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### Awakening the Sleeping Giant: The Influence of the Cold War over China on International System 1949 - 1962

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#### Abstract

This work focused on United State of America and Soviet Union relations how the relationship led to ideological war popularly known as the Cold War, and how this war awakens the sleeping giant - China. The era heralded the advent of the most destructive instruments in the annals of human's development – the Atomic Bomb and the Ballistic Missiles. The presence of these instruments in the midst of humanity, gave rational beings something to worry about. During this period, international peace was exposed to the danger of being violated. More worrisome but engaging is that this continued threatening international peace during the era. Obviously, the role of Cold War in perpetuating conflict or enhancing peace in the international political system needs to be re-examined. This paper, therefore, re-examines, the impact of the Cold War on international peace, with place like China as area of concentration. Measures taken by

the lead actors – the United States and the Soviet Union respectively, and how the two super powers explore the era in order to protect their national and vital interest. The paper finds out that the influence of the Cold War over China violated international peace and polarised the international system. The paper thus argues that the entire world populace must have a sense of commitment to the international system. This is attainable only when the international political apparatus is organised and managed in such a way that it will reflect the people's yearnings. To realise this, we need a competent and dynamic world body which will be capable of interpreting what constitutes the overall human interests into common interest. The paper is historical: hence, it adopts a qualitative method of analysis. Useful pieces of information were obtained from important relevant documents, and array of secondary sources.

**Keywords:** Sleeping Giant, United States, Soviet Union, Cold War, China

#### Introduction

The World War II, ended with the emergency of two opposing ideological blocs in international system led by the United States of America on one hand and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) on the other hand.<sup>i</sup> Thae Cold War, a brain-child of the second world war, originated from the war-time illusions of the Western Statesmen.<sup>ii</sup> These actors notably, Winston Churchill Prime Minister of Bsritain and President Truman of America, anticipated a post war co-operation of Soviet Union, but the post war development disillusioned them. This is aptly stated by Fleming D., *The Cold War, originated in the chagrin of Western leaders, notably Churchill and Trman, over Soviet control of central and Eastern Europe after World War II.*<sup>iii</sup>

The Cold War has been boiling between Western and Eastern bloc nations since 1949, with brief diplomatic rapprochement until 1975. The years in between were tension – ridden. Mankind lived under the perpetual fear of nuclear holocaust, with every stage of the Cold War, the world stood like a status waiting for Armageddon to come. The question uppermost in men's mind was, when will the Third World War occur? What nature will it take, and probably who will trigger it off. By 1970, following the imperative imposition of détente on international system, it became obvious that World War, the third in the history of mankind, is not likely to occur, because of this, some analysis argued that the Cold War did not violate international peace. Our concern here is to know what roles the Cold War played in aggravating the global tension on one hand and at the other, the ways it embraced the peaceful resolution of international conflicts.

The Second World War ended in a most spectacular way – the emergence of the two super-powers and the birth of the atomic bomb. This destructive instrument was used by the United States to end the war with Japan. Britain having secretly possess the atomic bomb, took steps to conceal it from Soviet Union and other actors of international political system. In his iron curtain speech on May 3, 1946, Winston Churchill of Britain said:

It would nevertheless be wrong and impudent to entrust the secret knowledge or experience of the atomic bomb, which United States, Britain and Canada now shares, to the World Organisation, while it is in its infancy. It would be criminal madness to cast it adrift in this agitated and unrated world. No one in any country has slept less well in their beds because this knowledge and the method and the materials to supply it, are at present retained in American hands. I do not believe, we should all have slept so soundly, had the position be reversed, and if some communist or neo-fascist state monopolised for the time being these dressed agencies.<sup>iv</sup>

In the Vietnam context, at the Vietnam Private Economic Forum 2019, the digital economy is understood as all economic activities based on a digital platform while digital economic development is the use of digital technology and data to create new business models.

The monopoly of the atomic bomb by the West and the war time strategy of the western allies' nations whereby they delayed the opening of the second front for lack of sufficient barges for such enormous undertaking and which the Soviet's interpreted as a "deliberate attempt by the World's two leading capitalist powers to destroy both of their two major ideological opponents one and the same time",<sup>v</sup> naturally led to mutual suspicion of Western powers by the Soviet Union. She saw her Western allies, war time delay in opening the second front as a calculated attempt by the West to expose the Red Army to massive onslaught of the Nazi's. during the war-time and post war-time peace conferences, the allied powers laid down modalities for post war settlement. Hence the end of the World War II, heralded the division of Europe between the victor powers – Britain, America, Soviet Union and France.

The Cold War had had meaningful impact on international peace. These can be seen in the areas of the preservation of international Peace, its violation, the introduction of arms race, its escalation and imposition of highly destructive weapons on international system, the permanent division of the world into bellicose camps and the evolution of neutralist feelings among peace loving people.

The paper is divided into six parts. The first part is introduction. The second section deals with the theoretical framework on which the work stands and draws its analysis. This is followed by the analysis of how the sleeping giant was awakened – the involvement of China in the Cold War. The next was the Cold War and China's role in the demise of non-alignment. In this section the work examined how the Cold War did not only condition the emergence of non – aligned movement but also led to its demise. This was manifested in the Cold War influence on India and Cuba. In the part of India she was forced to abandon her non – aligned stance to seek overt support from the western bloc when her security was threatened by the Chinese aggression against India borders in October, 1962. The last part is the conclusion. The argument tends to suggest that the Cold War awakened the sleeping giant and the influence the Cold War over China affected international system between the period of study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Cold War is a research field that poses serious problem of choice in adopting a theoretical framework for its analysis. This is because of the abundance of contending frameworks.

There are System Theory, Mutual Aid Theory, Conflict Resolution, Centre Periphery, Marxist and Game Theory. These theories can equally provide a perfect theoretical mould for the analysis of the war of nerves between United States of America and Soviet Union Relations on international peace.

It is my intention to use the Game Theory as my tools of analyses because, it seems to be most relevant to the topic under investigation. Though not without blemish, the game theory, has universal applicability to international political system. In this work, I intended to liken the actors of the Cold War to players of various kinds of "parlour games" – draught, chess, chicken, poker, scramble or bridge games. The games are prone to conflict decision – making and co-operation.

Game theory is a mathematical discipline, that is designed to deal with the question of optimum behaviour of participants in games of strategy and to determine the resulting equilibrium. In game theory, each participant endeavours to maximize their advantage in situations where the outcome depends on their actions, and the nature. The interests of participants in the game theory, are often opposed and sometimes parallel, to one another. In other words, conflicting interest and possible co-operation among participants are likely to be there. There is also mutual suspicion among participants because, some of them can forecast with certainty the next action of others.

Games are described by specifying possible behaviour within the rules of the game. In a game, the rules are given by physical and legal environment within which an individual's actions may take place. In the game of international politics, I regard each actor's as being rational beings, who has definite objectives and having at their disposal, some resources with which to confront their opponents in conflicts. The actors are expected to act rationally. Game involves moves and countermoves, which trends to explain the unfolding of the moves, the states of information of the players, and the alternative choices available to each actor at each encounter. Each actor, unaware of the opponent's choices, choose a single number that identifies a strategy from sets of strategies allowing for all contingencies.

In game theory, the player's is also expected to have perfect knowledge of the strategies open to him in pursuit of his aims. The players should also be able to design a strategy that covers all contingencies and ensure minimum risks and maximum – pay-off. In all game, there are outcomes – the pay-off. It is the relationship between player and the price of objective, they aim at – a win, a loss, or draw. In game theory, theorist is interested in analysing the strategies that will enable the players to maximise their outcomes, and the prospect being usually small in range, requires careful study of the alternative course of action. The rules of the game are simply the distribution of resources and the employment of these resources. In Cold War, players, are expected to know that nuclear missiles are not to be used – they are not part of the rules of international game.

Alliances are often formed in international politics. In game theory context, alliances mean, the combination of resources for the best advantages of the players. This is an indication that the players are many. Consequently, those who have common objectives, pool their resources together to enable them achieve their objective interests. This co-operation among actors is known as the variable – sum game which

assumes that two or more parties can gain more individually by co-operating, especially in the long run, for according to Isaak:

Rather than arguing over existing economic pie, it is more satisfying to co-operate and create more pies, for every one by means that individual parties would not have available, if they merely worked on their own.<sup>vi</sup>

Conversely, the Zero-sum game – a pure conflict game or situation assumes that “Whatever one party gains, the other party necessarily losses and that co-operation is, therefore, irrational”.<sup>vii</sup> A more appropriate model in international relations, is the multiparty non-zero-sum game; for, as Zawodny reminds us, “We must recognise that some types of international conflict today can be resolved only by situations in which neither side losses and in which sometime both sides may win”.<sup>viii</sup>

### China and the Cold War

“In China, there lies a sleeping Giant. Let him sleep, for when he awakens, he will shake the world.”<sup>ix</sup>

The above was the prophetic remarks of Napoleon, which started surfacing during the Cold War. China went red on October 1, 1949, and subsequently set about to fulfil the time – honoured prophecy of Napoleon. Since China went red in 1949 following the victory of Mao Tse Tung’s pro-communist guerrilla forces over the Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-Shek. On setting up its administration at Peking, in place of Kuomintang’s Nanking, during the fall of 1949, swiftly proclaiming the people’s Republic of China bringing a quarter the world’s population under communism rule. The all-devouring red dragon awoke, and set out to effect a remarkable change in the international status quo. Like an ill-wind, it blew no one any good - the communist bloc and capitalist western bloc as well.

Wart opined that:

China herself was ravaged though she was, loomed as the colossus of the far – East. The sleeping giant had often stirred in the past half – century, only to confound the prophets of its imminent resurrection by relapsing into a deep coma. Awake at last, China as a great power – still less as a communist power – did not conform to the stereotype of either uniformed Westerners or old China hands.<sup>x</sup>

Communist China emergence sent shudder through the spine of the free world and led inevitably to the escalation of the Cold War in the Asian. The development in China shook the West, notably the United States from her slumber to take firm stand on China. A drastic change took place in American thinking following Mao’s Moscow visit and the subsequent signing of military pact with Soviet Union. This development had great influence on American public opinion. It brought home to American the hard fact of what happen in China. To Hudson,

A nation which had been regarded as a reliable friend and had long been a special sphere for American missionary and educational activities, had been taken over into the camp of America’s greatest adversary in

world affairs.<sup>xi</sup>

Thenceforth, America pursued a rigorous containment policy towards China. The United States extended military, economic and technical aids to Formosa where Chiang Kai-Shek operates from. In order to deter communist invasion of Formosa, the United States adopted a more aggressive policy towards China. These policies were evidence in General McArthur Chinese posture – who according to Spanier conceived China as:

A new and dominant power which for its own purpose has allied with Soviet, but which in its own concepts and methods had become aggressively imperialistic with a lust for expansion and increased power normal to this type of imperialist.<sup>xii</sup>

I agree with Spanier because General Mac Arthur, further stressed that:

The aggressiveness now displayed not only in Korea, bur in Indo-China, Tibet, and pointing towards the South, reflects predominantly the same lust for power which has animated every would-be conqueror since the beginning of time and he wishes to severely cripple and largely neutralise China’s capability to wage aggressive war and thus save Asia from the engulfment otherwise facing it.<sup>xiii</sup>

The Chinese problem generated so much tension that hardly any hope exist for the survival of international system. America employed the containment policy and brinkmanship in its foreign policy towards Far East. In Roy’s view, United States was pushed to assist Formosa by the need to check the spread of Communism.

In order to check the spread of communism in the Far East the United States been assisting Formosa in all possible ways. Communist China regards Formosa as a part of Chinese mainland. Hence, the United States interference in Formosa antagonised both communist China and Russia.<sup>xiv</sup>

China titled the international system in favour of the Soviet Union yet its existence, gave the communist bloc some things to worry about and remained perpetually a thorn in the Western nation’s flesh. China during the time under review, shook even the communist world as well, this could be found in Strauss’s view:

Peking began to demand a say within the communist bloc and to lay claim to leadership of the communist world. And ideological and imperial conflict (i.e., the clash of interest hinging on the problem of how the doctrine of Marxism – Leninism should be applied in political affairs and on the Peking – Moscow rivalry for leadership) becomes inevitable.<sup>xv</sup>

I will want to agree with Strauss’s view with Prakash Chandra’s analysis; “It also posed a challenge to the leadership of the communist commonwealth was crumbled. The Soviet Union, no longer remain the sole leader of the communist world. In Peking, a second Rome was born. In

effect, Mao's Peking proved a more serious challenge to Moscow than Tito's Belgrade".<sup>xvi</sup>

China's influence on international system is all embracing because it did not only stop at stinging both the capitalist and communist blocs, but went as far as shaking the neutralists. The Sino – India conflicts in October 1962, drew India out of her non – aligned Cocoon to hang delicately on the Western support which implicitly made the entrance of Cold War as dispute, inevitable. That India, the most populous and model of non – aligned nations, been forced to abandon her cherished posture to enter the Cold War, made the international peace vulnerable to outright violation and threat.

### **The Cold War and China's Role in the Demise of Non-Alignment**

The Cold War is a double – edge sword. It polarised the world into belligerent blocs and set in motion a chain of events that blocs culminated in the formation of neutralist bloc – the Non-Aligned Bloc Nations.<sup>xvii</sup> Non – alignment was directly related to the Cold War. It was a reaction to the Cold War which was known for "aggrieve bloc building (Bipolarism) by the two super powers". In K. P. Misra, "Dissociation from bloc politics or military alliances became a focal point of non – alignment".<sup>xviii</sup> As the escalation of the Cold War made it mandatory for the emergency of new nations of International System to isolate themselves from the ideological conflicts between the mega powers of global system. Premkov and Vlasov argued that:

The non – aligned movement emerged in a stormy period of post war history as a collective protest against imperialism's efforts to keep them within the sphere of its political and military influence, held in an economic vice by means of neo – colonialism.<sup>xix</sup>

Banerjee, J., Contended that: "The inner contradiction of the Cold War gradually led to polycentrism and détente on the one hand and the rapid development of the non – aligned movement on the other".<sup>xx</sup>

The movement originated from India, where Jawaharlal Nehru identified anti – imperialism and anti – colonialism as the fundamental of India foreign policy, and assumed the impregnable role of counter forcing the balance of power game during the Cold War. Nehru, made it clear on September 7, 1946 that "We shall make history at our choice and propose, as far as possible to keep away from the power politics or groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale".<sup>xxi</sup> Palmer and Perkins quoting Professor M. S. Rajan "Non – alignment stands for abstention from power politics, for peaceful co-existence and for active international co-operation among all states – aligned and nonaligned".<sup>xxii</sup> Thus, the Frenzy pursuit of balance of power by the architects of Cold War made it indispensable for developing nations to take independence posture so as to preserve their sovereignty. Roy stated that:

The contradictions of the Cold War, doubtless, created the context in which it became imperative for the independent status that came into being to announce their determination of avoiding military alliances dominated by the two contending powers blocs.<sup>xxiii</sup>

The principles of non – alignment was endorsed by the Bandung Conference of the Afro – Asian countries. The movement was formerly inaugurated at the first summit at Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1961.

Now we have seen how the Cold War led to the formation of non – aligned movement. Let us look at how it led to its demise. The Cold War did not only condition the emergence of non – aligned movement but also led to its demise. This was manifested in the Cold War influence on Indian and Cuba. In the part of Indian she was forced to abandon her non – aligned stance to seek overt support from the western nbloc when her security was threatened by the Chinese aggression against Indian borders in October, 1962. Also, following the Bay of Pigs, Cuba found it necessary to close ranks with the Soviet Union, hence the Cuba missile crisis ensued in October, 1962. Russell aptly digested the issue, and posited that:

... It cannot be wholly pleasant for communist powers to have India turned entirely to the West inspite of the fact that Russia has been friendly to her. But perhaps the worst blow to the peace of the world is the fact that her defection from strict non – alignment weakness the blocs of neutral powers and their potential weight as arbitrators especially since India was more politically mature than most of the others and has been regarded as a leader in all matters where neutrality might be helpful.<sup>xxiv</sup>

One of the researcher's preoccupation of this work had been to put into investigative parlance the notion held by some that the fact that the Cold War did not generate the Third World War is an undisputed evidence that the Cold War did not violate international peace. Having gone thus, far, in the analysis, the researcher is convince4d that, notion is far from being a reality. The Cold Wars threatened international peace, so much that international war i.e., the third world war was on the verge of eruption; for how can one argue that the world is peaceable when it was only the unexplained non – intervention of Russia in the Korea War that save mankind from the scourges of total war. In China, Cuba, Berlin and Vietnam, the world stood helpless against nuclear war. Therefore, the hypothesis that the concept of international peace as seen by some political analysts as the absence of total war among nations of the world; in the sense that cold war nearly, but did not violate international peace is a null hypothesis and as a result be rejected.

### **The Aftermaths of the Cold War Skirmishes over China**

Having patiently examined the issues at stake in China during the Cold War, it will be worthy to outline its lasting influence on international peace. The Cold War affected international peace, so much, that it balkanised the world against itself.<sup>xxv</sup> The country used as research sample, was divided into separate zones, that is, China was divided into the communist and the capitalist camps. The communist entrenched in the mainland and the capitalist in the Island of Formosa.

Another significance of the Cold War in relation to these countries was the violation of international peace.<sup>xxvi</sup> In China the world waited pensively for the first button to be pressed by an American used of nuclear weapons on China. The greatest impact of these skirmishes was the preservation of international peace. Men invented the instrument for



exterminating one another, but the fear of the aftermath of their usage was so great that none is eager to precipitate the action that will lead to their usage. Thus, international peace was preserved.<sup>xxvii</sup>

### Conclusion

This research has tried to examine the actual influences of the psycho-ideological struggle between the Eastern and Western bloc-nations on international peace, and also find out the extent the brain-child of second World War (Cold War) had encroached on the peaceful coexistence of actors in international political system.<sup>xxviii</sup>

The game theory helped me much in dispelling the mist that beclouded the Cold War and my understanding of its obvious impacts on international peace. During the course of this research, the analysis showed that the protagonists of the Cold War, behaved in a typical player's manner. There were moves and counter moves, there was also room for negotiations. I found out, that throughout, the Cold War, the actors' resorts to negotiation when their strategies, moves and counter moves were exhausted.

I concerned myself with investigative analysis of the Cold War influences over China in inferring the influence of the Cold War on international peace. After what I pass for exhaustive analyses, I concluded, from my findings, that the Cold War violated international peace and polarised the international system.

Paradoxically, the Cold War which gave birth to the nuclear arms race preserved international peace because the destructiveness of nuclear equipment – to be precise, made global war useless, knowing that its usage will herald the extermination of all lives on earth including the deployer of such dreaded instrument this was shared by Essan Gala:

It is considered likely by many that the system of security which is inherent in the strategic relationship between the superpowers based as it is on a balance of terror, has discouraged them for over three decades from initiating military conflicts directly with each other. It is also assumed that it has prevented regional conflicts in which either side might be involved to escalate to global conflict.<sup>xxix</sup>

The paper finds out that the involvement of China in the Cold War violated international peace and polarised the international system. The paper thus argues that the entire world populace must have a sense of commitment to the international system. This is attainable only when the international political apparatus is organised and managed in such a way that it will reflect the people's yearnings. To realise this, we need a competent and dynamic world body which will be capable of interpreting what constitutes the overall human interests into common interest.<sup>xxx</sup>

### Endnotes

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