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"The Impossible Peace - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East"(17)

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Chapter 2 Global wave – The demise of the colonial era and the regional power

2-3(17) Clash of the East and West

After the British and French colonial imperialism, it was the age of East and West two major camps. The former camp was led by the United States and the latter was led by the USSR. The industrial revolution that began in the 18th century teared the society into two classes; capitalists and workers. In the 19th century, Karl Marx said in his book "Das Kapital" that production means monopolized by a small number of capitalists while workers had no means except selling their workforce. Marx called such production system as capitalism.

Marx advocates "Communism" aiming at an equal society by joint ownership of production means. In the beginning of the 20th century, communism was coupled with socialist ideology to counteract the evil of individualism and liberalism. Socialism and Communism penetrated as a new idea to replace capitalism. It became the reality when the Russian Revolution took place in 1917, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was born as the world's first socialist-communist state.

The USSR, born during the World War I, steadily accumulated its power and became the driving force to beat the totalitarian states Germany and Japan as a member of the Allies in the World War II. During the World War II US and USSR coexisted each other. But it was "Bitter enemies in the same boat" or "Cohabiting but living in different worlds". Oil and water could not mix at all. After the war the confrontation came to surface. The face-to-face collision was avoided. It was called as "Cold War". "Hot wars", however, took place worldwide.

In China, the Chinese Civil War between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party took place. In Vietnam, Indochina War between Viet Cong (National Liberation National Front, NLF) and France was broken out in 1955. Initially it was the resistance struggle of the Vietnamese people against colonial suzerain country, France. When France was defeated in the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the US

got into the front in Vietnam on behalf of France. Viet Cong continues to resist the United States under the military aid of the USSR (second Indochina War). It was the confrontation of two major camps as proxy war. In addition, the Korean War broke out in 1950, the front line stuck to the 38th north latitudes and ceased fire in 1953. The Korean Peninsula was divided into two regions until now.

On the European Continent, tension between Western Europe and Eastern Europe rose across the border. In 1949 East Germany built a wall surrounding the West Berlin District, and the blockade of Berlin eventually continued until 1990 when the USSR collapsed.

Eastern and Western camps sharply confronting in the Cold War strengthened military and economic blocking to contain each alliance. In 1949, the Western camp formed the military alliance called NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and took embargo on military technology and strategic supplies to the communist countries along with COCOM (Cooperating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls). Against these movements, the USSR launched a military alliance "Warsaw Treaty Organization" in 1955 involving eight Eastern European countries such as Poland, East Germany and so on. The United States, furthermore, formed a military alliance SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) in Asia similar to NATO to fill in the blanks with Southeast Asia after France withdrew from Vietnam.

In 1958, METO (Middle East Treaty Organization, also referred to as the Baghdad Convention where headquarters were located) was born in the Middle East. Three anti-communism military alliances of NATO, METO and SEATO encircled the USSR. Initially Egypt did not participate in METO, When a socialist revolution was broken out in Iraq, METO moved its headquarter to Ankara in Turkey, and changed the name to CENTO (Central Treaty Organization)



Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt who advocated Pan-Arabism or Arab Nationalism did not only join the anti-communist alliance of the United States, but also not descend under the umbrella of USSR. In his eyes both the US and the USSR appeared as new types of imperialists. Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai, Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, Yugoslavian President, Josip Bros Tito, and Indonesian President, Sukarno, also shared the same opinion with Nasser. In 1954 Nehru and Zhou presented the Five Principals of Peaceful Coexistence. The Asian - African

Conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955.

In the ten principles of peace adopted at the Bandung Conference, they urged the Non-alliance Movements belonging to neither the US or the USSR under the spirit of anti-imperialism, anti-

colonialism and ethnic self-determination. Third World was born for the first time in the history. Nasser was aiming at getting better with the fight between the eastern and western camps to be the fish in troubled water. He also got the position representing Arab countries in Third World. From this time until the Suez war (the second Middle East War) and the formation of the Arab Union with Syria, it was the heyday of Nasser.

(To be continued ----)