The Breakdown of the Grand Alliance and the Origins of the Cold War, 1942-1946

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INTRODUCTION

The onset of the Cold War, following the first and only truly global conflict, still remains a much studied topic in the wake of the 'new' Cold War history with its greater analysis and detail, albeit limited, of Soviet policy and communist archives.[1] However one regards these revelations and the light they might shed on the emergence of growing Allied tensions immediately before and after the Second World War, there remains the task of removing the cloud of Cold War fog that still hangs over analyses of Western policies and motives. Such obfuscation, conscious or not, has arisen primarily from the continual highlighting of traditional assumptions in the form of modified 'orthodoxy' once inappropriately termed post-revisionism. This was clearly influenced by the need, at the time and subsequently in the four following decades, to maximise the presentational Cold War advantages (spin) for the West. These Cold War requirements of Western academics and their ideological supporters from the former Soviet Union have been influenced by a combination of different public and private institutions both within and outside the Western world. They have provided interpretations to justify Western Cold War policies and by helping to produce, directly or indirectly, government propaganda, have played an important role in the fighting the Cold War historically. Some of these academic and political works by orthodox and neo-revisionist historians have often used the superficiality of some revisionist historiography to reinforce existing ideological prejudices. As the Cold War gathered momentum, arguably from the spring of 1948, so did this academic Western propaganda, delivered primarily to domestic audiences but also, and fairly early on to ones in the communist world. US propaganda as a whole, benefitted from considerable sums of normally hidden federal money.[2]

The US academic commitment to preserving more traditional Cold War interpretations, was evident in the reaction to Michael Cox's and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe's 2005 article on the Marshall Plan and American Diplomacy.[3] After the disconcerting and troubled events of 1945, 'containment', based around Kennan's 1946 Long Telegram and 1947 Mr X article, has always been the essential component of this traditional orthodoxy because it provided an essentially reactive and defensive interpretation of the nature of US policy.[4] This can be challenged without

assuming that the Soviet Union was anything but brutal and repressive, or that any of Stalin's policies were in any way benevolent or altruistic.[5] The unpleasant nature of the Soviet regime should not result in the United States or Britain automatically assuming an aura of righteousness in a struggle to prevent the alleged aims of the Soviet Union, or more accurately Joseph Stalin, coming to fruition. Moreover, with the end of the Cold War there is less of a need to portray the Soviets as an ideological opponent who had to be defeated in an ingrained and well-defined struggle to preserve economic and political benefits in which Cold War propaganda played an important role. Hence the need for Western academics to support analyses of the origins of the Cold War in order to bring about a desired Cold War outcome by encouraging domestic support for the ideological confrontation should no longer apply.

Attempting to shed light on the conflict following the breakdown of the grand alliance in a wartime cooperative framework preparing to promote stability and security after the war, has to confront the initial tripartite commitment to cooperation.[6] A key starting point is the Soviet and Western 'attitudes' to each other and their conflicting ideologies - not just within a framework limited by the need to win the Second World War, but one also defined by the perceived (and often neglected in the Soviet case) need to win the peace and create a stable and conflict free international order.[7] The most important self-interested component of that, particularly for Stalin, was the stability to be provided by preventing yet more German and Japanese aggression against the Soviet Union.

The aim here is to give a greater emphasis to examining the detailed decisions of Big 3 foreign policy makers in the planning for the post-war world. In doing so it will start by combining some less well covered military events of the war with the ideological goals of those planning the post-war international structures. Then an attempt will be made to shed light on what in 1944 might be regarded as the beginning of the breakdown of the Grand Alliance. The commitment to a cooperative framework in which to promote stability and security, continued in fits and starts during and after the war, as difficulties gathered pace after Yalta, despite the cooperation achieved there.

A key point is the Soviet and Western 'attitudes' to each other and their conflicting ideologies - not just within a framework limited by the need to win the Second World War, but one also defined on the one hand by the detailed and sometimes changing Allied post-war aims as they faced unexpected and challenging regional events. On the other hand, by an

ingrained fear of, and hostility to, the opposing ideology, primarily rooted in prejudice which made rational assessments of states' international interests and the threats to them problematic. Analysis of Soviet cases can be neglected because of a tendency to assume that because the outcome eventually resulted in repressive communist controls being imposed on areas of Eastern Europe that this was always the Soviet objective. As such the different stages and nuances of Alliance members' interests and ideological requirements are missed, as all three Allies' initial aims changed from cooperating to create a stable and conflict free international order to one of settling for greater confrontation.

The most important and self-interested component of the post-war international order for Stalin was the security and stability it would provide by preventing yet more German and Japanese aggression against the Soviet Union. Initially it was hoped that the most effective way to achieve this would be through full cooperation with the West. From early 1945, when Stalin's indecisiveness became more significant, the possible advantages of the unilateral employment of Soviet power in Eastern Europe increased. At the same time how far to allow important Soviet interests to be risked in order to maintain cooperation with the West became an important consideration. Cooperation, to a greater or lesser extent, for the Soviets then became focused on, if not limited to, preventing a German revival. As the West began to challenge Soviet influence in parts of Eastern Europe, riven by past conflict, that influence, in areas agreed by the Allies to be under its military control, developed into greater political control. However hypocritical the British demands in the Balkan areas were, given what they had been doing in Greece and Egypt, the Soviet military was responsible for both stability and the repressive application of Soviet ideological diktats to implement the form of political control unacceptable to the West.

Explanations of how the 1943 and 1944 commitment to cooperation was gradually eroded in different regions of the world by the failures of all three Allies, and subsequently by historians, to provide an adequate time-specific consensus explaining how and why confrontation and Cold War began to supersede cooperation. Particular details are used to explain the origins and cause of the breakdown of the Grand Alliance and the onset of Cold War in the first half of1946, rather than using general theories, rightly or wrongly, to explain and illustrate them. Details question the justification of a defensive Western response to alleged Soviet expansionism in Eastern Europe by containing a Soviet threat in power political or eventually military terms. Emotive and less rational reasons may have contributed to Cold War confrontation simply from deep seated Western and Soviet

ideological mistrust.[8] Moreover, because the Cold War, as interpreted here, was born out of, or at least entwined with British, Soviet and US imperialism, the breakdown of their alliance emerged simultaneously from disagreements in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

It is vital to stress that here, particularly for those unfamiliar with Empires and imperialism, "imperialism" is used here to mean "the projection of power in the world" with or without formal controls over territory. "Colonialism" is used to mean the imposition of formal direct or indirect administrative control over territory backed up by the threat or application of military power. Importantly power and the interests it produces, one senior post-war British Foreign Office official (a former private secretary of Bevin) noted, was particularly relevant for policy makers having to deal with a declining British Empire relatively losing power in comparison to its major wartime Allies – "Power is of course not to be measured in terms alone of money and troops: a third ingredient is prestige, or in other words what the rest of the world thinks of us."[9]

Notes

[1] The Cold War International History Project Bulletins and Papers began publishing authors who had been able to consult archives in the former Soviet Union and its satellites from the early 90s

[2] For the important role of propaganda and psychological warfare in an ideological Cold War see especially Kenneth Osgood *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (2006); Kenneth Osgood "Form before Substance: Eisenhower's Commitment to Psychological Warfare and Negotiations with the Enemy" *Diplomatic History* 24 (Summer 2000)

[3] Michael Cox and Caroline Kennedy Pipe "'The Tragedy of American Diplomacy?' Rethinking the Marshall Plan" *The Journal of Cold War Studies 7, 1 (*2005)

[4] Orthodoxy applies to interpretations which ascribe blame for the Cold War essentially to the actions and expansionist policies of the Soviet Union to which the US reacted defensively. Revisionism essentially blamed the economic expansion of the US. Post-Revisionism is essentially "orthodoxy with archives" as defined by Warren Kimball. Perhaps epitomised in John Lewis Gaddis *We Now Know Rethinking Cold War History* (1997) after the limited access to Soviet archives. The British role is often neglected which this author now attempts to rectify.

[5] For archival use to produce an excellent critique of US Cold War policy and the failure to implement any coherent US containment strategy, which has not had the recognition it deserves in the UK, and for details of a pro-active US early Cold War role see Corke (2008)), Corke (1997) and Corke (2001)

[6] This does raise the questions of what in essence the Cold War was, and if its nature was a direct consequence of the breakdown in Allied relations, and then when and

where it began. Federico Romero (2014) and Pierre Grosser (2015) provide interesting discussion, although both assume no real distinction between the breakdown of the alliance and the Cold War, and then follow the orthodox assumption that the Cold War began in Eastern Europe and then spread from there.
[7] Folly (2012) has some useful detail.
[8] Alleged Soviet expansionism is the appropriate term as expansionism is often used without distinguishing the expansion of Soviet military power, inevitable if Germany was defeated, from the expansion of political and ideological power represented by the left-wing forces encouraged, for some Europeans, by the wartime victory over fascism.
[9] NA FO371/96920 Minute by Sir Pierson Dixon 23 Jan 1952

CHAPTER ONE

PREFACE TO THE BREAKDOWN
OF THE GRAND ALLIANCE:
THE INITIAL COMMITMENT
TO POST-WAR COOPERATION
(1942-SUMMER 1944)

The traumatic nature of the Depression, which had shaken the international economic system's stability to its core, was followed by World War II's dramatic changes affecting the distribution of economic and military power. The resultant power politics were initially expected to produce new diplomatic building blocks to construct the post-war international political and economic systems. How successfully the Allies would fit them together in a durable post-war international order would depend on the acceptance of some ideologically different socio-economic cement. Identifying and connecting the right building blocks for a stable post-war order were gradually to produce more matters of dispute amongst the Allies until major disagreements threatened the continuation of the planning process by the end of the summer of 1945. Before then, the international system's components of power and their important relationship to prestige produced less ideologically significant domestic issues in the eyes of Western post-war planners. As the influence of global power redistribution and ideology on any peace settlement became more significant, understanding British, American, and Soviet plans in and after 1942 and 1943 and the reasons for their success and failure in implementing them becomes crucial. The issues arising from the big three attempts to reconcile ideological principles with their particular power political interests can then be better highlighted, as they were not easily compatible. The difficulties for policy makers within individual Allies grew with their efforts to agree on a framework for a stable and peaceful international order after the victories over Germany and Japan.

Initial Steps to Plan for New Post-War European and World Orders

The British had begun by focussing on the likely results of a primarily European war and by 1942, after the German attack on Russia, an Anglo-Soviet treaty was signed as a first step to preserving peace and stability in Europe. Eden emphasised to Halifax in Washington that playing a part in a European settlement "'involves collaboration and agreement with the Soviet Union to prevent the recurrence of German domination and aggression.'"[1] The resultant treaty did not ensure a smooth Anglo-Soviet ride towards an agreed European settlement, but the key issue in early 1942 was the initial assumption that this would be separate from any significant American involvement with post-war Europe.[2] This was to change as the war became increasingly global, and any European settlement had to be linked after 1943 to an international situation in which the US would have a more significant role. Before that change began, all three parties initially expected the traditional US distancing of itself from European issues to be maintained. Thus, Anglo-Soviet European settlement arrangements were seen as both desirable and necessary by the British in 1942, partly because of the war's demands, and were endorsed for at least the next two years by Stalin -subject to the modifications that increased Soviet military success against the Germans reduced the Soviet need for British support to prevent the Germans turning on Russia for the third time.

Post-war planning began in Washington before the US entered the conflict, very much on the lines of what was needed for a new post-war world order to suit American values and economic interests.[3] Once it had become clear in 1943 that the Allies were eventually going to win the war, post-war planning in London was also established institutionally with the formation of the Armistice and Post-War Committee and the Post-Hostilities Planning Committee. The post-war order was understandably conceptualised, particularly by the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, in ways which did not, as was the case in the inter-war years, allow for, or expect, the US to make a future contribution to European stability or defence.[4] As 1943 began, the framework in which German power would no longer be a threat in Europe, was thus seen in the Foreign Office as depending essentially on Anglo-Soviet co-operation and an acceptance of Soviet gains in the Baltic states.[5]

This British attitude had already aroused the ire of Roosevelt's key foreign policy adviser who was becoming more and more involved with post-war planning prior to his having to leave the State Department in the summer of

1943 following a sexual liaison with another man on a train. In 1942 Sumner Welles had been worried by the Anglo-Soviet treaty and the British acceptance of Soviet territorial gains in the Baltic which he saw as appeasement and a betrayal of the Atlantic Charter principles.[6] US values and future cooperation with the Soviets were both important for the British, if impossible to reconcile fully, and the question of whether or not US post-war planning policies would have been any different if Welles had not left the administration remains an open counter-factual question.

Changes in 1943 Following Soviet Military Successes

Post-war planners on both sides of the Atlantic in 1943 had to deal with new power political realities as well as the conflicting socio-economic systems produced by the ideologies of communism and capitalism. After the emergence of the Soviet Union had first injected ideology into Russian relations with the West, attempts to bury these radically different ways of life were made after 1941. By 1943 an opposing ideology was no longer accompanied by Soviet power political weakness but increasing military strength. The defeats inflicted on the Wehrmacht, would have a significant impact on post-war planning and power politics had to be considered differently within the framework of a cooperative international order with its conflicting ideologies. Would such ideological differences supersede the diplomatic reconciliation of general principles with particular interests in Allied diplomacy? Cooperation in post-war planning soon had to accommodate more extensive US European involvement and the idealist ideology it brought. The massive economic strength that the wartime growth of the US economy had produced was changing the economic requirements of an American state that was becoming more dependent on external trade. This was accompanied by the greater Soviet land based military power and the British determination to preserve their imperial (as distinct from colonial)[7] influence in an ideological mix that, despite the best of intentions, ultimately failed to provide for continued Allied cooperation. How and why this ideological mix could not be shaken into a cocktail of cooperative state interests and general international stability constitutes the causal origins of the Cold War.

US Concerns over Allied Cooperation: Moscow and Tehran Differences Within the Roosevelt Administration

In 1943, in the run up to the Moscow and Tehran conferences, when Welles was still having a significant impact on post-war planning, and the advance

westwards of the Red Army was not yet significant, the developing idealistic ideology still remained largely untarnished in Washington. Welles's concern over the British acceptance of the Soviet's incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union had an idealistic basis which had yet to confront reality. If the British were initially too willing to give Russia a free hand in Eastern Europe that could affect European peace and stability in ways as yet uncertain. Thus, the issues of British and Soviet post-war commitments, as Adolph Berle had warned the President, were to become entangled, as had happened after World War I with US domestic policies before Welles had to resign.[8] The main rivalry within the State Department concerned Welles and the Secretary of State Cordell Hull and it was to affect Soviet-American relations.[9] After accepting Welles' resignation, Roosevelt offered to appoint him to head the American delegation to the Moscow Foreign Ministers conference in October 1943, but Welles declined to be involved in the planning process as high level personal contacts with the Soviets were about to be made for the first time. Welles had perhaps become more aware of the Eastern European realities and the clash of American idealism with them, given the likely Soviet and British approaches to the post-war order. A way had to be found, through post-war planning, to reconcile specific Allied differences if cooperation was to be maintained. The Atlantic Charter typifying US idealism had had problems in avoiding a clash with the British Empire and would be more difficult to reconcile with Soviet aims in Europe, yet that would have to be attempted or fudged at some point.

However, by the end of 1943 the "Hull faction" that Roosevelt had worked against by continually bypassing the Secretary of State in favour of Welles, was now in a much stronger position. The implications for Soviet-American relations, as US interest in Europe began to grow, were not propitious, as Hull was regarded by Welles as "intensely prejudiced against Russia".[10] US policy began to favour the vague Rooseveltian approach of establishing an international organisation through Soviet-American cooperation. Hence it became less concerned with the specifics required to support it – especially spheres of influence. Roosevelt preferred the ambiguity that was sustained by different and often conflicting interpretations of events, which he believed could be cleared up by employing his personal charm over diplomacy in relations with Stalin.

When the Foreign Ministers met in October 1943 at Moscow, Hull may have been pleasantly surprised by Molotov's initial willingness to agree to discuss the first item the Americans raised. This was their draft four power

declaration (the Big Three plus China) to establish the principles on which the proposed international organisation, now dear to Roosevelt's heart, would be established. Harriman, in Moscow in a message to Roosevelt, reinforced the idea of Soviet-American post-war cooperation by reporting that the Soviets, so far, have "given us every indication that they have made up their minds they want to do business with us"[11]. As Hull was to point out at the conference, the proposed four power declaration was part of what he hoped would be a "programme of international collaboration". There was a mutual interest in the "preservation of peace and the establishment of international security".[12]

However, there were two features of the foreign ministers' early discussions which sounded some ominous warnings for the maintenance of future cooperation. One of these was the British and Soviet proposals for the establishment of a politico-military commission in London or Algiers to deal with European issues arising from the war, and specifically with carrying out the Italian armistice terms. Ironically it was the Soviets who suggested that a joint commission of the allies should have executive authority and act together.to make major policy decisions. The British simply wanted, with an eye on British influence, an advisory body for the relevant Commander-in-Chief, as chairman of an Italian Control Commission. It thus laid the ground for military control and political influence to be exercised by the forces occupying the former enemy territory.[13] Ruling out joint occupation in the West of Europe would inevitably mean accepting Soviet military control in post-armistice Eastern Europe. The other specific concern was the first soundings on the treatment of Germany with all three Allies mentioning dismemberment or division as being desirable, with the qualification that in Britain and the US there were those opposed to these outcomes. The Soviets initially strongly favoured dismemberment as a means of weakening Germany to prevent future aggression and saw Hull's proposals as the minimum needed.[14]Whereas the West first moved away from qualified support for dismemberment as part of Allied cooperation in preventing the threat of German revival. As Stalin repeatedly highlighted, preventing future German aggression was the *raison d'être* for cooperation, and the decision to abandon dismemberment was to become more significant as the war progressed.

When the three leaders met in November and December 1943, at Tehran, post-war planning on the shape of the world was well under way. Discussions on the proposed international organisation and the treatment of a defeated Germany formed the crux of the post-war issues. The ground for

Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin had to some extent been marked out by the October Moscow Foreign Ministers conference. US proposals for a post-war organisation of 35 members dealing with non-military matters on a global basis were the first item Roosevelt wanted to discuss. It would have an executive committee of the Big Three and China together with regional state representatives from South America, the Near and Far East, the British Dominions and two from Europe. The third element of the proposed world organisation would be Roosevelt's Four Policemen idea who would deal with any threat to peace or a sudden emergency requiring action[15]. The Four Policemen would need control of strategic points throughout the world, but Stalin believed that would not be liked by the small nations of Europe. He suggested something akin to Churchill's regional commissions for Europe, the Americas and Far East with the US involved in the European one. When FDR pointed out that Congress would never accept that degree of European involvement, which might require the sending of US troops to Europe, Stalin retorted that the Four Policemen idea might also require that**.**

Whatever was to be agreed on the specific details of a new international security organisation, there was the need to position them in bigger regional and international landscapes. It was assumed at the end of 1943, and at various points thereafter in 1944 and 1945, that co-operation not only could be maintained, but had to be for the sake of the future of the world. The common subsequent interpretations that it was only the war itself with its battle against the Axis that bound the alliance together was not the view of the big 3 leaders or many of their officials during the wartime meetings. More historical attention, however, should perhaps be paid to the importance of the three Allies' initial commitments to maintaining cooperation in, and over, the post-war world. The issue was to ensure this continued as the progress of the war gave way to new political assumptions about the resultant international order, its power political arrangements and the prestige they were deemed to bestow.

The Nature and Significance of Greater American Interest in Europe

Prior to Tehran, the general Allied assumption was that the US would not be significantly involved in the post-war future of Europe, with Roosevelt seeing problems in getting the American public to accept any commitments to resolve European issues and prevent future Germany aggression. In Tehran, the President told Churchill and Stalin that he "had only envisaged the sending of American planes and ships to Europe, and that England and

the Soviet Union would have to handle the land armies" in any future threat to the peace.[16] But American post-war planning was already focused on the broader international structures and the economic institutions deemed necessary to prevent economic autarchy and the political conflict it was perceived to produce. This immediately raised the issue of whether an influential and prestigious role for the US and its ideology after the war could be maintained by essentially leaving the European continent to the British and the Soviets. The negative answer was the one key change in US policy evident by the end of 1944, and the corollary would be greater European salience for American idealism. This would make it imperative for Roosevelt to fudge the situation on the ground and the reality of Soviet security expectations against German revival with US idealism. To do this effectively, the requirements of dealing with Russia's historical enemies and the Soviet Union's recent armed conflicts had to be buried and concealed under American rhetoric, while the expectations of the Atlantic Charter were sold to the public in the US.[17]

As the US began to absorb the changing domestic and international effects of the wartime redistribution of economic and military power, American planners focused on a limited but more influential European role for the US in the new world order. In addition to new economic and political institutions, the Roosevelt administration saw the need for a particular form of capitalism that would allegedly prevent another economic crisis and military conflict while promoting the global success of American enterprise. Thus, non-discriminatory multilateral trade would have to accompany the domestic use of the state's economic power to enhance and channel the role of private enterprise (as in the New Deal) and provide the economic icing on the cake of international stability.[18] Politically, this potentially more pro-active US role provided a challenge for both Britain and the Soviet Union to accommodate within Europe.

The Threats to Britain's Prestige and World Power Status: Roosevelt's Anti-Imperialism and Stalin's Security Concerns

The nature of the post-war global order was of particular concern to the British Prime Minister, primarily because of his emotive attachment to the British Empire's future position in it. The projection of global power through Empire was Churchill's preoccupation rather than retaining the benefit and responsibilities of colonialism. He was nevertheless concerned by the Empire's critics in the Roosevelt administration. Often interpreting colonialism as a

synonym for imperialism, American critics could provide opportunities for the Soviet Union and the United States to unite.[19] In addition, Churchill was more dismissive of the lesser and defeated Europeans than the Foreign Office was. The contrasting emphases on Europe and the Empire were to gather pace as the British approach to post-war planning faced reconciling the devil of Anglo-Soviet cooperation, needed for the containment of German power in Europe, with the deep blue sea of Roosevelt's acute dislike of the British Empire. What global prestige could be retained or restored, as anti-imperial Americans became more concerned with Europe and the global implications of Germany's future on the continent now affected relations with both British Allies. From 1944 British policy makers wishing to use Empire and Europe to enhance British prestige and status as a world power had to face US and Soviet ideologies as well as their growing economic and military power. How to deal with their approaches to the post-war world became a key issue facing British post-war planners during and after Tehran when they first began to notice Britain being treated more as a junior partner.

The Moscow and Tehran Conferences: International Cooperation with or without Spheres of Influence

At the Moscow Conference in 1943 Molotov had insisted that the Soviets were not interested in separate spheres of influence,[20] which whatever its veracity, indicated a commitment to joint cooperation on the Soviet side by appearing to accept American rhetoric. Yet this statement by Molotov was something the Soviets would move steadily away from. As the United States reluctance to accept spheres of influence became clearer after Tehran, it was to be a significant reason for the breakdown of cooperation beginning. Moreover, as we will see subsequently, the joint Western refusal to accept Soviet involvement in areas of Western interest was a plausible reason for the ultimate Soviet rejection of cooperation. The democratic capitalist Allies were reluctant to include the Soviets in dealing with Germany's defeated Allies in Western Europe and then both before and after Yalta began to insist on more involvement of areas of interest to the Soviets in Eastern Europe. Accepting Soviet spheres of interest was at odds with the rhetoric of the Roosevelt administration, while the British with their Empire were not yet fully acceptable as ideological American partners. As Anglo-Soviet power political rivalry developed in the Balkans, despite American rhetoric, the reality of the situation on the ground in 1944 was to make *de facto* Anglo-Soviet spheres something Roosevelt and the State Department might have to live with for the sake of Allied cooperation. The difficult problem was

thus now becoming how best to maintain the rhetoric while finding the means to obscure the reality.

For Stalin, while it was important to maintain Allied unity, agreement on the treatment to be accorded to Germany was arguably his most significant post-war aim. Being the first of the two most discussed subjects to which he kept returning during and after the first dinner at the Tehran Conference on the evening of 28th November 1943,[21] it was to remain a key issue for Stalin as discussions proceeded in 1944 and 1945. While there was initial agreement on the general principles to be applied to the treatment of Germany, the details remained to be worked out. It was a question on which the British, more than the Americans, or the Soviets, changed or modified their initial dismemberment views. On German reparations, the initial agreements remained ambiguous enough to allow for different interpretations of precisely what should be implemented when.

The Polish Problem Emerges

At Tehran, the German treatment issue was already connected to Poland, because of defining the German-Polish frontier, which was Churchill's major concern at Tehran and arguably also at the two subsequent Big Three meetings. The war had initially been declared over the violation of Polish sovereignty and Polish manpower had made a significant contribution to the British military effort. Churchill's determination to support the London Poles along with agreeing on Germany's future made these central European issues particularly crucial. Although Poland itself was never to become the main cause of Russian-American disagreement in 1945, it has often become convenient to portray it as such. Due to the Allied zonal occupation costs and the impact on them of the Polish-German frontier boundary, the whole economic and ideological future of Western and Eastern Europe was soon to be at stake.

For the Soviets, concerns regarding Poland increased after the breaking of relations with the London Provisional Government in Exile due to Stalin's refusal to accept an investigation into the Soviet massacre of thousands of Polish officers at Katyn.[22] At Moscow, Molotov made it clear that, along with the UK, the Soviets aimed at restoring "an independent Poland" but one that was friendly to the Soviet Union. Eden noted that just before leaving for Moscow the new prime minister of the Government-in-Exile, Mikolajczyk, had expressed a desire for good Soviet-Polish relations, which was news to Molotov who referred specifically to the divisions between

Sikorski and Sosnkowski. It should thus have been obvious that for the Soviets good relations would depend on which Poles were in a position to produce them by being willing to listen to Moscow.[23] Interestingly Hull was keen not to get involved in the Polish question, preferring to leave any conflict there to the British and the Soviets. An indication that he was endeavouring to avoid offending the Soviets in the expectation that they would then be more likely to become successfully involved in Roosevelt's plans for international peace keeping through a cooperative global institution.

Different Allied Perceptions: Ideology and Interests in a New Cooperative World Order

Whatever the promising signs at Tehran based on the shared commitment to future cooperation, after Tehran the cooperative recipe for post-war peace and stability was to develop into an increasingly conflictual, if unacknowledged, battle for dominance between the mix of general abstract principles (often mere rhetoric) and the reality of concrete, specific interests. Roosevelt's dilemma of reconciling abstract ideological principles with specific concrete requirements would come to involve both Europe and the wider world but was initially put on hold until the war had been won. In part this was connected, after Welles's departure, to the influence of Harry Hopkins.[24] As FDR's close confidante and key foreign policy adviser, Hopkins had a single focus on winning the war and was determined that nothing should threaten that overriding priority. While the British were struggling to reconcile their Empire with the development of an important European role to support their position as a world power, the Americans were struggling to develop their position as a world power by overcoming domestic doubts about their involvement in Europe. A dominant ideology was being refined that would not only benefit those sections of American society able to make the most of the opportunities it could offer but could also be advantageous for global citizens external to the US if they were to adopt it. American values, (capitalism, freedom and democracy) were thus portrayed as an ideology reflecting high status in the international system through a combination of power and idealism. The ever-present US idealism was fanned by the creative winds of planning a new world order, but only exacerbated the problem of applying the rhetoric to the real situation in Central and Eastern parts of Europe.

As each of the Allies developed their own ideas of how to secure their respective interests within a cooperative international framework, from

1943 to Yalta various ways were explored to realise general post-war Allied requirements and ultimately to try and reconcile these different priorities. The Russians for their part, after the Politburo had given Maxim Litvinov and Ivan Maisky formal responsibility for post-war planning in September 1943, had to reconcile the containment of German power in Central and Eastern Europe, necessary for the region's stability and their security, with the maintenance of Allied cooperation. It also had to be compatible with an acceptance of the inevitable increase in Soviet influence over the eastern part of the continent after the Russian military successes in 1943. Whether compromise could produce a cooperative post-war European framework was the emerging question. While there is limited written evidence available about Stalin's views, those of key figures in the Foreign Ministry have been analysed by Vladimir Pechatnov. Again, the importance and feasibility that Litvinov, Gromyko and Maisky attached to continued cooperation are clearly evident. For Maisky in 1944 continued cooperation was "an absolute necessity" with the UK being pushed towards Russia. The main conflict would thus be with the US over "imperial matters" in Western and Eastern European countries which Stalin's relationship with Roosevelt would have to deal with. Maisky saw Soviet interests being best served by popular front governments in the liberated countries-apart from Poland and Yugoslavia. Here, as in the former Nazi satellites, Soviet cooperation with the US and Britain would involve applying pressure and "we should not hesitate to use this kind of interference into the domestic affairs" of such nations.[25] Gromyko, writing in July 1944, believed that it would be likely that the US would be interested in both political and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and in preserving international peace. There was considerable optimism in Moscow in the first half of 1944, about the prospects for continued cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union, and for the young Gromyko: "The necessary conditions are clearly present for a continuation of cooperation between our two countries in the post-war period."[26]

It has been argued that the Soviet commitment to cooperation was just the necessary part of expansion in order to assert control over Eastern Europe.[27] Alternatively it has been suggested that Averill Harriman was influencing the Soviets in continuing cooperation through the carrot of US assistance in the reconstruction of the post-war Soviet economy.[28] The war had reduced it to a parlous state and economic strength, or lack of it, was linked to Soviet 'security' interests and regarded by both Western Allies as important. Thus, cooperation in helping them hold down Germany and keeping it weak would be crucial in convincing the Soviets of the West's sincerity. Hence

the logic of prioritising Soviet security in Europe against any threat from Germany should have rendered the arrangements in South-Eastern Europe less important. In terms of spheres or no spheres they would be more significant as a justification for leaving such issues until the peace negotiations. At the same time after the Americans became more concerned in 1944 with European problems because of their importance for global arrangements, US opposition to spheres of influence, while becoming clearer, did not overcome Churchill's determination to use them to protect British interests.[29]

Developments and Divisions Within the Foreign Office in 1944: European Interests, Prestige and Ideological Principles

The potential difficulties between the creation of European stability and the maintenance of Soviet interests (aka 'security') and the general principles of any new international order had yet to be resolved. Problems likely to affect, and be affected by, Soviet ambitions to be involved in the European and non-European worlds would emerge as the formulation of specific post-war planning policies in the West began. The crucial policies developed by both sides and then their implementation became more evident and important with the passage of time. In late 1943 and 1944 as concrete, specific interests were first focused upon, British attempts to maintain prestige and international stability soon ran up against European difficulties because of the differing views on what specifically to do with a defeated Germany. Crucially, how best to establish a cooperative post-war international order and an important British global role within it, reflected some very different views in Whitehall on the necessary military and political arrangements. Power politics and the increased salience of specific interests already had to be defined against an abstract and general ideological background. An initial problem was the divergence within the Foreign Office between those prioritising the retention of close Anglo-Soviet cooperation (the Northern and Central departments) because of the importance of European peace and stability and the prevention of German aggression; and those with keener ideological anti-Soviet prejudices (the Southern Department). That department had a closer eye on imperial (as opposed to colonial) areas bordering the Mediterranean outside Europe as the imminent defeat of Germany by predominantly Soviet land forces approached. A way was needed to use soft power and diplomacy to maintain prestige as Britain's reduced military and economic impact became more noticeable.

British Foreign Policy and Military Strategy:
Military and Civilian Conflicts Over Post-War Europe
as Germany's Final Defeat Approaches

Yet these diplomatic issues contributing to Allied differences were small matters compared to the problems inherent in British military attitudes. Unlike for the Foreign Secretary, the idea of a post-war Europe based on the containment of Germany, even without the Soviet Union, was anathema to British military leaders. As D Day approached the Chiefs of Staff (COS), even more than the military representatives on the Post Hostilities Planning Committee (PHP), wanted to incorporate as much of Germany (the actual military enemy/perceived ideological ally) as possible into a post-war Western bloc directed against the Soviets (the military ally/perceived ideological enemy). Even the PHP paper on British 'strategic' interests depicting a hostile Soviet Union was based not on what could be threatened but what **would** be and was approved by the Chiefs of Staff on 15 June 1944.[30]

This military antipathy to the Soviets was shared by the Southern Department in the Foreign Office, concerned with the Eastern Mediterranean where the Soviets were seen as less of an ally and more as a rival. That area, vital for Britain's Mediterranean and Middle East position, produced clear disagreements arising from the different geographical responsibilities of Foreign Office sections (known then as departments). While the distinctions between all officials were not entirely clear cut, they encapsulated the different emphases between Allied cooperation in the future containment of Germany and a focus on the priority of maintaining Britain's global position as a *sine qua non* of cooperation. The Northern Department (Soviet Union, Scandinavia) and the Central Department (Austria, Benelux, Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland) were still thinking more about the cooperation with the Soviets needed to prevent any German threat and thereby produce European stability. The more attention became focused on the situation after victory over Germany had been secured, the more British strategic interests and the maintenance of prestige and status as a world power were prioritised through the Foreign Office. This contributed to why the Mediterranean was deemed so important by the Southern Department and why there had been military support for sending troops to occupy Bulgaria because of its access to the Black Sea and its proximity to Greece.[31]

The crux of the disagreements arousing the annoyance of Foreign Secretary Eden, concerned the military's interference in political decisions over who should, in effect, be Britain's ally and enemy in any future Western bloc. This, contrary to the PHP paper approved by the COS in June, was seen by Eden as a matter for ministers and their Foreign Office advisors, not the COS. The military should only be considering the strategic implications of, and the force provisions for, what had been decided by their political masters. Given this military interference in post-war political matters, the COS were instructed to inform their PHP representatives that they should not take political issues into account when preparing papers, and it made no sense for Foreign Office officials to discuss and be associated with military questions.[32] Of course the ingrained anti-Soviet attitudes of the military did not disappear, and even though Eden met with General Ismay, according to one official the hostility to the Soviets had got worse.[33]

The War's Impact on Anglo-Soviet Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and Central Europe: Allied Cooperation, Strategic Rivalry or Ideological Hostility?

The military's ideological aversion to communism was accompanied by what they saw as a threat to British naval superiority in the Eastern Mediterranean if the Soviets gained unrestricted access through the Dardanelles, which Churchill had promised Stalin with the revision of the Montreux Convention on the Straits. In addition, possible Soviet air bases in Bulgaria and land forces in Western Turkey concerned British military leaders because of their adverse impact on British military control of the Suez Canal area.[34] It is important to note that these British imperial interests in the Eastern Mediterranean were perceived as being strategically affected by Soviet positions in South-Eastern Europe NOT the Soviet position in Central-Eastern Europe. With the Red Army's advance in the summer of 1944 the PHP expected the Soviets to control areas of Eastern Europe, specified as having the dominant influence in Poland, predominance in Hungary, being powerful in Czechoslovakia and with great influence in Yugoslavia while occupying Romania. The importance attached by the British military to Bulgaria led the PHP in February, with subsequent COS approval in March, to advocate one British division for the occupation of Bulgaria until ruled out by Deputy Prime Minister Attlee.[35] The British later reduced their expected Soviet influence in Bulgaria to them merely having a "close interest" in that country. And in June the Cabinet was informed that the Russians would want a "dominating moral position" in Bulgaria that included air bases.[36]

What was significant about military attitudes was not so much the innate hostility to the communist Soviet Union, but the need to deal with it by incorporating as much of Germany as possible into a Western anti Soviet bloc after the Allied victory. What exactly any enhanced Soviet power might have led to was unclear, but what was clear to some British policy makers and the military was that without countering it, the undermining of Britain's influence in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East was likely to be the result. How to reconcile this with Anglo-Soviet cooperation built on containing Germany was the dilemma of two conflicting visions of European stability and post-war cooperation. To oversimplify, the alternatives were either Anglo-Soviet cooperation in the containment of Germany or Anglo-German cooperation in containing Soviet influence in South-East Europe and the Mediterranean. Anglo-Soviet antagonism was already present for some in London long before the end of the war, but in 1943 and 1944 it was clearly not yet springing from any actions taken by the Soviets, least of all in imposing communism in Central or Eastern Europe.

Continued Cooperation and Anglo-Soviet Rivalries Over the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean

This awkward British juxtaposition of post-war competition or cooperation with the Soviets in the interest of European stability, and the importance of the Mediterranean for Britain's imperial interests and world power status, depended more on longstanding ideological assumptions within Whitehall than on external actions by the Soviet Union. The Southern Department, as early as 1942, saw the impending defeat of Hitler's Romanian allies creating an unenviable situation in the Balkans for Greece, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.[37] Lord Hood, a Foreign Office junior minister, perceived a potentially disastrous situation confronting Britain if the Balkans were effectively incorporated into the Soviet Union as it would present a menace more serious than Germany.[38] Yet at the same time, the Northern Department was still insisting in 1944 that the foundation of Britain's European policy must be an Anglo-Soviet alliance to contain Germany. When the Foreign Office post-Tehran began to consider how British influence in the Eastern Mediterranean could best be preserved, one argument was that any Anglo-Soviet friction would arise not from ideological differences but from different views on the treatment of Germany.[39]

Thus, there was no mention of the hostility to the Soviets present in the Southern Department and the military over rivalry in the Eastern Mediterranean. The hopeful assumption was that the Soviets would accept British vital interests there, which appeared plausible until April 1944. Then the Soviets began to criticise Britain's Greek policy for the first time, and the Cabinet were told that a friendly government in Romania would be required by the Soviets over which they will "have a considerable measure of control"[40] Here was the British origin of the first of the two percentages agreements made later that year by Stalin and Churchill.[41]

In 1944, future Anglo-Soviet cooperation or conflict could depend not on Soviet domination of Central and Eastern Europe, which was accepted by some in Whitehall, but on the damage to Britain's domination of the Eastern Mediterranean produced by the strengthening Soviet position in South-East Europe. Yet agreed means to prevent a German revival inevitably remained important. At Tehran Stalin had made it clear that he favoured the dismembering of Germany as the way to prevent renewed German aggression.[42] In the spring of 1944, one Foreign Office official believed that if the Soviets were not satisfied that Germany and Japan were rendered innocuous, they might well become a disruptive force in Europe.[43] Fears of the growing Soviet influence in South-Eastern Europe, which Eden had initially hoped to prevent by increasing British influence in Greece and Turkey, remained a worry in June 1944. Possible Soviet attempts to communise the region, not yet deemed to be in evidence, were much less of a concern.[44]

A Western European Bloc: Conflicting British Approaches to Growing Soviet Power in Different European Regions in 1944

Power and influence were still being perceived through eyes focused on territory and the power politics it produced independently of ideology. One way of limiting Anglo-Soviet rivalry was a joint UK/Soviet self-denying ordinance to rule out interfering in Balkan politics, but London saw this as problematic as Britain did not want to give up its active role in Yugoslav and Greek politics[45]. Similarly, it was unlikely that Stalin would want to give up an active role in Romanian or Bulgarian politics. The overall Foreign Office view of Soviet policy in the Balkans reflected earlier views from under-secretary level and above on "Probable Post-war Tendencies in Soviet Foreign Policy Affecting British Interests." The Soviet domination of Central Eastern Europe was more acceptable than Soviet ambitions in the

Balkans and Mediterranean, especially Greece and Italy, and its likely impact on the Middle East. Eden himself had noted that the Russians were "getting away with it in Italy" and their support for a broad-based government there was designed, he claimed, to enable the communists "to swallow up the other left-wing parties."[46]

Significantly the papers on Soviet policy and its implications for the UK went through a number of drafts in 1944. The question was not just reconciling the conflicting views in the Foreign Office and the military but the tactics of how best to maintain any future cooperation. This was still an important overall aim for Eden as the military situation developed in South-East Europe. As for Central Europe, in February the Cabinet had been presented with a memorandum by Paul Henri Spaak on the issue of European blocs. Spaak was concerned that blocs and spheres of influence in Eastern and Western Europe would produce competition for the allegiance of Germany. This could only be avoided by a common European arrangement in which a Western bloc would not be directed against the Soviets but be integrated into a common European framework constructed on an Anglo-Soviet alliance represented by the 1942 treaty.[47]

In the Northern Department, G.M. Wilson believed that the Soviet commitment to Popular Front movements did not indicate that the Russians wanted the communist system to be replicated in detail elsewhere.[48] Whereas by contrast, the department's supervising under secretary, Sir Orme Sargent, later appointed by Bevin to be the official head of the Foreign Office, viewed inter-war Popular Front governments as containing "flabby doctrinaire socialists" which "heaven help us will mean corruption, inefficiency and Civil War."[49] The Prime Minister, who tended to see Soviet military successes on the Eastern Front as alternately desirable or threatening, was convinced that Russia had resolved to seize the Baltic states and take what it wanted from Poland and Romania. For Churchill post-Tehran, it was impossible to determine whether a second series of demands would follow further Soviet military victories.[50] The issue was which assessment of Soviet aims and intentions was more accurate and how policy should be determined.

Sargent's view that there was no certainty that the Americans and the Soviets would not actually get together in a system of close collaboration at the end of the war, which left no room, or only allowed, for a small role for Great Britain. This was one interpretation of the United States beginning to show more of an interest in European affairs that would have to be carefully