Increasing Cold War tensions

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| Point | Evidence | Explain |
| Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe | Between 1945 and 1948 the Soviet Union made sure that every country in Eastern Europe had a government that was communist. Stalin used a number of ways to take control of countries including rigging elections, appointing a communist leader and using the army. | Stalin believed this to be a defensive measure, creating a buffer zone between the USSR and the West. The USA, however, did not believe the USSR was acting defensively. They thought it was the first step to world domination and a threat to the Western way of life. The issue of elections also caused tension because it was agreed at Yalta that countries would have free elections and Stalin did not allow this in many places. |
| Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan | The Truman Doctrine stated that the USA was prepared to give help to any country under threat from communism. Aid was given under the Marshall Plan to help the crumbling economies of Europe and therefore to increase trade opportunities. This was part of a policy of containment, rather than destroy communism, America made efforts to stop it growing further. | Stalin did not see it quite the same way, he thought it was a plan to infiltrate European countries and the US buying support. He developed Cominform and Comecon to try to oppose the plans. Comecon allowed Stalin to control the economies of Eastern Europe for the benefit of Russia. |
| Berlin Blockade. | Stalin was concerned about increasing prosperity in West Berlin. Stalin wanted to force the West out of Berlin. He wanted stop the recovery of Germany and wanted to stamp his authority on Berlin. Stalin placed blocks on all roads and train lines into Berlin The allies used an airlift to provide west Berlin with supplies. He felt the West were spying on the East and the recovery of Western Europe was an embarrassment to communism. | If the allies had tried to force through one of Stalin’s blockades it may have caused a full on conflict. The Berlin Blockade was aimed at the Allies leaving Berlin but the Allies were fearful of Stalin making other demands if they did. It strengthened the Allies resolve and brought about NATO which increased tensions further. |

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Which country had the more successful policies in Europe between 1945 and 1949: the USA or the USSR?

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| Point | Evidence | Explain |
| USA  Containment | The USA introduced the Truman Doctrine in 1947. It was introduced to provide arms, equipment and money to anywhere threatened by communism. The Marshall Plan was introduced in 1948 as poverty was seen to lead to communism, so American provided a number of European countries aid to the sum of $17 billion. | This policy was successful in Greece where communists were stopped from taking over as part of a civil war. However the allies were not successful in preventing Czechoslovakia being fully under Stalin’s control. In Yugoslavia they were partially successful as they accepted some aid from America which led to Marshall Tito being ejected from Cominform. |
| USA  Berlin Blockade | Stalin was concerned about increasing prosperity in West Berlin. Stalin wanted to force the West out of Berlin. He wanted stop the recovery of Germany and wanted to stamp his authority on Berlin. Stalin placed blocks on all roads and train lines into Berlin The allies used an airlift to provide west Berlin with supplies. | If the allies had tried to force through one of Stalin’s blockades it may have caused a conflict. The Berlin Blockade was aimed at the Allies leaving Berlin but the Allies were fearful of Stalin making other demands if they did. The allies continued the airlift throughout the Blockade and Stalin could not order the planes to be shot down without starting another war. He failed to force the allies out of Berlin. It strengthened the Allies resolve and brought about NATO which increased tensions further. |
| USSR  Successful takeover of Eastern European countries | The USSR began to impose Communist rule on the countries it had occupied rather than allowing free elections. Between 1945 and 1948 the Soviet Union made sure that every country in Eastern Europe had a government that was communist. Stalin used a number of ways to take control of countries including rigging elections, appointing a communist leader and using the army. | Stalin had removed non-Communist leaders in Poland replacing them with Communists. Stalin was able to spread Communism across Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia was taken over by the Communists despite the efforts of the allies. Stalin was successful in creating a ‘buffer zone’ around Russia and this zone was highly controlled by Stalin. |
| USSR  Less successful takeover | The USSR was less successful in Yugoslavia where Tito applied Communism in his own way and Greece where the Communist takeover was unsuccessful. | This was a huge loss for Stalin as American and British support had led the Monarchists to victory in the Greek civil war. Yugoslavia that he thought was a certainty, was tempted by aid from America and even though it remained communist, was not under his control. |

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