COLD WAR AS SOCIAL CONFLICT, IRON CURTAINS AND APPLICATION OF DÈTENTE POLICY AS COLD WAR CONCEPT

BY

Effiong Ekpo, Ph.D
Department of History and International Studies
Ritman University, Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State
08035428019, 07051248196
dreffiongekpo48@gmail.com
&
Udeoji Ebele Angela,PhD
Department of Political Science,
National Open University of Nigeria, Jabi Abuja-Nigeria
uebele@noun.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This paper is to evaluate the peculiarity of iron curtain that was to fortified borders in central Europe, because it was not used to describe similar border between communist and capitalist states basis. During the cold war iron curtain received prominence, why though it describe the boundary that separate the Warsaw Pact countries from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation NATO countries from the beginning to the end of the cold war (1945-1991). It traced ideologically minded westerners that interpreted cold war as a social conflict that signifying that Moscow was trying

to impose its own authoritarian system in a world that it meant to rule. It dismisses the popular nation that cold war was imperialistic ruling circles which America was trying to enslave all mankind under the yoke of Wall Street. The ideological perspective to the conflict makes the difference and the primary justification to the distrust by the two superpowers and their allies that created a reality to the ordinary man in the society beyond the operative objectives. The paper instead opines that cold war as a global social systemic conflict located in the typology of conflict or interest, which subsume economic interest, ideological incompatibility and misperception. The paper postulates that the antagonist behaviour in the Soviet Union, and US and her allies brought a second thought in the system, as a result dètente was a solution, and it is strategies relaxation of tension during the cold war associated with the diplomatic reactions between superpowers and later china. The paper x-rays the effects of dètente as cold war concept. The paper arrives at the conclusion that iron curtain became prominence as most states of the eastern bloc of the iron curtain developed their own international economic and military aliens. The method use was empirical by contacting textbooks and relevant journals. The paper concludes that iron curtain principles, dètente policy and approach to the cold war was the best methods of assessing the significance of cold war as social conflict.

KEYWORDS: *Cold, war, dètente nuclear, and weapons*

INTRODUCTION

The cold war, was not only a conflict of interest, ideology and misperception, it was also a geopolitical conflict, which was a product of international consequences of the socio-economic constitution of the soviet power and the way it related to the world and expanded. The source of the geo-political conflict is located in ideological preferences of each superpower like the economic conflict located in the cold war conflict of interest. Furthermore, there was also the internal socio-economic conflict within each superpower bloc through in varying degrees which also dictated the tempo of the external cold war conflict. This point becomes more salient when considered in relation to the collapse of the Soviet Union as a result of domestic economic pressure it faced that brought about the decisive end of the cold war. (Gaddis, 1979).

The origin of the term "Cold War" can be described to George Orwell in one of his articles in the British Tribune Newspaper essay titled "You and the Atomic Bomb", published on 19 October 1945. The essay explored a world living amidst a precarious threat of nuclear war following the 6th and 9th of August, 1945 when the United State of America bomber tagged "Town Gay" bombed two Japanese Cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Consequently, he went further to warn of "a peace that is No Peace" which he called a permanent "Cold War". According to Orwell, the war is the ideological confrontation between the Soviet Union and the western power, US.

The cold war began immediately after the Second World War and span over a period of five decades from 1945 – 1991. It was

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

an open yet restricted conflict between two groups of Nations that have evolved and recognised as practitioners of a political system and its ideology – groups of nations often classified as the Eastern and Western blocs. The Soviet Union and its Statelite states are known as the Eastern bloc and the US and its allies are referred to as western bloc. Thus, the foreign policies of these groups of Nations especially the Soviet Union and the US were dominant issues and conflict trajectories of the cold war from it latent stage in 1945 until the end and collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Nye, 2003).

APPROACHES TO COLD WAR

Since the collapse of Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, documents and relevant information have emerged from the Soviet achieves and made accessible to scholars of international relations. These documents have provoked intense discuss and debate on which side and who started the confrontation. One fact, which cannot be over-emphasized in the emergent discourse and debate, is the notion that the cold war was highly probable and inevitable in a bipolar structure. The bipolar structure staged two superpowers to be entangled into a power vacuum struggle in Europe and of course it was not unlikely that they will find it easy to disengage. (Williams, 1959).

Similarly, systemic and structural explanation done cannot be sufficient for the understanding of the international hostility that spanned over four decades; Beyond the systemic and structural explanation lies the understanding factors of individual and domestic politics of Roosevelt and Truman of the US and Stalin and Khrushchev of the Soviet Union. This may account for the

revisionist focus on domestic politics for a clearer understanding of the Cold War.

Both Schools of thought did not consider the significance of both superpowers' social interest in pursuing their different security objectives, the US security preserved the capitalist class in Western Europe while the Soviet Security System requires the elimination of the capitalist class and the social properties upon which it class rule rested. Though ignored the social aspect of the rivalry in terms of security objective were as important as the ideological and economic interest because they attempt to preserve and expand on their ideological and economic interest, they are either overtly or covertly imparting on the social interest which benefit from it. (Ronke, 2006).

The robust account of the orthodox, revisionist and post revisionists of the cold war suggest that the convict between the US and Soviet Union after the second world war in 1945 was inevitable. It also reinvigorated of conflict in terms of relations between the Soviet Union and the Western allied prior to World War II, which the US was invited to intervene and reserved the west. Finally, the different character in state ideology, interest and geopolitical circumstances were in themselves antagonistic and germane to incompatibility therefore the cold war was inevitable. Since the beginning of the cold war, several questions such as who and what caused the conflict has been a major discourse among scholars and policy formulators which has given prominence to three schools of thought:- (i) Traditionalist (ii) Revisionist and (iii) Post revisionist (Blackborn, 1989).

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

Traditionalist

The traditionalists were the early writers and commentators in the mid 1945 and 1950, they are otherwise known as the orthodox approach. The traditionalist strongly holds the opinion that Joseph Staline the leader of Soviet Union caused the cold war. They argued that between the First World War and the evil of the Second World War and even after, the Soviet Union had exhibited an aggressive and expansive tendency, which poses to be a great threat to the international community (Collins 2003).

According to them, the US had a foreign policy and diplomacy that was defensive. For instance soon after the war, the US proposed "a universal world order and collective security through the UN". The main thrust of a collective security within the UN is enshrined in the resolve states to ensure world peace through a system in which states in the union accept that the security of one is the collective responsibility of all such that it will join forces to suppress any form of aggression but which also is distinct from collective defense or alliance system.

It is against this backdrop and modest understanding that the US made her proposal. No doubt, the inherent, physical location and historical experience of frequent invasion and the wanton destruction and lose of lives of its citizens in the Second World War propelled the Soviet Union to pursue its expansion increase security by occupying and controlling the internal affairs of countries that bordered such as the polish Government. Thus, the Soviet Union did not accept the proposal for the establishment of the UN.

Similarly, after the war, while America was disposed to demolishing its troop, the Soviet Union never did rather it left large

armies in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the threat from Soviet Union guided interest even when America was ready to accommodate Soviet interest as manifested in the facts conference; It become apparent that Stalin, the Soviet leader was not ready to abide by the terms of the Yalta Agreement when the strongly and conspicuously interfered with the election of Poland (Coser, 1956).

The character of Soviet expansion is explained by its enthronement of a Communist Government in Czechoslovakia in 1948, Berlin blockage from 1948 to 1949 as an attempt to squeeze the west out of western Berlin and Communist North Korea invasion of South Korea. These precarious situations at different points and time gradually awakened the fear and suspicion of the Soviet Union in the west. Consequently, the traditionalist posited that those events precipitated the launch of the Cold War (Collin 1991).

Revisionist

The revisionist school of thought featured prominently in the 1960s and early 1970s. They had a strong conviction that the Cold War was caused by the US and not the Soviet expansion as the traditionalist contend.

According to this school of thought, bipolarity was not a consequence of the Second World War, because it never existed. They posited that, placing the US and the Soviet Union on scale balance then, after the war, showed an imbalance in favour of the US which was already strengthened by the war and had developed her nuclear weapons. Infact, according to their opinion, the Soviet Union was much weaker than the US. Thus: there was no basis for

the assumption of the existence of bipolarity (Gaddis, 2005)

Evidently, they argued that the Soviet Union suffered great loss in the war with an estimated death toll of about 30 million people combined with a depressed economy of low industrial production in 1939 which could not be compared or compete with the economy of the US. The UN was capable of offering financial assistance to other countries offer the war. Given the prevailing economic situation, the Soviet Union had strongly felt that it should look inward to build up her economy and repair the domestic damage. Thus, the behaviour of the Soviet Union was, quite moderate in its foreign policies as they tried to restrain Chinese Communist Mac Zedong and Greek Communist from taking power

Also, in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Finland, Stalin the Soviet leader allowed non-communist Government to reign. Though the disposition and opinion of the revisionist were strictly pro-soviet and anti-west, they were also classified into two camps of "Soft and hard revisionist" (Gohe, 1996).

a. Soft Revisionist

The soft revisionist pitched the discourse on the individual as the sole dramatis personal in the origin of the conflict. This group contended that the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April 1945, and his successor, president Harry Truman was a critical factor in the diplomatic relations between US and Soviet Union. According to them, President, Roosevelt was an optimistic man who thought was aware that Eastern Europe had fallen under the influence of Soviet Union, did not advocate strong resistance against Russian expansion. However, for this Successor, President Truman,

Communist was unacceptable and was determined to pursue a policy of strong resistance against Soviet expansion because if not checked it could extend from Eastern Europe into Western Europe. (Gampton,1997).

Truman never believed the communist. In 1945, the US during his presidency "cut off the lend-lease programme of wartime and that some ships bound for Soviet ports had to turn around in the mid ocean". Other instances cited by the soft revisionist to buttress their position, include Truman's attempt to intimate Stalin at the Potsdam Conference of July 1945, when he announced the US success in exploding her first atomic bomb. It was also alleged that he tired his secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace, for urging an improved relations with the Soviet Union and appointed a profound anti-communist as secretary of defense, helped to give credence to why the US was anti-Soviet.

b. The Hard Revisionist

It is all about a paradigm shift from dramatic personal to policy thrust such as liberal capitalist democracy, prominent among them were Gabriel and Joyce KoCko and William A. William who argued that, "the American economy required expansionism and that the US planned to make the world safe, not for democracy but for capitalism". According to the hard revisionists, the American Economic hegemony was strongly built on intolerance of any organised and closed economy without free market occasioned by fear of repeat occurrence of another economic depression caused by the unprecedented absence of external trade.

This group posited that the Marshall plan – US aid to Europe was designed to propagate the economic influence of the United

States over the world, and that it was most appropriate for Soviet Union to reject it as a possible threat to their share of influence in Eastern Europe. (Geobbal, 1945).

Post-Revisionist

The post revisionist school of thought was a marked departure from the traditionalist and revisionist points of view. This revisionist era spanned from the beginning of the late 1970s to 1980s up to the end of the Cold War and exemplified by John Lewis Gaddis. This school of thought unlike the earlier ones-the traditionalist and revisionist could not blame anybody rather they considered it as an inevitable phenomenon. (Krasnor, 1985). According to them, prior to the Second World War, there was a multi-polar system with at least seven major powers but after the havoc and wreck by the war, only two superpowers survived the US and the Soviet Union. The emergence of only two superpowers (bipolar system) and the weakness of the European states created a power vacuum, which starred at the US and Soviet Union.

Thus, there are bound to manifest some sort of competition, and conflict is inevitable, therefore according to Gaddis and his group, it is of no effect to seek for whom to blame (Robber, 1974). Evidently, the post revisionist explored the inherent differences between the US and Soviet Union in relation to individual state goals and interest, which brought incompatibility to the fore. For instance, the Soviet Union and US had different goals at the end of the second world war which were classified as tangible goals – general context of world polities respectively.

The Soviet tangible goals clashed with US intangible goals,

instance, the US as a measure of resolving future international conflicts proposed a worldwide international community, democratically organised under a sort of parliament of nations like the UN, the Soviet Union found it hard to subscribe to that kind of organisation. The plan for the economic reconstruction and integration of west Germany and indeed the Marshall plan initiated by the US and supported by the western allies were issues of interest, which the Soviet Union opposed, alleging that a reconstructed west Germany and integrated into the west would be a threat to its future. The economic assistance to Europe was another imperialist goal of the US designed as anti-communist campaign against the Soviet Union (Kempe, 2011).

Ideological in Compatibility

This paper acknowledged that, the Cold War was in its essence a war of idea. There was a consensus in both Washington and Moscow in relation to the observation of James F. Byrnes, US. Secretary of state, when he observed that there is too much difference in the ideologies of the US and Russia to work out long term programme of cooperation. Byrnes comment reinforces the fact that such scenery is a precursor to conflict within the content of the Cold war rhetoric, the US and the Soviet Union couched their ideology to depict the incompatibility as imperialistic, capitalist system and the atheistic communistic system respectively. It is not this set of core philosophical principles held by leaders and citizens alike that are not ideal but commitment to an ideology is prone to perceive other ideologies as competitive or as challenges to their belief system which may at times cause hatred and hostility

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

(Person, 1988).

Ideology according to this paper is the "Core philosophical principles that leaders and citizens collectively hold about politics, the interest of political actors, and the way people ought to ethically behave". Undoubtedly, such assumption was prevalent in Washington and Moscow as was witnessed in the west and east bloc's when ideological differences made the cold war a conflict not only between the two powerful states but also between two different social systems.

Misperception

This paper defined conflict "as a perceived divergence of interest", it holds that conflicts is a perceived incompatibility of interest, values, needs, aim which may or may not be expressed in behaviour". This is a fundamental psychological factor, which was preponderant in the cold war. The superpowers had an ingrained misperception of each other's motive that fertilised mistrust. When conflict parties imbibed mistrust, they are prone to vilify the actions of the other party while the see theirs as virtue (Wetting, 2003).

Naturally, when this happens it is a precursor to conflict and hostility is inevitable. On the other hand, when the evil intentions of an adversary is assumed as truth, self-fulfilling prophecy will be given birth to which may affect the future by the very way it is anticipated. This is the pivot on which the wheel of the Cold War arms race revolved. Also, this paper is apt to describe it as "mistakenly fearing that a rival is preparing for an offensive war, a potential victim than arms in defense, thereby provoking the fearful rival to fulfil the prophecy by defensively building more weapons".

when the later advanced the cause of the Global UN System while the former pursued consolidation of its influence over its controlled and satellite states is Eastern Europe. Beyond the different goals likes the issues of different styles and designs to actualise the incompatible goals under one international body like the UN even though each had its own sphere of influence:- Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and US in Western Europe. (Wilde, 1958).

The Cold War as a Social Conflict

The cold war began immediately after the seeing world war and span over a period of five decades from 1945 – 1991. It was an open yet restricted conflict between two groups of nations that have evolved and recognised as practitioners of a political system and its ideology – groups of nations often classified as the Eastern and western blocs.

Four basic themes of social conflict theory have been identified by this paper are the following:-

- Social stratification to explain inequality among groups and their domination over one another.
- Causes of what happen in society are sought in the interests of groups and individuals and their interest in maintaining their positions of domination.
- Who wins what in these struggles depend on the material resources for violence of economic exchange and also for social organisation and shaping of emotions and ideas, and
- Social change driver especially by conflict, hence, long periods of relatively stable domination are punctuated by

intense and dramatic episodes of group mobilisation.

These four basic themes of social conflict theory are elucidated by this paper will serve as a theoretical framework that guides our discussion of the cold war as a global social systemic conflict located in the typology of conflict of interest, which subsume economic interest, ideological incompatibility, and misperception. (Turner,1987). The cold war is a competition between the US and Soviet Union for hegemonic leadership. An evaluation of the cold war using Kenneth Boulding's predictive outlook of conflict when he stated that, "situation of competition in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other". Several other events and causes can aid our understanding of the conflict properties of the cold war – power rivalries that ended without great power violence.

Cold War as Conflict of Interest

The power vacuum created of the end of the World War II and the power transition, which lay at the fact of the US and Soviet Union to top international hierarchy, created on atmosphere of suspicion therefore conflict became inevitable. Prior to the Cold War, neither the US nor Soviet Union did sought unilateral advantage rather both expressed the hope of cooperation to reach agreement. This underscored an informal agreement in its sphere of influence as advocated by President Franklin Roosevelt (Daroty, 1989).

This was in consonance with the UN expectation that the great powers would cooperate to preserve world peace. For

This attitude featured prominently during the Cold War when both superpowers imposed their perception of reality on events and where ultimately enslaved by their own vision(Rosenbers, 2006).

At the latent stage of the Cold War, especially with the Soviet expansionist activities as a manifest national sense of insecurity, the west led by the US and even Winston Churchill in his popular Iron curtain speech titled "SINEWS OF PEACE" allied to the Soviet Union as pursuing a world dominance agenda: Likewise, the Soviet Union saw the US response to the very many crises as a plan to ward off the Soviet Union and to encircle and destroy their socialist system. (Kelsey, 2001).

Characteristics of Cold War

The nature of the Cold War featured certain overwhelming conflict properties that sustained war for five decades. The relations between lead nations of each of the blocs (EAST AND WEST) the Soviet Union and US were characterised by suspicious, mutual distrust and misunderstanding and this was extended to their allies. The absence of trust and compromise were so intense, and heightened the fear of outbreak of a third world war as direct consequences of the prediction of nuclear weapons and arms race.

For instance, the US have never ceased to express her fear and concern over the possible threat posed by the Soviet Union Geopolitical expansionist tendencies and attempt at the introduction of communism throughout the world. Similarly, the Soviet Union was weary of the US imperialist movement with capitalism and the attempt of stopping revolutionary activities in other Countries (Longman, 1971).

There was no direct war in the execution of the Cold War. However, there were incidences of armed conflict where the superpowers were indirectly involved in terms of espionage, armed. Conflict through surrogated and against surrogates, through spies, traitors and undercover agents. The Korean war, Vietnam war and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were among other wars that brought to the fore the tension between the two superpowers in an armed struggle by giving substantial support to their allies in terms of funding and supply of weapons. Furthermore, in the course of each bloc strategising their conflict arsenal both the Soviet Union and the US involved much of its peace time resource in developing strategic military technology as a form of deterrence and secret conflict through estimate.

No doubt, the Soviet Union and the US were preoccupied with the development and production of nuclear weapons and a lot of intelligence service agents lost their lives.

The period of military relaxation of tension often referred to as defence during the late 1960s and early 1970s were characterised by several events, which encourage the superpowers to try to control the nuclear arms race and resolve some of the conflicts. Consequently, new form of alliances emerged which altered the pattern of international relation beyond the two clearly opposed blocs when less powerful states began to assert their independence" (Myrdal, 1976).

The Cold war manifested to an unprecedented arms race; with the invention and development of an endless list of weapons both conventional and nuclear weapons which include but not limited to get fighters, bombers, nuclear weapons, chemical and

biological weapons, surface-to-air missiles, antiaircraft artillery, regular artillery surface to surface missiles etc.

The advancement in military technology was capital intensive is terms of manufacturing investments supported by the superpower. The western bloc was more favourably disposed to such investments and fielded weapons in many of these areas with superior effectiveness. This is because prior to the cold war the US enjoyed a robust economy and was a head of all others in digital computers and technology (Sehmid, 2006).

The secrete services of intelligences Agencies such as CIA (US) KGB (Soviet Union) M16 (UK) BND (West Germany) and Stasi (East Germany) were solely responsible as the armies of these countries rarely had much participation in the cold war. This is because the major world powers never entered into armed conflict overtly against each other. The cold war strategies and mandates were often carried out by the secret service personal in espionage who were either civilians or military recruited on location or conscripted into the services. These personnel stand a great risk and were most vulnerable to extrajudicial killings or used as near prisoners of war when detected spy airplane and surveillance aircraft used for these kinds of assignment were shut down when suspected or detected (Beer, 1972).

The symbol of the cold war struggle and hotspot of conflict was the city of Berlin as in Germany. The Berlin will represented the object of struggle, as it partitioned each of the power blocs. Berlin had a special status and was divided into four sectors occupied by the US, Soviet Union, Britain, and France. Though the City of Berlin was located within the heat of Soviet Zone of occupation, the

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

US, Britain and France decided to merge their sector for economic development and convenience. Suffice it that, this merger and audience may have contributed to the Soviet Union resolve to begin the Berlin blockade.

One prominent texture of the cold war strategy was the use of propaganda as a form of free information, which gave a background to the building of tensions between the Soviet Union and the US. The Cold War periods were a movement of intense conflict to relative cooperation, reciprocity when friendly initiative to one is reciprocated in kind, and action to reaction. As it were, both rural were willing to shift their ideological position, whenever, their national interests necessitate such inconsistence. Thus, the conflict procession between the US and Soviet Union during the Cold War displays a series of shift between periods of conflict and cooperation, each superpowers' posture toward the other tended to be reciprocal, and, for most periods between 1945 and 1992, confrontation prevailed over cooperation.

Iron Curtains

The cold war put the world on a dangerous course and the spending of billions of dollars in the arms race between the US and the Soviet Union. That was really a sad time in the history of man. Many people mostly young people lost their lives in the attempt to escape to the West. There was no freedom in the iron curtain countries. The term “IRON CURTAIN”, became synonymous with the cold war divisions, in Europe.

Iron curtain is the “description of the physical, ideological and military division of Europe between Soviet dominated

communist nations during the cold war, 1945 – 1991. The term IRON CURTAIN" described the antagonism between the Soviet Union and the West, the phrase received wider circulation after the March 5, 1946 speech by Winston Churchill to reveal the harsh and impenetrable nature of the divide (David, 1985).

This paper opines that the phrase "iron curtain" was used by British war time Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered in Missouri in March, 1946 calling US and British people to help preserve the peace that the allies won. It also described the emerging precarious era that would define international relation and polities after World War II. (John, 2006).

The US and its Western allies began a struggle that lasted for about five decades to contain Soviet expansion and spread of communism fostered by the Soviet Union, prior to the defeat of Germany in the World War II and United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union were allies against a common enemy Adolf Hitler of Germany and had met to chart a new course of post War Europe. They were able to partition Europe, whose boundaries were later adjusted by the position of each country's troops on the ground when the war in Europe ended in May 1945 (Hamessien, 1966).

Also, iron curtain is a term used to describe the boundary that separated the Warsaw Pact countries from the NATO countries from about 1945 until the end of the Cold War in 1991. The Iron curtain was both a physical and an ideological division that represented the way Europe was viewed after World War II. To the East of the Iron Curtain were the countries that were connected to or influenced by the Former Soviet Union. This included part of Germany (East Germany), Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania

and Albania (until 1960 when it aligned with China). While Yugoslavia was communist politically, it was not considered a part of the Eastern Bloc or behind the Iron Curtain. Josip Broz Tito, the president of Yugoslavia at the time, was able to maintain access with the West while leading a communist country. The other countries to the West of the Iron Curtain had democratic Government (Hoffman, 1960.

Cold War Iron Curtain

The Cold War Iron Curtain was actually both physical and ideological. While there was the idea of ideology separating the world, iron curtain become physical the moment the Berlin Wall was created, thus separating East and West. To put ourselves back in these times, we must recall that Soviet army had overrun Poland and advanced into Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Eastern Germany including East Berlin. The Soviet Union introduced communism as it sought to increase security by controlling the internal affairs of countries that bordered it. The activity of the Soviet Union poses dangerous threat to the US and the Western allies that desired a security system in which democratic government were established as widely as possible (Macpherson, 1981).

Much of the countries in Eastern and part of Centre Europe except West Germany, Switzerland and Austria were under the Soviet Union hegemony. The Soviet Union annexed Estonia, Latria, Lithuania, Eastern Poland, part of Eastern Finland, Northern Romania as Soviet Socialist Republics within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Soviet Union converted German Democratic

Republic, Peoples Republic of Bulgaria, Peoples Republic of Poland, Peoples Republic of Hungary, Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Peoples Republic of Romania and the Republic of Albania into Satellite State where Communist Soviet installed Government rule.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the only Eastern Bloc countries that retained its full independence. The country states of the Eastern bloc of the iron curtain developed their own international economic and military alliances such as Comecon and the Warsaw Pact. Some events such as the Marshal plan, Berlin blockade and airlift and the Coup d' etat in Czechoslovakia depicts further cold war division inside the iron curtain. The Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin's Strong opposition to the post war comprehensive recovery programme designed by the US to offer economic assistance to willing Europe nation including the Soviet Union and those of Eastern Europe depicts a remarkable reinforcement of its protective belt over Soviet controlled nations and what the iron curtain stands for in the cold war.

Though borne out of Stalin's apprehension over the US Interest in terms of political, cultural and economic penetration, forbade Soviet Eastern bloc countries from accepting marshal plan in the guise of the newly formed state. The Soviet Union went further to cut of surface road access to Berlin, popularly known as the Berlin blockade, to cut off all supplies in term of food, water and other sundry goods for the citizen of non-Soviet sector of Berlin (Mesqnita, 1998).

Berlin, a German City was a Soviet occupied territory and the only option to subvert the blockade was through United Air

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

Corridor. The US, Britain, France and other countries launched a campaign for massive aerial supply to the non-Soviet Sectors of Berlin. The Soviet Union lifted the Berlin blockade in 1949 as a result of the success of the aerial supply.

The physical shape of the iron curtain was in the form of border defences between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. The border area were restricted with heavy military presence notable among the border defense was the inner German border commonly known as CiFie Grenze in Germany between Eastern and West German. The inner German border were designed in different design to cater for their peculiar need, for example, in the rural areas, there were double fence made of steel Mesh with sharp edges, while near urban areas are higher concrete barrier similar to the Berlin walls (Morgenthau, 1954).

The barriers were created in at least a short distance inside East German territory to avoid encroachment into the western territory. The area had several guard post and signs with numerous watch towers set behind the barrier, the access to the area were strictly at persona risk because of the consistent surveillance by border guards. The civilian and army guard death toll at the border ran into several hundred as a result of common shooting incident (Padelford, 1976).

Apart from these, elsewhere, along the border between west and east the defense arrangements were like the intra-German border. During the period, the barrier in the Hungarian axis began at least 15 kilometre before the border, movement was highly restricted as only citizens area require special permission to enter the area with 5 kilometres of the border. The defense wall was

heavily fortified with a double barb wire fence, space laden with land mines which were later replaced with a electric signal fence, guard towers and a sand strip to track border violations.

The term, iron curtain was peculiar to the fortified borders in central Europe because it was not used to describe similar border between communist and capitalist states of Asia. Though the borderline between North and South Korea could be compared with the former inner German border, especially, in terms of the Militarisation however, it has never been conventionally considered as part of iron curtain. Rather when China fell to Mao-Tse-tung communist in 1949, the metaphors change to bamboo curtain (Mesquita, 2003).

Fall of Iron Curtain

Several events revealed that the free world is winning the cold war and dangers of a third world roar has decreased, and the spread of communist has been arrested, signs of strain and defiance are evident and cracks are opening in the iron curtain notably in the Soviet sphere of the cold war geography. For instances, the Soviet Union jettison its intervention in Eastern bloc politics because of the prevailing economic depression and politics stagnation (Palprer, 1953).

This new posture is in defiance to the Brigham Doctrine, which held that if socialist were threaten in any state, then other socialist government had an obligation to intervene to preserve it, in favour of the Sinetra Doctrine. In Poland and Hungary, anti communist candidate won a striking victory, the victory precede series of peaceful anti-communist revolution in central and eastern

Europe, that led to complete collapse of communism. In Hungary, the border guard were unable to intervene in a mass exodus of people across the Iron curtain as they fled into Austria. Also, in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania experienced mass protest against communist regime, the government relaxed border restriction and new regulations, which saw tens of thousands of West Berliner flood checkpoints during the iron curtains (Prakash, 1979).

November 9, 1989, remain the best date for the end of the cold war when the iron curtain was rapped open in Berlin Eastern Europe nation were pecking from behind the iron curtain and people were literally directing. Exactly 46 years after Churchill announced to the world from the same West Minister College that an iron curtain had descended over Europe, on May 6, 1992, he announced the end of iron curtain (Stranzz, 1954).

Dètente

Dètente is a French word for relaxation. In the Russian Lexicon, the word is razryadka meaning relaxation, discharge and in America parlance as alternative strategy to rollback. Dètente in general, is a strategy of seeking to relax tensions between adversaries to reduce the possibility of war. This paper sees dètente as period of reduced tension between military adversaries in which the risk of war is reduced (originally referring to the relaxed position of a crossbow.

It is a strategic relaxation of tension during the cold war associated with the diplomatic relation between the Soviet Union and US and later Chain – a thawing at a period roughly in the middle of the cold war. The US pursued dètente during the Nixon

administration as a means to pursue the goals of containment. The Soviet Union also adopted dètente as a term to describe their policies toward the US. After a series of events constrained the superpower to desire some measure of control of their nuclear arsenals (Haass, 2008).

Each of the superpowers had different reasons to pursue the course of dètente. For instances, the US, sooner than later discovered, that there are more effective ways of containing communism then she did in the past. Besides, they soon realised the comparative advantage and cost effectiveness of maintaining a peaceful relaxation with Soviet Union rather than the massive weapon production and maintaining a huge armed forces (Mansfield, 1993).

Similarly, the Soviet Union budgetary provision for dètente was huge when compared to its ailing economy, especially after the World War II dealt a huge blow for it. The huge spending in weapons development and maintenance presupposes that other areas of the economy such as basic household and living standard were relegated. Furthermore, the improved, relationship between the US and its archival with China, a former ally now enemy poses serious threat to Soviet Security, thus the Soviet Union sought for a better relation with the US. Suffice it that, this apprehension was extended to China an emerging world power that stock piled nuclear weapons through of smaller quantity than the superpowers. (Thompson, 1988).

Dètente as Cold War Concept

When the US and Soviet Union began strategic diplomatic

shift from past confrontational posture by bargaining with its adversaries and to express its interest in a more cooperative relations, they tacitly began laying the foundation of dètente. Using the words of Henry Kissinger, 1968, US, National Security Adviser to President Nixon "dètente sought to crest" a vested interest in cooperation and restraint, an environment in which competition can regulate and restrain their differences and ultimately move from competition to cooperation (Walta, 1959).

Dètente is the period when the relations between the US and Soviet Union during the 1960s, that is, the tension of East and West blocs wended, reduce competition and increased cooperation with a marked departure from past confrontation as a result of compromises at the negotiation table. Of course, it was a period when the superpowers met several times to discuss apaches to relaxing tension between and treaties that resulted from these meetings. The nuclear non-proliferation Treaty and outer space treaty were two of the first building blocks of dètente.

In June 10, 1973, Leonid Brezhner, Premier of the Soviet Union visited Washington as a high water mark in dètente between the US American astronauts and two Russian Cosmonauts resulted into five years of political negotiations and technical cooperation including exchange of engineers to the two countries space centers (Halle, 1967).

Trade relations between the two blocs increased substantially during the era of dètente. Most significant was the vast shipments of grain annually from the US to Soviet Union to cushion the failure Soviet collect wised agriculture known as KOLKHOZ. Specifically, dètente is seen to reflect mutual interest and

understanding cooperation and comprise as characteristic of superpowers relation rather than Marxist and Realist view that give greater impetus to material power, crises and conflict.

The key elements of dètente reflect common interest and cooperation overlooks the complex relationship between the superpowers. The following cold war events made dètente possible. The Sino-Soviet split, the Berlin wall, Cuban missile crises, Vietnam War, arms control and Helsinki conference (Hamm, 1983).

The End of Dètente

By the late 1970s, the cold war relaxation of tension was beginning to wane. Several reasons have been advance for the end of dètente. The Soviet Union had not ceased its military build-up in spite of the agreements and negotiations of the strategic arms limitation talks. For example, the Soviet Union deployed the new SS20 missiles in Europe. Similarly, the Soviet Union pursued its expansionist policies more vigorously by offering political and military support to emerging Marxist Governments in Angola, Afghanistan in 1977 – 1980 (Garthot, 1994).

It was alleged that the US undermined the arms control process when they failed to ratify SALT II and facilitated its allies in Europe, China and Japan to encircle the Soviet Union. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan Shared up a struggle allied regime and the boycott of 1980 summer Olympics. The US under the Jimmy Carter doctrine increased and boosted defense budget and began financial assistance to Pakistan consequently subsiding anti-Soviet Mujahedeen Fighters in the region.

President Regan opposed the concession of dètente and abandoned Salt II negotiations. One fundamental factor that sustained the cold war tension for over five decade was the mutual distrust and suspicion was also responsible for the end of dètente, because by 1980, the feeling of distrust and suspicion has increased tremendously when both nations acquired new leadership with aggressive disposition (Latober, 2002). One of such leader was President Ronald Regan of the US, who sought to increase the country's military arsenal, was reported to have said, “we don't mistrust each other because we are armed we are menaced because we distrusts each other”.

Concluding Thought

The nature of the cold war featured certain overwhelming conflict properties that sustained war for five decades. The relations between lead relations of each of the block, the Soviet Union and US were characterised by suspicious, mutual distrust and misunderstanding and this was extended to their allies. The absence of trust and compromise were so intense, and heightened the fear of outbreak of a third world war as a direct consequence of the production of nuclear weapons and aims race. This paper viewed the activities of the US as a more serious threat.

For instance, the US have never ceased to express her fear and concern over the possible threat posed by the Soviet Union geopolitical expansumist throughout the world, above all, the Soviet Union was weary of the US, imperialist movement with capitalism and the attempt of stopping revelatory activities in other countries.

However, iron curtain is a term used to describe the boundary

that separated the Warsaw Pact Countries from the NATO countries from about 1945 until the end of the cold war in 1991. The iron curtain was both a physical and ideological division that represented the way Europe was viewed after World War II. The physical shape of the iron curtain was in the form of border defense between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe.

Besides, there was a growing fear of a nuclear holocaustic especially with the growth in those countries that had nuclear weapons. A cursory look at the tripartite relations that existed in the Soviet Union that possessed nuclear weapons explains why the superpower had to pursue dètente. First, though with small volume of nuclear weapons, China was unable to continue to fear of world isolation and what the US did in Vietnam and her worsening relations with the Soviet Union.

For US, it became clearer that there are better ways of containing communism other than confrontation, military budget and arms race but rather more advantageous to pursue cooperation and maintain peaceful relations with Soviet Union after the Vietnam experience. Therefore, dètente, it is a strategic relaxation of tension during the cold war associated with the diplomatic relationship between the Soviet Union and US and later China.

This paper has the following recommendations:

- ✓ The orthodox revisionist debate on the origin of the caused crack and disintegration of alliances formed in the second world war should be discouraged.
- ✓ The issue of the character of the Soviet States expansion into

East Central Europe in the cold war which is a reflection of its form of international relation, mixed with its security objective be encouraged.

- ✓ The traditionalists view of Joseph Stalin that leader of the Soviet Union caused the cold war should be discountenance.
- ✓ The ideological perspective that cold war as the imperialist ruling circles of America where to enslave all mankind under the yoke of Wall Street was unfounded.
- ✓ The ensuring conflict and rivalry was called cold war because, in its characteristics manifestation, there was no direct physical confrontation or fighting between the superpowers, was true.
- ✓ The fundamental psychological factor, which was preponderant in the cold war was ingrained misperception of each other's motive that fertilised mistrust should not be practise by the superpowers
- ✓ The cold war strategies and mandates were often carried out by the secret service personnel in espionage who were either civilian or military recruited on location or conscripted into service. These personnel stand a great risk and were most vulnerable to extrajudicial killings or used as Prisoners of war when defected without compensation, those families should be compensated.

REFERENCES

Beer, F.A. (1972), "The Political Economy of Alliance: Benefits, Costs, and Institution in NATO Bererly Hills: Sase.

Blackburn, G. (1989)," The west and the world since 1945,"New York St. Martins Press.

Closer, L. (1956), "The Functions of social conflict; New York; Free Press.

Cohen, S. M, (1996),"New Pensian Dictionary or Quotation Pensian Books.

Collins, English Dictionary – Complete on unatrnased (2003) Harper Collins Publishers.

Collins, R (1991),"Conflict Theory and the Advance of Macro-Historical Sociology" In G, Ritzier (ed), Frontiers of social Theory, The New Synthesis' New York: Free Press.

Daoty, A. (1989), "Closed Borders: The contemporary Assault on Freedom of Movement," Yale: Tale University Press.

David, C. I. And Charles, K. (Jr) (1985), "Armies of NATOS Central Front,' James Publishing Company Limited.

Gaddis, John L. (1975)," we know: Rathinsans cold war History, London: Oxford university Boss.

Gaddis, T. L. (2005),"The Cold War: A new History Pensian Press.

Garthoff, R. (1994), "Dètente and confrontation: American- Soviet Relations from Nixon to Regime Booking Institution Press.

Goebbels, J. (1945),"Das Jahr 2000,"Das Ruch Hansard House of Common, Vol. 413.

Gramption, R. J.(1997),'Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century and After", New York Routledge.

Halle, L.J (1967),"The cold was As history,' New York Harper and Row Publishers.

Hamm, M.R. (1983), "New Evidence of Moscow Military Threat: The Heritage Foundation.

Hannessian, J. J. (1966), "The study and teaching of international Relations: Some comments on the current crisis", SAIS REVIEW.

Harrison, H. M. (2003),"Driving the Soviets up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations 19503-1961," Princeton University Press.

Hass, R. (2008), "The Age of Non-Polarity", Council on Frasn Relations", http//www.frasnaffavors.

Hoffman, S (Ed) (1960), "Contemporary Theory in International Relations," Englewood cliffs. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

John, C. M (2006), "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's 1948-1957 community of Alliance, Focus on Iron – military issues.

Kempe, F. (2011), "Berlin 1961 USA" Pensain Group.

Kesley, C W and WIHKOPF, E. R (2001), "World Politics: Trend and Transformation", New York: Macmillan Press Limited.

Krasnor, V. (1985),"Soviet Defectors: the KGB wanted list. Hoover Press.

Lanesam, W. C and Mitchell, O. C (1971), "The world since 1919", New York: Macmillan.

Latober, W (2002), "American, Russia and the cold war, 1945-2002. Boston. McGraw- Hill.

Macpherson, C. B. (Ed) (1981), "Leviathon by Thomas Hobbers: London: Penguin.

Menstued, E. D. (1193), "Concentration, Polarity and the Distribution of Power", International Studies Quarterly 37(1), Blackwell publishing.

Mesquite, B. J and Morrow, T. D (1999), "Sorting through the wealth or nations", international security. 24/2.

Mesquites, B. (2003), "Principles of international Politics: Peoples Power, Preferences and Perceptions", New York: University Boss.

Miller, R. G. (2000), "To serve G city: The Berlin Airlift, 1948-1949,"Texas: AXM University Press.

Morgenthau, H. J. (1954), "Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for power and peace", New York Routland Press.

Mydal, A. (1976), "The Game of Disarmament", New York: Parthenon.

Nye, T.S. (2003)," Understanding international concept: An introduction to theory authority (4th d), New York; foremen press.

Odom, W. E. (2000), "The Collapse of the Soviet Military Yale: Yale University Press.

Padelford, N.T. and Lincoln, G. A (1976), "The Dynamics of international Politics", London: Macmillan.

Palmer, N. D and Perkins, H. C. (1953), "International Relation. The world community in transition", New York.

Pearson, R. (1998), "The Rise and fall of the Soviet Empire," Macmillan Press.

Prakash, C (1979), "International Polities, Dechie Sanjey Press.

Robber, R J. (1974)(Ed) Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches 1897-1963, volume vii: 1943-1949 (New York: Chelsea House Publishers).

Rosenberger, J. (2006); "The Rise and Fall of the Berlin wall", www.about.com.quide: 20th century History Guide.

Rouke, J. T. (2006)," International politics on the world stage,' New York ; Mc Grand Hill.

Schmid, A. P (2000), "Thesaurus and Glossary of Early Warning and Conflict Prevention Terms: United Kingston: Forum in Early Warning and Early Responses.

Strawzz, Hupe, R and Possory, S (1954), "International relations in the Age of Conflict Between Democracy and Dictatorship, New York.

Thompson, W. R (1988), "In Global War: Historical Structural Approaches to World war Polities" Colombia, S. G. University of South Carolina Press.

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

Tunner, H. A. (1987), "The two sermons since 1945: East and West, Yale University Press.

Waltz, K (1959), "Man the sole and war: A Theoretical Analysis: New York. Gambia University Press.

Wetting, G. (2008), "Stalin and the cold war in Europe" London: Rowman and Littlefield.

Williams, W. A (1959),"A Tragedy of American Diplomacy" Cleveland world.

Wude, R. (1988), "Iron Curtain" New York, Routledge.