

**‘The Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc.’ Comment on the validity of this statement.**

After WW2, the US and USSR rose and became superpowers. It led the Cold War and shaped the development of international situation. Thus, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc. This essay will explain it in political, economic and military aspects.

In political aspect, the capitalist bloc and communist bloc confronted each other, which shaped opposing situation. Different blocs formed alliances respectively leading to hostile situation. For example, capitalist countries such as Britain, the US, France and so on established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (1949) in order to prevent member countries from being attacked by communist countries. On the other hand, Eastern European countries formed the Warsaw Pact (1955) so as to confront the NATO. In the end, the NATO and Warsaw Pact were hostile to each other which shaped opposing situation in the Cold War.

However, the Cold War originated in a struggle between the US and the USSR. The US and USSR became superpowers after WW2. They formed alliances, which strengthened their powers, aimed at competing for the world championship. Thus, the US and USSR were leaders of the NATO and Warsaw Pact respectively. It facilitated the opposition between the two blocs. Besides, major conflicts of the Cold War were caused by struggles between the US and the USSR. For example, the Berlin Crisis (1948) occurred because the USSR blocked the West Berlin. The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred because the US and USSR set up missile bases. Moreover, the action of the US and USSR guided the end of the Cold War. For example, the leaders of the US and USSR announced “the Cold War will be dumped down to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea” in the Malta Conference (1989). It marked the end of the Cold War. Later, the dissolution of the USSR (1991) broke down the opposing relationship and led to the end of the Cold War. In comparison, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc. Undoubtedly, many countries of the two blocs also involved in the Cold War. However, the US and USSR were the leaders. They formed hostile alliances to confront each other. Other countries were under control and they followed the US’s or USSR’s decision. The start, development and end of the Cold War were shaped by the US and USSR. Thus, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc.

In economic aspect, the capitalist bloc and communist bloc confronted each other, which led to the Cold War. Western European capitalist countries established economic cooperation such as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) (1948) and the European Economic Community (EEC) (1958). It enhanced the economic integration among Western European capitalist countries. On the other hand, Eastern European communist countries also established the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) (1949) in order to counteract economic integration of Western Europe. In the end, it led to economic confrontation between two blocs, which divided Europe's economy and led to the Cold War.

However, the Cold War originated in a struggle between the US and the USSR. The US introduced the Marshall Plan (1948) in order to counteract communist threat and rebuild Western European capitalist countries' economy. On the other hand, when the Marshall Plan was still in discussion stage, the USSR introduced the Molotov Plan (1947) in order to prevent Eastern European countries from receiving aid from the Marshall Plan. It divided Europe's economy and formed confrontation. Besides, the economic confrontation between the US and USSR extended to Asia as well. The US offered a loan of US\$2 billion to rebuild Japan's economy. The USSR also sent thousands of experts to assist the implementation of the First Five Year Plan (1953-57) in China. They supported allies' economic development in order to expand their influence, thus resulting in opposing situation. In comparison, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc. The economic confrontation between the Eastern and Western Europe was originated in the confrontation between the US and USSR. They imposed monetary policies such as the Marshall Plan and Molotov Plan to confront each other. It led to division of Europe's economy. Moreover, the economic confrontation also existed in the US's and USSR's supporting countries, but not only existed in Europe. Thus, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc.

In military aspect, military conflicts and competitions between the two blocs shaped the situation of the Cold War. The capitalist bloc and communist bloc broke out several local wars all over the world, including the Greek Civil War (1944-49), the Chinese Civil War (1946-49), the Korean War (1950-53), the Vietnam War (1961-75) and so on, which led to hostile situation. Besides, in order to avoid attacks by enemies, every country actively invented nuclear weapons. For example, Britain and China successfully tested nuclear weapons in 1952 and 1964 respectively. Nuclear armaments race was prevalent, thus leading to hostile atmosphere.

However, the Cold War originated in a struggle between the US and the USSR. The US and USSR actively supported capitalist and communist countries respectively in order to expand their influences. For instance, the US introduced the Truman Doctrine (1947) offering a loan of 400 million to assist Greece and Turkey confronting local communist groups. The USSR seized Japanese military weapons during WW2, and gave CPC. Moreover, the US sent troops to interfere local wars. For example, most of the soldiers of the UN peacekeeping body were US soldiers during the Korean War (1950-53). The US sent 3 million soldiers to Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Several local wars became a struggle between the US and the USSR. Furthermore, armaments race during the Cold War was controlled by the US and USSR. For example, the US introduced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) (1983) which aroused space armaments race. Later, when their relationship improved, the NATO and Warsaw Pact signed the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) (1991) which realized the disarmaments of two major military organizations. It reflected that the US and USSR shaped the development of the Cold War. In comparison, although local wars broke out all over the world and armaments race did not confine to the US and USSR, the US and USSR greatly affected the development of local wars and armaments race indeed. They incited the breakout of wars and shaped the rise and decline of armaments race. Thus, the Cold War was more a struggle between the US and the USSR than a struggle between the capitalist bloc and the communist bloc.

In conclusion, although many countries involved in the Cold War, the US and USSR, which shaped the development of the Cold War, were leaders. Thus, this statement is valid.

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