An Overview Paper on Cold War

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ABSTRACT: The U.S. and the Soviet Union fought against the Nazis during World War Two together as allies the two countries, though, had a tense relationship. Americans have long been worried about the Soviet communism, and the tyrannical rule of their own government by the Russian dictator Joseph Stalin. The Soviets, for their part, resented the American reluctance for decades to recognize the USSR as a respectable part of the foreign world and the incompetent entrance into World War II, triggering the deaths of tens of millions of Russians. After the war came to an end, these grievances ripened into an overwhelming sense of mutual distrust and emit. Postwar Soviet expansionism in Eastern Europe fueled many Americans' fears of a Russian plan to control the world. Meanwhile, the USSR came to resent what they perceived as American officials' bellicose rhetoric, arms buildup and interventionist approach to international relations. In such a hostile atmosphere, no single party was entirely to blame for the Cold War; in fact, some historians believe it was inevitable.

KEYWORDS: America, Cold War, Korean War, Soviet Union, USSR

I. INTRODUCTION

The word "cold war" persisted since the 1930s in which relations between European countries were characterized as more and more delicate. In 1945 the philosopher George Orwell used the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in an article describing what the nuclear bombs were about regarding international relations. Orwell claimed that the explosion was such that it probably ended large-scale conflicts, establishing "a Nation that was instantly incapable of winning and in a continuous state of' cold war' with its neighbors". Following the surrender of Nazi Germany in May 1945 near the close of World War II, the uneasy wartime alliance between the United States and Great Britain on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other began to unravel. By 1948 the Soviets had installed left-wing governments in the countries of Eastern Europe that had been liberated by the Red Army. The Americans and the British feared the permanent Soviet domination of Eastern Europe and the threat of Soviet-influenced communist parties coming to power in the democracies of Western Europe. The Soviets, on the other hand, were determined to maintain control of Eastern Europe in order to safeguard against any possible renewed threat from Germany, and they were intent on spreading communism worldwide, largely for ideological reasons. The Cold War had solidified by 1947–48, when U.S. aid provided under the Marshall Plan to Western Europe had brought those countries under American influence and the Soviets had installed openly communist regimes in Eastern Europe[1]–[5]. Figure 1 portrays the struggle between the world power.

Fig.1: The Figure Portrays the Cold War between the Leading Countries

II.   THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN SUPERPOWERS

In this period the Soviets unsuccessfully blockaded the Western-held sectors of West Berlin (1948–49); the United States and its European allies formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a unified military command to resist the Soviet presence in Europe (1949); the Soviets exploded their first atomic warhead (1949), thus ending the American monopoly on the atomic bomb; the Chinese communists came to power in mainland China (1949); and the Soviet-supported communist government of North Korea invaded U.S.-supported South Korea in 1950, setting off an indecisive Korean War that lasted until 1953. Between 1953 and 1957 the tension of the Cold War was a slightly relaxed mainly because of the death in 1953 of the former Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin; nevertheless, the standoff remained. A unified military organization among the Soviet-bloc countries, the Warsaw Pact, was formed in 1955; and West Germany was admitted into NATO that same year. This triggered the Cuban missile crisis (1962), which put the two superpowers at war's edge before an agreement was reached to withdraw the missiles. The Cuban missile crisis demonstrated that neither the USA nor the Soviet Union are able to use nuclear weapons out of fear of the reprisal of others (and thus of mutual atomic annihilation). The two superpowers then signed the 1963 Treaty of Nuclear Test-Ban, which banned the testing of nuclear weapons on the ground. But the crisis also hardened the Soviets' determination never again to be humiliated by their military inferiority, and they began a buildup of both conventional and strategic forces that the United States was forced to match for the next 25 years. Throughout the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union resisted a direct military conflict and participated in conventional offensive activities only to deter or destroy allies on the other side. Thus, the Soviet Union sent troops to preserve communist rule in East Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan (1979). For its part, the United States helped overthrow a left-wing government in Guatemala (1954), supported an unsuccessful invasion of Cuba (1961), invaded the Dominican Republic (1965) and Grenada (1983), and undertook a long (1964–75) and unsuccessful effort to prevent communist North Vietnam from bringing South Vietnam under its rule (see Vietnam War)[6]–[8]. Figure 2 shows the efforts to end the cold war.

Fig.2: The Figure Portrays the Efforts and Events to End the Cold War

III.   THE COLD WAR EXTENDS TO SPACE

Another exciting arena for the Cold War rivalry was the speed of discovery. Sputnik, the first artificial satellite in this universe and the first man-made object to be dropped into earth's orbit, was launched on 4th October 1957 by a SovietR-7 intercontinental ballistic missile. The arrival of Sputnik arrived to most Americans as a shock, not a pleasant one. Space was seen as the new frontier in the United States, a logical extension of the American great discovery era, and it was important not to give the Soviets too much territory. Furthermore, this example of R-7's overwhelming power–seemingly capable of carrying a nuclear springhead. In 1958, the United States launched its own Explorer I satellite, designed by the United States. Army led by the Wernher von Braun rocket scientist and the so-called space race was ongoing. That same year, President Dwight Eisenhower signed executive order to create the NASA, a new space exploration organization with various programs the plan to use the space's military capacity. Nonetheless, the Soviets went one measure forward and in April 1961 put the first man into space. That May, after Alan Shepard become the first American man in space, President John F. Kennedy made the bold public claim that the U.S. would land a man on the moon by the end of the decade. U.S. astronauts came to be seen as the ultimate American heroes. Soviets, in turn, were pictured as the ultimate villains, with their massive, relentless efforts to surpass America and prove the power of the communist system[9], [10].

IV.   COLD WAR ABROAD

The fight against subversion at home mirrored a growing concern with the Soviet threat abroad. The first military action in the Cold War occurred in June 1950 with the occupation of the pro-Western south by the Soviet-backed North Korean People's Army. Many American officials feared this was the first step in a communist campaign to take over the world and deemed that nonintervention was not an option. In 1955 West Germany was accepted into NATO and authorized to remilitarize by the United States and other leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). With the Warsaw Pact, a mutual security alliance of the Soviets, which formed a unified military command under Marshal Ivan S was developed between the Soviet Union, Albania, Poland, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Other international disputes followed. The occupation of the Bay of Pigs in 1961 and the

next year's outbreak of the Cuban missiles seemed to demonstrate that the true communist challenge is now the chaotic postcolonial Third World. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Vietnam, where the collapse of the French colonial regime had led to a struggle between the American-backed nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem in the south and the communist nationalist Ho Chi Minh in the north. Since the 1950s, the United States had been committed to the survival of an anticommunist government in the region, and by the early 1960s it seemed clear to American leaders that if they were to successfully "contain" communist expansionism there, they would have to intervene more actively on Diem's behalf. However, what was intended to be a brief military action spiraled into a 10-year conflict.

V.   END OF COLD WAR

In the 1960s and 1970s, though, the binary battle between the US and the Soviet blocs contributed to a more complex pattern of international relations in which the region was no longer separated into two distinctly opposing blocs. In 1960 the Soviet Union and China split significantly. Over the years, the socialist bloc became fractured. Western Europe and Japan have, in the 1950's and 1960's, achieved dynamic economic growth and reduced their relative inferiority to the USA. Lower power states had more space in which to preserve their own integrity and often defied intimidation or cajoling by superpower. In the 1970s Cold War tensions were eased as evidenced by the Strategic Arms Restricting talks (SALT) which led to the 1972 and 1979 SALT I and II agreements in which both superpowers imposed restrictions on their anti-ballistic missiles and their nuclear missiles. Despite this, in the early 1980s the two superpowers continued to build up their massive arms and fight for dominance in the third world, a time of heightened Cold War tensions. Nevertheless, during the Soviet dictator, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Cold War began to break up late 1980. Gorbachev abolished the Soviet system's authoritarian elements and launched attempts to democratize the soviet political system. In 1989–90, Gorbachev participated in the collapse of communist regimes in the Soviet-bloc countries of East Europe. Democratic governments in East Germany, Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia gradually became more likely to emerge, with the assistance of the Soviet Union, with the integration of West and East Germany under NATO auspices. Gorbachev's internal reforms had meanwhile weakened his own Communist Party and allowed power to shift to Russia and the other constituent republics of the Soviet Union. In late 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and 15 newly independent nations were born from its corpse, including a Russia with a democratically elected, anticommunist leader. The Cold War had come to an end.

VI.   CONCLUSION

Cold War, open yet restricted rivalry that developed after World War II between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies. The Cold War was waged on political, economic, and propaganda fronts and had only limited recourse to weapons. The term was first used by the English writer George Orwell in an article published in 1945 to refer to what he predicted would be a nuclear stalemate between "two or three monstrous super-states, each possessed of a weapon by which millions of people can be wiped out in a few seconds." It was first used in the United States by the American financier and presidential adviser Bernard Baruch in a speech at the State House in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1947. In late 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed and 15 newly independent nations were born from its corpse, including a Russia with a democratically elected, anticommunist leader. The Cold War had come to an end.

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