CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
Soviet-U.S. relations have formed a keystone in the arch of international politics. They have influenced the realm of international 'thinking' and have affected the relation of states all over the world. The phase of post World War II international politics got dominantly identified with this relationship, and came to be known as 'the bipolar world'. This was because the Soviet Union and the United States (known as 'super powers') and the politics represented by them was the most dominant force in world politics. This chapter deals with Soviet policy towards the USA and the U.S. response to Soviet policy between 1917 to 1955.

Soviet policy towards the U.S.A. has been based upon a conceptual framework which formed the basis of their world view. This conceptualization was based on the theories of Marx and Lenin. Soviet-U.S. relations cannot be isolated from the broader currents of international relations. In fact, the entire process has been so complex that although Soviet-U.S. relations constituted the fulcrum of world politics, exerting tremendous influence on the entire international system, this central relationship itself was significantly affected by the broader system of which it was part.¹ Soviet policy towards the U.S. was an end product of a complex interaction of many determinants, especially the political, economic and ideological factors have played a significant role in determining the Soviet policy towards the U.S..

The ideological precepts which influenced decades of Soviet assumptions were based on Marx's idea of social formations. The makers of the Soviet revolution used Marxism as a method of analysis, both for specific Russian conditions and for understanding the world. It becomes important therefore to briefly re-examine some of the important theoretical understanding of the founder of the Soviet state, V.I. Lenin, especially his understanding of imperialism, which became so identified with Soviet perception of the USA.

A. LENIN'S UNDERSTANDING OF IMPERIALISM: THE MAKING OF A WORLD VIEW AND DEVELOPING IDEAS OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE:

After 1917, under the overarching compulsions of the making of Soviet foreign policy, Soviet policy towards the U.S.A. was formulated. Lenin's understanding of imperialism, undoubtedly, played an important theoretical role. His interpretation of imperialism brought to light the deep roots of modern international relations. Lenin specified that imperialism emerged as the development of the monopoly stage of capitalism; capitalism became imperialism at a very advanced stage of its development. Economically it was a displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition was the basic feature of capitalism, whereas monopoly the exact opposite of free competition. Competition thus became transformed into monopoly.² Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of

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development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital has established itself, in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance and the division of the world among the international trust has begun, and in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.\(^3\) Such developments in the realm of political economy of an advanced capitalist country necessarily lead to the emergence of imperialism.

According to Lenin, imperialism included the following features:

1) the concentration of production, thus it created a monopoly which played a decisive role in economic life; 2) merging of banking capital with industrial capital on the basis of finance capital; 3) export of capital, 4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist association, and 5) territorial division of the whole world amongst the biggest capitalist powers.\(^4\) These five features of imperialism, in other words, can be called the prerequisites for the existence of imperialism.

Lenin identified three areas of highly developed capitalism: Central Europe, Germany, Great Britain and the United States that dominated the world. Further, he maintained, imperialism had almost grown into a

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3. Ibid., p.84.
4. Ibid.
predominant system. Lenin thus came to the conclusion that economic and political conditions were bound to increase the irreconcilability between opportunism (represented by the capitalist West) and the general and vital interests of the working class movement. Lenin's views on imperialism were of great importance in shaping Soviet foreign policy thinking until his death in 1924. Even after his death the basic premises of Soviet foreign policy more or less remained the same.

However, Lenin's theories of imperialism provoked much debate. Thomas Weisskopf undertook, in a critical evaluation of theories of imperialism, to decide whether it is "national interest" or "class interest" that is responsible for American imperialism. But this exercise proved to be fruitless in the view of the close relationship between the two interests. Robert Wolf, after pronouncing Lenin's theories of imperialism as "open to criticism on several grounds", declared that there is no inherent economic necessity for aspects of American imperialism. His contention seems that American economy, if need be, can also survive without imperialistic characteristic which means economic necessity has not made America, what we call, an imperialist state.

Marx initially propounded the idea that capitalism is responsible, in modern times, for the creation of surplus

5. Ibid., p.102.

product, for which it must find ever expanding market or die, and, in seeking them, fight to death. The theory of imperialism thus cannot be separated from the Marxist theory of capitalist development. What has become the Marxist "orthodoxy" on the subject of imperialism hinges on Marx's idea that imperialism is inherent in capitalism, i.e. capitalism must expand or die. The orthodox Marxist conception of the subject are based on the views of Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin, which essentially reiterated Marx's position, that capitalism had to expand. They defended this view against other Marxists, like M. Hilterdizo, Otto Buer, Karl Kautsky and N. Bukharin, who held that capitalism need not expand in order not to die. 7

Herb Addo argued that imperialism is a fact of history of the world system level. Imperialism has been developing in various forms at the level of the evolving world system ever since the initial emergence of capitalism. Imperialism has had no autonomous existence of its own; it can exist only with reference to the changing tones of capitalism in evolution. Further, as capitalism and its needs become different, so will imperialism change. 8 For Herb Addo, imperialism is not a static category. Since it has a strong organic link with capitalism it keeps changing accordingly. However, in the final analysis Herb Addo does not seem to have demolished Lenin's pioneering work on imperialism.

7. Ibid., p.93.
8. Ibid., p.121.
Marxists maintain that the Western capitalist world is inherently imperialist and exploitative. In essence, imperialism is an effort to control the destinies of foreign States. This very theoretical underpinning became the conceptual basis of Soviet world view.

In 1917, Russia broke away from the global capitalist system and set about constructing economies and societies inspired by the alternative principles of socialism that were given their formulation by Karl Marx in the nineteenth century. With the revolution of October 1917, the problems of building socialism were added to the problems of relations between states. The belief in class struggle on the world scale took a dual form: the struggle between social classes in each country with its inevitable international repercussion, and the relations between the Soviet Union and the bourgeois states; these two alternative strategies had to be accommodated by the fledgling Soviet state. The Bolshevik leaders had to tackle these problems amidst chaos and civil war, played by foreign intervention by a alliance of capitalist powers and under the heavy pressure of a variety of immediate burning needs.9 Indeed, Bolsheviks were destined to work under tremendous pressures, which not only multiplied the troubles but also hampered the smooth path of building socialism and constructing a new society. This, in fact, caused the distortion and aberration in socialism.

The compelling need to survive amongst other nation states led the All Russian Congress of Soviet Union to pass a decree on peace on 8th November 1917. This decree of peace, was believed to be the first act of foreign policy of the 'provisional worker's and peasants government' which introduced something new into international relations. The decree appealed that "the government considers it the greatest crime against humanity to continue this war for the sake of dividing among the powerful and wealthy nation.... the government solemnly declares its determination to sign immediately terms of peace which put an end to this war. This was a call for unconditional peace because without peace the new Soviet government could not consolidate its position.

The decree on peace underscored the two fold character of the Bolshevik aspirations and concerns in the realm of foreign relations. Obviously, one was the immediate need to conclude peace; the longer term aspiration had the belief of the Bolsheviks that peace could be secured only by socialist revolution in other countries, which found expression in the form of the class appeal in the decree on peace.

Immediately after the Revolution, the Bolsheviks needed time to institutionalise their hold on power and


established a Bolshivik state and ruling regime. The struggle with internal enemies, took precedence over the struggle with the foreign enemy, the Germans. Hence Lenin wanted peace with imperial Germany at any cost, even if this meant signing away all occupied territories. Because the Soviet State had no army worthy of the name and that the country was war weary, it needed a breathing space to regain its strength. Evidently Lenin quite realistic in assessing Russia's strength vis-a-vis the prevailing adverse conditions. In these circumstances the Brest-Litovsk treaty was signed, which established the Russian interest in consolidating their gains.

What complicated matters was the two fold nature of Soviet Russia, was she a revolutionary base or a state? The irony was that the interests of the Soviet Union and those of world revolution did not always coincide. When they clashed, the left communist group regarded her as the former while Lenin tended to see her as the latter. Lenin saw revolutionary objective best fulfilled in working to protect the interests of the Soviet state to promote the cause of world revolution. Lenin thus, did not see any contradiction between preserving the Soviet state and the world revolution. This belief continued as an objective of Soviet foreign policy long after Lenin.


B) PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE:

The encirclement of the fledgling Soviet-State by hostile powers, who sponsored an intervention, led to sustained fighting by the newly formed Red army. The heavy losses sustained by the Russians in the First World War, historical experiences of Russian losses in the war with German and Japan, the need for sustained growth for Soviet Russia's very survival, the necessity of "breathing time" for the Bolsheviks to formulate a political system and structures and institutions for state building, necessitated a period of peace from outside forces. These were some of the factors which probably weighed on the mind of Lenin and his close advisors, namely Georgi Chicherin, in formulations of the Soviet foreign policy. In 1921, Lenin put forward the concept of peaceful coexistence, which focussed on the idea that despite the fact that two contradictory and opposing social system existed, it was possible for them to coexist in an environment of amity. Perhaps more than anything else, the formulation of peaceful coexistence was a practical necessity. Therefore the Bolshiviks were forced to evolve such a concept at that particular historical juncture of turmoil and stability.

In post revolutionary Russia the fundamental ideological divide was based on the understanding that antagonism based on ideological difference divided the world into "two camps". This notion, was related to the horizontal

demarcation between the exploiter and the exploited, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, between the new socialist nation of the Soviet Union, antagonistic to the Western Capitalist countries. The epoch was characterized in terms of the ongoing struggle between the two opposing systems. There was a conviction of the impending collapse of imperialism and the belief in the triumph of socialist revolution. In the Soviet Union in 1919, the third Communist International was established to direct the communist movement and foreign policy. The question of founding a new, truly revolutionary international was first raised by Lenin at the very beginning of the first world war. The Comintern took upon itself the duty of supporting and encouraging unequivocally, working class movements in the West and national liberation movements in the East so as to advance the ultimate overthrow of the imperialist world system.  

The Comintern envisaged its task to be primarily anti-imperialist because, in spite of the "entente", the imperialists were blockading Russia for the sole purpose of destroying the struggling Soviet Republic, since they viewed the Soviet Union as a "hot-bed of infection", for the capitalist world.  


between the capitalist camp led by the USA and the socialist and progressive forces led by the Soviet Union as the axis of world politics of the period.

Since most of Lenin's theoretical work was written before the Revolution, there is really very little in his major works which can be related to the concept of peaceful coexistence. Chicherin's statement seems to be correct that before the 'October Revolution no attempt was ever made to work out a programme of the foreign policy of a Socialist state in the midst of capitalist state. Lenin evolved the policy of peaceful coexistence as a practical method so as to combine a variety of tasks like re-integrating the Soviet system into the international economic system, reassuring the capitalist world that Bolshevik Russia was essentially peaceful in its attitude to other states despite the belief in basic differences with its system, retaining Soviet relations with capitalist firms, etc. Hoping that war would be prevented and the urgent task of reconstructing the Russian economy could proceed. Lenin was thus appealing for the resumption of economic and political relations.

Scholars have felt that in Lenin's opinion coexistence merely represented a phase in the struggle over capitalism and never an opportunity for reconciliation or a lasting settlement. Peaceful coexistence was seen as the relationship between two antagonistic worlds, the socialist and the capitalist, a conception to which both Lenin's general

outlook and views on the class struggle contributed. Lenin saw peaceful coexistence as a temporary phase of relation between two antagonistic systems; not as a permanent solution of conflict in international relations, especially with the West.

The first mention of 'peaceful coexistence' or development of relations between socialist and capitalist states was made in 1919, in connection with the need to attract foreign technical aid, by granting concession for foreign firms. Lenin thought it would be more difficult for capitalist states to go to war with Russia once they had taken up concessions. So there were both economic and political arguments in favour of granting them concessions. But at the same time Lenin stressed that peaceful coexistence did not mean an absence of conflict between socialism and capitalism.

Perhaps, at that point of time, Lenin found the answers of all sorts of problems in the form of peace. To quote Lenin, "If there were no peace and peaceful coexistence the socialist state could not successfully grow - the socialist republic situated among imperialist powers could not form that point of view, conclude any economic treaties and could not exist unless it were to fly off to the moon".


According to Władysław W. Kulski the Brest-Litovsk treaty was the first experiment in peaceful coexistence: After the period of foreign intervention, Lenin faced the problems of economic and political isolation and again his answers was the same: peaceful coexistence with the capitalist states, with whom he was actually eager to enter into economic relations.\textsuperscript{22} Perhaps it was the only wise option to avoid the possibility of international political isolation.

Conceptually, the Bolsheviks affirmed the amity of the interests of the Soviet state and world revolution in such a way as to subordinate ultimately, the first to the second, the very conquest of power in Russia was seen and justified primarily as a contribution to the development of socialist revolution in other, more advanced countries.\textsuperscript{23} So, understandably, foreign policy of the Soviet Union in Lenin's time was interrelating the defense of the Soviet-state with the link of the developing world revolution.

However, Ernest Mandel does not attribute Lenin as the father of "theory of peaceful coexistence". He contends that of late an attempt has been made to attribute to Lenin the concept of peaceful coexistence, and a parallel legend has been developed about Trotsky advocating "instantaneous resolution" in all countries through military intervention of the Soviet State. In actuality these things have no foundations. This misunderstanding, he feels, arise from the

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{23} Mandel, n.9, p.4.
dialectical nature of the interrelationship between the Soviet state and the world revolution; the need of defending the Soviet state as a genuine task of world revolution. In fact, Lenin used the term cohabitation (sozhitelstvo) to the world currently used for coexistence (Sosuchchestrovanie). Although one does not find much difference between the term what he called cohabitation and coexistence as these two terms carry more or less the same meaning.

Joseph Stalin won the struggle for leadership after Lenin's illness. He also offered similar solutions as Lenin to the problem of the early Soviet State. The political strategy followed by Stalin did not bring about a change in the practical meaning. However, Lenin's flexible approach within the concept of peaceful coexistence was hardened by Stalin's dogmatic understanding and the approach under Stalin turned theoretically inflexible. The contradictions between the two camps were given more focus. During this period Soviet approach to world politics was based on the "the hostile camp" approach. Stalin considered that the two coexisting systems had nothing in common and that while socialism was waxing stronger, the other, capitalism, was on the decline. These opposing currents constituted the motive force of coexistence. Stalin said, "the foundation of our

24. Ibid., p.6.
25. Light, n.15, p.25. Despite Lenin's efforts on peace, the Western nations continued to exhibit hostility towards the fledging Soviet state. For detail see E.H.Carr, Vol.1.
relations with capitalist countries consists in the assumption of coexistence of the two opposite system". 26

Though Stalin waxed eloquently about the hostile camps he too needed peace because the USSR was much weaker than the great powers. However, he never compromised on issuing harsh statements on imperialism, rather he argued that so long as imperialism continued to exist the risk of an imperialist war would remain, and hence coexistence could never be regarded as being safeguarded. "But if war breaks... we shall have to take action, but we shall be the last to do so. And we shall do in order to throw the decisive weight in the scales, the weight that can turn the scales." 27 Stalin looked upon coexistence as a desirable state of affairs, but one that could not be maintained by the Soviet Union alone. He thus maintained a continuous tension in Soviet relations with the West. This tension was due to the continued hostility of the Western bloc towards the Soviet state, and the inflexible stalinist response.

Stalin believed that the Russian Revolution established and consolidated socialism in one country. And the building of socialism in one country, quite obviously, required the survival of that country in a world of capitalist states. 28

The idea that peaceful coexistence shifts the capitalist-socialist conflict to non-military spheres was emphasized in the thesis adopted at the sixth Congress of the Communist International (Commintern) in 1928. Great stress was given to the inevitability of war, but the Soviet peace policy was said to be essential to protect the international revolution and allow socialism to be constructed. However, Soviet Union remained under perpetual fear of attack from capitalist countries.

By the mid 1930s, a dark phase of Stalinist terror began. The famous novelist Arthur Koestler rightly called it "darkness at noon" because any kind of difference or disagreement with Stalin meant an invitation to repression. Nonetheless, a difference in emphasis can be noticed in comparing M. Litvinov's and even V.M. Molotov's views on peaceful coexistence with those of Stalin. Stalin tended to emphasize that Soviet foreign policy was aimed at preserving peace and strengthening trade relations. He did not use the term 'peaceful coexistence' in his reports to either the 17th or 18th Congress of the CPSU. Instead he laid stress on business relation. Litvinov, on the other hand, consistently used the term 'peaceful coexistence' to describe Soviet foreign policy. However, the difference between Stalin and Litvinov was that of thrust not that of perception.

29. Ibid., p.33.
The threat from the capitalist world was a factor that the Soviet Union had to take into account. But they also believed that the inherent contradictions of capitalism would continue to prevail which would provide a barrier to the combined action of the capitalist world against the Soviet Union. Logically it became a part of Soviet policy to encourage these contradictions. The Soviets became prepared to support the weaker and less dangerous of two capitalist countries, as a safeguard against the threat to the Soviet Union from the stronger. Now the Soviet relations with outside world were no longer seen, mainly or exclusively through the prism of world revolution. It was certainly a breakthrough in the Soviet worldview.

It is in this context, the Soviet foreign Minister V.M. Molotov speaking in 1945, stressed that the USSR would need peace for long time. Molotov regarded the fundamental task, as one of the overtaking and surpassing economically the most developed capitalist countries of Europe and U.S.A. and finally revolving this task within the shortest period of time. Evidently, they needed a lengthy period of peace and security in order to finally resolve this great task.

Soviet-U.S. Relations:

Absence of official relations was no bar to an intense and glaring curiosity in Soviet circles about the course of


32. Kulski, n.10, p.128.
American policy. In fact, the changed balance of economic power resulting from the First World War, and the overwhelming predominance of the United States had been recognized in the Soviet Union as elsewhere. Now it was no longer Great Britain or France but the United States, which was taking the initiative on every important issue: it was also undertaking "a cunning plan to create a capitalist international". American policy was clearly seen as the aider and abetter, if not the instigation, of western hostility to the Soviet Union. As a result, now the polarity of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. had become quite obvious.

The Soviet - U.S. antagonism was rooted in their contrary world view. The Soviet Union and U.S. became adversaries since their basic perception and their political systems were so different that the two countries for ever remained confounding and alarming each other. This contradiction exists not just in the international arena, but also in the way they function internally. These systems provided a threat to each others existence. In 1917, when Woodrow Wilson cast an eye in the direction of Russia, he saw "wonderful and heartening things" happening. But just after a few years, in the 1920s, a number of official statements from Washington made clear that the U.S. could force change for the better, inside Russia by refusing to have anything to do

Thus it was clear that from its very inception the Soviet system irked US interests.

For the first time, on Sept 10, 1920, Russia and America engaged in a polemical war relating to the policy of Soviet Russia. The then American Secretary of State, Brunbridge Colbly told the Italian ambassador that the American government would like friendly relations towards Russia provided its government should not be "Soviet" one. In response, Soviet Russia called this kind of statement a wholly unprecedented one in diplomatic practice, which Soviet Russia could not ignore. It is evident from the American reaction that they were quite capable to speculate that if they legitimise the new political system by making friendly relations it was going to cause harm to their very political survival.

Ever since the establishment of the 'Socialist regime' in Soviet Russia, allegations and counter allegations had been a typical feature of relations between the two ideologically opposed states. The Soviet Union criticised the USA as leader of the Capitalist countries for their habit of excusing their incapability in internal or foreign affairs by reference to Bolshevik machinations and the plots of the Soviet government.

While the Soviet government announced that they have always stood for and continued to stand for the renewal of normal relations between the USSR and the United States, the United States one of the great powers of the world till 1933, stood out against maintaining diplomatic contact with the Soviet Union. The hostility of the United States shown in its policy of non-recognition, was apparently shared throughout the New World. The fundamental reason for the American policy of non-recognition was, it has been said, "the irreconcilability of the revolutionary communistic theory and practice of government with the theory and practice of American democracy and capitalism". Max Beloff made an interesting remark, "the non-recognition of the Soviet government had been one of the political luxuries of United States". 37

Needless to say, the U.S. policy of not recognising the first socialist state did not alter either the internal or foreign policies of the USSR, much less bring the regime there tumbling down. Since, for the US, the policy of holding the Soviets at arm's length had not worked, America decided to change their tactics. Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision "in 1933 to end the quarantine and finally extended recognition to the USSR was one of the first in series of zig-zags that has been the pattern of American policy towards the Soviet

Ultimately the U.S. extended recognition to the USSR; perhaps the US could no longer afford the luxuries of not recognising the USSR.

American comments on the approaching negotiations continued to stress the economic aspect of the recognition. M. Litvinov arrived in the US on 7 November 1933. Apart from immediate recognition of the Soviet government, the points on which an agreement was reached were as follows: a mutual pledge to abstain from hostile propaganda; freedom of worship for American nationals in Russia; and legal protection, on most favoured terms, for American nationals, to be included in a consular convention.

In a press statement in Washington, Litvinov expressed the desire to work for normal and friendly relations. Such relations were bound to arise since there had been no real conflicts in the past and they need not expect them in the future. Thus he expected a common ground for cooperation in the field of economics, culture and the struggle for peace.

Despite the absence of diplomatic relations, American citizens had been able to travel to Russia for business trips or as press correspondents, and accept employment as

38. Nye, Jr., n.34, p.185.
39. Ibid., p.123.
specialists and skilled workers. But this favourable state of Soviet-American economic relations suddenly deteriorated, and that at a time when American industry could least afford to lose its market. When proposals for re-opening Russo-American trade were being discussed, the Soviet government came to know that the U.S. was considering to send a Technical Commission to study economic conditions in the USSR. The Soviet reply had been that permission would be granted provided a Soviet Commission were allowed to investigate economic conditions in the United States.\footnote{Nye, Jr., (1931-1941), n.34; p.39 & 221.}

The Soviet Union conveyed her realization to United States that the absence of relations for sixteen years has been instrumental in accumulation in that country of incorrect and false ideas and notions regarding the state of affairs and conditions of life in the Soviet Union. The absence of any official representative in Moscow had deprived American executive of the possibility of getting first hand and authentic information.\footnote{Degras, n.40, p.40.} It seems that the Soviet message really made Americans rethink about the futility of absence of relations.

Negotiations for trade agreement under the American trade agreement Act of 12 June 1934, were conducted in 1935 and culminated in the exchange of Notes of 13 July 1935. In return for the grant to Soviet goods of minimum tariff rates,
the Soviet government agreed to substantially increase its purchase of American goods. Speaking on 11 Jan. 1936, Molotov declared "while relations with the United States had on the whole developed normally, chiefly in the commercial and economic field", the Soviet-US propaganda war continued. Max Beloff remarked that "it was impossible to ignore the anti-Soviet campaign artificially worked up in a section of the American press by the pro-fascist circle". As a result the relation between the two countries always remained in a flux mainly due to distrust and damaging propaganda.

Some analysts believe that the basic premise of American foreign policy was that it would not bother with the way Stalin ran his own country as long as he refrained from trying to run other countries the same way. But this statement does not seem wholly true because ever since the establishment of communist regime in Russia, the Americans left no stone unturned in propagating against the Soviet Union in all aspects. The Soviets in turn continued to criticise the USA. This mutually reinforcing criticism led to a corresponding deterioration of perceptions.

The Post World War II Phase:

Until 1945, the United States and Soviet Union, together with Great Britain, were working partners in a war

43. Beloff, n.37, p.125.
44. Ibid., pp.126-7.
45. Cited in Nye, Jr., m.34, p.186.
time alliance, and that within "alliance, the U.S. often played a mediating role between the two powers". The existence of this working alliance is a fact of central importance in understanding subsequent events since it shows that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. not only could, but actually did cooperate in a dangerous and difficult situation, at a time, when Stalin was firmly in control of Soviet foreign policy. Although this alliance was held together, by the necessity of the hour, it was maintained during a time of great national peril for the powers involved, amidst events affecting the whole future of Europe. It should not be surprising, however, that the alliance was subject to significant tension and strains.46

In the First and Second World Wars, the United States intervened belatedly on the allied side. All the times its "professed goals were to reform international relations. And to spread American style democracy and the rule of law.47 In the wake of the Second World War the antagonism surfaced between the US and the USSR - the two rigidly hostile blocs. This hostility became known as the Cold War in international politics.48 This was a new phenomenon of a bipolar world.


After World War II, Decolonization and the changing structure of the world, the Soviet Union and the United States emerged as super powers; thereafter few Soviet and U.S. moves in the world arena can be understood in total isolation from the "super power rivalry". In fact, their hostility was rooted in ideological antagonism. Both alarmed and distrusted each other. Since America was a source of constant fear for the Soviets they were forced to give priority to the U.S. in their foreign policy agenda. Thus the relationship with United States has continuously been among the central consideration of Soviet foreign policy. Its logical extension was also clear. The Soviet Union adopted a hostile posture and attempted to undermine Washington's international position - in an effort to prove its own super powers status. 49 The Soviet Union had adopted a hostile posture towards Washington primarily because of reasons. Ideological reason, their different viewpoints on the status of Europe, their relationship with the national liberation movements and emerging new nations; and ties with communist parties, and US anti-communist tirade. Their differences led to the start of an arms race. These and other factors led to the effort by both nations to maintain their super powers status. The super power status of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. itself explains their superpower rivalry.

The 1940s was a decisive decade in American politics. In this period American attitude towards the rest of the

49. Nye, Jr., n.34., p.291.
world drastically changed. The Second World War pulled the economy out of its worst depression. After the World War, a new style of foreign policy emerged. It is in this context, that the Marshall Plan can be seen as a logical extension of domestic and foreign policy developments going back to the first American efforts to reconstruct war-torn Europe. The Marshall Plan was officially proclaimed in June 1947. It was the brain child of the New Deal coalition of progressive private groups and political elites. This coalition aimed to create in Western Europe the sort of neo-liberal political economy that had taken shape in the United States. In addition to making trade multi-lateral, making currencies convertible and allowing free-market forces to integrate economies, American policy makers urged their clients to organize European trade commission, monetary boards and other instruments of economic planning and regulation. "Political rather than economic fears, or hopes, are undoubtedly the driving force behind the whole programme. More concretely, the major fear is that economic distress of Western European countries will drive them to Bolshevism". The Marshall Plan amounted to the bifurcation of Europe. According to Soviet scholars, it was actually leading to the liquidation


of the sovereignty of these countries. America, being the leader of non-communist world, did everything to check the influence of communism, the actual intention behind concentration on the war-torn economy of Europe was to stop the growing popularity of communism.

As regards the Marshall Plan, the Soviet scholars believed that it had created an artificial "temporary stabilization of capitalism". These measures, along with the Truman Doctrine and the North Atlantic Treaty, were part of a foreign policy designed to postpone an American economic crisis by providing a foreign market for American surplus production and by maintaining a high level of profits and employment through the stimulation of arms production. All this exploration of American motives appeared to represent a serious Soviet analytical interpretation and not only a propaganda position. Undoubtedly, Soviet scholars had no illusion regarding American motives, be it the Marshall Plan or the NATO.


53. Marshall D. Shulman, Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.35. When Marshall Plan was announced, even at that time there was an enormous growth in commodity goods, which found no demand within the country, and there was apprehension over the effects of the tendency toward a drop in prices., Both these threatened to affect seriously the fabulous profiles of American monopolies and aroused growing alarm among American businessmen. See Gavrilov, "The Marshall Plan: Some results of the "Marshallization of Italy", CDSP, Vol.I, no.7, March 75, 1949, pp.13-16.
Soviet foreign policy in general, and that towards the United States in particular was over the years formulated in different ways, under different conditions with different priorities in mind. During Stalin’s last years, it is believed that foreign policy decisions were reached by Stalin himself, because the ageing ‘dictator’ increasingly came to distrust even his closest associates.

Stalin’s Understanding of Imperialism and post World War II Debate on the Changing Nature of Imperialism:

After World War II, when the United States clearly appeared to be hegemonic in the global system, and in sole possession of nuclear weapons, they set about in earnest to reverse the defections from capitalism that were still in the process of happening. At the time with the Red Army in possession of most Eastern Europe, Stalin at first thought it would be possible to agree to a ‘live and let live’ arrangement with the West at least in Europe. But soon he realized that survival of the developing ‘Eastern bloc’ demanded the most extreme measures. As a result he “imposed rigid communist dictatorship on the neighbouring countries and grouped them together in a tight military alliance capable of rapidly occupying the entire European Continent in case of a U.S. atomic attack on the USSR.” Indeed, Soviet fears of U.S. atomic attack were not totally baseless.

54. Nye, Jr., n.34, p.294.

Analysing World War II, Stalin wrote that the disintegration of the single world market must be regarded as the most important economic sequel of the Second World War and of its economic consequences. This, he believed, had the effect of further deepening the general crisis of the world capitalist system. The Second World War was itself a product of this crisis. Stalin explained and, "The U.S. hoped to put its dangerous competitors, Germany and Japan, out of action, seize foreign markets and world's raw material resources and establish its world supremacy". 56 Whereas China and other European people's democracies broke away from the capitalist system and forced a united and powerful socialist camp confronting the camp of capitalism. Stalin, further argued that at moments it seemed that Britain, France, Italy and Japan had fallen into the clutches of the USA, and were meekly obeying its commands. "But it will be wrong to think that these countries will tolerate the domination and oppression endlessly". 57 However Stalin's understanding proved not only to be economic determinism wrong in its crudest form but geopolitically based on assumptions, because for almost four decades all these countries enjoyed the political intimacy with USA, while Soviet Union was isolated.

After World War II, Stalin and Eugene S. Varga, eminent Soviet Economist debated over the prospects for the survival

57. Ibid., p.38.
of capitalism. The debate focussed on whether the capitalist economies could avoid an immediate post war depression in light of their war time experience with a substantial amount of state intervention, i.e. planning, in the economy, something which traditionally Marxism held to be impossible. 58 Stalin's post war writings generally centred around the collapse of capitalism and the inevitability of war among capitalist countries because of their economic competition. We would agree with Allen Lynch when he considers that many of Stalin's notions were crude and mechanically deterministic.

Varga's dispute with Stalin was a policy dispute about the conduct of relations with the West. 59 This debate had a vital bearing on policy direction within the Soviet Union. Varga's book on the American economy was published in Sept. 1946. In this he analysed the American economy and concluded that the possibility of crisis might be deferred through the increasing intervention of the state in economic process. He foresaw the possibility of socialist reforms in Europe without revolution and implied that war was not inevitable even while imperialism continued. 60 Varga's book generated a lot of debate among Soviet scholars. Soviet official scholars were particularly antagonistic, most specifically his book

59. Ibid., p.20.
60. Shulman, n.53, p.32.
provoked Stalin to take part in debate. In May 1947, at a public discussion in Moscow, Varga's book was severely attacked as being "soft on capitalism". Because his analysis implied a non-revolutionary and less militant policy on the part of the Soviet Union, anticipating eventual peaceful gains as a result of the breakdown of colonialism and revolutionary changes in capitalist societies this possibility was heatedly rejected. Varga was bound to be condemned by official Soviet scholars as in those days a non-dogmatic approach was not appreciated and could invite dire consequences. Any deviation from the official position, was not acceptable to the Soviet regime.

Refuting Varga's position, Stalin put forward his own thesis in 1952 in which he argued that capitalist collapse was imminent and that war among capitalist states was more likely than war between capitalism and socialism; this was in response to Varga's position. The bourgeois state had thus come to represent the interests of the entire bourgeoisie as class in the process of creating the entirely new phenomenon of "military-monopoly-state capitalism", indicating the possibility of a stable-economy, capitalism could be relatively stable in as much as they are seriously committed to planning both on the domestic and international levels. This implied that to assume a repetition of the economic

61. Ibid., pp.32-33.
catastrophes that eventually followed the first World War was wrong as circumstances had thoroughly changed.

The political implications of Varga's analysis were obvious: the capitalist countries would continue to exist for the foreseeable future and even progress; war would not be inevitable. While drawing the distinction between the character of the politics of the leading capitalist states and those of the fascist countries, he suggested "bourgeois democracy contained a considerable portion of the real thing, thereby providing avenues of influence for the substantial elements of public opinion in the advanced capitalist countries that were in favour of improved relations with the Soviet Union". Varga's thesis thus proposed a shift in Soviet hard-line antagonist position vis-a-vis the West. A subliminal appeal to self-criticism and an urge for understanding reality as it existed. This appeal was however rejected out right.

After the death of Stalin, Varga returned to the thesis developed in his 1946 book - "changes in the economy of capitalism resulting from the Second World War". This book revolved around two fundamental notions: the "third" stage in the general crisis of capitalism and the implications of nuclear weapons for the nature and conduct of international relations. In fact, the thrust of Varga's post-Stalin work was aimed at pinpointing the changes that capitalism had

63. Ibid., p.22
undergone in the course of the twentieth century. A number of previously held dogmas were therein refuted.

Highlighting the changing composition of the capitalist proletariat, Varga argued that the entire capitalist proletariat was in favour of service employment. This aspect had great political significance since it resulted in the counter-revolutionary spirit of the Western working class.64 But at the same time he wrote that the economic crisis (in America) would react on the domestic situation and on Washington's foreign policy. In home policy, the crisis was identified as an attempt by the monopolies to suppress all resistance to their plans against the people, while the mounting mass protest continued against that policy. This crisis, he believed, had an impact on American foreign policy. Thus he concluded that the crisis in the U.S. makes for the further weakening of American imperialist position in the international arena.65

Much of the Varga's analysis of capitalism was later (i.e. by 1954) fully accepted by Soviet scholars. But for many years following the attack on Varga, Soviet writings adhered closely to the classical Marxist conviction that the laws of capital accumulation had led, or were inevitably leading to a deepening general crisis of capitalism. 1948 and the first half of 1949 witnessed a recession in the United States.

64. Ibid., p.24.
American economists felt that this was due to the fact that the public demand for goods built up during the war, had by this time been fairly well satisfied. This recession was accompanied by a rise in unemployment in the U.S.A. By the latter part of 1949, however, the American economy had recovered. Soviet analysts were unable to share the concepts used by American economists of a "short term inventory crisis, which attributed the quick recovery to the vast expenditure under the Marshall Plan and the armament programme beginning in 1947.

Evidently Varga's assessment of post World War II capitalism proved to be correct, despite the fact that, in the last phase of Stalin's life, Varga was much condemned for his "soft" analysis of capitalism. However, After Stalin he was not only accepted in the Soviet Union, but history also validated his position. He proved to be right because he could see the undergoing changes in "moribund" capitalism which recovered after recession -something very tricky to analyse from within the orthodox digmatic Marxist framework.

**Ideological War:**

After the Second World War, the U.S. foreign policy saw a number of changes, specifically they sought to intervene effectively in international politics. The "vacuum" created by the decline of the West European system after the war, was attempted to be filled in by the U.S.A. Simplistically speaking, their strategy was to curb the growing influence of communism. An attack on communist ideological tenets was seen
as an effective weapon to obstruct Soviet propaganda and development. George F. Kennan, an important ideologue for the USA, sought to introduce into the Soviet Union, information about the United States which would counter what the Soviet people heard from their own governments. John Foster Dulles, American Secretary of State (1953-59), advocated a more militant version of the same approach. He saw the world as a battlefield of the conflict between "the idea of freedom" and "the idea of slavery." Their characterization of the Soviet Union as a "devil empire" or a "totalitarian state" was precisely based on this proposition.

After the 1917 revolution, ideological enmity compounded national differences; almost every American political leader was obliged to hate the Soviet economic and political system. Especially after the World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States were doomed to be antagonistic. This was because the ruling regimes in both countries were sustained by their economic-political systems. Preservation of the regime depended on preservation of the system, and vice versa.

Since the 1950's, the overt policy of the United States to "contain" the Soviet Union by preventing any extension of communist influence, was central to their policy. The two countries were consistently involved in an ideological

67. Ibid., p.204.
propaganda warfare, and in the search of hegemony, whereby they could control each other's expansionism.

Following Stalin's demise, things began to change quickly. The first sign of change became noticeable in the Soviet foreign policy as early as 1949. The elements of "irrational defensiveness" disappeared and Soviet foreign policy considerably became more dynamic and sensitive to the intricacies of evolving international realities. The Soviet Union gave up its rigidity and adopted a relatively liberal attitude towards international relations. As a result, a number of talks and summits were held between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A.

The United States sought three basic objectives in its relationship with the Soviet Union: avoiding nuclear war; containing the spread of Soviet power and ideology; and gradually encouraging a change in the nature and behaviour of the Soviet Union. It is believed that, "Soviet intentions were always opaque to Americans because of Soviet secrecy, and American interactions have been opaque to Soviets because of incoherence and cacophony".68 As regards the foreign policy, the country can have a consistent foreign policy, for, by its nature, foreign policy involves balancing competing objectives in a changeable world. Hence, neither the Soviet Union nor the U.S. were absolutely consistent or coherent in their approach. The Yalta agreements of Feb 1945

68. Ibid., pp.231-32, 35.
raised the hope of world peace and apparently laid the basis for post war cooperation. But shortly, they provided the focus of bitter dissension in which each side accused the other of having broken its solemn promises, resulting in disputes which led to mutual distrust and to a hardening of positions on both sides.69 Thus, in fact, peace gave way to the Cold War and superpower rivalry with international ramifications.

THE FORMATION OF NATO AND WARSAW PACT

NATO

One of the main reasons why North Atlantic treaty was held together for such a long period was the fear of Soviet aggression on its member states. Harry S. Truman and Robert A. Taft, in a message to the Senate, on April 12, 1949, wrote, because "the world has grown too small, the oceans to our east and west no longer protect us from the reach of brutality and aggression"... The North Atlantic treaty is an expression of the desire of the people of the United States for peace and security, for the continuing opportunity to live and work in freedom".70 This treaty fulfilled the same

69. Christopher Larch, "The Cold War, Revisited and Revisioned", in Hoffman, n.48, p.163.

70. Ernest, R., ed., n.47, p.211.

The debate in the U.S. Senate on the ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation revealed some very noteworthy divergences of opinion within the American ruling class. The administration secured the 2/3 majority necessary for the ratification of the treaty. Only 13 out of the 15 senators voted against.

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need. According to them the treaty was nothing but their determination to work for a peaceful world. The world however was to be designed on their terms, i.e. capitalist, pro-western world.

The 12 nations which signed this treaty undertook to exercise their right of collective or individual self-defence against armed attack, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. All the nations signing this treaty shared a common heritage of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. However, A. Vyshinsky criticised the NATO at the Sept. 23, 1949 session of the U.N. General Assembly, and said that NATO was supposedly dictated by the desire to strengthen the U.N., but, on the contrary, strikes a new serious blow against the organization and promotes its further weakening. He pointed out that the formation of the NATO could not be justified by reference to the right to check United Nations member to individual or collective self-defensive. Such a right, according to Article 51 of the Charter, can arise only in the event of an armed attack on a member of the the organization. In a memorandum on the

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A number of Republican Senators, who were by no means opposed to the aggressive policy embodied in the treaty, voted against its ratification. For detailed analysis see Sergevgera, "The U.S. Senate North-Atlantic Treaty debate and what it revealed", New Times, No.31, July 27, 1949, p.5.

71. Ibid., p.112-13.

NATO, the Soviets asserted that the references to Article 51 of the U.N. Charter were groundless and were intended only to conceal the true aggressive aims. The treaty has nothing in common with the aims of self defense of the states participating in the treaty. It was not meant to contribute to the strengthening of peace and international security which is an obligation of the U.N. members. 73

In fact, the basic interests of NATO members were four: i) defence of the homeland; ii) economic well-being of the society; iii) security of the North Atlantic areas and the adjacent regions; and iv) the preservation of western democratic value system. In 1949 there existed a strong convergence, a community of interests on all four of these basic interests among the original twelve states that joined the North Atlantic Pact; there was an urgent need for the military power of the United States to be projected over Western Europe to prevent Soviet "encroachment and intimidation" of the war weakened countries in the West. There was an urgent need for economic cooperation and growth. All NATO members believed that western democratic values were seriously endangered by the Soviet ideology. 74 Therefore the belief and practice of Western value system has had an important consideration for becoming the member of NATO.


The consensus on national interests led to the expansion of its membership in the mid 1950 to include Greece, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Germany and thus an alliance system that effectively contained the Soviet Union was built. Spain, whose geography was an important link in the Western defense chain, was denied NATO membership because it was stated that the Spanish government's value system was incompatible with the ideological interests shared by the other member states. 75

With the formation of NATO, some American Leaders thought that it would develop a strong military posture across the board, including non-nuclear or conventional forces. But it did not happen so. And since the Soviet 'non nuclear' threat to Western Europe was incorrectly perceived, large efforts to counter it would be futile. 76 In fact, the Soviet Union, as an alternative political system, always posed a serious threat to America.

Since 1945 the United states became the main concern of Russian foreign policy. Prior to 1939 America's role in world affairs was not so significant, but after World War II the entire scenario changed. The Soviet leadership realized that the timing was of supreme importance; a push policy in Eastern Europe carried risk, but Soviet gains had to be foreclosed before Western policy became more determined and anti-

75. Ibid., p.165.

Thus NATO fueled cold war rivalry. By building an alliance system which kept out the Eastern and Southern bloc, on the basis of their own limited national interest the Western bloc set the terms of international relations for the decades to come.

The orthodox interpretation of the cold war developed in the late forties and early fifties - years of acute international tension and super power rivalry during which the Soviet-U.S. relations deteriorated with alarming speed.

**THE WARSAW PACT**

The World War II ended in a crushing defeat of the fascist states which the Soviets felt had acted as the bulwark of world imperialism. The victorious Soviet Union emerged even stronger: this time it was not alone, rather a community of "socialist states" had also come into being under the Soviet Umbrella'. But Soviet relations with Western powers deteriorated even further. Stalin saw this danger and commented that "the capitalist encirclement is no empty phrase, it is a very real and unpleasant feature". By 1947

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77. Ulan, n.12, p.423.


79. J.V. Stalin, Report to Plenary Seminar of the CC of the CPSU (B), 13 March 1937, p.11. Soviet scholars viewed the post war international situation as a sharp demarcation of forces, "the camp of peace of democracy was headed by the Soviet Union, while the camp of imperialism and was headed by the USA. In the struggle between these two camps, forces of democracy gain while (Contd........)
East-West relations were really strained. President Truman was instrumental in creating this deterioration. With regard to East-West relations, he declared, "nearly every nation must choose between the two worlds". His declaration sounded like an ultimatum to the rest of Europe: "to be with us or to be counted against us". Besides the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan was launched with the desire to rehabilitate Western Europe and turn it into a major bastion of Western political and military strategy.

By 1950, the Communists had consolidated their priorities in the Eastern European armed forces during national front coalition period of people's democracy. The Soviet Union as the leader of the Soviet Community provided the theoretical guidelines and practical considerations involving policies, principles, strategy and tactics and helped in the training of the armed forces. The basic parameters within which Soviet foreign policy operated, were to look for advantages in the Western imperialist system and the fusion of ideology in foreign policy, countering NATO militarily and politically, and consolidating the gains of

(Contd...f/n.79.....)


socialism in the Central and Eastern Europe. Obviously, the Soviet Union was forced to assess NATO moves, particularly in the European context.

On the 11th of May 1955, the Warsaw Conference of European countries on safeguarding European peace and security was held in which Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, GDR, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Czechoslovakia participated. As a matter of fact, the Warsaw Treaty was rooted in Soviet and East European fears of a reunited Germany. Specifically, it grew out of Moscow's campaign to prevent West German membership in the Atlantic Union. "The Warsaw Pact primarily symbolized a buffer between West Germany and the Soviets. Because without this pact Soviet military involvement in Europe could not become possible." Needless to say, the pact legalized Soviet troops in Hungary and Romania, which otherwise should have been withdrawn.

Under the Warsaw treaty, a joint command of Soviet and East European armed forces was set up. Soviet Marshal I.S. Konev was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the joint armed forces. He was to be assisted by the Ministers of Defense of the other member States who acted as deputy Commanders-in-


84. Remington, n.81, p.16.
The Warsaw Pact Headquarters started functioning under the overall guidance of the Soviet ministry of defense. The treaty was signed by the socialist countries under the leadership of the Soviet Union to safeguard the security of these countries and maintain peace in Europe. The Warsaw Pact was supposed to "protect" sovereign rights and to "ensure mutual defense of the sovereignty of all its signatories".

A cursory glance over the Warsaw treaty indicates the international priorities of the Khrushchev-Bulganin leadership. The treaty consists of eleven articles defining the member state relationship to one another, particularly in the event of aggression, to the United Nations, and to the non-member states. Basing the treaty on the principle of respect for independence and sovereignty of each other and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The Warsaw pact was thus formulated as an alliance that bound the socialist countries together, based on Marxist-Leninist principles and revolutionary changes. The characteristics of these societies were entirely different from those which formed the NATO; they claimed to be purely defensive in nature. The very fact that NATO came into existence in 1949 whereas the Warsaw Pact came into existence only in 1955, as


87. Remingtion, n.81, p.15.
a desperate defensive move after all Soviet peace proposals were turned down by the Western powers. 88

Evidently, the formation of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact heralded a new era of tension, hostility and cold war in international affairs. Especially, East-west relations deteriorated to the extent of breaking into physical war between the two powers. The Soviet perceived the formation of NATO as a serious threat to their existence. Primarily because NATO (US had acquired nuclear power much before USSR) relied on the nuclear arsenal of the U.S. as the ultimate deterrent for Warsaw Pact aggression on the alliance. The U.S. had hinted the use of its strategic nuclear force against the Warsaw Pact if a conflict reached a certain point. At times, the USA threatened to use these weapons early on in a war, even if the initial attack was non-nuclear. At other times it pledged to use them if NATO found itself incapable of mounting a serious conventional defense against a conventional attack. 89 Though the Warsaw Treaty, was essentially a defensive treaty, the parties. To it undertook, in the event of any of them being attacked, to exercise their right under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter and come to the immediate assistance of the State or States attacked with all the means they may deem necessary, including armed or strategic defence forces. For that they


89. Schwartz, n.76, pp.2-3.
had agreed to set up a joint command of their armed forces. Many of the war-torn European countries became dependent on the U.S. for security. Consequently the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the leaders of the two respective camps; and thus acquired the status of super powers. This then, led to a spiralling arms race, with dire consequences on the economy of the world. The drive for hegemony led to the outbreak of wars in the Third World and general militarization of consciousness.

CONCLUSION:

In this chapter we have examined the main trends of Soviet - U.S. relations in the historical context, beginning with 1917 to the formation of Warsaw Pact in 1955. Lenin, undoubtedly, played a major role in formulating Soviet foreign policy. The basic formulation of Soviet foreign policy was based on the theory of imperialism. In the wake of the October Revolution the Bolsheviks had to grapple with chaos, civil war and foreign intervention. There were unprecedented troubles. In fact, after revolution life became much more difficult and state affairs highly unmanageable. In such a situation they attempted to establish new kinds of relationships. Prior to 1917, no attempt was made to work out a programme of the foreign policy of a socialist state in the midst of capitalist states.


Amidst heavy pressure, the survival of Soviet Russia
amongst other states became increasingly difficult, especially when they were going to create a new political system and structure which in its very form was fundamentally opposed to the capitalist systems, and thus challenged their very existence. It necessitated a period of peace, and Lenin realized this and put forward the concept of peaceful co-existence which focussed on the idea that, despite the fact that two contradictory and opposing systems existed, it was still possible for them to co-exist in an environment of amity. However, peaceful coexistence did not mean reconciliation or lasting settlement. Scholars have differences over the first mention of 'peaceful coexistence', but it clearly evolved in Lenin's practice of foreign policy, which toned down its propagandist approach in international politics.

After Lenin's death, though Stalin also followed the policy of peaceful coexistence, he was inflexible and dogmatic in his approach. As a result the concept of peaceful coexistence was also hardened, as maximum emphasis was given to the concept of two "hostile camps", and their "irreconciliable antagonisms". Stalin thus sought to modernise and develop the Soviet Union into superpower status, to challenge what he perceived was imperialism, which in turn challenged the existence of the Soviet Union.

The roots of Soviet-U.S. antagonism lay in their contrary world views; the difference of their perception led them to endless polemics, allegation and counter-allegation.
The United States showed its hostility towards the Soviet Union by not recognising till 1933, for almost sixteen years.

During World War II, the US sided with allied countries and the Soviets were part of this uneasy alliance. After the War, the U.S.A. appeared to be hegemonic in the global system, because it was the first country to acquire nuclear capability which for some time remained unchallenged. Moreover, economically, they had more resources and were viable. The fact that their economy boomed after the War, the USA emerged from their pre-war isolation as a dominant actor in world politics, determined to curb communism. The First step in this attempt was building a Western alliance and reviving the shattered Western European economies.

After World War II, Stalin and Eugene S. Varga debated over the prospects of the survival of capitalism. Varga’s main contention was that a capitalist economic crisis might be deferred through state intervention, socialist reforms, i.e. planning. Seemingly, Varga was misunderstood by orthodox Marxists and was, therefore, attacked for being "soft on capitalism". Stalin outrightly rejected Varga’s thesis and argued that capitalist collapse was imminent and war among capitalist states was more likely than war between capitalism and socialism. Interestingly enough, history not only validated Varga’s his assessment but later his analysis was fully accepted by Soviet scholars.
Again on the Soviet-U.S. relations, one of the most glaring features has been that of constant propaganda against each other. The term 'Devil empire' and 'totalitarian state' were frequently used in American writings to denote the internal and external functioning of the Soviet Union. Hating the Soviet Union had become the fond hobby of the U.S. statesmen. They condemned the Soviet Union for maintaining excessive secrecy.

After World War II, the U.S. took the initiative in almost all European affairs and also a keen interest in Asian affairs, in which they got increasingly involved. The formation of NATO in 1949 under the U.S. leadership is a case in point. The NATO, was supposedly founded to preserve and promote Western value system.

Evidently, after World War II, the structure of world power witnessed a radical shift from a world dominated by the European great powers to a distribution of power between the US and the Soviet Union. For some time US alone enjoyed the nuclear monopoly. Decolonization saw the emergence of a myriad of new states, struggling to survive in the world body of nations.

In order to counter the NATO, the Soviet Union sponsored the Warsaw Pact in 1955. Already by the early 1950s, the Communists had consolidated their positions in Eastern Europe. Warsaw Pact was created in the name of safeguarding East European peace and security. The Warsaw
Pact legalized the Soviet troops in Hungary and Romania, and countered NATO, thus creating the system of 'balance of power' in Europe.

In the history of East-West relations, the formation of the NATO and WARSAW Pact meant the clear bifurcation of the world, which reversed hostility and developed the Cold War.

We can safely conclude that the Soviet-U.S. relations have influenced the realm of international politics, so much so that the concept of bipolar world has emerged out of this relationship. This relationship was so overriding that even the most recent concept of multipolar world by no means overshadow the important role played by Soviet-U.S. relations. Moreover, the terms of discourse between the Soviet and US were set in this historic period. Though significant shifts occurred in the 50's to the 1980's, the basic course of events had been set during this period, influencing all international events for years to come.