

Agreements and Disagreements in 1945

The Yalta Conference, February 1945

By the start of 1945, it was clear that Germany was going to lose the war, so country leaders held a meeting to discuss what would happen upon Germany's defeat.

Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill discussed. Meeting went well and a lot decided, including what would happen to Germany (being split up into four parts)

The Potsdam Conference, July 1945

Harry Truman replaced Roosevelt. Disliked communism and was determined to make sure that Stalin didn't get his own way. Churchill replaced by Clement Attlee. USA had tested nuclear bombs (Hiroshima bombed a month after this) - scared Stalin and made him less likely to be friendly with USA.

Unfriendly atmosphere and little agreement made. Old hatreds reemerging.

The USSR Takes Over Eastern Europe, 1945

Why? USSR had suffered really badly during WW2. 27mil dead, 32,000 factories in ruins. Stalin didn't want USSR to ever be invaded again - one way: to be in control of Eastern Europe himself. Ordered Russian Army to take control of lots of countries and put communist governments in charge.

Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania and Czechoslovakia. 'Satellite States'

USA felt that it had been deceived by USSR, thought Stalin was trying to spread communism round the world. Saw this as a threat to democracy and freedom across Europe and eventually elsewhere. Stalin saw nothing wrong with this, USSR 'friendly' with his country.

Main result - mistrust and suspicion deepened.

An 'Iron Curtain'

Churchill made speech in which he said Western Europe was now separated from Eastern Europe with an 'iron curtain'. Stalin reacted angrily to this speech, claiming that Churchill was stirring up trouble. Stalin stated USSR was only trying to defend itself.

Communist Control over E. Europe 1945-49

The USSR Gain Control in Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania

Usually a pattern to what happened to these countries.

First, communists joined in a coalition government, but they took key jobs such as the running of police and army.

Next, the communists got rid of opposition - fascists or capitalists were tried or expelled. Evidence was 'found' to cast doubt on non-Communist politicians and opposition was whittled away.

Finally, an election was held when hardly any opponents were left. Candidates were all or mostly Communists. When a Communist government was elected, a 'People's Democracy' was set up.

By 1948, the USSR had set up 'friendly' Communist neighbours all along its borders with the rest of Europe. In each country, non-Communist leaders had fled, been put in prison or were dead.

Poland

In 1945 Communists at first formed a government with socialists. This was known as the Lubin government. Once Communists obtained a majority share of government, they began to force out non-Communists.

Violence and intimidation widely used against opponents. Political meetings broken up by mobs, non-Communist politicians and party members were arrested, kidnapped and murdered.

In 1947, Communists rigged the election in order to gain complete control. Other political parties banned. Media and press controlled. Red Army helped to keep them in power.

Leader of Peasant Party - Milolajczyk - so fearful for his life that he fled from Poland after his party had been disrupted, harassed and finally banned.

Bulgaria

Red Army helped set up new government. Abolished the monarchy in September 1946 and made Georgi Dimitrov the new Prime Minister. Proceeded to run Bulgaria as a 'suburb of Moscow'. Over 10,000 killed by 1952 by this government.

Czechoslovakia

Only country in Eastern Europe with a democratic government after 1945. In the 1946 elections, communists received 47.6% of the vote. With pressure from USSR, Klement Gottwald (PM) allowed communists to take control of police and armed forces.

Communist Control over E. Europe 1945-49 (cont)

In February 1948 though, the communists took control of the whole government. In the process, a leading non-Communist Jan Masyrk 'committed suicide' by falling from a Prague window.

Hungary

Red Army entered in September 1944. Free elections held in November 1945, won by non-Communist Smallholders' party.

However in 1945-46, under Soviet pressure, secret police 'found evidence' against the Smallholders' party and they lost power. The United Workers' Party took over, led by Matyas Rakosi.

Under his leadership, Hungary became a 'People's Democracy' in 1949. It was given a new constitution based on the USSR's.

Rakosi organised the dismissal of independent-minded government ministers. Non-Communist parties were taken over in a series of mergers. Communist-controlled police were used to harass opposition and imprisoning some without trial. Eventually all other political parties were banned and afterwards, Rakosi led a very strict government with a ruthless secret police.

Romania

Romania retained King Micheal as head of state but he was forced to make concessions to the communist-dominated government which was in power after March 1945. In December 1947, the King was forced to abdicate and Romania was ruled subsequently with a very strict Communist government.

Yugoslavia

Ruled by Josip Tito. Led the fight to free Yugoslavia from German control. Refused to accept control from USSR, and as he was successful and popular he could stand up to Stalin. From 1948, Yugoslavia was a Communist country outside Soviet control.

Cominform and Comecon

By 1949, virtually all of Eastern Europe had Communist government. The USSR used other methods to maintain control of these Satellite States. From 1947, these countries were linked with the USSR through Cominform (the Communist Information Bureau) meaning all Communist governments had to take direct orders from USSR.

In 1949, Comecon (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) was set up. Under this, all Communist governments had to create economic systems the same as the USSR. For instance, they prohibited trading with non-Communist countries.

The Truman Doctrine & Marshall Plan

The Truman Doctrine, March 1947

Greece was the only country in Eastern Europe which wasn't Communist by the end of 1945.

By the start of 1946, it looked like Greece was going to become communist too as the Greek government wasn't very strong. Without extra guns and money for supplies, the Communists would beat it and take over.

President Truman decided that Greece must not become Communist. So in March 1947, Truman made a speech to American politicians which would become known as the 'Truman Doctrine'

Truman promised that the USA would help any country threatened by Communism. Truman said that the USA would be containing Communism. Began containment policy. Truman's words were turned into actions immediately, to stop Communism taking over Greece, the USA gave the Greek government \$400 million to fight the Communists.

Containment could work. Americans thought containment was worth trying again elsewhere in the world.

The USA was committed to stopping Communism from spreading. USA was worried about Communism spreading to other countries in Western Europe, as they had been weakened through bombing in WW2. Truman was worried the USSR would take advantage of this weakness so he decided the USA could give things like money, equipment, food and tools.

Truman asked George C. Marshall to visit Europe in 1947 to see how much help the European countries needed. Towns, factories and farms were in urgent need of being rebuilt.

When he returned the 'Marshall Plan' was devised to help European countries by giving them money.

As a result the USA gave \$17 billion dollars to European countries between 1947 and 1952.

The USSR believed that the USA were using money as a way to dominate Europe. USSR and USA grew to despise each other even more - both believed the other superpower was attempting to dominate Europe.

The Cold War Grows

When USA dropped the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, it began an arms race. Relations between the USA and USSR worsened. The USSR felt insecure as it did not have an atomic bomb, so Stalin ordered his scientists to produce one quickly. By 1949, the USSR had succeeded.

The Cold War Grows (cont)

On 1 November 1952, the Americans went further and exploded the first hydrogen bomb. Explosion was 100x more powerful than Hiroshima.

USSR weren't too far behind and tested a hydrogen bomb on 14 August 1953. Both superpowers were now capable of destroying each other in minutes.

Dwight Eisenhower decided the USA needed to make as many nuclear weapons as they possibly could. USSR weren't happy to settle in second place so in 1957 the USSR built the first 'Intercontinental Ballistic Missile' (ICBM) These rockets were able to carry nuclear warheads and could be launched at targets thousands of km away. USA caught up in 1958.

Both countries tried to place these weapons near to their enemy - USA put weapons in Turkey whereas USSR put weapons in Cuba

Mutually assured destruction - the idea of making weapons was to deter or discourage the other side from using their weapons.

The Space Race

Both superpowers wanted to prove they were the most technologically advanced country. Space exploration expanded their rivalry and had value for propaganda.

The USSR was most successful in the early stages of the space race. In 1957 successfully launched a space satellite - 'Sputnik' Were able to send dogs into space (Laika) shortly afterwards.

In 1961, the USSR were the first country to send a man into space - this was Yuri Gagarin. In 1963, Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space.

In contrast USA was less successful. 20 February 1962 - John Glenn became first American to orbit the earth. July 1969 - Neil Armstrong became first human to set foot on the moon.

Spies

Level of distrust was so great that both the USA and USSR spied on each other to try and gather military secrets and other important information.

