

The successful application of the Truman Doctrine and containment in the Korean War beginning in 1950, as well as the justification it delivered for the resolutions developed in NSC 68 in that same year 1950, means that the Korean War was the most significant crisis in the period 1948-62.

In considering this period it is not relevant to compare the relative points of crisis and to what extent they individually sparked conflict in the

period, but rather to consider
the lasting effect of each
crisis.

Following the proclamation
of the Truman Doctrine
in March of 1947, and
importantly what Offner describes
as the second half
of the walnut: the
Marshall plan announced in
1947 and implemented in
1948, it becomes significant
to consider that
these two policies
provided the blue print
for the US foreign
policy throughout
the Cold War, and
that the early

conflict in Korea, and its success for the USA, ~~was~~ renders it more significant than other crises in the period, due to its nature in affirming containment.

Firstly, the advent of the Korean war limited the options provided in NSC68, rendering all but 'containment' and 'active-all-out' impossible.

This was further cemented by the refusal of the USSR

do join the Marshall Plan and counter it with their own Molotov Plan in 1948.

It is significant not only that during the Korean War MacArthur wanted to use nuclear weapons but also that this was the first instance in which both powers were willing to impose their ideological conflict, rather than simply their national self-interest as in Northern Iran in 1947, and Greece and Turkey in late 1947, or a war.

It is of particular note that in Korea the UNIS became significant in terms of furthering Cold War hostilities as it involved both parties warring over ideological commitment, rather than market access or solidarity.

This can of course be juxtaposed with the USA's lack of action concerning the revolution in Hungary in 1956 in which thousands were murdered by the Red Army.

The juxtaposition of these two crises serves to illustrate

the significance of
the Korean War in
the period 1948-1962
in defining spheres of
influence and in parting
the way for the
wars by proxy that
became a feature of
the Cold War especially throughout
the 1970s.

The Korean War also evidences
itself as the most significant
crisis in the period
in that it formed
and then justified the
ideological shield ~~between~~
~~which~~ behind which
four successive
US administrations were

do much to rebuild the world market economy by implementing a variety of different economic policies, as Seabury notes.

Importantly however, the Korean War of 1950-53, and the subsequent death of Stalin, marked a position in which the US were desirous of furthering their national self-interest under the banner of a crusade against communism, rather than interacting with a similar superpower.

As Seabury was later to note 'It would appear

that the US needs not only national self interest to guide its foreign policy, but also a belief that we are protecting the values to which we as a nation prescribe.

The Korean war thus according to Scamson's appraisal was of particular value in that it affirmed not only the inherent ideological conflict between the two superpowers and asserted the dominance of the USA in this early period.

This can be juxtaposed with the failure of the Bay of Pigs Invasion in 1961, which Latimer notes forced Kennedy to consider the limits of America's power.

The significance of the Bay of Pigs in this period however is limited when compared to that of the Korean War in 1950 fundamentally because it did not alter the US foreign policy stance, or the balance of power significantly, although in and of itself significant as a crisis.

It is crucial to note that the significance of the Korean War in this period is to be evaluated in light of 'super-power relations'; and it is in this sense that the significance of Korea can be fully appreciated.

Offner argues that the failure of the superpowers to establish grounds for compromise at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences of 1945 formulated a framework for poor relations throughout the period, however he goes on to argue that

it was the Korean War which confirmed that this ~~old~~ ideological conflict was to extend, but also impinge upon, the spheres of influence of both super-powers.

In light of Offner's analysis, in combination with the appraisal offered earlier in this essay, Korea becomes specifically significant in the period 1948-1962 as it opens a 'battle-field' for spheres of influence in Asia.

Furthermore, as Morgenthau notes, Truman's containment provided the ~~basis~~ blueprint for the Johnson Plan in SE Asia, and the rationale

for this, as Morgenthau emphasises, was the success of containment as expressed in the Korean War of 1950.

Interestingly however, Taft ~~stated~~ later contended that the significance of the Korean War was not in the military success of containment and thus its assistance to the propagation of a defining policy of the Cold War, but its failure to correctly combine the two halves of the 'Walnut' that Offner identifies, ~~is~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~core~~ specifically; the failure of the USA to capture

North Korea as a market.

It is also crucial to consider the relative significance of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 when compared to the Korean War

from 1950-53. It is of course crucial to note that the Cuban missile crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear crisis, and even that it was the catalyst for peaceful-co-existence as the liberal-historians suggest,

However this appraisal would seem to ignore that the Cuban Missile Crisis was in actual fact

the final demonstration of Oscillatory Antagonism, and that this period in fact stems directly from the conflict in Korea. Furthermore, as Gaddis maintains, the Cuban Missile Crisis was not as important as it ^{was} initially considered, taking into account that both nations already possessed the capabilities to destroy one-another and that McNamara's 'Mutually Assured Destruction' had already been affirmed by both nations.

The last crisis with which the war in Korea must be juxtaposed is

the Berlin Blockade in 1949.

The 10 month airlift that the US engaged in, in order to not allow West Berlin to be cut-off, and maintain it as a symbol of the free-world, which cost 1.2 Billion dollars, following the 12 Billion dollars given to Western Europe under the Marshall Plan, is indeed significant.

However as has already been detailed in this essay, the significance of these crises affecting superpower relations in this early period must be considered in the context of in what

What way they brought the superpowers into conflict over spheres of influence and what defines these spheres of influence, as this is what shaped the early cold-war.

It is clear that West Berlin, as an acknowledged part of this sphere of influence, did not in fact extend the ideological conflict but rather was an expression of pre-existing national interests.

The nature of the Korean War in affirming the ideological

shield which had become the justification for the US foreign policy, and thus justifying the 368% defence budget increase stipulated in 1950 by NSC 68, defines the significance of the crisis at that time.

However the propagation of the ideological conflict, the development of the superpowers' conflict over spheres of influence, and the balance this stale war accorded between economic and military factors, makes it the most significant crisis affecting superpower relations in the period.