



## THE COLD WAR ERA AND ITS POLITICS

After the Second World War, the Allies of the war—the United States of America and Soviet Russia—were engaged in what has been described as the ‘Cold War’. During the War the two countries were on the same side with Britain and France to defeat the Fascist dictatorships (Germany and Italy) and the empire of Japan. The two countries also signed a five-year non-aggression treaty in 1941, and even as late as the Yalta Conference in February 1945 there was some harmony among the two countries. But soon the situation changed completely and the USA and the Soviet Union stood against each other in a “war like situation” which has generally been described as the Cold War.



### OBJECTIVES

After studying the lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning of the Cold War
- discuss the factors responsible for the Cold War
- point out different issues of struggle
- list the phases of the Cold War and
- compare the Cold War with New Cold War.

### 25.1 MEANING OF THE COLD WAR

The Cold War has been described as “peace time unarmed warfare” between new superpowers. It was a “diplomatic war” and not an armed conflict among the superpowers and was based on ideological hatred and political distrust. Flemming described the Cold War as “a war that is fought not in the battlefield, but in the minds of men; one tries to control the mind of others.” The Cold War was very different from an open war where the enemies are well known and the war is fought in the open. In the Cold War, war was never declared and diplomatic relations were maintained among the countries. The Cold War did involve some military confrontation and loss of life, but it was also a psychological warfare aimed at reducing the enemy’s area of influence and increasing the number of one’s camp followers.

The Cold War was a bi-polar confrontation between the United States of America and the Soviet Union but it also involved allies or satellites of the two superpowers. The Cold War has also been understood as the clash between two ideologies and two



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differently organised systems of economy and society—communism and liberal democracy, and socialist command economy and capitalism. Although there have been many bi-polar confrontations in history, this was the first time that two different forms of social organisation were competing for implementing alternative visions of the world.

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century both the USA and the USSR were on their way to becoming superpowers. A comparison of the share of various countries in manufacturing in 1932, just after the Great Depression shows America the indisputable leader with nearly 32%, and the Soviet Union which came next with 11.5%. But other leading countries were not far behind—Britain (10.9%), Germany (10.6%), France (6.9%). After the Second World War, however, the armed strength of Germany and Japan stood defeated and of Britain and France stood exhausted. Now it was the two countries—America and Soviet Union—which emerged as superpowers. Soviet Union, despite phenomenal losses in war made rapid strides because of its socialist command economy. The phenomenal rise of these two countries led to a competition between the two which ultimately resulted in the Cold War.

The Soviet Union set up the Cominform (the Communist Information Bureau), ‘Radio Moscow’ and supported some communist parties in other countries. The United States of America set up a Radio News programme called ‘Voice of America’ and supported the anti-communist political parties and movements in other countries.

The conflict between the two countries turned out to be the conflict between different ideologies that both the countries adopted. One of these ideologies was political and economic liberalism which was adopted by America and the other was Marxism-Leninism adopted by Russia.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.1**

1. Which two ideologies clashed in the cold war?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which were the news services set up by the USA and the USSR?

\_\_\_\_\_

**25.2 FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLD WAR**

After World War II, the USA and the USSR, the new superpowers, wanted to establish the supremacy of their position and ideology, and this conflict became the focal point of international relations. There was formation of opposing blocs, intensifying the rivalry of these two powers. Most western countries tended to side with the USA and were firmly opposed to communism. America’s rise to the status of superpower was complete with the possession of the nuclear weapons. Very soon Russia emerged as a challenger and rival to America’s position and in 1949 she also developed nuclear weapons and ended the American supremacy.

There had been a long period of suspicion and distrust between the Soviet Union and the western countries. The Soviet Union could never forget that Western states

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(Britain, France and the USA) had tried to undo the Bolshevik revolution and intervened (along with Japan) in the civil war. The western countries also did not forget that the declared objective of the Soviet Union was the overthrowing of capitalism worldwide. During World War II, mutual suspicion increased further. After Germany invaded the USSR in 1941, the Western democracies delayed opening a second front against Germany. Britain and the USA promised that they would do so, but the delay confirmed the Soviet suspicion that the west wanted a prolonged struggle between Germany and Russia so that both would be eliminated.

During the war, both the sides encouraged opposite elements in the countries liberated from the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and a few smaller states). After the fascist dictator Mussolini was removed from power in Italy, Italy was supported by the Western powers and received 'aid for reconstruction' (grants of money totaling hundreds of millions of USA dollars). Since Italy had one of the largest communist parties outside of the USSR, USSR leaders saw this as an attempt to strengthen the capitalist camp or bloc of countries. There were similar problems in Greece and Poland. The USA helped defeat communist forces in Greece.

After 1945, both superpowers took some steps to lessen mutual suspicion. The USA agreed to occupy only the western zones of Germany and Austria and to stay out of Poland, Czechoslovakia and other eastern European territories that had been liberated by the Soviet Red Army. The Soviet Union dissolved the Comintern (Communist Information Bureau) and allowed capitalist forces to control Greece. The Soviet Union in 1952 vacated Finland and by 1955 had removed all its troops from Austria. There remained differences of opinion between the USA and USSR regarding the future of Europe and other areas. Soviet Union wanted to install 'friendly' governments in the East European countries liberated from the Nazi Germany. By friendly governments, the Soviet Union meant the communist governments, with which America and Britain did not agree. The Soviet Union also tried to establish her domination in Turkey and delayed the withdrawal of her troops from Iran, much to the dislike of the western countries.

Both sides were responsible for the Cold War. The temporary truce between the two parties during the World War II was just a bright patch in the otherwise strained relationship between the two, before and after the war.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.2**

1. Which countries formed the part of the Axis power?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which countries formed the part of the Allies power?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Which parts of Europe were influenced by the USA and the USSR?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**25.3 DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE COLD WAR**

It is very difficult to find an exact date for the start of the Cold War since the war was never declared and even the undeclared aggression was of a long-term kind. After



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the initial phase (1945-47) which has been called the ossification phase, the Cold War began in earnest and at its centre was the creation of a European postwar order. The onset of the Cold War reflected the failure of the different powers to consistently respect the principles agreed on at wartime conferences of Yalta and Potsdam.

**First Phase**

In the early phase the fate of **Poland** turned out to be a crucial issue. All the countries had a special interest in Poland. France and Britain had declared war on Germany when Hitler's army had crossed the Polish border in September 1939. For Russia, Poland had been a historic enemy: on the other hand Polish lands had been the traditional gateway for invasion of Russia from the west. When the Soviets entered Poland in 1944, they formally handed over power to the Lublin government, pro-communist committee of National liberation. The future of Poland was discussed at length at the Yalta Conference of Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt. No agreement could be reached on the exact boundary of Poland. But Poland ultimately came into the Soviet camp. The sovietisation of Poland became a landmark in the origin of the Cold War.

The second crucial area of conflict was the **Balkan**. Britain and the Soviet Union had decided to have their own spheres of influence in the Balkan areas. But in all the countries except Greece communist regimes were installed, and once the communist governments were installed they were openly supported by the Soviet Union. Except Greece, which came under British control, all other East European countries fell under Soviet domination. Churchill's formulation of this state of affairs was that an 'iron curtain' had descended over Europe. This led to an intensely strained relationship between the East and the West, including between the USA and the Soviet Union.

After the unconditional surrender to the Allied forces, **Germany** was divided into four occupation zones—each one under the control of the Soviet Union, the USA, Britain and France. Berlin, the capital of Germany, fell in Soviet occupation zone but Berlin itself was divided into four occupation zones on the same pattern as the whole of Germany. The military occupation was a temporary arrangement till the time the Peace Treaty was concluded. The Potsdam Conference was convened to finalise the peace treaty with Germany. The Allies were not clear on critical issues, such as whether Germany should be disarmed, demilitarised and partitioned. To what degree was the reconstruction of the German industry to be allowed? The Soviet Union wanted a pauperised and weak Germany so that its interests did not get threatened by Germany. The Soviet Union also demanded US\$ 20 billion from Germany as reparation fees. But the western allies did not agree to these proposals. Later the British, American and French zones were merged into one and Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) came into existence. After the election in the new state a pro-west government came to power. It started getting heavy financial aid from America. Soon, with the Soviet help the other zone also created a state called German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

The western allies wanted to introduce monetary reforms in Germany, but the Soviet Union did not and responded by what is known as the **Berlin Blockade**. The Soviet Union imposed a total ban on all traffic between Berlin and the western zones, be it road, rail or waterways. This Blockade was also in protest against the **Brussels Pact** which was formulated as a mutual defense treaty between Britain, France and Belgium. The Pact directed the signatories to extend military assistance to any



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member state in case of attack by Germany or any third party in Europe. Though the name of the Soviet Union was not mentioned in the text it was mainly aimed against the Soviet Union and not against Germany.

In **Iran** a crisis developed when Soviet troops failed to withdraw by March 1946. Iran had been the main thoroughfare for western aid to the Soviet Union during the war. Iran was also rich in oil. The Soviet Union demanded privileged access to Iranian oil and refused to allow Iranian troops in the Soviet held areas. US then mounted pressure in the United Nations Security Council forcing the Soviet forces to leave Iran.



Map 25. The Confrontation between the Superpowers-1950



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In **Turkey**, the Soviet Union demanded the internationalisation of the Bosphorus Strait. The western allies resisted that. In Greece, the USA and the Soviet Union backed rival factions. The Greek conservative forces had called upon the USA for support.

It was in this backdrop that the US President Truman formulated his policy which came to be known as **Truman doctrine**. The Truman doctrine was a policy of ‘containment’ i.e., to limit or contain communism to areas where it had already triumphed, but to not let it spread any further. Thus, the American foreign policy changed from one of isolationism to become interventionist. This intervention was aimed at containing the spread of communism anywhere in the world.

There was a significant rise of communism in some of the western European countries also. The war-torn countries of Europe had hoped for improvement in their lot after the war but that did not happen. European national economies and industries were struggling and the members of the communist parties in these countries were increasing. It was in this background that U.S. Secretary of State, Marshall, put forward his plan for European economic reconstruction which is known as ‘**The Marshall Plan**’. The Plan envisaged American transfer of more than ten billion dollars to Europe over a period of twenty years. It was hoped that such massive monetary infusion would help Europe recuperate from the ravages of the war and thus stabilize its material condition and political climate. It was also believed that only a stable Europe would be able to resist the indigenous and external communist challenges. Significantly, the offer of aid was made to East European countries also.

On its part the Soviet Union revived the ‘**Cominform**’ (Communist Information Bureau) in response to the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. It was founded with the intention to bring the communist governments in the Soviet sphere of influence in line with Moscow’s policies. Thus, it was an attempt to further consolidate Communism in Eastern Europe.

The **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation** was signed on April 4, 1949. This treaty was signed in pursuance of the policy of “containment”. It was between the US and other European countries—Britain, France, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Norway and Portugal. The treaty was a military alliance against the Soviet Bloc. Article V of the NATO treaty is the central provision which states that an attack on any member of NATO would be considered as an act of aggression against all others. However, every member state had the right to decide on the kind of support it wanted to offer to other member states. Later, Greece and West Germany also joined the NATO.

Post-1945 developments in China and Korea led to the intensification of the Cold War. In **China**, the Communists gained power in 1949 under Mao Tse-Tung and People’s Republic of China was established (See Unit 5.5.7). The United States refused to recognise the People’s Republic of China, which was also denied entry into the United Nations; only Taiwan (‘Nationalist’ China) was recognized. The United States used its power of veto to keep communist China out of the U.N. and the Soviet Union effectively boycotted the U.N. because of this. However, this did not mean the establishment of friendly relations between the USSR and PRC: after 1950 their relations took a turn for the worse.

After the defeat of Japan in the World War II, **Korea** was divided into North Korea under Soviet control and South Korea under American control in accordance with the Potsdam Conference. South Korea was effectively a dictatorship with direct support

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from the USA. In North Korea a pro-Soviet Government was set up. Neither the Soviet Union nor the U.S.A. recognised the governments which were opposed to them. In 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. The United Nations, whose permanent Security Council was dominated by capitalist states, declared North Korea the aggressor and set up a unified UN command to repel the North Korean attack. General MacArthur of the USA was named its commander. The UN troops pushed North Korean forces out of South Korea and entered deep into the North Korean territory, reaching the Chinese border. China then joined the North Korean troops to push the UN troops into South Korea. Ultimately an armistice was signed in 1953 bringing to an end the threat of an open war. The Korean crisis was the first military struggle of the Cold War. The USA and USSR and PRC did not engage in much direct combat with one another (although North Korean aircrafts were actually flown by Soviet pilots) but they fought each others' client powers (the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Republic of Korea: neither was actually a democracy!).

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.3**

1. Which countries future was discussed at Yalta conferences?

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2. Which leader coined the famous term "Iron Curtain"?

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3. What was the aim of the Truman Doctrine?

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4. What does NATO stand for?

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**25.4 SECOND PHASE OF THE COLD WAR : POST TRUMAN-STALIN ERA**

In the second phase, tensions eased considerably but there was no end to the Cold War. In both the countries, there was a leadership change at the highest level. In the USA President Truman's tenure came to an end in 1953 and in the Soviet Union Stalin died in 1953. Stalin was succeeded by Nikita Khrushchev, who retreated on many of the policies of Stalin. On the policy front, Khrushchev stood for the policy of relaxation of tension in Europe and admitted Soviet responsibility for some problems there. On the other hand, he openly suppressed anti-Soviet leaders and ideas in Poland and Hungary and denounced as 'fascist' the activities of liberals and Catholics who expressed Polish and Hungarian nationalism. Soviet leaders during this period also commented critically on racial conflicts in the USA, which they said were inevitable consequences of capitalist inequality. For its part, the USA and its clients tried to stir up anti-Soviet feelings in the East European countries.

The change of leaders in the USSR and Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalinism inspired revolts in **Poland** and Hungary. In 1956, revolt broke out in Poznan city of Poland but was suppressed. The Communist Party of Poland became divided into



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two factions, one Stalinist and the other owing allegiance to Gomulka. Gomulka's faction succeeded and the Communist Party of Poland decided to pursue a "national road to socialism". This meant that Poland would have more control over its affairs as long as it respected Soviet hegemony (for instance, in economic and military affairs) throughout Eastern Europe. Thus, Poland became the second country after Yugoslavia to follow the path of "Nationalist Communism", which most Soviet leaders accepted within limits.

In **Hungary** people rose in revolt in 1956. The Soviet Union initially agreed to some reform, but when Hungarians demanded complete withdrawal of the Soviet troops and Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact (which was set up by the Soviet Union in response to NATO), the Soviet leadership got annoyed with the 'New Course'. The final declaration of Hungary's neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact led to the execution of Imre Nagy, the then ruler of Hungary and the attack on Hungary by the Soviet Union. Thus the Soviet Union made it clear that it was not ready to accept a liberalised communist regime or a multiparty democracy in Poland. The US did not do much about it as any action on its part would probably have led to direct confrontation between the Soviet Union and the USA.

After the Chinese Revolution, General Chiang Kai-Shek led his followers across the Taiwan Strait and set up the Republic of China which continued to represent China in the UN till 1971. The American policy before 1950 was not to interfere in **Taiwan** in the event of attack by the Communist China (Peoples' Republic of China). But after the Korean War in 1950, the U.S. policy changed and after 1953 US President Eisenhower agreed to massive American rearmament of Taiwan.

In 1954, the PRC (China) declared that Taiwan had to be liberated and accordingly started military operations. The US on its part threatened to use nuclear weapons and war between the PRC and the US seemed imminent. Communist China showed an inclination to back down and the NATO states declared they would not support American use of nuclear weapons. During this period the PRC leaders believed that the advances made by the USSR in the development of long range delivery systems for nuclear weapons, ICBMs, had tilted the European balance of power in favour of the Eastern bloc. PRC leaders were not sure what USSR military resurgence would mean for them; perhaps it would make the USA less likely to threaten the PRC. When the PRC bombarded Quemoy in 1957, it was the USSR that pressured the PRC to stop. Ultimately direct Sino-USA war was avoided, but Chinese Communist suspicion of the USA *and* USSR increased.

The **Suez Canal** was constructed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> c. by the British and the French. The Suez Canal Company enjoyed the right to operate the canal and earn profits for a period of 99 years commencing 1869. The Egyptian decision to nationalise the Suez Canal—that is, make it part of Egyptian national territory—in 1956 led to a series of crises. Britain, France and Israel decided to initiate a concerted military campaign against Egypt. America was against the use of force. But Israel attacked Egypt in collusion with Britain and France. This forced the USA to condemn its own allies and for the first time since the Cold War, the USA and the Soviet Union came together on this issue. Britain and France had to accept a UN peace keeping force for the canal. The imperial decline of France, which had tried to remain independent of the USA security bloc, speeded up after the 'Suez Crisis'. Britain too was now generally recognized as being only a second-rate power and junior partner of the USA.



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In **Cuba** Fidel Castro came to power after many years of struggle in 1959. He brought Cuba closer to the Soviet Union within a few years. The USA cut off diplomatic relations with Cuba, refused to purchase Cuban sugar and supported an ‘invasion’ of Cuba in 1961 by anti-Castro Cubans who were living in exile in the USA. The exiles attempted a landing at the Bay of Pigs. The ‘invasion’ turned out to be a complete failure as the exiles got no support from the people of Cuba. The Soviet Union then decided to install a nuclear bomber and ground-to-ground missiles in Cuba (some of them only 150 km. from the USA). The Soviet Union also dispatched dozens of long-range missiles to Cuba. (Since 1949, the USA had put bomber and missile bases in Norway, Turkey and other places directly adjacent to the USSR.) The USA in turn announced a blockade of Cuba. There was a strong possibility of war between the superpowers. Initially the Soviet Union denounced the blockade but later agreed to withdraw the missiles on the condition that the Americans would not invade Cuba and would remove their medium-range nuclear missiles from Turkey. The USA agreed to the first condition; they soon removed missiles from Turkey with the excuse that they were outdated. This was probably the closest the superpowers came to nuclear war during the Cold War.

The Soviet Union virtually gave an ultimatum to the western powers demanding demilitarisation of all of Berlin within six months; the USSR would remove its occupation troops if the other occupiers did the same. If agreement was not reached within six months, the Soviet Union was to transfer its occupation rights in East Berlin to the German Democratic Republic (‘East Germany’). When Soviet troops surrounded the city, the West Berliners and foreign occupiers were supplied by an ‘air-bridge’; eventually Soviet leaders decided they could not easily force the Western powers out of Berlin, the city they had lost 300,000 troops in occupying at the end of the Second World War. The ‘**Berlin Crisis**’ was not so much defused as won in favor of the Western occupation forces.

The Soviet Union continued to be worried during the 1950s by the flight of many workers and professionals from East Germany to West Germany via Berlin. When they resumed pressure against the Western occupiers over the Berlin question, the latter changed some of the terms of occupation to prevent being drawn into a major conflict over Germany. West Germany, the German Federal Republic, was being re-armed after 1955 and given effective control over most of the western occupation zones, where the communists were outlawed for some time. In 1961 the Soviet occupiers of East Berlin built a concrete wall to prevent East Germans from fleeing to the West German state. The **Berlin Wall** became a symbol of Cold War politics until Germans tore it down in 1989–90.

During the second phase of the Cold War, there was a thaw between the two superpowers but on certain occasions, as during the Cuban Missile crisis in 1962, the tension ran very high. The possibility of a nuclear war and its catastrophic effects was an important factor that forced the two superpowers to change their attitudes. In both the countries there were pressures to reduce military expenditures.

Some grounds for improved relationship between the two superpowers had already been made. In 1963 the Soviet Union, the USA and Britain had signed a nuclear test ban treaty and agreed to carry out their nuclear tests underground only to avoid polluting the atmosphere any further. In the same year a telephonic link (the so called hot line) was introduced between Moscow and Washington to ensure swift consultations.



## Notes



## INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.4

1. Which Soviet leader initiated the policy of relaxation of tension on Europe and suppression of anti-soviet leaders and ideas at the same time?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does PRC stand for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When did Berlin wall collapse?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 25.5 THE DETENTE

The Soviet Union and the USA relationship now entered a new phase which has been described as **Detente**, a term that was used for relaxation in East-West conflict. The Detente was also to take into account China. The relationship between the USA and China had been tense for past few years. The Detente with China was a notable achievement. The Cold War did not end during this period but there were improved levels of understanding. Henry Kissinger, an American official, described Detente as “a mode of arrangement of adversary power”. Leonid Brezhnev, who succeeded Khrushchev as Soviet leader after the Cuban missile crisis, described Detente as “willingness to resolve differences and disputes not by force, not by threats and saber rattling, but by peaceful means at the conference table. It also means a certain trust and ability to consider each other’s legitimate interests.” President Nixon of the USA has been described as the “author of Detente”. But this is more appropriate in the context of U.S.-China relations. Although Nixon had based his political career during the 1940s-60’s as an anti-communist ‘hardliner’, when elected President in 1968 he took steps to improve US relations with China.

Several steps were taken by both the countries to ease the tension. In 1968, a nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) was signed by U.K., USA and USSR. A major area of conflict between the two superpowers was the two Germanys and Berlin. In 1969, the government of West Germany initiated the policy of *Ostpolitik* which means a “policy for the East”. West Germany renewed normal relations with East European countries. Both the Germanys recognised each other and were recognised as separate and legitimate states by the superpowers; the two Germanys joined the United Nations in 1973. In 1972 USA and the Soviet Union signed the **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty** (SALT-I). The agreement did not reduce the amount of armaments but did slow down the arms race. The then Presidents of the Soviet Union and the USA met thrice (Brezhnev and Nixon respectively). The USA also started exporting wheat to the Soviet Union. In July 1975, 35 countries assembled for the **Helsinki (Finland) Conference**. The signing of its final act was regarded, for the time being, as burying the Cold War. The final act contained ten principles, most important of which was that all the Nations were to accept the European frontier which had been drawn after the Second World War. Thus the division of Germany was accepted. The communist countries promised to allow their peoples “human rights” including freedom of speech and freedom to leave the country.



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During the period of detente USA-China relations improved considerably. President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger made special efforts to ease the tension with China. In 1971, China was admitted to the UN and Taiwan was expelled. In 1978 the USA withdrew the recognition of Nationalist China and in 1979 the USA gave recognition to the People's Republic of China, and ambassadors were exchanged.



### INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.5

1. What was Detente? Who was its author?

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2. What was NPT?

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3. What was SALT-I?

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4. What was the policy of *ostpolitik*?

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### 25.6 NEW COLD WAR

After the Helsinki Conference the process of detente lost its momentum. Relations between the USA and the Soviet Union became so sore that by 1980 it appeared that Cold War had come back. The new tensions came to be described as the **New Cold War**. The New Cold War was different from the Cold War in the sense that it was not based on ideological conflict but on balance of power. In the New Cold War a new power bloc, namely the PRC, emerged as a power that could not be defeated or ignored. The intervention of the Soviet army in Afghanistan in 1979 was the turning point. The New Cold War was marked by the efforts of both the countries to spread their influence mainly outside Europe. Conflicts outside Europe assumed greater significance than ever before. Detente for the Soviet Union meant acceptance of status quo in Europe only. In Indo-China, Africa, Afghanistan etc. both the countries supported opposing groups. The Soviet Union replaced the President of Afghanistan by one favourable to it. Nearly 1, 00,000 Soviet soldiers were stationed in Afghanistan. America regarded the positioning of Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan as a threat to Iran and moved her warships in the Gulf. Both the countries were deeply involved in developing the new weapons of destruction. The US President, Ronald Reagan, approved of the plan to develop a new weapons system, the **Strategic Defence Initiative** (SDI) which was also known as Star Wars.

### 25.7 THE END OF THE COLD WAR

The New Cold War came to an end with the **collapse of communism** in various East European countries. The pace of collapse was very fast and ultimately communism collapsed in its birth place i.e., the USSR. The process began in Poland in 1988 when the Solidarity trade union organised huge anti-government strikes forcing the government to allow free elections in which the communists were comprehensively



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defeated. The same happened in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Czechoslovakia. In East Germany the communist leader Eric Honecker wanted to disperse the demonstrators by force but was overruled by his colleagues. By the end of 1989, the Communist Government had to resign in East Germany and the Berlin Wall, the symbol of Cold War, was pulled down in 1989 with much public enthusiasm. The fall of the Berlin wall was taken to be the end of the Cold War as its erection had been taken as the start of the Cold War. In 1990 the West German currency was introduced in East Germany and finally the two Germanys were reunited. The Chancellor of Federal Republic of Germany was chosen as the head of the Government of the united country which adopted market economy and western type of democracy.

In the Soviet Union also communism collapsed. Mikhail Gorbachev made efforts to transform and revitalize the country by his policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *Perestroika* (restructuring-which meant economic and social reforms). But the measures did not succeed and by the end of 1991 the USSR split into separate republics, and Russia alone was not in a position to command the same influence that the old Soviet Union did. The Cold War came to an end. Many political commentator argued that with the end of the Cold War the world problems would disappear but new problems and new areas of conflict have now emerged.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.6**

1. What was SDI?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was glasnost and perestroika?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Which symbol symbolized the end of the Cold War?  
\_\_\_\_\_



**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

The Cold War started immediately after the Second World War, though signs of it had started appearing during the war. In the early phase of the Cold War, there were attempts by the USA and the USSR to spread their areas of influence and ideology. There was suspicion and distrust against each other. During the second phase there was some relaxation in the tension between the two countries. The suspicion and distrust, however, persisted. Immediately after the Detente, a New Cold War started. A new power bloc i.e. the PRC emerged during this period. Only with the collapse of communism in East European countries and in the USSR did the Cold War come to an end.



**TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. What do you understand by Cold War? In what ways was it different from an open war?
2. Mention some of the factors responsible for the Cold War.

**Notes**

3. Discuss the issue of Poland during the first phase of the Cold War.
4. What is meant by Berlin Blockade?
5. Discuss the Suez Canal Crisis during the second phase of the Cold War.
6. Discuss the phase of Detente in the cold war.
7. What is New Cold War? In what ways does it differ from the Cold War?

**ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****25.1**

1. Political and economic liberation and Marxism – Leninism.
2. Voice of America and Radio Moscow.

**25.2**

1. See third para of 25.2
2. See third para of 25.2
3. See the second last para of 25.2 Eastern, Europe by the USSR, Western Europe by the USA.

**25.3**

1. Poland.
2. Churchill.
3. Containment.
4. North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

**25.4**

1. Nikita Khrushchev.
2. People's Republic of China.
3. 1989-90.

**25.5**

1. 'Detente' was a term used for relaxation in east-west conflict. President Nixon of America was its author.
2. Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.
3. Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I.
4. Policy of West Germany which meant policy for the East.

**25.6**

1. Strategic Defense Initiative.
2. Openness and restructuring.
3. Collapse of the Berlin Wall.



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**HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. Refer 25.1
2. Refer 25.2
3. Refer 25.3 para 2
4. Refer 25.3 para 5
5. Refer 25.4 para 6
6. Refer 25.5
7. Refer 25.6

**GLOSSARY**

- Cominform** – The Communist Information Bureau. It was founded by the Soviet Union in 1947 with the aim to encourage International communist solidarity.
- Ossification Phase** – The initial phase of the Cold War during 1945-1947. After this phase the Cold War began in right earnest.
- Iron Curtain** – The term was coined by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Churchill used this term to describe the state of affairs in the Balkans where all countries except Greece had come under the Soviet domination.
- Berlin Blockade** – The ban imposed by the Soviet Union on Berlin curtailing its links with the western zones. The western allies wanted to introduce monetary reforms in Germany.
- Brussels Pact** – The Pact formulated as a mutual defense treaty between Britain, France and Belgium against Germany. However, the Pact was mainly directed against Soviet Union and not against Germany.
- Truman Doctrine** – The Truman Doctrine was a policy of containment which was aimed at limiting or containing communism to the areas where it had taken roots.
- Marshale Plan** – The Plan was aimed at transferring more than ten billion dollars to European countries over a period of 20 years to come out of the ravages of the war.
- NATO** – The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation which was formed in 1949 between the US and some European countries. It was a military alliance against the Soviet Bloc.
- Detente** – A term that was used for relaxation in East-West conflicts. During the period of détente there was improved level of understanding between the two power blocs. The US relationship with China also improved during this period.
- SALT – I** – Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty that was signed between the US and the Soviet Union. The Treaty helped in slowing down the arms race.

**Notes**

- SDI** – Strategic Defence Initiative which was also known as Star Wars. It led to development of new weapons of destruction.
- Glasnost** – A policy which meant openness. The policy was initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev of Soviet Union to transform and revitalize the country.
- Perestroika** – A policy initiated by the Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachov which meant restructuring economic and social spheres.
- Ostpolitik** – A policy initiated by the government of West Germany which meant “ a policy for the East”. West Germany renewed normal relations with East European countries and both the Germanys recognized each other and were also recognized as separate and legitimate states by the superpowers.