

*The  
Cold War  
US History*



*Mr.  
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## The Cold War: An Introduction

The Cold War is the name given to the relationship that developed primarily between the USA and the USSR after World War II. The Cold War was to dominate international affairs for decades and many major crises occurred - the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, Hungary, and the Berlin Wall being just some. For many, the growth in weapons of mass destruction was the most worrying issue.

Logic would dictate that as the USA and the USSR fought as allies during World War Two, their relationship after the war would be firm and friendly. This never happened, and any appearance that these two powers were friendly during the war is illusory.

Before the war, America had depicted the Soviet Union as almost the devil-incarnate. The Soviet Union had depicted America likewise, so their 'friendship' during the war was simply the result of having a mutual enemy - Nazi Germany.

Europe by the summer of 1945 was very different to the Europe that had started out on war in September 1939. The Allies (USA, Britain, and France) had started to fall out with Stalin's Russia during the war itself. Stalin had wanted the Allies to start a second front in 1943. This, the Allies claimed, was not possible. Stalin got it into his mind that the Allies were *deliberately* allowing Russia to take on the might of two-thirds of the Wehrmacht (the German army) in eastern Europe. Such a military campaign, he believed, would leave the Soviet Union so weakened once the war was over that the Allies would have major military superiority over Russia almost immediately hostilities ceased.

This distrust also came out in the meetings that were held during the war. At Casablanca, Yalta and Potsdam, the one thing that clearly united the Allies and Russia was a common enemy - Nazi Germany. Little else did unite them. In fact, Stalin was not invited to Casablanca, which increased his belief that the Allies were planning things behind his back. The Casablanca meeting only concerned the western front, so there was no need to invite Stalin. However, Stalin interpreted this differently.

The three war leaders - Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin - did meet at Yalta in February 1945. They agreed on the following:

- The people freed from Nazi rule in Europe should be allowed to set up their own democratic and independent governments.
- Germany should be divided into four zones at the end of the war. USA, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France would occupy one zone each.
- Berlin would also be divided into four sections for the Allies.
- Half the \$20 billion that would be collected from Germany as reparations would go to Russia.
- The eastern part of Poland would go to Russia so that Russia could build up her defenses. Land would be taken from eastern Germany and given to Poland in compensation.
- Russian forces would be used against Japan in the Far East.
- A United Nations would be set up to promote world peace.

A key issue at Yalta was how to treat those nations that had been under Nazi occupation. It became clear to the Allies that Stalin's idea of free and democratic governments was different than theirs. In Stalin's mind, a free and democratic government should be subordinate to Moscow and have pro-Russian people in power so that those nations should do as Moscow wished. There was little that the Allies could do as the huge Red Army advanced west across eastern Europe towards Berlin. By 1945, the Red Army was a well-equipped and well-led army and getting very used to victory.

By May 1945, the month of Nazi Germany's surrender, the Red Army and, therefore, Moscow, effectively controlled the bulk of eastern Europe. Initially, the people of Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary saw the Red Army as their liberators. But the murder of anti-Moscow politicians soon tainted their new-found freedom. The death of Roosevelt led to Harry Truman becoming American president. He was far less sympathetic to Russia than Roosevelt had been. He was also president of a country armed with a new and fearsome weapon - the atomic bomb.

After the Nazi surrender, the Allies and Russia met at Potsdam, a suburb of Berlin. They discussed what to do with the newly surrendered Germany. Half-way through the conference, Winston Churchill was replaced with the new British prime minister Clement Atlee, the leader of the Labour Party. Despite the celebrations of victory, a number of issues were not fully addressed at Potsdam. There was a failure to re-confirm the promise made at Yalta - of free and independent elections in eastern Europe. The new border between Poland and Germany was also missed out.

Stalin was also told at Potsdam about America's new weapon. However, very little information was given to him. When the atomic bombs were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it became clear to Stalin that Russia was years behind America in terms of modern weaponry. Though the Red Army was huge, its tanks some of the most modern in the world, and its air force as good as any, this new weapon made all this conventional power of less value.

By the end of 1945, the seeds of the Cold War had been well and truly sown. Both sides were no longer linked by a common enemy. One side had massive conventional forces while the other had an unknown number of atomic bombs which could be used against Moscow - as Stalin knew.

So this was the scene after the war ended in 1945. Both sides distrusted the other. One had a vast army in the field (the Soviet Union with its Red Army supremely lead by Zhukov) while the other, the Americans had the most powerful weapon in the world, the A-bomb and the Soviets had no way on knowing how many America had.

answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper:

1. Why were the US and the Soviet Union allies during WWII?
2. Why did Stalin want the Allies to open a second front during WWII? Why did he get angry when they didn't?
3. How did meetings held during the war show the distrust between the Soviets and the other Allies?
4. In what way did the Allies and Stalin disagree about how to deal with areas formerly under Nazi control?
5. How do we see the base of the Cold War already established by the end of the war in 1945?

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### **The Origins of the Cold War**

We have already examined the ideological difference between the American and Soviet systems. It is now time to examine the political relations between the US and the Soviet Union and how it may have contributed to the emergence of the Cold War after World War II.

Read the packet and answer the following questions:

#### **US-Soviet relations during World War II**

1. The reading lists 9 challenges or problems facing US-Soviet relations. Rank them in order from most problematic (=1) to least problematic (=9).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Justify your top three most problematic issues. Why are these the most troublesome?

#### **International Politics in the Postwar World**

1. Of the 12 issues listed, which poses the greatest threat to good US-Soviet relations (choose 3)? Why?

## U.S.-Soviet Relations during World War II

**T**he United States and the Soviet Union became wartime allies on December 11, 1941, when Nazi Germany declared war on the United States. Germany had invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. The German attack on the Soviet Union had come as a shock to the Soviet leaders. Two years earlier, the Soviets had signed a treaty with Germany, the so-called Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, in which leaders of both countries committed themselves to peaceful relations.

For Americans, the U.S. alliance with the Soviet Union raised troubling questions. The United States had opposed the Soviet system since the communists had come to power in 1917. Even after Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, most Americans remained wary of helping Moscow. The U.S. entry into World War II compelled American leaders to put aside their differences in the common struggle against Adolf Hitler. President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to

emphasize the cohesion of the anti-Nazi alliance in a speech delivered in February 1943, several months after the successful Allied landings in North Africa:

*In an attempt to ward off the inevitable disaster, the Axis propagandists are trying all of their old tricks in order to divide the United Nations [the name for the coalition of nations fighting Germany]. They seek to create the idea that if we win this war, Russia, England, China, and the United States are going to get into a cat-and-dog fight. This is their final effort to turn one nation against another.... To these panicky attempts to escape the consequences of their crimes we say — all the United Nations say — ... "Unconditional Surrender" .... The Nazis must be frantic indeed if they believe that they can devise any propaganda which would turn the British and American and Chinese governments and peoples against Russia — or Russia against the rest of us.*

Nonetheless, areas of U.S.-Soviet friction emerged. These hidden points of conflict were to

### NOTE TO STUDENTS

The period from 1947 to 1990, generally labeled the "Cold War" by historians, was a time in which U.S. foreign policy, U.S. domestic politics, and international relations were dominated by the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Frequently, this rivalry took on the appearance of a crusade, with the United States leading the forces of the "free world" against the threat of "international communism" directed by the Soviet Union. An understanding of the critical period from 1945, when the United States and the Soviet Union were still wartime allies, to 1947, when the Cold War had clearly begun, is necessary to grasp the events of the second half of the 20th century. The attitudes formed and the decisions made during this three-year period defined the character of the following four decades.

This unit is built around selections from letters, speeches, interviews, and memoranda written while the events you will be studying were happening. These documents, composed by the people who were shaping the decisions, express their values, perceptions, and recommendations. These primary sources are the raw material that historians work with when they write history and they should be read *very carefully*. Notice not only the ideas expressed, but also the words and phrases chosen to express them. What are the *values* and *perceptions* behind these opinions and what are the *implications* of the recommendations? Major differences of opinion frequently lie behind relatively minor differences in expression.

In this unit, you will be taken back to the 1945 to 1947 period. You will participate with those who actually shaped U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union by deciding what strategy the United States should adopt to ensure its security and world peace in the postwar period. You will have available to you much of the information that these decision-makers possessed at the time. For the next few days, please forget everything that you might know about the events after 1947. Just take yourself back to the time of your grandparents' schooling, before television, when a new car could be purchased for under \$500.



influence U.S.-Soviet relations after the war. Among the most important issues were:

**Soviet Aggression** — The Soviet Union took advantage of Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 to reassert its control over the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. These countries had been part of the Russian Empire before the communist revolution of 1917. The Soviet Union also attacked Finland in late 1939. Like the Baltic states, Finland had been part of the Russian Empire. After 1939, however, it was not completely incorporated into the Soviet Union. While the peace treaty of 1940 gave the Soviet Union several slices of Finnish territory, the Finns retained their independence. The American public admired the defense of the valiant Finns against their larger and stronger neighbor. Another example of Soviet aggression was found in the secret provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Under the treaty, Germany and the Soviet Union agreed to divide up Poland, which lay between them. A few weeks after Germany invaded Poland from the west in 1939, the Soviets entered the country from the east.

**The Second Front** — President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had promised the Soviet leader, Josef Stalin, that they would launch a second front against the Axis powers before the end of 1942. Stalin wanted the Allies to invade western Europe to relieve some of the pressure that the Soviet armies were facing on the eastern front. However, Churchill, like Roosevelt, feared the enormous battlefield casualties that a premature second front might produce. He strongly opposed the frontal assault on the entrenched German positions in western France, and instead urged Roosevelt to launch the Allied blow through the Balkans, the area extending northward into Europe from Greece. This strategy, according to Churchill, would accomplish three things. First, the casualties would be lower. Second, British influence in Greece, an area of historical British concern, would be guaranteed. Third, the Allied armies would be positioned much closer to eastern Europe, leaving British and U.S. leaders in a much stronger position to influence postwar developments in this area. Although President Roosevelt, acting upon the advice of his military leaders, rejected Churchill's specific strategy, the U.S. plan to invade North Africa in late 1942 indicated that U.S. leaders were also eager to

avoid a premature second front in western Europe.

The Allied invasion of North Africa had virtually no impact upon the huge German armies in the east. Roosevelt and Churchill again promised a second front — this time landing troops on the island of Sicily and then the Italian peninsula in 1943. The invasion of Italy, while putting an Allied army on the European continent, again did not significantly lessen the Axis powers' pressure on the Soviet Red Army. The geography of the Italian peninsula made it possible for the Germans to delay the Allied armies with only a fraction of those forces used on the Russian front. The long-awaited invasion of western Europe did not come until D-Day in June 1944, by which time the Soviet armies already had inflicted costly defeats upon the Germans and had begun to force them back toward the prewar boundaries. Since the Red Army bore the brunt of the fighting in Europe during most of World War II, Soviet battlefield casualties exceeded the combined battlefield casualties of all of the other Allies in the European theater. In fact, Soviet casualties were more than fifty times those of the U.S. armies in Europe.

**Poland** — Because of the absence of natural barriers, such as mountain ranges and large rivers, Russia historically has been very vulnerable to invasion from the west through Poland. This was the route taken by Napoleon's armies in 1812, Kaiser Wilhelm's armies in 1914, and Hitler's armies in 1941. One of Stalin's principal wartime objectives was to establish security for the Soviet Union in this area. First, Stalin wanted to move the borders of the Soviet Union westward. Under this plan, the territory that Poland would lose to the Soviet Union would be offset by giving postwar Poland territory taken from eastern Germany. Second, the Soviets demanded a "friendly" government in Poland. To achieve this, the Soviets installed a provisional government in areas of eastern Poland liberated by the Red Army. The provisional government, based in Lublin, was staffed by pro-Russian and pro-communist Poles who had spent the war years in Moscow. Excluded initially were members of the Polish government-in-exile in London, which Stalin viewed as anti-Soviet and anti-Russian.

Two wartime incidents served to complicate the Polish issue even further. When the German armies entered that section of Poland that had been occupied by the Soviets in 1939, they discovered in the Katyn Forest

mass graves containing bodies of thousands of executed Polish army officers. Although Moscow blamed this atrocity on the Germans, the Polish government-in-exile in London had no doubt about who was to blame. As the Red Army pushed the Germans out of occupied Poland in January 1945, the Polish government-in-exile ordered the underground forces in Warsaw to rise up, expel the Germans, and establish their own Polish authority before the Soviet forces could take the city. Although initially somewhat successful, the underground forces soon were overwhelmed by German reinforcements. British and U.S. appeals to Moscow to send the Red Army, which was just across the Vistula River, to the aid of the underground fighters were ignored. Instead, the Soviet army waited until the uprising had been crushed before it resumed its attack on the Germans.

**Mutual Suspicion and Dislike** — Many Americans disliked the Soviet government's policies and philosophy. In particular, the Soviet regime's official atheism and abolition of private property violated two fundamental American values. When Germany attacked the Soviet Union prior to the U.S. entry into the war, many Americans could find little sympathy for the Soviets. Senator Harry Truman told a reporter in June 1941: "If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help the Russians, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and in that way let them kill as many as possible."

Soviet leaders were likewise deeply suspicious of the United States. As communists, they considered conflict with the world's most prosperous capitalist nation inevitable. Moreover, Soviet leaders had not forgotten that shortly after the new Bolshevik (communist) government pulled Russia out of World War I in 1918, the United States sent troops onto Russian territory. While the stated purpose of this joint British-French-Japanese-American intervention was to prevent war supplies from falling into the hands of the Germans, the Soviets believed that these troops were actually assisting the Russian "White" armies — those Russians fighting the Bolsheviks in a bloody civil war. During the 1920s, the United States supported the efforts of the British and French to isolate the new Soviet regime. In fact, the United States did not extend diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union until 1933.

**U.S. Aid** — In March 1941, Congress approved

the Lend-Lease Act, enabling the Allies to "lend" or "lease" military equipment. Although the Lend-Lease program was originally designed to help cash-starved Great Britain, the United States also began sending military supplies to the Soviets after the Nazi invasion. During the course of the war, the Soviets received about \$11 billion worth of aid. Most of these supplies had to be transported by the dangerous northern sea route, which was subject to German air and U-boat attacks. When shipments were delayed because of these dangers, the Soviets became distrustful of U.S. motives. As soon as Japan surrendered, aid was abruptly terminated by the U.S. government. The Soviet Union had suffered more physical damage than any of the other Allies, and Stalin had hoped to use Lend-Lease aid, which included trucks and railroad equipment, to help rebuild his country.

At the Big Three conference held at Yalta in February 1945, Stalin requested \$10 billion in reparations from Germany. (To appreciate the buying power of \$10 billion in the 1940s, remember that a new car cost under \$500!) These reparations would not be actual currency, but rather machinery, goods, food, and anything of value that could be physically transported back to the Soviet Union. Both Roosevelt and Churchill were reluctant to approve this figure. At Yalta, Stalin also requested a postwar loan from the United States of \$1 billion — \$5 billion lower than his request of 1944. Rather than granting a loan, Washington would consider only a "credit," which the Soviets could use to purchase American goods. The administration of President Harry S. Truman also delayed action on the request until March 1946, tying the granting of the credit to the resolution of political and economic issues that had arisen.

**Postwar Germany** — During the war, joint plans for postwar Germany did not progress much beyond the designation of areas that the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain would occupy. These three zones (a fourth zone was created later for France) were intended to correspond roughly to areas that the victorious armies expected to occupy at the conclusion of the war. Berlin, located well to the east, would be under joint administration. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed reluctantly to the redrawn German-Polish border. Beyond agreeing that the Nazi influence had to be purged from Germany, and that in practice each

occupying power could deal with the reparation issue within its own zone, the Western Allies and the Soviets seemed unable to overcome their suspicions concerning the other's intentions. The Soviets, in particular, feared a Germany rebuilt along capitalist lines that could again threaten Soviet security.

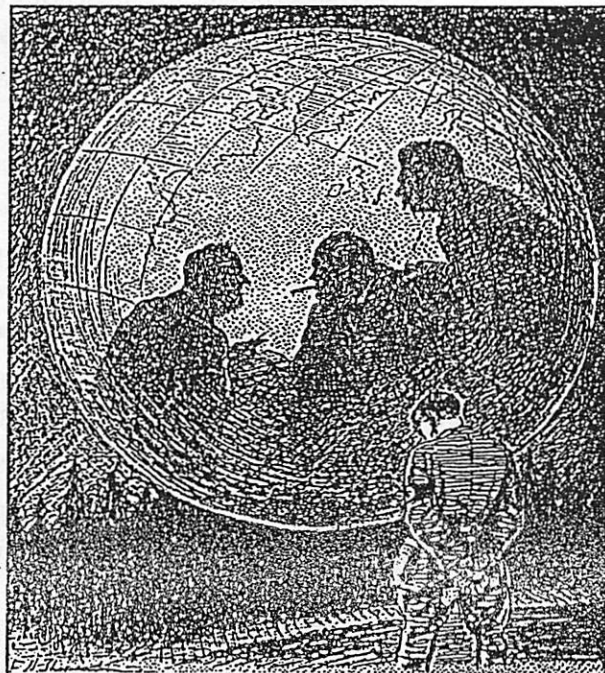
**The War against Japan** — The United States wanted commitments from the Soviets that after Germany's defeat the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan. The Japanese were fighting tenaciously in the Pacific war, and the weight of the huge Red Army was seen as an effective weapon to shorten the war and limit American casualties. In return for Stalin's promise to enter the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed at Yalta to a number of territorial concessions that would strengthen the Soviet position in the Far East. These concessions involved not only Japanese-controlled areas, but also areas that historically had been under Chinese control. China, of course, was an ally of the United States in the war against Japan.

**The United Nations** — The Soviets were suspicious of President Roosevelt's plan for a postwar international organization with the ability to enforce peace terms imposed on the defeated Axis powers, and to deal with future threats. Moscow feared that the United Nations (UN) would be controlled by capitalist, and potentially hostile, states. The Soviets insisted that each of the five major victors (Great Britain, United States, Soviet Union, China, and France) have the right to veto UN decisions. The Soviets also demanded that each of the Soviet republics be given representation in the world organization. Similarly, the establishment of the World Bank, with powers to coordinate trade and economic development, was seen as a threat to the Soviet socialist system.

**The Atomic Bomb** — The secret joint U.S.-British project to develop the military potential of atomic energy (code named "Manhattan Project") involved more than 100,000 workers and cost more than \$1 billion. The Soviets were not officially informed of the existence of this new, immensely powerful weapon until the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. President Truman described the atomic bomb in general terms to Stalin, who already knew of its existence through unofficial sources. Since the weapon was not tested until after Germany had surrendered, it was to be used

on Japan to hasten the end of the Pacific war. Although the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki would, in fact, bring about a quick end to the war the following month, Truman did not withdraw the long-standing U.S. request that the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan. The concessions promised to the Soviets also were not withdrawn.

**Winston Churchill** — The British wartime leader's opposition to Soviet communism was well-known and extended back to the days of the Bolshevik revolution, when Churchill expressed the desire to strangle it at birth. His close friendship with Roosevelt and his ability to influence U.S. policy was resented by the Soviet leaders. Throughout much of the war Moscow feared that the British and the Americans would come to terms with the Nazis at Soviet expense. Churchill's opposition to the establishment of an early second front in France and his advocacy of a Balkan strategy were known to the Soviets. Unlike Roosevelt, who thought that he could employ his considerable political skills to persuade Stalin to behave and cooperate, Churchill held no illusions about the tactics or long-term objectives of the Soviet dictator. Harry Truman, Roosevelt's successor, respected Churchill's opinions and was strongly influenced by Churchill's passionate anti-communism.



*The Big Three shape the postwar world*

© Punch, 1943



# International Politics in the Postwar World

## Summary of Issues Affecting U.S.-Soviet Relations — 1946

**Iran** — The Soviet Union withdraws its occupying forces in March from northern Iran after strong protests from the United States. The communist governments that had been installed by the Soviets in those areas are easily disbanded by Iranian armed forces.

**Greece** — Civil war is being waged by the communist-led forces (ELAS) against the right-wing government, creating economic and political chaos. British military units in Greece and massive financial aid from Great Britain and the United States prevent the collapse of the Greek government.

**Poland** — Attempts to force the communist-dominated government to hold free elections and to allow meaningful participation within the government by non-communist parties do not succeed. The new Polish boundaries make Poland more dependent upon the Soviet Union for protection against a revived Germany.

**France** — A coalition government consisting of the three largest French political parties, including the communists, is attempting to maintain good relations with both the Soviets and the West. Fears of a rebuilt Germany continue to dominate French foreign policy.

**Turkey** — The Soviets continue to pressure the Turkish government for territorial concessions and joint control of the straits connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean Sea. Soviet maneuvers near the border cause the Turkish government to seek foreign aid to modernize its army.

**Czechoslovakia** — Although still a parliamentary democracy, the coalition government is dominated by the Communist Party, which has substantial electoral support. The communists control the national police as well as the armed forces. The United States is holding up economic aid because American business interests have been nationalized and the issue of compensation is not settled.

**Great Britain** — The Labour government, experiencing a severe financial crisis, wishes to withdraw from some of Britain's worldwide commitments. The British have discussed with the United States government the possibility of the U.S. assuming some of these commitments. A very large U.S. aid package early in the year does little to revive the British economy.

**Soviet Loan** — The Truman administration declines to act upon Soviet requests made during the war for U.S. assistance to rebuild the Soviet Union. Increasing U.S.-Soviet tensions make this loan very unlikely.

**United Nations** — Emerging voting patterns reveal a split between the Western states and the Soviet Union and its allies. Increasing disagreements between these groups indicate that the Great Power collaboration upon which the United Nations was constructed is jeopardized by postwar disputes.

**Western Communist Parties** — The electoral strength of the Communist Party in several Western countries is considerable. In addition to Italy and France, where nearly 30 percent of the voters support the communists, the Communist Party enjoys significant popularity in nearly all of the other western European countries.

**U.S. Demobilization** — The United States government rapidly demobilizes its armed forces at the close of World War II. From a peak of about sixteen million, the U.S. armed forces now number about five million, and there is an expectation that they will be reduced even further.

**Atomic Weapons** — Most observers expect that the United States will retain its monopoly of atomic weapons for five to ten years. The United States proposes a plan to encourage the peaceful development of atomic power under international control, providing that nations developing atomic resources submit to United Nations authority.

# The Soviet Union and the United States During the Cold War: A Comparison



## GOVERNMENT

	<b>Soviet Union: <i>DICTATORIAL</i></b>	<b>United States: <i>DEMOCRATIC</i></b>
<b>Political parties</b>	The communist party is the only party permitted to exist. It selects all candidates for election to office and dominates the Soviet government.	Many political parties exist, the two major parties being the Democrats and the Republicans. The major and minor parties check upon each other, present candidates and issues to the people, and compete for support. No one party monopolizes the gov't.
<b>Power over the country</b>	Communist party leaders debate among themselves and decide upon Soviet policies, which are then presented to the nation as the not-to-be-challenged Communist position, or party line. The party takes a stand not only political, military, and foreign affairs, but also on economic and cultural matters. It dominates every aspect of Soviet life.	National officials set American policies, but these are subject to public criticism. Public policies are influenced by leaders in such fields as industry, agriculture, labor, race relations, education, and the information media. Because power is diffused, no one group or party dominates the country.
<b>Civil liberties</b>	Russian citizens lack many basic civil liberties and fear the secret police. Persons who speak against the gov't are regarded as criminals.	American citizens are granted civil liberties by the federal Constitution and by state constitutions. They can turn to the courts to protect their rights.

## ECONOMY

	<b>Soviet Union: <i>Communist</i></b>	<b>United States: <i>Capitalist</i></b>
<b>Industry</b>	The government owns and operates all industry.	Private entrepreneurs (individuals and corporations) own and operate most industry. Competition and profit motive provide personal and economic incentives. The government acts chiefly to prevent abuses.
<b>Labor</b>	Almost all Russian workers belong to unions dominated by the Communist party. These unions spur the workers to greater productivity. However, they have no say in determining wages and no right to strike.	One-fourth of American workers belong to unions, which are free of gov't domination, although subject to regulation. Unions bargain collectively with employers regarding wages and working conditions; they retain the right to strike.

## CULTURE

	<b>Soviet Union</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Literature and art</b>	The Soviet regime encourages writers and artists, but it demands that they propagandize for Communism. They must seek wide popular appeal, avoid experimentation, and praise the Soviet state. Many Soviet writers resent regimentation and represent a constant pressure upon the Communist party for greater freedom of expression.	The American gov't is prohibited constitutionally from interfering with free expression. American writers and artists produce works that represent their own taste and outlook on life. The works may praise or criticize aspects of American culture and gov't policy.

**communism:** 1. A social system characterized by the absence of classes and by common ownership of the means of production and subsistence. 2. A political, economic, and social doctrine aiming at the establishment of such a classless society.

**capitalism:** 1. An economic system characterized by freedom of the market with increasing concentration of private and corporate owners of production and distribution.

## International Politics in the Postwar World

### Comparing the Great Powers — 1945-1950

	United States	Soviet Union	Great Britain	France
Area (square miles)	3,023,000	8,390,000	94,000	213,000
Population	151,000,000	193,000,000	48,000,000	39,700,000
WWII Deaths military: civilian:	292,131	10,000,000 15,000,000	298,000 100,000	167,000 400,000
Armed Forces, 1946	5,000,000	5,000,000(+)	2,950,000	735,000
Gross National Product (GNP), 1950	\$381 billion	\$126 billion	\$71 billion	\$50 billion
Form of Government	2-party democratic republic	single-party dictatorship	2-party parliamentary democracy	multi-party parliamentary democracy
Aircraft Production, 1945	50,000	21,000	12,000	not available
Steel Production (mil. tons), 1948	80	21.5	13 (1945)	2 (1945)
Electricity (mil. kwh. monthly average), 1945	18,000	3,600	3,106	1,464
Coal (mil. tons) 1945: 1946:	631 582	149 164	186 193	35 49
Defense Budget, 1950	\$14.5 billion	\$15.5 billion	\$2.3 billion	\$1.4 billion
Percent GNP Spent on Defense, 1950	3.8	12.3	3.2	2.8
International Balance of Payments 1945 imports: 1945 exports: 1946 imports: 1946 exports:	\$4 billion \$9.5 billion \$5 billion \$9.5 billion	not available not available not available not available	\$4.5 billion \$1.75 billion \$5.25 billion \$3.75 billion	\$4.5 billion \$2 billion not available not available

## **End of WWII: What's America to Do?**

Remember the US response after WWI? Well, now it's 1946, and the US is in the same position (well, almost the same position). What should the US do regarding its involvement in the world? What should it do about Soviet leader Joe Stalin, the Soviet Union, and communism in general?

Your assignment is to read the four proposed options (sound familiar?) each of which suggests the 'correct' policy that the US gov't should adopt in the postwar period.

Specifically:

Read the four options presented in the packet. They are:

- a. Impose a Pax Americana
- b. Co-exist and compromise
- c. Contain Soviet communism
- d. Avoid Foreign Entanglements

In your notes, please write down the following information:

- A summary of each option's perspective
- A short paragraph explanation of the meaning of the cartoons for the option assigned to you.

You have been assigned Option: 1                      2                      3                      4

## Option

# IMPOSE A PAX AMERICANA (AMERICAN PEACE)

1

No nation in modern times has had the opportunity the United States has now to shape an entire world order. Our industrial production exceeds that of the Soviet Union and all other European countries combined. Our armed forces, equipped with atomic weapons, have no equal on the face of the earth. At this unique juncture in history, the United States has the power to lay the foundation for a new era of peaceful international relations and to ensure that the peoples of the world have the opportunity to prosper economically and to develop politically. The peaceful, prosperous world order of the future must be built upon the principles of national self-determination, democracy, economic freedom, and free trade. Self-determination requires that every nation have the right to determine its own destiny, free of external coercion and control. Free economic institutions, and free and equal access to the markets of the world are necessary to produce the prosperity that provides the necessary foundations for democratic institutions.

The last war was fought in the name of freedom. Ultimately, the justice of our cause gave us the strength to overcome Nazi Germany and Japan. Our mission, however, will not be complete until freedom is within the grasp of all peoples. The Soviet Union is now the greatest threat to a just world order. To allow the Soviet Union to continue to dominate many of the nations of eastern Europe, as well as areas of Germany, makes a mockery of those principles for which the United States fought and for which so many Americans sacrificed. Just as the aggression of the Nazis should have been stopped in the 1930s, the ambitious schemes of the Soviets must be smashed now. The leaders of the Soviet Union must be made to live up to the promises they have made. The Soviets must be forced — by U.S. military power if necessary — to free those peoples whom they have deprived of self-determination. They must accept the new international order based on political and economic freedom. Any delay on our part will enable the Soviet Union to consolidate its gains and make a reversal of its conquests much more costly. Future generations will not forgive us if we allow this opportunity to create a Pax Americana slip by.



Joe likes a firm handshake

Hutton in The Philadelphia Inquirer, 1945

## Building the Case for Option One

Excerpts from General George Patton's conversation with Secretary of the Army Robert P. Patterson, May 7, 1945:

Mr. Secretary, for God's sake, when you go home, stop this point system; stop breaking up these armies; give us an opportunity to keep 30 percent of our battlewise troops home on leave if you wish, etc. Send us replacements and let us start training here, keeping our forces intact. Let's keep our boots polished, bayonets sharpened, and present a picture

of force and strength to these people [the Soviets]. This is the only language they understand and respect. If you fail to do this, then I would like to say to you that we have had a victory over the Germans and have disarmed them, but have lost the war....I would have your State Department, or the people in charge, tell the people concerned [the



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## THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. Use all means necessary — including military force — to push the Soviets out of eastern Europe and to compel them to live up to the promises made at Yalta and in the United Nations charter.
2. Keep our military forces, both conventional and nuclear, so strong that the Soviet Union will back away from its aggressive behavior rather than risk a confrontation it cannot win.
3. Help the war-ravaged nations of Europe rebuild their economies according to American free-market principles.
4. Use our political and military might to ensure that all nations have access to the world's markets and resources and that all areas of the world be open to free trade.

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

- Hitler taught us that appeasing aggressors does not achieve lasting peace. It only postpones the confrontation and makes it more costly. Therefore, aggression must be stopped when it happens.
- The failure of the democratic German Weimar Republic and the rise of Hitler were caused by Germany's economic collapse. Promoting prosperity in Europe is necessary to preserve democratic institutions and prevent the establishment of totalitarian regimes that endanger peace.
- Restrictions on international trade after World War I led to the Depression and set the stage for World War II. Therefore, a system of free international trade must be established.
- Instability in Europe has drawn the United States into war twice in this century. To prevent another global conflict, we must take the lead in establishing a sound world order based on our values of freedom.

## ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION ONE

- By standing up to aggression now, we reduce the chances of another world war.
- The U.S. atomic monopoly and overwhelming industrial superiority make it unlikely that any aggressor would defy our wishes and challenge us militarily.
- The era of peace that this option will produce will bring new levels of economic prosperity to the United States as well as to other nations of the world.
- Today's circumstances give the United States an unprecedented opportunity to impose a just peace that will ensure that all nations' interests are fairly considered.

## Option 2

## CONTAIN SOVIET COMMUNISM

The two world wars have shown that the United States cannot distance itself from European nations that share our economic system and political values. As the largest and most powerful Western nation, we have no choice but to defend our partners in the free world. The defeat of Germany and Japan does not bring our international responsibilities to a close. On the contrary, the United States must not retreat to the head-in-the-sand isolationism that followed World War I. In an age of atomic weapons, there is no place to hide from international aggression. Whether we like it or not, international relations in the postwar world will be dominated by a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. In many respects, Soviet communism presents a greater threat than that posed by Nazi Germany. Soviet leaders are convinced of their mission to extend communism throughout the globe. Not only do the Soviets reject our principles of democracy and freedom, but they believe that conflict between the capitalist nations and themselves is inevitable. The threat posed by this ideologically inspired aggressive state is unique in modern history, and the future of Western civilization hangs in the balance.

The United States cannot turn its back on the threat of Soviet expansion. Western Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Japan are too important to U.S. national interests to leave them vulnerable to Soviet aggression. By working with other free nations we can construct a strong barrier that will contain further Soviet expansion. Foreign aid can nourish democratic institutions and undercut the appeal of the communists in France, Italy, Greece, and other countries suffering from economic and political unrest. War with the Soviet Union is avoidable if we possess the will to stand up to Soviet military aggression. Our possession of the atomic bomb, a firm commitment to strengthening our armed forces, and our control of the oceans can be used to limit Soviet military actions. Fenced in by the power of the free world, Soviet communism will eventually wither and die, making room for a new generation of democratic leaders. Communism thrives only in conditions of misery, want, and strife. The United States and its allies must be vigilant in their efforts to contain its spread.



Charles G. Werner in *The Indianapolis Star*, 1949

### Building the Case for Option Two

Excerpts from a telegram sent by George Kennan from the U.S. Moscow embassy to the State Department, February 22, 1946:

"USSR still lives in antagonistic 'capitalistic encirclement' with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence....[They

believe that the] Capitalist world is beset with internal conflicts, inherent in the nature of capitalist society....Internal conflicts of capitalism inevitably

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## THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. Provide foreign aid to free countries in Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Japan to enable them to resist Soviet encroachment and communist subversion.
2. Strengthen our armed forces — specifically our ability to wage atomic and biological warfare — in order to deter further Soviet aggression and contain the expansion of Soviet influence.
3. Educate the citizens of the United States and the free nations of the West concerning the true nature of the Soviet regime, its long-term threat to Western values, and the subversive role of the Communist Party in non-communist countries.
4. Cooperate militarily with non-communist countries so as to discourage Soviet attempts at expansion and ensure that non-communist governments have sufficient military resources to combat internal communist subversion and insurrection.

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

- The Soviet threat is very different from that posed by Hitler's Germany. Soviet leaders are motivated by an ideology that predicts world conflict and conquest. In their eyes, war with the United States is inevitable. Thus, our country needs a new global strategy.
- While the Soviets have sought to take advantage of vulnerable nations along their border, they have ceased their actions when the risks became too great. The Iran crisis of early 1946 showed that the Soviets will back down when faced with determined opposition.
- Communism has grown only when the social fabric of a nation has been weakened by war, economic crises, or political strife. In nations with healthy economies and stable democracies, communism has had little appeal.
- For the past thirty years, Soviet leaders have condemned and attacked Western values of economic freedom and political liberty. There is no reason to believe that they will change their views or behavior in the foreseeable future.

## ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION TWO

- The Soviets respect force and will stop expanding when faced with military strength, thus avoiding a major confrontation.
- Any country that falls under Soviet control strengthens the Soviet Union in its worldwide attack against capitalism and Western values.
- The American way of life is threatened by the avowed goals of Soviet communism and those who follow the communist ideology.
- The costs of economic and political aid in the short run will be much less than the inevitable war that will come if the Soviet Union is allowed to become more powerful than the West. In the long run, this strategy will force the Soviets to modify their behavior and work responsibly with other nations.

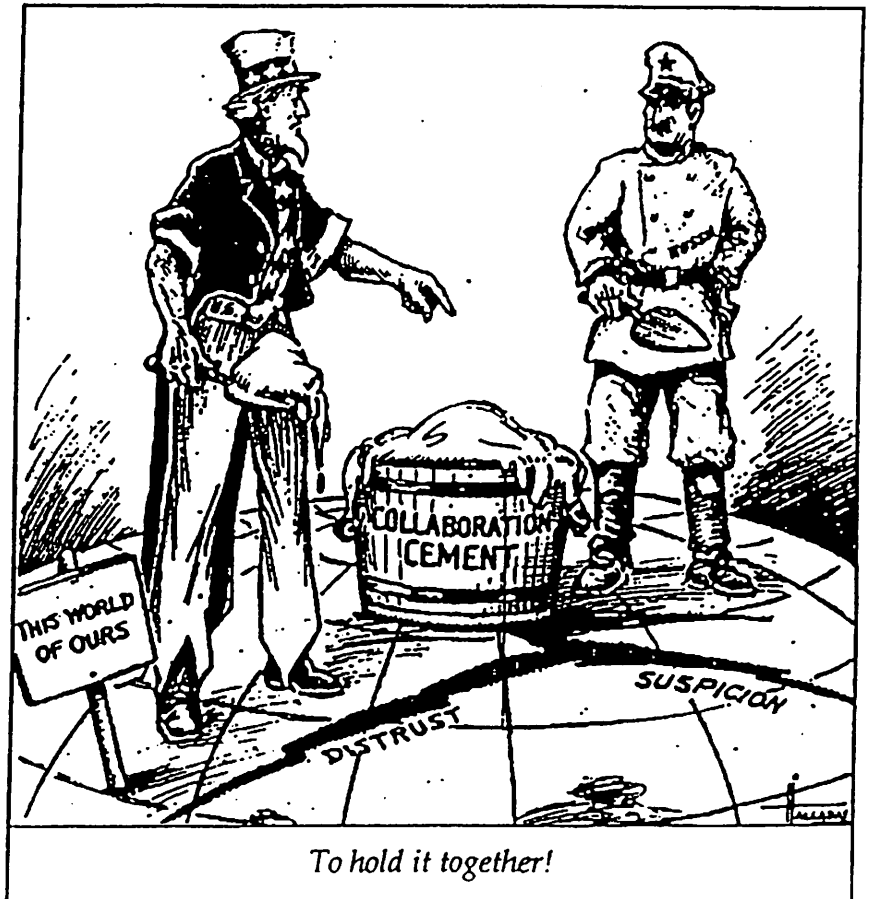
## Option

3

## CO-EXIST AND COMPROMISE

With the defeat of Germany and Japan, the Allied nations are in a unique position to create a new international order based on the rule of law. As history has shown, peace is possible only when the most powerful countries of the world share common goals. The United States and the Soviet Union are different in many ways. But while we reject the Soviets' economic and political system, we share a mutual desire for peace. Now is the time to build on this area of agreement to ensure a future of international stability and legality. The United States can do its part to maintain peace by refraining from the threat or use of force, whenever possible. This is particularly true in the case of our relationship with the Soviet Union. After losing more than 20 million people in the last war, the Soviets are naturally fearful of outside threats. This explains the actions of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe. These strategic moves are regrettable, but understandable. The Soviets feel they need a buffer of friendly states on their borders to protect themselves from invasion. With similar logic, the United States has dominated the Caribbean for most of this century. Installing Western-style democratic governments in the Soviet sphere of influence cannot be achieved short of another world war.

The best way to promote the interests of the peoples of eastern Europe would be to diminish the Soviet sense of insecurity. U.S. economic assistance for the Soviet Union and those countries within its orbit would reduce tensions, raise living standards, lay the foundation for expanding trade, and open up access to natural resources. Finally, the U.S. monopoly over atomic weapons and the resulting "saber rattling" heard from some of our leaders present a major obstacle to better U.S.-Soviet relations. This type of talk only strengthens the hand of those elements within the Soviet ruling class that do not favor cooperation with the West. These hard-liners use signs of U.S. hostility to justify further militarization of the Soviet economy. By establishing secure international controls over atomic weapons, we could eliminate this source of friction and take another important step toward shaping a world of peace and cooperation.



Halladay in *The Providence Journal*, 1946

### Building the Case for Option Three

*Excerpt from testimony by General Dwight Eisenhower before the House of Representatives, November 15, 1945:*

There is no one thing, I believe, that guides the policy of the United States.... of Russia more today than to keep friendship with

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## THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. Recognize Soviet security interests in eastern Europe and stop encouraging groups in this area to resist the Soviets.
2. Avoid threatening the Soviet Union with our atomic monopoly and work for effective international control over the development of atomic power.
3. Focus on areas of mutual concern where there are some common interests, while using the United Nations as a forum to discuss differences and negotiate settlements.
4. Assist the Soviet Union and eastern Europe to rebuild, using U.S. expertise and economic assistance.
5. Avoid political and military alliances that might appear to the Soviets to be directed against them.

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

- The aftermath of World War I demonstrated that world peace cannot be maintained without the cooperation of all the Great Powers. To exclude a Great Power such as the Soviet Union from the process guarantees failure.
- While friction between Great Powers is an inevitable result of the international system, the extent of such friction in the past has been limited through diplomacy. Differences in economic and political systems do not inevitably lead to war between nations.
- Just as the United States has been historically dominant in the Caribbean and has reacted strongly to other powers meddling in the area, so the Soviet Union has been historically dominant in eastern Europe and has interests in some areas of the Middle East. This is natural behavior for a powerful state.
- The wartime collaboration showed that the United States and the Soviet Union can work together on common areas of interest, even though they have very different political and economic systems.

## ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION THREE

- Contact and cooperation with the Soviet Union is the best way to expose the Soviets to the benefits of the American democratic system. Eventually, the Soviets will become more like us.
- U.S. assistance in the economic development of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe will lead to increased trade and access to raw materials, which will benefit the American economy and raise the American standard of living.
- Since the U.S. atomic monopoly will not last long, the destructive power of these weapons requires that all nations refrain from threatening behavior and confrontations. No longer can the world's leaders engage in traditional games of threat and bluff.
- Reduced defense expenditures will promote American economic prosperity. American citizens should be engaged in productive, peacetime occupations, not in nonproductive, military establishments.



## AVOID FOREIGN ENTANGLEMENTS

With our victory in the last war, the security of the United States is assured. Americans can return again to making their lives better without foreign threats lurking over their shoulders. Our fortunate geographic position, with great oceans isolating us from the strife of Europe and Asia, enables us to defend our shores without bankrupting our economy. The United States' two-ocean navy and air force equipped with atomic bombs are more than sufficient to ensure our freedom and protect those areas on the periphery of Europe and Asia that may be important to us. Further involvement in world affairs should be avoided. Especially dangerous are misguided plans to shape the world to fit American ideals. The people of each country should be allowed to work out their own problems in their own ways. The role of crusader is not only doomed to failure, as was demonstrated by the aftermath of World War I, but it also tends to corrupt the values that motivate the crusade. At a time when the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union is high, such a policy would be both expensive and reckless.

President George Washington established the traditional U.S. policy of nonintervention in European affairs. This policy, faithfully followed until this century, has worked hand-in-hand with our system of economic freedom to bring the American people an unrivaled level of peace and prosperity. By shunning political and military commitments in Europe, the United States has avoided the economic burdens of maintaining oversized armed forces. Moreover, unlike the experience of many Europeans, Americans have not seen their democratic values and individual rights threatened by an overbearing military establishment. Americans understand that we prosper most when the power of the central government is kept at a minimum. The individual liberties that Americans hold so dear would be threatened by the unchecked growth of executive power fed by overseas involvement. Like military and political commitments abroad, dependence on overseas markets and resources leads to a build-up of a military establishment to protect and promote these interests. Foreign loans and credits, even when motivated by humanitarian concerns, more often than not produce friction. America can continue to prosper without excessive overseas economic commitments.



*Some day they'll come crawling back to her*

Joseph Parrish in *The Chicago Tribune*, 1949. © Chicago Tribune Company. Used with permission.

### Building the Case for Option Four

Excerpts from President George Washington's Farewell Address, September 19, 1796:

Nothing is more essential than that permanent, passionate attachments for others should be inveterate antipathies against particular nations and excluded and that in place of them just and amicable

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## THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. Avoid interfering in the disputes concerning Soviet influence in eastern Europe.
2. Keep our navy and air force strong enough to defend the Western Hemisphere and those areas along the periphery of Europe and Asia vital to our interests.
3. Avoid alliances, political or military, with any European power, particularly those directed against the Soviet Union.
4. Limit foreign aid to outright grants of financial assistance, rather than loans.

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

- The United States has prospered for 170 years because we have avoided foreign commitments and the high level of military expenditures that such commitments require.
- The aftermath of World War I showed that we cannot remake the world according to American ideals. American ideals cannot be exported or imposed upon others.
- The economic dependence of the European powers on colonies in Asia and Africa has led to tangled political commitments and military involvement abroad. This was a major reason for the war among the European powers in 1914.
- The aftermath of World War I taught us that lending money to Great Britain, France, and other countries leads to hard feelings, friction, and, frequently, nonrepayment of debts.
- From the Roman Empire to Nazi Germany, history shows us that militaristic governments tend to repress the liberties of their citizens.

## ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION FOUR

- We will minimize the chances of being drawn into the next European war by avoiding commitments to or alliances against any European power.
- Our economy will not be burdened with the heavy defense and foreign aid expenditures required by foreign commitments.
- Because of our geographic isolation and largely self-sufficient economy, the Soviet Union poses no vital threat to the United States in the long run.
- Americans will enjoy a full range of political and economic liberties only if the United States rejects policies that result in the build-up of a large military establishment.
- The U.S. navy and the air force, equipped with atomic weapons, can guarantee the security of the United States from attack.