1988

Soviet-American relations and the origins of containment 1941-1946: The force of tradition

Anita Louise Coryell
The University of Montana

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5179

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1976

This is an unpublished manuscript in which copyright subsists. Any further reprinting of its contents must be approved by the author.

Mansfield Library
University of Montana
Date: 1988
SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND THE ORIGINS OF CONTAINMENT,
1941-1946: THE FORCE OF TRADITION

By

Anita Louise Coryell

B.A., Rutgers, The State University, 1974

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1988

Approved by:

[Signatures]

Chairman, Board of Examiners

Dean, Graduate School

Date

June 8, 1988
The role which ideology has played in the formation of Russian and American foreign policy was the impetus for this project. Soviet-American diplomacy during the period 1941 to 1946 became the focus of the study after several projects pointed to the role that ideology played in the relationship between Russia and America during the years 1945 to 1947. After discovering the role which ideology played, it became necessary to find the origins of such a role, as well as the felt necessity by each nation to implement ideology into the formation of its policy. The origins of each nation's ideology led to the discovery of traditions in the way each nation conducted its foreign relationships. These traditions go beyond ideology, although ideology is often a part of the tradition. After a close evaluation of each nation's history in the formation of foreign relationships, the tradition was identified. It was found that Russia, and later the Soviet Union, had a tradition of conventional European power politics; its policy during the war years was based on its own national interests and maintaining the global status quo in its favor. The American tradition was more complicated; although interested in preserving the global status quo in its favor, the American tradition also involved spreading justice and democracy throughout the world, thereby changing the status quo. The American tradition also involved convincing the American public to accept Washington's foreign policy decisions, doing whatever was necessary to gain approval. The American and Russian traditions proved to be incompatible during the years of the Grand Alliance. Roosevelt tried to bridge the gap between the two traditions, but he did not succeed. His successors were left with the problem of balancing the power of Europe and containing the Soviet Union in a way that was compatible with the American tradition. The origins of containment can be found in these two traditions and Roosevelt's attempt to bridge the gap between Soviet power politics and America's quest to assure its national interests through the establishment of democratic capitalism.
To mother and father,
who made it possible

To Steven and Ethel May,
who kept me going

And to Professor Skinner,
my educator
The tradition of all past generations weighs like an Alp upon the brain of the living.

-- Karl Marx
18th Brumaire (1852)

Tradition is a great retarding force, the vis inertiae of history.

-- Friedrich Engels
Socialism, Utopian and Scientific (1891)

The effigies and splendors of tradition are not meant to cramp the energies or the development of a vigorous and various nation. They are not meant to hold in mortmain the proper territory of human intelligence and righteous aspiration. They live and teach their lessons in our annals, they have their own worshippers and shrines, but the earth is not theirs nor the fulness thereof.

-- Lord Roseberry
Address at Aberdeen
5 November 1880
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One—The Traditions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Policies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Russian Tradition</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American Tradition</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reality of the Events</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two—The Crucial Years: 1941-1945</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalin's War Aims</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt's War Aims</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grand Alliance</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three—The Creators, 1945-1946</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truman</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalin</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennan</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four—Conclusion: &quot;If you want war, nourish a doctrine.&quot;</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other than the causes of World War I, there has been more literature written about the origins of the Cold War than any other period in history. The reasons why are as numerous as the writings themselves, but three come readily to my mind. First, the Soviet Union and the United States managed to remain allies in fairly good standing throughout the war, proving that the two nations had the capacity to cooperate when necessary. What broke up the coalition is one source of fascination for historians. Secondly, all nations must live with the Cold War and its aftermath—the arms race. An understanding of the causes of such a precarious situation is instrumental in rectifying or neutralizing the conflict. Lastly, the nature of the conflict is often thought of as ideological, and Americans have been led to believe that the democratic integrity of the United States, indeed the entire globe, is at stake if the Soviet Union succeeds in achieving any of its goals. For this reason, historians have felt compelled to either criticize or condone the foreign policy of America, placing the blame on either the United States for being too idealistic, or the Soviet Union for allowing its communistic doctrine to justify any means used to gain the end—ultimate control of the world, for the good of all mankind of course.

The part which ideology has played in the formation of both nations' foreign policy has held a fascination for me during my course of study. The Soviet Union admits it upholds a certain ideology—the
doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, and claims to proudly base all its policies, both foreign and domestic, on the determination to remain true to its professed creed and ambition—the establishment of a classless, communist society. What part has Marxism-Leninism actually played in Russia's foreign policy decisions, however, and to what extent does the Kremlin simply use the doctrine to mask its true motives?

Determining the role ideology has played in the formation of America's foreign policy is a bit more difficult. One man did not take a distinct philosophy and forge a new nation on its premises, as did Lenin. However, America is still a mythological nation to a certain extent, the home of the brave and the land of the free. United States policy makers have had to contend with the fable that every action America takes is for the sake of justice and liberty; to what extent did this idea affect the formation of America's foreign policy goals and to what extent has Washington been able to discard such ideals?

The search for the origins of the containment policy as it was finally penned in 1947 by Harry S. Truman's Doctrine and George F. Kennan's famous "X Article" did not begin with the ideologies of America and Russia. By first exploring the part which America's ideology played in the Cold War, and then coming to an understanding of Stalin's war aims and the reasons behind his goals, it became obvious that each nation had a distinct "tradition" in foreign policy, a tradition so integral to its decision-making process that it could not be avoided or ignored even if the policy makers were aware of its existence. Roosevelt was painfully aware of the tradition in American
foreign policy; Truman did not appear to be. Stalin, because he had to answer to no one, did not bother to concern himself with anything but his goals; indeed, that reality is a part of the Soviet tradition in foreign policy.

The paper took several turn-about as research proceeded. At first, it was thought the period examined would have to extend to 1949. It then became obvious that the origins of the policy lay somewhere between the eighteenth century and Roosevelt's death. It was still important to examine the years between Roosevelt's death and the Truman Doctrine, for the origins of containment could be seen in the actions and heard in the words of the men who succeeded FDR. The Russian tradition began as far back as the ninth century, but the age of Russian expansion and the Russian Revolution was the most closely examined. Consequently, the paper begins with a careful examination of how the tradition in each nation's foreign policy evolved, and then closely examines the period which planted the seeds of containment. The thesis is not about the policy of containment itself, and makes no attempt to discuss the actual policy, its consequences or attributes.

The writer felt certain, at first, that George Kennan's role would be indispensable. Research found a stumbling block in this premise, also. Kennan may have penned the word, but his writings did not achieve the kind of policy he wanted. The reason: the American tradition in foreign policy. With or without Kennan's contribution, Russia would have to be contained. Stalin's goals had much to do with the Russian tradition, as did the clarity with which he stated them. His clarity could not be dealt with in the terms ordained by America's
tradition in foreign relations.

In the end the author was pleased with the research, for it did not prove the ideas first held regarding the matter. Sources relied upon were the memoirs of the characters involved, their conversations with and about each other. Secondary sources were relied upon to establish the traditions in each nation's foreign policy, but chapters two and three attempted to dispense with secondary sources and turn to the memoirs of the foreign policy makers in each nation.
The Policies

Since the Soviet Union's stormy inception in 1917, the concept of a bi-polar world has existed in the foreign policies of America and Russia. Each country has wished to see the world molded in its respective political system, each claiming its system to be the harbinger of world peace and security. The Communists boasted of socialism as their economic base, maintaining its uniqueness in a world exploited by high-finance. America's Republic, however, was certain capitalism was the true expression of individualism and freedom.

There is more to the chasm, however, than two opposing political systems. Ivo J. Lederer made the observation that Russian relations with the outside world have always been notably unstable, and past generations have faced their own particular problems with Russia. As Cyril E. Black pointed out in one of his essays on Russian foreign policy objectives, Russia has always been a potential threat to Europe's balance of power by sheer size alone. Such a massive area could easily achieve world hegemony if it had the necessary strength and will. Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States in 1830. His observations led him to the conclusion that America and Russia held the fate of the globe in their hands, and this was years before communism had become a part of the Russian system. Tocqueville obviously recognized the dormant power latent in both Russia and the United
States, nations occupying two of the globe's largest continents, both rich in natural and economic resources.

There are at present two great nations in the world which seem to tend towards the same end, although they start from different points. I allude to the Russians and the Americans....Their starting point is different and their courses are not the same, yet each of them appears to be marked by the will of heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.

Throughout the despairing relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States, neither has trusted the other to share the vital resources and raw materials necessary to maintain power and hegemony in a world which places the utmost importance upon the two. Therefore there appears to be two diverse aspects of Soviet and American relations, and it is usually difficult to tell which one takes precedence when the policies are being made—ideology or the quest for economic and political power.

This is why the account of how the two foremost industrially powerful nations on earth came to be adversaries is one of convolusion, of economic and national security interests shrouded in ideology and masked by noble and lofty ideals. A truly objective eye would soon tire of trying to discern the truth of the story, of exactly what happened in the years following the Bolshevik Revolution to produce a world engaged in Russia's and America's Cold War. The foreign policies of these two nations have often been directed against each other and there has been little room in the past for compromise in their dichotomous systems.

The officially stated foreign policy of the Soviet Union is to stop aggressors and ensure the peace and independence of the world,
which is constantly being threatened by high-finance capitalists seeking to exploit weaker nations and hence thwart their liberation from the yoke of low wages and poverty. America is the world's biggest exploiter, "who now plays the role of world policeman aiming to strangle any liberation movement in any part of the globe." Interestingly, there are several American historians who would agree with the Soviet assessment of America's foreign policy goals.

It is more difficult to discern a succinct and definitive foreign policy for the United States. Unlike the Soviet Union, which touts an officially stated foreign policy commensurate with Communist Party rhetoric, American policy has developed gradually over the years according to historical dictates. Since World War II it has been not only to contain communism, which threatens the world with censorship, totalitarianism, and the curtailment of basic civil and political liberties integral to free societies, but also to "change the nature of the Soviet System itself." America's foreign policy goals have been explicitly based on the principle of self-determination for all nations ever since 1941 when the Atlantic Charter was penned. American foreign policy makers have always felt the political system of the Soviet Union to be the antithesis of this principle. In 1985, George Schultz told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "American foreign policy is driven by positive goals—peace, democracy, liberty, and human rights...These are not Soviet goals."

Because America's foreign policy is to contain communism, it is essential to understand the development and aims of Russia's foreign policy from 1917 to 1941. It was during these years that
Marxist-Leninist ideology was forced to succumb to the global realities of the 1920's and '30's. Expediency supplanted ideology during this time, but it did not become a substitute for it. Furthermore, one can never understand the obstinancy of the United States to contain communism unless America's perceptions of Soviet foreign policy are understood. Perhaps this is why Donald Bishop, author of a two-volume study on Soviet foreign policy, wrote that "the decisions of Soviet leaders affect us more than the decisions of our own people."\(^{10}\)

The reality of Soviet foreign policy, however, if it can be found, may be quite different from America's perception of it, or what America claims its perception to be. Moscow officially claims to adhere to the Marxist dialectic, and believes capitalism's demise is inherent within the system itself. Therefore, war or territorial aggrandizement is not necessary to bring down capitalistic nations: they will simply fall.\(^{11}\)

In the years directly following World War II, several American foreign policy makers discounted the official party-line and instead chose to believe communist expansion to be a goal of the Soviet Union.\(^{12}\) Stalin's stated purpose for wanting to extend his western frontier, to protect his badgered nation against future invasion, was not accepted either. A crucial question asked by Moscow at the time, is whether the United States truly believed Russia was aggressively planning to expand its communist ideology to encircle the globe, or if it simply claimed to believe that in order to protect its own national interests, whatever they were, at the cost of Soviet friendship. As Stalin said when the Truman Doctrine was issued: "The cry of saving Greece and Turkey from the expansion of the so-called 'totalitarian states' is not
new. Hitler used to refer to the Bolsheviks when he wanted to open the road for his own conquests.”

And what of Moscow's perception of American foreign policy? Capitalistic encirclement of the globe is something to fear if a nation is not capitalistic, but is that actually America's intention? The Soviet Union does not view containment as a defensive policy; it is instead a mask to cover up an offensive policy designed to export capitalistic exploitation to all parts of the world in order to achieve the optimum amount of economic power possible for the United States.

If the United States foreign policy of containment was determined by imperialistic self-interests as the Soviets claimed, how does one go about proving that, especially if American foreign policy makers state otherwise? By the same token, if Washington chose to believe Soviet foreign policy goals were not what Moscow purported them to be, where is the basis for mutual cooperation? There comes a time when truth and reality merge with ideology and perception. In fact, it may not be possible at all to derive the true motives which formulated the foreign policies of the two, newly endowed superpowers in the crucial years, 1941-1946. All that can be seen are the results.

The key point to remember about each nation's foreign policy is that both claimed to be striving for world peace, true democracy and egalitarian values. How is it possible both powers could profess to offer the only viable political system for attaining these goals when the systems were so dichotomous? The question, like the answer, is ambivalent because the truth in this story is not objective, nor can it be. It is opaque, obscure, subject to years, even centuries, of
historical traditions, circumstances and attitudes. The studies undertaken to explore these historical traditions are voluminous, and they have their place and importance in assessing what happened to produce two foreign policies so much at odds with each other that they threaten the peace of the world. More than anything else, an understanding of the traditions and circumstances that helped to shape these nations' ideologies and ultimately their foreign policies is imperative in establishing a rapport and empathy between the two.

The Russian Tradition: "We shall turn to you our alien
Asiatic snout."

In 1961 Theodore Von Laue wrote an article for a Yale Conference convened to explore the problems of a century of Russian/Soviet foreign policy. According to Von Laue, Russia has always felt a compulsion to compare itself with the West; and the deepest motivation for forming foreign policy has come from this "evaluation," and not from the internal conditions of the state itself. To understand this contest between Russia and the West, one needs to go back in time. How far back is a matter of interpretation and thoroughness. Louis J. Halle's The Cold War As History goes as far back as the ninth century. Seeing an abundance of continuity and little change over the centuries, Halle simplistically states:

Fear, rather than ambition, is the principal reason for the organization and expansion of the Russian society. If all my ancestors for ten centuries had died violent deaths at the hands of their neighbors, it is quite likely that I would have been brought up from childhood to be suspicious and hostile toward my neighbors.
This is quite a generalization, and one must be careful not to put too much credence in pat generalizations that span centuries, for they can too easily become explanations for complex situations. It is true, though, that Russia's history has brought about a peculiar xenophobia, especially of the West.

The single, most pervasive reason for Russia's history to have developed as it did was its geography. Over the years historians have debated Russia's geographical status—was it part of Europe or Asia? According to historian Robert Byrnes, geographically Russia has always been in the West, but she has never been a part of it. To understand the logic of his reasoning, it is necessary to go back to the ninth century; and although it may seem extreme to traverse ten centuries to understand a situation in 1944, Russian history developed differently than the West's and the nation became locked into an alien political system feared and abhored by the "free" world.

The vast European plain to where the Slavic peoples migrated in the eighth century was void of natural, protective boundaries. Tibor Szamuely, author of The Russian Tradition, writes that the area was "worlds apart from that of western and central Europe, a vast, unbroken, unchanging and unending plain." This plain, or the southern steppe, is the one region where arable soil can be found on the huge Russian landmass. The steppe stretches from Kiev south to the Black Sea, then moves eastwardly, declining in width as it expands toward Siberia. This area of a quarter billion acres is now the center of Soviet agriculture.

The Slavs, though, were not to know the bounty of the steppe until
the end of the sixteenth century. Lacking the protection of seas and mountains, the population residing on the steppe was constantly subjected to invasion and pillaging by nomadic tribes seeking to gain control of the fertile area. Szamuely wrote of the invasions, "of which the length, intensity and ferocity has no parallel in the annals of any other nation." Each invasion sent the Slavs fleeing in fear from the steppe into the formidable forest of northeastern Europe, near the region where a small, insignificant ostrog named Moscow was located on the Moskva River. Moscow, well inside the forest's interior, offered wonderful protection to an already xenophobic population, conditioned by centuries of incursion. It was here that Russia grew up—in a bleak forest situated on the same latitude as Canada, in a climate barely able to support life, far away from the thriving cosmopolitan centers to the south and west.

The most definitive blow to the steppe would come from the Mongol invasion of 1237-1240. Any Slavs remaining on the plain fled northward, leaving the rich Ukraine area to the Tartar control of the Golden Horde. Their conquest would last 250 years, depriving the Russ, as the Slavs were sometimes called, of the light of Western advancements as they were being made.

The cultural contributions the Mongols made to the population they dominated were, on the other hand, nominal. The Mongols interfered little with everyday Russian life. They disliked the confinement of the forest and stayed out of it.

How much influence the Mongols had upon the Russ remains a controversial issue among historians. Although they interfered little
in everyday life, Szamuely writes that "The infiltration of Russian society by Mongol concepts and practices was a gradual and insidious process that covered a long period of time."²¹ Nicholas Riasanovsky, however, stresses that caution must be used when assessing the Mongolian impact on Russia. Their primary interest was only in extracting tribute, "and they were perfectly willing to leave the Russians to their own ways."²² It is possible over the years that the Mongols taught the Russ, through example, what was eventually utilized to throw off the yoke of the Golden Horde: absolute, centralized autocratic rule and unqualified submission to the state. According to Szamuely, the Tartars had provided this kind of paradigm to the Russians, and they learned it well.²³ One thing is certain: a highly centralized state and autocratic ruler finally consolidated Russia, ending the appanage period and throwing off the Mongol rule.²⁴

Whatever its source, the Russian people experienced state domination and subjugation while the rest of Europe became immersed in the concepts of the Magna Carta, the contractual partnership characteristic of the medieval feudal system, and the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Russian historian Kliuchevsky wrote:

If one thinks of the amount of time and the material and spiritual forces consumed in this wearying, painful pursuit of the cunning steppe predator, one can hardly ask what the people of Eastern Europe were doing while Western Europe was achieving its triumphs in industry, commerce, in social life, in the arts and the sciences.²⁵

Instead of learning of the liberal political systems much of Western Europe would adopt in the centuries to come, Russia learned of a peculiar state social system, where all classes were utilized to serve
the state for the purposes of defense against the alien invader.

The Tartar Khans continued to penetrate the northern regions for centuries, to capture and enslave the population. "Year after year, an unending procession of young Russians disappeared into the Crimea." 26 Securing the northern region from Tartar incursion and closing the southern steppe to invaders became a priority of the Russian state well into the eighteenth century. Muscovy, in order to combat the unrelenting invasions, had to become, out of necessity, a highly centralized state, well-organized and controlled from above. Economic resources, what little were left after the Mongol Khanates had extracted their purse, had to be collected and utilized for the purpose of defeating the Golden Horde. This objective was the only priority, turning Russia into a military state. Halle compares this aspect of Russia's development with America's:

The United States, expanding over a rich and empty continent, could afford the luxury of democratic self-rule, of individualism, of free enterprise. The whole Russian society, by contrast, had to be organized for continuous military defense. Its government had to be in a position of total control, so that it could maneuver freely, and so that it could command the forces necessary for the vital defense of the besieged and embattled society. 27

Kliuchevsky had this to say: "The Muscovite state, in the name of the common welfare, took into its full control all the energies and resources of society, leaving no scope for the private interests of individuals or of classes." 28

In 1550, Ivan the Terrible destroyed the large Khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan and annexed their territory into Muscovy. This cleared the way for Russia to begin expanding into the more fertile lands to
the south. Beyond Kazan lay Siberia. Russia began its expansion, but according to Halle it was a "peculiar" kind of expansion, done out of fear. Without natural boundaries, the only protection was to spread out as far as possible, to use space as a defense.

The danger of invasion, however, came not only from the south and east, but from the west as well. In the thirteenth century major incursions came from Europe. The Holy Crusades brought the Germanic Teutonic Knights, a formidable foe who swept eastward into the Baltic area. In 1239 the Germans advanced with the Finns as their allies, and in 1240 the Swedes invaded. These penetrations were only the beginning of a continuous and ominous onslaught from the west and northwest. In the early part of the seventeenth century Poland invaded, and for two years occupied Moscow. The Swedes became involved in this dispute as well, and would attack again in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Peter the Great finally subdued them in 1709. The invasions from the west and northwest left a more indelible fear in the Russians than had the Mongol occupation. These assaults, more than any other single event or circumstance, influenced the development of Russian foreign policy in subsequent years.

Cyril Black maintains the Baltic frontier has been the scene of Russia's longest and most significant political turmoil. Unprotected by natural boundaries, the quest to secure this borderland has spanned two centuries and resulted in the bitter circumstances that precipitated America's containment policy and the Cold War. In 1709 Peter the Great mounted a successful campaign to annex the Ukraine into the empire. By 1795 the western frontier had been conquered. In 1815
with the defeat of Napoleon Russia moved farther into Poland, and in spite of several rebellions the eastern portion of Poland remained a part of the Russian empire until World War I. At that time Lenin's separate peace with Germany resulted in several heavy losses for the young Soviet state, including the entire Ukraine and the Baltic region. Although the Treaty of Versailles restored most of the Ukraine to the Bolsheviks, it contained many anti-Bolshevik points as well, weakening Russia even further and liberating the Baltic frontier. Finland was made a separate state, as was Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. New states were created, carved mostly from the destroyed Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires—Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Bulgaria and Rumania were enlarged. Poland was made a sovereign nation, the first time in over 100 years. This created a barrier, a series of buffer states, preventing Russia from expanding and shutting her off from the West. The destruction of this 'cordon sanitaire' would become the driving principle behind Stalin's diplomacy during the Second World War; never again, he vowed, would Germany be able to march through those hostile buffer states. Stalin succeeded in securing his war aims, and the Russian empire once more came to include the frontier which borders Western Europe.

Louis Halle is tempted to discuss Russia's expansion in terms of geopolitics and a xenophobic fear of the West. This approach is far too simple, for imperialistic Russia also extended eastward, into Siberia and eventually Japan and Manchuria, using the same imperialistic methods practiced by Britain, France and America in the nineteenth century. Historian Hugh Seton-Watson writes:
The Russian record is neither better nor worse than the others. Russian expansion in the Volga valley has its parallels in the Spanish reconquista, the absorption of the Ukraine in the French absorption of Burgundy and Lorraine, and the colonisation of Siberia in the colonisation of North America. Indeed the Russo-Japanese war share with the Anglo-Boer war the distinction of more nearly approaching the Marxist model of an imperialistic war undertaken for economic motives than any other example in history. 

Lenin denounced imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. Yet the notion of national self-determination, so integral to the abolition of imperialistic colonies, became something which the young Bolsheviks expounded in theory only, not practice. Lenin seemed to tread the Marxist path with practical feet, and he succumbed to a more traditional foreign policy which had Russia's best national interests at heart. He made Joseph Stalin Commissar of Nationalities, and in 1918 Stalin told the Third All-Russian Congress that the principle of self-determination must be an instrument in the struggle for socialism and must be subordinated to the principle of socialism. No national republic could be expected to secede from the union. Stalin never wavered from this approach to Marxist-Leninist foreign policy, creating a blatant paradox within the Soviet tradition of foreign policy. It was one thing to condemn the West's imperialistic policies and call them exploitative; it would be yet another to allow national self-determination in the Soviet empire if such a practice threatened the power base of the newly-formed U.S.S.R.

This paradox is evident throughout the study of Russian history. Denouncement of Western culture and political systems has been essential to the survival of this backward nation, so obviously an anomaly when compared to Western Europe and the U.S. Yet emulation of
the West has also been necessary in order for Russia to compete with
the industrially superior nations of the world. Nowhere is this
paradox, the 'leitmotif' of Russia, more evident than in the history of
the Russian revolutionary movement. To modernize in the tradition of
the West would be a painful and embarrassing admission of the stagnant
conditions of the culture and society. There were those able to admit
to such faults, able to rebuke every Russian institution and tradition
as damnable and not worth saving. Others, though, became adamant in
their defense of Russia's uniqueness, seeing it as separate from and
desirable over the decadent West. In the end this attitude prevailed;
Russia would not become a liberal, Westernized nation, joining in the
democracies of Europe; instead it would remain different and apart, as
it had throughout its history.

The Russian reform movement had a difficult time with this
dilemma, caught as it was between the best way to change a battered,
backward nation: imitate those in the West who had already progressed,
or build on a tradition which already existed. For those who opted for
the latter, industrialization and the rising new proletariat class were
quickly changing the character of the mir, the pseudo-communal farm
which had been an integral part of medieval Russia. Many in the
revolutionary movement looked upon the mir as virtuous, a phenomenon
that made socialism natural in Russia, setting it off from the corrupt
West. These revolutionaries wanted to deny the industrialization of
their country, which prophesied of the death of the commune. Others
knew industrialization had come to Russia to stay.

Among these were the Marxists, who accepted modernity and
technology as positive forces. Although Marx accepted the industrialization process the West had undergone, he did not accept the way it had all turned out—in favor of the capitalists who exploited the working class in their quest for profit. He advocated socialism, a society where the working class controlled the means of production and hence the profits of industrialization. With all sharing equally in the spoils of manufacturing, class rivalry would disappear, to be supplanted by communism. What could be more natural for a nation which already had the tradition of the socialistic mir? Furthermore, the Marxist theory pegged the West as corrupt and greedy, and this greatly appealed to the small band of revolutionaries who extolled their nation and resented living in the West's shadow.

Marx provided a way out of the Russian revolutionary dilemma, a way to catapult a backward and inferior nation into the modern world without adopting the political institutions and culture of the West. The class struggle of Marx gave the young revolutionaries a chance to embody their fears of the outside world into an ideology which would eventually exclude all other political systems from the face of the earth; all threats would disappear, utopia would abound—and Russia's uniqueness would be preserved.

But the utopia Marx envisioned was subject to historical processes which he called the dialectic. Before a classless society could prevail, capitalism, industrialization and the proletariat had to be firmly established. The working class had to be the largest segment of the population, well versed in how to run a modern, technical society. How else could the workers wrest control of the means of production and
overcome the bourgeois capitalists with socialism? Clearly, Russia had not evolved to this point; even as late as 1917, it was still 85% agrarian. The truly orthodox Marxists like George Plekhanov and Rosa Luxemburg adamantly felt that Russia needed to wait, to allow the dialectic to take its course.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, however, did not want to wait. His desire for revolution was obsessive, his loathing of the bourgeois capitalists unprecedented. The struggle between the worker and the capitalists was viewed scientifically by Marx, a logical and necessary development. But Lenin attacked the capitalistic elements of the world ferociously. One need only read Lenin's own words to gain an insight into the fierce dedication of the Soviet Union toward an anti-capitalistic-imperialistic ideology and an ever-present xenophobia which pits capitalism against socialism. Written shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution, the attitude present in these words, more than any other, has been Lenin's legacy to Soviet foreign policy:

The hangers-on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described socialism as a uniform routine, monotonous and drab barrack system. The lackeys of the moneybags, the lickspittles of the exploiters—Messieurs, the bourgeois intellectuals—used socialism as a bogey to "frighten the people, who, precisely under capitalism, were doomed to penal servitude and the barracks, to arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of dire poverty and semi-stravation."

In 1901-1902, Lenin put forth his doctrine of revolution in "What is to be Done?" Feeling as he did that the working class was inadequate and too spontaneous, Lenin feared they would fall prey to the influence of the bourgeoisie, content with achieving better working conditions and materialistic goods. Because the workers could not be trusted to
turn to socialism on their own, an elite party would have to nurse the workers along, educating them to social consciousness. This elite group was an updating of Marx's "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," and its concept split the Social Democratic Party into the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, the former being the orthodox Marxists. The party, the vanguard of the proletariat, made it possible to 'leapfrog' the bourgeois revolution which the West had undergone.

Lenin's "What is to be Done" was quite in keeping with the Russian spirit. It allowed Russia to modernize and revolutionize, yet the process advocated was far removed from the route the West had taken. Lenin's elite vanguard, the party, or, more precisely its Central Committee, produced the same kind of absolutism which had prevailed in Russia for centuries. As Rosa Luxumburg argued, there was nothing revolutionary about it:

In Lenin's over-anxious desire to establish the guardianship of an omniscient and omnipotent Central Committee... we recognize the symptom of the same subjectivism that has already played more than one trick on socialist thinking in Russia.... Knocked to the ground, almost reduced to dust by Russian absolutism, the 'ego' takes revenge by turning to revolutionary activity. In the shape of a committee of conspirators, in the name of a non-existent Will of the People, it seats itself on a kind of throne and proclaims it is all-powerful. But the 'object' proves to be the stronger. The knout is triumphant, for tsarist might seems to be the 'legitimate' expression of history.34

"What is to be Done" was written in 1902, when the possibility of revolution was an unrealistic dream in the hearts of a very few. By 1917, however, World War I had drastically altered the internal situation within Russia. Lenin recognized the war as an opportunity—a chance to bring revolution to the world, with Russia the vanguard.
Calling World War I an imperialistic, capitalistic war, Lenin's promise of peace to a weary, hungry population gained the Bolsheviks the votes they needed in the Soviet to wrest power from a dying provisional government. These war cries were anti-Western, and Von Laue writes how the war was the turning point in Russian foreign relations: it would be the last humiliation suffered at the hands of the West for the backward Russian nation. The Bolshevik Revolution was a "breakthrough of the deepest ambitions of the Russian ego," Von Laue wrote. Rosa Luxemburg would have agreed. According to Von Laue, with the Bolshevik's publication of the secret treaties connected with the war, the repudiation of the Tsar's war debts, and the decision to conclude a separate peace with Germany, the break with the West was final and conclusive. It was done with hostility and no regrets, as Lenin's own words demonstrate in the following excerpt, taken from "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," written in 1917:

The tens of millions of dead and maimed left by the war—a war to decide whether the British or German group of financial plunderers is to receive the most booty—and those "peace treaties," are with unprecedented rapidity opening the eyes of the millions and tens of millions of people who are downtrodden, oppressed, deceived and duped by the bourgeoisie. Thus out of the universal ruin caused by war a world-wide revolutionary crisis is arising which, however prolonged and arduous its stages may be, cannot end otherwise than in a proletarian revolution.

Lenin planted the seeds for a bipolar world in these words. Writing in answer to an indignant West that was angered over Lenin's decision to make a separate peace with Germany, poet Aleksandr Blok told the Europeans: "We shall turn to you our Asiatic snout!"

Lenin's "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," is the
first official treatise written on Soviet foreign policy. It pits the socialist system against capitalism, branding the latter inferior and bound to ruin in time. Written in early 1917, the theoretical work damned the capitalistic states as warmongers. Colonialism was at its peak in the early decades of the twentieth century. With the world completely divided into economic spheres of influence, Lenin wrote that the only recourse left to the capitalistic nations was to repartition their spheres through war. Lenin's anti-capitalistic doctrine, however, could not be translated into state policy—the new communist nation was simply too weak. The Soviet leader would have liked to sever all relations with the West and infiltrate its bourgeois systems with communist propaganda and party leaders. With the world's workers so war-weary, instigating a revolution would be easy. It soon became evident, however, that Russia could not afford to abandon the more affluent West.

There was no world-wide socialist revolution, and by 20 January 1918, Lenin knew he could not count on Europe to help out with the consolidation of his own revolution in Russia. Addressing the party on the question of a separate peace with Germany, Lenin wrote that "a certain amount of time, not less than several months at least, will be necessary, during which the hands of the Socialist Government must be absolutely free for the job of vanquishing the bourgeoisie in our own country first..."40 In a speech delivered 14 May 1918, Lenin spoke of the hostility of the capitalistic nations, which he was sure would come against the new Soviet state once they no longer had the war to occupy their time: "...our Socialist Republic remains, for the time being, an
The world situation had not turned out the way Lenin and the Bolsheviks had hoped; and there was nothing left to do but change course, try to coexist, in a world correctly perceived as hostile by a small band of revolutionaries who had wanted it that way. Now, it was time to "retreat," as Lenin called it. 42 Lenin recognized what the orthodox Marxists had said all along: Russia had not been ready for a socialist revolution—the industrial base had been too small, the agrarian population too large. This realization marked for the Bolsheviks a grave and unpleasant departure in foreign relations, and the beginning of the concept of "socialism in one country."

Lenin's post-1917 policy in foreign relations is based on this recognition. He judiciously advocated cooperating with the capitalistic nations simply because he needed them. Practicality was one of Lenin's virtues, as well as a willingness to do whatever was necessary to save his revolution. Lenin's foreign policy became one of expediency. In December 1920 he wrote:

While we stand alone and the capitalist world is strong, our foreign policy consists on the one hand, in our having to utilise disagreements (to vanquish all the imperialist powers would, of course, be a most pleasant thing, but for a fairly long time we shall not be in a position to do so... On the other hand, our existence depends on the presence of radical differences between the imperialist powers...

Lenin was most concerned with aligning Russia with Western nations in order to keep them from coming against the Soviet state, beginning with Germany, which had already been ostracized by the West as a result of World War I. Lenin admitted the "concessions" to the capitalists were
degrading to a nation so proud of its socialist revolution, the one event which had set it apart from the West. Yet it was, at the time, the only way. "It is our task," Lenin wrote, "to secure for Russia the necessary machinery and funds for the restoration of the economy; when we have obtained that, we shall stand so firmly on our own feet that no capitalist enemies can overawe us." 44

Stalin continued in this mindset—setting out to make Russia so strong no nation, capitalistic or otherwise, could consume it. It is interesting, and very important to remember, how clearly these terms were presented as rapprochement was negotiated between the West and the Soviets in the years following the revolution. As Adam Ulam pointed out, Russia entered into the community of nations on her own terms—as the world-wide center for social revolution, dedicated to the destruction of capitalism. 45 As the Western nations began formal recognition of the Soviet Union, beginning with England in 1922, and as trade opened up, there was never any pretense on the part of Russia as to just what its ambitions entailed.

Ulam wrote that the Treaty of Brest-Litvosk marked the end of the age of innocence for the young Bolsheviks: "They went into the negotiations as world revolutionaries; they emerged as men solicitous mainly about their own state and power." 46 To the present day the Soviet state's insistence that the U.S.S.R. is a peaceful nation is based on the Treaty of Brest-Litvosk and the Bolsheviks' futile attempts in late 1917 to negotiate a peace with the belligerents. 47 Their assertion is quite right; but it was the failure of the world revolution which motivated the Soviet state to adopt a policy of
co-existence with the bourgeois enemy. This is not denied by the officially stated foreign policy of the Soviet Union. Nikolai V. Sivachev, co-author of the Moscow publication, *Russia and the United States*, explained how Lenin's foreign policy put forth the notion that the Soviet Union must peacefully coexist, as revolution in other nations might not happen for quite some time. "This has been our foreign policy ever since," wrote Sivachev. Other nations have not wanted to co-exist with Russia, maintains Sivachev, because they think the Soviet Union is stirring up world revolution and sedition within their political parties.

The fundamental problem in foreign policy for the Soviet nation has been to consolidate the victory of Socialism, but our chief foreign policy goal has nothing to do with stirring up "world revolution"... Revolution results in the contradictions of capitalism and is not something introduced from the outside.

This is a strange statement, indeed, coming from a country whose revolution was not borne from the "inner contradictions of capitalism" at all.

The Russian Revolution was borne from a desire to modernize, to transform a backward and corrupt nation—but in a way that was different from the West and peculiar to Russia alone. The insistence that Russia be different was because Russia was different, not a part of Western Europe in the ideological sense. The nationalistic pride in the Russian tradition, the Russian ego of which Lenin was such an example, saw no reason to adopt Western institutions or doctrines for a nation which felt it had its own contribution to make to the modern world. Ironically, the system Russia finally did adopt to help
catapult it into the modern world came from the West. Yet Marxism was the antipathy of the Western society which the triumphant Russian revolutionaries had grown to abhor. For this reason it was acceptable to embrace Marxism. The acceptance of Marx demonstrates so well the 'leitmotif' of Russian history, the resentment of the West eclipsed by a dependency on it.

The Russian Revolution occurred when the tides of history were changing; indeed, the revolution happened in part because of these tumultuous times. Part of what was changing so drastically was Europe. World War I had destroyed the European empires, both physically and ideologically. No longer would Europe be the vanguard of the world, the center of commerce, the determiner of global politics. Something new was afoot, stirring in the imagination of humanity.

Lenin had issued a challenge to the Western world which would not go unheeded. In the eyes of Woodrow Wilson, the very backbone of America stood on the chopping block: capitalism and the free enterprise system. He felt compelled to address Lenin's denouncement of the Western world with his own utopia, and both Wilson and Lenin purported to be the bearers of a new order superior to "old-world Europeanism"--with its spheres of influence and secret diplomacy. Lenin and Wilson, Russia and America, were beginning to fulfill the prophecy made by Toqueville so long ago. Unfortunately their spiritual ideas were in conflict, competing for the loyalties of the world.50

The American Tradition: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again."
According to the thesis of Robert Dalleck, author of *The American Style of Foreign Policy*, Wilson's acceptance of Lenin's challenge was very much in keeping with an established American attitude toward the world and the role America was to play in foreign affairs. Dalleck saw America's participation in foreign affairs before 1945 as erratic, an extension of domestic policy and emotions brought about by the need for reform and a firm assurance that democracy will always be a part of American life. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, written in 1918 to guide the world into peace without power politics, were the conscience of America speaking; but they had little to do with the reality of world politics or the situation in which the world found itself in 1917.

When discussing the American tradition, however, one must be very careful to make a distinction between the opinion of the American people as a collective body and the attitude of the foreign policy makers themselves. Unlike a despotic Russian or Soviet leader, an American president has to take public sentiment into account while still making decisions in the best national interest. While it may be true that the Fourteen Points had little to do with the reality of the world situation in 1917, Wilson's decision to enter World War I, when it was finally made, was based on very hard-core realism. In spite of a pretense to fight the war for universalist goals, the reality of the situation showed Germany about to upset the balance of European power, thereby threatening United States interests and security. Wilson knew this; and he knew he had to restore Europe to a balance favorable to America's economic and political goals. No doubt he believed in the
League of Nations: it was the best political system capable of assuring America's continued growth and power in a precarious world.

A careful study of American foreign policy will expose many myths. Isolationism, for one, has never really existed as an official foreign policy, although the American people may have perceived it as such throughout the years. America has tried to remain independent of European affairs, and to do so was sound advice offered by George Washington in his Farewell Address. Our independence, though, was only possible as long as Europe remained politically balanced and free from domination from any one force. An aggressor nation threatened the freedom of the seas as well as commerce and economic prosperity for all, putting America's national interests at risk. Such a situation would never be tolerated, nor was it. Ultimately, the United States pursued a policy of involvement with Europe whenever the circumstances threatened world stability. It did, however, often have a difficult time convincing the American public that such a threat was detrimental to United States' interests, both political and economic.

According to Felix Gilbert, author of To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy, the reason for such difficulty lies in America's early history. Like Russia, the United States also has a past that has nurtured its outlook of the world. From its inception, there has been a contradiction inherent in this outlook, largely based on the two main reasons why Europeans moved to the North American continent in the first place. One reason was materialistic, to seek financial reward and gain; the other was spiritual, to establish a more perfect society than the warring Europe that was left
behind. The two motives were contentious, as were the policies needed to attain such goals. Financial gain necessarily required trade and relations with the Continent; creating a different kind of world, however, called for close scrutiny of the Old World and separation from it. These two goals, the one material and the other spiritual, are an integral part of the American personality. Over the years they have resulted in foreign policy problems which the United States has never totally solved.

The problems exist mainly because America's policy makers have never been able to separate the two goals, or to honestly prioritize one over the other. Instead, they have pursued economic goals, or goals of national self-interest, under the guise of pursuing a better world for mankind. Often, the two were thought to be the same. Thomas Paine thought so. "We have it in our power to begin the world over again," he wrote in Common Sense, the pamphlet most historians agree is exclusively responsible for convincing the colonies to seek independence from Britain. The new world he envisioned, though, included free ports to serve the commercial interests of all nations. America was to take the lead in establishing these free ports. The insular position of the North American continent was ideal for such a revolutionary concept. Renunciation of all foreign political alliances was necessary in order to establish such free and unbiased trade. Yet in 1776, protection by Britain's maritime fleet was needed to protect the open seas, something Paine did not seem to consider. A threat to Europe's balance of power became a threat to Britain's maritime power—and a threat to the open seas meant a threat to America's vision
of a new, more spiritual world.

As America's economy grew and prospered, it is easy to see why the two goals became so entangled. Alexander Hamilton wrote George Washington's Farewell Address. It called for a continuance of all trade relations, and an avoidance of alliances — but the two were often in contention: commercial interests were threatened by political alliances. This policy was further complicated when Washington imposed a moral obligation upon this country to be an example to the rest of the world of justice, enlightenment and virtue. The "exaltation" of America's station was penned from the beginning, and this superiority has stuck:

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony...It will be worthy of a free, enlightened and at no distant period of a great nation to give mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence.

James Monroe recognized the impracticality of attempting to follow a foreign policy which encouraged international trade while discouraging political alliances. The Monroe Doctrine, written 24 years after Washington's address, made it clear the United States would not condone or support any interference from European powers to colonize "any portion of this hemisphere." While the doctrine was defensive and lacked military support at the time, it was characterized as "the best guardian of a nation with a great continental expansion before it..." by scholar George Dangerfield. He also claimed it committed the United States to be a leader in world politics, promising to stand by any country in this hemisphere seeking independence. Such
a doctrine would assure the economic, political and ideological supremacy of America in its 'sphere of influence', even though the American people disliked the term. Britain's maritime hegemony, by the way, is what made the Monroe Doctrine possible, another reason why the United States would have to involve itself in European affairs if the situation called for it. By 1823 Europe's future was America's future, regardless of any implied policy that the U.S. should not become entangled in political relationships.

The Spanish-American war tested the Monroe Doctrine. The American people went to war to achieve Cuban independence from the Spanish 'brutes'; they equated the situation with their own quest for independence, and the war had a romantic impact on the nation. Acquiring the Philippines, however, was not part of the original war aims for which Americans perceived the war was being fought, nor was the blatant acquisition of Hawaii and Puerto Rico. A debate within the Senate broke out as a result of America's new imperialistic course in foreign affairs. The main tenet of the debate used by pro-imperialists promulgated the theory of the white man's burden, giving full responsibility to the civilized, Christian world to educate the rest of the world's heathen peoples. These shades of Social Darwinism were destined to become a part of America's foreign policy as it was officially stated. They would show up in Wilson's war aims, Truman's Doctrine, and John F. Kennedy's inaugural address.

While the debate ensued, the question of overseas economic expansion was being egged on by the Industrial Revolution. America's 'other side', the quest for financial gain, was exposed by the
Spanish-American War. Worried that the United States economy would stagnate if it was not expanded, industrialists used the debate over imperialism to develop a policy of open economic trade, one of Thomas Paine's principles. Secretary of State John Hay's Open Door Notes of 1899 and 1900 proposed that all nations have an equal opportunity for trade with China. Nervous that China's apparent weakness would be taken advantage of by Russia, Japan and France, which were beginning to establish spheres of influence throughout the area, the United States sought an open trade market for all nations regarding China.

Businessmen greeted the new expansionist policy positively. And ideological purists like William Jennings Bryan were also pleased. Not only did it mean more for the economy, but America was doing its part to preserve and foster the independence of others, as stated it should in the Monroe Doctrine.

The Open Door Notes embodied the ideology of what Brook Adams called "America's economic supremacy," while establishing for America conditions to extend the "American system throughout the world without the embarrassment and inefficiency of traditional colonialism." William Appleman Williams concludes the Open Door Policy was a manifestation of America's "desire to reform the world in its own image." What had apparently happened was an odd fusion of ideology and economic imperialism, the same two goals which had been present since the founding of the nation. While very concerned about Russia's and Japan's influence in China, our own influence in the Philippines and Hawaii was justified by a so-called need to protect that part of the world until democracy could flourish. America's now easy access to
Chinese ports was assured by its occupation of territories in these parts of the world. Rather than call a spade a spade, United States policy chose to claim it was making the world safe for democracy. Williams claims the definition of that nebulous phrase meant "the world was to be made safe for democracy a'l'americaine, with all that implied economically, politically and socially." 68

The world could not be made safe for democracy "a'l'americaine," however, if the Bolsheviks were making their own proclamation to be the bulwark of an even purer democracy on the other side of the world. According to Arno J. Mayer, author of Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, both Lenin and Wilson were "champion revolutionists of the new age," 69 one which wanted to do away with the old, European diplomacy and balance of power politics. Each leader's policy to attain such a goal was not without its irony, however.

Wilson wanted a dissolution of autocratic power throughout Europe and the world, and the establishment of democracy in its place. But the Bolshevik solution to despotism "would render her economy useless to mankind." 70 This paradox in American foreign policy, the two-edged sword of capitalism and democracy, became apparent with Wilson's opposition to the Bolsheviks. Soviet power was not conducive to American economic and political growth and the attainment of power, regardless of its stated ideology to uphold democracy and do away with the exploitation of the working class. This is why, according to Williams, the birth of America's policy to contain the Soviet Union actually began in 1918 with the "decision to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the breakup or the
mellowing of Soviet power." Gabriel and Joyce Kolko believe this same paradox is the context for understanding the post-World War II situation as well. According to the Kolkos, a Soviet-American ideological rivalry was not the issue in the years 1945 through 1947 when policy was formed. What had happened was America's failure to reform the world economically, one of the United States' major war aims. If the above thesis is plausible, Stalin's occupation of Eastern Europe and the Balkans was not acceptable to such a goal, anymore than Lenin's Russia had been with its shocking denouncement of capitalism.

Whether or not America made its foreign policy decisions in the interests of economic growth and power or in the interests of securing liberty and justice for all people, is probably not discernable. If the United States perceived it was saving the world for democracy's sake, all other motives would simply fade away. The Bolsheviks, however, were convinced of America's imperialistic motives, not their esoteric ones, and this conviction led to a policy which tolerated the United States only to the point needed to gain Soviet national interests. Yet the Bolsheviks, and later the Communists, were just as determined to secure their own interests as were the Americans, even if it meant compromising the socialistic principles of Marx. They proved this point in the 1920's and 30's when Stalin pursued a policy of rapprochement with the bourgeois, capitalistic states, England and America. The alliance Stalin forged with Hitler, a known enemy, in 1939, also proved this point. Stalin made this pragmatic move to buy time and gain access to Russia's western border which had been lost as
a result of World War I. The paradox inherent in both nations' foreign policy was this willingness to sacrifice democracy, either socialistic or capitalistic, on the altar of self-interests, regardless of what those interests entailed. The Soviets, however, did so without pretext; Washington, on the other hand, could not.

The American people never fully understood this. Except during the years of the Grand Alliance, the image they had of the Soviet Union, regardless of its validity or falsity, was threatening to their perceived mission of the United States: establishing a new and better world order. United States foreign policy makers were concerned with both of America's missions, democratic and economic. The democratic mission endeavored to establish a world unlike any other; economically, the world should be as free, giving America every opportunity to grow and prosper. As put forth by founding fathers Thomas Paine and George Washington, as well as James Monroe, the American way provided a suitable paradigm for the rest of the world to follow. American foreign policy became based on this role. Both Wilson and Roosevelt sought to establish new world orders. The American people fully supported these pursuits—they were an integral part of tradition.

The Reality of the Events

In the world of power politics, however, motives which shape foreign policy pale beside actions and their ensuing results. One can debate what Stalin's motives were for wanting to establish Soviet hegemony in Poland and Eastern Europe; and the true impetus for issuing
the Truman Doctrine is still being debated. George Kennan's assessment of the driving force behind Soviet foreign policy is fascinating, but one will never be able to do more than speculate over the impact it had on Washington's policy-making as it began to unfold in the years following the war. Washington discussed the reasons why Stalin insisted on securing friendly governments in the states he had liberated at the end of the war, but the bottom issue was that he was there, a perceived threat to the balance of power in that region of the world. It is when the reaction Moscow had to the Truman Doctrine is evaluated that the reality of the situation becomes apparent. The world became divided, precarious; the two allies became enemies; and World War II, like its predecessor, had failed to create a stable environment for future generations.

The foreign policy traditions of Russia and the United States had considerable bearing on the formulation of policy, as did the attitudes each nation had regarding the other throughout the history prior to the outbreak of World War II. The events of the situation, however, determined the eventual outcome: in 1941 Russia and America were allies, joined in a common cause, pledged to rid the world of evil and ensure a lasting peace once the enemy had been destroyed; by 1944 the alliance had fragmented; and in 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had been formed to the exclusion of the Western allies' once-friend-turned-foe, Russia. It was between the years 1944 and 1947 that America's containment policy gradually developed; but John Gaddis, author of several books on containment, believes there was containment of Russia before Truman ever elucidated his doctrine, before George
Kennan sent his long telegram, before the war even ended.

According to Gaddis, containing the Russians had been on Franklin Delano Roosevelt's mind as early as 1941—as well as on the mind of W. Averell Harriman, United States ambassador in Moscow since 1943. Roosevelt had not forgotten recent relations with Russia had been tenuous, and he was not fond of communism. Yet like Churchill, he knew the necessity of forging an alliance with "the devil"; and from the first Roosevelt exhibited a stubbornness to follow the only policy he believed possible to assure a postwar peace with Stalin and Moscow. Roosevelt gambled he could convince Stalin of the West's sincerity and friendship, thereby assuring Stalin's participation in the United Nations, ending once and for all the traditional European concept of a balance of power keeping the peace. If Stalin confidently believed he could rely on the United Nations to keep the peace, Roosevelt felt certain he would abandon the urgently-felt need to expand Russia's borders. Although Roosevelt prepared for the loss of the Baltic states and portions of Eastern Europe to Stalin, he hoped such a situation could be averted. Roosevelt actually wanted to 'change' Stalin, convince him that a concept of collective security would keep peace far better than a system of buffer states. Roosevelt took for granted that Stalin's driving motive behind his war aims was fear—of future invasions as well as a hostile capitalistic world. Roosevelt may have assumed too much. In spite of pleadings from his advisors and Churchill, Roosevelt refused to discuss the territorial war aims Stalin had put forth very early in the war, even before the United States had entered.
But Stalin made no secret of what he expected to gain from the war, and Britain was prepared to give him what he demanded in order to safeguard the alliance and the continuance of a maximum war effort from the Red Army. Churchill and Stalin privately discussed postwar territorial gains, Churchill being just as eager as Stalin to assume hegemony in certain parts of the world.

Roosevelt, however, could not publicly and officially acquiesce to territorial aggrandizement of any kind because it so violated the Atlantic Charter, to which Moscow supposedly subscribed. Ivan Maisky, however, the Russian ambassador to England during the war years, carefully made Soviet acceptance of the charter conditional and open-ended. Furthermore, Roosevelt felt certain he could not present to the American people a Europe which had been carved up into innocuous spheres of influence.

Throughout the war years, America insisted on pushing democratic principles upon its allies. Keeping true to its traditions in foreign policy, nebulous goals had to be a part of the Grand Alliance's war aims, not goals to reestablish the European balance of power. Although Moscow agreed to such aims only equivocally, the American people soon came to equate Stalin with "Uncle Joe," believing a new Soviet Russia was their partner in saving the world from totalitarian evil. This misperception was not Stalin's doing, nor did he perpetuate such a myth.

It is understandable, however, why Roosevelt felt compelled to give this impression to the American people, and why they were so easily convinced. It would prove far easier to forge a lasting peace
with Stalin after the war if the public held a positive view of its Russian ally. Because of the paradox so inherent in the American tradition, the peculiar tendency to believe wars are fought for the purpose of liberty and democracy instead of the more practical reasons of national self-interests, American policy makers have often had to hide the truth from the public. The vagueness of such abstract motives is much easier to defend to the American people than power politics. Following World War II Americans finally had to admit to the necessity of becoming involved in European affairs, but the European concepts of 'balance of power' and 'spheres of influence' have traditionally been abhorred by a large majority of Americans. As Hans J. Morgenthau put it, if the United States could no longer shut itself off from a world infected with power politics, it had to decontaminate the world from that infection in order to make it safe to enter. 82 Perhaps this is why such a paradox exists in the American tradition of foreign policy. Remembering their ancestors who had fled the Continent's imperialistic wars of conquests, Americans wanted nothing to do with wars being fought for territorial gains or national self-interests. Stalin, however, did not sacrifice twenty million Russians for democracy's sake—he wanted concrete spoils of war.

Franklin Roosevelt's war strategy failed: Stalin had not been convinced to abandon a buffer zone on Russia's western border. Worse, Stalin had moved into Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The situation Roosevelt hoped to avert had come to pass, a situation for which the American people and the foreign policy makers were totally unprepared. Rather than admit that it was a mistake not to reach a practical
agreement regarding Stalin's post-war territorial aims sooner, Washington chose instead to accuse Moscow of breaking its pledge to establish America's concept of democracy in the post-war world, a pledge that had been made in equivocal, obscure language. Because of the American tradition, United States policy makers could not honestly admit they wanted to restore the European balance of power in order to secure vital interests in a strategic part of the world. It had to become a matter of restoring democracy, a cause to which the American people—and Congress—could rally.

For a large despotic state that has never known Western liberalism or republicanism, concepts of self-determination and free elections were nominal at best. With a history of invasion in a land unprotected by natural borders, securing national interests had been a part of Russian foreign policy since the Moskovite princes first consolidated their power in the dark northern forests surrounding present-day Moscow. With a tradition quite unlike the United States, which settled a vast, relatively unpopulated continent founded on the principles of the Enlightenment, Russia has had to contend with the power and supremacy of various European nations throughout the centuries; therefore, it learned a tradition of conventional European power politics.

The Russian tradition in foreign policy, and later the Soviet tradition, sought to secure its national interests. Regardless of Marxist-Leninist ideology, these interests always came first. Unlike Washington, which often felt it necessary to mask its state interests behind lofty ideals, Moscow offered no apologies for its ambitions
during World War II. Stalin laid his war aims clearly on the bargaining table, and he expected to be compensated for his nation's war efforts.

Over the centuries Russia came to fear and resent the West, and this xenophobia helped to determine its foreign policy. At the same time it always realized its need for the West's technology in order to compete in the European world of power and politics. It is not surprising that, years later, this enigma would be present, haunting the proceedings at Yalta and Potsdam. Equivocal terms like 'self-determination' and 'democracy' are open to interpretation; and when it came to settling the aims of World War II, their importance and meaning were altogether different in the democratic West than in the dictatorial Soviet Union. Still, in the Russian tradition, Stalin realized his need for America's powerful economic assistance in the post-war world, providing American policy makers with a lever they never used. Instead, the post-war settlement ended in territorial augmentation and the need for containment instead of a mutual consideration for the differences and degrees inherent in individual societies and civilization as a whole.

To those of us who must ask why, the answer lies in the traditions of each nations' foreign policy—the quest for power. The policy of containment originated in the debris left behind from Roosevelt's failed war strategy and the inability to formulate a policy to deal with Stalin's demands for territorial security. As the power vacuum created by four years of war began to fill up with Red troops, Washington realized it would not be able to control Stalin or the post-war world the way Roosevelt had envisioned—or the way they
perceived Roosevelt's vision would unfold. The quest for a new strategy began then.


12. Thomas H. Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., "American Relations


27. Halle, p. 17.

28. Kliuchevsky as cited in Szamuely, p. 27.


32. Weeks, p. 15.

34. Rosa Luxemberg as cited in Szamuely, p. xi.

35. Von Laue in Lederer, p. 81.

36. Ibid, p. 82.

37. Ibid, pp. 81-82.

38. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," Tucker, The Lenin Anthology, p. 207.


41. Ibid, p. 78.

42. Tucker, The Lenin Anthology, p. 517.


44. Ibid, p. 634.


46. Ibid, p. 75.

47. Sivachev and Yakolev, p. 37.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid, p. 34.

50. Lederer, p. 588.


52. Ibid, pp. xiii, 87.


57. Ibid.

58. Ibid, p. 42.


60. *American Foreign Policy*, Publication No 17, pp. 2-3.


63. Varga, pp. 583-95.


67. Ibid.

68. Ibid, p. 44.


70. Ibid, pp. 378-79.


72. Gabriel and Joyce Kolko, p. 2.


74. Ibid, p. 3.
75. Ibid, pp. 9-14.


The historical traditions of Soviet and American foreign policy stayed on a collision course throughout the years of the Grand Alliance. In the wisdom of hindsight, both Eastern and Western historians have concluded how the 'marriage de convenience' was destined for divorce once the destruction of Hitler's legions was assured.¹ Russian tradition dictated serving national self-interests through territorial acquisition. Stalin made it clear early in the war that he wanted those interests secured. Americans, on the other hand, claimed their ambitions lay with what Herbert Feis called "the power of principle," the principle being that of national self-determination.²

The incompatibility of American principles with Stalin's war aims became a well-kept secret throughout the war. Franklin Roosevelt was well aware of the conflict; the American people were not. Furthermore, only some of FDR's colleagues were aware of Stalin's war diplomacy; others, like Harry Truman, remained tragically ignorant of what had transpired between the coalition during the war years.

The negotiations, however, had to be clear to those present. Roosevelt pursued a war strategy involving risks. By putting off Stalin's demands for early settlement of the post-war "organisation for peace," by offering him a European front in 1942, Roosevelt hoped to buy the time needed to convince Stalin that his new world order was an efficient, peace-keeping mechanism for all, even the Soviets. Economic sanctions necessary for reconstruction would be offered in the interim, convincing Stalin not only of America's trustworthiness, but also of
its sincere desire for an economically strong Russia to take its place in the world community of nations. Using these tactics, Roosevelt hoped ultimately to prove the inefficiency of spheres of influence to either world peace or international trade. Woodrow Wilson had failed to convince Europe of this in 1918; like Wilson, though, Roosevelt had confidence in his own ability to influence and change.

There are revisionists who argue that America's "community of nations" included only those countries which supported Western, liberal-style democracy and capitalistic enterprise, the two being part of the same package. It is not clear if Roosevelt felt this way or not. Clearly, his vision for the post-war world included capitalism and democratic liberalism, but he also philosophically believed that Russia, like other totalitarian states, would lose its despotic nature if allowed to participate in the world on an equal basis without fear of reprisal. More an internationalist than even Wilson, Roosevelt became determined not to repeat the mistake of ostracizing the Soviet Union from the West. He realized full well any peace without Russia was only pseudo-peace. If America was truly to realize its economic and political aspirations, the Soviet Union could not be an enemy, competing for the same raw materials, threatening world stability. If international law was to be America's pathway to an Open Door in trade and world-wide democracy, the Soviet Union would have to become a cooperating nation eventually.

Not all of Roosevelt's advisors shared his vision. Truman, ignorant of what FDR tried to accomplish, was not going to allow the Russians to freely participate in the "community" under their own
terms. It is also possible that Truman, even if he had understood Roosevelt's intentions, would not have adhered to them. Stalin's insistence that he acquire hegemony in the Balkans and a sphere of influence in Iran started to greatly disturb Roosevelt before his death. Truman could not allow Stalin to succeed in these quests, any more than Roosevelt could or would have.

The truth is, FDR's war strategy was never tried. It is quite possible it could have succeeded if given a proper chance. Instead, Stalin continued to pursue his war aims throughout the negotiations while Roosevelt's were never practiced. Stalin received what he asked for by default alone; Roosevelt never offered the Soviet statesman the incentives needed to convince him it was in his own best interests to follow, or at least consider, FDR's peace plan. The concrete proposals, the bulwark of Roosevelt's strategy, never came: the second front materialized two years after it had been promised, and FDR never offered a substantial post-war loan. FDR's successors avoided all offers of a loan after his death. Roosevelt chose to procrastinate for reasons not fully known, opting instead to lead Stalin to believe he could have what he wanted. Historian Lloyd C. Gardner wrote: "Searching for an answer to this phase of the strategy of postponement is a frustrating task."

Authorities like Norman A. Graebner and Herbert Feis, who believe Russia would never have accepted a world based on the principle of self-determination, do not account for Roosevelt's failed strategy. There is no way to know the difference the second front would have made if promptly delivered. All evidence points to an enormous difference,
in attitudes alone. In history, however, there are no ifs. Graebner criticized Roosevelt's strategy: assuming Russia would accept a world order utilizing the principle of national self-determination "expected too much denial of that country's historic problems and ambitions"; and, one might add, of its tradition in foreign policy. Likewise, to expect the United States to acquiesce while Stalin divided up Europe denied the American tradition.

As the events unfolded in the years beginning with 1941, it is important to remember both Stalin and Roosevelt pursued policies very much in keeping with the traditions inherent in each nation's own foreign relationships. Stalin's war aims, clearly laid on the bargaining table from the beginning, simply followed a policy of conventional balance-of-power, making sure Moscow would not be excluded from the post-war world by Western nations which had shown little tolerance in the past for Russian power. Roosevelt had a more difficult row to hoe, trying as he did to appease both the American people and the Soviet dictator so he could create a new world order. Both Moscow and Washington knew of America's and Russia's emerging superpower status; the post-war world would have to be shared. Both were equally aware of the distrust and apprehension lying dormant underneath the semblance of coalition and alliance. The difference in these traditions cannot be denied; their failure to converge at some point and become compatible, however, was not inevitable.

Stalin's War Aims: "Long Live Our Glorious Motherland!"
To the vast relief of Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler marched east on 22 June 1941, invading the Soviet Union, thereby giving Britain one lone ally in all of Europe. Churchill alluded to Stalin as the devil in Parliament, and Stalin as well felt he had little choice of allies. Engaging Germany in a two front war, however, would be the only salvation for Europe as well as Russia. So East and West came together to fight the center; how the center would be divided upon its defeat was a natural problem, a dilemma facing all the victors at the war's end.

Stalin began thinking of such problems as early as 1939 when he signed the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. If that seems premature, it is wise to remember America as well considered the post-war world before it even entered the fighting! In August 1941, with the formation of the Atlantic Charter, a vague dissertation proclaiming the right of all nations to determine their own political destiny, America's post-war interests had been initiated. Unfortunately, the Charter could do little more than suggest a way to peace; its obscure wording, quite open to interpretation, carried no enforcement provisions. Churchill admitted it could serve only as "a guiding star," not a law. Each nation, remembering the chaos resulting from the last war's peace-making process, began looking out for its own self-interests by formulating policies to oversee the post-World War II world. Stalin admitted it quite openly and developed his foreign policy accordingly. Unfortunately his policy, laced as it was with suspicion and precaution, afforded very few compromises.

The suspicion, born in the past, was bound to influence the
diplomacy of the Grand Alliance, brought together for the sole purpose of stopping Hitler. To the Russian mind, the feelings of suspicion were confirmed during Hitler's rise to power. The Soviet Union futilely appealed to the League of Nations for collective security to stop Hitler. The West practiced the foolish policy of appeasement to extremes, and Hitler marched closer east, toward Russia. Through several remarks made by people like Britain's Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, the Western leaders made it known that war between fascism and communism would delight them. "If there is any fighting in Europe to be done," Baldwin told Churchill in 1936, "I should like to see the Bolsheviks and Nazis doing it." Frightened of the impending war, needing more time, Stalin entered into a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939. It was a shrewd move, giving Stalin the time he needed, allowing him to regain access to a geopolitically significant portion of the Russian empire lost after World War I. It also displayed within Stalin a diplomatic talent that would come to haunt the Grand Alliance. In exchange for neutrality, the USSR received a free hand in Poland and the Baltic States. Russia took back Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and incorporated Bessarabia and northern Bukovina into the empire.

The West thought the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression agreement, called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, to be one of the most cold-blooded acts in history, the cause of World War II. The Soviets believed the West had steered Hitler in their direction, wishing for their destruction as they always had. Distrust of the Allies dictated how Stalin would formulate his war aims and policies. Two main fears haunted Stalin as
he entered into alliance with the West, and both reflected his
distrust. Stalin feared that a separate peace between Germany and the
Allies would leave him to fight Hitler alone. He also feared the
Allies would remain inactive, forcing his Red Army to bear the brunt of
the war while Germany and Russia "mutually exhaust themselves." 11
Philip Mosley wrote how, in 1941, the Soviet leaders fully expected
Britain and the United States to sit idly by while Hitler ran over the
Soviet Union. The prompt support of financial aid Russia received from
America, known as Lend-Lease, did not shake its fear of "capitalist
encirclement." 12

Stalin formulated three main war aims based on these fears, and
these goals became the backbone of his foreign policy during the war. 13
The first intended to prevent a separate peace at all costs, and this
meant keeping the coalition intact and friendly as long as Hitler's
armies rolled. For this reason as well as to strengthen his own
regime, Stalin defined World War II as the Great Patriotic War, fought
for the motherland. It was as well a great war for the liberation of
"the people of Europe and America...for democratic liberties." 14

The tactic worked indubitably well, cementing the Russian people
together in this cause, laying to rest allied fears of Stalin's
totalitarian methods. The day Hitler attacked Russia, Churchill
loyally declared, "This is no class war," 15 and Stalin's speeches began
to reflect this mood. In 1943 he dissolved the Comintern, his
"political contribution to the coherence of the Grand Alliance." 16

Stalin's second goal sought allied recognition of the territories
Russia acquired from the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and the preservation
of those territories for Russia following the war. Stalin claimed the lands annexed in 1939 were both ethnographically and culturally Russian, remembering that the Versailles treaty had taken them from the Soviet empire. Stalin furthermore wanted the eastern border of Poland moved farther west, along what was known as the Curzon Line, an imaginary border proposed by Lord Curzon at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, allowing for the annexation of more Polish territory into Russia. Poland was also to acquire territory from East Prussia, and the Rhineland was to be separated from Prussia.17

The third aim proved the most taxing, draining the allies of any advantage they might have had at the conference table and becoming a bitter point of contention for Stalin and the Soviet people: opening a second front in Europe. Stalin wanted allied troops to cross the English channel, coming into Europe from the West, drawing Hitler off Russia's frontline. The second front assured Russia it would not fight this war alone. It also guaranteed Stalin that his Allies would not allow the war to weaken Russia to the point where the West could manipulate it in the post-war world.

At the Eighteenth Party Congress Stalin caustically remarked that, once the belligerents were weak and exhausted, the imperialistic nations would "appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, - 'in the interests of peace', and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents...Cheap and easy!"18 Moscow took the necessary steps to prevent such domination. Stalin, whose Red Army provided the main source of manpower against Germany in the early years of the war, and some will argue throughout the war,19 would make certain that
Russia was not cut out of the peace this time.

So Moscow remained on guard throughout the years of the Grand Alliance for any signs that its allies were out to exhaust the Red Army so they could reap the rewards of victory. The late delivery of the second front confirmed these suspicions. "Britain and the USA dragged the war out in order to weaken the USSR," reads the official Soviet account of the war years. What follows is worth quoting in full:

In Britain and the USA some of the leaders did not think it necessary to conceal designs of this sort. They wanted the USSR to fight Germany single-handed so that the two countries would bleed themselves white. Plans of this nature were cynically expounded by US Senator Harry S. Truman, who later became President of the USA. "If we see that Germany is winning," he said, "we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible. In Britain, similar ideas were propounded by John Moore-Brabazon, then Minister of Aircraft production."

The front was delivered way past the point when it could have convinced Stalin that statements like the above were untrue.

The history of the second front is a curious one. Ivan Maisky's memoirs speak of the front as the "main problem dominating all others." Stalin needed reassurance of his allies' trustworthiness; to this Moscow's History of Soviet Foreign Policy readily admits:

First and foremost, Soviet diplomacy had to make sure that the bourgeois states already fighting Germany and Italy would become reliable allies of the USSR. To this end it was necessary to form and consolidate a coalition of states fighting Nazi Germany and open a second front in Europe as quickly as possible.

As early as 1941 Stalin began intimating to the Western allies as well as to his own people the need for a second front. On 18 July 1941, less than one month after Hitler's invasion, Churchill received
communication from Stalin, asking for a second front.

It seems to me, furthermore, that the military position of the Soviet Union, and by the same token that of Great Britain, would improve substantially if a front were established against Hitler in the West (Northern France) and the North (the Arctic)... Until understanding is reached on these... points, not only will there be no clarity in Anglo/Soviet relations, but, if we are to speak frankly, there will be no mutual trust.

Churchill, however, continued to assure Stalin in the first five and a half months of their alliance of the logistical impossibility for a European front at this time. Stalin's intimations grew insistent but Churchill maintained that Moscow's unrelenting demands for a European front reflected a "monotonous disregard for... physical facts." The following excerpt from a speech delivered by Stalin in 1941 on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the October Revolution, however, clearly illustrates his interpretation of the "physical facts":

One of the reasons for the setbacks of the Red army consists in the absence of a second front in Europe... It is a fact that there are no armies of Great Britain or the United States on the European Continent at present which are waging war against the German fascist troops...

The situation now is such that our country is waging the war of liberation alone without anyone's military aid...

The first Anglo/Russian mutual war-time assistance pact signed on 12 July 1941 lacked any mention of a second front or post-war settlements. Stalin wanted both, at the earliest possible date. He presented a draft of treaties to Britain's Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden on 16 December 1941. The first treaty provided for mutual assistance both during and after the war. The second clearly established the Soviet vision of the "post-war organisation of
The treaty called for:

...the restoration of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Greece in their pre-war frontiers, and also the transfer to Poland of East Prussia. The treaty furthermore recognised the 1941 frontiers of the USSR (i.e. including in it Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia), and the right of Britain to have bases necessary for her 2^8 security in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway.

Eden felt the treaties could be negotiated, but he reserved the right to make modifications. Stalin made a third request, however, which surprised even Maisky and was flatly refused by Eden: immediate recognition by the British of Russia's 1939 territorial acquisitions. Britain had gone to war to defend Poland, though; it would have been unrealistic to expect Eden to give it away here.

The reason Eden gave for Britain's refusal surprised and angered Stalin. Explaining that territorial changes were not to be decided on during the course of the war, Eden told Stalin that "under the Atlantic Charter we have pledged ourselves to take into account the wishes of the inhabitants." An incredulous Stalin replied:

Why does the restoration of our frontiers come into conflict with the Atlantic Charter...I thought that the Atlantic Charter was directed against those people who were trying to establish world dominion. It now looks as if the Atlantic Charter was directed against the U.S.S.R."

The British cabinet voiced mixed emotions concerning Soviet demands. Always more pragmatic than the quixotic Americans, many felt Russia had earned the right to keep its 1939 borders. The London Times felt the boundaries "were in no way incompatible with the security of Europe, which the framework of the Atlantic charter sought to insure." Fearing for the Alliance, well aware of the enormous part
Russia still had to play to defeat Hitler, Churchill relented. On 7 March 1942 he wrote to Roosevelt, pleading Stalin's case to recognize Soviet borders.

Roosevelt, with the support of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, held firm in his conviction not to grant any territorial changes. Hull was concerned with Polish-American pressure, which insisted on a free Poland after the war. The President showed more concern for the principles and causes of the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations, his vision for post-war peace.

In May 1942 Stalin sent Molotov to London for final approval of the draft treaties and recognition of the 1941 boundaries. As sharp debate continued between English and Americans regarding the recognition of Soviet borders, Roosevelt intervened with an offer of his own. He sent Stalin a letter on 12 April 1942 inviting Molotov to Washington directly after his London visit to discuss "a very important military proposal involving the utilisation of our armed forces in a manner to relieve your critical Western front." It was an astute diplomatic maneuver on FDR's part.

The evening of 24 May John Winant, US ambassador to Great Britain, entered into a discussion with Molotov at a reception in London. He expressed great interest in a second front, engaging Molotov in an extended conversation on the matter. Molotov signed the mutual aid-assistance treaty with England two days later: there was no mention of borders whatsoever. The diversionary tactic of the second front had worked.

Molotov's visit to Washington confirmed the second front, with
little room for interpretation or misunderstanding. Molotov asked point blank if the intention was to launch a European front sometime in 1942. The following account comes straight from the State Department:

The President then put to General Marshall the query whether developments were clear enough so that we could say to Mr. Stalin that we are preparing a second front. "Yes," replied the General. The President then authorized Mr. Molotov to inform Mr. Stalin that we expect the formation of a second front this year. 36

Churchill, as usual, showed much more caution, stating in an "aide-memoire" that the feasibility of the plan would be more evident as it unfolded. 37 Each time Stalin accused the Allies of breaking their promise, Churchill would recall the postscript he had handed to Molotov in London on his return trip from Washington that spring. Averell Harriman as well reiterated to Stalin that no premises had been broken. 38

In Moscow's assessment, however, the promise had been made and the date pronounced. More like a sentence than a promise, the second front stood at the threshold of relations between the Big Three. It had been offered in place of the Anglo/Russian treaty, an understanding that Stalin would keep quiet regarding the recognition of Soviet boundaries in exchange for a cross-channel invasion. That its untimely deliverance only confirmed Moscow's worst misgivings was the most pronounced tragedy of the Grand Alliance.

Soviet accounts of the failure to produce the front "as promised" reek with damning accusations. Maisky's diary entry of 15 February 1942 accuses the British of allowing the opening of the second front only if it looked like the Red Army would get to Berlin first. Later,
Maisky wrote how right he was in his earlier assumptions:

...even at that early period of the Great Patriotic War I had no illusions as to the true inclinations and calculations of the British government. What followed only confirmed the accuracy of my assessment of the situation. In particular, the Second Front in France opened only when the British and the Americans found themselves faced with the real 'threat' that the Soviet armed forces would get to Berlin before they did.  

It is quite possible, though, that the West's intentions were not honorable. Certainly Churchill had no qualms about sacrificing Russian troops for British troops. He argued stubbornly against the front, fearing the channel would become a "bloodbath," favoring a safer route for his troops through French Northwest Africa in conjunction with an advance westward across the desert toward Tripoli. American war policy also aimed at giving up as few men as possible, and on this fateful note Churchill managed to convince FDR of the unsoundness of a cross-channel invasion in 1942.  

Evidence proves, however, that Roosevelt promised the front in good faith with every intention of delivering it in 1942. Preparation for the front, code-named SLEDGEHAMMER, began immediately after Molotov left Washington in May 1942. At a London Conference on 20 July, where the future of the front was ultimately decided, America's delegation argued for Russia and the fate of the Red Army if American and British ground forces failed to land in Europe before the end of 1942. Roosevelt wrote the following in a memorandum to Hopkins, instructing him on how to proceed with negotiations at the conference:

In regard to 1942, you will carefully investigate the possibility of executing SLEDGEHAMMER. Such an operation would definitely sustain Russia this year. It might be the turning point which would save Russia this year.
SLEDGEHAMMER is of such grave importance that every reason calls for its accomplishment. You should strongly urge immediate all-out preparation for it, that it be pushed with the utmost vigor, and that it be executed whether or not Russian collapse becomes imminent. In the event Russian collapse becomes probable SLEDGEHAMMER becomes not merely advisable but imperative. The principal objective of SLEDGEHAMMER is the positive diversion of German Air Forces from the Russian front.  

It is difficult to believe such conviction could have been swayed. Yet Churchill ostentatiously refused support for the front, and FDR agreed with Marshall's and Hopkins' final assessment of the fateful situation: "...mere acquiescence on the part of the British was not sufficient for carrying out plans of this magnitude."  

Regardless of Roosevelt's good intentions, they could not be a substitute for actions. Moscow, well aware that the failure to put SLEDGEHAMMER into operation lay with the British, directed its anger toward both Allies. Stalin spoke to his people about the absence of a second front on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the October Revolution, 1942:  

Our Allies cannot fail to realize that since France has been put out of action, the absence of a second front against Fascist Germany may end badly for all the freedom-loving countries, including the Allies themselves.  

To the Soviet nation the front became all-important, an instrument of accountability needed to solidify the coalition. The failure to provide a European front early in the war greatly hindered the chances for a successful post-war peace settlement between the Big Three. What is most curious about the whole affair is Washington's obvious cognizance of the delicate situation. Hull's memoirs recorded an observation made by Ambassador Winant in December 1941: "'Russia,'
Winant reported, 'was suspicious that the British and ourselves aimed at excluding her from the peace and postwar settlement..."49

Stalin's demands for territorial acquisition had posed too great a hazard to Roosevelt's concept of the future post-war world. The ideal of self-determination, embodied in the Atlantic Charter, became the crusading spirit of World War II; the United Nations symbolized hope for the American people and the West in general. Both FDR and Cordell Hull felt great relief when Stalin relented and signed the Anglo treaty with no mention of borders or territories.50 Failure to deliver the front in 1942, however, gave Moscow ample reason to distrust its Allies; and neither the Atlantic Charter nor the United Nations offered anything to meet the immediate needs or interests of the Kremlin. Stalin was not about to compromise his war aims to allies he suspected for a dream he did not share. Robert Sherwood, writing in 1948, dismissed the issue of the second front. "The debate about the Second Front will probably continue for as long as any of the immediate participants in it shall live, and after that all that will matter is that it actually happened precisely when it did and new world history was made."51 Sherwood's prediction that the late delivery of the second front would be forgotten in the more monumental history to follow could not have been more wrong.

Roosevelt's War Aims: "We leave here, friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose."
The Atlantic Charter, signed by Britain and America on 14 August 1941, secured in words Thomas Paine's vision for America: complete political sovereignty for all nations, endowing them with a capitalistic freedom "to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance." The Charter embodied the tradition of the Open Door and the necessary political freedom needed to pursue such a policy. The fourth point of the Charter called on the signatories "to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity."\(^{52}\)

Clearly regarded by Roosevelt as a principle rather than a binding law,\(^{53}\) the Charter offered little guidance in solving the pressing conflicts which faced the coalition throughout the war years. "It is not a code of law from which detailed answers to every question can be distilled by painstaking analysis of its words and phrases," Cordell Hull said in a radio address delivered 9 April 1944. "What is fundamental," he concluded, "are the objectives of the Charter and the determination to achieve them."\(^{54}\)

Unfortunately, neither Stalin nor Churchill shared FDR's dedication and enthusiasm to the rhetorical principles of the Atlantic Charter. The nebulous document was America's dream, and both statesmen at one point or another clarified their acceptance of its lofty ideals. Its main objective, calling for the "respect of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they live," rendered England's imperial possessions obsolete. An embarrassed Churchill explained to the House of Commons that the Charter applied only to
those nations "now under the Nazi yoke, and the principles governing any alteration in their territorial boundaries....So that is quite a separate problem from the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions in the regions, and people which owe their allegiance to the British Crown."55

The Soviets as well voiced skepticism of the Charter's ability to provide concrete guidelines in the post-war world. Ivan Maisky signed the Charter in London on 24 September 1941, yet he qualified the degree to which the Soviets would adhere to its precepts:

Considering that the practical application of these principles will necessarily adapt itself to the circumstances, needs, and historic peculiarities of particular countries, the Soviet government can state that a consistent application of these principles will secure the most energetic support on the part of the government and the peoples of the Soviet Union.

That the "circumstances, needs and peculiarities" of certain countries, especially Poland in its relationship to Russia, was interpreted differently by the Allies than by Moscow should have come as no surprise to the West, yet it did time and time again. According to historian Walter LaFeber, Moscow's qualifying acceptance clearly indicated that the Soviets had no intention of allowing the history of 1919-1939 to repeat itself; if they could gather the requisite power, Eastern Europe and particularly Poland, across which German armies had invaded Russia twice in less than twenty-five years, would come under de facto Soviet control.57

Regardless of its inability to appease Stalin's territorial war aims, Roosevelt's war diplomacy still focused on establishing a universal court of justice based on the principles of the Atlantic Charter; his vision included China, America, Russia and Great Britain
policing the world. Only those nations with power had the ability to check aggressors and influence smaller countries. The President hoped the peace-keeping organization would provide a viable substitute to Stalin's security demands. Roosevelt wanted to believe America's political and economic institutions would be an acceptable alternative to the present world order based on spheres of influence and power politics, yet there was no evidence at the time that the world was ready for, or even wanting of, such an order.

William Appleman Williams saw real continuity between Woodrow Wilson's attempt to turn the Progressive reform movement into a viable program for the entire world and Roosevelt's attempt to change the New Deal into a new world order. In order to sustain American style democracy and prosperity, Williams maintained, it is always necessary to expand markets. "For these traditional reasons the United States declined...even to discuss the Soviet Union's bid to settle postwar boundaries." The Soviet Union certainly viewed Washington's refusal to settle post-war European territories as evidence that American policy-makers "planned to use the war as a means of spreading their influence to as many countries as possible... They wanted to see the postwar world ruled by themselves." The refusal to discuss Moscow's war aims, followed by the August 1942 revelation that the second front would not come after all, reinforced Russia's traditional fears of foreign and capitalistic encroachment.

The President did place a proportionate amount of emphasis on America's economic needs, and what those needs would be after the war. The American tradition, though, does not really separate democracy from
capitalism; nor did Roosevelt. Secretary Hull, as chairperson, stated this tradition to the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy in 1942, hoping perhaps to make such rhetoric official policy.

Liberty is more than a matter of political rights, indispensable as these rights are. In our own country we have learned from bitter experiences that to be truly free, men must have, as well, economic freedom and economic security—the assurance for all alike of an opportunity to work as free men in the company of free men.  

Such an atmosphere excluded the Soviet Union, and Hull felt explicitly the post-war world held no room for a socialistic economic system.  

Roosevelt did not feel quite as strongly as Hull on this point. He certainly wanted to change the Soviet system, and he had a sincere desire to have the rest of the world partake of an "opportunity to work as free men." But while it may be true that the Open Door best suited American interests, Roosevelt and Hull sincerely believed such a world was best suited to all. Even Britain's system did not properly conform, as evidenced in the following poignant conversation between Churchill and Roosevelt, which took place just prior to the signing of the Atlantic Charter. The dialogue was recorded by Roosevelt's son, Elliott, and Roosevelt began the conversation.

"Of course, he remarked, with a sly sort of assurance,"of course, after the war, one of the preconditions of any lasting peace will have to be the greatest possible freedom of trade...
Churchill's neck reddened and he crouched forward. "Mr. President, England does not propose for a moment to lose its favored position among the British Dominions. The trade that has made England great shall continue...
"The peace, said Father firmly, "cannot include any continued despotism. The structure of the peace demands and will get equality of peoples. Equality involves the utmost freedom of competitive trade. Will anyone suggest that Germany's attempt to dominate trade in central Europe was not a major contributing factor to war?"
Roosevelt cannot be faulted for trying to convince Stalin that such a universal trade system would be beneficial to all nations, even the outcast Soviet Union. Stalin would have been difficult to persuade even in the best of circumstances, given the element of mistrust already present when the coalition formed. Perhaps a more timely delivery of the second front would have been a strong, convincing factor.

As Stalin's nation continued to be hammered and besieged by German forces, however, the need for post-war reconstruction entered Soviet thinking. Moscow's war aims became even more important, for expanded borders meant greater resources. Unfortunately, Moscow's growing concern to address the issues met only with frustration. Stalin's demands for border recognition were put off to the peace conference at the war's end, giving Roosevelt time to push his plans, hoping all the while that Stalin's war aims would dissolve into a new found enthusiasm for the world peace-keeping organization. With his Allies unwilling to discuss war spoils at all, either in monetary or territorial terms, Stalin's only choice was to accept the new American world order or pursue the goals he believed offered real security. As the war raged on and Stalin continued to stand firm in his initial demands, the relationship of the Big Three deteriorated. Stalin's unwillingness to let a world court provide for his nation's security became more obvious with the passing of each communique between the Big Three.

The Grand Alliance: One in Fact...Three in Purpose
By November 1943, Stalin was in a superior position. The victory at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-43, featuring the valiant Red Army, had determined the Germans would eventually be defeated. In contrast, the Allied armies were "mired in Italy in a theater of war which could not compare in scope or casualties to the huge Russian front." Embarrassed and feeling somewhat guilty, neither Roosevelt nor Churchill had the stamina to deny Stalin the requests he felt he deserved. At this point in the war the West needed the Red Army, which was busy rolling back German troops from "the dangerous opening of the German front between Stalingrad and the Caspian Sea." By the time of the first official meeting of the coalition, held in Teheran from 27 November to 1 December 1943, Stalin felt confident: the conference would be overshadowed by the broken promise of the second front. When Churchill wrote to Stalin in July 1942 announcing there would be no cross channel invasion, Stalin replied with candor:

As to... opening a second front in Europe, I fear the matter is taking an improper turn. In view of the situation of the Soviet-German front, I state more emphatically that the Soviet Government cannot tolerate the second front in Europe being postponed till 1943.

Yet Stalin would have to tolerate it, for the front would not be opened in 1943, either.

The main topic at Teheran involved the necessary military considerations needed for opening the second front. Churchill, still opposed to a cross channel invasion, feared more for his land army than anything else, knowing that a crushing defeat at Normandy would only facilitate Hitler. Roosevelt had allowed Churchill to convince him of this for almost two years, but at Teheran he firmly agreed with Stalin:
"Operation Overlord" would commence the following May, 1944. Stalin was thrilled. It became clear to all that the front would become a reality, thanks to Roosevelt's insistence.

Roosevelt and Stalin had a rapport that did not include Churchill, and it is possible the issue of the front had much to do with establishing this understanding. Roosevelt, always willing to meet Stalin more than halfway, felt with conviction that he would have to be the more conciliatory of the two if his peace-making organization was to triumph. He knew post-war peace could not be kept without Moscow's cooperation. Nowhere is this conviction more evident than in the discussions held at Teheran regarding Poland. Poland's fate was decided at Teheran: Stalin would have a free and open hand in Poland, and Eastern Europe as well.

Some historians believe the Polish problem to be the nemesis of the coalition, lurking in every discussion and compromise. Others believe the same to be true of Germany, which the Soviet Union expected to pay dearly for the destruction of its homeland. The thrust of the Polish problem came from the Polish government-in-exile, which Britain had harbored since Hitler's 1939 invasion. The invasion of Poland ended the West's policy of appeasement, sending Britain and France into war against Germany. Churchill, constantly under pressure to secure a Poland free of Soviet influence, found himself in a difficult mediating position between Moscow and the London Poles. Stalin correctly surmised the hostility of the government-in-exile, and he tenaciously refused to accept an "unfriendly" government on his border.

Roosevelt cared only that the Polish government be representative
of the people; this would please his home crowd. Roosevelt hoped public opinion and gestures of good will would ultimately convince Stalin to allow self-determination in the buffer states. In 1943, though, Roosevelt held no illusions regarding Stalin's feelings about spheres of influence. A personal communique from U.S. Soviet Ambassador Averell Harriman to FDR written in October 1943 during the Moscow Conference demonstrates Roosevelt's awareness of Stalin's post-war ambitions. Three difficulties stood out in Harriman's mind: 1) the Soviet Union's firm stand on the position taken for recognition of their 1939 border; 2) their intention to be very tough on Germany; and 3) the Polish situation. Harriman also called attention to Washington's reluctance to discuss Stalin's post-war aims, and how that approach had so far misled the Soviets:

Although Soviet territorial questions were never raised... it can only be inferred that the Soviet Government expects to stand firmly on the position they have already taken in regard to their 1941 borders. I believe they have the impression that this has been tacitly accepted by the British, and the fact that we did not bring up the issue may have given them the impression that we would not raise serious objections in the future.

This, however, is exactly the impression Roosevelt wished to convey.

Roosevelt and his advisors agreed there was little anyone could do short of war to prevent Stalin from taking back the territory he believed rightfully belonged to him. Roosevelt was not about to go to war for the self-determination of Eastern Europe, regardless of what the Atlantic Charter had to say. This might create a dilemma for the American people, but cooperation with the Soviet Union for the remainder of the war and in the post-war world dominated Roosevelt's
thinking at this time. A discussion the President had with Anthony Eden in March 1943 revealed as much. Harry Hopkins recorded the conversation:

The President said that, after all, the big powers would have to decide what Poland should have and that he, the President, did not intend to go to the Peace Conference and bargain with Poland or other small states; as far as Poland is concerned, the important thing is to set it up in a way that will help maintain the peace of the world.

The President's attitude became evident in a secret conversation Roosevelt held with Stalin on 1 December. At the meeting, Roosevelt explained to Stalin the importance of public opinion in American politics:

He added that there were in the United States from six to seven million Americans of Polish extraction, and as a practical man, he did not wish to lose their vote. He said he personally agreed with the views of Marshall Stalin as to the necessity of the restoration of a Polish state...He hoped, however, that the Marshall would understand that for political reasons outlined above, he could not participate in any decision here in Teheran or even next winter.

The conversation continued, and the question of self-determination among states was discussed. Roosevelt explained to Stalin, very patiently, as one would to a child, how "he thought that world opinion would want some expression of the will of the people, perhaps not immediately after their re-occupation by Soviet forces, but some day..." Stalin's reply was not child-like, but clever and accusatory:

The Marshall replied that the three Baltic republics had no autonomy under the last Czar who had been an ally of Great Britain and the United States, but that no one had raised the question of public opinion, and he did not quite see why it was being raised now. The President replied that the truth of the matter was that the public neither knew nor understood. Marshall Stalin answered that they should be informed and some propaganda work be done. He added that as to the expression of the will of the people, there would be lots of opportunities for that to be done in
This apparently satisfied the President, even in lieu of the character of the Soviet constitution. It is easy to understand why Stalin left Teheran with the impression that the United States would not oppose any territorial changes he wanted. It is the job of the historian to interpret words, and although it can never be known exactly what Stalin thought about this "peculiar conversation" or of Roosevelt's exact intentions, the words themselves are vague and do not connote a definite policy. On such words the future of Europe became precariously decided.

Brief discussions concerning Germany also transpired at Teheran. Stalin wanted complete dismemberment, as did Roosevelt. Churchill hesitated. Remembering Versailles, he knew the consequences of upsetting the status quo by totally debilitating a nation. The three discussed a few plans for carving up Germany and demilitarizing the nation, but settled nothing. Stalin, adamant about retribution for Germany's past sins, related this issue directly to the Polish problem. The weaker was Germany, the less chance it would rise again. Stalin made it clear at Teheran that he would conduct all future diplomacy toward one aim: Germany would never again pass through the Polish corridor. Teheran became Stalin's victory.

The only official documents to emerge from the conference were the Declaration of Iran, the military agreement on the second front, to be opened in May 1944, and the Declaration of the Three Powers, whose final words read: "We came here with hope and determination. We leave here, friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose." Yet amidst the
salutations and praise, the testimonial luncheons and dinners, a
division of purpose among the Big Three had surfaced—Roosevelt,
interested in the promulgation and establishment of his peace-making
experiment; Churchill, still interested in reestablishing a semblance
of power in Europe, the only world order in which he felt safe; and
Stalin, dedicated to establishing a sphere of influence to protect his
borders, unable or unwilling to understand the abstract principles of
democracy which Roosevelt would soon impose upon him.

FDR addressed the nation soon after Teheran. His Fireside Chat of
24 December sowed the seed of illusion that all was right within the
coaition. Historian Norman Graebner discussed the speech: "...the
President described accurately the imposing military situation,
especially in the Far East, but ignored, in his description of the
postwar world, the clear warnings of Soviet ambition in Eastern Europe
which Stalin had made no effort to hide. In the utopianism of such
public statements Roosevelt laid the foundation for eventual
disillusionment and conflict." During that fireside chat Roosevelt
told the American people:

We did discuss international relationships from the
point of view of big, broad objectives, rather than
details. But on the basis of what we did discuss, I can
say even today that I do not think any insoluble
differences will arise among Russia, Great Britain and the
United States....The doctrine that the strong shall
dominate the weak is the doctrine of our enemies --and we
reject it.

Roosevelt, willing to make an exception in the case of Russia's
relationship to Poland, failed to prepare the world for the eventuality
of a Polish government "friendly" to the Soviet Union.
The nature of this relationship became well-known at the Yalta Conference, held fourteen months later, February 4-11, 1945. Mild weather blessed the February conference; but Roosevelt's health was ailing and he felt put upon to travel halfway around the world to meet with his collaborators. Stalin, however, would not venture very far from his own well-protected sphere. So for the sake of peace and to quiet Churchill's clamorings for another peace conference to settle the Polish question once-and-for-all, Roosevelt agreed to meet the Generalissimo more than half way.

By the beginning of February, the Red Army had moved two hundred miles through central Poland, past the German frontiers, into upper Silesia. Soviet troops, less than fifty miles from Berlin, controlled all of East Prussia with the exception of Königsberg. In Hungary, the Red Army moved toward Budapest. Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe had begun, in spite of the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

Since Teheran, Stalin had begun to insist on the Polish territories annexed in 1939, and on a pro-Soviet Polish government. Relations between the London Poles and Stalin had fallen beyond repair by February 1945, so much so that Stalin could claim at Yalta that these Poles not only exhibited hostility to his government and carried out sabotage acts against the Soviet rear, but were conspiring with the Germans. There was little Churchill or Roosevelt could say against these charges, short of calling Stalin a liar; such a charge would have endangered the coalition far too much.

The incident Stalin offered as proof of the disloyalty of the Polish government-in-exile began in 1941 when the government set about
forming an army. Many of their top officers could not be located, and no explanation could be offered as to its whereabouts. On 13 April 1943 the Nazi radio began to transmit reports that the Soviet government had murdered the Polish officers in the Katyn forest. The Polish government-in-exile chose to take the German reports seriously and ordered an investigation. Churchill saw the dangers such allegations would have to Soviet-Polish relations, but he was unable to calm Stalin's furious redress. Stalin broke all relations with the London Poles denouncing the incident as proof of a hostile government under German influence.

The significance of the incident was its affect upon negotiations. The Big Three agreed wholeheartedly that any Polish government must be composed of democratic, anti-fascist elements. The action of the London Poles had not demonstrated their love for democracy or their hatred for Germany, Stalin asserted during the plenary sessions at Yalta. On 5 January Stalin wrote to Roosevelt concerning the matter:

I greatly regret that I have not been able to convince you of the correctness of the Soviet Government's attitude toward the Polish question. I nevertheless hope that events will convince you that the Polish National Committee has always rendered and will continue to render to the Allies...considerable assistance in the struggle against Hitlerite Germany, whereas the emigre Government in London assists the Germans by creating disorganization in this struggle.

The severing of Polish-Soviet relations prompted Churchill to write to Roosevelt on 8 January 1945: "At the present time I think the end of this war may well prove to be more disappointing than was the last." The Big Three discussed Poland in detail at the third plenary
session on 6 February. The President said he wished to see Lwow and the rich oil deposits of that area go to Poland even though they were within the already agreed upon Curzon line. Roosevelt wished to appeal to Stalin's magnanimity, still hoping Stalin would learn to bend to Western public opinion. Roosevelt pleaded rather than demanded: "He said that he was merely putting forth this suggestion for consideration and would not insist on it." Churchill said he was much more interested in the "sovereignty and independence of Poland than in the frontier line—he wanted to see the Poles have a home where they could organize their lives as they wished." Churchill pleaded, going on and on about how, for Britain, the question was one of honor—"it had almost cost them their life in the world." Stalin, whose country had suffered more than any other, who remembered with anger that neither Great Britain nor the United States cared enough about the loss of Soviet lives to open the second front before the war was practically won, remained unconvinced by either plea. He also desired a strong, independent Poland, for it had been a weak Poland that had made it possible for Germany to invade Russia not once, but twice. For Russia, however, "It is not only a question of honor...but one of life and death." Stalin would not recognize the London Poles as a legitimate government, and Churchill would not recognize the Warsaw, or Lublin Poles. The intense situation indicated the lack of progress that would be made at Yalta regarding the Polish problem.

Churchill continued to press for a written solution to the problem while Roosevelt made general statements that contributed little. He never wavered from his vow not to get directly involved. Churchill
insisted the Lublin government did not represent the Polish people and Stalin assured him it did. Churchill, of course, could offer no proof. It had been impossible to get anyone into the country to investigate up until this time, and now that the war had abated in the area Stalin insisted that attempts to go in would be an insult to the Polish people and the Provisional Government. Stalin said, after all, the Lublin Government had stayed to fight Hitler and assist the Red Army in liberation—it was to them that the Polish people had pledged their loyalty and thanks. The President felt free elections to be the most important consideration, the only real question being who would govern in the interim. Stalin promised free elections, but insisted the government be formed from the nucleus of the Lublin Poles who had already proven their loyalty and adeptness to rule. Churchill and Roosevelt proved powerless under the barrage of Stalin's steady and faultless arguments. Churchill and Roosevelt finally agreed to a "reorganization of the already acting Polish Provisional Government with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad."

Stalin made it quite clear, however, that he did not consider the Polish government-in-exile to be democratic or even close to it.

To this day myths surrounding Yalta flourish. Among the most famous are that Stalin broke his promise to allow self-determination in Eastern Europe and Roosevelt sold Poland 'down the river'. In reality none of this happened. The most accurate comment concerning the truth about Yalta comes from Admiral William Leahy, who was present at the conference. The final agreement on Poland, he said, "is so elastic
that the Russians can stretch it all the way from Yalta to Washington without technically breaking it." Since the Red Army already occupied Eastern Europe, however, Roosevelt wearily replied to Leahy, "I know Bill, I know...but it's the best I can do for Poland at this time." 87

Herbert Feis declared the Yalta Declaration an "ambiguous formula," destined to fail. 88 George Kennan had this to say about the Polish agreement:

The Yalta Declaration, with its references to the reorganization of the existing Polish-Communist regime "on a broader democratic basis" and to the holding "of free and unfettered elections...on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot," struck me as the shabbiest sort of equivocation, certainly not calculated to pull the wool over the eyes of the Western public but bound to have this effect.

Unfortunately, abstract ideals like the ones presented in the Polish agreement abounded at Yalta. The Declaration on Liberated Europe, another undefined document, emerged from the conference. Feis called it "little more than another avowal of devotion to ideals which all three Allies had approved many times before...Its loose net of phrases allowed easy passage to any determined purpose." 90 The Declaration, like the Polish document, makes use of words like "democratic elements," phrases which Stalin defined much differently than Churchill or Roosevelt.

Almost immediately following Yalta, as the Red Army continued its march through Eastern Europe and began to occupy the region, the Western world pointed to Moscow's actions as a breach of the Declaration on Liberated Europe, an intentional reneging of these highly cherished principles to which Stalin had pledged his support.
But Stalin had made his policies clear to Churchill and FDR, and both knew he had every intention of creating 'friendly' states in Eastern Europe. According to Gaddis, the real failure had been not to honestly prepare the American and British people for Stalin's intentions, and not to inform the world that the Allies had no intention of opposing Moscow if it meant jeopardizing the Grand Alliance, world peace or Roosevelt's United Nations.  

Graebner maintains that what occurred in the eighteen months following Yalta was very logical, considering the military and diplomatic history of the war. In 1943 William C. Bullitt obstinately argued for sending American troops into the Baltic states, liberating the region before the Russians. The only way to prevent Moscow from controlling the region, he argued, was to get there first. Roosevelt refused to adopt this tactic, not wanting to upset Stalin and determined to sacrifice as few American lives as possible. Withholding the second front made the situation especially ironic, encouraging Russia to "eventually occupy the vast areas of Slavic Europe which has comprised the historic territorial objectives of the Russian nation."  

The truth of the matter is that Eastern Europe, historically, has never been a part of America's interests or affairs. Graebner writes how, for American officials, the Slavic states had always represented political corruption, economic instability and strategic insignificance. Their significance to the Kremlin and the Tsars, however, has always been astronomical, and for the first time since Napoleon Moscow had an opportunity to secure this buffer zone, de facto. Americans mistakenly assumed that Moscow's tradition in
foreign relations could be supplanted by a new world order. Roosevelt ignored Stalin's quest for political security, convincing the American people and the rest of the world that Stalin had indeed abandoned Russia's traditional quest for a sphere of influence. This never happened, and Stalin never hid his intentions from his partners in war. Soviet foreign policy remained orthodox throughout the war.

Official Washington had simply promised too much. Leading the American people to believe Stalin had magnanimously changed because of the Grand Alliance and now adhered to the nebulous principles of the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration for Liberated Europe left FDR's successors little choice: abandon the Atlantic Charter and admit to Roosevelt's failed war strategy, or brand Stalin a liar, thus sacrificing the Grand Alliance and laying the seeds for the Cold War. The decision to take the latter route misled the world into believing Stalin had indeed broken the pledges made to his Allies.

Yet the document which bound both Churchill and Roosevelt to deny Stalin's territorial requests, The Atlantic Charter, the "guiding star" of the coalition, was one whose principles were easily bent. Such ideals calmed the American public, steeped as they were in the tradition of fighting wars for democracy and liberty for all. Yet Stalin had agreed to the Charter only with the qualification that the principles would secure support under certain circumstances, depending on the needs of the country. In spite of Stalin's clear intentions, or perhaps because of them, the agreements and communiques signed at the conferences were too broad to be binding, saying little in specific terms about what would transpire in Poland and Eastern Europe, leaving
Roosevelt's successors with no policy whatsoever in that part of the world. As the Red Army pushed Hitler's forces back, Eastern Europe and Germany became a huge military vacuum into which Soviet influence flowed. Left up to a group of men unprepared to follow FDR's unproven war diplomacy, United States policy makers proceeded to act in America's best interests; and this clearly excluded a socialistic economic system dominating part of Germany and all of Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Some contemporaries, like Walter Lippmann and Henry Wallace, spoke out in favor of allowing the Soviet Union to have its traditional sphere of influence. Lippmann argued that, after all, the U.S. had a sphere in Central America, and would soon have one in Japan and China. For Lippmann, the matter was one of limitations. "No nation, however strong, has universal power which reaches everywhere." Captain Thorneycroft, speaking to the British House of Commons, viewed the Polish conflict with despair, seeing in it the seeds for another world war.

We could not come back from Yalta with a blue-print for a new Utopia. The fundamental error into which my hon. Friends have fallen is this. The rights of small nations are not safeguarded by signing documents like the Atlantic Charter and quarrelling with anyone who does not agree with your interpretation of them.

Before the advent of containment came the United States' 'get tough' policy with Russia—based on the democratic principles of the Atlantic Charter which Stalin had allegedly violated. Even before the supposed violation took place, however, the Charter's main design eliminated the Soviet Union's political and economic system from the
post-war world and unequivocally put forth a new world order. Even Britain's pre-war colonial domain had to be abolished according to the precepts put forth in the document. Roosevelt had every intention of coaxing Stalin along, offering him attractive piecemeals like the second front, in order to gain his cooperation in a world totally different from the one in which he was used to operating. Roosevelt's strategy remained unfulfilled, and the Soviets became unfairly linked to the principles and vague words of a document which would, if given time, firmly entrench Western-style democratic capitalism in all corners of the earth. This Roosevelt's successors were bound and determined to do, with or without Moscow's cooperation. Stalin, on the other hand, had suspected such motives all along; he therefore took precautions early in the war to assure that such a world would not come to pass.

The seeds of America's containment policy, sowed in the years of the Grand Alliance, germinated soon after Roosevelt's death. He had left no legacy of foreign policy for dealing with the Soviets in either Eastern Europe or the world. Hoping the United Nations would prove viable in the face of future dilemmas, there is even evidence that Roosevelt hoped to hand the bomb over to the peace-keeping organization and the world's four policemen. Harry Truman, however, did not share the President's vision. Left without a concrete policy for dealing with Stalin and the threat of Soviet expansion and world-wide socialism, he and his advisors had to devise a policy conducive to their goals and philosophies—the establishment of the American tradition in foreign policy.
ENDNOTES


2. Feis, p. 22.


5. Gardner, p. 42.


15. Churchill as cited in Deutscher, p. 475.


24. Stalin's Correspondence, p. 33.


29. Ibid.


33. Ibid.

34. Roosevelt as cited in Stalin's Correspondence, p. 23.


44. FR:1942, 3, p. 583.
47. Stalin's Correspondence, p. 61.
51. Sherwood, p. 808.
56. Maisky as cited in Feis, p. 22.

63. Elliot Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), pp. 35-37.


66. Stalin's Correspondence, p. 56.

67. Deutscher, p. 507.

68. Ulam, p. 367.

69. Harriman as cited in Graebner, Ideas, p. 647.


71. Sherwood, p. 710.


73. Ibid, p. 595.

74. Ibid.

75. Gaddis, Origins, p. 139.

76. The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran: 1943, p. 604.


79. Feis, p. 484.


83. Ibid.

84. Ibid, p. 668.

85. Ibid, p. 669.

86. Ibid, p. 973.

87. William Leahy to Roosevelt as cited in Feis, p. 163.

88. Feis, p. 552.


95. Ibid.


99. Ibid.

100. Thorneycroft as cited in Graebner, Ideas, pp, 142-43.


Chapter Three—The Creators, 1945-1946

Dean Acheson, assistant secretary of state in 1945, later to become Truman's Secretary of State, entitled his memoirs Present at the Creation. The 'creation' was that of an American foreign policy which clearly accepted the responsibility of a world power in the post-war world, and all the tenets such a duty entailed.

Every creation must have a creator, and in this case there were several. Harry Truman, Dean Acheson, James Byrnes, Averell Harriman, James Forrestal, and Senator Arthur Vandenberg come to mind as some of the prime movers of this creation. George Kennan, also one of the creators, played a different role. He served to confirm convictions already held, to provide the justification for official policy when it finally emerged. Not everyone would agree with this assessment. John Lewis Gaddis, foremost authority on America's containment policy, would not.¹ Gaddis, however, does agree that "although [Kennan's] role was by no means decisive in shaping Truman's approach to the world, his ideas, more than those of anyone else, did provide the intellectual rationale upon which that approach was based."²

America's tradition in foreign affairs had, so far, been idealistic and self-righteous, with an intense dislike of European power politics. Furthermore, the quest for a thriving and stable economy had become fused with democracy, adding an element of contradiction to the creation of a foreign policy. No doubt America had endeavored to become an economic, and therefore a political world
power. By 1945 it had achieved the status it desired; unfortunately, it had little or no experience in the new role.

Acheson's memoirs say as much. The period of the creation of America's foreign policy as a new world power is one which he called obscure and ambiguous. "Not only was the future clouded, a common enough situation, but the present was equally clouded." Evidence shows this to be the case. Revisionists go to great lengths to prove that Washington's creation of foreign policy in the years immediately following the war became maligned by those who intentionally wanted to sabotage Roosevelt's post-war plan for peace. Such a view, however, is far too simplistic for the complicated situation with which Washington and the Kremlin had to deal in the post-war years.

Elliot Roosevelt's memoirs discussed the difference between FDR's administration and the new State Department under Harry Truman. The one difference, he wrote, "is that when Franklin Roosevelt died, the force for progress in the modern world lost its most influential and most persuasive advocate." As biased as that remark may be, the implications of it are accurate. FDR's devotion to a world peace-keeping organization belonged almost exclusively to him. An integral part of his personality, the attitude he held toward Stalin and the importance of the Russians in world affairs could have been upheld by only a few other statesmen.

Daniel Yergin, author of Shattered Peace, described Franklin Roosevelt's attitude toward the Russians as the "Yalta Axiom." The axiom depended on finding a way to work with the Russians, even to the point of agreeing to the vague documents negotiated at Teheran and
Yalta. Preserving the coalition for the post-war world remained the primary goal of FDR until his death. Yet, "The Yalta axioms were very much the personal possession of Roosevelt and a few powerful independent agents, whose only loyalty was to him. Those axioms had no institutional base in the government...Certainly, they were not popular in the state department." Even the United Nations, the one institution which may have assured the survival of some of Roosevelt's attitudes, lacked any real power for keeping the peace.

For this reason, it is difficult to accuse Harry Truman, or anyone else, of deliberately infiltrating Roosevelt's "Grand Design" with one of his own. In actuality the largest part of FDR's policy involved an attitude, a certain mindset, and very few people shared it, Harry Truman the least of them. Roosevelt certainly knew this, but for political reasons of expediency FDR felt Truman had to be his running mate in the 1944 election. The 'creation' which started in 1945, following Roosevelt's death, quickly became saddled with an almost impossible task—trying to implement an "attitude" with no institutional or legal basis, a dead man's dream with which few had empathized. Ultimately, it may be safe to say that few had even understood FDR's vision. Furthermore, neither Truman nor the creators knew what Stalin was going to do in 1945; Stalin himself did not know. Each nation knew what it wanted to achieve in the way of national interests; the difficulty or feasibility of realizing those goals remained to be seen.

Thus the 'creators' were not of the same frame of mind as Franklin Roosevelt. When assessing their scramble to implement foreign policy in
1945, it is prudent to remember this. At the time of Roosevelt's
death, there were few concrete agreements regarding the post-war world
and the territorial acquisitions which Stalin insisted upon having.
Left only with the ambiguity of the Atlantic Charter and the
Declaration on Liberated Europe, the creators of America's post-war
foreign policy had the freedom to determine policy and the success or
failure of the United Nations. Their attitudes determined the outcome,
resulting in the political containment of Russia which was colored with
the ideological fervor of the Cold War.

And what of the Kremlin? To what extent did Stalin bring upon
himself the American decision to contain Russia? Issac Deutscher
maintains that Stalin had no concrete plans, no designs, other than
what he had put forth at Teheran and Yalta—"friendly states" on
Russia's western border, especially Poland, and reparations from
Germany and other Axis nations to help rebuild his war-torn economy.
According to Deutscher, Stalin did not premeditate putting his Eastern
European zone under exclusive communist control, and none of his
demands for reparations from Germany or any other country could be
described "as a stepping stone for revolution."7 "...even at the close
of the war," Deutscher wrote of Stalin, "his intentions were still
extremely self-contradictory, to say the least."8

If this was truly the case, and evidence shows it to be, the
creators of containment, as well as Stalin, found themselves
floundering at the war's end, searching for a policy which assured that
each of their nation's self-interests would be met. In April 1945 the
new creators of American policy had little faith the United Nations
could assure this condition. Stalin of course never believed the UN could serve his country's security needs; but then Stalin had left Yalta under the impression he would be allowed "friendly states" on his western border. The agreement he made with Churchill in June 1944 confirmed the Russian sphere of influence in the post-war world. The one factor which had held all the loose language and obscure ends together, FDR, was gone. He had believed in the United Nation's ability to secure United States interests and modify Russian needs. The time may have come when even FDR would have modified his expectations; that is something we cannot know.

One thing is certain. A definite change in attitude can be detected after FDR's death, rather than a change in any official policy which may have belonged to the former President or the Generalissimo. Although this change was not necessarily a result of the President's passing, the creators of American policy felt they could no longer trust FDR's methods, what little they understood of them; and Stalin, perhaps remembering Truman's harsh words spoken as a senator in 1941, waited to see if the tenuous agreements drawn up at Teheran and Yalta would stand. With America's tradition in foreign policy steeped in open-door trade, it is not surprising that Stalin's emerging socialistic sphere of influence would not be tolerated. Likewise, the Russian tradition believed in the necessity of "friendly governments" in order to secure borders, making it almost certain the Kremlin would view any attempt to establish liberal-based democratic governments on its western border as unacceptable.

There is a big difference, however, between an unacceptable policy
and cold war. The decision to contain Russia, although formally adopted in 1947 with the Truman Doctrine, actually began two years before, a gradual process resulting more from the necessities of Realpolitik than anything else. The attitudes of the creators became manifested in the Truman Doctrine, an ideological statement designating the virtuous United States as an ensign to the people, the protector of all nations against the evil and totalitarian Soviet Union. Such rhetoric, true to the American tradition in foreign policy, justified U.S. intervention into Greece and assured Congressional approval of such an action. Stalin also intimated to his people the bellicose nature of their past-ally, and the hopelessness of working together to negotiate a post-war peace. What actually happened, however, was the formulation of the belief, on both sides, that future negotiations would prove futile in obtaining the interests both nations insisted upon having—a precept Roosevelt had refused to accept.

Truman: "...and the Russians can go to hell"

In the 1920's, after the State Department had decided to reject the new Bolshevik state, it set up an "observation post" in the Baltic port city of Riga. Having adopted a policy of nonrecognition, the State Department simply hoped the Bolsheviks would disappear. As DeWitt Clinton Poole, a State Department official at the time wrote, there was a "breach between the Bolsheviks and the rest of the world." The year 1933 brought a renewal of expectations to the
relationship between Russia and America. William Bullitt, Roosevelt's choice for the first U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, eagerly anticipated working with the Russians. George Kennan was also in Moscow during the 1930's. Called "Bullitt's bright boy," Kennan recalls in his memoirs how "Words would fail me if I were to try to convey in this context the excitement, the enjoyment, the fascination...of this initial service in Moscow."^13

By 1935, however, the assassination of Sergei Kirov, a powerful Communist leader and the most plausible man to succeed Stalin, had taken place, marking the beginning of Stalin's purges and the end of expectations for successful negotiations between the democratic Americans and the dictatorial Russians. Bullitt's reports to Roosevelt recoiled in bitterness and spoke of insurmountable difficulties, yet much to the ambassador's chagrin Roosevelt refused to be convinced to adopt a "hard line." Kennan wrote of those years:

...the terrible cloud of suspicion and violence, of sinister, unidentifiable terror and 'sauve qui peut' denunciations, began to gather over Russia, only to unleash upon it some months later the full horror of the purges, and to continue to darken it, in one degree or another until Stalin's death in 1953. With this event the atmosphere for the conduct of any sort of diplomatic work in Moscow, by anyone, deteriorated drastically...

According to Daniel Yergin, the pessimism of those years continued to exist in the State Department, only to resurface following FDR's death. "If one had taken a snapshot of the career staff sometime during those first couple of years of relations, it would have shown many of the men who were to become State Department experts on Soviet and communist affairs in the mid and late 1940's."^15 Yergin adds: "As
U.S. leaders attempted, after World War II, to analyze Soviet policy and select an appropriate American course, this group's position provided one end of the spectrum of the debate. Eventually its axioms triumphed.¹⁶

Harry Truman seemed to have been unduly influenced by this end of the "spectrum," although he had the benefit of advice from the other end as well. There were those like Henry Wallace and Secretary of War Henry Stimson who warned against adopting a 'get tough' policy toward the Russians.

There is much debate concerning Truman's attitude toward FDR's policy and his intentions to carry it out. Evidence shows Truman did have every intention of adhering to his predecessor's policies, but his ignorance of FDR's war-time diplomacy saddled him with a low self-esteem. Understandably, Truman felt compelled to appear tough and decisive to compensate for such a tremendous oversight. Even so, Truman was characteristically prone to rashness as his 1941 remark regarding Germany and the Russians proved. It was very important to Truman that he be in control, leading him to make hasty decisions before all the details had been examined. He exhibited a sensitivity to knowing so little about current foreign affairs, and expressed anxiety that Roosevelt had not taken the care to brief him on the most important issues of the day.¹⁷ Even though he had to rely on the advice of those closest to the situation, he clearly indicated he would make any changes he thought necessary. Truman wrote in his memoirs:

I always fully supported the Roosevelt program, but I knew that certain administrative weaknesses existed... I was well aware of this, and even on that first day I knew I would eventually have to make changes, both in the Cabinet
Truman believed in FDR's program for peace, and probably believed he carried it out the best he could under the circumstances. He never did possess Roosevelt's patience and subtleness, however, and this became obvious in his dealings with the Soviets.

One of the people Truman sought the advice of in those early months was Averell Harriman, the United States ambassador to Russia between 1943 and 1946. William Appleman Williams described Harriman as "one of the many wealthy industrial banking leaders who supported FDR." Although this is true, it was Harriman's earlier business dealings with the Soviets in 1925 which led him to believe, initially, that Stalin and the Russians could be reasonable partners in both war and peace. This conviction, in fact, influenced FDR's decision to appoint Harriman, whom he felt would prove an excellent negotiator, determined to find resolutions for even the most difficult problems. Roosevelt was correct in this judgment. Like FDR, Harriman at first did not feel alarm at Stalin's intentions in Eastern Europe, content that the dictator and the Kremlin "do not wish to foment revolution along their borders or to cause disorder which would threaten international stability." Historian Deborah Larson points out that neither FDR nor Harriman had any patience for the London Poles, feeling them to be aristocratic landowners hostile to Stalin. Both statesmen wanted to see a Polish government sympathetic to the Soviet Union and willing to call on it for any future security problems.

Gaddis believes no one did more to shape Truman's views than Harriman, who began to advocate a quid pro quo treatment of Russia as
early as September 1944, mostly in reaction to the Warsaw uprising of July 1944. Harriman became deeply disillusioned following the uprising. As underground Poles desperately tried to liberate their capital before the Red Army arrived, Stalin maliciously halted his troops outside the city and let Warsaw be rampaged. This maneuver resulted in the destruction of most of the anti-Soviet political factions within the capital. Pleas from Churchill as well as Roosevelt would not move Stalin. "Under these circumstances," Harriman wrote in a telegram which he never sent, "it is difficult for me to see how a peaceful or acceptable solution to the Polish problem can be found."

Shortly after the uprising, on 25 August, Harriman telegraphed Roosevelt and Hull:

I have evidence that (the Russians) have misinterpreted our generous attitude as a sign of weakness, and acceptance of their policies. Time has come when we must make clear what we expect of them as the price of our goodwill. Unless we take issue with the present policy there is every indication the Soviet Union will become a world bully wherever their interests are involved.

Roosevelt, however, would not heed Harriman's advice. Discussing Roosevelt's lack of discernment, the Ambassador wrote:

He has no conception of the determination of the Russians to settle matters in which they consider that they have a vital interest...The President still feels he can persuade Stalin to alter his point of view on many matters that, I am satisfied, Stalin will never agree to.

It is not surprising, then, that Harriman warned Truman during their first meeting on 20 April 1945 of a "barbarian invasion of Europe." The Ambassador called for a reconsideration of present U.S. policy and "the abandonment of any illusion that the Soviet government
was likely to act in accordance with the principles to which the rest of the world held in international affairs."

Three days later Harry Truman called together a special conference with his chief military and diplomatic advisors to get some opinions on the current status of the Polish situation. Molotov was in Washington, and Truman had already met with him once. He had another meeting scheduled later that afternoon. Present at the advisory council were Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Henry Stimson, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, Admiral William Leahy, General George Marshall, Admiral Ernest King, Ambassador Averell Harriman, General John Deane, and Charles Bohlen. This landmark meeting clearly illustrated the difference between Truman's and Roosevelt's approach to the Russians.

Truman began by stating how, up until now, the "Yalta agreements had so far been a one way street and that could not continue. He would go ahead with the plans for San Francisco, and if the Russians did not care to join, they could "go to hell." "It may well be that Roosevelt would have resisted the acceptance of the Lublin Government in Poland...," wrote revisionist D.F. Fleming, "but without telling the Russians to go to hell." "

Truman then moved around the room, asking each one present to state his opinion. Stimson went first. He favored "caution." In the big military matters the Soviets had always kept their word, he said, and had often gone even one better. Concerning the border countries, it was important to find out what Soviet intentions were. Much of Poland, after all, had been part of the Soviet Union prior to World War I, and the Russians took the Polish question very seriously. Later,
Stimson would point out that aside from the United States and Great Britain, very few countries understood free elections.

Ambassador Harriman believed the real issue to be whether the United States was to be a "party to a program of Soviet domination of Poland." Stimson interjected at this point that perhaps the Russians were being a bit more realistic than the United States regarding their own security. Leahy then spoke up with some additional pragmatic reasoning. Directly following Yalta, the Admiral had been the one to tell FDR that the Crimea declaration was "so elastic that the Russians can stretch it all the way from Yalta to Washington without technically breaking it." He now repeated the concept, explaining how he had left Yalta with the impression that the Kremlin had no intention of permitting a free government to operate in Poland. "In his opinion Yalta was susceptible of two interpretations." In the same breath, though, Leahy voiced the contradiction that the United States should tell Russia it stood for a free, independent Poland.

Secretary Stettinius voiced his opinion that Stalin had broken the Yalta agreement. Forrestal agreed with this. "He had felt for some time...that the Soviets believed we would not object if they took over all of Eastern Europe. Better to have a showdown now than later."

After hearing all the opinions, Truman dismissed the conclave, keeping with him Stettinius, Harriman, Dunn and Bohlen to help work out an agenda for the meeting scheduled later that afternoon. When Molotov entered the room, the President came right to the point. He told the Russian the United States had made all the concessions it intended to make regarding the Polish situation, that Stalin simply had not lived
up to the Yalta agreement, and it was most doubtful if Congress would appropriate any money for post-war economic assistance unless the Polish problem was solved in accordance with the decision reached at the Crimea.

"I have never been talked to like that in my life," Molotov retaliated in protest. "Carry out your agreements," Truman shot back, "and you won't get talked to like that." 33

Even Harriman reacted with dismay at the President's rough language. "The years of labor by Roosevelt and Hull...were cancelled out on April 23, 1945," Fleming wrote regarding the tongue-lashing Molotov received at the hand of Truman. 34

If the meeting between Truman and his advisors proved anything, however, it was that Washington lacked any post-war policy for dealing with the Russians. The men present were uncertain of exactly what course to follow. They only knew their own personal feelings—regarding the present situation, the Russians themselves and what it had been like to deal with them in the past. Stimson criticized both Harriman and Deane for their attempts to convince Truman to pursue a "tougher policy" at that April meeting, citing past experiences as a reason for their attitude.

They (Harriman and Deane) have been suffering personally from the Russians' behavior on minor matters for a long time, and they have been urging firmness in dealing on these smaller matters & we have been backing them up, but now they were evidently influenced by their past bad treatment & they moved for strong words by the President on a strong position. 35

The "Riga Axiom" was triumphing.

Molotov left Washington angrily. The peace conference of the Big
Three loomed ahead, its date unknown; and still an agreement regarding Poland had not been reached. Truman decided to send Harry Hopkins to Moscow to try to patch things up, to smooth over the rough spots he himself had created. Gaddis contends this attempt by Truman symbolized his earnestness to carry out Roosevelt's program, to work with the Russians in the best 'Rooseveltian' fashion. This was Truman's intention, regardless of his tone, which Gaddis called "belligerent rhetoric." He purposely sent Hopkins to Moscow, knowing the secretary of commerce represented a close link between Stalin and Roosevelt.

Hopkins managed to negotiate a compromise for the Polish conflict, and Truman felt the results had at least accomplished a return to normality in negotiations between the two powers. It was Stalin's suggestion to allow four representatives from the London Poles-in-exile to be on the current Polish Provisional Government. Hopkins urged Truman to accept the compromise, and he did—with reservations. "This did not settle the Polish problem," Truman wrote. "All that was accomplished was to break the deadlock between ourselves and the Russians..." Hopkins managed to successfully negotiate the problem because he assured Stalin, as had Roosevelt, that the United States wanted to have "friendly countries all along the Soviet borders." And Truman, also like Roosevelt, felt compelled to gloss over this concession and hide it from the American public.

Gaddis maintains that the Polish compromise left the question of German war reparations the major issue facing Potsdam. This is partially accurate, but Poland was still very much a part of the German question. Poland currently occupied a portion of Germany, west of the
Neisse and Oder rivers, an area rich in food production. Stalin wanted the western border of Poland to include this portion of Germany, believing it should be compensation for Polish sufferings. In reality, he wanted a larger, "friendly" Poland on Russia's western border. Churchill, understandably, voiced the most concern about this. Once American troops pulled out of Europe, it would be left to Britain and France to meet the needs of the German people. With a large area of their food source under Polish control, Germany would be difficult to feed. The rest of Western Europe as well would not have the benefit of this area's food source.

At first, Roosevelt had agreed with Stalin's desire to see Germany economically ruined after the war. The initial terms for unconditional surrender, proposed in the Morgantheu Plan, would have starved the Germans to death. More rational thinking prevailed as the war wore on, however, and Washington came to realize that social and political chaos would be the only result if the Germans were not fed and employed. More important, it would be impossible to establish a democratic, and therefore capitalistic government in such an economically weak atmosphere.

The question of war reparations from Germany opened up a real pandora's box. Even though Britain and America were not prepared to restore Germany to a high degree of prosperity, the Big Three, prior to Potsdam, could not come to terms on just how much Germany should pay for its crime. Truman had threatened Molotov, during that decisive April confrontation, with Congress' reluctance to appropriate funds to any nation that disregarded the American principles manifested in the
Declaration on Liberated Europe or the Atlantic Charter. This left Stalin in a dilemma. If pro-Western governments on Russia's western borders proved to be the only way he could get post-war aid for his country, he would simply have to find other alternatives. No doubt the gravity of the economic situation facing the Big Three permeated the Potsdam conference; the fact that only America was in an adequate financial position to assure the survival of Russia and Europe put both Stalin and Churchill on edge.

The truth is, the creators of American policy feared a post-war depression. They also feared the survival of democratic capitalism in a war-torn Europe that politically tended to move toward the socialistic left. A depression in America almost assured the economic ruin of Europe, and American policy makers feared the triumph of socialism under such circumstances. Walter LeFeber, writing on the Cold War, contends that American foreign policy grows directly from domestic considerations, the most important of these being economic. Discussing the post-war policy makers, he wrote: "The ghosts of Depression Past and Depression Future led officials to a second assumption."

The post-1929 quagmire had been prolonged and partly caused by high tariff walls and regional trading blocs which had dammed up the natural flow of trade...Free flow of exports and imports was essential."

The new Secretary of State James Byrnes, whom Truman appointed to replace Stettinus in July 1945, agreed that "Our international policies and our domestic policies are inseparable...a durable peace cannot be built on an economic foundation of exclusive blocs...and economic warfare." On 21 August 1945 Byrnes submitted a statement to the
The United States is today a bastion of democracy and private enterprise. In many countries throughout the world our political and economic creed is in conflict with ideologies which reject both of these principles. To the extent that we are able to manage our domestic affairs successfully, we shall win converts to our creed in every land."  

A more accurate definition of the American tradition in foreign policy could not be found anywhere.

Most of the creators shared this 'Universalist' view. The ironic exception was George Kennan, the man usually credited with formulating the containment policy. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. maintains that post-war policy boiled down to a debate between the universalists and the sphere of influence supporters. Harriman, Byrnes, Acheson and Forrestal were all universalists, upholding Open Door trade and the promulgation of Western-style democracy worldwide. Capitalistic democracy, they believed, was the only insurance against the spread of socialism, a system which threatened the kind of world conducive to America's free enterprise system. Universalists feared spheres of influence and European power politics because such policies closed off markets and induced tariffs on exports and raw materials. Furthermore, if the American Congress felt a sphere of influence approach was being used to solve the world's post-war problems, rather than the United Nations, Washington's political atmosphere would once again embrace isolationism, limiting America to intervene only in the Western hemisphere. Without American intervention into European and Asian affairs, "closed trade areas and discriminatory systems would flourish," and the dream of the Open Door policy would go down in a sea
of socialism and European labor parties. Schlesinger pointed out that this dream belonged to Cordell Hull as well, who managed to pull Franklin Roosevelt back into its folds everytime he strayed from its precepts. Letting Stalin have the war reparations from Germany that he wanted threatened Europe's economy as well as its political systems, the danger being that Stalin would succeed in establishing a sphere of influence in Germany and other parts of Western Europe, thereby assuring an economy based on socialism in those regions. Stalin's determination to receive monetary compensation for his financially war-ruined country, and the West's reluctance to give it to him, badly strained the relationship of the Big Three.

Just how much these economic fears influenced the origins of containment is not so clear. Stalin wanted a sphere of influence in both Eastern Europe and Manchuria; and although Roosevelt had given it to him this was unknown to Truman and viewed with alarm by Harriman. On 14 May 1945 Harriman wrote to Forrestal that Russian conduct "would be based upon the principles of power politics in its crudest and most primitive form. He said we must face our diplomatic decisions from here on with the consciousness that half and maybe all of Europe might be communist by the end of next winter..." Harriman wrote of a conversation he had with Stalin in April 1945, when the dictator told him he expected communism to "flourish in the 'cesspools of capitalism.'" Advocating a containment policy in 1945, Harriman wrote:

The Communist party and its advocates everywhere are using economic difficulties in areas under our responsibility to promote Soviet concepts and policies and to undermine the influence of the Western allies. The only hope of stopping Soviet penetration is the development of sound economic conditions.
In the same month, Harriman recommended against giving the Soviet Union preferential loan treatment over Western Europe. He also criticized the Treasury Department's study on a $10 billion dollar credit requested by Russia. According to Harriman, the study overlooked "the determination of the Soviet Government not only to reestablish its capital investment destroyed by the war, but to embark on an ambitious program of expanding her industrial machine." It is hard to conceive of any industrial nation, however, not wanting to reestablish its industrial capacity in the years following a major world war. Later, Byrnes would 'misplace' a Russian request for a $6 billion loan.

At the Potsdam conference, one of Truman's most important goals advocated establishing international control of the Black Sea Straits. Such a requisition ensured Western control of a very politically and economically strategic area. Although his proposal called for "international waterways," the paper specifically named only the Black Sea straits to be under the jurisdiction of the Big Three powers. Stalin would have none of it. He wanted to control the straits and negotiate a treaty with Turkey allowing him to do so, much like Britain had a treaty with Egypt for control of the Suez Canal. Truman had a difficult time understanding Stalin's reluctance to allow the straits to be controlled by the United Nations Security Council. Calling his proposal a "war-preventative measure," Truman wrote:

The persistent way in which Stalin blocked one of the...measures I had proposed showed how his mind worked and what he was after. I had proposed the internationalization of all the principle waterways. Stalin did not want this. What Stalin wanted was control of the Black Sea Straits and the Danube. The Russians were planning world conquest.
The chance that this strategic area would fall exclusively under Soviet domination alarmed Washington. It was clear by the summer of 1945 that Poland would be under communism’s thumb; and the Rumanian government as well had a Soviet-inspired premier in command, put there by the Rumanian King at the Kremlin’s insistence in March 1945. Roosevelt, by the way, remained complacent over this development, feeling Rumania to be an improper place to test the Declaration on Liberated Europe.54

Truman and Byrnes, however, did not share this view. Negotiations had broken down during the final meeting of the Big Three at Potsdam concerning the recognition of several Eastern European states by Britain and the United States. The president asked for the reorganization of the satellite governments along the "democratic" lines as had been agreed upon at Yalta.55 Stalin replied that the governments in those countries were more democratic than the one in Italy, which had been recognized. Churchill and Truman would not believe this. Certain words irked Stalin, words like "responsible" and "democratic"—"If a government is not fascist, a government is democratic," Stalin hotly told his comrades.56 Truman told Stalin he had no way of knowing whether the governments were democratic or not. No one was allowed in, and the reports coming from within the countries were disheartening. "An iron fence had come down around them," Churchill blatantly told Stalin. "All fairy tales," Stalin retaliated. Nonetheless, Truman would not recognize the satellites until their governments had been reorganized according to the Yalta agreements. Churchill agreed and that was the way it stood. As a result, Russia
stood little chance of receiving any kind of economic assistance from
the U.S.

Following Potsdam and Stalin's refusal to allow democratic
elections in his sphere or the internationalization of the Black Sea
straits, Truman's fear of Soviet expansion intensified. On 13 October
1945, Truman wrote to Byrnes:

My position on the Dardanelles has never changed. I
think it is a waterway link with the Black Sea, the Rhine
and the Danube...I am of the opinion if some means isn't
found to prevent it, Russia will undoubtedly take steps by
direct action to obtain control of the Black Sea Straits. 57

Furthermore, the Soviets were beginning to show signs of their
ambitions in Iran. In 1941, both British and Soviet troops entered Iran
and divided it into a northern and southern sphere to keep the Germans
out. Plans for evacuation had been negotiated at Yalta, and it was
agreed all parties should pull out nine months after V-E Day. That was
not until March 1946. Now, however, the U.S. ambassador in Iran warned
Washington that Soviet troops were intervening in Iranian affairs,
attempting to incite Azerbaijanis, Kurds and Armenians to unite with
their ethnic brethren along the Russian southern border. 58

Truman, like Roosevelt, had paid lip service to the concept of
"friendly" governments along Russia's western border. At Yalta, then
later at Potsdam, the American government would insist it only desired
friendly governments; yet in the same breath it called for
self-determined governments representative of all elements of the
population. The two concepts were incompatible, something which
Roosevelt and Hopkins could not face at the time of their
negotiations. At the end of 1945, however, Truman had to face it;
Stalin had a sphere of influence which Washington could not allow to grow any larger. He had acquired this sphere with American approval, all because of the word "friendly," which Roosevelt, Churchill and Truman had tacitly agreed to. The only way to publicly admonish the Soviets was to claim that they had broken the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe. In the minds of the creators, Russia was carving out a sphere of influence which Washington simply did not want it to have.
Stalin: "...and the United States...would have to accept world-wide interests whether it liked it or not..."

The May 1945 meeting between Hopkins and Stalin showed the Generalissimo to be patient and conciliatory toward what he considered stubborn and infantile behavior. The refusal of Truman and the State Department to accept the Polish Provisional Government, a body "friendly" to the Soviet Union, could only be interpreted as hostile by the Russian dictator.

Harriman saw the harm in using such equivocal language. The following comment, made just after Yalta, shows this:

I believe at the time that Stalin meant to keep his word, at least within his own interpretation of 'free elections', although I had always expected we would have trouble over those words. He did not, in my judgment, sign the declaration with the intention of breaking it.

According to Harriman, Stalin was confident at the time of the Yalta conference that most of Eastern Europe would vote communist, and free elections would prove "friendly" after all. George Kennan, present at the Moscow embassy along with Harriman, could not agree. Harriman recalls how

Kennan argued that instead of trying to negotiate issues that were not negotiable, the rational course was to divide Europe frankly into two spheres of influence and accept no responsibility for whatever the Russians did in their sphere, because the United States and Britain were too weak to affect it.

A more accurate assessment would be that the United States chose not to affect it, opting instead to let the Red Army liberate Eastern Europe rather than sacrifice its own armed forces to get there first.
Harriman, rejecting the concept of spheres of influence, insisted on the principles of the Charter and the Declaration even though he admitted the wording of the documents to be "trouble."

Stalin admonished the creators of America's foreign policy during Hopkins' Moscow visit, telling the statesman, in essence, that America needed to grow up and accept the fact it could not have its own way in all parts of the world. Other powers' interests needed to be considered, Stalin told Hopkins, and the recognition of this fact is all part of being a superpower.

He said that whether the United States wished it or not it was a world power and would have to accept world-wide interests...In fact the United States had more reason to be a world power than any other state...  

The fact that Stalin recognized the power of his ally and the weakness of his own state is well-documented. Truman's memoirs recount how Stalin agreed with America's 'open door' policy and went out of his way to indicate that the United States was the only power with the resources to aid China economically after the war. He observed that Russia would have all it could do to provide for the internal economy of the Soviet Union for many years to come.

In April 1945, Stalin admitted to Milovan Djilas, a Yugoslavian communist, that it would be ten to fifteen years before the Russians would recover. In the same breath Stalin added, "...and then we'll have another go at it." The remark, made at a dinner party after the consumption of several bottles of vodka, sounded like Stalin anticipated another war; there is no telling from this statement if he intended to start it.

Whether or not the Soviet Union was on the offensive,
contemplating, even wanting, world domination, preoccupied the minds of
the State Department. Russia's perceived desire to forcefully subjugate
the world to totalitarianism and communism had become, by the end of
1945, integral to Washington's 'get tough' attitude toward the Kremlin.
Certainly, if Stalin was not on the offensive, the get tough policy the
creators advocated would not be quite as necessary. Evidence points to
the weakness of Washington's argument that Stalin wanted world
conquest, as well as to the Soviet ability to wage such action. The
very term "world conquest" is meaningless, anyway, unless defined in
more precise language. Certainly Stalin would have liked the widest
possible base to support the Soviet Union, to consolidate his own power
and help rebuild the economy to its pre-war level of production. The
dictator, however, had to be keenly aware of what he could practically
accomplish and what was simply beyond his grasp. Harriman himself told
the State Department in April 1945 how important it was not to
overestimate Soviet strength. "The country is still fantastically
backward...Mr. Harriman said he was therefore not much worried about
the Soviet Union taking the offensive in the near future."64
Apparently, Harriman neglected to convey this observation to the
President.

By the time Stalin and Hopkins met in May 1945, the Georgian felt
convinced United States policy makers no longer shared the same
attitude which had guided Roosevelt during the war. The Generalissimo
told Hopkins how the Kremlin felt:

It was their impression that the American attitude
towards the Soviet Union had perceptibly cooled once it
became obvious that Germany was defeated, and that it was
as though the Americans were saying that the Russians were
Stalin cited examples confirming his impression, one being the Polish question. At Yalta, Stalin said, the decision had been made that the existing Provisional Government was to be reconstructed, and "anyone with common sense could see that this meant that the present government was to form the basis of the new."

He said no other understanding of the Yalta agreement was possible. Despite the fact that they were a simple people the Russians should not be regarded as fools, which was a mistake the West frequently made, nor were they blind and could quite well see what was going on before their eyes.

Another example Stalin offered as proof concerned the manner in which Lend Lease aid had been abruptly cut off. Truman had mistakenly signed a paper terminating the final period of Lend Lease. Not only were all ships prevented from departing, but those ships already sent out were turned back, making Stalin furious. In spite of a reversal of the order and Truman's apology, Stalin called the manner in which the incident had occurred, "brutal."

The incident took place in early May one month after Truman had lashed out at Molotov, warning him that economic sanctions could not be appropriated unless the Yalta agreement, as he interpreted it, was adhered to. In lieu of this incident, it is not surprising Stalin regarded the abrupt termination of lend-lease as economic diplomacy of the basest kind.

If the refusal to continue Lend Lease was designed as pressure on the Russians in order to soften them up, then it was a fundamental mistake. He said...that if the Russians were approached frankly on a friendly basis much could be done but that reprisals in any form would bring about the exact opposite effect.
The Soviet Union never was offered any reconstructive aid in the post-war period. After the final protocol for Lend Lease ran out, the Soviets were on their own. Philip Mosley, author of *The Kremlin and World Politics*, believes the withholding of loans or grants to Russia at the war's end greatly affected the ability of the coalition to remain intact in the post-war years. Mosley wrote: "To make the cooperation stick, much more should have been done to assure [Stalin] of assistance in rebuilding the Soviet economy; as it turned out, Stalin and the Soviet people soon felt that their vast sacrifices were forgotten by less war-damaged Allies as soon as the fighting was over." Stalin thought so as well, as his conversation with Hopkins proved.

Historian Norman Graebner agrees with Mosley. The absence of reconstructive aid, and the refusal to discuss it to any degree, simply gave the Soviets too few alternatives. Faced with American intransigence, the Kremlin's only recourse was to create a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, Manchuria or anywhere it could find insurance for the survival of its war-torn nation.

Whether or not Stalin had a legitimate complaint is difficult to assess. Roosevelt had gone out of his way to give the Soviets maximum lend-lease during the war with no quid pro quo attached, even to the point of waiving the requirement of recording expenditures. Other nations had to account for every penny, but FDR did not want to offend Stalin. Of course, Roosevelt too had refused to discuss a post-war loan with the Soviets, although he intimated there would be one. Furthermore, he left all negotiations for reparations to the final peace conference. At Yalta, he did settle on a figure of $20 billion
to be the "base figure" upon which negotiations should proceed.\footnote{71} Stalin took the figure literally, and became quite upset when Truman and Churchill refused to set any definite figure for reparations to be extracted from Germany. Mosley contends Roosevelt refused to negotiate a post-war settlement because of the American public, which wanted very limited involvement in European affairs at the war's end.\footnote{72} Any sign that American involvement in European affairs included post-war economic and military aid threatened American entrance into the United Nations. Roosevelt did not want another repeat of 1919, when Congress had refused to join the League of Nations, so he proceeded with extreme caution—even to the point of misleading the public of Stalin's true ambitions and expectations for the post-war world.

Unfortunately the United Nations, the one institution upon which Roosevelt had founded his policy, disappointed Stalin even before the Potsdam conference had commenced. The United Nations Conference opened in San Francisco in April 1945. The fact that Argentina, a Nazi sympathizer during the war, had received an invitation to join, and Poland was still being excluded from the organization, upset Stalin. Stalin told Hopkins in May that this action raised the question of the value of agreements between the three major powers if their decisions could be overturned by the votes of such countries as Honduras and Puerto Rico.\footnote{73}

Gaddis sympathized with the Soviet point of view regarding the admittance of Argentina.\footnote{74} Even Harriman criticized the UN decision to seat the Argentines. The Yalta agreement stated that only those nations who had declared war on Germany by 1 March should be allowed entrance
to the UN. Argentina clearly did not apply.

Gaddis cites several journal and newspaper articles written at the time, all of the opinion that the United States was forming an anti-Soviet bloc of South American countries. Thomas Reynolds of the New Republic denounced an "anti-Soviet bloc" within the State Department and "called for Truman to remove these officials from office."75 The most influential member of the American delegation to the UN was Senator Arthur Vandenberg, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Secretary of State Settinius and he backed each other on most decisions made at the UN conference. Settinius voted to admit Argentina, and Vandenberg welcomed his support.76

Vandenberg viewed the conference more as a contest between the two superpowers than a workable peace organization. "The net of all this battle," he wrote in his memoirs, "is that Molotov won only at those points where he had a commitment from the dead hands of F.D.R. Otherwise, he would have won nothing. He lost every other battle."77

On 26 April 1945, while the conference was in session, Vandenberg recorded the following in his diary:

It was the consensus of Delegation opinion that we must "stand by our guns" at whatever point we are sure of votes enough to win....I continue to believe that this is the point at which we line up our votes...and win and end this appeasement of the Reds now before it is too late.78

Harriman had a meeting with the delegates the day the conference opened, "making everyone understand that the Soviets were not going to live up to their post-war agreements."79 Harriman's comment started a debate within the public sector which had been steadily building since Yalta. Were the Russians reneging on past promises, and were they going
to prove detrimental to the establishment of Roosevelt's Grand Design for world peace--the United Nations?

Most people mistakenly assume the main tenet responsible for the failure of the United Nations to produce a secure post-war world is the power of the veto--and blame the Soviets for their insistence on this. Yet America insisted on it as well, and in fact would have it no other way. Hull's memoirs recall how "we were no less resolute than the Russians in adhering to this principle." 80

The real inadequacy of the United Nations proved to be the lack of confidence both Washington and the Kremlin had in its ability to solve world problems to their liking. World War II involved more than twenty-five nations, all demanding their right to sovereignty and participation in world-wide decisions. "Small nations had been responsible for some of the world's troubles," Stalin told Hopkins that spring in Moscow. "He expressed emphatically his unwillingness to allow the Soviet Union's interests to be affected by such countries." 81 America's insistence on admitting Argentina confirmed Stalin's reasoning. Henry Stimson called the conference situation "'unreal', with the delegates 'babbling on as if there were no...great issues pending.'"

The San Francisco Conference as well as Potsdam convinced Stalin he would not have the kind of cooperation he envisaged having with FDR. Whether or not Roosevelt led Stalin to believe he could do whatever proved necessary to maintain friendly states on his western border was, by the end of 1945, a moot point. Washington insisted on self-determination in Eastern Europe; Stalin insisted America leave his
sphere of influence alone.

He had, after all, stayed out of Greece when British troops marched in to repress the resistance forces attempting to overthrow the monarchist party on 12 February 1945. As part of a bargain he had made with Churchill in June 1944, Stalin agreed to let England retain its sphere of influence in Greece, Yugoslavia and Hungary in exchange for a Russian sphere in Rumania and Bulgaria. The official agreement called for a ninety per cent Russian predominance in Rumania, a ninety per cent British predominance in Greece, and a fifty-fifty split in Yugoslavia. The Russians were to have a 75-25 predominance in Bulgaria. Officially, Roosevelt acquiesced in this arrangement as long as it could be cancelled after the war, therefore dealing only with armistice and liberation procedures. However, FDR unofficially accepted Russian dominance in Eastern Europe as fact by October 1944.82

Issac Deutscher agrees with Feis' assessment in his article, "Myths of the Cold War." Churchill and FDR had to yield Eastern Europe to Stalin in what Deutscher calls a "grotesque gentleman's agreement."83 The necessity of the war-time alliance dictated that Stalin be given his sphere of influence. "After the war, they had second thoughts; after the war, they wanted it back. That was the idea of containment," Deutscher wrote. What Deutscher left out of his analysis, however, was Truman's unawareness of Roosevelt's ambiguous agreement to a Russian sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.84 Harriman as well never became aware of Roosevelt's true attitude regarding the Churchill-Stalin agreement of October 1944.85 The Ambassador only objected to Roosevelt's complacency regarding Eastern Europe, a
situation he futilely tried to change.

Harriman's memoirs reflect an ignorance that would eventually infect all of Washington following FDR's death:

I don't understand now, and I do not believe I understood at the time, just what Churchill was accomplishing by these percentages. I know that he wanted a free hand in Greece, with the support of the United States...Churchill certainly knew that President Roosevelt insisted on keeping a free hand and wanted any decisions deferred until the three could meet together. The interesting thing is that when they did meet at Yalta, the question of percentages was never raised.

By Yalta, however, the issue had already been settled, at least in Stalin's mind, and Roosevelt was not about to jeopardize the San Francisco Conference with a public debate regarding Russia's sphere of influence. He had been prepared to let it go since 1943, and by 1945 it was gone: the Red Army occupied most of Eastern Europe, which it had liberated. Truman and the creators had to deal with this occupation, whereas Roosevelt did not.

According to Deutscher and Horowitz, Stalin upheld his end of the 1944 bargain. He yielded Western Europe to the capitalists, saving it from communism, sitting still while British troops moved into Greece in July 1945, crushing the leftist rebel forces of the National Liberation Front (EAM). Furthermore, Stalin supported the Chinese Nationalists, led by Chaing Kai-shek and in Yugoslavia he did all he could to prevent Tito's communist revolution.

Stalin did not pursue the above policies out of respect for his allies. Such a notion carried meaning only if it suited Soviet national interests. In this case it did, or at least the dictator believed it would. Stalin wanted the establishment of friendly buffer
states on his western border, as well as an influence in the strategic areas which had always been instrumental to Russian security and power. Roosevelt had done his best to accommodate Russia's security requirements to "lay a basis for long-term cooperation." Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to carry through his conciliatory policy.

Stalin, who had already gone to great lengths throughout the 1930's to consolidate his power, was not about to yield what he had gained through a long and costly war. Strictly a sphere of influence person, he understood nothing about Western-style democracy, believing it to be a farce. Because he only understood power, the creators of American foreign policy mistakenly believed they could deal with Stalin if they exhibited a power which matched his own. But Stalin reacted furiously to Truman's tongue lashing of Molotov, the first real action of the new administration's change in attitude. Stalin redressed Truman by reminding him that the Russians had accepted Britain's right to establish ideologically compatible governments in Belgium and Greece, because these countries were vital to British security. Why were the Americans giving the Soviets such a hard time in Poland? Stalin also resented Washington's objections to the Groza regime in Rumania—he and Churchill had agreed to Soviet hegemony there as well. "Truman had unintentionally reversed FDR's policy of conceding a sphere of influence in Poland, and refused to accept special Soviet prerogatives based on geography and proximity," historian Larson wrote. Stalin, no doubt, would have agreed with her.

By the end of 1945, both Washington and the Kremlin were convinced
negoitations between them would fail to yield what the other one wanted. In early February 1946, Stalin delivered his famous speech to an election committee in Moscow. He blamed capitalism for World War II, much as Lenin had blamed the Western world for World War I. He called for strenuous five-year plans to step up production, intimating that such plans were necessary to ward off future capitalistic forces, just as the five-year plans of the 1930's had saved the Mother Country from Hitler. He extolled the virtues of communism and the Soviet system, maintaining that the Red Army's strength during World War II had proved their worth.

Washington dubbed the speech a declaration of war. It came at a time when Washington had publicly voiced concern over Stalin's recent moves in Iran. Gaddis maintains the discovery of a spy-ring in Canada just before the speech also influenced its impact. On 28 February, in response to Stalin's speech and the other disturbing incidents, Byrnes called for an about-face in American policy, declaring that the U.S. should end the appeasement of Russia once-and-for-all. He also called upon America to take its rightful place as the preserver of the world's status quo against force and tyranny—Soviet force and tyranny to be sure. "If we are to be a great power we must act as a great power, not only in order to ensure our own security but in order to preserve the peace of the world." Senator Vandenberg, just the day before, had delivered a speech before the Senate strongly attacking America's current foreign policy and calling for the end of appeasement.

The change in American policy, however, had already taken place. In Stalin's mind, it took place the day Molotov received Truman's
scolding. And although Washington may have been unaware of it, their change in policy began ten months before when Harriman began influencing Truman to adopt a quid pro quo approach to Soviet ambitions in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. He had tried in vain to convince Roosevelt to adopt the same approach. Byrnes' speech on 28 February officially voiced Washington's decision to recognize the quest for expansion, coupled with tyranny, in Soviet policy. Stalin's speech of 9 February voiced his official recognition of the change in Washington's policy, and his own avowal to combat it.

It was at precisely this time that George Kennan, holed up in the Moscow embassy, fuming over America's policy toward the Soviet Union, received a request from the State Department asking for a detailed explanation of why the Soviets behave as they do. Kennan recalled the request in his memoirs, emphasizing the importance of timing in his answer, simply called "The Long Telegram."

It was one of those moments when official Washington, whose states of receptivity or the opposite are determined by subjective emotional currents as intricately imbedded in the subconscious as those of the most complicated of Sigmund Freud's erstwhile patients, was ready to receive a given message.

Kennan later questioned the capability of a State Department prone to such emotionalism. "Increasingly, with the years, my answer would tend to be in the negative."
Kennan: "Never—neither then [1933] nor at a later date—did I consider the Soviet Union a fit ally for this country."

The author of Washington's containment policy, George Kennan, favored a "particularist" approach to settling conflicts in international affairs, not a "universalist" approach. The particularist approach considers that "the thirst for power is still dominant among so many peoples that it cannot be assauged or controlled by anything but counter-force." Kennan sensed a deep foreboding about Roosevelt's policy to entice Russia into the United Nations by offering it concessions. "An international organization for preservation of the peace and security," Kennan recorded in his memoirs, "cannot take the place of a well-conceived and realistic foreign policy."

The more we ignore politics in our absorption with the erection of a legalistic system for the preservation of the status quo, the sooner and the more violently that system will be broken to pieces under the realities of international life.

Particularism did not reject the idea of working with other nations to preserve the peace, but it did recognize "a real community of interest and outlook, which is to be found only among limited groups of governments and not upon the abstract formalism of universal international law..."

It might be safe to say that Kennan belonged more to a past age than to the one in which he lived, to the time when a handful of European diplomats determined whether or not to wage war and what would be the fate of peace. Kennan had a great deal of respect for men like Prince von Metternich, Viscount Castlereagh and Otto von Bismark, the
accomplished plenipotentiaries of Europe's great nineteenth-century empires. Following the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, these men managed to keep Europe out of a world war for over 80 years. Kennan admired these leaders because of their recognition of one of the world's foremost realities—the quest for national self interests among great nations—and their determination to deal pragmatically with that reality.

The diplomats of the 1800's avoided war by keeping a balance of power among their nations; war waged by any one against the others would prove to be self-defeating. Kennan believed the "balance of power was and would continue to be the only glue binding any international structure." The ambitions of sovereign states could not be contained by any international peace organization, Kennan argued.

Stalin, after all, laid no value on peace per se. He was interested in a world where the interests of his own personal power would prosper. If "peace" would cause them to prosper better than "war," he would be for peace...if the day were to come when violence...would serve his purposes better than peace, no international organization would restrain him...

For this reason, Kennan disliked Roosevelt's second-front diplomacy and made no secret of the fact. Kennan returned to Moscow in 1944, after a seven-year absence, to find Washington engaged in what he considered a deplorable policy—trying to convince Stalin to participate in America's peace-making endeavor.

I found this persuasion to be unwise and regrettable because it helped to feed the impression...that it was we who were anxious for their collaboration and friendship, we who wanted something from them, we who, for some reason, could not face the problems of the postwar era without dangling before our public opinion at least the facade of Big Three collaboration.
Frustrated, Kennan found himself working on the problem of which non-Communist Poles to invite to the discussions to formulate a coalition government, never doubting all the while that it was a "lost cause." Kennan's own feelings on the subject were ignored by the State Department. Upon his return to Russia, he made the comment "that none of these reflections had merit, at that time, in the eyes of my superiors in Washington." 

The above observation is true of Kennan's entire career prior to 1946, when Washington finally read The Long Telegram. A pensive and sensitive man, Kennan remained obscure in the State Department throughout the 1920's and 30's. Kennan pointed out in his memoirs that the Foreign Service had been established in 1924, just two years before he entered. He decided to enter into the Foreign Service, as he tells it, because "I did not know what else to do." He left Princeton University in 1924 as "obscurely as I had entered it" and considered himself, at that time, "an ordinary youth, assailed by very ordinary weaknesses and passions." He thoroughly enjoyed the study of international relations in college, however, and had flourished at it. Even so, he did not want to pursue the field academically, believing it would throw him into an "occupational rut." He chose the Foreign Service instead, a career decision he never regretted.

His decision to serve in Russia, however, was a bit more pragmatic and a little romantic, both characteristics of this statesman and historian. He knew America presently had no relations with the Russians, but that they would be forthcoming. Furthermore, he remembered with fondness his grandfather's cousin and his namesake,
George Kennan, who devoted his life to the study of Russia, especially the penal system which sent so many of Russia's revolutionaries into exile. Calling it "a family tradition," Kennan embraced the study of Russia, its language, its people, and its foreign policy tradition.  

Kennan felt a certain affinity for the Russians and their late entrance into the Industrial Revolution. Raised in a pioneering farm family from the South, Kennan admits that the eighteenth century lasted fifty years longer for him—just as it did in Russia. His father found the new twentieth century that was dawning a bit "disturbing...and incomprehensible."

It is, I suppose, to this shallowness of grounding in the nineteenth century, and this inherited partiality for the eighteenth, that I must attribute the discomfort I experience in my own status as a contemporary of the twentieth.

Kennan also felt uncomfortable with the Russian Revolution, which so clearly pitted socialism against capitalism. He confessed that his own agrarian background provided him with little exposure to the reality of capitalism's exploited and exploiter. He admitted there must be some truth to Marx's theory, that the class struggle had to be a "real phenomenon," but he "retained the privilege of viewing it as the product of a tragic 'misunderstanding' (to use Chekov's charitable term) in the early development of industrial society, not as a dramatic encounter between demons and angels."

One gets the feeling that Kennan belongs, in part, to the Lost Generation, the Fitzgeralda and Jungs and Hemingways who had such a difficult time dealing with the global effects of World War I. In the introduction of *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order*, Kennan wrote:
I was a young and rather lonely young man, living in Germany and the Baltic states, consuming...some of the great German and other war literature of the Weimar period: Remarque, Hemingway, Bulgakov, and others. The initial effect of this confrontation through the printed page with a reality—namely the holocaust of 1914-1918—which lay scarcely in a decade past was to force me to ponder the immense and apparent injustice the recent war had represented.

Kennan went to Russia in 1931, to Riga. In 1934, after Roosevelt and Litvinov had made the agreements for formal recognition of the Soviet Union, Kennan went to Moscow as part of the official American embassy. There, he would be a witness to the Kirov assassination and Stalin's purges, becoming part of the disillusioned delegation stationed in the Soviet capital at that time.

Regardless of the purges, however, Kennan had not been pleased with the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements, accusing FDR of using weak language during the negotiations and in the subsequent treaty, "verbiage that had failed to be effective in protecting the interests of other countries dealing with the Soviet Union." This would be the beginning of Kennan's displeasure with the way Washington dealt with the Kremlin.

This episode has remained in my mind as the first of many lessons I was destined to receive...on one of the most consistent and incurable traits of American statesmanship—namely, its neurotic self-consciousness and introversion, the tendency to make statements and take actions with regard not to their effect on the international scene...but rather to their effect on those echelons of American opinion, congressional opinion first and foremost..."

In addition to FDR, Kennan accused John Hay of doing this in the Open Door Notes, as well as Harry Truman "when he gave the Truman Doctrine."
Kennan remained in Moscow until 1938, then he went to various places in Europe until 1944, when he was called back to Moscow in Averell Harriman's absence. He had been in Moscow only a short time when the Treasury Department wrote to the embassy, requesting an explanation of why the Soviets behave as they do. According to Kennan, what prompted the request was Stalin's refusal to join the World Bank and Monetary Fund. The query excited Kennan, who had longed for a chance to tell what he knew, what all his years of study and experience had taught him about the Russians. "They had asked for it," Kennan wrote. "Now, by God, they would have it."  

Kennan's main thesis of The Long Telegram, written 22 February 1946, would be repeated one year later in the controversial "Sources of Soviet Conduct." It discussed the intricacies of Russian diplomatic behavior. Kennan believed the behavior to be influenced by the internal workings of the Soviet totalitarian system. Because the regime had to maintain absolute power, it was imperative to invent a hostile world environment from which the people had to be protected. This would allow the maximum amount of control. Not only would the population be willing to succumb to tyrannical police methods "for their own protection" from outside malevolent forces, but the Soviet Union could erect an "Iron Fence" to keep the people walled off from outside influences attempting to cause dislocation. Propaganda denouncing the capitalistic world as imperialistic and war-bound helped to maintain the illusion of the necessity of the Iron Fence. For these reasons, Kennan theorized, negotiations with the Kremlin would always prove futile. The Politburo had to maintain an adversarial position
vis-à-vis the Western world and especially the United States, or its main reason for assuming absolute power over its people would disintegrate.

Kennan looked to Russia's history for an explanation of its inability to deal with the Western world, and the Russian Revolution itself, whose outcome Kennan had such trouble accepting.

It was no coincidence that Marxism, which had smoldered ineffectively for half a century in Western Europe, caught hold and blazed for the first time in Russia. Only in this land which had never known a friendly neighbor or indeed any tolerant equilibrium of separate powers, could a doctrine thrive which viewed economic conflicts of society as insoluble by peaceful means. 114

The State Department found Kennan's telegraphic message fascinating. Forrestal distributed copies to hundreds of naval and army officers, making it "required reading." 115 Acheson was given a copy, and of course Byrnes read it. Clark Clifford prepared his September 1946 report on United States-Soviet relations based upon its contents, a report which the President read. Schlesinger wrote that "much of American policy during those years can best be understood within the policy assumptions outlined in the paper." 116 Clifford directly quoted Kennan's telegram in several places of his report.

In the telegram, Kennan's attitude toward Russia was debilitating. He waited a long time for the opportunity to write the dispatch for the State Department. Now, the statesman felt a surge of relief at his chance to reveal the motives behind Soviet policy; and to put to rest once and for all the notion that the Kremlin would respond reasonably to negotiations. Although Kennan was well aware of national interests and the part they played in determining policy, he seemed to
forget that America had ambitions, too. Perhaps everyone in Washington did, conveniently.

Kennan warned that Russia would try to influence Turkey and Iran, and that it desired access to the Persian Gulf. The telegram's most important contribution, however, that the Soviet Union would be willing to consort with the community of nations if it was offered "large-scale long term credits" seems to have been overlooked by Washington, especially Byrnes. If Russia is not offered aid, Kennan wrote, "it is possible that Soviet foreign trade would be restricted largely to Soviet's own security sphere...and a cold shoulder turned to the principle of general economic collaboration among nations."\textsuperscript{117} This fact, that collaboration was even possible, is contradicted by Kennan toward the end of the telegram:

\begin{quote}
In summary, we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with US there can be no permanent modus vivendi, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure.\textsuperscript{118}
\end{quote}

The purpose of this paper is not to determine the accuracy of Kennan's analysis. Certainly there is a great deal of truth in the overall assessment—any totalitarian regime must have ways of maintaining control over its people. Whether or not Kennan figured out Stalin's main method of control is hardly the point. Washington's inability to negotiate a lasting peace settlement with Stalin could now be justified with Kennan's analysis—the Soviets were simply impossible to deal with, and always would be. No external offering, regardless of its efficacy, would move the Russians.
Washington could not admit to such allegations in the late months of 1945 and the beginning of 1946; public opinion still placed faith in the Russians, America's ally. The time would come when Kennan's analysis would be converted into policy, but for now Truman continued to negotiate with Stalin, hoping all the while he would not have to abandon FDR's Grand Design. James Byrnes continued to press for a peace settlement in the Eastern European satellites, but the September Peace Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in London, proved to be a fiasco. The American Secretary of State met privately with Molotov, before the British foreign minister arrived, hoping that such preferential treatment would convince the Kremlin that the United States was not forming an Anglo-American bloc against the communist state.

Regardless of the efforts to negotiate, however, relations between the two remained cool. Byrnes insisted the Rumanian and Bulgarian governments be reorganized according to the Polish precedent, allowing elements from other political factions to participate in a coalition government. Molotov insisted that Poland was different, that Bulgaria and Rumania were just as democratic as Italy, whom the United States and Britain had recognized with no hesitation. Molotov refused to allow any factions with Western interests into the Bulgarian and Rumanian governments, wishing these areas to remain explicitly under Soviet influence:

If the United States had been invaded by Mexico and the Mexicans had occupied a part of the United States as the Soviets had suffered at the hands of Rumania, the American government would not tolerate a hostile government in Mexico.
The failure to arrive at a peace settlement in September prompted Byrnes to try one more time, in December. He called for the Peace Conference to be held in Moscow, hoping the Soviets would prove more yielding in their home court. Byrnes managed to negotiate a settlement allowing for U.S. and British recognition of Bulgaria and Rumania, but the terms were so disagreeable to Truman that they led to the secretary's demise. This time Byrnes did business directly with Stalin instead of Molotov, whom he considered stubborn and dishonest. Stalin agreed almost immediately to allow a few other political factions to enter the Rumanian government. Furthermore, he would "advise" the Bulgarian government to broaden its political base.\footnote{120}

Truman angrily criticized the December conference for several reasons, the least of them being Soviet dominance in Rumania and Bulgaria. He was furious with Byrnes, mainly for political reasons. The Secretary of State had been, of late, failing to issue satisfactory briefings back to the President. Truman learned about the Stalin/Byrnes negotiations from the press; and even after Byrnes issued his report to Washington, there had been just as many details in the newspaper account. Truman disliked his Secretary of State's nonchalant attitude, the failure to keep him well-abreast of all proceedings. He began thinking about a new secretary, his first choice being General Marshall.

The main reason for Truman's disagreement with the December settlement went deeper than an insubordinate employee and Soviet hegemony in Rumania and Bulgaria. This is obvious from the angry letter the President wrote to Byrnes immediately following the incident.
Truman saw the threat of a chain reaction, not unlike the 'domino theory', in current Soviet policy if allowed to continue. In the letter, Truman voiced the most concern over the current situation in Iran. Truman compared the Kremlin's program in Iran to its takeover in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Now, it was clear if the Soviet Union was not stopped it would invade Turkey and take over the Black Sea straits to the Mediterranean.

Truman thought Rumania and Bulgaria should be the stopping point for Soviet expansion, a symbol to the Russians that America would not tolerate any more "incidents" that resembled expansion. "I do not think we should play compromise any longer," Truman wrote to Byrnes.

We should refuse to recognize Rumania and Bulgaria until they comply with our requirements; we should let our position in Iran be known in no uncertain terms and we should continue to insist on the internationalization of the Kiel Canal, the Rhine-Danube waterway and the Black Sea Straits and we should maintain complete control of Japan and the Pacific.

Truman was not finished yet, however. "We should rehabilitate China and create a strong central government there. We should do the same for Korea....I'm tired of babying the Soviets." The letter was written 5 January 1946.

Obviously Truman felt Turkey and Iran to be of more strategic importance to the United States than Eastern Europe. Like Roosevelt before him, President Truman never considered going to war over the fate of Poland or any other state which held so little strategic interest to the United States. The Balkans, however, particularly Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, provided a close channel into the Mediterranean and the oil-rich countries of the Middle East.
refused to recognize these states unless their governments were formed according to the principle of self-determination. Even so, Truman brushed aside the problems of self-determination and recognition, referring them to the Council of Ministers, to meet at a later date. A more urgent concern at Potsdam was internationalizing the Black Sea Straits; nonrecognition of the Balkans was simply a method of staying Soviet hegemony in the region.

Iran, too, caused concern. Strategically it held oil and a gateway to the Persian Gulf, the means to transport the oil. President Roosevelt began thinking of this critical area and its importance to the waging of modern industrial war early in the war. He placed General Patrick Hurley in Iran and other Mid-Eastern countries in 1943 as his "personal representative," to study the region for possible economic and political infiltration of the American way.

Hurley issued his Iranian "report" to Roosevelt on 23 December 1943. It outlined the economic and political shape of the country, making recommendations on how best to influence the nation to become a Western, liberal democratic state. "The policy of the United States toward Iran, therefore, is to assist in the creation in Iran of a government based upon the consent of the governed and of a system of free enterprise..." the report began.

By this program... of self-help Iran can achieve for herself the fulfillment of the principles of justice, freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom from want, equality of opportunity, and to a degree freedom from fear.

And, one could also add, freedom to trade oil with the United States. Hurley recommended that the American government assist the Iranians
"concerning the character and other qualifications of every applicant for a[n oil] concession."^125

Roosevelt found the letter "very interesting."^126 "I was rather thrilled," he wrote to Secretary of State Stettinius, "with the idea of using Iran as an example of what we could do by an unselfish American policy. We could not take on a more difficult nation than Iran. I would like, however, to have a try at it." Hurley defined the program outlined in his report as a simple plan "to promote the building of free nations."^127 The report also discussed the imperialism of Great Britain and the socialism of the Soviet Union, both obstacles which must be overcome if the plan to turn Iran into a "free nation" was to work. Hurley had faith in the ability of FDR's "world diplomacy" to take care of these little problems.^128

As the Soviet Union began to encroach upon Turkey and Iran, throughout 1945 and into 1946, Truman's foreign policy was bound to change; those areas dictated it, whereas Eastern Europe did not. His anger that Russian troops were still moving into Iran in late 1945, as the deadline for Soviet troop withdrawal drew closer, was manifested in the letter he sent to Byrnes. At the same time, Stalin was pushing Turkey to negotiate bilateral control of the Dardanelles, ignoring completely Truman's proposal for the "internationalization" of those waterways.

As Stalin correctly reasoned, internationalization meant that Russia would lose sovereign control over the straits, a goal of every Russian Tsar since Peter the Great. The Soviet dictator did not want to share control, and Truman was not about to hand the straits over to
him; their geopolitical position made them too important. Making that part of the world a United States sphere seemed the only recourse, and the creators of America's foreign policy had started thinking in these terms by early 1946. A report from the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Edwin Wilson, to Byrnes, dated 11 March, stated that "Soviet troop movement in Iran toward the Turkish frontier would indicate that USSR may shortly be in position to strike at Turkey if and when this should appear advisable from viewpoint Soviet interests." The report cited Soviet objectives as the installation of a friendly government in Turkey so it could secure control of the straits and "putting an end to Western influence in Turkey." In early 1946, Byrnes' memoirs also anticipated Soviet domination of Greece and Turkey:

Greece is apparently their first objective. They are likely to seek next the usual infiltration methods, control of the Italian government. This would be because of the military effect it would have on Greece and Turkey. I do not doubt that their ultimate goal is to dominate, in one way or another, all of Europe.

The Soviet Union, though, eventually backed down in both Turkey and Iran. Troop build-up in Iran continued until March 1946. A State Department report on the status of northwestern Iran, issued 23 January 1946, had this to say:

Although oil has not been mentioned during the current dispute, some observers believe the Iranian government's refusal to grant broad concessions in northern Iran to the USSR in 1944 is the cause of the present difficulty.

By 6 April an agreement had been reached between the Iranian government and the Soviets, the main tenet being "An agreement for joint Irano-Soviet Oil Company" to be submitted within seven months.
Russia was not the only country wanting Iranian oil. In addition to Roosevelt's experiment to make Iran a "free nation," American businessmen were in communication with the State Department for control of Iranian oil fields. A dispatch dated 4 August 1944, sent from the Charge in Iran to the Secretary of State, urged "upon the Department utmost necessity of prevailing upon companies to get their men to Tehran without delay...that American companies send representatives from highest executive level to complete presentation of bids, if an American firm is to get concession...to gain this rich prize for American interests will require quick action." 134

The Russian delegation, also on its way to bargain for the oil, did not arrive in Teheran until 21 September. 135 It apparently lost out, as the bid was accepted 1 September. The proposed Irano-Soviet Oil Company, negotiated two years later, did not succeed either.

The Shah of Iran did not want the Soviet Union involved in Iranian oil concessions, or in any other facet of his nation. On 5 March 1946, the Iranian government officially asked the United States to assist it in obtaining the "unconditional evacuation of Iran by Soviet forces." 136 Turkey as well wanted the Soviet Union to quit its harassment for a bilateral treaty to control the straits. 137 On 7 June 1945 the Soviet Union officially announced to Turkey that it wanted a base on the straits. Turkey realized it would need help from more than just the British, who were overextended in the area and "tiring fast....The Turkish objective, therefore, became one of securing peacetime U.S. military and diplomatic support for Turkish territorial integrity and the maintenance of the status quo in the straits." 138
The United States complied with that policy. On 28 February 1946, Forrestal asked Byrnes what he thought of a "task force" in the Mediterranean as a sign of support for the region. Byrnes liked the idea. He sent the USS Missouri to Turkey as a "show of flag." More ships were sent in the course of the year, and Forrestal announced that the American government would maintain a permanent naval presence in the Mediterranean.\footnote{By the end of 1946, Soviet pressure on Turkey had abated. With the Soviets retreating in both Iran and Turkey, it would seem reasonable to expect Washington to soften its attitude toward Moscow. The Greek civil war, however, going on at the same time, revealed a new dimension to the contest for hegemony in that region of the world.}

World War II brought real trouble to Greece, unleashing the forces which sent the old order crumbling and gave rise to a broadly-based leftist resistance movement.\footnote{Starvation and unemployment were rampant in the country by 1944, and the left-wing liberals would no longer trust their fate to a monarchy. Great Britain had always kept the status quo in the Mediterranean intact, shoulerding the responsibility for Greece's defense and liberation during the war. England harbored the Greek king, George II, during the war, well aware of the opposition growing against him within his own country.}

Britain's job became more difficult with the formation of the National Liberation Front in September 1941, known as EAM. Although organized by the Greek Communist Party, the EAM was predominantly a non-Communist organization, with a membership by 1944 of perhaps 1 1/2 million people (out of Greece's 7 1/2 million) and armed forces (ELAS) of about 50,000 guerilla fighters. Thousands of republican
officers, large numbers of women and peasants, virtually the entire labour movement, and a surprising array of clergymen and intellectuals took up the resistance cause.

After the liberation of Greece in 1944, Churchill favored restoration of the Greek king, George II, to the throne. The starving and war-torn population, under the guidance of EAM leaders, fought against this. Churchill installed a coalition government under George Papandreou. Although it contained seven communist ministers, it primarily consisted of political factions to the right and center. The people rebelled in December 1944, with EAM forces controlling the countryside. Greece's communist neighbors, Bulgaria, Albania and Yugoslavia, offered support. Moscow stayed away from the conflict, as Stalin promised Churchill it would. Churchill himself praised Stalin for upholding his end of the June 1944 sphere of influence agreement. There is doubt as to how much influence the Soviets ever had over the EAM, even in 1947, at the time of America's intervention.

The bloody civil war in Greece would continue until 1949. The dilemma for American policy makers was whom to support--the right-wing conservative politicians, clearly not the people's choice, or the left-wing resistance movement. It was impossible to support the EAM, which would throw the strategic Mediterranean into the hands of the communist Balkans, too close to Moscow's influence. On the other hand, the ideals of the National Charter promulgated self-determination and free elections. Roosevelt had favored an election as soon as possible, but the election continued to be postponed at Churchill's insistence. After FDR's death, reports from Lincoln MacVeagh, the American ambassador in Greece, to Secretary Stettinius confirmed the
need for an election but feared the result would be a government too far to the left.\textsuperscript{145}

American officials tried to push for a moderate government. Britain had maintained troops in Greece since its 1944 invasion, hoping to quiet the region enough to hold negotiations between the EAM and the British imposed government. Negotiations brought about several agreements, but neither side could suppress its hostility and anger. Reports coming from the EAM spoke of the coalition government repressing the resistance movement's freedom of speech and supporting terrorist raids throughout the countryside, trying to flush out well-known EAM leaders.\textsuperscript{146} In March 1946 elections were held, with the monarchist right winning. Only 49\% of the population registered to vote, however, and the left boycotted the elections.\textsuperscript{147} Seven months later King George's restoration to the throne sent the nation into bloody civil war again as leftist factions rose up in protest against what they considered an oppressive unjust regime.

On the eve of the March elections, Kennan sent a dispatch to Washington relating the Kermlin's account of the coming Greek elections. Quoting from the Moscow publication, \textit{Red Fleet}:

\begin{quote}
It is plain to all honest and impartial observers that elections now being prepared are an attempt to provoke Monarchist-Fascist coup d' etat under mask of "legality" and thereby deceive world public opinion. As Eleutheria stated, Greek people will hardly accept authority imposed upon it without resistance.\textsuperscript{148}
\end{quote}

They did not. Because of the right-wing electoral victory, the nation continued to be convulsed by civil war. The only thing keeping the monarchist government afloat was Britain's assistance, and that could
not go on much longer. As early as fall, 1945 London asked Washington for assistance in maintaining Greek independence against "what Western officials believed was a Soviet instigated threat." Throughout 1946, in spite of protests coming from the left, exposing the repression of King George's regime, Washington knew it had to support the undemocratic right or face the alternative: a communist government in Greece, bordering on the Mediterranean and the already communized Balkan states. The Greek government asked the United States for assistance, knowing their only salvation lay in continued support from the Anglo-American bloc. When the British officially pulled out on 21 February 1947, America readily stepped in.

The decision to intervene in Greece, assuring the continuance of a right-wing regime counter to the will of the people and the downfall of the leftist resistance movement, was the beginning of America's policy to support the government most likely to enhance the interests of the United States. The creators of this policy did not like the implications of supporting an unjust regime. On 3 January 1947, after the Greek monarchist government had already asked for U.S. economic assistance, Byrnes expressed the need for the government to change, to become more representative of the people.

Although US recognizes importance of Greek independence and territorial integrity, our views on desirable character and policies of Greek Govt have not changed...all loyal political parties should unite to form most broadly based govt possible dedicated to moderation...now is the time to subordinate unessential differences and cooperate in policies that will remove, as far as possible, legitimate criticism of Greek Govt and causes of internal dissension.

But MacVeagh assured the Secretary in the summer of 1946 that "No
'terrorism' can possibly exist in a country under Anglo-Saxon hegemony which can be equated with that which accompanies Russian-supported Communism wherever it goes." The State Department had to believe such equivocations to justify its own polices.

This is where George Kennan's role as a creator becomes so instrumental, for Kennan's Long Telegram provided such justification. Kennan himself admitted the timing of the telegram was perfect. "Six months earlier," Kennan reasoned, "this message probably would have been received in the Department of State with raised eyebrows and lips pursed in disapproval." Gaddis wrote the following regarding the role Kennan played:

To insist that Kennan's thinking either shaped or reflected that of the administration would be to oversimplify, for in fact it did both. Kennan himself acknowledges having played a decisive role in certain areas...But Kennan's overall strategic concept...did not emerge fully formed in 1947; it was as much a rationalization for (and at times, a critique of) what the administration did during the next three years as it was an impetus to those actions.

The State Department needed to ideologically assess the Kremlin's diplomatic behavior and relate it to its own. Losing Greece to a communistic-oriented regime in an area already under communistic control would not be sound policy. It was a question of power politics and the balance of power. "Containment," wrote Gaddis, "is just another way of restoring a balance of power in the world." Britain, unable to maintain its traditional role in the Near East, had to be replaced by America. Churchill knew it, and set the stage for such a takeover on 9 March 1946, with his famous speech delivered in Fulton Missouri. He called for an Anglo-American alliance, now that an "iron
curtain" had been drawn all around Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Anticipating the future, knowing full well his nation faced grave economic danger, Churchill used ideological fervor to turn the conflict of power politics into a clash between good and evil. He painted a grim picture for his idealistic American audience.

So did Kennan, although it was clearly not his intention. It was, however, exactly what Washington had wanted to hear. After the famous Long Telegram circulated throughout Washington, Forrestal brought Kennan home to head the newly established National War College in Washington, "dedicated to the study of political-military affairs at the highest level." His success in that position attracted the attention of Secretary of State Marshall. He appointed him director to the newly formed Policy Planning Staff in May 1947, organized to formulate and develop "...longterm programs for the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives."

It was actually Forrestal's request that prompted Kennan to write the famous "X Article," as "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" became known. The Secretary of the Navy was so taken by Kennan's viewpoints on Russia that he sent him a paper on Marxism and Soviet power, asking for Kennan's comments. Kennan replied that he would rather write his own views on the subject and Forrestal readily agreed. Forrestal liked the paper Kennan wrote so much that he gave it to the Secretary to read.

Early in January 1947, Kennan spoke on the subject of Soviet objectives to the Council of Foreign Relations, using the paper he had written for Forrestal as a guideline for his lecture. The editor of
the council's magazine, Hamilton Armstrong, was present. He asked Kennan to submit in writing the topic of the presentation. The result was "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," signed with an anonymous "X." The article appeared at the end of June in the July issue of Foreign Affairs. As it coincided with the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, and as it penned the word "containment," it correctly assumed the status as rationale for Washington's supposedly newly-formed policy.  

Kennan, in the article, explained that the Kremlin must be contained because "there can never be on Moscow's side any sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and powers which are regarded as capitalists." Its ultimate goal was to "make sure that it has filled every nook and cranny available to it in the basin of world power." It had all the time in the world, because it believed in "the basic badness of capitalism, in the inevitability of its destruction...." Kennan cited the hostility between capitalism and socialism as an inherent part of the Soviet tradition which could not be modified. "In these circumstances," Kennan wrote in the article, "it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansion tendencies."

Kennan called for containing the Soviet Union at a "series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and manoeuvres of Soviet policy...." He did not, however, consider all points on the globe to be of the same importance. This was the 'particularlist' in Kennan. The United States needed to restore
the balance of power, not try to make the world over in its image. Those areas which held the key to natural resources, raw materials and industrial capability were instrumental to U.S. security. Of course, Greece and Turkey applied and Kennan approved of the policy of sending aid to those areas. He did not apporve of the reasons Truman told the American public it had to be done. "The internal organization of other states was not a proper matter of concern for American foreign policy." For the creators of American foreign policy, however, it would not do to publicly create a sphere of influence in the Mediterranean and the Near East, an area vital to the Persian Gulf and the rich oil passing through it. Roosevelt recognized the growing importance of this area, and began making early plans to create a sphere there by developing a "free nation" in the truest sense of America's superior values and institutions. No doubt he believed in his own value judgements, as did MacVeagh when he wrote that no sphere under American hegemony could be as harsh as one under the Soviets, regardless of oppressive, right-wing tactics. Truman knew at Potsdam how vital the area was—he wanted to 'internationalize' the straits for this reason.

Stalin wanted the area too, and would not cooperate in allowing American interests to cut him off from it. He knew the limitations of his weakened nation, however, and backed down. Given this circumstance, it seems poor judgment on Washington's part to have created a Soviet monster and use it for an excuse to send economic aid to Greece in order to prevent a left-wing communist party from gaining control. Throughout 1944 and most of 1945, Stalin contentedly let the
British roll troops through Greece, stabilizing the country under its sphere. He did this in order to keep the West out of his sphere—Poland and Eastern Europe; and specifically Rumania and Bulgaria, the areas which he and Churchill had agreed would be under Russian dominance.

It soon became obvious to Stalin, though, that Truman and the creators of America's foreign policy had little respect for the deals which he, Churchill, and Roosevelt had made. There is no guarantee that Stalin would have stopped trying to gain influence in Iran and the Balkans even if Truman had cooperated by recognizing the nations in the Soviet sphere. Perhaps a large loan would have helped to convince Stalin that Washington desired an economically healthy and productive post-war Russia. In truth, neither Washington nor London wanted this in the post-war world; the power of the Bear was too great.

Roosevelt would have come up against the same problem. Cordell Hull's memoirs note a change in Stalin's behavior in the fall of 1944, right after Stalin and Churchill negotiated their little deal. Hull wrote that "we were beginning to get indications that the Russians were about to drive hard bargains in their armistice agreements with Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania..." Even though Roosevelt approved the agreement, he made it conditional for three months only; then it would have to be discussed. Roosevelt postponed many discussions until a later date. Although he died before the later date arrived, he would have had to deal with the problems eventually. No one, Roosevelt included, knew what Stalin was going to do in the years following the war. Within the State Department, opposition was also growing against
Roosevelt's methods, particularly from Averell Harriman. FDR, had he lived, would have had to deal with those objections as well.

Most evidence points to the "Yalta Axiom," more than anything else, making the difference. Even after Hull noted the change in Stalin's behavior, he advocated treating the Soviets with friendship. He totally sympathized with Russia's history, their fear of the antagonistic and hostile West, their xenophobia and suspicions. Roosevelt used this approach—it was his contribution to the war effort. Yet he knew the power politics of the world were about to undergo a great change, with America and Russia sharing the lead and Western Europe going down. He sought to control the ambitions of Russia by convincing it to cooperate in ruling the world instead of seeking to do it unilaterally. His efforts are to be commended, but they fell short of what was needed at the time.

The creators of America's foreign policy did not inherit Roosevelt's disposition toward Russia. They chose instead the "Riga Axiom," feeling it would get far better results in "taming the bear" and establishing a post-war world molded in the American tradition of foreign policy—Open Door, low tariffs and nations wishing to cooperate with such a system. In retrospect it is easy to ascertain the failure of their policy. It is not so easy to determine if Roosevelt's 'axiom' would have done a better job once the Soviets starting making their demands known.

George Kennan wrote in his memoirs that "Never—neither then [1933] not at any later date—did I consider the Soviet Union a fit ally...for this country." This attitude showed in the Long Telegram
and in "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," penning the word 'containment', officially making it part of U.S. policy. Yet Truman knew, like Roosevelt before him, that the post-war world had to freely supply, in the political sense, the raw materials and resources needed to keep America great. It came down to a matter of methods and attitudes only because Roosevelt failed to publicly address the issues when he was alive. The Soviet Union was never a fit ally for the goals of America's creators of foreign policy—Roosevelt simply hoped it would be someday, and that he and his "Grand Design" would be instrumental in bringing such a transformation about. The Grand Design, however, the United Nations, was not a viable organization for solving the problems caused by power politics in the post-war world, leaving the Kremlin and Washington face to face in cold war combat, each wanting what the other did not want it to have.


8. Ibid, p. 537.


20. Larson, p. 93.

21. Ibid, p. 82.


27. Harriman and Abel, p. 452.


32. Harriman and Abel, p. 452.

33. Ibid, p. 453.

34. Fleming, p. 268.

35. Henry Stimson as cited in Harriman & Abel, p. 452.


37. Ibid.


40. Larson, p. 185.

41. Walter Lefeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War, 1945-1971* (New
42. Byrnes as cited in Lefeber, p. 7.


53. Truman as cited in Gardner, p. 81.


56. Ibid, p. 360.

57. Truman as cited in Larson, p. 225.

58. Larson, p. 221.

59. Harriman and Abel, p. 414.

60. Ibid.


64. FR:1945, 5, p. 844.


67. Ibid.


70. Larson, pp. 85-86.

71. Sherwood, p. 862.


73. Sherwood, pp. 893-94.


77. Ibid.


84. The Conferences of Cairo and Teheran: 1943, Foreign Relations of
151


85. Larson, p. 78.
86. Harriman and Abel, p. 358.
88. Larson, p. 78.
89. Stalin as cited in Larson, p. 156.
90. Larson, pp. 155-56.
91. Schlesinger, Dynamics, 2, p. 191.
95. Ibid, p. 295.
98. Kennan as cited in Gaddis, Strategies, p. 28.
99. Gellman, p. 34.
100. Kennan, Memoirs, pp. 219-20.
102. Ibid, p. 212.
104. Ibid, p. 17.
105. Ibid, pp. 15-16.
106. Ibid, p. 17.
109. Ibid.


112. Ibid.

113. Ibid, p. 293.


118. Ibid, p. 557.

119. V. M. Molotov as cited in Larson, p. 222.

120. Larson, p. 246.


122. Ibid.


135. Ibid.


138. Ibid.

139. Wittner, p. 55.


141. Ibid, p. 3.


144. *FR:1944, 5*, p. 177.


151. Lincoln MacVeagh as cited in Wittner, p. 42.


161. Ibid.

162. Ibid, p. 337.


165. Ibid, p. 359.


On 27 February 1947, Dean Acheson delivered a persuasive speech to a select group of Congressional leaders, hoping to convince them to support the President's forthcoming request for military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. The meeting, by invitation only, came just seven days after Britain had issued two papers to Washington, formally announcing England's troop withdrawal from Greece in six weeks and the end of all economic aid in the area. Britain asked America to step into the newly-created power vacuum, taking its place and thereby assuring the continuation of Anglo-American interests.

Acheson, the under secretary of state at the time, did remarkably well convincing those present of the urgency of the situation. At the President's request, he and the new Secretary of State, General Marshall, had been busy drawing up the necessary paperwork to give to Congress ever since the British made their announcement one week before. Acheson threw himself into the task, which he considered "his crisis." General Marshall started to explain the situation to his colleagues during the Congressional meeting, but his commentary was going "very badly," alarming the Congressmen to the possibility of some useless and expensive American intervention abroad, undertaken simply to pull "British chestnuts out of the fire." It was up to Acheson to take over the meeting and, in his own words, "scare hell of out 'em." He did this.

Acheson described the pressures Moscow had been putting on Turkey in the last year in order to obtain access to the Straits. He also
emphasized the amount of Soviet propaganda which had been filtering into the communist forces in Greece. The move against Iran, Acheson said, "for the time being had failed." Acheson painted a picture of limitless Soviet expansion if the U.S. allowed Greece to fall to the communists, the so-called 'domino theory.' "If they controlled Greece, Turkey would sooner or later succumb, with or without war, and then Iran...From there the possibilities of penetration of South Asia and Africa were limitless."

Acheson told the Congressional leaders that the issue was freedom-America's and the world's-versus Soviet totalitarianism.

Senator Vandenburg, present at the meeting, spoke first and with gravity. "Mr. President," he solemnly told the entire room, "if you will say that to Congress and the country, I will support you and I believe that most of its members will do the same." Vandenberg wanted to be sure Congress understood the situation in the global terms Acheson had described. "It was Vandenberg's 'condition'," wrote Arthur Schlesinger, "that made it possible, even necessary, to launch the global policy that broke through the remaining barriers of American isolationism."

A few weeks later, on 12 March 1947, Truman made his formal request for funds to Congress. The statement became known as the Truman Doctrine. More than just a request for funds, his discourse announced
to the American people a new threat to their security, and hence the need for a new policy governing the relationship between America and the rest of the world. Without this threat, Washington feared Americans might have difficulty grasping the severity of the situation, insisting instead that intervention into European affairs had nothing to do with the security of their hemisphere. So Truman told the people of all nations that

>At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between two alternative ways of life. The choice is not always a free one.

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of the minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedom.

Both Acheson and Truman ignored the reality of the situation in Greece when they turned the internal struggle of that country into a necessary crusade against the evil forces of Soviet communism. The decision to contain Moscow's sphere of influence where it presently stood in 1947 was based on sound pragmatic thinking, an acknowledgement of the strategic importance of Greece and Turkey to the national interests of America—the need for economic and natural resources which could not be provided by the United States alone. Furthermore, Washington had been concerned with the region for years; its interest in the area was not new, nor was the threat U.S. policy makers now emphasized to Congress. It was only when Britain could no longer maintain the status quo in Greece that the situation became urgent.
The tradition in American foreign policy had been, since the nation's beginning, to shroud its ambitions in democratic rhetoric and the task of promoting freedom and justice for all. The Truman Doctrine offered no exception, and it is quite likely that the creators of America's post-war foreign policy believed in the illusion, promoted over the years, that nothing mattered quite so much as aiding other nations to adopt America's ways, means and institutions. Capitalism, of course, was the backbone institution. Creating "friendly" states assured its survival, but Washington could not separate its ambition that America be a rich and powerful nation from the Kremlin's ambition that the U.S.S.R. be the same. The failure to do so resulted in cold war, an arms race which could still erupt into a global catastrophe, and a containment policy which has extracted from the American people exhorbitant costs--in both human lives and revenue. Would it have been in America's best interests to allow the civil war to continue in Greece, inviting Moscow's eventual participation? Of course not. But what was the point of turning the power struggle there into an ideological battle between the American way and Soviet totalitarianism?

A study in the tradition of America's foreign policy clearly foreshadows this outcome. Ever since George Washington's farewell address, the ethnocentric concept that America must shoulder the responsibility to provide an example of democracy and justice to the world denied the possibility than any motive the United States might have was not wholesome and pure. Its people came to believe in both the creed and their nation's motives. As a result, the creed's very
existence has forced America, over the years, to strive for justice and equity. Even though its failures have been pronounced, the tenaciousness of its efforts, usually by a handful of determined citizens, is commendable. The concepts of justice and sovereignty, born out of the Age of Enlightenment, have set a standard for human conduct the world over. All nations are expected, to some extent, to adhere to this morality. Human beings as well as governments have created their own systems of chastisement for those who ignore such ethics. The credit goes more to Thomas Jefferson, who penned the immortal words that all men are created equal, than to the United States as a nation. It was an idea whose time had come, and someone had to say it.

It is not surprising that America, forged on this idea, has had to struggle with it ever since. Domestically and internationally, the United States has continued in its self-imposed policy to be unique and above reproach, feeling strongly that there never has been any other reasonable method of government than that of its Constitution and democratic republic. Regardless of the shortcomings, it was the best the world had to offer—so far. From time to time, the argument would crop up that Americans should first establish their morality at home before trying to push it abroad. Once the need for foreign markets became obvious, however, and intervention into foreign affairs a necessity for assuring those markets, the American tradition was too firmly entrenched; the American people would not approve Washington's intervention for any other reason than to save the down-trodden from the evil of corrupt governments.
If that sounds too simplistic for the realities of this world, its political systems and power struggles to date, it is. Moreover, it was when Woodrow Wilson went to war to end all wars; and it was when Roosevelt and Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter, the "guiding star" of the coalition, the "expression of fundamental objectives toward which we and our Allies are directing our policies."\(^{11}\)

The tradition of America's foreign relations, however, cannot serve as a good excuse for the eventual disintegration of World War II's Grand Alliance, the failure of Roosevelt's Grand Design, and the emergence of Washington's containment policy. Roosevelt was quite aware of the shortcomings of self-determination and the Atlantic Charter, principles he used to satisfy the American people. Throughout the war years he had to walk a tightrope, appeasing Stalin's war aims while allowing the American people to believe he did not have any. The pressure must have been tremendous; and there are those who argue that Roosevelt did the best he could given the mindset of the American people. For this reason, George Kennan has always resented the interference of public opinion into foreign affairs, believing diplomacy to be a chore for a few knowledgeable people who can determine the best way to negotiate a settlement without the fear of offending voters.\(^{12}\)

Roosevelt did have this fear, as his handling of the Polish situation bore out. He knew he would never go to war over Poland, yet the concerns of Polish-American voters did not allow him the freedom to publicly negotiate a Polish settlement with Stalin. After Roosevelt's death, the creators in Washington used Poland as an example of Moscow's
breach with the Atlantic Charter, a reneging which never took place. Roosevelt's initial agreement with Stalin, which took place at Teheran in 1943, assured Poland's existence as a state "friendly" to the Soviet Union in the post-war world. Yet Roosevelt made this agreement in secret, resorting to the use of innuendos and obscure language. No doubt Stalin recognized the agreement as tenuous, at best. Even so, Roosevelt had accepted Stalin's definition of 'friendly', knowing full well he intended to establish hegemony in Poland, one way or another.

Nowhere is the use of vague wording and meaningless rhetoric more pronounced than in the Atlantic Charter and The Declaration on Liberated Europe. Issac Deutscher wrote that the "pledges of the allies, had, anyhow, been so vague and contained so many loopholes that by reference to the text each side could justify its conduct." Several historians agreed with him, George Kennan among them. It is hard to believe Churchill or Roosevelt were naive enough to think Stalin's concept of social democracy would ever change to Western-style liberal democracy, yet this is the impression they conveyed at the conferences when the Big Three met. Stalin had made it clear at Teheran that he equated democratic parties with parties that were friendly, that would cooperate, with the Soviet regime. The West's disregard for Stalin's war aims cannot be excused by naivete or ignorance. It is certain the West knew of Stalin's war aims and the problems they posed to America's concept of the post-war world. It is not as clear if Roosevelt realized the problems the obscure language of the Atlantic Charter would eventually cause.

Poland was the one issue where definition and clarity was needed,
the one issue which damaged the coherence of the coalition more than any other. It set the precedent for future negotiations between the Big Three. The unsettling of issues with ambiguous language and meaningless agreements became the norm. In spite of Stalin's clear intentions, or because of them, the agreements and communiques signed at the conferences became too broad to be binding, saying little in specific terms about what would be done in Poland and Eastern Europe at the war's end.

Stalin was determined to return his borders to the configuration of 1941, to create a protective barrier along western Russia. This was but one of his war aims. He made his intentions clear early in the war when he sent Molotov to London and Washington to push for recognition of the 1941 border. Molotov was refused recognition and promised a second front by his Western partners instead. The front was never delivered when first pledged, and thus became the first broken promise of the coalition, a fact Stalin never forgot.

The document which bound both Churchill and Roosevelt to officially deny Stalin's territorial requests was The Atlantic Charter, whose principles were so easily bent. Such ideals may have calmed the American public, but Stalin agreed to the charter conditionally, with the qualification that the principles would secure support only under certain circumstances, depending on the needs of the specific country. Roosevelt chose to publicly ignore these important words.

The interpretation of the Polish agreements hinged on the words "democratic" and "anti-fascist," two words which, in Stalin's eyes, were not manifested by the London Poles or any other existing Polish
party except his own puppet party. The West knew this, yet it proceeded to follow a policy of contradiction, agreeing with Stalin that Poland's government should be friendly but insisting that it include unfriendly elements. America's ambitions of an open door in Europe and the rest of the post-war world conflicted profoundly with Stalin's war aims, yet instead of confronting the conflict openly Roosevelt chose to stall for time, putting off discussions until a final peace conference which he would never attend. Simultaneously, he was misleading the public with tales of the coalition's new-found oneness and unity.

One possible explanation for such a debacle is the tremendous pressure Roosevelt felt to balance public expectations with reality. Another is Roosevelt's dream of a United Nations, a vision in which he obviously placed too much confidence, hoping that it would solve deep-seated and complex problems. Russia's quest for secure borders and spheres of influence in the Balkans, Iran and Asia was part of its tradition in foreign relations long before Stalin ever made it the basis for his foreign policy. It was rooted in Bismarck's diplomacy, European power politics and the balance of power. It was also rooted in the desire for power for its own sake, the nationalistic goal of the modern, industrial world. Churchill, a product of Europe, understood this. The American people did not. Roosevelt may have, but for domestic political reasons he could not base policy on the existence of such a world; it denied the American tradition.

Woodrow Wilson had dreams of overcoming the archaic system of balancing the power to preserve the peace, but he could not put these
dreams into motion at Paris in 1918. The Treaty of Versailles, hammered out at the end of World War I, destroyed the status quo so completely that Hitler gathered the support of the demoralized German people, rallying to the cry that their nation would rise again. Stalin, combining a fierce xenophobic nationalism with anti-capitalistic principles of Marxism-Leninism was determined, politically, militarily and economically, to survive with a hostile Western world. He would do what he could to assure such survival. This determination became heightened by historical events as Hitler rose to power—mainly the isolation and non-recognition of the Soviet Union by the West, and the policy of appeasement. This legacy of the past was too strong to overcome with broad terms, and Stalin was not about to depend on Western institutions to secure his borders or to prevent Germany from rising still a third time. He wanted real assurance, not America's unfulfilled dream of Manifest Destiny to remake the entire world over in its image.

Yet Roosevelt cannot be faulted for wanting a functional world body. The fault lies in letting this nominal agency, still in its embryonic form, serve as a substitute for diplomacy and negotiations over territorial disputes. Stalin's demands were pushed aside with vague language, giving Roosevelt time to pursue his Grand Design, hoping all the while that Stalin's war aims would dissolve into a new-found enthusiasm for a world peace-keeping organization. One cannot help but think Roosevelt knew the failure of his reasoning as the war's end drew closer, but the seeds of the future had been sown. He could not go back to 1943, to Teheran, which had been the time for
negotiations. Then, Stalin had a desperate need for his Allies and lend-lease, and would have been willing to make concessions. This would have required a frank admission to the American public on Roosevelt's part of the need to negotiate, an honest admission that Stalin harbored the traditional war aims of territorial aggrandizement. Roosevelt obviously felt such an admission would not have been tolerated. More faith in the ability of the American people to handle reality could have made the difference, or perhaps an insistence that they do. Procrastination only hindered an already difficult situation. Theorizing what could have been, however, is not a luxury historians can afford to engage in.

Problems besieged the Grand Alliance, some rooted in the past, others arising as the war wore on. The tragedy of the coalition was not an unawareness of the problems, but a failure to confront them head on by negotiating in concrete language about definitive borders. That each was suspicious of the other was realized by all; that each had different war aims was known by all. It is prudent to remember that Churchill's war aims also received Roosevelt's disapproval. It is doubtful that Poland or Eastern Europe could have been saved from Moscow, but it was certainly possible for the coalition to reach a more equitable status, giving the United Nations a chance to fulfill its true purpose. As it turned out, past suspicions were confirmed and past hostilities intensified, threatening national security as it never had been before. The coalition surely had the power to overcome the past and secure the future, at least more than it did. Refusal to address the issues gave FDR's successors cause to brand Stalin a liar,
precipitating the policy of containment.

FDR's successors became the creators of America's containment policy as it was eventually penned. Roosevelt knew the Soviet Union would have to be contained, but his Grand Design was far removed from the ideological fervor of the Truman Doctrine which committed America's resources anywhere that "free peoples" needed help to "maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes." In 1950 the National Security Council (NSC) drew up paper #68, which declared that "the assault on free institutions is worldwide now, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere." NSC 68 locked America's decision to contain Russia into a global phenomenon, perceived as a struggle between good and evil by the American people. FDR's worst fears had become a reality: all efforts to negotiate a post-war peace settlement ceased, supplanted by a cold war.

George Kennan did not approve of the Truman Doctrine, which he felt masked America's true motives in the same rhetoric as the Atlantic Charter. Kennan wrote that "We like to...attribute a universal significance to decisions we have already found it necessary, for limited and parochial reasons, to take."

It was not enough for us, when circumstances forced us into World War I...our war effort had to be clothed in the form of an effort to make the world (nothing less) "safe for democracy." It was not enough for us, in World War II, that the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor...we did not feel comfortable until we had wrapped our military efforts in the wholly universalistic--and largely meaningless--generalities of the Atlantic Charter. Something of this same compulsion became apparent in the postwar period in the tendency of many Americans to divide
Kennan complained that the "heart" of the Truman Doctrine, "to support free peoples who are resisting subjugation," "placed our aid to Greece in the framework of a universal policy rather than in that of a specific decision addressed to a specific set of circumstances." 22

It seems odd, then, that Kennan's article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," provided the rationale for Washington's containment policy. As Kennan himself remarked, however, it was more a matter of timing than anything else. Irregardless of anything Kennan had written or would write in the future, the decision to support the right-wing monarchist regime in Greece, thereby assuring the survival of the status quo in the region, was never in dispute.

Kennan admits that he did not make his objectives clear enough in the article. The gap between ends and means became too large, and his intention of political containment soon came to mean military involvement. "So egregious were these errors," Kennan wrote in his memoirs, "that I must confess to responsibility for the greatest and most unfortunate of the misunderstandings to which they led." He called the language of the "X Article" "careless and indiscriminate," and the recognition of the article's shortcomings a "painful experience." 23

In spite of Kennan's realizations, one cannot help but wonder why the wording of both The Long Telegram and the "X Article" led Washington so far away from Kennan's intentions and his particularist philosophy. One answer must be the American tradition in foreign
policy—the creators had to account for their decision to intervene in Greece in such a way that the American public—and Congress—would support it. Kennan's writings contained truths, yes; but the overall tone reeked with the "Riga Axiom." Kennan overlooked the fact that the Soviet Union may have had some legitimate reasons to suspect the West, that the West was indeed guilty of some inimical acts against it. Kennan's explanation of the historical circumstances surrounding the Kremlin's hostility toward the West ignored both the West's intervention into Russia's civil war of 1918-1920, and its refusal to align with Russia against Hitler in the 1930's.24

In the "X Article," Kennan attributed Soviet animosity to ideology alone: "For ideology, as we have seen, taught them that the outside was hostile and that it was their duty eventually to overthrow the political forces beyond their border." Furthermore,

The real facts concerning it have been confused by the existence abroad of genuine resentment provoked by Soviet philosophy and tactics and occasionally by the existence of great centers of military power, notably the Nazi regime in Germany...which did indeed have aggressive designs against the Soviet Union. But there is ample evidence that the stress laid in Moscow on the menace confronting Soviet society from the world outside its borders is founded not in the realities of foreign antagonism but in the necessity of explaining away the maintenance of dictatorial authority at home.25

The existence of such an attitude, present in Kennan's "Long Telegram" as well, made it all too easy for the creators of America's post-war foreign policy to ignore the ambiguity of the agreements made at Teheran and Yalta and insist the Soviets follow them unequivocally, right down to the last obscure letter. It gave the policy makers an excuse to disregard the interests of the Kremlin, which were termed
destructive and detrimental to the freedom of the world. The tone of
Kennan's writings fit the mindset of Washington's creators, who were
tired of dealing with Moscow's intransigence and its refusal to adopt
America's version of the post-war world. Regardless of whose political
system was the most desirable, Moscow's or Washington's, both were here
to stay. Roosevelt's awareness of this was keen; as a result, he
viewed antagonism and hostility toward Russia as futile.

Unfortunately, Roosevelt's legacy to Truman did not include his
attitude toward Russia. FDR led America's creators to believe Moscow
would adopt his Grand Design in the post-war world. When Stalin began
insisting that Poland, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans be instilled
with 'friendly' regimes, the creators insisted in turn on a stricter
observance of the Declaration of Liberated Europe and the Atlantic
Charter. Averell Harriman especially went out of his way to convince
Truman that Stalin had to be stopped—via the use of a 'get-tough'
policy. This turned out to be a fundamental mistake, simply because
such demands were not negotiable with Stalin. Although it would have
been difficult, the creators had it in their power to correct this
error by admitting that the Yalta agreement was tenuous and the
Atlantic Charter nothing more than a "guiding star." Soviet expansion
could still have been contained, but minus the universal fanfare of
saving the entire world from the evils of Soviet totalitarianism.
Russia had already backed down in both Iran and Turkey by the end of
1946. By treating Greece as an individual incident instead of a global
precedent, as Kennan advocated, Stalin would have realized Washington's
intolerance toward Soviet expansion, political, ideological or
otherwise. This would have kept negotiation channels open and the
United Nations may have proven a viable instrument, averting the
ideological conflict of cold war and the concept of a struggle between
evil and good.

Kennan contributed to universal crusade, even though he deplored
the implications of such motives. His writings, however, did nothing
to promulgate the notion that the Soviet Union should be dealt with as
any other nation seeking power directly in conflict with United States
interests; instead, he turned that country into a menace which could
only be dealt with using extraordinary measures, such as coming to the
aid of any nation whose freedom was threatened, whatever that means.
The EAM in Greece felt its freedom threatened by the Monarchist right,
which held power. Conversely, the right's political sovereignty was in
danger of being destroyed by leftist rebel forces. Who was right?

Moscow called the creators of America's foreign policy
prejudiced. "...according to the authoritative evidence of a man who
was 'present at the creation'," Sivachev wrote, "...Washington was
guided not by facts but by prejudices." During these years, the
Soviet historian continued, the "totalitarian model" prevailed among
the thinkers in Washington, influencing Walter Bedell Smith, George
Kennan and other members of the State Department. Stalin replied
scathingly to the Truman Doctrine within twenty-four hours. He used
America's own opposition to the Doctrine to make his points:

Walter Lippmann, for example, frankly points
out...that an American alliance with Turkey would give the
U.S.A. a strategic position, incomparably more advantageous
than any other, from which power could be wielded over the
Middle East.
Stalin next quoted the *New York Times*, which proclaimed the advent of "the age of American responsibility."

Yet what is this responsibility but a smokescreen for expansion?...Now that they want to take Greece and Turkey under their control, they raise a din about "totalitarian states."

Stalin raised a good point, but there was no double standard involved. Each nation wanted to secure that part of the world for its own interests. Clearly, neither nation was mature or insightful enough to lay aside its ambitions for the sake of peace. In that respect, Roosevelt's vision was not fit for the world as it then existed; it still is not. Kennan knew this. Although left weak economically, Russia emerged as an undisputed world power, as did the United States. Toqueville's prophecy of so long ago had come to pass. This instantaneous two-power world was most unfortunate when viewed in terms of America's and Russia's already existent ideologies and the realities of the past. Deutscher wrote that a struggle between socialism and capitalism all too often misrepresented a conflict between democracy and communism. His analysis is well taken. It is important to realize that Roosevelt's motives, like Truman's, Stalin's and all the creators of containment, can be questioned. To what extent are governments, all governments, sincere, and to what extent do they use their ideology as a mask to cover up quests for political and economic power? There is evidence to support either side of this question and no clear answers emerge.

William Graham Summer warned Americans, "If you want war, nourish a doctrine." Nourishing doctrines has been part of the American
tradition in foreign relations, and the Soviet Union has its doctrine as well. Both nations claim their doctrines speak of true democracy, and both have tried to base their foreign policies on the supremacy of their ideas, each accusing the other's corrupt political system of seeking world domination. Geopolitically, however, both Russia and the United States are rich in land, natural resources and manpower; this reality was the basis of Toqueville's prophecy, and it had nothing to do with republicanism or communism. He foresaw a power struggle, and astutely guessed it would encompass the globe. It was not in the name of these ambitions, however, that the Grand Alliance broke down and the containment policy formed. Without the doctrines, waging a cold war would have proven somewhat more difficult.

In truth, neither the political system of the Soviet Union nor the United States has yet proven to be superior to the other; neither has achieved world peace, an end to starvation, disease or economic exploitation, or an abolition of racial and religious prejudice. Of course the American system has never, fortunately, produced a menace like Stalin. Stalin had to be dealt with in the post-war years, but the methods adopted by the creators of America's containment policy did little to change the nature of the dictator's policies. Roosevelt hoped to do this, but his strategy failed as well. Both Stalin and Roosevelt were too bound by the traditions in their own foreign relations—Stalin to achieve national interests by the use of orthodox European power politics; Roosevelt to secure his interests by promoting a universal system based on America's already existing system of capitalistic-democracy.
The seeds of America's containment policy were sown in FDR's war diplomacy, which refused to negotiate a territorial settlement with Stalin in the post-war world. This left Truman and his advisors with nothing but the Atlantic Charter, the Yalta agreement, and their own concept of the post-war world and Stalin's place in it. The origins of containment, however, lay dormant throughout the war, and even before, in the traditions of both Washington's and Moscow's foreign relations. Both harbored ambitions which excluded the other; both wished to 'contain' the other's ambitions in order to fully promote their own. There could be no winners and no losers, only face-off after face-off. This has happened throughout the years since World War II ended; and many times the absurdity of the policy has been proven. It is left to the future to decide its outcome, and leaders of all nations will make the final choices.

It is fitting to recall some of Roosevelt's last words, spoken in his 1945 State of the Union Address, the final time he addressed Congress. The words foreshadowed the danger he knew was coming. Sadly, they also spoke to the failure of the Grand Alliance to achieve a lasting peace. The time would come again, Roosevelt seemed to indicate, when the world would have to come up with a better plan for establishing the peace.

The nearer we come to vanquishing our enemies the more we inevitably become conscious of differences among the victors. We must not let those differences divide us and blind us to our more important common and continuing interests in winning the war and building the peace. International cooperation on which enduring peace must be based is not a one-way street. Nations like individuals do not always think alike, and international cooperation and progress are not helped
by any Nation assuming that it has a monopoly of wisdom or virtue....

Perfectionism, no less than isolationism or imperialism or power politics, may obstruct the paths to international peace. Let us not forget that the retreat to isolationism a quarter of a century ago was started not by a direct attack against international cooperation but against alleged imperfections of the peace.

In our disillusionment after the last war we preferred international anarchy to international cooperation with Nations which did not see and think exactly as we did....

We must not let that happen again, or we shall follow the same tragic road again—the road to a third world war.
ENDNOTES


15. See Chapt. 2, p. 76


17. See Chapt. 2, p. 62


22. Ibid, p. 320.


BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Documents


Degras, Jane, ed. Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1, 2, 3. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).


In Quest of Peace and Security: Selected Documents on
American Foreign Policy, 1941-1951. General Foreign
Office, 1951).

Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation. General Foreign Policy
Office, 1950).

Schlesinger, Arthur M. Dynamics of World Power: Documentary
History of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1945-1973, 2. (New

Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic
1960).

The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran: 1943. Foreign
Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers.

The Conferences at Malta and Yalta: 1945. Foreign Relations
of the United States Diplomatic Papers. (Washington:

Memoirs and Personal Papers

Abel, Elie and Harriman, W. Averell. Special Envoy to
Churchill & Stalin, 1941-1946. (New York:

Acheson, Dean. Present at the Creation. (New York: W.W.

Bullitt, Orville H. For the President, Personal and Secret.

Byrnes, James F. Speaking Frankly. (New York: Harper &
Brothers, 1947).

Churchill, Winston. Triumph and Tragedy: The Second World


Roosevelt, Elliot. As He Saw It. (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946).


Stalin, Joseph. Selected Writings. (Connecticut: Greenwood


Truman, Harry S. Memoirs: Year of Decision, 1; Years of Trial and Hope, 2. (New York: Doubleday, 1955).


SECONDARY SOURCES

Books


Crabb, Cecil V. Jr. The Doctrines of American Foreign Policy. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).


Dallin, David J. *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy, 1939-1942.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942).


__________. *Strategies of Containment.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).


Kennan, George F. Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961).


The Fate of East Central Europe: Hopes and Failures of American Foreign Policy. (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956).


Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate


Articles


**Newspapers**

*Izvestia*, 1 July 1945; 12 March 1946; 22 September 1946.


*Pravda*, 29 October 1944; 17 December 1944; 13 March 1945; 15 April 1945; 22 April 1945.