

The end of the Cold War 1970-91

DÉTENTE:

A period of peace / reduced tensions between two groups that were previously at war, or hostile to each other.

Aim:

To know why the USA and USSR followed a policy of Détente
To know a series of agreements that reinforced Détente
Understand why Détente was abandoned



The search for peace...



The Arms Race since WW2 had led to both USA and USSR creating enough weapons to destroy the world several times over, as well as increasing tensions, particularly with M.A.D.

The Cuban Missile Crisis in **1962** brought the world to the brink of a Nuclear holocaust, this scared everybody, just how close they got.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet and American leaders tried to ease the tensions in their relationships. As a result, 2 important treaties were signed by the end of the 1960s...

**LET THE
GOOD TIMES
ROLL**



- [1967](#) Outer Space Treaty: Stopped the arms race spreading to outer space as both countries agreed no nuclear weapons would be placed in space
- [1968](#) Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty agreed that neither superpower would supply nuclear weapons to any other states or help any other state develop nukes. This stopped superpower conflict engulfing other areas of the world.



Richard Nixon was elected US President in 1968

He was determined to take his country out of Vietnam which was costing the USA billions and resulted in the deaths of 60,000 soldiers. Détente with USSR would end paying into the Arms Race for starters.

There was massive protest within USA, many calling for a return to the isolationist policy of pre WW2.

USA was also still reeling from the assassination of JFK and Martin Luther King Jr. with riots all over America



Shocking images like these flooded the US causing the mass protest

Why was now a good time for Détente for USA?

Reasons for USA & USSR seeking Détente.



Copy this diagram including the title



Willy Brandt was elected Chancellor of West Germany and he followed a policy of '**Ostpolitik**' – Building better relations with East and West Germany.

Other European countries soon followed a similar policy seeking improved relations.



Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty I

May 1972 – Imposed limits on the nuclear capability of Russia & USA

This was important because it showed that détente had created an environment where both sides could cooperate.

The ABM (Anti Ballistic Missile) Treaty was agreed. ABMs could shoot down incoming nuclear missiles. Both sides were limited to 2 AMB sites each with a maximum of 100 missiles.

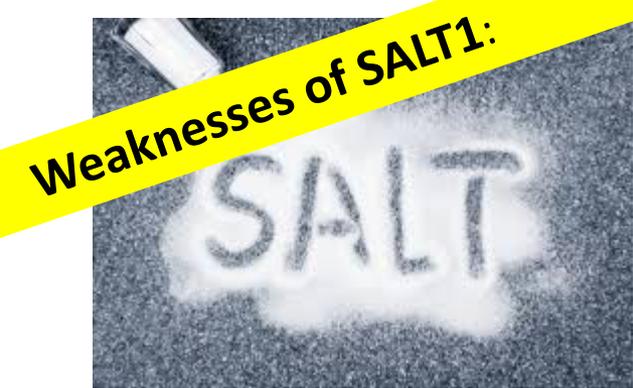
Agreements

Restricted the number of ICBMs and SLBMs.
USA allowed: **1054 ICBMs and 740 SLBMs**
USSR allowed: **1618 ICBMs and 740 SLBMs**
This was for a minimum of *5 year freeze*

Agreed conduct for Nuclear war, banning nuclear warheads on the seabed and setting out steps to avoid a nuclear war (both countries agreed they would exercise restraint in times of tension).

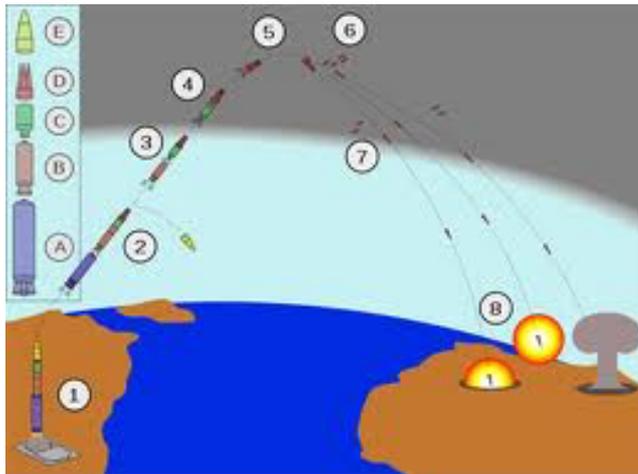
USA & USSR agreed that there would be no further production of strategic ballistic missiles (short range, lightweight missiles).

Summarise the agreements of SALT1

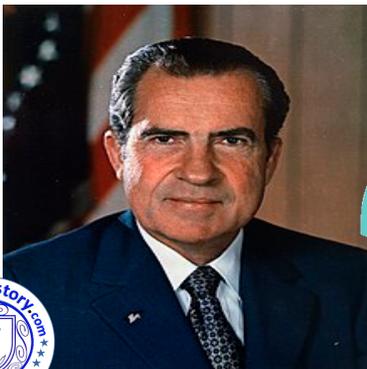


Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty I

- In reality, if nuclear war looked likely, a written agreement probably wouldn't stop it
- Both countries still owned enough weapons to destroy each other many times over
- **MIRVs** (Multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles) were not restricted



each line x 25 power of Hiroshima



Despite these weaknesses, it was clear that both USA and USSR wanted to reach agreements and demonstrate their improved relations publicly. Nixon visited Moscow and Brezhnev visited Nixon in Washington

SALT 1

US Historian S. Ambrose said in 1985

“SALT I in 1972 froze ICBM deployment but not MIRV which was as meaningful as freezing the cavalry of European countries in 1938 but not the tanks. Nixon added 3 MIRV warheads a day in his time in power.



The Helsinki Accords, 1975

33 nations from NATO **and** Warsaw Pact met to build on this spirit of co-operation from SALT1. There had been 3 agreements at Helsinki, **European borders**, **International co-operation** and **Human Rights** (These agreements were known as baskets 1,2 and 3)

Basket 1: **European Borders (Security)**

- All country boundaries were accepted (so East & West Germany accepted each other's existence for the 1st time).
- All disputes were to be settled peacefully not by use of threats or force. (by the UN if necessary).
- No Country would interfere in the internal affairs of another country.
- Countries would inform each other about any big military manoeuvres and would accept representatives from other countries to observe them.

"No one should try... to dictate to other peoples how they should manage their internal affairs..."

Brezhnev, Helsinki 31 July 1975



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Basket 2: **International Co-operation**

Countries agreed to co-operate on many different levels, for example:

- Economic co-operation through trade (so the USA would buy oil from the USSR, whilst the USSR would buy wheat from USA).
- Industrial co-operation through setting the same standards and running joint industrial projects.
- Scientific co-operation through sharing information and research (for eg in medicine or space research).
- Educational co-operation (for eg learning languages, student exchanges).





Apollo-Soyuz Mission:

A clear example of international co-operation.

In 1975 a joint mission was launched in which an American Apollo spacecraft and a Russian Soyuz spacecraft docked high above the earth. The 1960s had been dominated by an extremely competitive race to the moon, but this marked the beginning of superpower cooperation in space.

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Basket 3: **Human Rights**

Countries should respect human rights including:

- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of movement
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of information
- The Helsinki Agreements stabilised the situation in Europe by agreeing greater co-operation between the superpowers and their European allies in terms of trade and fighting international terrorism.





Who really won at Helsinki?

Although Helsinki was a high point of Détente, there was still Cold War politics going on



- Wanted an extension of Human Rights into Soviet controlled areas which would undermine communist authority and weaken the power / influence of USSR

Happy with Basket 3

- Some USA politicians were very unhappy saying they had basically given the American seal of approval on the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe

Unhappy with Basket 1

- Wanted agreements and recognition of borders (especially East Germany)
- Wanted to books Soviet economy

Happy with Baskets 1 & 2

- Soviets were concerned that organisations would be set up to monitor Soviet policies in its satellite states

Unhappy with Basket 3



Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty II

1979 – Negotiations began for this in 1972 as SALT 1 was only supposed to be temporary.

This was more difficult for both sides to negotiate, Détente was fading.

- There was a growing distrust in America of Brezhnev and the USSR. Soviet Union were increasingly supporting communist groups around the world, **which contradicted SALT1**.
- Further agreements with USSR would make USA appear weak.
- Islamic militants captured the American embassy in Tehran, holding the Americans hostage for 444 days. Many Americans wanted to see a stronger America restoring its position as a global powerhouse that wouldn't be treated like this
- Despite this growing tension, it was agreed to a 1320 limit on MIRV systems for both sides and 2400 ICBMs, SLBMs and bombers each, a ban on construction of new land based ICBM launchers
- Soviet Union station 2000+ troops in Cuba and then invaded Afghanistan, bringing an official end to Détente.
- As a result of Afghanistan, USA withdrew from the SALT2 negotiations ensuring it wasn't ratified!

Plot the key events of Détente either in the top half or bottom half of this graph relating to US USSR relations



Bad relations



Good relations

1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980

Exam-style question, Section A

Write a narrative account analysing the key events of détente in the years 1970–79.

You may use the following in your answer:

- SALT 1, 1972
- The Helsinki Accords, 1975.

You **must** also use information of your own. **8 marks**

Exam tip

Remember that the key to scoring well on this type of question is to create a coherent narrative that links together events and explains how one leads to the next in a logical and structured way.

Summary

- The events of the 1960s had worried world leaders about the threat of nuclear war.
- The arms race increased that worry.
- Both the USA and the Soviet Union had domestic reasons for wanting to improve relations.
- There was a series of agreements to limit nuclear weapons in the 1970s.
- By the end of the 1970s, the spirit of co-operation had died.

Checkpoint

Strengthen

S1 What was 'MAD'?

S2 What were the weaknesses of SALT 1?

S3 Why was SALT 2 not ratified by the USA?

Challenge

C1 Why was 'MAD' not necessarily bad?

C2 How did the policy of 'Ostpolitik' influence events in the 1980s?

C3 What different aims did world leaders have in the Helsinki Accords.

How confident do you feel about your answers to these questions? Form a small group and discuss any questions you are not sure about. Look for the answers in this section. Now rewrite your answers as a group.