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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This study challenges several widely held assumptions about the origins of the Cold War. The first one, generally held by all historians, is that the Cold War was primarily the result of great power rivalries. The second, held by the traditionalists, is that the responsibility lies primarily with the Soviet Union for having broken wartime agreements and recklessly expanded its power. The third, held by the revisionists, is that the West was responsible, the United States for having pursued its policy of multilateralism, Great Britain for having feared the loss of its empire. My research suggests that the Cold War was mainly the result of a series of civil wars all along the entire Soviet frontier which gradually involved the great powers on opposite sides. These civil wars were, in turn, caused by the expansionist drive of Germany and Japan. Both powers conquered and pulverized the societies of Eastern Europe and East Asia and threatened the stability of Central Asia and the Middle East. Their policies created widespread chaos and unleashed a bitter struggle for power within these devastated regions.

The Soviet response to social disintegration on its frontiers was limited by the paradox of its power. Firstly, its great military strength and widespread political influence rested upon a weakened socio-economic base. The war had been a demographic and economic disaster. Reconstruction and restoration of political controls demanded demobilization and a massive reallocation of resources. Secondly, it had not won its victory unaided, and a continuation of the wartime alliance with the West was necessary in order to prevent a military revival by Germany and Japan. Thirdly, the very popularity and strength of certain Communist parties, like the Chinese and Yugoslavs, made them, in Stalin's eyes, potential rivals for leadership in the socialist world if they came to power; the weakness of others, like the Polish and Rumanian, made them vulnerable to defeat by anti-Soviet forces.

Soviet policy attempted to reconcile these contradictions by achieving three major war aims:

1. acquiring a series of strategic strong points all along its frontier from Petsamo and Porkalla-Ud to Port Arthur and the Kurile Islands, to defend against a revival of German and Japanese power.
2. creating a frontier zone of "friendly countries" (or regions) bound to the Soviet Union by bilateral economic agreements, treaties of alliance and cultural ties but not sovietized, for that process would antagonize the West and give too much power to local communists; and
3. participating in a new international system capped by a consortium of great powers that would guarantee the vital interests of each as it defined them.

Soviet policy collapsed over the problem of creating friendly governments. The Soviet Union could not prevent the civil wars from breaking out and then could not afford to have their side lose. As the internal struggles polarized societies in the frontier zone, the Soviet Union supported the communists and the West supported the nationalists. The friction generated by each of these civil wars rapidly eroded the wartime alliance. The crises in Poland and Rumania dispelled the spirit of Yalta; the Iranian case polarized the U.N.; the fighting in Greece spawned the Truman doctrine; the Chinese Civil War and its Korean aftermath touched off the search for scapegoats in the U.S. that fed the Red scare and McCarthyism. By 1947, the Soviet Union and the U.S. began to rearm. Thereafter, the Cold War generated its own momentum.

There are several policy implications that follow from this study.

- a. Ever since World War II, the Soviet Union has sought to balance the nationalist and communist elements in the border states so as to maintain "friendly" countries on its frontiers as a form of defensive glacis. Any attempt by internal or external forces to upset the balance which threatens, in the eyes of the Soviet leaders, to create an "unfriendly government" constitutes a civil war that the Soviet Union cannot afford to lose. Afghanistan is simply the most recent example of this. But the Soviet Union has shown a

degree of flexibility, even under Stalin, though sharply diminished, to permit within limits varieties of internal development in the borderlands. Thus, one policy option for the United States, which it did not exercise from 1944-47, is to encourage variation without supporting opposition. Had this been attempted in the post-liberation period, the worst excesses of Stalinism in Eastern Europe might well have been avoided.

b. Ever since World War II, the Soviet Union has sought equal status with the United States (and formerly Great Britain) as a global power, particularly in those three great culture areas that are adjacent to the Soviet borders: Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. Any attempt to exclude the Soviet Union from the consultation and/or settlement of major issues in those areas has led to strong Soviet reaction. Thus, another policy option for the United States, which it did not exercise in 1944-47, is to engage in continuous consultation with the Soviet Union over major crises in those areas without conceding or retaining a veto over recommended action.

c. Ever since World War II, the study of Soviet-American relations has been treated mainly as a rivalry between the two powers, ideological and geopolitical. This study suggests that there is another important dimension, the history of internal wars that arise from indigenous social movements as the result of foreign conquest and/or colonization. The danger lies in the Soviet Union and the United States being drawn in to support opposing forces and thus end up confronting one another. The United States would do well to pay closer attention to the indigenous origins of these wars and avoid treating them as examples of Soviet subversion.

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The main outlines of Soviet foreign policy as we know them today are more the product of the mature years of Stalinism particularly of World War II than of the revolution, civil war and intervention. This is not to say that Soviet foreign policy during the late thirties and early forties broke absolutely with the practices of the previous two decades; rather the discontinuities resembled in many ways those which separated the late imperial period from the early years of the Bolshevik Revolution. From 1937 to 1945 a number of profound changes took place in both Soviet political culture and its global geopolitical position. This geo-cultural transformation was not the result of a conscious policy by the Soviet leadership, still less of a grand design. It was rather the largely unintended consequence of two violent traumas that shook the state and society to its foundations: the terror of the late thirties and the war. The two events were closely interconnected, most obviously in the way the terror was largely responsible for the early disasters of the war.

THE IMPACT OF THE PURGES

The destructive impact of the terror on all aspects and institutions of Soviet life was so indiscriminate and widespread that it would be misleading and incorrect to single out one among the many as having been particularly hard hit. Nevertheless, there has been a tendency to underestimate the effects on foreign policy. Most general histories of Soviet foreign policy treat the question, if at all, parenthetically by showing how in the eyes of foreign observers the purges diminished the international standing of the USSR as a great power.¹ In specialized studies serious attention has been given to the crippling effects of the purges on the army, but virtually none at all on the diplomatic service. In fact, there

¹See for example, Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence* (New York, 1968), pp. 239-42; Max Beloff's detailed and reliable *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1936-1941, II*, 8 mentions the purges of diplomatic personnel around Litvinov, but does not pursue the long term effects upon Soviet diplomatic practice.

were four major areas where the purges severely weakened the ability of the state to represent and defend its interests in international relations: defense, diplomacy, the international Communist movement and national republics in the Western borderlands.

The Army

The army purges, beginning in 1937 with the general staff, reaching down to battalion and company commanders and continuing quite literally right up to the eve of the German invasion, left deep scars on Soviet defense policy. It interrupted and delayed the introduction and mastery of modern mechanized warfare, and it deprived the Red Army of the most experience and best trained commanders at the moment of its greatest peril in June 1941. It also cleared the way for Stalin's assumption of direct control over all aspects of military policy from weapons procurement to order of battle. He exorcised the ghost of Bonapartism that still haunted the Soviet corridors of power.² But the liquidation of Marshall Tuchachevskii also cast discredit on innovative tactics and led to the breakup of independent tank formations, an error of disastrous implications that was corrected too late to prevent the German panzer breakthroughs in 1941. The purge of the officer corps shattered morale and placed commands in incompetent hands. A meager seven per cent of all officers in 1941 had higher military education and seventy-five percent of them had occupied their posts for less than a year.³ Equally damaging to national defense were the extensive purges in the aviation and armaments industry. The arrest of A. N. Tupolev and his colleagues virtually destroyed the long range bomber design school in the Soviet Union, and strategic bombing never became a major part of the Soviet military effort in World War II. The purges of specialists in radar design deprived the country of this vital anti-aircraft

²The standard interpretations of the army purge are John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command. A Military and Political History, 1918-1941*, second edition (Boulder, 1984), chapters 14 and 15 and Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purges of the Thirties* (London, 1968), chapter 7 and pp. 459-67.

³Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin and His Generals* (New York, 1969), p. 63.

defense until units were brought from the U.S. and Great Britain at the end of 1941. Leading designers of the earliest Soviet rocket weapons were eliminated along with individual experts in tank and artillery production. Indirectly, the entire defense industry suffered from the massive repression in heavy industry, in particular railroads, including most of the trained executives of the central apparatus.⁴ Stalin allowed his personal whims to influence his judgement on the lessons to be learned from the Spanish Civil War, and he supported political favorites over technical experts who understood the importance of mass tank formations as in the defeat of the Italians by T-34 tanks at Guadalajara and mass bomber attacks which the Russian forces never tried in contrast to the Germans.⁵

Stalin's morbid suspicions, his obsession with eliminating all forms of political opposition and the infernal perpetuum mobile of the purgers had, in the case of defense policy, brought the country close to destruction in 1941. Yet throughout the war he never wavered in his determination to direct personally all military operations and to make all the decisions concerning weapons procurement. The fear and confusion which his repression had sown among the commanders reinforced by his own colossal operational blunders were largely responsible for the collapse of the front in 1941 when the Soviet forces actually enjoyed numerical superiority in men, tanks and aircraft over the Germans. But unlike Hitler, Stalin learned from his mistakes, removed incompetent commanders, promoted younger men of outstanding ability and weighed the advice of his experts on professional rather than political grounds. At the same time he was also determined not to allow the army to emerge as an autonomous political entity.

Stalin forestalled the development of a political ethos among his generals by playing

⁴Erickson, pp. 500-01; Roy A Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York, 1971), pp. 228-30; P. K. Oshchepkov, *Zhizn' i mehta* (Moscow, 1965), pp. 25-26; Speeches of B. P. Beschev and N. M. Shvernik at XXII Party Congress, *Current Digest of Soviet Press*, February 7, 1962, XIV, no. 2, 24-25; February 28, 1962, XIV, no. 5, 25-26.

⁵*Istoriia velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* (IVOV), (Moscow, 1961), I, 321.

upon their personal rivalries and ambitions. The competition between Zhukov and Konev was only the most obvious and well-known case. In the early years of the war he shifted blame for the defeats from himself, where it belonged, to the commanders. He ordered some to be shot for incompetencies; he publicly accused the others of not having mastered the techniques of modern warfare, thus depriving them of any basis for challenging his control.⁶ And he shrewdly offered the officer corps glory as a substitute for power in assuaging their *amour propre*.

As Stalin converted the army into an instrument of his personal rule, so the army became the main instrument of extending Soviet power beyond the borders, providing a protective cover for the successes of local communist parties that were too weak by themselves to play a major political role, still less to take power, in their own countries. Stalin had already assigned this political role for the Red Army during the Civil War when he preferred its direct intervention, in the Ukraine or Georgia for example, as opposed to the local Communist uprising as a means of advancing Soviet power in the borderlands. But this was true only if he could be certain of controlling the Red Army units. As long as the danger existed of "Red Bonapartism" as he contemptuously dubbed Tukhachevskii's ambitions, Stalin maintained a reserved attitude toward the army as an instrument of foreign policy. After 1937 his hesitations disappeared and in 1944 the opportunities were at hand.

Diplomacy

In the world of Soviet diplomacy the loss of personnel and the extent of disorganization was as great as in the army but the recovery was even slower and the damage done to relations with the outside world was in many subtle ways more lasting. It is estimated that about two thirds of the top diplomats including all heads of departments and directors of services of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and a majority of ambassadors and ministers were arrested and executed. The top leadership of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade was also destroyed. The Litvinov cadres were decimated, and

⁶I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1967), II, 54-5; 90-91.

the Foreign Commissar himself lived in dread of arrest, a revolver tucked under his pillow at night. It was not simply a question of replacing seasoned diplomats with less experienced men, or of restoring shattered morale, as in the army. The entire ethos of the diplomatic service was profoundly altered, and a return to the spirit of the twenties is only now taking place in the Soviet Union.

The subtle process of denigrating the Soviet diplomatic corps had already begun less than a decade after its establishment. In the wake of the great political struggles of the twenties, Stalin honorably "exiled" a number of supporters of the left opposition to various diplomatic posts. At one time, about half the Paris mission was composed of "quasi-Trotskyites."⁷ It was a curious revival of an old Russian tradition. Peter the Great's successors were the first to send abroad defeated contenders for imperial favor in the factional struggles at court. Then, as in the years of Stalin's ascendancy, there was a strong implication that foreign policy was secondary to domestic affairs and could be left in the hands of skilled politicians. Deprived of any power base at home, they had no choice but to defend with scrupulous loyalty the national interest as it was defined in general terms by those who held real power in the country. Nevertheless, former supporters of Trotsky like Nikolai Krestinskii and Christian Rakovskii served brilliantly abroad. Like other members of the diplomatic service, they were well-educated, cultivated men with a thorough knowledge of European culture and languages. At the tactical level, they enjoyed a great deal of autonomy. Under the skillful direction of Chicherin and then Litvinov, the Soviet diplomatic corps enjoyed a high reputation for its abilities and conviviality. The year 1937 changed all that.

There were three waves of purges that decimated the diplomatic corps. The first came in 1930 among foreign embassies and commercial missions in response to defections prompted by the shock of collectivization; the second struck at the top ranks in 1937 and implicated

⁷*Alexander Barmine, Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat* (London, 1938), p. 233.

several important figures like Krestinskii, Grigori Sokolnikov, deputy commissar, and Arkadi Rozengolts, Commissar of Foreign Trade, who were accused of spying and plotting to dismember the USSR; the third followed Litvinov's replacement by Molotov in 1939 and turned over virtually the entire internal staff of the Commissariat.⁸ There were few survivors by the end and many of these were recalled or demoted in the period before the war including Vladimir Potemkin and Vasili Surits. Among the last holdovers were Litvinov himself, posted to Washington, and his long time friend and associate Ivan Maisky in London. But in 1943 they too were recalled, presumably as a sign of Stalin's displeasure over the postponement of the second front.⁹

With the dismissal of Litvinov in 1939, the management of Soviet foreign policy fell into the hands of three men, and, according to Litvinov's lament, "none of them understand America or Britain." V. M. Molotov, a long time friend and supporter of Stalin had little experience in diplomacy, although he was active in Comintern affairs and as Premier had on at least one important occasion gone behind Litvinov's back in trying to work out a deal with the Americans over debt settlement. Andrei Vyshinskii, a lawyer by training, was notorious to the foreign community as the xenophobic prosecutor in the purge trials. Vladimir G. Dekanozov was a former police official who, together with Vyshinskii, was responsible for the purges in the Baltic States; later as ambassador to Nazi Germany he "sat next to Ribbentrop for a year," in Litvinov's sarcastic evaluation, "and that's all he knows

⁸Barmine, *Memoirs*, pp. 242-44; *Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Trotskyite Centre* (Moscow, 1937), especially the testimony of Karl Radek and Grigori Sokolnikov; and *The Case of the Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites* (Moscow, 1938), especially the testimony of Arkadi Rosengoltz, Nikolai Krestinskii, and Christian Rakovskii; Robert Slusser, "The Role of the Foreign Ministry," in Ivo Lederer, (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy* (New Haven, 1962), pp. 229-30.

⁹Ivan Maisky, *Memoirs of a Soviet Ambassador. The War: 1939-43* (New York, 1968), pp. 364-65; *Diplomaticheskii slovar* (Moscow, 1961-64), II, 574; III, 331 entries for Potemkin and Surits.

about foreign countries."¹⁰

Beginning with the first trials in 1936, the process accelerated of isolating the foreign community from the population within the Soviet Union and the Soviet diplomatic personnel from the population of foreign countries. By 1937, "an anti-foreign campaign of almost unparalleled intensity," according to George Kennan's Moscow dispatch, made no effort to distinguish between democratic peace-loving states and fascist aggressors. A wave of arrests and deportations of foreign nationals swept indiscriminantly through the foreign community. Arbitrary arrests of Soviet citizens who worked for foreign missions further reduced contact. Statements by leading Soviet officials in the press and radio warned the public that all foreigners were secret agents. Harassment of diplomats turned their lives into a nightmare of frustration and irritation. Litvinov admitted to the German ambassador that he lacked any means of restricting the internal authorities, that is the police, from arresting German citizens. Even the French ambassador, representing a country allied to the Soviet Union was helpless to prevent the expulsion of French nationals.¹¹

Stalin had never displayed much interest in the operational aspects of foreign policy. Chicherin and Litvinov had enjoyed a good deal of leeway in implementing the general lines of foreign policy, occasionally even taking surprising initiatives. This was also the case with the leadership of the Comintern. The evidence suggests that Stalin was skeptical about the twin policies of collective security and popular front against fascism but he allowed them to develop as their advantages became clearer to him. But after 1936, he appeared to retreat more and more into isolation. For a period of almost five years, 1936 to 1941, he

¹⁰Vojtech Mastny, "The Cassandra in the Foreign Commissariat: Maxim Litvinov and the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 54 (1975-76); 366-76; for Molotov's behind-the-back dealings with Stalin's consent, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), The Soviet Union, 1933-1939* (Washington, 1952), pp. 579-80; on Dekanozov, Conquest, *The Great Purge*, pp. 455, 472 and Alexander Worth, *Russia at War* (New York, 1964), p. 94.

¹¹FRUS, *The Soviet Union, 1933-1939*, pp. 318, 398, 449-50, 517, 645; *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, Series C, VI, 1003; Robert Coulondre, *De Staline a Hitler. Souvenirs de Deux Ambassades, 1936-1939* (Paris, 1950), Chapters 8 and 10.

met personally with only four foreign plenipotentiaries, creating a sensation in the diplomatic corps, for example, when he surprised Joseph P. Davies with a visit in Molotov's office.¹² Combined with his personal indifference, Stalin's repeated pronouncements on the renewed dangers of capitalist encirclement produced a gloomy reaction among Western, especially American diplomats, who interpreted it as a prelude to the abandonment of the policy of collective security.¹³

The effect of the purges and isolationist tendencies upon the Soviet diplomatic corps is more difficult to document than in the case of the army because the revelations by Soviet diplomats in the 1960's were not as numerous or detailed as those of the generals, and rehabilitations were fewer and less significant. Gleaning from the memoirs of Barmine, Maiskii, Novikov and Berezkov, it is possible to sketch a picture of a service that became disoriented, demoralized and distrustful. As in the army, the elimination of knowledgeable veterans forced promotion of young and inexperienced individuals to high ranks for which they were not adequately prepared. Most of the new diplomats were drawn from the middle ranks of the bureaucracy and the professionate. For example, Andrei Gromyko at thirty-four and Fedor Gusev at thirty-eight became ambassadors to the U. S. and Britain after only four and six years of service, respectively. K. V. Novikov took charge of the second section for European Affairs of the Foreign Commissariat at age thirty-eight after two years of service. Alexander Bogomolov was already thirty-nine when he was assigned to the service and, after two years, became ambassador to the allied governments in exile in

¹²FRUS, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 567-68; for his meeting with the British ambassador see Eric Estorick, *Stafford Cripps* (London, 1949), pp. 253-57. The others were Ribbentrop, of course, on 19 August 1939 to negotiate the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the Japanese Foreign Minister Y. Matsuoka (twice) in 1941 to negotiate the neutrality treaty. Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1936-1941*, II, 371-74.

¹³FRUS, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 515-516.

London.¹⁴ Beginning in the late thirties, the network of informal communications and trust among colleagues within the service was badly disrupted. A conspiracy of silence descended; the purges were simply not discussed. Even formal instructions from the center became terse and were often delayed for long periods because of the excessive centralization that replaced individual initiative. Individuals were abruptly recalled and reassigned without warning or consultation. Outside of formal diplomatic receptions, social contact with foreigners was rare. These habits and procedures continued even after the wartime alliance was consolidated by the summit meetings at Teheran and Yalta. Western diplomats discovered negotiating with the Russians a baffling and frustrating task. The smallest changes in wording in original Soviet drafts had to be referred to Moscow. Sometimes embarrassed by lack of instructions and their own inability to respond, Soviet diplomats resorted to extraneous arguments, misleading comparisons and mendacious evasions; then when instructions arrived, they were perfectly capable of blithely reversing themselves without batting an eye. Traditional diplomatic practices and procedures were ignored or poorly understood. Agreements by Soviet diplomats "in principle" were rejected in practice; but when Allied diplomats agreed in principle, that is for purposes of discussion, Soviet diplomats including Stalin himself took this to mean acceptance in practice.¹⁵ These Stalinist traits of negotiation became deeply ingrained in the Soviet diplomatic service. They were reenforced by the onset of the Cold War and the anti-cosmopolitan campaign in the late 1940's and only gradually began to change after Stalin's death, although strong traces of them remain characteristic of Soviet diplomacy into the 1980's.

The purges, Stalin's complete domination over foreign policy and the imposition of his mentality, backed by fears among his diplomats that the slightest error would be

¹⁴Diplomaticeskii slovar', I, 413-14, 417; II, 412; K. V. Novikov, Put' sovetskogo diplomata (Moscow, 1975).

¹⁵Raymond Dennett and Joseph E. Johnson, *Negotiating with the Russians* (Boston, 1951), especially Philip E. Mosely, "Techniques of Negotiation," pp. 210-228.

misconstrued as weakness or sabotage as exemplified in the trials, had the effect of reinforcing rather than creating the anti-Soviet feelings that permeated the British and American foreign services. The American specialists on Russia were, by and large, well trained in the language and steeped in the culture, but they had little sympathy with the new Soviet regime. Whatever there was of it was quickly dissipated by Stalinism. Their experiences in the thirties added a stiff dose of personal frustration, humiliation, and anger to their political and ideological predispositions. They sympathized with William Bullitt's disillusionment and scorned Joseph E. Davies for his naivete. They had little patience for Roosevelt's policy and, consequently, he sought to circumvent them. He succeeded only partially; they exercised strong influence on all his ambassadors except Davies and, after he passed from the scene, their advice and counsel was eagerly sought by an administration that was drawing up the battle lines for the Cold War.¹⁶ The longer experience of the British foreign service was even more volatile, agitated by the anti-Russian sentiments that predated the revolution and powerfully reinforced by such incidents as the Zinov'ev letter and Arcos raid in the twenties as well as the purges that came later.¹⁷ Despite the heavy legacy of these traditions, the Stalinist style from which, ironically, only Stalin himself was occasionally free, created unnecessary difficulties for Soviet foreign policy often projecting the image of the diplomat as a rude, uncompromising, automaton and turning every negotiation into an ordeal of patience and a test of will.

The Nationalities

The effect of the purges on the national republics of the Soviet Union has never been fully explored though it was clearly deep and pervasive. The decimation of the party cadres

¹⁶Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace. The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston, 1977), is the fullest account, though it is not necessary to accept his somewhat artificial division between the Riga and Yalta axioms. There is nothing as good for similar reactions among academics who later entered government service during the war.

¹⁷Sir Stafford Cripps was particularly sensitive to these currents Estorick, *Stafford Cripps*, p. 257.

was no greater in the non-Russian autonomous republics than the RFSFR, yet there was one essential difference between them. Most of the victims in the non-Russian republics and none in the Russian republic were condemned for nationalist deviation. The scale of repression among the non-Russian republics was more or less the same, but, again, there was an essential difference in the consequences. In the words of Soviet historian Roy Medvedev: "By destroying tens of thousands of good Communists among the minority nationalities, the charge of nationalism helped to revive many nationalistic moods and prejudices."¹⁸

The Ukraine was particularly hard hit by the purges because of its large party organization, the number of prominent Ukrainians in the central apparatus, and the vigorous cultural life within the republic.¹⁹ Almost all the leading officials of the republic were arrested and most of these were executed. Over 180,000 party members (37% of the total) were repressed.²⁰ The Belorussian organization, over a longer period of time, lost half its effectives. In the North Caucasus where the invading Germans in 1942 encountered widespread disaffection from Soviet power, the losses were equally great; in Ossetia, a large part of the intelligentsia²¹ was also wiped out. In the Kabardino-Balkarskii region, the popular hero of the revolution and civil war, first secretary of the obkom, B. E. Kalmykov was arrested and executed, though later rehabilitated.²¹ In terms of foreign policy, the purges in the politically sensitive western borderlands severely weakened the resistance to

¹⁸Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 207.

¹⁹The standard treatments of the purges in the Ukraine are Hryhory Kostyuk, *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror* (Munich, 1960) and Robert Sullivant, *Soviet Politics and the Ukraine, 1917-1957* (New York, 1962). These should be supplemented by Soviet materials published after the XXII Party Congress.

²⁰*Ocherki po istorii kommunisticheskoi partii Ukrainy* (Kiev, 1964).

²¹*Istoriia Severo-Ossetinskoi ASSR* (Orzhonikidze, 1966), p. 247; B. E. Kalmykov, *Stat'i i rechi* (Nal'chik, 1961); *Narody kavkazy* (Moscow, 1960); *Ocherki po istorii kommunisticheskoi partii Belorussii*, pt. 1 (Minsk, 1961).

the German invader and delayed the reestablishment of Soviet power in those areas after the liberation.

The Comintern

The purge of the Comintern did not strike a healthy organism, but the treatment hastened its demise. Its history had been marked by intense factionalism, periodic purges, rapid volte-faces and, up to 1935, a general decline in membership. The Seventh Congress in 1935 bid fair to reverse the declining popularity of Communist Parties by demoting world revolution to a secondary concern and identifying the parties' fortunes with a broad anti-fascist front. But the gains in membership and electoral successes in the few countries where they were still legal were offset by resentment among the professional cadres over the apparent indifference to revolutionary goals, and the ever deepening sense of complete subordination to Soviet security interests.²² Moreover, most of the parties' leadership were vulnerable to direct Stalinist pressure because they were obliged to shelter in Moscow from the repressive policies of their own governments which declared their activities illegal and arrested their agents. The Soviet Union also maintained several special schools for training younger foreign Communists and they too were trapped with nowhere to escape when the arrests began.

As with other categories of purge victims, the Comintern personnel cannot be identified by any simple political coloration. But a large proportion of them were by the common definition of the times 'sectarian,' that is either reluctant to embrace the popular front movement or to renounce the dictatorship of the proletariat as its immediate end. This was particularly true of several east European Communist parties: the Hungarian, still under the influence of the leaders of the abortive 1919 revolution, the Yugoslav which had scarcely acknowledged the popular front line and the Polish which insisted on attacking the

²²E. H. Carr, *Twilight of the Comintern, 1930-1935* (New York, 1982) and for an anti-Stalinist critique B. M. Leibzon and K. K. Shirinia, *Povorot v politike Kominterny* (Moscow, 1965).

leadership of the rival socialist parties and subordinating the rank and file to their control.²³ The latter two parties were so badly mauled that they virtually ceased to exist; the Polish Party was abolished and only Tito was left among the Yugoslav leadership to reconstruct the cadres from the ground level. If 'sectarianism' might be considered a charge not wholly without foundation, what was more damaging in Stalin's eyes, as it had always been, was an obvious reluctance or outright refusal to adopt immediately and without question to the new line. Obedience and tactical flexibility were the true tests of loyalty. Adaptation had saved some supporters of Bukharin in the Comintern, like Togliatti, who turned obediently to the left in 1928, abandoning their ideological mentor and champion to his fate. Once such a betrayal was on record, Stalin had no need to fear any future opposition from such men for even if they subsequently took a principled stand, their principles could no longer be taken seriously and their own words could be turned against them.

The implications of the Comintern purge for Soviet foreign policy were unclear at the time but profound in the long run. The killings in Moscow further weakened the abilities of the left to resist Hitler in Eastern Europe from 1938 to 1941. This weakness persisted throughout the war among most parties like the Polish, Hungarian, Rumanian and Bulgarian, German and Austrian seriously complicating the tasks of liberation and reconstruction. The Yugoslav party was exceptional due to the strong personality of Tito and the peculiar local conditions in that country. The Stalinist purges could not, of course, reach into fascist jails where many Communists, most of them 'sectarian' by necessity, survived only to emerge at liberation and cause Stalin the kind of trouble he foresaw from these irreconcilables.

²³For the Hungarians, see Leibzon and Shiriniia, *Povorot*, p. 90; for the Yugoslavs, Milovan Djilas, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* (New York, 1973), p. 250; and for the Poles, M. K. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), pp. 142-46.

THE IMPACT OF WAR

The German invasion of the Soviet Union came, then, at a moment of uncertain transition in the country's history. The completion of collectivization and of the first two Five Year Plans had anchored the economic foundations of the regime. But there were ominous signs of trouble ahead. The wasteful and hasty industrialization combined with the purge of the economic cadres created serious problems in key sectors, particularly metallurgy and transportation. These bottlenecks threatened future expansion. The party had been decimated and demoralized, the international communist movement crippled, and a marked decline in ideological dynamism was apparent. The acquisition of the Baltic States, the eastern provinces of Poland and Bessarabia provided an additional buffer against attack from the west, but it would take some time to reorganize the defenses, move the fortresses forward and establish political security in the newly occupied territories.

It is now clear that Stalin expected war, but, as he told Churchill, he believed he had more time, perhaps an additional six months to prepare for it. His failure to heed the ample, indeed overwhelming, intelligence he possessed on Hitler's operational plans and preparations for the invasion was a profound error in judgment but it was neither mysterious nor irrational. Stalin suspected that the British were determined to involve him in the conflict in order to divert Hitler from the West and the Mediterranean. He had held that view since Munich and it continued to influence his attitudes toward Britain throughout the wartime alliance. The delays in the opening of the second front, the interruption of supply convoys, the diversions in North Africa and Italy were, for him, simply additional proofs of Britain's traditional anti-Russian policy nourished in recent years by heavy doses of anti-Communism.

If Stalin did not want to be the cat's paw of Britain, neither did he wish to be perceived as the aggressor in a war with Germany. His strenuous efforts, which appear almost grotesque in retrospect, to avoid being provoked into a preventative attack or even

to order the equivalent of general mobilization suggests that he had learned his lessons from the origins of World War I; he knew too what effect an "unjust war" might have on the morale of the army and civil population. Even closer to hand, the experience of the Winter War with Finland had demonstrated the dangers of conducting a war that was not exclusively defensive, especially against a major military power. It is possible, too, that Stalin believed that Hitler would not be so foolish as to ignore the lessons of history and attack Russia, as Napoleon had, while leaving Britain unconquered in his rear, but that is more in the realm of speculation. The way the war began was of enormous significance for Soviet foreign policy. Although the surprise attack led to great losses of men, material and territory, it enabled Stalin to portray the conflict as a great patriotic war in defense of the mother land and for the liberation of all peoples from fascism. It made possible too an alliance with Great Britain and later the United States founded on a common if not simultaneous reaction to Nazi aggression.

The point here is not to excuse Stalin's colossal mistake, but to place it in the context of his foreign policy. He could just as easily have accomplished his aims without carrying the country to the brink of defeat. But his aims were consistent: to avoid war as long as possible, but to make certain that if it came, the Soviet Union would not be caught fighting alone but rather as part of a general coalition.

The Great Recovery: Organizing the Economy

The geo-cultural transformation of the Soviet Union during the war took the forms of a great recovery from the brink of disaster. No other state in modern history has survived the kind of military defeat inflicted upon the Soviet Union in the first two years of the war and then gone on to win such a crushing victory. One has to go back to "the Prussian miracle" in the Seven Years War to find anything comparable. For Russians, the striking historical contrast was with World War I when the tsarist empire enjoyed the advantage of a continuous "second front" against Germany in the west and suffered fewer casualties and a

smaller loss of territory, yet collapsed under the strain of fighting a modern war.

In World War II, the great recovery took three forms: organizational, economic and military. In order to mobilize the human and material resources of the country, Stalin created a new state organ, the State Defense Committee, and staffed it with a few trusted leaders drawn mainly from officials who had made their careers in the state rather than the party apparatus. Modelled in certain respects on the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defense during the Russian Civil War, it was an ad hoc organization with no fixed rules. In the absence of any special administrative machinery, Stalin resorted to the use of plenipotentiaries, much in the style of Peter the Great.²⁴

The reorganization of the economy centered on solving three critical problems that had fatally undermined the tsarist monarchy: transportation, arms production and food supply. The modernization of railroads had taken place in the thirties but administration had been disrupted by the purges and there remained serious strategic gaps in the western network. The loss to the Germans of forty percent of the carrying capacity of required heroic efforts in construction and administrative improvisation. Over 9000 kilometers of track were added during the war, exceeding the annual average tempo of construction during either of the prewar plans. Soviet managers showed themselves superior to the Germans in overcoming problems caused by bottlenecks, shortages and destruction of equipment.²⁵

In metallurgy and armaments, the famous exploit of mass evacuation of existing industrial plant from the western territories accompanied by new construction enabled the country to increase very substantially the production of all types of weapons. By the fall

²⁴Sanford Liberman, "Crisis Management in the USSR: The wartime system of administration and control," in Susan J. Linz (ed.), *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Totowa, 1985), pp. 60-66; see also John A. Armstrong, *The Politics of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1961), pp. 133-35.

²⁵Holland Hunter, "Successful Spatial Management," in *ibid*, pp. 50-54; V. A. Vinogradov et al, *Sovetskaia ekonomika nakanune i v pervoi period velikoi otechestvennoi voiny, 1938-1945 gg* (Moscow, 1978), pp. 425-28.

of 1942, in comparison to the immediate prewar period, monthly figures showed that four times the number of rifles, six times the number of artillery guns, eight times the number of tanks and ten times the number of mortars were rolling off the assembly lines. By the end of the war, the Soviet Union had far outproduced Germany and Britain in self-propelled guns, tanks and aircraft. The relocation of industry also shifted the industrial center far to the East, the share of war production in the eastern regions jumping from 18.5 to 76 percent in one year. The first metallurgical factories were constructed in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Thus, the war also contributed to a greater economic integration of the country and reduced the industrial disparities between the Slavic and Muslim Republics.²⁶

It was something of a miracle that the Soviet Union was able to feed its army and civilian population in the face of frightful losses in livestock and equipment, a sharp drop in farm productivity and a massive decline in human and mechanical labor. Simultaneously with the evacuation of industry and again in 1942, two dramatic and poignant evacuations of the great livestock herds took place. Under incredibly difficult conditions, the Soviet collective farmers saved only thirteen percent of the western Russian herds and thirty percent of the eastern Ukrainian herds. But the enemy was deprived of important food supplies and the heavy slaughtering which accompanied the drives helped feed the Red Army in the crucial winter of 1941-1942. The evacuation of farm machinery was more difficult and the country lost forty percent of its tractors. Women, children and old people constituted virtually the entire labor force on the farms, but their heroic efforts could not sustain production levels without adequate draft animals and mechanical assistance. The gross value of the harvest at the end of the war was less than one half the figure in 1940. Yet the collective farm system, though battered and weakened, survived; grain procurement, introduced as a crisis mechanism continued to function adequately and reenforced by strict rationing, it prevented

²⁶A. V. Mitrofanov et al, *Rabochii klass SSSR nakanune i v gody velikoi otechestvennoi voiny, 1938-1945 gg.* (Moscow, 1984), III, 206-11, 261; Vinogradov, *Sovetskaia ekonomika*, pp. 172-79, 188.

a breakdown in the food supply.²⁷

The Great Recovery: The Military

The great recovery of the Red Army from the crushing defeats in the summer of 1941 and again during the German offensive in the south in 1942 was no less surprising. The enormous initial losses in men and equipment, not to speak of productive capacity, could not be made good immediately. The reorganization and rearmament of the armed forces that had begun as far back as the Frunze reforms and picked up momentum in the early thirties paid off. The training and ability of the junior officers and non-coms was far superior to the old tsarist army. The purges of the late thirties had deeply wounded the high command, but there was surprising depth and talent among the middle rank officers. Many of them who were promoted too rapidly to fill the gaps perished in the initial battles in the summer of forty-one, but they were replaced by men who had survived and learned from the shock of defeats. The teachings of the purged Tukhachevskii and his school were quietly put into practice: closer coordination among the various service branches, reassembly of independent tank formations, accumulation of strategic reserves despite urgent demands to commit units piecemeal. Surprisingly, Stalin, too, adapted to the new picture, freeing himself at least for the duration from morbid suspicions of his best commanders, replacing sentimental favorites from the Civil War by younger officers who had proven their battle worth, and relying heavily on the professional advice of the small talented group of top commanders he gathered around him.

At bottom, however, it was the social transformation of the army under the Soviet power that made the difference. The rapid urbanization and industrialization of the country produced a semi-skilled and skilled working class population that provided the bulk of technical people for communications, armor, artillery and air services that had been wholly lacking in 1914. The use of the Red Army as a school for literacy and political

²⁷Iu. V. Arutiunian, *Sovetskoe krestianstvo v gody velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* (Moscow, 1970), pp. 45-60, 75, 118, 183, 267, 278-79.

consciousness had succeeded in transforming the raw peasant recruit of the old tsarist army into a thinking soldier and a representative of the progressive ideas of the new regime in the countryside.²⁸ Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that many Soviet units encircled in the frontier areas, for example, fought on desperately despite having lost their commanders and contact with the main forces of the retreating army. In other cases, such as the encirclements at Vyazma-Briansk and West of the Dniepr, numbers of Soviet units broke out despite very high losses. Cities like Leningrad, Odessa and Sevastopol held out long after their total investment by enemy forces. The picture of the Red Army soldier as passive and inert, surrendering in droves when strong leadership from the center was absent is in need of serious revision. Similarly, the interpretation of Soviet society stripped of initiative, rigidified by totalitarian controls cannot stand up to the evidence of the wartime experience. The ability to reestablish defensive lines before Moscow and launch a major counter attack after five months of headlong retreat and terrible losses was a stunning tribute to improvisation, like the evacuation of the factories, and the great livestock herds, the conversion of civilian to wartime industry, the maintenance of the food supply and the transportation miracle. Erickson's verdict on the military response can be justly applied to all aspects of the war effort: "The immense capacity for improvisation remained, nevertheless, a signal advantage for the Russians."²⁹

It took the Red Army two years to recover the territory lost in the first five months of the war, but, in the end, it was they and not the Wehrmacht which triumphed. After the battle of Kursk in 1943, strategically the real turning point, the Soviet military astonished the world with the scale and sophistication of its offensive operations. For example, in the great Belorussian offensive in June 1944, the Russians massed 166 divisions

²⁸For suggestive insights, see Mark Von Hagen, "School of the Revolution: Bolsheviks and Peasants in the Red Army, 1918-1928," Ph.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 1985).

²⁹Erickson, *The Soviet High Command*, p. 629.

and 5200 tanks (the Germans estimates were higher) to deliver a crushing blow along a 450 mile front in one of the largest land operations of the entire war, indeed, of any war in history. A year later, the battle of Berlin involved even larger numbers of Soviet tanks and troops though the outcome was never in doubt. The Red Army had staged the most dramatic reversal of military fortunes in modern times.

The Great Recovery: Ideology

The war enabled Stalin to recover much of the emotional and psychological capital he has so prodigiously squandered in the years of forced collectivization and the blood purges. Already, before the war, he made some gestures in the direction of reconstituting the shattered ideals of the Bolshevik revolution by weaving together an eclectic ideology individual motifs and themes of which he directed at different audiences, carefully selecting his forums and occasions. Crude in comparison with the theoretical pronouncements of his Old Bolshevik predecessors, his amalgam of Great Russian nationalism, Soviet patriotism, international proletarian solidarity and Pan Slavism possessed a raw emotional appeal that cannot be discounted. The integrating factor in the mature Stalinist ideology was the war itself which Stalin ritualized and mythologized so that it came to replace the October Revolution as the "great event" of the Soviet experience.³⁰

Symbolically, Stalin introduced and concluded his tale of the Great Patriotic War on a note of Great Russian nationalism. In between these incantations, Stalin multiplied his symbolic gestures and expanded the cultural institutions of Russian nationalism. On the first wartime anniversary of the revolution, no less, he unveiled his pantheon of Great Russian heroes: "Let the manly image of our great ancestors Alexander Nevsky, Dmitri Donskoi, Minin and Pozharskii, Suvorov and Kutuzov inspire us in this war." On cue, the Propaganda and Agitation Department turned out a million copies of popularly written

³⁰Cf. Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel. History as Ritual* (Chicago, 1981), especially chapters 1 and 6 for suggestive insights into the process as applied to socialist realism.

pamphlets on each of these heroes. Behind the scenes, Stalin inspired the even more startling rehabilitation of the two tsars with whom he felt the closest affinity, Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great.³¹ On numerous occasions, Stalin personally intervened with writers and film makers to urge upon them historical and patriotic themes that would offer moral principles and serve as guides to right action.³² Formerly, Stalin was eager to appear as Lenin's heir but gradually he extended his lineage by four hundred years, tapping into a different tradition.

At the same time, Stalin restored the lustre of the two institutions that had under the monarchy embodied the ideals of Great Russian nationalism - the army and the church. The restoration of elitism among the officer corps, the "cult of the uniform," the opening of the Suvorov academies modelled, according to *Krasnaia Zvezda* "after the manner of the old Cadet Schools," all drew heavily on the pre-revolutionary military traditions. The elaborately planned victorious battle celebrations, "the cult of the dead" featuring the magnificent war memorials that far outnumbered and overshadowed monuments to the revolution, and the transformation of all holidays into military displays were Stalin's embellishment of those traditions. The revival of the Church was more muted but no less radical in its implications for Russian nationalism. The Church's initiative in denouncing the German attack prompted Stalin to call off the antireligious campaign and arrange an informal concordat with the church. The permanent reestablishment of the patriarchate endowed it with a modest but active role in foreign affairs. The Church restored direct

³¹Stalin, *Sochineniia*, II, 35; Lowell Tillet, *The Great Friendship* (Chapel Hill, 1969), p. 77; George Reavey, *Soviet Russian Literature Today*, pp. 49-56; Charles Corbet, *Une littérature aux fers. Le pseudo-réalisme soviétique* (Paris, 1975), p. 187; Leo Yaresh, "Ivan the Terrible and the Oprichnina," in Cyril Black (ed.) *Rewriting Russian History*, second edition (New York, 1962), pp. 220-29.

³²Sholokhov reported that Stalin told him that his anti-German essay, "The Science of Hatred" was as timely and necessary for one stage of the war as Gorkii's *Mother* for the revolutionary movement and added that it was time to write a novel about "the holy, national war of liberation." Herman Ermolaev, *Mikhail Sholokhov and His Art* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 46-7.

relations with the Orthodox community in the Near East and, of particular value for Stalin, in the Balkans where it helped to allay the worst fears of co-religionists liberated by the Red Army. Perhaps its greatest service from Stalin's perspective was as an ally in the struggle to retain the loyalty of parishioners in the occupied territories of the western borderlands where membership in the official Church outweighed all other factors including ethnicity in determining political allegiance to Moscow.³³

From the early years of the war, the leadership harnessed the theme of Soviet patriotism to that of Great Russian nationalism, although there was latent tension between them. Soviet patriotism as it evolved in the twenties, particularly after the official acceptance of Stalin's socialism in one country, aimed at overcoming the persistent and disturbing absence in the previous history of the state of a justification morally superior to brute force or historical accident for assembling under one authority the many peoples who constituted the old tsarist empire and the USSR. Its guiding idea was a fusion of class and ethno-linguistic identities in a new form of citizenship. Its institutional bulwarks were the All Union Communist Party and the federal republics.

During the war, Soviet patriotism served Stalin to balance the emotionally powerful but one sided appeal of nationalism, to restore the idealism and energy of the party cadres and to stiffen the resolve of the nationalities, especially those exposed to the pressures and temptations of living outside the Soviet power under German occupation. In order to reconcile national and multinational loyalties, the leadership appealed to "the unbreakable friendship of peoples" with the Russians occupying the position of the first among equals.³⁴

³³For the internal picture, Walter Kolarz, *Religion in Russia* (New York, 1961), pp. 48-60 remains the standard treatment; for the western borderlands, see William C. Fletcher, "The Soviet Bible Belt," in Linz, *The Impact of World War II*, pp. which focuses on the growth of schismatic churches but suggests that defections would have been greater had there been no Patriarch in Moscow. For influence abroad, FRUS, 1945, V, 1111-1123.

³⁴An early example of this was the speech of Politburo member A.S. Shcherbatov, "Pod znamenem Lenina," *Bolshevik*, No. 2, 1942, p. 10.

It was not difficult for propagandists to embellish this theme with examples from the Soviet period. But the party pressed for glorifications of the military tradition among the non-Russian nationalities and these, for the most part, could only be found in the history of their resistance to Russian conquest. In order to resolve the embarrassing paradox, historians had recourse to the "lesser evil" formula. They explained that the nationalities fared better under the Russians than they would have under the alternative rule of the Turks, or Chinese, or Poles, and that, ultimately, they benefitted from the greatest bounty of all -- participation in the Bolshevik revolution.³⁵

One of the most effective propagandists for Soviet patriotism was the president of the USSR, Mikhail Kalinin, a deft touch considering that he was, to many, the embodiment of the "pure Russian peasant type" among the governing elite. In his frequent appearances before Komsomol leaders and front line agitators, he insisted that the Soviet Union is "a single harmonious family of nations, that our unity is such as the world has never seen."³⁶ Kalinin boasted that the state was not afraid as the tsarist monarchy had been of recruiting from all the national groups. But the State Defense Committee decided to give more visible and dramatic expression to the vitality of the Stalinist nationality policy in the war effort. In November, 1941, it recreated the national units within the Red Army that had been abolished in 1937. The task was placed in the hands of republic and oblast party commissions which, it was specified, had to contain at least a minimal representation of the local nationality. Russians were permitted to join the units only if the necessary technical personnel was lacking. Units of divisional strength were formed in the Central Asian,

³⁵The most comprehensive treatment is Tillet. *The Great Friendship*, chapter 4, which does not make the distinction between Russian nationalism and Soviet patriotism sharp enough in my view. See also, Konstantin F. Shtepa, "The Lesser Evil Formula," In Black, *Rewriting Russian History*, pp. 107-19.

³⁶M. I. Kalinin, *Stat'i i rechi (1941-1946)*, (Moscow, 1975), especially pp. 36-9, (Chto nachit byt' sovetским patriotom v nashi dni"); 289-94 ("Edinaia boevaia sem'ia").

Transcaucasian and North Caucasian nationality areas.³⁷ Throughout the war the Soviet press made much of heroes of the Soviet Union who belonged to non-Russian nationalities.

Another major step in the government's campaign to strengthen the loyalties of the non-Russian nationalities and exploit the intellectual resources of the entire country was the establishment of republic academies of science outside the Slavic republics. The first steps had been taken earlier with the creation of the Georgian Academy of Sciences on the eve of the war. But the new centers, mainly identified with the autonomous republics, rapidly increased as the Uzbek, Armenian, Azerbaizhan and Kazakh academies were organized from 1943 to 1945. Shortly after the war, republic academies were founded in the reincorporated Latvian and Estonian republics.³⁸ The central Asian academies also provide a haven for scientists evacuated from Russian and the western republics thus bolstering the notion of unity in diversity. By building the institutional infrastructure of a multicultural society, the state gave credence to the Soviet ideal and rebuffed the Nazi racist myth.

Despite Stalin's savage and contemptuous treatment of the party, it remained the most reliable and compelling instrument of his power in fostering the ideals of Soviet patriotism. Great Russian nationalism and multi-ethnicity were potential rivals, but the All-Union Communist Party was perfectly placed to mediate between them. While the country could be governed during the emergency by an ad hoc state committee run by a dozen powerful men under Stalin's command, the hard local organizational work demanded the revitalization of the party. No other state organ could be entrusted with running the daily life of the country; certainly not the police, nor even the Soviets which lacked experience, an esprit de corps and discipline. Restoring the old enthusiasm and initiative of the party members was

³⁷N. A. Kirsanov, *Partiinye mobilizatsii na front v gody velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* (Moscow, 1972), pp. 155-82.

³⁸E. A. Beliaev and N. S. Pyshkova, *Formirovanie i razvitie seti nauchnykh uchrezhdenii SSSR* (Moscow, 1979). The Ukrainian and Belorussian Academies had existed since the early years of the Soviet State. Alexander Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 90, 203-206.

no easy task in the wake of the purges. The process began slowly and then gathered momentum in the second year of war.

The prominence of Great Russian nationalism and Soviet patriotism with emphasis on military traditions and the friendship of peoples left little room for Marxist-Leninist theory until it became clear that the party's organizational and ideological coherence was being undermined. The traditional relationship between the party and army was in danger of being reversed. In 1941, the government had, in a moment of panic, reestablished the dual command in the army by appointing political commissars. Once the Red Army commanders had proven their reliability, the system was changed back to the principle of a unified single military leadership (*edinonachalie*) with a deputy political officer. Just as important was the relaxation of membership requirements for Red Army men, especially those in combat. The result was a new flood of raw recruits who had been mainly peasants in civilian life into the ranks of the party. In 1941, the military accounted for only 20 percent of party effectives; by 1943, they numbered 50 percent and by the end of the war slightly more than that. At the same time, the party lost many of its seasoned veterans in the initial fighting when they were hastily thrown into combat; overall, the party lost three million members during the war. There was no time for the more than three and one half million new members to study the Marxist Leninist classics, and the party leadership complained of the appalling ignorance of the new recruits.³⁹

To meet the challenge, the party leadership overhauled the entire propaganda structure of the army. It shook up the stodgy Main Political Administration replacing L. Z. Mekhlis by the vigorous A. S. Shcherbatov and creating a high powered advisory Council of Military-

³⁹For party membership drawn from archives, see IVOV, VI, 342, 365; for the early losses and concern over new recruits, see I. M. Shliapin, M. A. Shvarev and I. Ia. Fomichenko, *Kommunisticheskaia partiia v period velikoi otechestvennoi voiny* (Moscow, 1958), pp. 47-8; M. E. Brodskaia, *Verosomnoe napadenie fashistskoi Germanii po Sovetskii Soiuz. Mobilizatsiia partiei sovetskogo naroda na otpor vragu* (Chardzhoi, 1957), p. 13; E. Iaroslavskii, *Chego trebuet partiia ot kommunistov v dni otechestvennoi voiny* (Leningrad, 1945), pp. 8-9.

Political Propaganda. An institute of agitators was created to raise the level of political workers in the armed forces and the number of agitators throughout the country was increased by two to three times.⁴⁰

An equal cause for concern was the organizational and ideological erosion of the party in the autonomous republics. In the peripheral republics under German occupation, the drop in party membership caused by battle losses, Nazi executions and flight was often catastrophic. By the end of the war, the Ukrainian party had lost forty-three percent of its prewar membership and the Belorussian party thirty-four percent despite wartime recruitment. In both parties, the substantial majority was composed of young communists, inexperienced and untested. Overall, very few of the nationalities in the USSR had more communist party members than they did on the eve of the war, only the Mari, Buriat Mongols, Estonians and Yakuts, all numbering below 10,000 members. The party organizations of the territories annexed by the Soviet Union on the eve of the war were so weak and small that the party took the extraordinary measure in the fall of 1944 of creating a Party Bureau for the Moldavian, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Soviet Republics. For a historical precedent, it was necessary to go back to the dark days of the Civil War when similar bureaux had been set up for Central Asia and the Caucasus.⁴¹

At the ideological level, the revival of *partiinnost* was necessary in order to solve another kind of practical question, the reappearance of nationalist deviations as a result of too much enthusiasm for local traditions in fostering Soviet patriotism. Among other faults, the Tatar ASSR party organization was rebuked for "serious mistakes in evaluation, the military-political and international position of our country, denigrating the role of the Red Army in the struggle for the destruction of the German-Fascist predators and bowing before the military power, technical and culture of the bourgeois countries" as well as "serious

⁴⁰IVOY, VI, 344, 355-57.

⁴¹IVOY, VI, 369-70.

shortcomings and errors of a nationalist character in illuminating the history of Tataria (glorifying the Golden Horde and popularizing the khanate-feudal epic of Idigei)." The party organization of the Western Ukraine was taken to task for a series of nationalist errors including the failure to combat the "Ukrainian-German nationalists" and overcoming the attitudes of the older generation of intelligentsia "who were educated in German, Austro-Hungarian, Polish and Rumanian schools in the spirit of bourgeois ideology." A similar decree of the Central Committee criticized the Bashkir ASSR for failing to distinguish between the Bashkir national liberation movement and bandit raids, for having "distorted the history of the participation of the Bashkirs in the Patriotic War of 1812, setting against one another the Russian and the Bashkir wars."⁴²

Throughout the war, then, Stalin used the party to maintain a rough balance between Great Russian nationalism and Soviet patriotism. Where the two ideologies appeared to conflict, he favored Russian nationalism because it could muster the stronger forces. But he had not been commissar of nationalities for nothing and understood that strong as it was, it could not by itself hold the country together against external attack. He harnessed them together without resorting to any sophisticated theory and drove them hard according to his custom. What the war gave him was a unique opportunity to infuse both with a dynamism that had been lacking in the prewar period. There are no quantitative measurements to demonstrate the effectiveness of the wartime propaganda and agitation. But at critical moments--the siege of Leningrad, the defense of Moscow, the battle of Stalingrad--morale did not break under the most extreme pressure. Similarly, behind the front, arms production did not falter and the food supply, though dwindling, was adequate to prevent starvation and feed the army. The heroic exploits of factory workers and peasants were not solely or even primarily extracted by coercion. If they worked to save their version of the homeland

⁴²*Kommunisticheskaia partiia sovetского soiuza v rezoliutsiakh i resheniakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK, VI, 1941-1945, 114, 119, 125-29, 131.*

rather than a particular socioeconomic system, it must be conceded that the government and party succeeded in identifying themselves with that homeland in a way that no Russian government had done since 1812. Thus, ideology in the Soviet Union, largely hollow and discredited by the late thirties, also enjoyed, like the army and the economy, a great recovery in the furnace of war.

The Great Recovery: International Communism

The announcement of the Nazi-Soviet Pact passed like a tremor through the body of the international communist movement. Tactical flexibility was one thing, but to many communists, a deal with Hitler was a betrayal. There had been almost no political preparation and only the most astute and cynical could have detected the faint signals in Soviet diplomacy that Stalin was ready to strike a bargain with the Nazis. Trotsky and his supporters had a field day at Stalin's expense and widespread resignations in the local parties poured in including many by prominent figures. The outbreak of the war produced further confusion among communists in countries attacked by Hitler. Some militants resisted or went underground in preparation to fight, but the general picture was one of passivity and criticism of both sides as "imperialist."

Coming at a low point in the morale and organizational work of the Comintern, the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union had an electrifying effect. Stalin's appeal for international help was not issued in the name of proletarian solidarity but of all freedom loving people against fascism. With those words, he appeared to eliminate any and all barriers to cooperation among anti-fascists, whatever class loyalty and party affiliation. For a year, the Comintern executive fumbled in search of more precise formulae to instruct the local parties, while the Soviet leadership gave uncertain instructions. Meanwhile, in a repetition of the events leading to the Popular Front in 1943, the local parties took their own initiatives. What finally emerged without any doctrinal guidance from Stalin, who had other more pressing concerns, was a new policy, the national or united front that proved

more innovative in its open-ended appeal and organizational flexibility than the popular front of the 1930's. Its three components were: 1) partisan warfare in occupied Europe to pin down fascist divisions; 2) the widest possible social and political mobilization in support of armed resistance and; 3) the organization of all anti-Nazi forces in a national front movement directed by the Communists. The Comintern and the local parties gradually dropped even the most guarded references to social revolution. As during the heyday of the Popular Front, the French Communist Party emerged as the prototype of the new form of political struggle.⁴³

The military effectiveness of the partisan movement remains a subject of bitter controversy, but it is undeniable that its political significance was enormous. By virtue of their tightly-knit and semi-clandestine party organizations and their militant proclivities nourished by strike movements and demonstrations, the Communists readily adopted an underground resistance mentality and excelled in clandestine activities.⁴⁴ These qualities appealed particularly to youth, which increasingly after 1942, were driven into the resistance by the Nazi labor draft and the policy of reprisals against the civilian population for partisan attacks on German and fascist troops. The Communists unified substantial elements of the military and civilian resistance directly or indirectly under their control in Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Northern Italy and France; even in Poland where they failed

⁴³Joan Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party. From Togliatti to Berlinguer* (Ithaca, 1986); Alfred J. Rieber, *Stalin and the French Communist Party* (New York, 1962).

⁴⁴One of the most thorough surveys by an East German historian gives the following estimates of partisan activists at the time of the liberation of each country: Albania - 70,000; Belgium - 75,000; Bulgaria - 250,000; Denmark - 47,000; France - 500,000; Greece - 140,000 (ELAS only); Italy - 462,000; Yugoslavia - 800,000; Poland - 350,000; Czechoslovakia - 23,500; Hungary 2-2500. Heinz Kuhnrich, *Der Partisanenkrieg in Europa, 1939-1945* (Berlin, 1968), pp. 426-26, 432. In Asia there were, according to Japanese sources, from 500,000-800,000 Communist guerillas operating at the end of the war in China. Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power* (Stanford, 1962), p. 76. Soviet sources estimate that already in 1937 there were 230,000 Korean partisans fighting in Manchuria and North China, F. I. Shabshina, *Ocherki noveishei istorii Korei (1945-1953 gg)* (Moscow, 1958), p. 32.

they made the effort. Tens of thousands of non-Communists served under their command in these countries. This is not to deny the existence of nationalist resistance movements, especially in Greece, Yugoslavia and Poland, but rather to emphasize how successful the national front was in ending the nightmare of isolation and altering the image of the Communists as anti-patriotic and rigidly separate.

The abolition of the Comintern in 1943 reenforced these impressions, as it was intended to do. Stalin could also claim that the demise of the Comintern refuted Goebbels' propaganda that fed upon fears among the Western democracies of its subversive aims. In fact, the move enabled Stalin to score a propaganda triumph while getting rid of an organization that he despised. A hotbed of factionalism and opposition it had caused him nothing but trouble. He had already transferred many of its functions so the Foreign Department of the Central Committee, the "ghost Comintern." Henceforth, his relations with the Communist parties would be placed on a bilateral basis which gave him greater control and flexibility in dealing with them. It was a characteristic Stalinist touch: an ideological shift to the right was accompanied by an organizational shift to the left.

The activism and patriotism of the Communist parties combined with the prestige of the Soviet Union to raise their popular appeal to new heights in Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. In the early post-war elections which were genuinely free, the Communists won from a quarter to a third of the vote in Belgium, Holland, France, and Italy. Even in Finland, which had just fought two wars against the Soviet Union and lost important territories, over 23 percent voted Communist while in Czechoslovakia, the Communist share of the vote topped 38 percent. In Yugoslavia, there was no election but the Communists had proven their widespread support by winning their civil war unaided by outside forces. In Greece, the Communist dominated resistance controlled about two thirds of the country at the liberation and, judging by the first postwar plebiscite on the king, they could muster at least a quarter to a third of the electorate. In Iran, the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party won

twenty percent of the vote in the first really free election in the country. In north and east China, the Communists commanded the overwhelming allegiance of the population. In Korea, by all account, the Communists and their allies would have won a national election if it had been held in the second half of 1945. These achievements reflected a greater degree of ideological openness, flexibility and pluralism within the international movement than had ever existed within the international movement. It was another great recovery from the confusion and embarrassment of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

Pan Slavism

Pan Slavism, the fourth component of Stalin's eclectic ideology, had no place at all in prewar Communist thought so that its revival must refer to pre-revolutionary times when it was more often than not a handmaiden of Great Russian nationalism. During the war, Stalin's recourse to Pan Slavism cut two ways. It was, first of all, a counterfoil to Nazi racist propaganda which identified the Slavic peoples as second only to the Jews as the race enemies of the Nordic type and promised their destruction. Secondly, Stalin employed ideas of Slavic solidarity as a political weapon in combating a thousand years of German expansion to the east, *Der Drang nach Osten*, and reversing it in favor of the Slavic peoples under Russian leadership.

In order to propagate the idea of Slavic solidarity, the Soviet government sponsored the formation of a Pan Slav committee which held two congresses in Moscow during the war, a third in Belgrade in 1946, and founded a monthly periodical, *Slaviane*. In their many activities, the committee emphasized Slavic humanism as contrasted with the predatory and militaristic character of its enemies to east and west. Although its leadership was mediocre, as Djilas was quick to notice, leading Soviet intellectuals like Dimitri Shostakovich and Alexei Tolstoy occupied a prominent place in its conferences and cultural exchanges.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism, Its History and Ideology* (Notre Dame, 1953), 231-32; Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York, 1962), p. 26.

In practical terms, Stalin exploited the powerful currents of anti-German feeling among the Slavs in order to expel the Germans from Eastern Europe and advance the Slavic frontiers to the west. In his dealings with the Poles over the postwar frontiers, he revived the idea first advanced by the Russians during the Seven Years War and restated in 1915 of expelling the Germans from East Prussia and annexing all or part of the province. As compensation, the Poles would be moved to the West. Stalin spoke of restoring the old Polish lands up to the Oder, thus reconstructing Poland as it had existed under the medieval Piast kings, which, in his mind, was an anti-German Poland to replace the multinational Poland of the Jagellonian dynasty built at the expense of the Belorussians and Ukrainians and repeatedly aspiring to a Dniepr frontier at the expense of the Russians.⁴⁶

In his dealings with the Czechs over the frontier issue, he agreed to support Benes, proposals to expel the Germans from the Sudetenland. But he and Molotov were disappointed that Benes did not wish to move the Czech borders further to the West as they were encouraging the Poles to do. In an unusually frank and emotional speech in honor of Benes, Stalin toasted the "neo-Slavs" who favored the complete independence of small Slavic countries, unlike the Pan Slavs, and then turned his wrath on the Germans. "I hate Germans. Slavs footed the bill for the First World War and also the Second World War is being solved at their expense But this time we will break the Germans so that never again will attacks against the Slavs be repeated. We are attempting to make them harmless."⁴⁷

Early in the war, Stalin even toyed with the idea of a series of Slavic Federations in Eastern Europe, one including the Czechs and Poles and the other the South Slavs. When

⁴⁶FRUS, 1943, *Conferences at Cairo and Teheran*, pp. 532, 604; Tony Sharp, "The Russian Annexation of the Koenigsberg Area, 1941-45," *Survey*, v. 23, no. 4 (1977-78), pp. 156-62; Stalin, *Sochineniia*, II, 184-86; D. Anishev, "Pol'skii narod na puti k svobode i nezavisimosti," *Bol'shevik*, July 1944, nos. 13-14, pp. 49-55, 61.

⁴⁷Eduard Taborsky, "Benes and Stalin" (Moscow, 1943 and 1945) *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 13 (1953-54), pp. 167, 178-79.

the Poles resisted Stalin's offers to reconstruct their country, he torpedoed the western Slav federation. Stalin also pursued the expulsion of the Germans from the south Slav states, particularly from Yugoslavia, and he sustained his interest in a south Slavic federation until after the war when Tito's independent attitude led him to turn against that as well.⁴⁸ These several abortive attempts to construct transnational Slavic associations in Eastern Europe suggests that Stalin sought to tap the genuine emotional force of fraternal relations among Slavic countries in order to raise a bulwark against a German revival and forge a powerful bond between these nations and the Soviet Union. Stalin was also successful in exploiting feelings of Slavic solidarity in the peace negotiations after the war against the Germans, Hungarians, Italians and Greeks.⁴⁹ But the most far reaching effect of Stalin's Pan Slavism was to transform the demographic and cultural face of Eastern Europe. Almost everywhere east of the Oder-Neisse-Trieste line, the German population fled or were expelled. It is estimated that about thirteen million Germans who inhabited these territories left between 1944 and 1950. Tens of thousands retreated from the Baltic States with the German Army; 100,000 were expelled from the prewar Polish territories annexed by the Soviet Union; 500,000 Volksdeutsch in the Voevodina and other areas of Yugoslavia were driven out; the Czechs expelled almost three million from the Sudetenland, and seven million Germans fled their ancestral lands in East Prussia, Pomerania, Brandenburg and Poznan. Within the Soviet Union, 400,000 Volga Germans were deported to Siberia. The Slavic fury behind these expulsions must be contrasted with the relatively smaller percentages of Volksdeutsch who fled or were driven out of Hungary (260,000) and Rumania (120,000). In fact, the Rumanian government of General Santescu protested against Soviet orders to provide several hundred thousand Germans for forced labor to repair war damage

⁴⁸Eduard Taborsky, "A Polish-Czechoslovak Confederation: A Story of the First Soviet Veto," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, IX (January 1950), 379-95.

⁴⁹Philip E. Mosely, "Soviet Policy and Nationality Conflicts in East Central Europe," in *The Kremlin and World Politics* (New York, 1960), pp. 221-46.

in the Soviet Union.⁵⁰

The Pan Slav policy interpreted by the Russians and carried out with the help of East European Slavs helped to create more homogenous national states and substantially reduced the ethnic minorities throughout the area that had been the cause of so many conflicts. Almost all the Belorussians and Ukrainians were brought into the Soviet Union; Poland became a homogenous national state for the first time in its history. An exchange of Magyars and Slovaks was never fully implemented and only about 30,000 of each rejoined their co-nationals. Yugoslavia remained a multi-national state, to be sure, but under Tito's leadership, a modified version of the Soviet nationality system was put into effect, establishing for the first time a genuine federal state, not altogether free of tensions but cohesive enough to survive several major internal and external crises. Virtually the only active minority problem in Eastern Europe left at the present time involves the Hungarians and Rumanians in Transylvania, a conflict between two non-Slavic peoples.

Although the break with Tito doomed the Pan Slav committee, the Soviet policy of promoting the Russian language and culture and the historic ties among Slavs persisted. Its legacy has been mixed, but one certain result of the Russian cultural penetration of Eastern Europe has been the sharp decline and almost complete disappearance of the strong prewar German orientation among intelligentsia and the commercial-professional elements in the area. This cultural roll back has nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism, quite the contrary in fact. But it has had a great deal to do with the consolidation of Soviet power in the western borderlands against the threat of a German political revival.

The Paradox of Power

If the Soviet Union enjoyed a great recovery during the war, it also confronted a paradox of power at the end of the war. Victory over Germany and Japan left the Soviet

⁵⁰Joseph B. Schechtman, *Postwar Population Transfers in Europe, 1945-1955* (Philadelphia, 1962), pp. 94-5, 167, 170-73, 194-95, 209, 270, 274, 282.

The Soviet leaders hoped and expected that substantial external capital inputs would be forthcoming in the form of \$10 billion reparations from Germany and \$6 billion long-term, low interest loan from the United States. Recent estimates suggest that the impact of reparations and a loan would have been "modest" though "not insignificant," particularly in eliminating bottlenecks, improving high technology and reducing interest payments. As it turned out, the realization of Soviet expectations rested upon their making political compromises which they were not willing, in the long run, to make.⁵⁴ Thus, the Soviet Union was unable to capitalize on its military victory in order to obtain external resources to restore its damaged economy.

Another source of internal weakness was the attitude of the population that had lived under German occupation. Only a small percentage of the seventy million people in the occupied territories collaborated with the Nazis; over a million took up arms against the Soviet power and several million assisted the Germans in various ways. But a large part of the population remained passive, supporting neither the Germans nor the Soviet partisans behind the lines. Disaffection was widespread among the non-Slavic nationalities, the Turkic-Tatar peoples of the Crimea and North Caucasus, the Baltic peoples, Ukrainians in the Western Ukraine who had only come under Soviet rule in 1940 and those areas of the southern Ukraine that had most stubbornly resisted collectivization. Only the brutality and inconsistency of Hitler's Ostpolitik restricted the anti-Soviet movements.⁵⁵ Even after a

1946-1953 (Ithaca, 1982), especially pp. 22-3 for the differing views among the leadership. For atomic research, see I. N. Golovin, *I. V. Kurchatov* (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 39-52.

⁵⁴For a recent estimate of the probable effect of these sources on the rate of Soviet reconstruction, see Susan J. Linz, "World War II and Soviet Economic Growth," in Linz, *The Impact of World War II*, pp. 12-46.

⁵⁵Alexander Dallin, "North Caucasus," in John Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison, 1964), pp. 567-70, 582, 606; Ronald Misiunas and Rein Taagerpa, *The Baltic States. Years of Dependence, 1940-1980* (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 68-70, 81-91; John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (second edition) (New York, 1963); Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945* (second edition) (New York, 1981), pp. 64-5, 113-14, 166.

Soviet victory appeared certain, bands of nationalists fought against the Red Army in Lithuania and the Western Ukraine, sometimes in cooperation with Polish nationalists. Small units survived for several years after the war. The so-called Russian Army of Liberation, recruited by General Andrei Vlasov from Soviet POWs, only managed to enroll 50,000, but that was in 1944 when the German position was already grim. Vlasov's German supporters estimated that an earlier and more determined campaign could easily have raised half a million men to fight against Stalin.⁵⁶

Stalin reacted to signs of disloyalty by deporting over a million people from the North Caucasus and Crimea, about 100,000 Lithuanians and half as many Latvians.⁵⁷ On numerous occasions throughout the war, he disparaged the Ukrainian people because of their behavior under occupation. In an effort to strengthen security in the border regions, the Soviet authorities organized large scale in-migration of Russian and Ukrainians from Siberia to the western Ukraine and Belorussia and the north Caucasus to replace the deportees. Stalin made certain that northern East Prussia was colonized mainly by Russians and then incorporated into the RFSFR despite the absence of a common border. Despite all these measures, a veritable rebuilding of the state power was necessary in the western borderlands.

The dominant Soviet power throughout the borderlands outside its frontiers was also insecurely anchored. Among the local communist parties in these areas, particularly in Poland, Yugoslavia and China, the resistance had bred an independence of outlook and spirit that did not fit Stalin's Soviet-centered definition of international proletarian solidarity. Then, too, the Soviet Union was not alone in filling the power vacuum left by the crumbling

⁵⁶George Fischer, *Soviet Opposition to Stalin* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952); Dallin, *German Rule*, pp. 553 ff. and Wilifried Strik-Strikfeldt, *Against Hitler and Stalin: Memoirs of the Russian National Liberation Movement, 1941-1945* (New York, 1973).

⁵⁷Alexander Nekrich, *The Punished Peoples* (New York, 1978), pp. 21-88; Stanley Vardys, "The Partisan Movement in Postwar Lithuania," *Slavic Review* XXII (September 1963), no. 3, pp. 499-522.

empires of Germany and Japan. The United States at first tentatively and then with a rush opposed and challenged Soviet influence in the borderlands; it not only gathered half Germany and all Japan under its wings, but also replaced the faltering strength of the British Empire in Greece, Turkey and Iran and made fresh commitments in China and Korea.

The social and economic foundations of the country were too depleted to support a policy of expanding or, in some cases, even of consolidating positions won on the battlefield. The Soviet Union could not fully exploit the defeat of its traditional rivals in Eurasia without antagonizing the U.S. and very possibly leading to a revival of German and Japanese power under the aegis of an even more powerful protector. Supporting revolutionary transformations along its frontiers not only posed dangers of arousing the capitalist West but also of losing control over local Communist parties to nationalist deviations. Such was the dilemma of Soviet power. How could it guarantee security in the borderland without either antagonizing the Western powers or sacrificing its political legitimacy as the leader of international socialism and, at the same time, free most of its energies for the main task of completing the building of socialism at home?

Soviet war aims and postwar plans did not, then, spring fully armed from Stalin's brain. They evolved in the course of a geo-cultural transformation of the Soviet Union. The great recovery and the paradox of power are merely convenient concepts to express the rational restraints and realistic limits on Soviet foreign policy during and after the war. The memories of near defeat and the costs of victory acted to temper ambitions and discourage adventurism.

THE WAR AIMS

The aims of Soviet foreign policy as they evolved during the war may be summarized concisely under three points: acquisition of strategic strong points on the frontiers, maintenance of the anti-Hitler coalition into the postwar era, and the establishment of a

security belt of "friendly countries" along the Soviet frontiers. Their achievement would provide the Soviet Union with a "breathing space" of a decade or more during which the energies and resources of the country could be devoted to reconstructing the western regions and resuming the march toward socialism.

Strong Points

Although Stalin supported Roosevelt's suggestion for an international organization to keep the peace, he insisted that Germany and Japan could only be restrained from embarking on new adventures by sitting on their necks. "What was needed," he told Roosevelt at Teheran, "was the control of certain strong physical points either within Germany, along German borders, or even farther away to insure that Germany would not be able to embark on another course of aggression." He favored applying the same method to restraining Japan: "the islands in the vicinity of Japan should remain under strong (allied) control to prevent Japan embarking on a course of aggression."⁵⁸ Although there is no evidence that Stalin had a detailed and comprehensive plan for acquiring these strong points, his negotiations with the allies and with defeated members of the enemy coalition reveal that he had a firm grasp of strategic realities grounded in history. His piecemeal acquisitions of territory added up to an impressive system of strong points along the periphery of the Soviet Union.

Beginning in the far northwest, the Soviet Union in its peace negotiations with Finland demanded two strong points at the northern and southern extremes of the country that hampered any future efforts by a great power to use Finland as a jumping off point for an attack on the Soviet Union. Petsamo, Finland's only access to the Arctic Ocean, the site of important copper mines, and the ancient fortress (Pecherskii Monastery) guarded the approaches to the Murmansk and the White Sea ports. To the south, Soviet insistence on a long-term lease of Porkalla-Ud, where they intended to construct their own naval base,

⁵⁸FRUS, 1943, *Conferences at Cairo and Teheran*, pp. 532, 604.

placed Soviet forces within twenty miles of Helsinki at the narrowest point of the Gulf of Finland across from Soviet Estonia guarding the sea approaches to Leningrad.⁵⁹

In arguing for the Soviet annexation of northern East Prussia, Stalin pointed out the need for two ice free ports on the Baltic, the ancient fortress city of Koenigsberg and Memel, adding that these had been ancient Slavic lands (a thousand years earlier!). Here indeed was "a strong point within Germany," but the claim was hardly new, having been staked out first by Elizabeth Petrovna in the Seven Years War and renewed by the imperial government in 1915.⁶⁰

From the earliest conversations with Eden in 1941, Stalin was adamant on the reincorporation of the Baltic States and the Belorussian and Ukrainian areas of eastern Poland along the rough ethnic line first delimited at Versailles and called the Curzon Line amended and extended south to include Lvov with its important oil fields. The center of the defense line was the great fortress of Brest linked by a frontier railroad north to Koenigsberg through Minsk and Vilnius and south to Odessa through Lutsk, Lvov and Ternopol. Late in the war, Stalin unexpectedly imposed upon Benes a demand for the Sub Carpatho Ukraine with the rather dubious argument that he was merely responding to the popular demands of the local population. More likely, he was motivated by more strategic consideration, first in order to eliminate a base for anti-Soviet Ukrainian nationalists outside the Soviet Union and, second, to obtain a common frontier with Hungary.⁶¹

In armistice negotiations with Rumania, the Soviet Union laid claim to Bukovina which had been annexed in 1940 and contained the last significant Ukrainian population outside the

⁵⁹Thede Palm, *The Finnish-Soviet Armistice Negotiations* (Stockholm, 1971), pp. 59, 86-7; FRUS, 1945, IV, 620.

⁶⁰FRUS, 1943, *Conferences at Cairo and Teheran*, pp. 532, 604; only the Soviet record mentions the old Slavic rights, *Tegeran, Ialta, Potsdam. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow, 1967), p. 53.

⁶¹Taborsky, "Benes and Stalin," pp. 167, 172; for insights into the timing of Stalin's demand Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War* (New York, 1979), p. 228.

Soviet Union. In addition, the return of Bessarabia (the Moldavian Republic) made the Soviet Union once again a riparian power on the Danube which was of considerable commercial and political significance for the reorganization of a Danubian Commission after the war.⁶²

Soviet territorial aspirations in Turkey revived late in the war after it became clear that Turkey had let slip a chance to reverse its policy of unfriendly neutrality and intervene against the Germans when it could still have helped relieve pressure on the Soviet southern front. Stalin snapped up Churchill's unsolicited and vague offer in October 1944 to support a revision of the Montreux convention and denounced the Soviet-Turkish treaty of non-aggression as being out of date. Molotov then presented the Turks with offer to conclude a treaty of mutual aid in return for a Soviet base in the Straits and a modification of the 1921 frontier. This meant the return of the provinces of Kars and Ardahan which included the famous frontier fortresses over which the two countries had struggled for a hundred years.

Confident of his position, Stalin overreached himself, insisting at Potsdam that a new Straits regime to replace Montreux should be determined jointly by the USSR and Turkey as the two states chiefly concerned with commercial navigation and security in the Black Sea. The Soviet Union had returned to its negotiating position with Hitler in 1940 and, as Molotov stated to Churchill, to the treaties of 1805 and 1833. The Turks also reverted to historical precedent and threw themselves upon the mercies of the chief Western power, first Britain and then the U.S. Stalin retreated to a more moderate position but it was too late to salvage his policy. The U.S., which had never been a party to any Straits Convention, awarded themselves a vital interest in the area. This was the prelude to the

⁶²Molotov had pressed Hitler, unsuccessfully, for the right to annex the Northern Bukovina as well as Bessarabia. The Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941* (Washington, 1948), p. 237. For the Rumanian negotiations, FRUS, 1944, 165-66; on the Danubian Commission, John C. Campbell, "Diplomacy on the Danube," *Foreign Affairs*, XXXVII, January, 1949, 315-37; FRUS, 1946, II, 606-610; 335-336.

Truman Doctrine. Russia's last grasp for the Straits had fallen short.⁶³

In the Far East, Stalin waited until the prospects for Soviet entry into the Pacific War were imminent before advancing his frontier policies directed against Japan. His demands included the annexation of the southern half of Sakhalin which the Russians had lost in 1905 and the Kurile Islands which they had never held. These were the island redoubts to which he had alluded at Teheran. Sakhalin in Soviet hands opened the passages from the Sea of Okhotsk to the Pacific and made possible the construction of important naval and air stations in the southern tip of the island to screen Vladivostok. These territories were cleared of their indigenous populations, 300,000 Japanese having been repatriated to the home islands in five years. Slavic immigrants from the Soviet mainland replaced them. Like the population exchanges in Karelia, East Prussia, eastern Poland and Bessarabia, these forced migrations carried on a long-term policy dating back to early tsarist times of colonizing the frontier areas for security purposes.⁶⁴

In addition, Stalin laid claim to strong points in Manchuria. These included a long-term lease on Port Arthur, recognition of Dairen as a free port with "preeminent" Soviet interests, joint Sino-Soviet control over the Manchurian trunk lines (the old Chinese Eastern Railroad) which Stalin told T. V. Soong was need by the USSR "during the thirty years required to make the Soviet Far East impregnable against attack by Japan."⁶⁵

Although Stalin made no territorial claims on Outer Mongolia, he was determined to resolve its ambiguous international status. He demanded that the Chinese Nationalists recognize its formal independence, a claim that even Mao Tse-tung regarded unfavorably. But the strategic value of Outer Mongolia for the protection of the Trans-Siberian Railroad

⁶³FRUS, 1943, I, 660; 1944, V, 875-77; 893-95; 1945, I, 684; Sipols, *Na Puti*, pp. 118-22; FRUS, 1945, *Conference at Berlin II*, 256-58, 1427-428; 1946, VII, 806-08, 840-41, 864, 874.

⁶⁴John J. Stephan, *Sakhalin. A History* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 160-61, 174.

⁶⁵FRUS, 1945, VII, 967-73; Russell D. Butie, *Soviet American Relations in Asia, 1945-54* (Norman, 1981), pp. 8-16, 20-21, 26.

had been demonstrated in the border clashes with Japan in the late thirties and again in 1945 when the main thrust of the Soviet offensive into Manchuria was launched from Outer Mongolia and not from the Maritime Provinces. In sum, Stalin's territorial claims did not go beyond the traditional tsarist ambitions. This does not alter their imperialist character, but it demonstrates their limits.

Alliance With the West

From Stalin's perspective, however, strong points were by themselves an inadequate guarantee of security. "History reveals," he stated in 1944, "that a short period of time, twenty of thirty years, is enough for Germany to recover from defeat and reestablish her might."⁶⁶ What was needed was the maintenance of the anti-Hitler coalition into the postwar era. This was the second major war aim. He spoke of "the vital and lasting interests" that bound the big three power together and warned that their cooperation was necessary to prevent the resurgence of Germany and Japan. Stalin's main concern throughout the war was to prevent the political and military isolation of the Soviet Union. This is clear from his attitude on three critical issues: the opening of a second front, the need for allied consultation on all major political questions concerning the war, and the fear of a separate peace. Recent Soviet materials have shown that the absence of a second front came to be regarded as a deliberate effort by the West to weaken the Soviet Union and that this view was widely shared by the Soviet diplomatic community and cannot be attributed simply to Stalin's paranoia. In 1943, no less an advocate of collective security than Maxim Litvinov cabled from Washington: "It is beyond doubt that the idea behind the military calculations of those two States (the U.S. and Great Britain) is for the forces of the Soviet Union to be exhausted and worn out to the utmost so as to reduce its role in

⁶⁶Stalin, *Sochineniia*, II, 167-68.

resolving postwar problems."⁶⁷

Stalin regarded allied cooperation over the future of Germany as the touchstone of his European policy. Although he was determined to weaken Germany, he was equally determined to avoid advocating too punitive a policy that might separate him from his allies and drive a defeated Germany into their arms. He waited patiently for them to advance concrete proposals. He was willing, for example, to abandon the idea of dismembering Germany when the allies did.⁶⁸ But once agreements were reached in principle on extracting reparations and treating Germany as an economic unit, he stubbornly defended their tactical application in order to promote Soviet interests. The publication of Lucius Clay's papers make clear that the American and Soviet representatives on the Allied Control Commission got along famously; their disagreements came mainly over the interpretation of previous agreements. On the other hand, the French and, to a lesser extent, the British were fundamentally opposed to the concept of a unified Germany.⁶⁹ In the end, the U.S. chose to support its western allies; it preferred the certainty of controlling half Germany to the risk of losing all of it to the Soviet Union.

Stalin favored a joint policy toward the liberated governments of Europe. Molotov proposed the creation of a committee, subsequently called the European Advisory Commission, in order to draft armistice terms for Hitler's satellites. But the Americans, who were not eager to admit the Soviet Union to armistice negotiations for Italy, bypassed the EAC thereby setting a precedent that the Soviet leaders repeatedly cited as a

⁶⁷Maisky shared these views. I. N. Zemskov, *Diplomaticheskii istoriia vtorogo fronta v Evrope* (Moscow), pp. 137, 148; V. Ia. Sipols, *Na puti k velikoi pobede sovetskoi diplomatii v 1941-45 gg* (Moscow, 1984), chapter 2. On Soviet fears of a separate peace, see V. L. Israelian, *Antigitlerovskaia koalitsiia, 1941-1945* (Moscow, 1964), chapter 12.

⁶⁸Bruce Kuklick, *American Policy and the Division of Germany* (Ithaca, 1972), pp. 28-30.

⁶⁹Jean E. Smith (ed.), *The Papers of General Lucius Clay. Germany 1945-1949* (Bloomington, 1974), pp. 63, 87, 90-2, 113, 168, 203, 243-44; Robert M. Slusser, "Soviet Policy and the Division of Germany, 1941-45," pp. 115-18.

justification for their own unilateral treatment of the East European satellites.⁷⁰ Soviet policy toward the territories liberated by U.S. and British troops, including Belgium, France, Italy and Greece was consistent though it often appeared cryptic because of the failure of Stalin and his subordinates to communicate clearly and unambiguously their aims and intentions. Its main features were: a demand for consultation on major decisions affecting the political life of those countries; support for as large a degree of independence of those countries from U.S. and British control; subordination of the local communist parties to the overall strategy and military command of the Western allies as an example of how domestic political forces ought to behave. The twin aims of this policy were to increase the active forces engaged in the war against Hitler and to secure a strong role for the Communists, commensurate with their participation in the resistance, in the postwar governments. But Stalin drew the line between encouraging an independent line by the liberation governments and permitting them to play the Soviet Union against its western allies in order to secure greater freedom of action.⁷¹ And where his restraint of the local Communists broke down due to local conditions, as in Belgium briefly in November and in Greece more seriously in December 1944, he refrained from offering any direct aid in support of the radicals in the resistance. Although he refused to disavow them, he confined criticism in the Soviet press to publishing Western news reports.

⁷⁰FRUS, 1943, I, 588, 597-98, 643; William Hardy McNeill, *America, Britain and Russia* (New York, 1953), p. 310; Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (New York, 1968), pp. 50-2; Mario Toscano, *Designs in Diplomacy* (Baltimore, 1970), p. 258; but cf. John L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York, 1972), pp. 90-1.

⁷¹For Italy: FRUS, III, 1944, 1044, 1089, 1103; Toscano, *Designs*, pp. 269-70, 302; G. Warner, "Italy and the Powers, 1943-49," in S. J. Woolfe (ed.), *The Rebirth of Italy, 1943-1950* (London, 1972), pp. 30-40. For France, Rieber, *Stalin and the French Communist Party*, pp. 42-51; *Sovetsko-frantsuzskie otnosheniia vo vremiia velikoi otechestvennoi voiny 1941-1945 gg. Dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow, 1959), pp. 58-9, 95, 103, 241, 324, 359 and passim. For Belgium, Henri Bernard, *Histoire de la Resistance europeene* (Bruxelles, 1968), pp. 130-31; For Greece, William Hardy McNeill, *The Greek Dilemma: War and aftermath* (London, 1947), p. 121; John O. Iatrides, *Revolt in Athens: The Greek Communist second round, 1944-1945* (Princeton, 1972).

Stalin obviously expected the West to reciprocate in those areas where Soviet interest were paramount and its military power predominant. But he never said so. Nor did the much debated spheres of influence agreements between him and Churchill do anything to clarify the situation. On the contrary, it was a monstrous confusion, a diplomatic disaster, imprecise, incomplete and inadequate and probably not very important. It did not define what was meant by one side or another having predominant interest; it did not include important countries of Eastern Europe such as Poland, Finland and Czechoslovakia; and it completely ignored Western Europe. Although Eden and Molotov haggled over the percentages, no accord was reached and the entire exercise produced little except for Churchill's recriminations.⁷²

Stalin did not actually favor the concept of spheres of influence. It was divisive rather than consensual. The Nazi-Soviet Pact had demonstrated that, and Stalin did not attempt to repeat the experience. Indeed, he could not have done so without admitting his control over local Communist parties and unnecessarily antagonizing those whose countries he might have to write off to Western influence. Besides, such an agreement would have violated a fundamental principle of Stalin's foreign policy, that military control over territories would determine their political fate. Moreover, the whole point of Stalin's policy of prolonging the anti-Hitlerite coalition beyond the war was to prevent the division of the world into two blocs, for that could only lead to a new form of capitalist encirclement and greater strains upon an already weakened socio-economic structure.

A Belt of "Friendly Countries"

The third major Soviet war aim was to fashion new political relationships with states bordering on its frontiers by establishing "friendly governments, not spheres of influence.

⁷²Churchill's dramatic account in his memoirs, *Triumph and Tragedy* (Boston, 1953), pp. 227-28. An indignant, if unconvincing, Soviet refutation is in V. Trukhanovsky, *British Foreign Policy During World War II* (Moscow, 1970), pp. 406-08. A more balanced and skeptical view is Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War*, pp. 207-10.

Neither Stalin nor his advisors ever defined this ambiguous term, though they employed it frequently. But it is possible to gain a rough approximation of his meaning by analyzing the armistice agreements he negotiated with his enemies and the treaties of mutual alliance he concluded with his allies. What emerges is a rather consistent pattern of nine basic conditions: 1) vigorous participation in the war against Germany or Japan which meant, in the case of Hitler's satellites, either the expulsion of German forces from their territory (like Finland) or a complete reversal of fronts (like Rumania and Bulgaria); 2) unconditional cooperation with the liberating Red Army; 3) bi-lateral treaties of alliance and mutual aid with the Soviet Union; 4) acceptance of Soviet territorial demands as a prerequisite to armistice agreements or ratification of treaties of alliance; 5) purge of all collaborationist or anti-Communist elements in the government and armed forces; 6) recognition of the primacy of Soviet political interests over those of its western allies either in the country as a whole or, as in the case of Iran, China and Korea, in the frontier provinces adjacent to Soviet territory; 7) reparations payments for war damage in the case of its enemy and/or economic agreements for joint exploitation of natural resources in the country as a whole or in the frontier provinces adjacent to Soviet territory; 8) admission of the indigenous Communist party into the political process in various ways depending upon local conditions, ranging from legalization of the party to the creation of united front coalitions that would preserve a multiparty system but reduce political conflict and prevent civil war; 9) abolition of feudal privilege including the breakup of large landed estates, introduction of agrarian reform, legalization of trade unions, confiscation and nationalization of large industries.

There can be little question that these add up to an infringement on national sovereignty and a state of quasi-dependence on the Soviet Union. It is less certain that they constituted a consciously planned preliminary stage in the sovietization of these countries although it has appeared that way to most historians in retrospect. An alternative explanation must begin with the evidence that Stalin was perfectly willing to make a deal

with non-Communists who accepted to one degree or another the conditions of a "friendly government." The real push for sovietization began only after these deals broke down largely as the result of domestic strife, as in the case of Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and China, or as in the case of Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Korea after the growing polarization of world politics crossed a critical threshold due to the collapse of efforts to unify Germany and Korea and the introduction of the Marshall Plan. Even then the truly irrevocable steps were only taken in 1949. Finland and Austria remained lonely examples of what might have been.

Stalin's reluctance to sovietize the borderlands, paradoxical as it may seem, was a clear reflection of Soviet experience in the war and the paradox of power that confronted it in 1945. Sovietization meant a rupture of the wartime alliance, an end to hopes for external economic assistance through reparations, loans and trade, a diversion of scarce internal resources to armaments; in most of the borderlands, it meant helping weak communist parties in predominantly agrarian societies carrying out a revolutionary transformation against strong domestic resistance with a repetition of all the attendant traumas of forced collectivization, industrialization and terror; or else in the case of Yugoslavia and China, acknowledging their equality with the Soviet Union or facing their competition for leadership in the socialist world. It was not a course of action that Stalin could have favored. The question remains then; why did he pursue it?

THE COLD WAR AS CIVIL WAR

The onset of the Cold War has been most often portrayed by Western and Soviet historians, traditionalists and revisionists alike as a consequence of great power rivalries. It was that, to be sure, but it was also much more. To borrow from social history, the Cold War must be understood from below as well as above; as a conflict involving whole peoples attempting to rebuild and transform their societies under conditions of appalling human loss

and physical destruction as well as the intense political and ideological conflict among the three great powers, each one caught up in the necessity of redefining its national interests in light of the global transformation brought about by the war.

The social origins of the Cold War lay deeply embedded in the second attempt during the twentieth century of Germany and Japan, two late industrializing countries, to dominate Eastern Europe and East Asia as sources for raw materials and living space for colonization. Their aggression and their defeat broke up the balance of power in Europe and Asia but also undermined the traditional social structures of most of the territories lying on the periphery of the Soviet Union from Poland to Korea. They uprooted populations, dissolved national state boundaries, plundered resources exploited the labor of the conquered peoples and brutalized social life. Their policies gave rise to a series of internal wars that were in scale, duration and complexity, unprecedented in world history. Most of these internal wars divided society into three antagonists, collaborationists, communist and radical socialists, and nationalists. Occasionally, there were fragile and furtive alliances among two against a third but more often they fought against one another.

The internal wars in Europe and East Asia were mainly fought outside the force field of great power politics. The prize for all the combatants whether left, right or center was control over the political and social institutions of the country. The strategy of the communists was to fight with all the means at their disposal whatever the cost; indeed, the higher the cost in terms of reprisals, the more desperate the choice faced by the civilian population and the larger number of fresh recruits likely to join their ranks. The struggle *à outrance* confirmed them as the most patriotic as well as the most courageous and energetic elements in the population. Wherever possible, from Poland to China, the communists tarred the non-communist resistance with the brush of collaborationism as a means of discrediting and eliminating them. To many of the resistance communists, though not to their exiled comrades in Moscow, liberation would be tantamount to taking power.

In both Eastern Europe and East Asia, the internal wars were rooted in traditions of peasant insurrections, political banditry and resistance to foreign domination. The Communists acted more effectively than their nationalist rivals to capitalize old grievances over the land and ethnic minority claims in order to mobilize elements of the population that had remained largely premodern in their political outlook well into the twentieth century. Their skillful blending of traditional forms of social protest with revolutionary Marxism created a new form of communist movement that owed as much to indigenous factors as to the Leninist legacy.⁷³ Tito in Yugoslavia and Mao in China were the best known representatives of this phenomenon, but they were no means unique in the international communist movement. There were powerful currents in all the parties favoring one or another form of autonomous development. The determination to march along separate paths to socialism faced Soviet disapproval as much as Western opposition. The social origins of the Cold War, then were closely entwined with the origins of national communism. Three case studies treated in some detail may serve to illustrate this hypothesis. Poland and Rumania in Eastern Europe, Iran in the Middle East, and China in East Asia, illustrating the global dimensions of the problem and the consistency of Soviet policy.

Poland and Rumania

Stalin's aims in Poland, which were to resolve once and for all the disputed frontier and move Poland physically to the West as a bulwark against Germany revival, did not involve the Communists at all. His contempt for them had a long history beginning with

⁷³For this aspect of the resistance in Greece, see Dominique Eudes, *The Kapetanios. Partisans and Civil War in Greece, 1943-1949* (London, 1972), especially pp. 3-14; for Yugoslavia Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power* (Stanford, 1962), chapter 6 but cf. Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question* (New York, 1968), especially chapter 2 for important corrective; for China, Mary Wright, "The Chinese Peasant and Communism," *Pacific Affairs*, XXIV (1951), no. 3, 256-59; and Donald G. Fillin, "Peasant Nationalism in Chinese Communism," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXIII (1964), 269-89, a necessary corrective to Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism*; for Korea, Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton, 1981), especially chapters 1 and 2.

their failure to lead the Warsaw workers in an uprising in 1920 to welcome the advancing Red Army through the factional fights in the Comintern and culminating in his liquidation of the party in 1938. He preferred to negotiate with nationalist leaders like Sikorski and Mikolajczyk who at least could claim popular support in Poland, something the Communists could not. Although these negotiations dragged on inconclusively, for two and a half years, Stalin did not demand participation of the Communists in the Polish government of exile until the Red Army crossed the 1938 frontiers of Poland when the issue could no longer be postponed. Before then he had studiously ignored the claims of the small communist underground to be the core of a future government of Poland.⁷⁴ Even afterwards, right up to May 1944, he made no move to include the underground Poles in his demands for a reorganized government in exile. As late as July 1944, Molotov was still saying that "the Soviet government was not at the present time committed to the final support for any group."⁷⁵ Up to this time, too, there was no substantial disagreement between the Soviet Union and Britain over the postwar frontiers or the need to moderate the strongly anti-Russian attitudes of the government in exile. What changed all this was the intensification of the internal war that had been smoldering in the underground for several years.

The Polish nationalist underground, the Home Army, was even more resolutely reactionary than the government in exile. Its largest and best armed units calling themselves the National Armed Forces (NSZ) concentrated its main efforts on fighting the so-called "minority units" of Jewish partisans and communist People's Guards. Like the rest of the Home Army, it avoided clashes with the German occupation forces in order to conserve their fighting strength for the great moment of popular insurrection that it

⁷⁴Anthony Polonsky and Boleslaw Driukier, *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland* (London, 1980), pp. 9-10; Ito Takayuki, "The Genesis of the Cold War. Confrontation over Poland, 1941-1944," in Yonosuka Nagai and Akira Iriye, *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York, 1977), pp. 175-76; Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising of 1944* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 104-09.

⁷⁵FRUS, 1944, III, 1230-31; 1424.

anticipated leading during the brief hiatus between the German collapse and the arrival of the Red Army.⁷⁶

First in Vilnius and then in the tragic Warsaw rising, the Home Army attempt to carry out its own liberation of key Polish cities and "act like hosts" to the Red Army. Their leaders refused to accept the Red Army offer to accept its units as an independent ally under a single operational command and to disband all partisan units behind the Russian lines. "We must be prepared for an open collision with between Poland and the Soviets . . ." its leaders in Poland and London agreed.⁷⁷

Even after the savage Nazi repression of the Warsaw rising, the Home Army continued to launch attacks against the provisional government, then in the hands of the communists. In the first five months of 1945, an estimated 80,000 anti-communist guerillas were in action unleashing a virtual civil war in Lublin, Rzeszow, Kiela, eastern Warsaw and the hilly areas of Krakow province. In Poznan alone, according to internal communist documents, the guerillas were responsible for the killing of 800 members of the Polish Workers Party and 317 Red Army men.⁷⁸

The underground communists who constituted a very small group of partisans, found themselves heavily dependent upon the Red Army to protect them. They resented what they termed the deportations, marauding and other "mistakes of the Soviet organs," but could do little to stop them. They had already made several unofficial approaches to the moderates among the London Poles, particularly Mikolajczek to join and lead them back to Poland in a unified and strong coalition. "If you do not," the communist commander of the People's Army told Mikolajczek, "then they (the Russians) will take control and it will be too

⁷⁶Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed. Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942-1944* (New York and London, 1984), pp. 4-13, 153.

⁷⁷Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising*, pp. 176, 193-94, 207-08; FRUS, 1944 III, 1251-252.

⁷⁸Polonsky and Drukier, *The Beginnings of Communist Rule*, pp. 106-07.

late."⁷⁹ But the ideological and social cleavages between the Polish left and right were too great to bridge. As tensions mounted within the country, the great powers were drawn in reluctantly on opposite sides.

At Yalta, Stalin took the calculated risk of agreeing to a reorganization of the Communist Provisional Government and "free and unfettered elections" in return for British and American recognition of the Curzon line as the eastern frontier of Poland. If the non-communist Poles accepted the Yalta agreements, then the civil war would end and Stalin would obtain his frontier aims and a "friendly government." If the non-Communist Poles did not accept Yalta, then he could reasonably expect them to be disowned by the West and the Communists with Soviet help could stifle the opposition without any international consequences. What happened to wreck the Yalta agreements was not a shift in Soviet policy, but the rejection by the non-Communist Poles as "the fifth partition of Poland" and the continued insistence by the Western powers that these opponent of Yalta be included in the reorganized government. This was something Stalin refused to accept until the Hopkins mission persuaded him to include Mikolajczek and a few colleagues in the government, despite his fears that he was admitting a Trojan Horse to Poland.

Mikolajczek's return to Poland signalled a new phase in the internal struggle. He rapidly built his Peasant Party to 800,000 members while the Communists struggled to reach 235,000. Mikolajczek's participation in the government did not end the armed resistance of the right wing "forest detachments" which still numbered 32-35,000 men of whom a quarter were members of the Ukrainian Independence Army. In some areas, the Polish Workers Party had to go into hiding for fear of assassination; official communist figures list 11,000 terrorists acts and 5,000 killed in 1946.⁸⁰

⁷⁹*Ibid*, 96-7, 107; FRUS, III, 1305-312.

⁸⁰Suzanne Lotarski, "The Communist Takeover in Poland," in Thomas T. Hammond (ed.) *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (New Haven, 1975), pp. 361-62; V. S. Parsadanova, *Formirovanie natsional' nogo fronta v Pol'she (1944-46 gg)* (Moscow, 1972), pp. 161-62, 168,

Civil strife and growing anti-Communist strength took place against a deteriorating economic situation. The peasants only met fifty percent of their assigned grain deliveries to the government as late as March 1946. The previous fall the real wages of industrial workers hovered ominously between 20 and 40 percent of the prewar figure. The working class, terribly depleted by the war was being replenished by peasants and craftsmen who, according to internal party documents, sought to slow the pace of social change.⁸¹ There was a clear danger that, under such conditions, free elections in Poland would return an anti-communist majority. Stalin could not accept such a government astride Soviet communications with his occupation forces in Germany, nor the predictable ripple effect this outcome would have on the standing of weak communist parties in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. The campaign of government terror and intimidation that made free elections an impossibility in Poland and then turned them into a mockery was a direct outcome of this dilemma. The civil war in Poland and not the actions of the great powers destroyed the Yalta compromise and hastened the onset of the Cold War.

In Rumania, the internal struggle between the nationalists and the communists developed only after the liberation. Under the dictatorship of Marshal Antonescu, Rumania had contributed twenty to thirty divisions to Hitler's war against the Soviet Union, annexed more Soviet territory than any other Axis power, and carried out a campaign of massive killing, deportation and pillaging of the Ukrainian population.⁸² Under their rule, the population of Odessa alone declined by 400,000 in one year. Rumania enjoyed a profitable war at Soviet expense, and there was no resistance movement. As the tide of war turned, Stalin was willing to make a deal with Antonescu in order to reverse fronts against Hitler

189, 207.

⁸¹Parsadanova, *Formirovanie*, pp. 157, 200.

⁸²L. I. Afeniuk, et. al., *Moldavskaia SSR v velikoi otechestvennoi voine* (Kishinev, 1970), pp. 181-93, 202-05; *Odessa v velikoi otechestvennoi voine sovetskogo soiuza: sbornik dokumentov* (Odessa, 1950), II, 47.

and keep the West out of the country. But the old Marshal could not break free from Hitler and he was overthrown by a palace coup organized by the young King Michael and representatives of the dormant traditional parties. The Communists admitted at the last moment were not happy about the Soviet flirtation with Antonescu.

The first two postliberation governments of Rumania were controlled by the traditional right under Generals Sanatescu and Radescu. Despite its defeat in battle, the bankruptcy of its imperialist policies in the Ukraine and the fall of its leader, Antonescu, the right held a strong position within the country.⁸³ King Michael was immensely popular and the Soviet government had just decorated him with the Order of Victory for having reversed his alliance and declared war on Hitler. The army, largely intact and still under the command of an anti-communist officer corps, was engaged in fighting the Germans but the government kept 40,000 men in Bucharest, including the only Rumanian tank unit. The Ministry of Interior controlling the 150,000 policemen and gendarmatic was in the hands of a violent anti-Communist, the National Peasant, N. Penescu. None of the officials responsible for the atrocities in the Ukraine were brought to trial until a communist dominated government took power in the spring of 1945.

In 1941, the leaders of the traditional parties, Iuliu Maniu of the National Peasant Party and Constantin Bratianu, had made their peace with Antonescu and endorsed his participation in the war and the annexation of Bessarabia, although they demurred at a further advance into the Ukraine. Thoroughly opportunistic, they approached the Western embassies for support in balancing the communists, but were willing, if they received no encouragement to make their own deal with Stalin. During the liberation, their supporters, called the Guard of I. Maniu, terrorized the Hungarian population of Transylvania until the

⁸³The best introduction to the right in Rumania is Eugen Weber, "Romania," in Hans Rogger and Eugen Weber, *The European Right* (Berkeley, 1966), pp. 443-500; see also F. L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (Berkeley, 1967), pp. 181-93; and Henry Roberts, *Rumania: Political problems of an Agrarian State* (New Haven, 1951), pp. 188-235.

Red Army replaced the local administration with its own. Within a year of liberation, Maniu confided to the American ambassador that they were working for the overthrow of the coalition government and exclusion of the Communists "even at the risk of an open break with Russia."⁸⁴

Most members of the industrial and commercial classes had collaborated willingly with the Germans who dominated the Rumanian economy since 1940. After liberation, the government turned back the mines and oil fields to private operation, but production fell off sharply. The government blamed the Red Army for requisitioning all the rolling stock. But the head of the transportation sector of the Allied Control Commission reported that the Rumanian government was not utilizing fifty percent of its rolling stock. Defense industries were idle. Agricultural production declined in part due to military action and in part to the flight of the landowners in the Banat and Transylvania. The government made no move to implement the long delayed agrarian reform.⁸⁵

The Rumanian Communist Party, illegal and persecuted before the war, crippled by Stalin's purges and led by members of Rumania's minorities, enjoyed little support at liberation. They had been able to muster only about 2,000 workers for the August, 1944 coup against Antonescu and were assigned a modest role in the first two post liberation governments. The party was also split between the domestic communists like Lucretiu Patrescanu, Gheorghiu-Dej and N. Ceausescu and Muscovites like Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca. Patrescanu, a participant in the August coup, the only Communist in the first coalition as Minister of Justice, understood the weakness of the party and favored a prolonged period of the national front while the party rebuilt its cadres from its traditional

⁸⁴FRUS, 1945, V, 569, 562; the British considered Maniu useless but the Americans disagreed, *ibid.*, 644. Molotov had already warned Eden that Maniu was not to be trusted. *Ibid.*, 1943, I, 633.

⁸⁵A. A. Sheviakov, *Otnoshenie mezhdû Sovetskim soiuzom i Rumyniei, 1944-1949* (Moscow, 1985), pp. 158-63 based on the record of the Allied Control Commission.

base of the working class and filled the party leadership with more ethnic Rumanians. Pauker (of Jewish background) and Luca (of Hungarian background) represented a sectarian view, criticizing the domestic communists for having cooperated with the traditional parties rather than waiting for the Red Army to overthrow the dictatorship and install a communist dominated regime at once.⁸⁶ They also were determined to open party membership to anyone and everyone, including former "legionaires," members of the fascist Iron Guard, showing themselves to be every bit as opportunistic as the liberals. Both factions agreed on one aim: to weaken the traditional right.

The Communists mobilized the workers and mounted large scale demonstrations which the government did not hesitate to break up by force. They also fanned out into the villages agitating the peasants to seize the land of the landowners who had taken flight. Although the peasants had a long history of agrarian radicalism dating back to the insurrection of 1907, when many of the same men who led the government in 1944 commanded punitive detachments against them, years of repression in the thirties and forties had made them passive. The situation in the Rumanian countryside was hardly revolutionary, as a keen American observer at the time, Henry Roberts, reported. But General Radescu was furious at the news of land seizures: "I will oppose (it) with all my strength and, if necessary, am ready to resort to civil war."⁸⁷

As tensions mounted in Rumania, Stalin took a characteristically ambivalent stance. He had plotted to make a deal with Antonescu, even at the expense of the local communists, and up to the end of 1944, he was willing to work with the Rumanian right so long as they

⁸⁶The interpretation of these factional positions emerged from the two subsequent purge trials of Patrescanu in June, 1948 and of Pauker and Luca in 1952. Ghita Ionescu, *Communism in Rumania, 1944-1962* (London, 1964), pp. 75-85, 152, 210-13; and Stephen Fischer Galati, *The New Rumania. From People's Democracy to Socialist Republic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 7, 19-27.

⁸⁷Roberts, *Rumania*, pp. 293-94; *Studii*, 1960, No. 4, p. 47 quoted in Sheviakov, *Otnoshenie*, p. 74.

did their part in the war effort and kept order behind the lines. When Andrei Vyshinskii visited Bucharest for a month in the fall, he told the king he was able to correct many of his impressions and "was pleased with the Rumanian action in fulfilling the armistice terms" and satisfied with the new coalition led by General Radescu. The king understood Vyshinskii had talked to some of "the viperous Communists and had advised them against stirring up trouble."⁸⁸ But Stalin conducted a devious and manipulative policy within the Rumanian party. He supported a national front line but distrusted its advocates among the domestic Communists, like Patrescanu, who was not under his control and had been critical of the abortive deal with Antonescu. He trusted Pauker and Luca, who were actually Soviet citizens, but restrained their overzealous drive for power in the name of his broader strategy of maintaining the anti-Hitler coalition. So he played one faction against the other in order to exert a double pressure on the right wing government: cooperate with the moderate communists or face the radicals. Stalin's strategy failed, as in Poland, because the right decided to oppose cooperation with all Communists and rely for outside support upon the West. This played into the hands of the radicals who stepped up attacks on the government and called upon the Red Army to protect it against reprisals. As the danger mounted of open clashes between right and left, the Soviet command sent alarming reports to Moscow about the harassment of their forces, the poor performance of Rumanian units at the front, and the large number of Rumanian troops, 350,000 to be exact, which were being held in the rear to repress left wing disorders.⁸⁹

At this point, Vyshinskii descended on Bucharest in a far different mood, his optimistic prognosis in tatters, and delivered the famous ultimatum to King Michael that brought to power the communist dominated coalition. The February, 1945 crisis in Bucharest coincided

⁸⁸The British were ecstatic at the news considering the outcome "a triumph for the conservative forces of the country (and) therefore that the danger of the Soviet communizing Rumania is now past." FRUS, 1944, IV, 258-60, 280-83.

⁸⁹Shestakov, *Otnoshenie*, pp. 71-72 citing Foreign Ministry Archives.

with the Soviet arrest of the leaders of the Polish non-communist underground. Both these interventions came in the wake of the Yalta Conference which, with its promise of free elections, encouraged the right in Poland and Rumania to resist communist pressure to the breaking point. The Soviet Union was confronted by the threat of civil war in the rear of its armies that would crush the small local communist forces and doom the prospects for a "friendly government." The Soviet government claimed that its actions were taken in order to preserve the unity of anti-Hitlerite forces embodied in the Yalta agreements. In the West, Churchill and the State Department perceived them as violations of the Yalta agreements; Roosevelt was more cautious, but he had only two months to live.

After February, 1945, the polarization of political forces accelerated in Poland and Rumania. The nationalist right appealed more and more openly to the West for support and the Communists leaned more heavily on the Soviet Union. The incipient civil wars were rooted in old class antagonism but they also assumed the characteristics of the dominant political culture: romantic insurrectionism in Poland and cynical opportunism in Rumania. The great powers were drawn into the vortex of domestic policies. Britain and the U.S. had no strategic and few economic interests in the area: the Soviet Union, however, had far more at stake. Poland and Rumania had blocked the path to Soviet assistance to Czechoslovakia in 1938 and had served as the springboard for the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. From the Soviet perspective, neither country could be allowed to slip back into unfriendly hands again. Once the Red Army had liberated them, Stalin expected their leaders to be realistic and the West to be reasonable. It was a crucial test for Soviet diplomacy but the Russians failed to present a convincing case or much of a case at all.

The Soviet dilemma was real. How could they admit to the West the paradox of their power? Their military power on the ground was dominant, but the political and social foundations of "friendly governments" were weak and uncertain. Stalin could not depend upon the local communists to carry out his bidding; left to themselves, they were either

untrustworthy or impotent. Yet he could only bring them power by jeopardizing the anti-Hitler coalition, destroying any hope of postwar cooperation and creating artificial and ultimately unstable dependencies. In dealing with the problem, Soviet diplomats were intransigent and impenetrable, short of Stalin himself. And "the boss" resorted to the devious and manipulative tactics that had served him well in domestic politics, but were out of place in international affairs. Their predictable but unintended effects were to confirm the worst suspicions of the West and encourage the most zealous local communists in their drive for power. The attempts of the great powers to reach compromises, Yalta, Potsdam, and the Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow were torn apart in these local struggles. The internal wars became an international cold war.

Iran

In Iran, the outbreak of an internal war took place under the joint Anglo-Soviet military occupation of the country in reaction to the threat of Nazi subversion. By 1940, German penetration of Iran introduced a thousand technical experts, increased the German share of foreign trade to over 45 percent, flooded the country with Aryan racial propaganda and infiltrated agents who were reportedly planning a coup to install an openly pro-Nazi regime. The danger to the Soviet Union multiplied when the Nazi offensive, in the summer of 1942, penetrated deep into the Caucasus and the Turks mobilized 25 divisions on the frontiers of the Transcaucasian republics.⁹⁰

Although the Soviet Union had unusual treaty rights dating to the Soviet-Iranian Treaty of 1921 that permitted its troops to occupy Iranian territory in order to secure its frontiers against attack, Stalin refused to move until he obtained British concurrence. Britain agreed, fearing a pro-German Iran on its Indian flank, eager to find a more reliable and safer convoy route to Russia than the Murmansk route, and interested in protecting its

⁹⁰Kh. Parvizpur, *Sovetsko-iranskie otnosheniia v gody vtoroi mirovoi voiny (1939-1945)* (Tbilisi, 1978), pp. 7-8, 10-12, 20-36, 66-9.

oil concessions in the Gulf.

The occupation and abdication of the authoritarian shah, Reza Shah, threw Iranian politics into turmoil. Both the Russians and the British sought out would-be clients but not always with predictable results. The recovery of the Shiite clergy, the assertion of autonomy by the tribes in the South, the rise of ethnic politics among the Kurds and Azeri, and the eruption of Iranian nationalism among the middle classes produced a welter of political movements that flourished in the absence of a strong central power. In some ways, it was a throwback to the period before World War I with one important exception. In 1942, a mass party of the left took root and enjoyed a phenomenal growth.

The modernizing policies of Reza Shah had doubled the size of the working class to approximately 600,000 and altered its membership from traditional craftsmen to industrial workers, mainly in the oil fields. Although the Shah had banned trade unions, they came into existence under the Anglo-Soviet occupation. Students who had been sent abroad to acquire Western scientific, technical and administrative skills returned with larger political ambitions. Among them were a small group of Marxists who were different from the old guard of Iranian communists. Western educated, native Persians rather than expatriates from the Russian Caucasus or Turkestan, they resembled the revolutionary intelligentsia of Eastern Europe more than Comintern apparatchiks tamed by a decade of Stalinist discipline and purges. They were fiercely nationalist which colored their outlook toward the national minorities in Iran and made for some awkward moments in their relations with the surviving Communist veterans of the Gilan Republic of 1920.⁹¹ They were the founders of the Tudeh (Masses) Party.

During its most active and militant phase, the Tudeh avoided any direct political links with Moscow. Originating in the north under the benevolent protection of the Red Army, it spread rapidly throughout the country, recruiting 350,000 agricultural and industrial workers

⁹¹Sepehr Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran* (Berkeley, 1966), pp. 63-9.

into its newly organized United Council of Trade Unions and polling twenty percent of the vote in the first elections to the Majlis that it contested. Its First Congress called for an equitable labor law and agrarian reform. In April 1945, its militant labor stance culminated in large strikes and demonstrations, unprecedented in Iranian history, that led to severe government reprisals. The Tudeh accused the government of failing to protect the workers "against the aggression of armed terrorist bands" and formed its own self-defense units.⁹² Armed workers gradually took over their enterprises and then assumed control over entire provinces in the northern region. The party did not proclaim a provisional government, calling instead for new elections. But its action amounted to a breakdown in the constitutional order. Iran was poised on the brink of civil war.

Meanwhile, the young Shah had been quietly rebuilding the central institutions of power with the help of American financial and police advisers, Arthur C. Millspaugh and Colonel Norman Schwartzkopf. The Americans had been using Lend Lease to rearm the army and gendarmerie with modern weapons. The landing of 30,000 "non-combatant" American troops to supervise transshipments of Lend Lease to the Soviet Union bolstered the American presence. The Americans pursued a policy quite independent of the British, who relied on their traditional imperial policy of supporting and encouraging the tribes, especially in the southwest, as a counterweight to the left but also as a hedge against the revival of a strong central power in Iran.⁹³ The Americans and British were clearly rivals over the financial and petroleum resources of Iran, but from Stalin's point of view, this typical "imperialist rivalry" meant only that whichever of the Western powers triumphed, he would lose.

⁹²Iraj Eskanderi, "Histoire de Parti Toudeh," *Moyen-Orient*, May 1950, No. 11, p. 9. The author was a Tudeh leader.

⁹³Arthur C. Millspaugh, *American in Persia* (Washington, 1946); Michael Stoff, *Oil, War, and American Security, 1941-1947* (New Haven, 1980), pp. 95-104; Kolko, *The Politics of War*, pp. 298-310.

The Soviet protection of the uprisings in the north signalled an active intervention in Iranian politics in order to obtain through pressure what diplomacy alone had failed to accomplish. In October, 1944, several months before the constitutional crisis, a Soviet delegation had arrived in Teheran to negotiate a five year joint oil exploitation agreement in the northern provinces. These demands had been prompted by revelations that the government was secretly negotiating for extensive outright concessions in the south and even more disquieting rumors that Standard Vacuum would get a concession in the northern fields as soon as the Red Army evacuated the area. The Iranian politicians in the Majlis responded to pressures from the three powers in characteristic fashion by manipulating one against the other; they passed legislation forbidding any concessions until after the war. The British, having obtained a financial agreement that placed Iran squarely in the sterling area, agreed to evacuate ahead of the scheduled deadline of six months after the war. These maneuvers placed the Soviet Union in a quandary. If the Red Army followed suit and evacuated without having obtained concessions, then it would have surrendered its bargaining power without any guarantees against American economic penetration and political hegemony throughout Iran right up to the Soviet frontiers. No Russian government, whether Soviet or imperial going back to Peter the Great, had ever been willing to tolerate the preponderant influence of another great power, be it the Ottoman Empire, Germany or the U.S. in that border region. But if the Soviet Union refused to evacuate it, they ran the risk of alienating all the Iranian nationalists including many in the Tudeh Party.

In the summer of 1945, the Soviet position in Iran appeared strong on the surface but faced exclusion. Moscow could not rely completely on the Tudeh Party. Although pro-Soviet, it was not "a Leninist Party of the new type." An open, democratic, mass party, fluid in membership, lax in organization, it was already beginning to show signs of

resentment against Soviet economic demands.⁹⁴ The party was divided over nationality policy, the national leadership opposed to the demands of the local Azeri Tudeh for linguistic and political autonomy in the provinces adjoining the Soviet Union. The Tudeh was struggling for power on a national scale, but the Soviet Union had no desire to be dragged into a conflict at that level which could only lead to a direct conflict with the U.S. and Great Britain over their vital oil and strategic interests in the Gulf. The balance of forces constituted one important difference with the situation in Poland, Rumania or the rest of Eastern Europe for that matter. In Iran, Soviet and Western power actually was (and had long been) roughly 50-50. No percentages agreement was necessary. What the Soviet Union required, then, was assurances that a "friendly government" would exist in the border regions. In order to obtain this with minimal risk, the Soviet Union sponsored a little internal war of its own.

The Soviet-sponsored insurrections in Iranian Azerbaizhan and Kurdistan in the fall of 1945 demonstrated how little confidence Stalin had in the Tudeh. In Azerbaizhan, the revolt was led by a veteran Iranian communist who emerged from twenty years of exile in the Soviet Union. He brushed aside the Tudeh, created his own party The Democratic Party of Azerbaizhan (Firqeh), and proclaimed the Tudeh program plus regional autonomy. Armed with light weapons supplied by the Red Army, Firqeh organized an almost bloodless takeover as the Soviet troops again blocked regular units of the Iranian army from entering the northern provinces and Soviet diplomats hastened to reassure the Tudeh leaders that this was not the prelude to the dismemberment of the state. The myth that the rebels had proclaimed an independent Democratic Republic of Azerbaizhan was an invention of American journalists.⁹⁵

⁹⁴Zabih, *Communist Movement in Iran*, p. 93; the major splits did not occur until two years later, *ibid*, pp. 124-36.

⁹⁵Ervard Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 388-99, 402-08.

Keeping a tight rein on Firqeh, Stalin engaged in a little friendly horse trading with the Iranian government. He agreed to evacuate all Soviet troops in five to six weeks in return for conditional promises concerning the establishment of an Iranian-Soviet joint stock company to manage a fifty year oil concession and a modest form of autonomy for Azerbaizhan. The Iranians also withdrew their formal complaint to the UN Security Council where it had become a subject of the first postwar dispute among the three powers. There is no evidence to support President Truman's contention that he forced Stalin to compromise by sending him an ultimatum.⁹⁶ But the story became part of the Cold War legend. It was precisely in the absence of any real clash between the vital interests of the great powers that the similarity exists between the Iranian crisis and those of Eastern Europe. Soviet concerns are limited to the northern frontier regions and Western concerns to the Gulf area. But the civil strife between left and right in Iran forced the great powers to take sides at the national level; and this brought them into conflict. The Soviet Union appeared to understand better than the West that the real issues were regional, but once again, Stalin and his associates were not able to communicate this distinction to their western counterparts. In any event, the Soviet Union struck a poor bargain. The right, emboldened by the withdrawal of the Red Army, closed ranks around the shah and crushed by force of arms the autonomous provincial of Azerbaizhan and Kurdistan. The Soviet Union made no move to reenforce its supporters or supply them with heavy weapons. For the second time in a generation, the Soviet Union had sacrificed a revolutionary movement in Iran for the elusive goal of a security zone on its frontiers. Yet the Western powers were convinced they had forestalled a Sovietization of Iran.

China

⁹⁶In addition to the American sources in FRUS, 1946, VII, 289 ff., substantial excerpts from the Iranian record of the conversations in Moscow are contained in Faramary S. Fatami, *The USSR in Iran* (South Brunswick, 1980), pp. 112-21. On Truman, see Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941-1973* (Charlottesville, 1975), pp. 138-39.

The Japanese invasion of China in 1937 ushered in a new phase in the long history of internal wars that stretched back to the beginnings of the Chinese revolution. It further complicated the ten year old struggle between the nationalists and communists by destroying Kuomintang power in north and east China and sponsoring a third major protagonist for control of China--the puppet governments with their own armies and administrations. In the struggle for power, the Chinese Communists enjoyed a number of advantages over their domestic rivals and over other Communist parties in Asia and Europe. The leadership was a tightly knit group with extensive military experience, untouched by the Stalinist purges. They had already developed sophisticated campaign for the united front in 1937 that was not disrupted by the Nazi-Soviet Pact. In other words, this was an independent minded and self-reliant cadre. Its flexible tactics and organization appealed to a variety of indigenous traditions ranging from xenophobia to peasant rebellions and regional autonomy. From 1937 to 1945, its armies grew at a fantastic rate; according to Japanese intelligence reports, jumping from 50,000 to more than half a million.⁹⁷ Avoiding pitched battles with the Japanese after 1941, their guerilla forces gradually occupied large areas of northern and eastern China that the Japanese found economically and strategically of marginal importance.

During the war, the Nationalists (Kuomintang) under Chiang Kai-shek never entirely lost its patriotic, anti-Japanese reputation, but the party gravitated even more to the right, showing little inclination to defend peasant interests or even the ability to provide them with basic physical security in the north and east. With the entry of the U.S. into the war, Chiang adopted a position similar to that of the pro-Western nationalists in Eastern Europe of avoiding combat with the external enemy whenever possible and devoting more of his forces to containing the Communists in anticipation of a struggle for power at liberation.

⁹⁷Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power. The Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1937-1945* (Stanford, 1962) should be balanced by Donald G. Fillin, "Peasant Nationalism in Chinese Communism," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXIII (1964), 269-89; Lyman Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends. The United Front in Chinese Communist History* (Stanford, 1967), pp. 75-92, 102-116.

He shifted some of his best divisions to blockade the Communists and cut off their direct access to the Soviet Union through Sinkiang Province. In the blockaded areas, according to American consular reports, the population turned against the central government forces who were engaged in extortion and graft rather than in fighting the Japanese. Chiang adopted more and more of a lenient attitude toward the Japanese puppets, arriving at a number of tacit agreements aimed at checking communist penetration of the countryside.⁹⁸

The Japanese were slow to establish a strong, centralized puppet regime, and never succeeded in the north. But they created a number of Model Peace Zones in the center by means of a systematic rural pacification movement that combined security with economic incentives. As the end of the Pacific War drew near, it became clear to the Communists and Kuomintang alike that winning the allegiance of the puppet troops and administrators might tip the balance one way or another in the struggle for power. Thus, in China, there was much less talk of punishing collaborators as war criminals than there was in Eastern Europe and more space for the Communists to implement the united front.

Throughout the Sino-Japanese War, the Soviet Union was interested in keeping the Communists and Nationalists from one another's throats. It urged them to mount a unified defense against their common enemy in order to divert the Japanese from an attack on the Soviet Far East. At the same time, the Soviet Union conducted a quite different policy in the borderlands of Sinkiang, Outer Mongolia and Manchuria that aimed at bringing those areas into closer economic and political relationships with it. In other words, it sought the establishment of "friendly regional governments" no matter who ruled in Beijing, or Chungking, or Yen-an. In Sinkiang, the Soviet Union shifted from backing the regional nationalist administration against Turkic rebellions in the late thirties to encouraging the formation of an Eastern Turkistan autonomous movement in the forties; in both cases, there

⁹⁸Lyman Van Slyke, *The Chinese Communist Movement. A Report of the United States War Department, July 1945* (Stanford, 1968), pp. 92-3.

were means to extract concessions from the central government.⁹⁹ In Outer Mongolia, direct Soviet military aid complemented diplomatic efforts which culminated in the Chinese Nationalist recognition of Outer Mongolia's independence in 1945. In Manchuria, the Soviet Union combined extensive demands for bases (Port Arthur and Dairen) and railroad concessions with support for regional Communist forces so that no matter who won the civil war, the Soviet Union would protect its special interests in the area. The importance of Manchuria for the economic development of the entire Soviet Far East and, as a strategic base against Japanese revival, impelled the Soviet Union to pursue an independent policy there even after the Chinese Communists came to power. With Soviet aid, the Northern regional bureau led by Kao King built Manchuria into an "independent kingdom," as Chinese Communist sources later disparaged it, and sought to use it as a springboard to influence the economic and political development of all Communist China.¹⁰⁰

At the end of the war, the Soviet Union attempted to maintain this dual policy. It favored keeping a balance between the Nationalist and Communist elements in the central government and exploiting China's internal weakness in order to secure the autonomy of the borderlands. As in Iran and Eastern Europe, the object, then, was not to sovietize the border states but rather to create governments economically and politically dependent upon the Soviet Union.

But, once again, the dynamic local forces upset these calculations. The Nationalists were determined to carry out a reconquest of the north and called upon the U.S. to ferry

⁹⁹Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia* (Boston, 1950); Allen S. Whiting and Sheng Shih-tsai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or pivot* (East Lansing, 1958); N. N. Mingulov, "Natsional 'no-osvobozhdeniye v Sindzhang," *Voprosy istorii Kazakhstana i vostochnogo Turkestana* (Alma Ata, 1962); Andrew D. W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* (Cambridge, 1986).

¹⁰⁰O. B. Borisov and B. T. Kolosov, *Soviet Chinese Relations, 1945-1970* (Bloomington, 1975) (originally published in Moscow in 1971); Okabe Tatsumi, "The Cold War and China," in Nogai and Iriye, *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, pp. 226-27; Wang Ming, *O sobytiikh v Kitae* (Moscow, 1969).

troops and secure beachheads for them in Manchuria. The Soviet Union opposed the presence of American marines in north China and Manchuria as a potential threat to their preeminent interests in that area, although Stalin had no objections to the United States mediating the civil war for that would create the weak central government he sought. Neither the Nationalists nor Communists were prepared to accept such a compromise. Each of the two protagonists calculated that it had the support of one great power and could count on the neutrality of the other. As the fighting intensified, the Soviet Union and the United States perceived one another as the chief support for one or the other side, though both were, in fact, reluctant allies of their Chinese clients. What had long been an internal war became a test of strength between the two great powers. The Chinese Communist victory in 1949 was perceived then as a defeat for American foreign policy and a victory for Soviet foreign policy, though, as it turned out, this was, at best, a simplification and, at worse, a serious error in judgment. The end of the Chinese civil war set the stage for the Korean War, the return of U.S. military power to the Asian continent, and the Sino-Soviet split, all of which Stalin had taken great pains to avoid.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the war, the Soviet Union moved from the periphery to the center of world politics. After a generation of second class status, it emerged to become as Russia had been before 1914, a great power in Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. Its power and influence were much greater than they had been under the Old Regime, and its traditional rivals in Eurasia were defeated and prostrate. Culturally, the war had narrowed the gap between the ruling elite, the party and the people, particularly the peasantry. It aroused dormant sentiments of patriotism and enabled Stalin to combine a number of powerful but contradictory themes into an eclectic ideology that appealed to virtually the entire population. At home, he reaffirmed the preeminence of its old Russian core yet preserved and strengthened the multicultural system. Abroad he revised still another

traditional ethno-linguistic identity--Pan Slavism. He allowed international proletarian solidarity to assume a variety of national forms that he then turned against but was never able to destroy. Overall, the geo-cultural transformation made the Soviet Union more secure from external attack and promoted domestic integration.

But the war also created a paradox of power. A formidable military machine rested upon a depleted socio-economic base. The prospects for expanding Soviet power beyond its frontiers had never been better but the risks had never been greater. Soviet war aims reflected the need for a breathing space in which to reconstruct the extensive physical damage, restore uncertain loyalties in the western regions, replenish the demographic losses and renew the building of socialism. Stalin gradually constructed a defensive glacis, enveloping the Soviet Union in a triple belt of strong points, friendly governments and an international system with full and equal participation of the Soviet Union in a special relationship with its wartime allies that would secure the traditional national interests of all three. But his policies failed to resolve the paradox of power.

Pressing domestic needs drove the Soviet leaders to actions that antagonized the west: the stripping of German and Manchurian industry, the looting of Rumania and Hungary, the demand for reparations whatever the social effects on the German population. They were carried out irrespective of the international consequences. But Stalin was also determined to prevent domestic economic needs from becoming a weakness exploited by the United States, whether by making political concessions in Eastern Europe in exchange for a loan or else by giving up a degree of economic sovereignty in order to participate in the Marshall Plan.

Moreover, Stalin and his associates, bred and trained to excessive secrecy, fearful of conspiracies and inexperienced in international diplomacy failed to explain and justify their policies. Unfortunately, too, the depressing effect of Stalinism upon the West, among both politicians and foreign service officers, made difficult a balanced assessment of Soviet

intentions and capabilities. The legacy of the purges in the thirties weighed heavily on the diplomacy of the forties.

The collapse of the wartime alliance was not simply, or even mainly, the result of a misunderstanding between the Soviet Union and the West, still less of a clash of vital interests. In fact, there was no point on the globe in 1945 where the traditional geopolitical interests of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States were in direct conflict. Rather, the great powers were drawn into a series of internal wars on the Soviet borderlands, all of which Stalin sought to avoid but most of which he could not afford to lose. In Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Iran and China (Sinkiang and Manchuria), the nationalists, some of whom had collaborated with the Germans and Japanese, and the communists, often split between domestic and Muscovite branches, refused to accept the compromises worked out over their heads by the three great powers. As they fought or prepared to fight one another, the Soviet Union intervened where necessary to prevent a Communist defeat and the British and Americans took up the defense of the nationalists, diplomatically in Poland and Rumania, militarily in Greece and Iran. Local representatives of the great powers were sometimes more zealous and panicky than their leaders. Friction generated by these internal wars rapidly eroded the wartime alliances. The crises in Poland and Rumania destroyed the Yalta spirit; the conflict in Greece spawned the Truman doctrine; the Iranian case polarized the U.N.; the Chinese Civil War and its Korean aftermath touched off a search for scapegoats in the U.S. that fed the Red scare and McCarthyism. In the late forties, both the U.S. and the Soviet Union began to rearm; the nuclear arms race started up. The Cold War acquired a momentum of its own.