

"It was China that caused a fundamental shift in the US Cold War Strategy by 1951"

use his full name first time

behind  
China's  
what?

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here

When Mao declared a Communist People's Republic of China in September 1949, the West were shocked. This, and the other associated factors behind China, meant "American policy soon had to adjust to the new balance of power emerging" as historian Oliver Edwards says, and there was a fundamental shift in US Cold War Strategy by 1951. This shock of China influenced the American people's opinion of the Cold War, and subsequently the president's decisions in order to satisfy them. McCarthyism and the Red Scare were sparked by China, and the idea of the domino theory stems back to this point, before 1954 when Eisenhower coined the phrase. Nuclear development in the USSR and the Berlin Blockade had caused a stir, but this was nowhere near what happened as a result of China as the nuclear weapons race really came to prominence with the Hydrogen bomb after 1951, and the Berlin Airlift was regarded as a success despite it creating tension in the US over Stalin and the USSR. China caused the fundamental shift that eventually saw containment give way to Roll back.

I agree with the statement and would label China as a cause for the fundamental shift in US Cold War strategy, firstly as it laid the foundations for the Domino Theory. Although this was only mentioned in 1954, it was only at this point that Eisenhower gave American belief of what communists would do through the 50s a name. This was actually created as a result of China's 'falling' in 1949, because politicians looked at the geographical potential that China had. Japan's recovery "depended



on access to resources and markets of China", and also bordered Korea, where conflict started in 1950 and confirmed the US's thoughts. This also caused a shift in geographical focus for the US - prior to China it had been Europe that was the main melting point of tensions, but now the US's attention turned to Asia, which it now recognised as an area with potential characteristics to "fall to communism", just as areas of Europe had prior to Marshall Aid. This was the beginning of globalism in the Cold War; the US could see how much potential China had to become a main player in world politics especially with its veto power as one of the 5 permanent members of the UN. For this reason more funding towards supporting nationalism in Asian countries had to occur, which was a switch from the complete focus shown on Europe prior to China.

*can you provide specific evidence of that funding?*  
*against* Prior to China being overtaken by the Communists and Mao, US citizens felt they were 'winning the war'; however China changed this on springing up a mentality switch amongst the people. There had already been a fear of communism, but after China and subsequently into the early 50s there was some hysteria. This was represented best by McCarthyism - the republican based movement created by Joseph McCarthy which was heavily anti-communist, and aimed to remove 'communist sympathisers' from all aspects of US life. The US people were annoyed that their government had supported Chiang Kai Shek, only for him to be an incapable leader meaning there was a desire to question those in power, and to take matters into the US's hands to a greater extent than before. This US loss of confidence allowed Joseph McCarthy's theories to gain support, and he caused sensation in 1950 when he claimed 205 US government officials were members of the communist party. He produced no real evidence to



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support his claims, and therefore proves how open the US people were to new anti-communist movements — and McCarthy tapped into that idea. People's growing support for McCarthyism (or Red Scare) meant it influenced the president's future policies as he now had to be firmer on Communism to remain popular with the people. The extent of how great a shift in internal US mentality can be seen by the China White Paper; a document that tried to defend the US's actions in China as the best it could do, blaming it on the matter being too internally based for the US to intervene. This document was very badly received in the US, and therefore shows the mounting pressure caused by China for a fundamental switch in Cold War strategy. *This is a great argument but you do need to link directly back to how this caused the shift in policy.*

China also caused the shift towards militarisation as seen in Korea due to America needing to fulfil its role as the 'world Policeman' better than she did in China. This meant the move to greater spending in the defence sector occurred, and the 'non-干涉' approach seen previously at the Berlin Airlift was gone. This can be seen by the 'Uniting for Peace Resolution' passed by the UN — ~~the US exploited the USSR boycotting the council as a result of the new Communist China being refused entry into the UN.~~ This 'resolution' in essence meant that UN troops were sent into Korea in 1950. This idea would never have come about if the same style of containment had continued after China, but it did not and the US took a more hardline approach to match the American people's feelings and internal fears about the spread of Communism from China into vulnerable neighbouring countries of Asia.

refused  
the seat  
on the  
Permanent  
Council

However, some may disagree with the initial statement, and find other factors to have caused this switch, for example the speed of



Nuclear development in the USSR worried US citizens and officials. Coming away from WWII, this was seen as the USA's great advantage over their eastern counterparts; they monopolised the nuclear weapons front until 1949 when the USSR develops its own atomic bomb. Concerns began to arise about the idea that it wouldn't be long before the USSR had overtaken USA in terms of its nuclear military ability, especially as at the time there were many exaggerated intelligence reports which fed this rumour that only boosted ideas in the US that they were 'losing' the Cold War, and therefore more needed to be done in terms of defence spending to prevent communism spreading as rapidly as they thought it might (particularly pre-1951 when many felt Korea would end up like China). [Link to NSC-68?](#)

The other tension point that could be seen as a reason for the fundamental shift would be the Berlin Blockade. This caused uproar in the west at the USSR and Stalin - he was never to be trusted again and Truman's government had been too lax with their manipulative leader. <sup>SP</sup> Across America people started to think that all that had gone before 1948 was pointless, and even bothersome to negotiate with Russia was wrong. A new, strong distrust and hatred formed against the expansionist - Communism. Although it could be said that the airlift was seen as a positive back home, neither country were fully satisfied with the outcome. The creation of NATO subsequently demonstrates the US's move to new strategies in terms of containing the USSR via global backing.

Some would even say there was little change in terms of strategy by 1951, seen by NSC-68 being very similar to the earlier Long Telegram of Kennan. Strategy had not changed because of China, it had only sped up an inevitable growth in the good to see you've reflected on the lesson content!



distinct of the USSR and allowed McCarthyism into American politics. This can be counterargued however, by saying that NSC-68 would never have been followed up like the Long Telegram if there hadn't actually been a shift in Cold War strategy. This document was a reaction to China, and the first proper moment that the US proposed a substantial increase in military strength. NSC-68 had multiple reasons including the nuclear war race and China for forming, but only China caused this document to have a significant impact unlike the Long Telegram, and almost all the proposed points of NSC-68 were followed up in the next 3 years in Korea.

grammar

on the atomic bomb? / wouldn't it be sensible to place this with your previous argument. The argument about the nuclear weapon advantage I feel is not a true reason for the fundamental shift in strategy, mainly as nuclear weapon related tension really sparked after 1951 when the two countries involved started developing hydrogen bombs. The Bomb gap only came in 1955, but there is a case for a fear factor in 1950, as seen by US military spending going from \$15 to \$50 billion - but I would say this is another shift linked mainly to China.

In conclusion I feel that China did cause a fundamental shift in US cold war strategy - it effected greatly internal US perception of communist expansion on a global scale and therefore shifted attention from Europe to Asia. It caused NSC-68 to be fully implemented because of the pressure on the government due to McCarthyism ~~growing~~, also because of China, and essentially caused the militarisation of the Cold War in Korea. The US spent more on defence than ever, and a new era of the Cold War had begun by 1951 which involved a much more hands-on USA that wanted to do more than passively contain communism, but stand up to it.