US in case of attack. In a 2010 interview,

Castro expressed regret about his earlier stance on first use: "After I've seen what I've seen, and knowing what I know now, it wasn't worth it at all." Castro also ordered all anti-aircraft weapons in Cuba to fire on any US aircraft: the orders had been to fire only on groups of two or more. At 6:00 am EDT on October 27, the CIA delivered a memo reporting that three of the four missile sites at San Cristobal and the two sites at Sagua la Grande appeared to be fully operational. It also noted

that the Cuban military continued to organise for action but was under order not to initiate action unless attacked.

At 9:00 am EDT on October 27, Radio Moscow began broadcasting a message from Khrushchev. Contrary to the letter of the night before, the message offered a new trade: the missiles on Cuba would be removed in exchange for the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Italy and Turkey. At 10:00 am EDT, the executive committee met again to discuss the situation and came to the conclusion that the change in the message was because of internal debate between Khrushchev and other party officials in the Kremlin. Kennedy realised that he would be in an "insupportable position if this becomes Khrushchev's proposal" because the missiles in Turkey were not militarily useful and were being removed anyway and "It's gonna – to any man at the United Nations or any other rational man, it will look like a very fair trade." Bundy explained why Khrushchev's public acquiescence could not be considered: "The current threat to peace is not in Turkey, it is in Cuba."

McNamara noted that another tanker, the *Grozny*, was about 600 miles (970 km) out and should be intercepted. He also noted that they had not made the Soviets aware of the blockade line and suggested relaying that information to them via U Thant at the United Nations.

While the meeting progressed, at 11:03 am EDT a new message began to arrive from Khrushchev. The message stated, in part:

"You are disturbed over Cuba. You say that this disturbs you because it is ninety-nine miles by sea from the coast of the United States of America. But... you have placed destructive

missile weapons, which you call offensive, in Italy and Turkey, literally next to us.... I therefore make this proposal: We are willing to remove from Cuba the means which you regard as offensive.... Your representatives will make a declaration to the effect that the United States... will remove its analogous means from Turkey... and after that, persons entrusted by the United Nations Security Council could inspect on the spot the fulfillment of the pledges made."

The executive committee continued to meet through the day.

Throughout the crisis, Turkey had repeatedly stated that it would be upset if the Jupiter missiles were removed. Italy's Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani, who was also Foreign Minister *ad interim*, offered to allow withdrawal of the missiles deployed in Apulia as a bargaining chip. He gave the message to one of his most trusted friends, Ettore Bernabei, the general manager of RAI-TV, to convey to Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. Bernabei was in New York to attend an international conference on satellite TV broadcasting. Unknown to the Soviets, the US regarded the Jupiter missiles as obsolete and already supplanted by the Polaris nuclear ballistic submarine missiles.

On the morning of October 27, a U-2F (the third CIA U-2A, modified for air-to-air refuelling) piloted by USAF Major Rudolf Anderson, departed its forward operating location at McCoy AFB, Florida. At approximately 12:00 pm EDT, the aircraft was struck by an SA-2 surface-to-air missile launched from Cuba. The aircraft was shot down, and Anderson was killed. The stress in negotiations between the Soviets and the US intensified; it was only later believed that the decision to fire the missile was made locally by an undetermined Soviet

commander, acting on his own authority. Later that day, at about 3:41 pm EDT, several US Navy RF-8A Crusader aircraft, on low-level photo-reconnaissance missions, were fired upon.

On October 28, 1962, Khrushchev told his son Sergei that the shooting down of Anderson's U-2 was by the "Cuban military at the direction of Raul Castro".

At 4:00 pm EDT, Kennedy recalled members of EXCOMM to the White House and ordered that a message should immediately be sent to U Thant asking the Soviets to suspend work on the missiles while negotiations were carried out. During the meeting, General Maxwell Taylor delivered the news that the U-2 had been shot down. Kennedy had earlier claimed he would order an attack on such sites if fired upon, but he decided to not act unless another attack was made. Forty years later, McNamara said:

We had to send a U-2 over to gain reconnaissance information on whether the Soviet missiles were becoming operational. We believed that if the U-2 was shot down that—the Cubans didn't have capabilities to shoot it down, the Soviets did—we believed if it was shot down, it would be shot down by a Soviet surface-to-air-missile unit, and that it would represent a decision by the Soviets to escalate the conflict. And therefore, before we sent the U-2 out, we agreed that if it was shot down we wouldn't meet, we'd simply attack. It was shot down on Friday.... Fortunately, we changed our mind, we thought "Well, it might have been an accident, we won't attack." Later we learned that Khrushchev had reasoned just as we did: we send over the U-2, if it was shot down, he reasoned we would believe it was an intentional escalation. And therefore, he issued

orders to Pliyev, the Soviet commander in Cuba, to instruct all of his batteries not to shoot down the U-2.

Ellsberg said that Robert Kennedy (RFK) told him in 1964 that after the U-2 was shot down and the pilot killed, he (RFK) told Soviet ambassador Dobrynin, "You have drawn first blood ... . [T]he president had decided against advice ... not to respond militarily to that attack, but he [Dobrynin] should know that if another plane was shot at, ... we would take out all the SAMs and anti-aircraft ... . And that would almost surely be followed by an invasion."

### **Drafting response**

Emissaries sent by both Kennedy and Khrushchev agreed to meet at the Yenching Palace Chinese restaurant in the Cleveland Park neighbourhood of Washington, DC, on Saturday evening, October 27. Kennedy suggested to take Khrushchev's offer to trade away the missiles. Unknown to most members of the EXCOMM, but with the support of his brother the president, Robert Kennedy had been meeting with the Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin in Washington to discover whether the intentions were genuine. The EXCOMM was generally against the proposal because it would undermine NATO's authority, and the Turkish government had repeatedly stated it was against any such trade.

As the meeting progressed, a new plan emerged, and Kennedy was slowly persuaded. The new plan called for him to ignore the latest message and instead to return to Khrushchev's earlier one. Kennedy was initially hesitant, feeling that Khrushchev would no longer accept the deal because a new one

had been offered, but Llewellyn Thompson argued that it was still possible. White House Special Counsel and Adviser Ted Sorensen and Robert Kennedy left the meeting and returned 45 minutes later, with a draft letter to that effect. The President made several changes, had it typed, and sent it.

After the EXCOMM meeting, a smaller meeting continued in the Oval Office. The group argued that the letter should be underscored with an oral message to Dobrynin that stated that if the missiles were not withdrawn, military action would be used to remove them. Rusk added one proviso that no part of the language of the deal would mention Turkey, but there would be an understanding that the missiles would be removed "voluntarily" in the immediate aftermath. The president agreed, and the message was sent.

At Rusk's request, Fomin and Scali met again. Scali asked why the two letters from Khrushchev were so different, and Fomin claimed it was because of "poor communications". Scali replied that the claim was not credible and shouted that he thought it was a "stinking double cross". He went on to claim that an invasion was only hours away, and Fomin stated that a response to the US message was expected from Khrushchev shortly and urged Scali to tell the State Department that no treachery was intended. Scali said that he did not think anyone would believe him, but he agreed to deliver the message. The two went their separate ways, and Scali immediately typed out a memo for the EXCOMM.

Within the US establishment, it was well understood that ignoring the second offer and returning to the first put Khrushchev in a terrible position. Military preparations

continued, and all active duty Air Force personnel were recalled to their bases for possible action. Robert Kennedy later recalled the mood: "We had not abandoned all hope, but what hope there was now rested with Khrushchev's revising his course within the next few hours. It was a hope, not an expectation. The expectation was military confrontation by Tuesday (October 30), and possibly tomorrow (October 29) ...."

At 8:05 pm EDT, the letter drafted earlier in the day was delivered. The message read, "As I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals—which seem generally acceptable as I understand them—are as follows: 1) You would agree to remove these weapons systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safe-guards, to halt the further introduction of such weapon systems into Cuba. 2) We, on our part, would agree—upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations, to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments (a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and (b) to give assurances against the invasion of Cuba." The letter was also released directly to the press to ensure it could not be "delayed". With the letter delivered, a deal was on the table. As Robert Kennedy noted, there was little expectation it would be accepted. At 9:00 pm EDT, the EXCOMM met again to review the actions for the following day. Plans were drawn up for air strikes on the missile sites as well as other economic targets, notably petroleum storage. McNamara stated that they had to "have two things ready: a government for Cuba, because we're going to need one; and secondly, plans for how to respond to the Soviet Union in Europe, because sure as hell they're going to do something there".

At 12:12 am EDT, on October 27, the US informed its NATO allies that "the situation is growing shorter.... the United States may find it necessary within a very short time in its interest and that of its fellow nations in the Western Hemisphere to take whatever military action may be necessary." To add to the concern, at 6:00 am, the CIA reported that all missiles in Cuba were ready for action.

On October 27, Khrushchev also received a letter from Castro, what is now known as the Armageddon Letter (dated the day before), which was interpreted as urging the use of nuclear force in the event of an attack on Cuba: "I believe the imperialists' aggressiveness is extremely dangerous and if they actually carry out the brutal act of invading Cuba in violation of international law and morality, that would be the moment to eliminate such danger forever through an act of clear legitimate defense, however harsh and terrible the solution would be," Castro wrote.

### **Averted nuclear launch**

Later that same day, what the White House later called "Black Saturday", the US Navy dropped a series of "signalling" depth charges (practice depth charges the size of hand grenades) on a Soviet submarine (*B-59*) at the blockade line, unaware that it was armed with a nuclear-tipped torpedo with orders that allowed it to be used if the submarine was damaged by depth charges or surface fire. As the submarine was too deep to monitor any radio traffic, the captain of the *B-59*, Valentin Grigorievitch Savitsky, decided that a war might already have started and wanted to launch a nuclear torpedo. The decision to launch these required agreement from all three officers on

board. Vasily Arkhipov objected and so the nuclear launch was narrowly averted. On the same day a U-2 spy plane made an accidental, unauthorised ninety-minute overflight of the Soviet Union's far eastern coast. The Soviets responded by scrambling MiG fighters from Wrangel Island; in turn, the Americans launched F-102 fighters armed with nuclear air-to-air missiles over the Bering Sea.

## **Crisis ends**

On Saturday, October 27, after much deliberation between the Soviet Union and Kennedy's cabinet, Kennedy secretly agreed to remove all missiles set in Turkey and possibly southern Italy, the former on the border of the Soviet Union, in exchange for Khrushchev removing all missiles in Cuba. There is some dispute as to whether removing the missiles from Italy was part of the secret agreement. Khrushchev wrote in his memoirs that it was, and when the crisis had ended McNamara gave the order to dismantle the missiles in both Italy and Turkey.

At this point, Khrushchev knew things the US did not: First, that the shooting down of the U-2 by a Soviet missile violated direct orders from Moscow, and Cuban anti-aircraft fire against other US reconnaissance aircraft also violated direct orders from Khrushchev to Castro. Second, the Soviets already had 162 nuclear warheads on Cuba that the US did not then believe were there. Third, the Soviets and Cubans on the island would almost certainly have responded to an invasion by using those nuclear weapons, even though Castro believed that every human in Cuba would likely die as a result. Khrushchev also knew but may not have considered the fact that he had submarines armed with nuclear weapons that the US Navy may

not have known about. Khrushchev knew he was losing control. President Kennedy had been told in early 1961 that a nuclear war would likely kill a third of humanity, with most or all of those deaths concentrated in the US, the USSR, Europe and China; Khrushchev may well have received similar reports from his military.

With this background, when Khrushchev heard Kennedy's threats relayed by Robert Kennedy to Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin, he immediately drafted his acceptance of Kennedy's latest terms from his dacha without involving the Politburo, as he had previously, and had them immediately broadcast over Radio Moscow, which he believed the US would hear. In that broadcast at 9:00 am EST, on October 28, Khrushchev stated that "the Soviet government, in addition to previously issued instructions on the cessation of further work at the building sites for the weapons, has issued a new order on the dismantling of the weapons which you describe as 'offensive' and their crating and return to the Soviet Union."

At 10:00 am, October 28, Kennedy first learned of Khrushchev's solution to the crisis with the US removing the 15 Jupiters in Turkey and the Soviets would remove the rockets from Cuba. Khrushchev had made the offer in a public statement for the world to hear. Despite almost solid opposition from his senior advisers, Kennedy quickly embraced the Soviet offer. "This is a pretty good play of his," Kennedy said, according to a tape recording that he made secretly of the Cabinet Room meeting. Kennedy had deployed the Jupiters in March of the year, causing a stream of angry outbursts from Khrushchev. "Most people will think this is a rather even trade and we ought to take advantage of it," Kennedy said. Vice

President Lyndon Johnson was the first to endorse the missile swap but others continued to oppose the offer. Finally, Kennedy ended the debate. "We can't very well invade Cuba with all its toil and blood," Kennedy said, "when we could have gotten them out by making a deal on the same missiles on Turkey. If that's part of the record, then you don't have a very good war."

Kennedy immediately responded to Khrushchev's letter, issuing a statement calling it "an important and constructive contribution to peace". He continued this with a formal letter:

- I consider my letter to you of October twenty-seventh and your reply of today as firm undertakings on the part of both our governments which should be promptly carried out.... The US will make a statement in the framework of the Security Council in reference to Cuba as follows: it will declare that the United States of America will respect the inviolability of Cuban borders, its sovereignty, that it take the pledge not to interfere in internal affairs, not to intrude themselves and not to permit our territory to be used as a bridgehead for the invasion of Cuba, and will restrain those who would plan to carry an aggression against Cuba, either from US territory or from the territory of other countries neighboring to Cuba.

Kennedy's planned statement would also contain suggestions he had received from his adviser Schlesinger Jr. in a "Memorandum for the President" describing the "Post Mortem on Cuba".

Kennedy's Oval Office telephone conversation with Eisenhower soon after Khrushchev's message arrived revealed that the President was planning to use the Cuban Missile Crisis to escalate tensions with Khrushchev and in the long run, Cuba as well. The President also claimed that he thought the crisis would result in direct military confrontations in Berlin by the end of the next month. He also claimed in his conversation with Eisenhower that the Soviet leader had offered to withdraw from Cuba in exchange for the withdrawal of missiles from Turkey and that while the Kennedy Administration had agreed not to invade Cuba, they were only in process of determining Khrushchev's offer to withdraw from Turkey.

When former US President Harry Truman called President Kennedy the day of Khrushchev's offer, the President informed him that his Administration had rejected the Soviet leader's offer to withdraw missiles from Turkey and was planning on using the Soviet setback in Cuba to escalate tensions in Berlin.

The US continued the blockade; in the following days, aerial reconnaissance proved that the Soviets were making progress in removing the missile systems. The 42 missiles and their support equipment were loaded onto eight Soviet ships. On November 2, 1962, Kennedy addressed the US via radio and television broadcasts regarding the dismantlement process of the Soviet R-12 missile bases located in the Caribbean region. The ships left Cuba on November 5 to 9.

The US made a final visual check as each of the ships passed the blockade line. Further diplomatic efforts were required to remove the Soviet Il-28 bombers, and they were loaded on three Soviet ships on December 5 and 6. Concurrent with the

Soviet commitment on the Il-28s, the US government announced the end of the blockade from 6:45 pm EST on November 20, 1962. At the time when the Kennedy administration thought that the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved, nuclear tactical rockets stayed in Cuba since they were not part of the Kennedy-Khrushchev understandings and the Americans did not know about them. The Soviets changed their minds, fearing possible future Cuban militant steps, and on November 22, 1962, Deputy Premier of the Soviet Union Anastas Mikoyan told Castro that the rockets with the nuclear warheads were being removed as well.

In his negotiations with the Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, Robert Kennedy informally proposed that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey would be removed "within a short time after this crisis was over". Under an operation code-named *Operation Pot Pie*, the removal of the Jupiters from Italy and Turkey began on 1 April and was completed by 24 April 1963. The initial plans were to recycle the missiles for use in other programs, but NASA and the USAF were not interested in retaining the missile hardware. The missile bodies were destroyed on site, warheads, guidance packages, and launching equipment worth \$14 million were returned to the United States.

The practical effect of the Kennedy-Khrushchev Pact was that the US would remove their rockets from Italy and Turkey and that the Soviets had no intention of resorting to nuclear war if they were out-gunned by the US. Because the withdrawal of the Jupiter missiles from NATO bases in Italy and Turkey was not made public at the time, Khrushchev appeared to have lost the conflict and become weakened. The perception was that

Kennedy had won the contest between the superpowers and that Khrushchev had been humiliated. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev took every step to avoid full conflict despite pressures from their respective governments. Khrushchev held power for another two years.

## **Nuclear forces**

By the time of the crisis in October 1962, the total number of nuclear weapons in the stockpiles of each country numbered approximately 26,400 for the United States and 3,300 for the Soviet Union. At the peak of the crisis, the U.S. had some 3,500 nuclear weapons ready to be used on command with a combined yield of approximately 6,300 megatons.

The Soviets had considerably less strategic firepower at their disposal (some 300–320 bombs and warheads), lacking submarine-based weapons in a position to threaten the U.S. mainland and having most of their intercontinental delivery systems based on bombers that would have difficulty penetrating North American air defence systems. The U.S. had approximately 4,375 nuclear weapons deployed in Europe, most of which were tactical weapons such as nuclear artillery, with around 450 of them for ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and aircraft; the Soviets had more than 550 similar weapons in Europe.

### **United States**

- SAC
- ICBM: 182 (at peak alert); 121 Atlas D/E/F, 53 Titan 1, 8 Minuteman 1A

- Bombers: 1,595; 880 B-47, 639 B-52, 76 B-58 (1,479 bombers and 1,003 refuelling tankers available at peak alert)
- Atlantic Command
- 112 UGM-27 Polaris in seven SSBNs (16 each); five submarines with Polaris A1 and two with A2
- Pacific Command
- 4–8 Regulus cruise missiles
- 16 Mace cruise missiles
- 3 aircraft carriers with some 40 bombs each
- Land-based aircraft with some 50 bombs
- European Command
- IRBM: 105; 60 Thor (UK), 45 Jupiter (30 Italy, 15 Turkey)
- 48–90 Mace cruise missiles
- 2 U.S. Sixth Fleet aircraft carriers with some 40 bombs each
- Land-based aircraft with some 50 bombs

## **Soviet Union**

- Strategic (for use against North America):
- ICBM: 42; four SS-6/R-7A at Plesetsk with two in reserve at Baikonur, 36 SS-7/R-16 with 26 in silos and ten on open launch pads
- Bombers: 160 (readiness unknown); 100 Tu-95 Bear, 60 3M Bison B
- Regional (mostly targeting Europe, and others targeting U.S. bases in east Asia):
- MRBM: 528 SS-4/R-12, 492 at soft launch sites and 36 at hard launch sites (approximately six to eight R-12s were operational in Cuba, capable of striking

the U.S. mainland at any moment until the crisis was resolved)

- IRBM: 28 SS-5/R-14
- Unknown number of Tu-16 Badger, Tu-22 Blinder, and MiG-21 aircraft tasked with nuclear strike missions

## **Aftermath**

### **Soviet leadership**

The enormity of how close the world came to thermonuclear war impelled Khrushchev to propose a far-reaching easing of tensions with the US. In a letter to President Kennedy dated October 30, 1962, Khrushchev outlined a range of bold initiatives to forestall the possibility of a further nuclear crisis, including proposing a non-aggression treaty between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact or even disbanding these military blocs, a treaty to cease all nuclear weapons testing and even the elimination of all nuclear weapons, resolution of the hot-button issue of Germany by both East and West formally accepting the existence of West Germany and East Germany, and US recognition of the government of mainland China.

The letter invited counter-proposals and further exploration of these and other issues through peaceful negotiations. Khrushchev invited Norman Cousins, the editor of a major US periodical and an anti-nuclear weapons activist, to serve as liaison with President Kennedy, and Cousins met with Khrushchev for four hours in December 1962.

Kennedy's response to Khrushchev's proposals was lukewarm but Kennedy expressed to Cousins that he felt constrained in exploring these issues due to pressure from hardliners in the US national security apparatus. The US and the USSR did shortly thereafter agree on a treaty banning atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, known as the "Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty".

Further after the crisis, the US and the Soviet Union created the Moscow–Washington hotline, a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington. The purpose was to have a way that the leaders of the two Cold War countries could communicate directly to solve such a crisis.

The compromise embarrassed Khrushchev and the Soviet Union because the withdrawal of US missiles from Italy and Turkey was a secret deal between Kennedy and Khrushchev. Khrushchev went to Kennedy as he thought that the crisis was getting out of hand, but the Soviets were seen as retreating from circumstances that they had started.

Khrushchev's fall from power two years later was in part because of the Soviet Politburo's embarrassment at both Khrushchev's eventual concessions to the US and this ineptitude in precipitating the crisis in the first place. According to Dobrynin, the top Soviet leadership took the Cuban outcome as "a blow to its prestige bordering on humiliation".

## **Cuban leadership**

Cuba perceived the outcome as a betrayal by the Soviets, as decisions on how to resolve the crisis had been made

exclusively by Kennedy and Khrushchev. Castro was especially upset that certain issues of interest to Cuba, such as the status of the US Naval Base in Guantánamo, were not addressed. That caused Cuban–Soviet relations to deteriorate for years to come.

### **Romanian leadership**

During the crisis, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej sent a letter to President Kennedy dissociating Romania from Soviet actions. This convinced the American Administration of Bucharest's intentions of detaching itself from Moscow.

### **US leadership**

The worldwide US Forces DEFCON 3 status was returned to DEFCON 4 on November 20, 1962. General Curtis LeMay told the President that the resolution of the crisis was the "greatest defeat in our history"; his was a minority position.

He had pressed for an immediate invasion of Cuba as soon as the crisis began and still favoured invading Cuba even after the Soviets had withdrawn their missiles.

Twenty-five years later, LeMay still believed that "We could have gotten not only the missiles out of Cuba, we could have gotten the Communists out of Cuba at that time."

At least four contingency strikes were armed and launched from Florida against Cuban airfields and suspected missile sites in 1963 and 1964, although all were diverted to the Pinecastle Range Complex after the planes passed Andros island. Critics, including Seymour Melman, and Seymour

Hersh suggested that the Cuban Missile Crisis encouraged the United States' use of military means, such as the case in the later Vietnam War.

## **Human casualties**

U-2 pilot Anderson's body was returned to the US and was buried with full military honours in South Carolina. He was the first recipient of the newly created Air Force Cross, which was awarded posthumously. Although Anderson was the only combatant fatality during the crisis, 11 crew members of three reconnaissance Boeing RB-47 Stratojets of the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing were also killed in crashes during the period between September 27 and November 11, 1962. Seven crew died when a Military Air Transport Service Boeing C-135B Stratolifter delivering ammunition to Guantanamo Bay Naval Base stalled and crashed on approach on October 23.

## **Later revelations**

Schlesinger, a historian and adviser to Kennedy, told National Public Radio in an interview on October 16, 2002 that Castro did not want the missiles, but Khrushchev pressured Castro to accept them. Castro was not completely happy with the idea, but the Cuban National Directorate of the Revolution accepted them, both to protect Cuba against US attack and to aid the Soviet Union. Schlesinger believed that when the missiles were withdrawn, Castro was more angry with Khrushchev than with Kennedy because Khrushchev had not consulted Castro before deciding to remove them. Although Castro was infuriated by Khrushchev, he planned on striking the US with remaining

missiles if an invasion of the island occurred. In early 1992, it was confirmed that Soviet forces in Cuba had already received tactical nuclear warheads for their artillery rockets and Il-28 bombers when the crisis broke. Castro stated that he would have recommended their use if the US invaded despite Cuba being destroyed.

Arguably, the most dangerous moment in the crisis was not recognised until the Cuban Missile Crisis Havana conference, in October 2002. Attended by many of the veterans of the crisis, they all learned that on October 27, 1962, USS *Beale* had tracked and dropped signalling depth charges (the size of hand grenades) on *B-59*, a Soviet Project 641 (NATO designation Foxtrot) submarine. Unknown to the US, it was armed with a 15-kiloton nuclear torpedo.

Running out of air, the Soviet submarine was surrounded by American warships and desperately needed to surface. An argument broke out among three officers aboard *B-59*, including submarine captain Valentin Savitsky, political officer Ivan Semonovich Maslennikov, and Deputy brigade commander Captain 2nd rank (US Navy Commander rank equivalent) Vasily Arkhipov. An exhausted Savitsky became furious and ordered that the nuclear torpedo on board be made combat ready. Accounts differ about whether Arkhipov convinced Savitsky not to make the attack or whether Savitsky himself finally concluded that the only reasonable choice left open to him was to come to the surface. During the conference, McNamara stated that nuclear war had come much closer than people had thought. Thomas Blanton, director of the National Security Archive, said, "A guy called Vasili Arkhipov saved the world."

Fifty years after the crisis, Graham T. Allison wrote:

- Fifty years ago, the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear disaster. During the standoff, US President John F. Kennedy thought the chance of escalation to war was "between 1 in 3 and even", and what we have learned in later decades has done nothing to lengthen those odds. We now know, for example, that in addition to nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, the Soviet Union had deployed 100 tactical nuclear weapons to Cuba, and the local Soviet commander there could have launched these weapons without additional codes or commands from Moscow. The US air strike and invasion that were scheduled for the third week of the confrontation would likely have triggered a nuclear response against American ships and troops, and perhaps even Miami. The resulting war might have led to the deaths of over 100 million Americans and over 100 million Russians.

BBC journalist Joe Matthews published the story, on October 13, 2012, behind the 100 tactical nuclear warheads mentioned by Graham Allison in the excerpt above. Khrushchev feared that Castro's hurt pride and widespread Cuban indignation over the concessions he had made to Kennedy might lead to a breakdown of the agreement between the Soviet Union and the US.

To prevent that, Khrushchev decided to offer to give Cuba more than 100 tactical nuclear weapons that had been shipped to Cuba along with the long-range missiles but, crucially, had

escaped the notice of US intelligence. Khrushchev determined that because the Americans had not listed the missiles on their list of demands, keeping them in Cuba would be in the Soviet Union's interests.

Anastas Mikoyan was tasked with the negotiations with Castro over the missile transfer deal that was designed to prevent a breakdown in the relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union. While in Havana, Mikoyan witnessed the mood swings and paranoia of Castro, who was convinced that Moscow had made the agreement with the US at the expense of Cuba's defence. Mikoyan, on his own initiative, decided that Castro and his military not be given control of weapons with an explosive force equal to 100 Hiroshima-sized bombs under any circumstances. He defused the seemingly intractable situation, which risked re-escalating the crisis, on November 22, 1962. During a tense, four-hour meeting, Mikoyan convinced Castro that despite Moscow's desire to help, it would be in breach of an unpublished Soviet law, which did not actually exist, to transfer the missiles permanently into Cuban hands and provide them with an independent nuclear deterrent. Castro was forced to give way and, much to the relief of Khrushchev and the rest of the Soviet government, the tactical nuclear weapons were crated and returned by sea to the Soviet Union during December 1962.

## **In popular culture**

The American popular media, especially television, made frequent use of the events of the missile crisis and both fictional and documentary forms. Jim Willis includes the Crisis as one of the 100 "media moments that changed America".

Sheldon Stern finds that a half century later there are still many "misconceptions, half-truths, and outright lies" that have shaped media versions of what happened in the White House during those harrowing two weeks.

Historian William Cohn argued in a 1976 article that television programs are typically the main source used by the American public to know about and interpret the past. According to Cold War historian Andrei Kozovoi, the Soviet media proved somewhat disorganised as it was unable to generate a coherent popular history. Khrushchev lost power and was airbrushed out of the story. Cuba was no longer portrayed as a heroic David against the American Goliath. One contradiction that pervaded the Soviet media campaign was between the pacifistic rhetoric of the peace movement that emphasises the horrors of nuclear war and the militancy of the need to prepare Soviets for war against American aggression.