



USA – Capitalist	USSR - Communist
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold elections to choose a government • Business owned privately • Want to make money • Property owned privately • Individual freedom 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party dictatorship • Industries and farms owned by the state • No individual ownership of property • Individuals' lives controlled

Key Topic 1: The Origins of the Cold War, 1941-58

What was the Cold War?

The **Cold War** was a period of **tension** between the USA and USSR from 1941-58 caused by **their ideological differences**. It was a war of words, of propaganda and of threat, but it did not involve the two Superpowers in direct confrontation. They both took part in proxy wars – that is they helped their allies to fight the other Superpower or their allies but did not become directly involved in the conflict themselves.



1. Early Tension between East & West

- The **Grand Alliance** was established by USSR, USA and Britain from 1941 to defeat the axis powers in WWII. After the war they began to have conflicting aims and objectives.
- The Big 3 met at the **Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam conferences** to decide the future of post-war Europe. They agreed to form the United Nations and for 'free elections' in each liberated country. They decided that Germany and Berlin would be divided into four zones of occupation and that Stalin could have 'a sphere of influence' in Eastern Europe. However the leaders began to fall out due to the **ideological differences** between the superpowers and the attitudes of **Stalin, Truman and Churchill**.
- On 6th August 1945, the USA dropped the first **atomic bomb** on Hiroshima. This angered Stalin as the USA had not informed him on the new weapon. This led to the **arms race** where the USSR raced to make their weapons equal in force to those of the USA.
- The USSR created **Soviet satellite states** in Eastern Europe through the use of intimidation, force and rigged elections (see map above).
- Truman received the **Long telegram** from his ambassador, Kennan, which warned the USA that the USSR was armed and determined to spread communism. The USSR's ambassador responded with the **Novikov telegram** which warned that the USA wanted world domination.

2. The development of the Cold War

- In 1947 Truman announced his policy of **containment** where the USA would give aid to countries that were resisting communist takeover. This led to the **Marshall Plan** where the USA gave **\$17 billion** to help Western Europe rebuild.
- To try to prevent any eastern European countries applying for Marshall Aid, Stalin offered help and support to eastern Europe by setting up two organisations, **Cominform (1947)** (Communist Information Bureau) and **Comecon (1949)** (Council for Mutual Economic Aid).
- In 1948, Britain, France and the USA merged their zones of West Germany and Berlin into one and introduced a new currency called the '**Deutsch mark**' to help it become economically stronger.
- In response, Stalin cut off all road, rail and canal links to West Berlin – the **Berlin Blockade** - to starve the 2 million inhabitants into submission. The West responded with a massive **airlift** - food, fuel and supplies were flown into Berlin for 10 months. Stalin called off the Blockade in May 1949.
- This led to the division of Germany into two separate states – the West became the **Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)** and the eastern zone became the **German Democratic Republic (GDR)**. It also led to the formation of **NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)** in 1949 which was a military alliance between capitalist powers.

3. The Cold War intensifies

- In 1949 the USSR exploded its own nuclear weapon which caused the **Arms Race** to intensify. The USA began to develop the Hydrogen bomb. In 1952 the USSR exploded its own H-bomb. The USA and USSR also began to build bomber aircraft and **ICBM's**.
- **Stalin died** in 1953. After a short struggle for power, in 1955 Khrushchev became the new ruler of the USSR.
- In 1955 the **Warsaw Pact** formed which was a defensive military alliance of the USSR and its **satellite states** in Eastern Europe. It was intended as a counter-force to **NATO**, which was a military alliance of western powers.
- In 1956 the **Hungarian Uprising** occurred where the Hungarian people decided to protest against communist rule due to poverty, a hatred of Soviet control, religious oppression and the desire for de-Stalinisation.
- The new Hungarian government, led by Nagy, introduced democracy, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. Nagy also announced that Hungary was going to leave the Warsaw Pact. Khrushchev responded by sending **1000 Russian tanks** into Budapest. 4000 Hungarians were killed, 200,000 Hungarian refugees fled into Austria and Nagy was executed.
- The West were horrified by the invasion but Eisenhower decided not to intervene.

1943	Tehran Conference.
1945	Yalta Conference
1945	Potsdam Conference
1947	The Truman doctrine
1947	Marshall Plan
1947	Cominform
1949	Comecon
1947	Bizonia
1948-49	The Berlin Blockade
1948-49	The Berlin Airlift
1949	NATO formed
1955	The Warsaw Pact formed
1956	Soviet invasion of Hungary
Throughout The Arms Race	

Key Words

Ideology	A set of shared beliefs on how a country should be governed and how society should work.
Reparations	Payments of money or goods after a war to the winning side.
Satellite State	A nation that is under the control of another.
Iron Curtain	Churchill 's statement that a figurative divide had come down across Europe
Containment	Preventing the spread of communism.
Deterrent	A force that prevents something from happening.
Uprising	An act of resistance or rebellion.

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