PART I

The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1945–53

The debate on the nature and origins of the early Cold War has had an enormous impact on the way historians and social scientists have interpreted the nature of the international system in the years up to 1991. Realists seeking confirmation of their emphasis on power, represented through economic and military strength, have maintained that the Cold War, with its associated expansion of weapons, vindicated their ideas. Yet the realist refusal to associate domestic factors with foreign policy and to consider ideology, domestic, social, and economic factors as key features of the Cold War have left an enormous void in many attempts to understand the conflict and its origins. The latter can only be fully understood if the linkage between power politics and the social and economic upheavals of war, which threatened a revolutionary change in the dominant capitalist status quo, is understood in historical terms.

Historiographical Debate

The origins of the Cold War remain a matter of long-standing historical dispute and the arguments, generally not mutually exclusive, are linked to ideas about the nature of the Cold War international system. Was it a bipolar world whose systemic characteristics dictated the power struggle between the two protagonists? Was it a world dominated by exogenous concerns about interstate rivalries or was it a world in which internal battles over economic power and political influence had a significant effect on external ideological and power political rivalries?

Initial attempts to explain the Cold War in the West focused on the actions of the Soviet Union as the key factor in producing confrontation. These so-called 'orthodox' or 'traditional' theories assume that alleged Soviet aggression, or more usually, alleged Soviet expansionism, dictated American reactions. In essence, the Cold War became a battle for global power and influence because Stalin and/or the Soviet system made cooperation impossible. The reason for this in orthodox accounts rests with the paranoid and ruthless leader of an expansionist, ideologically driven Soviet state. Stalin and Soviet communism had to be confronted and contained by Western capitalist states for the sake of international peace and the survival of liberal democratic values. Or, in other Western Cold War words, an allegedly expansionist Soviet Union threatened the so-called national security of the US

and Western Europe, requiring an economic and military response. The historical focus on security from external threats links with realist explanations of superpower rivalry, in which power and security have a more significant explanatory role than ideology or the internal make-up of capitalist and communist states.

In the 1960s the crude orthodox approach was challenged by 'revisionist' historians, focusing less on the international state system and the struggle to gain greater power and influence than on the alleged requirements of international (and, in 1945, largely American) capitalism. Revisionists interpret the foreign policy of the US as designed to meet the expansionist requirements of capitalism. The Soviets therefore sought security in the form of resisting the expansion of capitalism into areas that would threaten Soviet communism. For the revisionists, blame for the Cold War lies with aggressive US policies to which the Soviets had to respond. Rather than Soviet expansionism creating American insecurity, then, the US commitment to the expansion of capitalism created Soviet insecurity.

Since the challenge by revisionists, other Cold War historians and political scientists, who allegedly reject the stark interpretations of the opposing schools, have been labelled 'post-revisionists'. This term can refer to a number of very different authors but is commonly based on interpretations that allegedly adopt a more balanced and research-orientated approach. Thus, ascribing responsibility exclusively to one side is often avoided and criticism of both powers is generally made on the basis of archival evidence. While this approach can embody attempts to reach consensus, and an acknowledgement that both superpowers may have misperceived the policies of the other, it should also be remembered that some post-revisionists still attribute blame to the Soviet Union rather than to the US, or to both powers equally. In addition, a significant part of the Cold War took the form of a massive state-influenced campaign on both sides of the Iron Curtain to justify military policies and expenditures in order to gain popular support for them. Thus, despite the greater sophistication of the various arguments and emphases of the post-revisionists in the 1980s and 1990s, they themselves may still have been justifying the Cold War, rather than explaining it.

The leading exponent of post-revisionism, John Lewis Gaddis, has claimed that the best ideas from both schools are subsumed in an emerging post-revisionist consensus. In addition to the emphasis on national security, one of Gaddis's books, *The Long Peace*, sees

the alleged Cold War bipolar system as a basis for stability and gives support to the neo-realist approach in general, and to the work of Kenneth Waltz in particular. Here security concerns and the nature of the international system are portrayed as explanatory tools for understanding the nature of the early Cold War. While accepting that US policy-makers may have exaggerated the Soviet threat and failed to appreciate the impact of their own policies, Gaddis nevertheless portrays the US as reacting to an expansionist Soviet state in justifiable ways. The essential responsibility for the Cold War lies with Stalin whose policies created the need for defensive resistance. This is despite the fact that the geopolitical position of the US had always provided it with more security than any other great power, at least in the years before intercontinental missiles. The reaction to this by Warren Kimball has been to dismiss the Gaddis version of post-revisionism as 'orthodoxy with archives'.

Other post-revisionist historians who share the emphasis on security issues have taken a different line to Gaddis's ascription of blame to Stalin. Post-revisionists less inclined to justify American policy, most notably Melvyn Leffler, still locate Cold War explanations primarily within a national security framework of power politics. Yet from Leffler's work it is not clear that US policy can be justified simply as a response to the Soviets. The quest for what he terms a 'preponderance of power' sometimes involved excessive efforts to project US power and influence. At best, therefore, this was an overreaction to Soviet policies. However, it also involved the formulation and implementation of policies, defined in terms of American goals and interests that existed independently of Soviet aims and ambitions. Thus, to some extent Leffler moves away from portraying a reactive, defensive strategy of national security to describing a more expansionist US strategy based on American global interests. These interests remain largely defined in terms of state power and supposed threats to the American exercise of this power, within a framework of international relations clearly dominated by military might, geopolitics, and control of economic resources. This is another example of the way post-revisionism can be compatible with realist theory.

It has been suggested, by Howard Jones and Randolph Woods, that national security concerns provide the basis for a post-revisionist consensus on the origins of the Cold War in general and the reasons for US policy in particular. This has been criticized on a number of grounds and has led to a debate on the role of ideology and ideas in foreign policy, as opposed to state concerns about power, survival, competition, and, in Cold War parlance, security. Anders Stephanson has noted that, in line with realist thinking, security removes ideology and class as explanations of, and influences on, foreign policy. In addition, there are vital questions to ask about security, in terms of for whom it exists and for what purpose. In the West, does it mean security for elite groups in the US, security for the Western hemisphere or security for American capitalism and its foreign markets? Emily Rosenberg has questioned the very meaning of 'national security', as it is itself a product of the Cold War, and its increasingly broad usage can serve the needs of 'advocates of almost everything and anything'. Randall and Woods define it as 'the relation between domestic and foreign elements affecting a country's safety and to include the social, economic, political and military considerations that influence strategy'. The implication is that external policy is geared to securing all aspects of social, economic, and political life on the basis of resisting threats to values or interest groups as well as threats to territory and physical safety. Such ideas prepare the ground for conceptions of common national interests in the face of external powers who may not pose a direct military threat, but who do represent an ideological danger, particularly to elite groups on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

More generally, the attempts to build a Cold War consensus on 'national security' issues sidestep the ideological and domestic conflicts which were central to the Cold War's origins and nature. They serve the realist cause by disconnecting foreign policy from domestic issues and by emphasizing state/national concerns about security and military power. Finally, such ideas disguise *descriptions* of Cold War thinking and strategies to win the conflict (building a domestic consensus on resisting the 'other' by portraying it as a military threat) as *explanations* of the Cold War. As Emily Rosenberg notes, some historians make the same 'discursive turn that Cold War policy-makers themselves made: conflating a wide variety of contexts and complexities into a symbolically powerful but increasingly diffuse phrase—national security.' The subordination of internal forces, in the sense that their dynamics are not of significance in determining, as opposed to justifying foreign policy, is a key feature of realist and orthodox accounts of the Cold War's origins and nature.

Other historians have rejected the basic national security approach and the idea of a bipolar systemic

analysis as central to a Cold War dominated by issues of power and security. Anders Stephanson has challenged the idea that the Cold War was essentially systemic in nature. The concept of a bipolar world from 1945 to the collapse of the Soviet Union dictated by a relative equilibrium of forces is, in his view, erroneous. It ignores the distinctive time periods, which reflect the changing character of the Cold War and the shifting nature of the threat to the internal social and economic order, particularly in Europe. Thus the elimination of dissidents within the Soviet bloc and the McCarthyist persecution within the US cannot 'be reduced in origins and development, to geopolitics and strategy'.[1] Nor can determined efforts to overthrow governments throughout the world be explained solely in terms of strategy or economic resources.

Ideology thus becomes an important element in the Cold War, but in ways which are more complex than most Cold War accounts assume. In orthodox terms, and as seen by some policy-makers at the time, the ideology of Soviet communism promoted worldwide revolution which in foreign policy terms became a quest for Soviet world domination. More sophisticated explanations look at the general ways in which ideas are employed by elites to serve domestic political purposes. In more specific Cold War terms, this means examining how ideology, linked to foreign policy success or failure, can have a damaging impact on the internal social and political order which maintains the privileged position of elite groups. Thus, foreign policy goals reflect elite ambitions in the form of state preoccupations with power and expansion as linked to status rather than security. Domestic goals reflect elite needs to preserve the socio-economic order that secures their own position and ensures its acceptance through the portrayal of ideological challenges as external threats. This provides a key to an understanding of the early Cold War more as a political battle for domestic dominance than a military conflict over national security. This is certainly how elites in Britain and America perceived it at the time, even if the conflict was, and still is, often justified in terms of security and its military requirements.

There are, of course, always connections between foreign economic policy, geopolitics, territorial security, and ideology in any analysis of the Cold War. Those who question the alleged post-revisionist national security consensus and the explanatory value of 'national security' simply place more emphasis on economics and ideology. Or, in theoretical terms, they attach greater significance to internal non-state actors, their connections with the state, and the linkages between domestic affairs and foreign policy. Thus, corporatism is a post-revisionist approach which places less emphasis on power politics/security and more on the need to ensure the spread of liberal capitalism as a means to secure a stable world order. In the model put forward by Michael Hogan, corporatism embodies capitalist cooperation between government, non-governmental organizations and business corporations in an attempt to establish a 'corporative world order'. Thus, there was an economic need to rebuild Western Europe, which served private interests as well as producing overall benefits for the US economy. This need dovetailed with, and provided the basis for, maintaining and preserving the socio-economic status quo in democratic capitalist states, which was under acute electoral threat in Western Europe in the immediate post-war years. It also complemented a broader global strategy of building a new economic world order on the expansion of multilateral trade, which required the reconstruction of Western Europe and the elimination of imperial and communist economic blocs.

For those post-revisionists concerned with the relations between public and private interests, and between foreign economic policy and military strategy, alleged external threats served more to justify than to explain policies linked to the domestic needs of the state and the position of its ruling elites. It seems that the Cold War developed when there was a conjunction of external and internal threats to the stability of capitalist states and their communist rivals, which had not existed to the same extent in the inter-war years. In Western Europe, the experiences of the Second World War produced more awareness of class divisions and privilege from which the Left gained new strength. Significant social reform, as predicted by appeasers like Neville Chamberlain, was now unavoidable, but post-war economic difficulties might open the door to more radical challenges to the capitalist status quo. In the East, the Soviet regime had been weakened by the destruction of the Second World War, in which traditional ideas about the nation had again proved more powerful than the ideology of communism in rallying the people. Consideration of these issues and their links to foreign policy is important if the nature of the early Cold War is to be fully understood.

More difficult to determine is the degree of responsibility for the Cold War, given the extent to which explanations of the conflict have been put forward as part of the strategy of fighting and winning the Cold War,

rather than as determinants of policy or as analyses of the nature of the struggle. In this situation where all governments were involved in overt and covert propaganda campaigns, often aimed primarily at their own citizens, it is difficult to disentangle the genuine perceptions of policy-makers from the perceptions they wanted the public to have in order to succeed in their various Cold War aims. How far, for example, did the military measures adopted reflect genuine fears of attack or how far were they put forward in order to unite domestic opinion against an ideological and political challenge to elite values and interests?

Attempts to allocate blame by portraying the policies of one state as essentially free from the desire to maintain and expand power, and as geared only to countering the aggressive intentions of others, are not convincing. Far better to start from the position that all major states sought to expand their power and influence in proactive as well as reactive ways, for whatever combination of reasons. The Cold War was not essentially a reaction by one side to the actions of the other; its origins need explaining in terms of conflicting ambitions and the differing perceptions of what kind of post-war order was necessary to reconcile such ambitions and interests with order and stability. In addition, foreign policy in the immediate post-war years has to be connected to the dynamics of internal and external socio-economic relations. The issue then becomes how the external quest for power and the internal attempt to preserve the social and economic status quo, combined to produce a unique Cold War era in international relations. In other words, how and why did the desires for two very different domestic political and economic orders prove internationally irreconcilable. In this context, aims and perceptions have to be explained and these historical details linked to broader theories locating the Cold War, within an interpretative international relations framework.

The Causes and Nature of the Early Cold War

The Power Political Issue of Confrontation replacing Cooperation

The first stage of any effort to explain why three great victorious powers (all initially committed to the maintenance of cooperation in order to prevent a future global conflict) embarked on the Cold War, is to define the different stages by which attempts at cooperation and compromise were replaced by confrontation and conflict. These stages are vital to any understanding of how and why the determination to ensure that recently defeated enemies should never again have the power to disturb world peace was replaced by an equal determination, on the part of one bloc, to rebuild them in opposition to a former ally. In essence, the prime commitment to cooperation was replaced in the first three months of 1946 (although the British had reached this stage by September 1945) by an emphasis on confrontation, followed by the definition of requirements which had to be accepted by the other parties if continued cooperation were to succeed.

Initially, in 1945, power politics dominated the disagreements, but ideology became increasingly more evident in the development of the conflict in 1946 and 1947. By the beginning of 1948 confrontation and hostility was accepted and a new phase of Cold War conflict began. Yet both sides still justified actions and policies directed against ideological enemies in terms of traditional interstate threats and challenges (geopolitical or geostrategic).

The Second World War's Impact

The world from which the Cold War was born was one in which popular expectations of social reform and international cooperation were high in the wake of the Second World War. Leaders in the allied states doubted whether such goals could be easily fulfilled, partly because of the enormous difficulties of economic reconstruction and the failure to fashion a peaceful world order in 1919. Moreover, there was no consensus as to how international peace and stability could best be preserved. In addition, the lessons of the past and the needs of the present were seen differently in the Soviet Union, Western Europe and the US. In part, these differences can be explained by short-term self-interest, particularly in those countries which had suffered most from the war. In terms of insecurity and potential threats, it is necessary to consider the contrasting impact of the war on the allies. The Soviet Union suffered enormous economic losses. Its industries were moved eastwards and its population was reduced by up to 29 million in a war of extermination on the Eastern European front. Britain too was weakened economically, although it had neither the huge armed forces nor the massive problems of reconstruction which characterized the Soviet Union

in 1945. The Soviet Union was desperate for economic aid and the British, eager to regain great power status, were determined not to sacrifice the short-term needs of recovery for the sake of free trade and international economic cooperation. Only the US could wield formidable military and economic strength and this has to be considered in any objective assessment of tensions stemming from supposed concerns about power and threats to security.

Reconciling Vital Interests and Idealistic Rhetoric

However, rather than so-called national security problems it was the failure to reconcile the maintenance of expanding vital interests with the preservation of the vital interests of others that was the initial source of disagreement and tension in 1945. The Soviet Union certainly had the greater territorial ambitions, but

Post-Revisionism and the Geopolitics/ Revisionist Debate on the Origins of the Cold War

Those post-revisionist writers who reject the orthodox idea that American policy was essentially reacting to Soviet actions also reject the revisionist idea that American policy was deliberately geared to confronting the Soviets. Instead, they have sought to focus on factors such as geopolitics, cultural traits, and elite perceptions, on psychology, bureaucratic politics, security requirements, misunderstandings, and misperceptions, none of which are mutually exclusive.

Geopolitics. At its most basic level this view is linked to the pre-1917 development of two great land-based empires in Eurasia and the western hemisphere. Inevitably, these two exploitative land-based systems would come into conflict. Another explanation, based on the post-1945 period is the clash of three imperial powers seeking to expand their influence, who were unable to agree on a cooperative strategy for so doing. Thus, ideology is largely removed from the analytical framework and issues of power and security are, in the realist tradition, central to the conflict. However, the different geopolitical situations of the great powers and the different traditions and socio-economic systems provided different perspectives on 'security'.

Security. The emphasis many writers place on 'security' (or, in the US after 1947, 'national security') often fails to distinguish between security and imperial requirements. In the Soviet case territorial vulnerability, the fear of another war of extermination, and more twentieth-century attacks from the West were undoubtedly real, but whether they justified the kind of repressive measures taken against the Soviet population and the peoples of Eastern and Central Europe is more questionable. In the US, 'national security' clearly came to involve factors other than military power and territorial defence. Even if the extension of a Soviet-controlled Eurasian empire constituted a threat to the US, did it justify the acquisition of a vast array of military bases and the

determination to project a 'preponderance' of power? The US drive for 'security' on a global basis ironically ignored the more limited Soviet security/imperial requirements, largely confined to areas neighbouring the Soviet Union, and emphasized the universal, revolutionary rhetoric of Marxism-Leninism. Was this a misperception or a calculated strategy to protect state and elite interests?

In the West the most commonly used Cold War terms are 'national security' and 'containment' with threats to the former from an expansionist Soviet Union allegedly leading to the latter. The importance of both terms as explanations of the Cold War have recently been questioned. National security has become so broad in its usage that it can be used to justify virtually any internal or external policies pursued by the US government, whether related to national or sectional interests. Moreover, its emphasis on the Soviet threat excludes many of the economic and social requirements of elite groups whose interests were most threatened by left-wing ideologies in the West or by opposition to communism in the East. Thus, two questions arise. How important were the influences of internal economic and political factors in producing external policy in the US and the Soviet Union, and were the alleged requirements of security policy, defined in terms of military power and inter-state struggles for influence, justified as defensive measures prompted by genuine fears? Barton Bernstein has argued that to use national security as an explanation of the Cold War makes more sense in relation to Soviet policy than it does to that of the US. Indeed, given the relative geopolitical positions of the two powers it is the US that has historically been secure and the Soviet Union that has been vulnerable. Moreover, given the ability of the US to project all forms of military power in 1945 (including the only nuclear weapons), and the superior American economic strength, it does seem odd that the quest for national security has been attributed more to the US than to a Soviets. After all, the Soviet state had been subjected to three twentieth-century invasions, and has suffered from human and economic devastation on an almost unimaginable scale and initially lacked atomic weapons.

tensions also stemmed from the failure to implement the new principles of international political and economic cooperation which were expounded most forcefully in the US. In the 1940s the principle of mutually beneficial international goals proclaimed by many American policy-makers did not square with their own practices let alone gain universal acceptance. Despite much American rhetoric, idealism did not override American self-interest, even though it became an important element in US domestic politics.

The Cold War may, therefore, have been born out of the failure by both sides to reconcile old practices with new principles. The West needed to proclaim the end of power politics, but if such policies were still pursued, such hypocrisy had to be concealed from domestic opinion for political reasons. One way to do this was to attack Soviet power political ambitions in Europe while pretending that Britain and the US had no such goals in the Middle East or the Pacific. Thus, even if an imperialist deal with the Soviet Union, based on vital interests, had been acceptable on a global basis to Stalin, it would not have been acceptable in the West.

Ideology and Legitimate Expansion

Such explanations of the Cold War have never satisfied most historians in the West. For them, conceptions of competing national interests, of conflicting rhetoric and practice, of equally crusading ideologies, or different understandings of democracy and security are less important than the allegedly in-built motivation of a communist state assuming the mantle of a traditional imperialist power. They do not see post-war leaders having to reconcile competing power political ambitions—Soviet control of Eastern Europe, the maintenance and extension of exclusive British influence in the Middle East, or the acquisition of new US bases and control of Japan to ensure domination of the Pacific—but rather as facing the same situation as in the 1930s. Then the issue was not how to reconcile great power differences, but whether it would have been better to resist an inherently expansionist German power sooner rather than later. Viewed from this perspective, the Cold War could be attributed to the West's lack of realization that Stalin had unlimited ambitions, albeit with no timetable for achieving them, and its consequent failure to confront the Soviet dictator soon enough.[2]

Fundamental to these explanations is the belief that Western ambitions were legitimate and limited whereas, because of the ideological and repressive nature of the Soviet regime, its ambitions were neither. While there can be no doubt that the Soviets did have imperialist ambitions after 1945, the question is the extent to which, in foreign policy terms, they were fundamentally different from those that Britain and the US saw as essential to their post-war roles as great powers. To portray them in terms of an unlimited drive for global domination by Moscow means excluding the possibility that some (such as the demand for a trusteeship in Tripolitania in north Africa) may have been put forward in order to win acceptance of limited gains elsewhere, in areas more important to the Soviets. It also means ignoring the substantial evidence that Stalin, like his Western counterparts, and unlike Hitler, was not only extremely cautious but initially committed to the maintenance of great power cooperation and the concessions this would require. So, he was prepared to compromise over the nature of the United Nations (UN) and to accept the position of Greece as lying in the Western sphere of influence. And the main motivation for this cooperation was the self-interested need to prevent the revival of a strong Germany. More importantly it means accepting that the US did not have a crusading ideology whose aim was to shape the world in ways which would reconcile ideological principles with the expansion and success of American political and economic interests. Given the substantial, detailed evidence of the specific ways in which American post-war planners intended to create a world dominated by US values and interests, and while there is as yet no evidence of similar Soviet planning, the idea of a one-sided Soviet effort to gear a crusading ideology to world domination remains difficult to swallow.

Regional or Global Origins of the Cold War

Those who take the line of unlimited Soviet ambitions, which forced the West to confront Stalin, tend to focus more on European issues and on the aims of the Soviet Union and the US within a new bipolar framework. For some, Britain and France allegedly played subordinate roles to the dominant forces of Soviet–American rivalry, roots of which have been traced back before the 1917 revolution. In this clash between the two land-based empires of the Western hemisphere and Eurasia, European problems served to arouse or exacerbate Soviet–American disagreements. It was in Europe that the Soviet Union carried out its most repressive and

exploitative acts, in defiance of the Yalta agreements on Liberated Europe, which sought broadly based provisional governments and free elections. This focus on Eastern Europe has normally been accompanied by an ideological condemnation of the ruthless and undemocratic nature of Soviet power. In emphasizing European developments, historians have ensured that areas of vital interest to the Soviet Union became the centre of attention. The post-war aims and ambitions of Britain and the US in areas of vital interest to them (the Middle East and Pacific, for example) receive relatively less attention and the imperialist mantle of repression is placed squarely and solely on the Soviets. A full understanding of the Cold War's origins requires a closer examination of the Middle East and Pacific regions and the interaction between great power goals outside Europe and the Soviet attempts to maintain and strengthen their control within it.

The efforts of the Western powers to preserve areas of exclusive influence outside Europe may have been seen by Soviet leaders as comparable to their determination to have an exclusive sphere of influence over the territories adjoining the Soviet Union. We can be more certain that while many Americans, then and in subsequent historical accounts, have seen Soviet imperialism as part of an ideological crusade for global domination, their Soviet counterparts have seen US power and ideology in precisely the same light. Messages from the Soviet embassy in Washington in 1946–7, portrayed America as keen to ensure global domination based on a crusading capitalist ideology and economic hegemony. In addition, it was believed that the Americans were even prepared to embark on global war to bring it about. These perceptions, an almost mirror image of the threat presented by the other superpower, had clearly developed by 1947 despite the perceived interests of both sides in maintaining cooperation. The most plausible power political explanation of the Cold War lies in the failure to reconcile great power imperialist goals, *in areas outside Europe as well as within it*. The implications of this failure became more serious because of ideological concerns and the possible challenges to the domestic status quo that all elites faced in the wake of the Second World War's upheavals.

The Early Cold War's Portrayal and its Domestic Factors

Both sides faced a situation which was unique in the previous history of international relations since the French Revolution. Internal opposition threatened the socio-economic dominance of European ruling elites through a political ideology with mass appeal, which was more dangerous because it was backed by a powerful state. In the East, Stalin could contemplate, in the light of invasion and external intervention in the Russian Civil War, the threat presented by capitalist powers hostile to communism or the Soviet Union or both. External enemies could unite national sentiments and pre-empt opposition to oppression more effectively if they were presented as military and territorial threats. In the West, communism was now linked to the victorious and most powerful continental European state that was prepared to confront the Western Allies with its own imperial demands. It was now a more potent ideological threat because of the post-1941 increase in support for the Left in much of Western Europe, which was driven by its important role in resistance movements and by the increased demand for significant social reform. Again, it was far safer to present this as a military danger to the nation than an ideological threat to elites even if it meant transforming wartime friends into post-war enemies. The military focus, portrayed in terms of containing a military or imperialist threat, has been subsequently emphasized but the problems and challenges of reconstruction and the preservation of the political and economic status quo were now even more important in defining the developing Cold War.[3]

Defining US Policy

Territorial security was much less of a direct concern for American policy-makers. The Soviets in 1945 had no powerful surface fleet to threaten US naval supremacy. American aims have been frequently explained in terms of the invented concept of 'national security' and in terms of a defensive reaction defined as 'containment' which has been associated with the diplomat George Kennan. National security came to encompass much more than the need to defend the boundaries or home waters of the state and has been used to explain US policy in terms of the geopolitical and strategic nature of the Soviet threat. Based on the fear, as in the Second World War, of one single power dominating the European land mass, the possibility of a hostile power dominating Eurasia was allegedly a much bigger threat to US national security than the

The Debate on the Role of Ideology and Perceptions on the Origins of the Cold War

Ideology has generally figured in the debate on the Cold War in terms of policy-makers assessing its influence on the policies of the opponent. Communism was perceived as innately hostile to capitalism just as the contradictions of capitalism were deemed in Moscow to produce war and conflict. Were these the most important influences of ideology or did ideology play a different role in the origins of the Cold War? And was ideology linked to misperception rather than misrepresentation.

Perception and Misperception. The importance of misperceiving the aims of the opponent and particularly of misperceiving ideology's influence on policy has featured strongly in the accounts of those post-revisionists who believe the Cold War could have been avoided. For such authors the US view of Marxism-Leninism producing policies aimed at world domination misperceives the role of Soviet ideology and ignores such factors as differences within Soviet political elites and the historical traditions which shaped Russia's geopolitical fears and ambitions. The Soviet analysis of capitalist contradictions exaggerates the inevitability of US actions and ignores the various influences on US policy decisions. It also distorts the relations of capitalist powers by assuming rivalries and divisions arising from the contradictions of capitalism. Ideology is therefore connected to misperceptions of its influence on the foreign policy of the other, but it is normally assumed that as only the Soviets had a crusading ideology the issue is the impact of communism on foreign policy and US (mis)perceptions of this. In the West the unstated assumption has been that liberal, democratic, free-market capitalism is not a crusading ideology or an ideological determinant of foreign policy. The focus is therefore on how the ideology of communism influences (mis) perceptions of Soviet foreign policy rather than on how the West's own ideology influences (mis)perceptions of Soviet foreign policy. Moreover, such assessments ignore the ideological influences which shaped US and Soviet elites' perceptions of the role their own state was to play and the extent to which these influenced (mis)perceptions or misrepresentations of the other's policies and actions. Ideology may well be most important in producing a particular conception of the kind of world role the perceiver's own state should play. This, in turn, produces a perception of what is required from the other and when the other fails to play the required role ideology can serve as an explanation for this. Few studies have looked at the possible impact of a Western crusading ideology and the links to Western policy or on Soviet (mis)perceptions of this. Perceptions of one's own role may determine expectations of the other's role and the actions or ideology of the other may not shape perceptions of the other's policy as much as considerations of one's own world role with its ideological justifications. Hence the importance of each side's crusading ideology and its ideological relationship to foreign policy and the real world may be linked more to Cold War misrepresentations than misperceptions. Moreover, these misrepresentations may have formed a vital part of a coordinated propaganda campaign to persuade the masses that the Cold War was more to do with power and military capabilities than it was to do with ideology. In the West, ideology is thus relegated to the simple question of freedom versus tyranny posed in political terms, with the fundamental nature of the social and economic order played down and divorced from the Cold War.

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prospect of a German-dominated Europe. Cold War hostilities are then explained in terms, not of a failure of three powers to accept a new power political world order, but of America containing Soviet expansionism to preserve national security. Thus, economic and ideological factors are reduced in importance which is difficult to justify in 1947.

Acceptance of an Ideological Cold War

By the end of 1947 imperial ambitions and geopolitical rivalries were accompanied by a greater sense of ideological differences, which reflected genuine fears about domestic stability and the nature of the international economic order. If the period prior to the first quarter of 1946 was dominated by the desire for cooperation, but with growing tension that resulted from the failure to reconcile or compromise over imperial rivalries, 1946 and especially 1947 were dominated by ideological confrontation. This led to the real onset of Cold War by the beginning of 1948.

In early 1947, tensions increased, with the Truman Doctrine in March, and the economic problems brought by the winter hardships in many parts of Europe. The Truman Doctrine, by promising aid to Turkey, as well as Greece, was an early indication that, if it was a question of preventing the spread of communism, then Washington was willing to deal with authoritarian states. However, it was the Marshall Plan, launched in June, that subordinated rhetoric to

the economic reality of whether capitalism or communism could survive in Europe. The Soviets saw in the Marshall Plan an economic threat to communist ideology and to their need to dominate Eastern Europe. In reality, the Americans were initially more concerned with keeping Western Europe within the democratic camp, while serving the interests of the US economy, than with attracting the countries of Eastern Europe into an American economic bloc. By alleviating the economic difficulties that could have been portrayed as the failure of democratic capitalism, the spread of communism in Western Europe could be prevented. But by including Eastern Europe in the offer of benefits to those prepared to accept the expansion of non-discriminatory trade and economic integration, Soviet fears were heightened. Therefore, the Marshall Plan signalled the creation of a divided Europe in which the consolidation of confrontational capitalist and communist blocs became a priority on both sides.

The German Problem

The confrontation which developed during 1947 was formalized by the failure of the Council of Foreign Ministers, meeting in London in December, to reach agreement on the German peace treaty. The more that suspicion and confrontation developed in 1945–7,

the more difficult it became to reach a decision on the future of Germany. As past German actions and future military potential were considered in an atmosphere of confrontation both sides came to realize that a divided Germany offered the safest bet. The risk of a revived, united Germany allying with the opposing bloc was too great. Germany had too much potential, in terms of its industrial strength, large population, and central geographical position in Europe, to be left to the other side. However, there were economic difficulties inherent in a divided Germany that was unable to use its agricultural surpluses in the East to provide for the industrial population in the West. To avoid expenditure on foreign exchange, it was inevitable that the British and the Americans would support the revival of West German industry and attempt to limit the Soviet desire for reparations. Thus a combination of power political concerns and the economic needs of reconstruction placed Germany at the centre of the confrontation. However, because the final breakdown of the attempts to find an acceptable German solution did not occur until the end of 1947, it is hard to ascribe a causal role to the German question in the origins, as opposed to the development, of the Cold War. This is all the more significant when it is realized that initially there was a general assumption that self-interest in preventing the revival of Germany would facilitate agreement. At the same time, the economic difficulties and potential

Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin (1879–1953)

Born in Gori, Georgia, Joseph Djugashvili, who later adopted the name Stalin, joined the Social Democratic Party in 1898 and the Bolsheviks in 1903. He founded *Pravda* in 1911 and was the Bolshevik leader in the Duma until exiled to Siberia in 1913. On his return after the October revolution of 1917 he became Commissar for Nationalities and General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1922 a position he held until his death. It was this position and the patronage it provided that enabled him to succeed Lenin as Chairman of the Politburo on Lenin's death in 1924. Stalin then changed his ideological stance in order to defeat all his rivals, including Trotsky, and become the all-powerful leader of the party and the government in 1927. At enormous human cost, Stalin embarked on the modernization of the Soviet Union transforming it into a major industrial power by the Second World War. Millions died in the process with the collectivization of agriculture and the inefficient expropriation

of rural surpluses for urban development. Stalin also moved to eliminate all potential rivals within the party and the military through show trials, and he created a regime of fear and terror in which families and neighbours were prepared to denounce each other to the secret police. In 1939 in a futile attempt to ward off an attack by Hitler and to secure territory in Poland he signed an agreement with the Nazi leader. Reluctant to accept he had been duped when the Germans attacked in 1941, Stalin then embarked on a brutal war of survival in which millions died because of the extermination policies of the invaders or because of the sacrifices demanded by Stalin. After the war, he secured Soviet predominance in much of Eastern Europe, developed atomic weapons and encouraged a 'personality cult' around himself. Preferring to work and hold meetings at night, he continued as the undisputed, but highly suspicious head of a brutal and tyrannical regime until his death from a stroke in March 1953.

sacrifices created further antagonism and made it more likely that German industry would have to be rebuilt, which in turn would create further insecurity. The Berlin crisis of 1948–9 was born in this context. It was a crisis which is often deemed to herald the birth of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and another phase in the Cold War where the preparations for military conflict loomed much larger. However, this depends on the type of analysis of the Cold War, and in particular of the nature of its development, that is adopted.

The Myth of Containment?

In the West the early Cold War has been described and justified in terms of the development of 'containment', on which Western strategy was allegedly based. However, there are a number of basic problems associated with this idea, particularly regarding the stages through which Western policies passed. A frequently encountered sketch of these developments, before and after 1947, is that in Europe a more or less expansionist and militaristic Soviet Union was eager to increase the pressure on the free world. This was allegedly indicated by the expansionist takeover of Eastern Europe, the 1947 actions of Western communist parties in calling widespread strikes, and by the dangerous 1948–9 Berlin Blockade, which necessitated a firm Western response. Thus, the militarization of containment, through the creation of a military alliance, NATO, was required to deter an aggressive Soviet attack on Western Europe. Then, in 1949 the focus of the Cold War allegedly moved to Asia, with the success of the communists in seizing power in China and the growing left-wing insurgencies in Indo-China, and Malaya. As the Americans began to consider these new challenges in the spring of 1950 with the production of a lengthy National Security Council Memorandum (NSC 68), the communist threat culminated in armed aggression in Korea. The Korean War of 1950–3 allegedly produced further modifications of containment. Not only did the war serve to prove the aggressive intentions of the Soviet Union, it signified that the Cold War had become a global conflict with an active military dimension that required rearmament on a gigantic scale. Most notably it required the arming of the recent German enemy to contain Soviet expansionism and ensure the defence of freedom in Western Europe.

The first problem with such a scenario is that the Soviets had in fact not expanded into areas outside their control after 1945. They simply kept control of the areas occupied during the war, while attempting expansion at the expense of Turkey and Iran in 1945–6. They drew back there out of fear of provoking hostilities with America, but Soviet ambitions justifiably aroused mistrust in the West. Second, there is the issue of whether US policy by 1948 can accurately be described as one of containment. Of course, in order to defeat an enemy one would need to adopt an initial strategy of containment before a more aggressive strategy could be implemented. And, preventing the spread of Soviet control or influence from areas like Western Europe, to which the US attached particular significance, was an important consideration in 1946 and 1947.

However, from the end of 1947 the US also aimed at the destruction of the Soviet satellite empire in Eastern Europe, not simply at containing it. Indeed, the crusading American ideology had no place for the existence of communism, and Kennan himself, despite being labelled as the architect of containment, had not envisaged long-term coexistence with the Soviet Union. Thus, as the Soviets directed communists in Western Europe to undermine bourgeois governments there, so Washington began its campaign, not just to contain communism, but to weaken the Soviet hold on Eastern Europe. New agencies were created within the US government, beginning with the Office of Policy Coordination, whose aim was to prepare for undermining the Soviet system by weakening Soviet control over its satellites in Eastern Europe. It was already not just a question of containing Soviet power but reducing it. Most activities of American agencies within Eastern Europe generally remain classified but they were the other side of the 1948 coin of assisting Western Europe. The strategy was more than just containment and reflected Kennan's earlier beliefs that coexistence between capitalism and communism was impossible: one or the other must be destroyed. We do not know so much about the aggressive aims of the Soviets in destabilizing the democratic capitalist world, but in Marxist doctrine the existence of bourgeois governments can be accepted as part of the ultimate transition to communism. Yet it seems more accurate to portray the Cold War in 1948, not in terms of coexistence or containment, but as a determined effort by both sides to develop offensive means of weakening the other in order to achieve outright victory, as

in any military conflict where coexistence is ruled out. The idea of containment, then, serves more to indicate how, during the Cold War, the means of explaining and fighting it were subordinated in the West to the need to justify it and to build support for the attempts to win it. More than an attempt to explain American policy and long-term strategy, the idea of containment became a part of the Cold War struggle itself.

Bloc Consolidation

Whatever the nature of the two sides' strategies in 1948, there can be no doubt that one consequence was the attempt, in various ways, to consolidate influence or control over their respective blocs in Eastern and Western Europe. The Soviet Union began this process with a ruthless policy of economic exploitation based on the extraction of raw materials and machinery from Eastern Europe to serve the needs of Soviet reconstruction. Whether Moscow's influence was gradually extended from an initial position in which Stalin was determined never to allow any communist parties independence, or whether he was reacting more to growing concerns about Western policies, there can be no doubt of the result. One by one, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia were, by 1948, denied the right to choose their own governments or even pursue their own form of socialist development. The fact that, in Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito was reluctantly allowed to develop his own form of communism only reinforced Stalin's determination to clamp down on any deviation from Moscow's control elsewhere in the region. As the attempts of both sides to subvert the other began in earnest, control and influence over the respective blocs became more important for the future of the European continent.

In the West, American influence and US dominance of the economic and political reconstruction of Western Europe has been deemed 'Empire by invitation' or 'Empire by inspiration'.[4] Certainly, there was a desire on the part of European elites to achieve stability and reconstruction even if it meant accepting American terms. Suppressing the Left was both a short- and long-term goal given its strength in much of post-war Western Europe. At the same time short-term US assistance offered the prospect of eventually charting a more independent domestic and foreign policy course between raw, free-market American capitalism and the harsh and oppressive

practices of Soviet communism. In the event, by 1949 the Western bloc was established voluntarily under US dominance as a permanent feature for the foreseeable future. More importantly, because the ideological competition was part of a broader battle over the nature and success of European economies and societies, Western European economic recovery was vital. It was firmly believed that such recovery was dependent not just on American aid to overcome the dollar gap but on a revived West German economy contributing to the recovery of Western Europe as a whole. As in other areas there was a clear linkage between economic and political requirements. Fears of an economically powerful Germany, which were widespread in Western Europe and generally underrepresented in Cold War historiography, meant that the incorporation of Germany into a cohesive Western bloc was essential as part of a policy of containment. Indeed, containment can be seen as a more accurate description of the goals of Western policy to Germany in 1948 than the goals of Western policy to the Soviet Union.

The Cold War and European Integration

In 1948 the first moves to closer European cooperation coincided with the implementation of the Western European Recovery Program, talks on military alliances, and the attempts of both sides to undermine the opposing bloc. Like the process of decolonization, which was beginning to gather pace outside the European continent, European integration was linked to the dynamics of the Cold War as well as to the prevention of any further threat from Germany. Behind the process lay the vision of integrationists like France's Jean Monnet, who had a broad political agenda for the development of European integration, as well as a narrower economic agenda defined by the national needs of French recovery. Yet, Monnet's political vision of a more united Europe was always driven by the need to pursue Franco-German reconciliation within a framework that limited Germany's ability again on a path of confrontational nationalism.

The debate over the goals and achievements of European economic cooperation and integration has focused on whether this meant abandoning or strengthening the nation state. On the one hand, in the eyes of Alan Milward, the French in particular have

been perceived as driven by nationalism and the process of integration interpreted as the salvation rather than the demise of the nation state in Europe.[5] On the other hand, liberal institutionalists like Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane do not see the creation of institutions like the European Coal and Steel Community as mere tools of the nation state but as significant in their own right and capable of producing greater international cooperation. Similarly, functionalists, in the tradition of David Mitrany and Ernst Haas, see European integration as promoting a transfer of allegiance away from the nation state by European elites and then the mass of the population.

In the early days of integration, the minds of both these groups were certainly focused more on the practical problems of recovery and German containment than on changing the nature of the international system. By 1946, the idea of a divided Germany had its attractions particularly for those in the West even though the Russians made a number of proposals for a neutral, but united Germany. The most famous of these occurred in March 1952 and debate has subsequently raged over whether Stalin's proposal was a serious one or one merely designed to prevent a rearmed Western Germany becoming a more important American partner. In a sense, some of the arguments are not mutually exclusive. On the one hand is the idea that Stalin was always driven by the idea of creating a united but communist Germany which would form part of the Eastern bloc. All his proposals for a united Germany therefore had that goal in mind, which was why it was important to prevent an economically revived West Germany from being incorporated into the capitalist bloc. Thus, talking to Stalin on such matters was deemed to be disadvantageous to the West given Stalin's allegedly spurious appeals to the German people that would only arouse sympathy and undermine Western solidarity. On the other hand Stalin may have genuinely been seeking a settlement, without aiming to dominate a united Germany, in ways which would bring greater German stability. It seems clear from Soviet sources that Stalin hoped to use the 12 March 1952 note as a means to thwart German disarmament, but that does not necessarily mean he was motivated by a quest for gain as opposed to genuine fears about a rearmed West Germany. In the latter case, he would be sharing the same fears as many in the West and his attempts to mitigate them were to be geared to modelling East Germany more on Soviet lines.

The Militarization of the Cold War

It was the Berlin Blockade that allegedly made a major contribution to the creation of NATO. A strong response to Soviet actions was seen as necessary by Western governments for the sake of credibility, but explained and justified in terms of the risk of war and the need to resist Soviet expansion. Here was the point, it is claimed, when the military dangers presented by the Soviet Union became clearer, presaging the limited warfare that the Soviets were to authorize in Korea two years later. Not normally mentioned are the first American moves in 1948 in what was to become a significant campaign to undermine Soviet control over Eastern Europe. Nor is it often mentioned that military opinion in Britain and the US in 1948 deemed it unlikely that the Soviets would deliberately start a major war. In other words, the US and British military believed that there was no immediate military threat to Western Europe (even if it was always possible that war might start through some miscalculation). Their assessments were borne out by another example of Stalin's cautious nature and his fear of a direct clash with the US, when the blockade was terminated in humiliating circumstances in 1949.

The reasons for creating what became NATO were not primarily geared to hostile Soviet actions in Berlin nor to perceptions of an imminent Soviet military attack in Europe. In the West, while Soviet moves over Berlin were seen as increasing the risk of war by miscalculation, NATO was essentially conceived to meet political not military threats and requirements. Indeed, the military role for NATO in operational terms has always been subordinated to its political importance. The fear in 1948–9 was of further communist political successes, and NATO's creation was seen as a political boost to the morale of the people of Western Europe. Put another way, it was better to present the threat in military terms to encourage popular resistance to left-wing ideologies expounded by political parties, some of which were effectively dominated by a foreign power. NATO had little chance in the immediate future of providing a military defence of Europe but its political impact could be considerable. Unlike the military, the public and academics would come to accept that the Soviets were geared to attacking Western Europe, rather than spreading communism or increasing Soviet power and influence peacefully. This deception was a vital part of Cold War strategy in the West. It developed against a post-war background of

what has been described as an exaggeration of Soviet military strength in order to maximize the need for strong American armed forces.[6]

In the Soviet Union the creation of a confrontational military bloc also influenced the domestic aspects of Stalin's Cold War strategy. Paranoid and insecure, imagining internal and external threats to his personal power, the Soviet leader, although he would have known from spies within the British government that NATO was not planning to attack the Soviets, could, as in the West, use an invented short-term military threat for domestic purposes. Imperialist spies could be linked to armed aggressors seeking to destroy the Soviet Union and thus provide the excuse for the brutal elimination of political rivals and opponents alike. In a sense, by 1948–9 the three former allies were manipulating public perceptions of the external world for domestic as well as foreign policy reasons, and the US and the Soviet Union were consolidating influence or control over their respective European spheres.

Empire, Decolonization, and the Impact of Colonialism

In 1948 when the Cold War began in earnest there were conflicts within the Asian possessions of Holland, Britain, and France, and in South Asia Britain had abandoned India and was about to concede independence to Burma and Ceylon. European rule was on the retreat in an area where it had never recovered from military defeat in the Second World War and the consequent loss of belief in the innate superiority of the white man. The term 'decolonization', itself somewhat problematic, has thus been applied to the beginning of a process which was to transform the world in the next twenty years by the creation of a large number of new states, and signify the decline of Europe in the post-war world. The impact of decolonization, or the end of the European empires, affected the workings of international organizations and had important implications for state formation, and for the relationship between political and economic freedom. The process was closely tied up with the development of nationalist or anti-colonial movements, the specific cultures and ideologies of the colonial powers, and the impact of international developments, most notably the Cold War.

To provide an overall interpretation for developments, in such disparate countries as India, the Windward Islands, Algeria, Fiji, and Angola, is a difficult task,

as the circumstances in each former colony reflected differences in everything from geography to the political structures of colonial rule. Moreover, the perceptions and policies of the imperialists in the metropoles and the colonial capitals also reflected different ideas about the meaning of empire and the nature of colonialism. These stemmed from, among other factors, European perceptions of how colonies contributed to an imperial system that was designed to fulfil an economic, strategic, cultural, or even symbolic role indicating international status and prestige. It was precisely because European colonies reflected metropolitan perceptions of national roles as great world powers that the transformations during and after the Second World War helped produce the violent nature of the conflicts between colonial rulers and their subjects. Had the issue been simply the nature of the administrative, judicial, or cooperative arrangements between parts of Europe and large areas of the non-European world, then transferring power would not have been so burdened by such disputes. Nor would it have become so closely entwined with the developing Cold War if the only issues were how best to control, influence, or be involved with some of the poorest and most inhospitable places on the planet.

Central to the progress of decolonization were a number of interrelated factors, all influenced by the Second World War and the Cold War. They ranged from the crucial mobilization of Asian and African political movements in opposition to colonial rule to the emotive attachment of Europeans to their own perceptions of superiority. For some in Britain this reflected a concern for, and knowledge of, what is often referred to as the developing world, and came to be embodied in a sense of duty or mission to prepare what were perceived as more backward peoples for the modern world. For other policy-makers it reflected a belief in their country's position within a global community that was defined in the same terms of exclusiveness, status, and sense of superiority that had characterized their upbringing in English public schools and Oxbridge. Thus for some, by the late 1930s it was desirable to transfer power as soon as the colonies were sufficiently developed politically, once progress had also been made in providing the necessary infrastructure and social welfare. For others, even in the mid-1950s they found the very idea of independence, as opposed to self-government, hard to swallow. And in the case of the mandated territory of Togoland, some of whose people were also

inhabitants of the Gold Coast, the thought of uniting them in French territory was ruled out by the unbearable prospect of part of the British Empire being given to the French. The sense of importance and prestige associated with Britain's international role, in comparison with France, would be compromised by such actions whatever the situation in Africa. Hence, the governmental debates on colonial policy were influenced by international perceptions as well as by the demands of the anti-colonial movements that grew in strength and number after 1945.

The historical debate on decolonization has developed within the tripartite framework of nationalist challenges to colonial rule, the European colonial policies which confronted them, and the international influences which all parties had to take into account. The rise of what are generally deemed to be nationalist movements began in nineteenth-century India, but did not emerge in parts of Black Africa until after the Second World War. Whether they were nationalist in terms of civic or ethnic nationalism is a matter of debate. It is true that the Western-educated elites, who tended to dominate political movements in the colonies, sought to build popular mass-based parties in support of independence. Yet some would argue that the lack of a civic tradition in many African cultures weakened any sense of identification with newly created states based on externally imposed boundaries. Furthermore, while nationalist parties sought to transcend ethnic divisions and attract support on policies and issues, in both Africa and Asia, parties tended to divide on ethnic or religious grounds, particularly with the approach or attainment of independence. This lack of a civic or political culture has led some to conclude that nationalism in the era of decolonization constituted a set of elite groups whose supporters were united by anti-colonialism, then divided by competition over who should wield power with the achievement of independence. Others have seen the failure of nationalist movements to create successful post-independence states as rooted in the allegedly divisive nature of colonial rule and the corruption and weakness of some African and Asian elites. The causes of state instability may be primarily social and political, with their internal roots in colonialism, or they may be primarily economic, with their roots in the nature of the developing world's links with the international economy. What is certain, however, is whatever the success of nationalist or anti-colonial movements, the political freedom gained by decolonization was generally not matched by the gaining of economic freedom.

Whether this was due to some form of neocolonialism is again a matter of dispute, but a uniform analysis of international capital's development that supposedly produced neocolonial links of dependence is difficult to reconcile with the different economic and political policies of the various colonial powers. In political terms, Britain's aims can be linked to the tradition of granting independence to the white Dominions of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa. The British were certainly committed to eventual self-government for parts of their colonial empire before the Second World War, but the crucial factor was its timing, and independence. The French and Portuguese, on the other hand, found such a concept anathema, and after the Second World War initially preferred a policy of assimilation into the culture and political structure of the metropolitan state. Thus, in the face of indigenous opposition they argued that there were no longer any colonies or nationalist movements. In the French case their overseas territories were portrayed as part of the one and indivisible Fourth Republic with their inhabitants granted political rights according to the same principles as metropolitan French people. Such claims ignored the unstated premiss that on a constitutional and on an individual basis overseas French citizens and their territories would not achieve full political equality with their metropolitan counterparts. However, both France and Portugal claimed that all overseas citizens were part of the metropolitan nation or on the way to being assimilated into it so there could be no internally inspired nationalism. Protests against colonial rule were therefore seen as examples of external forces at work, whether they be communist-inspired or a consequence of American imperialism. This remained the case for the period in question; it was only the British and the Dutch who were prepared to grant independence before 1953.

In economic terms, the benefits or burdens of colonialism remain as controversial as neocolonialism. The first Colonial Development Act, enacted by the British in 1929, was designed to provide outlets for the goods of British firms hit by the Depression. However, by 1946 Britain, and especially France, began to provide funds aimed at assisting the colonies. In Overseas France this gave metropolitan producers with overpriced goods that were unable to compete on world markets privileged access to protected colonial

markets. On the other hand, it could be argued that French colonial producers also benefited from produce prices which in the franc zone were fixed above world market prices. Jacques Marseille has argued that the economics of the French imperial trading bloc influenced the process of decolonization. As the French economy changed in the 1950s with the modernization of French industry reducing the numbers of small producers dependent on the markets of Overseas France, so the resistance to ending French rule was weakened.

Portugal also adopted a system of imperial preference, which maintained close economic ties with its overseas possessions, and this trade was certainly important for the Portuguese economy. Moreover, in Portugal's African colonies, where many Portuguese settlers sought to escape the high levels of unemployment back home, as in French Algeria, racial tensions were high as white settlers competed with Black Africans for menial employment. The situation was made worse by the post-war continuation of forced labour, which the British and French no longer used for such tasks as road-building. In Portuguese Africa exploitation was not to be mitigated by even minimal social and economic reforms until the 1960s.

In the rest of colonial Africa development was more evident, but of limited effect. The hopes of the British Colonial Office, that economic measures could be taken to assist African producers in achieving higher and more stable prices for their tropical produce, were dashed by 1947. The demands of the imperial state for post-war recovery centred on increased colonial production, without any compensation in the form of increased imports of consumer goods. The latter were in short supply as wartime industry in Britain struggled to revert to peacetime production. The priority given to metropolitan consumers meant, at the very least, the short-term exploitation of colonial producers in the interests of overcoming the 'dollar gap' and assisting an ailing metropolitan economy. These pressures were never fully removed in this period and the chances of making a significant impact in a vast continent lacking in infrastructure were always remote. Despite the acceptance by some policy-makers of the principle of colonial development for the colonies, it remained of marginal importance both from the point of view of benefiting the metropole and for producing significant changes in the colonies.

Moreover, as the urgency of economic requirements was reduced in the early 1950s, international pressures on colonial rule began to grow. They had been significant in the 1930s when the British response to disturbances in some colonies, most notably in the West Indies and Palestine, was clearly influenced by the impending war. It was particularly important then to avoid deploying troops, not just for the obvious military reasons but also to avoid international criticism of British colonialism, which would have been damaging to Britain's international reputation at a crucial time. After 1939 international pressures came to be associated with the anti-colonialism of Britain's two main wartime allies, particularly the US. However, this American criticism was almost immediately reduced as the war ended, owing initially to the demand of the American military for an extensive network of overseas bases, particularly in the Pacific and East Asia.

With the establishment of the United Nations and the influence of its Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Asian members who had once been colonies, a new source of international pressure for the end of colonial rule emerged by the 1950s. The developing anti-colonialism in the United Nations had an important Cold War dimension in terms of winning support for the West in the non-European world. This presented the US, which saw colonialism and its end as part of the East–West conflict, with a number of dilemmas. It was not simply a question of avoiding NATO divisions which would jeopardize American strategic requirements. The broader Cold War dilemma stemmed from the disadvantages of fighting a Cold War for freedom with large areas of the Western world denied this right. The Soviets could point to the Western idea of freedom in the context of formal subjugation making colonialism a serious handicap in the propaganda battle. It therefore appeared to make sense to terminate colonial rule as soon as possible. If this did not happen, unrest would mount and the conditions would be ripe for communist exploitation even if growing numbers of colonial people did not look to the Soviets for support in their battle for independence. Unfortunately, if the European powers granted independence too soon, without adequate preparation, then the new states would be unstable and open to subversion if they proved unable to provide law and order and a stable political environment. From a Western Cold War perspective, there were dangers in transferring power too soon as well as in delaying it.

In 1953, the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, tried to get round the dilemmas of Cold War and colonialism by portraying the latter as a lesser evil, in terms of the denial of freedom, than Soviet

communism, thus overcoming the disadvantages co-lonialism presented to the West. It was a dubious ploy to excuse one denial of freedom by pointing to the existence of a greater loss of liberty. Moreover, colonial people did not accept that their freedom should be delayed merely because it was denied to Soviet citizens, so the American dilemma remained. Even though they accepted the British strategy of granting independence to 'responsible' leaders when their countries were ready for it, the issue was whether that would be sooner rather than later.

The question of timing was a key one, and remains so for any understanding of the transfers of power which ended formal European rule. If anti-colonial movements were the sine qua non in producing change is it plausible to say that they determined the timing of the transfers of power? Did the colonial powers change their policies or speed them up simply because they grew more aware of the strength of indigenous opposition to their continued presence? Or was the international situation important in determining precisely when power was transferred? And how important were considerations of preserving economic interests as opposed to establishing new collaborators who would look to their colonial masters for advice and guidance? Were Cold War considerations vital in efforts to ensure that power was transferred at appropriate times to those elites whose allegiances would be to the Western rather than to the communist world and who were deemed likely to provide the necessary stability in viable new states?

Some ideas on these and other questions arising from the complex process of decolonization will be suggested in the following sections. For the period from 1945 until 1953, it is clear that Cold War requirements were mixed up with the perceived need to retain influence on a regional and global basis while dealing with challenges to European rule. To some extent the nature of the international environment can be used to explain why in 1947 power was transferred in India, but not in what are often regarded as less important parts of the British Empire. Some explanations for this have focused exclusively on the strength of the Indian nationalist movements which forced the British hand. Subsequently, it can therefore be argued that, with the 'jewel' in the British Crown abandoned, it was inevitable that the rest of the dependencies would achieve independence as and when nationalist movements were strong enough to demand it. This does not explain why the British were

so keen to resist any loss of influence in the Middle East during this period nor why there was resistance in London to the transfer of power in parts of Black Africa. To some extent, explanations for this can be located in the different circumstances in the colonies including their economic viability, political awareness, and educational development, but also such things as their racial mix, particularly when there was a significant white-settler minority. Thus in many ways it can be argued that India was ripe for independence when most parts of the British Empire were not. Another argument, which ignores the influence of international factors, is that by the end of the Second World War India was much less important to the British economy and was therefore abandoned because it had outlived its usefulness. By contrast, the fact that Prime Minister Clement Attlee had an intimate involvement with India through his work on the Simon Commission (which drew up the devolved 1935 Constitution), and a personal commitment to Indian independence, has been portrayed as another significant factor.

What the above have in common is that, to a greater or lesser extent, they made it easier to concede to the demands of the nationalists, and easier for Attlee to convince his reluctant colleagues of the need to leave India. The international situation had a similar effect, as did the fact that opponents such as the Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin could offer no practical alternative, although the conflict between the practical and the desirable in imperial policy-making did not always favour the former in the process of decolonization. In 1945–6, before the growing international tensions fully gave way to confrontation and Cold War, the spirit of internationalism, characterized by the commitment to freedom for which the war had allegedly been fought, ran through the newly established United Nations and into all corners of the globe. The expression of that spirit and plans for its implementation dominated the immediate post-war years in which the key decisions on India's future were taken. Britain's status in the international community could be enhanced by embracing that principle of freedom and offering it to Indian subjects as well as to those deprived of it by Nazi rule.

The United Nations and the ideas it embodied, in terms of the rhetoric, if not the reality, was important before the Cold War really began to impact on international politics. The new Prime Minister was someone who embraced internationalism as something that would be a new addition to the post-war international

order, which could be used effectively by Britain as a tool for crafting a new and more affordable world role. Attlee did not see internationalism as something which would supersede the old order, and replace empire and interstate rivalry, but as something which would modify the latter and which therefore had to be taken into account. Such ideas have proved easy to misrepresent and easier to dismiss once the Cold War world was established at the end of 1947. By then, of course, India was independent and the idea that Britain would gain kudos from transferring power as part of her quest to regain her status as one of the Big Three powers was less plausible. Moreover, the glib assumption that Britain would recover economically from the war was under threat from the harsh winter of 1947 and the growing dollar gap. Empire thus came to be seen not only in the different light of the Cold War but as something which would have to be employed to regain British economic strength and great power status. Thus, Colonial Office efforts to develop the colonies in ways which would prepare them for self-government now coincided with attempts by the Treasury and the Board of Trade, backed by the Foreign Office, to increase colonial production. Produce and raw materials could then help British industry and consumers or be sold to the dollar area. As a result, the second colonial occupation, as it has been termed, also involved increasing exploitation, through production without economic incentives which in turn would influence anti-colonial movements and the nature of the British response. Increased exploitation was difficult to reconcile with increased cooperation the Cold War notwithstanding.

Ideology and Power Politics in East Asia

It has been suggested that the tensions that developed in the Grand Alliance in 1945 stemmed from disagreements over power and influence on a global basis, with the Middle East and East Asia contributing as much as Europe to the failure to agree on the distribution of formal and informal influence. As such, the idea of a Cold War developing separately in Asia is a misperception despite the fact that the establishment of a new, unified China in October 1949 was the result of the particular circumstances that produced a communist victory over the Nationalists in the civil war. In order to understand Soviet and American reactions

to this, one has to take into account the regional circumstances and the way in which East Asian events interacted with broader international considerations. Such interactions have to be seen in terms of the Cold War's ideological nature and in terms of the impact on the regional power balance. They cannot simply be defined by analyses of Soviet–American relations based on the assumption that a gain for one was a loss for the other—a so-called 'zero-sum game'. China's emergence in particular was a threat to both powers and both were uncertain about how best to respond.

The more powerful Mao Zedong and communist China became, the more they became a threat to Stalin who had ambitions to achieve in East Asia, particularly with regard to a warm-water port and the extension of Soviet influence. The success of Mao effectively put a brake on these ambitions, especially the agreement which, with American help, Stalin had foisted upon Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalist regime. Arguably, Stalin's ambitions would have been achieved more easily with American support. It was logical for the Soviet leader to assume that the price would be paid by the Nationalists, with whom ideological sympathy was lacking, and therefore power political goals would be easier to achieve at their expense. An ideologically-friendly regime, while it might enhance the global communist movement, would not be so easy to reconcile with Stalin's power political goals.

The conflict in Korea and the communist takeover in China were far more than an extension of a European confrontation into a more global one centred on Soviet–American rivalry. They involved a mixture of ambitions with purely Asian elements as well as the confrontation between the capitalist and communist worlds. The Chinese communist success was long seen as inevitable by those in the West with knowledge of the region, but this did not remove old Chinese fears and ambitions in East Asia. On the other hand, power politics did not mean that Mao would turn to the Americans. Just as the prospect of the US saving China was a forlorn hope so was the prospect of Mao, disillusioned with Stalin, turning to Washington. Whatever Mao's disillusion and suspicion of the Soviets or his ideological affinities with Moscow, there was the American attitude to the Nationalists to consider. This major obstacle required a massive shift in American policy to surmount and to take into account the importance for Mao of unifying China. This fundamental Chinese communist goal was far more important than ideology or long-term

regional ambitions. It would long constrain Sino-American relations and rule out any Sino-American cooperation.[7]

In a sense, given the closer links with the Chinese communists, the Korean War, for the Soviets, was part of the attempt to reconcile ideological support with Stalin's particular ambitions in East Asia. As has been argued by Shen Zhihua, this could be achieved by returning the port of Darien and replacing it with warm-water ports in Korea once the peninsula was united under communist control. Unfortunately for Stalin, his fears of taking on the Americans made him disinclined to risk such actions, and until early 1950 he refused to accede to the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's requests to support a proposed invasion of the South. Only when the Chinese were on board, and it seemed the Americans were unwilling to fight for an area they deemed strategically unimportant, did Stalin finally give Kim Il Sung the green light. It was a grave miscalculation on Stalin's part and another example of his lack of understanding of the West, manifesting itself in serious consequences for the Soviets who emerged the only real losers from the war, despite playing a back seat and only providing trained military personnel and equipment.

The Korean War can be characterized and assessed in a number of contrasting ways. A war which enhanced the status of the United Nations and which saw a firm stand being taken against armed aggression on the part of the North. A war which saw a further extension of Soviet–American hostility and which clearly played a major role in the global conflict and added a new armed dimension. The Korean War can thus be seen as a Cold War which became hot but which was limited to a regional conflict. This indicated the fears in the communist camp about the military power of the US, and the fact that those in the latter country who favoured an extension of the war were finally defeated with Truman's sacking of General MacArthur in April 1951. The aggression perpetuated by the North Koreans brought no reward, yet the Chinese gained in status enormously, because of their proven capabilities against the Americans in a military stalemate. The Americans managed to prevent the loss of South Korea and, as they perceived it, the loss of credibility for their leadership and defence of the free world. They also concluded that communist aggression in Korea was instigated by Stalin, which led them to dramatically overstate the scale and ambitions of the Soviet Union and the closeness of its ties with China. Stalin was the loser because the Americans acted on this exaggerated perception and reinforced their commitment to the kind of aggressive Cold War actions that he feared. It was therefore a war which intensified the Cold War in the short term and reinforced Stalin's paranoid perceptions while bringing him no power political gains.

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NOTES

1. H. Jones and R. B. Woods et al., 'The Origins of the Cold War: A Symposium', *Diplomatic History* 2 (1993), and the commentaries by E. Rosenberg, A. Stephanson and B. Bernstein, 251–311.

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3. V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1996), 102–3.

4. By Geir Lundestad and John Lewis Gaddis respectively.

5. Argued in Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Routledge, New York, 2nd edn, 1992).

6. M. Evangelista, 'The "Soviet Threat": Intentions, Capabilities and Context', *Diplomatic History* 3 (1998).

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PART I CHRONOLOGY

The origins and development of the Cold War, 1944–53

1944

October	Percentages Agreement between Stalin and Churchill over Greece, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

1945

January	USSR requests American loan.
February	Yalta conference of Big Three leaders.
	Ceasefire in Greek Civil War.
March	British Foreign Office discusses value of a tougher stance against and showdown with the Soviets.
	Some Anglo-American concern over Soviet installation of puppet Romanian government (27 Feb.) and failure to broaden Lublin governments in Poland in breach of Yalta agreement.
	Soviets denounce Turkish treaty and refuse to sign another one unless Turkey returns provinces of Kars and Ardahan.
April	President Roosevelt dies.
	Truman confronts Molotov over Soviet failure to stick to all the Yalta agreements.
May	German surrender ends the war in Europe.
May–June	Hopkins mission to Moscow succeeds in securing agreement on Poland with Stalin broadening the Polish government.
June	Soviets inform Turkey of their desire for bases in the Straits of the Dardanelles.
	State Department report on international communism concludes it poses a serious challenge to the United States.
	UN Charter agreed at San Francisco.
	Soviet request for say in the international administration of Tangier.
	James Byrnes becomes US Secretary of State.
	George Kennan reports that the end of the Comintern has not weakened Moscow's control over international communism.
July	Potsdam conference of Big Three leaders.
	British Foreign Office debating value of concentrating on protecting vital interests in the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Germany at the expense of endeavouring to retain a say in areas such as Poland and Romania where no interests were at stake.
6 August	Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.
8 August	USSR declares war on Japan.
9 August	Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.
14 August	Japanese cease fighting.
September	54 per cent of US public opinion trusts Soviets to cooperate.
September–October	London Council of Foreign Ministers (UK, USA, China, France, and USSR attend).
November	Communists are defeated in Hungarian elections.
	Marshall leaves for China to mediate between communists and Nationalists.
	44 per cent of US public opinion trusts Soviets to cooperate.
December	Ethridge report on Soviet policy in Romania and Bulgaria concludes that to concede Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe would be to invite its extension.
16–26 December	Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers.

PART I CHRONOLOGY (continued)

1946

January	UN meeting where Iran complains about alleged Soviet interference in its internal affairs.
	Truman tells Byrnes he is tired of babying the Soviets.
	Secret Yalta agreement on Soviet acquisition of South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands made public in the US.
February	US warship sent to Istanbul to signal support for Turkey.
9 February	Stalin speech calling for new 5-year plan to prepare for the inevitable conflict between communism and capitalism.
February	35 per cent of US public opinion trusts the Soviets to cooperate.
	Reports on Soviet spy ring providing information on US atomic bomb.
22 February	Kennan's Long Telegram from Moscow.
March	Soviets fail to withdraw troops from Iran in accordance with agreement.
5 March	Churchill's Fulton speech describing an Iron Curtain across Europe from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic.
March	US send a note complaining of the Soviet troops present in Iran which violated the Soviet-Iranian treaty.
	70 per cent of Americans disapprove of Soviet actions.
April	Soviets agree to withdraw troops from Iran in May.
	Fighting begins again in Manchuria between Chinese Nationalists and communists.
April–May	First Paris Council of Foreign Ministers takes place.
June–July	Second Paris Council of Foreign Ministers.
July–October	Paris Peace Conference (all Allied nations attend).
November–December	New York Council of Foreign Ministers takes place.
December	The Bi-Zone agreement fuses US and British occupation zones in Germany.

1947

January	Polish elections are rigged.
12 March	Truman makes his Doctrine speech.
March–April	Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers on Germany.
June	The Marshall Plan is launched.
July	Kennan's Mr X article in *Foreign Affairs*.
August	Elections in Hungary are rigged.
September	Rio Treaty of Latin American states signed.
November	UN partition plan for Palestine.

1948

February	Communist coup in Czechoslovakia.
March	Brussels Treaty signed.
May	British leave Palestine and Israel established.
June	The Berlin blockade begins as the Soviets block the surface access to West Berlin.
	Yugoslavia is expelled from Cominform.

(continued…)

PART I CHRONOLOGY (continued)

1949

April	The North Atlantic Treaty is signed.
May	Berlin blockade is ended.
August	Soviets explode their first atomic bomb.
September	The Chinese People's Republic is proclaimed by Mao Zedong.

1950

January	Acheson speech withdraws Korea from US defensive perimeter.
	Stalin decides to authorize N. Korean plan to attack S. Korea.
February	The Sino-Soviet Alliance is signed.
April	The National Security Council memorandum number 68 (NSC 68) proposes a large arms build-up.
May	Schuman Plan launched for a European Coal and Steel Community.
June	North Korean forces invade South Korea.
October	Pleven plan for a European army launched.
November	The Chinese intervene by using force in Korea.

1951

June	Establishment of Psychological Strategy Board.
July	Ceasefire talks concerning Korea begin.
September	US Japanese defence treaty is signed.
November	An agreement on the ceasefire line is reached in Armistice Talks in Korea.

1952

May	The occupation of West Germany is ended.
November	US explodes first hydrogen bomb.

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