

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

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Module Name: Cold War: Origin and Bi-Polar Competition

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Notes:

The Cold War: Meaning: The term Cold War was first used by Walter Lippmann by referring to a war-like-situation between two power blocs. However, it did not involve a physical war. The Cold War was an ideological conflict which existed since 1945 between the United States and the Soviet Union and their allies. USA and Soviet represented two opposite ideas; Capitalist and Communist. Capitalism supported private ownership of the means of production, profit, private property, wage labor and competitive markets. Communism believed in elimination of private property, social concern, public ownership of land factories, or machinery. The government is the owner of property for the good of the society. The period was characterized by an aggressive arms race, competition to conquer the space in the sky, tension, proxy wars, and ideological race for world dominance.

Causes of the Cold War

The abandonment of war time policy of collaboration.

After World War, USA and Russia became suspicious of each other's motives. The decisions taken at the Yalta Conference (Ukraine) to distribute territories among themselves between President Roosevelt and Stalin were not honored. There were disagreements on the control of

the Far East and Europe. Their interests clashed in Germany, Japan, Korea and the Middle East.

2. Bipolar Competition. Bipolar competition resulted after World War II was a condition where two power blocks controlled the world; namely America and Soviet Russia. The Capitalist Bloc also came to be called Western Bloc, or the Democratic Bloc. The Communists Block was termed as the Eastern Bloc, or Soviet Bloc, or Socialist Bloc. The Western critics described it as Communist Bloc or the Totalitarian Bloc. On the other hand, Soviet leadership described the Americans as colonialists and capitalist exploiters. The rivalries between the American and Soviet powers started in Europe and spread to East and Southeast Asian region from the late 1940s until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the December 1991. The bipolar competition was reflected in the control of space and arms.

3. Churchill's Fulton Speech. In March 1946, Winston Churchill, the then leader of the opposition in Britain, delivered a speech at Fulton, Missouri where he sharply criticized the Soviet and declared that the Iron Curtain has descended the world. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." He described Soviet actions as threat to democracy, freedom, and Christian civilization. Churchill called for an Anglo-American alliance *to champion freedom and protect Christian civilization*. Truman called for the policy of "**Containment of Communism.**" For Soviet leaders Churchill's Fulton speech was a declaration of Cold War.

Difference in Ideology: The outbreak of cold war was the result of ideological difference among the two power blocks. USA became the self-appointed savior of democracy and spent millions of dollars to save the world. The economic and political systems of the two countries were different. In this diplomatic war, the United States tried to project the Soviet Union as the enemy of world peace and Communism as destroyer of individual freedom. America kept

on spreading the idea that USSR was an expansionist and an imperialist power which had installed Communist regimes by force in the East European countries. It was also declared that Hungarian and Czechoslovak communist leaders were kept under the tight control of the Soviet control. Russia declared that she was trying to liberate the people of Eastern Europe of oppression.

Policy of Containment: This policy was initiated by USA. It was carried out through **Dollar Diplomacy** where USA poured dollar as aid for economic and military purpose. President Harry Truman declared the Truman Doctrine and launched the **Marshall Plan** in 1947. The **Truman Doctrine** was also looked upon as the official declaration of the Cold War. Truman Doctrine, declared immediate economic and military aid to the governments of Greece, and other government including Turkey which was threatened by communist revolts. There was also pressure on Turkey from the Communists. The British government which had earlier been supporting Turkey and Greece informed the United States that it could no longer provide the economic and military assistance. Truman declared USA as a democratic country would give aid to free countries. It proclaimed that USA would not stand aloof in a world contaminated by communism. But it would actively involve itself in European politics. The Truman administration believed jumped at the chance to take a tough stand against the Soviet Union. The doctrine was a stern warning to the Soviet Union to mend its ways.

Marshall Plan: George C. Marshall, Secretary of State. The United States became concerned with the growing of communism in Europe and set up an Economic Plan. Marshall Plan as an economic recovery program funded by the United States. They gave relief money to the war torn democratic countries in order to rebuild their economy. It was directed against hunger and poverty. Poor countries could be tempted to take communist help. Thus, USA volunteered to offer economic aid under the Marshall Plan. She sent to Europe food, machinery, technical help and raw material worth 13 million dollars. This led the Soviet

Union to form an economic federation between all the communist states called the COMECON.

Soviet Response to the Western Block

2. Extension of Russian influence in Europe and Asia: Even before the end of the war, the Soviet Union had gradually extended her influence in Eastern Europe. Stalin had felt insecure about the Russian position in Europe. He wanted to create a buffer zone (protective zone) against the future invasions of Europe as he had felt betrayed by the Nazis during the Second World War. He wanted to create Pro-Soviet regimes in Eastern Europe. He also wanted to obtain economic benefits for Russia from these regions. The Red Army (Communist Army) began by influencing the post-war elections. Soviet Russia also possessed sufficient military power to dominate Europe. The rise of communist parties all over Europe and their loyalty to Moscow had given confidence to the USSR. Many Hungarian, Polish, Czech, East European, Bulgarian Chinese leaders were trained in Russia. For this reason, the USSR, enjoyed prestige with the countries of Eastern Europe, just as the United States with the countries of Western Europe. Yugoslavia (under Tito) and Albania (Enver Hoxha) in 1945 were the first two Eastern European countries that were led by communist governments. They were followed by Poland and Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany. Soviet Russia also helped China to complete the communist revolution. General Chiang Kai Shek was expelled from China and he had to take shelter in Formosa. Under the support of Soviet Russia, North Korea became communist. Vietnam and Afghanistan also got involved in cold war politics.

Soviet Russia as Leader of the Red Empire. Russia surrounded herself by a ring of Satellite states or states under her influence. They would give her protection from any possible attack

from the USA. But Russia had her rivals. Yugoslavia and Albania later refused to toe the communist line fully. China also openly criticized the leadership since 1956. The Nonaligned block led by Nehru and several Afro-Asian countries refused to follow neither the communist nor the capitalist block

Cominform-(Communist Information Bureau) Soviet Response to Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine united the Communist states in Europe. The Cominform was the centralized organization of the international communist movement in the period from 1947 to 1956. It was in a way the successor of the Comintern. This organisation had the following objectives: To ensure that the Satellite states of the Soviet Union were members. To ensure all member states implemented Soviet Style Communism. Only trade with Cominform members was allowed. In Jan 1949, the Comecon (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance) was set up to coordinate Cominform's economic policies. It united the economies of Eastern Europe with that of Soviet Union's. In 1959, Cuba had fallen under the leadership of Fidel Castro, who had rejected American influence to ally himself with the Soviets. In the fall of 1962, American spy planes discovered that Castro was installing Soviet nuclear missiles capable of quickly striking targets in the US. The United States navy blockaded Cuba, preventing Soviet deliveries of war materials. For a heart-stopping time the world lurched toward nuclear war.

The Cold War: arms race.

Cold war was accelerated by a race for armaments. The two power blocks and their allies began a race for the production of sophisticated weapons. The USA had a wide range of weapons of great striking power. The rockets could hit enemy planes, ships, and other targets. The Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) could fling nuclear bombs at the amazing rate of 15,000 miles an hour, at targets in the USSR. The USSR produced the Polaris missile

which could be kept under water in a nuclear submarine for a long time and could be fired when required. Similarly, the Poseidon Missile had a higher potential than the Polaris missile. The USSR kept a hawk's eye on the USA. Soviet Russia had three and half million men as soldiers. It had jet powered combat planes. It was supplying weapons for other countries and experimenting with nuclear weapons. In 1949, the Soviets tested an atom bomb of their own. In response, President Truman announced that the United States would build an even more destructive atomic weapon: the hydrogen bomb, or "superbomb." Stalin also followed suit. In 1957, Soviet R-7 launched Sputnik the world's first artificial satellite and the first man-made object to be placed into the Earth's orbit. Sputnik's launch came as a surprise. In 1958, the U.S. launched its own satellite, Explorer I, designed by the U.S. Both the Soviet Union and the United States knew how to make nuclear weapons. This knowledge made the consequences of their actions much more cautious. This helped to cause the war during the Cuban Missile Crisis where the Soviet Union planted nuclear missiles at the United States from Cuba for a time. Both the USSR and the USA built up huge arsenals of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The United States tested a hydrogen bomb in 1952 and in November 1955, the USSR developed one too. After that the USA moved its bombers into Europe. In 1955 West Germany was allowed to re-arm and join NATO. Russia responded by forming the Warsaw Mutual Defense Pact with its buffer zone neighbors.