**Capitalism vs. Communism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Capitalism</th>
<th>Soviet Communism</th>
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<tr>
<td>- People should be free to make as much money as they can</td>
<td>- Rich people are wicked and selfish. They should be forced to shard their wealth.</td>
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<td>- Factories and other property should be owned by individuals and companies</td>
<td>- Factories and other property should be owned by the state on behalf of all the people</td>
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<td>- The government should interfere as little as possible in lives of ordinary people</td>
<td>- A communist government should get involved in every aspect of life</td>
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<td>- At elections people should be allowed to choose anyone they want for government</td>
<td>- At elections people should only be allowed to choose communist governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The press should be able to criticize the government</td>
<td>- The press should never criticize a communist government</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The government should not interfere in religion</td>
<td>- Religious belief in nonsense and should be wiped out by the government</td>
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**Long Term causes of the cold war:**

Russian revolution created the first workers state

**Causes:**

* American fear of communist attack
* Truman’s dislike of Stalin
* Russia’s fear of the American's atomic bomb
* Russia’s dislike of capitalism
* Russia’s actions in the Soviet zone of Germany
* America’s refusal to share nuclear secrets
* Russia’s expansion west into Eastern Europe + broken election promises
* Russia’s fear of American attack
* Russia’s need for a secure western border
* Russia’s aim of spreading world communism
The common enemy:

The hostility between the USA and the Soviet Union was suspended in 1941. They were linked by their common enemy wish to destroy Adolf Hitler. As soon as it looked like Hitler was going to be beaten the old tension started to re-emerge. Hitler predicted that once the war was over the two wartime allies would no longer have anything in common and would become hostile towards each other once again.

The end of the war created a difficult situation. Nazi power over Europe had been destroyed but what should replace it? In many countries there was no proper government. Decisions had to be made about the future of these countries. Inevitably, American and Soviet leaders had very different views on the best type of government for the countries of the new Europe. Shortly before his death Hitler predicted the start of the cold war.

1945: The breakdown of the wartime alliance

Many countries, especially in Eastern Europe did not have functioning governments - there was a power vacuum as both superpowers realized that they needed to fill this vacuum as quietly as possible with governments which would support them.

The Warsaw uprising:

- The London Poles decided that their only chance of frustrating Stalin was to seize control of part of Poland before the Red Army did. In August 1944 Polish resistance fighters, loyal to the London Poles, attacked the German forces occupying Warsaw, the capital of Poland. The Soviet Army was nearby but did nothing to help the Poles. Stalin did not want them to defeat the Germans. He wanted the Lublin Poles to takeover after the war. The British and the Americans were appalled by Stalin's attitude. Without Soviet help, the rising was ruthlessly smashed by the Germans and nearly 300,000 Poles were killed. The Germans sent the surviving people of Warsaw to concentration camps and when the Red Army finally took the city, it was completely deserted. The Red Army went on to take control of the whole of Poland. By January 1945 the USSR announced that Poland had been liberated and the Lublin group was now in charge.

Yalta and the argument over Poland:

On the 4th -11th of February 1945 the leaders of Britain, the USA and the Soviet Union met at Yalta. The three leaders were Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin. The end of the war was in sight and they met to decide on the shape of the post-war world. Much of their time was spent discussing the future of Poland. They disagreed about how Poland should be governed.
-The Lublin government in Poland was to be expanded so that it also included some London Poles. Free elections would be held in Poland as soon as possible.

-Germany should be divided into occupied zones. Churchill argued there should be a French zone as well. This was because Churchill was keen to restore the power of France.

**The weakness of the Yalta agreement:**

-Yalta was the high-point of the wartime alliance. To Roosevelt and many Americans it seemed like the beginning of the post-war period of co-operation. There was enthusiastic cheering in the American Senate when the agreement was read out. In fact, the Yalta Agreement was flawed in a number of ways.

**The problems:**

- The Soviets and the Americans interpreted it differently. Both Stalin and Roosevelt had different views on what democracy was as for Roosevelt it was the American system of free speech while for Stalin it was the communist party representing the people with no opposition allowed.

-Yalta raised false expectations in the USA. People expected that Stalin would not allow western style governments to be set up in Eastern Europe. They were disappointed when this did not happen.

-The Agreement tried to achieve compromise however compromise was not possible. Either Poland was democratic or it was friendly with the USSR. Stalin knew that he could only make sure that Poland was friendly by destroying free speech.

**Yalta in Practice:**

At Yalta it was agreed that the Soviet Foreign Minister, Molotov, would negotiate the details of the new Polish government with the British and American ambassadors to Moscow. These were unsuccessful as Molotov refused to let the London Poles play a significant role in the government. By the beginning of April Harriman was reporting to Truman that the talks had achieved nothing. At the same time Polish opponents of communism were dealt with ruthlessly.

**Truman:**

A key figure in the early stages of the Cold war was US president Harry Truman. It was only by chance he was elected as Vice president he took over when Roosevelt died in April 1945. Truman was a democratic politician from Missouri. He had made his reputation through domestic politics. He had only been Vice President for a few weeks and he had almost no experience of international politics. He was very different from Roosevelt and his personality played a part in the development of a tougher American policy. Roosevelt was much more diplomatic than Truman. Roosevelt was sure that the USA and the Soviet Union could remain friendly after the war. Roosevelt remained convinced that the USA would stay on good terms with the Soviet Union. Truman was less certain about Soviet intentions.
**After the Blockade: The formation of West Germany:**

Stalin’s attempt to put a stop to the creation of West Germany was a complete failure. The blockade accelerated moves towards a powerful, pro-Western state in much of Germany. As the airlift began, the military authorities in the western zones also organized meetings to work out a constitution for West Germany. The new state was called the Federal Republic of Germany and it was formally founded in May 1949. The Soviet Union responded to this by setting up a new constitution for East Germany. In October 1949 the eastern state was officially established and it was known as the German Democratic Republic.

West Germany held its first elections in August 1949. A political party called the Christian Democrats won the greatest number of seats and dominated the new state. Its leader was Konrad Adenauer, a conservative who hated communism and believed very strongly in linking West Germany to the USA and Western Europe. The development of West Germany under Adenauer was the last thing that Stalin wanted. The idea of a powerful capitalist German state made him feel insecure.

**The formation of NATO:**

The blockade also encouraged the Western allies to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was set up in April 1949. The alliance was dominated by the USA. The formation of NATO was a milestone in American foreign policy. Never before had the USA been a member of a peacetime military alliance. This proves how determined Truman was to stop the spread of communism.

**Why was NATO really set up?**

- To provide protection for the countries of Western Europe and North America from attack.
- This was really an organization set up to oppose the Soviet Union and the spread of communism.
- Some have said this was defense others have said it was an offense.
- NATO was a bulwark against communism in Europe. Many believed it was an extension of US foreign policy as the USA dominated the organization.
**De-Stalinization:**

At the communist Party International in 1956, Khrushchev made an astonishing attack of Stalin. He dredged up the gory evidence of Stalin’s purges and denounced him as a wicked tyrant who was an enemy of the people and who kept all the power to himself. Khrushchev began a programme of De-Stalinization.

- He released more political prisoners
- He closed down Cominform as part of his policy of reconciliation with Yugoslavia
- He invited Marshal Tito to Moscow
- He dismissed Stalin’s former Foreign Minister, Molotov.

Those in Eastern Europe who wanted greater freedom from the Soviet Union saw hopeful times ahead.

**The Warsaw Pact:**

One aspect of Stalin’s policy did not change, however. His aim in Eastern Europe had always been to create a buffer zone against attack from the West. Khrushchev continued this policy. In 1955 he created the Warsaw Pact. This was a military alliance similar to NATO. The members would defend each other if one was attacked. The Warsaw Pact included all the Communist countries of Eastern Europe except Yugoslavia, but it was dominated by the Soviet Union.

**Co-existence:**

From 1955, however, the Cold War began to enter a new phase. Stalin had died in 1953. The new Soviet leader was Nikita Khrushchev. He seemed keen to ease the tensions with the USA. He talked about peaceful co-existence rather than continuing conflict. After ten years without any meetings between the leaders of the USSR and the USA, he met with Western leaders in 1955 and 1960. The meetings did not achieve anything specific but the two sides were talking to each other, which was some improvement on the tensions of the early 1950’s. However not all Western leaders were convinced by Khrushchev. To some, his behavior in Eastern Europe was a constant reminder of the evils of communism.
On December 25, the Soviet Army invaded Afghanistan. Hafizullah Amin, the president, was arrested and executed and a pro-communist government was set up. President Brezhnev announced that the Soviet Union had responded to an urgent request from the Kabul government for help. Almost immediately the good relations between the USA and the USSR broke down. Exports of US grain were stopped. The USA refused to ratify SALT II and the USA boycotted the 1980 Olympic Games which were being held in Moscow.

**Why did the Cold War freeze again in the 1980's?**

Revolution in Iran:

The Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979. The USA had supported the Shah because it needed Iran’s oil. The new government was strongly anti-American but also strongly anti-communist. It wanted a society based on Islamic values. The Iranian Revolution changed the balance of world power in the Middle East and increased tension between the superpowers, who were worried about how each other would react.

Civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador and in Angola:

Communist rebels, supported by Cuban and Soviet money and expertise, tried to overthrow their government of these states in South America and Africa. The USA funded the governments against the rebels. In Angola, funding by both superpowers caused a long-running civil war.

Human rights:


New nuclear weapons:

In 1977, the USSR began replacing out-of-date missiles in Eastern Europe with new SS-20 nuclear missiles. The West saw these missiles as a new type of battlefield weapon that could be used in a limited nuclear war confined only to Europe. In response, President Carter allowed the US military to develop the Cruise missile. By 1979 the USA had stationed Pershing missiles in Western Europe as an answer to the SS-20 missiles.
Collapse of SALT II:

The main terms of the SALT II agreement had been set out as early as 1974. Finally signed in 1977. By that time, relations between the USA and the USSR had deteriorated so much that the US congress refused to ratify it.

Afghanistan:

In 1979 the pro-soviet regime in Afghanistan was under serious threat from its Muslim opponents, the Mujahideen. To protect the regime, Soviet forces entered Afghanistan. Western powers were alarmed that the USSR could get so close to western oil supplies in the Middle East and President Carter took this actions as “the most serious threat to world peace since WW2.” The USA secretly began to send very large shipments of money, arms and equipment to Pakistan and from there to the USSR’s Mujahideen opponents. The campaign became the Soviet Unions equivalent of the Vietnam War. It was a nightmare campaign, virtually unwinnnable for the Soviet forces although they remained there until the early 1990’s.

The Moscow and Los Angelis Olympics:

In protest at Soviet involvement in the Afghan War, the USA boycotted the 1980 Olympic Games held in Moscow. In retaliation, the USSR and eastern European teams boycotted the Los Angeles Olympics held four years later.

Ronald Regan:

In 1981, the USA elected former Hollywood film actor Ronald Reagan as President. Reagan made no secret of his dislike for communism and the USSR, calling it the evil empire. He supported anti-communist forces in Afghanistan and Nicaragua. Reagan was helped by the fact that many other pro-western governments at the time supported his tough line against the USSR. His boldest plan was to escalate the arms race in order to end it. He increased US defense spending by $32.6 billion. In 1982, he gave the go-ahead for the Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as star wars. This was a multi-billion dollar project to create a system using satellites and lasers that could destroy missiles before they hit their targets. Clearly a weapon such as this could change the whole nature of the Cold War.