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### From allies to enemies

Robin J. Cowan

*University of Richmond*

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From Allies to Enemies

Robin J. Cowan

Honors Thesis

in

Department of History

University of Richmond

Richmond, Virginia

April, 1988

Advisor - Dr. Martin Ryle

From Allies To Enemies  
(The Russian Perspective)

Robin, your topic is superb & your sources are excellent. The major problem is a willful suspension of disbelief in your analysis of the Soviet POV as you too often assert the plausible but unproven Truman may have been misled, misinformed, and simply wrong. I well not deny the USSR was behind the Vietnam War, but are you not aware of all the evidence that the Soviet Union was behind the USSR in the 1950s? I also have some examples of what you might call "errors of fact" which is too often ungrammatical with the diligence with which you have researched it. For all the intricacies of the topic and the diligence with which you have researched it, I applaud your choice of topic and the diligence with which you have researched it. I also have some examples of what you might call "errors of fact" which is too often ungrammatical with the diligence with which you have researched it. I also have some examples of what you might call "errors of fact" which is too often ungrammatical with the diligence with which you have researched it. I also have some examples of what you might call "errors of fact" which is too often ungrammatical with the diligence with which you have researched it.

Robin J. Cowan  
April 8, 1988  
Senior Thesis  
Dr. Rilling

B

## INTRODUCTION

R.G. Collingwood concludes his book, The Idea of History with a powerful statement. He says, "We ought by now to realize that no kindly law of nature will save us from the fruits of our ignorance." Collingwood argues that the only way to overcome ignorance is to have a solid understanding based on historical thought. The job of the historian is to search through existing evidence and the theories of other authorities and <sup>to</sup> present what she believes is the historical truth.

After reading Collingwood and always having had a strong interest in the Cold War, I was inspired to examine the origins of the Cold War beneath the popular facade. The Cold War has intrigued me because I ~~felt~~ <sup>have believed</sup> that I, along with the American public, never knew the whole story. I believed that the best way to increase my understanding of the Cold War is to study it from the Russian perspective. Nikolai V. Sivachev, a Soviet scholar, also suggests that the best way to learn how foreigners view and deal with the United States is to turn to non-American scholars of distinction for their country's perception of relations with the United States.

My research is of great value because it attempts to understand the thoughts and actions of a society with a very different social and political system from that of the United States. My research can dissolve many of the misconceptions about the Soviet Union and can also provide a deeper understanding of our own society. As Collingwood has stated, "... misconceptions are a

constant peril to historical thought." My research has proven that misconceptions have not only influenced historical thought but also world leaders and national policies.

As soon as World War II was over (some scholars argue that even before World War II was over), the Soviet Union and the United States went from allies to enemies almost overnight and hence the Cold War began. The arguments and numerous works written about the Cold War from 1945 to the present is not the focus of my thesis. My paper attempts to understand the motives and relationships of the Soviet Union during World War II and how these factors led to the Cold War with the United States. My analysis ends with President Truman taking office because that is when the Cold War becomes inevitable. Although tension existed between the Soviet Union and the United States before and during World War II, I do not believe that it was inevitable that these two great powers would become vicious rivals. The Russian perspective sees the United States instigating the Cold War from a position of strength after World War II. My thesis seeks to prove that the Russians have a valid argument. I do not claim to prove that the Russian perspective is correct but I do believe there is a great deal of historical truth to their perception.

The purpose of my introduction is not only to describe the objective of my thesis but also to acknowledge the credibility of my sources. Many of my primary sources are books written in the Soviet Union. In doing my research I have been very sensitive to the obvious propaganda and bias that must exist in these sources; however, they remain valuable sources. These works are instrumental

in answering one of the major questions in my paper: What is the perspective that the Russian government portrays to their people? Furthermore, much of the information in the Russian books surprisingly correlates with some of the American sources. I think it is important to recognize that Western research is often sunk in bias and strict analysis is also required in determining the validity and truth of these sources.

Through my research and studies, I have learned that history is not universal. Events are universal but the history<sup>ies</sup> of those events are often extremely different. Any good historian must search for all historical perspectives before he can claim to truly understand the history. My goal is to enhance my knowledge and the knowledge of others in order to bring us closer to a historical truth regarding the origins of the Cold War.

"Never before has there been such utter confusion in the public mind with respect to U.S. foreign policy. The President doesn't understand it; the Congress doesn't understand it; nor does the public, nor does the press. They all wander around in a labyrinth of ignorance and error and conjecture, in which truth is intermingled with fiction at a hundred points, in which unjustified assumptions have attained the validity of premises, and in which there is no recognized and authoritative theory to hold on to. Only the diplomatic historian, working from the leisure and detachment of a later day, will be able to unravel this incredible tangle and to reveal the true aspect of the various factors and issues involved."<sup>1</sup>

-George Kennan  
Diary entry, 1950

Just as the U.S.'s foreign policy was guided by misconception and fear, so was Soviet foreign policy. Both countries after World War II were guilty of misinterpreting the actions and statements of the other. As George Kennan has suggested, through time the historian will be able to search through the myths of both countries and uncover a closer truth about the Grand Alliance in World War II and its offspring- The Cold War.

The sensationalism and complexity that make up the Cold War greatly hinder the historian's attempt to unveil some type of truth. Any scholar must acknowledge that no one perception has a monopoly on truth and that <sup>?</sup>they all emphasize some aspects of reality and obscure others. The task of the historian is to examine the various perceptions and break them down into what she believes constitutes the truth. One of the best ways to understand the Cold War is to research it from the Russian perspective. The Russian point of view, like the American viewpoint will also be filled with irrational assumptions, misinformation, and emotionalism. However, the shocking fact remains that much of the Russian

perspective is based on solid universal evidence that can be found in many Western sources. The validity of the perception is not as important as the insight that the perception provides about the beliefs, goals, and fears of the people within the Soviet Union. The Russian perspective can reveal why the Cold War happened, but it can not prove who is responsible. The historian must make that ultimate decision.

Alexander Werth claims that the Cold War started in 1917 with the Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>2</sup> George Kennan argues that the Cold War grew out of World War II and "forces inherent in Russian and American history."<sup>3</sup> Both of these arguments are valid, but they lack emphasis on the most significant factor that led to the Cold War- World War II. Alexander Werth demonstrates in his work Russia- The Post War Years that tension between the Soviet Union and the United States had been increasing steadily from the Bolshevik Revolution to WW II. However, to <sup>designate</sup> call that tension a cold war is to greatly exaggerate the condition. Kennan's argument also does not give enough emphasis to the events and relationships within WW II. What is especially disturbing about Kennan's thesis is that he saw the Cold War as inevitable due to the two opposing social systems. George Kennan, the author of the Mr. "X" Article that proposed the containment policy, later admitted the "error of judgment and regrettable effect" which that policy shaping article had for several years afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

By examining closely the interaction between the Soviet Union and the United States it will become evident that the Cold



War grew out of very real policies and personalities not "forces". As Alexander Werth said, "Today, I think everybody in the U.S. with any sound historical judgment agrees that the Cold War was unnecessary."<sup>5</sup> The Russian perspective reinforces this idea and argues that the United States was at liberty after World War II to establish peace throughout the world. However, the United States Government panicked over the Soviet Union's power and prestige after World War II and immediately labeled them as a serious threat instead of a serious partner. Historical evidence provides a powerful argument that the United States was the intolerant country that could not peacefully co-exist with a communist power. There is no doubt that the United States was the most powerful country, financially and militarily, after World War II. If they could destroy the Soviet Union, they would not *simplistic* have to share their power. What an easy objective for the American government, especially when they could disguise it as "stopping communist aggression." Stalin was not promoting World Revolution, he was seeking vital security, and the history of World War II both on the battlefield and in the summits strongly supports this argument.

The Soviet Union focuses more ~~on~~ than the United States on the events of World War II because the "Great Patriotic War" provides a favorable and valiant picture of the Soviet Union and its purposes. World War II was a turning point in Russian history because the Soviet Union finally gained great power status and they believed that their courageous fighting in the war justified

their power and prestige. Russian writers promote confidently the theory that the Soviet Union saved the world from Hitler. Perhaps this is a slight exaggeration, but it borders on more truth than many American arguments. The Russian perspective should leave any tolerant thinker with a fresh understanding of the origins of the Cold War.

Define Imperialism bears the burden and responsibility for World War II.<sup>6</sup> The Russians believe that both World War I and II were caused by the imperialist system. The Soviets identify the main instigators as the fascist states of Germany, Italy, and militarist Japan. However, the other bourgeois democratic nations such as France, Great Britain, and the United States were also to blame for following a policy of appeasement toward Hitler. The Soviet Union witnessed the Western powers trying to appease the aggressors at the expense of Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Spain, and Austria.<sup>7</sup> The Soviets were especially irate over the Munich Agreement of 1938 which partitioned Czechoslovakia. This agreement by the Western powers helped build and consolidate the aggressors' military bloc. Stalin interpreted the West's behavior as a blatant policy to channel Nazi aggression exclusively eastward against the Soviet Union.<sup>8</sup>

Before the Munich Agreement was made the Soviets had been calling for collective security against the Hitler coalition. Stalin had tried to make treaties with the Western countries but they chose to follow their own policy of appeasement. Most of the leaders of the capitalist world were so deeply prejudiced

their motherland." Furthermore, they performed their international responsibility by providing armed resistance for peoples of other countries.<sup>15</sup>

Learning about the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Winston Churchill declared full British support but also stressed that he had always been an enemy of communism and always would be. Churchill's broadcast speech on June 22 said:

"No one has been a more consistent opponent of communism than I have for the last twenty-five years. I will unsay no word that I have spoken."<sup>16</sup>

However, Churchill went on to explain that any state that fought against Germany would have British aid:

"The British government would give the Soviet Union any technological or economic assistance which is in our power and which is likely to be of service to them... The Russian danger is therefore our danger and the danger of the United States."<sup>17</sup>

Britain's terms of cooperation were vague initially and they remained so throughout the war. However, Churchill's speech was significant to the Soviets because it meant that the British did not intend to make a separate peace or strike a deal with Germany. The Soviets immediately showed their appreciation. Molotov cabled to the Soviet Ambassador in London on June 22 to explain the Soviet Government's position on Soviet-British mutual assistance; "It will be understood that no Soviet Government will ~~not~~ want to accept British aid without compensation and that it will, in its turn, be ready to lend assistance to Britain."<sup>18</sup>

The United States, who was claiming neutrality in 1941 reacted cautiously to the German invasion. The day before Hitler attacked

the Soviet Union, the U.S. State Department sent out a memorandum stating the United States' policy regarding the Soviet Union. It stated:

"We should offer the Soviet Union no suggestions or advice unless the Soviet Union approaches us. If the Soviet Government should approach us directly requesting assistance, we should so far as possible, without interfering in our aid to Great Britain and to victims of aggression or without seriously affecting our own efforts of preparedness, relax restrictions on exports to the Soviet Union. In particular, we should engage in no undertakings which might make it appear that we have not acted in good faith if later we should refuse to recognize a refugee Soviet Government or cease to recognize the Soviet Ambassador in Washington as the diplomatic representative of Russia in case the Soviet Union should be defeated and the Soviet Government should be obliged to leave the country."<sup>19</sup>

President Roosevelt was more supportive than the State Department,<sup>?</sup> and he decided to endorse Churchill and his policies. FDR believed that "Any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying that these forces may spring, will hasten the eventual downfall of the present German leaders and will therefore redound to the benefit our own defense and security. Hitler's armies are today the chief dangers of the Americas."<sup>20</sup>

Despite strong opposition from the isolationist<sup>s</sup>, Roosevelt was successful in bringing the country closer to cooperation with the Soviet Union. Roosevelt's strong dislike of fascism and Harry Hopkins' visit to Moscow greatly influenced FDR's position. Roosevelt personally despised Nazism because it discredited the entire capitalist system of which he was a firm supporter.<sup>21</sup> On July 28, 1941, Roosevelt sent Harry Hopkins, who was a close friend of Roosevelt's and the Administrator of Lend-Lease to Moscow to assess the military situation. Hopkins returned with a

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positive impression about the Soviet Union and he concluded that they were not only capable of withstanding the enemy but could also inflict serious blows. Hopkins reported to Washington: " I feel ever so confident about this front. The morale of the population is exceptionally good. There is an unbound determination to win."<sup>22</sup> Hopkins' report to the government and personally to the president did much to determine the policy of the Roosevelt Administration in aiding the Soviet Union.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, British and American trade unions were increasingly vocal in urging close cooperation with the Soviet Union. A United States opinion poll taken in 1941 indicated that 87% of Americans favored cooperation, 12% were against it, and 1% abstained.<sup>24</sup>

Britain and the United States recognized that they must cooperate with the Soviet Union but they also wanted to make clear their ~~class~~ hatred for communism. The United States and Great Britain still anti-Soviet agreed to set up the anti-Hitler coalition. Britain and the Soviet Union initiated the anti-Hitler coalition by signing "The Agreement For Joint Action of USSR and Great Britain in the War Against Germany" on July 13, 1941 at the Kremlin.<sup>25</sup> The two basic tenants of this agreement were that the two governments would assist each other in all ways possible against "Hitlerite Germany", and that neither of them would negotiate or conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.<sup>26</sup>

The United States joined <sup>in creating</sup> the Grand Alliance on August 14, 1941 when it signed the Atlantic Charter. The Atlantic Charter

became the first document in which all three powers: The USSR, the United States, and Great Britain joined in a public declaration of their purposes of action against fascist aggressors. The three basic principles in the Charter were: the establishment of a post war democratic organization formulated by the Soviets, the American and British intent to achieve "the final destruction of Nazi tyranny," and it also stated the claim by the U.S. and Britain to dominate the world.<sup>27</sup> The Soviet Union expressed agreement with the basic principles of the Atlantic Charter but made reservations if it was to be interpreted to "deny freedom, independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of any state or nation."<sup>28</sup> Most Soviet scholars claim that the charter was an important propaganda ploy for Roosevelt and Churchill because it did not really disclose the true aims of the American and British governments. The idealized manner in which Lebedev describes the Atlantic Charter in his book, The USSR in World Politics implies to the astute scholar that Stalin also used the Charter as propaganda.

Although Soviet historians are obviously bias<sup>ed</sup> in some of their research, they still argue a strong point regarding the anti-Hitler coalition. All three countries recognized the advantages of a Grand Alliance but the Soviet Union made the anti-Hitler coalition a reality. The major concern of Soviet diplomacy as soon as World War II began was to unite all the forces opposed to the bloc of fascist aggressors. Britain was Stalin's top priority as an ally because it was the only great power in the war. Stalin also wanted to promote close relations with the United

States in order to obtain military equipment and other war materials. Stalin had to overcome the stubborn resistance of the most influential quarters in western countries which opposed cooperation with the USSR in order to achieve the Grand Alliance.

One of the most interesting facts about the origins of the Cold War from the Russian perspective, is the ~~pride and~~ significance the Soviets grant to the anti-Hitler coalition. First, they make clear that the Soviets were the instrumental country in forming the coalition. They use this basic assumption to prove that from the beginning the Russians have always been interested in promoting peace with the Western countries. They believe that the coalition proves that countries with opposing social systems can still cooperate and peacefully co-exist. As Vilnis Sipols said in his work, The Road to Great Victory: "Britain and the United States agreed to military cooperation with the Soviet Union- a socialist state, so as to strengthen their hand in a clash with another imperialist group."<sup>29</sup> The coalition was a unique event in history and the Soviets had hoped that it would set a precedent in the future. Therefore, they believed that any tension that had occurred between the two countries was due to imperialist desires and power, not Soviet aggression. The sacrifices of the Soviet people and the "Second Front" issue in World War II proved sound support for the Russian perspective.

Hitler had destroyed France in two months and Stalin knew it was only a matter of time before the Nazis would attack Russia. On June 22, 1941, Hitler started his treacherous attack on the



Soviet Union with the ultimate goal of crushing socialism. The German forces launched Plan Barbarossa; an offensive in the three major directions of Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev. In the beginning weeks the German troops penetrated deep inside Soviet territory. It was the unanimous opinion in the British ruling circles that it would not take Hitler any longer to defeat Russia than France.<sup>30</sup> John Dill, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London said, "The Russians would be done with in no more than six or seven weeks. The Germans would go through Russia like a hot knife through butter."<sup>31</sup> Britain and the United States expected an early German victory; however, the "Soviet-German war was welcomed mainly as a diversion of German strength from the British Isles."<sup>32</sup> Therefore, Churchill continued his ardent spoken support of the Russian effort. Encouraging Stalin to fight onward, for obvious reasons of self-interest, Churchill proclaimed, "The Russian front has now become the decisive front."<sup>33</sup>

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Much to the Western powers' surprise, the German-Soviet front did become a major influence in the outcome of World War II. The first week in December of 1941 marked a major turning point in the war and in Soviet prestige. Russia dealt Germany her first major defeat outside Moscow and in other areas. Furthermore, the persistent and courageous fighting of the Russians started to gain international attention.<sup>34</sup> The United States and Britain also started to value their relationship with the Soviets more. In November of 1941, Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of Canada, commented:

"Never in human history has battle reckoned in machines and men together, been waged on such a scale. Never have casualties been heavier. Only rarely, I believe, has spontaneous sympathy of people throughout the world been so aroused."<sup>35</sup>

The Russian morale had been sparked and for the first time the Soviets had full faith in their ability to win the war.<sup>36</sup>

The United States and Britain were helping the USSR in only ineffective, non-sacrificing ways. While the Soviet army was fighting fierce bloody battles wearing out German forces, British troops were still avoiding any major action against Germany.<sup>37</sup> Aid from the United States was limited and came late. At the end of 1941, the United States supplied \$751 million to all the belligerent countries with only \$545,000 going to the USSR, less than ten percent!<sup>38</sup> Cordell Hull, The Secretary of State admitted that American authorities deliberately caused delays in shipments to the Soviet Union.<sup>39</sup> President Roosevelt ordered that production and delivery of lend lease be accelerated and quantities increased. He said, "Frankly, if I were a Russian, I would feel that I had been given the run around by the United States."<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the materials and supplies that the Russians did receive were usually of lower quality. Stalin's interpreter Berezkhov wrote in his memoirs, "Soviet citizens are well aware that both the Americans and the British have airplanes as good as the Germans or even better, but for reasons unknown none of these planes are supplied to the Soviet Union."<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps the reasons were unknown, but it was becoming apparent that there were conflicting objectives in the coalition. W.H.

McNeill argues that actually two separate wars were being fought. The decision to defeat Germany first was a mutual agreement but the lack of full scale action by Britain and the United States in Europe until 1943, and <sup>the delay</sup> a major offensive against Germany until 1944, drastically reduced the actual value of that decision.<sup>42</sup>

It was evident that the coalition could not remove the contradictions between the two social systems. Russian historians have a simple explanation for the split in the coalition. The USSR was fighting the war to achieve the quickest possible victory and the Western powers were fighting the war for imperialist interest.<sup>43</sup> During

the war many episodes reinforced this belief, one in particular <sup>being</sup> was the summer and autumn of 1942. <sup>During</sup> This period, <sup>was</sup> one of the gravest times of war for the Soviet Union, <sup>and</sup> the British and American governments decided to suspend convoys along the northern route. They <sup>justified</sup> explained the cutoff <sup>by</sup> to the significant increase in losses of transport vessels. It is true that many ships were being destroyed by the Germans; however, these difficulties could have been overcome depending on the command and willingness of the Anglo-American forces.<sup>44</sup> <sup>P</sup> Despite the lack of any substantial assistance to the Russians, having powerful allies had some psychological importance to the Russians.<sup>45</sup>

World War II was different from any other war to the Soviets. It was not only a "patriotic war" in the deepest sense, but a war in which literally the only choice was between death and victory; and Russians by the millions were ready to die.<sup>46</sup> During the war, even pictures of Stalin disappeared from the Soviet press. This was not Stalin's

war but a plain war of national survival. The rule in Russia till the very end of the war was: "Use dlya fronta, vse dlya pobedy - Everything for the front, everything for victory."<sup>47</sup> The Soviets suffered under brutal destruction and starvation. During the winter of 1941-42, nearly half the population <sup>of</sup> that encircled Leningrad died of starvation. Starvation was so rampant that the government turned a blind eye to black marketing of food because it helped thousands of hungry civilians. Alexander Werth regretted to report in his work that among the worst black market profiteers in the Soviet Union were foreign diplomats in Moscow!<sup>48</sup> Words of praise like FDR's, were about the only form of relief that the Russians received from Britain and the United States during the first few bloody years of World War II. Roosevelt said:

"The Red Army and the Russian people have surely started the Hitler forces on the road to ultimate defeat and have earned the lasting admiration of the people of the United States...The world has never seen greater devotion, determination, and self-sacrifice than have been displayed by the Russian people and their armies."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>h</sup>  
^ February of 1943, the Red Army accomplished a glorious victory at Stalingrad. W.H. McNeill writes, "The Red Army had dealt the Wehrmacht a blow from which it could never recover. After Stalingrad, victory looked certain and it would be a Russian victory, for the contributions of the Western allies to Russia's success were not very obvious."<sup>50</sup> A Russian woman told Werth at the time, "For the first time in my life, I think we are a very great people, perhaps the greatest people in the world."<sup>51</sup> The Russian triumph was not only a great military victory, but was also a victory of international prestige for the Soviets. Recognizing

the Soviet Union as one of the world's most powerful and influential nations, there was a rising trend in many countries to strengthen relations with the USSR after Stalingrad. <sup>name one or two</sup> Many Western historians have tried to play down the significance of the Stalingrad victory. They argue that it was not heroism and steadfastness by Soviet soldiers but rather bad roads and unusually cold winters that determined victory.<sup>52</sup> Russian historians vehemently discredit this theory. Vilnis Sipols states, "Any attempts at playing down the significance of the Battle of Stalingrad are futile. Its scale, the intensity of the fighting, the military and political consequences were so great that it has gone down in history as the major turning point of the war."<sup>53</sup>

Ironically, victory at Stalingrad was not only a turning point towards ~~a closer~~ victory in World War II, it was also an initial stepping stone towards the Cold War. The Russians had proved their determination and power by defeating the enemy and now their allies were suspicious. Vojtech Mastny, who exemplifies the typical hard-line American perspective writes, "Stalingrad deprived Hitler the chance to win the war...Stalingrad only increased the uncertainty of who else might dominate Europe afterward."<sup>54</sup> The Western allies in the anti-Hitler coalition were now worried that Stalin would negotiate a separate peace with Germany. The British government went as far as ordering their Moscow ambassador to investigate Soviet intentions toward Germany.<sup>55</sup> There was very little evidence to support the Western powers' suspicions about Stalin during this period, and it <sup>may be</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>more</sup>

accurate to identify the West's behavior as paranoid. Furthermore, American and British concerns could not have been too intense because there was still no indication that a second front was on the way.

The suspicions of the Western powers were short lived due to the fact that the Red Army was bringing the Allies closer and closer to defeating Hitler and the British and Americans had hardly shed a drop of blood. In July of 1943, the Soviets won another decisive battle at Kursk. After the Battle at Kursk, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff drew up a document on August 2, 1943 of great significance. The document, <sup>which</sup> called for maximum assistance to Russia, ~~and it~~ was supported by President Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins. The document said:

"In World War II, Russia occupies a dominant position and is the decisive factor looking toward the defeat of the Axis powers in Europe...After the war Russia would be the strongest nation in Europe...The conclusion reached is that Russia is so necessary to victory and peace that we must give her maximum assistance and make every effort to develop and maintain the most friendly relations with her."<sup>56</sup>

Stalin interpreted maximum effort in only one way- a second front. The second front was a Russian term which defined an Anglo-American invasion of France across the English Channel.<sup>57</sup> The delaying of the crucial second front is one of the most sound and convincing factors that both American and Russian historians have argued led to the Cold War. Debate over the second front initiated the beginning of complicated and distrustful relations between the USSR and her Western allies. Stalin had been pushing for a second front since the Germans attacked in 1941. As late

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as 1943, Churchill still would not provide a second front. Stalin commented to Churchill, "You say that you quite understand my disappointment. I must tell you that the point here is not just the disappointment of the Soviet Government, but the preservation of its confidence in its allies which is being subjected to severe stress."<sup>58</sup> The stance of the British and American governments was also being questioned by the majority of the population in both countries. Roosevelt, by 1942 had also started to push for a second front, and he wrote to Churchill, "Your people and my people demand the establishment of a front to draw off pressure on the Russians and these people are wise enough to see that the Russians are today killing more Germans and destroying more equipment than you and I put together."<sup>59</sup> Despite consistent pleas for a second front, Churchill continued what Stalin called "the passive war." The passive war consisted of Britain moving her forces to British colonial possessions instead of committing to the second front. Stalin and Soviet historians have interpreted the passive war to imply that Churchill's main goals were to suppress national liberation movements and to preserve and strengthen the British Empire. The ruling elite of Britain saw the preservation of her possessions, not the defeat of Germany as her top priority.<sup>60</sup> And conversely, the second front was a paramount requirement of all Russian policy.

Finally, on April 7, 1944 an announcement promising a second front was made and on June 6, American and British troops landed in Normandy. Regardless of the fact that by 1944 the Soviet army



had regained almost entirely what they regarded as home territory, Stalin congratulated Churchill and Roosevelt.<sup>61</sup> Two days later Stalin made a tribute to the Allies' military prowess, and never before had "Stalin displayed such obvious satisfaction with the alliance."<sup>62</sup> However, even when the second front was opened, only one-third of Hitler's forces fought against the American, British, and French forces. Two-thirds of Hitler's army remained on the eastern front.<sup>63</sup> The second front issue, <sup>which</sup> ~~that~~ will be examined further in reference to the summit conferences, planted the seeds of distrust and hostility and they would grow quickly.

The Soviets did not leave the war on May 9, 1945 with the unconditional surrender of Germany. Stalin promised to help fight Japan and he entered the war against Japan on August 9, 1945.<sup>64</sup> Russia was not involved with the war against Japan for very long and her impact was minimal; however, Western historians usually ignore the fact that the Soviets did help the United States fight the Japanese. Not as By the end of the war, the Soviet soldiers had fought in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, Norway, Denmark, China, and Korea. The Red Army had also saved seven million people in concentration camps.<sup>65</sup>

Final statistics are only additional evidence to the condition of the two Cold War countries at the end of the war. Twenty million Russians were killed; less than one-half of a million Americans were killed; 1,710 towns, 70,000 villages, and 32,000 industrial plants in the Soviet Union were destroyed; there was

no property destroyed on the American continent; Russian material losses equalled 679 Billion Rubles; United States national income increased \$100 Billion, war profits equalled \$55.2 Billion, and the United States ~~possessed~~ <sup>amassed</sup> seventy-five percent of the gold reserves in the capitalist world.<sup>66</sup> Despite these overwhelming statistics the Soviet Union did not overlook the role played by the armies of other countries in securing victory. A Resolution of the CPSU Central Committee read: "A large contribution to victory in World War II was made by the peoples and armies of the United States, Great Britain, France, China, and other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition."<sup>67</sup> All Soviet historical publications that were used to research this paper acknowledged the contribution of the United States and Great Britain in helping defeat Nazi Germany. However, they also strongly denied the widespread Western argument that the United States was the arsenal of victory and thus had played a main role in the victorious ending of the war with Germany. It seems rather odd that such an argument could be made when The Secretary of State's memoirs presented a very different view. Cordell Hull's memoirs read:

"The United States of America must ever remember that by the Russian's heroic struggle against the Germans they probably saved the Allies from a negotiated peace with Germany. Such a peace would have humiliated the Allies and would have left the world open to another Thirty Years War."<sup>68</sup>

Even British Prime Minister Winston Churchill can be cited for remarking:

"It is the Russian army that tore the guts out of the German military machine...Future generations will acknowledge their debt to the Red Army as unreservedly as do we who have lived to witness these proud achievements."<sup>69</sup>

The evidence presented indicates that the Russian perspective that seeks to explain the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during World War II is closer to the truth than most Western perceptions. Perhaps some day the contents of American history courses will include thoughts such as Karl Renner's when teaching students the "facts" about World War II. Karl Renner was the Chancellor of the Austrian Provisional Government in Vienna and was the speaker at a monument dedication to Soviet soldiers on August 14, 1945. He said:

"The happy coming generations will stand before this monument and admire the heroic deeds and exploits of the Red Army, the selflessness of the Soviet soldier...He brought about the overthrow of the accursed regime of fascist enslavement and secured lasting peace among the nations of the whole world. All mankind is indebted to the Red Army."<sup>70</sup>

How could all these words of admiration and gratitude make the Allies into enemies? The simple answer is that they were only words, and actions spoke much louder and projected a very different message. Stalin said to Churchill in 1942, "We like a downright enemy better than a pretending friend."<sup>71</sup>

The United States and Great Britain were not Stalin's enemies, but as the various summit meetings developed during the war, Stalin must have begun to suspect that he was dealing with "pretending friends." It was within the several conferences of World War II among the allies that tensions and conflicting goals became a threat to the "harmony" of the anti-Hitler coalition. The policy makers of Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States were aware that the summits were never a great success for any one power. However, the media and public always treated them with

great optimism, because they were usually uninformed of the real dissent within the Grand Alliance. ~~Three of the~~ <sup>three</sup> ~~most~~ significant summits that revealed the true aims of the members of the anti-Hitler coalition were: Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam. There were numerous other meetings during the war, but these three conferences best represent the evolving of relationships among the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union.

President Roosevelt and Stalin met for the first time at the Teheran Conference, which was code-named Eureka, on November 28, 1943. At this time, American support for Russia from both the public and the government was at a peak. The friendliness between the two countries was evident in the fact that the United States delegation stayed at the Soviet Embassy in Iran for a few days until top security could be provided for them. While Soviet-American relations were at a high, British-American relations were at a low. Britain was resentful that the United States had assumed the role as leader of the Western countries and reduced Britain to a "junior partner."<sup>72</sup>

Stalin immediately recognized the tension between the United States and Britain and used it to his advantage, especially over the second front issue. Stalin's main objective at Teheran was to set a definite date for the opening of the second front. Churchill and Roosevelt disputed over how the second front should be implemented and Stalin endorsed Roosevelt's alternative. The firm decision taken at the Teheran Conference to open a Second Front in Europe in the spring of 1944 was significant. First it

would bring the allies much closer to victory, and it would also ease the building tension among the allies.<sup>73</sup>

The second front problem had been basically resolved at Teheran, but two other issues ~~that~~ would drag on to the other conferences, ~~were~~ <sup>v</sup> Poland and post-war Germany. Poland had been a sensitive issue even before Britain, the United States and Russia had become allies. When Hitler was on his rampage in Europe in the beginning stages of World War II, Stalin had to make a choice about Poland. He had to decide whether to abandon all of Poland to the Nazis, which would have brought them to a frontier almost within marching distance of Moscow or to take over Eastern Poland. Stalin made a deal with Hitler during the Nazi-Soviet Pact to split Poland. While Stalin had set up the Lublin government, which became the Union of Polish Patriots in 1943, an anti-Soviet Polish government was in exile in London. ~~During~~ <sup>at</sup> Teheran, Stalin wanted the Lublin government to be recognized as the official government of Poland. Stalin called for an independent, democratic, and strong post-war Poland. He also wanted to establish definite boundaries <sup>that</sup> ~~which~~ adhered to the ethnic boundaries of the Polish people. The basic Soviet proposal was adopted in exchange for promises from Stalin to fight in Asia and to join the United Nations. Stalin also signed the "Polish Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance, and Post War Collaboration." Stalin's determination to set up the Lublin government in Poland for strategic reasons was a definite indication of his sphere-of-influence policy.<sup>74</sup>

The other significant issue at Teheran was the structuring

of post-war Germany. The United States and Great Britain argued for the dismemberment of Germany. They thought that Germany should be divided into small self-governing states that would be ruled by the United Nations. Stalin thought dismemberment would be dangerous because it would generate an aggressive desire to unify. He favored the supervision of Germany by the victors through a system of strategic strong points. No real conclusion was ever reached at Teheran and the issue remained a topic of heated debate.

Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin gave the impression that Teheran was basically successful and it represented a new spirit of Allied cooperation.<sup>75</sup> In reality the leaders knew they were portraying a false optimism. Although the leaders agreed on several important issues, the implementation of these decisions <sup>WAS</sup> ~~were~~ vague. Therefore at the next major summit at Yalta, the same issues were hashed out again.

The Crimea Conference or the Yalta Summit, which took place from February 4th to the 11th of 1945, was the last war time conference. Yalta laid the ground work for resolving a number of major problems of the post-war peace settlement and above all those of the treatment of Germany after defeat.<sup>76</sup> Although many significant agreements were made at Yalta, each of the three powers had their own special interest. According to Russian sources there were essential differences between the war goals of the Allied powers. They believed that the Soviet government's main objectives were liberation, the expulsion of the German

aggressors, and to guarantee<sup>s</sup> that Germany could never start another war. Great Britain's aims were to keep her empire and possessions all over the world. The United States main goal was to establish world-wide supremacy <sup>based</sup> ~~due~~ to her great military strength and monopoly of atomic weapons.<sup>77</sup> Obviously, all these objectives have been exaggerated, but the main point is that each country perceived the other country as the obstacle to their "vital interests" and goals. The fact remains that much was ~~still~~ accomplished at Yalta, but unfortunately the decisions were not respected.

Besides basic military matters that were easily resolved, the two most significant issues at the Summit were again, Germany and the Polish dilemma. The German question was the most urgent on the agenda because Hitler's defeat was almost inevitable by now. The structuring of post-war Germany was deferred to the foreign ministers for future action. Stalin did get approval for reparations from Germany, but the amount was significantly less than he wanted. Stalin still perceived reparations as a major victory because it was a critical and vital issue to the people of Russia who had suffered such overwhelming losses.

Poland, which Daniel Yergin has labeled the "emblem of the Cold War" took up more time than any other issue at Yalta.<sup>78</sup> The Allies finally agreed on the borders of Poland but the more difficult problem was the nature of Poland's new government. The choices were the Western-supported London exile government that was bitterly anti-Soviet or the Lublin government <sup>that</sup> which was

supported heavily by the Soviet Union. During the debate Churchill said to Stalin, "Poland was to Britain a matter of honour." Stalin replied, "To the Soviet Union Poland was not only a matter of honour, but also a matter of security."<sup>79</sup> Stalin argued that Poland was not only vital because it was on Russia's frontier but it had also been the corridor for attack throughout history. The Allies agreed to reorganize the Lublin Government with some men from the London and Polish underground.<sup>80</sup>

Poland and Germany were basically victories for Stalin; however, Roosevelt also achieved what he regarded as his major aims. Roosevelt sold his voting procedure for the Security Council to Stalin, which assured the creation of the United Nations. Furthermore, a conference in San Francisco was scheduled for April 25, 1945 to establish the United Nations Organization. Roosevelt also received a definite pledge by Stalin to enter the war against Japan.

Winston Churchill also accomplished his main objective. He wanted to see the restoration of France back to "great power status" as a means of checking Russia's growing power. Churchill pleaded that "France's friendship was as essential for Britain as Poland was for Russia."<sup>81</sup> It was agreed that France would receive an occupation zone in Germany.

All three leaders declared a positive evaluation of the Conference and claimed that the decisions were well balanced. <sup>name a few</sup> Many Western historians <sup>have</sup> severely criticized Roosevelt's concessions to Stalin during Yalta; however, the Soviet Union actually made



more concessions. American historian Diane J. Clemens contradicts many Western scholars' argument. She concludes, "The decisions at Yalta involved compromise by each nation and probably more by the Soviets than by the Western nations."<sup>82</sup>

As the Allied powers aggressively pursued their own interest at Yalta, they ~~three~~ powers ironically signed a document known as "The Unity For Peace As For War." The document stated:

"Our meeting here in the Crimea has reaffirmed our common determination to maintain and strengthen in the peace to come that unity of purpose and of action which has made victory possible and creation for the United Nations in this war."<sup>83</sup>

Unfortunately the unity that this document proclaimed was never achieved. After Yalta relations would only get worse. The wartime summit meetings provided high level personal contact, which the leaders had hoped would dispel suspicions and set a precedent for post-war agreements. However, as the war drew to a close, tension and suspicion among the allied powers emerged from every angle. The night Roosevelt died, he wrote a letter to Churchill regarding the tension that had evolved between the West and Russia. Till his death on April 12, 1945, Roosevelt clung firmly to the conviction that no matter what differences there were between the Soviet Union and the West, "they could and must be peacefully ironed out."<sup>84</sup>

Roosevelt's successor Harry Truman would depart radically from Roosevelt's foreign policy, and the chance for peaceful co-existence was shattered. Truman took office and proclaimed a <sup>not used by</sup> crusade against world communism. Truman would go to the Potsdam

Conference armed with the belief that Stalin was a "communist devil", who intended to dominate the world.<sup>85</sup> Truman was not only armed with mythical beliefs but also with real atomic bombs. Two days before the Potsdam Conference the United States tested the atomic bomb in New Mexico. Under these conditions, there was little doubt that the alliance was over. After Potsdam, there was no doubt.

The Potsdam Conference took place during July and August of 1945. Potsdam was significant ~~in that~~ <sup>because</sup> it was the culminating stage of many complex negotiations between the American, Soviet, and British governments regarding future Germany. Ironically it was also the culminating stage for cooperation among the Allies. The atmosphere had definitely changed from Yalta; there was little cooperation and lots of opposition. Truman made it very obvious by his attitude that the Western allies had no intentions of cooperating with the Soviet Union. Charles Bohlen, an American diplomat who accompanied Truman <sup>to</sup> Potsdam, wrote about a conversation he had with Truman on the way home from Potsdam. Bohlen wrote:

"We discussed the atomic bomb and how we might use the security and power it gave us to establish a sound relationship with the Soviet Union...We speculated about methods we might use, considering everything from a flat ultimatum to the Soviets to withdraw to their frontiers down to various degrees of pressure."<sup>86</sup>

In a speech to Congress on December 19, 1945, Truman said, "The victory which we have won has placed upon the American people the continuing burden of responsibility for world leadership."<sup>87</sup>

Where could the Russians have ever gotten the idea that their security might be threatened and that their decisive role in the

victory of World War II was ignored?

Truman's aggressive policy, the atomic bomb, and the disappearance of a German threat provided a solid basis for the Russian perspective that the United States was the aggressive power seeking world domination. Western historians further validated this Russian point of view. They argued that the anti-Hitler coalition was a coalition of necessity. Once the threat of Hitler was dissolved, there was no reason to remain allies. The American perspective claims furthermore that the Soviets made it impossible to remain allies because immediately following World War II, they began a policy of aggression and expansionism throughout Eastern Europe. Many believed as Churchill did, "The Soviet Union had liberated Europe only to establish despotism of the Soviets."<sup>88</sup> This interpretation of Soviet behavior and intentions was a crude falsification and a slander on Soviet foreign policy. Scholars who made this argument did not truly understand the history of the Soviet Union and greatly distorted the true aims of the Soviet Union in order to diminish their significance and influence in the international realm. Alexander Werth argues that if Roosevelt had lived longer, the post-war years would have been different because he understood Stalin and the Soviet Union. Werth said, "He (Roosevelt) realized more fully than Churchill and most of his own advisors that Stalin's suspicious and secretive nature, which had made wartime cooperation difficult, had its roots in history."<sup>89</sup>

The roots that Roosevelt could appreciate and that Truman

reinforced was Russia's quest for security. The American historian, D.F. Fleming claims "that for 900 years fear has been the driving force in Russia and that Russian expansionism is explained as a reaction- as a defense expansion."<sup>90</sup> Just to list the invasions from the seventeenth century to World War II validate the Soviet's obsession with security. In the seventeenth century Moscow had been captured by the Poles; in the eighteenth century, the Swedes under Charles XII invaded Southern Russia; in 1812 Napoleon captured Moscow; in 1914 the Germans invaded; in 1920 the Poles invaded again and occupied Kiev; during the Russian Civil War various foreign troops invaded; and finally in 1941, the brutal invasion of Hitler that cost the Soviet Union twenty million people and one-third of her national wealth.<sup>91</sup> Most influential Westerners believed Stalin's goal after World War II was world revolution and <sup>thus</sup> therefore he induced rampant aggression in order to achieve his goal. This was the pretext on which the Cold War was based. Apparently this pretext did not consider the insight of Averell Harriman, the United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union during World War II. Averell Harriman wrote to Roosevelt:

I am a confirmed optimist in our relations with Russia because of my conviction that Stalin wants, if obtainable, a firm understanding with you and America more than anything else. He sees Russia's reconstruction and security more soundly based on that than on any other alternative. He is a man of simple purposes and although he may use devious means in order to accomplish them, he does not deviate from his big main objective."<sup>92</sup>

The United States, operating from a position of overwhelming power and security must absorb the major responsibility for creating the notion of a "Soviet crusade" due to their inexcusable

ignorance. The Western powers convinced themselves that Soviet policy preached unlimited expansionism, regardless of the fact that it was financially impossible, unlike the United States whose GNP actually doubled during the war.<sup>93</sup> Various evidence consistently leads back to the point the Alexander Werth argues:

"Security infinitely more than any ideological considerations which determined Stalin to create in Eastern and part of Central Europe a 'friendly cordon sanitaire' in place of the hostile cordon sanitaire which had been set up by Western powers at the end of World War I."<sup>94</sup>

President Roosevelt even admitted, "There was something to be said for the Russian security argument for controlling countries of the former Western cordon sanitaire."<sup>95</sup>

Mastny argues, like many other Western scholars and leaders that the Soviet Union was obsessed by an "imaginary danger" and that security was a fabricated excuse to justify Stalin's intentions. If Russia's history is not convincing enough that security was a real motive, Truman's aggressive attitude and the atomic bomb should be more than enough to convince any skeptic. The United States blatantly instigated the Soviet Union by dangling the threat of the atomic bomb over their heads. The Hiroshima bomb was dropped and the notion of security was drastically altered. Gloom and desperation overwhelmed the Soviet Union. They had fought for four bloody grueling years and had lost millions of lives for nothing. The United States <sup>now</sup> had the atomic bomb, <sup>and</sup> ~~they~~ did not need any allies, especially communist allies. The Soviet Union was in terrible condition and needed allies terribly for reconstruction. The United States was well aware of <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ position

of supremacy) and as the citadel of democracy, compassion, and righteousness, it dedicated itself to the Cold War instead of peace. Clearly, the United States had the power to determine the international atmosphere of the post-war years, not the Russians. Did the United States not learn the lesson from Hitler about abusing power?

The first line out of a censored history book from Moscow reads: "World War II proved how futile and foredoomed were all hopes of dominating peoples of the World."<sup>96</sup> <sup>where?</sup> Is this the type of propaganda that a country who promotes world revolution would disperse? The Soviet Union suffered tremendous losses in World War II and had everything to gain from peace, and Truman knew it! <sup>?</sup> No matter who the Russians perceive as guilty for starting the Cold War, their plea to end the Cold War is not a perception. Preventing another world conflict was the ultimate goal of Stalin during and after World War II. Russians today still argue for that same objective. The history of World War II strongly supports the argument that security and world stability motivated Stalin. The same history of World War II also strongly supports the idea that the United States was not interested in peaceful co-existence with the Soviet Union and that she used her power gained in World War II to threaten the existence of the Soviet Union.

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Berezhkov was Stalin's interpreter during WWII and all the peace treaties. His book consist of very detailed day to day descriptions of Stalin's activities. He was present at all the meetings between the Big Three and has served in many key diplomatic posts in Germany, the United States and other countries. His book clearly presents the motives and ideology of Stalin during the period and provides a convincing argument of the Russian perspective.

Collingwood, R.G. The Idea of History. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.

Collingwood explores the theory and significance of history. He presents the various theories that philosophers have argued about the meaning and purpose of historical thought. Collingwood's insights were helpful in helping me define the purpose of my thesis.

Douglas, Roy From War To Cold War. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981.

Douglas argues that the Soviet Union instigated the Cold War by their Eastern European expansionism. He believes all American responses were "natural American" reactions. Douglas' work was helpful in my research because it presented the arguments on the other side that my paper would have to address.

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Harriman, W. Averell and Abel, Elie Special Envoy. New York: Random House, 1975.

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This source was not that helpful for two reasons. The first problem was that besides the first chapter the information was too present for my research. The other problem was that the information was pure propaganda and not at all valuable.

Ponomarev, Boris Winning For Peace Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985.

I received this source from the Pentagon and it was by far the most helpful in my research. It was an analysis of the political and historical lessons of World War II. This work was such an excellent source because it gave me a real feel for the Russian perspective supported by historical fact. There was obviously some propaganda within the book and some arguments that I totally ignored. However, for the most part I was really impressed with this source.

Sipols, Vilnis The Road to Great Victory Moscow: Progress Publishers,

1984.

This was another Russian source that provided ~~very valid~~ documented arguments, often citing American sources. Its emphasis was on American and British actions that had affected Soviet foreign policy. Sipols is very critical of Churchill, and fairly supportive of Roosevelt. This source was also very helpful in my research.

Sivachev, Nikolai V. and Yakovlev, Nikolai N. U.S.-Soviet Relations. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

The major question this work addresses is: "How could reason fail?" Obviously, the book is very critical of United States foreign policy and blames the causes of the Cold War on the United States. They make some valid points but they do not argue their thesis convincingly because there is too much bias within their work.

Ulam, Adam B. The Rivals. New York: The Viking Press, 1971.

Part I of Ulam's book was very helpful in my research. Ulam does an excellent job in examining the ideologies, political systems and responsibilities of both countries in an objective manner. Ulam also argues that the study of history is the clue to understanding the whole confrontation.

Werth, Alexander, Russia at War 1941-45. London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1964.

I only used this book to investigate references made by Werth in his other book for clarification purposes. However, I found both of Werth's books to be helpful.

Werth, Alexander, Russia The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1971.

This work was an excellent source. Werth's information and arguments seem more valid due to the fact that he lived in Russia during World War II and has since written sixteen books about Russia. His book was also very interesting to read because of all the comments he includes directly from the Russian people. Werth's book makes many substantial statements but one of the most important is his theory that if Roosevelt had lived longer the post-World War world could have been very different.

Yergin, Daniel Shattered Peace Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977.

This source was helpful in providing much of the information I needed for the summits. Yergin provides a basic overview, emphasizing the major issues and impacts. Similar to Werth, Yergin also focuses in on Roosevelt as being a key player in the Alliance.