
The Role of "Cold War" in Bringing International Order

The Cold War was a period of historical clash that took place between 1947 and 1991. Many International Scholars, however, believed that the Cold war started in the 1917 Russian revolution. It was between America and its allies (western countries) vs the Eastern bloc by USSR. However, the two superpowers surprisingly didn't fight. Instead, it was a fight that was fought through proxy wars, Nuclear Arms race, ideological influence and propaganda war which had a decisive impact on the world. This essay will examine ways in which the cold war brought international order.

The cold war brought international order in many ways, for instance, most of the Cold War divided the world into three distinct camps, first world (USA, UK, and its allies), second world (USSR and its allies) and third world. The first 2 camps were heavily armed with nuclear weapons. The fierce rivalry between the two superpowers quickly escalated and spread to the rest of the world. The USA strongly encouraged other friendly regions to form their own alliance such as SEATO in South East Asia and CENTO in the Middle East. The aim as suggested by (Derrick Murphy, Collins Frontline History – The Cold War 1945–1991, 2003) was to surround the USSR with the military alliance which in return increased tension. Moreover, both superpowers had possession of nuclear missiles which could reach Washington and Moscow. Resulting in the cold war becoming global and directly affecting stability (Derrick Murphy, Collins Frontline History – The Cold War 1945–1991, 2003). Both superpowers resorted to confrontation and propaganda which was played out in the rest of the world. Using the three distinct camps allowed powerful countries to have a higher power above the less powerful countries which allowed international order in some ways.

The Cold War resulted in the division of Europe in general, more specifically, Germany. (David Cornwell, 2001) stated that the modernization and reintegration of the defeated countries such as Italy, Germany, and Japan meant that its impact was heavily felt in Africa. Where it was possible the emergence of new states made sure that the colonial masters were no longer able to control those colonies. The Cold War severely affected Europe, where it originated, as well as internationally. It caused the Berlin Blockade, which therefore created divisions of Vietnam and Korea which led to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. This clearly damaged the relations of the West and the Soviet Union, which fuelled other conflicts and wars in the Middle East.

Furthermore, another reason the Cold War had such a huge influence on international relations was the protecting sphere of interest used by both powers to a global level. For example, in the Hungarian uprising 1956 and the subsequent interference of the Soviet troops was caused by

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the Soviet's dislike of the fact that the Hungarian's intended to leave the Warsaw Pact. Equally, USA also carried out a high level of interest in other less dominant parts of the world, for example, Latin America. The Cold War led fear to the spread of communism which resulted in the US having to deploy the military to Latin America. For example, America was instrumental in providing weapons and various other assistance to anti-communist rebels in El Salvador and Nicaragua, also by using force to further safeguard its interest in the region. (Jefferson Adams, Strategic Intelligence in the Cold War and Beyond). A good example of this was the armed intervention by the USA in the Dominican Republic in 1965. America's aim was as suggested by (John W. Young & John Kent, International Relations since 1945: A Global History, 2004) was to stop the spread of communism in the region, in other words, this was a proactive attack against communism. Finally, another example was the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala and the attempt to overthrow Castro's government in Cuba because America was fearful that Castro was a dangerous enemy during the cold war. This caused international order as both powers created allies with other nations which meant that countries were much less vulnerable as they had the backing of America and USSR. Both superpowers also entertained a high level of interest to new nation-states and used them for their own interest, for example, oil and minerals. Some would say this interest in new countries and states that both superpowers have has not changed i.e. America's interest in Iraq, Libya, Iran or Russia's interest with Syria or Ukraine.

On the other hand, experts would say that the Cold War didn't have a huge impact on international order as there was a fierce-some rivalry between the superpowers that played out in parts of the world, for instance, in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, Angola which was a massive battleground for the superpowers. USSR and Cuba were providing support to the Angolan government by providing them with artillery they needed to defend themselves, while America and South Africa gave support to the UNITA rebels. There were many instances America and USSR gave militarily and economically support several governments and rebels in Africa which caused countless civil wars that affected the continent.

Due to the rivalry between the two superpowers in the third world, millions of people died because of the Cold War. Many civil wars and other conflicts haunted certain parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, even till to this day. As (Jefferson Adams, Strategic Intelligence in the Cold War and Beyond, Chapter 6) suggested, a clear majority of people who were killed during the cold war were from the third world, which suggests that the Cold War didn't bring international order over there.

The Cold war also increased tensions within the international community because of America and USSR, they were heavily interested in perusing ideological and political goals and didn't mind using other less dominant countries to achieve this. In fact, some political and ideological goals were, even more, opposing with the ambitions of the other, for example, the Soviet

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believed the US was an imperialist power and were, therefore, trying to spread capitalist ideology with the goal of taking over the world. On the other hand, America saw the Soviet as an ideologically motivated evil empire that was committed to spreading communism around the world. Even by force. Both superpowers preached that their system of belief was the right way forward for a better world which didn't really create order internationally as countries were divided on whom to believe.

Statistically, the world is less deadly, less peaceful and more stable. Since 1945 the number of armed conflicts in any given year has been climbing slowly. At the same time, the interval of battle deaths has been indeed marked decline. This suggests that the superpowers are not necessarily fighting each other when it means that they could risk nuclear war. Instead, they are both seeking smaller proxy wars to indirectly battle each other. This causes a stability of the international system within marginal states

Another bad effect of the Cold War was the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. It was an international crisis which created fear amongst people that there was going to be a nuclear war between America and The Soviet. This increased tension between the two powers and their allies to something we never saw before. As (Baylis et al, *The Globalization of World Politics*, p.62) stated, this was the "most dangerous period" the world had ever seen since the Second World War. In November 1983, NATO carried out an operation called "Able Archer". This was an exercise which simulated a coordinated Nuclear attack against USSR. This made the Soviets suspicious that America was getting ready to attack them. They then took the necessary steps to prepare their Nuclear missiles. This led to unrest amongst countries and increased tension in Cuba as people thought that a war between the two superpowers would be the end of the world.

The Cold War indeed divided the world into three camps; some of those camps (mainly 1st and 2nd world countries) had nuclear missiles capable of reaching each other's capital cities. Both USA and USSR were ready to protect their sphere of interests even if it meant war between the two. Thus, their actions did cause tensions within the international community. Although the Cold war did cause conflict in some parts of the world, it also maintained order and peace. It also allowed the reconstruction and integration of defeated countries such as Italy, Germany and the transformation of Japan from a war-torn country to one of the most powerful economies in the world. However, this aspect cannot be compared to the negative impact the Cold War had on the Third World, more specifically, Africa. The Cold war fuelled civil wars and was the cause of millions of people losing their life through proxy wars and civil wars. The emergence of new nation-states caught the eye of the two superpowers who then provided arms and other support to them which resulted in horrifying events.

The Cold War did lead to a major impact on International order because the post-Cold War

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order of bipolarity and the balance of power had ended making America as the strongest country in the world. This, therefore, meant that America had the power to do whatever she likes with impunity. This change led to an era of peace between countries. (Mearsheimer, Diplomacy, 1994) stated that the Cold War was a period of peace and tranquillity.

Moreover, towards the end of the Cold War in the 90's, The Soviet suffered a catastrophic economic decline because of the effects of the Cold War and its spending. The effects of the Cold War contributed to the downfall of the Soviet Union in 1991. This left the United States as the only hegemony power in the world.

To conclude, the Cold War had an impact on the world order and divided it into two nuclear-armed camps and one neutral one, it used the same rules that existed in Germany and paved the way for new nation-states to emerge, the rise of those new states attracted the attention of the two superpowers, both powers rivaled each other to protect their interests in these states and maintain a sphere of interest. This has allowed the two powers to maintain a sense of order in the countries they were allies with which has stopped many civil wars from happening. Even though we have the complicated crisis in Syria were America want to overthrow Assad and Russia want to keep him in power, there is still a sense of international order that these two countries keep, which would lead me on to believe that the Cold War did indeed bring international order.

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