



CHAPTER

9

Cold War 1945–1991 : Origin, Course, End and Impact

Brief Summary...

End of War time Unity-rift widened in the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences • Stalin's speech of February, 1946 that communism and capitalism could not live peacefully • 'Fulton Speech' of Churchill, 1946 • Causes of Cold War • Rival alliances • Truman Doctrine • Marshall Aid • Marshall Aid • Communist Coup at Czechoslovakia • Berlin Blockade • Formation of NATO and Warsaw Pact • Division of Germany • Thaw in the Cold War (1953-59) • The Vietnam War in two phases (1945-75) • Crisis in East-West relations (1960-62) • Easing of tension (1963-66) • Hot Line Telephone established • Signing of SALT (1972) • Détente (1970s) • Recognition of People's Republic of China (1979) • Split up of the Soviet Union • Cold War came to an end.

9.1. COLD WAR, 1945 –1991

ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR, END OF WAR TIME UNITY, YALTA AND POTSDAM CONFERENCE, RIFT WIDENS, SOVIET EXPANSION IN EASTERN EUROPE (1945-1947)

The War time unity among the Allied Powers was very soon lost. They failed to come to an agreement about the terms and conditions of the treaty to be imposed on Germany. The political conditions of Europe began to improve since February, 1945 and the end of war became almost certain. The Allied Powers now felt the necessity of drawing up the outlines of peace treaties regarding future of Europe. At the London Conference, 1944, America, Britain and Russia agreed

about the plan of partitioning Germany among themselves. The final settlement was made at Yalta in February, 1945.



Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta, February, 1945

In the **Yalta Conference** (Yalta was in Crimea in Russia) the following decisions were taken:

1. It was decided to form an international organization (UNO) for the preservation and maintenance of international peace.
2. It was resolved to make Germany free from Nazi influence.
3. Germany would be divided into four zones, each under the control of America, Britain, France and Russia.
4. Similar arrangements were to be made for Austria.
5. Liberal reforms were to be introduced in Germany and Nazi war criminals have to be punished.
6. Germany had to pay heavy reparation to the Allied Powers.
7. Free elections should be allowed in the Eastern European States.
8. The fate of Poland was also decided here. When the Russian army swept through Poland, a Communist government was set up there. But there was another Polish government in exile at London. It was decided at Yalta that some members of that non-Communist

Government should be allowed to join the Communist government. In return, Russia was allowed to keep a strip of Eastern Poland which she annexed in 1939.

9. In the treaty, Russia's special interest was recognized in the Far East. South Sakhalin, Kurile Islands and Port Arthur were given to Russia and her authority over Outer Mongolia was recognized. As the price of participation in the War, Russian army occupied some territories in Manchuria.

Finally, Russia gave the assurance that she would join the Allied Powers against Japan after the fall of Germany. But Roosevelt was not happy about Stalin's demand that Poland should be given all German territories East of the river Oder and Neisse. But no agreement was reached on this point by the three powers.

THE POTSDAM (GERMANY) CONFERENCE OF 1945

The Potsdam Conference of 1945 was the last of the series of the war time Conferences of the Allied Powers. This Conference revealed a distinct cooling off in relation. The three leaders present at the beginning of the Conference were **Stalin, Truman and Churchill**, later on **Churchill was replaced by Clement Attlee**, the new British Labour Prime Minister, after Labour Party's election victory. It was agreed that Germany would be disarmed, Nazi Party be disbanded and the Nazi leaders be tried as war criminals. As Russia incurred greatest loss by the aggression of Germany, she would get half of the reparation collected from Germany. But the **main disagreement occurred over Poland**, because a portion of Poland had already been occupied by Russia and a pro-Communist government had already started functioning there. Moreover, this pro-Communist government had already expelled some five million Germans living in the region and this had not been agreed to at Yalta. In the Potsdam Conference it, was also not decided whether and when the four zones of Germany would be allowed to join together to form a united country again. Truman and Churchill were not happy as the Russian troops had already occupied East of Oder-Neisse region of Germany.

When the Potsdam Conference was going on, the American air force dropped two atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki of Japan. America maintained secrecy about this deadly weapon and this gave rise to Russia's suspicion and apprehension about the military potentiality of Britain and America. On the other hand, Russia's activities in Poland perturbed the Western powers. Henceforth, mutual suspicion, distrust and hostility among the war time partners began to develop. The relation became more critical when Stalin in his speech of February, 1946, said that **communism and capitalism could never live peacefully together and that future wars were inevitable until the final victory of communism was achieved**. Churchill responded to this by his famous '**Fulton Speech**' of 1946. In his speech at Fulton, Missouri, March, 1946, Churchill said, "**From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.**" He then called for a Western alliance which would stand firm against the communist threat. This Fulton speech thus helped to widen the rift between the East and the West.

The Second World War greatly modified the relative positions of the great powers. The fall of the Axis Powers gave Russia the chance to consolidate her influence in Eastern Europe. Soviet influence now became paramount on Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. In these countries, People's Republic had been set up backed by Moscow. In Czechoslovakia the Communists captured power with Russian help. Though a temporary Non-Aggression Pact was concluded with Germany, Russia re-acquired most of the territories lost during the First World War. Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and portions of Poland and Finland were recovered by Russia. Thus from the Baltic Sea to Aegean, a long line of states were linked under Russian protection and control. In Eastern Europe, two states, namely, Greece and Turkey remained outside the orbit of Russia because of American economic and military assistance. Thus Russia emerged from the Second World War as a dominant power in Europe.

CAUSES OF THE COLD WAR

The strained relation which developed between the USA and the USSR after the Second World War has been described as Cold War in modern European history. **The term 'Cold War' had an American origin.** The term was first used by **Bernard Baruch** who observed on 16 April, 1947, "**Let us not to be deceived today. We are in the midst of a Cold War.**" The term was picked up by **Walter Lippmann** who through his book on the Cold War popularized it. Henceforth, the term Cold War was used to describe the relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers after the Second World War. Thus Cold War was not a state of armed struggle but a state in which the rivals while maintaining their peace time diplomatic relations, continued their hostility. Thus the Cold War was an ideological war or a propaganda war or a diplomatic war. It was neither a condition of war nor a condition of peace. **Dr. Barnett called it 'Hot Peace.'** **Kennedy described it as 'Hard and bitter peace.'**

The origin of the Cold War may be traced back to 1918. When Civil War broke out in the USSR, America, England, France and Japan sent troops to Russia in support of the counter-revolutionaries because these powers wanted to nip Bolshevik's in the bud. Ultimately the Communists won but the Russian leaders were convinced that the capitalist powers wanted to destroy communism. Thus the back ground of the future Cold War was created in 1918.

Actually the basic cause of conflict was due to belief in different principles of Communism and Democracy. The Communists believe in the ideas of Karl Marx on the basis of which they wanted to rule the state by the proletariat. They did not believe in individualism and political liberty of the people. On the other hand, the supporters of Democracy believe in private ownership of property and democratic rights of the people. Naturally the Democratic and the Capitalist states were afraid of communism spreading to other countries.

During the War, the Allied Powers fought shoulder to shoulder against the Axis Powers. Stalin of Russia wanted to take advantage of military situation to increase Russian sphere of influence. With the fall of Germany, Stalin wanted to capture as much German territories as he could along with the territories of Poland, Finland and Rumania. The Western Powers saw in it a

plan of Soviet aggression and became convinced that Russia wanted to spread communism as much as possible. The American government realized that communism was an international movement whose expansion meant an accession of strength to Soviet Union. So the two important powers looked with suspicion to each other.

The fall of Japan due to atom bomb explosion on Hiroshima and Nagasaki greatly increased the cleavage. America never revealed to Russia about the existence of atom bomb until before its use on Japan. Thus it became clear to Russia that America had atom bomb and Russia did not. America insisted on keeping herself the secrets of the manufacture of the atom bomb. This was one of the important causes of Cold War in the post-world war period.

After the Second World War, there developed a distinct cooling off in relation. Russia felt that America had the technical knowhow of atom bomb, strongest navy and air bases at strategic positions. Moreover, America's position in West Germany and Japan had brought her close to Soviet frontiers. The abrupt termination of Lend-Lease Aid, the rejection of a Soviet request for a post-war reconstruction loan further deepened Soviet Union's suspicion of American goodwill. Actually after the Second World War both the powers began to complain about other's bad faith. The establishment of Communist government in Eastern Europe caused alarm in the West. The Russian government steadily started interfering in the Eastern European countries like Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Albania and Rumania. The Western Countries became apprehensive about Russia when Stalin in a speech in February, 1946 categorically said that communism and capitalism would never live peacefully and that future wars were inevitable until the final victory was achieved.¹

The Western Powers complained about the Sovietization of the East European countries. The Soviet leaders on the other hand resented that America enjoyed freehand in Japan, but the same privilege was denied to Russia in the areas under her sphere. Thus the rivalry of these Big Powers after the Second World War started for establishing control over different parts of Europe and the world.

During the Second World War, America and Russia came close to each other and fought against Nazism and Fascism. But this cooperation and understanding gradually evaporated and after the war mutual distrust and suspicion began to appear. On a number of issues differences of opinion began to rise. This led to bitter feelings and tensions between the two sides. Apart from this, ideological differences and differences in social and economic policies of Russia and Western powers widened the gulf between the two power Blocs. The spread of communism in the Eastern Europe and the formation of Blocs by Russia became a source of danger to America and other Western countries. In response to this, America announced the **Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan**. The Western states tried to oppose the spread of Communism and this led to the origin of the Western Bloc. This tension had been termed as 'Cold War' or 'a war of nerves'. The struggle of these two Blocs was not restricted within ideological conflicts but extended also to political, economic and military spheres as well. Thus the world got divided into two camps.

1. Norman Lowe-Mastering Modern World History, P.126b

TRUMAN DOCTRINE, MARCH 12, 1947

In Greece, the Communists were trying to overthrow the existing monarchy. The Communists received help from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Under this situation it became impossible for Britain to suppress the Communists and appealed to America for help. The US President appealed to the US Congress for a sanction of \$400 million and declared, **“It must be the policy of the United States to free people who were resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.”** This declaration was subsequently known as the **“Truman**

Doctrine." This doctrine was the first direct response to the challenge of the Soviet Russia. The chief aim of this doctrine was to protect the independent nations from Communist aggression. Greece then received military assistance and by 1949 the Communists were defeated. Turkey also received similar military aid because the country had faced similar threat. It became clear that America now became committed to a policy of contending Communism, not only in Europe, but all over the world including Korea and Vietnam.

MARSHALL AID, 1947

This plan was an extension of the Truman Doctrine. In 1947 America sponsored a scheme of economic and financial help known as European Recovery Programme (ERP). It was known as **Marshall Plan as it was prepared by Marshall, the American Secretary of States.** America apprehended that the economic crisis in Europe would help the spread of communism. The chief aim of the Plan was to improve the political and social life of Europe by fighting out poverty and economic crisis. Marshall Plan originated from the apprehension that the influence of America would be endangered if Communist influence spread to economically depressed Europe.

Both the Communist and the non-Communist countries of Eastern Europe including Russia were invited to accept the plan. But Soviet Russia rejected the offer on the ground that America under the cover of this plan wanted to create an economic empire taking advantage of the economic plight of Europe. Czechoslovakia accepted the plan but later on had to reject it under Soviet pressure. Seventeen countries, namely, Austria, Belgium, Luxemburg, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, West Germany and Trieste accepted the Marshall Plan. This plan was in operation till June, 1952.

To counter the American policies, the USSR government also introduced a number of plans for the satellite states like as the Molotov Pan, Comecon and the Cominform.

The Molotov Plan

After the Second World War, the Communist countries of Eastern Europe were joined in a kind of unity under the leadership of the USSR. There were nine states in the Communist Bloc. Apart of USSR, these were Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia. All these states had to carry on trade with USSR. Their foreign policies and armed forces were controlled from Moscow. In response to Marshall Plan of 1947 of America, the Russian Foreign Minister, Molotov, offered an alternative plan between USSR and its satellite states. The purpose was to form an economically united Eastern Bloc led by USSR against the Marshall Plan since USSR refused to allow any of his satellite states to accept it.

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance or Comecon

This body was formed by the USSR in 1949. The aim was to help the economic condition of the individual states. All industries were nationalized and the agriculture was collectivized. In the

successive period, the USSR tried to use this body to organize the communist bloc into a single integrated economy. This attempt provoked hostile reactions in many of the satellite states. Ultimately this plan was changed by the USSR government.

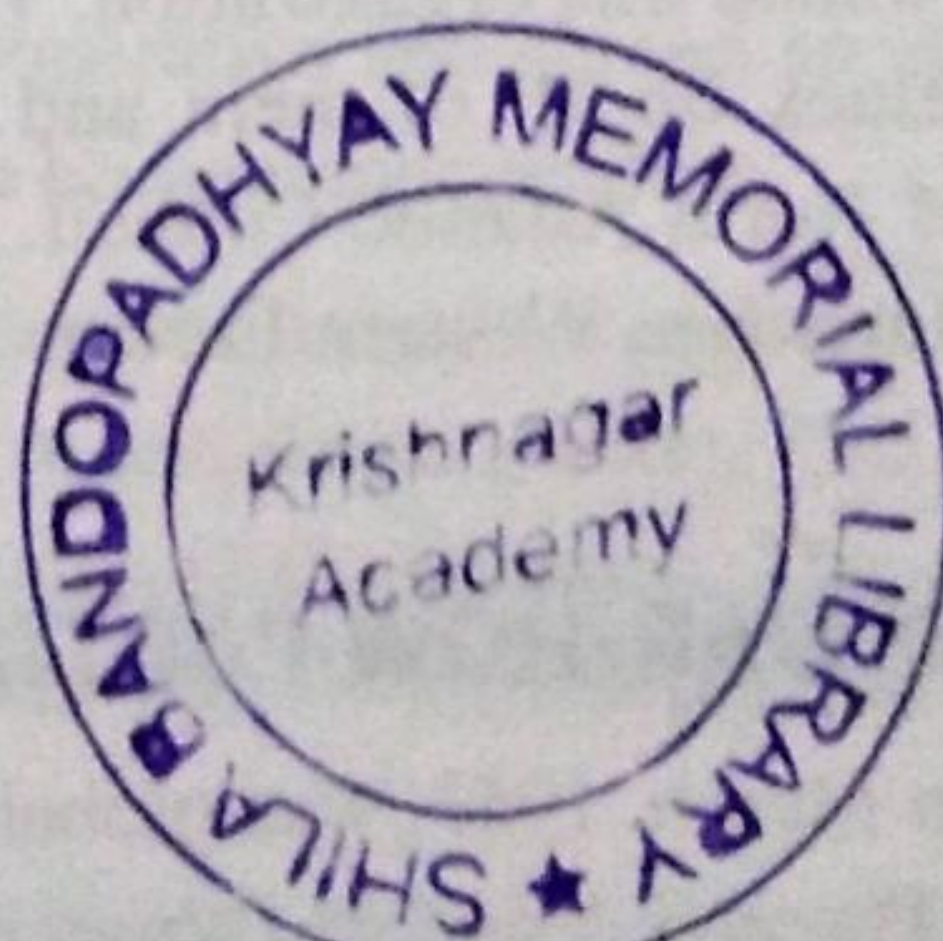
The Communist Information Bureau or Cominform

This body was set up by the USSR at the time of the introduction of the Molotov Plan. All the Communist states had to become its member. The aim of this body was no doubt political, to make sure that all the governments should follow the same line as the government of the USSR.

The USSR government wanted to control all the Eastern Europe states in different ways. Elections were controlled, non-Communist members of coalition government were expelled, many were arrested and executed and all other political parties were dissolved. Even Stalin treated the Russian zone of Germany as if it were a Russian territory. The Western Bloc was profoundly irritated by Russian attitude towards the Eastern European countries.

THE COMMUNIST TAKE OVER OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 1948

The Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February, 1948 was a great shock to the Western Bloc, because it was the only democratic state that remained in Eastern Europe. The Communists and the Left parties formed a coalition government after the election of 1946. It was expected that Czechoslovakia with its highly developed industries would remain as a bridge between East and Western Europe. But a crisis was seen in early 1948 when elections were likely to take place in May, 1948. All the signs were apparent that the Communists would lose the election because of its refusal to accept Marshall Plan for economic regeneration of the country. The Communists then captured power through an armed coup and all the non-Communist ministers except two had to resign. The elections were held as usual, the candidates were all communists only. The Western Powers and the UN protested but could not prove Russian involvement in any way. Thus the bridge between the East and the West had gone.



9.2. THE BERLIN BLOCKADE (1948-1949)

The Berlin Blockade (June, 1948 to May, 1949) by Russia brought the Cold War to its climax. At the Yalta and Potsdam, it was agreed by the Allied Powers that Germany and Berlin would be divided into four zones each under America, Britain, France and Russia. First three powers did their best to organize the economic and political recovery of their respective zones. But Russia treated the zone as its satellite and drained its resources towards Russian development. In 1948, the three zones merged together and formed a single economic unit. With the help of the Marshall Plan, the three zones had developed economically in contrast to the poverty of the Russian zone. The Western Powers wanted four zones to be reunited again. But Stalin wanted to keep the Russian zone separate, because the reunited three zones would be a part of the Western Bloc thus threatening Russia to a great extent.

In June, 1948, the Western Powers introduced a new currency and ended price control in their respective zones and in West Berlin. But the Russian authority was not in a position to have two different currencies in the same city. Actually Berlin City was situated within East Germany. Moreover, they were embarrassed by the contrast between the prosperity of West Berlin and the poverty of the surrounding areas. Russia then closed all roads, rail and canal links between West Berlin and West Germany. In this situation, the Western Powers decided to send food supply through aeroplanes to the blocked area for the next ten months. In May, 1949, Russia was compelled to withdraw the blockade. The result was that the relation of the Western Powers with Russia reached the worst ever. The West Bloc then decided to form the NATO in April, 1949, for the coordination of their defence. It thus became clear that Germany would remain divided in future.

THE FORMATION OF NATO, 1949

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was a defence organization against the Russian Bloc. The conflict between Western and Eastern Europe over German problem became serious. America decided to form a mutual military assistance organization with the Western countries.

On April 4, 1949, America, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Iceland and the Netherlands signed the North Atlantic Treaty, Greece, Turkey and West Germany later joined this organization. The signatory states agreed to regard an attack on any of them as an attack on all of them and placed their defences under a joint NATO command organization of North Atlantic Council. The NATO was formed primarily to oppose the spread of Russian influence in Western Europe. Now Stalin took it as a challenge and tension naturally remained high.

THAW IN THE COLD WAR-HOW PARTIAL WAS IT?

The death of Stalin on March, 1953, was probably the starting of **Thaw** because new leaders now came into forefront. The new leaders of Russia like **Malenkov, Bulganin and Khrushchev**

wanted to improve relations with America. The probable cause was the manufacture of more nuclear weapons by both the countries. As a result, two sides were so nicely balanced that international tension might be relaxed if nuclear war could be avoided. This new spirit was expressed through the speeches of **Nikita Khrushchev**. He even criticized Stalin and said in his famous **Speech of February, 1956**, that peaceful co-existence with the West was essential; there were only two ways—either peaceful co-existence or the more destructive war in history, there was no third way. It should be remembered that this did not mean that Russia had given up the idea of Communist-dominated world.

Anti-Communist feeling in America started decreasing when **McCarthy was discredited in 1954**. Actually McCarthy had stirred up anti-Communist feeling in America. When he began to accuse leading generals of having sympathy for the Communists, the American Senate condemned him. It clearly showed that America's policy towards Russia had changed. The Republican President **Eisenhower** announced that the American people wanted to be friendly with the Soviet people.

The thaw showed itself in several ways. The signs were shown when Korean War came to an end by a peace treaty and the end of the war in Indo-China. The Russians also made important concessions in 1955 when they agreed to wind up their military bases in Finland. Russian leader **Bulganin** attended a summit meeting in Geneva where he met the American President Eisenhower. Then Russia lifted her veto power on the admission of sixteen new members to the United Nations. Khrushchev paid a visit to Tito and thus quarrel with Yugoslavia was healed to some extent. **The Cominform¹** was abandoned, suggesting more freedom for the satellite states.

The signing of the **Austrian State Treaty on May, 1955**, was another step forward for thaw. After the Second World War, Austria was divided into four zones of occupation with the capital Vienna in Russian zone. Austria was allowed her own government because she was viewed not as a defeated enemy but as a state liberated from the Nazis. Three Western occupying powers organized the recovery of their respective zones but Russia collected reparation in the form of food supply. Early in 1955, the Austrian government persuaded the Russian government to be more cooperative. Russia had an apprehension of a merger between West Germany and Western Austria. The Russian government became cooperative and signed an agreement. As a result, all occupying troops were withdrawn and Austria became independent.

But she was not to be united with Germany, her armed forces were restricted and she was to remain neutral in any dispute between Western and Eastern Bloc. This meant that Austria could join neither the NATO nor the European Economic Community. The Austrians were not happy for the loss of German-speaking people of South Tyrol which was given to Italy.

1. It was set up by Stalin in September, 1947, to draw together the various European Communist Parties and all the satellite states and thus Stalin wanted to tighten his grip on those states.

In fact, the thaw was only partial. Khrushchev sometimes followed conciliatory policy and sometimes a policy seemed to be threat to the Western Bloc. He did not show any desire to relax Russian control over the satellite states. When the Hungarians revolted in Budapest against the Communist government, the movement was crushed by Russian tanks in November, 1956.

Khrushchev now signed the **Warsaw Pact in 1955** with the satellite states just after Western Germany was admitted to the NATO. The Pact was a mutual defence agreement with the satellites states. Apart from this, to put the Western Bloc on pressure, Russia successfully tested an inter continental ballistic missile and launched first space satellite Sputnik-1.

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962

The most tense incident of the entire Cold War period was the **Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962**. **Fidel Castro**, the new ruler of Cuba, nationalized all American-owned estates and factories. As a result, the relation with America worsened whereas relation with Soviet Russia improved. In January, 1961, America broke off all diplomatic relations with Cuba. Russia then decided to set up nuclear missile launchers in Cuba which was very close to American coast. The two powers were on the verge of nuclear war. Finally, Russia decided to remove the missiles. Both sides came to their senses and tension gradually relaxed. A **telephone hot link** was introduced between Moscow and Washington for quick consultation in case of any emergency. Finally **America, Soviet Russia and Britain signed a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (July, 1963) and thus agreed to carry out nuclear tests underground to avoid polluting the atmosphere any more.**

THE WARSAW PACT OF MAY 4, 1955

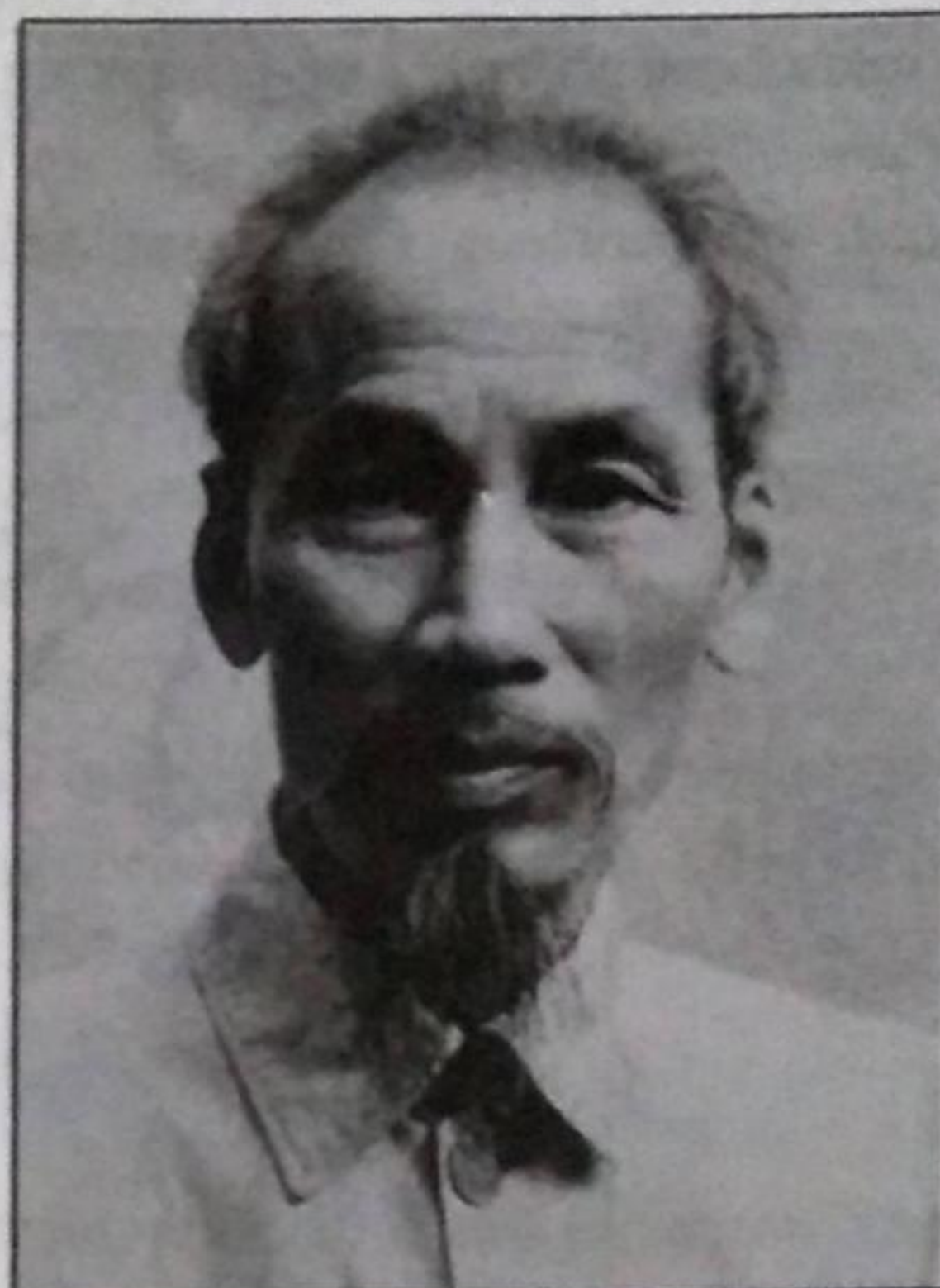
Soviet Russia became alarmed at the formation of the NATO. Russia strongly protested against the inclusion of West Germany into this organization. Ultimately Russia formed a rival organization with the Eastern European countries. At the initiative of Russia, the countries like Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Albania and East Germany concluded the **Warsaw Pact on May 4, 1955**. The Pact provided for a joint command of the armed forces of the signatories. Moscow became the headquarters of these unified forces. The war tension in international politics had started afresh.

After the formation of NATO and the conclusion of the Warsaw Pact, it became clear that Russia would not allow Germany to be united in near future. The representatives of the three Western powers, Britain, America and France, met in Bonn and drafted a Federal Constitution and set up the **German Federal Republic known as West Germany** in August, 1949. According to the new constitution, election was held and **Conrad Adenauer** became the first Chancellor of the Republic. The Russian response was quick and **East Germany was proclaimed as the German Democratic Republic**. Western Germany joined the Western Bloc while East Germany sided with the Soviet Bloc. Since then, tension mounted between the two blocs over Germany for a long time.

THE FIRST PHASE OF VIETNAM WAR (1946-54)

Back Ground: Indo-China was consisted of three areas, namely, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This area was part of the French empire. The people of these areas fought against the French and ultimately became independent. During the Second World War, Japan again occupied Indo-China, but after the fall of Japan, Vietnam was proclaimed a Republic. Both French and Japanese were resisted by the **League for Vietnamese Independence (Vietminh)** under the leadership of **Ho-Chi-Minh**. He was trained in the ideals of Russian Communism.

The Vietminh, though led by the Communists, was an alliance of different shades of people. At the end of the war in 1945, Ho-Chi-Minh declared the whole of Vietnam as independent. But France was not willing to give Vietnam full independence. Vietminh then started fighting against France and this resistance continued for long eight years. France was then defeated at **Dien-Bien Phu in May, 1954**. The



Ho-Chi-Minh

Vietminh became successful due to massive support of the people and constant supply of arms from the Communist China. France failed to send troops because of the after effects of the Second World War. Realizing the struggle as part of the cold war and the fight against communism, America also became involved and helped the French with military and economic aid.

Geneva Conference of 1954

The Geneva Conference of 1954 was attended by Britain, France, Communist China and USA. Vietnam was partitioned into two parts, namely, **North Vietnam** and **South Vietnam**. Ho-Chi-Minh's government was recognized in North Vietnam while South Vietnam came under Western Powers, mainly, America. But America refused to sign the Geneva Accord of 1954. It was laid down in the Geneva Agreement that elections should be held in Vietnam in 1956 to ascertain whether the people wanted reunification of two parts of Vietnam. But this election never held and gradually civil war started in Vietnam in which the North Vietnam and America got involved in the long run.

THE SECOND PHASE OF VIETNAM WAR (1954-1975)

The South Vietnamese government under **President Ngo Dinh Diem** refused to organize elections. America backed this regime and never pressed Ngo Dinh Diem for elections for fear of communist victory. Very soon the government of Ngo Dinh Diem became unpopular and a **National Liberation Front (NLF)** was formed with various opposition groups including the former communist members of the Vietminh. The NLF now demanded a Democratic National Coalition

Government which would take steps for a united Vietnam. Gradually it became clear that Diem government could not tackle the situation. America then increased its military presence in South Vietnam on the plea of protecting the independence of the Vietnamese people, but the real intention was to keep the country in the non-communist bloc. The Vietnam crisis was a post cold war problem. China and America were the principal interested parties and Moscow had

maintained a caution. The refusal of the South Vietnamese government to organize nationwide election, Ho-Chi-Minh believed that only force could unite the two halves of the country.

The successive American Presidents like **Kennedy** and **Johnson** stuck to the policy of interference in South Vietnam to prevent the spread of communism.

Gulf Tonkin incidents

In fact, during the first year of Johnson administration (1963-69), the controversial first **Gulf of Tonkin incident** took place. The first incident occurred between North Vietnam and the United States in the waters of Gulf of Tonkin on August 2, 1964. While one US destroyer USS Maddox was patrolling in the area, North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked the US destroyer. According to US source, **the Second Gulf of Tonkin incident** occurred on August 4, 1964. It is said that the Second Gulf of Tonkin incident never took place.

Consequence

The US Congress now passed the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** after these two incidents. The Resolution granted the President Johnson the authority to assist any South Asian countries whose government was going to be threatened by Communist aggression. This Resolution empowered Johnson to deploy US forces for open warfare against North Vietnam. Thus the incident in the Gulf Tonkin led US open entry into the Vietnam War. Thus during the time of American President **Johnson** attack on North Vietnam increased on the ground that Ho-Chi-Minh controlled the **Vietcong** guerrillas who were fighting in South Vietnam. He ordered to bomb North Vietnam. Johnson thought that an overwhelming show of force by US Air Force would persuade Ho Chi Minh to cut off all aid to the NLF (National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam), but his assessment was wrong.

Indiscriminate air raids on North Vietnam caused a wide spread resentment and apprehension throughout the world. American President Johnson had no intention of withdrawing but he suspended the bombing on North Vietnam in March, 1968. The next **President Nixon** (1969-74) changed the policy and the new war policy was known as '**Vietnamization**'. Now the Americans would train the South Vietnamese army to take care of the defence of South Vietnam. On the other side, President Nixon started heavy bombing policy again but all attempts failed. At the end of 1972, the Vietcong established their control over the entire Western half of the country. President Nixon was under tremendous pressure both at home and abroad to withdraw from Vietnam.

Finally, cease fire was arranged in January, 1973. It was agreed that the American troops would be withdrawn from Vietnam and both North and South would respect the frontiers along the 17th Parallel. But still the Vietcong continued the attack and Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, was ultimately occupied in 1975. At last Vietnam became free from foreign intervention. The united Vietnam came under a communist government. In the same year

communist governments were also established in Laos and Cambodia. Thus the American policy of preventing the spread of communism in South-East Asia ended in complete failure.

THE BERLIN WALL, AUGUST, 1961

The situation in Berlin also created tension between the two blocs. Perhaps encouraged by the lead in nuclear weapon, Khrushchev made the announcement that Russia no longer recognized the rights of the Western Powers on West Berlin. When America challenged this declaration of Russia, Khrushchev did not press the demand too far. But in 1961, he again placed this demand before the American President John F. Kennedy that West should withdraw from West Berlin. When Kennedy refused to accept this demand, **Berlin Wall was erected, a 28-mile long, across the entire city effectively blocking the escape route (August, 1961).**



The Berlin Wall

EASING OF TENSION AND DETENTE, 1970s

The word '**detente**' was used to mean a **permanent relaxation of international tensions** rather than just a 'thaw' in the Cold War. The first sign of real detente between East and West came in the early 1970s stimulated probably by the continuing fear of nuclear war and the horrors of Vietnam.

There were specific motives of different powers for detente.

1. For example, China was anxious about their isolation in the international politics and worsening relations with Russia.

2. America felt that the policy they pursued in Vietnam was to be revised and a policy of peaceful co-existence to be adopted.
3. Russia also thought in a different way. Russia wanted to reduce expenditure on defence so as to increase the standard of living of the Russian people along with the satellite states. There was unrest in Poland in the early 1970s which threatened to destabilize the Communist Bloc. At that time, Russia was on bad terms with China.
4. The most important cause was the fear of the Western States who were worried that they would be in the front line if nuclear war broke out. **Willie Brandt, the Vice Chancellor of West Germany**, wanted to develop better relations with the Eastern European countries. This policy was known as '**Ostpolitik**'.

Both America and Russia had already established '**Hot Line**' telephone link to discuss urgent important issues. The next important step was the signing of **Strategic Arms Limitation Talk (SALT) in 1972**. American President Nixon twice visited Moscow in 1972 and 1974 while the Russian leader Brezhnev paid a counter visit to Washington in 1973. America even decided to export wheat to Russia. **By the Helsinki Agreement of July, 1975**, America, Russia, Canada and almost all the European states accepted the European frontiers settled after the Second World War.

The relation between America and China was far from cordial because America backed Chiang Kai-Shek and China supported and backed Ho-Chi-Minh. The attempt to break the isolation was first initiated by China by inviting the American Table Tennis Team to visit the country. In response, America did not use her veto right on Chinese entry into the United Nations. President Nixon and Ford also visited Peking in 1972 and 1975. The relation improved further when American President Jimmy Carter decided to withdraw recognition of Nationalist China (Taiwan). The climax of detente between China and America was seen when Jimmy Carter gave the **formal recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1979**. Finally in 1985, an agreement was signed on nuclear cooperation between the two countries.

The relation between Russia and China was not cordial because of China's disapproval of Khrushchev's policy of 'peaceful co-existence' and his claim that it was possible to achieve communism by methods other than violent revolution. This went against the ideas of Lenin and China accused the Russians of revisionism, interpreting the teachings of Marx and Lenin to suit their own needs. The hardcore Communist government of Russia was also not happy with Khrushchev's soft line. Russia now reduced economic aid to China. Apart from ideological argument, there was also a frontier dispute between Russia and China. But now China herself followed a 'softer' policy towards America. At the end of the 1970's, it became apparent that both Russia and China tried for American support against each other in the struggle for the leadership of world communism. In December, 1991, Russia itself had split up into separate Republics and communist rule came to an end after 75 years. Naturally this question did not rise again.

Answer the following :

1. What is Truman Doctrine ?
2. Why did Russia reject the Marshall aid ?
3. Why was the Berlin Wall erected in 1961 ?
4. State one outcome of the Berlin Blockade.
5. Mention the event which led to the Cuban Crisis of 1964.
6. Why was there a 'thaw' in the Cold War after 1953 ?
7. Mention the importance of Detente on European politics.