

# Cold War: The Ideological Warfare

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## Abstract

Cold War had divided the world into two blocs: USA and USSR. The end of Second World War had seen the emergence of a bipolar world haunted by bloc rivalry between the two superpowers. The bipolar world engulfed by Suspicion, hatred and hostility. Other small countries emerged as 'Third World' states. This hostility continued for the next 45 years and is referred to as 'cold war' in history.

**Keywords:** Cold War, Bipolarity, Western Alliances, Eastern Alliances, Nuclear Deterrence, Third World, Non-Alignment

## Introduction

In contemporary world politics, cold war is referred to as the period which emerged after the Second World War. When the Second World War ended, the U.S.A and Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (U.S.S.R) were clearly the masters of the world. They were so far ahead of all the other countries in power and influence that they were called the 'Superpowers'. Relations between U.S.A and U.S.S.R became cold and deteriorated to such an extent that in spite of the absence of a direct military conflict between communist and capitalist camps, there began a mutually opposing political propaganda war.

It is a diplomatic war fought with potent weapons like formation of military alliances, spying, propaganda and economic and military assistance.

## Origin: Ideological Divide

After the Second World War, USA and USSR representing the Capitalist and Communist ideology emerged. Russia wanted to spread communism or socialism while USA wanted to control the spread. After the Second World War, areas of east Europe, under Soviet occupation came under the influence of communism.

## Truman Doctrine

The American President Truman started a programme of 'containment' of Soviet Union by providing aid to European Western states. Through this doctrine the U.S.A would help any country threatened by communism so that it does not advance in future.

## Marshall Plan

In 1947, Marshall, the US secretary of State, put forward a plan to give billions of dollars of aid to Europe so that it could recover from the shattering effects of the war. Western European countries had to be made strong enough to defend themselves. At this juncture, the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia further strengthened the American determination into build up string anti-communist countries by rescuing and restoring prosperity in Western Europe.

## Cold War: Nuclear Deterrence

The cold war was a result of the rivalry between the two superpowers. The innovation of nuclear and atomic bomb prevented a direct war. The logic was simple, since both powers were in possession of nuclear weapons capable of inflicting havoc and death, a hot war had to be avoided. In spite of provocations, no country wanted to risk a war just to gain political mileage by ruining their societies.

Even if one of the superpowers had attacked or disabled the nuclear weapons of the other superpower, it would still sum the other superpower the ability to inflict widespread destruction. This was known as the Logic of deterrence: both the sides have the capability to retaliate any nuclear attack and cause so much damage that none of them could afford to initiate the war.

## Emergence of Two Power Blocs: East Vs West and Small Countries

The world was divided by the alliance system by the two superpowers. Each State associated to one alliance system was to remain tied to its respective superpower so that the influence of the other alliances

was restrained.

The small countries within the alliances used the support from the superpowers to their advantage. They were promised protection in war, economic aid and military weapons against their enemy alliances. The alliance system thus divided the world into two camps. West European countries joined the US and came to be known as 'WESTERN ALLIANCE'. East European countries joined the Soviet bloc and were known as 'EASTERN ALLIANCE'.

The Western alliance was called NATO and the Eastern alliance was called WARSAW.

USA also built an alliance in West Asia called CENTO and in East Asia called the SEATO. Soviet Union responded by having relations with China, North Vietnam, North Korea.

Under these circumstances, many independent states which had just come out of the clutches of colonialism felt threatened to lose their independence again and found an autonomous way of staying out of the alliances by opting for Non-Alignment move.

In spite of their armies and nuclear preparations, superpowers needed allies. Small states helped superpowers to:

1. Extracting needed resources like minerals and oil.
2. Occupying territorial base to launch their troops and missiles, if required.
3. Locations to spy on each other.
4. Receive Economic support, to pay for military expenditures.

#### **Aim of the Study**

To analyse and showcase the logistics of the ideological warfare between two power blocs: USA and USSR. And to analyse the potential threat of a direct hot war. And to project the role of India and Non-alignment in the whole scenario.

#### **Methodology**

Collecting and analysing cold war logistics with secondary data available on various sources on the internet.

#### **Arms Control Treaties**

##### **Limited Test Ban Treaty (Ltbt)**

The LTBT was signed by the USA, the USSR and the UK in Moscow on 5 August- 1963. It put a ban on testing nuclear weapons in atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space.

##### **Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT)**

The NPT was signed by the five nuclear weapon states- USA, USSR, BRITAIN, FRANCE and CHINA. It allows only nuclear weapon states to have nuclear weapons and stops others from acquiring them.

#### **One of the Major Conflicts: Cuban Missile Crisis**

One of the major crises was the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. USA in its impression to contain communism promoted certain corrupt right-wing governments. One such government was in Cuba. In 1962 US spy planes took pictures of Russian missile bases in Cuba. The US president John.F.Kennedy dared not appear weak after which, He ordered his armed forces to prepare for a nuclear attack and demanded Khrushchev to withdraw his

missiles. And the world faced the first direct threat of a hot war supported by nuclear weapons.

Good sense, however, prevailed as Khrushchev replied in the following words, "assurances were given that the president of the US would not participate in an attack on Cuba and the blockade were lifted, the question of the missile sites in Cuba would be an entirely different question. We and you ought not to pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied the knot of war, because the more the two of us pull, the tighter that knot will be tied."

US president Kennedy agreed to Khrushchev's offer.

The blockade was lifted up, and the missiles crated up and sent back to Soviet Union. It was a direct telephonic link from the White House to the Kremlin in Moscow in 1963.

#### **Challenge to Bipolarity: Non Alignment Movement**

The idea of Non-Alignment was first originated by first Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who gave the idea to form an organisation of independent states in 1946. He got extreme support from a certain group of leaders.

These included Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Col. Abdul Nasser of Egypt, Sukarno of Indonesia and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. These 5 leaders were known as the founders of NAM. The first non-aligned summit was held in 1961 at Belgrade. The summit took three crucial decisions:

1. Not to join any power bloc of the Cold War era.
2. To increase cooperation between the third world countries.
3. To foster cooperation to reduce Cold War tension.

#### **India and the Cold War**

As pioneer of NAM India's approach towards cold war was twofold:

1. On one hand, it stayed away from the two military alliances.
2. On the second hand, it raised its voice against the decolonised nations becoming part of the hostile cold war alliances.

India's approach was thus, neither negative nor passive. Nehru clearly streamlined that NAM was not a policy of fleeing away. But rather India was keen to participate in the cold war rivalry to soften it. Indian mediators were quite often used to mediate between cold war rivals.

Non alignment served India's interest in two ways:

1. India was able to take an autonomous stance on world issues
2. Was able to balance on superpower against the other.
3. None of the superpowers could bully India or take it for granted.

#### **Cold War in a Nutshell**

1947 American President Harry Truman's Doctrine about the containment of communism.

1947-52 Marshall plan

1948-49 Berlin Blockade

1950-53 Korean War

1954 Defeat of the French, Signing of the Geneva Records, Division of Vietnam

1955 Baghdad pact

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis  
1979-89 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan  
1985 Gorbachev becomes the President of the USSR  
1989 Fall of the Berlin Wall  
1990 Unification of Germany  
1991 DIAINTEGRATION OF USSR, END OF COLD WAR ERA

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