

# **COLD WAR AND DÉTENTE**

**(For Degree Part-III, Paper-VI (Political Science (Hons.))**

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## **MEANING**

The term cold war was for the first time used by Bernard Baruch, an American Statesman, but was popularized by Prof. Lippman. The term cold war came to be used for describing the situation in which war was not actually fought but a war like hysteria or as Nehru described "a brain war, a nerve war and propaganda war" was kept in operation. It can be defined as a state of intensive unhealthy competition – political, economic and ideological- which falls short of an armed conflict between the states. As a concept in international relations, it denotes a state of constant conflict, strains, tensions and strife maintained and perpetuated by political and psychological warfare but without a direct war between the opposing sides.

In the words of K.P.S. Menon, "Cold war as the world has experienced was a war between two ideologies (capitalism and communism), two systems (bourgeoisie democracy and proletarian dictatorship), two block systems (NATO and Warsaw pact), two states (USA and USSR) and two personalities (John Foster Dulles and Stalin)."

## **CAUSES OF COLD WAR**

The causes of cold war between communist east and democratic west can be conveniently studied in two parts –

(A) The Western Grievances against the East<sup>1</sup>

- Western fear of growing soviet power in the World Politics
- The ideological conflict between communism and capitalism
- Western fear of growing socialist Movement as a really subversive movement.
- USSR was guilty of violating Yalta agreement
- Soviet interferences in Poland and arrest of Polish democratic leaders

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<sup>1</sup> Ghai, U.R, International Politics :Theory and Practice, New Academic Publishing, Delhi, 2017

- Conversion of Eastern Europe to Communism
- The Soviet reluctance to join war against Japan
- Soviet help to Chinese Communists
- Soviet refusal to withdraw its forces from Northern Iran on account of its oil reserves
- Soviet pressures on Greece
- Soviet attempts to tame Turkey
- Soviet pressures on Germany like transportation of heavy machinery from Germany to USSR, imprisonment of German leaders, separation of East Germany, Soviet control over German Socialist Party, non-acceptance of a single economic zone.
- The differences over Berlin with USA
- Frequent use of Soviet veto in UN security Council
- Differences over the implementation of the peace treaties.
- Communist activities in USA and Canada

#### (B) Soviet Grievances against the West

- Soviet displeasure over several Western policies
- Soviet apprehension of Western intentions
- The delay in the opening of Second Front against Germany when Germany attacked USSR during second world war
- Western policy of appeasement of Fascist Italy
- Inadequate western aid to the Soviet Union
- Abrupt end of lend-lease agreement
- The American secrecy over the Atom Bomb
- Anti-soviet propaganda by Western Press and Leadership
- Soviet disapproval of several western decisions

## **NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE COLD WAR**

### **THE PREPARATORY STAGE OF COLD WAR (1945-47)**

- Mutual fear and distrust between USA and USSR
- Conflicting ideologies of communism and capitalism
- Churchill's Fulton speech, popularly known as Iron Curtain Speech (March 1946)

- Growing fear of Soviet expansionism
- End of US Isolationist policy
- The Truman doctrine according to which the US commits itself to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures.
- Marshall plan to help the socio-economic reconstruction of the war-torn Europe. It was an attempt to win over the European states and keep them away from communism.
- Soviet reaction and counter moves like Sovietization of Eastern Europe, establishment of COMECON in response to the Marshall Plan

### **THE FIRST ROUND OF COLD WAR (1947-1953)**

- Germany as the centre of cold war
- Berlin issue and cold war
- Organization of NATO and Division of Germany
- Rise of communist China
- Korean crisis
- Issue of Peace Treaty with Japan

### **THE SECOND ROUND OF COLD WAR (1953-1963)**

- SEATO and Warsaw Pact
- Nuclear arms race
- Civil war in Indo-China
- Hungarian crisis
- Suez crisis
- Eisenhower Doctrine which is a plan to send US forces anywhere for checking the danger of communism
- Khrushchev's visit to USA – a hope for peace
- U-2 ( a US spy plane in USSR) incident and renewal of cold war
- Failure of Paris Summit
- The construction of Berlin wall by USSR for separating the soviet sectors from the Western sectors of Berlin city in 1961, was strongly opposed by the USA
- Cold war towards Hot war – Cuban Missile crisis of 1962

## **COLD WAR (1963-1970)**

- Change of US leadership with Johnson as its president and USSR leadership also with Brezhnev and Kosygin as its two powerful leaders.
- Indo-Pak war of 1965
- 1967 Arab-Israel war
- An attempt to reduce tension – The Glassbrough Summit, 1967
- Berlin Blockade
- The thinking towards Détente

**Détente** : A French term literally meaning loosening. In the context of Cold war, the term Détente referred to the relaxation of hostilities between the two superpowers during the 1960s. Thus, it denotes a phase in the cold war in which series of bilateral agreements between USA and USSR followed. Let us examine the reason for the emergence of Détente.

## **Emergence of Detente (1970-1979)**

- Moscow-Bonn agreement 1970
- Berlin agreement 1971
- Korea agreement, 1972
- East Germany-West Germany Agreement, 1972
- Helsinki Conference (1973) and Helsinki Agreement (1975) for the promotion of mutual cooperation in the entire European continent without any consideration for the communist and non-communist nature of political systems of the states.
- End of war in Cambodia, 1975
- End of Vietnam war, 1975
- US China rapprochement which paved the way for China's entry into UN
- Third European Security Conference, 1977
- Camp David Accord between Egypt and Israel, 1979
- American Soviet Détente.

The so called ease in tension between the USA and USSR could not last for long as soon the tension emerged and this time it was the precipitation of Afghan Crisis that flared up the tension between these two and historians announce a the second phase of cold war after a brief lull.

## **NEW COLD WAR: NATURE AND HISTORY (1980-1990)**

- US decision to counter the increasing soviet influence in Ethiopia
- Changes in US foreign policy under President Reagan
- Irresponsible Soviet view
- US attempts to cultivate relations with Eastern Europe and China with a view to check soviet influence
- US role in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Grenada
- Soviet intervention in Afghanistan
- The failure of Non-alignment Movement towards disarmament
- The destabilization of peace in West Asia as a result of Iran-Iraq war
- The increasing arms race between the two super powers
- The extensive militarization of Pakistan by the US
- Inability of the rich nations to accommodate the poor developing nations

### **IMPACT AND DECLINE OF COLD WAR**

Fortunately within 7 years of its emergence, the New Cold War began diluting. The welcome break came in the form of bold initiative taken by the Soviet leader Gorbachev in the form of Perestroika (reconstruction) and Glasnost (openness). Finally it came to an end with the disintegration of USSR in 1991. However, when the cold war came to an end, the end was dramatic, swift and unexpected. Andrew Heywood<sup>2</sup>, in his book, Global Politics ascribes four factors for this dramatic end of Cold War and they include;

- I. The structural weaknesses of Soviet-style communism;
- II. The impact of Gorbachev's reform (perestroika and Glastnost) process;
- III. Us policy and the second cold war; and
- IV. Economic and Cultural Globalization

However It is true that these events construed a conducive backdrop for the demise of Cold War but it is difficult to stick to any of them so religiously to denounce the Cold War as the world unfurled themselves afterward, make it pretty clear that who is in charge of the world affairs.

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<sup>2</sup> Heywood, Andrew, Global Politics, Palgrave macmillan, UK, 2011, P.42