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**U.S.-Soviet Relations
Since 1945**

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The United States and the Soviet Union came out of World War II as the two most powerful countries in the world. Allied in the war by the need to defeat Hitler's Germany, not by choice, they discovered by the end of the War that they had many points of conflict. The main points of conflict at the end of the war were over the future of defeated Germany and the Soviet Union's position in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union and the United States have been the two primary actors, superpowers, on the world scene since 1945. Though the two countries have not faced each other in direct military conflict, their relationship has usually been less than amicable. The relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union since the early 1950s, has been described as a Cold War. Their relationship has seen its low points; the 1948 Berlin Crisis, and 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, but the relationship has also seen some higher points such as the detente of the early 1970s. The relationship may be entering a new phase today in the 1990s. Since Mikhail S. Gorbachev took over the leadership of the Soviet Union, it has gone through many internal and external changes. And in the six years since Gorbachev came to power, the relationship of the Soviet Union and the United States has also changed, towards better relations. This improvement of relations can be seen by their cooperation in the Persian Gulf Crisis. But with the start of the Persian Gulf War, the relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was put under strain. The decision United States and its coalition partners to use force, conflicted with the Soviet position to try to find a peaceful solution. The

internal problem in the Soviet Union have also caused some disturbances in the relationship. In the future is the relationship going to keep improving as it has over the last few years?. Or is their relationship reached its peak somewhere between allies and Cold Warriors? Or will their relationship return to a state of Cold War?

The future of the U.S.-Soviet relationship will be one aspect considered in this paper. This paper will examine the relationship of the Soviet Union and the United States since the end of World War II to their present day relationship. It will focus on the crucial periods: the early post-war years and the beginning of the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, detente, and arms control. This paper will pay particular close attention the changes in their relationship since Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and their present day situation.

Immediate Post-War Years

Even though the United States and the Soviet Union were allies there was a strain in their relationship even before the war ended. At the Potsdam Conference held from July 17 to August 2, 1945, the meeting of U.S. President Harry S. Truman, Great Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet General Secretary Joseph Stalin. The signs of disintegration of the wartime alliance were evident. The conference was mainly concerned with administration of Germany and the question of German borders.(Bark 50) The question of German boundaries was one of the main sticking points. When Germany was divided, German territory east of the Oder River

and Western Neisse River went to Poland. The land was compensation, or so Stalin insisted, for the eastern part of Poland seized by the Soviet Union in 1939 under the Hitler-Stalin Pact. (Bark 23) In the Fall and Winter of 1944-45 the Soviet Army had control of this region up to the Western Neisse and lower Oder rivers. The Communist-organized Polish Lublin government swept in behind the Soviet Army and this became Polish territory. Churchill and Truman believed the Soviet government had violated the early Yalta agreement, in which the boundary of Poland and Germany would be the Oder and Eastern Neisse rivers. Stalin stated that it was impossible to upset the present state of affairs. This meant that all Germans living east of the Oder and Western Neisse rivers, about 8 and a half million people, were subject to expulsion into what remained of Germany by the Polish regime. (Bark 51)

The wartime allies disagreed over the boundaries of Germany. The United States and Britain were upset at the fact that Stalin was giving part of Germany to a Communist Polish regime, to repay it for land that the Soviet Union had taken from Poland, under the Stalin-Hitler pact. The leaders of Britain and the United States did not think it was proper to take land from Germany and give this land to Poland, for land seized from Poland by the Soviet Union. The fact that Poland now had a Communist regime was another reason for British and American leaders to be upset over the land transfer. Stalin on the other hand believed it was in his power to help get this land. Germany had started the war, and as the defeated country, they were at the mercy of the victors. It helped

that the Red Army had liberated this area. The question of the German boundaries was a major point of conflict but it was not the only one.

There were also disagreements over reparations from Germany and the Soviet Union's control over Eastern Europe. The Soviet leaders insisted that its claim at the Yalta Conference of \$10 billion of reparations from the Western zones must be settled first before any agreements could be made on economic unity of Germany. (Deighton 456) The allies could not agree on how reparations should be collected, and it was finally decided that each zone of occupation should be treated wholly separate for the purpose of reparations. (Bark 54) In addition the Soviet Union was to receive 25% of the industrial equipment removed from the Western zones. (Ulam-Rivals 75) This was one of the first steps in the division of Germany between the Soviet Union and the Western allies, the U.S., Britain and France. The Western Allies, especially the United States and Britain were upset at Soviet plundering of German industry. The Soviets uprooted much of Germany industry and moved it to the Soviet Union. The United States was not pleased at the mass removal of Germany industry. But Soviet leaders believed it was completely acceptable. Much of Soviet industry had been destroyed by the German invasion, so why shouldn't Germany pay the Soviet Union back? Discord at Potsdam also developed over the reconstitution of the Polish government, and the heavy-handedness of Soviet rule in Bulgarian and Romania. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin asserted " that the Bulgarians,

Romanians, ect., now had their own democratic governments and it would be inappropriate for the conferences to interfere with the affairs of the nations." (Ulam-Rivals 73) The Potsdam Conference demonstrated that the Soviet Union and the United States had contradictory and incompatible interests in Germany and Eastern Europe, and different methods of trying to achieve these interests. Germany and Eastern Europe would become the two main areas of disagreement between the United States and the Soviet Union in the immediate post-war years.

The wartime alliance between the United States and Soviet Union was beginning to breakdown. One of the reasons for this breakdown was that they had different ideas of what a post-War Europe should look like. The Soviet Union's biggest concern was to make sure that they would not be invaded from the West again. This was one of the main reasons the Soviet leaders exerted their control over Eastern Europe and the reason the Soviet leaders wanted a weak Germany. The United States leaders biggest concern after the war was to get Europe back on sound economic footing. The United States needed European markets for their products and believed an economically weak Europe would hurt the economy of the United States. These post-War objectives of the Soviet Union and the United States were both misread by the other side.

The United States, its people and its leaders have an extremely strong attachment to democratic governments. They did not like the Soviet Union taking over Eastern Europe and inserting Communist control. The leaders of the United States did not see

Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe as the Soviet Union trying to gain security, but as the spread of international Communism. In Western Europe the Soviet Union did not see American aid as the United States trying to help out their allies but as the spread of American capitalism. The deterioration of the U.S.-Soviet relationship was present in Germany.

The Soviet Union and the United States were not able to come to an agreement on a unified Germany after the Second World War, and this led to the establishment of two separate Germanies. The original division of Germany was worked out in 1944 by the European Advisory Commission, consisting of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain. Germany was divided into three zones; a Soviet, American and British. A French zone was added later. These zones were not meant to be permanent. But the Soviet Union and the Western allies could not agree on what should be done with Germany. With respect to a leader, Stalin would not accept any German government favored by the Western allies and the Western allies rejected the form acceptable to Stalin. The Soviet leaders and the Western leaders had different views of what a future Germany would be like. The Soviet leaders wanted a Germany that was Communist or at least friendly to the Soviet Union. And the Western leaders wanted a Germany that would be part of Western Europe and economically strong. These different ideas of what Germany should be, helped lead to a quick drifting apart in the relationship of the Western allies and the Soviet Union. Winston Churchill's famous "iron curtain" speech in Fulton Missouri on

March 5, 1946, demonstrates this fact. Churchill stated;

An iron curtain is drawn up upon their (Soviet Union's) front. We do not know what is going on behind. There seems little doubt that the whole of the regions east of the line Lubeck-Trieste-Corfu will soon be in their hands"(Pounds 4)

The relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union quickly deteriorated between the period of 1945-1947. The United States failure to come to terms with the Soviet Union on Germany and what it perceived as Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe led the U.S. to believe that the Soviet Union was a hostile expansionist country. This belief led to the implementation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Starting with Poland before the end of the war, the Soviet Union began to gain control or, Sovietize, all of Eastern Europe. The control of Eastern Europe was extremely important to the Soviet Union. The leaders of the Soviet Union felt, their country desired neighbors on their western front that were friendly to the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders could remember quite vividly attacks from the West in 1914 and 1941 and they wanted to make sure this would not happen again. Stalin wanted to eliminate all Western influence from Eastern Europe and concomitantly establish Communist control.(Rubinstein 210) In 1945, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Vyshinsky, in brutal form, compelled the King of Romania to appoint a Communist-dominated government. Also in 1945 in Yugoslavia the compromise between the royalist regime and Tito's Communists became dominated by Tito.(Ulam-Expansion and Coexistence 379) In Poland Communist manipulations of the general elections in January 1947, helped to

convince the United States, that the Soviet leaders had no intentions of permitting free elections as promised at Yalta and Potsdam. (Rubinstein 213) The United States and the Western allies were unable or unwilling to risk another war, to oppose Soviet methods of resettlement, plunder, expulsion and annexation by which Stalin and the Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Eastern German Communists were installing their rule in Eastern Europe. (Bark 54) At the Foreign Minister's Conference in 1947 the question of free elections in Bulgaria, Poland and Romania, plagued the discussion between the Soviet Union and the Western allies. In February 1948, with a coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union gained dominance there; their control over Eastern Europe was now complete. (Rubinstein 240) Soviet inspired action in Czechoslovakia dispelled virtually all remaining illusions in the United States and Western Europe concerning Soviet intentions. (Rubinstein 240)

At the end of World War II there was still hope, at least in the United States that the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and the United States could continue. In the Summer of 1945, President Truman and most Americans wanted to trust Stalin and believed that if he was not provoked the wartime alliance could stay intact. (Bark 50) In May 1945, Truman sent Harry Hopkins to Moscow to seek a detente with Stalin. Hopkins acquiescence on the question of Poland, led to the Soviet Union to their own concession; they dropped their objection to the American plan for the voting procedure in the Security Council of the United Nations. (Ulam-Expansion and Coexistence 384-6) The United States

leaders were willing to give it try to keep their relationship with the Soviet Union together, but there were too many disagreements between the two countries. The United Nations was one of these disagreements.

The formation of the United Nations was a preoccupation of the United States. The U.S. had a feeling of guilt over their abstention from the League of Nations and believed this help lead to the war.(Ulam-Rivals 16) The United States thought that the Soviet Union's cooperation in setting up the United Nations as the key to success of the organization. They believed that no international organization could preserve peace without the Soviet Union. The United States leaders also hoped that the U.N. would somehow "domesticate" the Soviet Union and assimilate the goals of the Soviet Union, if not its aspirations to those of Western democracies.(Ulam-Rivals 17)

But just as the Soviet Union and the United States had different objectives on Germany and Eastern Europe, they also had different ideas on the U.N. While the United States hoped that the United Nations would be a grand organization that would preserve peace and democracy throughout the world, the Soviet leaders did not put much faith in the organization. The Soviets from the beginning thought it was at best a facade for covering up the domination of the world by the great powers, mainly the Soviet Union and the United States.(Ulam-Expansion and Coexistence 412) Stalin himself had very little faith in the United Nations. He stated

Can one trust that the role of the United Nations will be sufficiently effective?... (It) will be effective if the Great Powers that carried on their shoulder the main burden against Hitlerite Germany will act afterward in a spirit of unity and collaboration. It will not be effective if this necessary condition is absent. (Ulam-Expansion and Coexistence 412)

Although Stalin put little faith in the U.N.; he used the American preoccupation with it to bargain indirectly for American concessions, especially on Poland. (Ulam-Rivals 38) The United Nations was just one of the points of conflict between the two countries after the war. The disagreements between the United States and the Soviet Union and the disintegration of their relationship finally caused the United States to take some type of action. The leaders of the United States believed that the Soviet Union was going too far. The Soviet Union had already gained control in Eastern Europe and they would not cooperate on Germany and the United Nations. The first such actions took the form of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, implemented in 1947, were adopted with the underlying beliefs that the Soviet Union was continuing to display expansionist ambitions which the United Nations could not stop, that direct negotiations with the Soviet Union was hopeless, and that the advance of Communism must be stopped by an active policy of the United States. (Ulam-Rivals 121) The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan along with the overall policy of containment of the Soviet Union were influenced by George Kennan, director of Policy Planning Staff in the State

Department. Kennan in his influential article under the pseudonym, X, in Foreign Affairs, tried to show that the Soviet government was inherently expansionist and that there might well be war or Communist domination in Europe unless the U.S. took clear action to contain the Soviet Union. (Bark 150) Kennan believed the way to contain the Soviet Union was to build countervailing centers of power along the periphery of the Soviet Union, so that it could not expand. These assumptions helped to shape the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

The Truman Doctrine stated, "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." (Ulam-Rivals 125) The Truman Doctrine was meant specifically for Greece, which was fighting internal subversion, assisted by its Communist neighbors and Turkey, to help them fight off Soviet pressure. The Truman Doctrine was formulated in anti-Communist rhetoric and to be applied world wide, it was hoped that in this format it would be able to gain public support. It may have been better for the United States in the long if the U.S. leaders had stated the Truman Doctrine was meant to keep Greece and Turkey from falling under Communist control, instead of international Communism, so the United States would not rush in every time Communism threatened a country anywhere in the world.

The Marshall Plan was designed to restore economic well-being to Europe, remedy the immediate shortages of essential commodities and help to expand industrial and agricultural production. (Ulam-

Rivals 129) It was hoped that an economically strong Europe would be able to stand up to Communist domination; without it, it was feared that Italy or even France could possibly fall to Communism. The United States believed it was desirable to offer aid from the Marshall Plan to the Soviet Union as a show of good will, though U.S. leaders did not expect the Soviet Union would accept it. The Soviet leaders were intrigued by the plan but could not afford to disclose the information about its economy, standard of living or production norms. (Ulam- Rivals 129) To the Soviet Union, the Marshall Plan, seemed to entail an all-encompassing program of integration of various national economies. The Soviet leaders also perceived the plan as a way to promote economic and hence political expansion of American influence. (Rubinstein 214) The Truman doctrine and the Soviet refusal to accept aid from the Marshall Plan accelerated U.S.-Soviet estrangement, which came to a head in Berlin in 1948.

Berlin Crisis 1948

Since the end of the War the Western zones of Germany, the American, British and French, were becoming closer together and estranged from the Soviet zone. The Soviet Union was installing Communist control in its zone, Stalin got rid of all non-Communist civil servants, landowners, industrialists and labor leaders, that might be a threat to Communist power. (Bark 124) The Western allies thought it was best to unite their zones into one economic unit. The Soviet Union had time and again violated the four-powers principles and decision on German unity, as well as ignoring

political and economic preferences of the Germans by installing a Communist dominated government in their zone.

The first step in uniting the Western zones was to replace the old Reichsmark with the new Deutsche Mark. The Western allies could do this easily in their own zones, but when it came to introducing the new Deutsche Mark in Berlin this was more difficult. The divided city of Berlin was in the middle of the Soviet zone. When the Deutsche Mark was introduced into the western sections of Berlin in June 1948, the Soviet military forces closed off all land communications from the western sectors of Berlin. The Soviet leaders stated reason for the blockade was that the Reichsmark would have no value in the Western zones, but still be in circulation in the Soviet zone. This could cause a flood of Reichsmark into the Soviet zone. The American reaction was to run an airlift to Berlin. Planes from the United States and Britain were able to transport the basic materials that the people of Berlin needed to survive. Stalin finally called of the blockade in May 1949 after six months of negotiations. (Rubinstein 242)

The Soviets reasons to run a blockade are not completely clear. Stalin may have wanted to force the Western powers out of Berlin and bring the entire city under Soviet control. If this happened, it would enhance the prospects of Soviet control over Germany and undermine the efforts of the Western allies from forming a united West Germany. And an allied surrender in Berlin would have strengthened the prestige of the Soviet Union while weakening that of the Western allies. Another view is that the

Soviet Union was trying to force an agreement on the German question as a whole and trying to prevent the possibility of rearmed West German State. (Ulam-Rivals 148) There were certain factors mitigating the danger of the blockade: first that the blockade could be lifted instantaneously, and second that the Soviets were careful not to break off negotiations and never made it appear that the situation was beyond a diplomatic solution. (Ulam-Rivals 150)

Whatever the Soviet reasons the Americans saw the blockade as Soviet aggression in Germany. It became clear to U.S. leaders that the Soviets could not be worked with in negotiating a final outcome on Germany, and heightened their resolve to form a United West Germany. West Germany came into being in the latter months of 1949. The effect of the blockade was that the U.S.-Soviet relationship had completely collapsed. The blockade helped lead to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, which was created in April 1949. The United States did not only see the Soviet Union as a threat to Germany but of all of Western Europe.

The Berlin blockade is similar to other crisis between the Soviet Union and the United States. The two countries did not understand the objectives behind the others actions and they did not communicate to spell out their respective actions. The Soviet Union did not give the United States its objectives for the blockade and the United States saw it as Soviet aggression. The blockade is similar to other crisis because it stopped short of

direct hostilities between the two sides. The United States decided on an airlift instead of invading Berlin. The blockade showed how far the wartime alliance had deteriorated in just a few years, but the relationship would deteriorate even further.

1949-50

The years 1949-50, at least to the American perspective, was a period of crisis in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. In August 1949, the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic weapon. The United States leaders did not expect the Soviets to get the bomb so quickly, they had hoped for a breathing period of maybe ten to fifteen years. Instead the period was only four years. The American monopoly on the most powerful weapon in the world had now ended and now the Soviet Union had the bomb. Many Americans were frightened at the aspect of the Soviet Union possessing this weapon. Also in 1949 the collapse of the Nationalist government in China led to the ascendancy of Mao Zedong and the Communist Party. The United States blamed this on Soviet international Communist advancement. But the United States did not have a clear policy on China. From mid 1947 until 1950, since the situation in China had become complicated the U.S. reaction had been contradictory and confusing. The U.S. policy was to hope for the best, but it was not clear what the best was. (Ulam-Rivals 158) The Soviet-Sino alliance was signed on February 14, 1950. Moscow may have been quite surprised by American equanimity on the loss of China, and thought that they could be pushed farther in Asia, possible Korea.

Korea was divided into two parts, the northern part was dominated by the USSR and the southern half was friendly to the West. Both Korean governments wanted a unified country, but only on their own terms. In June 1950, North Korea attacked South Korea. The United States believed that the Soviet Union was behind the invasion, a testing American resolve in the region. The invasion led not just to American action, but to United Nations' action. The United Nations was able to intervene because at the time of the attack the Soviet Union was boycotting the Security Council and missed the vote on action in Korea. This leads to some question on the nature of the invasion decision; either Stalin did not order the invasion or he did not think the United States and the United Nations would react in such a way. The United States had done little when the Communists took over in China. And in January 1950, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson offered his infamous definition of American defense engagements in Asia, as running along a perimeter extending from Aleutians to Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines, excluding South Korea. This could have convinced Stalin, that the United States would not protect South Korea. The years 1949-50, were hard for the Americans to handle with respect to the Soviet Union. First the Soviet Union got the Atomic bomb, then China "fell" to Communism and then the Korean War, which many Americans felt was Soviet inspired. These events help to touch off a Red Scare in the United States.

The Red Scare

Americans were seeing Communism as the cause of everything

that was not going their way. Most Americans blamed international Communism for the "loss" China and for the invasion of Korea. The Red Scare was also having its effect on U.S. administrators, nobody wanted to be seen as being weak on Communism. It was during this period of the early 1950s that Joseph McCarthy was able to rise to national prominence on his outlandish claim of Communism infiltration of the United States Government. During this period the idea of containment was fully accepted by the U.S. Government and by the American public. Another concept that was becoming accepted was the Domino Theory, that if one country in a region "fell" to Communism, then the other countries in the region would fall to Communism like dominos. This theory encouraged U.S. action in Korea and later in Vietnam. The Red Scare of the late 1940s and early 1950s created the image that Communism was lurking everywhere and it had to be stopped whenever possible. Although the mania of the Red Scare ended, the fear of the Communist threat did not.

But from a Soviet perspective the events of the late 1940s and early 1950s were not confrontational towards the United States. The Soviet had to develop atomic weapons, the United States had no right to have a monopoly on such an awesome weapon. And Stalin was not all that happy to see all of China become Communist. He did not even meet Mao when he arrived on his pilgrimage to Moscow in 1950. China was a mixed blessing to the Soviet leadership. It was great in terms of prestige to the Soviet Union and Communist ideology. But it was also a country so large that it would be hard for the Soviet Union to control. And with respect to the South

Korean invasion it is unclear of Moscow's intervention and intentions.

The 1950s

The 1950s saw the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, and the rise of Nikita Khrushchev in the Soviet Union. While the United States was under the reigns of Dwight Eisenhower, and his middle of the road policies as president from 1952-1960. With the death of Stalin, there was no clear leader to take his place. Khrushchev did not become the dominant figure until 1955 or 1956. Khrushchev is an intriguing figure, as one author describes him it is almost as if there were two Khrushchevs

one, a 'coexistentialist' eager for enhanced intercourse between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. ... and the other a militant Communist and bully ready to cash in on each and every weakness and hesitation of the West, threatening nuclear obliteration if his opponent would not submit. (Ulam -Rivals 249)

Khrushchev regime was a change from the Stalinist past. In foreign policy he was much more daring and he was willing to make agreements. In March of 1955 the Soviet Union unexpectedly dropped its demand that Austrian peace be linked to the German question and negotiated to end the occupation of Austria. The result was the Austrian Peace Treaty signed on May 15, 1955, which committed Austria to a policy of nonalignment. (Rubinstein 281) At the Geneva Conference in July 1955, Khrushchev offered to institutionalize the status quo in Europe and to enter into peaceful coexistence with the United States. (Rubinstein 282) Khrushchev and the Soviet Union hoped to delay West German rearmament, which was allowed under the Paris Agreement in 1954. The agreement had also allowed for West

German entry into NATO. The Soviet Union was deeply concerned with the rearmament of Germany, which they saw aimed at the Soviet Union and its allies. These effort can also be seen as an attempt by the Soviet Union to stop the rearmament of West Germany.

During this period the United States was under the leadership of Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower and his advisors anticipated a long-term competitive relationship with the Soviets, one reason for this was Moscow's progress in nuclear weapon and the means to deliver them. Attempts to defeat the Soviet Union through the policy of containment ran the risk of bankrupting the United States. (Bailer 326) Under the Eisenhower administration, the U.S. took most actions not directly against the Soviet Union but in the Third World. In the case of Guatemala, Eisenhower sent in the CIA to help get rid of Guatemalan President Arbenz. Arbenz land reform programs and his lifting the ban on the Communist party went too far for most American Officials. The CIA did not have much direct intervention of the coup against the Arbenz government, buy the new government was heavily backed by the United States. In Lebanon, Eisenhower using an anti-communist rhetoric, dispatched 10,000 marines to help bring abut an agreement that was favorable to the United States. And in January 1957 the Eisenhower Doctrine was announced, and administration-sponsored congressional resolution authorizing the United States to render military and economic aid to those countries in the Middle East, which required and requested it. (Ulam-Rivals 278) The Doctrine stated that it was in the interest of the United States , "to protect the territorial

integrity and political independence of such nations requesting such aid, against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international Communism."(Ulam-Rivals 278) The Eisenhower doctrine was an attempt to formulate American policies in the Middle East, disguised in the only term which at the time could gain support, anti-Communist rhetoric. The threat of international Communism in the area was minimal at best and where it did exist it resulted from previous American policies in the region. American foreign policy under Eisenhower although not aimed directly against the Soviet Union was often aimed against international Communism. The Eisenhower administration saw the Soviet Union as its main competitor for influence in the Third World. The United States tried to gain influence in the Third World and tried to contain the influence of Communism. The Kennedy Administration followed up on this policy but one place they were unsuccessful was in Cuba.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 has its roots in 1959. On January 1, 1959, the U.S.-backed Cuban leader Batista was ousted and replaced by the popular, later Communist, Fidel Castro. Castro hoped for Soviet protection against a very possible American move against him.(Ulam-Rivals 314) This move came in April 1961, when American President John Kennedy ordered the Bay of Pigs invasion. The invasion of Cuba by 1,500 CIA trained Cuban refugees was a complete disaster. The Bay of Pigs incident greatly reduced American prestige in Cuba, while turning Castro into a national hero. President Kennedy wanted to show he was as tough as the

Russians, and he did not like a government 90 miles off the coast of Florida with strong ties to the Soviet Union. But the Soviet leaders got a different picture by the failed invasion. It confirmed Soviet feelings that the Kennedy administration was inexperienced, lacked assurance and probable under the thumb of the CIA and Pentagon. (Windows 107) The Soviet leaders also saw this as a chance to push the Kennedy Administration around and gain their own advantages.

And this is exactly what the Soviet Union tried to do. The Soviet Union moved medium range nuclear weapons launchers to Cuba. The missiles were discovered by the United States, by U2 overflights of the island. President Kennedy ordered a blockade of Cuba, which the Soviet leaders took as a dramatic step. The situation got even hotter when a U2 flight over Cuba was shot down by the Soviets, and another U2 strayed into Soviet territory. The two sides were very close to war, as Kennedy said there "was a one-in-three chance of war." (Allison 9) Why did the Soviet Union risk World War III by moving their missiles into Cuba. As of present day, we do not know the Soviet true intentions, but there have been a few theories put forth.

The Soviet Union's official explanation was that it was their desire to help the Cuban leaders defend the island against intervention originating in the U.S. The well known adventure at Bay of Pigs showed that the U.S. administration was ready to render all assistance... to bring Cuba's neighboring Central American states into the conflict, in order to overthrow the Cuban leadership. (Windows 105)

But few believe that the Soviet leaders risked a nuclear war to save Castro. The conventional wisdom holds that Khrushchev did not

like the U.S. having their nuclear weapons all over the world, such as on the Soviet Union's border in Turkey, while the Soviet Union did not have a right to put its missiles where they wanted. And though the United States had a huge nuclear warhead edge, 5,000 to 300, stationing the missiles in Cuba would be a first step towards nuclear parity. It does not seem that Khrushchev had a well thought out plan for stationing the missiles in Cuba, and how President Kennedy might respond and how he would respond to U.S. actions. The missiles were poorly camouflaged, if at all, and were easily spotted by U.S. overflights. There was some need to protect Castro and Cuba. A Communist outpost 90 miles off the coast of the United States was not only strategically important but politically important for Communism. With the missiles in Cuba, with some Soviet troops stationed there, an attack on Cuba would be extremely unlikely. (Allison 107) But the main reason, many believe, for the Soviet missiles, were to improve the military-strategic position of the Soviet Union in confrontation with the United States; it would restrain American aggressiveness and reduce the capacity of the United States to conduct negotiation, vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, from the position of strength. (Allison 108)

But not all experts agree with these reasons for the Soviet missiles in Cuba. As Adam Ulam states "one does not risk an immediate nuclear war to ensure that your opponent will be only twice as strong rather than four times. (Rivals 332) Ulam states that Khrushchev had a master plan, behind him placing the missiles in Cuba. Khrushchev wanted the United States to sign a German

peace treaty renouncing for West Germany, the right to own or manufacture nuclear weapons and the stop China from obtaining nuclear weapons. (Rivals 325) In this view the Soviet Union was more concerned with the nuclear capabilities of West Germany and China than with the U.S. and Cuba. The Soviet Union wanted to push the United States into a German peace treaty and an agreement to stop West Germany and China from obtaining nuclear weapons. Whatever the reasons for the missiles in Cuba, the realization of nuclear war frightened both sides, and some positive agreements between the two superpowers came out of the crisis.

The Cuban Missile Crisis is reminiscent of other U.S.-Soviet crises. Again each side did not understand the objectives behind the other side. The Soviet Union did not realize how the United States would react to Soviet missiles 90 miles off their coast. The Soviet Union figured the U.S. deserved a bit of their own medicine, since the United States had missiles on the Soviet border. But the United States saw their nuclear weapons as protecting against Soviet expansion, not as means to delivery an unprovoked attack on the Soviet Union. The American saw Soviet missiles as a means to attack the United States. And the U.S. leaders did not understand that the Soviet Union thought it had a right to put its nuclear weapons where they pleased. And like other crises the two superpowers were able to avoid war, but this time it was dangerously close.

Kennedy and Khrushchev moved quickly to reduce tensions, and beginning with the Test Ban Treaty of 1963, helped to create the

building blocs of a less volatile and more constructive relationship. (George 1) The Test Ban treaty outlawed the above ground testing of nuclear weapons. The famous "hot line" between the Kremlin and the White House was also installed. Before this there was no direct communication's link-up between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union. This had help to complicate communications during the Cuban Crisis. The period of good relations between the United States and the Soviet Union immediate after the missile crisis would reach its peak with the period of detente in the late 1960s and early '70s, under Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and American President Richard Nixon.

Detente

Detente means a relaxation of tension. The U.S. and the Soviet Union had been close to war over the Cuban Crisis, and a relaxation of tensions looked good to both sides. Detente emerged as a result of policies made by the Soviet and American leaders, and it was shaped in a way in which efforts would be taken in an effort to define a new relationship, that would replace the hostility of the Cold War, moderate conflict inherent in their competition and strengthen cooperation in areas where their interests converged. (George 19) Detente did not mean an end to competition. It reflected a mutual recognition that the competition could not be safely regulated by threats of confrontations or by mutual avoidance. Both governments showed during the early period of detente, that they were unwilling to withdraw from their global power positions. The United State's

Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger eagerly pursued an exclusionary diplomacy in the Middle East, and tried to link U.S.-Soviet normalization with the opening of the Peoples Republic of China. (George 325) Soviet leader Brezhnev stated that detente would not lead the Soviets to endorse the international status quo or to abandon national liberation movements or anti-western governments. This can be seen by Soviet support for Egypt and Syria. (George 325) Although detente did not cease the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, the early years lead to some promising agreements.

The Basic Principles Agreement, BPA, was signed by Nixon and Brezhnev at their first Summit meeting in 1972. The agreement was described by the leaders as a sort of charter for detente. The two sides agreed to adopt the practice of periodic high-level meetings, continue efforts to limit armaments and to begin to develop economic, scientific and cultural ties between the U.S. and the USSR on a long term basis to strengthen their relationship. (George 23) The BPA stated common assumptions and responsibilities between the United States and Soviet Union. The first assumption was that they proceeded from the common determination that in a nuclear age there is no alternative but to conduct their mutual relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence. The differences in ideology and social systems between the two powers will not prevent normal relations based on the principles of equality, sovereignty, and noninterference in internal affairs. (George 107) The second point is that the United States and the Soviet Union place the utmost

importance to preventing the developing of situations capable of causing dangerous acceleration of tensions. Both countries would do their best to avoid military confrontation and to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war. And both sides agreed that efforts to gain unilateral advantage at the cost of the other, are inconsistent with these objectives. (George 107) And lastly the United States and the Soviet Union, have a special responsibility, as do the other three members, Great Britain, France and China, of the United Nations Security Council, to do everything in their power to make sure that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tensions. The BPA sounds nice and quite promising, but it was also very vague, which would cause problems for the detente between the two superpowers.

The early years of detente also witnessed a series of bilateral agreements on: controlling the arms race, controlling nuclear weapons proliferation, the diffusion of the Berlin issue, recognizing the division of Europe, and expanding East-West trade and collaborating on scientific, cultural, environmental, health and related fields. (George 330) At their second summit in June 1973, Nixon and Brezhnev signed the Agreement on Prevention of Nuclear War, APNW, in which they reiterated their commitment to cooperate in crisis prevention. The agreement included a much stronger and more explicit obligation that the two powers engage in urgent consultations if the situation developed anywhere in the world that raised the possibility of nuclear warfare. It was designed not only to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war between

the superpowers but any nuclear combat that might occur between any countries. (George 111) The Helsinki Final Act was signed at the end of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE, including the leaders of the thirty-three European states plus, the United States and Canada. The Document contained a variety of provisions pledging the signatories not only to cooperation in European security but to a whole range of economic, Scientific and humanitarian measures. (Ulam-Dangerous Relations 141)

For all the promises and hopes of detente, the relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union deteriorated between the two countries after this early success. The main reason for this disintegration of detente was that each side had a different view of detente, different objectives they wished to obtain through detente.

For the Soviet Union the roots of detente were to be found in objective developments, the most important of which are military in nature: the status of equality to the U.S. in strategic nuclear weapons, and the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty SALT I. The leaders of the Soviet Union believed that detente was the best arrangement, in an environment dominated by the ever-present risk of nuclear war between the two superpowers. (George 120) The Soviet leaders believed that the United States had no alternative but to alter its traditional anti-Soviet posture, once Moscow acquired the ability to destroy the United States in the event of direct hostilities. The Soviets also regarded, detente as a necessary precondition for the resolution of many outstanding Soviet security

problems. The leaders of the Soviet Union believed that their enhanced military capabilities left the U.S. with little choice but to acknowledge the emerging global character of Moscow's political interests. (George 121) To the Soviet Union detente symbolized the end of the U.S. ability to dominate, without reference to the Soviet preferences; political, military, and economic developments in Western-orientated environments as the NATO countries and the Middle East. (George 126)

Increased trade with the United States was another reason the Soviet Union entered into detente. Until 1971, American exports to the Soviet Union seldom totaled more than \$100 million a year. But in 1971 they totaled \$162, \$550 million in 1972 and in 1973 the U.S. exports totalled \$1.3 billion. (Goldman 4) The economic benefits from new and friendlier atmosphere of Soviet-American relations helped the Soviet Union overcome an agricultural crisis due to a disastrous harvest in 1972. The Soviet Union was able to purchase large quantities of grain at relatively low cost and that was actually subsidized by the U.S. treasury. The United States had always been reluctant to trade with the Soviet Union, because they were afraid the Soviets would gain more from the trade than the U.S. received from the trade. The Soviet Union hoped detente would lead to trade not only in agriculture but in scientific and technical fields. Although the Soviet leaders were pleased by the grain purchase, they would become disappointed when trade was tried to be expanded to other areas.

The Soviet goals for detente included: gaining official

confirmation as the United States nuclear equal, to press their claims for political equality and attempt to reduce the risks associated with the Soviet-U.S. competition in the Third World, increased trade with the United States and an agreement on the status quo of Europe. But the goals and ideas about detente of the United States, differed from those possessed by the Soviet Union.

For the United States, the policy was one among several choices. It was a decision designed mainly by Nixon and Kissinger to pursue a less hostile and more cooperative relationship with Moscow. The U.S. strategy sought to envelop the Soviets in a web of economic ties that would deepen the Soviet Union's stake in the continued detente with the United States. Kissinger believed it was vital to forge linkages between the economic side of detente and Third World competition. Nixon and Kissinger also were intrigued by the possibility of establishing a tripolar balance of power between the U.S., the Soviet Union, and the Peoples Republic of China. By developing friendly relations with both of these traditional archivals, the U.S. might be able to reduce the potential threats to its interest from either side and introduce each a greater cooperation with U.S. policy. (George 21) The different goals and views between the United States and the USSR led to a breakdown of detente.

Detente as originally defined as a mixed collaborative-competitive relationship. The breakdown occurred because each side tried to define the terms of competition, and the term of collaboration, in ways to maximize their unilateral advantage, not

towards expanding the mutual interest of their relationship. (George 320) The two main areas of misunderstanding were their respective interests in the Middle East and the role the two sides would play in the search for a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There was also misunderstanding in the limits the United States would observe in developing closer ties with the PRC. (George 324) The United States, having been lead to believe the detente would mean a reduction of Soviet Third World activity, saw Soviet action in this area as confrontational. The Soviet leaders stressed that "international class struggle" would continue regardless of bilateral agreements between the United States and Soviet Union. And the Soviet Union would lend whatever help it deemed appropriate, and prudent, to those countries involved in the struggle. (George 127) The Soviet Union and the U.S. also had different views on the BPA and the "rules of detente".

The Basic Principles Agreement gave the erroneous impression that the United States and the Soviet Union were in basic agreement on the rules of the game and the restraints to be observed in their competition in third areas. It would have been better from the U.S. standpoint, for the two superpowers to openly state that they disagreed over peaceful coexistence and that in the respect for rules regulating their competition in third areas remained an unresolved issue. (George 110) On the Soviet side, its leaders were interested in using the BPA and the APNW to help evoke or control crisis carrying the danger of nuclear war with the United States and a official statement that the Soviet Union had gained nuclear

parity with the United States. Nixon and Kissinger in addition to avoiding nuclear war hoped these agreements would help to moderate Soviet efforts to make gains in third areas at the expense of the U.S., whether or not such behavior would lead to dangerous crises of the kind feared by the Soviets. (George 114-5) Soviet leaders saw BPA as a renunciation of U.S. policy, that until the late 1960s was based upon the existence of superior and more numerous nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union because of their reaching nuclear parity with the United States, which they believed was agreed upon in the BPA, was now a superpower in political as well as military terms. To the American leaders, parity in nuclear terms carried with it few special privileges in the world of international politics. In those areas where the Soviet Union had long been dominant, its interest would be respected. But this had been the case, for virtually the entire post-war period. These differences between the U.S. and the Soviet Union were the roots of the breakdown of detente.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Helsinki Final Act also help lead to the breakdown of detente. The Soviet Union hoped to gain confirmation on the status quo of Europe from the Helsinki agreement. The Soviet Union had been long frustrated by its inability to get formal recognition of the post-World War II settlement and frontiers established "provisionally" at the Potsdam Conference. The United States and its Western allies were not going to upset Soviet hegemony by armed force, or risk war to assist those in the Soviet sphere. (Bell 100) This had

already been demonstrated by the Western acquiescence of Soviet action in Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1969. But the Soviet leaders wanted it in writing. They believed this would grant the Soviet Union added legitimacy in Eastern Europe and possible increase their international prestige. The Helsinki Final Act confirmed the post-War status quo of Europe as the Soviet leaders wanted, but the agreement had many side effects that they did not expect nor want.

The Helsinki accords had no legal force on the Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. The part on the inviolability of frontiers did not rule out the prospect of peaceful change, since the Germans could not have signed the agreement if it had. (Bell 108) The agreement also seemed to have awakened the half-forgotten feelings of guilt. The Helsinki Final Act also contained a section on human rights, Basket Three. Basket Three required the signatories not to place undue obstacles in the paths of citizens seeking to be reunited with families abroad or to marry foreigners, ease regulations concerning movement of citizens from other participating states in their territory, and a clause on religious freedom. (Ulam-Dangerous Relations 142) Basket Three became a major source of embarrassment to the Soviet Government. This was something which the soviet leaders did not expect. They had already been a signatory of other international agreements and declarations and occasional violations by the Soviet Union was accepted. But the Helsinki process continued through regularly scheduled international conferences, and there was a lot of Western

pressure on the Soviet Union to practice better human right, especially towards Soviet Jews and dissidents. The embarrassment of the Helsinki helped the Soviet Union lose interest in detente.

From about 1974-75 detente was in a period of decline. The United States policy in the Middle East, under Kissinger, helped to quicken the fall of detente. Kissinger's exclusionary policy in the Middle East; the Israeli-Egyptian disengagement agreement in January 1974 and a similar agreement between Israel and Syria in May 1974 upset the Soviet leaders. The agreement between Israel and Syria angered the Soviet leaders especially. The Soviets had worked hard to consolidate influence in Syria and they saw this agreement, as a U.S. threat to their relationship. (George 327) The American policy of linkage between economics and Soviet Policy also helped the breakdown of detente. The Jackson-Vanik and Stevenson amendments to the U.S.-Soviet trade agreement were on the causes. The Jackson-Vanik amendment formally linked most-favored-nation status for the Soviet Union with Soviet Jewish emigration policy. The Stevenson amendment restricted credit allocation the Soviet Union to \$300 million over four years, a small amount compared to what the Soviet leaders expected. The Soviet leaders rejected the linkage policy. They wanted to instead maximize reciprocal exchange within the policy realms. They wanted to insulate their agreements with the United States from other dealings. From 1975 onward, the Soviets escalated their competitive activity in the Third World. They gave material and military assistance to North Vietnam in their final offensive. The

Soviets also gave help to Angolan, 1975-6, Ethiopia, 1978, and South Yemen in 1978. The Soviet Union realized that the U.S. did not accept their basic premises of detente: greater importance of the U.S. relationship than that of the U.S., USSR, PRC triangle, insulation of the commitments of SALT I and trade agreements from Third World competition and acceptance of their claim as equal status to the U.S. as a global power. (George 320) Meanwhile the United States saw the Soviet action in the Third World as hostility and breaking the rules of detente. The complete breakdown of detente occurred with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent American grain embargo. Although detente was not lasting period of better relations, it did produce some meaningful agreements, especially in arms control.

Arms Control

Arms control is an issue that played an important role in detente and throughout the 1980s and into the 90s. From the end of the Second World War until the late 1960s, the United States and the Western allies had a distinct advantage in nuclear forces. In the late 1960s, early 1970s the Soviet Union reached nuclear parity with the United States. Now it was assumed that each side had the capability to deliver an annihilating retaliatory strike on the other, even after subjection to a first strike. (Hudson 176) During the seventies, the two important treaties were reached between the U.S. and the Soviet Union; SALT I and II. Although SALT II was never ratified by the United States Senate, the leaders agreed to adhere by the agreement. The SALT I treaty in 1972 was the first

time a limitation cap was put on a nuclear system. The agreement put ceilings on the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear submarines. The number of anti-ballistic missile, ABM, systems a nation could have was also limited to two. ABMs were considered very dangerous because they were designed to protect an area against nuclear attack. If the Soviet Union or the United States felt they were significantly protected by their ABM systems their leadership might be more likely to launch a preemptive strike. The number of ABM systems was later reduced to one. The SALT I agreement was to be verified by national technical means, which was by satellites. SALT II which in many respects was a looser agreement than SALT I, it put a limit on the number of delivery systems, and each side agreed to limit the number of MIRVs, multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles. Although SALT I and SALT II did limit certain quantitative dimensions of the arms race, both sides continued to make rapid advances in nuclear war-fighting, or hard target kill capabilities.(Hudson 51) There were no other major arms control treaties until the Gorbachev era, where it seems that the United States and the Soviet Union have substantially limited the arms control race and the possible threat of nuclear war.

But even before the Gorbachev era the USSR was changing its stance on nuclear weapons. In 1977 at Tula, Brezhnev affirmed that the Soviet Union was not striving for superiority in armaments with the aim of delivering a first strike.(Hudson 177) The Soviets also accepted the idea that a first-strike capability was both

unattainable and irrelevant, which lead to their acceptance of "mutual assured destruction" or MAD. The idea of MAD lead to a consensus in the Soviet Union that nuclear war is so unpromising and dangerous that it is only a policy in theory, an instrument of policy which cannot be used. (Hudson 177) In 1981 Brezhnev denied that their could be a victory in a nuclear war, and in 1982 announced a no-first-use policy, a pledge not to fire nuclear weapons before they had first been launched by the other side. Even before Gorbachev, the Soviet Union was coming around toward a more Western outlook of nuclear weapons. And under Gorbachev, the view would be furthered that the Soviet nuclear forces would be used in defense only, which led to some positive arms control agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Gorbachev Era

When Mikhail S. Gorbachev came to power in 1985, no one knew the changes the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the rest of the world would be in for. During the Gorbachev era there has been a move restructuring, perestroika, openness, glasnost, democratization, and increased personal freedoms. Under Gorbachev there has been at first a loosening up of Eastern Europe and then the collapse of Soviet power and domination in the former Soviet empire. In terms of the U.S.-Soviet relationship, they have reached a high point in their relationship. They have made agreements on arms control, conventional weapons in Europe, the reunification of Germany and was even together in their condemnation in the United Nations of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The U.S.-Soviet relationship has come

a long way under Gorbachev and U.S. presidents Reagan and Bush. Many believe that the Cold War is over, and that Mikhail Gorbachev is the main reason for this, with the U.S. willingly following their lead. Before a closer look is given at the Soviet-American relationship, it will be helpful to look at the internal change and foreign policy change under Gorbachev.

Gorbachev's two major internal programs for change in the Soviet Union are perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness, or publicity). Perestroika seeks to correct the one-dimensionality of Soviet superpower status through internal economic reforms, changes in military doctrine and political reforms. (Hudson 6) Under perestroika, Gorbachev has overhauled the Soviet political system, trying to introduce multi-candidate elections, freer elections and a more responsive government. In this overhaul of the state structure, the Communist Party is no longer all powerful, and General Secretary Gorbachev has become the more powerful President Gorbachev. All these changes in the political makeup of the Soviet Union, have raised popular expectations. The people seem to now want more free democratic elections, but will Gorbachev be willing to grant this request?

The other major Gorbachev reform, glasnost, has allowed intellectual to discuss numerous social and political problems relatively freely in Soviet academic journals, plays, books, and movies. (Hudson 100) It has also meant open criticism of the shortcomings of Soviet society and those responsible, and more attention the darker side of Soviet life; such as prostitution, drugs and

crime.(Nelson 129) Glasnost has also meant open and broad debate on security policy such as military doctrine and arms control. Glasnost has also more recently led to an opening up of the Soviet Press and television. It is not uncommon to see articles criticizing Gorbachev or his policies. There had also been an opening up of mass demonstrations, even when they are against the regime. But earlier this year Gorbachev tried to ban demonstrations. Gorbachev did not have expected, nor wished, for glasnost to have gone as far as it has. but it is hard to give people a taste of freedom and not expect them to want more.

Early on, Gorbachev and his leadership came to some conclusions about Soviet national security: one is that the Soviet Union cannot achieve strategic nuclear superiority over the United States. Second that the continuation of the arms race, especially into space, where the edge in Western technology is great, poses the possibility of a surge in American technology that could endanger the state of strategic equality. And that a continued and intensified arms race would divert human and material resources from Gorbachev's economic reform.(Bailer 458) These conclusions helped to change Soviet national security policy.

One of the new concepts Gorbachev has set forth is of "mutual Security". He sees a link in national security and mutual security. He is the first Soviet leader to state that the Soviet Union cannot pursue its own security at the expense of other countries, especially the United States. Gorbachev has stated that there can be "not security for the USSR without security for the

United States."(Bailer 453) Gorbachev's view of mutual security is based on the premise that meaningful and stable relations can not be achieved in the nuclear age by individual nations attempts to attain effective deterrence. Technology and uncertainty will always increase war-fighting capability and undermine deterrence. Mutual security sees both sides as hostages to the nuclear arms race, and the only way out is through cooperation on a broad front.(Hudson 51)

Another policy in national security proposed by Gorbachev has been "reasonable sufficiency". The concept of "reasonable sufficiency" envisions the reduction of nuclear and conventional forces to the limits "sufficient for defense", a level that would eliminate any offensive capability. (Hudson 175-6) "Reasonable sufficiency" consists of nuclear arsenals capable of launching a secure second strike, conventional forces capable only of defending, not conducting offensive operations and interventionary forces capable of deterring an aggressor in regional crises, but unable to prop up a regime incapable of defending itself.(Bailer 112) Two elements of this policy are crucial, the reductions of conventional forces should move towards elimination of offensive capability on both sides, and the readiness for "unequal, asymmetrical" reductions in those areas where one side has an advantage.(Hudson 53) New Soviet thinking on their own national security, has provided the way for Soviet-American agreements on both conventional and nuclear forces.

The INF treaty in 1987, was a breakthrough agreement between

the United States and the Soviet Union. It provided for the first time the elimination of an entire class of nuclear arms, land-based missiles of intermediate and shorter range, based in Europe. It was also a major agreement because it provided on-site verification of the missiles, something that the U.S. had been pushing for a long time, but the Soviet had been unwilling to on-site inspection and the fact that the Soviet Union was withdrawing four times as many warheads as the United States, proved to the U.S. leaders that the Soviet Union was truly serious about the arms control agreement. Gorbachev described the INF treaty as a "major event in world politics" and a "victory for new political thinking"(White 116)

In november 1990, the U.S. and the Soviet Union along with the members of NATO and the former Warsaw pact signed the conventional forces in Europe, CFE, treaty. The treaty drastically cut the number of conventional land armies in Europe. Again the amount of Soviet and Warsaw Pact countries were larger than the U.S. and NATO cuts. Though the CFE has run into some major difficulties. The INF and CFE treaties show that when working together, the Soviet Union and the United States are able to make important agreements, not only on nuclear weapons but also on conventional.

U.S.-Soviet relations have shown a real improvement in the last few years. One of the best indicators of this improvement came with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. This incident touched off an international crisis in the Persian Gulf region. The United States and the Soviet Union joined in the

condemnation of the invasion. Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze stated of the situation that: there exists "principles and norms of international law, such concepts as respect for the inviolability for existing borders and observance of world law and order. (CDSP vol. XLII no 39 p9) The United States and Soviet Union, working together in the United Nations, helped to pass a number of resolutions against Iraq stating that it must leave Kuwait and restore the government that was in power prior to the invasion. The U.N. also added economic sanctions against Iraq, and a resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq, if President Saddam Hussein did not remove his forces from Kuwait by January 15, 1990. For a change the United States and the Soviet Union were working together, not against each other, in the United Nations during an international crisis.

The United States was the main actor, along with its coalition partners, in the Persian Gulf War. It was the United States that had 500,000 troops in the region, along with thousands of aircraft, tanks and along with battleship and cruisers, and supplied most of the other munitions. It was the U.S. that took the lead role in the air campaign against Iraq, which began on January 15, 1990 and it was the United States that was the main player in the land war against Iraq, that freed Kuwait. It was also U.S. troops who risked their lives, and many who lost their lives or were injured in freeing Kuwait. The U.S. military deserves a lot of credit for their campaign against Iraq and the liberation of Kuwait. The Soviet Union did not play a military role in the campaign, but

their cooperation was crucial. It probably would not have been possible for the buildup of half a million U.S. troops and military action to be taken against a former Soviet ally, if these were still the Cold War days. It was important that the United States had Soviet support or at least not their disapproval in the Gulf war.

From the time Iraq invaded Kuwait, the Soviet Government was for the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and restoring the situation that appeared before the invasion. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "the sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity of the state of Kuwait must be fully restored and protected.(CDSP vol XLII NO. 32 p5) The Soviet Union has appeared strong in opposing the invasion, even though Iraq had been a long time ally of Soviet Union, having a Treaty of Friendship and Agreement signed in 1972. There have been some commentators who attributed the Soviet policy line solely to a desire for economic assistance from the West.(CDSP vol. XLII No. 32) But both the Soviet press and the administration dispel this idea, and attribute the Soviet position to "new thinking" in the Soviet Union. The crisis also put a strain on the Soviet economy. The Soviet were not able to take advantage of the increased oil prices, because of declining production of oil . The Soviet Union also lost the subsidies provided by Kuwait of the development of oil production in areas of Siberia and the arctic.(CDSP XLII No 33 p13) The Soviet Union, while favoring Iraq's withdrawal, was against the use of force.

Before the January 15 deadline, Gorbachev sent special envoy, Yevgeny M. Primakov to meet with Hussein. Primakov had to meeting with Hussein, and tried to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. Gorbachev also sent two Deputies Foreign Ministers, A.M. Belonogob and V.F. Petrovshiy to the Middle East in an effort to try to find a political solution. (FBIS Nov 20, 1990 p20) From the beginning Gorbachev was in favor of Arab participation in the crisis and widening the scope of the involvement, in the crisis. Many Western officials felt that the Soviet Union was trying to forge unrealistically close links between the crisis in the gulf and the whole Palestian problem. (Lewis, "Soviet Aide urges") The United States rejected the idea of directly linking the invasion of Kuwait to the whole problem of instability in the middle East.

In terms of Soviet military personnel in the crisis, the Soviet Union contributed two small warships to the International Gulf Force; the vessels were deployed only in defense of Soviet shipping and citizens. (Kraus) Some believed that a Soviet involvement int the Gulf war could have provoked a backlash from the country's 50 million Muslims and increased the activity of the opposition within the Soviet Union, But the United States seemed satisfied with the level of Soviet involvement. One thing that the U.S. was not satisfied with was the number of Soviet personnel in Iraq. During the crisis there was question about the number and position of Soviet personnel in Iraq. There were conflicting reports from the beginning on the number in Iraq. There was some hesitation to remove these advisers/technicians because of feared retaliation on

the Soviet hostages in Iraq. If there were any Soviet advisers left in Iraq at the time of the war it seems they played not part.

From the onset Moscow stated that it would strictly comply with United Nation's sanctions against Iraq, even though it caused financial and economical problems. The Soviet Union faced a shortfall of \$800 million of hard currency and oil from Iraq and Kuwait. (CDSP XLII No 37 p10) The U.N. Security Council, before the resolution authorizing force, passed ten resolutions, declaring Kuwait's annexation null and void and imposing far-reaching sanctions against Iraq. The Soviet Union was in support of them all. The Soviet Union believed that the resolution authorizing the use of force was a turning point in the international relations and could lead to more creditable role for the U.S. in resolving conflicts and preserving international peace. (Lewis, "U.S. Gives Iraq")

Before the start of the ground war, the Soviet leaders, tried one last time to reach a peaceful solution. President Gorbachev presented a plan for the withdrawal from Kuwait, to Iraqi leaders. The plan was believed to combine an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait with pledges of Soviet help in preserving Iraq's sovereignty and in calling for a Middle East peace conference. (Schmemmann, "Russians, Citing Suffering) This came after nine days of diplomatic talks initiated by the Soviets to find a political resolution before an all-out ground offensive. The U.S. indicated that the plan had nothing in it that would cause a delay in the ground attack. Gorbachev felt that the U.S.-led

alliance, in a ground offensive threatened to exceed U.N. mandate. (Schmemmann, Gorbachev's Gamble") The Soviet leaders argued that a ground offensive would cause enormous suffering and destruction of the country. (Schmemmann, Russians Citing Suffering") Gorbachev spokesman Vitaly N. Ignatenko stated, "The offensive will only result in more suffering and bloodshed. Our stand is that new casualties should be avoided." (Schmemmann, Russians Citing Suffering") The United States, although initially suspicious, stated that they had concluded that the Soviet Union mediation was not some mischievous Cold War scheme trying to frustrate U.S. policy in the Gulf. (Friedman "No Subterfuge is") The U.S. went along with the ground war against Soviet pleas, the Soviet Union though not happy, did not denounce the military effort.

Now that the Persian Gulf War is over, where does the U.S.-Soviet relationship stand in 1991? There were some who thought that the Gulf War would tear the relationship apart, but this did not happen. United States Secretary of State Howard Baker stated that he hoped and expected that the Soviet Union would remain a "constructive partner" with the United States in stabilizing the post-war Persian Gulf. (Friedman, "U.S. and Kremlin") And new Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmerthnyk said "what matters most is that the Soviet-U.S. relationship has gone through a very difficult test and passed that test, and this opens reliable prospects for future developments." (Friedman, "U.S. and Kremlin") Although the relationship survived the Gulf Crisis, there seems to be possible cracks in the relationship.

One of these cracks is in arms control. Back in February 1990 both sides announced they were close to a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START, and that all that was left were largely 'technical details'. (Friedman, "U.S. and Kremlin") But over a year later there is still no START agreement. The main differences that remain are over treaty verification. And each side is blaming the other, reminiscent of the Cold War era. The Soviet leaders have accused the Bush administration of stalling and not being able to meet them halfway. And U.S. officials have stated that Gorbachev appears to be under pressure from the Soviet military and its military-industrial base, who think that Moscow has already made too many concessions on arm control. (Friedman, "U.S. and Kremlin") There has also been problems with the CFE treaty. After signing, the Soviet Union insisted on excluding three naval divisions because they are involved in shore defense and technically not covered in the treaty dealing with land armies. This incident has annoyed many U.S. officials, including President Bush. He has stated that he will not submit the treaty for Senate ratification until the Soviets drop this demand.

Another possible crack in the relationship is the shift in Gorbachev to the right. He has been under pressure from the right-wing in Soviet Government. The Soviet conservatives have made a strong comeback. On December 20, 1990 Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze resigned, he warned that "reactionaries" threaten his country with dictatorship. (Keller-"Shevardnadze stuns Kremlin") Shevardnadze had been one of Gorbachev's strongest

supporters of Gorbachev's reform programs. Shevardnadze that

the reformers have gone into hiding. A dictatorship is approaching- I tell you with full responsibility. No one knows what this dictatorship will be like, what kind of dictator will come to power and what order will be established. (Keller-"Shevardnadze Stuns Kremlin")

Gorbachev has stated that the resignation would not cause a change in Soviet foreign policy. Liberals in the Soviet Union viewed Shevardnadze's as a warning against becoming a hostage to authoritarian-minded forces, which the liberals view as bent on crushing the country's struggling democracy. (Keller-"Moscow Gossips about") These forces had harshly criticized Shevardnadze.

The right-wing forces in the Communist Party attacked Shevardnadze for tolerating the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the satellite governments in Eastern Europe, for bringing the Soviet military home too quickly, for negotiating arms treaties with the West that cut disproportionately into Soviet missiles and tanks, and for following too closely the American lead on policy in the Gulf. (Keller-"Shevardnadze Stuns Kremlin") The parliamentary faction Soyuz, union, has united the hard-liners in the Supreme Soviet, from a wide range of backgrounds. (Keller-"Soviet Military Growing") The Soyuz has criticized Shevardnadze and Gorbachev for what they feel is a loss of Soviet power. The hard-liners not only attacked Shevardnadze, but they were very critical of Soviet position in the Gulf crisis.

While the official Soviet position supported the U.S. led coalition against Iraq, there were many dissenters. Some argued that the USSR should play a mediator role so as to preserve both

its economic interests in Iraq and its authority in the Middle East. Others thought the USSR should have abstained from voting on the resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq. And others believed that the USSR sold out its interest to try to please the West. (Crow 15) Some critics did not like the presence of U.S. led force in Iraq. The 640,000 Western military personnel so close to the Soviet border caused them great discomfort. A few Soviet officials expressed concern that some of the Western forces might remain in the region after the fighting was over. When the fighting did start many of the hard-liners were embarrassed at the drubbing meted out to the Soviet Union's long-time client Iraq. (Foye 1) The conservatives and hard-liners have made strong comeback in Soviet affairs, and recent events show that they have had a big impact on Mikhail Gorbachev.

As stated before it seems that the hard-liners have persuaded Gorbachev to be tougher on arms control as seemed by the stalled START talks and the problems over the CFE treaty. Gorbachev has also moved right on internal affairs. In January 1991 Soviet tanks troops attacked Lithuanian independence demonstrators, leaving fifteen dead. In March Gorbachev put forth a resolution banning all demonstrations. There had been large demonstrations in Moscow calling for Gorbachev to resign.

The ban was ignored and thousands demonstrated calling for Gorbachev to resign. This shows the lack of power Gorbachev has.

Gorbachev and the Soviet Union face serious problems. Gorbachev faces critics from both the left and the right. His

position has been challenged by Russian President Boris Yeltsin. And his resolutions trying to regain order in the Soviet Union are being ignored. This is one explanation for his shift to the right, as attempt to regain order. The Soviet Union faces grave economic problems and a possible break-up of the union. The problems in the Soviet Union cause problems for U.S.-Soviet relations.

The United States is not quite sure where Gorbachev stands. Is he the leader that brought democratic reform to the Soviet Union, helped to improve U.S.-Soviet relations, cooperated with the United States on the INF treaty and at first on the CFE treaty and START. Or has he moved to the right, trying to stop democratic reform and move towards authoritarian rule, and putting up barriers in the ratification of the CFE treaty and an agreement to START. The Soviet domestic problems and how they will be resolved will be a key in future relations. Will the United States have to deal with one revised Soviet Union, 15 independent republics or some number of independent countries in between. The United States will have to wait and see how the Soviet Union comes out of this internal crisis.

Conclusion

The U.S.-Soviet relationship since the end of World War II has been and continues to be extremely important, they being the two most powerful military powers in the world and have often not on friendly terms. The war-time alliance between the United States and Soviet Union, broke down soon after their common enemy, Germany, was defeated. The leaders of the two countries were

unable to come to an agreement on the future of defeated Germany. The two countries also disagreed over the future of Eastern Europe and the formation of the United Nations. The United States and the Soviet Union had different visions of what post-war Europe should look like, and these visions conflicted. The different ideas of what Europe should look like helped lead to the disintegration of their relationship.

There have been some serious crises between the United States and the Soviet Union have come dangerously close to war: the Berlin Crisis in 1948 and the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962. Misunderstandings and different objectives in these areas led to the crises. But in these cases and every other crises between the two countries they have been able to avoid open hostilities. The main reason for this is the fear of war and in the latter crises the fear of nuclear war. But the relationship has had periods of friendly relations.

The detente of the early 1970s was a time of good relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. During this period they were able to make some important agreements. But again each side had different goals and objectives for detente which conflicted with the other side's goals and objectives. This helped lead to the breakdown of detente. The present period of U.S.-Soviet relations is at the highest point ever, but as mentioned before there are certain factors that are threatening to tear the relationship apart. The present period is very important, if the leaders of the two countries are able to keep the relationship

together it could greatly reduce the threat of war. But if not the countries could slip back towards Cold War hostilities.

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