

Question 3: In What Ways Did the Cuban Missile Crisis Change Relations Between the Superpowers?

The Cuban missile crisis changed relations between the superpowers in several ways both good and bad

In October 1962 Khrushchev wrote a letter to JFK that allowed the Cuban missile crisis to end peacefully. He would remove the missiles from Cuba and JFK would in turn, promise not to invade Cuba and would remove the missiles from turkey. This event greatly improved the relationship between the two superpowers, by removing any imminent threat of a confrontation happening and releasing a lot of political pressure and tension. This was the first sign of détente.

Also, soon after this happened, a hotline was setup between Moscow and Washington. This allowed the two countries to communicate with ease. Before the hotline was created communications were difficult and took days to plan and arrange. By creating an easy and swift means of communication between the two superpowers, any issues or problems could be solved much faster. This is another event that had a positive impact on the two countries relations.

The Nixon doctrine stated that America would only get militarily involved with situations that directly effected America, and so, America would cease defending; freedom and democracy in other countries, and its allies. This doctrine was implemented in 1969, and immediately improved the relationship between the two superpowers.

Other treaties and political documents were created which also improved relations including: "The 1963 Test Ban treaty" which limited the amount of nuclear tests that each country was allowed to perform; "Strategic Arms Limitation Talks" took place during 1969 till 1972 and it was decided that both countries would limit their amount of "strategic offence arms", Also a second round of talks started again in 1972 till 1979 which limited the amount of "strategic nuclear weapons" that were allowed to be manufactured. These things greatly improved the relationship between the two superpowers.

The Helsinki agreement was made in 1975 in Helsinki, Finland. It stated several important human rights, 35 countries agreed to it including the USA and the USSR. The immediate impact of this was that it improved the relationship and showed how they could agree and co-operate together. However, soon after this Jimmy Carter, the American president, accused the USSR of abusing human rights and going against the

"Helsinki Agreement". This severely damaged the relationship, the USSR felt insulted and as if the USA was attacking it.

In 1975 America invaded Vietnam and tried to stop the spread of communism. The USSR on the other hand helped the Vietcong's (communists) and gave them supplies and weapons to help fight the USA. This conflict created hostile feelings towards the two countries and had a massively detrimental effect on their relationship.

There were also several other conflicts that the USA and the USSR where both involved in throughout the late 1900's, where it was effectively a communist army against a capitalist one. These conflicts include the USSR's invasion of Czechoslovakia and the USSR's deployment of troops in Afghanistan. Every conflict that the USA and the USSR were involved in caused their relationship to strain and made any chance of political co-operation happening slim.

So, in conclusion to "In what ways did the Cuban missile crisis change the relations between the superpowers?" I think that overall it improved the relationship, there were some instances of events that caused the relationship to deteriorate, but, as a whole, I believe that the relationship was improved. I Believe the most important events were the political agreements and treaties that took place, such as the "Truman doctrine" and the "test ban treaty", they helped to keep the "cold war" cold.

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