I

Stalin, Truman, and the Origins of the Cold War, 1945-1948

Stalin

In 1909, Koba walked behind his wife's coffin, holding his infant son. She "softened my heart," he confided to an old friend. "Now she is dead, and with her passing goes my last drop of feeling for mankind." Placing his hand on his chest, Koba lamented, "Here, in here, everything is empty, unutterably empty."[1]

In his youthful adolescence Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, later to take the name Stalin, had loved the name Koba. Koba had been a romantic revolutionary, a Robin Hood character, seeking to kill the tsar. Betrayed by one of his accomplices, Koba killed the betrayer. A few years later, Koba gradually changed his name to Stalin, meaning man of steel. From romantic heroism to man of steel; such was the evolution of Stalin's self-image.[2]

In 1909, Stalin was thirty-one years old. He was a relatively unknown, dedicated Communist revolutionary, in and out of Russian prisons, in and out of labor camps, continually escaping from the police and from internal exile. He had no close friends, no intimate ties with other people, except perhaps his mother and his wife. As a child growing up in Georgia he had been repeatedly beaten and then abandoned by his father. His mother had nurtured him. With the help of others, she had sent the young Stalin to the Gori Spiritual School and to the Tiflis Theological Seminary. He was a devout, intelligent, and ambitious student. His years of education there, the only formal education he ever had, left a significant imprint. Stalin learned to think in absolutes; in dogma; in ritual; and in struggle.[3] Yet Stalin despised religion. "Endless prayers and enforced religious training," his daughter, Svetlana, later wrote, brought "extreme

skepticism of everything heavenly, of everything sublime."[4]

The ideology of Marxism-Leninism became Stalin's religious doctrine; his ritualistic practice, the making of revolution. As a teenager in the seminary, he mastered the Russian language and began secretly reading radical and Marxist literature. In 1899, when he was twenty-one, he left the seminary, aligned himself with small groups of Georgian Marxists, and started agitating among the tiny working class in Tiflis and Baku. Stalin never had any real job. His job was revolution.[5]

What motivated Stalin's decision to become a revolutionary? Little is known, and even his most authoritative biographers have little to say on this subject. A few years after the Bolshevik revolution and long before he achieved the pinnacle of power, he answered the question this way: "It is difficult to describe the process. First one becomes convinced that existing conditions are wrong and unjust. Then one resolves to do the best one can to remedy them ."[6]

But, in fact, Stalin wrote and said rather little about injustice. "He had a cold heart," said Sergio Beria, son of one of Stalin's secret police chiefs, whose own father had a very cold heart indeed. Stalin's mind, wrote one of his most able Russian biographers, "lacked a single noble feature, a trace of humanitarianism, to say nothing of love of mankind."[7] Svetlana poignantly noted that her father joined the revolutionary movement "not as an idealistic dreamer of a beautiful future, like my mother's family . . .; not as an enthusiastic writer like Gorky, who described in romantic hyperboles the coming Revolution . . . . He chose the way of a revolutionary because in him burned the cold flame of protest against society, in which he himself was at the bottom of the ladder and was supposed to remain there all his life. He wanted infinitely more, and there was no other road open to him but that of revolution."[8]

As a young revolutionary, Stalin mastered the basic texts of Marx and Lenin. He was an active propagandist and writer. But in these years he never wrote anything substantial, except on the treatment of non-Russian nationality groups within a revolutionary multinational state. In prison camps and exile, Stalin often preferred the company of criminals and robbers to fellow revolutionaries. Although he had a good memory and an incisive mind, Stalin preferred to scheme, manipulate, organize, and act.[9]

Among his revolutionary brethren, he developed a reputation for his will and self-discipline. When the tsar was overthrown in February 1917, Lenin, who did not know Stalin well, nevertheless knew him well enough to want his assistance. He believed he could rely upon Stalin to get things done. In April, Lenin spoke in favor of Stalin's election to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.[10]

After the Bolsheviks seized power in November, Stalin assumed important military responsibilities. The new Bolshevik government faced multiple enemies from within and without. Great Britain, France, Poland, Japan, and the United States sent troops and provided assistance to numerous anti-Bolshevik factions operating on various fronts. Stalin became a virtual warlord. He requisitioned and distributed food supplies, organized the local branches of the Cheka, the new secret police, and took charge of regional military activities. He was ruthless and relentless, cunning and cruel. Like other communist commissars, he executed enemies as well as incompetents and traitors within his own ranks. Hating to take orders from anyone, he wrangled throughout the civil war with Leon Trotsky, the overall commander of Red armies. But Stalin deferred to Lenin, whose leadership was unchallenged.[11]

In April 1922, after the Bolsheviks defeated their internal enemies, thwarted the allied intervention, and consolidated power, Stalin was made General Secretary of the Communist

Party's Central Committee. Biographers agree that this was the key position that Stalin used, however gradually, to gain a monopoly of power. Lenin saw this happening. As he lay dying in 1923, Lenin agonized over the future leadership of the party for he saw that the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin might tear it apart and destroy the revolution. He had no solution. But he warned, "Having become General Secretary, Comrade Stalin has concentrated unlimited power in his hands, and I am not sure that he will use that power with sufficient care." Stalin, Lenin wrote, "is too rude. His job should be given to someone else who might be "more patient, more loyal, more respectful and attentive to the comrades, less capricious and so on."[12]

Stalin was not removed. He maneuvered deftly and capitalized on the rift between Trotsky and other Bolsheviks like Grigori Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev. Stalin initially did not stake out clear positions on how to manage the economy, on how to deal with the peasantry, on how rapidly to modernize the economy. In 1924, he wrote the most important theoretical tract of his career, "The Foundations of Leninism," but none of his comrades looked to him for theoretical solutions to basic issues. While leftists and rightists in the party argued fiercely over the role of the market, the organization of agriculture, and the pace of industrialization, Stalin shifted his alignments to defeat the Trotskyites and outwit the leftists. He then adopted the latter's program to vanquish Nikolai Bukharin, who was inclined to work with the kulaks, or wealthier peasants, and who envisioned a more peaceful and evolutionary transition to socialism. By 1930, Stalin was the fiercest proponent of rapid industrialization and collectivization.[13]

What is striking about Stalin and his gradual rise to unquestioned domination in the party and in the Soviet Union is his tactical ambiguity, pragmatic zealotry, and opportunism. "What stands out," writes one of his preeminent biographers, "is his slowness to adopt to crises and changes. His instinct at every key moment was to temporize, think things over, and only then

adjust to the new situation."[14] In difficult political situations, a key aide wrote, "he frequently had no idea what to do or how to behave, but was able to disguise his hesitation, often acting after the event rather than providing leadership."[15]

One should not be too surprised by these tactical shifts. Stalin was fond of quoting Lenin: "a Marxist must take cognizance of real life," of concrete realities. Marxist-Leninist theory was a science that "does not and cannot stand still." Its "propositions and conclusions are bound to change in the course of time, are bound to be replaced by new conclusions and propositions corresponding to the new historical conditions."[16] Stalin's thinking was always fluid, shifting, tactical, and expedient. But theory and ideology were important to him, notwithstanding the simplicity and flexibility of his ideas. Marxism was the scientific study of history. Society was governed by certain laws. Communism represented the future. Change was inevitable. Struggle was essential. Power had to be seized and maintained.

There could be no revolutionary movement, he believed, without revolutionary theory. Theory and ideology provided a framework for comprehending the world, for interpreting the unfolding of events, a guide for understanding threats and grasping opportunities, a lens through which to see the changing correlation of forces among classes, a means for understanding the actions and machinations of imperial powers.[17]

Stalin believed that the "fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power."[18] The Party had to preserve its power in the Soviet Union. Since the conditions for Socialism did not yet exist, the Party had to use the state to build Socialism, for that alone justified its power.[19] "The construction of Socialism in the Soviet Union," Stalin wrote, "would be a momentous turning point in the history of mankind, a victory for the working class and peasantry of the U.S.S.R., marking a new epoch in the history of the world."[20]

But Socialism was endangered from within and without. Ideology and experience confirmed this view. Bourgeois ideas lingered in the minds of men and women even after the revolution and had to be eradicated. The proletarian state, Stalin said, must use force, unrestricted by law, to suppress the bourgeoisie. But it would take time; an entire historical epoch. In the meantime, the Party had to stand at the head of the working class and serve as its General Staff. It had to have "unity of will, complete and absolute unity of action."[21]

Unity at home was imperative because even graver dangers lurked in the international arena. Imperial nations aimed to crush the revolution. Already by the mid-1920s Stalin came to believe that Bolsheviks could not wait for revolution to succeed abroad. They had to "consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, using it as a base for defeat of imperialism in all countries."[22] For Stalin, capitalist encirclement was an ongoing, mortal danger. Soviet Russia was weak. Indeed, the whole "history of Russia [was] one unbroken record of the beatings she suffered for falling behind, for her backwardness. She was beaten by the Mongol Khans. She was beaten by the Turkish beys. She was beaten by the Swedish feudal lords. She was beaten by the Swedish feudal lords. She was beaten by the Polish and Lithuanian gentry. She was beaten by the British and French capitalists. She was beaten by the Japanese barons. All beat her for her backwardness."[23]

The immediate task was to strengthen Soviet Russia. Rapid industrialization was urgent. "The industrialization of the country would insure its economic independence, strengthen its power of defense and create the conditions for the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R." In the late 1920s, Stalin claimed that his domestic foes, like Bukharin, would unwittingly destroy the revolution. Their policies would preserve Soviet Russia as an agrarian country, producing foodstuffs, exporting raw materials, and importing machinery. Such plans were tantamount to

the "economic enslavement of the U.S.S.R. by the industrially-developed foreign countries, a plan for the perpetuation of the industrial backwardness of the U.S.S.R. for the benefit of the imperialist sharks of the capitalist countries."[24]

Stalin could not tolerate such an approach. The first task of planning, he later explained, was "to ensure the independence of the socialist economy from the capitalist encirclement. This is absolutely the most important task. It is a type of battle with world capitalism."[25] In 1931, he exhorted industrial managers, "The tempo must not be reduced! . . . . To slacken the tempo would mean falling behind. And those who fall behind get beaten. But we do not want to be beaten. No, we refuse to be beaten."[26] To be beaten would mean the defeat of the inevitable march of history.

To avoid defeat and achieve rapid industrialization, Stalin had to eradicate his enemies. He had, most of all, to crush the Kulaks, the wealthy peasants, who the Party claimed were withholding food from the cities and thwarting his industrialization program. After Stalin ordered the collectivization of agriculture in 1928-29, he forced fifteen million people into collective farms; those who protested were arrested, shipped off to labor camps, or killed. Then he demanded even larger grain deliveries to the state. When famine erupted in 1932-34, he cared not a whit. Millions perished from starvation. He demanded silence. Merely to speak of the famine could mean death.[27]

With his second wife, Nadezhda Allilueva, Stalin was callous and domineering. Depressed, jealous, and suffering from migraine headaches, she committed suicide in 1932. Stalin was mortified. He grieved, as few had ever seen him. "I can't go on living like this," he lamented. He threatened to resign, and ruminated about killing himself. But he lived and ruled. In fact, he grew more distant, more suspicious, and more paranoid. Ice, writes the historian

Robert Service, "entered his soul."[28]

Between 1932 and 1938 Stalin extinguished every trace of opposition within the Politburo, the Kremlin's ruling body, although very little existed. His lust for power was absolute. No longer did it suffice for Stalin to defeat his foes; he now had to have them executed. They might recant; they might admit they were enemies of the revolution, but they had to die. Tortured, they might acknowledge, falsely, that they conspired against Stalin, or the state, or Socialism, but they had to die. They might acknowledge that they had schemed with enemies abroad, but they had to die. His old comrades from the revolution -- Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin --were shot. His former allies in the Politburo were shot. His military chieftains were shot. Friends and relatives were shot. The executioners were then shot. During 1937 and 1938, Stalin signed 383 lists, directly sending 40,000 human beings to their deaths. He also catalyzed a reign of terror by subordinate cadres everywhere. Overall, almost a million people died in the purges of 1937-38; millions more were sent to camps in Siberia and the Arctic, to the Gulag, where they died from work, starvation, disease, and despair.[29]

Top Party officials shared Stalin's fears. They were acutely aware that their policies were failing. Millions of peasants and urban proprietors were angry and confused; millions of others had been killed or died of starvation. "Nobody really understood how the economy was working or should work, not even its new directors."[30] The Party elite in Moscow put the blame on regional leaders; regional leaders accused their local enemies; rank and file communists wreaked revenge on local leaders they despised. In 1937-38, the result was mass terror and mass murder, some of it carefully orchestrated from above, some of it unleashed from below. But what united the perpetrators was their insecurity, their fear for the safety of the regime; their concern for their careers which they had linked to the success of socialism. In their worldview,

"the future of humanity depended on socialism. Socialism in turn depended on the survival of the Soviet revolutionary experiment, which depended on keeping the Bolshevik regime united, tightly disciplined, and in control of a society that frequently exhibited hostility to that regime."[31]

Hence, party leaders united around Stalin, the man of steel, who could keep everything in check and preserve the revolution. He, in turn, was certain that his followers needed a tsar, a tsar imbued with a vision of the future that transcended the petty everyday needs of humankind. Even his victims who knew him best did not contest his right to crush the foes of revolution. Facing death, Bukharin wrote a letter to his old comrade, Koba, pleading for his life, but also acknowledging, with evident sincerity, that he "knew all too well that ***great*** plans, ***great*** ideas, and ***great*** interests take precedence over everything, and I know that it would be petty for me to place the question of my own person ***on a par*** with the ***universal-historical*** tasks, resting, first and foremost, on your shoulders."[32]

On Stalin's mind was betrayal in time of war. Stalin and his allies worried that internal dissidents, disillusioned workers, disaffected peasants, and aggrieved minorities might align with a foreign invader. The purges and mass deportations focused on national and social groups that might form a "fifth column" in time of war.[33] Many years later, V. M. Molotov, then premier, admitted that many victims of the purges were not, in fact, spies. But they could not be trusted. In time of war, they might betray the socialist fatherland. If this happened, Molotov believed, it would have meant "doom."[34]

In Moscow, the revival of German power under Hitler generated great anxiety. Stalin expected conflict. Marxist-Leninist ideology predicted war, but whether it would be a war among the Kremlin's capitalist and fascist adversaries (which might ensnare the Soviet Union)

or whether it would be a direct assault on Soviet Russia was not clear. Ideology offered competing strategic visions and uncertain solutions. Stalin's foreign minister in the 1930s, Maxim Litvinov, advocated formation of popular fronts with bourgeois parties and bourgeois governments willing to collaborate with the Kremlin. Stalin himself embraced this option for a few years, but not with a great deal of conviction. His ardor for it withered as Nazi Germany swallowed Austria and the prospective western allies practiced appeasement at the Munich Conference and relinquished slices of Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1939. Worried about Japanese as well as German aggression and seeing no indication that Britain was serious about military coordination with Bolshevik Russia, Stalin switched directions, made Molotov his foreign minister, and opted for the infamous non-aggression pact with Hitler, signed in August, 1939. Stalin "saw two great benefits in the new arrangement: the USSR would avoid immediate involvement in the pan-European war and at the same time it could embark on a search for security through spheres of influence in eastern Europe."[35]

Stalin used the alliance with Nazi Germany to act opportunistically. He invaded eastern Poland, annexed the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and fought Finland to achieve greater defense in depth. He had long believed that "to destroy the danger of foreign capitalist intervention, the capitalist encirclement would have to be destroyed."[36]

The fate of the peoples living in these countries was sorrowful. Stalinism now replicated itself in eastern Poland and the Baltic. Land was expropriated, property nationalized, local officials and business people shot or imprisoned. Two million Poles were deported to some of the bleakest parts of Siberia. Polish officers, about 20,000 of them, were rounded up on Stalin's personal orders and systematically shot in the back of their heads in the tranquil forest around Katyn and other areas. No potential Polish resistance to Soviet control would be tolerated.[37]

Stalin knew he would eventually have to fight a war with Germany, although he tried to delay it as long as possible. He dramatically accelerated his rearmament efforts and staked out an ambitious claim for a sphere of influence in southeastern Europe as well as in Iran and Turkey. His new vision of security encompassed the Balkans, the Turkish Straits, and the Persian Gulf. But he was not prepared to launch a preemptive attack or a war of aggression, as some writers have suggested.[38]

Stalin wanted to buy time, capitalizing as much as he could on what he regarded as the intracapitalist conflict in the west, the war long contemplated by Leninist theory. Meanwhile, he sought to appease Hitler, knowing full well that it was just a matter of time until war erupted. Having decimated his officer corps in the purges, Stalin knew his new commanders required time to train their troops, to plan, and to configure their forces effectively. He worked assiduously to avoid provocations that might justify a German attack. In the spring of 1941, he disregarded warning after warning that an invasion was imminent. When a German soldier deserted on the eve of battle and warned that the attack would occur the next day, Stalin ordered that he be shot. Until the very end, Stalin calculated that Hitler would not attack until he had defeated his capitalist-imperial rivals, that he would not attack with the forces he then had available, that he would not attack so late in the spring when only a few months remained for an offensive campaign before winter arrived.[39]

On 22 June, 1941, 146 German divisions attacked. Hitler's aim was to make Stalin's socialist commnonwealth a slave state. Yet Stalin failed utterly to comprehend his foe.[40] Ideology distorted his view of his adversaries. He had thought the intraimperialist conflict between capitalists and fascists would consume Hitler's attention and delay any assault on Soviet Russia. "Revolutionary patriotism," meaning the preservation of the Soviet state, now more than

ever, was to be Stalin's main foreign policy goal.[41]

World War II, the Soviet Union, and Stalin

But the revolutionary state was imperiled and its peoples endangered. About a year after the German invasion, on 14 August 1942, Pravda printed a typical article, "Death to Baby-Killers," and the next day the article re-appeared in many local newspapers throughout the Soviet Union. The history of war, the article began, had never known such cruel acts as those being perpetrated by Hitler's fascist scoundrels and two-legged beasts. Everywhere in the lands they occupied, vile oppressors raped women, tormented old men, tortured POWs, and abused innocent children. Read these lines, comrades, the story went on; read this letter to a Red Army soldier from his sisters in the Smolensk region.

Vera and Zina wrote to their brother, Kolya, that it was hard to describe what they were enduring. Hitler's butchers seized Valya Ivanova, secretary of the local Soviet, wanting her to reveal the names of local partisans. They tied her hands, brought in her children, and cut off their right ears. Then they pitted out the right eye of her son and chopped off five fingers of her daughter's hand. Watching the torture of her children, Valya died of a heart attack. The Nazi cannibals then marched to the neighboring village, seized more children as well as the elderly, forced them into a shed, and set it ablaze.

The article ended with a long exhortation. We must endure; we must fight on; we must exterminate the German fascists. Kill the Germans; kill the child-devouring beasts. Either we defeat the German hordes, or they annihilate us and our children. Soviet soldiers, not a step backward! Save us, warriors of the Red Army, defenders of the Don and Kuban Rivers. Save

us! The blood of our children demands revenge; death to the baby-killers![42]

Suffering. Grief. Death. They were everywhere. On the battlefields and in German concentration camps, the Nazis killed nine million Soviet soldiers. Beyond the battlefields, the Nazis murdered, crushed, tormented, and enslaved. For them, as one of their own generals unabashedly stated, it "was an ideological war of extermination."[43]

In the Soviet lands they occupied, the Germans destroyed more than 1700 towns and 70,000 villages, leaving more than twenty-five million people homeless. In these occupied areas, the Germans murdered seven million civilians and allowed four million additional people to die of hunger, disease, and indifference. The Germans captured and deported as slave labor another five million adults. Overall, wartime deaths on the Soviet side amounted to 26-27 million human beings, including several million killed by Stalin himself. But such cold figures hardly begin to describe the personal tragedy that afflicted and beleaguered almost every human being in the Soviet Union. Even with the new documents, diaries, memoirs, and oral accounts, we can still scarcely imagine the sorrow and challenges of these years. "Virtually every individual had been involved in the war effort and was traumatized by the war experience."[44]

But along with the grief, went a burning desire for revenge, vicious revenge. "If you haven't killed a German in the course of a day, your day has been wasted," wrote Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the most famous Soviet wartime correspondents and postwar writers. "If you have killed one German, kill another: nothing gives us so much joy as German corpses. Your mother says to you: kill the German! Your children beg of you: kill the German! Your country groans and whispers: kill the German! Don't miss him! Don't let him escape! Kill!"[45]

Mass murder was nothing new to Stalin. But now his socialist experiment was imperiled, his personal power threatened, his country's very existence at risk. He had misjudged his

enemy. He was humiliated and infuriated. Hearing reports of the relentless advance of Hitler's armies during the first days of the attack, he muttered: "Lenin founded our state, and we've fucked it up."[46] During those terrible days in late June 1941, Stalin labored to organize the battlefront as well as sustain the homefront, but the news was devastating. [47] Hundreds of Soviet divisions were annihilated. Nazi troops headed toward Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa. Their method of waging war immediately became clear: prisoners of war, Jews, and civilian members of the Communist Party were slaughtered.

On 27 June, "Stalin abruptly stopped ruling." Sulking, he retreated alone to his dacha at Kuntsevo. He was demoralized, embarrassed, enraged. He grasped the magnitude of the tragedy enveloping his country. He knew he was responsible. When members of the Politburo came to the dacha on 30 June, Stalin appeared thin, haggard, and indecisive. Half expecting they were coming to arrest him, he queried, "Why have you come?" In fact, they had come to urge him to take command of the armed forces and to rally the people. They knew nobody but Stalin had the capacity to salvage the socialist experiment, now on the verge of extinction.[48]

On 3 July 1941, Stalin addressed the nation. He talked hesitantly, stopping a few times, perhaps to sip water as he spoke. Invoking patriotism rather than communism, he told his listeners, whom he called "friends" and "brothers and sisters," that the country had been attacked without provocation. The homeland was endangered. Patriotism demanded sacrifice. The enemy was fierce but could be defeated. It would not be an ordinary war; it would be a total war. The next day Pravda called it a "Fatherland war."[49]

But words could not stop Nazi armies. They pushed forward on three fronts, besieging Leningrad and advancing hundreds of miles toward Moscow. There was chaos at the battlefront and panic behind it. Stalin ordered the capital evacuated. Women and children fled the city.

Looters took over. Stalin told his dead wife's sisters, "Things are very bad! Get yourself evacuated. One can't stay in Moscow." To them, Stalin seemed confused, even crushed.[50] During these first six months of war, the Red Army lost 2.6 million soldiers killed in action; almost 3.5 million were taken prisoner and 500,000 were shot.[51]

And the civilian suffering never ceased. In Minsk, the Nazis imposed a regime of "permanent terror." Spontaneous acts of murder were the norm of daily existence. Around Leningrad, the Nazis stopped the inflow of food and fuel. In that beleaguered city, thousands began to die every day from starvation. In the countryside, the Nazis systematically slaughtered Jews and partisans.[52]

But Stalin did mobilize his iron will. He was, after all, the man of steel. He did not leave Moscow, and personally assumed overall command of the war effort. But for those weaker than he, he had no mercy. He ordered that soldiers not retreat; should they do so, they were to be shot. He ordered that soldiers not surrender; should they do so, they would never be forgiven. If officers allowed themselves to be captured, their wives would be arrested. Stalin's own son, that infant whom he carried in his arms on the day of his first wife's burial, and whom he immediately abandoned to the care of others, was captured by the Germans. Stalin refused to make a prisoner exchange. His son's wife was arrested and sent to a labor camp for two years.[53]

Stalin purged and shot the officers whom he regarded as responsible for the Soviet tragedy. He arrested and deported millions of ethnic Germans, Tatars, and other minorities whose loyalty he suspected. Though he placed the fate of the Red Army and the defense of Leningrad and Moscow in the hands of the young general, Georgi Zhukov --a soldier of genius: tough, courageous, flexible, and demanding -- Stalin never fully trusted him and feared Zhukov's growing esteem. But Stalin was shrewd enough to realize that he had found a commander of

determination and imagination. In December 1941, Zhukov organized a counteroffensive outside Moscow. He rallied his men, brought in additional divisions from the Far East, and capitalized on the frigid conditions and heavy snows that beleaguered the enemy. His soldiers fought fiercely and heroically, knowing that the very existence of their country was at stake. And as soon as they advanced a few miles into the towns occupied by the Germans, they witnessed the legacy of Nazi barbarity: burned houses, starving children, raped women. Partisans were often found hanging from trees; their mutilated bodies frozen and dangling in the wind.[54]

Stalin looked to the British to open a second front in western Europe in order to divert Nazi forces and to lift the pressure on Russian armies. At the same time, he looked to the Americans for vast supplies of munitions, trucks, and food. In September 194l, Harry Hopkins, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's personal emissary, visited Moscow and talked to Stalin. In December, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden did the same. Many of their countrymen did not expect the Soviet Union to survive the Nazi onslaught. Most assumed that the Russians would capitulate as had the Poles and the Dutch, the Czechs and the French. Stalin was a defiant supplicant. He desperately needed Western help, but he also grasped that they desperately needed him to continue fighting.

From the outset of his talks with the British and Americans, Stalin made clear that notwithstanding his desire for material aid and a second front, in any postwar settlement he intended to incorporate into the Soviet Union the parts of eastern Poland and the Baltic states that he had annexed in 1939 and 1940. With the Germans marauding his country, seizing its assets, and threatening his power, his concern with the security of his socialist state mounted. He was determined to establish secure frontiers through territorial gains, but he also aspired for

an enduring alliance with his wartime allies, the British and Americans. In June 1942, Stalin ordered his foreign affairs commissar, Vyacheslav Molotov, to tell Roosevelt that he shared the American president's views: "it would be impossible to maintain peace in future without creating a united military force by Britain, the USA and the USSR, capable of preventing aggression."[55]

But plans for a future peace took a back seat to the exigencies of war. Whether Soviet peoples would fight was much in doubt. In Poland and the Baltic states, as well as in Ukraine, the Crimea, and Soviet Russia, hundreds of thousands, maybe a few million of Soviet citizens deserted or rebelled or colluded with the enemy. Still, the vast majority fought stoically, defiantly, heroically. They suffered; they endured; eventually, they triumphed. Throughout, they were inspired by their passion to regain their land, their homes, their country; throughout, they were inspired by their lust for revenge. Contemporary reports, memoirs and recollections, poetry and literature attest to the depths of despair and the allure of revenge. "Great and enduring is the Russian people," wrote Konstantin Simonov, another prominent wartime journalist. "Great and enduring but at the same time fearful in anger. I have driven along devastated roads, through burned-out villages, through places where the cup of suffering is overflowing, and all the same I have seen few tears. When one hates very much, one has few tears."[56]

Stalin, more than anyone, intended to wreak revenge and secure his country. On 6 November 1943, on the twenty-sixth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, Stalin heralded the recent victories on the battlefield. The Germans still occupied vast parts of his country, but they had failed to vanquish their communist foe. The Soviet state, he said, would emerge stronger than it had ever been. The superiority of the socialist system had proven itself.

But rather than dwell on the themes of socialism, Stalin intuitively knew what rhetoric would resonate with his countrymen. He never had been a good speaker. Even now, he was far from eloquent. But he understood human nature. He understood the passion for revenge. "In the districts they seized," Stalin said, "the Germans have exterminated hundreds of thousands of our citizens. Like the Medieval barbarians of Attila's hordes, the German fiends trample the fields, burn down villages and towns, and demolish industrial enterprises and cultural institutions. . . . Our people will not forgive the German fiends for these crimes. We shall make the German criminals answer for their misdeeds." And he finished with the peroration:

Long live our Red Army!

Long live our Navy!

Long live our gallant men and women guerillas

Long live our great motherland!

Death to the German invaders![57]

Not a word about socialism in this peroration.

But Stalin's ideological mindset had not changed. How could it have? He was now almost sixty-six years old. At the core of his belief system for more than forty years was the notion of capitalist encirclement. The Nazi invasion confirmed, he believed, the rectitude of this assumption. Under the duress of the Great Depression, fascism had become an extreme form of capitalism, and capitalist countries therefore had warred among themselves, just as Leninist theory postulated. But the fascists also sought to extinguish communism and destroy the Soviet Union, thereby creating an alliance of convenience between the liberal capitalist democracies and the Soviet Union. Stalin did not trust Great Britain or the United States, but mutual dependence, inured hardship, and personal interaction generated his grudging respect and

appreciation, especially for Roosevelt.[58] The anti-Hitler coalition, he stated publicly, was "a firm association of peoples, and rests on a solid foundation."[59] The alliance, he repeated in May 1944, was not temporary, but "long-term." This was "his Bolshevik view" of the question."[60]

But would that alliance endure? For the rest of the war and into the immediate postwar years, Stalin wrestled with the dilemma of reconciling his concerns for security with his fears of capitalist encirclement, of reconciling the needs of the coalition with his obligations to the revolutionary project to which he had devoted his life. He formed numerous commissions to examine postwar Soviet foreign policy options. His subordinates pondered and wrangled, not knowing how the war would end, not knowing whether the United States would withdraw into its prewar isolation, not knowing the extent to which class interests should or would reassert themselves. But, overall, security considerations trumped revolutionary ambitions. This did not mean that ideology was not at work, for it was very much operative. Theory and experience suggested that capitalism would founder again, that Germany and Japan would revive, that the Soviet Union would remain endangered, and that intra-capitalist wars would recur; hence the enormous espionage effort that the Kremlin conducted in the United States and Great Britain even when the wartime coalition was at its height. But it was hard to sort out primary, secondary, and tertiary threats. Prudence and watchfulness would be essential. All Soviet leaders felt this way, even when they disagreed among themselves, which they most definitely did, on the definition of threat, the conception of strategy, and the role of ideology. But, overall, they were concerned far more with defense than with revolution. And hence they desired to sustain the allied coalition into the postwar years. It was to Soviet advantage to do so.[61]

Stalin often kept himself removed from these discussions among his subordinates, although he clearly authorized the commissions, requested the studies, and pondered their

conclusions. After assessing the most recent documents and carefully appraising their different meanings, the Italian scholar Silvio Pons has written, "the new expansionist tendency of the USSR continued to be conceived in a strategic context dominated by the priority of Soviet security."[62] In short, Stalin's overriding goal, more compelling than ever before, was to safeguard the Soviet homeland. World revolution was a dialectical process to which he swore ideological allegiance, but since the early 1920s it had not been his primary goal in practice. Revolution abroad was important to him insofar as it could help rid the Soviet Union of enemies on its borderlands: enemies, like the Poles, whose weakness, vacillation, and hostility had opened the path to Hitler's armies; enemies, like the Czechs, who had capitulated to Hitler's demands; enemies, like the Slovaks, Croats, Hungarians, Rumanians, and even Bulgarians who, formally or informally, explicitly or implicitly, aligned themselves with Hitler's ambitions or abetted his agenda. "He is a revolutionary," Stalin long ago had stated, "who is prepared to defend, to protect the USSR without reservations, unconditionally . . . . He is an internationalist who is prepared to defend the USSR unreservedly, without hesitations, without conditions . . . . [M]oving forward the revolutionary movement is impossible without defending the USSR."[63]

Yet Moscow remained the home of the Communist International. Formally, Stalin dissolved the Comintern in 1943, but for all intents and purposes it continued to operate. From all over Europe and Asia, communists fled to Moscow to survive fascism, nazism, and militarism. Otherwise, they joined resistance movements in their own countries, often forming the core of its forces and capturing admiration and support for their valiant struggle for freedom from fascism and militarism. Communism now stood for liberation and reform.[64] Stalin stood at the pinnacle of this worldwide movement, heralded as the stoic, determined, courageous leader who would not capitulate to the forces of darkness and evil. The war had enshrouded him with

the nobility and prestige that he could never gain in peacetime as the brutal leader of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Stalin cared little for the revolutionary leaders with whom he dealt. Regardless of their ideological zeal, or sometimes because of it, he viewed them with the same suspicion that he viewed his former comrades in the revolution as well as his current wartime partners. But as leader of the world's sole socialist country, as leader of the nation engaging the overriding bulk of Nazi forces, comrades abroad needed him more than he needed them. He used his authority to monitor or eliminate communist leaders who might defy him as deftly and brutally as he used his power to extinguish domestic opponents. He sought to use the world communist movement to enhance the security, power, and stature of the Soviet Union.[65]

There are many recollections, memoirs, minutes, and memoranda illuminating Stalin's interactions with communist leaders as they consulted with him on strategy during and immediately after the war. Stalin did not encourage communists to seize power and bolshevize their societies. He encouraged them to establish broad popular coalitions with other democratic and socialist parties, a national front strategy. Radical measures, he told the French, the Italians, the Poles, and many others, must be avoided. They would alienate potential supporters, jeopardizing their "efforts to win over the majority of the people." The national front strategy, he said, required "concessions and compromises." Over the long run, he hoped communists would win power, but this goal was subordinate to preserving the alliance. Radicalism, he instructed the Polish communists, would mistakenly "make Poland a bone of contention" between the British, Russians, and Americans.[66]

The circumstances were propitious for socialist advances, but prudence was essential. Communists abroad, eager to seize power, must exercise self-restraint, must be calculating.

"Bourgeois statesmen," Stalin told the head of a Yugoslav delegation in January 1945, "are very touchy and vindictive. You have to control your emotions; if you are guided by your emotions – you lose." When you are weak, Stalin added, you need to be on the defensive; when strong, you should attack.[67]

For the time being, the communists definitely were not strong, but their opportunities were growing. They needed to be calculating, as Stalin thought he was. They needed to adapt strategies to meet existing circumstances. Repeatedly, he told communists from eastern Europe as well as western Europe that the Russian model of seizing power and bolshevizing the country was not the one to be followed. Socialism could be achieved in other ways, under other "political systems - for example by a democracy, a parliamentary republic and even by a constitutional monarchy."[68]

As World War II drew to a close, Stalin indisputably was the director of the world communist movement. He was consulted and deferred to. He gave orders and sent agents abroad. He sought to be cool and cunning. But Stalin's exact plans were not clear; indeed he had no master plan, not anything like it. Many foreign communists were puzzled or exasperated by the ambiguities emanating from Moscow, ambiguities that sometimes confounded their own desires to be bolder at the end of the war. Extrapolating from a very detailed investigation of the Italian experience, a leading scholar writes, "Stalin's vagueness hardly demonstrates the development of a real strategy for Communist hegemony in Europe."[69]

Stalin did not encourage communist revolution because he was most preoccupied with enhancing the security, self-interest, and well-being of the Soviet Union. To do this, he wanted to preserve the allied coalition, for he believed it was in the interest of the Soviet Union to do so. There was a huge task of reconstruction ahead. The Americans might provide loans. At the

very least, their cooperation, and British assent, would be needed to extract huge reparations from Germany -- from the Ruhr and the Rhineland as well as from the eastern parts of the country that his armies would occupy. And most of all, British and American cooperation would be essential to control and monitor the revival of German and Japanese power. In June 1944, when Stalin met with members of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, the Lublin Poles, he told them that Poland "must have alliances with several great states. Poland needs alliances with the Western states, with Great Britain, France, and friendly relations with America."[70]

Stalin's overriding concern as the war came to an end was to control against the revival of German power. In conversation after conversation, with communists and non-communists, with east Europeans and west Europeans, with Americans and British, the specter of German power loomed large. Even "after the defeat of Germany the danger of war/invasion [sic] will continue to exist," he told Bulgarian and Yugoslav communists. "History teaches us," he said to the Lublin Poles, "that one must not wait long for recovery of the German power." "In 1871," Stalin remembered, "Germany attacked France. . . . Forty years later, in 1914, Germany attacked again. After the last World War, Germany restored its strength and began to wage war in 1939. Germany possesses an immense regenerative capability." If half-hearted measures were taken, Stalin believed, "we will have a new war in 15 years."[71]

No matter how total would be the impending German defeat, the Soviet Union could never feel secure. History, experience, and ideology shaped the Soviet view. The Germans, Stalin said, "do not believe in human feelings."[72] "We are now smashing the Germans," he said in March 1945, "and many people now assume that the Germans will never be able to threaten us again. Well, that simply is not true. I HATE THE GERMANS. . . . It's impossible to destroy the Germans for good, they will still be around. We are fighting the Germans and we will finish

the job. But we must bear in mind that our allies will try to save the Germans and conspire with them. We will be merciless toward the Germans, but our allies will seek to treat them more leniently. This is why we, the Slavs, must be ready in case the Germans can get back on their feet and launch another attack against the Slavs."[73]

These views reflected the sentiments of all Russians living through the war, regardless of how they felt about their own communist regime. When Stalin refused to relinquish eastern Poland and Bessarabia after the war, when he rejected any consideration for the independence of the Baltic states, when he negotiated tenaciously at the Yalta Conference for a Polish government mainly composed of communists, when he sought to install and maintain friendly governments on the Soviet periphery, when he demanded the huge bulk of German reparation payments, when he raised the question of having postwar bases in the Turkish Straits, when he delayed withdrawing Soviet troops from northern Iran, he was conducting affairs much like a Russian tsar, seeking to take advantage of every opportunity to enhance the security and power of his country. Few Russians could dispute the desirability of these goals, after the hardships and cruelties they had just suffered. "If ever a state had good reason to want to rule over Europe," comments the distinguished political scientist John Mearsheimer, "it was the Soviet Union in 1945. It had been invaded twice by Germany over a thirty-year period, and each time Germany made its victim pay an enormous blood price. No responsible Soviet leader would have passed up an opportunity to be Europe's hegemon in the wake of World War II."[74] Stalin expected the Americans and the British to understand and to accommodate these security needs.

In return, Stalin was willing to acknowledge some of the compelling imperatives of his western partners. He was willing to join the war against Japan and insure its defeat, thereby helping Roosevelt to minimize the loss of American lives while gaining strategic territory, ports,

and railroads to serve the interests of the Soviet Union. Stalin was also willing to control the forces of revolution, so far as he could. In the civil war in China between the Nationalists and Communists, for example, he was willing to deal with the Nationalists and withhold recognition from the Communists. He was willing to tell communists in Greece, France, and Italy to desist from any efforts to seize power when conditions were arguably most propitious. Overall, he was willing to calibrate the forces of revolution, spontaneously arising from the condition of depression, war, and liberation, to serve the security requirements and national self-interest of Soviet Russia. "Stalin," writes Georgi Arbatov, a leading foreign-policy apparatchik of the Soviet regime, "manipulated internationalism to serve nationalism and imperial ambitions."[75]

Many of these points came up in his talks with T.V. Soong, the Chinese Nationalist emissary who met with Stalin just before and just after the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. The intent was to iron out the terms of the secret Yalta protocol about the Far East that Roosevelt had negotiated with Stalin. Soong wanted Stalin to repudiate the Chinese Communist Party, recognize China's sovereignty over Outer Mongolia, and admit partial Chinese control over the ports of Dairen, Port Arthur, and the major Manchurian railroads. The detailed, cryptic records we now have of these talks once again illuminate Stalin's overriding and persistent concern with security and frontiers. Japan, said Stalin, "will rise again like Germany." "We want an alliance with China," he declared, "to curb Japan." Japan, he elaborated several days later, "will not be ruined." After Versailles, he reminded Soong, "all thought Germany would not rise. 15-20 years, she recovered. Same would happen with Japan even if she is put on her knees."[76]

In comparison to the quest for security, the lure of revolution was secondary, but not always separable. In talks with Churchill in October 1944, Stalin had quickly assented to a percentage agreement that, in effect, gave the Soviet Union overwhelming influence in Bulgaria,

Romania, and Hungary in exchange for abandoning the Greek communists to their fate at the hands of their domestic conservative opponents and Great Britain which actively supported the latter. As his armies marched through eastern Europe, Stalin signed armistice agreements and set up governments that would be friendly to the Soviet Union and that would insure the safety of military lines of communication. He argued with Roosevelt and Churchill at Yalta, insisting that the Lublin communist Poles constitute the majority in a Polish provisional government. Afterward, he acted ruthlessly to arrest, imprison, and kill selected Polish opponents. He unequivocally stated that the Soviet Union had to have a friendly Poland, a Poland that would not serve as a corridor for a future invasion of the Soviet Union. In Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, he implemented his national front strategy, setting up broad coalition governments in which communists had important posts but were not yet dominant.[77]

Under the terms of the armistice agreements that ended the war with Germany's satellites in eastern Europe, the Soviet Union had the right to form these provisional governments in behalf of the allied coalition, much as the British and Americans already had done in 1943 in Italy. Soviet military commanders worked with local leaders to enhance communist strength and thwart non-communist opponents. Stalin was willing to give lip service to notions of free elections and self-determination, as he did at Yalta, but, in practice, he was determined to establish a sphere of influence that would safeguard the Soviet periphery for all time. These were countries, after all, that had fought alongside or abetted Nazi Germany. "The Soviet dictator did not believe that a bourgeois government could be truly loyal and friendly to a socialist great power."[78]

In the spring of 1945, Stalin's armies launched their last offensive to reach Berlin and vanquish Nazi Germany. The fighting remained fierce. Casualties again were enormous. But

the outcome was now inevitable, as British and American forces also attacked from the west. Hitler committed suicide. The Germans surrendered unconditionally. Soviet troops plundered and marauded. They raped, brutalized, and humiliated German women. Now was the time to even scores. Now was the time for Russian soldiers to restore their own manhood, to overcome their own sense of impotence arising from the Nazis' barbarous treatment of their wives, mothers, fathers, and children. Now was the time for the Germans to pay for their racial arrogance and ruthless exploitation. Within a few weeks almost 100,000 Berlin women sought medical attention for rape. And the lamentations of German women, young and old, were poignant:

At home and still not at home,

The Russians come every night

Dear God I beg you

Let me sleep and forget

Forget . . .

Shamed, humiliated, and besmirched

I get up again with new wounds

Forget . . .

Is a woman there only to be stepped on - enslaved?

Doesn't anyone ask about simple right?

Forget . . .

. . . .

I beg you God let me sleep and forget

And don't measure my life by what happens here.[79]

Stalin was measuring his life by what happened in Berlin. Nor would he forget or forgive. This was his defining moment. Victor over the Germans. Savior of the Revolution. Tsar of the Soviet peoples. Master of the Kremlin. Arbiter of the fate of countries. Dictator of the proletariat.

At 2 a.m., on 9 May 1945, victory over Germany was announced on Moscow radio. People, thinly dressed, poured out of their houses and along the streets toward Red Square. "It was an extraordinary day, both in its joy and in its sadness," recalled Ilya Ehrenberg. An elderly woman walked the streets with a photograph, showing everyone her son who had died in battle. "She wept and smiled." Young people rejoiced. Strangers embraced. The war and the suffering had bred bonds, kindled hopes. "With everybody else," Ehrenburg continued, "I grieved, I despaired, I hated, I loved."[80]

All day long, throngs gathered in the streets. In front of the American embassy, they shouted "Hurrah for Roosevelt." The joy was "indescribable," wrote an American diplomat.[81] In the evening, in Red Square, two or three million people gathered to hear Stalin's words. He began, not with "brothers and sisters," as he had on 3 July 1941, but with "Men and Women compatriots." "Its lack of warmth," grieved Ehrenburg, sensitive poet and writer. But people did not care. Their country had triumphed. Stalin was their hero. "Every word" he spoke "was convincing." The "salvoes of a thousand guns sounded like an Amen."[82]

Stalin was at the pinnacle of his career. He reigned supreme in the Kremlin. His authority was unquestioned. So great was his power, so vast the orchestrated tributes, that he disdained parades and dismissed public adulation. He dressed modestly, acted modestly. He had aged under the strain of war. He was sixty-seven now, short and increasingly stocky, with visibly thinning hair and a sallow, pock-marked face. He no longer was the militant, aggressive

revolutionary; he had learned over time to listen, to withhold his thoughts, to speak clearly and succinctly. With foreign leaders, like Roosevelt and Churchill, he could be smiling, gracious, self-effacing; with subordinates, he, too, could be convivial, warm and generous. "Stalin," writes Sergo Beria, the son of the dictator's secret police chief, "was able to charm people. . . . He managed to give the people he was with the impression that Jupiter had come down from his Olympus for them . . . . He found subjects of conversation with everyone. . . . [H]e left each person he spoke to anxious to see him again, with a sense that there was now a bond that linked them forever."[83] Stalin spent more and more time at his dacha at Kuntsevo, worked late, slept late, and expected everyone to be available at all hours of the night. Often, he invited leading comrades in the Politburo for dinner. They ate lavishly; he did not. The alcohol flowed, but he did not usually drink much. They talked politics, diplomacy, and affairs of state. They then gossiped, sang, watched films, and sometimes even danced. Stalin, the host, wanted joviality. He watched them carefully.[84]

Stalin's subordinates respected him and deferred, completely. He could be intimidating, humiliating, and murderous. The purges of high Party comrades had ended during the war, but Stalin remained suspicious of everyone around him. They knew it and lived in dread. He monitored their lives. They dared not meet privately together in large groups. They dared not travel together except with his permission. They dared not entertain westerners. Lest this not suffice, to prevent cabals and preserve his ultimate right to decide affairs of state, he consciously set them against one another by establishing overlapping, competing jurisdictions. He created parallel instruments of governance in the Party and the government, each of which was monitored by multiple security services, which in return reported one on another.[85]

But Stalin often remained inscrutable both to subordinates and to interlocutors. "He

dominated his entourage by mystery," writes a recent biographer. "Everyone found it difficult to comprehend Stalin," writes another.[86] He could speak clearly, but what he was thinking was not clear. He could quote Lenin and Marx, but to extrapolate different meanings, contrasting strategies, and divergent ends. Capitalists would founder, but the United States was strong. Capitalists would war against one another, but the Anglo-Americans were "closely connected." Crush the opposition (whoever they might be), but "make sure that the people are following you." Socialism is inevitable, but it might develop through the "parliamentary way."[87]

We can try to discern clear patterns in all of this, but it would be a misreading of Stalin. For him, there were certain constants, but never clear strategies. There would always be fear and suspicion; there would always be a lust for power and a craving for security. Ideology and experience dictated these constants. The world indeed was a dangerous place. Lenin's texts were not necessary to clarify this truism -- all Stalin had to do was look around him and see the legacy of war -- but Lenin's texts explained why war had occurred. Capitalist dynamics generated conflict that could engulf and extinguish the socialist experiment. So might the recovery of Germany and Japan. So might domestic opponents. Threats abounded, and they were not phantom threats. "Soviet leaders," writes the historian Richard Overy, "were not living in a world of invented danger; they were fighting armed resistance on what was now Soviet soil, in areas where popular hostility to Soviet communism was widespread. Throughout the states liberated by the Red Army pro-Soviet forces were in the minority. The fragile control over these territories sharpened the conflict with the West, and provoked an almost constant state of alert against the threat of war and internal subversion. "The hardening of Soviet attitudes to the West evident from 1946 onwards was a product of Soviet vulnerability as much as Soviet strength."[88]

Stalin pondered what to do. He did not want hostility with his erstwhile wartime

partners. Sustaining the wartime coalition offered many advantages: possible loans for reconstruction; possible reparations for rehabilitation; possible guarantees of security against the revival of German and Japanese threats. He disliked Churchill and was upset by Roosevelt's death in April 1945. He had never let down his guard in dealing with them, knowing they were capitalist adversaries, but their interests had become intertwined and might remain so. On the morrow of victory, there was no anti-Americanism; nor would there be for many months.[89]

As Stalin headed off to the Potsdam Conference in mid-July 1945 to meet Harry S. Truman, the new American president, for the first time, the future of international relations was still contingent. Truman thought he needed Stalin to help defeat Japan. And he needed Stalin to perpetuate Roosevelt's dream of a permanent peace based on the alliance forged in war. Stalin still believed he could get the Americans to accept his sphere of influence and abet his reconstruction. Both the Soviets and the Americans thought they had a common interest in controlling the revival of German and Japanese power. And so did the British. Communist ideology postulated and lived experience demonstrated that the international system was a dangerous place where real dangers lurked and survival was perilous. Cooperation might be better than cold war.[90]

Truman

Harry S. Truman was born in 1884 in a simple house in rural Missouri. Until 1934, when he was unexpectedly elected to the U.S. Senate, his life was ordinary. While Stalin was agitating to overthrow the tsarist regime and escaping from labor camps in Russia, Truman farmed the land and dabbled in business; while Stalin plotted with Lenin and Trotsky in 1917 to seize power and create a Bolshevik government, Truman decided to support President Wilson's crusade to make the world safe for democracy and enlisted in the National Guard; while Stalin

acted as a warlord in southern Russia and rallied support for the new communist regime, Truman ran a regimental canteen in Oklahoma and then commanded a battery of troops in France on the Western front; while Stalin assumed the post as general secretary of the communist party of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Truman floundered as a small businessman in postwar America; while Stalin outmaneuvered Trotsky and Bukharin and established himself as the most powerful man in the Kremlin, Truman served as an obscure local official in Thomas Pendergast's political machine in Jackson County, Missouri; while Stalin orchestrated the collectivization of agriculture and the destruction of the Kulaks, Truman directed a newly created New Deal employment bureau in his home state; while Stalin murdered his former comrades and purged his top military commanders, Truman struggled to gain stature in Washington as the newly elected junior senator from the state of Missouri; while Stalin negotiated the alliance with Hitler and prepared for war, Truman worried about his reelection campaign; while Stalin oversaw the defense of Moscow and Leningrad, met with Churchill and Roosevelt, and organized the defeat of the Nazi war machine, Truman gained national visibility heading a Senate committee investigating the operation of the U.S. defense industry.

Because of the national visibility Truman achieved as a result of his work on this investigative committee and because he was acceptable to different factions of the Democratic Party, Roosevelt chose him as his vice-presidential running mate in 1944. The two men were strangers. Roosevelt never confided in him or trusted him with any significant responsibility. "He never did talk to me confidentially," Truman confessed, "about the war, or about foreign affairs or what he had in mind for the peace after the war."[91] On 12 April 1945, Roosevelt died. Harry Truman inherited the presidency of the United States, the most powerful and richest country in the history of the world. "Pray for me now," Truman whispered to friendly

journalists.[92]

The new president was hard-working and ambitious, but he did not crave fame or power. Throughout his life, Truman earned less money than he would have liked, and this was a continuous source of disappointment. But "honor, ethics, and right living," he was fond of saying, was "its own reward." A modest yet proud man, full of folksy, plain-speaking aphorisms, he wrote, "If I can't win straight, I'll continue to lose."[93]

During World War I, Truman had found that he was a natural leader of men. After he returned home from France and floundered in business, yet again, he took considerable pride in his public service. As presiding administrative judge of Jackson County, he had labored to provide better roads and commodious public buildings. He always wanted to do more than his meager jobs allowed. He sought higher public office, but the prospects were rarely auspicious. In 1932 and 1933, he failed to get the nomination for governor and for Congress. His political career seemed at an end. Despite his lifelong efforts always to maintain a positive disposition, he sounded distraught. "Tomorrow," he wrote in May 1933, "I'll be forty-nine," but "for all the good I have done the forty might as well be left off."[94]

In 1934, after several candidates turned down Boss Pendergast's overtures that they run for the U.S. Senate, Truman jumped at the opportunity. He was a determined campaigner, benefited from weak opponents, and capitalized on the Pendergast machine's ability to turn out the vote in Kansas City, where Truman himself was well known and respected for his record of service, especially as the federal reemployment director. When he got to Washington, he worked hard to earn the respect of his new colleagues and to cast aside his reputation as the "senator from Pendergast." He supported much of the legislation of the New Deal, but was not regarded as a liberal reformer. When Pendergast himself was indicted for fraud and income tax evasion in

1938, Truman was besmirched by his close association with the machine. Roosevelt did not want him to run again. Truman thought of resigning, but then campaigned doggedly and eked out another improbable victory.[95]

Truman's foreign policy was fairly simple: he did not believe in isolation and he was against dictators. He favored low tariffs, open trade, and military preparedness. But these were not defining issues for him. In the 1930s, he was not a crusader against totalitarianism. He spoke rarely about the menace of Nazism or Communism. He once said that he hoped Hitler and Stalin would fight each other to extinction, but that was no more than a quip. Ever since his experience in World War I, he gave little thought to international affairs. He did not "give a whoop (to put it mildly) whether there is a League of Nations or whether Russia has a Red government or a purple one."[96]

Truman was simply pro-American. He loved his country; "God's country," as he was fond of calling it.[97] He admired the Constitution, "the greatest document of government ever put together."[98] He cherished American values: liberty, individual opportunity, and free enterprise. He championed the hard-working farmer and laborer and believed government should be used in thoughtful yet limited ways to help them. He opposed big corporations and military big shots. In early 1941, when internationalists were battling isolationists and seeking more support for the beleaguered French and British, Truman turned his own attention to investigating the national defense program. He wanted to make sure that contracts were being fairly distributed, that production was efficient, that money was not being wasted, that the fat cats were not getting all the best contracts, that his own Missouri constituents and manufacturers were being well served. Truman beautifully blended a parochial nationalism with an incipient internationalism. He became a strong proponent of the United Nations.

Even as he gained considerable notoriety as the chair of the Senate committee investigating the defense industry, his simple life style and modest sense of self never changed. He disdained luxury and hated pretense. He woke early, worked hard, and often ate at the local Hot Shoppe.[99] He never ceased to write loving letters to his wife and daughter, who were often back in Independence, Missouri, while he was in Washington. He missed them, and he waited expectantly for their return letters. Yet he loved being a politician, close to the people, seemingly representing their views and getting the government to serve their needs. Once in the Senate, he did not strive any longer for higher office; he did not seek the vice presidency or yearn to occupy the White House. As U.S. senator, he was already a man who had accomplished more than he expected. He loved politics; he liked the legislative infighting. He enjoyed a card game with friends and a glass (or two) of bourbon in the evening.

While Truman was serving his second term in the Senate and gaining the esteem of his colleagues and the attention of the public, the United States moved from depression to war. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 killed several thousand Americans, but continental United States was unscathed by enemy attack. After Hitler declared war on America a few days later, the nation found itself fighting all three Axis powers -- Germany, Japan, and Italy – and fighting them far from America's shores. Young children and old men were not slaughtered by enemy occupation; sisters, daughters, and mothers were not raped. Homes were not bombed; villages and cities were not ruined. The American wartime experience was vastly different than that endured by any of the other major combatants.

Hard times ended. After a decade of depression, writes the historian Michael Adams, the "war inaugurated the greatest era of prosperity in human history." Gross national product increased sixty percent during the war; total earnings fifty percent. There was social unrest,

labor agitation, racial conflict, and teenage vandalism, but life in America was unimaginatively different than life in war-torn Europe and Asia. "Many Americans, for the first time in history had more money than they knew what to do with." The numbers of middle class Americans grew rapidly as did home-ownership. Despite rationing, or perhaps because of it, people had more discretionary income than ever before. They bought washers and dryers, jewelry and cigarettes. Average department store purchases soared fivefold, from two to ten dollars, during the war. "Never in the history of human conflict," commented the economist John Kenneth Galbraith, "has there been so much talk of sacrifice and so little sacrifice." Teens, in particular, relished the opportunity to find jobs, make money, and spend it. They were beginning to shape a postwar consumer culture that would become the envy of the world, but nobody then was quite aware of its significance.[100]

Like most Americans during the war, Truman focused his attention on the spectacular rise in America's defense production, industrial capability, and strategic power. By the end of 1942, the United States was producing more arms than all the Axis states together. During 1943, it made almost three times more armaments than did Soviet Russia. During the remainder of the conflict, the United States turned out two-thirds of all the Allied military equipment utilized in the war: 297,000 aircraft, 193,000 artillery pieces, 86,000 tanks, 2 million army trucks. By the end of the war, it had the capability to produce almost 100,000 planes and 30,000 tanks a year. In four years, overall industrial production doubled; the machine-tool industry trebled. In 1945, the United States had two-thirds of the world's gold reserves, three-fourths of its invested capital, half of its shipping vessels, and half of its manufacturing capacity. Its gross national product was three times that of the Soviet Union and more than five times that of Great Britain. It was also nearing completion of the atomic bomb, a technological and production feat of huge

costs and proportions.[101]

Truman went to the Potsdam Conference in July 1945 knowing these facts. He was not eager to cross the ocean to meet his wartime allies, Churchill and Stalin. "How I hate this trip," he confided in his diary. "But I have to make it . . . and we must win."[102] The war in Europe was over, and it was critical to begin talking about postwar settlements for Germany and eastern Europe. It was even more critical to talk to Stalin about the war in the Pacific. Truman wanted Stalin to make good on his promise at Yalta to declare war on Japan within three months after Germany's defeat. If Russians attacked Japanese troops on the Chinese mainland, the Japanese emperor would have fewer troops to kill Americans when they invaded the home islands. This was of utmost importance to Truman, as his plans for the Potsdam conference were made before the atomic bomb was secretly and successfully tested in New Mexico on 16 July.

Truman wanted to get along with Stalin. Some advisers, like W. Averell Harriman, the American ambassador to the Soviet Union, Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal, and Admiral William Leahy, the wartime chief of staff, wanted him to take a tough stand against the Soviet Union. They told Truman that the Russians were looting eastern Germany and imposing communist regimes in eastern Europe. But Truman felt no passion about these matters; no deep empathy for peoples he neither knew nor understood. Stalin was a dictator, for sure, but Truman felt he also had the support of the Russian people. If not, they would not have fought so tenaciously; so let's get along, he jotted in his diary. Truman knew the Soviets were looting eastern Europe, but they had also been "thoroughly looted by the Germans over and over again and you can hardly blame them for their attitude." Truman knew the Soviets were seeking to set up police governments, but he felt that Stalin would eventually bow to American pressure. On the eve of Potsdam, he had seen the Kremlin make concessions. "Yesterday was a hectic day,"

he wrote his wife on 7 June 1945. "Had both good news and bad. Stalin agreed to our interpretation of the veto at San Francisco and a reconsideration of the Polish question, but we lost the election in Montana and the Republicans are jubilant over it."[103]

Because he believed that the travail of the Polish people was on a par with the disappointment of Democrats in Montana, he was perfectly well disposed to deal with Stalin. "I want you to understand," he told his good friend Joseph Davies, the pro-Soviet former U.S. ambassador to the Kremlin, "that I am trying my best to save peace and to follow out Roosevelt's plan."[104] The plan was to sustain cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union and to avoid a postwar rift. But Truman's gut instincts demanded that agreement be on American terms. He told Harriman, "We could not, of course, expect to get 100 percent of what we wanted but that on important matters he felt we should be able to get 85 percent."[105] Truman intended to protect American interests, even if he didn't have a precise definition of them. He had no particular sense of gratitude to the Russians for their war losses, no particular reverence for Churchill or the British for their heroism, no particular empathy for the plight of European peoples engulfed by the depression and war. After several days of meetings at Potsdam with Stalin and Churchill, he wrote, rather proudly, to his wife:

> We had a tough meeting yesterday. I reared up on my hind legs and told 'em where to get off and they got off. I have to make it perfectly plain to them at least once a day that so far as this president is concerned Santa Claus is dead and that my first interest is U.S.A., then I want the Jap War won and I want 'em both in it. Then I want peace--world peace and will do what can be done by us to get it. But certainly am not going to set up another [illegible] here in Europe, pay reparations, feed the world, and get nothing for it but a nose thumbing. They are beginning to awake to the fact that I mean business.[106]

Business meant getting along with the Russians, and protecting U.S. interests. "I like Stalin," he wrote his wife. "He is straightforward. Knows what he wants and will compromise

when he can't get it."[107] Differences there were over important issues, but these were to be expected. Truman felt no outrage about Stalin's record of repression. Not all the horror of Stalin's rule, of course, was then known, but the purges and killing of high party officials were a matter of public record, as was the ruthless suppression of the Kulaks and other opponents of the regime. Yet none of this mattered all that much to the president. Even many years later, he acknowledged that at the time "I liked him a lot. . . . Stalin was a very gracious host, and at the table, he would grasp what was going on as quickly as anybody I ever came in contact with."[108] Those who believe the Cold War was inevitable because of Western horror with Stalin's cruelty are disregarding the contemporary record; those who believe that Truman immediately started the Cold War because of the advice and pressure of anti-Soviet advisers are mistaken. Stalin, Truman thought, was somewhat you could deal with. He would respect American power. Agreement was still possible.

Truman believed in American power and American righteousness. So did his newly appointed secretary of state, James F. Byrnes. Byrnes was a long-time Washington power broker, a former conservative senator from South Carolina, Supreme Court Justice, and wartime overlord of the American economy. Truman liked Byrnes, who had befriended him as a new senator in the mid-1930s, and thought him shrewd, knowledgeable, and tough. He let Byrnes do most of the contentious bargaining at Potsdam on German reparations, Polish borders, and the composition of the new governments in eastern Europe. Once Stalin agreed in the first days of the conference to attack Japan, Truman felt satisfied. "I've gotten what I came for," Truman confided to Bess on July 18, "Stalin goes to war August 15 with no strings on it. . . . I'll say that we'll end the war a year sooner now, and think of the kids who won't be killed. That's the important thing."[109]

To Truman and Byrnes, the atomic bomb meant more than the weapon that could defeat Japan and save American lives. It was a vast new instrument of American power. Truman went to Potsdam not knowing it would work: Admiral Leahy said it wouldn't; Byrnes thought it might, "but he wasn't sure."[110] By all accounts, and there are many, news of the successful testing of the bomb enormously buoyed Truman's self-confidence. It "took a great load off my mind," the president confided to Joe Davies.[111] The president did not order the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima to impress the Russians, as some historians claim, but nevertheless he believed that it would impress them and make them more manageable.

At Potsdam, Truman quietly took Stalin aside and elliptically mentioned that the United States had a powerful new weapon to use against Japan. Nothing more needed to be said. Nor did all the pressing issues have to be resolved at Potsdam. Truman was eager to go home. He grew impatient with the incessant haggling at the conference. Stalin, he thought, was stalling. He "doesn't know it," Truman again wrote his wife, "but I have an ace in the hole and another one showing--so unless he has threes or two pair (and I know he has not) we are sitting all right."[112] The "atomic bomb," Byrnes also was thinking, "had given us great power, and . . . in the last analysis, it would control."[113]

When Truman ordered that atomic bombs be dropped on Hiroshima and then Nagasaki, these were not tough decisions for him. They were necessary, in his mind, to save American lives. They vividly demonstrated American power; they confirmed that enemies of America would pay for their transgressions. The Japanese did pay, and then they capitulated, unconditionally, except for the preservation of the emperor. They had little choice, for Stalin's troops attacked at the same time, seized parts of Manchuria, invaded northern Korea, and set their sights on Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost home island.[114]

The war ended. The American people celebrated. Truman breathed a sigh of relief. He was not comfortable fighting wars and planning peace. He knew little of these matters. He read report after report, memo after memo, but diplomacy baffled him. He was inexperienced, and he knew it. "I was so scared," he wrote Bess from Potsdam, "I didn't know whether things were going according to Hoyle or not."[115] His closest associates recognized that he was nervous, uneasy, and insecure. Sometimes he answered so quickly, almost before they finished their questions.[116] At such points, Truman thought he was demonstrating strength, but he was revealing weakness, at least to those who cared most about him.

With the war over, Truman eagerly delegated the responsibility for peacemaking to Secretary of State Byrnes, who he thought had performed ably at Potsdam. Truman wanted to turn his own attention to demobilization, reconversion, and the domestic issues he knew and understood. Byrnes for his part was eager to take command of the nation's foreign policy. He was sure of himself. The atomic bomb, he told his closest colleagues, was a great weapon that could be used to exact concessions from potential adversaries.[117] But experienced colleagues in the State and War departments had their doubts. They deeply resented Byrnes' attempts to monopolize the nation's diplomacy. Many of them left office in September and October 1945, exhausted from years of wartime responsibility, however, and Byrnes was now in charge.

Byrnes was not as shrewd as he thought he was, nor was the Soviet Union easily threatened. At the first postwar meeting of foreign ministers in London in September 1945, Byrnes thought he could outmaneuver Molotov. He wanted to loosen the Russian grip on eastern Europe and arrange for more representative governments in Romania and Bulgaria. But Molotov chafed at Byrnes' procedural moves and sneered at his not very subtle efforts to use America's atomic monopoly to leverage concessions. In fact, the Soviet foreign minister was

willing to negotiate on some of these points -- that is, until Stalin ordered him to stiffen his resolve. Let the conference end in deadlock, Stalin wired Molotov. Let Byrnes stew for a while. Stalin's adulatory comments about Byrnes in front of Truman at Potsdam had typically concealed the dictator's emerging contempt for a man who so flagrantly wielded American power.[118]

Byrnes returned to Washington chastened. The Russians would not be intimidated, he realized. Perhaps, Byrnes now thought, the bomb could be used as a carrot rather than a stick. Perhaps the Soviets could be lured into a favorable agreement to regulate the future of atomic energy. Nor did Byrnes think that some of the Soviet arguments were without merit. There was, he grasped, hypocrisy in the American insistence that the Soviets open up eastern Europe, while the United States locked the Kremlin out of Japan. He could understand why the Soviets feared the revival of German power and why they wanted friendly governments on their periphery. It might make sense, he thought, to acquiesce in the governments the Russians were imposing in Bulgaria and Romania, however slightly reconfigured, if in return the Kremlin promised to withdraw Soviet troops as soon as peace treaties were negotiated. Moreover, a four-power treaty guaranteeing the demilitarization of Germany might hasten this process. In other words, Stalin's obsession with security might be reassured by a demilitarization treaty while his domination of eastern Europe might be diluted by his agreement to withdraw Soviet troops from Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, as they just had been withdrawn from Czechoslovakia.[119]

Byrnes wanted to achieve an open sphere in eastern Europe, contain Soviet power, sustain the wartime alliance, and avoid hostile confrontations with Soviet Russia. These ideas may have made sense, but his swift tactical changes coupled with his arrogant behavior alienated cabinet colleagues, powerful senators, and key presidential aides. Truman grew frustrated with

Byrnes, as he did with so many of his advisers in that autumn of 1945. The end of the war provided no respite for the inexperienced president. He was worried by labor strife and spiraling inflation. He was agitated by the biting criticism he was experiencing and by the souring of his party's prospects to win the 1946 congressional elections. "The Congress," he noted in his diary, "is balking; labor has gone crazy; management is not far from insane in selfishness." His Cabinet had "Potomac fever."[120] Byrnes was conniving, striving for too much publicity, acting too independently, arousing too much controversy, trying to be too clever, and alienating friends and foes alike.

Truman liked things in black and white. His closet advisers knew that he did not like nuance or ambiguities.[121] He wanted to get along with the Russians, but on American terms. In a major speech on Navy Day, 27 October 1945, he set forth his views. The United States, he said, foreswore the acquisition of any new territory. It championed democracy and self-determination. It favored freedom of the seas, open trade, and global economic cooperation. It supported the United Nations and Pan Americanism. There would be no return to isolationism. Never again, said Truman, would the United States be caught by surprise. Never again would it relinquish its military superiority. It would hold the atomic bomb as a "sacred trust" for all mankind. Its air and naval forces would control the seas and dominate the skies. Aggression would not be tolerated. American interests would not be slighted nor would its ideals be compromised. The United States would not "compromise with evil."[122]

Although his speech-writers designed the speech to force "our diplomatic appeasers to pay closer attention to the vital interests of America," there is no reason to think that Truman thought he was breaking new ground with this speech.[123] These ideals and interests were like apple pie and ice cream to Truman. The nation had to be strong and it had to be involved. Its

interests and its ideals had to be protected. This was, after all, God's country. The war had taught key lessons: no more surprise attacks, no more aggression. The United States had to be able to project its power far from American shores. The country needed bases around the globe. And no nation could be permitted to upset the balance of power in the Old World and gain control of the industrial infrastructure, raw materials, and skilled manpower of Europe and Asia. Germany and Japan had almost achieved this in the late 1930s and early 1940s, and when they did, American interests as well as ideals had been jeopardized. This could not be allowed to happen again.

Truman still did not want a rift with the Soviet Union. He wanted to get along, thinking he should get his way 85 percent of the time. Byrnes was too eager to make concessions. The president jotted his thoughts on a piece of paper. Byrnes had to stop "babying" the Soviets. The Soviets had to get out of northern Iran, where they had been slow to withdraw their troops after the war. They had to stop putting pressure on Turkey for bases in the Dardanelles. They had to install more democratic governments in Bulgaria and Romania. They had to agree to strong central governments in Korea and China. "Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making."[124]

Stalin and Truman

By the end of 1945 Stalin and Truman were eyeing one another warily. They were both angry with their foreign ministers for inclining toward compromise. They felt that their respective nations had the power and the right to forge a new international order that would enhance their security and their ideals. They were not inclined to tolerate opposition. But they also grasped that confrontation made little sense. They had more to gain from sustaining the

alliance than from rupturing it. But cooperation was logical only if it served national interests. During 1946, they wavered back and forth between toughness and conciliation.

Stalin distrusted capitalists, and fear of encirclement by them was a constant in his thinking. Nonetheless, he worked collaboratively with Roosevelt and Churchill during the war, thinking the conflict would end with Germany's dismemberment and a secure periphery. But then, suddenly, Roosevelt died and Truman dropped two atomic bombs on Japan. Stalin was shaken by Roosevelt's passing. He was wary of Truman, but not disinclined to cooperate with him.[125] Yet Truman had great power and used it.

Stalin immediately interpreted Hiroshima as atomic blackmail against the USSR. "Hiroshima has shaken the whole world," he said. "The balance has been destroyed." Stalin thought the Americans and the British were backtracking on the promise they had given at Yalta to allow the Russians to rule their sphere as they liked. "They want to force us to accept their plans on questions affecting Europe and the world. Well, that's not going to happen," Stalin told his closest confidantes. Even before Truman told Byrnes to stop babying the Soviets, Stalin told Molotov that in dealing with the Americans and the British, "we cannot achieve anything serious if we begin to give in to intimidation or betray uncertainty. To get anything from this kind of partner, we must arm ourselves with the policy of tenacity and steadfastness."[126]

On 9 February 1946, Stalin gave a famous "election" address at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, transmitted by radio to every part of the Soviet Union. Reviving the ideological language that was his lodestar, he said the war had not been an accident, nor was it the result of the mistakes of statesmen. "The war arose in reality as the inevitable result of the development of the world economic and political forces on the basis of monopoly capitalism." Perhaps peace could be preserved if capitalists could redistribute markets and raw materials without conflict,

"but this is impossible under the present capitalist development of the world economy."

The Soviet Union had been ensnared in this intra-capitalist conflict. But World War II was "radically different" from World War I. The fascist states had extinguished "democratic liberties" in their own countries, established "cruel, terrorist regimes," and sought "world domination." "As far as our country is concerned," said Stalin, "the war was the most cruel and hard of all wars ever experienced in the history of our motherland." But it proved the superiority of the socialist system, the vitality of the multi-national state, and the resiliency and heroism of the Red Army. The war also demonstrated the wisdom of collectivization and industrialization. "The party remembered Lenin's word that without heavy industry it would be impossible to safeguard the independence of our country, that without it the Soviet system could perish." Hence the need "to organize a new mighty upsurge of the national economy," seeking the production of 50 million tons of pig iron annually, 60 million tons of steel, 500 million tons of coal, and 60 million tons of oil. Alluding implicitly to the atomic bomb, Stalin said that science, too, had to be promoted "to surpass the achievements" of other countries. "Only under such conditions will our country be insured against any eventuality."[127]

Stalin's ideological preconceptions and personal paranoia made him suspect enemies everywhere. As the war drew to a close he confided, "The crisis of capitalism has manifested itself in the division of the capitalists into two factions—one fascist, the other democratic. . . . We are currently allied with one faction against the other, but in the future we will be against the first faction of capitalists, too."[128] Suspicious of the capitalists, fearful of Germany and Japan, and proud of Soviet achievements, he would be satisfied with nothing less than a friendly periphery. He wanted "to consolidate Soviet territorial gains, establish a Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe, and have a voice in the political fate of Germany and—if possible—

of Japan."[129] He wanted security, and hoped to get it without rupturing the grand alliance.

This explains why he was so furious with Churchill's speech in Fulton, Missouri, in March 1946, when the former British prime minister declared that Stalin was building an iron curtain from the Baltic to the Balkans. "The following circumstances should not be forgotten," Stalin stated in a Pravda interview. "The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The Germans were able to make their invasion through these countries because at the time, governments hostile to the Soviet Union existed in these countries." As a result millions of Russians died, many more than the United States and the United Kingdom combined. Perhaps Churchill was inclined to forget these colossal sacrifices, but Stalin could not. "What can be surprising," Stalin fumed, "about the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, is trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries?"[130]

Stalin thought the Americans and the British were maneuvering to squeeze the Soviet Union out of Germany, undermine its position of power in eastern Europe, and deny it the $10 billion of reparations it thought it had been promised at the Yalta Conference.[131] Soviet officials looked cynically upon the four-power German demilitarization treaty that Byrnes repeatedly proposed. Even Maxim Litvinov, the prewar foreign minister who was known for his pro-Western orientation, expressed dismay about U.S. motives. In July 1945, Litvinov had noted that the Ruhr and other industrial parts of western Germany, now in French, American, and British hands, produced 75 percent of Germany's coal and 70 percent of its steel and pig iron. The industry of the Ruhr, he warned, could be completely restored within one year and that it could support an army of several million soldiers. "If a serious conflict escalates between us and Western states, we will not be able to prevent the Western powers from turning the Ruhr region

into a supply base either for Germans, whom they would enlist as Allies, or for their own armed forces." The Americans, Litvinov believed, were seeking to dupe the Russians by creating the impression that Soviet security could be guaranteed through this demilitarization treaty. In his view, which Stalin shared, Byrnes was trying to lay the groundwork for the most dangerous scenario imaginable, a premature termination of the occupation of Germany.[132]

It was not only that Stalin imagined threats; there were threats. Famine stalked his country. Unrest pulsated through the lands he annexed. Low-scale insurgencies and guerrilla war challenged his rule in the countries he occupied. Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian documents make it clear that Stalin and his internal security services "were profoundly concerned" with how Churchill's Fulton speech might buoy the morale of rebels and insurgents. Speculation about a third world war between the Anglo-Saxons and the Russians percolated through the resistance movements against Soviet power and inspired Ukrainian and other nationalists to imagine that in a new world conflict they might be liberated. "Throughout Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe, Churchill's Fulton speech was like a call to arms," or so it seemed inside the Kremlin and among Stalin's police chieftains.[133]

Ideology conditioned Stalin's thinking, but his suspicions were reinforced by experience and reality. In Romania, Poland, the Balkans, and Ukraine, British and American officials conducted clandestine operations, albeit on a small scale, to nurture unrest and establish ties with opposition leaders. Of course, Stalin's brutal repression, his transfer of subject nationalities, his wrangling for bits of Iranian and Turkish territory also fomented instability and encouraged the policies that exacerbated his own suspicions.[134]

Yet Stalin was not embarked on a cold war. He was vacillating, wavering, saying contradictory things, pursuing divergent policies. Historians violently argue about Stalin's

motivations and his goals precisely because his rhetoric and his actions were so inconsistent. In 1993, when Soviet documents from this period were first becoming available, the Norwegian historian Odd Arne Westad wrote: "Stalin's foreign policy is not as much inexplicable in its parts as incoherent in its whole." This description seems even truer now, in view of still more documents, than it did in 1993.[135]

For while Stalin delayed the withdrawal of his troops from northern Iran, asked for new rights in the Turkish straits, and installed progressively more communist governments in Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria, he also withdrew Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia and from the island of Bornholm in the Baltic; he allowed free elections in the Soviet occupation zone in Austria as well as in parts of Hungary and Czechoslovakia; he pulled Soviet troops out of Manchuria; and he continued to discourage revolution or communist seizures of power in Greece, Italy, and France. In Germany, Stalin consolidated the Soviet hold over the eastern zone of occupation yet talked repeatedly, both privately and publicly, about honoring the Potsdam pledges to keep Germany unified and demilitarized. He told the German communists whom he placed in power in Berlin to cease radical actions and to plan for a unified Germany. He instructed them to join with social democrats in a new Socialist Unity Party (SED) and to position themselves to win elections in all four occupation zones. Yet the actions of Soviet armies in eastern Germany brutalized the people and eroded any popular support the communists might garner. Stalin, writes Norman Naimark, an eminent historian of Stalin's European policies, "had no firm plan for post-war Europe, not even what we would call today a 'road map' . . . . He was too tactically inclined for that" and too responsive to local circumstances and unforeseen developments.[136]

Stalin did not want a rift with the Western powers. Agreement with the United States, he told Polish communists in late 1945, was still possible.[137] Knowing that his election speech of 6

February 1946 had been interpreted in the West to mean that he was sundering the wartime alliance and resuming an ideological offensive, Stalin made repeated efforts, publicly and privately, to clarify his views. After telling the new U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Walter Bedell Smith, that he did believe the United States and Britain were united to thwart Soviet Russia, he insisted that he wanted to cooperate with them. "We should not be alarmed or apprehensive," said Stalin, "because of differences of opinion and arguments which occur in families and even between brothers because with patience and good will these differences would be reconciled." He said the same to Labour delegates and to journalists from Great Britain. There will be no war, he told Alexander Werth, the correspondent of Britain's Sunday Times. "I absolutely believe," he said, in the possibility of long-standing cooperation with his wartime allies. "Communism in one country is entirely possible, especially in such a country as the Soviet Union." If he were seeking to orchestrate opinion against the Americans and British, it is hard to comprehend why he would permit such interviews to be printed in the Soviet press.[138]

For Stalin, the future was still contingent. Threats abounded. His former allies could not be trusted, their motives were sinister, but the possibilities of cooperation for the foreseeable future were not precluded. In his last meeting in January 1946 with departing U.S. Ambassador Averell Harriman, just two weeks before his Bolshoi speech, Stalin told him: "As to our foreign policy conceptions, the Soviet Union and the United States can find a common language." He then inquired whether it might still be feasible to get a large loan from the United States, as previously had been promised. Stalin made clear that he would not make political concessions in return for the loan, but the money was still needed for postwar reconstruction. It would take six or seven years, he admitted, to restore the devastated districts of western Russia.[139]

But Stalin also wanted cooperation in order to control the possible revival of German and

Japanese power. He was angered that the United States so blatantly monopolized the occupation of Japan, a nation that was a perennial threat to Russia, and he could not accept American indifference to his strategic imperatives. He wanted to be accepted as a partner, albeit a junior one.[140] In Germany, grasping that the western allies would not assent to dismembering the country and believing that they were maneuvering to harness Germany's latent power to serve western interests, Stalin shifted course in mid-1945. He started to champion German unification. He would permit Germany's economic revival and aim to maneuver a unified, demilitarized Germany into the Soviet sphere of influence. A revived Germany, he now believed, would compete with Britain and America and constrain their domination of the international economy. But a unified, revived Germany might also maneuver out of control and join a western capitalist alliance against Soviet Russia, or it might act independently, rearm, and aim for revenge and territorial revision. Conciliating the Germans, Stalin grasped, might make Germany less revanchist, but it would be risky. Hence cooperation with the Americans and the British was imperative, even while suspicion mingled with cooperation. At the very least, Stalin knew that cooperation was indispensable if he were to get reparations from the western zones of Germany which he desperately wanted for the reconstruction of Russia.[141]

A unified Germany, with all its attendant uncertainties, also made it more imperative to dominate the Soviet Union's eastern European borderlands. Hence throughout 1946 and 1947, Stalin ordered Molotov to work with Byrnes and British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin to complete peace treaties with the east European nations that had fought with Germany during the war. Stalin wanted allied acceptance of his sphere without forgoing cooperation. He wanted, writes one of Hungary's leading Cold War historians, to foster a Communist "takeover in East Central Europe by peaceful means, while preserving Soviet-Western cooperation as well."[142]

Truman did not know how to deal with these twists and turns in Soviet policy, with the signs of truculence and the contrary evidence of self-restraint. In February 1946, his ablest diplomat in Moscow, George F. Kennan, sent a long telegram to Washington, saying that "at the bottom of the Kremlin's view of world affairs is a traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity." The Soviets, Kennan concluded, did not believe in the possibility of any permanent reconciliation with the West.[143] But Ambassador Harriman left Moscow at about the same time with a typically ambivalent view of the Soviet dictator:

> It is hard for me to reconcile the courtesy and consideration that he showed me personally with the ghastly cruelty of his wholesale liquidations. Others, who did not know him personally, see only the tyrant in Stalin. I saw the other side as well—his high intelligence, that fantastic grasp of detail, his shrewdness and his surprising human sensitivity that he was capable of showing, at least in the war years. I found him better informed than Roosevelt, more realistic than Churchill, in some ways the most effective of the war leaders. . . . I must confess that for me Stalin remains the most inscrutable and contradictory character I have known—and leave the final word to the judgment of history.[144]

President Truman did not have the luxury of waiting for the judgment of history, of course. He had to make decisions in real time. He, too, wavered and vacillated. He was angry with Byrnes' temporizing. He was outraged by news of Soviet wartime espionage against the allies. He liked Churchill's tough words in his Fulton address. He told the Soviets to get out of northern Iran. He instructed the joint chiefs of staff to draw up contingency war plans. He encouraged Byrnes to unite the British and American zones in western Germany, to ameliorate conditions there, and to win the support of the German people. If the Kremlin objected to Anglo-American moves, their views could be ignored.[145]

But Truman did not seek a showdown. He recognized the unrepresentative, Soviet-

imposed governments in Romania and Bulgaria. In late 1945, he asked General George C. Marshall, the renowned wartime Army Chief of Staff, to go to China and to try to work out a settlement between the Communists and Nationalists there. He encouraged Under Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson and his aides to work on a plan for the international control of atomic energy. He continued to oversee the demobilization of U.S. forces. He instructed Byrnes, much as Stalin instructed Molotov, to finish the peace treaties regarding eastern Europe, Italy, and Finland. He wanted General Lucius D. Clay, the deputy military governor in Germany, to keep meeting with his Soviet, British, and French counterparts on plans for the nation's unification. Truman's closest aides, Clark Clifford and George Elsey, drew up a long report in the summer of 1946 claiming that the Soviet Union was not simply chiseling on its earlier agreements, as the president already believed, but was intent on world domination. When Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace remonstrated against this view and spoke publicly in behalf of a more conciliatory policy toward the Kremlin, Truman fired him. Yet at the same time, he locked the Clifford/Elsey report in a safe and bided his time.

Truman was not eager to sunder the great wartime coalition he had inherited from Roosevelt. A breakdown would complicate his domestic priorities and weaken his party. Republicans lambasted him for rising prices, labor strife, and high taxes. Strife with the Soviet Union, Truman knew, would mean more foreign aid to beleaguered countries, more defense spending, fewer tax reductions, and spiraling inflation. Notwithstanding the consensus among his foreign-policy advisers that the Soviet Union was looming as a great threat, Truman did not quite know what to do. After his party suffered a humiliating defeat in the congressional elections of November 1946, Truman asked General Marshall to become his secretary of state, but he gave Marshall no marching orders, and the general himself was known for his prudence

and restraint. Marshall did not want confrontation. He wanted to negotiate a German peace treaty with the Russians. Before he arrived in Moscow, however, worsening international conditions dashed any lingering hopes for a sustained détente.[146]

International Anarchy

Neither Truman nor Stalin wanted a Cold War. Yet it came. Why?

The Cold War came because the international system conjured up risks that Truman and Stalin could not accept and opportunities they could not resist. Neither the president of the most powerful country the world had ever known nor the cruelest dictator the world had ever witnessed was in control of events. Indeed the beliefs and experiences of both men magnified their perception of threat and their fear of betrayal. Each felt they had to act because danger loomed. Each felt they had to act because opportunity beckoned.

From the time World War II drew to a close, nothing frightened American policymakers more than the economic plight and social strife that it had bequeathed. In April 1945, as the fighting in Europe was in its last stages, John J. McCloy, the influential assistant secretary of war, returned from a trip to Europe and presented an apocalyptic account of conditions. "There is a complete economic, social and political collapse going on in Central Europe, the extent of which is unparalleled in history." The situation in Germany, he told Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, was "worse than anything probably that ever happened in the world." Writing in his diary, Stimson noted that he "had anticipated the chaos, but the details of it were appalling."[147]

A few months later, in July 1945, Assistant Secretary of State Acheson presented a similar view to the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency: "There is a situation in the world, very clearly illustrated in Europe, and also true in the Far East, which threatens the very

foundations, the whole fabric of world organization which we have known in our lifetime and which our fathers and grandfathers knew." In liberated Europe, Acheson reported, "you find that the railway systems have ceased to operate; that power systems have ceased to operate; that financial systems are destroyed. Ownership of property is in terrific confusion. Management of property is in confusion." Not since the eighth century, when the Muslims had split the world in two, Acheson said, had conditions been so serious. The industrial and social life of Europe had "come to a complete and utter standstill." The "whole fabric of social life," Acheson warned, "might go to pieces unless the most energetic steps are taken on all fronts."[148]

People suffered. People endured. People yearned for a better future. People discussed, disputed, and imagined alternative political and economic orders. Capitalism was blamed for the depression, the war, and genocide. Describing conditions in Czechoslovakia, the historian Igor Lukes writes that after the war, "Many in Czechoslovakia had come to believe that capitalism . . . had become obsolete. Influential intellectuals saw the world emerging from the ashes of the war in black and white terms: here was Auschwitz and there was Stalingrad. The former was a byproduct of a crisis in capitalist Europe of the 1930s; the latter stood for the superiority of socialism."[149] Writing in November 1945, the British historian A.J.P. Taylor commented: "Nobody in Europe believes in the American way of life—that is, in private enterprise." People, he said, "want Socialism, but they also want the Rights of Man."[150]

This was not mere rhetoric. What concerned U.S. officials was what was happening on the streets and in the voting booths. Everywhere in Europe communist and socialist support seemed to be mounting. In Belgium, the Communist Party grew from 9,000 in 1939 to 100,000 in November 1945; in Greece, from 17,000 in 1935 to 70,000 in 1945; in Italy from 5000 in 1943 to 1.7 million at the end of 1945; in Czechoslovakia from 28,000 in May 1945 to 750,000

in September 1945. In France, Italy, and Finland, communists were already getting twenty percent of the total vote; in Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Holland, and Sweden, it was close to ten percent. In eastern European countries, twenty to fifty percent of the populace aligned with leftist parties.[151] Support for socialist parties made the Left appear even more threatening. In Great Britain, the Labour Party emerged triumphant in July 1945 and, to the astonishment of Americans, unseated Winston Churchill. Everywhere, people seemed to be clamoring for land reform, social welfare, and nationalization of industry. "They have suffered so much," said Dean Acheson, "and they believe so deeply that governments can take some action which will alleviate their sufferings, that they will demand that the whole business of state control and state interference shall be pushed further and further."[152] From the American perspective, private enterprise and free markets appeared endangered by a resurgent Left.

Conditions in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa were no more reassuring. In Japan, 15 million people were homeless and the economy near collapse. In China, there was political strife and civil war. In South Asia, the Congress Party under Mohandas K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru struggled for independence. In Southeast Asia, revolutionary nationalist movements blossomed. Ho Chi Minh clamored for French recognition of Vietnam's independence. Achmed Sukarno pleaded for Dutch recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty. Embedded in the international system was the problem of Europe's former colonies in Africa and Asia, many of which wanted independence; the solution to this problem would gradually reconfigure the international order, kindling in Moscow immense hopes for progress and change and generating in Washington immense fear and never-ending frustration.

U.S. officials hoped conditions would improve. In many places they did, but not enough to allay their apprehensions. In March 1946, Acheson told a congressional committee: "The

commercial and financial situation of the world is worse than any of us thought a year ago it would be. Destruction is more complete, hunger more acute, exhaustion more widespread than anyone then realized. What might have been passed off as prophecies have become stark facts."[153] At Cabinet meetings, Truman's advisers discussed food shortages and the social disorder and political upheaval they were engendering. "More people," the president acknowledged, "face starvation and even actual death . . . than in any war year and perhaps more than in all the war years combined."[154]

What hovered over all these deliberations were fears that Stalin would try to capitalize on these conditions. There would be "pestilence and famine in Central Europe next winter," Secretary of War Stimson had told President Truman on 16 May 1945. "This is likely to be followed by political revolution and Communistic infiltration." The next month Undersecretary of State Joseph Grew gave the president a long report on the international communist movement. "Europe today," the study concluded, constituted a breeding ground for "spontaneous class hatred to be channeled by a skillful agitator." Over the next two years, while Soviet and American officials wrangled over eastern Europe, Iran, and Turkey, this principal threat did not abate. The "greatest potential danger to U.S. security," the newly formed Central Intelligence Agency concluded in September 1947, "lies . . . in the possibility of the economic collapse of Western Europe and of the consequent accession to power of elements subservient to the Kremlin."[155]

Heavy snows and frigid temperatures during January and February 1947 transformed alarm to action. British officials confided that financial exigencies would force His Majesty's Government to withdraw from the eastern Mediterranean, thereby exposing Greece and Turkey to additional risk. "The reins of world leadership," Assistant Secretary of State Will Clayton

wrote, “are fast slipping from Britain’s competent but now very weak hands. These reins will be picked up either by the United States or by Russia. If by Russia, there will almost certainly be war in the next decade or so with the odds against us.”[156] Clayton feared that the Greek communists would gain power and align Greece with the Soviet Union. The success of the communists in Greece would have a bandwagon effect throughout Europe. President Truman put it this way:

> If we were to turn our back on the world, areas such as Greece, weakened and divided as a result of the war, would fall into the Soviet orbit without much effort on the part of the Russians. The success of Russia in such areas and our avowed lack of interest would lead to the growth of domestic Communist parties in such European countries as France and Italy, where they already were significant threats. Inaction . . . could result in handing to the Russians vast areas of the globe now denied to them.[157]

Truman took action. He delivered a special address to Congress on 12 March 1947, setting forth what became known as the Truman Doctrine. Thereafter, it “would be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” He asked Congress to allocate $400 million in aid for Greece and Turkey. A “fateful hour” had arrived. Nations had to choose “between alternate ways of life. . . . If we falter in our leadership,” Truman warned, “we may endanger the peace of the world.”[158]

Three months later, after failing to make headway on a German settlement at a conference in Moscow, Secretary of State Marshall gave a commencement address at Harvard in which he proposed that the United States would help to fund reconstruction should Europeans design a satisfactory plan for it. The Soviet Union was not acting aggressively, but it was consolidating its influence in eastern Europe and maneuvering to capitalize on mounting unrest

in western Europe. "Europe is steadily deteriorating," said Assistant Secretary Will Clayton on 27 May. "Millions of people in the cities are slowly starving. . . . Without further and substantial aid from the United States, economic, social, and political disintegration will overwhelm Europe." In the western zones of Germany, rations had just been cut to 1200 calories per day for each person. Marshall and his assistants feared that without additional food deliveries they would lose "the great struggle . . . to prevent [Germany] going communistic."[159]

Truman understood that he needed to put events in a context that the American people could comprehend if they were to support the initiatives he was now contemplating. He explained that it was a struggle between alternative ways of life for the soul of mankind. It was not a military struggle. It was a political struggle, an ideological struggle, a spiritual struggle. Much of the world, Truman stated in a speech at Baylor University just days before he announced the Truman Doctrine, was heading toward central planning. Free enterprise was challenged everywhere. And where free enterprise was endangered, so were other cherished freedoms, like freedom of speech and freedom of religion. In the president's view, all these freedoms were indivisible, and they were all at risk.[160] They were at risk because of the devastation wrought by the war, because of people's yearnings for a better future. They were at risk because strong communist parties were competing successfully for office, because armed minorities were willing to use force to seize power, and because the Kremlin hovered in the background willing to give succor to such efforts and eager to capitalize on them.

America's own future was at risk. "Our deepest concern with European recovery," Truman explained, "is that it is essential to the maintenance of the civilization in which the American way of life is rooted. . . . If Europe fails to recover, the people of these countries might be driven to the philosophy of despair [to totalitarianism]. Such a turn of events would

constitute a shattering blow to peace and stability in the world. It might well compel us to modify our own economic system and to forgo, for the sake of our own security, the enjoyment of many of our freedoms and privileges."[161]

U.S. officials were motivated to act, then, not because Stalin was an evil dictator, killing millions of people in his own country and subjugating peoples on his periphery, but because of conditions in the international system, and out of fear that social turmoil and economic paralysis in Europe would play into communist hands, affording Stalin new opportunities to expand Soviet power. They also feared that floundering occupation policies in Germany and Japan might allow those countries to gravitate into a Soviet orbit and that decolonization in the Third World would be exploited by the Kremlin. They had learned that once a totalitarian power possessed great power, it was likely to wage war, and even if the totalitarian adversary did not wage war, its control of huge resources and markets throughout Eurasia meant that it endangered America's free political economy. "If communism is allowed to absorb the free nations," Truman subsequently explained, "then we would be isolated from our sources of supply and detached from our friends. Then we would have to take defense measures which might really bankrupt our economy, and change our way of life so that we couldn't recognize it as American any longer."[162]

No country was more critical than Germany. How Germany would be integrated into the postwar international system was the overriding question. "The only really dangerous thing in my mind," said George Kennan in 1946, "is the possibility that the technical skills of the Germans might combined with the physical resources of Russia."[163] From the moment the war ended, top U.S. officials recognized that the revival of German coal production would be essential for the economic revival of the rest of Europe, on which social peace depended. During

the Postdam Conference in July 1945, President Truman had ordered General Dwight D. Eisenhower, then commander of American troops in Europe, to make the production and export of 25 million tons of coal the number one priority of occupation policy (other than the health and safety of U.S. troops themselves). This priority had far-reaching implications. The successful large-scale mining of coal, acknowledged General Clay, meant "some restoration of the German economy, and some industrial activity to support coal mining."[164]

But the economy in the British, French, and American occupation zones floundered during 1946, causing immense consternation in Washington. When officials went to work designing the Marshall Plan, Kennan and his associates in the State Department maintained that reviving German production was the key to European recovery, yet they feared that a revived Germany might not be within their power to control. There was no certainty how it would behave once the occupation was over or how it would orient itself in the international system. When Marshall went to Moscow to discuss the future of Germany at the Big Four Council of Foreign Ministers in March 1947, he took John Foster Dulles, the prominent Republican foreign-policy spokesmen, with him. Germany's economic potential, Dulles told Marshall, had to be integrated into western Europe without "giving economic mastery to the Germans." This was a daunting challenge, as Dulles recognized. Once they began recovering, he acknowledged, the Germans would "almost certainly be dominated by a spirit of revenge and ambition to recover a great power status." They might align with the Soviet Union or act independently. Either way, danger lurked.[165]

But it could not be avoided. Steps had to be taken to expedite coal production in the Ruhr. No reparations in the form of raw materials, machine tools, or anything else should be given to the Russians. German resources had to be harnessed for the recovery of western

Europe. The Moscow Conference partly foundered on this issue of reparations. Although he hoped to sustain wartime cooperation, Marshall told Stalin, he could not continue to haggle about the future of Germany. Action was imperative.[166] At a meeting on 3 July, Secretary of State Marshall, Secretary of War Robert Patterson, and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal agreed: "Germany must cooperate fully in any effective European plan, and that the economic revival of Europe depends in considerable part on a recovery of German production—in coal, in food, steel, fertilizer, etc., and on efficient use of such European resources as the Rhine River."[167] A week later, General Clay was instructed to boost the level of industrial production in the western zones.

The American offensive—the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the rebuilding of western Germany—was a reaction to the anarchy in the international system upon which it was believed the Kremlin could capitalize. Fear drove policy. Truman and his advisers understood they were placing the reconstruction of western Europe and the cooptation of western Germany over their desire to sustain wartime cooperation with the Soviet Union. They did not seek to provoke Stalin or to endanger Soviet security, but they believed they had to act as they did, even if it meant that the Soviets would feel provoked. Prudence demanded action.

Stalin was not surprised. The capitalists were acting as capitalists, seeking to form a bloc against Soviet Russia. Initially, he pondered Soviet participation in the Marshall Plan. He sent Molotov and 100 technical advisers to a conference in Paris in July 1947 to discuss Marshall's overture for the European Recovery Program. But while Molotov negotiated, Stalin changed his mind. He saw encirclement. He believed, quite rightly, that the allies' terms for participation included the opening of the eastern European nations where until now the Red Army largely enforced Soviet control. The financial credits would prove illusory, he said, and would form a

pretext to isolate the Soviet Union. The Americans were trying to maneuver their way into eastern Europe. They were seeking to harness German power against the Soviet Union. Stalin ordered the Czechs and Poles, who were mightily enticed to participate, not to permit themselves to be lured by the American offer.[168]

But Stalin did much more than pressure his allies to rebuff American overtures. Seeing danger, Stalin orchestrated a new round of purges in eastern Europe, reshuffled the composition of governments, and planted his minions in power more firmly. Soviet delegates walked out of the Allied Control Council that was supposed to be governing Germany. The Kremlin tightened controls over access to Berlin, and suppressed opponents of the SED in the Soviet zone in eastern Germany. In Czechoslovakia, Stalin supported a communist seizure of power in February 1948; almost overnight a democratically elected government was transformed into a "People's Democracy." With other nations on the Soviet periphery, Stalin negotiated defense agreements. Inside his own country, he boosted military expenditures. "We do not wish for war," he said, "but we are not afraid of it."[169]

Stalin believed the capitalists had thrown down the gauntlet. Although he had been planning the move for quite some time, he now convened a meeting in Poland and established the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) to improve his control over and coordination among European communist parties. At this meeting, Stalin's representatives announced that the world was being divided into two camps. Peaceful coexistence was impossible. Western capitalist initiatives had to be thwarted. The Marshall Plan had to be defeated. Efforts to unite and reconstruct the western zones of Germany had to be challenged. If necessary, Stalin would blockade Berlin. The former capital of Nazi Germany, although officially administered by the four occupation powers and divided into four zones, lay inside Soviet-controlled east Germany

and could be easily squeezed to counter Western initiatives. At a special session of the Politburo on 14 March 1948, Stalin explained his thinking. "The innumerable conferences taking place in recent years indicated clearly to us that we cannot come to an agreement with the camp opposing us just as water and fire are unable to come to terms. The present situation of a hostile yet peaceful world may still last for a long time but there will come a time when conflict, I repeat, will be inevitable."[170]

Ideology shaped Stalin's interpretation of the actions of America and Britain and ideology provided a menu of possible responses. He could try to exploit divisions among the capitalist powers. He could try to mobilize the European proletariat to thwart the actions of their bourgeois governments. In fact, Stalin denounced French and Italian communists for their previous postwar collaboration with social democrats and now encouraged them to obstruct the implementation of the Marshall Plan, but he also cautioned against adventurism, against acting too crudely, against provoking even more ominous reactions from the capitalist adversary.[171] Stalin told the Yugoslav communists that they should stop supporting the communists in Greece. That struggle should be postponed for a more propitious time, he insisted. "The entire question rests in the balance of forces. We must go into battle not when the enemy wants us to, but when it's in our interests."[172]

But if there were dangers in the international environment, communist ideology also postulated opportunities. Ever since the 1920s, Stalin had ruminated about a "coalition between the proletariat revolution in Europe and the colonial revolution in the East . . . against the world front of imperialism."[173] Now, in late 1947 and early 1948, Stalin returned to this theme with greater emphasis than ever before. He told a special session of the Politburo on 14 March 1948, "we should energetically support the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples of the

dependent and colonial countries against the imperialism of America, England, and France." Many countries once controlled by European powers, Stalin explained, already "had entered the path of national liberation." Their struggles would help precipitate the crisis of capitalism, long postulated by Marxist-Leninist theory. The Kremlin, he said, could do much to hasten the revolutionary process in Central and South America and, even more so, in Asia. We have already done a lot, Stalin told his comrades, to "accelerate the emancipation of Asiatic peoples, although I think henceforth we should increase tenfold our work in this direction." China's liberation movement, Stalin maintained, would become a model for the future. Revolutionary nationalist turmoil in the Third World provided boundless opportunities for the expansion of communist influence and the erosion of capitalist power.[174]

While Stalin acknowledged weakness in Europe and opportunity in Asia and Latin America, Truman and his advisers believed that they still had an opportunity to act from a position of strength in Europe. "In the necessary delicate apportioning of our resources," wrote assistant Secretary of War Howard C. Petersen in mid-1947, "the time element permits emphasis on strengthening the economic dikes against Soviet communism rather than upon preparing for a possible eventual, but not yet inevitable war."[175] If the passage of time was likely to mean the further accretion of state power, more experiments in central planning, and proliferating trade and exchange controls, it was urgent to act now while the correlation of forces were still in America's favor. If the food shortages, work stoppages, and political turmoil in the western zones of Germany portended uncertainty about the future of Germany, it was imperative to act now before the German communists and their Soviet backers outmaneuvered western-oriented parties and politicians.

By the fall of 1947, U.S. officials no longer felt they had the time to try to work out

cooperative agreements. They had to act quickly to mobilize west German resources for the economic reconstruction and financial stabilization of western Europe. At a London meeting of foreign ministers in December, Soviet officials continued to bargain meaningfully over the future of Germany even while the Kremlin fomented riots and demonstrations in France and Italy against the proposed Marshall Plan. Precisely because the international environment was so fraught with risk, and precisely because the communists in Italy had a real chance to win the elections scheduled for April 1948, Truman and Marshall pressed Congress to pass emergency relief legislation and then capitalized on the news of the communist coup in Prague to push for passage of the legislation supporting the Marshall Plan.

Even more important, they could no longer afford to haggle over the future of Germany. The Americans and British wanted to unify the British, French, and American zones in a Federal Republic, implement a currency reform there, and boost industrial production, thereby integrating this new West Germany into a plan for western European recovery. France equivocated and remonstrated, fearful that such Anglo-American initiatives might provoke Soviet aggression in the short run or create a German Frankenstein in the long run. "The thing that impressed me," said Will Clayton after talking to French officials in the fall of 1947, "was the intensity with which the French people . . . regarded the possibility of an attack by Germany again." Marshall tried to allay these worries, but he was insistent on moving ahead. "Maximum German contribution to European recovery," he wrote, "cannot be obtained without establishment of political organization of western Germany. . . . Failure to proceed would appear to Soviets as sign of weakness. . . . While appreciating French concern, US government does not believe that western nations can permit themselves to be deterred."[176]

In other words, the Soviet threats to blockade Berlin must not thwart the Western

initiatives. Truman, Marshall, and their colleagues did not think the Soviet Union would go to war over Germany. George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, the nation's foremost experts on Soviet Russia, did not think Stalin would attack. Indeed, the United States could try to build up west German power and leverage its way into the Soviet sphere precisely because it calculated that the Soviet Union felt too weak to respond militarily. Stalin might threaten, might clamp down in his own sphere, and might try to blockade Berlin. But he was not ready for war. He could not ignore America's atomic monopoly. Stalin, Marshall calculated, would defer to American power, even while he denounced it or denied it. The Soviet leader would bluster. He would repress. He would foment unrest. But these actions, Marshall told his cabinet colleagues, reflected Soviet "desperation," not their strength. They are bluffing, said General Clay on 17 June 1948, "and their hand can and should be called now."[177]

Conditions in the international arena impelled U.S. officials to go on the diplomatic offensive in 1947 and 1948. Digesting the lessons of recent history, U.S. officials believed they had to act before the skilled labor, resources, and industrial infrastructure of Europe fell into the grasp of a totalitarian adversary. America's free political economy would then be at risk. But if the existing correlation of forces enabled the United States to act swiftly in western Europe and Japan, opportunities still abounded for the Kremlin to further its influence and its power in eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Stalin never foreswore his determination to safeguard Soviet security and to oversee the forces of worldwide revolution. So long as cooperation with the West promised the possibility of expediting reconstruction at home and controlling the revival of German and Japanese power abroad, he was prepared to cool the ardor of his revolutionary comrades and sometimes even betray them. But once Truman declared that he was waging a war against evil for the soul of

mankind, Stalin saw that the international landscape was fraught not only with the dangers postulated by Marxist-Leninist ideology, but also with opportunities.

Indeed, danger and opportunity would define the Cold War. Embedded in the international system were social forces of order and disorder, vacuums of power, and wars of national liberation. Who would win the spiritual battle for the souls of humankind after depression, war, and genocide? Who would fill the vacuums of power in central Europe and northeast Asia after the defeat of Germany and Japan? How would wars of national liberation in Asia and Africa shape the configuration of power in the international arena after the demise of Europe's colonies? Stalin and Truman pondered these questions. They were wracked with fear and inspired by hope. Ideology and historical experience shaped the way they saw the dangers and the opportunities that lurked in the international system. But so did domestic politics.

Domestic Polities

Truman was not eager to go on an offensive against the Soviet Union and international communism. By 1947-48, he knew that American public opinion had grown deeply suspicious of Russia. And he knew that the Republican Party was eager to attack him for appeasing another totalitarian adversary. Yet he was far from certain that the public would support a vigorous foreign policy which would be costly. In November 1946, voters had repudiated his party and put Republicans in control of both houses of Congress, for the first time since the 1920s. But the election was fought primarily on domestic issues. Many newly elected senators like Joseph McCarthy from Wisconsin and John Bricker from Ohio were economic nationalists and political isolationists, more eager to attack the president for being soft of communists at home than to press him to do anything abroad. [178]

Truman's prestige was at rock bottom after the elections of November 1946, with only about 30 percent of Americans thinking he was doing a good job. Fed up with shortages and strikes, they were primarily concerned about the costs of housing and the price of meat. Businessmen wanted to crush unions; southern segregationists wanted to keep Blacks in their place; America firsters wanted to rid the country of domestic spies and communist traitors.

Truman acted because he feared Stalin would exploit conditions to aggrandize Soviet power; not because he felt a groundswell of public opinion demanding new foreign-policy initiatives. The president and his advisers believed they were far ahead of the public in wanting to take action, and thought they had to "shock" or "electrify" the American people into support. In meetings with Democratic and Republican leaders of Congress, Secretary Marshall and Under Secretary Acheson grasped that they had to pose the threat in stark ideological terms if they were to garner congressional support for a policy of "containment". Truman's aides and State

Department officials invested a huge amount of time in drafting the president's address to Congress asking for aid to Greece and Turkey. Truman insisted that the message be framed in simple language that the American people could grasp. The looming contest was a struggle between good and evil, between freedom and slavery.[179] "I wanted no hedging in this speech," he recalled in his memoirs. "This was America's answer to the surge of expansion of communist tyranny. It had to be clear and free of hesitation and double talk."[180]

Domestic opinion was ripe. Support for Truman soared in the spring of 1947 as he took the offensive against the Soviet Union. Truman's intent was not to launch a crusade that would ultimately entrap himself and his successors, but he did. His ideological language deeply resonated. Religious evangelicals and racial segregationists, right-wing extremists, anti-New Dealers thrived on anti-communist rhetoric. How could they assail communists at home yet be indifferent to the menace abroad? Truman's creation of Loyalty Boards to screen the backgrounds of federal employees and his support of legislation to create the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Council "neutered the Republican resurgence."[181]

But the president also became the prisoner of his own rhetoric.[182] Highlighting the communist menace abroad, he could not ignore it at home. Americans hated communism. In July 1946, thirty-six percent Americans told pollsters that domestic communists should either be killed or imprisoned.[183] Truman's conservative foes could exploit this public attitude and manipulate the president's own language to suit their purposes. They wanted to expel communists from the government, crush "leftists," and repudiate the New Deal. Two weeks after the president delivered his Truman Doctrine message to Congress, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, told the House Un-American Activities Committee that the administration was not doing enough to root out subversives. Public opinion,

said Hoover, needed to be aroused. "Victory will be assured once communists are identified and exposed, because the public will take the first step of quarantining them so they can do no harm. Communism, in reality," Hoover continued, "is not a political party. It is a way of life—an evil and malignant way of life."[184]

The struggle to contain Soviet power became an ideological crusade. This was understandable. The American people had just vanquished one totalitarian foe; they now faced another. They knew Stalin's regime was ruthless. They knew he was imposing godless, communist governments on countries like Poland and Romania from which some Americans had themselves emigrated. They did not ask if Stalin was different than Hitler. They assumed the answer was clear. And they realized that Stalin had support in many lands beyond the Soviet periphery. Richard Nixon, a newly elected Republican congressman from California who had run a strong anti-communist campaign, visited Europe in early 1947. He saw how French and Italian communists capitalized politically on Europe's dire economic conditions. The threat was real, he believed. It was immediate. "Communists throughout the world," he said, "owe their loyalty not to the countries in which they live but to Russia."[185]

The international landscape was filled with real threats; deeply held ideological beliefs and historical experience translated threats into fears. Republicans could capitalize politically on these fears. Domestic political battles, therefore, reinforced the ideological and geo-strategic convictions of U.S. officials. Republicans and Democrats, however, shared a common vocabulary: they believed they were in a battle for the souls of humankind to preserve the American way of life. "If Western Europe goes behind the Iron Curtain," declared Republican Senator William Knowland, "the whole productive potential of that section of the world will fall into the Russian orbit . . . [and] the repercussions upon our own domestic economy would be . . .

terrific." If the United States did not act now, George Kennan warned, if the United State did not employ its vast power when it still had an opportunity to do so, it would face a Europe that "would be no less hostile" than the Europe of Hitler's dreams. It would force the United States to change, requiring increases in defense spending, controls over the economy, more intense hunts for domestic subversives, and more infringements on personal freedoms. The United States, Truman predicted, might have to become a garrison state with "a system of centralized regimentation unlike anything we have ever known."[186]

Stalin's evolving policies were also a response to his domestic polity. Geo-politics, ideology, and personality shaped his attitudes, but his behavior cannot be fully understood without an understanding of the domestic context in which he operated. The Soviet people, Stalin knew, wanted a better way of life. They expected benefits, not more calls for sacrifice. Everybody, wrote the popular journalist Ilya Ehrenburg, "expected that once victory had been won, people would know real happiness." The war itself was already being "remembered as a time of freedom." It had catalyzed feelings of community and had unleashed people's creativity and ingenuity, since they had been forced "time after time to make their own decisions, to take responsibility for themselves." It had almost been a period of spontaneous de-Stalinization. After victory, they expected better. We "believed," wrote Ehrenburg, "that victory would bring justice, that human dignity would triumph."[187]

Stalin was not blind to the realities around him. His country was devastated, his people impoverished. His armies had conquered new lands, but they were inhabited by millions of discontented people. His soldiers returned with ideas and hopes that could not be trusted. His internal empire contained subject peoples and nationalities whose desire for autonomy had been intensified by resistance and war. The Soviet armed forces had performed heroically but now

might capitalize on their popularity and challenge his power. Stalin had more stature than ever before, but he was personally insecure and fearful of his life. His country had more power than ever before, but its long-term safety was far from assured. Communism had more resonance than ever before, but the system tottered within.

Rumblings of discontent abounded. Food was scarce, housing conditions abominable. In 1946, the Soviet grain harvest sank to 39.6 million tons compared to 95.5 million in 1940; in 1947, the nation had 14 million tons of flour compared to almost 29 million in 1940. Where food existed, it was often inedible. "Workers and even low level managers in rural areas endured a state of poverty which was almost beyond description." Parents could not feed or clothe their children. "Dreams of a calm, even if slow, advance forward were dashed forever."[188]

Demoralization prevailed everywhere, and Stalin's spies vigilantly reported news of spreading discontent. General V. Gordov, conqueror of Prague and Berlin, ruminated on conditions with F. Rybalchenko, his former chief of staff. "People are angry," Gordov said, "about their life and complain openly. . . . There is incredible famine." Rybalchenko retorted, "Policies are such [that] nobody wants to work. All collective farmers hate Stalin and wait for his end." The recorded conversation was sent to Stalin. Gordov and his wife were executed.[189]

There was seething discontent in the western borderlands of Soviet Russia and in the recently annexed territories. Suppressed nationality groups and ethnic minorities wanted a softening of the Soviet way of life and an opportunity for self-expression. During 1946 Ukrainian nationalist rebels continued to fight tenaciously. Stalin's secret police reported growing foreign espionage activity. Captured suspects said they were paid by Americans and

British intelligence to gather information. Rebels spread rumors of an impending war between the United States and the USSR that would lead to the liberation of Ukraine.[190]

Stalin's suspicions were stirred anew. He was determined to "deliver a blow" against any talk of "democracy," let alone subversion. He reorganized the internal police system throughout the western borderlands of the Soviet Union. He ordered Andrei Zhadanov to take charge of the Propaganda Administration in the Party secretariat and to re-impose ideological purity on the nomenklatura and apparatchiks. He instructed Lavrenty Beria, the head of the secret police, to use slave labor to accelerate the Soviet atomic project. He reshuffled the top brass of the army and demoted Zhukov. The Gulag population of political prisoners, held in a huge network of Soviet labor camps, grew from 1,460,677 in 1945 to 2,199,535 in 1948; the numbers of ethnic minorities and repatriated soldiers forced to live in special settlements in forsaken places totaled almost 2.5 million at the end of 1946. Prisoners died each year by the tens of thousands: 81,917 in 1945; 30,715 in 1946; 66,830 in 1947; 50,659 in 1948.[191]

Stalin intimidated his subordinates one by one, not killing them but striking fear into their hearts, stripping away their independence, and reminding them that he was the source of their authority, even of their lives. Yet it was often difficult to discern what Stalin wanted beyond a few key fundamentals: his unchallenged power; a single party-state guided by Marxist-Leninist ideology; and Soviet imperial control over the peoples of the USSR and eastern Europe. Over many economic matters Stalin allocated responsibility to his Council of Ministers. Defense and foreign-policy matters and ideological issues stayed within the province of the Party's Politburo, which met informally and infrequently and which Stalin dominated. But the dictator's domination did not mean that his views were predetermined.[192]

Soviet records reveal that on many issues Stalin had no clear policy. On many matters he suspended action. Top officials discussed complex, often intersecting issues among themselves and with him. These matters involved relations with the United States; the security of the Soviet Union; the future of Germany; the orientation of the Communist parties abroad; the allocation of resources to industry and agriculture; the degree of national and cultural self-expression. But Stalin intervened only episodically and inconsistently.[193] Russocentrism, however, loomed larger and larger in his thinking. "The patriotic [Russian] component steadily increased its relative weight in comparison with the Marxist."[194]

But the mix remained inchoate. Stalin's ideology did not provide him with clear answers, nor did domestic politics shape his foreign policy. But at a time of international turmoil and internal ferment, his ideology, mixed with his personal paranoia, oriented his thinking and shaped his domestic crackdown. Nobody could be trusted, least of all capitalists. He was prepared to work with the United States, just as Truman wanted to get along with him, but on his own terms and to serve his own interests. Cooperation with the Western powers did not mean that he could allow Soviet security to be endangered or the communist experiment to be imperiled. Capitalists were stirring up discontent and brewing rebellion inside eastern Europe and the western borderlands of the Soviet Union. They were thwarting his ambitions in Iran and Turkey. They were intent on rebuilding western Germany. They were dangerous. They were scoundrels. The Marshall Plan confirmed his worst suspicions. It "tore the alliance apart," writes a recent biographer. It was regarded by Stalin as a device "to destroy Soviet military and political hegemony over Eastern Europe."[195]

Stalin now had no alternative but to confront the adversary. Ideology and history

instructed that they could not be appeased. The loyalty and discipline of his subordinates were deemed imperative not only at home but throughout Eastern Europe. Dissidents were purged, obeisance demanded.

Allies and Clients

As the Iron Curtain descended across Europe, opportunity beckoned in Asia. Communists were waging a tenacious struggle to gain power in China, and revolutionary nationalist leaders like Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam and Sukarno in Indonesia were battling the French and Dutch in behalf of their people's freedom.

After the war, Stalin initially did rather little to support prospective communist allies and revolutionary nationalist leaders in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. His attitude toward Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party's war against the Kuomintang illustrated that his priority was Soviet Russia. Stalin did not think that the conditions in China were ripe for revolution. He did not think that the material base and class structure were conducive for success. In August 1945, he had signed an agreement with the Nationalists. He wanted to secure Russia's periphery in northeast Asia, avoid a rift with the United States, and temper Washington's penchant to intervene in behalf of Chiang Kai-shek. On key occasions, the Soviet army in Manchuria did provide arms and assistance to the Chinese Communists, but Stalin urged Mao to compromise, share power, and reach a modus vivendi with the Kuomintang. Stalin's actions disheartened Mao but did not alter his quest to gain power. As Stalin recounted to Bulgarian and Yugoslav communists in February 1948, the Chinese comrades agreed "in words," "but in practice kept accumulating forces."[196]

Stalin's priority was not revolution in Asia and the Third World. His priority was the

reconstruction of Soviet Russia and the protection of its frontiers. Revolution, the ultimate goal, could be deferred, even subordinated, while the Kremlin assessed whether and for how long it could collaborate with its wartime allies in shaping the future of Germany and Japan, Russia's traditional enemies. Because of Stalin's desire to "to take care of [his] relations with the United States," Mao had acknowledged in December 1945, Soviet forces had not done all they could have to thwart the movement of Nationalist troops into key cities in Manchuria. Mao's revolution could wait, Stalin thought, until he assessed the Americans' willingness to share power in Japan. Ho's revolution could wait, Stalin calculated, until he could determine Ho's reliability and evaluate the evolution of French domestic politics.[197]

But once the Americans opted in the spring and summer of 1947 to focus on the reconstruction of western Europe and once French officials aligned their country with American and British policy in Germany and excised the communists from the governing coalition in Paris, Stalin turned his attention to the vast opportunities that he thought he had to weaken the capitalists and encourage revolution in Asia. As the Truman administration reversed course in Japan in early 1948 and concentrated on rehabilitating Japan's economy rather than reforming its prewar institutions, Stalin, too, reversed course in China. He told Mao's emissaries that they now could count on him. "If socialism is victorious in China," Stalin said, "and [if] other countries follow the same road, we can consider the victory of socialism throughout the world to be guaranteed."[198]

World revolution remained a distant goal, however, not to be pursued at the expense of the interests and power of the Soviet Union. When he formed the Cominform in September 1947, Stalin's aim was to gain tighter control over his minions in Europe, not to encourage

worldwide revolution. In fact, he chastised French and Italian communists for allowing themselves to be outmaneuvered and warned them not to engage in insurrectionary activity.[199] Ideology shaped Stalin's perception of threat and opportunity; it did not breed affinity for his communist comrades in foreign lands or make him more amenable to their wishes. His allies and clients learned to their dismay that they had to accommodate the twists and turns of his policies, even when they conflicted with their interests and aspirations.[200]

Stalin despised signs of their independence and autonomy. He often was tentative and vague in communicating with his communist comrades, masking his own uncertainties. But when they acted on their own and in ways he deemed harmful to Soviet interests he could be brutally clear. He would not allow the national interests of other communist leaders to usurp his authority or interfere with his priorities. In August 1947, he was furious with Bulgarian and Yugoslav communist leaders for signing agreements without first consulting him. They were foolishly supporting the insurgency in Greece and mistakenly seeking to intimidate Albania through the movement of Yugoslav troops. "These are leftist infatuations," he declared. Hereafter, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia must coordinate their foreign policies with the Kremlin. They must not do anything to provoke the capitalist adversary. "Right now," Stalin lectured, "a great electoral struggle is going on in America. For us, it is of great importance to see what the future government there will be, because America is a powerful country, well armed. Its government is headed not by intellectuals but by moneybags who hate us terribly and look for any pretext to do us harm."[201]

Stalin, alone, would shape the foreign policies of his communist neighbors. Believing that Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia was defying his leadership, Stalin sought to destroy him. In

June 1948, he orchestrated Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform. But at the same time he took action that provoked the United States far more than anything Tito had done. Soviet troops imposed a blockade on Berlin, stopping all railroad traffic between the isolated capital and the West.

Stalin wanted to prevent the formation of an independent West German republic that might become part of a western bloc led by the United States. If Great Britain, France, and the United States would repudiate the agreements they had just signed regarding their zones in Germany, Stalin said, he would lift the blockade. Otherwise, he would keep Berlin isolated from the rest of western Germany and seek to incorporate it into the Soviet zone.

Nothing he had done since the war had been quite so daring. If the Americans were to challenge the blockade, they might start a war in the heart of Europe. In fact, Stalin hoped that fear of such hostilities would induce France to force a reversal of the Anglo-American initiative.[202]

But Truman, Marshall, and their colleagues worked brilliantly to reassure their European allies. Believing that their own initiatives were critical to rebuilding western Europe and restoring hope in democratic capitalism, they would not back down. Calculating that Stalin would not shoot down American planes and risk war, they decided to airlift supplies to Berlin. But also understanding that they were asking their friends in western Europe to take grave risks, Truman and Marshall acted to allay their fears. Marshall made it clear that U.S. troops would stay in Germany indefinitely, that Washington would provide military aid to France, and that emergency war planning would begin in earnest. More important, he and President Truman decided that the United States would join an alliance of likeminded democratic nations in the

North Atlantic region, an alliance designed to deter Soviet aggression and provide reassurance against the Germans.

British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin had been pressing the Americans to sign such a North Atlantic Treaty for some time, a treaty that would guarantee peace and security in the Old World. For 150 years, the United States had eschewed "entangling" alliances, and neither the public nor the Congress was demanding a rupture with this tradition. But Truman and Marshall knew they had to satisfy their European friends and guarantee their security. They knew they were asking the French and other Europeans to incur risks that their electorates might not support. The peoples of Europe, after all, yearned for peace and stability, not new crises and new confrontations. If American leaders were asking them to comply with American initiatives that might provoke a Soviet attack in the short run or spur German revanchism in the long run, the United States had to assume unprecedented risks and make unprecedented sacrifices.[203]

By responding to British overtures and French pleas, Truman and his advisers were demonstrating a capacity to empathize with allies in ways that Stalin could never emulate. But allied pressures did not motivate U.S. actions. Fear and opportunity lay behind American actions: fear that the Soviets might otherwise gain control of much of Eurasia without war unless the U.S. went on the offensive; opportunity in knowing that the United States still had the power and wealth to defeat communism, contain Soviet power, and revive democratic capitalism. Once these beliefs prevailed in Washington policy-making circles, prospective allies were able to exert leverage not only in Europe but also beyond.[204] Very soon thereafter, Truman and his advisers decided to support the French in their war against communist-led insurgents in Indochina. The struggle for the souls of humankind was already assuming global dimensions.

Ideology, Personality, and the International System

Truman and Stalin became locked in a worldwide struggle, yet the shape of the struggle was not predetermined. Initially, both men saw reason to collaborate with their ideological adversaries. Both men grasped that national self-interest could be served through cooperative arrangements. As much as each leader preferred a world ordered along lines of either democratic capitalism or communism, neither initially believed that postwar reconversion, reconstruction, or security necessitated confrontation. Indeed, both men had reason to believe and did think that immediate goals could be served by containing competition and modulating conflict.

But the Cold War came and it engulfed the world. Why?

Truman and Stalin could and did articulate the reasons for national self-restraint. They could and did warn friends and potential allies not to fuel the suspicions of sensitive and powerful adversaries. But they could not control their own fears and instincts, their passions and aspirations. The structure of the international system and their ideological mindsets overcame their initial desire to sustain their nations' collaboration.

The condition of the international system engendered fears and opportunities. At the end of the war international society was astir with demoralized peoples yearning for a better future after a decade of depression, war, genocide, and forced migrations. In the center of Europe and in northeast Asia the defeat of Germany and Japan left huge vacuums of power. In time, and not a very long time, contemporaries assumed, the occupations would end and the Germans and Japanese would reconstitute their governments and political economies. They would then decide

how they would configure themselves in the international system, but their future trajectory was a huge, unsettling question mark. Elsewhere in the world --in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East--local leaders and indigenous elites felt emboldened to seek independence as they witnessed their colonial masters' strength erode. They were inspired by the rhetoric of freedom and the affirmations of the principle of national self-determination. They wanted to modernize their countries, overcome the humiliations of dependency, and extinguish the misery that came with poverty. Would they choose free enterprise and liberal democracy, or would they choose planned economies and the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Stalin and Truman had to make sense of these realities, had to integrate them into belief systems that comported with their rational calculations of national self-interest, the exigencies of domestic politics, and the aspirations and sensibilities of potential friends and clients. They were agents of change and shapers of international history. But they were enveloped by structure and belief.

Stalin had an immense task of reconstruction ahead and confronted huge uncertainties. Germany and Japan were defeated, but they would recover, as they had before, and they would have to be dealt with. Britain and America were partners in the war, but they were also potential rivals and they could not be trusted. If there were challenges, there were also opportunities. Soviet armies were spread across eastern Europe and parts of northeast Asia. Stalin had a unique opportunity to secure his borders and control Russia's periphery for the indefinite future. Free elections in many of the countries he occupied, Stalin knew, would lead to anti-Soviet governments. Why have them? Yet free elections in western Europe and self-determination in the colonial world offered considerable advantages.

Stalin had to balance fear and opportunity, incentives to cooperate with temptations to compete. More than anything else he wanted to protect Soviet Russia against the revival of German and, secondarily, Japanese power, goals mandated by tradition and experience, by strategic necessity and national revenge. After World War II no Russian or Soviet leader could forsake the opportunity to control the periphery and to shape developments in Germany and Japan. The international landscape was permissive. No nation existed to contain Russian expansion; the vacuums could be filled to secure long-term ambitions.

Marxist-Leninist thinking lurked behind Stalin's actions. Opportunities inherent in the system had to be grasped because capitalists could not be trusted. Cooperation might be possible, indeed desirable, at least in the short term, but it was not likely to endure. Capitalist wars might engulf Russia, as had just occurred, or, more likely, capitalists might again seek to crush the Bolshevik experiment. Even while he confided to Polish communists that he was not ruling out agreement with the United States, he believed, not without cause, that Washington was seeking to use its atomic monopoly "to intimidate us and force us to yield in contentious issues concerning Japan, the Balkans, and reparations." Likewise, the United States was trying to maneuver its way into eastern Europe and was hoping to divide Russia from its new found allies in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia. Beware of this, he told Polish leaders.[205]

Suspicion pulsated through all his transactions. Capitalists would trick, deceive, and try to crush communists. Don't accept the invitation to go to London, he warned his Polish comrades in 1945. "I assure you they are not inviting you for a good purpose. . . . There is a group of complete rascals and ruthless murderers in the Intelligence service who would fulfill any order given to them."[206] Marxist-Leninist thinking about the world inclined Stalin to

exaggerate the dangers of American atomic diplomacy, which was being practiced, and of Anglo-American spying and espionage, which was occurring, in the emerging Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe and even within Soviet Russia's western borderlands. Knowing the magnitude of discontent and the possibilities for widespread unrest, Stalin's Bolshevik mentality and personal paranoia took over. He accepted the division of Europe into two camps as soon as he was convinced that the Americans were on the offensive, as they seemed to be when they announced the Truman Doctrine, articulated a plan for European recovery, and orchestrated plans for the revival of German and Japanese economies. Marxist-Leninist theory provided Stalin with no blueprint for a cold war, but it did explain the actions of capitalist adversaries and did outline a vision of endless possibilities for communist advancement in the Third World once his aspirations were blocked in Europe.

Truman could not but fear and he, too, had to act, although he did not seek a cold war. He understood that the international landscape offered immense opportunities for Stalin to aggrandize Soviet power if he chose to do so. Stalin might not be seizing every opportunity to expand, as intelligence analysts repeatedly pointed out, and Stalin might be smart enough to back down when resisted, but there were sufficient aggressive moves to intensify Truman's anxieties. Just a few years before other totalitarian foes had made menacing signs, then, unchecked, declared war on the United States and dared to conquer much of the world. Why wait to take action, Truman thought, when he grasped that America's wealth and power enabled the United States to act wisely and swiftly, if provocatively, to promote Europe's recovery, coopt western Germany and Japan, life morale among dispirited peoples, and ignite hope in free enterprise democracy?

Truman was a straightforward man and did see things in black and white. What he saw was the incipient rise of another totalitarian power with an expansionist ideology. He was not motivated by Stalin's brutality—indeed he rarely talked about it—but he was motivated by the challenge he saw to America's way of life. Our foreign policy, he said, "is the outward expression of the democratic faith we profess."[207]

Inaction or retreat meant that the American way of life would be endangered not simply abroad, but also at home. It meant that prospective allies would be abandoned and their resources and manpower relinquished to a potential adversary. Should this happen, Truman warned, "it would impose upon us a much higher level of mobilization than we have today. It would require a stringent and comprehensive system of allocation and rationing in order to husband our smaller resources. It would require us to become a garrison state, and to impose upon ourselves a system of centralized regimentation unlike anything we have ever known."[208] The president grasped that the distribution of power in the international system had immense ramifications for democratic capitalism in the United States.

The structure of the international system intersected with the beliefs of human agents to produce the cold war. Truman understood that power centers, like western Europe, West Germany, and Japan must be kept out of Stalin's grasp. But these efforts had to be supplemented with additional initiatives. As Stalin turned eastward and southward in accord with Marxist-Leninist thinking about opportunities for communist advancement, Truman and his advisers realized that the sources of raw materials, investment earnings, and markets of the industrialized democracies in the Third World had to be preserved. "Curiously enough," Kennan wrote Secretary of State Marshall in December 1948, "the most crucial issue of the moment in our

struggle with the Kremlin is probably the problem of Indonesia."[209]

A world in turmoil, where decolonization and revolutionary nationalism were embedded realities, meant that the Cold War could not be contained in Europe and northeast Asia. The lure of future victories in distant lands tempted Stalin; the fear of losses there agonized U.S. officials. In their very first national security strategy statement, approved by the president in December 1948, Truman's advisers explained their thinking. Soviet domination of Eurasia, they said, "whether achieved by armed aggression or by political and subversive means, would be strategically and politically unacceptable to the United States."[210]

Believing that "Communist ideology and Soviet behavior clearly demonstrate that the ultimate objective of the USSR is the domination of the world," Truman and his aides agreed that containment would not suffice. Our first objective, they said, is "to reduce the power and influence of the USSR to limits which no longer constitute a threat to the peace, national independence and stability of the world family of nations." Our second goal is "to bring about a basic change in the conduct of international relations by the government in power in Russia."[211]

In 1948, Stalin and Truman set forth the visions and the ambitions that would drive their nations for the next forty years. They could not do otherwise in an international order that engendered so much fear and so much opportunity.

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2. Robert Conquest, Stalin: Breaker of Nations (New York: Penguin, 1991), 14; Alfred J. Rieber, "Stalin, Man of the Borderlands," The American Historical Review, 106(December 2001): 1651-91.

3. For the young Stalin and the impact of these religious schools, see Service, Stalin, 13-31; Kuromiya, Stalin, 207; Conquest, Stalin, 16-26; Dmitri Volkogonov, Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1988), 7, 229.

4. Svetlana Alliluyeva, Only One Year (London: Hutchinson, 1969), 341.

5. Service, Stalin, 13-101; Kuromiya, Stalin, 1-25; Conquest, Stalin, 16-49; Adam B. Ulam, Stalin: The Man and His Era (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), 16-126.

6. Conquest, Stalin, 22; Kuromiya, Stalin, 6.

[7] Sergo Beria, Beria: My Father : Inside Stalin's Kremlin, ed. by Francoise Thom, trans by Brian Pearce (London: Gerald Duckworth, 2001), 148; Volkogonov, Stalin, 235.

8.Alliluyena, Only One Year, 341; also see Kuromiya, Stalin, 7.

9. Service, Stalin, 43-112; Volkogonov, Stalin, 5-12, 225-36; Conquest, Stalin, 27-57; Alliluyena, Only One Year, 45; Moshe Lewin, The Soviet Century, ed. by Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2005), 19-20.

10. Service, Stalin, 113-53; Ulam, Stalin, 47-157; Alliluyena, Only One Year, 27-57.

11. Service, Stalin, 150-85; Ulam, Stalin, 167-91; Conquest, Stalin, 72-95.

12.Volkogonov, Stalin, 78-82; for strong antipathy between Lenin and Stalin, see Lewin, Soviet Century, 12-18; for more nuanced view of their relationship, see Service, Stalin, 190-218.

13. Service, Stalin, 219-50; Kuromiya, Stalin, 50-100; Conquest, Stalin, 96-170; Robert C. Tucker, Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928-1941 (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 25-145; Ulam, Stalin, 192-358.

14. Conquest, Stalin, 69; for a more praiseworthy view that also stresses his zealotry and pragmatism, see Service, Stalin, 94.

15. Quoted in Roy A. Medvedev, On Stalin and Stalinism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 34.

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[17] Stalin, “Foundations of Leninism,” 104-6; Service, Stalin, 93-94.

[18] Stalin, “Foundations of Leninism,” 121.

[19] John Gooding, Socialism in Russia: Lenin and his Legacy, 1890-1991 (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002), 142; Lewin, Soviet Century, 37.

[20] CPSU, Short Course, 273.

[21] Stalin “Foundations of Leninism,” 122-26, 172-83.

[22] Ibid., 157.

[23] CPSU, Short Course, 314.

[24] Ibid., 276-77; Service, Stalin, 253-64; Kuromiya, Stalin, 74-100.

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[26] CPSU, Short Course, 314.

[27] Kuromiya, Stalin, 101-17; Volkogonov, Stalin, 159-73; Conquest, Stalin, 156-65.

[28] Service, Stalin, 297; for a superb account of the death of Stalin's wife and the dictator's reaction, see Simon Sebag Montefiore, Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2003), 1-18; the quotation is on p. 18; also see Rosamond Richardson, Stalin's Shadow: Inside the Family of One of the World's Greatest Tyrants (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 119-35.

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[31] Ibid., 11.

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[33] See the essays by Oleg Khlevniuk, "The Reasons for the 'Great Terror': the Foreign-Political Aspect,"; Geoffrey Roberts, "The Fascist War Threat and Soviet Politics in the 1930s"; and Andrea Romano, "Permanent War Scare: Mobilisation, Militarisation and Peasant War"; in Silvio Pons and Andrea Romano, eds., Russia in the Age of Wars , 1914-1945 (Milan, Italy: Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, 2000); Kuromiya, Stalin, 121-28; Service, Stalin, 346-56.

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[49] Overy, Russia's War, 79.

[50] Alliluyeva, Only One Year, 352.

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[68] "Notes of V. Kolarov from a Meeting with J. Stalin," 28 January 1945, "Conversations with Stalin," 130, CWIHP; Notes on Stalin's Statement from a Meeting with a Bulgarian Delegation," [late August 1945], ibid., 247-48; "Report of the Labor Party on its Goodwill Mission to the USSR," [late July 1946], ibid., 330-31; "Report to Central Committee of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on Meeting with Stalin," 26 September 1946, CWIHP Collection; Roberts, "Ideology, Calculation, Improvisation"; Norman M. Naimark, "The Soviets and the Christian Democrats: The Challenge of a "Bourgeois" Party in Eastern Germany, 1945-1949," East European Politics and Society, 9(Fall 1995): 369-92.

[69] Pons, "Stalin, Togliatti, and the Origins of the Cold War in Europe," 15; Norman M. Naimark, "Cold War Studies and New Archival Materials on Stalin," The Russian Review,61(January 2002): 5-6; Kuromiya, Stalin, 184.

[70] "Notes of Stalin's Speech During a Reception at the Kremlin to Celebrate the Achievement of the Agreement to Create the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity," 23 June 1944, "Conversations with Stalin," 21, CWIHP.

[71] "Notes of V. Kolarov," 28 January 1945, ibid., 130; "Notes of Stalin's Speech During a Reception at the Kremlin," 23 June 1944, ibid., 21; "Record of a Conversation of Comrade I.V. Stalin and Comrade V.M. Molotov with the Polish professor Lange," 17 May 1944, ibid., 15; for Stalin's preoccupation with Germany, see Roberts,

Stalin's Wars, chapter 6.

[72] "Record of a Conversation of Comrade I.V. Stalin and Comrade V.M. Molotov with the Polish professor Lange," 17 May 1944, ibid., 18.

[73] Quoted in Mark Kramer, "The Soviet Union and the Founding of the German Democratic Republic: 50 Years later—A Review Article," Europe-Asia 51(1999): 1097-98.

[74] John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (New York: Norton, 2001), 198.

[75] Georgi Arbatov, The System: An Insider's Life in Soviet Politics (New York: Random House, 1992), 168. Most historians examining the Soviet archives agree. In the complex mix of Bolshevism and Nationalism, the nationalist component grew. See, for example, Pons, "In the Aftermath of the Age of Wars"; Roberts, "Ideology, Calculation, and Improvisation"; Branderberger, National Bolshevism; Kuromiya, Stalin, 180-87.

[76] "Record of Meeting between T. Soong and Stalin," 30 June 1945, 2, 7, 9, 11 July 1945, 10 August 1945, "Conversations with Stalin," 207, 145, 148, 157, 173, 179, 207, 225, CWIHP.

[77] For Stalin's objectives in eastern Europe, based on new archival materials, see Mark, "Revolution by Degrees"; Roberts, Stalin's Wars; Vojtech Mastny, The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 11-29; Francesca Gori and Silvio Pons, eds., The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); Norman Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii, eds., The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 1944-1949 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Odd Arne Westad, Sven Holsmark, and Iver B. Neumann, eds., The Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); for the emphasis on security, see Tony Judt's recent survey, Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945 (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 117-21; for a recent assessment of Stalin and the Greek communists, see

John O. Iatrides, "Revolution or self-Defense: Communist Goals, Strategy, and Tactics in the Greek Civil War," Journal of Cold War Studies, 7(Summer 2005): 3-33.

[78] Ree, Political Thought of Joseph Stalin, 243; for recent analyses, see Kuromiya, Stalin, 169-200; Roberts, Stalin's Wars.

[79] Norman M. Naimark, The Russians in Germany (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 114-16.

[80] Ilya Ehrenburg, The War, 1941-1945 (London: McGibbon & Kee, 1964), 187-88.

[81] Overy, Russia's War, 280; Hiroaki Kuromiya, Freedom and Terror in the Donbas: A Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870s-1990s (London: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 297-98.

[82] Ehrenburg, The War, 187-92.

[83] S. Beria, Beria, 142-43; Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin, 205; Service, Stalin, 438, 461-68.

[84] Alliluyeva, Only One Year, 162-63; Alliluyeva, 20 Letters, 199-207; Yoram Gorlizki and Oleg Khlevniuk, Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945-1943 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 49; Montefiore, Stalin, 454-71.

[85] S. Beria, Beria, 145-46; Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, Cold Peace; Montefiore, Stalin, 435-577; Service, Stalin, 521-40.

[86] Montefiore, Stalin, 455; Kuromiya, Stalin, 184.

[87] These contradictions appear in the many conversations assembled by the CWIHP. See the collection "Conversations with Stalin," for example, pp. 272, 248; for Stalin's inscrutable nature and ambiguous language, also see Steven Kotkin, "A Conspiracy So Immense," The New Republic, 234(13 February 2006): 28-34.

[88] Overy, Russia's War, 312; also see Service, Stalin, 478-87.

[89] Roberts, Stalin's Wars, especially chapter 7; Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin, 207; Arbatov, The System, 35-36; Service, Stalin, 467-68.

[90] The emphasis on Stalin's trying to reconcile security and cooperation has emerged in the writings of many writers who have seen the new Russian documents. See, for example, Roberts, Stalin's Wars; Marks, "Revolution by Degree"; Pons, "In the Aftermath of the Age of Wars"; Kuromiya, Stalin, 161.

[91] Margaret Truman, ed., Letters From Father: The Truman Family's Personal Correspondence (New York: Arbor House, 1981), 106; Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, The First Cold Warrior: Harry Truman, Containment, and the Remaking of Liberal Internationalism (Lexington, Ky: Niversity Press of Kentucky, 2006), 16.

[92] For the quotation, see Alonzo L. Hamby, Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 293.

[93] Robert H. Ferrell, Dear Bess: The Letters From Harry to Bess Truman, 1910-1959 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983), 213, 215; Arnold Offner, Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 9.

[94] Offner, Truman, 9.

[95] For influential books on Truman, see Alonzo Hamby, Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); David McCullough, Truman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992); Robert Ferrell, Truman and Pendergast (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999); Offner, Another Such Victory, 12-13.

[96] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 293, 285.

[97] Ibid., 277.

[98] Harry S. Truman, Truman Speaks (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 32.

[99] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 451.

[100] Michael C. Adams, The Best War Ever: America and World War II (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 114, 131, 136, 126-27; for the astounding prosperity that no one anticipated, see David M. Kennedy, Freedom from Fear: The American People in the Depression and War, 1929-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 785-86.

[101] Richard J. Overy, Why the Allies Won (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 192; Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers (New York: Random House, 1987), 357-58, 369.

[102] Robert H. Ferrell,ed., Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 49; Ferrell, Dear Bess, 516, 518.

[103] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 515, 522.

[104] Davies Diary, 15 and 16 July 1945, box 18, Joseph Davies Papers, Library of Congress.

[105] Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: 1945, Year of Decisions (New York: Signet, 1955), 72.

[106] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 520.

[107] Ibid., 522.

[108] Truman, Truman Speaks, 67-68.

[109] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 519; for Truman and Byrnes, see Robert L. Messer, The End of an Alliance: James F. Byrnes, Roosevelt, Truman, and the Origins of the Cold War (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

[110] M. Truman, Letters From Father, 178.

[111] Davies Diary, 16 July 1945, box 18, Davies Papers.

[112] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 522.

[113] Davies Diary, 28 and 29 July 1945, box 19, Davies Papers.

[114] For the end of the war, see Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[115] Ferrell, Dear Bess, 519.

[116] See, for example, John M. Blum, ed., The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942-1946 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1973), 437, 440-41, 448-51.

[117] For Byrnes' thinking about the atomic bomb, see Brown Log, 16 July-1 August 1945, James F. Byrnes Papers, Clemson University Library, Clemson, South Carolina.

[118] For information on Stalin, Molotov, and the meeting of the council of foreign ministers, see V. O. Pechatnov, "'The Allies Are Pressing on You to Break Your Will . . .': Foreign Policy Correspondence between Stalin and Molotov and other Politburo Members, September 1945-December 1946," CWIHP Working Paper No. 26 (Woodrow Wilson International Center, 1999), 18-32; Gorlizi and Khlevniuk, Cold Peace, 19-23.

[119] For insight into Byrnes' thinking, see Messer, End of an Alliance, 137-55; Gregg Herken, The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb in the Cold War (New York: Knopf, 1980), 66-94; Eduard Mark, "American Policy Toward Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-46: An Alternative Interpretation," Journal of American History, 68(September 1981): 313-36.

[120] Ferrell, Off the Record, 72; Blum, Price of Vision, 512-13; Minutes of Cabinet meetings, October-December 1945, Matthew J. Connelly papers, box 1, Harry S. Truman Library (HSTL), Independence, Missouri.

[121] Clark Clifford Oral History, pp. 180-84, HSTL.

[122] "Address on Foreign Policy," 27 October 1945, Harry S. Truman, Public Papers of the Presidents, 1945 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), 431-38 (hereafter cited as PPP: HST, year, page).

[123] For the quotation, see Diary of William Leahy, 27 October 1945, William L. Leahy Papers, Library of Congress.

[124] Ferrell, Off the Record, 79-80; Messer, End of an Alliance, 156-66; Spalding, First Cold Warrior, 24-35.

[125] Pechatnov, "Harriman's Mission to Moscow," especially 26-27; Geoffrey Roberts, "Sexing Up the Cold War: New Evidence on the Molotov-Truman Talks of April 1945," Cold War History, 4(April 2004): 105-25.

[126] Montefiore, Stalin, 445; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 42-43; Jonathan Haslam, "The Cold War as History," Annual Review of Political Science, 6(2003): 92-93; Pechatnov, "The Allies Are Pressing on You," 31.

[127] Joseph Stalin, "New Five Year Plan for Russia," 9 February 1946, Vital Speeches of the Day, 12(1March 1946): 300-304.

[128] Banac, Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 358.

[129] David Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press,1994), 168.

[130] Joseph Stalin, For Peaceful Coexistence: Postwar Interviews (New York: International Publishers, 1951), 11-12.

[131] Transcript of Interview between Stalin and Byrnes, 24 December 1945, G. P. Kynim and Y. Laufer, eds., SSSR i germanski vopros, 1941-1949: documenty iz arkhiva vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi federatsii [USSR and the German Question: Documents from the Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Federation], Vol 2: May 9, 1945-October 3, 1946 (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye, otnosheni, 2000), 335-36; Pechatnov, "Allies Are Pressing on You," 10-11.

[132] Memorandum, by Litvinov, 5 July 1945, Kynim and Laufer, USSR and the German Question, 171-75; Litvinov to Stalin, 25 May 1946, ibid., 517-19; Draft Statement prepared by Litvinov and I.M. Maiskii, 12 June 1946, ibid., 596-98.

[133] Jeffrey Burds, "The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948," The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies, No. 1505 (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001), 25-30; Kuromiya, Freedom and Terror in the Donbas, 251-323.

[134] Burds, "Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine"; Eduard Mark, "The War Scare of 1946 and Its Consequences," Diplomatic History, 21(Summer 1997): 406-7, 410-11; Richard J. Aldrich, The Hidden Hand: Britain, America, and Cold War Secret Intelligence (New York: The Overlook Press, 2002), 142-45; Kuromiya, Freedom and Terror in the Donbas, 313-16.

[135] Odd Arne Westad, Cold War and Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944-1946 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 55; also see Haslam, "Making of Foreign Policy under Stalin;" for most recent assessments, see Norman M. Naimark, "Stalin and Europe in the Postwar Period, 1945-1953: Issues and Problems," Journal of Modern European History, 2(2004): 28-56; Roberts, Stalin's Wars; Vladimir O. Pechatnov, "The Soviet Union and the Outside World, 1944-1953," Cambridge History of the Cold War, ed. by Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 3 vols (London: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

[136] Naimark, "Stalin and Europe in the Postwar Period," 36.

[137] Gomulka's Memorandum of a Conversation with Stalin, third quarter of 1945, in "Conversations With Stalin," 272, CWIHP.

[138] Walter Bedell Smith to Secretary of State, 5 April 1946, ibid., 293-94; "Report of the Labour Party on Its Goodwill Mission to the USSR," [Summer 1946], ibid., 330-32; "Answers to the Questions Posed by A. Werth," 17 September 1946, ibid., 339-40; "Answers to the Questions of Mr. H. Bailey," 26 October 1946, ibid., 341-44; for the theme of cooperation, also see especially Roberts, Stalin's Wars; Pechatnov, "The Soviet Union and the Outside

World".

[139] Pechatnov, "Harriman's Mission to Moscow," 45-46; "Answers to the Questions of Mr. H. Bailey," 26 October 1946, in "Conversations With Stalin," 344, CWIHP.

[140] Stalin's concern with Japan emerges clearly in all the recent research. See, for example, Pechatnov, "The Allies Are Pressing on You," 11-16.

[141] These generalizations have been shaped by Naimark, The Russians in Germany; Naimrak, "The Soviets and the Christian Democrats"; Roberts, Stalin's Wars, chapter 6; Vladimir K. Volkov, "German Question as Stalin Saw It," draft paper for the conference on "Stalin and the Cold War, 1945-1953 (New Haven Ct.: Yale University, 1999); Wilfried Loth, Stalin's Unwanted Child: The Soviet Union, the German Question and the Founding of the GDR (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

[142] Csaba Bekes, "Soviet Plans to Establish the Cominform in Early 1946: New Evidence from the Hungarian Archives," CWIHP Bulletin 10(March 1998): 135. These generalizations emerge from my reading of the many documents assembled in "Conversations With Stalin," CWIHP; Roberts, Stalin's Wars; Mark, "Revolution by Degree"; Zubok, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War; Holloway, Stalin and the Bomb; Mastny, Cold War and Soviet Insecurity; Pechatnov, "The Allies Are Pressing on You; Pechatnov, "The Soviet Union and the Outside World".

[143] The "Long Telegram" can be found in George F. Kennan, Memoirs, 1925-1950 (New York: Bantam, 1967), 583-98.

[144] W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946 (New York: Random House, 1975), 535-36.

[145] For U.S. policy in Germany, see especially Carolyn Eisenberg, Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany, 1944-1949 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 71-276.

[146] These generalizations about Truman's policies in 1945 and 1946 are elaborated upon in my book, Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1993), 25-181; for different interpretations, see Offner, Another Such Victory, 1-184; Marc Trachtenberg, A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 3-65; McCullough, Truman; Hamby, Man of the People; Deborah Welch Larson, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985); John L. Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-47 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

[147] Memorandum for the President, by McCloy, 26 April 1945, box 178, President's Secretary's File (PSF), Harry S. Truman Papers (HSTP), HSTL; Diary of Henry L. Stimson, 19 April 1945, Henry L. Stimson Papers, Yale University.

[148] Acheson Testimony, 12 June 1945, U.S. Senate, Committee on Banking and Currency, Bretton Woods Agreements , 79th Cong., 1st sess., (washingotn, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1945), 1-51, especially 19, 20, 21, 48-49.

[149] Quoted in Igor Lukes, "The Czech Road to Communism," in Naimark and Gibianskii, eds., Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 29; for an elaboration of this idea, see Abrams, Struggle for the Soul of the Nation.

[150] A. J. P. Taylor, "The European revolution," The Listener 34(22 November 1945): 576; see Judt, Postwar, 215-19.

[151] Adam Westoby, Communism Since World War II (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 14-15; Roberts,

"Ideology, Calculation, and Improvisation," 671; Abrams, Struggle for the Soul of the Nation, 9-38.

[152] Acheson testimony, 8 March 1945, U.S. Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, Bretton Woods Agreements, 1:35.

[153] Acheson testimony, 13 March 1946, U.S. Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, Anglo-American Financial Agreement, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), 306.

[154] "Statement by the President," 6 February 1946, PPP: HST, 1946, 106; Cabinet Minutes, January-March 1946, Connelly Papers, Box 1.

[155] Stimson to Truman, 16 May 1945, box 157, PSF, HSTP; Joseph Grew to Truman, 27 June 1945, Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Potsdam, 1: 267-80 (hereafter cited as FRUS); Central Intelligence Agency, "Review of the World Situation," 26 September 1947, box 203, PSF, HSTP.

[156] Memorandum, by Will Clayton, 5 March 1947, Frederick J. Dobney, ed., Selected Papers of Will Clayton (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 198.

[157] Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952 (New York: Signet, 1956), 124-25.

[158] "Special Message to the Congress," 12 March 1947, PPP: HST, 1947, 176-80.

[159] For Marshall's speech, see Department of State Bulletin, 16(15June 1947): 1159-60; Clayton to Acheson, 27 May 1947, FRUS, 1947, 3:230-32; Howard C. Petersen to Robert P. Patterson, 12 June 1947, box 8, general decimal file, Robert P. Patterson Papers, Record Group 107, National Archives (NA) .

[160] "Address on Foreign Economic Policy," 6 March 1947, PPP: HST, 1947, 170-71.

[161] "Special Message to the Congress," 19 December 1947, ibid., 516-17.

[162] "Radio and Television Address," 6 March 1952, ibid., 1952-1953, 194-95; also see "Special Message to the Congress," 6 March 1952, ibid., 189.

[163] Kennan, "Russia's National objectives," 10 April 1947, box 17, George F. Kennan Papers, Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

[164] Directive to Dwight D. Eisenhower, 26 July 1945, FRUS, Potsdam, 2: 1028-30; Jean Edward Smith, ed., The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay: Germany, 1945-1949 (2 vols., Bloomington, IN: Indiana University press, 1974), 1: 44.

[165] Memoranda, by John Foster Dulles, 26 February and 7 March 1947, box 31, John Foster Dulles Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University.

[166] Memorandum of Conversation, 15 April 1947, FRUS, 1947, 2: 339-44; Robert H. Van Meter, "Secretary of State Marshall, General Clay, and the Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers of 1947: A Response to Philip Zelikow," Diplomacy and Statecraft, 16(2005): 139-67.

[167] Meeting of the secretaries of state, war, and navy, 3 July 1947, box 3, safe file, Robert P. Patterson Papers, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, RG 107, NA.

[168] Minutes of a Visit to Generalissimo J.V. Stalin, by Czech delegation, 9 July 1947, in "Conversations With Stalin," 395-399, CWIHP; Geoffrey Roberts, "Moscow and the Marshall Plan: Politics, Ideology, and the Onset of

the Cold War," Europe-Asia 46(1994): 1371-85.

[169] For the quotation, see "Stenographic Record of a Speech by Comrade J.V. Stalin at a Special Session of the Politburo, 14 March 1948, in "Conversations With Stalin," 432, CWIHP; Mastny, Cold War and Soviet Insecurity, 23-46; Zubok and Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, 50-52, 104-8; Kramer, "Soviet Union and the Founding of the GDR," 1099-1102.

[170] "Stenographic Record," Stalin Speech, 14 March 1948, "Conversations with Stalin," 429, CWIHP.

[171] Record of a Meeting of Comrade I.V. Stalin with the Secretary of the CC French Communist Party Thorez, 18 November 1947, ibid., 403-5.

[172] Report of Milovan Djilas about a Secret Soviet-Bulgarian-Yugoslav Meeting, 10 February 1948, CWIHP Bulletin, 10(March 1998): 128-34.

[173] Stalin, "Foundations of Leninism," 110.

[174] "Stenographic Record," Stalin Speech, 14 March 1948, "Conversations with Stalin," 429-32, CWIHP.

[175] Memorandum by Chief of Staff, ND [July 1947], ABC 471.6 Atom (17 August 1945), section 6-A, American-British Conversations, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, RG 165, NA; also see Walter Millis, ed., The Forrestal Diaries (New York: Viking, 1951), 350-51.

[176] For Clayton's statement, see Dabney, Selected Papers, 208; for Marshall's views, see Marshall to Caffery, 26 May 1948, FRUS, 1948, 2:284.

[177] Marshall statement, in Cabinet Meeting, 23 July 1948, box 1, Connelly Papers; for Clay, see Smith, Clay Papers, 2: 708; for the views of Kennan and Bohlen, see FRUS, 1948, 3: 152-54, 157-58, 177, 186; Kennan to Lauris Norstad, 4 May 1948, box 33, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, RG 59, NA.

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[180] Truman, Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 128.

[181] Jonathan Bell, The Liberal State on Trial: The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004): 80.

[182] Ibid., 46-120; Richard M. Freeland, The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and Internal Security, 1946-48 (New York: New York University Press, 1985); Thomas J. Christensen, Useful Adversaries:Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobiliziation, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 49-69; Melvin Small, Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789-1994 (Baltimore, MD.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 84-86.

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[184] Richard Gid Powers, Not Without Honor: The History of American Anti-Communism (New York: Free Press, 1995), 217.

[185] Ibid., 223; Bell, Liberal State on Trial, 92.

[186] For Knowland's quotation, see Appendix to the Congressional Record, vol. 93, p. A4915; for Kennan's view, see Policy Planning Staff Paper No. 20, "Effect Upon the United States if the European Recovery Plan Is Not Adopted," Policy Planning Staff Papers, ed. By Anna Kasten Nelson (3 vols., New York: Garland, 1983), 2: 78-79; for Truman, see "Special Message to Congress," 6 March 1952, PPP: HST, 1952-53, 189.

[187] Ehrenburg, The War, 124; Merridale, Night of Stone, 213-14; Overy, Russia's War, 329.

[188] Donald Filtzer, Soviet Workers and Late Stalinism: Labour and the Restoration of the Stalinist System After World War II (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 46-47, 76; Kuromiya, Freedom and Terror in the Donbas, 300-8.

[189] Vladislav Zubok, "Limits of Empire: Stalin and the Lean Year of 1946," unpublished paper; for slightly different renditions of this conversation, see Kuromiya, Stalin, 177; Robert Service A History of Twentieth Century Russia (London: Penguin, 1997), 299.

[190] Burds, Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine; Kuromiya, Stalin, 174-80; Kuromiya, Freedom and Terror in the Donbas, 310-20; Swain, Between Stalin and Hitler.

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[194] Ree, Political Thought of Joseph Stalin, 282-83; Brandenberger, National Bolshevism.

[195] For the quotations, see Kuromiya, Stalin, 188; Service, Russia, 308; also see Volkogonov, Stalin, 531, 534; Zubok and Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War, 50-51, 104-8.

[196] For Stalin's negotiations with T.V. Soong, see the many documents in "Conversations with Stalin," 144-246, CWIHP; for Stalin's reflections on his own actions, see "Report of Milovan Djilas about a Secret Soviet-Bulgarian-Yugoslav Meeting," 10 February 1948, CWIHP Bulletin, 10(March 1998): 131; for Stalin and Mao, see S. N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, Xue Litai, Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War (Stanford, CA; Stanford University Press, 1993); Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, Mao: the Unknown Story (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 175-89, 281-92, 337-55; Michael J. Sheng, Battling western Imperialism: Mao, Stalin, and the United States (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Chen Jian, China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 66ff.;

[197] Shuguang Zhang and Jian Chen, Chinese Communist Policy and the Cold War in Asia: New Documentary Evidence, 1944-1950 (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 1996), 54; Ilya V. Gaiduk, Confronting Vietnam: Soviet Policy Toward the Indochina Conflict, 1954-1963 (Stanford, Ca.: and Washington, D.C.: Stanford University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2002), 3.

[198] Quoted in Ree, Political Thought of Joseph Stalin, 252.

[199] Record of the Meeting of Stalin and Thorez, 18 November 1947, "Conversations With Stalin," 403-6; also see Pons, "Stalin, Togliatti, and the Origins of the Cold War"; Judt, Postwar, 139-45.

[200] This is abundantly clear in the collection of documents, "Conversations with Stalin," CWIHP; also see Banac, Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 421-23, 437-440; Pons, "Stalin, Togliatti, and the Origins of the Cold War"; Iatrides, "Revolution or Self-Defense?"; for Stalin's relations with Mao, see citations in note 196 above.

[201] Banac, Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 439-440; "Report of Djilas," 10 February 1948, CWIHP Bulletin, 10(March 1998): 129-33; Leonid Gibianskii, "Stalin's Policy in Eastern Europe, the Cominform, and the First Split in the Soviet Bloc," 17-22, Paper Prepared for the Conference, "Stalin and the Cold War".

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[203] Leffler, Preponderance of Power, 182-286.

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