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Chapter V

The Genesis, Political, and Economic Sides of the Internet

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Abstract

The purpose of this chapter is to show that the Cold War is behind the invention of the Internet. This is one of very few positive results of this war, which had tremendous influence on the further development of civilization. The research on the universality of info-communication processes was conducted on both sides of the Iron Curtain, which indicates the similarities in engineering thinking, regardless of geographic locations. The political meaning of the Internet does not only result from its history but also stands for the support of democratic development and the obstruction of dictatorships. The history of the Internet is also an example of the development of great engineering talents and research and development centers, which rise to the occasion on such ambitious projects. All of these aspects of the Internet will be investigated in this chapter, as well as its impact on the emergence of the global civilization.

Introduction

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Challenges of the Cold War

The Cold War began to take shape just before the end of the World War II in April 1945 when President Harry Truman reprimanded Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister and Stalin's confidant for sabotaging the Yalta Agreement in Poland, where a free election was postponed. Formally speaking, the Cold War began after Winston Churchill's speech on the Iron Curtain in Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946. He said that an "Iron Curtain had fallen from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic. The Soviets had installed pro-communist governments in every country which had been occupied by the Red Army as well in the Soviet zone of Germany" (Kissinger, 1994).

The Cold War lasted 46 years, from 1946 to 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. This war relied on the symmetry of military power between the United States (U.S.) and the USSR, who both kept their respective military forces in balance to avoid unwanted military confrontations. The U.S. treated this war as a means of promoting democracy and containing communism (Kennan, 1947), while the USSR used the war to conduct the double standard, officially promoting world peace and unofficially looking for the opportunity to defeat capitalism (Targowski, 2000).

The politics of communist containment was implemented by the strategy of circling the USSR by friendly states, which hosted American bases (Spykman, 1942, 1944). In Europe, NATO was organized to counter the Warsaw Pact armies (Moczulski, 1999). The architecture of the Cold War is shown in Figure 1.

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