Student

Course

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Date

Soviet Union History Essay

Many years after World War II, international politics has been regarded as an ideological rivalry, bipolarity, and the impulse of peace among the significant powers of the world. The power transition theory depends on the powerful states and elicits implications from their behavior in the times of war. It also depends on their interactions for the maintenance and restructuring of the global political system. It is not entirely a realist theory as it is not explicitly concerned with the hegemony, but it also requires the satisfaction of a state with the ideologies of the international systems and policies and the status quo. The status quo is an apprehension of general patterns for diplomatic, economic and military ties with other members in the system. The dominant states establish a global order where they specify the foreign policies for other countries and the purpose is to gain wealth, security and prestige; in other words, ultimate global hegemony (Lemke).

The clash of civilizations is another theory can be used in this context to explain the transition of world politics from multipolarity to bipolarity by the end of World War II. According to Karl Marx, socialism wanted to take control over the world and the majority of the Soviets considered themselves in a battle with capitalism itself. They saw Americans reconstructing their efforts in expanding their markets in Europe and Japan. The United States had fears that the USSR intended to destroy the democratic and capitalist institutions while the USSR had the concerns that the U.S. is exploiting its money and power to dominate Europe. They perceived that they were eventually trying to destroy the political and democratic system in the Soviet. There has been a long history of geopolitical struggles among the major powers of the world; however, the tensions after the World War II had escalated so much that there was the fear of destruction of the whole humanity (Ikenberry).

The world politics did not come back to normal after the end of the Second World War; however, it initiated a new series of conflicts for the power-hungry U.S. and the USSR to attain the global hegemony. The power distribution of Europe was now out in the battleground to be picked up by these countries. The clash of the ideologies, while come call it the clash of civilizations yet again, became the stage for the power mongers. The European powers were destroyed at the international front and were exhausted completely by the war. The decline of European power set the scene of the emergence of two new global superpowers. The rest of the world was forced to choose between the two blocs of communism and capitalism. The soviets came out of the war with a prestigious status of having fought Hitler's army. It gained a new lease due to its heroic resistance against the enemy and demonstrated its victory at the Stalingrad. The USSR also provided Europe with a reformed ideological, economic and social model. Moreover, the Red Army was not destroyed by thy war as the U.S. army did. The Soviet Union had the advantage of numerical authority in terms of soldiers and heavy weapons. Albeit the human and material losses of the U.S. were higher and its army was completely demolished by the end of the hostilities, it remained the world's biggest military power. Its navy and air force were unrivaled, and it also remained the leading economic power even in the devastating events of turmoil. It continued its trade and production at industrial and agricultural levels (CATLEY).

After World War II, the USSR established as a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, taking over the states where the Red Army had defeated the Nazis. It was that moment when Winston Churchill said that an Iron Curtain was descended over Europe. Though history states that the era of the Cold War was from 1945 to 1990, it is said that it had started during the World War. Stalin's cynicism of the United States and Great Britain grew stronger as they declined to attack Europe and start another upfront against the Nazis. It is also thought that the aspiration of intimidating the USSR influenced the attempt to drop the bomb over Japan. However, it moved the Soviets to produce their atomic bombs. The United States always had the advantage from the beginning as they had more money and power and could protect Europe while it had the chance to rebuild itself. On the other hand, they also had a disadvantage as they were being controlled by the creeds of Joseph Stalin. Europe was primarily the first battleground of the Cold War, mainly Germany. It was divided among the West and East Berlin, and the Soviets tried to cut off West Berlin in 1948. They closed the main roads but were stomped by the air forces; thus, they tried again in 1961 and built a wall around the city. The U.S. response to the USSR was the containment policy, and its main purpose was to stop the spread of communism by defending them wherever they seem to expand it. The United States implemented the Marshal Plan and spent billions on the reconstruction of Western Europe. The capitalist efforts of providing for the people was used as a weapon against the communism. The U.S. also founded NATO and the CIA to spy on the spread of communism.

In the struggle of controlling the spread of communism in Europe, there escalated a nuclear arms race. Both countries, now assuming the powerful roles and declaring their hegemony, developed their nuclear arsenals. The nuclear tensions grew so tight that the U.S. and the USSR agreed on a tactic called Mutually Assured Destruction. Later, the rise of communism in China, Korea, and Vietnam further intensified the situation when Soviets supported North Vietnam. Soviets also invaded Afghanistan and then left after ten years. On the other hand, the U.S. supported the rebels in Nicaragua to overthrow the leftist regime in El Salvador. The U.S. continued supporting governments against communism, such as in Egypt, Iran, and Chile. The Soviets remained busy in fighting against the uprisings in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The rivalry between the U.S. and the USSR expanded from Europe to Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America.

The conflicts of ideologies and the interests between the new global powers eventually multiplied and an atmosphere of fear and suspicion continued to grow. The soviets felt the threats of Imperialist Expansion by the United States. While the American's concerns were focused on the Communist Expansion and they indicted Stalin of breaking the Yalta Agreement, which was based on the right of people to self-determination. It resulted in a long-standing global tension that spread dramatically over time. It even led to the armed conflicts on a localized level without a fully apprehended war between the two nations with global effects. Europe remained divided and was under the grind of conflicts between the two superpowers. The world saw a transition from the multipolarity to bipolarity in the face of threat and fear of choosing the wrong side. The suspicions and missing chances of evading all these conflicts were disregarded, and the world remained divided under the shadows of the cold war for decades.

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