

Prescribed Subject 3 The Cold War, 1960 to 1979

Topic areas listed in the IBO History syllabus guide:

- *peaceful co-existence: challenges and détente*
- *nuclear disarmament and arms control: SALT (strategic arms limitation talks); ***START (strategic arms reduction talks)*** [Note that the START talks were in the 1980s and have been mistakenly included in the Paper 1 syllabus details. You will therefore not be examined on them]*
- *developments in Latin America, especially Cuba*
- *the Vietnam War*
- *developments in Germany and the eastern bloc*
- *Sino-Soviet relations*

I have used italics for the headings of these topic areas to draw your attention to them, e.g.

the Vietnam War

Background

What were the causes of the Cold War ?

Long-term

Relations between Russia and the West (the USA, GB, France) had been strained since the Bolsheviks (Communists) seized power in Russia in November 1917. The Bolsheviks pulled Russia out of the First World War and the USA, Britain, France and Japan all sent troops to help the Whites against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War (1918-20). After the Civil War the new USSR (as it was known from 1922) was isolated as the West feared the spread of communism. The USA refused to recognise the Communist government as the legitimate Russian government until 1933. Hostility between the West and the USSR, both in the years 1917 to 1941, and, again after 1945, was to a large extent the result of their rival ideologies: capitalist democracies against a communist dictatorship.

In the late 1930s relations between Stalin and Britain and France worsened. Stalin feared that Britain and France were trying to encourage Hitler to expand eastwards towards the USSR. This is partly why Stalin agreed to the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939. This shocked Britain and France and they condemned Russia's invasion of Poland in September 1939 and its subsequent occupation of the Baltic states in the winter of 1939-40. Between September 1939 and June 1941 Stalin kept Russia on good terms with Germany, desperate to avoid war with Hitler.

Therefore, it was only the fact that Hitler invaded Russia in June 1941 that brought Britain and Russia together as allies. Similarly it was only after Germany declared war

on the USA in December 1941, that the USA became an ally of the USSR. During the war relations between the USSR and Britain and the USA were often strained. In