



COLD WAR USSR

NYUMUNC XV Joint Crisis Committee

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NSC Cold War: USSR

Committee Background Guide



Joint Crisis Committee

New York Model United Nations Conference

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Table of Contents

Welcome Letters	3
Statement of Diversity and Inclusion	5
Introduction	7
Committee Mechanics	8
Background	9
Essential Topics to Understand	25
Current Issues	27
Questions to Consider	30
Character List	31
Works Cited	33

Welcome Letters

Meet Your Joint Crisis Director

Greetings Delegates!

My name is Sophie Chaves, and I am thrilled to be your joint crisis director for NYUMUNC's Cold War JCC! I grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut and am a third-year student at NYU majoring in Global Public Health and Biology and minoring in French.

I was briefly involved in MUN in high school and am now a current member of NYU's travel Team. I have staffed two of NYU's conferences and this is my first conference as joint crisis director! Outside of MUN, I research Public Health with NYU's Grossman School of Medicine and love to paint and read in my free time.

I'm very excited to staff this JCC and will work to ensure that this committee stays consistent and flows smoothly!

Good luck,

Sophie Chaves, Joint Crisis Director

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Meet Your Crisis Director

Welcome, comrades!

My name is Henry Fleck, and I am thrilled to be serving as your crisis director for the USSR side of NYUMUNC XV's Cold War JCC! I originally hail from the Chicago area, and am a first-year student here at NYU, where I am double-majoring in Politics and Public Policy. My MUN career began in high school, and currently, I am very proud to be a member of NYU's Travel Team!

Aside from my MUN responsibilities, I serve as the Vice Chair of Student Government's Sustainability Committee and BridgeNYU's Executive Vice President. In my free time, I'm always looking for new board games to explore, and have done some work on the game design side of things as well! In addition, I'm a passionate nature lover, an amateur baker, and a writer for NYU's International Relations Insider.

As a Politics student, I firmly believe that history is central to understanding the current human situation, with all its complexities. The Cold War in particular has sculpted the global society we exist in today to a more significant degree than can be truly expressed, changing our technologies, our politics, and our mentality. That is why I'm truly eager to see what you all will be able to accomplish with such a dynamic topic, and such a fascinating case of characters. I hope you are just as excited as I am.

Comrades, our great union faces tremendous challenges from the world's capitalist elite, but through the strength of our convictions and our commitment to the rights of workers worldwide, I am confident that we can push forward and bring the U.S.S.R. to greater heights than ever before. Our skills are many, and if we stand as one, we will never fall. Best of luck to you all.

With fraternal greetings,

Henry Fleck



Meet Your Chair

Hi all!

My name is Sarah Jiang, and I am looking forward to serving as your U.S.S.R. Chair in the NYUMUNC XV Cold War JCC. I am a second-year student at NYU with an individualized major in health industries and policies in epidemiology. I also take interest in studies of humanitarian and non-profit work for equal health access advocacy. Originally, I am from Shanghai China, though I was born in New Zealand and attended boarding school in Pennsylvania for 4 years prior to college, so I like to think I am from all over. I began Model UN as early as middle school, and I am ecstatic to become involved again here at NYU.



Outside of Model UN, I serve as the senator of students with disabilities on the Student Government Assembly, and as the director of teaching with NYU's Red Cross Chapter. As both a part of my studies and personal passion, I spend a lot of time volunteering in healthcare and humanitarian settings, such as NYU Langone, and abroad in the Dominican Republic. Beyond school, however, I enjoy exploring the countless restaurants in New York City with friends, or watching movies in my apartment.

Admittedly, epidemiology is a field distant from the Cold War. However, understanding global relations especially from such a historical event is imperative to global public health, and the populations impacted by conflict in general. Furthermore, the nature of Model UN and the conditions under which topics such as the Cold War are handled enriches my understanding of policy, the nature of politics, and response to crisis. These unique experiences only possible by the work done inside committees is why I come back to the conferences and the team here at NYU. I hope this committee will be as dynamic and insightful for me as it will be for you.

What a great experience it will be to see the development of the U.S.S.R. in this era of complex global engagement. I look forward to working with this diverse panel of individuals, and how each of you shape and progress in this committee.

Best of Luck,

Sarah Jiang

Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

At NYUMUNC, we are dedicated to maintaining an educational and historically accurate experience for all participants. We acknowledge that discussions surrounding historical events, particularly in the context of the Cold War, involve many sensitive issues. Delegates are expected to approach these topics with a high level of maturity and respect. NYUMUNC is committed to promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion, aligning with NYU's values. We firmly reject the use of any bigoted symbols, statements, or attitudes during the entirety of our conference.

Recognizing the inherently sensitive nature of this committee's topic, NYUMUNC finds it imperative to establish explicit guidelines. Delegates are strictly prohibited from engaging in any actions involving crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression; this includes genocides, chemical warfare, war crimes, or any serious offenses. Delegates found in violation of these guidelines will face appropriate repercussions.

Should you have specific concerns or questions regarding the appropriateness of certain topics, we encourage you to reach out to us via email or during the conference. Thank you, and we look forward to a conference with a respectful, inclusive, and educational environment!

Introduction

Strap on your helmet and cue Bert the turtle, because in the wake of the Second World War, we find ourselves in a relentless pursuit of creating advanced weaponry. The aftermath of Hiroshima and Nagasaki displayed the devastating power of the atomic bomb, propelling major powers, such as the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Republic of China, into a feverish race to develop hundreds to thousands of these weapons, all striving for technological advancement and superiority. On every front, these nations fervently competed to engineer explosives with increasing yield and even greater destructive abilities.

Enter the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks I (SALT, 1969), a conference hosted by the United States with 27,552 warheads and the Soviet Union with 10,671 warheads. The purpose of these bilateral talks was to restrict the ever-growing stockpile of nuclear warheads amid escalating uncertainties during the Cold War. The treaty established several limitations on intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM). However, its failure stemmed from a lack of verification and the emergence of new technologies that allowed the development of more advanced weapons outside the treaty's original scope.

This committee starts with political turmoil: August 9th, 1974, with Nixon's resignation. As a delegate embodying the spirit of your character, you are tasked with navigating this tumultuous political and growing technological landscape. The echoes of failed treaties and the looming threat of unrestrained nuclear proliferation set the stage for a committee where every decision matters. As we step into the shoes of the National Security Council for the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Republic of China respectively, it is your duty to ensure that despite this race for nuclear proliferation and personal technological advancement, we must come to an agreement to save the unpredictable future at hand from nuclear threat. The

doomsday clock is approaching midnight so the stakes have never been higher. Welcome to the Cold War Joint Crisis Committee!

Committee Mechanics

The Cold War was a multifaceted period in which various positions, opinions, and events were held and occurred. Consequently, this branch will be part of a three-way Cold War Joint Crisis Committee (JCC), with the other two committees being China and the US. Each of the three committees will run as a typical crisis committee where the frontroom (caucuses and directives) and backroom (crisis notes and JPDs) will impact each committee's course of action. However, as this is a JCC, decisions, policies, and efforts within each committee will additionally impact the other two. These impacts can range from simple trade deals and policies to full-blown combat. You can also (and encouraged to) contact those on the other sides of the JCC through your back room by addressing the position you want to contact.

Each day will have new and exciting topics to discuss and crises to solve, some predetermined and some determined by your participation. To maximize your impact on the committee (and the NSC as a whole), try to respond to these topics with a combination of effectiveness and efficiency WHILE following the Statement of Diversity and Inclusion. We all want to have fun, but not at the expense of respect.

With regard to crisis notes, we will be utilizing a fast-paced, online two-pad system. You will be given two digital notepads (as well as physical one's for delegate usage), each corresponding to a different branch of your overall crisis arc. While you write on one digital notepad, the backroom will respond to the other. When the notes of all delegates have been responded to, the backroom will come in, deliver a crisis update, and announce a timeline for the

next note response cycle. This cycle will repeat up until the end of the committee on Saturday. Your JCD and CD would look favorably upon backroom requests that are realistic. Given that this is a historical committee and the seriousness of the topic, it should be approached with a commitment to realism and authenticity to the time period. Those who cleverly demonstrate this commitment will be recognized.

Ultimately, this committee will be incredibly complicated, but in a positive way. Because of this, we thank you for your patience, understanding, and best efforts for the weekend. If you have any further questions about committee logistics, please feel free to contact the JCD, CD, or Chair.

Background

At 2:45 AM local time on the morning of August 6, 1945, the Enola Gay, a B-29 Superfortress, and an observation plane called the “Necessary Evil” took off from the small island of Tinian. They were embarking on the first mission of the Cold War. At 7:09 AM, air raid sirens blared. At 8:14 Aioi Bridge is spotted by the Enola Gay, and the countdown begins. Exactly a minute later, bombardier Thomas Ferebe announces “bombs away.” The bomb falls for 43 seconds, then detonates. “Buildings melt and fuse together, human and animal tissue is vaporized. The blast wave travels at 984 miles per hour in all directions, demolishing over two-thirds of Hiroshima’s buildings in a massive, expanding firestorm. Eighty thousand people are instantly killed or grievously wounded. Over 100,000 more will die from the bomb’s effects in the coming months.”¹

¹National Park Service. “The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (U.S. National Park Service).” *Www.nps.gov*, 4 Apr. 2023, www.nps.gov/articles/000/the-atomic-bombings-of-hiroshima-and-nagasaki.htm.

Soviet leader Joseph Stalin accelerated his search for the bomb. “If a child doesn't cry,” Stalin told Igor Kurchatov, the scientific director of the Soviet project, “the mother doesn't know what he needs. Ask for whatever you like. You won't be refused.”² By 1949, Stalin had his bomb. This did not end the arms race, it accelerated it. In 1948 the United States had 55 nuclear weapons. By 1950 they had almost 700.³ The Soviets and the Americans raced to produce more weapons, with larger yields, longer ranges, that could be deployed more rapidly. Soon, the two great powers could destroy not only each other, but the world, many times over. Soviet domination of eastern Europe, in stark contrast to western Europe's closeness with America, had already created a bipolar world. With the 1949 test, that bipolarity became unchallengeable, and one of the great battles at the time was which side China would end up on.

The Chinese Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong, and the Kuomintang, led by Chiang Kai-shek, had been at war since 1927,⁴ although they had agreed to a cessation of combat to defeat the Japanese in 1937. When WWII ended in 1945, both the US and the USSR hoped that the Civil War would not be rekindled. The United States even sent George Marshall to negotiate peace talks, and the Soviets officially recognized the KMT well into the conflict. Despite entreaties by both the United States and the USSR, by 1947 the fighting had resumed in earnest. While the United States armed and aided the KMT, the Soviets provided little assistance to the CCP. In 1948, the Soviets made a peace proposal: “the KMT ruled the southern part of the Yangtze River while the Chinese Communists controlled the northern part, and that the United States should recognise the Soviet Union's special privileges in Manchuria.”⁵ The Soviets were

²McMillan, Priscilla Johnson. “NYTimes.” *Archive.nytimes.com*, 2 Oct. 1994, archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/12/06/specials/holloway-stalin.html.

³Rosenberg, David R. *U.S. Nuclear Stockpile, 1945 to 1950*. no. 5, May 1982, pp. 25–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.1982.11455736>.

⁴Cucchisi, Jennifer. *The Causes and Effects of the Chinese Civil War, 1927-1949*. 2002, scholarship.shu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3416&context=dissertations.

⁵Kim, Donggil. “Stalin and the Chinese Civil War.” *Cold War History*, vol. 10, no. 2, May 2010, pp. 185–202, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682741003619447>.

far more concerned with the balance of power than they were with the global revolution. Despite Soviet pressure to end the war, Mao and the CCP pressed on, defeating the KMT in October 1949, forcing Chiang Kai-shek and his men to flee to Taiwan. The United States refused to officially recognize Mao's China, the People's Republic of China, and instead chose to recognize the Republic of China Chiang Kai-shek's government in exile on Taiwan. Mao's victory, while not a setback for the USSR, was not as beneficial as it could have been. Stalin's refusal to back Mao is a wound that would continue to fester for years.

Meanwhile, Kim Il-Sung, the leader of North Korea, had been pressing Stalin for permission to invade the South. Stalin had been refusing, fearing the United States would become involved, but his calculus had changed. Stalin now had a bomb of his own. Additionally, American non-intervention in China gave him confidence they would refrain from intervening in Korea as well. Additionally, Mao's government had signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance earlier in 1950. When Kim asked again in April of 1950, Stalin acquiesced, but made it clear that Soviet forces would not become directly involved. Mao made no such equivocations. On June 25, the North invaded. The UN Security Council met to decide on a course of action, and unanimously condemned the North Korean invasion of South Korea that very day with Resolution 82. They then met again on the 27th, passing Resolution 83, which recommended military action against the North. The Soviet Union could have vetoed both of these, but they had been boycotting the Security Council since January due to the ROC's continued holding of China's permanent seat at the Security Council. In conjunction with this, President Harry Truman "ordered the 7th Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa,"⁶ which

⁶ "Statement by the President on the Situation in Korea | Harry S. Truman." *W*www.trumanlibrary.gov, www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/173/statement-president-situation-korea.

effectively put Taiwan, and by extension the ROC, under US protection. This “neutralization” of the Taiwan issue effectively ensured the existence of the “two Chinas.”⁷

Another key question raised by the Korean war was the efficacy of battlefield use for nuclear weapons. After all, the United States had a clearly superior stockpile, so what stopped them from using nuclear weapons? “Ultimately, it was not even clear that atomic bombing in a war against peasant armies would produce decisive results. If the Americans used the bomb and the Chinese forces kept on coming, it would demonstrate the bomb's ineffectiveness and reduce its deterrent effect in other arenas.”⁸ Nuclear weapons, even this early in the cold war, were proving themselves to be more effective as a political tool than as a battlefield weapon. (perhaps elaborate) Korean War ends in 1953.

The events of 1953 and 1954 marked a dramatic shift in the tenor of the Cold War. The death of Joseph Stalin provided an opportunity for a change in relations with the Soviet Union, as would the end of the Korean war. The United States also deployed a new tactic in these years, successfully overthrowing the democratically elected leaders of Iran and Guatemala, replacing them with more pliant clients.⁹ The Soviet Union’s leadership crisis after the death of Stalin is also resolved at this time, with Nikita Khrushchev becoming the new leader of the USSR. One of his first moves is to establish the Warsaw Pact, a defensive alliance against the West, essentially an answer to NATO. The People's Republic of China is invited, but they declined, instead attending the Bandung Conference (which was the beginning of the Non-Aligned Movement) that same year. “Mao had sought Soviet support as a counterweight to potential American pressure on China in pursuit of American hegemony in Asia. But concurrently he tried to

⁷Matray, James. “Beijing and the Paper Tiger: The Impact of the Korean War on Sino-American Relations.” *International Journal of Korean Studies* , vol. XV, no. 1, p. 157, [icks.org/n/data/ijks/1483321954_add_file_8.pdf](https://www.icks.org/n/data/ijks/1483321954_add_file_8.pdf).

⁸ “The Korean War | American Experience | PBS.” *www.pbs.org*
www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/bomb-korean-war/#:~:text=Ultimately%2C%20it%20was%20not%20even.

⁹ “Cold War Timeline (Text Only)- History of War in the 20th Century.” *Publish.uwo.ca*,
publish.uwo.ca/~acopp2/historyofwar/coldwar/timeline-text.html.

organize the Non-Aligned into a safety net against Soviet hegemony.”¹⁰ The next year, Khrushchev would push Mao even further away.

At the 1956 party conference, Khrushchev delivered what came to be known as “the Secret Speech.” It was called this, in part, because the speech was closed to outsiders, including the Chinese delegation. The insult of not being allowed to witness the speech was little compared to the content. In the speech, officially called “On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences,” Khrushchev sharply denounced the brutality of Stalin’s regime, describing many of its abuses in detail. Additionally, Khrushchev repudiated the very idea of “personality cults,” saying that the “classics of Marxism-Leninism denounced every manifestation of the cult of the individual.”¹¹ The Chinese delegation worked to piece together what was said in conversation with those who were in the room, but they did not find out the full content of the speech, delivered on February 25th, until June 5th. And they had to find out from the New York Times, who had been leaked a copy by the CIA.¹² The headline that day blared “KHRUSHCHEV TALK ON STALIN BARES DETAILS OF RULE BASED ON TERROR.”¹³ This was not merely insulting to the Chinese leadership, it was potentially destabilizing. Whatever ideological and geopolitical differences Mao had with Stalin, his grip on power rested on a similar personality cult. In addition to denouncing Stalin, Khrushchev also announced a major reversal in Soviet relations with the West.

¹⁰Kissinger, Henry. *On China*. Penguin, 2011. pp.152

¹¹Khrushchev, Nikita. “Khrushchev’s Secret Speech, ‘on the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences,’ Delivered at the Twentieth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union | Wilson Center Digital Archive.” *Digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org*, 25 Feb. 1956.

digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/khrushchevs-secret-speech-cult-personality-and-its-consequences-delivered-twentieth-party.

¹²“Trade Secrets - Haaretz - Israel News.” *Web.archive.org*, 17 Feb. 2008,

web.archive.org/web/20080217092411/www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=69_298.

¹³“KHRUSHCHEV TALK on STALIN BARES DETAILS of RULE BASED on TERROR; CHARGES PLOT for KREMLIN PURGES; U.S. ISSUES a TEXT Dead Dictator Painted as Savage, Half-Mad and Power-Crazed Khrushchev Discusses Delay Speech Adds Much Detail STALIN DEPICTED as SAVAGE DESPOT Korean War Data Awaited Many Officers Liquidated Revelations by Khrushchev ‘Leningrad Affair’ Recalled ‘Doctors’ Plot Laid to Stalin.” *The New York Times*, *timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1956/06/05/86605470.html?pageNumber=1*.

Instead of assuming the inevitability of war with the west, as there had been under Stalin, the USSR would now pursue “peaceful coexistence.”¹⁴

Despite this push for “peaceful coexistence,” Khrushchev boasted frequently about the USSR’s large stockpile of ICBMs, in hopes that the West’s fear of nuclear annihilation would allow for him to extract political concessions. Khrushchev, however, was bluffing. The Soviet stockpile was relatively small, and, unbeknownst to Khrushchev, high level American officials knew this. In 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik, the first spacecraft, which dramatically heightened fears of Soviet capabilities, even among high level officials who knew the stockpile was small. Just a month later, Khrushchev hosted a conference of socialist countries, the primary aim of which was to repair relations following the 1956 speech. Mao chose to attend, the second and last time he would leave China. While he paid lip service to Khrushchev’s “peaceful coexistence,” the speech Mao delivered offered a stunning, and terrifying, alternate approach. “We shouldn’t be afraid of atomic missiles,” Mao declared, “no matter what kind of war breaks out, conventional or nuclear, we will win... If the imperialists unleash war on us, we may lose more than 300 million people. So what? War is war. The years will pass and we will get to work making more babies than ever before.”¹⁵ It is in this context that Mao sparked another conflict with the United States.

On August 23, 1958, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) began shelling the Taiwanese islands of Quemoy and Matsu in what is known as the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. The shelling was, according to Mao, a response to the US and British occupations of Lebanon and Jordan that began that July.¹⁶ This operation was an implicit rebuke of Soviet inaction in response to

¹⁴“Milestones: 1953–1960 - Office of the Historian.” *State.gov*, 2019. history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/khrushchev-20th-congress.

¹⁵ Kissinger, Henry. *On China*. Penguin, 2011. pp. 154

¹⁶“Memoir by Wu Lengxi, ‘inside Story of the Decision Making during the Shelling of Jinmen’ | Wilson Center Digital Archive.” *Digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org*, digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/memoir-wu-lengxi-inside-story-decision-making-during-shelling-jinm.

American action in the Middle East. However, America did not know this, and assumed that the Chinese actions were done at the behest of Moscow. Thus, China strained Khrushchev's relationship with the West and enlisted him as a nuclear ally in a conflict over which he had no control. Mao's bid to undermine "peaceful coexistence" was largely unsuccessful. In fact, these actions did more to damage Sin-Soviet relations than Soviet-American. Moscow suspended nuclear cooperation, withdrew all technicians, and suspended all aid projects. The consequences of the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis, alongside the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, would leave China largely absent from the world stage in the decade to come.

Meanwhile, Khrushchev continued to pursue better relations with the United States. In 1959 then Vice-President Richard Nixon visited Khrushchev in Moscow, where they had their famous "kitchen table debate." The debate was seen by some as part of Nixon's campaign to win the presidency in 1960.¹⁷ His opponent in that race was the young Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy. Kennedy, as a part of his campaign, ran against the "missile gap," exasperating fears that the United States was weak, and the Eisenhower-Nixon administration was to blame. "The nation was losing the satellite-missile race with the Soviet Union because of" Kennedy claimed, "complacent miscalculations, penny-pinching, budget cutbacks, incredibly confused mismanagement, and wasteful rivalries and jealousies."¹⁸ Due in part to his stoking of these nuclear fears, Kennedy beat Nixon in 1960.

The Kennedy Administration, more than any other in American history, was defined by its relationship with nuclear armageddon. "On the one hand he created the Arms Control and

¹⁷ "News of the Week in Review", *The New York Times*, July 26, 1959

¹⁸ Preble, Christopher A. "Who Ever Believed in the "Missile Gap"?": John F. Kennedy and the Politics of National Security." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2003, pp. 801-26, www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27552538.pdf?refreqid=fastly-default%3A6ce8a71f886e16ae307ceab4e5b2b165&ab_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1.

Disarmament Agency, and on the other he expanded the number of American intercontinental ballistic missiles from some 60 to more than 420.”¹⁹ And then there was Cuba.

In 1959, Fidel Castro successfully overthrew the US backed Cuban Dictator Fulgencio Batista. The CIA, under orders from President Eisenhower and with the knowledge of Vice President Nixon, began drawing up plans to overthrow Castro. Nixon, to his own surprise, was not the man in the Oval Office once those plans were ready. In 1960, Kennedy ran to the right of Nixon on the issue of Cuba, castigating the administration's inaction. He was eager and ready to overthrow Castro, but when he was presented with the CIA's plan, he had second thoughts. The plan looked implausible, but, in the recollection of National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, “If we didn't do it [i.e., the operation], the Republicans would have said: ‘We were all set to beat Castro, and this chicken, this antsy-pantsy bunch of liberals’ ... there would have been a political risk in not going through with the operation. Saying no would have brought all the hawks out of the woodwork.”²⁰ The mission was launched in April of 1961, and Kennedy was right to be worried about the plan: it was a disaster.

In the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs invasion, Castro asked Moscow for assistance, and a delegation from the USSR arrived in May 1962 to discuss the requests. In September of 1961 Castro asked for surface to air (SAM) missiles, and as of May, 1962 they still hadn't arrived, and Moscow was indicating they would be sending even less than originally promised. The same was true of the Sopka shore missiles and of Soviet troops, which Castro hoped would serve as a sort of ‘trip wire’ to deter American invasion. So when the Soviet delegation offered Fidel Castro

¹⁹Paterson, Thomas G. *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*. Oxford University Press, 1992. pp 5

²⁰Gleijeses, Piero. “Ships in the Night: The CIA, the White House and the Bay of Pigs.” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 27, no. 1, Feb. 1995, pp. 1–42.

nuclear weapons, the Cuban leader was surprised, to say the least.²¹ Cuba was the centerpiece of Khrushchev's grand scheme to rebalance the global order.

"I think," Khrushchev exclaimed, "we will win this operation!"

This operation would achieve three Soviet goals: "altering the international balance of power (the Soviets were behind in the production of intercontinental ballistic missiles) by scaring the United States with missiles nearby, protecting Fidel Castro's Cuba, and forcing a new settlement over the control of West Berlin."²² Khrushchev planned to dramatically announce the existence of the missiles at that year's meeting of the United Nations in November of 1962.

Khrushchev's plan began to unravel on October 16th. American U-2 spy planes had taken photos of Soviet medium range ballistic missiles in Cuba, and Kennedy's National Security Advisor, McGeorge Bundy delivered the news, along with his advice that the sites had to go. Kennedy concurred. What followed were 6 days of near constant deliberation between Kennedy and his top advisors. The initial plan was to bomb the sites. As it became clear this path may not be entirely effective, Kennedy sought other options. Eventually, Kennedy determined that a blockade, proposed by Secretary of Defense McNamara, was the best course of action. Despite all of the activity, the Kremlin remained unaware of the deliberations until the White House announced the President would be making a speech "of national importance."²³ They sensed, although did not know, that the Cuba plan had been discovered.

Khrushchev and his advisors were agitated, "the tragedy is that they can attack, and we shall respond," Khrushchev predicted, "this may end in a big war." Kennedy's speech, to the Kremlin's relief, did not announce an attack on Cuba. At least not yet. In the coming days, Soviet ships

²¹ Fursenko, Aleksander A., and Timothy J. Naftali. *Khrushchev's Cold War : The inside Story of an American Adversary*. W.W. Norton, 2007. Pp. 440

²²"Putin's Fear of Retreat." *Foreign Affairs*, 16 Nov. 2022, www.foreignaffairs.com/russian-federation/putin-fear-retreat-cuban-missile-crisis.

²³ Fursenko, Aleksander A., and Timothy J. Naftali. *Khrushchev's Cold War : The inside Story of an American Adversary*. W.W. Norton, 2007. Pp. 467

approached the American blockade and the world crept ever closer to war. And then, it was over. As it was described to the American public, “we went eyeball to eyeball with the Russians—and they blinked.”²⁴ In fact, the Cuban missile crisis ended in an important deal, one which brought Khrushchev and Kennedy closer than any two of their predecessors. Khrushchev had offered to remove the missiles from Cuba, but only if the US removed similar missiles from Turkey. Known only to a few advisors, Kennedy did so, but only 6 months later, and only if the Soviets kept the deal a secret.²⁵ By October 27th, it was over.

In the following months, both Khrushchev and Kennedy attempted to build closer ties to each other, trying to lower the temperature and lessen the odds of global annihilation. By “midsummer 1963, the Soviet Union was on better terms with the United States than it was with the Peoples Republic of China.”²⁶

When Kennedy arrived in office, there was already war in Southeast Asia, although he was more concerned with Laos than Vietnam. Laos provided an early opportunity for Khrushchev and Kennedy to work together, negotiating Laotian neutrality at a Geneva conference in 1962.²⁷ In the meantime, things were escalating rapidly in Vietnam: there were under 1,000 US military advisors in Vietnam when Kennedy took office. By the end of 1962 there were 11,000,²⁸ and disaster was on the horizon.

Saturday, August 24th, 1963 was the zenith of what would become known as “the Buddhist crisis.” The South Vietnamese government of Ngo Dinh Diem carried out a series of

²⁴ Kaplan, Fred. “What Robert Caro Got Wrong.” *Slate*, 31 May 2012, slate.com/news-and-politics/2012/05/robert-caros-new-history-of-lbj-offers-a-mistaken-account-of-the-cuban-missile-crisis.html.

²⁵ Kaplan, Fred. “What Robert Caro Got Wrong.” *Slate*, 31 May 2012, slate.com/news-and-politics/2012/05/robert-caros-new-history-of-lbj-offers-a-mistaken-account-of-the-cuban-missile-crisis.html.

²⁶ Fursenko, Aleksander A., and Timothy J. Naftali. *Khrushchev's Cold War : The inside Story of an American Adversary*. W.W. Norton, 2007. Pp. 28

²⁷ Editors, History.com. “Kennedy and Khrushchev Agree on Neutrality for Laos.” *HISTORY*, www.history.com/this-day-in-history/kennedy-and-khrushchev-agree-on-neutrality-for-laos.

²⁸ “JFK and Vietnam: The September 1963 TV Interviews | JFK Library.” *Www.jfklibrary.org*, www.jfklibrary.org/learn/education/teachers/curricular-resources/jfk-and-vietnam-the-september-1963-tv-interviews#:~:text=In%20May%201961%2C%20JFK%20authorized.

midnight raids killing hundreds, arresting thousands, and cutting the cables to the American embassy. President Kennedy, Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara were all on vacation. To deal with the crisis, several high level deputies took it upon themselves to draft a cable to newly installed Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. These high level National Security Council deputies, either unwilling or unable to reach their direct superiors, called President Kennedy at his home in Hyannis Port directly. They asked the President for approval for what would become known as Cable 234: the cable that instructed Ambassador Lodge to tacitly endorse the overthrow of President Ngo Dinh Diem, saying “we must face the possibility that Diem himself cannot be preserved.”²⁹

The cable was drafted by Michael Forrestal of the National Security Council along with Roger Hillsman and Averell Harriman of the State Department. The three men called Kennedy, who agreed to approve the cable if, and only if, the Secretary of State also approved. Then, the men called Rusk, who reportedly said “well, go ahead. If the President understood the implications, [I] would give a green light.”³⁰ Thus, they had the green light from both the Secretary of State and the president, if tenuously. After reaching out to other deputies, although no other cabinet level officials, they returned to Kennedy and informed him that the Cabinet officials had given him the green light. Having consulted none of his senior advisors, Kennedy greenlit a coup on the most important American ally in South East Asia.

On November 2, President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu were executed in a military coup. President Kennedy would follow them a few weeks later. Kruschev would meet his own end, albeit less violently, a little over a year later. In 1964, the Soviet Union saw a leadership change with Leonid Brezhnev taking over as the General Secretary. Under Brezhnev,

²⁹ Douglas Martin. “Roger Hilsman, Adviser to Kennedy on Vietnam, Dies at 94.”

³⁰ Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation: How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*, 315

the Soviet Union continued its policy of supporting communist movements worldwide, but also pursued détente with the United States, a policy aimed at easing the hostilities of the Cold War.

The Vietnam War escalated significantly during this period, becoming a central front of the Cold War. The U.S. involvement in Vietnam intensified under Presidents Johnson and Nixon, aiming to prevent the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. This conflict became highly controversial within the United States, leading to widespread protests and a deep national divide. Despite the massive U.S. military effort, the war ended with the withdrawal of American forces in 1973, and the subsequent fall of Saigon to the North Vietnamese forces in 1975, marking a significant setback for U.S. foreign policy and a victory for the Soviet Union and its allies.

The arms race continued unabated during this period, with both superpowers developing and stockpiling an increasing number of nuclear weapons. The threat of nuclear annihilation remained a constant concern globally. However, recognizing the dire implications of this arms buildup, the U.S. and the Soviet Union began to engage in negotiations to limit the growth of their nuclear arsenals. This led to the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) treaty in 1972, which aimed to restrict the number of ballistic missile launchers both countries could have. This was a significant step towards reducing the risk of nuclear conflict.

In 1968, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the Prague Spring, a series of reforms and liberalizations that threatened to loosen the Soviet grip on Eastern Europe. This intervention demonstrated the limits of Soviet tolerance for reform within its sphere of influence and reaffirmed the rigidity of the Iron Curtain.

The period also saw attempts at improving relations between East and West Germany, culminating in the signing of the Basic Treaty in 1972, which normalized the relationship

between the two German states. This was part of Ostpolitik, West Germany's policy aimed at improving relations with the East, including the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The U.S.-China relations underwent a significant transformation when President Richard Nixon visited China in 1972, leading to the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries. This strategic rapprochement aimed at isolating the Soviet Union, leveraging the Sino-Soviet split to the advantage of the United States. The opening to China marked a pivotal shift in the Cold War dynamics, introducing a new geopolitical triangle that complicated the bipolar rivalry that had defined the previous decades.

Throughout this period, the Cold War continued to influence global affairs, from Africa to Latin America, where U.S. and Soviet support for opposing factions fueled conflicts and political upheavals. The Cuban Missile Crisis had left a lasting impression on both superpowers, highlighting the catastrophic potential of their rivalry. Consequently, despite ongoing tensions and conflicts, there was a growing recognition of the need for dialogue and negotiation to prevent a nuclear confrontation.

Side of JCC Breakdown

Summary

At this time, the USSR was well into what would be known as the Brezhnev era, named after its leader since 1964, Leonid Brezhnev.³¹ Brezhnev rose to power after helping to remove the USSR's previous leader, Nikita Khrushchev, and winning a subsequent struggle for power against Premier Aleksey Kosygin, with whom he ruled in tandem for a time, and Presidium

³¹ "Leonid Brezhnev." Encyclopædia Britannica, January 26, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leonid-Ilich-Brezhnev>.

Chairman Nikolay Podgorny. His reign was marked by significant diplomatic shifts and an overall economic downturn.

Domestic and International Politics

As ruler, Khrushchev gave Kosygin and Podgorny a fair amount of control over internal affairs, preferring to focus his own efforts on military and diplomatic matters. A key legacy of his was the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine: the right of the USSR to intervene in other communist countries in the name of protecting the ideology. This was used as justification for the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 after the latter attempted to liberalize its economy. Within the USSR, he asserted Russia's power over the other Soviet Socialist Republics, creating internal tensions. Yet Brezhnev was not wholly aggressive in his diplomacy. In partnership with Richard Nixon, he oversaw a warming of relations with the United States through the policy of detente. Motivated in part by the increasingly prohibitive costs of the nuclear arms race, the two countries moved to limit buildup; their negotiations resulted in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1968 and the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty in 1972.³²

Relations with the People's Republic of China, however, posed an issue during this time period. Though the two countries had been friendly upon the PRC's creation, ideological differences surged to the surface beginning around 1960, with the PRC levying polemics against the USSR's supposed revisionism.³³ The Soviets attempted to bring about a thaw in relations, but to little avail. As the feud continued, the two countries began to interfere with one another in increasingly serious ways. In Eastern Europe, the Chinese Communist Party attempted to present itself as a viable alternative to its Soviet counterpart; it also reached out to many African countries, and criticized the Soviet Union over its handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

³² "Détente and Arms Control, 1969–1979." U.S. Department of State. Accessed January 31, 2024. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/detente>.

³³ Kanet, Roger E. "The Soviet Union and China: Is War Inevitable?" *Current History* 65, no. 386 (1973): 145–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45312923>.

Meanwhile, the Soviets sided with India in the 1962 Sino-Indian war, and butted heads with Chinese leaders over Vietnam. Border skirmishes occurred in 1969, with serious casualties on both sides. Despite efforts to the contrary, relations with China remain frigid, making a war on two fronts a very real threat to the USSR.

Military Buildup

Brezhnev was also responsible for significant military growth during this period. As did many others, he saw military power as a key means by which to secure Soviet leadership in the world, and to force Western democracies to treat the USSR more equitably.³⁴ Under his watch, the USSR engaged in a massive military buildup in both nuclear and conventional capacities. This push met with remarkable success in a number of areas. The USSR's space program advanced at a rapid rate, bringing it far closer to the Americans' level. On the seas around the country, a colossal navy was outfitted, while on land, the Soviet army remained the largest in the world. This refurbished military allowed Brezhnev to back up his military interventions throughout Eastern Europe with hard power, lending further credibility to his reign. On the nuclear side of things, Soviet buildup caused acute fear for American leaders, prompting a reciprocal trend of proliferation.³⁵ However, unbeknownst to them, many Soviet missiles face accuracy issues, which continues to pose a problem for the country's nuclear readiness.

Economic Issues

However, Brezhnev's relentless focus on international and military affairs have proven to be a double-edged sword. Though many Soviet leaders remained confident in the economy,

³⁴ Holloway, David. "Military Power and Political Purpose in Soviet Policy." *Daedalus* 109, no. 4 (1980): 13–30. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20024694>.

³⁵ Podvig, Pavel. "The Window of Vulnerability That Wasn't: Soviet Military Buildup in The." *International Security*, 2008. https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/publications/the_window_of_vulnerability_that_wasnt_soviet_military_buildup_in_the_1970sa_research_note.

growth rates were dropping by the mid-1960s.³⁶ The command economy, despite the USSR's faith in it, had led to a complicated economy facing quickly dwindling natural resources, declining worker productivity, and rampant alcoholism and absenteeism. Furthermore, the Soviet bureaucracy was insulated from many of these issues as they developed, leading to a dearth of information in the highest ranks. Yet the country's economic woes have grown harder and harder to ignore, and action will soon be needed.

Public Opinion within the USSR

Perceptions of the Soviet Union vary worldwide. Many other countries saw Brezhnev's policies as bringing about a return to Stalinist leadership, while also noting the Soviet Union's economic troubles as a real weakness.³⁷ Within the USSR, the average Soviet remained a generally passive political participant, and most retained their faith in the nation's command economy.³⁸ The country's increasing power on the world stage, and rapid technological advancement, spread a sense of optimism among the populace.³⁹ Still, many fell victim to financial difficulties, and were well aware of slow wage increases and declining productivity. National pride remained strong, but Brezhnev's heavy-handed social policies caused the emergence of a counterculture among bolder citizens. Even as the Soviet people supported their government, simmering resentment posed a threat to leadership as they struggled to navigate the difficulties of the 1970s.

³⁶ Trachtenberg, Marc. "Assessing Soviet Economic Performance During the Cold War: A Failure of Intelligence?" *Texas National Security Review*, 76-101, 1, no. 2 (February 2018). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15781/T2QV3CM4W>.

³⁷ "The Soviet World in the Long 1970s | Center for Russian, East European ..." Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies, 2021. <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/creees/soviet-world-long-1970s>.

³⁸ Gregory, Paul, and Barbara Dietz. "Soviet Perceptions of Economic Conditions during the Period of Stagnation: Evidence from Two Diverse Emigrant Surveys." *Soviet Studies* 43, no. 3 (1991): 535-51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/152520>.

³⁹ "The Brezhnev Era." Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed January 31, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union/The-Brezhnev-era>.

Essential Topics to Understand

October 18-29, 1962: Cuban Missile Crisis

An American U-2 spy plane discovers nuclear missile sites built by the Soviet Union on the island of Cuba. Then President Kennedy does not reveal his knowledge of the site, until making the decision to establish a “quarantine” around the island with a naval blockade to prevent transport of military supplies in. The crisis marked one of the tensest moments of USSR and US relations, and was the closest point all parties came to nuclear war. The publication of this secret Soviet attempt led to a publicly agreed deal: the removal of USSR missiles and deconstruction of their sites, in exchange for the pledge by the United States against invading Cuba. The humiliation that followed the event, however, contributed greatly to the fall of Khrushchev’s power.

October 1964: Fall of Khrushchev/ Rise of Brezhnev

In October Communist Party forced Khrushchev out of power, but it was publicly displayed as a request for retirement due to “advanced age and poor health”. Brezhnev replaced him as first secretary after his appeal to the central committee, blaming Khrushchev for the country’s economic downfall as a result of his poor behavior and leadership. Following his rise the country saw economic improvement, but later the Brezhnev era starts to become associated with an era of Stagnation, with progressions of social, economic and political issues

August 1968: Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia

Warsaw troops invade Czechoslovakia led by the Soviet Union, an event that later takes its toll on the unity of the communist bloc. Brezhnev makes the decision to seize Czech leaders and secretly take them to Moscow in an attempt to control reformist trends that were increasing in Prague at the time. The invasion had a temporary effect on détente progression between the

USSR and the US. The invasion was justified based on the Brezhnev Doctrine, the idea that Moscow had the right to intervene in any country where its communist rule was being threatened. It was also China's fear of this doctrine that prompted the 1960 sino-soviet split .

May 1972: Moscow Summit P1

President Nixon met with Brezhnev in Moscow, making him the first US president to travel there. Notably the two signed the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty and the strategic arms limitation treaty interim agreement. Other topics of discussion included public health, science, technology, education and culture.

June 1973: Brezhnev-Nixon Meeting in the United States ⁴⁰

Brezhnev and Nixon met in Washington, signing nine accords, including agreements on prevention of nuclear war, basic principles of negotiations, scientific cooperation, agriculture, trade and many more.

June-July 1974: Moscow Summit P2

The June July Moscow Summit meeting saw limited expectations from both the US and the soviet union, in light of the Watergate scandal and the prediction of Nixon's resignation. Topics of discussion included arms control and international issues, scientific cooperation and cultural exchanges. Both sides signed a threshold test ban treaty that limited the size of underground nuclear weapons testing.

Key considerations:

- The 60s and 70s were two decades widely known for its more international involvement opposed to the more previous bipolar struggles⁴¹

⁴⁰ "United States Relations with Russia: The Cold War." U.S. Department of State, January 20, 2001. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/pubs/fs/85895.htm#nonproliferation>.

⁴¹ "Toward a New World Order." Encyclopædia Britannica, January 28, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Cold-War/Toward-a-new-world-order>.

- The two opposing blocs (United States and USSR) were less clearly split
- The 60s and 70s were also prominent for the communist party specifically as there was a growth in contrast between elite and average members of the party
 - Wealth and power was concentrated amongst elite party members
 - Millions of average soviet citizens dealt with starvation and lack of access to basic needs
- The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks led to the SALT I agreement of 1972, part of the progress towards easing cold war tensions

Current Issues

Newly shuffled leadership

The current first Secretary is Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, and prime minister Aleksey Kosygin. Both are politically affiliated with the Communist party of the Soviet Union. There are, and have been, however, power fluctuations between the two, despite Kosygin and Brezhnev's unanimous service to their public. From Khrushchev's fall in 1964 up until 1968, Kosygin maintained most control, with Brezhnev cooperating with his opinion. Approaching 1970, however, Kosygin lost his control as a result of a general turn back towards stalinism, which undermined his economic reforms⁴². Brezhnev, to this day, has seen an increasingly fast incline of power, support and control amongst the population, as well as other members of the party.

Calls for a new constitution

⁴² "The Brezhnev Era." Encyclopædia Britannica. Accessed February 1, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union/The-Brezhnev-era>.

Khrushchev left his leadership and the country facing a plethora of national and international developmental issues:⁴³ The Soviet economy was in crisis, the country lacked a strong, stable defense, the communist ideology amongst citizens of the USSR wavered, especially amongst the younger ages and management of the party's societal influence was weak. The country needed new leadership, and the shift of governing methods as one leader replaced another was a response. Khrushchev's previously independent and wilder leadership style was replaced by Brezhnev's more conservative, as well as heavier involvement of other elite party members in decision making.

Economic stagnation

The status quo is in the era of stagnation, also known as Brezhnevian stagnation or period of developed socialism. This timeline began back in 1967, as, despite his initial popularity, criticisms against Brezhnev rose for his conservative ruling style, in line with a lack of adaptation to changing nation. There was little to no initiation of major reforms to help improve the declining economy, very much a result of his choice to prioritize the arms industry over consumer goods, leading to decline in industrial growth rates. This current combination of high military expenditures and lack of reform contributes to an economic stagnation.

Military buildup

There exist many examples of the widespread military intervention occurring: Huge economic investments into the military, arms buildup and an expansion of the Soviet Union's international influence, notably in the Middle East and Africa. The Brezhnev Doctrine, a Soviet foreign policy, also utilized its military ability to enforce power and control. The doctrine is a way of strengthening the central and eastern european Soviet bloc, as it allows for interventions

⁴³ Wolfe, Thomas W. "SOVIET MILITARY POLICY TRENDS UNDER THE BREZHNEV-KOSYGIN REGIME." Page redirection. Accessed February 10, 2024. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/AD0651423>.

such as military or political in nations deemed a threat. This exact policy was the justification of the 1968 Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the USSR improve the quality of life for its citizens both socially and economically?
2. How can the Soviet economy be revitalized?
3. How can the USSR successfully compete with the USA, the PRC, and other nations?
4. What can be done to improve relations with the PRC?
5. Where can the USSR increase its influence worldwide? How could doing so favor the interests of both the nation and your character?
6. How does your character feel about the USSR's military buildup? Is it insufficient, unnecessary, or somewhere in the middle?
7. Where does your character possess influence? How could such influence be leveraged to bring about change or continuity for the Soviet Union?
8. Do you believe in the ideology of communism? Is it operating successfully in the USSR?

Character List

*Note that this does not guarantee the characters presence during the conference! Expect the unexpected always!

- Domestic Political (5):
 - **Aleksey Kosygin** - Premier
 - **Nikolay Podgorny** - Chairman of the Presidium
 - **Kirill Mazurov** - First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers
 - **Andrei Kirilenko** - Senior Secretary of Cadres of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
 - **Mikhail Suslov** - First Second Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
- International Political (4):
 - **Anatoly Dobrynin** - Ambassador to the United States
 - **Vasily Tolstikov** - Ambassador to the People's Republic of China
 - **Andrei Gromyko** - People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union
 - **Aleksandr Lyubimov** - Minister of Trade
- Military/Scientific (6):
 - **Sergey Gorshkov** - Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy
 - **Ivan Pavlovsky** - Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Ground Forces
 - **Pavel Kutakhov** - Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Air Forces
 - **Yuri Andropov** - Chairman of the KGB
 - **Mstislav Keldysh** - President of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union
 - **Kerim Kerimov** - Chairman of the State Commission on Piloted Flights

- Economic (5):
 - **Vasily Garbuzov** - Minister of Finance
 - **Miefodiy Svieshnikov** - Chairman of the Board of the Soviet Bank
 - **Nikolai Baibakov** - Chairman of the State Planning Committee
 - **Dmitry Polyansky** - Minister of Agriculture
 - **Pjotr Neporozhny** - Minister of Energy and Electrification

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NSC Cold War: USSR

Committee Background Guide

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