

Dec 11/09


Cold War


From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)

For other uses, see *[Cold War \(disambiguation\)](#)*.



 United States President Ronald Reagan (left) and President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev meet in 1985.


Part of a series on the
Cold War
Origins of the Cold War
World War II
War Conferences
Eastern Bloc
Iron Curtain
Cold War (1947–1953)
Cold War (1953–1962)
Cold War (1962–1979)
Cold War (1979–1985)
Cold War (1985–1991)

The **Cold War** (1945–1991) was the continuing state of political conflict, military tension, and economic competition existing after [World War II](#) (1939–1945), primarily between the [USSR](#) and its [satellite states](#), and the powers of the [Western world](#), including the [United States](#). Although the primary participants' military forces never officially

clashed directly, they expressed the conflict through military coalitions, strategic conventional force deployments, a nuclear arms race, espionage, proxy wars, propaganda, and technological competition, such as the Space Race.

Despite being allies against the Axis powers and having the most powerful forces, the USSR and the US disagreed about the configuration of the post-war world while occupying most of Europe. The Soviet Union created the Eastern Bloc with the eastern European countries it occupied, annexing some as Soviet Socialist Republics and maintaining others as satellite states, some of which were later consolidated as the Warsaw Pact (1955–1991). The US and some western European countries established containment of communism as a defensive policy, establishing alliances such as NATO to that end.

Several such countries also coordinated the rebuilding of western Europe, especially western Germany, which the USSR opposed. Elsewhere, in Latin America and Southeast Asia, the USSR fostered communist revolutions, opposed by several western countries and their regional allies; some they attempted to roll back, with mixed results. Some countries aligned with NATO and the Warsaw Pact, yet non-aligned country blocs also emerged.

The Cold War featured periods of relative calm and of international high tension – the Berlin Blockade (1948–1949), the Korean War (1950–1953), the Berlin Crisis of 1961, the Vietnam War (1959–1975), the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), the Soviet war in Afghanistan (1979–1989), and the Able Archer 83 NATO exercises in November 1983. Both sides sought détente to relieve political tensions and deter direct military attack, which would likely guarantee their mutual assured destruction with nuclear weapons.

In the 1980s, the United States increased diplomatic, military, and economic pressures against the USSR, which had already suffered severe economic stagnation. Thereafter, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the liberalizing reforms of perestroika ("reconstruction", "reorganization", 1987) and glasnost ("openness", ca. 1985). The Cold War ended after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, leaving the United States as the dominant military power, and Russia possessing most of the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal. The Cold War and its events have had a significant impact on the world today, and it is commonly referred to in popular culture such as fiction.

Contents

[hide]

- 1 Origins of the term
- 2 Background
- 3 World War II and post-war (1939–47)
 - 3.1 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939-41)
 - 3.2 Allies against the Axis (1941-45)
 - 3.3 Wartime conferences regarding post-war Europe

- 3.4 Beginnings of the Eastern Bloc
 - 3.5 Potsdam Conference and defeat of Japan
 - 3.6 Tensions build
- 4 Containment through the Korean War (1947–53)
 - 4.1 Soviet satellite states
 - 4.2 Containment and the Truman Doctrine
 - 4.3 Marshall Plan and Czechoslovak coup d'état
 - 4.4 Berlin Blockade and airlift
 - 4.5 NATO beginnings and Radio Free Europe
 - 4.6 Chinese Revolution and SEATO
 - 4.7 Korean War
- 5 Crisis and escalation (1953–62)
 - 5.1 Khrushchev, Eisenhower and De-Stalinization
 - 5.2 Warsaw Pact and Hungarian Revolution
 - 5.3 Berlin ultimatum and European integration
 - 5.4 Worldwide competition
 - 5.5 Sino-Soviet split, space race, ICBMs
 - 5.6 Berlin Crisis of 1961
 - 5.7 Cuban Missile Crisis and Khrushchev ouster
- 6 Confrontation through détente (1962–79)
 - 6.1 Dominican Republic and French NATO withdrawal
 - 6.2 Czechoslovakia invasion
 - 6.3 Brezhnev Doctrine
 - 6.4 Third World escalations
 - 6.5 Sino-American relations
 - 6.6 Nixon, Brezhnev, and détente
 - 6.7 Late 1970s deterioration of relations
- 7 Second Cold War (1979–85)
 - 7.1 Afghanistan war
 - 7.2 Reagan and Thatcher
 - 7.3 Polish Solidarity movement
 - 7.4 Soviet and US military and economic issues
- 8 End of the Cold War (1985–91)
 - 8.1 Gorbachev reforms
 - 8.2 Thaw in relations
 - 8.3 Faltering Soviet system
 - 8.4 Soviet dissolution
- 9 Legacy
- 10 Historiography
- 11 See also
- 12 Footnotes
- 13 References
- 14 Further reading
- 15 External links

Origins of the term

The first use of the term *Cold War* ^[1] describing the post–World War II geopolitical tensions between the USSR and its Western European Allies is attributed to Bernard Baruch, a US financier and presidential advisor. ^[2] In South Carolina, on April 16, 1947, he delivered a speech (by journalist Herbert Bayard Swope) ^[3] saying, “Let us not be deceived: we are today in the midst of a cold war.” ^[4] Newspaper reporter-columnist Walter Lippmann gave the term wide currency, with the book *Cold War* (1947). ^[5]


Previously, during the war, George Orwell used the term *Cold War* in the essay “You and the Atomic Bomb” published October 19, 1945, in the British newspaper *Tribune*. Contemplating a world living in the shadow of the threat of nuclear war, he warned of a “peace that is no peace”, which he called a permanent “cold war”, ^[6] Orwell directly referred to that war as the ideological confrontation between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. ^[7] Moreover, in *The Observer* of March 10, 1946, Orwell wrote that “. . . [a]fter the Moscow conference last December, Russia began to make a ‘cold war’ on Britain and the British Empire.” ^[8]

Background

Main article: Origins of the Cold War

Further information: Red Scare



 American troops in Vladivostok, August 1918, during the Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War

There is disagreement among historians regarding the starting point of the Cold War. While most historians trace its origins to the period immediately following World War II, others argue that it began towards the end of World War I, although tensions between the Russian Empire, other European countries and the United States date back to the middle of the 19th century. ^[9]

As a result of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (followed by its withdrawal from World War I), Soviet Russia found itself isolated in international diplomacy. ^[10] Leader 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, beginning with the establishment of the Soviet Comintern, which called for revolutionary upheavals abroad. ^[11]

Subsequent leader Joseph Stalin, who viewed the Soviet Union as a "socialist island", stated that the Soviet Union must see that "the present capitalist encirclement is replaced by a socialist encirclement."^[12] As early as 1925, Stalin stated that he viewed international politics as a bipolar world in which the Soviet Union would attract countries gravitating to socialism and capitalist countries would attract states gravitating toward capitalism, while the world was in a period of "temporary stabilization of capitalism" preceding its eventual collapse.^[13]

Several events fueled suspicion and distrust between the western powers and the Soviet Union: the Bolsheviks' challenge to capitalism;^[14] the 1926 Soviet funding of a British general workers strike causing Britain to break relations with the Soviet Union;^[15] Stalin's 1927 declaration that peaceful coexistence with "the capitalist countries . . . is receding into the past";^[16] conspiratorial allegations in the Shakhty show trial of a planned French and British-led coup d'etat;^[17] the Great Purge involving a series of campaigns of political repression and persecution in which over half a million Soviets were executed;^[18] the Moscow show trials including allegations of British, French, Japanese and German espionage;^[19] the controversial death of 6-8 million people in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in the 1932-3 Ukrainian famine; western support of the White Army in the Russian Civil War; the US refusal to recognize the Soviet Union until 1933;^[20] and the Soviet entry into the Treaty of Rapallo.^[21] This outcome rendered Soviet-American relations a matter of major long-term concern for leaders in both countries.^[9]

World War II and post-war (1939–47)

Main article: Origins of the Cold War

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939-41)

Further information: Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and Nazi-Soviet economic relations

Soviet relations with the West further deteriorated when, one week prior to the start of the World War II, the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which included a secret agreement to split Poland and Eastern Europe between the two states.^[22] Beginning one week later, in September 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union divided Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe through invasions of the countries ceded to each under the Pact.^{[23][24]}

For the next year and a half, they engaged in an extensive economic relationship, trading vital war materials^{[25][26]} until 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.^[27]


Allies against the Axis (1941-45)

Further information: Eastern Front (World War II), Western Front (World War II), and Lend-Lease

During their joint war effort, which began thereafter in 1941, the Soviets suspected that the British and the Americans had conspired to allow the Soviets to bear the brunt of the fighting against Nazi 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 moment and shape the peace settlement.^[28] Thus, Soviet perceptions of the West left a strong undercurrent of tension and hostility between the Allied powers.^[29]

Wartime conferences regarding post-war Europe



 The "Big Three" at the Yalta Conference, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin

Further information: Tehran Conference and Yalta Conference

The Allies disagreed about how the European map should look, and how borders would be drawn, following the war.^[30] Each side held dissimilar ideas regarding the establishment and maintenance of post-war security.^[30] 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.^[31]

Following Russian historical experiences with frequent invasions^[32] and the immense death toll (estimated at 27 million) and destruction the Soviet Union sustained during World War II,^[33] the Soviet Union sought to increase security by controlling the internal affairs of countries that bordered it.^{[30][34]} In April 1945, both Churchill and new American President Harry S. Truman opposed, among other things, the Soviets' decision to prop up the Lublin government, the Soviet-controlled rival to the Polish government-in-exile, whose relations with the Soviets were severed.^[35]

At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the Allies failed to reach a firm consensus on the framework for post-war settlement in Europe.^[36] Following the Allied victory in May, the Soviets effectively occupied Eastern Europe,^[36] while strong US and Western allied forces remained in Western Europe.

The Soviet Union, United States, Britain and France established zones of occupation and a loose framework for four-power control of occupied Germany.^[37] The Allies set up the United Nations for the maintenance of world peace, but the enforcement capacity of its Security Council was effectively paralyzed by individual members' ability to use veto power.^[38] 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.^[39]

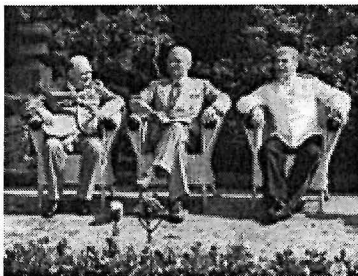
Beginnings of the Eastern Bloc

Further information: Eastern Bloc

During the final stages of the war, the Soviet Union laid the foundation for the Eastern Bloc by directly annexing several countries as Soviet Socialist Republics that were initially (and effectively) ceded to it by Nazi Germany in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. These included eastern Poland (incorporated into two different SSRs),^[40] Latvia (which became the Latvian SSR)^[41],^{[41][42]} Estonia (which became the Estonian SSR)^{[41][42]} Lithuania (which became the Lithuanian SSR)^{[41][42]} part of eastern Finland (which became the Karelo-Finnish SSR)^[24] and eastern Romania (which became the Moldavian SSR).^{[43][44]}

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.^[45] In April-May 1945, the British War Cabinet's Joint Planning Staff Committee developed Operation Unthinkable, a plan "to impose upon Russia the will of the United States and the British Empire".^[46] The plan, however, was rejected by the British Chiefs of Staff Committee as militarily unfeasible.^[45]

Potsdam Conference and defeat of Japan



Winston Churchill, Harry S. Truman and Joseph Stalin at the Potsdam Conference.

Further information: 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 eastern Europe.^[47] Moreover, the participants' mounting antipathy and bellicose language served to confirm their suspicions about each others' hostile intentions and entrench their positions.^[48] At

this conference Truman informed Stalin that the United States possessed a powerful new weapon.^[49]

Stalin was aware that the Americans were working on the atomic bomb and, given that the Soviets' own rival program was in place, he reacted to the news calmly. The Soviet leader said he was pleased by the news and expressed the hope that the weapon would be used against Japan.^[49] 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.^[50]

Tensions build

Further information: Long Telegram, Iron Curtain, and Restatement of Policy on Germany

In February 1946, George F. Kennan's "Long Telegram" from Moscow helped to articulate the US government's increasingly hard line against the Soviets, and became the basis for US strategy toward the Soviet Union for the duration of the Cold War.^[51] That 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".^[52]

On September 6, 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.^[53] 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 [...]"^[54]

A few weeks after the release of this "Long Telegram", former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered his famous "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri.^[55] The speech called for an Anglo-American alliance against the Soviets, whom he accused of establishing an "iron curtain" from "Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic".^{[56][57]}

Containment through the Korean War (1947–53)

Main article: Cold War (1947–1953)

Soviet satellite states



Formation of the Eastern Bloc

Further information: *Eastern Bloc* and *Cominform*

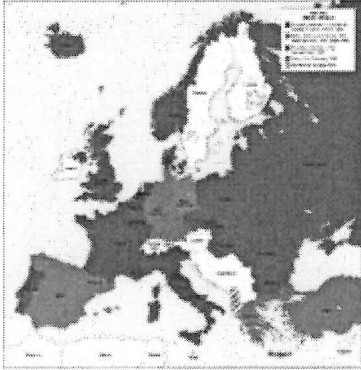
After annexing several occupied countries as Soviet Socialist Republics at the end of World War II, other occupied states were added to the Eastern Bloc by converting them into puppet Soviet Satellite states,^[57] such as East Germany,^[58] the People's Republic of Poland, the People's Republic of Hungary,^[59] the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic,^[60] the People's Republic of Romania and the People's Republic of Albania.^[61]

The Soviet-style regimes that arose in the Bloc not only reproduced Soviet command economies, but also adopted the brutal methods employed by Joseph Stalin and Soviet secret police to suppress real and potential opposition.^[62] In Asia, the Red Army had overrun Manchuria in the last month of the war, and went on to occupy the large swath of Korean territory located north of the 38th parallel.^[63]

In September 1947, the Soviets created Cominform, the purpose of which was to enforce orthodoxy within the international communist movement and tighten political control over Soviet satellites through coordination of communist parties in the Eastern Bloc.^[64] 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.^[65]

As part of the Soviet domination of the Eastern Bloc, the 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.^[66] 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.^[67]

Containment and the Truman Doctrine



European military alliances

Main articles: Containment and Truman Doctrine

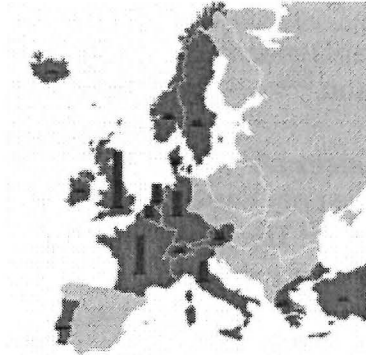
By 1947, US president Harry S. Truman's advisers urged him to take immediate steps to counter the Soviet Union's influence, citing Stalin's efforts (amid post-war confusion and collapse) to undermine the US by encouraging rivalries among capitalists that could precipitate another war.^[68] In February 1947, the British government announced that it could no longer afford to finance the Greek monarchical military regime in its civil war against communist-led insurgents.

The American government's response to this announcement was the adoption of containment,^[69] the goal of which was to stop the spread of communism. Truman delivered a speech that called 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.^[69] Even though the insurgents were helped by Josip Broz Tito's Yugoslavia,^[20] US policymakers accused the Soviet Union of conspiring against the Greek royalists in an effort to expand Soviet influence.^[70]

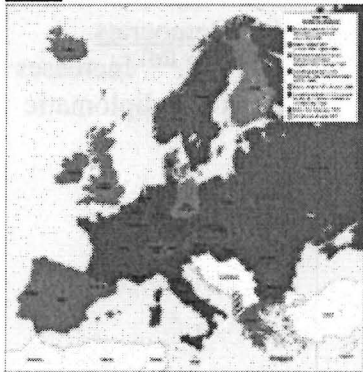
Enunciation of the Truman Doctrine marked the beginning of a US bipartisan defense and foreign policy consensus between Republicans and Democrats focused on containment and deterrence that weakened during and after the Vietnam War, but ultimately held steady.^{[71][72]} Moderate and conservative parties in Europe, as well as social democrats, gave virtually unconditional support to the Western alliance,^[73] while European and American Communists, paid by the KGB and involved in its intelligence operations,^[74] adhered to Moscow's line, although dissent began to appear after 1956.

Other critiques of consensus politics came from anti-Vietnam War activists, the CND and the nuclear freeze movement.^[75]

Marshall Plan and Czechoslovak coup d'état



Map of Cold-War era Europe and the Near East showing countries that received Marshall Plan aid. The red columns show the relative amount of total aid per nation.



European economic alliances

Main articles: Marshall Plan and Czechoslovak coup d'état of 1948

In early 1947, Britain, France 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.^[76] 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.^[76]

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.^[77] The plan also stated that European prosperity was contingent upon German economic recovery.^[78] 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. These would become the main bureaucracies for US policy in the Cold War.^[79]


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.^[64] Stalin therefore prevented Eastern Bloc nations from receiving Marshall Plan aid.^[64] The Soviet Union's alternative to the Marshall plan, which was purported to involve Soviet subsidies and trade with eastern Europe, became known as the Molotov Plan (later institutionalized in January 1949 as the Comecon).^[20] 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.^[80]

In early 1948, following reports of strengthening "reactionary elements", Soviet operatives executed a coup d'état of 1948 in Czechoslovakia, the only Eastern Bloc state that the Soviets had permitted to retain democratic structures.^{[81][82]} The public brutality of the coup shocked Western powers more than any event up to that point, 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.^[83]

The twin policies of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan led to billions in economic and military aid for Western Europe, and Greece and Turkey. With US assistance, the Greek military won its civil war,^[79] The Italian Christian Democrats defeated the powerful Communist-Socialist alliance in the elections of 1948.^[84] Increases occurred in intelligence and espionage activities, Eastern Bloc defections and diplomatic expulsions.^[85]

Berlin Blockade and airlift



 C-47s unloading at Tempelhof Airport in Berlin during the Berlin Blockade.
Main article: Berlin Blockade

The United States and Britain merged their western German occupation zones into "Bizonia" (later "trizonia" with the addition of France's zone).^[86] 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.^[87] In addition, in accordance with the Marshall Plan, they began to re-industrialize and rebuild the German economy, including the introduction of a new Deutsche Mark currency to replace the old Reichsmark currency that the Soviets had debased.^[88]


Shortly thereafter, Stalin instituted the Berlin Blockade, one of the first major crises of the Cold War, preventing food, materials and supplies from arriving in West Berlin.^[89] 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.^[90]

The Soviets mounted a public relations campaign against the policy change, communists attempted to disrupt the elections of 1948 preceding large losses therein,^[91] 300,000 Berliners demonstrated and urged the international airlift to continue,^[92] and the US accidentally created "Operation Vittles", which supplied candy to German children.^[93] In May 1949, Stalin backed down and lifted the blockade.^{[66][94]}

NATO beginnings and Radio Free Europe

Main articles: NATO, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and Eastern Bloc information dissemination



 President Truman signs the National Security Act Amendment of 1949 with guests in the Oval Office.

Britain, France, the United States, Canada and eight other western European countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty of April 1949, establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).^[66] That August, Stalin ordered the detonation of the first Soviet atomic device.^[20] Following Soviet refusals to participate in a German rebuilding effort set forth by western European countries in 1948,^{[87][95]} the US, Britain and France spearheaded the establishment of West Germany from the three Western zones of occupation in May 1949.^[47] The Soviet Union proclaimed its zone of occupation in Germany the German Democratic Republic that October.^[47]

Media in the Eastern Bloc was an organ of the state, completely reliant on and subservient to the communist party, with radio and television organizations being state-owned, while print media was usually owned by political organizations, mostly by the local communist party.^[96] Soviet propaganda used Marxist philosophy to attack capitalism, claiming labor exploitation and war-mongering imperialism were inherent in the system.^[97]

Along with the broadcasts of the British Broadcasting Company and the Voice of America to Eastern Europe,^[98] 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.^[99] 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.^[99] 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.^[100]

American policymakers, including Kennan and John Foster Dulles, acknowledged that the Cold War was in its essence a war of ideas.^[100] 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.^[101]

In the early 1950s, the US worked for the rearmament of West Germany and, in 1955, secured its full membership of NATO.^[47] 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.^[102]

Chinese Revolution and SEATO

Further information: Chinese Revolution and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization

In 1949, Mao's Red Army defeated the US-backed Kuomintang (KMT) Nationalist Government in China, and the Soviet Union promptly created an alliance with the newly-formed People's Republic of China.^[103] Confronted with the Chinese Revolution and the end of the US atomic monopoly in 1949, the Truman administration quickly moved to escalate and expand the containment policy.^[20] In NSC-68, a secret 1950 document,^[104] the National Security Council proposed to reinforce pro-Western alliance systems and quadruple spending on defense.^[20]

US officials moved thereafter to expand 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.^[105] 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 and SEATO), thereby guaranteeing the United States a number of long-term military bases.^[47]

Korean War

Main article: Korean War

One of the more significant impacts of containment was the outbreak of the Korean War. In June 1950, Kim Il-Sung's North Korean People's Army invaded South Korea.^[106] To Stalin's surprise,^[20] the UN Security Council backed the defense of South Korea, though the Soviets were then boycotting meetings to protest that Taiwan and not Communist

China held a permanent seat on the Council.^[107] A UN force of personnel from South Korea, the United States, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Canada, Australia, France, the Philippines, the Netherlands, Belgium, New Zealand and other countries joined to stop the invasion.^[108]

Among other effects, the Korean War galvanised NATO to develop a military structure.^[109] Public opinion in countries involved, such as Great Britain, was divided for and against the war. British Attorney General Sir Hartley Shawcross repudiated the sentiment of those opposed when he said:^[110]

I know there are some who think that the horror and devastation of a world war now would be so frightful, whoever won, and the damage to civilization so lasting, that it would be better to submit to Communist domination. I understand that view—but I reject it.

Even though the Chinese and North Koreans were exhausted by the war and were prepared to end it by late 1952, Stalin insisted that they continue fighting, and a cease-fire was approved only in July 1953, after Stalin's death.^[47] In North Korea, Kim Il Sung created a highly centralized and brutal dictatorship, according himself unlimited power and generating a formidable cult of personality.^{[111][112]}

Crisis and escalation (1953–62)

Main article: Cold War (1953–1962)

Khrushchev, Eisenhower and De-Stalinization

In 1953, changes in political leadership on both sides shifted the dynamic of the Cold War.^[79] Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated president that January. During the last 18 months of the Truman administration, the US defense budget had quadrupled, and Eisenhower moved to reduce military spending by a third while continuing to fight the Cold War effectively.^[20]

In March, following the death of Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev became the Soviet leader following the deposition and execution of Lavrentiy Beria and the pushing aside of rivals Georgy Malenkov and Vyacheslav Molotov. On February 25, 1956, Khrushchev shocked delegates to the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party by cataloguing and denouncing Stalin's crimes.^[113] As part of a 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.^[79]

On November 18, 1956, while addressing Western ambassadors at a reception at the Polish embassy in Moscow, Khrushchev used his famous "Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you" expression, shocking everyone present.^[114] However, he had not been talking about nuclear war, he later claimed, but rather about the historically determined victory of communism over capitalism.^[115] He then declared in 1961 that even if the USSR might indeed be behind the West, within a decade its

housing shortage would disappear, consumer goods would be abundant, its population would be "materially provided for", and within two decades, the Soviet Union "would rise to such a great height that, by comparison, the main capitalist countries will remain far below and well behind".^[116]

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.^[79] 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.^[20]