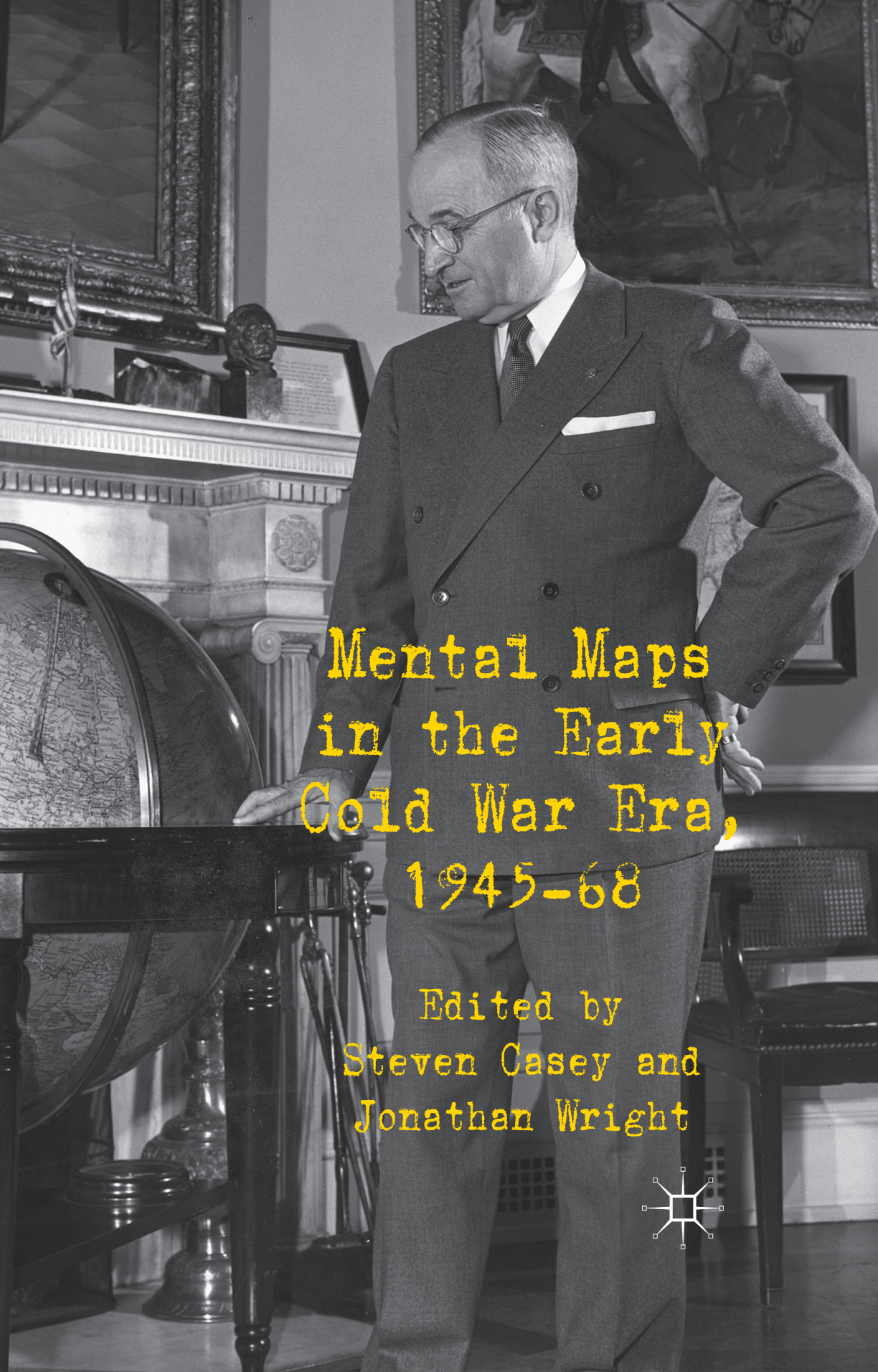

Mental Maps in the Early Cold War Era, 1945–68

Edited by
Steven Casey and
Jonathan Wright

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Also by Steven Casey

CAUTIOUS CRUSADE: Franklin Roosevelt, American Public Opinion and the War against Nazi Germany

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Steven Casey and Jonathan Wright

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Jan-Werner Mueller (2002); 'A different 1956: British responses to the Polish events, June–November 1956', in *Cold War History*, 6/4 (2006); 'Britain and the Cold War, 1945–1955', for the *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn Leffler & Arne Westad (2010). She is also the author of *The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany and the Origins of the Cold War* (1990).

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Introduction

Steven Casey and Jonathan Wright

The Second World War transformed international relations. It destroyed or weakened the old great powers, paving the way for the decolonization of their extensive empires in Europe, Asia and Africa. It left just two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union; the former with overwhelming economic strength and a monopoly of nuclear weapons, and the latter with preponderant conventional armed forces and a widely attractive ideology. And it resulted in the birth of a new set of international regimes and organizations, whose aim was to provide stability in the security and economic spheres.

How did the leaders in various key states respond to this new world?

Our earlier volume explored the 'mental maps' – the geographic vision – of a range of pivotal figures in the 1914–45 period. In the Introduction to that volume, we provided the intellectual rationale for this focus, as well as outlining the theoretical and methodological issues surrounding the concept of 'mental maps'.[1] To summarize, our central aim is to provide a focus for the study of international history that preserves what is distinctive about particular cultures by exploring the subject through the minds of major leaders.[2] These mental maps were formed not only by age, education, experience and personal values but also by the recognition of the structural forces – geographic, strategic, economic, political and ideological – with which they had to contend.

This book applies the same concept to the 1945–68 period. It explores how post-war political leaders dealt with the problems of Cold War – the clashing ideologies and the vying for supremacy in areas laid waste by the war, the arms race and the effort to compete without sparking a nuclear Third World War. It looks at the US and Soviet leaders who were 'present at the creation' of the Cold War order, when they

had the exhilarating and troubling task of confronting a world full of opportunities and dangers.[3] It assesses the European leaders who had to come to terms with their straightened new circumstances. And it examines the Third World leaders who faced the demanding task of gaining independence, forging a new national identity and working out which ideological model presented the best chance of achieving their goals.

By exploring the early Cold War period from this perspective, a variety of themes emerge. One is the origin and evolution of the various leaders' mental maps. For the men discussed in the following pages (and this was still a male-dominated era), age – and thus their generation – was often vitally important in determining attitudes. Indeed the Cold War followed two global conflagrations of such devastation that they inevitably cast a long shadow over those who had lived through them and made national security through military strength a first priority.[4] Some of the leaders who came to power during the early Cold War era had fought in the trenches during the 1914–18 conflict. Others had been caught up in the 'Wilsonian moment' in 1919, convinced, like Harry Truman, that liberal internationalism offered the only path to avoid the evils of modern warfare, or, conversely, disillusioned like Ho Chi Minh after it became clear that President Woodrow Wilson's liberalism did not offer them a path towards self-determination.

However vivid their memories of the First World War, most leaders during the early Cold War period found the Second World War an even more searing experience. As Sergey Radchenko emphasizes in Chapter 1, Stalin emerged in 1945 not just with an intense hatred of Germany but also a firm conviction that, given the chance, the Germans would inevitably launch yet another war of aggression within 15–25 years. In Poland, meanwhile, as Anita Prażmowska points out in Chapter 6, Władysław Gomułka believed that the Nazis' rise had been a product of left-wing disunity during the 1930s. Gomułka was therefore determined to emphasize socialist solidarity in the future, especially since the Soviet Union's victory over Germany made it the natural model for Poland to follow during the 1940s and 1950s. On the other hand, as Jeronim Perović shows in Chapter 7 for Tito, despite his socialist convictions, successful resistance against Nazi Germany was followed by a determination to pursue national ambitions and retain freedom from Soviet control.

For those leaders most haunted by the spectre of these earlier wars, their Cold War mental maps tended to be fixed. With their views firmly established by a tumultuous era of trench warfare, failed peacemaking,

communist revolution and yet another global cataclysm, they tended to view the new Cold War period through their existing frames of reference. Thus, as Anne Deighton points out in Chapter 3, Ernest Bevin's 'was not a world view shaped primarily by the Cold War itself'. It was, rather, a product of his interwar experiences, not just as an internationalist trades unionist but also as a firm believer in 'the role of Britain as a global and imperial power'. Similarly, Sudhir Hazareesingh's portrait of de Gaulle in Chapter 4 emphasizes the one 'supreme moment which defined his political world view: his rebellion against the Pétain government in June 1940, his flight to London and his 18 June 1940 BBC broadcast calling upon his compatriots to continue the struggle against Germany'.

Yet not all leaders were rigid in their views. The Cold War, after all, was a period of enormous change. The economic, political and social consequences of the Second World War weakened many of the great powers that had dominated international politics, paving the way, most obviously, for the demise of their formal empires. Technology in the guise of atomic weapons or rocket science increasingly transformed the way that states interacted with one another. And the Cold War struggle itself did not remain static, with the power of weaponry changing rapidly, new regions in the Third World opening up for competition and the perceived balance between the two superpowers in constant flux.

In this rapidly shifting environment some leaders were forced to alter their mental maps accordingly. In Chapter 2, Casey argues that Truman had only a superficial grasp of the world before 1945, had to learn rapidly once in office and swiftly changed his mental map to deal with the challenges presented by the atomic age, the economic collapse of Western Europe and the apparent appeal of Soviet communism. Similarly, as Yafeng Xia points out in Chapter 8, Mao's mental map, despite its hefty ideological underpinnings, was supple enough to encompass a highly risky war with the United States in Korea between 1950 and 1953, then a split with the Soviet ally in the late 1950s and finally a rapprochement with the Americans in the early 1970s, as the Soviet Union became the biggest threat to Chinese security.

The extent to which a leader's mental map was fixed or flexible depended on numerous variables, many of them personal: their own experiences before 1945, their degree of intellectual openness to new ideas and their sense of whether the atomic age had really transformed the nature of warfare and international relations. But context was also vital. The leaders discussed in this volume governed a range of different states: superpowers, declining powers or newly independent nations.

Some were basking in unprecedented power and wealth. Others were trying desperately to conserve what they still had. And still others were tasked with constructing a new state, providing it with legitimacy and developing a foreign policy that overcame the humiliations of the past. For great foundational politicians, like Mao in China, Castro in Cuba and Nasser in Egypt, the need to proclaim a world view that erased a past history of Western domination was crucial. As Judith Brown points out in Chapter 10, the leaders of a newly independent India were engaged in a similar task, though Gandhi and Nehru approached the problem differently: 'Where Gandhi saw moral decay as the cause of India's social and political problems, Nehru discerned a flight from reason, rationality and the application of scientific principles.'

It is tempting to add that leaders of the two superpowers needed to develop a more global field of vision now that their capabilities dwarfed all possible competitors, at least in the years immediately after 1945. And, to be sure, Stalin, although fixated on Europe, did cast his eye increasingly towards Asia – from his shifting attitudes towards a turbulent China and his sanctioning of Kim Il Sung's invasion of South Korea to his advice to national liberation movements in countries like India and Indonesia. Truman, although likewise inclined to look at Europe first, increasingly became embroiled on the side of South Korea, the Nationalists in Taiwan and the French in Indochina. In contrast, leaders of smaller, newer or more fragile states inevitably tended to have a more restricted view of the world: Gomułka, for instance, focusing on relations with neighbouring states in Eastern Europe, or, even more starkly, Adenauer, trying to regain influence for a truncated part of Germany that was overshadowed by the events of the Second World War.

Yet this contrast between big and small states should not be taken too far. Indeed, one of the striking characteristics of the Cold War era was the increasingly ambitious scale of many leaders' maps. With technology shrinking the globe, and with the clash for supremacy between two ideologies and their respective alliance systems in full swing, by the 1960s few leaders were parochial. Thus, Quinn-Judge in Chapter 9 views Ho Chi Minh as 'a leader with a sophisticated knowledge of the world and an expansive mental map'; Brown emphasizes that 'education and later travel made Nehru a truly international man, with a clear geographical understanding of the world and the interconnections between different regions'; Clive Foss in Chapter 12 points to Castro's increasingly ambitious actions in Latin America and Africa; and Laura James in Chapter 11 shows the way in which Nasser grew into the role of playing off the superpowers in pursuit of his regional ambitions.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, neither Truman nor Stalin initially saw the Cold War in truly global terms. Indeed Radchenko emphasizes that Stalin was preoccupied largely with areas on the Soviet Union's borders, and that regions like Africa and Latin America 'practically did not exist' on his mental map. Casey stresses that Truman was often out of step with his key advisers because of his reluctance to support anti-communist regimes like Jiang Jieshi in Taiwan or Franco in Spain. Not until the 1950s and 1960s, when Khrushchev, Kennedy and Johnson took over did the superpowers' field of vision expand. Then, as Preston shows in Chapter 13, the United States entered an era of 'globalized national security'; while, as Uhl points out in Chapter 14, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev's leadership equally saw the Cold War in global terms, and was also prepared to gamble dangerously with the threat potential which nuclear and missile technology placed in its hands.

Ideology was one reason why these later leaders were more inclined to view the whole world as a Cold War battleground. Of course, the Cold War was always a struggle between two political ideologies – communism and capitalism. For leaders like Władysław Gomułka or Mao Zedong ideology gave shape to their whole attitude towards politics, filling the gaps created by their lack of experience or exposure to other alternatives. Thus, as Anita Prażmowska points out, Gomułka was totally committed to the socialist model and had absolutely 'no understanding of the capitalist mode of production'. Likewise Yafeng Xia illustrates how ideology rather than experience heavily influenced Mao Zedong's mental map, for Mao, while steeped in Marxist literature, had little experience of the world beyond China's borders.

Different forms of ideology also heavily influenced many leaders' views of the Cold War enemy. In Chapter 5, for instance, Jonathan Wright demonstrates that Konrad Adenauer's perception of the ever-present danger posed by 'Soviet Russia' was the 'magnetic North' of his mental map, giving his 'policy an unusual clarity'. For Adenauer, Soviet expansionism was a product of panslavism as well as communism, endowing his hostility with a cultural and even racial quality which mirrored that of Stalin's fear of Germany. Truman, likewise, was 'always predisposed to distrust the USSR', not least because of his distaste for the internal nature of Stalinist rule. But ideological and cultural differences could create distaste for allies too: witness de Gaulle's anti-Americanism or Mao's fractious relationship with the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, even in the Cold War ideology was not always central. As Sophie Quinn-Judge points out, Ho Chi Minh, though concerned

with social justice, was attracted by communist ideology principally as a way to achieve his nationalist goals: the removal of the French imperialists from Indochina. Moreover, as Brown shows, Nehru, although convinced that imperialism was an outgrowth of capitalism, was not a rigid socialist, but rather a non-doctrinaire believer in trying to provide 'the six basic necessities of life for his compatriots – food, clothing, housing, healthcare, education and employment'. Similarly, as Laura James describes, Nasser was initially anti-British but not anti-American and indeed was popularly known as 'Colonel Jimmy'. Even more strikingly, Sergey Radchenko's Stalin was obsessed, first and foremost, with security after the Second World War; and he defined security in a very traditional – non-Marxist – manner: as 'a geographical concept', with the domination, control or annexation of territory the best way to make the USSR safe from a future invasion.

Even within the two ideological camps, moreover, tension frequently erupted. As Perović argues, the Tito–Stalin clash stemmed largely from a struggle for power. The Yugoslavs supported the Soviet Union's new order in Eastern Europe, he writes, 'but they had no intention of retreating from their plans to establish Yugoslavia as the dominant Balkan power. If the Yugoslav leadership recognized the Soviet Union as the undisputed leader of the socialist world, they envisaged for themselves the same role on a regional scale.' It was a struggle that prefigured the later Mao–Khrushchev clash, and demonstrated the possibility of stunning Cold War realignments, but it was by no means the only element of complexity in the Cold War system. Non-alignment was a route travelled by Tito in the aftermath of his break with the USSR. And he found sympathetic partners in Nehru and Nasser, whose maps rejected capitalism and imperialism but who were also deeply uncomfortable simply parroting the communist line. For all three, non-alignment provided an attractive perspective on the Cold War map, apparently distancing them from the central conflict and increasing their bargaining power, though each found in practice that their freedom of manoeuvre remained constrained by the system.

At the same time, the role of ideology also has to be qualified by reference to another dimension. Historians tend to think of ideology in national or global terms: it is a big unifying glue that ties together those living in one country (i.e. the American ideology) or those joined to a cosmopolitan movement (i.e. the communist ideology). But just as all politics have a local element, so mental maps can also spring partly from the particular region where a leader was raised. Harry Truman, for instance, was the archetypal 'man from Independence', Missouri,

whose views and attitudes were typical of the American Midwest. Or, as Jonathan Wright emphasizes, Konrad Adenauer was heavily influenced by his upbringing in 'a minority culture', that of Germany's Catholic Rhineland.

Did these mental maps matter? Counterfactual history, for all its pitfalls, offers a way of thinking about this thorny problem, particularly as the emergence of some of the leaders discussed below was not preordained. What would have happened had President Franklin D. Roosevelt lived, or if he had stuck with Henry Wallace as his vice-president rather than accepting the relatively unknown and inexperienced Harry Truman? What if Prime Minister Clement Attlee had maintained his initial preference and appointed Hugh Dalton, rather than Ernest Bevin, as British foreign secretary? In both instances, a different emphasis, at the very least, would have been placed on, in the US case, the reconstruction of Germany, and, in the British case, policy towards Palestine. But other instances are more difficult to judge. Implicit in Andrew Preston's chapter, for instance, is the impressive degree of consistency between Kennedy and Johnson, which suggests that Kennedy's assassination on 22 November 1963 was not the pivotal moment that historians often see, for the basic reason that broader global changes were exerting a powerful influence on the minds of these two very different men.

Although some leaders discussed below remained in power into the 1970s and 1980s, this volume ends in 1968, which itself suggests that we must be careful in the weight we attach to the role of individual mental maps in explaining key historical outcomes. For 1968 is a useful endpoint, because it marked the start of a new era of the Cold War – a period of 'maximalist' détente, of top-level summitry, of arms control agreements and ultimately the Helsinki accords, followed swiftly by a renewed bout of tension in Africa, Afghanistan and Central America.[5] But by the same token 1968 saw remarkably little change in top-level leadership, with the important exception of the United States, where stalemate in Vietnam helped to destroy Johnson's political career and pave the way for Richard M. Nixon's election. Elsewhere, however, the likes of Mao, Tito, Castro and Leonid Brezhnev (who ousted Khrushchev in October 1964) had to develop new mental maps to deal with a rapidly changing international system, not to mention mounting domestic pressures for change.[6] And even Nixon adopted a 'new' persona, shedding his Cold Warrior mask for a willingness to conclude deals with the erstwhile 'Red' menace. These, though, are themes we have reserved for the third volume of our mental maps trilogy.

Notes

1. S. Casey and J. Wright, eds, *Mental Maps in the Era of Two World Wars* (Basingstoke, 2008), xii–xiv.
2. For the application of this method to one region, see Judith M. Brown, ' "Life Histories" and the History of Modern South Asia', *American Historical Review*, 114 (2009): 587–95.
3. D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation. My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969).
4. O. A. Westad, 'The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century', in M. P. Leffler and O. A. Westad, eds, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War,* vol. I, *Origins* (Cambridge, 2010), 9.
5. The term 'maximalist' détente is from M. Bowker and P. Williams, *Superpower Détente: A Reappraisal* (London, 1988), 7, 27.
6. For a controversial, and stimulating, account of these developments, see J. Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, 2003).

1
Joseph Stalin

Sergey Radchenko

'In the hall way we stopped before a map of the world on which the Soviet Union was coloured in red. Stalin waved his hand over the Soviet Union and exclaimed, "They will never accept the idea that so great a space should be red, never, never!" '[1] So Milovan Djilas, a Yugoslav communist, recalled his meeting with the Soviet leader in early June 1944. The contours of victory in the most devastating war the world had ever seen were already discernible. Much of Europe and the Far East lay in ruins. In less than a year the Third Reich would lie prostrate; it was only briefly outlived by the Japanese Empire. The Allies were planning for the post-war world. Maps had to be redrawn, and realities accepted. The basic fact of 1945 was that the Soviet Union was unrivalled in Eurasia in raw military power. Soviet armies were to subdue Eastern Europe in a series of bloody but overpowering offensives. The strength of Soviet occupation was a trump card to force a post-war settlement on Stalin's terms; whether the British and the Americans accepted these terms was practically immaterial: they would have to bow to the inevitable Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.

Three years earlier the Wehrmacht stood at the gates of Moscow. Behind it were routed Soviet armies, burning cities and ravaged countryside. Stalin had hoped for a different war, a war in the West, not in the East, a war the Soviet Union would have enjoyed from the sidelines. The signing of the Soviet–German Non-aggression Pact on 23 August 1939 was a masterpiece of Stalin's personal diplomacy: now he could observe the war between Germany and the West from the sidelines. While their armies dwindled in mutual slaughter in the West, Stalin would build up Soviet security in the East, augmenting forces and bolstering defensive and offensive capabilities in anticipation of an impending showdown on Soviet terms. Unlike ideals of collective

security, unsuccessfully championed by the former Soviet commissar for foreign affairs Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet–German Pact directly contributed to Soviet security by beefing up the Soviet buffer zone in Eastern Europe.

Security for Stalin was a geographical concept: occupied territory afforded strategic depth in case of a military conflict, the much-needed kilometres to fall back upon, hold the advancing enemy, regroup and turn the tides of war. The further Moscow or Leningrad were from the borders, the better for Soviet security. By the same token, the closer Soviet tanks and airplanes were to the industrial heartland of Europe, the worse the chances of a potential enemy, the shorter the war, the sweeter the victory. Division of spheres of influence with Germany allowed the Soviet Union, in a matter of months, to occupy eastern Poland, the Baltic states, a sizeable chunk of Romania, and a stretch of territory at the Soviet–Finnish border, although in the last case only after a difficult, bitter war against Finland. These territories were simply annexed by the Soviet Union with German acquiescence, but Stalin's appetite was greater than that.

Hitler's hopes to divert Soviet attention away from Europe, towards British India and the Indian Ocean, fell on deaf ears. It was not that Stalin did not care about India; simply, he had more immediate, pressing interests in Europe. His key aims were to improve the Soviet Union's geopolitical position in the north, by annexing Finland and so to become the master of the Baltic Sea, and in the south, by assuring Soviet control of the Turkish Straits, the entrance to the Black Sea. Germany was not particularly forthcoming on either of these two points, nor was Hitler enthused by Stalin's proposal to send Soviet forces to Bulgaria, or to be consulted about the ultimate fate of Hungary and Romania.[2] Germany's invasion of the USSR in June 1941 wiped out almost overnight Soviet gains of the previous months but not Stalin's territorial ambitions. No sooner was Germany defeated than Eastern Europe was back on the menu, and now Stalin's bargaining position was incomparably stronger.

'Stalin said on many occasions that Russia wins wars but cannot use the fruits of victory', recalled former Soviet commissar for foreign affairs Vyacheslav Molotov – 'The Russians fight wonderfully but cannot conclude peace; they are outsmarted; [they are] not given enough.'[3] 'Enough' was a flexible concept: where did vital security interests give place to extravagant demands? Stalin's early post-war strategy was to take as much as he could carry in geopolitical terms. His demands included a security belt in Eastern Europe on a far grander scale

than anything possible under the Soviet–German Non-aggression Pact, although this was a difference of extent rather than of essence. Historians disagree as to whether Stalin intended at the outset to 'Sovietise' the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, or was forced to do so by the contingencies of the Cold War.[4] My reading of the evidence would strongly favour the former explanation, although insisting that Stalin had blueprints for communization of Eastern Europe would not do justice to the complexity of internal conditions in each country, or to the variations in Stalin's approach in each case.

The Germans and the Slavs

The German question was central to Stalin's post-war planning in Europe. His understanding of this question was heavily influenced by notions more akin to social Darwinism than Marxism. Germany was dangerous because it was populated by capable, industrious, well-organized and militant people. 'I hate the Germans', Stalin said on one occasion. 'But hate should not prevent us from evaluating the Germans objectively. The Germans are a great people. Very good technical workers and organizers. Good, naturally brave soldiers. One cannot annihilate the Germans; they will remain.'[5] Not only would the Germans remain but, in Stalin's fatalistic view, they would also be prepared for another war in 15–20–25 – at most 30 – years, a war that would inevitably involve the USSR and other East European countries. The Soviet leader believed that Germany 'will continue to be dangerous for the Slavic world, because it sees it as an enemy'.[6] Ethnic division was not the only contradiction of Stalin's world but it was one of the more important ones: 'the capitalist world', he believed, 'is divided into two hostile blocks – democratic and fascist. The Soviet Union takes advantage of this in order to fight against the most dangerous [country] for the Slavs – Germany.'[7]

In the impending Slav–German conflict, several precautions were necessary to guarantee the Slavs' victory. First, Germany had to be kept weak, disarmed and occupied. Stalin looked forward to a post-war settlement on much harsher terms than that signed at Versailles in 1919. Versailles, Stalin believed, 'not only stimulated the idea of revenge, but also made this revenge possible', lacking as it did an enforcement mechanism. 'Any measures to restrain Germany', argued Stalin in a conversation with Churchill, 'will inevitably cause a feeling of revenge in Germany. The task is to prevent revenge.'[8] Stalin's solution was to de-industrialize Germany, dismantling its heavy industry, a solution

that, Stalin believed, was not only in the Soviet interests but, ultimately, also in the interests of the British and the American capitalists who would be only too eager to strangle German competition.

Stalin's views on the dismemberment of Germany were ambiguous and evolved over time. This idea was seriously considered in the months before the Third Reich's downfall and discussed in various forms between Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt. In principle, Stalin was not opposed (in fact, he mentioned the possibility of dismemberment as early as December 1941, during his meetings with the UK foreign secretary Anthony Eden).[9] However, the prospect of several German states did not allure him nearly as much as physical occupation of German territory. In the East, Stalin was more interested in outright annexation rather than dismemberment, evidenced in his insistence on the Soviet possession of Königsberg and revision of Polish borders (recreating an independent Polish state at Germany's expense). But this sort of trimming of Germany was not the same as dismemberment, and even here Stalin went by the principle 'quod licet Jovis non licet bovis', for he was very touchy about Western intentions with regard to the Ruhr, the Saar and the Rhineland, seeing their detachment or annexation by France as potentially detrimental to Soviet interests.

But did Stalin believe that the Allied occupation would eventually lead to the creation of two Germanies? The evidence is mixed. One chance remark by Stalin – in June 1945 – is at the root of the controversy: 'there will be two Germanys despite all the unity among the allies', he is known to have told a delegation of East German communists.[10] But if Stalin was so certain of the inevitable division of Germany, why did he strive, in 1946–47, towards a unified pro-Soviet Germany? Historian Norman Naimark argues that Stalin's initial intentions were to see a unified Germany in the Soviet sphere of influence.[11] Stalin's expectations of an eventual US withdrawal from Europe in the context of a deepening post-war crisis in the West could have made him think that a pro-Soviet Germany was within reach. The Marshall Plan ruined the Soviet leader's hopes in this regard, and he began to push for consolidation of his gains in Eastern Europe: the Cominform, Stalinization of Eastern Europe, the Czechoslovak coup and the Berlin crisis of 1948 are cases in point.

Another guarantee of Germany's weakness, and thereby of Soviet security, was the settlement of the Polish question on Soviet terms. Once again, the problem was in the geography. A military historian of a kind, Stalin was mindful of Poland's role as a 'corridor', through which Russia had been invaded in the past. He counted three such instances since 1812, once by Napoleon, and twice by the Germans: 'The Russians are

sick and tired of the fact that hordes of aggressors come through Poland', he argued on occasion.[12] Addressing this security dilemma required a 'pro-Soviet' Poland, which Stalin located a good deal further west of the old Polish borders. Of course, he was not about to give up the Polish territory which the Soviet Union occupied in 1939 for the sake of even a pro-Soviet Poland. The Allies accepted Poland's relocation to the West. Germany, whose territory was trimmed for the purpose, was in no position to protest.

> ... This is a turning point in our policy towards Poland. Up until the start of this war Poland and Russia have always been in a state of conflict ... One of the lessons of the war has been the realization that the Polish-Russian friendship is a guarantee of security for Poland and Russia. This has not only been understood by the ruling circles of Russia but also by the better Polish elements.[13]

Such was Stalin's line of argument in conversations with Western partners in 1944–45. The bottom line was to have London and Washington agree to have Poland run by the 'better Polish elements' and not by the representatives of the Polish émigré government in London. These 'better Polish elements' were communists who would now assume power with Soviet support and in the face of bitter Western complaints. Stalin manoeuvred and compromised to maintain a semblance of democracy; he also initially cautioned the Polish communists to take a slow road to communism. In the end what really mattered to him was not so much whether Poland was a communist country but that real power was in the hands of people of pro-Soviet orientation.

At one of his meetings with Polish visitors in October 1944, Stalin raised a toast: 'Long live the Slavs, headed by a democratic Poland, that should unite them in a great Slav union.'[14] Of course, he was just flattering the Poles: anything 'headed' by Poland was *a priori* unacceptable to Stalin in his dog-eat-dog perception of the world. But the idea of a 'great Slav union' was not a slip of the tongue. In fact, Stalin peddled such a union in his early post-war calculations as a measure of security against a future German menace. The probable parameters or projected membership of this ambitious union were never outlined with precision; what Stalin had in mind here was something like re-establishment of the traditional Russian tutelage over the East European people of Slavic stock, first and foremost among the South Slavs in the Balkans.

This was a fine aspiration except for a little difficulty: the Red Army did not liberate Yugoslavia. Belgrade was taken in October 1944 by

guerrilla forces fiercely loyal to the leader of the Yugoslav resistance movement, Josip Broz Tito. He was a communist, to be sure – in fact, a radical communist – but he was not Stalin's man. Tito enjoyed enormous popularity, and with him the Yugoslav Communist Party. The general election of November 1945 resulted in a landslide victory for his electoral bloc, the Popular Front – an almost unheard-of development in the Eastern European context. Tito, of course, deferred to Stalin on key questions of foreign policy – even when, as in the Trieste crisis of 1945 – doing so went against Yugoslavia's national interests (in his interpretation). But Tito's path to power afforded him a measure of independence from, and something like moral equality with Stalin. Therein lay a potential for Soviet–Yugoslav conflict.[15]

Tito's views about Slav brotherhood ran on a parallel track to Stalin's. The key pillar of this brotherhood was a federation of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. The Bulgarians did not mind this scenario but there were different views in Belgrade and Sofia about the set-up of such a federation. Tito offered his neighbours a role in the federation on par with other constituent republics of Yugoslavia. Sofia, naturally, pushed for a greater share of influence in the state-to-be. Stalin sided with Bulgaria in this question and reprimanded the Yugoslavs for taking advantage of Bulgaria's post-war weakness: 'Do not create an impression that somebody wants to swallow the Bulgarians', he cautioned – 'we should accept the principle of dualism as the basis for unification, creating a dual state following the model of Austria-Hungary.' Stalin's insistence on 'dualism' was a consequence of his apprehension of a Yugoslav-led Balkan federation. An Austro–Hungarian scenario would allow the Soviet leader to check Tito's influence in the region.

The Yugoslav–Bulgarian union was never achieved. Stalin's quarrel with Tito resulted in Yugoslavia's excommunication from the socialist camp. This quarrel was to some extent a product of Tito's overzealousness in relations with both Bulgaria and Albania. Stalin was furious that he had not been consulted about the discussions between Belgrade and Sofia on the question of forming a federation. In February 1948, Stalin summoned both the Yugoslavs and the Bulgarians to talks in the Kremlin. The Bulgarian leader Georgi Dimitrov was forced to kowtow and admit his mistakes. But the real culprit – Tito – refused to attend the summons. Stalin required no other demonstration of Belgrade's disloyalty. The Soviet–Yugoslav split made Stalin postpone the plans for a Balkan union. 'Now this idea seems inconceivable and should not become a reality because Yugoslavia is not a democratic state', he argued in November 1949. The idea could be revived in the future – 'If the

recent regime in Yugoslavia falls down soon.' Then, Stalin told the Albanian leader Enver Hoxha, 'it is a good idea for Albania to become part of this future-to-be federal union, Bulgaria first, then Albania. But first, Tito's regime has to be fought against fiercely.'[16]

On 28 March 1945, at a reception for a Czechoslovak delegation in the Kremlin, Stalin offered a vivid exposition of his views on post-war Slavic unity:

> Presently there is a lot of talk about Slavophilism and Slavophiles. We are often compared to the old Slavophiles of the tsarist times. This is incorrect. The old Slavophiles, for example, Aksakov and others, called for the unification of all Slavs under the Russian tsar. They did not understand that this was a harmful and unrealizable idea. The Slavic peoples have different social and ethnographic traditions, different cultural levels and different socio-political set-ups. The geographic situation of the Slavic peoples also prevents unification. We, the new Slavophiles-Leninists, Slavophiles-Bolsheviks, communists, stand not for the unification, but for the alliance of the Slavic peoples. We think that regardless of the differences in political and social conditions, regardless of the local and ethnographic differences, all the Slavs must be allied against our common enemy, the Germans. The whole history of the Slavs teaches that we need this Alliance for the defence of Slavdom.[17]

Slavophile Bolshevism was a remarkable contradiction of terms, which can perhaps be reconciled within the framework of what Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov famously characterized as Stalin's 'revolutionary imperial paradigm'. However, I do not see anything particularly revolutionary in Stalin's approach to the question. Class struggle had no place in his ethnographical exposition. Instead, Stalin repeatedly emphasized the importance of ethnic ties in the post-war security arrangement – an idea, which was not, after all, that far from pan-Slavism of old. The most important common theme in these two approaches was Moscow's unquestionable hegemony in the pan-Slavic movement. Any independent initiatives in this respect were intolerable for Stalin, as the Yugoslavs and Bulgarians found out very quickly. For the same reason Stalin was against any integration of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, even if on an anti-German basis. In fact, even as he called for pan-Slavic unity, Stalin encouraged nationalist sentiment in Eastern Europe through measures such as population exchanges. Furthermore, the idea of Slavic brotherhood did not blind Stalin to the

importance of other non-Slavic nations, in Soviet security calculations. In this sense, Slavophile Bolshevism was only a convenient excuse to channel Soviet influence in post-war Eastern Europe.

Asia in Stalin's post-war calculations

At Yalta in February 1945 Stalin and Roosevelt agreed that the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan two to three months after Germany's capitulation. The price exacted: bases in China and the Soviet occupation of South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands. The Soviet Union declared war on Japan on 8 August, two days after Hiroshima. Stalin opted for an early entry, fearing that the atomic bombardment of Japan would end the war before the Soviet army made the required territorial gains in the Far East.[18] Meeting very limited resistance, Soviet forces advanced rapidly in Korea, Manchuria and Inner Mongolia and occupied Sakhalin and the Kuriles chain. Stalin hoped that the Soviets would also capture Hokkaido from Japan but the planned landing was curbed after US President Harry S. Truman registered strong disagreement with the idea. Even Stalin's appetite had its limits: he did not want to jeopardize US recognition of gains he had already made.

But Stalin's failure to occupy Hokkaido had undesirable consequences from the Soviet perspective of the post-war settlement in the Far East. Japan was placed under American military control and so effectively beyond the Soviet reach. The Soviet representative on the Allied Control Council, General Kuz'ma Derevianko, was in no position to challenge Douglas MacArthur's authority in Japan. Stalin bitterly complained about the situation. This issue was discussed in his meetings with the US ambassador Averell Harriman in October 1945. 'In point of fact the Soviet Union had become an American satellite in the Pacific. This was a role it could not accept. It was not being treated as an Ally. The Soviet Union would not be a satellite of the United States in the Far East or elsewhere.' Stalin proposed that the Soviet Union leave Japan altogether rather than be there as a 'piece of furniture'.[19] Furniture or not, Stalin knew that he had misjudged US post-war intentions. It did not dawn on him overnight, but came as a gradual realization: the Americans were in Asia to stay, as they were in Europe. That required a re-thinking of Soviet policy.

Much as Germany was Stalin's obsession in Europe, so Japan had been the object of his fears in East Asia. Soviet relationships with other regional players were ordered to address the growing security problem posed by Japan's relentless expansionism in the 1930s. The most

reliable platform in military terms was, of course, the Mongolian People's Republic, which had been in the Soviet orbit since 1921. In 1936, the Soviet Union stationed military forces in Mongolia, then still *de jure* Chinese territory, by a special agreement of specifically anti-Japanese purpose. These forces proved their use in the summer of 1939 in the battle of Khalkhyn Gol – a border engagement effectively won by the USSR.

At the same time, the Soviets arranged a non-aggression treaty with Guomindang China in 1937, a major breakthrough considering the sorry state of relations between the Republic of China and the USSR since Chiang Kai-shek's anti-communist purges a decade earlier. Moscow supplied the Guomindang with military equipment, and Soviet pilots even engaged Japanese forces in the opening battles of the Sino–Japanese War. Importantly, Stalin forced the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), then in deep retreat in Yan'an, to adopt the 'united front' strategy with the Guomindang. Proper ideological justification was, of course, immediately offered, but it hardly obscured the obvious: Stalin wanted a strong Chinese government to resist Japanese encroachment so as to afford a measure of security to the USSR in the East as it prepared for a war in the West.

It is in the context of Stalin's efforts to build up a buffer against Japanese incursion that one must understand his machinations in Xinjiang in the 1930s and the 1940s. One may, of course, draw parallels here with the Great Game of the nineteenth century, and in its time Soviet activities at China's north-western fringe inspired accounts of exactly such an orientation (e.g. the writings of Peter Fleming, etc.).[20] A Great Game, to be sure, was underway but Stalin's designs in the heart of Central Asia were targeted against potential Japanese moves in the same area. In the late 1930s, Stalin counted on the loyalty of Sheng Shicai, a Manchu warlord, nominally under the Republic of China's authority but really a law unto himself. Sheng received generous aid from the USSR, both in materiel and in specialists, and in turn pledged a pro-Soviet orientation and even asked to be made secretly a member of the Soviet Communist Party during his visit to the USSR in 1938. That Sheng Shicai's credentials were untainted by Marxism–Leninism did not worry the Soviet dictator. Ideology was the last thing he worried about when it came to channelling Soviet influence in Asia.

Stalin's manipulations backfired when, after the German invasion of the USSR, Sheng Shicai abandoned his ally and sanctioned anti-Soviet pogroms in Urumqi. Soviet influence in Xinjiang collapsed overnight. On the other hand, the conclusion of the Soviet–Japanese

non-aggression treaty in April 1941 ushered in an era of relative peace for the USSR in the Far East, while the war with Germany forced Stalin to shelve his plans for extending Soviet influence in Central Asia and the Far East until better times.

Soviet involvement in Xinjiang intensified in 1944–45, as the war in Europe drew to a close. As in Europe, Stalin's post-war designs in Asia were premised on the creation of as wide a buffer belt as possible. Xinjiang – by and large an under-populated and unapproachable expanse of lifeless desert, barred from China by a wall of towering mountains – was just the sort of buffer Stalin needed to protect the vulnerable underbelly of Soviet Central Asia. Now that his flirtations with Sheng Shicai failed to deliver, Stalin played his trump card – the national question. In 1944–45 the Soviet leader extended political and military support to the Uighurs and the Kazakhs who staged an anti-Chinese uprising in a bid to create an independent republic of Eastern Turkistan. By the summer of 1945 the rebels, aided by Soviet troops and with Soviet air support, captured much of northern Xinjiang and the Altai district from the Chinese forces, and threatened the capital city of Urumqi.[21]

Then, in a remarkable volte-face, Stalin abruptly changed his plans for northern China. The turning point was once again Yalta, where Roosevelt agreed to certain Soviet gains in China after the war with Japan – to be precise, a guarantee of the status quo of Outer Mongolia, the Soviet possession of the Manchurian railroad, long sold to the Japanese, and military presence on the Liaodong peninsula. These concessions were extremely important to Stalin. For one thing, Port Arthur, a warm-water port at the tip of Liaodong peninsula, which projected like a sabre into the Yellow Sea, was a *sine qua non* of any serious effort to defend Manchuria and northern China from an overseas incursion. The railroad was, of course, essential to supply the Soviet forces at Port Arthur. This road was in fact built by the Russians at the turn of the century, precisely to supply Port Arthur, which had been a Russian military base until St Petersburg's defeat in the Russo–Japanese War of 1904–05. Now Stalin had the unique opportunity to take back what Nicholas II had lost to Japan – and with US acquiescence!

China was not a party to the Yalta discussions but had to abide by the results. In July and August 1945, the president of the Chinese Executive Yuan Song Ziwen, held talks in Moscow with Stalin to conclude the Sino–Soviet treaty of alliance in order to set up a framework for the implementation of the Yalta decisions on China. These talks offer an excellent opportunity to judge the outlines of Stalin's mental map of

Asia, and the Soviet role in the region. The biggest obstacle to agreement was the status of Mongolia, for which Stalin demanded China's recognition as an independent state. In one conversation with Song, Stalin laid out the reasons: 'Outer Mongolia is not wealth to you or us, but geographical position is important . . . Outer Mongolia is question of defence. Siberian rail can be cut off from Outer Mongolia and whole Siberia is gone. Japan tried. We cannot station troops on Chinese territory. It is graver question than Port Arthur (shows map).'[22]

In view of China's resistance to the prospect of an independent Mongolia, Stalin put out a threat: the Mongols were nationalists, he said, and the sentiment for unification in Outer and Inner Mongolia was strong. If China resisted, it could be faced with a much stronger, bigger, independent Mongolia. It was not an idle threat. Stalin had encouraged pan-Mongolian sentiments and the prime minister of the unrecognized republic, Khorloogiin Choibalsan, was full of anticipation of the coming war against Japan, which would have given him an opportunity to unite with the Inner Mongolian banners still under China's control. But Mongolia was only part of the problem. Chiang Kai-shek was no doubt aware of the extent of Soviet involvement in Xinjiang (although Stalin made a surprised face every time he was asked about it). Soviet invasion of Manchuria – then only a matter of time – was also fraught with undesirable consequences in the absence of a treaty regulating the Soviet presence. Most importantly, Chiang's nemesis – the CCP – enjoyed Soviet support, and that was a major problem for the Chinese president in light of the foreseeable collapse of the 'united front'.

Chiang capitulated and surrendered Mongolia but with conditions: no Soviet meddling in the affairs of Xinjiang, and no Soviet support for the CCP. Stalin agreed. A broad accord with the internationally recognized government of China, which guaranteed concrete Soviet gains and had implicit US blessing through the Yalta agreements, outweighed any combination of ad hoc arrangements involving unreliable warlords, ethnic insurgencies or even self-proclaimed communists. In the following weeks Stalin curbed Soviet support for the Xinjiang separatists and forced Choibalsan to abandon hopes for Great Mongolia at China's expense. Although the Soviet Union maintained a measure of support for the CCP, Stalin was in favour of a compromise between the Guomindang and the CCP, and a coalition government in China, which would have left him with means to influence the Chinese internal political situation through the CCP.[23]

The changing international situation forced Stalin to rethink once again his policies in Asia, first and foremost in China. Some of these

changes were the result of deepening Soviet–US contradictions or – it may be said – the beginning of polarization of Asia in line with the logic of the Cold War. Other changes, by contrast, stemmed from local contradictions, none as serious as the raging Civil War in China. Stalin was slow to take sides unequivocally, not least because he did not believe in the inevitability of the CCP's victory against the more numerous, much better equipped armies of the Guomindang. But the communists won, and by 1949 Stalin had to ponder once again on the future Soviet role in China, the nature of the Soviet relationship with the CCP and the meaning of this relationship for the broader Soviet strategy in the Cold War.

Stalin was willing to make some allowances for the Chinese communists. For example, he readily offered to withdraw the Soviet troops from Port Arthur, because the agreement he had squeezed out of Chiang Kai-shek in 1945 had not been 'equitable'. Stalin later found a pretext (the Korean War) to keep the troops where they were but, on the other hand, Mao was not particularly demanding on that point, arguing time and again that the Soviet military presence on the Liaodong peninsula was in the interests of China's security. The Soviet leader was also willing to permit greater Chinese involvement in the running of the Manchurian railroad; on the other hand, he forced the Chinese to grant the Soviets a right to transport troops in Manchuria in wartime (while resisting reciprocal requests from China).[24]

Stalin categorically endorsed the CCP's control of Xinjiang, and, in the spirit of his ruthless ethnopolitics, even urged the Chinese leaders to increase the percentage of the Han Chinese population in the region to 30 per cent from its (then) 5 per cent to strengthen border security and oppose British intrigues in Xinjiang: 'They [the British] can activate the Muslims, including the Indian ones, to continue the civil war against the communists, which is undesirable, for there are large deposits of oil and cotton in Xinjiang, which China needs badly.'[25] In the same spirit, Stalin urged Mao to consolidate Chinese control in Tibet by building a road and bringing in troops to keep an eye on the hostile lamas who, as he put it, 'are selling themselves to anyone – America, Britain, India – anyone who will pay the higher price'.[26] By contrast, Stalin rebuffed Mao's approaches on Mongolia (the Chinese leader sought reunification with the break-away republic). He also obtained Mao's agreement to exclude third-country nationals from Xinjiang and Manchuria as a measure of guarantee of Soviet influence in the buffer belt. Thus, there was a constant quality to Soviet geopolitical interests in the region despite the remarkable political

transformation of China and the conclusion of the formation of the Sino–Soviet bloc.

The third player in this security arrangement was, of course, the United States, and not Japan as formerly. The creation of the Sino–Soviet bloc was an act of polarization of international politics in the Far East; in Stalin's mind, the rationale for this bloc was intimately connected to his Cold War imperatives. China received certain responsibilities in this new arrangement – the task of leading the revolutionary struggle in Asia just as the Soviet Union led the world revolutionary struggle. In early 1949 the Soviets advised Mao Zedong that he should form a 'bureau' of communist parties of East Asia, headed by the CCP, which would include, for a start, the Chinese, the Japanese and the Korean parties, but later expand its membership.[27] This was the kind of subordination Stalin had in mind when he advised North Korea's Kim Il Sung to seek Mao Zedong's approval of his plan to invade South Korea, or told Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh to rely on the Chinese support in his national liberation struggle, not come asking for Soviet help.[28]

Of course, this sort of attitude did not prevent Stalin from sanctioning Kim Il Sung's attack on South Korea without prior consultation with the Chinese, or forcing an unrealistic revolutionary strategy on the Japanese Communist Party, nor did Stalin desist from advising nationalist movements, from India to Indonesia, about the conduct of their struggle. It is interesting that Stalin tended to downplay the significance of the Chinese experience for these Asian countries. Mao Zedong, Stalin liked to remind listeners, only scored victory in the Chinese Civil War once his peasant armies abandoned the stronghold of Yan'an and moved to Manchuria, where they had a firm 'rear', the friendly Soviet Union. India, for example, did not have such a rear to fall back upon, and was also much more industrially developed than China, so Stalin advised the Indian communists to combine guerrilla warfare with workers' strikes in the cities.[29] The same advice was proffered to the Indonesian communists.[30]

In any case, revolution in India, if and when it was accomplished, would have to be a bourgeois–democratic revolution, an agrarian revolution, an anti-feudal revolution but not a socialist revolution. 'Questions of revolution are solved in stages', Stalin would say – 'it is impermissible to mix up all the stages.' The first task of national liberation movements, in Stalin's view, was anti-imperialism but, once again, not anti-Americanism. Thus, Stalin called on the Indonesian communists to create a 'national front' 'aimed at expelling the Dutch imperialists with their military forces, nationalization of their property and

declaration of independence for Indonesia'.[31] In the meantime, the British and the Americans were to be left alone in Indonesia, so that enemies may be eliminated one by one. The same applied to India, except there Stalin singled out the British as the object of the 'national front'. He also advised the Communist Party of India to demand India's reunification with Pakistan and Ceylon, calling the division of India 'a swindler's trick, organized by the British'.[32] Stalin did not demonstrate any awareness of the importance of religious and ethnic tensions on the subcontinent, whether because he had an ideological blind spot in this respect, or simply did not know enough about the local conditions in South Asia.

By contrast, Stalin's interest in the Near East was more than academic. Here, not unlike the British and Americans, Stalin set his sights on Iranian oil. In September–October 1944, Soviet representatives asked Tehran to grant the Soviet Union an oil concession in northern Iran. Moscow's probes were rebuffed. Embittered, Stalin played the ethnic card. After all, northern Iran was home to a large population of Azeris who shared ethnic and linguistic ties with Soviet Azerbaijan and resented Tehran's ruthless assimilation policies. As in the case of Xinjiang, by supplying weapons, training and economic aid to ethnic insurgents in Iran, Stalin intended to establish an independent state of Azerbaijan of a clear pro-Soviet orientation, possibly (actually, quite likely) followed by its accession to the Soviet Union. Stalin's trump card in 1945 was the presence of Soviet troops in northern Iran, deployed there several years earlier by a wartime agreement with the Allies.[33]

Under close Soviet supervision, the Azerbaijani Democratic Party (ADP) captured power in northern Iran in December 1945. It is interesting, though by no means surprising, that Stalin's support for an ethnic-based but certainly not Marxist–Leninist ADP took precedence over Soviet investment in the pan-Iranian People's Party (Tudeh) of the Marxist–Leninist orientation, whose leadership complained to the Soviets on account of being thus sidelined. In order to consolidate his gains in northern Iran, Stalin resisted a military pullout, triggering a showdown with the West. In March 1946, facing the prospect of a confrontation with his erstwhile allies, the Soviet leader suddenly reversed course and ordered a full withdrawal (completed in May 1946). In return, Stalin obtained Tehran's promise of oil rights (never realized). Robbed of Moscow's support, the Azeri insurgence collapsed in December 1946. Stalin's great game of the geopolitics of oil was a complete fiasco and one of the first serious setbacks to Soviet expansionism in the early Cold War.

The other major setback was Turkey. Here, the forbidden fruits were the Turkish Straits, connecting the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Stalin had been dissatisfied with the 1936 Montreux Convention, which granted Turkey the right to control the strategic passageway. After the conclusion of the Soviet–Nazi Non-aggression Pact he unsuccessfully attempted to revise the convention with Hitler's acquiescence, citing historical grievances: 'All events from the Crimean war of the last century to the landing of foreign forces in Crimea and Odessa in 1918 and 1919 speak to the fact that the security of the Black Sea coastal regions of the USSR cannot be provided for without resolving the straits question.'[34] Stalin returned to the same question during the post-war negotiations with the Allies, and put pressure on the Turks by issuing a set of territorial demands, which would have resulted in large sections of eastern Turkey being sliced off and 'returned' to the Soviet republics of Armenia and Georgia. Molotov recalled years later: 'In his last years Stalin became a little bit arrogant and in foreign policy I had to demand what Miliukov used to demand – the Dardanelles! Stalin: "Come on, push! As joint ownership." I told him: "They won't give them." – "But you must demand!"'[35] Stalin's probes predictably heightened Turkey's sense of insecurity, paving way to the country's close alignment with the West and eventual NATO membership. Here, as in Iran, Stalin overplayed his hand.[36]

There is a wealth of scholarship about Stalin's post-war policies towards Europe. His policies towards Asia are less well-understood. Here, complex factors were in play. Stalin's core interests were confined to the lengthy Soviet perimeter in Asia: Turkey, Iran, China, Mongolia, North Korea – countries all in the immediate proximity of the USSR and so vital to Soviet security. Yet, it is not fair to say that Stalin was oblivious of the situation in more remote parts of Asia, or that he simply did not care about national liberation movements in the colonial and semi-colonial world, a charge later levelled at Stalin by Nikita Khrushchev. However, it is true that his interest in what we would later call the 'Third World' was a purely academic one, an exercise in theoretical analysis. For Stalin, the Cold War was not the global phenomenon it would later become for Khrushchev, nor was it a struggle for the liberation of the world from the double yoke of colonialism and American imperialism. It was primarily an issue of maintaining Soviet security interests in the face of US pressure, and these interests lay much closer to home than India or Indonesia, let alone Africa or Latin America – these practically did not exist on Stalin's mental map of the world.

Geography and warfare

At the time of Germany's surrender the Soviet army possessed colossal might, both in sheer numbers – over 500 infantry divisions numbering about 6.5 million men – and in weapons.[37] In January 1945, the Soviets boasted almost 13 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns, over 100 thousand artillery pieces and 15.5 thousand military aircraft – several times the German strength.[38] Although after the war the size of the Red Army was reduced through demobilization and restructuring, in the post-war years it had no competitors in Europe or Asia. This awe-inspiring assembly of manpower and firepower gave Stalin a peace of mind in the post-war months: he was convinced that a Third World War was unlikely in the immediate future. The only country really capable of waging a war against the USSR was the United States but, as Stalin said in November 1945, 'I am completely assured that there will be no war, it is rubbish. They are not capable of waging war against us.'[39]

Stalin's low assessment of the United States' ability or willingness to fight was an important element in his foreign policy moves, including, for example, his ill-considered decision to expel the Allies from West Berlin in 1948. The other notable miscalculation was Stalin's approval of Kim Il Sung's plans to attack South Korea on the premise that the United States would not intervene. The Inchon landing was a brutal shock to the Soviet leader but China's success in stemming and reversing the tide of the US offensive reassured him. 'The opinion arose in recent times that the United States is an invincible power and is prepared to initiate a third world war', he explained at a Soviet-bloc conference in January 1951. 'As it turns out, however, not only is the US unprepared to initiate a third world war, but is unable even to cope with a small war such as the one in Korea.'[40] Stalin also allegedly said: 'The current military power of the United States is not very great. For the time being, the Soviet camp therefore enjoys a distinct superiority.'[41]

It is interesting, however, that in 1951, perhaps for the first time since the end of the Second World War, Stalin began seriously to entertain the thought of a war with the United States. Perhaps the dual setbacks of the Berlin blockade and the Korean War had taught him that he had underestimated US resolve. Confident that he had time to prepare at least while the United States was bogged down in Korea, Stalin warned his Eastern European allies to use the breathing space to 'create modern and powerful armies that must be combat-ready by the end of the three-year period'. The documentary record is unclear as to whether Stalin had in mind a war of offence or defence in Europe; by one account, he

proposed nothing less than 'to grasp this unique opportunity to extend socialism throughout the whole of Europe'.[42] At a conference in January 1951, Stalin asked Soviet satellites to field 3 million men in the coming conflict. The Soviets were to do their part to supply Eastern Europe with modern military equipment: tanks, artillery and aircraft. Thus, Stalin imagined that the eventual Third World War would be won or lost on land, in a contest of land armies, as in the Second World War.

Stalin did not think that Hiroshima and Nagasaki changed the nature of warfare. 'Not atomic bombs, but armies decide wars', Stalin is known to have told a Polish Communist leader, Władysław Gomułka, in one of several private and public pronouncements on the subject of the A-bomb, which never did add up to anything like appreciation for the awesome destructive power of the new weapon.[43] But surely the problem was more complicated than that. If Stalin was so dismissive of atomic weapons, he would not have authorized an ambitious, breakneck-pace, tremendously expensive Soviet project to build the bomb in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a project of such high secrecy and urgency – it was simply known as 'Project Number One'. The A-bomb was in fact very important to Stalin, but not in the immediately obvious military sense.

The bomb was a symbol of status, an entry pass to the superpower club. For Stalin, what mattered was not so much the bomb's military effectiveness (here, he had very conservative estimates of what it could actually do) but its political significance. With the bomb, you either had it or you didn't. That is why in his meeting with the scientific head of the Soviet atomic project, Igor Kurchatov, on 25 January 1946, Stalin called for a 'crude' device: 'All great inventions were initially crude, as it was with the steam locomotive.' The successful Soviet nuclear test in August 1949 gave Stalin his very first 'locomotive'.[44] It did not matter that the United States was in possession of many more atomic bombs: the 'balance', which Stalin once said had been upset in Hiroshima, had now been restored.[45] 'The US has atomic power; we have that too', Stalin noted with satisfaction in January 1951.[46] The nature of warfare remained the same. Indeed, it was not until after Stalin's death that the Soviets conducted their first nuclear combat training, incorporated atomic warfare into their military doctrine and altogether abandoned Stalin's outmoded thesis about the inevitability of war as inapplicable to the reality of the nuclear age.

Stalin's inability to grasp the military significance of the nuclear bomb can be better understood in view of his incredibly persistent efforts to build an ocean-going navy. These efforts predated the Second World

War; in fact, it was in 1935 that Stalin made the decision to build massive battleships and heavy battle cruisers. Fantastic and completely unrealizable plans were drawn up, which would have made the USSR the world's strongest naval power in a decade, and work was even begun on four battleships of the Sovetskii Soiuz class, never to be completed. Why was it that Stalin, although he realized very well that the Soviet Union was a land power, embarked on a massive battleship construction programme? The answer is, of course, 'greatness' – he repeatedly stressed that in order to be a great power, one not only had to possess a great army but also a great navy. Russian historians who have assessed Stalin's plans in retrospect argue in this regard that 'possessing a strong battleship fleet at the time was as important for a great power as possessing atomic weapons after the war. Therefore, it is not surprising that Stalin saw the creation of battleships as the highest priority . . . '[47]

More surprisingly, after 1945 the Soviet battleship programme was reinstated in obvious disregard of the lessons of the Second World War, which underscored the importance of aviation and the relative uselessness of great battleships in warfare. Stalin's megalomania cannot fully explain this programme; clearly, he envisioned a military role for his big fleet. For example, the failure of Soviet efforts to impose their control on the Turkish Straits made it more imperative 'to have a big fleet, ten times more than now, so that we are able to firmly shut the Dardanelles', as the Soviet leader explained in March 1950.[48] Efforts to build heavy battle cruisers continued until 1953, when Stalin's death put an end to these ambitious plans. Stalin's successor, Khrushchev, fascinated by the power of missile technology, ridiculed extensive Soviet efforts to build 'floating coffins'. During his 1959 trip to the United States, Khrushchev dismissed his own flagship as 'good only for state visits . . . and as a missile target!'[49] Khrushchev's brave talk aside, Stalin's inexplicable love for battleships cost the Soviet Union a missed opportunity to invest where it really mattered – in aircraft carriers.[50]

Stalin's military strategy was sensibly rooted in the basic geographic fact: the Soviet Union was a land power. A large, well-trained and well-equipped land army was the Soviet leader's trump card in post-war settlements, the weightiest argument in the negotiations with neighbouring countries, and the most important guarantee of Soviet security. Stalin's policy of bufferization of the Soviet Union's European and Asian frontiers, in part abortive, in part successful, ultimately linked up with his military priorities and security interests. This does not mean that Soviet presence in Eastern Europe, or in Mongolia, or failed adventures in Iran and Xinjiang, came down to some requirement of Stalin's

military doctrine. There were often other variables in the equation, not least Stalin's ideological imperatives or great power pretensions. Some of these imperatives were in fact mutually reinforcing and, indeed, indistinguishable. Nevertheless, a juxtaposition of Stalin's mental map and his military priorities suggests a formidable capacity for strategic thinking – something later Soviet leaders notably lacked.

Conclusion

'[Stalin's] reception had maps on each wall', Molotov recalled. '...he really loved geographic maps; Asia was here, Europe there – all kinds of maps. We spent a lot of time [in front of them] stomping about.'[51] The war was over. Aged, tired Stalin, in late-night discussions with Molotov, or in cold solitude, pondered the subtleties of these cartographic representations of his world. He was not a frequent traveller. Save for precious few trips abroad and his summer retreats in the Caucasus, Stalin stayed put – in his Kremlin office or at one of his dachas just outside of Moscow. But the world he never saw was compartmentalized in his head in minute detail and with remarkable accuracy. This mental map was a point of reference for Stalin as he planned his post-war policies.

All world maps offer a distorted representation of the real world, a result of projection of three-dimensional surfaces onto a two-dimensional plane. Stalin's mental map of the world suffered from distortions of a different order: his interpretation of history, his ideological proclivities and his hardened *realpolitik*. On this map, some countries loomed larger than others: in 1945 Germany dwarfed all others in Europe; Japan appeared extraordinarily large in Asia. Within a few years, and somewhat unexpectedly, the United States replaced both as the Soviet nemesis in Europe and in Asia. Contrary to Stalin's early estimates, Washington defied geographic realities which had formerly constrained US involvement beyond the Western hemisphere. During the interwar years Stalin could have hoped to exploit the differences between his enemies in the East and in the West. Now, there was only one enemy on either side, and even much-hoped-for antagonisms between the United States and the United Kingdom failed to materialize in the form Stalin had expected. The early post-war years thus witnessed a readjustment of Stalin's mental map, a transition from a multipolar to a bipolar frame of reference.

This important change did not affect the logic of Soviet expansionism. Before the war and after the war Stalin sought to bolster Soviet security by building up an ever-expanding belt of buffer states along

the Soviet periphery. Thus, at the war's end, large tracts of territory were simply annexed by the USSR; but where outright annexation was either undesirable or impossible because of external or internal realities, Stalin sponsored 'friendly' regimes. 'If some country sees that it can grab or enslave another country, then it will do it . . . ', Stalin used to say. 'The weak are neither pitied nor respected. Only the strong are taken into account.'[52] This brutal maxim was fully acted upon in Eastern Europe. Stalin's mental map may have been much wider than that of the Athenian generals at the gates of Melos; his methods were about the same. Stalin's only regret about the contours of the post-war Soviet bloc was that his gains did not reach far enough or, as in the case of Yugoslavia, were sometimes unexpectedly reversed.

But it is wrong to perceive Stalin as some sort of a bull in a china shop. The Kremlin's post-war behaviour was bullish, to be sure, but Soviet policies were sophisticated. Stalin was fully cognizant of the socio-political complexities beyond the Soviet borders. He carefully manipulated ethnic sentiments, aided national liberation movements, bolstered communists or anti-communists as it served his aims. Soviet policy manoeuvres in Greece, eventual Soviet withdrawal from Iran and frequent policy reversals in China all point to Stalin's political skill and considerable flexibility – indeed, opportunism. Did Stalin win or lose as a result of the geopolitical reconfiguration of the post-war world? On the face of it, the Soviet Union had never been greater; never had Soviet influence extended so far in Europe or in Asia. But amid all the new-found security, the Soviet Union was fundamentally insecure. A menace to its neighbours, the Soviet Union existed in a state of perpetual hostile encirclement. It could not be otherwise in a world where security was measured in square miles of acquired territory. This profound paradox could not be resolved within the coordinates of Stalin's mental map.

Notes

1. M. Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (San Diego, c. 1990), 74.
2. For a detailed discussion of these issues, see materials of Vyacheslav Molotov's visit to Berlin in November 1940, in A. Iakovlev et al. (eds), *1941 god*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1998), 349–95.
3. F. Chuev, *140 besed s Molotovym: iz dnevnika F. Chueva* (Moscow, 1991), 78.
4. For a helpful overview of Soviet policies in Eastern Europe see Norman Naimark's chapter in M. P. Leffler and O. A. Westad (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 2010).
5. V. A. Malyshev, 'Proidet desiatok let, i eti vstrechi ne vosstanovish uzhe v pamiati. Dnevnik narkoma', *Istochnik*, no. 5 (1997), 127–28.

6. 'Notes of V. Kolarov from a meeting with I. Stalin', 28 January 1945. CDA (Sofia), f. 147 B, op. 2, ae. 1025, l. 1–6. Contributed by Jordan Baev and translated by Nedialka Douptcheva. The author would like to thank the Cold War International History Project (www.cwihp.org) for sharing this valuable document, and, of course, Jordan Baev for sharing it with the CWIHP. This and other conversations between Stalin and foreign leaders are due to appear in a forthcoming volume edited by Christian Ostermann, David Wolff and Vladislav Zubok.
7. Ibid.
8. Cited in O. Rzheshevskii, *Stalin i Cherchill'. Vstrechi, besedy, diskussii: dokumenty, kommentarii* (Moscow, 2004), 427.
9. Ibid., 39.
10. Cited in N. Naimark, *Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge and London, 1995), 258.
11. Ibid., 251.
12. T. V. Volokitina et al. (eds), *Vostochnaia Evropa v Dokumentakh Rossiiskikh Arkhivov, 1944–1953*, vol. 1 (Moscow and Novosibirsk, 1997), 39.
13. 'Entretien du 2 décembre 1944 entre J. Staline, président du Conseil des commissaires du peuple de l'U.R.S.S., et Ch. de Gaulle, président du Gouvernement provisoire de la République française', *Recherches internationales à la lumière du marxisme*, no. 12 (March–April 1959), 57.
14. A. Kochański (ed.), *Protokoły posiedzeń Biura Politycznego KC PPR 1944–1945* (Warsaw: ISP PAN, 1992), 30–37. Translated by Jan Chowaniec. The author would like to thank the Cold War International History Project (www.cwihp.org) for providing this document, and Jan Chowaniec for the translation.
15. For a more detailed treatment of Soviet–Yugoslav relations in the early postwar era, see Svetozar Rajak's chapter in Leffler and Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War.* See also Chapter 7 of this volume.
16. Conversation between Enver Hoxha and Joseph Stalin, November 1949. The Central Archives of the Party of Labor of Albania, Fund 14/AP-MPK(b)BS, File no. 20, Year 1949. The author is grateful to the Cold War International History Project (www.cwihp.org) for providing this valuable document.
17. Malyshev, 'Proidet desiatok let, i eti vstrechi ne vosstanovish uzhe v pamiati. Dnevnik narkoma', 127–28.
18. T. Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman and the Surrender of Japan* (Boston, 2005). The influence of Hiroshima on Stalin's decision to enter the war against Japan earlier rather than later is disputed by other historians, notably G. Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939–1945* (New Haven, 2006), 289.
19. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. VI (The British Commonwealth, the Far East, 1945) (Washington, DC, 1969), 789.
20. P. Fleming, *News from Tartary: A Journey from Peking to Kashmir* (New York, 1936).
21. For a thorough treatment of Soviet relations with Xinjiang, see V. A. Barmin, *Sintszian v sovetsko-kitaiskikh otnosheniiakh* (Barnaul, 1999).
22. 'Conversation between T.V. Soong and Joseph Stalin', 2 July 1945, Hoover Institution Archives, T.V. Soong papers, Box 68, Folder 6–9. The author is grateful to David Wolff for pointing his attention to these materials.

23. For the Soviet records of the 1945 negotiations, see A. Ledovskii, R. Mirovitskaia and V. Miasnikov (eds), *Russko-kitaiskie otnosheniia v XX veke*, vol. 4/2 (Moscow, 2000).
24. For a detailed treatment, see S. Radchenko and D. Wolff, 'New Evidence on the Mao-Stalin Relationship in 1947–1949', *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, no. 16 (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, Fall 2007/Winter 2008), 105–82.
25. Ibid., 171.
26. 'Stalin's Conversations with Chinese Leaders', *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Nos. 6–7 (Winter 1995/96), 4–29.
27. Radchenko and Wolff, 'New Evidence on the Mao-Stalin Relationship in 1947–1949', 142.
28. On Stalin's attitude towards Ho Chi Minh, see I. Gaiduk, *Confronting Vietnam: Soviet Policy Toward the Indochina Conflict, 1954–1963* (Washington, DC and Stanford, 2003), 4–5.
29. 'Conversation between Joseph Stalin and a CPI delegation', 9 February 1951, RGASPI (Moscow): fond 558, opis' 11, delo 310, listy 71–85. The author is grateful to David Wolff for obtaining and sharing this valuable document.
30. 'Joseph Stalin's draft letter to Aidit', January 1951, RGASPI: fond 558, opis' 11, delo 313, listy 45–50. The author is grateful to Ragna Boden, Roland Popp, Shana Goldberg, and to the Parallel History Project on Cooperative Security (www.php.isn.ethz.ch) for obtaining and sharing this valuable document.
31. Ibid.
32. 'Conversation between Joseph Stalin and a CPI delegation', 9 February 1951, RGASPI (Moscow): fond 558, opis' 11, delo 310, listy 71–85.
33. For the best account to date of Stalin's policies in Iran, see D. Gasanly, *SSSR-Iran: Azerbaidzhanskii krizis i nachalo kholodnoi voiny, 1941–1946* (Moscow, 2006).
34. Iakovlev, *1941 god*, 374.
35. Chuev, *140 besed s Molotovym*, 103.
36. The best account of Soviet-Turkish relations is D. Gasanly, *SSSR-Turtsi'ia: ot neitraliteta k kholodnoi voine, 1939–1953* (Moscow, 2008).
37. The number of Soviet divisions comes from V.I. Fes'kov, K. A. Kalashnikov and V. I. Golikov, *Sovetskaia Armiia v Gody 'Kholodnoi Voiny'(1945–1991)* (Tomsk, 2004), 22. Personnel numbers are from V. Shunkov, *Krasnaia Armiia* (Minsk, 2004), 9.
38. Shunkov, *Krasnaia Armiia*, 9. A word of caution: other sources – for example, R. Overy's *Russia's War* (New York, 1998), 155 – cite weapons production figures of somewhat greater magnitude for the same year.
39. A. Werblan, 'The Conversation between Wladislaw Gomulka and Joseph Stalin on 14 November 1945', *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, no. 11 (Winter 1998), 136.
40. C. Cristescu, 'Ianuarie 1951: Stalin decide înarmarea Romanei', *Magazin Istoric*, no. 10 (1995), 15–23. Translated by Vladimir Socor. http://www.gwu.edu/~ nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB14/doc4.htm.
41. Karel Kaplan, *Dans les Archives du comité central: Trente ans de secrets du bloc soviétique* (Paris, 1978), 165–66; translated by Vojtech Mastny.

42. Ibid. For an interesting analysis of this episode, see P. Lunak, 'Reassessing the Cold War Alliances', *Nato Review* (Winter 2001/02), http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/news/mediadesk/documents/NATOreview.pdf.
43. Werblan, 'The Conversation between Wladislaw Gomulka and Joseph Stalin on 14 November 1945', 136. For a detailed account see C. Craig and S. Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven, 2008).
44. Craig and Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War*, 106.
45. D. Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939–1956* (New Haven,1996), 132.
46. Cristescu, 'Ianuarie 1951: Stalin decide înarmarea Romanei', 15–23.
47. A. Vasil'ev and A. Morin, *Superlinkory Stalina* (Moscow, 2008), 105.
48. Cited in ibid., 82.
49. Cited in M. L. Hauner, 'Stalin's Big-fleet Program', *Naval War College Review*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Spring 2004), 114.
50. Vasil'ev and Morin, *Superlinkory Stalina*.
51. Chuev, *140 besed s Molotovym*, 296.
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2
Harry S. Truman

Steven Casey

The Truman presidency marked a major transformation in the United States' relationship with the world. In June 1940, when Nazi Germany overturned the global balance of power by defeating France in just six weeks, the Roosevelt administration sat back and did very little. Exactly ten years later, however, when North Korea invaded South Korea – a country that the US military had listed as fifteenth in importance in 1947[1] – the Truman administration dispatched American ground troops within a week. It even brushed aside the nation's traditional unilateralism, intervening under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), while also using the conflict to deepen the United States' involvement in NATO – a long-term military commitment to Europe that even the most internationalist of presidents would hitherto have deemed impossible.

Although he was president at the time, historians do not always place Harry S. Truman at the centre of their accounts of this profound change. Unlike his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, he was not a dominant personality. Whereas Roosevelt had consciously tried to centralize foreign policy-making inside the White House, often bypassing the State Department or giving similar jobs to different individuals in an effort to keep ultimate control in his own hands, Truman preferred a collegial form of government, viewing his cabinet as a board of directors, with each member given a specific job and then being delegated to see it through to fruition.[2] Truman, to be sure, was always jealous to protect the prestige and prerogatives of the presidential office, and was thus determined to reserve final judgment for himself. But in stark contrast to his shoot-from-the hip, buck-stops-here popular image, Truman's decisions were invariably made only after careful consideration by, and with important input from, the national security bureaucracy as a whole.[3]

Nor was Truman a profound thinker about foreign affairs. A border-state senator from Missouri who was suddenly picked as vice-presidential running mate in the summer of 1944, he lacked education and training in the complexities of the world. Before then, he had made only one trip abroad, as an artilleryman on the Western Front in 1917–18, which exposed him to little more than life in the US military, coupled with superficial impressions of the French countryside – and that was scarcely adequate preparation for the presidency. His ten years in the US Senate were then dominated by domestic issues, with even his famous investigations of the country's Second World War mobilization effort focusing firmly on internal questions of contracts and budgets. And during his short time as vice-president, Truman was equally bereft of detailed inside information; kept out of the policy loop by Roosevelt, he had to follow the war's closing military campaigns from the maps that appeared in each day's edition of the *New York Times*.[4]

Once he became president after Roosevelt's sudden death, Truman not only relied on the judgment of towering figures like George C. Marshall and Dean Acheson, his two most powerful secretaries of state. He also presided over the growth of a burgeoning new national security state, with the unification of the military services, the foundation of the Central Intelligence Agency and the establishment of the National Security Council. Over time, these changes helped to bring a greater degree of coordination to the making of US foreign policy, and thereby ensured that numerous other individuals were able to have a say on key issues. But in the short term, perhaps the most important innovation was the creation of the Policy Planning Staff (PPS) inside the State Department, which gave George Kennan and Paul Nitze the chance to play a crucial role in shaping American Cold War policy – and indeed the history of early US containment strategy is often written from the perspective not of the president, but of these two enormously influential PPS directors.[5]

Seen in this context, exploring Truman's mental map would appear to have only limited value. Why study a man who simply ratified the plans and policies of others? Yet the assumption underpinning this essay is that Truman did matter. Historians, whether critical or sympathetic, generally agree that his sudden elevation to power in April 1945 made a difference in the style, tone or content of American foreign policy.[6] Although often willing to delegate, thereafter Truman did periodically make decisive interventions in the policy debate. In 1948, for instance, he overrode Marshall when deciding to recognize Israel, knowing full well that Marshall was contemplating resigning on this issue. In 1952

he insisted on the voluntary repatriation of prisoners of war during the Korean armistice talks, even though most of his advisers were decidedly lukewarm to this policy, and even after it became clear that his insistence would prolong the war.[7]

If Truman was therefore important, albeit only on select occasions, what exactly were his thoughts? What was his mental map, as opposed to his broader assumptions about international politics?[8] This chapter argues that although Truman had some clear ideas when he became president in 1945, his mental map evolved rapidly and drastically during his time in office, which is scarcely surprising given the enormous changes in the world, as the Axis powers were defeated, the Cold War erupted and the atomic age dawned.

Truman's internationalism

When Truman suddenly and unexpectedly took the presidential oath of office on 12 April 1945, the world map was dominated by the ongoing global conflict. Just three years before, the Axis powers had controlled a vast chunk of Europe, North Africa and Asia: while the Nazi empire ran from France to the Volga, Japanese forces ranged as far south as the Coral Sea, and were even in a position to bomb northern Australia. Since then, however, a series of massive Allied victories had placed Germany and Japan on the verge of total defeat. Along with Churchill and Stalin, Truman therefore faced the task of drawing up a new map. It was a map that would, in the short term at least, be underpinned by the disposition of military forces when the fighting stopped. For the longer term, it would also have to work out who would now govern the large areas so recently occupied by the Axis, find ways of dealing with the enemy nations that had caused the war in the first place, reposition certain state boundaries to take account of new political realities and, above all, establish a durable system for ensuring that the world did not plunge into yet another conflagration.

Truman, despite his inexperience, approached these thorny questions with some clear beliefs. Never comfortable dealing with the grey, messy nature of politics, he always tended to view issues as black-and-white debates between right and wrong. A lifelong Baptist, he was also attracted by the 'simple and unpretentious' nature of his religion, and liked to think that he viewed the world in the same straightforward manner.[9] Truman, in other words, viewed himself very much as the man from Independence – a common, self-effacing leader who remained true to his Missouri roots. But this did not mean he was, as

one historian has claimed, simply a 'parochial nationalist' who knew little about, and cared even less for, anything beyond the limited horizons of the American Midwest.[10] On the contrary, Truman was a firm internationalist whose views were profoundly shaped by the interwar experience, when the West's failure to enforce the Wilsonian agenda had, in Truman's view, allowed the Axis powers to make such enormous gains by 1942.

Still, Truman's conception of the world, if not parochial, was nevertheless firmly fixated on his own country. Like the maps he had seen pinned up in his old school classroom, Truman's mental map had the United States placed firmly at the centre. This was hardly surprising. In 1945, the United States was clearly one of the dominant Big Three powers. By many yardsticks, in fact, it was clearly pre-eminent. In terms of economic muscle, for instance, it was poised to enter the post-war era in a position of massive superiority, producing half the world's goods and services, including 46 per cent of its electric power, 48 per cent of its radios and 54 per cent of its telephones.[11] But economic might was by no means all. Crucially, Truman also saw his own country as a force for tremendous good in the world. In his view, its ideals were universal: everyone wanted the freedoms its Constitution guaranteed to the American people. It also had no history of acquisitive imperialism: unlike the Soviet Union and Britain it therefore enjoyed 'the confidence of the smaller nations'.[12]

For Truman, American centrality was particularly important in explaining why the world had descended, once again, into war. Although he firmly believed that the British and French should have stood up to Germany, Italy and Japan much sooner, he did not blame the current world war solely on the misguided policy of appeasement. He was convinced, rather, that his own country had played a major role, albeit by neglect. According to Truman, if only the United States had followed Woodrow Wilson's lead in 1919, it could have prevented the descent into the Second World War. But by abdicating the responsibility that went with the nation's soft and hard power – and by failing, in particular, to join the League of Nations – American isolationism, more than anything else, had been responsible for the international crisis.[13]

After the present war, the situation would have to be different. 'History has bestowed on us a solemn responsibility', Truman declared in July 1943. The United States must be 'a mighty force at the peace conference. We failed before to give a genuine peace – we dare not fail this time.' For Truman, the only possible solution was active US involvement in some form of international organization. Although vague on

the details, throughout the war he moved slowly towards the evolving Rooseveltian concept of a two-tier system, with the great powers playing the leading, perhaps dominant, role: in Truman's words, 'a new and improved League of Nations' would consist of all the allies but be 'controlled by Britain, China, Russia and the United States in the name of all and for the welfare of all'.

Beyond this basic framework, however, Truman's thinking remained imprecise and fuzzy. He was particularly muddled on how any regional organizations might fit into the UN's international framework. At one point in the spring of 1945 he even reversed himself within the space of two days, stating first that he agreed with the State Department's proposal for regional security arrangements to be allowed under the UN Charter only to suddenly change course by remarking that such regionalism 'would tend to weaken the proposed world organization and lead to a return to power politics'.[14]

Still, despite this lack of clarity on specifics, Truman firmly believed that the United Nations was vital because the world map remained full of danger. In his opinion, great power wars often tended to be followed by a series of land grabs by smaller powers, especially those led by 'little Caesars' who sought to whip up nationalist frenzies. It would be the UN's task to sort out such conflicts, which would be relatively easy if the great powers remained united. But what if the bigger Caesars caused trouble?[15]

Truman always thought this likely as long as the world contained 'gangster' regimes who governed through repression. Indeed, he placed enormous emphasis on the connection between regime type and foreign policy. Based on his own reading of history, which invariably focused on heroes and villains, he tended to divide the world into good and bad, with 'thuggish' regimes the biggest menace to global order.[16] In Truman's eyes, they created three particular problems. First, like any gangsters, such regimes could never be trusted to fulfil agreements, which, to Truman, were the foundation of all politics. Secondly, because they used coercion at home to browbeat internal dissidents, they were always prone to try the same tactic on their neighbours. And thirdly, their domestic repression often created humanitarian problems, as refugees fled and those lucky enough to escape were determined never to return. Of course, Truman spent much of his presidency dealing with a Soviet regime whose brutality and perfidy, he was convinced, needed to be contained. But time and again, he also devoted energy to humanitarian issues, from his support for 'refugee Zionism' in the late 1940s to his unwillingness to forcibly repatriate prisoners of war to North Korea and China in the early 1950s.[17]

Economics and geography

Where were these problems most likely to appear? If Truman was normally fixated on the United States' position and role in the world, both negative and positive, he entered the presidency convinced that Europe was the next most important region.

Again, this had a positive and negative aspect. Unlike Roosevelt, who was inclined to think that the European age was passing – and was not beyond speeding up the passage, especially by detaching the European imperial powers from their colonies – Truman remained convinced that this continent would remain vitally important. In July 1945, after meeting with some of his old senatorial colleagues who were keen to assure him that 'the European world is at an end and Russia is the big bad wolf', Truman responded with scorn. 'Europe has passed out so often in the past 2000 years', he wrote in his diary, 'and has come back, better or worse than ever, whichever pleases the fancy.'[18]

Despite Europe's recuperative capacities, Truman believed that it had a worrying propensity to mire the world in war. 'He had come to the conclusion after a long study of history', Truman commented at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, 'that all the wars of the last two hundred years had originated in the area from the Black Sea to the Baltic and from the eastern frontier of France to the western frontier of Russia.'[19]

In trying to prevent future European conflicts, Truman differed markedly from his predecessor. During 1944 and 1945, Roosevelt had increasingly placed the blame squarely on the whole German nation, which he saw as inherently militaristic and aggressive. In Roosevelt's opinion, peace would only come when Germany's economy was so weakened that it could never again produce arms.[20] Truman saw matters differently. He did not believe in revenge, convinced that it merely fuelled resentments that would make the defeated powers more brutal and aggressive in the future. He also thought that European recovery, which was so vital to its political stability, depended upon some sort of German economic revival. 'A chaotic and hungry Europe', he remarked in May 1945, 'is not a fertile ground in which stable, democratic and friendly governments can be reared.'[21]

Rather than destroy the German economy, Truman wanted to reconstruct Europe. In the short term, he fretted that the continent faced a major food shortage, which would place a politically unsustainable strain on the United States if it had to ship large amounts of wheat across the Atlantic without any prospect that Europe could ever again

be self-sufficient.[22] For the longer term, he inclined towards the creation of a new European map, one that placed far less emphasis on nation-state borders and focused instead on tying together various economic regions. Put another way, Truman tended to view Europe through the prism of the continental United States, where different regions specialized in different economic activities and all were successfully connected by the free movement of goods and people. Thus, whereas Europe's previous economic nationalism had been a major cause of instability, now its projected new liberalization would hopefully create a far more stable situation.

In his memoirs, Truman recalled poring over maps of Europe with a senatorial colleague, looking not at political boundaries but at the location of economic resources. 'I would trace its breadbasket', Truman wrote,

> with Hungary the cattle country, and Rumania and the Ukraine the wheat area. Up to the northwest lay Western Germany, Northern France, Belgium and Britain with their coal, iron and big industries. The problem . . . was to help unify Europe by linking the breadbasket with the industrial areas through a free flow of trade. To facilitate this flow, the Rhine and the Danube would be linked with a vast network of canals which would provide a passage all the way from the North Sea to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. This would constitute free waterways for trade, while each country bordering on the waterways would have the riparian rights it should have.[23]

If such thinking made Truman sound like an American Whig of a century before, with visions of connecting a whole continent together with internal improvements on the pattern of an Erie Canal, his thoughts about other continents placed him closer to his more recent New Deal roots. The unifying thread was the importance of waterways. While the great European rivers simply had to be opened up for free use, in less industrialized regions they could provide the focal point for modernization projects, which would in turn engender political stability. So Truman envisaged developing the large rivers in Mesopotamia, which 'would take care of 30 million people and feed all of the Near East', or transforming the Zambezi and Amazon, which would perform similar functions in Africa and South America. In these various river basins his model was the Tennessee Valley Authority: a highly ambitious project that sought to harness the raw might of major rivers to provide electricity and industry to vast regions.[24]

Although some of these thoughts turned out to be little more than idle musings, others translated into concrete plans. At Potsdam, Truman's main personal intervention was to try to get the Soviets and British to sign up to a waterway programme that aimed to keep the peace by allowing free economic intercourse between European nations. Later, his Point Four programme would promise economic aid to help areas in Asia and Africa escape from poverty.

In public, Truman's rhetoric about such initiatives welded together his modernizing commitment and his firm conviction that the United States was an exceptional power. 'Only America could undertake such a unique approach to world affairs', he declared in reference to Point Four.

> Our population, unlike that of the other great nations, is made up of strains from every population around the world, and when we became the most powerful nation in the world, we tried to put into effect the ideals of all races and nationalities which we had written into the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

Yet Truman's idealism was never a case of simple starry-eyed altruism, whatever his public rhetoric. He also had one eye firmly on how development would impact on his own country. As he commented at Potsdam, 'The United States was rich but it could not forever pour out its resources for the help of others without getting something in return.' These were the words of a new president whose internationalist inclinations were tempered by a strong sense of national self-interest.[25]

The atomic age

Truman's musings about economic issues were underpinned by a conviction that the world was increasingly interdependent. Like his new subordinates, Truman was also firmly convinced that technological change had made the world more interconnected in the security sphere. In the age of air power, the United States was clearly more vulnerable than at any time in its history. It therefore required an extensive network of bases, which would both encircle the Western hemisphere and form a line across the Pacific from the Japanese-mandated islands to the Philippines – bases that would provide the United States with sufficient defence in depth should a new war ever erupt.[26]

If air power therefore stretched the American sense of what regions posed a direct security threat, then the advent of the atomic bomb seemed likely to have a truly massive impact on the world map. Truman

had no doubt that the successful testing of an atomic weapon in July 1945, followed by its use on Japan in August, were seminal moments. The bomb, he repeatedly remarked, dwarfed all other weapons. It was 'far worse', he commented privately in 1953, even 'than gas and biological warfare because it affects the civilian population and murders them by the wholesale'. 'We can't stand another global war', he commented on another occasion. 'We can't ever have another war, unless it's total war, and that means the end of our civilization as we know it.' The bomb ought therefore to spark a whole new way of thinking about the world. 'In international relations as in domestic affairs', he declared less than two months after unleashing this weapon on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 'the release of atomic energy constitutes a force too revolutionary to consider in the framework of old ideas.'[27]

Truman's diary suggests that his first instinct on hearing that the bomb actually worked was to think in bold 'one world' terms. Everyone on the planet was now in the same position. The bomb had effectively obliterated all divisions – national, racial, class, gender. No one was invulnerable. 'We are only termites on a planet', he wrote, 'and maybe when we bore too deeply into the planet there'll [be] a reckoning – who knows?'[28] In practice, however, Truman was reluctant to follow through with this 'one world' logic. Most obviously, although he commissioned Dean Acheson and David Lilienthal to produce a report that discarded 'the old framework of ideas', he was reluctant to embrace its conclusions.

The Acheson–Lilienthal report was certainly bold. It advocated the creation of a new international agency that would own all uranium mines and control all nuclear weapons, leaving individual governments to develop the non-hazardous opportunities presented by the atomic age. Nation states would thus divest themselves of the world's most potent weapon. Moreover, any stockpiles of these weapons would transcend the normal great power political geography. Instead they would be distributed across the globe in a fair and equitable fashion.[29]

Truman's ultimate rejection of the Acheson–Lilienthal plan demonstrated the distinct limits to his internationalist idealism. While historians have disputed his precise motives, Truman clearly wanted the United States to remain in control of atomic power. Partly, perhaps, his thinking stemmed from a strong sense of American virtue, not just his conviction that the United States was the most trusted beacon of liberty in the world but also his sense of a connection between his nation and God. In explaining why the bomb had been dropped on Japan, Truman's language was striking. 'It is an awful responsibility which has come to

us', he declared. 'We thank God that it has come to us, instead of to our enemies; and we pray that He may guide us to use it in His ways and for His purposes.'[30]

Crucially, though, Truman was also convinced that internationalism was still too fragile. Just like the Ten Commandments, which were ideals the world was still working towards, he believed that a new international order based on cooperation and trust was an aspiration that would take a long while to establish. In the meantime, when faced with a new weapon of such enormous destructiveness, he thought it naïve and foolhardy to entrust it straight away to an untried international organization. As he told Bernard Baruch, the man who ultimately helped to scupper the Acheson–Lilienthal plan, 'We should not under any circumstances throw away our gun until we are sure the rest of the world can't arm against us.'[31] For Truman, such hard-headed thinking was vital because the nation state remained at the heart of the world map; but it was also essential because of the growing importance of the Cold War.

The Soviet threat

Truman was always predisposed to distrust the USSR. Initially, at least, he was not terribly troubled by its communist ideology; in fact, he tended to view its left-wing credentials as something of a sham, commenting privately in June 1945 that there was 'no socialism in Russia' – it was simply 'a hotbed of special privilege'.[32] What did trouble him, however, was the undemocratic and brutal nature of Stalin's regime.

In 1941, Truman had made the famous comment that he hoped that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would bleed each other white, adding as an afterthought that he did not want 'Hitler victorious under any circumstances'. Although this particular comment was an attempt at a joke, and although like many of his compatriots Truman suppressed his natural suspicion of the USSR during the war years, he was always inclined to lump Stalin and Hitler together, placing them in the same category with other 'thuggish' regimes, both historical and contemporary, for good measure. 'There isn't any difference' between totalitarian states, he remarked in one typical comment. 'I don't care what you call them, Nazi, Communist or Fascist or Franco, or anything else – they're all alike.'[33]

Apart from the brutality of such regimes, Truman was particularly troubled by their apparent unwillingness to fulfil international agreements. In his memoirs, he claimed to have given Molotov a big dressing down in their first meeting in April 1945, in an aggressive diplomatic

effort to get the USSR to live up to the Yalta protocols on Eastern Europe. And when the angry Soviet foreign minister claimed that he had never before been talked to in this way, Truman apparently responded: 'Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that.' Although Truman's recollections about this particular meeting were undoubtedly 'sexed up' for public consumption, he was nevertheless increasingly troubled by what he perceived to be Soviet perfidy, both in Eastern Europe and the Near East.[34] 'I have tried my level best to get along with the Russians', he told an assembled group of news analysts two years after the Molotov confrontation. 'But when I work out agreements with a government, in the name of the United States of America, and not a single one of these agreements is carried out, I have got to use other methods. They only stand one language', Truman concluded, 'and that is the language they are going to get from this point.'[35]

As Truman started to fret about Soviet actions during 1945 and 1946, three regions grabbed his attention: Eastern Europe, where the Red Army held sway and Stalin wanted to impose his own regimes; Iran, where the Soviet Union seemed keen to stir up rebellion; and the Mediterranean, where Stalin appeared bent on gaining access to the straits from the Black Sea. By 1946, Truman was increasingly convinced that Soviet actions were all part of a greater pattern: at best, signifying its 'high-handed and arbitrary' actions; at worst, evidence that it was incorrigibly expansionist.[36] But it was not until 1947 and 1948 that a variety of developments clarified his mental map.

One was the patent weakness of Britain, the other major member of the wartime alliance, which was now clearly unable to fulfil many of its great power obligations. The symbolic moment came in early 1947, when London called on the United States to take over its responsibilities in Greece, a country in the throes of civil war. The British plea clearly demonstrated the passing of global leadership from London to Washington, but it also had broader portents. For Europe as a whole was suffering, not just Britain, as an intensely cold winter exacerbated the enormous dislocations caused by the war. Truman and his advisers began to worry that Stalin might be in a position to fill this particular vacuum, in part because Truman's mental map became increasingly dominated by the idea of a 'Eurasian land mass': the sense that the Soviet Union enjoyed a fortunate geographical position, with its vast borders ranging from Manchuria to Eastern Europe. Simply put, in the wake of a war that had not only destroyed Germany and Japan but had also created a huge vacuum where the Axis empires had so recently been, the USSR had an obvious opportunity to expand outwards.

To Truman, Stalin's actions in Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and Iran suggested that he intended to expand. Moreover, if Stalin did 'capture or co-opt the industrial infrastructure, natural resources and skilled labour of more advanced countries' on the USSR's borders, he would also have the capabilities to pose an enormous danger to the United States. And crucially, Stalin might not actually have to do all that much. For a start, the communist parties in Western Europe and Asia looked set to become politically powerful, for one of the lessons taught by the 1930s was that people inclined towards extremism during times of economic collapse – and with the far right totally discredited, the far left would be the obvious benefactors of the enormous economic dislocation caused by the Second World War. Just as bad, if the Soviet Union ever actually acquired these valuable territories, the United States' economic and political system would be in dire peril, without Stalin having to lift a finger. For, as Truman put it, such a situation would inevitably 'require a stringent and comprehensive allocation and rationing in order to husband our smaller resources. It would require us to become a garrison state, and to impose upon ourselves a system of centralized regimentation unlike anything we have ever known.'[37]

In the space of a few short years, these calculations transformed Truman's mental map. Its new form was best summed up by a major speech, which is worth quoting at length. 'Our own national security is deeply involved with that of the other free nations', Truman began.

> While they need our support, we equally need theirs. Our national safety would be gravely prejudiced if the Soviet Union were to succeed in harnessing to its war machine the resources and the manpower of the free nations on the borders of its empire. If Western Europe were to fall to Soviet Russia, it would double the Soviet supply of coal and triple the Soviet supply of steel. If the free countries of Asia and Africa should fall to Soviet Russia, we would lose the sources of many of our most vital raw materials, including uranium, which is the basis of our atomic power. And Soviet command of the manpower of the free nations of Europe and Asia would confront us with military forces which we could never hope to equal. In such a situation, the Soviet Union could impose its demands on the world, without resort to conflict, simply through the preponderance of its economic and military power. The Soviet Union does not have to attack the United States to secure domination of the world. It can achieve its ends by isolating us and swallowing up all our allies.

> Therefore, even if we were craven enough . . . to abandon our ideals, it would be disastrous for us to withdraw from the community of free nations.[38]

Truman's analysis of the world helps to explain a central paradox of the early Cold War period: why the United States, despite its enormous economic might, not to mention its nuclear monopoly, felt so threatened by the USSR. Truman was troubled in part by the perceived appeal of communist ideology in areas destroyed by war. But crucially, he was also preoccupied by the Soviet Union's geographic position bestride Europe and Asia, which enabled it to exploit this opportunity. His government's response, of course, was to use the main strength of the United States – its economy – to counteract this perceived vulnerability. In 1947, the Truman administration proffered aid to Greece and Turkey. In 1948, it launched the Marshall Plan, while also instituting the 'reverse course' in Japan. 'The next few years can determine whether the free countries of Europe will be able to preserve their heritage of freedom', Truman explained in December 1947. 'If Europe fails to recover, the peoples of these countries might be driven to the philosophy of despair – the philosophy which contends that their basic wants can be met only by the surrender of their basic rights to totalitarian control.' It was American policy to ensure that Europe did recover.[39]

The global Cold War

The Cold War, coupled with technological change, thus pushed Washington officials to expand their horizons, viewing more and more regions as vital to the country's national interest. But in the late 1940s certain limits still existed. Washington remained very much focused on the 'core' regions of geopolitical importance – basically Western Europe and Japan, whose possession by the Soviet Union would undermine the balance of power. Other areas were not deemed vitally important, including most notably China, where the Nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek was engaged in a major civil war with Mao Zedong's communists.[40] Nor, for that matter, did the Truman administration feel the need to get drawn extensively into the numerous conflicts that erupted in Asia, as colonial powers struggled to regain control in Indochina, Indonesia and Malaya, and even Washington's 'manifest tilt' towards the French, Dutch and British 'reflected the sober calculation at the upper reaches of the Truman administration that European interests rated a distinctly higher priority than Asian ones.'[41]

For many US officials, however, this distinction between the core in Western Europe and the periphery in Africa and Asia was increasingly superseded by a truly global mental map, which greatly simplified international politics. This global map stemmed partly from a growing sense that the world was so interconnected that events in the periphery were bound to have profound repercussions in the core – that, for instance, French failure to re-establish control over its colonies in Indochina would have such a negative impact on the Paris government, both economic and psychological, that containment in Western Europe would be endangered. It was also partly driven by events during 1949–50 – the communist victory in the Chinese civil war, the Soviet A-bomb test, the Sino–Soviet alliance and the outbreak of the Korean War – which all shifted Washington's gaze from Europe to Asia, and suggested that communism was a massive global threat. And, finally, it derived too from the complex interplay of domestic politics, especially the administration's need to sell costly aid packages to a budget-minded Republican Congress during 1947 and 1948, which could only be achieved with a vigorous home front mobilization campaign that revolved around 'scaring the hell out of America'.

By 1950, then, the US official mind basically divided the world into two: the US-led capitalist West facing the Soviet-dominated communist East. All other global developments were subsumed into this bipolarity. Increasingly, for instance, colonial wars in, say, Indochina tended to be viewed through the prism of the Cold War, with Ho Chi Minh viewed as a dangerous communist rather than national freedom fighter. In this new American mental map, moreover, the communist world was basically monolithic: Stalin was in firm control of the regimes in Eastern Europe and China, not to mention the smaller, sometimes marginal parties throughout the West and in South East Asia. And all of the world's ills could be traced to decisions made in his Kremlin. To be sure, after Tito's Yugoslavia split away in 1948, some officials advocated a 'wedge' strategy to 'crack' the monolith. But even Titoism did not entirely undermine perceptions of a hierarchical and cohesive communist enemy. On the contrary, for US statesmen, Tito's heresy actually seemed likely to foster cohesion in the Soviet bloc, by pushing the Kremlin to accelerate its efforts to consolidate the rest of Eastern Europe.[42]

In this increasingly bipolar world, the United States' duty was clear: it had to contain communism using all its power wherever the threat appeared. While in 1947–48 containment had largely entailed economic aid, now senior officials in the Truman administration increasingly

looked towards conventional military forces, especially after the successful Soviet A-bomb test ended the United States' nuclear monopoly. The language of NSC-68, the document that provided the intellectual underpinnings for this military mobilization, indicated just how global and unambiguous the American mental map had now become. 'The assault on free institutions', it declared,

> is world-wide, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere. . . . For us the role of military power is to serve the national purpose by deterring an attack upon us while we seek the means to create an environment in which our free society can flourish.[43]

Truman and the global Cold War

By the end of his presidency, Truman had come to accept most of these central precepts. But for a key period of his tenure he was not fully in step with many of his key advisers.

For one thing, Truman was highly pessimistic about what the United States could afford. He always placed his own country at the heart of his mental map because he was convinced it offered a model of freedom and democracy to other nations. As president, he saw his task as trying to perfect this model. So, for instance, he emphasized civil rights partly because he wanted to reinforce the United States' image as a force for good in the world.[44] After winning election in his own right in 1948, he then pushed his Fair Deal package, which envisaged spending tax dollars not on costly conventional armaments but on liberal reform at home. In fact, Truman thought that big military budgets siphoned money away from his important domestic agenda. He was also concerned that if the military–industrial complex got too big it might undermine basic American freedoms. Hence his fears about the United States becoming a 'garrison state'. Hence too his determination in 1949 and the first half of 1950 to keep defence spending as low as possible. Even after the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, which ultimately forced Truman to change his mind, he was not entirely willing to abandon his old fiscal conservatism. As he remarked a few weeks into the conflict, he wanted to avoid 'putting any more money than necessary in the hands of the military'.[45]

As well as this hostility towards defence spending, Truman did not always view the world in completely black-and-white terms. This is not to say that he disputed the growing American conviction that Stalin

controlled a monolithic communist bloc. On the contrary, he often saw the Soviet Union behind each and every event, immediately concluding, for example, that Stalin was the mastermind behind North Korea's sudden invasion of the South in June 1950. But where Truman was somewhat out of step was in his view that some of the regimes that were supposed to be on the United States' side were not worth supporting. Indeed he thought that all 'thuggish' governments were bad, be they on the left or the right. Thus, for as long as possible he opposed sending an ambassador to Franco's Spain, let alone any aid, while publicly describing it as the same as 'the totalitarian Russian government and the Hitler government'.[46] He was also increasingly hostile towards providing additional help to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist regime, which fled to Taiwan in 1949, commenting, in a handwritten note, that it was 'currupt [sic]' and that the United States had 'picked a bad horse'.[47]

Above all, while many of his advisers increasingly blurred the distinction between the core and periphery, Truman's own gaze remained firmly fixed on Europe. The Korean War best illustrates this Eurocentric focus. In June 1950, Truman decided almost immediately to send ground troops to the faraway peninsula to turn back the North Korean invader. It was one of his most momentous decisions, for Korea soon became a nasty, bloody conflict, which killed more than 30,000 American troops and ultimately undermined his domestic standing. And it is worth reconstructing Truman's precise motives, for they reveal an important dimension of his mental map.

For Truman, the Korean peninsula had little geographic significance in its own right. His decision to respond decisively to the North Korean invasion stemmed not from a sudden sense that Asia was now the vital Cold War theatre. Korea, rather, was a symbol. In Truman's eyes, bold action here would signal to Stalin that the United States meant business. It would also send out a message to the United States' European allies that they would not be left in the lurch should Stalin launch a similar attack in Europe. 'Korea is the Greece of the Far East', Truman remarked at the outset of the crisis, peering at a globe in the Oval Office. 'If we are tough enough now, if we stand up to them like we did in Greece three years ago, they won't take any next steps.'[48]

Truman's Europe-first orientation persisted even after Communist China massively intervened in the Korean War in late November 1950. Although Chinese forces pushed US troops back down the peninsula, and on two separate occasions looked destined to drive the American army into the sea, Truman kept his nerve. Despite enormous pressure, he refused to escalate the Korean War, convinced, as his chairman of

the Joint Chiefs of Staff famously put it, that any extension of the current conflict 'would involve us in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, with the wrong enemy'.[49] 'Russia', as Truman himself commented, 'would like nothing better than to suck us into a fight on the Chinese mainland because that would give Russia a free hand in Europe.' To prevent this from happening, China's intervention had to be placed in perspective – and the Korean War kept limited.[50]

With his gaze still fixed firmly on Europe, the new troops Truman sent abroad during the tense winter of 1950–51 went, significantly, not to Asia but to bolster NATO. 'The heart of our common defence effort', he explained, 'is the North Atlantic community. The defence of Europe is the basis for the defence of the whole free world – ourselves included. Next to the United States, Europe is the largest workshop in the world. It is also a homeland of the great religious beliefs shared by many of our citizens – beliefs which are now threatened by the tide of atheistic communism.'[51]

Legacy

In January 1953, Truman left office on a profound low. His approval ratings, dragged down by the long, bloody stalemate in Korea, stood at an all-time record (that was only surpassed by George W. Bush in 2008). Many of his contemporaries had long considered him a man too small to fill the enormous task of the presidency. And during Eisenhower's successful election campaign, Republicans had successfully built on the public's widespread dissatisfaction, not only by emphasizing the casualties caused by containment in Korea but also by highlighting the areas Truman had apparently left exposed, not least the threat of communist subversion inside the United States.[52]

But, of course, historians soon came to view Truman in a different light. His presidency clearly marked a pivotal moment. It was a time when the United States undertook a leading role in international affairs. And whether their judgments were positive or negative, historians could not deny that the Truman years mattered. The decisions he made were clearly momentous – the dropping of the atomic bomb, the creation of the United Nations, the Marshall Plan, the formation of NATO, to name but a few. And the containment strategy that underpinned many of these decisions established a broad intellectual framework that endured throughout the Cold War.

Truman himself was not always the crucial actor in these decisions. Inexperienced when he suddenly assumed office, he relied heavily on

experts to craft ideas, make recommendations and draft speeches. But his mental map is worth exploring, because it reveals the trajectory of American thinking at a time when the United States was groping towards, and finally assumed, a world role.

Notes

1. T. H. Etzold and J. L. Gaddis, *Documents on U.S. Policy and Strategy, 1945–1950* (New York, 1978), 79.
2. H. S. Truman, 'Appointment Sheet', 18 May 1945, in R. H. Ferrell (ed.), *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (Columbia, 1980), 29; See also A. L. George and E. Stern, 'Presidential Management Styles and Models', in A. L. George and J. L. George (eds), *Presidential Personality and Performance* (Boulder, 1998), 204–07.
3. A. L. Hamby, 'The Mind and Character of Harry S. Truman', in M. J. Lacey (ed.), *The Truman Presidency* (Cambridge, UK, 1989), 49–50; R. E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents* (New York, 1990), 144–50.
4. The best account of Truman's pre-presidential career can be found in A. L. Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1995).
5. See, for instance, J. L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy* (New York, 1982).
6. For various perspectives on the Roosevelt-Truman transition, see, for instance, J. L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1972); D. Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston, 1977); W. D. Miscamble, CSC, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* (Cambridge, UK, 2007).
7. As R. Beisner points out, although Truman gave Acheson enormous freedom as secretary of state between 1949 and 1953, the president still had 'outbreaks of independence'. See R. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: Life in the Cold War* (New York, 2006), 104–09. On the Israel and Korean decisions, see note 17 below.
8. A number of analysts have explored these broader assumptions. See, for instance, D. W. Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, 1985), 138–44; Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*, 1–33.
9. Hamby, *Man of the People*, 21.
10. A. A. Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945–1953* (Stanford, 2002), 5.
11. G. Lundestad, 'American Empire by Invitation', in T. G. Paterson and R. J. McMahon (eds), *The Origins of the Cold War* (Lexington, 1991), 111.
12. Truman, Diary, 22 May 1945, in Ferrell, *Off the Record*, 35.
13. Truman, Speech, 2 November 1942, Senatorial and Vice-Presidential Speeches File, box 2, Truman Papers, Harry S. Truman Library [hereafter HSTL]; Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*, 19.
14. On Truman and the UN, see *Congressional Record* (Washington, DC, 1944), 90, part 8, A266; Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*, 25, 126–27.
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3
Ernest Bevin

Anne Deighton

Introduction

Individuals matter when political decisions are made. Outcomes are not determined by impersonal forces which are then simply mediated by inconsequential individuals who cannot make real choices about options. Yet this is not to say that the 'great men' thesis of history is the only, or even a particularly good, way of understanding the past. The study of the past is in large part the study of the interaction between the individual and the institution, or the clash of institutions which are themselves continually fuelled by the contrasting and changing ideas of their individual members. So an individual-based, mental map approach only gives a partial understanding of how policies emerged. In practice, the individual's input is mediated by the immediate circumstances surrounding a decision, by the influence of institutions (from the civil service, the church, unions) and by the wider flow of political decisions, including analogous thinking about the past, and how events can be avoided (or repeated). Further, it is not always possible to distinguish ideas that are clearly particular to the individual from those which reflect general assumptions of the period: attitudes to gender, race and empire would be very obvious examples of this.

Analysis of a politician's mental map is probably harder than is studying a more self-absorbed literary or artistic personality.[1] There is a danger of tracking back from a specific political action and using this as evidence that this action was taken because of a certain personality trait or world view. Despite these caveats, it is stimulating to think biographically and to understand and indeed enter the world view of one's subject, and to try and assess a mental map of an individual. In the case of Ernest Bevin, there is, however, one other great difficulty, for Bevin

did not keep extensive private papers.[2] He appears not to have written personal letters, nor to have kept a diary himself, nor even to have had extended conversations which were then recorded by colleagues or friends who did keep diaries. He is strangely absent from the private papers and diaries of his contemporaries.[3] Where he does appear in the accounts of others, he is depicted as quite a 'character' by civil servants who worked for him, although he could be brusque, difficult and defensive with those who took issue with him.[4] This evidence gap is, of course, in part a matter of class: it would have been most unusual for a working class, uneducated labourer and trades union official of his time to have kept a diary. As he grew older, so he also became increasingly busy. Further, he found the physical process of handwriting hard, and his script was often nearly illegible. His civil servants would turn his thoughts and ramblings into memoranda and speeches – it is not hard for the historian to distinguish the material that he actually wrote or dictated himself, from the polished prose of Foreign Office clerks.

Despite these occupational hazards, we can discern a mental map that developed in the early part of a long life of public service, and which stayed with him to the end of his career. The map reflects both Bevin's personality and his life course, as well as more generally held British views that spanned a career that began before the First World War and ended at a time when the Cold War (and the hot war in Korea) was raging. His was not a world view shaped primarily by the Cold War itself.

The advancement of the working classes was Bevin's driving passion. He was increasingly attracted to centre-left, social-democrat reformism as the best way to advance working-class interests. He became very hostile to the ideas and methods of communists, as well as towards fascism and the extremes of capitalism, both at home and overseas. Organizer rather than militant revolutionary, quite early on he became absorbed into the fabric of government and national administration through the trades unions and his membership of national committees. He was no doubt seen as a safe pair of hands, not as a political radical. Practical solutions and negotiation were of greatest importance to him: balancing the need to survive a negotiation so as to keep the lines of communication open for another day against the moment at which matters should be brought to a head was a constant feature of his negotiating style. He would often spend time as foreign secretary reining back the Cold War confrontational style of some of his own officials and attempting to find political space for social democracy in the emerging bipolarity of the international politics of the late 1940s.

Further, and exceptionally for his class and background, Bevin also developed an early interest in overseas affairs. His first interest was the Empire–Commonwealth and the obligations and possibilities that this presented after the First World War. His mental map reveals a powerful attachment to the role of Britain as a global and imperial power, and like many of his generation (including, of course, Winston Churchill), simply abandoning the whole imperial project was certainly not part of his world view, whether for strategic, national interest or economic development reasons. So, as we shall see, his view of the world was coloured most strongly by the great issues relating to Britain as a global, imperial power as it emerged after 1918, rather than Britain as a European power, although he was always very interested in and well-informed about trades union politics on the European continent.

The interwar years: Constructing a mental map of an internationalist trades unionist

Bevin had a very humble and inauspicious background and was largely uneducated, frequently bragging about his education in the 'edgerows of experience'. He flirted with communist ideas early in his career – after youthful consideration about whether to become a Christian missionary – and initially opposed the war in 1914; then became disillusioned with communism and its potential to undermine the British and international trades union movements. He rose to the top of the trades union movement in the interwar period, at a time when it was clear that little had been done for the working classes to protect them from the frailty of the economic and social system after the Great War. He founded and led the national Transport and General Workers Union for unskilled workers (1921–40) and was on the General Council of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) between 1925 and 1940. Bevin frequently talked about 'his' people when he talked about the working class: if one was seeking his key referent, and his starting point for politics, this would be it.

As a trades unionist, he showed quite extraordinary managerial and organizational skills in bringing disparate groups of union of unskilled men together during the 1920s and 1930s. He was a highly talented national trades union negotiator, who saw the importance of doing business even with capitalists so as to secure material benefits and a better place for working people. For example, he quickly saw that the General Strike of 1926 could be counter-productive for the jobs and incomes of working people in the longer term.[5]

He became closely involved with international trades unionists at the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva in the interwar years, where he also acquired a high reputation, and this particularity is one of the outstanding traits of his world view. He had been to France and the Netherlands as a trades union representative after the First World War, and indeed made his first visit to the United States during the war, in 1916. (He managed to go only because more senior fellow unionists were apprehensive about the transatlantic voyage because of submarine warfare.) There, he briefly met Samuel Gompers, and was impressed by the scale of the United States, though not by the way in which the trades union movement had developed there. Part of the rationale for the ILO had been to head off communism after the First World War by ensuring the delivery of a fairer capitalist system to working people through better regulation, and this sense that working people should participate more actively within the system rather than remaining outside it is one of the features of Bevin's career in the interwar years. In particular, he negotiated on behalf of the trades union section of the tripartite system in the ILO on the proposed changes to the rights of the employers of dockers and seamen – for the latter, their working conditions required an international approach to secure consistency of treatment in all international ports. His early opposition to Hitler, and his anti-appeasement stance, was in part driven by the treatment that trades unionists in Germany received at the hands of the Nazis.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, his trades union work brought Bevin into contact with those thinking about national and international economic strategy. He was co-opted onto a number of national committees, including the Colonial Development Advisory Committee that assessed funding under the 1929 Colonial Development Act. The TUC also began to hold regular meetings to discuss Commonwealth trade and development, and its contribution to the debate took place as the global economy was faltering after 1929, when there was extensive deliberation about free trade, protection and economic blocs. Bevin was not wedded to free trade, arguing that he had never accepted 'as a Socialist, that an inflexible free trade attitude is synonymous with Socialism'.[6] In his view, although protection would not stop economic rationalization, it could at least give inefficient industries – in the metropole – time to put their houses in order. It is clear that his thinking was already driven by two ideas which never left him: a desire to improve the immediate employment and trading conditions in the United Kingdom to benefit working people, and a sense that international economic development could,

through trade, be the key to preventing war which was disastrous for the workers in every way. Britain, he thought, should be in a position to drive this forward as it was a leading global power.[7] In this way, he sought to combine his championing of the working classes with his attachment to his own country and its Empire–Commonwealth through pacific international policies.

The second phase of Bevin's development occurred after 1937. He addressed the TUC as its elected president for the year, and this speech led to the establishment of a TUC Colonial Advisory Committee. This committee persuaded the Colonial Office to set up a Labour Department, and in 1940, a Colonial Development Act was passed.[8]

Bevin then suffered (not for the last time) what seems to have been a minor nervous breakdown. As part of his recuperation, he went to Australia for a conference organized by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, at which he met luminaries such as Lord Lothian (Philip Kerr), Lionel Curtis, Alfred Zimmern, Norman Bentwich and Keith Hancock, as well as leading academics and politicians from the dominions. The trip was a long one, taking him to the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Ceylon, India and Aden. While there, he had time to read, and, very unusually for him, to annotate copiously some of the extensive papers provided for the delegates to the conference; and later to dictate a record of his trip. He contributed vigorously at the conference, fearing 'the break up of the Empire', for this 'would lead to a scramble for its territories'. Great Britain, having acquired control of about one-third of the world, should endeavour to build a world order on this foundation.[9] Bevin thought that he was probably at the end of his career – he was already in his late 50s, and the possibility of leaving national trades unionism and taking on the more leisurely role of secretary general of the ILO was already being suggested to him. He was happy to talk very freely, both on the trip and when he returned, when the fear of another world war was increasingly strong.

For example, on his return, he gave a talk at Chatham House. He argued that the Ottawa system offered 'a road along which we in the British Empire – possibly in common with the great colonial powers . . . could use . . . for collective economic rights and collective defence', as long as the aim was to raise the standard of life and not be used for aggression. He argued that, if

> we invite countries like Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, Russia, France and the USA . . . to come within our preference system, would that not for the first time result in a real pooling of the whole of

> the colonial empires of the world and their resources? It would bring the Haves together as they would in fact control 92 per cent of the essential raw material of the world. . . . and so equip ourselves in a Peace Bloc with a far greater weapon than arms can give. . . . Is it too much to dream that we might yet change the name of the British Commonwealth to one of European Commonwealth, and open up avenues without destroying political institutions at all?[10]

This was, he argued, an economic equivalent of a defence pact, which might even appeal to aggressors, as, in time, it would improve the living standards of all and give them a chance to have a place in the sun and reduce the need for war.

He also wondered whether there should not be an Assembly of the British Commonwealth, which might be 'tantamount to a nucleus for the establishment of a World Order' in the future, as well as make a contribution to the development of the colonial empire both in relation to defence, trade and the recognition of equality, and moving away from government-to-government talks to people-to-people communication.[11] This assembly could also consider admitting those in the Sterling Group, and then more European states, thus 'creating an economic attraction for the development of Commonwealth cooperation and adhesion, instead of the present clamour for colonies'. Whilst the argument of much of his *Spectator* article is not very clear, it does seem that in the desperate months leading up to war, Bevin was exploring the extent to which the resources of the Empire–Commonwealth, and in particular the Ottawa Agreement, might be used as bait to appease Germany, and thus to preserve peace.

This line of thinking also shows the influence upon Bevin of federalists working in London at this time, principally Lionel Curtis, but also Lord Lothian, both of whom had been at the conference with Bevin in Australia. Bevin became a member of the Federal Union in 1938.[12] His colleague and early biographer, Francis Williams, makes it clear that the development of Africa was a question of great importance to Bevin in the months running up to the war. He says that Bevin

> envisaged a great United Africa Authority to which all the Colonial Powers in Africa together with the United States should be invited to belong and membership in which should also be offered to Germany and Italy if they would alter their politics of international aggression. British, French and Belgian knowledge of Colonial administration, allied to American capital and the American genius for large scale

> development plus the technical and research skill of the Germans and the emigrants Italy desperately needed to send abroad could, he argued, turn the undeveloped areas of Africa into one of the great treasure houses of the world.[13]

However, Bevin remained fully aware of the controversial nature of federation, telling Labour Party colleagues in 1939, 'if you mention federation in the dominions you are done. I would rather place it on the basis of reciprocity . . . on a treaty basis covering both trade defence and constitution.'[14]

These ideas were those of a man who, in 1938, thought that he was about to retire from national life, and was therefore free to speak without any great institutional constraint and to be a problem-solver at a critical moment in international relations. He was not categorized as an old-fashioned imperialist, and his interest in the empire was in part because he wished to develop trades unions in areas where they were lacking, before communist influences penetrated these regions. He also clearly admired the Commonwealth concept as a model for economic cooperation, stability and growth.[15] There is a clear line of strategic thought by Bevin that links these pre-war years to the presentation ten years later, in January 1948, of his ideas for Western Union, and a global Third World force.

Ernest Bevin: The impact of war

In the Second World War, Bevin was in Winston Churchill's coalition government as minister of labour – his second career – although he was a reluctant Labour MP and party politician. His job between 1940 and 1945 was to manage the 'home front' and this he did with skill. He had to ensure that labour was directed towards the areas in which it was most needed for the war effort. He had extraordinary legal powers to direct labour, and had a tough task balancing civil rights with the production needs of the economy and the military chiefs, who needed a fighting force in the field. Bevin was one of the figures in the cabinet with whom Churchill crossed swords only rarely: Churchill knew that success in the war required a sustained psychological effort to maintain confidence and a 'fighting spirit' amongst Britons, and he judged that, despite their personal and ideological differences, and mutual but suppressed hostility, Bevin engendered more confidence among working-class people than any other member of his cabinet. We can conclude that the art of negotiation under unfavourable conditions was a large part of Bevin's

learned skill as a politician, and he certainly prized his own abilities as a negotiator.

However, Bevin's skills and knowledge were not confined to the administration of the home front. He was a member of the inner war cabinet from 1941. This small group met almost daily – and sometimes more frequently than that. As this was a coalition government, the leader of the Labour Party, Clement Attlee, was the deputy prime minister, and so both he and Bevin secured extraordinary insight and knowledge about the management of foreign policy, albeit in conditions of war. They were privy to decision-making at the very highest level on all matters relating to the prosecution of the war. Bevin's time as minister of labour also allowed him to continue to reinforce his contacts with the ILO (relations with the ILO were managed by his department), urging its senior representatives, in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter, to be part of a people's peace that would surely come.[16]

This period also gave him experience of dealing with the British Communist Party from a position of power in government. After his very early interest in communism, Bevin had increasingly viewed its penetration of the trades union movements during the 1920s and 1930s with a mixture of disdain and alarm. Although relations with the Soviet Union were complicated by its switch from neutrality to co-belligerent in 1941, Bevin's suspicions were never far from the surface, and, while deploying his 'massive abilities' organizing labour on the home front, he also became obsessed about infiltration, fearing that wartime strikes were caused by the communists.

Bevin, 1945–51: Operationalizing the mental map

Bevin expected and hoped that his third career would be that of Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Labour Party won the July 1945 election.[17] He was now 65, still in poor health, yet clearly hoping to be able to build upon his experience to create what he believed to be the essential requirement for peace at home and abroad: full employment. So to be chosen to be foreign secretary by Prime Minister Clement Attlee, and to lead the Foreign Office, must have been a surprise – not least as he had recently described the Foreign Office as 'a self-contained preserve. . . . it is a different atmosphere altogether. It has a superior attitude, the attitude of what you must know, and the rest of it.'[18]

It was not at all clear what kind of socialist Jerusalem could actually be built after the war: strategic post-war planning had been fragmentary, given the improbable Grand Alliance of the war, the disposition

of troops on the ground across the world by 1945, and also because of Churchill's indecisiveness about post-war planning. There was no precedent for the creation of a successful 'socialist' foreign policy, nor understanding of what this might mean after a war won with the Soviet Union as a crucial ally. The Labour Party's election manifesto gave little specific guidance beyond a commitment to the United Nations. Wartime socialist deliberations had not delivered much practical advice, any more than the governmental planners had been able to construct an agreed vision for European or global stability upon which a new government could draw. At the same time, there was an enormous expectation of political and ideational leadership from the one country that had confounded expectations of defeat. Bayley rightly calls these years the 'Indian summer of Empire', driven by an imperialism of the welfare state, itself an ambition deriving from Beveridge, and by a commitment to expand trades unionism internationally, but also with an insistence that communities across the British Empire should be taught to help themselves, and that the United Kingdom had little to invest in its empire now.[19]

For Bevin, the challenge now was to use the Foreign Office to operationalize his own world view in the context of military victory, of socialist victory and of high expectations – but also of national bankruptcy. He still adhered to the idea of people-to-people contact, the social wage and the importance of employment and international trade to avoid the scourge of war. He certainly did not relish any diminution of Britain's role in the world under his watch, although he knew that the longer trajectories of history now militated against the old European empires. So the question then became one of how to manage and cultivate the Empire–Commonwealth to the mutual benefit and influence of both the metropole and the periphery. The raw materials that the empire could provide were seen both as a means of increasing trade and prosperity generally, thus encouraging peace, but they were also particularly vital for 'his' people, the British working classes. Bevin's instinctive anti-communism had been reinforced during the war, despite the current popularity of 'Uncle Joe' Stalin. Yet he was certainly not instinctively pro-American either: though he knew that, as if he were still a trades unionist, he had to deal and negotiate in different ways with both these great powers.

Experienced trades union leader as he was, Bevin knew that communism would not simply go away after the war, that negotiation was going to be the name of the game, that quick solutions were a chimera, but that, if he could, he had to generate political space for the promotion of social-democratic ideas overseas as well as at home. He had early hopes

for the internationalism of the United Nations, but was more sceptical about the creation of its Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as it seemed to be a competitor to the ILO, and because the Soviets were also members of ECOSOC. His attachment to the ILO method and, indeed, his preference for trades union politics remained throughout his tenure of office as foreign secretary: he sought to promote the ILO worldwide and to use the diplomatic skills of the Foreign Office to do this.[20]

At least Bevin already knew the outlines of the major foreign issues. However, it was not just the strategic issues relating to post-war reconstruction – what to do about Germany, how to manage the spread of communism, how to assert Britain's role despite its shrinking assets – that were on Bevin's agenda. The remaining residue – as well as the memory of interwar politics – was to play an important part in post-war foreign policy. Palestine and India, bilateral relations with the United States, and most of all, the failure of the post-war settlement in 1919 and the impact of the collapse of the League of Nations that had brought appeasement in the face of the rise of fascism and communism, were issues that had already shaped, and continued to shape, Bevin's world view.

Thrown headlong into the fray, Bevin's personal instincts of defensive belligerence combined with substantive tactical caution came to the fore in the early months. Churchill and Anthony Eden had left the Potsdam negotiations when the British election campaign got under way, and it was Attlee and Bevin who returned once the Labour Party's stunning electoral result was known. Bevin immediately acquired an international reputation for talking tough to Americans and Soviets – particularly to Molotov – alike. He needed much persuasion to agree to the humiliating 1946 loan that had been painstakingly negotiated by John Maynard Keynes, at whose feet he had sat in the 1930s.[21] Yet he was also cautious, and decided against shaking up the Foreign Office immediately: even Duff Cooper, ambassador to Paris, who was expecting dismissal, was retained, as Bevin knew that they shared ideas about the future importance of France in the rebuilding of the United Kingdom as a global as well as European power. Ironically, over the next five years, the institutional power and designs of the Foreign Office were increasingly to overwhelm Bevin's own ideas, especially when ill health set in. Early on, despite the appointment of ministers for the colonies and for the dominions, Bevin sought to take an expansive view of his role in government. In this he was no doubt helped by the fact that his Colonial Office colleague was Arthur Creech Jones, formerly a Transport and General Workers Union colleague, and then parliamentary

private secretary to Bevin in the Ministry of Labour.[22] Indeed, Bevin also still kept in very close contact with the Ministry of Labour. However, he was also frequently at odds with his own party. Apart from his irritation with middle-class north London intellectuals (he was only a peripheral figure in the club and country social life that accompanied Labour Party politics in the 1940s), what he resented most bitterly were displays of a lack of loyalty, whether from the left or the right; a view that no doubt stemmed from his union days in which a personal loyalty to the group cause – and class – had to override any internal disagreements, as these latter could be easily exploited by the managerial classes.

As the shape of the new international politics emerged in 1946, the opportunities for change reduced as options hardened and Britain's own economic weakness became even clearer. Bevin was fire-fighting on every front: in the peace negotiations; in negotiations over Germany, Berlin and Austria in Europe; over Iran, Egypt and Palestine in the Middle East; over the transition from war to peace, and then to Cold War across Asia, where in Malaya these transitions led to civil war. Meanwhile Bevin's own world vision was both influenced and also challenged by Churchill, who was now sulking in office as leader of His Majesty's opposition, capable of stealing the limelight, and of testing and provoking Bevin in debates in the House of Commons.[23] It took time for Bevin to translate his sets of ideas about the world as they related to communism, cooperation, global and regional arrangements, and the importance of exporting social-democratic ideas. Meanwhile, the one-liners about Bevin – how fat Eden has grown – reinforced the continuity that many saw between the Conservatives and Labour in foreign policy.

In January 1948, Bevin made his Western Union speech in the House of Commons. The speech represents a summation of his own economic views, his aspirations for space between capitalism and communism for social democracy and his global vision that embraced Europeans and their colonial and Commonwealth partners. It also echoed wider strands of third-force thinking within his party, and elsewhere (especially in France), in the mid-1940s. As Bevin had already told the cabinet, his aim since 1945 had been to save the outer crust of Europe and to keep it clear of dependence on the United States. Now,

> it would be necessary to mobilise the resources of Africa in support of a Western European union; and if some such union could be created, including not only the countries of Western Europe but also their

> Colonial possessions in Africa and the East, this would form a bloc which, both in populations and productive capacity, could stand on an equality with the western hemisphere and the Soviet blocs.

In the speech, he argued that,

> [t]he organisation of Western Europe must be economically supported. That involves the closest possible collaboration with the commonwealth and with overseas territories, not only British but French, Dutch, Belgian and Portuguese. These overseas territories are large primary producers and their standard of life is evolving rapidly and is capable of great development. They have raw materials, food and resources which can be turned to very great advantage, both to the people of the territories themselves, and to the world as a whole. The other two great world powers, the United States and Russia, have tremendous resources. There is no need of conflict with them in this matter at all. If western Europe is to achieve its balance of payments and to get a world equilibrium, it is essential that those resources should be developed and made available, and the exchange between them is carried out in a correct and proper manner. There is no conflict between the social and economic development of those overseas territories to the advantage of their people, and their development as a source of supplies for Western Europe. . . . We shall thus bring together resources, manpower, organisation and opportunity for millions of people. I would like to depict what it really involves in terms of population whose standard of life can be lifted. We are bringing together these tremendous resources which stretch through Europe, the Middle East and Africa, to the Far East. In no case would it be an exclusive effort. It would be done with the object of making the whole world richer and safer.[24]

As his colleague High Dalton remarked towards the end of 1948, Bevin was trying to 'reorganise the middle of the planet', using Western Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Commonwealth.[25]

Yet the scheme was vague: like much of what Bevin thought and wrote, there is a general sense that he had grasped a big idea, but there was little of a schematic approach that did not get swept away. While it reflected his own strategic vision, there was not a good fit with 'events'. Ironically, it was Churchill, in his Three Circles speech to the Conservative Party conference in May 1948 who – either building upon Bevin's success, or in parallel with him – managed more effectively to depict

Britain's place at the centre of three interlocking circles of the United States, Europe and the Empire–Commonwealth. Churchill showed little interest in the economic and resource implications of this idea, however, and, of course, was far more enthusiastic to paint the United States into the picture than Bevin. Bevin had sought to place Britain and the European and Empire–Commonwealth allies in the middle of the planet, geographically and ideologically between the United States and the Soviet Union, so that there was a real difference between what he and Churchill were saying.

Over the next two years, Bevin witnessed the steady disintegration of most of this grand design. The global dimensions of the Marshall Plan that related to the European colonies also took a battering over 1948–49, although he specifically talked of creating an Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) for Asia, which alarmed the Foreign Office as it implied a loss of British control over the region if decisions were made multilaterally. His hopes for a leading role for the Brussels Powers, with the United States as short-term military and financial backers for Western Europe against the Soviet Union, were lost in the course of the negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), though he had told his Brussels Powers colleagues in March 1949, he

> would be reluctant to hand the whole business [of defence] over to the United States. . . . If Western Europe developed on the right lines and again got on her feet, the difference in power between her and America would not be so great and it was important to keep Western Europe's position of leadership even during the present time of temporary difficulties.[26]

Yet, by the autumn of 1949, although he had not got the NATO deal that he had hoped for, Bevin nevertheless felt more secure about Western Europe, although the threat of communism in Asia seemed to be rising.

It was the Colombo Plan that was the last throw of the dice as it related to Bevin's own mental map of global cooperation. The Colombo Plan was intended to bring economic aid and development prospects to Asia in the face of the communization of China, and a fear that civil unrest, not only in Malaya, but also in Burma and Indochina, was being masterminded by Moscow. The idea had its roots within the Foreign Office, as well as being very much within Bevin's own mindset. In 1946, Bevin had dispatched Lord Killearn to the region with a brief

to act as special commissioner for development. In mid-1947, Killearn had advised Bevin that the spread of communism in the region was part of a process that had roots in the interwar period, which had been temporarily stopped during the war, but was now underway again.[27] Bevin had therefore encouraged this work that was being done on the region by the Foreign Office since 1945, and now, at the end of 1949, it seemed as though there was a chance to take forward his views about the Commonwealth, international economic policy and the global fight against communism.[28]

Bevin did not favour any attempt to extend a NATO-type defence arrangement to the Asian region, not least because of the greater disparities between countries there, and because the North Atlantic Treaty did not reflect his views about the need for a more independent Western Europe. He favoured an approach that was closer to Truman's Point Four project of early 1949, in which the need for economic development was linked to the assumption that development would stave off communist encroachment, through what he called the 'positive', that is non-military, methods of combating communism through a regional approach based upon the interests of the Commonwealth countries concerned with the project – what we would today call a soft power approach.[29] Although the idea about the international reorganization of social security in Europe was hustled away from the Brussels Treaty into the forum of the Council of Europe, we can see watered-down traces of Bevin's original Brussels Treaty-based plan in the brief that he took to the Colombo conference, which spoke of technical aid and assistance, of creating a single unit for health control over sea and air travel; conventions on the extension of social and medical benefits across the five countries, and the pooling of newsreel films, courses for youth workers, teachers and government officials.[30] The method, however, was similar to that deployed over Marshall Aid, and then the Brussels Treaty: it was to show political leadership and persuade the Commonwealth itself to lead on this regional project. So the first Commonwealth Ministers' conference to be held outside London was scheduled to be held in Ceylon in January 1950, and Bevin himself attended this conference – 'a great gathering of peoples of East and West', as he called it, though he travelled against the advice of his doctors.[31]

Bevin wanted to coax the Australians in particular into taking a greater interest in the South East Asia region, thus reinforcing Commonwealth solidarity, as well as bringing India and Pakistan into a loose economic grouping that was committed to development and egalitarian

cooperation across the region, and which would help to form a regional bloc committed to Western ideas, yet still under the benign influence of the United Kingdom.[32] The United Kingdom was not in a position to fund development projects itself, and it was hoped that, eventually, the existence of the project would attract American interest in the region, and then funding, as long as the Commonwealth had shown leadership here.[33] As Bevin summed it up himself in his inimitable style,

> the right policy was for the like-minded countries with interests in the East to keep in close contact and be ready to help each other in resisting any attempt to hinder peaceful development on democratic lines. They recognized the close interdependence of East and West and stressed the great need for the expansion of capital development and food production in the less developed countries. He hoped that a policy of financial help without domination could be adopted towards these countries: a start had already been made by the United Kingdom in, for example, dealing with the refugee problem in the Middle East and in the new water supply scheme at Owen Falls, Uganda, and in the Sudan. . . . The Russian doctrine was that the economic collapse of the non-Communist world was inevitable and that the United Kingdom policy of maintaining full employment was doomed to failure. [He] believed that these predictions could be falsified.[34]

The Colombo Plan was a good example of the way in which Bevin's own world view might be put into practice: it combined aid, with anti-communism, with the empowerment of Commonwealth countries in partnership with the United Kingdom.

Conclusion

Ironically, within six months, international politics quickly switched away from aid programmes to war on the Korean peninsula, and with it to the French proposal to reinvigorate European politics and to take the lead from Britain in Europe through the Schuman and Pleven plans for close economic and military cooperation. The Colombo Plan was Bevin's last attempt to put his personal stamp upon international politics, although he was to hold his ground on the introduction of a human rights regime through the Council of Europe in the autumn of 1950, before being unceremoniously sacked from his post on his seventieth birthday.

It is not possible to do more than paint with a broad brush the outline of Bevin's mental map. He lived through a period of quite extraordinary change and international development, with powerful social and economic movements, the creation of new international organizations and the rise of welfare societies and technologies. His own views were broadly consistent, but frequently not well expressed or developed. He was attacked more from the left than the right, and he has therefore acquired the reputation as a conservative in his international political thinking. It is true that his preoccupation with the Empire–Commonwealth may have appeared to reflect an age which the Second World War had swept away, and this was reinforced by his resistance to India's independence. However, it is clear that Bevin was fully aware both of the changes that the Second World War had brought and also of the exploitative nature of imperial management. However, he was not in a position simply to wash his hands of global responsibilities, and there seemed to be no better game plan for decolonization in existence: trusteeship and mandated territories both held real disadvantages. Thus his much-quoted, 'peasants not pashas' refrain gave him a tentative set of assumptions upon which he could work through policies that he hoped would bring benefits to people, although of course this was still a top-down, metropolitan-driven international policy, and did not meet rising nationalism.

His attitude towards the United States was one of considerable caution, especially during the early years, as he saw that the European social democracy he favoured was very different from US capitalism. His hostility to European supranationalism was also very much of the time in Britain (i.e., hostile), and was made worse by the fact that the French made no attempt to accommodate British interests in the summer of 1950, instead presenting the British with a set of policy proposals which were impossible to meet in the United Kingdom, but which opened the way to French leadership in Europe.[35] The tools he sought to deploy through the Foreign Office combined both hard power and soft power, and his global/Commonwealth view was one of cooperation, not supranational integration, and of gradual independence but the continuing presence of the United Kingdom as a global power.

Bevin's world view in 1945 was first of all one of 'Never Again'. His often badly articulated social-democratic world view was shaped predominantly by the experience of the effects of the First World War and the interwar years upon the working classes. His belief in international economics as the best route to prosperity and peace was unusual for a foreign secretary, although successive sterling crises meant that

the economy always remained the Achilles' heel of Britain's global capability. Yet, the achievements of Britain between 1945 and 1951 were, ironically, most strongly characterized by the positioning of the United Kingdom more closely to the United States, which was a position increasingly more favoured by Bevin's senior foreign officials than by Bevin himself, a tribute perhaps to the power of established institutions over their political masters.

Notes

1. There is an International Relations literature on cognitive maps, and one on analogical reasoning, in particular Alexander L. George, 'The Causal Nexus Between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-making Behavior: The "Operational Code" Belief System', in L. S. Falkowski (ed.), *Psychological Models in International Politics* (Boulder, 1979), 95–124; Scott Crichlow, 'Psychological Influences on the Policy Choices of Secretaries of State and Foreign Ministers', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 40, no. 2 (2005), 179–205; Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, 1992). See also the Introduction to this volume, which develops the generalizable aspects of the topic. I am grateful to Kai Hebel for discussion on these approaches.
2. Churchill College archive, University of Cambridge houses Bevin's papers, but there are only a few letters and reflective material. Alan Bullock used interviews and personal contacts for his three volume biography, Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, Vols. I–III (London, 1967–83). Bevin's ministerial career was as Minister of Labour in the wartime coalition government of 1940–1945, and then as Labour Foreign Secretary, 1945–March 1951, and finally Lord Privy Seal until his death in April 1951. The greatest influences upon his thinking however derived from his 25 years in the trades union movement.
3. Mrs Bevin was asked for a list of close friends to be invited by the Prime Minister's office to the internment of his ashes in Westminster Abbey in 1951. The list was short, and the civil servants had trouble in actually tracking down some of the names given to them. Bevin had planned to write a memoir but died only six weeks after he left the Foreign Office.
4. He always viewed the Labour Party as a poor second best to the trades unions, disliked the House of Commons and viewed middle class socialists with considerable disdain. From what one can tell, personal relations between Bevin and his senior officials required a high degree of 'Yes, Minister' role play on both sides to succeed.
5. He nevertheless retained a deep distrust of Churchill's behaviour during the general strike, and of Churchill as a class-based politician.
6. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, vol. I, 446; Alan S. Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy, 1945–1963* (London, 2002), 19.
7. Trades Union Congress conference proceedings, 1930.
8. Marjorie Nicholson, *The TUC Overseas: The Roots of Policy* (London, 1986), 191.

9. TUC archive, Warwick University (TUCAWU), MSS/126/Bevin/BC/20.10ff. He later used the phrase 'scramble of wolves for a third of the world', 16 March 1939, TUC archive, MSS/Bevin/BC/22/7, 'Future of the Commonwealth'. The conference in Sydney, Australia lasted from 3 to 17 September, 1938, TUCAWU, MSS126/Bevin/BC/15/ff.
10. Ernest Bevin (1939) 'Impressions of the British Commonwealth Relations Conference, 1938', *International Affairs*, vol. XVIII (1938), 56–76.
11. *The Spectator*, 'The Future of the Empire: V. Coordination' 3 February 1939.
12. Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford, 2000), 417.
13. Francis Williams, *Ernest Bevin: Portrait of a Great Englishman* (London, 1952), 209.
14. Francis Williams chaired the debate, TUCAWU, MSS126/Bevin/BC/20/9.
15. Nicholson, *TUC Overseas*, 262. See further, Anne Deighton, 'Ernest Bevin and the Idea of Euro-Africa from the Interwar to the Postwar Period', in M-T Bitsch and Gerard Bossuat (eds), *L'Europe Unie et L'Afrique* (Brussels, 2005).
16. TUCAWU, 292/925.2/4, December 1943. The ILO struggled to survive the war at all.
17. He had, once again, plans to go to the ILO if Labour lost the election.
18. TUCAWU, speech in New Zealand, 1938, MSS126.EB/BC/20/S.
19. Christopher Bayley and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Wars: The End of Britain's Asian Empire* (London, 2008), 280–81.
20. United Kingdom National Archives, LAB 13/348, Bevin to Ministry of Labour representatives, 15 February 1949. Posts of Labour attachés were established in overseas embassies under Bevin's instructions.
21. Robert Skidelsky*, John Maynard Keynes: A Biography, Vol. 3: Fighting for Britain, 1937–1946* (London, 2000).
22. Attlee used to say that he left foreign affairs to Bevin, but in fact, especially as Bevin's health deteriorated, Attlee himself came to play a greater role than is generally recognized.
23. It seems clear that the Labour Government was also happy to exploit Churchill if it served their purpose: the Iron Curtain speech was known about before its delivery, according to France's Ambassador to London, Rene Massigli, Archives Diplomatiques, Paris, Massigli papers, vol. 47, fol. 16, 960–61, 7 March, 1946.
24. Parliamentary Debates, Hansard, 5th series vol. 446 (London, 1948). Bevin's speech is at Cols. 383–409.
25. 15 October, 1948; Hugh Dalton, *High Tide and After: Memoirs 1945–1960* (London, 1962). Dalton was a long-term rival to Bevin, and it is probable that the troubles of British policy towards Palestine/Israel, not discussed here, might have played out differently if Dalton had been Foreign Secretary, although this issue left virtually no margin of manoeuvre to Britain beyond how it was managed with the United States.
26. UKNA, FO371/69683, Dening minute, October 1948. FO800/448, Five Power Consultative Committee, London, 14–15 March 1949, pp. 6–7. This is evidence for Bevin's hopes to develop a new military perspective as the 'middle of the planet' On the creation of NATO, Anne Deighton (2010), 'Three ministers and the World they Made: Acheson, Bevin, and Schuman, and the North

Atlantic Treaty, March–April 1949', in Jussi Hahnimaki (ed.), *Trans Atlantic Relations, 1949–2009* (London, 2010).

27. UKNA, CAB21/1956, 'Southeast Asia: growing communist strength', July 1947.
28. In a detailed, archivally based account, Tilman Remme argues that Bevin got in the way of FO planning for the region, and that 'his own ideas on regional cooperation were sometimes inconsistent with those of his department', but this is in a book that focuses upon the bureaucrats rather than the politicians as decision-makers, *Britain and Regional Cooperation in South-East Asia, 1945–49* (London, 1995), 5–6.
29. UKNA, PREM8/1149, Brief for the UK delegation to the Colombo Conference, January 1050: 'The Commonwealth has a unique part to play in promoting regional solidarity in South East Asia', p. 4.
30. UKNA, PREM8/1149, 'The situation in Europe', brief for the UK delegation to Colombo Conference, January 1950.
31. UKNA, FO371/76030, PUSC(32), PUSC(53), July–August, 1949, for the full set of proposals and briefing papers.
32. The Colombo Plan members were the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Ceylon. The United States joined in 1951. For a record of the meetings 9 January–3 February, 1950, FO800/445; see also, Daniel Oakman, *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan* (Melbourne, 2004), an account which puts a greater emphasis upon the Australian role, although Remme argues convincingly that the United Kingdom was quietly supporting and encouraging – and even writing the briefs – for the Australians.
33. UKNA, PREM9/1149, SAC (49)10, 20 July 1949, on US lack of interest. This was modified after the proclamation of the Peoples' Republic of China's accession to power in October 1949.
34. UKNA, CAB21/1760, 'Summary report of Mr Bevin's survey of the general international situation, Colombo Conference, January 1950'; See also UKNA, CAB129/38, CP(50)18, 22 February 1950. The Plan was extended to 23 countries and delivered $10bn of technical aid and assistance over the next ten years.
35. For two different interpretations by British writers, Milward, *National Strategy*; Edmond Dell, *The Schuman Plan and the British Abdication of Leadership in Europe* (Oxford, 1995).

4
Charles de Gaulle

Sudhir Hazareesingh

When General de Gaulle returned to power in May 1958, he was given a large globe by his former subordinates who had worked with him at his rue Solférino headquarters in Paris. The globe stayed in his presidential office in the Elysée Palace until his resignation in 1969, and was then brought back to the rue Solférino, where it can be admired today.[1] This seems like an ideal way to open this presentation of Charles de Gaulle's mental map: not only because throughout the time he was president, de Gaulle had a huge representation of the world in his office, but also because of the polymorphous character of the gift. His close associates had thought of the globe as a symbol of the General's universality, his celebrity status across the planet – but also of his stoic endurance, bearing the world on his shoulders like the Greek God, Atlas.

Writing about de Gaulle's mental map is no easy task. Although there is a wealth of sources available (his presidential papers in the French national archives and at the Charles de Gaulle Foundation; his published memoirs, speeches and letters; the vast literature of his collaborators and associates; numerous biographies[2]), the General's innermost thoughts are at times difficult to reconstruct. There are three issues facing the historian. First, there is de Gaulle's singularity, what the writer Romain Gary once called his 'felicitous eccentricity': his syncretic capacity to draw on a diversity of heritages and traditions, and to straddle the ideological conflicts which so sharply polarized his countrymen across the twentieth century. Furthermore, even by the standards of comparable figures, de Gaulle was an intensely private man, who had few friends or intellectual companions as such, and indeed often went out of his way to be provocative in conversation. For example, when the French government tried to honour him in 1946 for services rendered to the nation during the Second World War, he stiffly told one of his associates,

'on ne décore pas la France'.[3] A casual figure of speech, or a troubling incapacity to separate his personal identity from that of France? This Gaullocentrism (compounded by his frequent references to himself in the third person singular) throws up a more general problem for the identification of de Gaulle's cognitive scheme of politics: the deliberate blend between reality and legend in the General's own mind, and his frequent resort to mythogenic concepts and notions.[4]

There are four enduring components of the Gaullian mental map: his own self-image as a providential figure, a man of destiny; his quest for the creation of new political institutions for France, centred around strong presidential leadership; his ambition to restore the nation's 'rank' in a world in which the rigidities of the Cold War system were beginning to loosen; and, finally, his quasi-mystical rapport with territorial space. Throughout his life, de Gaulle was associated with strong spatial memories: from his march down the Champs-Elysées in August 1944 to the haunting final images of him walking on a windswept Irish coast after his resignation in 1969, the General always demonstrated a keen awareness of territorial symbolism.[5] This was reflected in his frequent visits to French localities (as president, he made an official visit to every French metropolitan department between 1958 and 1965), and his annual celebration of the anniversary of his Appel du 18 juin at the Mont Valérien fort, situated on the outskirts of Paris. Since his death, this 'patrimonialization' of de Gaulle has taken even greater proportions: the General has become the privileged focus of territorial commemoration, with more French streets and squares bearing his name than any other historical figure.[6] These themes of providentialism, institutional change, international revival and territoriality also feature prominently in the Gaullian myth – and it is worth noting that although the concept of a mental map overlaps with that of myth in some respects, it also departs from it in others. Myth is fundamentally a collective phenomenon (like memory), while a mental map typically centres around a single individual; a political myth does not end with the physical death of its founder, whereas a mental map has no afterlife (although as we shall see in the case of de Gaulle, his conceptual representation of the world did live on after him, both in the minds of political elites and in the collective self-representation of the French); a myth is less linear or biographical than a mental map, and is rather focused on specific idealized and transformative moments or episodes; a myth is not purely policy- or institution-oriented, and indeed is in some senses inversely correlated to positive outcomes (Waterloo is one of the most remembered of Napoleon's battles); and finally

a myth is dynamic, concerned with ideological invention and reappropriation, whereas a mental map is more of an objective heuristic framework.

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Charles de Gaulle's singularity emerges immediately in the supreme moment which defined his political world view: his rebellion against the Pétain government in June 1940, his flight to London and his 18 June 1940 BBC broadcast calling upon his compatriots to continue the struggle against Germany. Even though some formative elements of his pre-war political culture came into play at this moment (his contempt for parliamentary politics, his tragic conception of history, and his belief in his own destiny), his act of rebellion in 1940 marked a radical break with his own past. As he noted a few years later in his *Mémoires du guerre* – 'à mesure que s'envolaient les mots irrévocables, je sentais en moi-même se terminer une vie, celle que j'avais menée dans le cadre d'une France solide et d'une indivisible armée. A 49 ans, j'entrais dans l'aventure, comme un homme que le destin jetait hors de toutes les series.'[7] How did this 'adventure' over the next four years impact upon de Gaulle's mental map? A number of key areas can be identified; they represent the early frames of de Gaulle's intellectual mindset.

First, de Gaulle's Appel embodied a distinct view of the nature and character of the war itself. At the heart of the General's message of hope was the claim that this was a global conflict, and that even though metropolitan France had been defeated by Germany in 1940 she still had, through her allies and her imperial resources, as well as the mobilization of the internal Resistance, a number of important resources upon which to rely. France, as he would proclaim in another message posted in London in June 1940, had lost a battle but had not lost the war. And even though 1940 was a break from his own past in terms of his political and military career, his intellectual analysis of some elements of the conflict drew upon his earlier historical experiences. Thus, in his wartime speeches, de Gaulle constantly referred to the conflict between France and Germany as the 'Thirty Years' War: he saw German militarism as the primary cause of European turmoil since the beginning of the twentieth century, and in this sense downplayed the ideological distinctiveness of the Nazis, whom he regarded merely as the inheritors of the Wilhelmine regime.[8] This tendency to regard ideology as an accessory element in international politics – in contrast to leadership, state

interest and historico-cultural factors – would dominate the General's thinking thereafter, and significantly influence his attitude towards the Cold War after 1958.

The 1940–44 period was also transformative in that it brought de Gaulle to define – or to be precise, to redefine – his approach to the French republican tradition, with which his intellectual relationship before 1940 was somewhat remote. In the judicious expression of Claude Bourdet, de Gaulle's embrace of republicanism during the Resistance was that of an autodidact[9] : it was forged through the belief that national regeneration could come only through a revival of the spirit which had been typified by the French Republic in its heyday. Hence the frequent references, in the General's wartime speeches, to heroic republican leaders such as Carnot, Gambetta and Clemenceau, the standard-bearers of a 'defensive' republican tradition of which he saw himself as the inheritor.[10] Charles de Gaulle's mental map of republicanism was thus forged through war, and also in the domestic context of his battle against the authoritarian Vichy regime. For this reason, the republican precepts with which he engaged most directly were those which were anathema to Pétain's regime: the principle of popular sovereignty, the notion of civil equality, and the celebration of a civic as opposed to ethnic conception of the nation. This, too, would sustain the General's view of international politics in later years: this 'republican' strand of de Gaulle's thinking would notably re-emerge in the Cold War years in the General's vigorous expressions of hostility to all manifestations of imperialism and colonialism.

Charles de Gaulle's 18th of June Appeal also provided the launch pad for the central concept in the General's representation of the political sphere: the role of leadership. His providentialism was not accepted easily after 1940; particularly during the early years of the war the General had to struggle to establish his pre-eminence over the different components of the French Resistance. The formal unification of these groups occurred only in 1943, with the creation of the National Council of the Resistance; and even thereafter there were significant tensions between the 'outside' Resistance led by the Gaullists and the 'inside' groups, consisting of communist and non-communist elements.[11] There were, of course, conflicts of interest and personal rivalries at play here, but the fundamental difference was philosophical. The internal Resistance was committed to the classical republican notion that sovereignty was collective and embodied in the nation as a whole. Charles de Gaulle, in contrast, believed that while there were many resistances, there could be only one Resistance; and this integrated whole could cohere only if

it was under his leadership. Collective sovereignty and the principle of authority: the clash between these two concepts would dominate French politics in the ensuing decades, and eventually lead to the creation of the Fifth Republic after 1958.[12]

Above all, the war years shaped one of the fundamental elements of de Gaulle's world view: his belief that France was essentially on her own in the international arena and could achieve her national aims only by resolutely pursuing her interests and, if necessary, standing up to the Great Powers. This 'realist' view was reinforced by the General's experiences with the Allied leadership in the 1940–44 period. Although he supported the Free French movement decisively in its early moments, Winston Churchill clashed repeatedly with his prickly guest, and at one point even threatened to have him 'taken out' (some of the shouting matches between the two men have become the stuff of legend). The Americans barely disguised their hostility to de Gaulle, flirting with Vichy initially, then trying to force him into a shotgun marriage with General Giraud, before later seeking to impose an occupying authority in France after the Normandy landing of June 1944. Later in the same year, de Gaulle met Stalin. In the course of negotiating the Franco–Soviet agreement the Generalissimo tried to use his military and diplomatic power to coerce the French leader into recognizing the communist Lublin Committee as the legitimate Polish government. In all these arenas, de Gaulle stood up for what he regarded as France's essential interests, and this posture would remain unchanged after his return to power in 1958. The war also underlined, and indeed reinforced, the General's contempt for communism; as with Nazism, he paid little heed to its ideological dimension and regarded Marxism–Leninism largely as a cloak for the promotion of Russian national interests. Stalin's nonchalant and rather cavalier references to the French communist leader, Maurice Thorez, during their Moscow meeting in December 1944 no doubt reinforced this Gaullian view.[13]

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In de Gaulle's conception of leadership, and of the way in which his power was incarnated, a special place was assigned to territoriality, and to the projection of his power in space. His foreign visits during the Second World War, and especially after 1958, played a critical role in buttressing his domestic political aura. His journey to the Soviet Union, for example, was hugely significant in appealing to the communist left in France; and his criticism of the Vietnam War during his

visit to Cambodia in September 1966 became an iconic moment in the General's appeal to the developing world.

Charles de Gaulle also consciously deployed territorial notions in his domestic political discourse. Between 1940 and 1944, the Free French were exiled from their native land, and Gaullian wartime language was replete with metaphors about belonging and loss. After the Liberation much of this sentiment was transferred to La Boisserie, de Gaulle's home at Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises, which played a key role in the General's myth. The village represented the bucolic life, family privacy, solitude and reflection, and also a certain kind of retreat from the world.[14] This psychological and physical distance sometimes gave the house a fortress-like quality, as during the Fourth Republic, when Colombey symbolized 'the myth of isolation, of banishment, of silence'.[15] Even the General's close collaborators dreaded the 'interminable journey' from Paris to Colombey, to that 'distant, inconvenient house in that gloomy landscape, that indeterminate countryside under a lowering sky'.[16] Like the old monarchs, de Gaulle was believed by some of his followers to have supernatural powers, and Colombey saw a steady stream of visitors who arrived uninvited at the village at various times, and demanded to see the Great Man to share their gifts, their thoughts or their grievances with him. Among these curious pilgrims, surely the strangest was the woman who was found several years in succession hanging around the gates of La Boisserie and telling anyone who would listen that she had come from Lourdes to fulfil Our Lady's instruction to her that she should bear General de Gaulle's child.[17]

Only Chancellor Adenauer, in the name of Franco–German reconciliation, was honoured with an invitation to stay at La Boisserie in September 1958; this event was not only a powerful image of Franco–German reconciliation, but also provided a key symbolic frame for de Gaulle's presidential successors; most recently, Colombey was the venue for a meeting between Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel.[18] But this exception only proved the rule. For Colombey was a cloister, a place for meditation and preparation for action; under the Fifth Republic, every one of de Gaulle's most important journeys and press conferences, every difficult presidential decision, was preceded by a stay in his village sanctuary.[19] Colombey was above all the symbol of one of the cardinal virtues in the Gaullian scheme of values: loyalty. An informal and respectful loyalty, shown by the villagers, who saw de Gaulle at Mass on Sundays, at the polling station on election days, or at local anniversaries or feast-days; a strictly hierarchical loyalty, like that of the 'companions' who had the rare honour of being invited to La Boisserie, or of the (very

small) group who were permitted to talk to de Gaulle there on the telephone.[20] Loyalty could be demonstrative and spectacular, like that of the air force pilots who showed their enthusiasm for de Gaulle's return to public life in May 1958 by repeatedly flying over La Boisserie and dipping their wings in salute.[21] But loyalty could also take the form of discretion; like that of the servants in the house, or the young medical students who were on call when the president was in residence, and who used sometimes to watch American films on television with him on weekends,[22] or the police detachments who guarded the General's residence day and night, and who organized the protection of the estate and its surroundings, as far as the edge of the Forêt des Dhuits and the wood of La Montagne. During the Algerian War, such was the fear of an air attack that serious consideration was given to installing anti-aircraft batteries in the woods near Colombey.[23]

Colombey was thus both an integral component of de Gaulle's mental map, and, through its association with the notions of solitude, retreat and loyalty, of the way in which his legend began to crystallize in the 1940s and 1950s. The village became a metaphor for exile again after de Gaulle's resignation in 1969, when the General's return to his country home was frequently compared to Napoleon's banishment at Saint-Helena in 1815. As one member of the public wrote to de Gaulle at the time: 'France is sending you in exile to Colombey again. Napoleon's legend began on St Helena, yours is starting now.'[24] This sense of dispossession – which de Gaulle deliberately cultivated, notably by receiving only a handful of visitors in the final months of his life – prompted a wave of sympathy, as when a young girl wrote to de Gaulle after his resignation in 1969, imagining him walking in his garden at Colombey: 'How I wish I could be a flower in your garden, so that when you picked it some of its perfume would stay on your fingers and soften your terrible sadness . . . '[25]

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Alongside his experiences as the leader of the French Resistance, and his territorial mooring in his village in the Haute-Marne, de Gaulle's self-image was decisively fashioned by his writings. His *Mémoires de guerre*, which we have already cited, were written in the 1950s, and were a key element in the crystallization of his world view. Indeed this work became the *urtext* of the Gaullist political tradition, with repeated citations and reappropriations of some phrases and expressions, such as the celebrated opening phrase about his 'certaine idée de

la France'. Charles de Gaulle's *Mémoires* also connected explicitly with a French literary tradition of state memoirs, with powerful echoes of Louis XIV, Napoleon's *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, and Chateaubriand's *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. A remarkable success in France, and translated into 25 languages, de Gaulle's *Mémoires de guerre* offer further crucial insights into the General's mental map. Charles de Gaulle's sense of self was grounded in reason but also in a sensibility which offered strong echoes of nineteenth-century French political culture. In particular his world view, as it emerged in the 1950s, drew heavily on the mindset of one of his favourite writers, Chateaubriand: it was a romantic and tragic conception of history, imbued with religious sentiment and in particular with a sense of regret at the collective decline in Catholic values.

But the *Mémoires de guerre* were also highly topical. They were addressed to a France which was losing its way in a succession of disastrous colonial wars in the 1940s and 1950s, and whose collective sense of itself had not yet recovered from the wounds of occupation and Vichy. The General's purpose must also be understood in the context of the ideological battle that had begun in France after 1944 around how the events of the war years should be represented. On one side was communist memory, vehement and uncompromising, which saw the party as the vanguard of the 'spirit of resistance', while on the other were the first cautious articulations of a Vichyist memory, which found some echoes even in de Gaulle's own camp in the declarations of Colonel Rémy.[26] Faced with these dissonances, de Gaulle felt compelled to offer his own version of history: as he might have said himself, 'honour, good sense and the highest interest' required him to do so. So it was that unfolded in the pages of the *Mémoires de guerre*, the Gaullian myth centred on a vision of recent history, and of the General's three chief roles as war leader. First, de Gaulle cast himself, as a result of his Appeal of the 18th of June, as the only legitimate expression of the national will. There was no providentialism in this assertion, it is true, but a truly prodigious self-identification becomes clear when he wrote: 'suddenly my mission appeared to me, clear and terrible. At that moment, the blackest in her history, it fell to me to take responsibility for France.'[27]

Secondly, de Gaulle presented Free France as the single pivot of the Resistance, celebrating the 'key unification'[28] achieved by Jean Moulin, in the face of communists who were certainly brave and devoted, but who always tried to turn circumstances to their own advantage, 'while never losing an opportunity', the General continued, 'to sound off against the "de Gaulle myth"'.[29] Finally, the leader of Free France presented himself as the unyielding defender of the national interest

against British and American allies who sought to 'vassalize' France. He had much to say about British designs on Syria, Lebanon and Madagascar;[30] as for President Roosevelt, his gestures and actions made plain – according to de Gaulle – his hostility to the very idea of a 'sovereign and independent' France.[31] In the General's view, his resistance against the Allies was one of the key elements of his successful leadership of Free France. And, to make sure that this part of his story would not pass unnoticed, de Gaulle agreed at the time his second volume was appearing in 1956 to give an interview to Jacqueline Piatier, who was to review it for *Le Monde*.[32] Clearly taking her lead from the author's presentation of his work, Piatier summed up the second volume of the *Mémoires* as follows: 'it tells the story of two campaigns: one, open, clear and above-board, the resumption of the struggle against Germany, and the other muted, full of intrigue and concealed blows, the hidden struggle against the Americans. For it was in fact *against them* that the General eventually triumphed.'[33]

This head-on opposition between France and the Anglo-Saxon world would become even more evident under the Gaullian Republic after 1958, as we shall later see; it also marked the strongest break between the legend of the war years and the myth constructed by the *Mémoires*, where all the conflicts with the British and the Americans are deliberately foregrounded. The time was long past when de Gaulle would pay tribute to the 'fine and worthy Allied armies and their chiefs',[34] and when popular addresses to the General were everywhere accompanied by naming of streets after the United States or lyrical hymns in praise of the 'free, noble soul'[35] of 'splendid England'[36] (as late as the mid-1950s de Gaulle was still receiving poems celebrating him as 'the great friend of Great Britain').[37] The shifting of Gaullian discourse towards a more assertive nationalism was part of a wider component of the General's mental map: the schematization of sensibilities. From the very beginning of the *Mémoires*, de Gaulle strongly defined a series of binary oppositions: he described a France torn between death and resurrection, between honour and humiliation, between renewal and decay. This eschatology derived from Providence, which had created France 'for striking successes or resounding failures'.[38] Even the '*grandeur*' without which 'France could not be France' could only be seen in the mirror of its opposite, 'mediocrity'.[39] In these contrasts, de Gaulle was already anchoring his narrative to an essential element of legendary folklore: the 'titanic fight'[40] which had to precede final victory. Yet that victory was assured, since de Gaulle, even though driven from power in January 1946, was the incarnation of the supreme teleology: leaving power,

he 'took away with him something primordial, something permanent and necessary, which he personified through his role in History, and which the regime of parties could not represent'.[41] The *Mémoires de guerre* were thus doubly mythogenic: not only did they cast a highly selective (not to say tendentious) retrospective look at the past, but they also lay down a prospectus for a different kind of republic, grounded in strong centralized leadership.

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By the time de Gaulle returned to power in May 1958, to fulfil the prophecy with which he concluded the third volume of his *Mémoires*,[42] his view of the world was thus largely established. In one of his early press conferences, he famously declared that he was not going to embark upon a career of dictator at the age of 67; he might also have said (and it would also have been true) that he was not going to alter his mental map at such a ripe old age, either. He drew upon his sense of national destiny, and his belief that he was its personification, to confront the two key challenges which faced his incoming administration: solving the Algerian crisis, which had destabilized and finally brought down the Fourth Republic; and creating a new Republic, centred around a reinforced presidential executive. Within four years of assuming power, de Gaulle had achieved both of these goals. In mental map terms, the Fifth Republic was more or less an exact blueprint of the General's Bayeux speech of June 1946, in which he had declared that executive power in France should henceforth stem from the head of state, 'placed above parties'. The Algerian resolution is more difficult to pin down in terms of de Gaulle's original mindset because he had prudently avoided public comment on the issue before his return to power – but deep down he probably understood long before 1958 that Algeria was likely to become independent. Charles de Gaulle knew the French colonial world very well from the war years: he was based in Algiers during the latter half of the war, and travelled extensively in Africa and the Middle East during the conflict; unlike many men of his generation, who grew up celebrating France's *mission civilisatrice* in her colonial Empire, he was never moved by the colonial mystique.[43]

At the heart of de Gaulle's conception of the presidency was the notion of 'arbitrage': the president was responsible for all key areas of decision-making, and particularly what became known as the 'reserved domain' of defence and foreign affairs. A key element of the Gaullist international philosophy was the quest for the restoration of French

'grandeur'.[44] The world into which de Gaulle stepped in the late 1950s was highly volatile, with the Cold War remaining a menacing presence on the horizon. Yet, despite his intense contempt for Soviet-style communism, and his first-hand experience of Stalin, de Gaulle was not a classic Cold warrior (like Adenauer, for example). Why not? In part, because he was not in office at the height of the Cold War in Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He was also, as we have already seen (and in marked contrast with many European Cold warriors) extremely distrustful of American power; indeed, he believed that in some respects American hegemony posed a greater threat to European liberty than the Soviet Union – a view which baffled many of his liberal critics in France, such as Raymond Aron.[45] More speculatively, de Gaulle's anti-communism was tempered by his memories of the shared struggle during the Resistance years, and of the post-Liberation government over which he presided, and in which communist ministers loyally participated. To put the same point differently, de Gaulle believed that French communists were also capable of acting in the national interest – when these happened to coincide, of course, with the interests of the Soviet Union.[46]

Most fundamentally, de Gaulle's tepidity towards the Cold War was driven by his belief that a war between East and West was not inevitable, or even likely. Indeed he sensed that the superpowers' grip over Europe was beginning to weaken in the 1960s, and that this might provide France with an opportunity to play a more independent role on the foreign stage. He also felt that his age and his experience gave him the legitimacy to articulate this position, and to act upon it. In de Gaulle's eyes France had a double vocation – to act as an arbiter of the conflict between East and West, and as an intermediary between North and South. And the latter goal could not be achieved if France was still mired in a colonial war – hence the strategic urgency of Algerian self-determination. This delicate balancing act was underpinned by France's independent nuclear deterrent, whose development he resolutely championed after 1958. Charles de Gaulle's search for this special position for France was the driving force behind his most notable moves in the foreign policy realm: the overtures towards the USSR and Eastern Europe, the establishment of diplomatic relations with China, the ambition to build a European alliance 'from the Atlantic to Urals', and the spectacular (if not fully consummated) rapprochement with Germany.[47]

Charles de Gaulle's policy towards Germany was dialectically related to his wider vision of a peaceful Europe. As soon as the Algerian conflict

was brought to an end, de Gaulle put the last touches to the Franco–German reconciliation, first by inviting Chancellor Adenauer on a state visit to France in July 1962, then following it by his own triumphal visit to Germany in September. Constantly invoking the friendship between the two peoples, and speaking in German on six occasions, de Gaulle was enthusiastically welcomed everywhere he went: 10,000 people came to see him in Bonn and 50,000 in Cologne and in Hamburg. His visit was ecstatically reported by *Der Spiegel*: 'De Gaulle came to Germany as President of France: he leaves as Emperor of Europe.'[48] As with all of his core principles, the General's European philosophy was forged in the crucible of the war years. His belief in European unity was genuine, but it was confined to a Europe of nation states; as he declared at a press conference in 1962: 'there can be no other Europe than the Europe of nation states, except in myths, fictions and pageantry.' He categorically rejected any supranationalist conception of European unity, both because he believed it was inconsistent with French national traditions, and because he saw the most depraved manifestation of supranationalism in the 'Europe' championed by the Nazis and their French fascist vassals during the Second World War; here again, the General's mental map was largely a product of his historical and political experiences of the 1940s.

The cornerstone of de Gaulle's foreign policy was his resolute opposition to Anglo–American hegemony in Europe and in the world. The General used his veto (twice) to block British membership of the European Economic Community, arguing that the British were unacceptable because they would act as the 'Trojan horse' of the United States in Europe. While this view elicited considerable adverse comment in Britain about French ingratitude, there were also expressions of support for de Gaulle's stance. Charles de Gaulle received many letters from ordinary British citizens urging him to keep their country out of Europe; one lady even travelled all the way from England to the gates of Colombey to deliver this Eurosceptic message.[49] In a sense, this Gaullian policy was much more centrally directed at the United States, with whom the General sought to realign France's relationship.[50] His ambition to achieve French autonomy from the superpowers meant that nuclear missiles were pointed both at Washington and at Moscow, but in effect his policy was much more challenging to the United States: hence his decision to remove France from the integrated NATO command in 1966, and to close all American military bases in France. Charles de Gaulle was also critical of American imperialism, and took a prominent public position in supporting national liberation struggles

in the developing world. His anti-Americanism was not visceral, in the sense that he genuinely believed that France was part of the Western alliance, and should stand by the United States if she were threatened by the Soviet Union (de Gaulle thus strongly supported Kennedy over the Cuban missile crisis). But at the same time, the General believed that membership of the Western alliance should not lead to a subordination of French national interests to those of the United States. And underlying this, de Gaulle undoubtedly harboured a form of anti-Americanism, which was the crystallization of several factors: his Catholic revulsion at the greed and individualism of American society, his European cultural snobbery towards the perceived crassness of American culture, and his republican hostility towards the hegemonic tendencies of the United States. It is also not inconceivable – the General tended neither to forgive nor to forget – that he still remembered his shabby treatment by Roosevelt, who believed that de Gaulle suffered from a 'Joan of Arc complex' and should be sent off to become the governor of the island of Madagascar.

This Gaullist opposition to hegemonic order was, of course, partly driven by power–political considerations, and was not entirely consistent with France's own neo-colonialist policies in her former African colonies in the 1960s, which were discreetly framed by de Gaulle's *éminence grise* at the Elysée, Jacques Foccart.[51] But this French position was not merely directed at the United States' policies: it also featured prominently in de Gaulle's approach to Latin America, and in his more controversial stances, notably his resolute challenge to the Israeli occupation and conquest of Arab lands after 1967, and his support for French self-determination in Quebec. Charles de Gaulle is often presented as a 'realist' in his philosophy of foreign affairs, with an emphasis on concepts of national sovereignty and 'grandeur'. While there is no denying that the General believed that international relations were essentially driven by power and the pursuit of national interests, there were also profoundly republican elements in his approach. Indeed (and this is where he departs completely from the realist canon) the principle of self-determination was at the heart of his international philosophy, as was the notion that France was at her best when she acted in the name of a greater ideal.[52] It is for this reason that de Gaulle's stature in the developing world remained high in the decades which followed his death – especially among peoples fighting for their freedom and self-determination. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the historic leader and president of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was never seen without a gold Cross of Lorraine pendant hanging round

his neck: this talisman had been sent to him by General de Gaulle in 1970.[53]

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The international reaction to de Gaulle's death in November 1970 symbolized the global status he had achieved for himself and for France, thanks to his founding of the new Fifth Republic: he was mourned in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America, and more than 70 heads of state – including the American president Richard Nixon, a fervent admirer of de Gaulle – came to Paris to attend a religious service in his honour at Notre-Dame. Condolence books were opened all over France in municipal town halls, and the individual entries bore witness to the extraordinary temporal range of de Gaulle's life. The oldest signatory was a woman born in 1869; and among those who made the journey for this final salute to *l'homme du 18 Juin* were many veterans from the Great War, an officer who served with de Gaulle in Poland in 1920; de Gaulle's driver in Metz in 1939; numerous Free French from 1940–45; as well as men and women from the generations of the 1950s and 1960s – including one participant in the student revolt of May 1968, who now expressed his contrition at having opposed de Gaulle: 'I was a young idiot, rebelling against his father and his family, against the head of State and France. I now appreciate that you were right – again.'[54]

Charles de Gaulle would not have disagreed. Indeed, once it was forged in the dramatic circumstances of the 1940–44 period, the General's view of the world (and of France's place in it) was strikingly consistent over time. To coin a phrase, his mental map was both Gallo- and Gaullo-centric. The Cold War, from this point of view, represented at worst an irritating constraint upon his action, and at best an opportunity to be exploited. The General projected a strong self-image as a providential figure and man of destiny. Despite his resignation in 1946 and the failure of his political challenge to the Fourth Republic in the late 1940s, he remained convinced of the need for new political institutions for France, centred around strong presidential leadership; he pursued his ambition to restore the nation's 'rank' in the world; and constantly manifested a quasi-mystical rapport with territorial space. Indeed so obsessed was he with his posterity that he carefully planned his own funeral, insisting in his testament (written in 1952) that he wished to be buried at Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises, in a quiet ceremony attended only by his family, the villagers and members of the

Resistance order he had founded during the war, the Compagnons de la Libération.

However, while it always sounded categorical in its public articulations, his sense of providentialism was not without its internal tensions. Indeed de Gaulle's sensibility was profoundly dualistic. He could embody, at the same time and sometimes in the same set of representations, a whole array of contrasting figures: the haughty monarch and the homely head of state; the symbol of grandeur and the image of Christian humility; the face of authority and the voice of insubordination; the ideal of the Just and the figure of the avenger; the standard of chivalric values and the personification of popular sovereignty; the example of military glory and the pacifier of a wounded nation; the providential leader and the guarantor of public interest; the prudent legislator and the prophet of apocalyptic fury; the cold-headed monster and the man of passion. Ultimately, while he was confident that France was a great nation, somewhere in him also lurked the thought that this greatness might become corroded and dissipated from within – hence the frequent references to death in Gaullian discourse. To put the same point differently, in his mental map of the Hexagon[55] there was always a separation between 'France', which was an idealized metaphysical concept, and 'the French', which was an empirical one.

Yet, despite these frailties, de Gaulle is a good antidote to Bourdieu's claim about the 'illusion' of biography, or to the view that Great Men do not make history. Even compared with other major figures of the twentieth century, the General stands out for his single-mindedness, and his steadfast and unbending determination to work towards the realization of his core objectives. In the process of doing so he founded a political movement – Gaullism – which survived him until the early twenty-first century, but whose apogee came in the period between the 1940s and the late 1960s – a moment in French political history which was dominated by the titanic clash between Gaullism and communism. With the benefit of hindsight, these two groups had much more in common than they would perhaps have been prepared to acknowledge at the time: both were heroic political movements which celebrated the principle of patriotism, and exhibited a strong sense of discipline, a belief in purification, and a commitment to sacrificing individuals for the common good (as Stéphane Courtois has noted, these have been, in modern French political history, the only two political movements which have sent their militants to die for their respective causes[56]).

A map is a representation of physical reality, but also a potential distortion of it – it can notably exaggerate the scale of some objects, and minimize that of others. On this score, the Gaullist mental map undoubtedly contained a number of distorting elements. Its rendering of the 1940–44 era (especially in the *Mémoires de guerre*) was in many respects a deliberate misrepresentation, whose purpose was to buttress the 'Resistantialist' myth of a French nation united in its opposition to Vichy, and massively supportive of the Free French under the leadership of de Gaulle. The reality, as the memoir literature of the period now shows, was rather different. And although French historiography has made important strides in challenging this myth in recent decades, the Gaullist legend still shapes public attitudes in key respects. For example, the French still continue to regard themselves as the principal authors of their liberation in 1944; the role of the Allies is acknowledged, but not foregrounded. In de Gaulle's own mind, the main Second World War anniversary which the French should celebrate was the 18th of June. The 8th of May, which became the anniversary of Victory in Europe after 1945, was to be observed – but as the General put it, in a typical understatement, 'not too much'.[57]

Yet this Gallocentricity should be seen in perspective. Charles de Gaulle's mental map of France and of the French changed the way his fellow citizens imagined and represented themselves: between the 1930s and the 1960s, thanks largely to the General's intellectual artistry, a conservative, declining, humiliated colonial power reinvented itself as a plucky, cunning and assertive nation, symbolized by Astérix the Gaul, the diminutive warrior who stands up to the wicked and the powerful. This is indeed where the mental map and the myth coalesce. Charles de Gaulle went on to become, after his death in 1970, the most accomplished legend in French history, hailed all at once as a liberator, as a symbol of the French nation, as a law-giver – and ultimately, as a prophet. His key views on Vichy, on the Fourth Republic and on decolonization were subsequently embraced by the French. And likewise, many aspects of his foreign policy which seemed contentious or ill-judged when he first formulated them have subsequently been vindicated by posterity: we could cite, most notably, the end of bipolarity, the belief in a separate track for European détente, the diplomatic recognition of China (which Richard Nixon acknowledged decisively influenced his own China policy), the unsustainability of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe, the resilience of the nation state in Western Europe, the injustice of Israeli occupation of Palestine, and (last, but not least) Britain's unsuitability for membership of the European Union.

Notes

1. Pierre Lefranc, *Gouverner avec de Gaulle. Conversations avec Geneviève Moll* (Paris, 2008).
2. The most recent French biography is by Eric Roussel, *Charles de Gaulle* (Paris, 2002).
3. Entry of 10 April 1946, in Claude Guy, *En Ecoutant de Gaulle* (Paris, 1996), 55.
4. On this theme see Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Le Mythe Gaullien* (Paris, 2010).
5. See Maurice Agulhon, *De Gaulle, histoire, symbole, mythe* (Paris, 2000).
6. Philippe Oulmont (ed.), *Les 'Voies de gaulle' en France. Le Général dans l'espace et la mémoire des communes* (Paris, 2009).
7. 'As the words flew away irrevocably I sensed the closing of one chapter of my life, the one I had lived within the confines of an immutable France and an invincible army. At the age of 49, I became an adventurer, a man who had been tossed out of all conventions by destiny.' Charles de Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre* (Paris, 1989 edn.), 79.
8. See more generally Charles de Gaulle, *Discours et messages*, vol. 1 Pendant la guerre, juin 1940–janvier 1946 (Paris, 1970).
9. Claude Bourdet, *L'aventure incertaine. De la Résistance à la Restauration* (Paris, 1975).
10. See, for example, the General's speech of 2 July 1940, in de Gaulle, *Discours et messages*, 12.
11. On these internal conflicts, see Robert Belot, *La Résistance sans de Gaulle* (Paris, 2006).
12. See Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Political Traditions in Modern France* (Oxford, 1994).
13. For de Gaulle's account of his meeting with Stalin, see de Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre*, 656–75.
14. See Sébastien Danchin and François Jenny, *De Gaulle à Colombey. Refuge d'un romantique* (Nancy, 1990); also Michel Cazenave, *De Gaulle et la terre de France* (Paris, 1988).
15. Frédérique Dufour, 'Colombey et le gaullisme sous la IVe République', in F. Audigier and F. Schwindt (eds), *Gaullisme et gaullistes dans la France de l'Est sous la IVe République* (Rennes, 2009), 371.
16. Jacques Soustelle, *Vingt-huit ans de gaullisme* (Paris, 1971), 45.
17. Story told by de Gaulle to Alain Peyrefitte, and recounted in the documentary drawn from his book *C'était de Gaulle* (Editions Montparnasse, 2008).
18. The occasion was the inauguration of the new Charles-de-Gaulle memorial at Colombey in October 2008.
19. Jean Mauriac, 'Le Général de Gaulle et Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises', in *Charles de Gaulle 1890–1970*, Comité national du mémorial du général de Gaulle (Paris, 1973), 41–53.
20. See Jean-Paul Ollivier, *De Gaulle à Colombey* (Paris, 1998).
21. Telegrams from the Renseignements Généraux, 20, 21 et 22 May 1958. Archives Départementales de la Haute Marne (hereafter ADHM) 819 W 26357 (surveillance de La Boisserie).
22. Information provided by Professor Alain Corbin.
23. Memo of the Office of the President, 24 May 1961. ADHM, 1524 W 11 (protection de La Boisserie). The batteries were installed but de Gaulle discovered

them when walking in the forest of the Dhuits and had them removed. See Roger Tessier, *J'étais le gorille du Général* (Paris, 2002), 101.

24. Letter to General de Gaulle, 28 April 1969. Fondation Charles De Gaulle (hereafter FCDG), AE 3 (5).
25. Letter, Saint-Cloud, 1 September 1969. FCDG AE 4 (5).
26. On the Rémy affair, see Henry Rousso, *Le syndrome de Vichy* (Paris, 1990), 48–55.
27. de Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre*, 82.
28. Ibid., 241.
29. Ibid., 239–40.
30. Ibid., 304–05.
31. Ibid., 352.
32. Letter from Jacqueline Piatier to General de Gaulle, Paris, 12 June 1956. FCDG, AE 3.
33. *Le Monde*, 17–18 June 1956; emphasis added.
34. Broadcast speech by General de Gaulle, 29 August 1944, de Gaulle, *Discours et messages*, 441.
35. 'Les Libérateurs: Jeanne d'Arc 1429, les Anglais 1941', a poem addressed to General de Gaulle, Rouen, 7 October 1944. FCDG AC-1.
36. Magdeleine Bommier-Dewarin, 'Au général de Gaulle' (June 1941), Chateau de Wardrecques, Pas de Calais. FCDG AE 3.
37. 'Honneur au général de Gaulle', 11 May 1954. FCDG AF50 (5).
38. de Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre*, 9.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 10.
41. Ibid., 883.
42. It was in the summer of 1958 that de Gaulle rewrote the ending of the third volume, which closes with his departure from power in 1946 and announces his future providential return.
43. On de Gaulle's thinking, see Benjamin Stora, *Le mystère de Gaulle. Son choix pour l'Algérie* (Paris, 2009).
44. See Philip G. Cerny, *The Politics of Grandeur: Ideological Aspects of de Gaulle's Foreign Policy* (New York, 1980).
45. Raymond Aron, *Mémoires. 50 ans de réflexion politique* (Paris, 1993).
46. On the relationship between De Gaulle and the French communists, see the excellent collection edited by Stéphane Courtois and Marc Lazar, *50 ans d'une passion française. De Gaulle et les communistes* (Paris, 1991).
47. On Franco-German relations more generally, see Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'Alliance incertaine. Les rapports politiques et stratégiques franco-allemands 1954–1996* (Paris, 1996). For an overall evaluation of French foreign policy in the Gaullian years, see Maurice Vaïsse, *La grandeur. Politique étrangère du général de Gaulle 1958–1969* (Paris, 1998).
48. Quoted by Rainer Hudemann, 'Voyage en Allemagne', in C. Andrieu et al. (eds), *Dictionnaire De Gaulle* (Paris, 2006), 1171.
49. Testimony of de Gaulle's aide-de-camp Jean d'Escrienne (who spoke to her). See his memoirs, *De Gaulle sans frontières* (Paris, 2007), 92–93.
50. See Robert Paxton and Nicholas Wahl, *De Gaulle and the United States* (Oxford, 1994).
51. See Foccart's memoirs, *Journal de l'Elysée*, 5 vols (Paris, 1997–2001).

52. André Malraux, *Les chênes qu'on abat…* (Paris, 1971).
53. 'Le cadeau du général de Gaulle'. *Le Monde*, 24–25 October 1993. In an interview in the *Nouvel Observateur* in 2001, the President of the Palestinian Authority declared: 'I am proud to wear this Cross of Lorraine'. *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 11 January 2001.
54. Condolence register, Seine-Maritime, 1969. FCGD archives.
55. Because of the geometric shape of the territory of metropolitan France, the 'Hexagon' is spatial metaphor commonly used to designate France.
56. Stéphane Courtois, 'Gaullisme et communisme: la double réponse à la crise d'identité française', in *50 ans d'une passion française*.
57. Comment made by de Gaulle to his son-in-law Alain de Boissieu, and quoted by Jean Mauriac, *L'après de Gaulle* (Paris, 2006), 173.

5
Konrad Adenauer

Jonathan Wright

Konrad Adenauer is among those leaders of the early Cold War period for whom the concept of a mental map is particularly apt. This is partly because he was a representative of a minority culture in Germany, the Catholic Rhineland, with its own distinctive character. But even more important were the dramatic and horrific events which he experienced in his long career. These gave him a keen sense both of where he belonged and also of the fragility of the world – and of Germany's place within it.

He grew up in Imperial Germany as part of the Catholic milieu but one which by the 1890s had largely overcome the trauma of Bismarck's Kulturkampf and had an accepted place within the Empire.[1] His father became a civil servant after a career as a soldier when he fought on the Prussian side in the wars of unification. Adenauer himself had a successful career in municipal government, becoming Lord Mayor of Cologne, an important position in Germany, in 1917, when he was 41. The Empire was overthrown in defeat and revolution in 1918 but Adenauer remained Lord Mayor under the Weimar Republic. He was an influential member of the Catholic Centre Party, president of the upper chamber of the Prussian parliament and a serious candidate for the Reich chancellorship in 1926. In Cologne he experienced British military occupation and after the French extension of their control over the Ruhr industrial region in 1923, he took initiatives of his own to resolve the crisis. He knew the world of Weimar politics intimately and he was a significant, if provincial, leader within it. That world in turn collapsed in 1933 and Adenauer was dismissed from his position as Lord Mayor. He lived quietly in the Third Reich, was approached by opposition circles but kept his distance, and then saw that system disintegrate in a defeat that was more complete than anything previously known – the

end of a perverted moral order that had deeply affected a generation. That was again followed by occupation, but this time by powers intent not simply on German disarmament but on reforming German politics and society in their own image, leading to the division of Germany into the Soviet and Western (American, British and French) zones.

When he became chancellor of the Federal Republic in 1949, a position he continued to hold until 1963, Adenauer's mental map had naturally been formed by his own background and experience. Paradoxically, the division of Germany gave him his first chance of power at the state level, at the level of the Federal Republic, because part of the heartland of the Social Democratic Party – his only major rival for power – lay in the Soviet zone. The Federal Republic was a weak state, still in 1949 under extensive Allied controls, but Adenauer seized his opportunities to shape that state and its place in the world with ruthless determination.[2] That suggests both the force of his ambition (released from being simply a minority power broker in a party system divided on denominational lines) and the clear sense of direction – or mental map – which guided him. At the same time he was well aware of the constraints under which the Federal Republic operated and the all too obvious risks of failure. He had to remain flexible, to accept reverses, to trim to the prevailing wind. The agility he showed in this late flowering of his career – he was 73 when he became chancellor and 87 when he resigned – is perhaps its most remarkable feature.

What were the contours of his mental map as chancellor? Most marked was undoubtedly his fear of Russia and of Soviet communism. I refer to both, though he used to run them together as 'Soviet Russia', because each was clearly identified by him. In his memoirs he refers to 'the Russian policy of expansion' and 'the Communist plans for world domination'.[3] The fear of Russia because of its sheer size, both geographically and in population, deeply affected his generation before the First World War. That fear was also cultural and even had a racist tone, one that the Nazis exploited for the war on the Eastern front. Adenauer wrote in March 1946 to a German friend in the United States (Wilhelm Sollmann, a former leading Social Democratic journalist and politician of Jewish descent from Cologne) of the threat from Russia to European culture: 'The danger is great. Asia stands on the Elbe.'[4] But it was also a result of his understanding of the balance of power and of the dangers of Germany's central European position. As he commented in one of his tea-time conversations with journalists in May 1952, in words which might equally have been used by Bismarck, 'We have the East and we have the West and we lie in between.'[5] Of the expansionist nature of

'Soviet Russia' he had no doubt. In his memoirs, he enumerated its territorial annexations since 1939, amounting to 492,600 square kilometres, or over twice the territory of the Federal Republic – not including the satellite states – and the expanse of the Soviet Union was illustrated in black on a graphic map. 'The land mass of Soviet Russia is so great that it is automatically bound to drag the smaller countries on its borders with it.'[6] He had no doubt that it would, if it could, extend its control over the whole of Germany. Stalin would naturally want to dominate the continent to the same extent as Hitler at the height of his power.[7]

Given this one key compass point, the magnetic North as it were in Adenauer's mental map, the other elements followed as bearings relative to it.[8] But they did not follow automatically – like Soviet policy – but as aims to be achieved by unremitting effort with the ever-present danger, indeed likelihood, of failure. This gave Adenauer's policy an unusual clarity and even a desperate urgency which led to a willingness to force what he saw as essential choices on his government and the electorate – 'to save Germany from itself' in the words of the Belgian foreign minister, Paul Henri Spaak.[9] What seems to us the natural consequence of a 'bipolar world' – the consolidation of the Federal Republic into a military alliance under US leadership and a Western European political and economic bloc – seemed to Adenauer a struggle against enormous and at times overwhelming odds. To this end he was willing to use any and every opportunity, behaving more as an autocrat than a democrat, for instance, pressing forward with German rearmament only five years after the end of the war and in the process risking electoral defeat.[10]

The key to balancing Soviet power lay most obviously with the United States but in the early years there was no certainty about its future course. In his letter to Sollmann in March 1946, Adenauer wrote,

> The USA does not know Europe . . . The USA is therefore also inclined not to interest itself in European affairs. And yet that is quite wrong. If European culture, which has suffered severely for 30 years, is completely ruined, that will also be of great importance to the USA. . . . Only an economically and spiritually healthy Western Europe under the leadership of Britain and France, a Western Europe to which the part of Germany not occupied by Russia belongs as an essential component, can halt the further advance of Asia in spiritual terms and in terms of power. Do help to spread the conviction in the USA that the salvation of Europe can only come about with help from the USA and that the salvation of Europe is also essential to the USA.[11]

It followed that the policy of the Federal Republic should be to do everything in its power to encourage an American commitment to Western Europe. Adenauer was convinced that any alternative would be disastrous. A policy which led to neutrality between the blocs in the hope of achieving German unification, which attracted some in the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and elsewhere, would in his view be fatal. It would revive fear of German nationalism, encourage American isolationism, add to the French temptation to reach a separate agreement with the Soviet Union (reviving the Franco–Russian alliance of before 1914) and strengthen British detachment from the continent. As it was, Adenauer's constant anxiety was that the four great powers would reach agreement at Germany's expense, his 'Potsdam complex'. He likened this in June 1953 to Bismarck's 'nightmare of coalitions', adding, 'The danger of a common policy of the great powers at the cost of Germany has existed since 1945 and has also continued to exist after the foundation of the Federal Republic.'[12] That worry dogged him at the time of the proposed Foreign Ministers' Conference in 1951, when Churchill launched his détente balloon in 1953, during the Berlin Conference of 1954 and the Geneva Summit of 1955, and again during the Second Berlin Crisis from 1958. In his memoirs he wrote, 'One could not and cannot create a political vacuum in the centre of Europe. That would positively provoke the neighbouring powers to intervene in some form or other in this vacuum.'[13] And more directly in a conversation with journalists in June 1951, during the debates on German rearmament, he said, 'Russia wants the neutralization and demilitarization of Germany, as only then will this Germany one day fall into its lap like a ripe fruit.'[14]

Adenauer's vision was unusually – perhaps uniquely – clear, bold and consistent. It is worth pausing to ask why his mental map was so distinctive. Part of the answer is simply intellect and temperament. He had always had an independent mind and, given all that had happened in his lifetime, he had no reason to trust anyone else's judgment. But it is hard to believe that his Rhenish Catholic background is not relevant. This is controversial. His best-known biographer, Hans-Peter Schwarz, is at pains to point out that Adenauer belonged to the Catholic middle class, which by the 1890s had become integrated into the Empire and thought of Bismarck's Reich as part of the natural order of European states.[15] This argument is important to counter two lines of criticism. The first, used against him by the Nazis but also repeated elsewhere, was that he had been a separatist – that is, he supported a Rhineland state separate from Germany – in line with French ambitions after the

First World War.[16] The second, a more moderate variant, was criticism from the SPD in the 1950s and SPD historians since that as chancellor he had no serious commitment to German unification and that his so-called policy of German unification was simply a cover for the real policy of Western integration.[17]

The first charge is clearly inaccurate. He was never a separatist, which in any case was a movement lacking in significant support even when it received encouragement from the French and Belgian occupiers in 1923. Adenauer was far too important and mainstream a politician to have identified himself with such rootless individuals. However, he did advocate both in 1919 and again in 1923–24 a Rhineland state within Germany but separate from Prussia, as a way of meeting French fears. Such a state he argued would redistribute power within Germany between the rest of Prussia, the new Rhineland state and South Germany, and because of its economic importance the new state would have great influence on German policy as a whole. In addition, its population would be most at risk in a new war and would therefore want to maintain peace with France. The common economic interests of both countries in coal and iron would also draw them together.[18] Adenauer clashed with the then Chancellor Stresemann, who saw such ideas as a step towards legitimating French control of Germany's industrial heartland and was hoping that British and American pressure would force a change in French policy.[19] Adenauer continued to pursue his ideas in 1924, even gaining the consent of the new chancellor, his Centre Party colleague Wilhelm Marx, for what was an independent foreign policy directly counter to that of Stresemann as foreign minister.[20] However, at the time Stresemann's strategy prevailed and, with the help of the City of London, French plans for a separate Rhineland bank were thwarted. By the summer the Dawes Plan had put an end to Adenauer's policy. Nevertheless, the incident shows the shape of his thinking, his determination in pursuing his own course and the difference between his outlook and that of the Protestant Berliner, Stresemann. There is also a clear parallel with September 1945 when he again spoke of a Germany divided into three but now referring only to the part not occupied by the Soviet Union. He foresaw a division of the remainder between the North and the Rhine-Ruhr region and the South, apparently suggesting a loose confederation or even separate states.[21] Again his ideas were prompted by the desire to avoid French annexation of the Rhineland which would ruin his hopes of establishing good relations with France, an essential precondition for resisting the Soviet threat.

What of the second charge that he had no serious commitment to German unification as chancellor? Once again, there is a perfectly good defence for Adenauer. It was not that he did not care about the Germans in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) or even beyond in the Polish- and Soviet-occupied territories which had previously belonged to Prussia (though in 1955 he told the SPD leader Erich Ollenhauer that those territories had gone forever).[22] It was simply that he was not prepared to contemplate what he saw as the slippery slope to reunification on Soviet terms. The Western integration of West Germany had priority. During the Soviet 'note offensive' of 1950–52, using first the GDR government as its proxy and offering a neutral, unified Germany, Adenauer made his position clear to the Allied High Commissioners. Asked by the American High Commissioner, John McCloy, whether the Russians might be willing to offer more than the mere appearance of reunification in order to prevent the Federal Republic joining a European Defence Community, Adenauer replied that the question was 'indeed of fundamental importance'. He went on:

> The Soviets wanted the unity of Germany but without integration into the Western community. The Soviets did not want that because it was clear that an integration of Europe without the simultaneous integration of Germany was impossible. If they succeeded in preventing the integration of Germany into Europe that would be a great success for which they could certainly pay a price. If one believed that the integration was indispensable – and he, the Chancellor, was of this opinion – then one should continue that way, regardless of what Russia did or did not do.[23]

In response to the main Soviet note of 10 March 1952, Adenauer claimed that it showed his policy was already bringing results but that the conclusion of the European Defence Community must not be held up to allow negotiations with the Soviet Union to take place.[24] In his memoirs he referred to the Soviet offer as designed to disrupt the negotiations for the European Defence Community and to 'deceive the German public about the dangers to which isolation would expose us'.[25]

His reunification policy was simply to build up the strength and unity of the West and wait for the Soviet Union to concede German reunification as part of the liberation of Eastern Europe as a whole – he did not believe that East Germany would be given up on its own because of the repercussions that would have on the other Soviet satellites.[26] After the Korean War he did not expect the Soviet Union to risk war in

Europe. In time, he thought it would be vulnerable to economic crisis, particularly as a result of food shortages and the drain on its resources from China. He did not imagine a liberalization of the regime but he did argue, like Kennan, with whom he discussed the matter, for the possibility of a 'peaceful understanding' when the time was ripe.[27] But this was less a policy than a vague hope for the future; something which in the early 1950s he suggested might occur within two or between five and ten years, though on another occasion – exasperated by criticism of his willingness to conciliate France over the status of the Saarland – he told journalists that in ten years no one would be interested in the regulation of the Saar but Russia and its satellite states would still be there.[28] And by 1958 in a Bundestag debate he spoke of a process that might last 10, 20 or 30 years.[29]

As the SPD pointed out, he needed to hold out the hope of eventual unification to answer those who accused him of accepting the division of Germany all too readily, and he was particularly concerned about losing support from the powerful refugee lobbies. But after the launching of Sputnik in 1957 and his realization that nuclear stalemate reinforced the existing division of Europe, he became ever more sceptical about the possibility of German unification. Instead he tried a number of initiatives to improve the lot of the citizens of the GDR, which can be seen as an embryonic Ostpolitik.[30] Although there is a striking resemblance between Adenauer's predictions and the way unification in fact occurred in 1989–90, we should be wary of crediting him with too much foresight. He laid important foundations for what eventually happened but he never imagined a figure like Gorbachev and, during his tenure as chancellor, unification seemed increasingly unlikely.

How unusual was Adenauer in the absolute priority he gave to Western integration and to what extent did it represent a Catholic Rhineland perspective? As we have seen he defended his policy in terms of the balance of power and the values of the West against the values of Soviet Russia or 'Asia'. He was unwilling to compromise, resisting those in the new Christian Democratic party who favoured coalition with the SPD and rejecting their view that a broad coalition of democratic parties would be best to build a new consensus and to negotiate with the occupying powers. Adenauer was determined to force clear choices on the electorate between, as he saw it the values of freedom and socialism and between Western integration and neutralism.[31] In this he was helped by the first post-war SPD leader, Kurt Schumacher, who was also a polarizing figure, a traditional socialist who disliked what he identified as the capitalist, conservative and clerical policies of Adenauer.[32]

Schumacher had spent much of the Third Reich in concentration camps. He felt that the SPD, as the major democratic party to have resisted Nazism, had a natural right to power in the Federal Republic. He was no more conciliatory than Adenauer. They were both bold and divisive figures instrumental in moving the German party system from the multi-party fragmentation of Weimar towards the two major adversarial parties which developed in the 1950s.

But how far did they differ in their views of Germany's place in the world? Schumacher opposed Adenauer vigorously, once in an angry outburst accusing him in the Bundestag of being the 'Chancellor of the Allies', a taunt which conjured up the smear of lack of patriotism from which the SPD had suffered during the Weimar Republic. But that was Schumacher's purpose – the SPD assumed the mantle of the patriotic party, something it could do more naturally as it represented a German political tradition that had nothing to be ashamed of in its record during the Third Reich. In contrast, some of those who now rallied behind the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) had been supporters or fellow travellers of the Nazis. For them, Christian democracy, anti-communism and Western integration provided a welcome new ideological beginning in place of the nationalism that had been discredited by Nazism.

The division between the political cultures of the SPD and the CDU in the 1950s went deep. Schumacher's view of Germany's place in the world was not, however, as absolutely opposed to Adenauer's as one might have expected. He had no more reason than Adenauer to trust Soviet policy. The forced merger of the SPD with the German Communist Party (KPD) in the Soviet zone had prompted Schumacher in 1946 to found an independent SPD from Hanover, in what became the Federal Republic.[33] In a united Germany the SPD might well have emerged as the strongest party from free elections. In 1949 in the Federal Republic alone its vote was less than two per cent behind that of the CDU, though together with other small parties of the centre and right the CDU had a clear majority. Schumacher's opposition to the policies of Western integration was less about the general direction than about the character of the states that were to form it, the pace with which Adenauer moved and the terms he was prepared to accept. Schumacher would have preferred a Western Europe which included Britain with its Labour government and the Scandinavian states with their strong Social Democratic traditions. He was also opposed to rearmament, or at least to Adenauer's immediate readiness to accept the idea, and suspicious of American policy and more willing to negotiate with the Soviet leadership to see what lay behind their offers of a neutral, reunited Germany. His opposition

to Adenauer's foreign policy stemmed from the difference between their political traditions and concern about Adenauer's tactics rather than any sympathy towards the Soviet Union. It was Schumacher who advanced the idea of the Western zones acting as a magnet which would one day attract the Soviet zone to join them.[34] Both were strong-minded democrats and neither underestimated the threat posed by the Soviet Union. But their alternative visions of how to combat the Soviet threat did reflect a difference in their mental maps: that of the single-minded Rhineland Catholic on one side and the disappointed and mistrustful Social Democrat on the other.

The difference between their maps was symbolized by their choice of the new provisional capital for the Federal Republic. Adenauer and most of the CDU promoted the sleepy university town of Bonn, which happened to be near his own home in Rhöndorf. Schumacher and most of the SPD wanted the industrial centre of Frankfurt am Main with its historic association, as the site of the national assembly of 1848, with German unification. It was also in the SPD-governed state of Hesse. Adenauer argued against Frankfurt on the grounds that the new German government would appear to be too much under the influence of the American military government which had its headquarters there. Given the policies he intended to follow that was not a wholly specious argument and equally, given Schumacher's more demanding stance towards the Allies, not one about which he needed to worry.[35]

The division between Adenauer and the Social Democratic opposition was only to be expected. But how far was his mental map distinctive within his own party? There were certainly differences of view and none was more marked than the original clash between the organizations of the party in the British zone and that in Berlin in 1945–47.[36] This was a struggle over both leadership and policy. In terms of leadership it became a conflict between Jakob Kaiser, a former leader of the Christian trades unions in the Rhineland and member of the resistance groups involved in the July 1944 plot, who had decided in 1945 to make Berlin and indeed the Soviet zone of Berlin the headquarters of the new CDU, on the one side, and Adenauer, who quickly established his hold on the party in the British zone, on the other. In domestic politics, it was a clash between the trades unionist wings of the new party (including some in the Rhineland) which favoured nationalization of key industries and anti-socialist groups led by Adenauer and supported by the more conservative Christian Social Union (CSU) in Bavaria. But it was also a clash over the future orientation of Germany. Kaiser's objective was to maintain German unity by going along with Soviet policy, allowing the CDU

in Berlin to become part of the Soviet-led block of anti-Fascist parties, in order to maintain a common front of all German parties towards the occupying powers. In this he went further than Schumacher, let alone Adenauer. Adenauer did not feel at home in Berlin, referring to it disparagingly in 1946 as 'a heathen city', and feared that the Berlin wing of the party would fall under the influence of the Soviet authorities.[37] Kaiser in conversation dismissed Adenauer as 'this separatist' and was determined to thwart him.[38] Kaiser's guiding principle was rather the traditional concept of Bismarck and Stresemann, of Germany as a bridge between East and West. That was, in turn, anathema to Adenauer who, in addition, had a low opinion of Kaiser's abilities. Adenauer successfully frustrated the attempts by the Berlin wing to impose their claim to leadership of the national party on the Western zones. Kaiser's efforts quickly came to naught when he was expelled by the Soviet authorities in December 1947. He became Adenauer's minister of all-German affairs and continued to argue for an alternative course but with little influence. The one exception was his stout resistance to Adenauer's attempts to accommodate France over the Saar by giving it an autonomous 'European' status. The plan was rejected by the Saar's voters in 1956, allowing the region to join the Federal Republic.[39]

Another important dissident in Adenauer's first cabinet was Gustav Heinemann, though he too had roots in the Rhineland.[40] He was a respected and influential lay figure in the Protestant church, a member of the Protestant opposition 'Confessing Church' in the Third Reich and president of the elected synod of the Protestant church organization for the whole of Germany from 1949–55. As such, he represented an important constituency in the new CDU, to underline its credentials as not simply a revival of the former Centre Party but as a genuinely inter-denominational party. His reservations about Adenauer's policy of Western integration were similar to those of other critics. He feared Adenauer was acting too fast and with a lack of consideration for the consequences for German unity, a unity which still existed in the Protestant church. He also doubted the wisdom and morality of rearmament. He believed that the defence of the Federal Republic was properly a responsibility of the Western allies and that German rearmament would provoke France and, even more, the Soviet Union. But he was also incensed by the way in which Adenauer took the decision, refusing even to submit memoranda which he had given to the Allied High Commissioners to the cabinet. As the minister of the interior, Heinemann was responsible for the police and, since in origin the debate was about building up the police as a defence against attack by

the East German armed police units (supposedly on the parallel of the North Korean invasion of South Korea), he had a right to be informed. Adenauer's high-handed treatment of him triggered his resignation in October 1950. He formed a new party to campaign for a united, neutral Germany but in 1957 joined the SPD and was elected president of the Federal Republic as the SPD candidate in 1969.

As these examples suggest, Adenauer's policies were distinctive – not consensual – and were seen as such by his contemporaries. But if his mental map was a projection of his particular regional and denominational background, the same could be said of theirs. Given the four-power occupation of Germany and the absence of a national German government, it was inevitable that the policy preferences of democratic German leaders would reflect their own regional outlooks – whether of the Rhineland, Berlin or Bavaria. And the particular perspectives of regional leaders were, in addition, affected by suspicion of the influence of the occupying powers on their rivals – Adenauer's suspicion of Soviet influence on the Berliners and his critics' suspicion of Western, and particularly American influence, on him. Yet, as we have seen, the main criticisms of Adenauer, whether from the SPD or from within the CDU, were more about his leadership style and tactics and what was seen as his almost unconditional acceptance of Western terms of integration, than of his analysis of the Soviet threat. And as the enforced amalgamation of the SPD and KPD in the Soviet zone showed, and the expulsion of Kaiser underlined, the existence of a viable alternative to Adenauer's policy was always doubtful. As a result, whatever their dislike of his autocratic style, he was able to impose his authority on his party and cabinet. When Heinemann resigned, no one – not even Kaiser – followed him. As the successful defence of South Korea demonstrated the effectiveness of an American guarantee and the fruits of Ludwig Erhard's policies in promoting economic revival were felt, Adenauer won a resounding victory in the 1953 Bundestag elections. The CDU/CSU vote jumped from 31 per cent to 45.2 per cent mainly at the expense of small parties of the centre and right, while the SPD fell back slightly from 29.2 per cent to 28.8 per cent. Adenauer's leadership was thereafter secure.

But what exactly were his aims? How did he conceive of 'Western integration'? Were his critics right to think that he subordinated German interests to the creation of supranational institutions? Or did he, as other commentators have argued, perceive that the only route to gaining influence for the German Federal Republic was by demonstrating its willingness to join such institutions whatever their scope: the Council of

Europe, the European Coal and Steel Community, the aborted European Defence Community for which membership of NATO was ultimately substituted, and the European Community? By joining these institutions on the basis of equality, at least in principle, for the Federal Republic Adenauer achieved a paradoxical two-way process; by transferring sovereignty he regained influence step by step.[41] From the dependent state of 1949, the Federal Republic became a medium-sized power to be reckoned with, second only to France in the European Union and within NATO the largest contributor of conventional forces – 12 divisions – in Europe.

There were historic parallels for this process and the tensions it created between national interests and international obligations, for instance Stresemann's policy of joining the League of Nations in 1926, or even Bismarck's desire to ensure peace with Russia but without subordinating German policy to Russian interests. For a state in the centre of Europe – the Mittellage – isolation means weakness and insecurity. It follows that joining a coalition and accepting the inevitable compromise of independence involved is the only escape. Adenauer was prepared to go much further in the direction of supranationalism than his predecessors. That was easier for him as he also accepted the arguments for European economic integration which had been developed after the First World War.[42] And the new distribution of power and the eclipse of the European states gave urgency to a familiar dilemma. In a conversation with journalists about the European Defence Community he said, 'For decades German policy has stood in isolation . . . We always stood alone against the united Anglo-Saxon world and France . . . Now for the first time for many many decades that has ceased.'[43]

For these reasons it is unlikely that he saw any contradiction between the two sides of his policy, transferring sovereignty and regaining power, the idealistic and the realistic. Both served first a defensive aim. Western integration would counter Soviet power. It would also give the Federal Republic a potential veto through its membership of the European Union and NATO on any attempt by the former Western allies to reach agreement with the Soviet Union over the heads of the German government, his Potsdam nightmare. In a conversation in June 1951, he predicted that 'When Germany has actually made a military contribution then the project of demilitarizing and neutralizing Germany will be over.'[44] And in May 1952, referring to the European Defence Community, he associated 'the great historic importance of the whole treaty' with the fact that it 'put an end to the instability of Central Europe'.[45] With these defensive aims in mind, he summarized his policy in his

memoirs as 'a policy of pure self-preservation. It was the policy of least risk; there was no policy without risk.'[46]

At times he also made more ambitious claims. In December 1950 he told a journalist that contact with the present leaders of the GDR would upset negotiations with the Western allies. He went on:

> However, a Federal Government which had to a great extent recovered its sovereignty and beyond that disposed of its own defence force would be a negotiating partner which the Russian side could also not overlook. This must be the main goal of German policy, through its own strength to become a negotiating partner. In the end, only that would be respected by the Kremlin.[47]

In more conventional terms in April 1951 (again to journalists) he repeated remarks he had made in Paris, at the conference for the signing of the Schuman Plan which became the European Coal and Steel Community, that reunification remained a goal but one which could only be expected if

> we here in the Federal Republic are strong, Western Europe also strengthens and reinforces itself and the United States is also strong, so that one day Russia would see after all that it could not achieve anything, either in cold or in hot wars. And then the time would have come when the unity of Germany is to be achieved again in freedom.[48]

And for the new order of Western Europe he also occasionally made grand claims. In November 1951 he looked forward to the time when he could put before the Bundestag the General Treaty (restoring sovereignty from the Western allies to the Federal Government), the European Defence Community and the European Coal and Steel Community:

> And then I should like to say to you: when all that is ready, as I hope, a turning point in European history will in fact have occurred and one can indeed then truly go back as far as the time of Charlemagne. For then Western Europe will have become a unity again at least in its most essential regions.[49]

The revival of the Carolingian Empire was an image he clearly found attractive. Ernst Lemmer, like Kaiser, one of the leaders of the Christian Democrats in Berlin but himself (like Kaiser) originally from the West

of Germany, records that in the spring of 1946 Adenauer tried to persuade him to leave Berlin and join in building up the party in the Western zones. Adenauer argued that, unlike Berlin under Soviet influence, there was some hope of restoring Germany at least in part in the Western zones. Adenauer doubted whether they would live to see a united Germany again but, he went on: 'A democratic Germany would be identical with the organization of the states and societies of the Western allies, who moreover could be interested in restoring Germany . . . roughly within the frontiers of the Carolingian Empire.'[50] Lemmer was shocked and pointed out that the Carolingian Empire had included the Bishopric of Erfurt and in fact stretched to the Elbe which would include large parts of the Soviet zone. However, he adds that Adenauer never gave up thinking of the whole of Germany – restoring Germany within the Carolingian Empire was to be only the beginning. That is a fair balance to strike between the interpretations of Adenauer as primarily the Rhineland Catholic, on the one side, and the patriotic but realistic German, on the other. Lemmer himself became the minister for all-German affairs (in succession to Kaiser) in 1957.

When Adenauer was finally forced to resign in 1963 (a condition imposed by the Liberal Free Democratic Party for joining his coalition government in 1961), he had the satisfaction of having achieved his defensive aims, though he continued to the end, and in retirement, to warn of the dangers that in his mind now threatened from the momentum of détente. Under his chancellorship the Federal Republic had recovered as a free society integrated into Western European institutions and become an essential part of NATO. The Soviet Union had been unable to lure the West German electorate into the trap, as Adenauer saw it, of neutralism. The attempts of the Western allies to reach agreement with the Soviet Union on Germany, which might have loosened the ties of the Federal Republic to the West, had failed. Even the strains caused by the Second Berlin Crisis between Adenauer and Kennedy and Macmillan given their willingness, as he saw it, to appease the Soviet Union by moving towards recognition of the GDR, had been surmounted.[51] By contrast, the more ambitious elements in his policy remained unfulfilled. German unification was an increasingly distant dream. Substantial progress had been made towards the economic integration of Western Europe but political union remained elusive. The European Defence Community would have been a major step towards that goal but its rejection by the French National Assembly in 1954 – in Adenauer's words 'a black day for Europe' – put an end to that route to European union.[52] Membership of NATO was a great prize for the

Federal Republic and one for which Adenauer had hoped, but it did nothing for European union. The most significant change which went beyond institutional collaboration was Franco–German reconciliation. Adenauer deserves much of the credit for the achievement of this long-cherished aim. He responded to every initiative that came from Paris, the most important being the Schuman Plan. After 1958 he also decided to work for a close relationship with Charles de Gaulle even though their attitudes to European union and NATO were far apart; indeed in his last two years he committed himself almost recklessly to de Gaulle, a sign that his mental compass was beginning to fail.[53] For him, de Gaulle meant the restoration of stability to France, without which there could be no Western Europe.[54]

By contrast he was not prepared to attempt reconciliation with the East European states by direct negotiations. He rejected the plan of the Polish foreign minister, Adam Rapacki, for a nuclear-free zone in central Europe. He did recognize (in conversation with de Gaulle) that Poland was 'the country based on Western civilization that reached furthest to the East' and he admired the tenacity the Poles had shown historically in holding to the goal of national unity. But he feared for his own position in negotiations with Poland given the electoral power of the German Refugee Associations, and in any case he distrusted disengagement plans for which he thought Rapacki must have had Soviet approval. He also worried about the consequences of a revolt against Soviet control in Poland, such as had occurred in Hungary.[55]

As these examples suggest, Adenauer's mental map was drawn and redrawn pragmatically. He had a clear sense of direction but he was not doctrinaire. The defensive elements in his strategy remained uppermost. To achieve them he was willing to take great risks in domestic politics. By pressing ahead with rearmament he courted unpopularity, the CDU losing heavily in Landtag elections in October 1950 – nearly a third of its vote in Hessen and Baden-Württemberg and nearly half in Bavaria.[56] He put political priorities above economic prudence – overriding Erhard's objections to a European customs union with a common external tariff and committing himself to a figure for restitution to Israel before calculating the cost.[57] He remained flexible in his management of allies, first forging a close relationship with Foster Dulles to manage French and British doubts about German rearmament, later drawing closer to de Gaulle when relations with the United States and Britain became strained over Berlin. He was even prepared to open diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1955 despite this being a breach of the policy that the Federal Republic would not recognize any state that recognized

the GDR. And from 1957, he made cautious overtures to the Soviet Union suggesting that the GDR might be allowed a measure of autonomy, on the model of Austria, and later that both sides might agree to a ten-year 'truce' over Germany provided the citizens of the GDR were allowed greater freedom.[58] In these various ways he explored the limits of the Federal Republic's leverage without illusions about the extent of common interests that held the alliance together, particularly the lack of real commitment by the others to German unification.

Adenauer's mental map remained that of a power politician of the pre-1914 era, imbued with caution arising from long experience of rapid and disastrous reversals of fortune. His world was inhabited by the dangers that had haunted German statesmen since Bismarck. But he was exceptionally quick to see the way in which those dangers had been affected by the redistribution of power at the end of the war. And he was single-minded in working for the only possibility he saw of recovery. That depended on establishing a community of interests with the Western powers based on the common threat from the Soviet Union. Above all, the Federal Republic had to win the protection of the United States, the only power capable of matching the Soviet Union. In the early days, he hoped that Britain would take the lead in European policy but increasingly France became more important because of its willingness under Schuman to take the first steps in European integration. And despite his major achievements, Adenauer remained wary of each of his allies, anticipating conflicts of interest between them and with them. He had seen too many dramatic upsets in his lifetime to assume that the balance of power in the Cold War was stable.

But his perception was not simply one of power politics. For within his mental map there was also the natural community of democracies based on common values. Indeed, in the early days he saw the common values as the only way to win over the United States to a commitment to Europe. And on the other side there was the clearly stated belief that totalitarian states like the Soviet Union understood only the language of power. In that he built on his experience of Nazism and the initial failure of the democracies to stand up to Hitler. He hoped that they had learnt the lesson and would now apply it to the Soviet Union. And in his apparent belief that the Soviet Union could one day be brought to negotiate he also distinguished, like Kennan, between a Soviet Union which was able to calculate its interests 'coolly' and the Nazi leaders 'who beat their heads against a brick wall'.[59] In other words, despite the similarities between them, meaningful distinctions between totalitarian states could be made.

The last aspect of his mental map was the belief that individuals could make a difference. He was impatient of historians who refused to try to predict future developments, arguing that professors of recent history 'must at least make the attempt, by way of analogies between past events and those of our times, to discern the probable direction in which events seem to be tending and then to point to developments that may be expected and even, if necessary, to sound warnings'.[60] There was an even greater responsibility on statesmen. Of the choice between Western integration and negotiation on the Soviet note of March 1952, Adenauer wrote in his memoirs:

> In politics one will certainly never find ideal conditions; if they occur nevertheless, those are very great historical moments. Then again the question arises: are statesmen there, who recognize these conditions, and will their people follow them?[61]

There is no doubt that Adenauer thought that choosing Western integration was one such moment and that he was called to make that choice. The distribution of power may have made the choice inevitable in any case. But Adenauer took on himself the responsibility for that decision when others held back, and he helped both to make it acceptable to Germans and to make the Federal Republic acceptable to the Western democracies.

Notes

1. Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer, Vol. 1: From the German Empire to the Federal Republic, 1870–1952* (Engl. edn., Oxford, 1995), 35–41.
2. On Adenauer's transformation from city mayor to party leader, ibid., 378.
3. Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955* (Stuttgart, 1966), 16. In another passage he refers to Russia's 'constant urge to expand' being sustained by Panslavism in the nineteenth century and Communism since 1917 and to Russian Communism as a 'mixture of communism and nationalism'. Ibid., 201.
4. Adenauer to Sollmann, 16 March 1946; Hans Peter Mensing (ed.), *Adenauer Briefe 1945–1947* (Berlin, 1983), 191.
5. 23 May 1952; Hanns Jürgen Küsters (ed.), *Adenauer Teegespräche 1950–1954* (Berlin, 1984), 264.
6. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, 18.
7. Konrad Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945–53* (Engl. edn., London, 1965), 272–73.
8. Adenauer referred to Soviet Russia and the Western world as the two 'magnetic poles' between which lay the weak and, at first, demilitarized Federal Republic. Ibid., 366.

9. Quoted in Hans-Peter Schwarz, 'Das aussenpolitische Konzept Konrad Adenauers', in Rudolf Morsey and Konrad Repgen (eds), *Adenauer-Studien I* (Mainz, 1971), 84.
10. The classic statement of Adenauer's dominance in foreign policy is Arnulf Baring, *Aussenpolitik in Adenauers Kanzlerdemokratie*, 2 Bde (revised edn., Munich, 1971) the opening words of which are 'In the beginning was Adenauer . . . '; ibid., 17.
11. Mensing, *Adenauer Briefe*, 191. In using the argument about protecting Western culture, Adenauer overlooked its associations for at least some of the occupiers. A young British officer with the Control Commission, Noel Annan, noted that it was too like the views of those who during the war had wanted Britain and the United States to sign a separate peace with Germany; Noel Annan, *Changing Enemies. The Defeat and Regeneration of Germany* (London, 1995), 172.
12. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 594; Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955,* 216.
13. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, 20.
14. 28 June 1951; Küsters, *Adenauer Teegespräche 1950–1954*, 99.
15. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 55–57.
16. Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Adenauer in der Rheinlandpolitik nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart, 1966), 187–203; Paul Weymar, *Adenauer. His Authorized Biography* (Engl. edn., New York, 1957), 43–55.
17. Josef Foschepoth (ed.), *Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage* (Gőttingen, 1988), 16, 29–60.
18. See, for instance, the record of his comments to a meeting of a committee of representatives of the occupied territories on 26 November 1923; Erdmann, *Adenauer in der Rheinlandpolitik*, 317–18.
19. Jonathan Wright, *Gustav Stresemann. Weimar's Greatest Statesman* (Oxford, 2002), 236–38, 251–52.
20. Ibid., 262–66.
21. Henning Kőhler, *Adenauer. Eine politische Biographie*, Bd. 1 (Berlin, 1997), 333–53.
22. Hansjakob Stehle, 'Adenauer, Polen und die Deutsche Frage', in Foschepoth, *Adenauer und die Deutsche Frage*, 85.
23. Minutes of the meeting of 24 September 1951; Hans-Peter Schwarz (ed.), *Adenauer und die Hohen Kommissare 1949–1951* (Munich, 1989), 380–81.
24. Rolf Steininger, *The German Question. The Stalin Note of 1952 and the Problem of Reunification* (Engl. edn., New York, 1990), 24–25.
25. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955,* 70.
26. Ibid., 124–25.
27. Ibid., 63–66, 124–25.
28. Conversation with German journalists, 6 September 1951; with William Casey and George Morison of *The Times*, 3 June 1952; and with German journalists, 5 October 1954; Küsters, *Adenauer Teegespräche 1950–1954*, 138, 301, 542.
29. 23 January 1958; *Verhandlungen des Bundestags, 3. Walhperiode. Stenographische Berichte*, Bd. 39, 368.
30. Klaus Gotto, 'Adenauers Deutschland- und Ostpolitik 1954–1963', in Rudolf Morsey and Konrad Repgen (eds), *Adenauer Studien III. Untersuchungen und Dokumente zur Ostpolitik und Biographie* (Mainz, 1974), 3–91.

31. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 425–32. For an interesting discussion of Adenauer's success in framing the debate in terms of the values of 'Western civilization', see Patrick T. Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy. German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West* (Ann Arbor, 2006), 67–70, 180–88.
32. Peter Merseburger, *Der schwierige Deutsche. Kurt Schumacher. Eine Biographie* (Stuttgart, 1995), 318–56, 452–86.
33. Ibid., 240–317.
34. Ibid., 387.
35. Kőhler, *Adenauer*, 484–97; see also Carlo Schmid, *Erinnerungen* (Berne, 1979), 398–99.
36. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 362–69; Kőhler, *Adenauer*, 403–18.
37. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 357; Kőhler, *Adenauer*, 27–36.
38. Egon Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit* (Munich, 1998), 46.
39. Erich Kosthorst, *Jakob Kaiser. Bundesminister für gesamtdeutsche Fragen 1949–1957* (Stuttgart, 1972).
40. Diether Koch, *Heinemann und die Deutschland Frage* (Munich, 1972).
41. Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe. Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven, 1989), 4–11.
42. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, 63–64.
43. 28 May 1952; Küsters, *Adenauer Teegespräche 1950–1954*, 292–93.
44. 28 June 1951; ibid., 99.
45. 23 May 1952; ibid., 274.
46. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945–53*, 431.
47. 15 December 1950; Küsters, *Adenauer Teegespräche 1950–1954*, 28–29.
48. 20 April 1951; ibid., 83–84.
49. 15 November 1951; ibid., 159.
50. Ernst Lemmer, *Manches war doch anders* (Frankfurt am Main, 1968), 295–98.
51. Roger Morgan, *The United States and West Germany 1945–1973* (London, 1974), 75–115; John P. S. Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis 1958–62* (London, 1998), 123–27.
52. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, 289.
53. Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer, Vol. 2. The Statesman* (Engl. edn., Oxford, 1997), 690.
54. Klaus-Jürgen Müller, *Adenauer and De Gaulle – De Gaulle and Germany: A Special Relationship*. The Konrad Adenauer Memorial Lecture 1992 (St Antony's College Oxford and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1992), 17.
55. Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1955–1959* (Stuttgart, 1967), 362–67, 379; Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1959–1963* (Stuttgart, 1968), 18; Stehle, 'Adenauer, Polen und die Deutsche Frage'.
56. Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 1, 555.
57. A. J. Nicholls, *Freedom with Responsibility. The Social Market Economy in Germany 1918–1963* (Oxford, 1994), 341–49; Kőhler, *Adenauer*, 149–74.
58. Gotto, 'Adenauers Deutschland- und Ostpolitik 1954–1963', 34–40; Schwarz, *Adenauer,* vol. 2, 613–14.
59. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945–53*, 367.
60. Ibid., 15.
61. Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1953–1955*, 88.

6
Władysław Gomułka

Anita J. Prażmowska

Biographical outline

Władysław Gomułka was born on 6 February 1905 in Galicia, an area which had previously been part of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and which, as a result of the partitions, was incorporated into the Austrian Empire. Earlier, his parents had emigrated to the United States but then returned, settling in the district of Krosno. After the First World War this region became part of the new Polish state. Oil exploration and a local refinery offered employment opportunities for the local community in an area otherwise characterized by abject poverty. Gomułka's family, although officially classified as peasants, were in fact employed in industry. An older sister had after the First World War emigrated to the United States, whereas his younger sister remained in Poland. Gomułka ended his period of formal education at the age of 12, completing four years of primary education and three years of vocational training. On finishing an apprenticeship he worked as a turner and carpenter. In 1928 he entered into a common law relationship with Zofia Szoken, a trades union activist and member of the Polish Communist Party (Komunistyczna Partia Polski – KPP). As a communist Gomułka refused to have his union sanctioned by the church, which in any case would not have agreed to conduct the ceremony unless Zofia, who was Jewish, agreed to become a Catholic. There was not the option of a civil marriage. Only in 1950 were they officially married in a civil ceremony.[1] They had one son.

Although of humble origins it would appear that his father and mother both had a strong commitment to education. His school reports suggest that he had enjoyed his school work. While apprenticed he was enrolled at a night school. The fact that he was born and educated

within the Austrian Empire meant that he was taught in Polish, whereas in Polish areas under Russian and Prussian control, respectively, Russian and German were the languages of instruction. Gomułka's written and spoken Polish were very good and grammatically correct, while his handwriting was elegant and his style was clear.[2] Although he had a strong commitment to self-improvement, there were always visible gaps in his understanding of the world which he faced. His son admitted that his father was acutely aware of the failure of the planned economic system to improve the living conditions of the working people in Poland, something he viewed as the consequence of human rather than systemic failures. He nevertheless had no understanding of the capitalist mode of production and even during the 1960s when Poland experienced economic difficulties, he did not consider abandoning the socialist economic model.[3] Thus, his mental map was one moulded on the basis of the study of Marxist economic theories, to the exclusion of any other theories. In 1934, when released from prison on health grounds, the Polish Communist Party sent him to Moscow where he completed two years of political education.

Little is known of Gomułka's personal life. While he was first party secretary, no mention was made either of his wife or his son, though in 1968, during the period of attacks on Jews, it became public knowledge that his wife was Jewish. In his biography Gomułka made a rare reference to personal difficulties faced during the Second World War, when he mentioned anxieties caused by the fact that his wife and son were in constant danger of being either identified or denounced as Jews to the Nazi authorities.[4] Zofia was in every respect Gomułka's companion, sharing many hardships. When he met her she had just completed a two-year spell in prison for having belonged to the KPP. His early political experience was entirely linked first with trades unions and later with the Polish Communist Party. When in 1932 Gomułka was arrested and sentenced to four years in prison, Zofia was also in prison. In June 1951 Gomułka and his wife were arrested by Józef Światło, the deputy head of the notorious Department X of the Ministry of Public Security. After his defection to the West, Światło revealed how he relished Zofia's distress at their arrest by the communist authorities.[5] Husband and wife were imprisoned in a special prison in Miedzeszyn, where Światło made it his business to cause Zofia as much hardship and mental anguish as possible.[6] Gomułka's commitment to politics invariably had consequences for his relationship with his son. As a result, his son was brought up first by his grandfather and then his grandmother and aunt. Only in 1944 was the family united, only to be once more separated in 1951.

Zofia was released from prison in June 1954. Gomułka was freed in October 1954.

The man

Few could claim to have known Gomułka intimately. He did not have many friends. One acquaintance described him as always being careworn.[7] His appearance was unprepossessing, he was bald and he wore spectacles which gave him the appearance of a perpetually dissatisfied teacher. His speeches were delivered in a ponderous, lacklustre style and usually he kept his eyes firmly fixed on the script. He was neither an approachable nor a smiling person. His mouth had a slight grimace and his speech was direct, possibly too much so, indicating lack of empathy. In 1932, while trying to evade arrest during a strike organized by the union of textile workers, Gomułka was shot in his thigh. This led to permanent disability, which might account for his constantly strained facial expression. He always walked with a limp. It was known that during his detention in 1951–54 he lost the use of his legs. Most of those who had contact with him appreciated his hard work and sense of duty. When he was arrested in 1951 the Ministry for Public Safety found it very difficult to obtain incriminating information from those he worked with, who remained steadfastly loyal. He, in turn, showed a great degree of commitment to those with whom he worked. When his secretary was arrested, Gomułka and his wife cared for her small daughter.

His early political experience was entirely linked first with trades unions and later with the KPP. His life's aim was to improve the lot of working people. This, he believed, could only be achieved through the overthrow of the unjust capitalist system and the building of the socialist system modelled on the Soviet Union. His inner compass was not on politics and power but on achievement measured in terms of quality and security of life. This was reflected in his personal life. He was free of vanity, enjoying neither banquets nor international events. The latter he generally saw as a waste of time.[8] When obliged to attend the 1960 meeting of the United Nations, Gomułka was irritated by the amount of time wasted on socializing and the lack of results.[9] Unlike Józef Cyrankiewicz, who acted as prime minister during the period 1954–70 and who was known to enjoy the company of beautiful women and the good life, Gomułka was seen as austere and self-effacing to a fault.

The apparent lack of presence disguised a will of steel and a great degree of personal courage and intellectual autonomy. In August 1948 the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers'

Party (Polska Partia Robotnicza – PPR) condemned Gomułka on several counts. He was accused of showing a negative attitude towards the founding of the Communist Information Bureau, of supporting organizational unity with the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna – PPS) at the expense of ideological purity and of conducting an incorrect analysis of the failing of the pre-war KPP.[10] Gomułka's response, which verged on a death wish, was to reject all the accusations and to present a letter reinforcing points made earlier.[11] When Gomułka was forced to make an admission of errors, this was so unconvincing that it was used later to further condemn him.

Similar boldness was shown by Gomułka when, after Stalin's death, the slow process of de-Stalinization was initiated. By 1955 the Political Bureau had to bow to the demands of the Central Committee and investigate Department X and the Ministry of Public Security's abuse of power. The Political Bureau fought back against the calls to conduct a proper investigation. When it agreed to Gomułka being released, he himself pushed the debate to its logical conclusion. By doing this he not only challenged the basis on which he had been arrested, but also effectively demanded that the Political Bureau accept that he had been right and that they had been wrong. The main point of their accusation against him had been that he had succumbed to right-wing nationalist deviation. By refusing to admit that he had been wrong, Gomułka was forcing the Political Bureau to admit that his comments that the Soviet model of economic development in industry and in agriculture was inappropriate for Poland had been correct.[12] There is no doubt that the Central Committee and the Political Bureau, which until then were dominated by Stalinist elements, lost control of the course of the debates at the time when Gomułka asserted that the full extent of past failures had to be confronted. In that, he was undoubtedly encouraged by the fact that his past enemies, namely Jakub Berman and Stanisław Radkiewicz, were being criticized within the closed meetings of the Central Committee. Nevertheless, when issuing the challenge to the Political Bureau, Gomułka could still not be certain of the lie of the land.

Mental maps

In his long political career Gomułka had been guided by a strong conviction that the communist model was appropriate to Poland. During the Second World War when he became the first party secretary of the PPR, and after the war, he did not doubt the need for the restoration of

an independent Polish state. Poland was to be a communist, nevertheless independent, state. It was the latter conviction that Poland could and should be independent, even though linked in fraternal alliances with the Soviet Union, that distinguished him from key members of the immediate post-war communist leadership in Poland. In that respect Gomułka was not alone. In Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, as well as among the German communists, the dilemma of whether and to what extent there was a national road to socialism was faced and discussed extensively. Nor did the Soviet Union discourage these discussions, during the immediate post-war period.[13]

During the period before the establishment of the Cominform in September 1947 and the collapse of the negotiations over Germany, which led to the change in Soviet policies, Gomułka represented the nationalist wing of the PPR, committed to the development of the Polish model of socialism. In the economic sphere he favoured a slow process of industrialization and land reform, aiming to establish small-scale farming in preference to collectivization drives.

In common with many European left-wing thinkers, he believed that the rise of fascism and nazism was made easier by left-wing disunity. This led him to advocate left-wing unity after the war, in particular between the communist and socialist parties. In advocating these policies Gomułka had to contend with the opposition of a powerful group of communists who had spent the war in the Soviet Union and who had come to believe that they had Stalin's authority to pursue a radical programme of reforms modelled on the Soviet one.

Gomułka had not arrived at his conclusions during or even after the war. The dilemma of the relationship between revolutionary progress and independence for Poland was one which he faced throughout his political life. Nor was he unique in being tormented by these questions. In 1918 the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (Komunistyczna Partia Robotnicza Polski – KPRP) was founded from the coming together of the radical Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (Social Demokracja Królewstwa Polskiego i Litwy – SLDKiL) and the left-wing faction of the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna-Lewica – PPS-Left). In 1925 renamed the KPP, the party initially differed from the Leninist programme in which the workers' alliance with the peasants was accentuated. Considered by some to be more Menshevik than Bolshevik in its ideology, the Polish Communist Party stressed its character as the party of the working class.[14] Of considerably greater importance to the KPP's relationship with the Comintern and the Soviet ideologues was the party's rejection of Lenin's insistence

that national self-determination was a necessary historic stage. Taking as its ideological guideline Rosa Luxemburg's interpretation of the bourgeois nature of national self-consciousness, the KPRP put the fight for the revolution above that of national independence.[15] In their actions Polish communists stressed their rejection of the fight for national self-determination. They supported the Soviet entry onto Polish territory in 1920. This was consistent with their desire to see Polish territory incorporated in the revolutionary state. A Provisional Revolutionary Committee for Poland was established by the Red Army in the town of Białystok in August 1920.[16] The Soviet thrust into Poland was defeated, though the KPRP's actions were never overlooked by the wider community.

Throughout the inter-war period the KPP, a loyal member of the Comintern, experienced internal strains. Soviet actions did little to help resolve the ideological conflicts. On the contrary, as long as the Soviet leaders could still entertain hopes that a revolution would take place in Germany, the German Communist Party was more important than the smaller Polish party. The European communist movement was dominated by the powerful German Communist Party which was critical of Germany's post-war territorial losses, in particular to Poland. Thus, the KPP was required to ally itself with that line and as a result in all its pronouncements attacked the incorporation of previously German territories into Poland.[17] The case of Upper Silesia, which was awarded to Poland after several nationalist uprisings, was extensively referred to as a manifestation of Polish imperialist aspirations. During the following years, as a result of Soviet policies of trying to appeal to the Ukrainian and Byelorussian communities in Eastern Poland, the KPP obligingly pursued a policy of condemning the Polish state for incorporating these regions into Poland. Paradoxically, what turned out as a success for the KPP in gaining following among those minorities, caused the party's further alienation from ethnic Poles. Autonomous KPRP sections within the Ukrainian and Byelorussian areas established in 1923 put stress on those minorities' right to self-determination. In reality the Soviet Union tried to weaken Polish state control over these areas, a policy which was made easier by the fact that the newly established Polish state implemented discriminatory land reform. Attempts to strengthen Polish presence in the eastern borderlands meant that Polish settlers benefited from land while the local population was denied the same rights.[18] The result was that the composition of the KPRP was in the majority non-Polish. During the early 1920s only 33 per cent of party members were ethnic Poles. The fact that the communist movement attracted into its ranks

Jews further served to alienate it from ethnic Poles. Anti-Semitism remained the norm within the political life of inter-war Poland. These sentiments tended to be further fanned during the economic crisis of the 1920s and following the Great Depression after 1929. It was noted that nearly 50 per cent of the KPP leadership was Jewish.[19]

In 1938 the Comintern decided to disband the KPP. This followed years of internal divisions during which the party continued to debate the relevance of national self-determination in the context of the socialist revolution. In 1926 the KPP had made a fateful decision to support the Piłsudski coup d'etat. When in due course the Piłsudski regime attacked the left, communists came to bitterly regret that decision. The Comintern too criticized the KPP for its mistake. The final decision to disband the KPP might have been precipitated by the party's siding with Trotsky's critique of the Stalinist programme in 1923, a policy which Stalin henceforth held against the Poles. When the KPP ceased to exist, those leaders who were in the Soviet Union were imprisoned and executed. The few who evaded that fate were those who had been incarcerated in Polish prisons and thus were unable to heed the Comintern's call to proceed to Moscow. Among that group was Gomułka. When the war broke out in September 1939 some communists fled east, where in the Soviet Union they were initially forbidden to join local party organizations. In Poland those who considered themselves to be communists were not allowed to form a party. All organizational traces of the existence of the KPP were obliterated. Though within the eastern areas initially under Soviet military control and subsequently incorporated into the Soviet Union, some low-key attempts were made by ex-members of the KPP to maintain contact.[20]

Gomułka had as a young man become active first in the union of chemical workers. He then became associated with a breakaway section of the PPS, which took the name PPS-Lewica. Since that party had close contact with the KPP Gomułka's political maturing took him in the direction of the KPP. By 1927 he became a member of the KPP, though he remained committed to trades union activism.[21] He was nevertheless of the opinion that the party was wrong in its negation of the importance of Polish nationalism, a view which he maintained consistently.[22] Years later he commented on the fact that the first victims of the Soviet-directed purge of the KPP were members of the pre-war PPS-Lewica, people who, unlike the SDKPiL, had stronger links with the Polish working class and thus had an appreciation of the way socialism could be built in an independent Polish state. While disagreeing with the SDKPiL line he stressed that, unlike the KPP, the former was

an independent party and thus more likely to come to assess what was appropriate for Poland.[23]

During the war the reconstruction of the communist movement was wholly dependent on the whim and needs of the Soviet Union. In Polish territories under German and Soviet occupation, no activities were visible as the KPP leadership had been destroyed by Stalinist purges. In any case, the Soviet attack on Poland in September 1939 made it impossible for any communist even to attempt to rescue the party's reputation. In the Soviet Union a number of Poles gathered in the claustrophobic environment of the Comintern, awaiting a moment when they could be of use. Only after the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 was the Comintern able to expand on its policy of mobilizing communist members in occupied territories. On 23 June, just one day after the attack, Georgi Dimitrov, the head of the Comintern, proceeded to reorganize the Executive Committee of the Communist International to deal with the new situation.[24] It was no coincidence that on 4 July a group of Polish communists was selected to be parachuted into occupied territories. Stalin gave his approval to this initiative when Dimitrov met him in an air raid shelter on 27 August. Dimitrov noted Stalin's musings: 'It would be better to create a workers' party of Poland with a Communist program. The Communist party frightens off not only alien elements, but even some of our own as well.'[25]

The first group of Polish communists was parachuted from the Soviet Union into German-occupied Polish territories during the night of 27/28 December 1941. According to Gomułka, who was in the eastern town of Lwów, the emergence of the conspiratorial PPR in occupied Warsaw caught the old comrades by surprise. The arrival of the Initiative Group and the establishment of the new workers' party were signalled through the distribution of illegal leaflets which outlined the party's programme. Writing in 1957 Jakub Berman, later to be a member of the post-war Politburo and key ideologue of the Stalinist area, explained how and why the decision was made concerning the new name. He stated that in the autumn of 1941 members of the Initiative Group met Dimitrov. During this meeting it was supposedly agreed, though it would be safe to presume that Dimitrov set the tone of the debate which could on no account have been a discussion, that the party would deliberately avoid using the word 'communist'. It would also deny being affiliated to the Comintern, though the new party was to 'disseminate propaganda in the Communist spirit and would implement the policies of the Comintern'.[26] The PPR's first leaflets made no reference to revolutionary objectives. On the contrary, the party's first underground

publication proclaimed that the main aim was to cooperate with other underground movements to fight for national independence.[27]

The PPR suffered a crisis of identity. While it tried to distance itself officially from the Soviet Union this was neither possible nor credible. At the same time, being an organization which was wholly dependent on Soviet support, it could neither develop an independent programme nor seek to genuinely ally itself with other parties. In all circumstances Dimitrov demanded that the party seek approval for its actions. Since radio contact was always problematic, this led to the PPR leaders either stalling on decisions or making them, only to find that Moscow did not approve of what had been decided independently in Warsaw. Only in the autumn of 1943 when the radio link between the PPR and the Comintern was broken by the Gestapo uncovering the radio transmitters, which could not be easily replaced, did the PPR have the freedom to develop its own vision. Nevertheless, the key dilemma of what exactly the PPR was did not go away. It was forbidden to make any references to the rich left-wing tradition of the inter-war period and instead was obliged to propound a moderate programme. While the main objective was cooperation with other parties, this in itself raised the question of the party's true identity.

In December 1943 the PPR informed Moscow how it would address the issue of Poland's post-war borders.[28] It was proposed that a statement in the party's programme should refer to the aim of defending the nation and its interests. Poland was to be independent and sovereign. Within its borders should be included all areas inhabited by Poles and those which had been 'Germanized' during the Nazi period. The sensitive issue of Poland's eastern border was skirted over by a statement that it would be settled jointly with the local population and on the basis of good relations with the Soviet Union.

In November 1942 Marceli Nowotko, the leader of the PPR, was shot on the streets of Warsaw. Investigations by his comrades revealed that he was killed by a Polish communist who had been recently parachuted from the Soviet Union. The small party leadership was torn apart by these revelations. Paweł Finder, his successor as party secretary, was captured by the Gestapo on 14 November 1943. The loss of two leaders who had been closely connected with the Comintern paved the way for the selection of Gomułka, until then head of the Warsaw party branch, as the first secretary of the PPR. A break in radio contact with the USSR and the waning of Dimitrov's influence on Soviet policy-making gave the new PPR leadership an opportunity to develop its own programme. By then the Comintern policy of mobilizing the

European communist movement in defence of the Soviet Union in the wake of the German invasion was no longer of any relevance to the Soviet Union. Indeed, in his relations with the two allies, Stalin saw it prudent to play down the importance of ideology and as a result the Comintern was fast becoming a liability. The Polish Question had the potential to impact badly on Soviet relations with the United Kingdom and the United States and thus could not be left in the hands of Comintern functionaries and clearly not in Polish hands. From the middle of May 1943 the PPR and its military wing, the People's Army (Armia Ludowa – AL), were increasingly expected only to provide intelligence information and to support Soviet partisan units working behind German lines.[29] The political debate which had been the hallmark of exchanges between the PPR and Dimitrov until the beginning of 1943 ended when Stalin came to see the importance of the Polish Question in his relations with the United Kingdom and the United States.

On 25 April 1943 in response to requests made by the Polish government in exile that an International Red Cross team investigate the mass graves containing the bodies of murdered Polish officers, found by the Germans in the Katyń forests, the Soviet Union broke off relations with the London Poles. A new Polish authority was put together by the Russians and its existence was announced by Radio Kościuszko. The new organization was given the name of Union of Polish Patriots (Związek Patriotów Polskich – ZPP). It brought together some of the surviving Polish communists and left socialists in the Soviet Union, notably Wanda Wasilewska, Hilary Minc, Jakub Berman, Bolesław Bierut and Alfred Lampe. Although they believed that they would form the first provisional government, it would appear that Stalin was still leaving all options open.

Towards the end of 1943 in Poland Gomułka, without regular radio communication with the Soviet Union, proceeded to develop, what he believed to be, the correct party policy on liberation, namely the formation of National Committees which would bring together diverse progressive and anti-fascist groups to form first local and finally also central authorities. During the first months of 1944 arrests of many PPR activists effectively paralyzed the party's activities. Nevertheless, Gomułka tried to continue talks with the radical sections of the PPS and representatives of the peasant party. On 16 May 1944 a PPR delegation arrived in Moscow having made its way across the front line by foot. There it was confronted by the fact that the Polish communists in Moscow now expected to form the first government. Stalin's

decision cut through the complexities of infighting between the two Polish groups. On 22 June a manifesto announced the formation of the Polish National Committee of Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego – PKWN).[30] By all appearances, Gomułka's vision of the PPR ruling as part of a broad coalition with other left-wing and peasant parties had come true. He was seen as a proponent of the national programme within the PPR, one which assumed that at the very least the national road to socialism would develop over a longer period. The PKWN in accordance with Stalin's wishes was to be the future Polish government.

In spite of the expectation that they would be given a free hand in Poland, the leadership of the PPR had to contend with the fact that Stalin and Churchill had negotiated the broadening of the provisional government's base. The Peasant Party leader and prime minister of the government in exile, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, agreed to return to Poland and head the first post-war government. At the Yalta Conference, Stalin made a commitment that free elections would be held in Poland. The PPR was determined to secure a victory. Since it was not possible to hope that the party would win were it to stand in its own name, Stalin suggested that an electoral bloc should be formed which would include all legally reconstructed parties.[31] Gomułka forced the pace by locking the newly reconstructed PPS into an electoral agreement. The most likely reason for this was his genuine desire to see the establishment of left-wing unity between the communist and socialist movements. Divisions between the two had caused extensive damage and weakened the trades union movement during the inter-war period. It was nevertheless his view that the communists were best placed to guide the workers in the difficult road to political maturity. It was the PPR and not the PPS which was to dominate the united trades unions.[32] The method used by Gomułka was that of encouraging the left-wing sections of the PPS. The urgency came from a growing anxiety that the Peasant Party would be most likely to win the elections. This the communists succeeded in averting when elections took place in February 1947. Widespread intimidation of the Peasant Party and fraud meant that the Democratic Block which included the PPR and the PPS claimed victory, though no one believed the claim.

The international situation was difficult. The German problem, a factor which came to dominate Gomułka's thinking then and during his period as secretary of the United Polish Workers' Party (Zjednoczona Polska Partia Robotnicza – PZPR), forms a major element of his mental map. Constant anxiety about the possibility of the restoration of

Germany to its previous strength was a critical factor in Gomułka's assessment of Poland's international position. As the minister responsible for the Recovered Territories he was only too aware of the fact that Germany would not give up its claim to territories included in Poland after the war. West European actions had the appearance of complicity with German demands, thus increasing Polish insecurity. But Polish security could not be guaranteed without closer ties with the Soviet Union. Thus, in 1947 Gomułka faced a dilemma which was to dominate his thinking henceforth. On the one hand, how was Poland to establish its right to self-determination in the face of strong Soviet pressure to subordinate its internal and external policies to Soviet needs? On the other hand, could Poland enjoy some degree of autonomy when both the West European states and the United States viewed Poland through the prism of the Cold War which manifested itself in support for the division of Germany and the creation of a strong and in due course remilitarized West German state?

The first challenge to Gomułka's vision of Poland united with the Soviet Union and committed to the building of socialism came from the Soviet leadership with the decision to found the Communist Information Bureau. Already at the first meeting in September 1947 Gomułka appeared hesitant. In his opening speech he indicated anxiety about the Bureau's role and expressed the hope that communist parties would be allowed to develop their own road to socialism. He accepted that each party was accountable to the movement as a whole but still argued for independence.[33] In that he had allied himself with the Yugoslav line. When Stalin confronted the Yugoslavs during the summer of 1948, accusing them of ideological deviation, lack of vigilance and of tolerating capitalist modes of production, Gomułka first offered to mediate between the two and finally disagreed with the Soviet attack. In that he differed from the line taken by the Polish Central Committee which followed the Soviet condemnation of Tito.[34]

The other matter on which Gomułka found himself in conflict with Soviet directives and the Political Bureau of the PPR was left-wing unity. From 1947 the PPR leadership increasingly took an aggressive line on the question of organizational unity. But the battle was fought on several lines, with Gomułka insisting that the socialist policy of advocating a mixed economy with strong state control and workers' participation through cooperatives was correct for Poland. Nor would he support collectivization, which he knew would be disastrous in the party's relations with the peasants. In September the PPR believed that there was a threat of war with the capitalist states. Under strict instructions

the communists forced organizational unity with the PPS, forming the PZPR. In August the Political Bureau defined the threat posed by right-wing nationalist deviation. Gomułka was accused of having been too conciliatory towards the Yugoslavs and of incorrectly analyzing the history of Polish working-class organizations.[35] His self-criticism fell short of what was expected. He insisted on the correctness of his analysis of the situation. This sealed his fate. In due course he was dismissed from all party and state functions. In 1951 he and his wife were arrested. Gomułka was the highest-ranking Polish party leader arrested during the Stalinist purges but, unlike László Rajk in Hungary and Rudolf Slánský in Czechoslovakia, he survived his ordeal. The reason was Stalin's death, which reduced the momentum of the purges in Poland. At the same time it is notable that neither the Political Bureau nor the Central Committee of the PZPR were driven by same desire for bloodletting that affected the communist parties in other East European countries. Indeed, the Polish communist movement still bore the scars of the pre-war and wartime fratricidal conflicts which tempered the Ministry for Public Security's drive to unmask 'right wing nationalist deviationists'.

In 1955 the Central Committee forced the Political Bureau to revisit sentences against communists during the Stalinist period. Gomułka was the most prominent of those imprisoned and obviously symbolized all that had been wrong during that time. When the party leadership opened talks with him, it was immediately apparent that he had in no way changed his core assessment of Poland's place in Europe and that he continued to support the Yugoslav road to socialism. By May 1956 Gomułka succeeded in his insistence that all previous accusations against him should be set aside and that heads of Department X, which had been responsible for ideological purity within the party, should be dismissed.[36]

Gomułka was reinstated to the Political Bureau and was appointed first party secretary. In the communist system, where the overlap between party and state functions was blurred to the point that it is impossible to speak of any form of executive outside the party decision-making body, that meant that Gomułka had absolute authority over all state decisions. His mental map, the core of his political ideas, had an undisputed impact on the course of Polish internal and foreign relations henceforth. This was immediately apparent in his condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Hungary. In that, he allied Poland with the Yugoslav position.[37] He furthermore disagreed with the Soviet detention of the Hungarian leader Imre Nagy and the final decision to execute him. Nevertheless, Gomułka's commitment to the Soviet bloc remained constant.

In November 1956, a few days after reassuring the Yugoslav ambassador that Poland fully supported its condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Hungary, Gomułka had a meeting with Khrushchev to tell him what the Yugoslavs were doing. It might not be a coincidence that the Soviet leader at that point promised the Poles that they would receive increased wheat supplies.[38]

In the years to come Gomułka claimed for Poland a degree of independence within the Soviet bloc, which no other state, with the exception of Yugoslavia, was able to do. This was in spite of Poland continuing to be an area of vital strategic importance to the Soviet Union. Gomułka firmly maintained the view that Poland's security and economic progress could be guaranteed only through the continuing commitment to collaboration with the Soviet Union. At the same time he insisted that on its road to the building of the socialist system Poland should be supported both by the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist bloc. This did at times lead him to challenge the Soviet Union over agreements which were undisputably more beneficial to the former than to Poland. When in 1957 Khrushchev agreed to reopen talks on the economic treaties signed during Stalin's lifetime, Gomułka prepared an extensive list of issues to be advanced. In a handwritten note he listed five problems which needed to be worked out. These were economic relations, the stationing of Soviet troops on Polish territory, the legal status of these troops, repatriation of Poles still in the Soviet Union and, finally, reparations for Polish property confiscated in the East. The keynote of this extensive document is a sense that Gomułka demanded that Poland should not be treated as a client state but as an ally. Thus, attempts to maintain the very low price for coal supplied by the Poles to the Soviet Union were challenged robustly, as were Soviet demands that the Poles should shoulder the full cost of investment in the infrastructure needed to maintain the Red Army on Polish territory.[39]

During the coming years in the economic and military sphere Gomułka led in a policy of challenging all Soviet attempts to exploit Poland. In his first meeting with Leonid Brezhnev, after he replaced Khrushchev, Gomułka criticized the ousted Soviet leader over several major initiatives. He felt that Khrushchev had been wrong to encourage Poland's dependence on purchases of agricultural goods from the capitalist countries. The German issue, so close to Khrushchev's heart, was one which caused the Poles most resentment. Gomułka made the point that the German question was not a Soviet dilemma but a regional issue and one in which those affected should be consulted. On the Cuban

Crisis, Gomułka condemned Khrushchev for adventurism which could have led to world war over a matter of dubious importance.[40]

Gomułka was not prepared to accept that all decisions relating to the Warsaw Pact should be made by the Russians. He objected to the Soviet leadership assuming that the pact committed all socialist states to the maintenance of Soviet security, arguing that this was a divisive interpretation likely to irritate the Chinese communists. The unity of the socialist bloc was seen by Gomułka as a guarantee of both Polish security and the strength of the bloc. Not surprisingly he tried to limit the implications of the Sino–Soviet conflict and to mediate between the two. From 1957, when the first ideological divisions between the two manifested themselves, Gomułka tried to bridge the gap. The conflict arose against the background of the increased Soviet determination to limit the use of nuclear weapons and its neutrality in relation to the Sino–Indian conflict. The Chinese communists took a different view, demanding that the Soviet Union stop flirting with the United States and make a larger commitment to the policy of remilitarization. Gomułka acted as an intermediary and even though his efforts to avert an open split proved unsuccessful by 1964, the Chinese communists retained warm contacts with the Polish communist leadership.[41]

A number of initiatives concerning the creation of de-nuclearized zones in Europe were associated with Poland during the late 1950s and 1960s. It is still not possible to ascertain to what extent these were Polish ideas, or if the Soviet Union indicated to the Poles that they should present them as their own in the belief that the world community would then be more likely to accord them serious consideration. These proposals were nevertheless consistent with Gomułka's vision of Poland's place in Europe. On 2 October 1957, Adam Rapacki, the Polish minister for foreign affairs, put to the United Nations a plan for the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. The Rapacki Plan, as it came to be known, met with a degree of approval and was discussed, together with other similar proposals, during the following sessions of the United Nations. Nevertheless, it never had a realistic chance of success as the context of the Cold War prevented the United States and the Soviet Union from genuinely accepting demilitarization as a way out of the political stalemate.[42] During the second half of the 1960s the regime faced challenges to its authority. Economic stagnation and shortages caused increased irritation in growing sections of the community. The fact that East Germany and Czechoslovakia appeared to be enjoying a higher standard of living and access to consumer goods underlined the fact that economic planning was failing to deliver what

Polish people increasingly expected to see in shops, namely regular supplies of clothes, kitchen equipment, furniture and electrical goods. The expectation of some reward for years of sacrifice was growing and when people were fobbed off with trite propaganda statements, their sense of alienation from the state increased. The most basic level on which non-communists were prepared to accept the regime, namely that of economic well-being, was being eroded and with that appeared signs of irritation. Gomułka understood these demands, but was unable to respond to them as the Soviet Union made it clear that it would not prioritize supplies to Poland over those to East Germany and he himself remained trapped in a conservative way of thinking, unable to initiate bolder economic reforms.

The intellectual and creative community, which had supported Gomułka in 1956, felt cheated and marginalized. The next generation of intellectuals, nurtured in the post-war egalitarian ethos, expected the regime to abide by its own stated principles. Within universities students and young academics led the debate on the regime's visible ideological shortcomings. Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski published first a manifesto and then an *Open Letter* in which they criticized the regime for its lack of democratic accountability and commitment to economic reforms. Among the older Marxist intellectuals, many likewise came to doubt the regime's willingness to do anything other than maintain a grip on power. Among those, Leszek Kołakowski, Włodzimierz Brus and Zygmund Bauman were the best known in Poland and in the West.[43] Gomułka felt uncomfortable about the intellectuals' claim to have a genuine say in the process of reforms initiated after 1956. The intellectual and cultural journals which led in the debates of that year were closed down within a year. To Gomułka there was no collaboration between the intellectuals and the party. In that respect he firmly believed that the party had to lead. While it has been suggested that his own lack of formal education might account for his inability to work more closely with those calling for reforms, that point is difficult to test.

At the same time the party leadership was in turmoil for entirely different reasons. The PPR accommodated groups which had their own diverse perceptions of the way communism was to be established in Poland. Their debates were always conducted with a degree of caution and when they erupted into the open this was usually due to the Soviet leadership supporting a given faction, as had happened in 1947 and again in 1956. During the 1960s a nationalist group led by the wartime communist partisan leader Mieczysław Moczar came to prominence. The conflict dated back to the war and the first years of the communist

regime. Moczar felt that communists who had spent the war years in the Soviet Union had played down the role of the communists in Poland. He also displayed classic signs of anti-Semitism, believing that Polish–Jewish communists had formed a separate group within the PZPR and that they had a distinct agenda, one that was opposed to Polish nationalism. In 1964 he became minister of the interior, a fact that allowed him and his supporters to take the conflict beyond the narrow confines of PZPR debates. From that point on the activities of the wartime communist partisans were given new emphasis in books and films. The aim was to play down the role of communists in the Soviet Union. While Gomułka was not the main object of their attacks, the fact that his wife was Jewish made him vulnerable to party infighting.[44]

The Israeli–Arab war of 1967 and the ensuing diplomatic breach between the Soviet bloc and Israel gave Moczar's group an opportunity to launch an attack on Jews in the party, the army and Polish society. By defining Jews as Zionists and accusing them of a loyalty to the state of Israel that he claimed overrode their commitment to Poland, Moczar at a stroke identified all Jews as potential traitors. Some authors have suggested that during the Stalinist years Gomułka used anti-Semitism to 'bolster his case against the Polish party leadership'. But the evidence for this is scant.[45] Nevertheless, Gomułka, who had no track record of anti-Semitism, appears not to have done anything to protect Polish Jews, who were publicly denounced and vilified during meetings held in workplaces. Newspapers carried hostile comments on the role of Jews in post-war Poland and radio programmes repeated accusations of sympathies with Zionism and Israel. Many Jews were dismissed from their employment. The result was that a high proportion of the Jews who had stayed in Poland after 1948 felt compelled to emigrate.

Student protests at the University of Warsaw in March 1968 gave Moczar an opportunity to suggest that Jews were also active within the universities as leaders of the dissident groups. Student demonstrations were in fact precipitated by heavy-handed censorship and attempts to stifle debates taking place in the universities. On the one hand, Moczar led an attack on Jewish and dissident academics and students accusing them of disloyalty to the Polish state, while on the other hand the party purged the universities of dissidents and arrested students and high-school pupils involved in demonstrations. During fighting, which broke out first at Warsaw University and later in other universities, troops were sent in to quell the demonstrations with extreme brutality. The regime nevertheless pretended that these were actions taken by the workers justly outraged by the students' lack of commitment

to their studies and disrespect for the workers' state. Gomułka uneasily tried to mediate within these internal party conflicts. His response was nevertheless rooted in his perception of the role the party should play which excluded any dialogue with the intellectual opposition. Nor did he handle the anti-Semitic attacks well. On the contrary, by suggesting that Jews faced two mutually exclusive loyalties, to the Polish or to the Israeli state, he effectively gave the Moczar group a weapon with which to attack their opponents in the party. Anti-Semitism united both party and non-party members to the extent that the party secretary could not prevent. His weakness was thus publicly exposed and might have given the anti-Semitic drive an added momentum. The bloodletting now affected the party leadership. Rapacki, under attack for his Jewish origin, resigned his post as minister for foreign affairs, while Marian Spychalski, the minister of defence who had been imprisoned during the Stalinist period and rehabilitated in 1956, was relieved of his duties.[46] Both men had been Gomułka's close collaborators.

Gomułka failed to note that within the working-class community disaffection with the slow pace of improvement in the standard of living was taking root. No longer content with small achievements and deeply frustrated with increasing shortages of consumer goods and basic foodstuffs, the workers were ready to take action. Gomułka did not understand these aspirations and his modest lifestyle impressed no one.

The situation came to a head on 13 December 1970, when price increases on food were introduced just as families prepared for Christmas. These increases varied, but on average amounted to 15 per cent. Food bills made up half of a Polish family's household spending, therefore the increases had a big impact on anticipated family budgets. Most economists agreed that there was a need for changes in the pricing structures. The method and timing were nevertheless badly thought out. The increases came just as announcements were made about changes in workers' pay, which were meant to stabilize the economy by introducing an element of market forces. The workers' response was to take to the streets. On 14 December strikes affected the main coastal cities and ports. The Central Committee of the PZPR made the fateful decision to authorize the sending of troops to quell the strikes. Critically, soldiers were given live ammunition. On 15 December in a confrontation between striking workers and troops in Gdańsk 44 people were killed and many more injured. The police and the secret service extended their action, seeking to identify and punish those involved. Rather than seeing the workers' strikes as a sign of despair and anger, the party chose to portray them as orchestrated by 'criminal elements'.[47]

During the critical few days which followed, the party leadership was unsure as to the significance of the action taken by the workers and crucially what to do next. One issue became clear, namely that Gomułka had to go. It would appear that the Soviet ambassador to Warsaw conveyed to the members of the Central Committee a clear warning that Brezhnev wanted to see Gomułka replaced. The Polish party leaders were assured that no invasion was planned. Western reaction to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had been so serious as to preclude a similar decision in Poland's case. The Poles were left in no doubt that they had to remove Gomułka, as he was no longer considered capable of dealing with the escalating crisis. It has been suggested that the Soviet leadership had also identified a successor and discreetly suggested to the PZPR leadership who that was to be. This explains why, when the name of Edward Gierek was put forward, his nomination was accepted without any potential rivals raising objections. Gomułka was incapacitated either by a cardiac problem or through a simple collapse from overwork and did not put up a fight.

Beyond Poland

The impact of Gomułka's policies went beyond Poland. It can be argued that he was always subordinated to Soviet policies. Nevertheless, he could only function within the narrow boundaries of policies acceptable to the Soviet Union. Together with the Yugoslav road to socialism, Gomułka's policies represented a compromise between the Soviet model and what was more acceptable and appropriate to Polish circumstances. He did not challenge the Soviet Union but operated within the boundaries of freedom granted to Poland by its powerful neighbour. Thus, the Polish economic system, unlike the Soviet one, became more flexible. While the state had absolute control over large-scale production, distribution and transport, workshops and small retail outlets were allowed to function legally. Collectivization, initiated in 1949, was reversed after 1956 and most agricultural production remained in private hands. Equally striking, the Polish regime was able to reach a working consensus with the Catholic Church. Beyond Poland's borders, and in particular within the Soviet bloc, Poland offered an example of how the party could retain the trust of the Soviet leadership while being flexible in dealing with internal problems. At the time of the Hungarian crisis, Polish opposition to Soviet intervention was important in stabilizing the situation in the region. Gomułka supported Kadar, seeing in him a man who would complete the process of de-Stalinization. This was not the

case with Poland's attitude towards Czechoslovakia, as Gomułka had no sympathy with the economic and political reforms introduced during the Dubcek period.

In West European states Gomułka represented a liberal face of communism, though this did not lead to a reassessment of the Cold War paradigm. Proposals put forward by Poland for the demilitarization of Central Europe were noted positively, even if they were not ultimately accepted. The ideological boundaries were drawn too firmly. Nevertheless, Gomułka did seek for Poland economic and cultural ties with the capitalist world, at times showing himself willing to set aside unresolved long-term issues. The extent of his pragmatism was usually determined by the need for trading agreements rather than by a conviction that the two political systems could genuinely co-exist in the long term. An example of Gomułka's realism was shown when in the early 1960s Poland negotiated with the United States for increased supplies and the status of a favoured trading partner. During the talks Gomułka insisted that the US government stop Radio Free Europe transmissions over Polish territories. In the end this deeply divisive issue was dropped by him when it became apparent that it would stand in the way of the signing of an important economic agreement. To Gomułka, the son of a peasant, food supplies and guarantees of a better standard of living for the working people were ultimately of great concern, even if political principles needed to be renegotiated to secure them.

Notes

1. Andrzej Werblan (ed.), *Władysław Gomułka, Pamiętniki*, vol. I (Warszawa, 1994), 250.
2. Personal notes made by Gomułka on his meetings with a variety of politicians, varying from Chrushchev to Brezhnev have been retained in the Archiwum Akt Nowych (henceforth AAN) in Warsaw; see PPR 295 and PZPR XIA collections. Always written in pencil these notes give an insight into Gomułka's thinking and reflections which were precise and purposeful.
3. Ryszard Strzelecki- Gomułka, *Między Realizmem a Utopią, Władysław Gomułka we wspomniniach syna* (Warszawa, 2003), 28.
4. Werblan, *Władysław Gomułka, Pamiętniki*, vol. II, 92–94.
5. Zbigniew Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło, za kulisami bezpieki i partii* (London, 1986), 144.
6. Andrzej Paczkowski, *Trzy Twarze Józefa Światły, przyczynek to historii komunizmu w Polsce* (Warszawa, 2009), 136.
7. Ignacy REobb-Narbutt, 'Nigdy nie stawiał siebie na perwszym miejsce', in Władysław Horst and Bronisława Syzdyk (eds), *Władysław Gomułka we wsponieniach* (Lublin, 1989), 114.
8. Walery Namiotkiewicz, *Byłem Secretarzem Gomułki* (Warszawa, 2002), 69–75.

9. Ibid., 70.
10. AAN, PPR 295/263. 29 August 1948.
11. Ibid. Letter from Gomułka.
12. AAN PZPR V/42 letter from Gomułka to the Political Bureau 9 April and 29 May 1956.
13. A number of authors have recently challenged the previous view that the Soviet Union from the outset sought to establish Communist regimes in areas under its control. These historians have suggested a more complex interplay between local Communists who frequently saw the presence of the Red Army as a means of driving through reforms which would be otherwise met with strong resistance. Thus during the period 1944–47 the Soviet Union refused to support the local Communists and instead compelled them to follow a more cautious policy of alliances with other left wing parties; see V. Dimitrov, M. Mevius, A. Prazmowska.
14. Jan Alfred Reguła, *Historia Komunistycznej Partii Polski w świetle faktów i dokumentów* (Toruń, 1994), 25.
15. Marcin Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalism. Nacjonalistyczna legitymizacja władzy komunistycznej w Polsce* (Warszawa, 2005), 72–73.
16. Jan B. de Weydenthal, *The Communists of Poland: An Historical Outline* (Stanford, 1986), 12.
17. M. K. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland. An Outline of History* (Cambridge, 1959), 103–04.
18. Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalism*, 74–75.
19. Ibid., 73.
20. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland*, 158–59.
21. Andrzej Werblan, *Władysław Gomułka Sekretarz Generalny PPR* (Warszawa, 1989), 31–33.
22. Werblan, *Władysław Gomułka, Pamiętniki*, vol. I, 375–77.
23. Ibid., 400–19.
24. Ivo Banac (ed.), *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov 1933–1949* (New Haven, 2003), 167.
25. Ibid., 191.
26. AAN, Central Committee of the PPR in Moscow 248/2. Jakub Berman, November 1957.
27. AAN PPR 190/1–1 January 1942.
28. AAN PPR 190/1–6, 2 December 1943.
29. AAN PPR 190/1–13.
30. Anita J. Prażmowska, *Civil War in Poland, 1942–1948* (Basingstoke, 2004), 77–79.
31. Peter Raina, *Władysław Gomułka. Życiorys polityczny* (London, 1969), 54.
32. Anita J. Prażmowska, 'The Polish Socialist Party, 1945–1948', *East European Quarterly*, vol. XXXIV, no. 3 (Boulder, 2000), 346.
33. Raina, *Władysław Gomułka*, 511–15.
34. Ibid., 523–25.
35. AAN 295/VII, vol. 73.
36. AAN Biuro Polityczne PZPR V/42.
37. AAN Komitet Centralny PZPR XIA/285 notes by Wł. Gomułki.
38. AAN Ibid. 9 November 1956.
39. AAN KC PZPR XIA/71 notes by Wł. Gomułki.

40. AAN KCPXPR XIA/173 notes on meeting with Brezhnev, 26 October 1964.
41. Jan Ptasiński, *Drugi zwrot. Gomułka w szczytu powodzenia* (Warszawa, 1988), 122–27.
42. Andrzej Skrzypek, *Mechanizmy autonomii. Stosunki polsko-radzieckie 1956–1956* (Warszawa, 2005), 148–52.
43. Andrzej Paczkowski, *The Spring Will Be Ours* (Philadelphia, 2003) 297–99.
44. Ibid., 299–303.
45. Normal Naimark, 'The Sovietization of Eastern Europe, 1944–1953', in M. P. Leffler and O. A Westad (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. I (Cambridge, 2010), 192.
46. A. Kemp-Welch, *Poland under Communism, A Cold War History* (Cambridge, 2008), 148–63.
47. Ibid., 180–84.

7
Josip Broz Tito

Jeronim Perović

> [T]hose in the Western world who tend to regard [Tito as] just another Gottwald or Gomulka, but one who happened to break loose from Moscow, are making a big mistake.
>
> — George F. Kennan, US Ambassador to Yugoslavia, 19 July 1961[1]

Yugoslavia was different from the other Eastern European socialist states. From being the Soviet Union's staunchest ally after the Second World War, it turned into its most direct challenger in 1948 when the Yugoslav Communist leadership under Josip Broz Tito clashed with the Soviet leadership under Josif V. Stalin. As a result, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) was branded as a heretic party and expelled from the Cominform, the organization of Eastern European socialist states. In the aftermath of the conflict, Yugoslavia did not give up communist ideology, but due to Soviet economic sanctions and faced with the possibility of a military attack from the East, Tito sought assistance from the West, short of committing to any formal alliance. When Stalin died in 1953, however, Yugoslavia, instead of realigning with the Soviet Union, set out to define its own path of national communism, thus becoming the first socialist country in Europe not formally tied to Moscow.

During the entire Cold War period, Yugoslavia would ultimately remain outside the two competing blocs, pursuing a policy of balancing. From the mid-1950s onwards, Tito also sought international recognition by engaging in an active policy of forming alliances with Third World countries through the so-called 'Non-Aligned Movement'. Along with the particular 'Yugoslav way' in international affairs, which officially subscribed to a policy of 'peaceful coexistence' and the right of each country to pursue its own socialist development, came the

transformation of the country's communist system, which would share ever fewer traits with the Soviet Union.

After the split with Stalin in 1948, the Yugoslav way was born out of the necessity to survive and to maintain the country's sovereignty against any Soviet threat. The country's foreign policy options were thus largely conditioned by its situation between the blocs. However, its distinctive path ultimately reflected the choices of its leaders. Yugoslav foreign policy was the realm of a few, with Tito if not always at the centre, then certainly in the middle of it. Tito was the undisputed ruler of communist Yugoslavia after the end of the Second World War, combining the positions of head of state, chairman of the CPY and head of defence. Only the most-trusted advisers were put in charge of foreign affairs, or served in the Yugoslav diplomatic corps abroad. This personalized style of conducting diplomacy was also reflected in Tito's extensive travelling abroad; in fact, Tito was to become not only one of the oldest and longest-serving heads of state of his time (from 1945 to his death in 1980), but also one of the most widely travelled. Each of Tito's meetings with world leaders was presented as a spectacle to which the Yugoslav press gave great attention, leaving the impression that the country was of fundamental importance in global politics.

Tito's conduct of foreign affairs had its twists and turns, and his rhetoric and behaviour were almost constant sources of irritation to both Moscow and Washington. Tito's choices were not always undisputed on the domestic front and were at times at odds even with the policy of the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nevertheless, Yugoslav foreign policy was remarkably constant in at least two major respects. *First*, despite maintaining friendly relations and close economic ties with the West during most of the Cold War, Yugoslavia was never prepared to trade political concessions for economic ones. Even at the height of a perceived Soviet military threat in the early 1950s, the Yugoslav leadership rejected formal membership in the newly founded North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). *Secondly*, Tito allowed the Yugoslav communist system to be gradually transformed, but never abandoned the ideology of communism itself. Yugoslavia thus remained ultimately supportive of the communist cause, frequently sharing similar positions to Moscow with regard to international issues. And yet, after the split with Moscow, Yugoslavia rejected Soviet overtures to enter a formal alliance.

Tito may not have achieved exactly the role he envisaged for his country in international politics. For example, Yugoslavia's aspirations to be a peace broker in the Middle East during the mid-1950s failed due to

its ideological bias towards communism and the socialist world. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Tito became one of the champions of the Non-Aligned Movement, yet this loose forum of states would never succeed in establishing itself as a movement capable of playing an influential role within the bipolar setting. Nevertheless, Tito's foreign policy was quite successful, as both the United States and the Soviet Union courted Yugoslavia during most of the period. Yugoslavia also continued to enjoy good relations with Third World countries and managed to establish close economic cooperation with Western Europe.

From alliance to confrontation

Tito was not an easy person to deal with. *The New York Times*' obituary of 1980 aptly characterized him as a man of 'stubborn courage, ready to fight and intrigue, endure hardship and risk death for his beliefs (...) proud, strong-willed, unbending before an opponent, ruthless to an enemy – and a bit vain'.[2] In fact, all these characteristics would, in one way or the other, also emerge as characteristics of Yugoslavia's conduct abroad: Tito would most certainly always impress his counterparts, but at times also annoy and provoke them.

Still, during Tito's long tenure of power, his political line always aimed to retain a certain degree of freedom for Yugoslav behaviour abroad. This was true even before the split with Stalin. As a convinced communist, Tito regarded the alliance with the Soviet Union as the centrepiece of Yugoslav domestic and international policy; however, this did not preclude the pursuance of his own foreign policy agenda, which shortly after the end of the Second World War manifested itself in an aggressive course to enhance the influence of Yugoslavia in the Balkan region. The deeper reasons for the Soviet–Yugoslav clash in 1948 were precisely that Tito's ambitious plans in the Balkans and Moscow's visions of a hierarchical organization of the socialist camp would prove to be incompatible.[3]

When Tito collided with Stalin in 1948, he had already come a long way. Tito had been an ardent Marxist believer since his early youth, and a fervent supporter of the communist cause; he became more flexible in later years, but essentially he stuck to his ideological beliefs until his death. He had known hardship when he spent several years in prison in pre-war Yugoslavia for his socialist activities, and he learned of the dark side of the Stalinist regime at first hand by witnessing the mass terror of the 1930s when hundreds of his fellow communist comrades were purged. However, Tito's confidence and firm grip on power

came ultimately from the experience of the Second World War. Unlike the resistance movements in other parts of Eastern Europe, Tito's partisans had managed to free Yugoslavia from German troops by 1944, largely relying on their own forces. For Tito, power thus resided in the legitimate hands of those who freed the country – and he mercilessly persecuted those who questioned this claim.[4]

Soon after the Second World War, not only the Western powers, but also the Soviet Union quickly came to realize that Tito was a somewhat uncomfortable ally. Tito, who never made a secret of his communist convictions, was regarded as a useful brother-in-arms in the common Allied effort to fight the German enemy. Thus in 1943, Winston Churchill decided to shift his support from the royalist forces of Draža Mihajlović to Tito's partisans. After achieving victory, however, Tito immediately went about transforming his country according to the Stalinist model. In fact, Tito pursued the establishment of communism with far more zeal than his comrades in the other Eastern European states. By spring 1948, no other Eastern European country, perhaps with the exception of Bulgaria, had advanced further on the path of collectivization than Yugoslavia. No communist regime in Eastern Europe persecuted the opposition more ruthlessly than the Yugoslavs.[5]

Just how determined Tito was in suppressing real or imagined internal enemies is evident from a report compiled in mid-1946 by the Soviet ambassador to Yugoslavia, Ivan Sadchikov. Sadchikov reported that according to Milovan Đilas, one of Tito's closest companions at the time, 'some 200,000 people collaborating with the occupying forces (...) were liquidated after the liberation of Yugoslavia.' The same report stated that 'according to [Yugoslav] Minister of Interior, [Aleksandar-Marko] Ranković, 11,000 members of armed formations were destroyed, and all the relevant commanders serving under [Chetnik commander] Draža Mihajlović were either arrested or shot.' If anything, Sadchikov believed that these figures were understated. Sadchikov concluded that Tito had a firm grip on power and was not threatened domestically.[6]

The government of Yugoslavia saw itself as the Soviet Union's most loyal ally, and supported Moscow's position on all major international questions. In return, it also counted on the Soviet Union's support with regard to the country's internal development and its foreign policy ambitions. After the Soviet–Yugoslav Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance was signed in April 1945, Tito declared that 'the peoples of Yugoslavia have convinced themselves over the past year that in the great Soviet Union they have found the most honorable ally and the

strongest protector who assists in the development [of Yugoslavia] in peacetime as well as in war.'[7]

Sadchikov confirmed Yugoslavia's allegiance in his reports to Moscow. In mid-December 1945, just a few weeks after elections in Yugoslavia in November had formally brought Tito's Popular Front (the only party on the election list) to power, he wrote to Foreign Minister Molotov that '[t]he Yugoslav Popular Front is connecting this victory (...) with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, which is seen as actively supporting the new Yugoslavia. This conviction is not only prevalent among the country's leadership but also among larger circles of the democratic intelligentsia and the people.'[8]

For the USSR, having Yugoslavia as an ally was initially advantageous. Yugoslavia served as a role model for the other Eastern European 'peoples' democracies' to follow in their internal development. The Yugoslavs played a crucial role in the making of the Cominform, which was founded in September 1947 and served as the coordinating organ that united all European communist parties, including the Italian and French.[9] Ironically, it was the Yugoslav delegates who during the inaugural sessions most passionately supported Soviet efforts to bring all parties into line ideologically and strengthen the newly formed 'anti-imperialistic and democratic' camp led by the Soviet Union. Thus, they supported the same organization which only months later served as a platform for the Moscow-orchestrated attack on the CPY.[10]

The trouble with Yugoslavia, from Moscow's point of view, was not the Yugoslavs' lack of enthusiasm for the Soviet Union and communism, but the fact that they presented, from the beginning, a power centre in the Balkans that remained somewhat outside Moscow's reach. In fact, at the outset of the Second World War, Moscow never even genuinely considered the possibility that Yugoslavia would fall within the Soviet sphere of influence. The country emerged as an ally, not thanks to any grand strategic design, but because of events on the ground. Soviet troops marched into Belgrade in 1944. However, at this point, Tito's own troops had already freed the rest of the country, and they met with Soviet troops in Belgrade at the same time. After the liberation of Belgrade, no major Red Army contingents remained stationed in Yugoslavia.[11]

Through their victory over Nazi Germany, the Yugoslavs gained a confidence that, coupled with their ideological zeal, made itself felt in aggressive foreign policy behaviour. After the war, Yugoslavia made territorial claims on virtually all of its neighbours. The most pressing issue in 1945 became Belgrade's territorial claim to the Italian city of Trieste and

its hinterland. It was in no little part, thanks to Moscow's efforts that the Yugoslavs were restrained from attempting to conquer this territory militarily, risking the danger of a larger military conflict with the West, whose troops were stationed along the Italian–Yugoslav border. In fact, in the immediate aftermath of the war, Moscow had to intervene several times diplomatically on behalf of Yugoslavia to avoid an escalation of conflicts over Trieste and other disputed territories.[12]

Tito did not see the close alliance with the Soviet Union as contradicting his own foreign policy ambitions, namely to establish Yugoslavia as the regional power centre in the Balkans. In August 1947, without prior consultations with Moscow, he concluded an agreement with Bulgaria to form a federation, shipped arms over the Yugoslav–Greek border to help the Greek communists in their struggle against government forces backed by the Americans and the British, and worked towards an incorporation of Albania into the Yugoslav Federation. All these efforts aimed not only to enhance Yugoslav influence in the region, but also to solve long-standing minority and ethnic issues. Unification with Albania would have eased Yugoslavia's concerns about the large ethnic Albanian minority in Yugoslavia's Kosovo region and foreclosed any future Albanian attempt to incorporate Kosovo into an enlarged Albania. Similar problems existed with regard to Macedonia, a historically contested region divided among Yugoslavia (Vardar Macedonia), Bulgaria (Pirin Macedonia) and Greece (Aegean Macedonia). Tito wanted to unite all the Slavic-populated parts of Macedonia within the framework of an enlarged Yugoslav Federation with both Bulgaria and parts of Greece.[13]

If Tito's aggressive stance over Trieste was at odds with the Soviet Union's intention not to antagonize unnecessarily its wartime allies in the West, his Balkan endeavours ran contrary to Moscow's plans to strengthen Soviet control over the socialist camp. The Cominform was created in order to establish new rules of the game as far as the limits of power of individual party organs and their relation to Moscow were concerned. The Yugoslavs supported this new order, but they had no intention of retreating from their plans to establish Yugoslavia as the dominant Balkan power. If the Yugoslav leadership recognized the Soviet Union as the undisputed leader of the socialist world, they envisaged for themselves the same role on a regional scale.

The Yugoslav leadership was well aware of Soviet irritation, which manifested itself in increasingly angry diplomatic notes sent by Molotov to the Yugoslav leadership from early 1948 onwards. Still, Tito and his entourage must have felt that, eventually, the Soviets would recognize

and support Yugoslavia in their actions. An insight into Tito's mindset is provided by the notes of the conversation between the Soviet ambassador to Belgrade, Anatolii Lavrent'ev, and Tito, after their meeting on 28 January 1948, to discuss the situation in Greece:

> In Tito's opinion the Greek Monarcho-Fascists [i.e., the Greek government forces backed by the US and Britain] and their supporters must be made to understand that Yugoslavia will fully defend Albania. In the event that [Yugoslavia] does not make this intention demonstrably clear, the Monarcho-Fascists could easily occupy southern Albania because the Albanian-Greek border is basically unprotected. Tito further stated that he agrees with Moscow's view that we have to reckon with possible actions on the part of the Anglo-Saxons. It is not impossible that [the movement of Yugoslav troops] will create a stir in the [Western] press, but this does not concern us. Tito asked for his views to be passed on to Moscow and decided at the same time to postpone the sending of divisions to Albania for the time being. If the Soviet Union considers it desirable to abandon this project, Yugoslavia will accept this recommendation. But if Greece marches into Albania, Tito said in a half-joking tone, 'Yugoslavia together with the Soviet Union will clear this mess up [*raskhlebyvat' etu kashu*].[14]

The Soviet leadership was furious and demanded an immediate meeting in Moscow in order to sort out what they for the first time called 'serious differences' between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, as the Soviets had learned through other sources within the Yugoslav government that there was no reason to believe that the Albanian border was threatened by Greece. Tito, it seemed, simply conjured up the Greek threat as a pretext for a gradual Yugoslav annexation of Albania.[15]

Even though a high-level secret Soviet–Yugoslav–Bulgarian meeting took place on 10 February 1948, during which the Yugoslav delegation, led by Edvard Kardelj, acknowledged all their 'errors', the members of the Yugoslav Politburo ultimately decided not to change their policy substantially with regard to either Albania or Greece. They agreed only to drop the idea of forming a federation with Bulgaria. Obviously, Tito wanted to see his policy through and expected that Moscow would eventually accept his actions on the ground as a *fait accompli*.[16]

When Moscow learned of the decisions of the Yugoslav Politburo through an informant, the conflict escalated. On 18 March 1948, the USSR withdrew its military advisers from Yugoslavia. On 27 March, Stalin and Molotov sent their famous first letter to the Yugoslav leaders,

accusing them of an anti-Soviet and anti-Marxist–Leninist position.[17] When Tito rejected Moscow's accusations, Stalin and Molotov sent a copy of the letter to the other Eastern European leaders in late April 1948. This was the first step towards uniting the socialist camp against Yugoslavia and preparing for the Cominform meeting in June. The condemnation of the CPY through the collective organ of the Cominform was essential to Moscow, as the primary aim was to strengthen the Soviet grip over the socialist camp through an isolation of the CPY. The toppling of Tito was desirable but was, at least for the moment, of secondary importance to Stalin, as he would later explain in a letter to Czechoslovak leader, Klement Gottwald.[18] Significantly, Stalin and Molotov in their exchanges with Tito from March to May 1948 refrained almost completely from criticizing Yugoslav policy in the Balkans. Evidently, by stressing Yugoslav's erroneous behaviour in the field of ideology, they wanted to avoid the impression that this was in fact an argument about power politics.[19]

The most difficult years

Tito must have anticipated some kind of retaliation from the Soviet side, yet he could hardly have foreseen the kind of conflict that eventually erupted in mid-1948, which led to the expulsion of the CPY from the Cominform and the public branding of the Yugoslav leadership as deviationists from the true Marxist–Leninist line. Thus, when the official Soviet newspaper *Pravda* broke the news of Yugoslavia's expulsion from the socialist camp on 29 June 1948, the announcement caught not only Western diplomats and observers by surprise. The split was equally shocking to the leaders of the CPY and caused great confusion among them in the months afterwards.[20]

So deep-rooted was the cult of Stalin and the belief in the Soviet model that even after the expulsion of Yugoslavia, Tito assured the CPY's Fifth Congress in July 1948 that the Yugoslav party's 'unwavering loyalty to the science of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin [would] prove in practice that [the CPY] does not deviate from the path of that science'.[21] The Yugoslavs also continued stubbornly to defend the Soviet position in international matters as, for instance, during the United Nations General Assembly that was held in Paris from September to December 1948.[22]

Yugoslavia was on the defensive and dangerously isolated between East and West. In light of the considerable pro-Stalinist sympathies in the ranks of the CPY, Tito had to move carefully before engaging on

massive repression of the so-called 'Cominformists'.[23] He had also to avoid any move that might further aggravate tensions, as he feared an outside attack on his country. While new evidence from Eastern European archives indicates that at least until late 1950, Stalin was not preparing for a military attack on Yugoslavia – it is less clear what his intentions were in the last two years of his life – for the Yugoslavs, the threat was real, as armed incidents on the borders increased and rumours about an attack spread.[24] Vladimir Dedijer records that the Yugoslav leader's second-in-command, Edvard Kardelj, claimed in late March 1948, upon receiving the letter from Stalin and Molotov, that 'I know the Russians. (...) I know their reasoning. (...) They will label us as fascists in order to create before the world a moral-political excuse for war against us. (...) If they can, they will eliminate us by force.'[25]

The Yugoslavs thus had to prepare for the worst, and they had to prepare quickly. The expulsion from the Cominform not only enhanced the threat of war, but also brought severe economic hardship. Yugoslavia counted on Soviet assistance for its economy, which was suffering severely from the devastations of the war. Yugoslav trade was almost exclusively oriented towards the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Now that Moscow imposed a total economic blockade, Yugoslavia faced the spectre of economic collapse.

While the Yugoslavs still sought sympathy and understanding among the fellow communist parties in Europe by trying to explain their position, they grasped every opportunity to reach out to states outside the socialist camp for assistance. To this end, the Yugoslav diplomatic staff was increased, the rough partisan manners abolished and working-class shirts exchanged for more refined clothing. Only the most trustworthy were put in charge of handling international matters: Edvard Kardelj himself was appointed head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in August 1948 (until January 1953), and Aleš Bebler was named his deputy.[26]

In the months following the expulsion from the Cominform, the Yugoslavs talked not only to the British, French and Americans, but also to other world leaders such as India's prime minister, Nehru, who would later become Tito's close ally in the Non-Aligned Movement.[27] At first, talks with the Western powers were held in private and questions of direct economic assistance were handled with extreme discretion, since any public discussion of aid measures would be embarrassing, as Bebler mentioned during a talk with the British minister of state, Hector McNeil, on 5 October 1948.[28]

The West also avoided giving its assistance to Yugoslavia too much publicity for fear of parliamentary opposition. The United States as

well as Britain and France agreed to extend grants and credits to the Yugoslavs without trying to extract political concessions, as they saw an opportunity to drive a wedge between Moscow and its 'satellites' in Eastern Europe. In a telegram discussing Western strategy towards Yugoslavia that was sent to the US secretary of state on 13 January 1949, the US chargé in the Soviet Union bluntly stated that the goal of helping Yugoslavia should be opportunistic 'for the sake of prolonging and aggravating [the] Tito-Cominform break [and] encouraging non-Communist elements [in] Soviet satellite states [to break away from Moscow]'.[29] In short: the West wanted to support not only Tito for the sake of protecting Yugoslavia from the Soviet Union, but 'Titoism', which in essence represented the Yugoslav precedent of a communist state openly challenging the Soviet Union.[30]

The policy of 'keeping Tito afloat', which from the 1950s onwards also included shipments of arms – first secretly through Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) channels, then within the US military assistance programme – was meant primarily to sustain the damage the Yugoslav defection inflicted on the Kremlin. By 1951, the Truman administration had concluded that the threat of an imminent Soviet attack had passed, and the United States, while continuing its economic and military aid to Yugoslavia, also increasingly turned its efforts towards promoting Tito's influence in Eastern Europe and persuading him to affiliate himself with NATO.[31]

Tito welcomed Western economic and military assistance, yet resisted attempts to entice him into NATO, which he rejected on the grounds that this constituted a purely anti-communist organization. During his visit to Britain in mid-March 1953, his first visit abroad after the split with Stalin in 1948, Tito explained that as the Soviets had successfully depicted NATO as an instrument of Western imperialist aggression, joining the organization would lessen Yugoslavia's appeal to the socialist states of Eastern Europe.[32] Nevertheless, Tito wanted a security guarantee in case of Soviet attack, and as the West was not prepared to provide one as long as Yugoslavia remained outside NATO, Yugoslavia sought these guarantees by agreeing to closer regional cooperation with Turkey and Greece, which had just become NATO members.[33] The alliance with these two countries was formally established on 28 February 1953, when the three countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Assistance (the so-called 'Ankara Pact').[34]

Tito thus moved close to the West, but avoided making a formal commitment as to where his troops would stand in an East–West confrontation in Europe. Instead, through the treaty with Greece and

Turkey, he tied himself indirectly into NATO, thus gaining the kind of security backing he wanted, while still managing to work with the West largely on his own terms. Tito thus only made 'concessions' where he considered these to be in line with the interests of his country.[35] This was also true for changes in the realm of domestic policies, which were less dramatic than they appeared at the time.

Already in late 1949, Yugoslavia started to step back from full-scale collectivization and nationalization. On 25 November 1949, Tito declared in a speech during the party conference of the Croatian Communists that the five-year plan initiated in 1947 had to be annulled because of the hostility of Yugoslavia's neighbours.[36] The goal of collectivization was not officially abandoned, but the so-called Peasant Work Cooperatives were so inefficient that it was necessary to rethink the means to achieve this goal, and to strengthen individual private farms in the meantime. Changes in agricultural policy were all the more urgent since Yugoslavia in 1950 suffered from a severe drought and was able to cope, only thanks to Western grain deliveries.[37]

Tito also moved in a different direction from the other Eastern European socialist states when he decided to decentralize industry by creating worker–management councils, which were supposed to give workers a stake in their factories.[38] In the political sphere, from 1950 onwards Yugoslavia somewhat relaxed its travel restrictions, released hundreds of political prisoners and eased some of the pressure on religious communities. In a symbolic gesture, Tito freed Croatian Catholic Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac in December 1951 in order to appease critics in the West.[39]

Rapprochement with Moscow

The impulse to improve relations after Stalin's death came from the Soviets. Moscow began reviewing its Yugoslav policy already during early summer 1953, and diplomatic ties between the two governments were re-established in June of that same year.[40] Uncertain about exactly what Moscow's intentions were, the Yugoslavs at first continued to cooperate closely with the West, taking a wait-and-see attitude. On 9 August 1954, Tito agreed to sign the 'Balkan Pact', transforming the former Ankara Pact into a military alliance that for the first time entailed a formal security guarantee that an attack on one member constituted an attack on all. In the light of a changed international situation, with Moscow taking a decidedly more friendly tone with Belgrade, Tito was careful to point out that this was not a further movement towards

NATO, but praised the treaty as the kind of non-ideological association that countries join in order to preserve their independence and deter aggression.[41]

The Balkan Pact served as an option for the Yugoslavs to fall back on in case the situation should worsen again. For the time being, however, Tito clearly saw no need to make the treaty work. Instead, taking advantage of reduced tensions in the eastern direction, he renewed his claims to the Slavic-populated parts of Greek Macedonia, thus straining Yugoslavia's relations with Greece.[42] Tito also accepted a worsening of relations with the West when he set out to solve the issue of Trieste, Belgrade's most pressing foreign policy demand. During the summer of 1954, the situation over Trieste deteriorated dramatically as Tito gave orders to move Yugoslav troops to the border with Italy, thus enhancing to the utmost Yugoslavia's bargaining position vis-à-vis Italy and its Western allies. An agreement over Trieste was finally reached in October 1954, which at the time satisfied all parties.[43]

A certain toughening of policy also became apparent in Yugoslav domestic politics. In early 1954, the Yugoslav Central Committee stripped Milovan Đilas of his party positions and forced him to resign as president of the Yugoslav National Assembly. Đilas had published a series of articles in the official Yugoslav newspaper *Borba* in which he had called for a more rapid 'withering away' of the party and warned of Stalinism as a danger to all totalitarian states with one-party rule.[44] The Yugoslav leadership also engaged on a more repressive policy towards the Catholic Church in Croatia and went after other 'reactionary forces' with more determination. At the same time, and probably as a gesture of goodwill towards Moscow, Tito granted an amnesty for those arrested for 'Cominformist' activities.[45]

The Yugoslavs, by their crude behaviour over Trieste as well as their domestic actions, clearly demonstrated that they had started to re-equilibrate their policy towards the East. However, the breakthrough in the normalization process in Soviet–Yugoslav relations came about only with the ascent of Nikita Khrushchev to power. Khrushchev, who was promoted to the post of chairman of the Soviet Communist Party in September 1953, made the restoration of ties with Yugoslavia a priority. A lengthy correspondence between Khrushchev and Tito during the second half of 1954 paved the way for the Soviet party chairman's first visit to Yugoslavia in late May 1955,[46] resulting in an official apology from Khrushchev for the erroneous policy that had led to the Soviet–Yugoslav conflict in 1948.[47]

On 2 June 1995, Soviet head of state Nikolai Bulganin and Marshall Tito signed the so-called 'Belgrade Declaration', after which Khrushchev claimed that the enmity in relations between the two countries had been overcome. The Western press, however, saw the Yugoslavs emerging victorious, as they had succeeded in forcing Moscow to recognize publicly the 'peaceful co-existence among nations' and the right of each state to find its own road to socialism.[48] Most importantly, the Yugoslavs had managed to win Soviet approval for the 'principle of mutual respect for, and noninterference in, internal affairs for whatever reason whether of an economic, political or ideological nature because questions of internal organization, or difference in social systems and different forms of Socialist development, are solely the concern of the individual countries'.[49]

If the Yugoslavs saw in the Belgrade Declaration a sort of a 'Magna Carta' for their relations with Moscow, neither side seemed to understand at the time what exactly this would mean for their future relations. The restoration of friendly ties with the Soviet Union relieved some of the pressure on the Yugoslavs and opened up avenues for expanded economic and cultural cooperation. The two sides even began discussions on the possibility of Soviet military assistance to Yugoslavia. In direct talks with the Soviet ambassador in Belgrade during the second half of 1955, Tito explored the option of buying Soviet MiG warplanes and he hinted that Yugoslavia would end the US military assistance. During these same talks with the Soviets, however, the Yugoslav leader rejected the Soviet proposal to reinstate the Soviet–Yugoslav Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance signed in April 1945, as this would have amounted to a restoration of the situation before the split of 1948.[50]

Relations warmed up even further when Tito, 20 years after his last visit and his last personal encounter with Stalin, travelled to the Soviet Union for a three-week stay in June 1956. Tito was greeted with full honours and great pomp, and as a sign of goodwill, shortly before the arrival of the Yugoslav delegation, Khrushchev announced that Molotov would be replaced as foreign minister by the current editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, Dmitrii Shepilov. The removal of Molotov was an act against the hard-line core within the Soviet Communist Party, which continued to profess a Stalinist policy even after Khrushchev's famous secret speech to the 20th Congress in February 1956.[51] Nevertheless, it was also an important symbolic gesture towards the Yugoslavs, as it removed the man who was most closely associated with Stalin's campaign against Tito during and after the split of 1948.[52]

If, on the whole, the high-level Soviet–Yugoslav encounter went smoothly, the one remaining area of contention was the question of coordination of foreign policy among socialist states. While Tito stated that he saw Yugoslavia as a firm member of a socialist community or front (he rejected the term 'camp'), coordination of policy of all socialist states, including Yugoslavia, would not be feasible.[53] Khrushchev eventually conceded and once again reaffirmed the principles of the Belgrade Declaration by signing yet another document, the so-called 'Moscow Declaration'. However, he clearly saw these declarations as a way of defining relations with Yugoslavia only, not as guiding principles of relations among socialist states in general, as he never meant to relinquish Soviet power in Eastern Europe. Before Khrushchev could lay down the new principles defining authority and limitation of independence within the socialist bloc, however, he needed to bring the de-Stalinization process to an end. In this, he was keen to obtain the support and cooperation of Tito.[54]

Tito had other interests. Apart from establishing close relations with Moscow, he hoped to achieve a larger role and influence for Yugoslavia among certain members of the socialist bloc, which would follow the Yugoslav experiment to form a community of socialist states, where the Soviet Union would remain the *primus inter pares*, but nothing more.[55] This consideration also dovetailed with two of Tito's key foreign policy interests: *first*, to form a belt of independent socialist states as a sort of a 'buffer zone' between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.[56] In fact, as a consequence of relaxed Soviet–Yugoslav relations, in 1955–56 Yugoslav journalists and diplomats travelled through Eastern European socialist countries, proclaiming alternative roads to socialism.[57] *Secondly*, it followed up on Yugoslavia's previous ambition to establish herself as a centre of power within the Balkan region. While Tito was in principle in favour of equitable relations among socialist states, especially with regard to Soviet–Yugoslav relations, he did not seem to be opposed to a hegemonic role vis-à-vis his country's own Balkan neighbours, especially Albania and Bulgaria.[58]

Thus, in spite of the apparent personal amity of Tito and Khrushchev during their encounters, their aims were never the same. The Yugoslavs were very interested in a normalization of relations with Moscow, but they were pragmatic enough to remain cautious and keep their options open. Tito assured Khrushchev during their meeting in Moscow that Yugoslavia would soon stop accepting Western economic aid; yet he continued to seek the assistance of Western countries, asking for new loans and the supply of free commodities.[59] Moreover, the Yugoslavs

were determined to maintain their non-aligned status, and intensified relations with countries outside the blocs. During 1954–56, Tito for the first time toured countries in Asia and Africa as he travelled to India, Burma, Egypt and Ethiopia. In July 1956, he met the Egyptian president Gamal Nasser and the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in his private residency on Brioni Island to discuss the basic principles of non-alignment.[60]

The Hungarian crisis and its aftermath

The year 1956 brought a series of international conflicts that would prove to be decisive for the Yugoslavs. In late October, France, Britain and Israel started a military intervention against Egypt to stop Nasser nationalizing the Suez Canal. While Tito at first moved carefully as he sought to present himself as a mediator between Egypt and the West, he turned to ardent public support for Nasser's 'anti-imperialist' cause when the British flatly rejected the Yugoslav offer.[61]

As the Suez Crisis escalated, Soviet tanks entered Budapest to suppress the reformist movement led by Imre Nagy, a committed Marxist, who in the aftermath of Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Congress denouncing Stalinism declared the 'neutrality' of Hungary by announcing its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. If the Suez Crisis revealed the limits of Yugoslavia's role as an intermediary, the Hungarian crisis exposed the difficulty of propagating an independent foreign policy given Moscow's hierarchical concept of relations among socialist states.

For Tito, the timing of the Hungarian crisis could not have been worse, as it followed important summit meetings between him and Khrushchev, in which 'separate paths to Socialism' and the principle of non-interference had been affirmed by the Belgrade and Moscow declarations. In line with these principles, Tito initially supported the reformist efforts of Nagy, and condemned the first attempt of the Soviets in late October 1956 to crush pro-Nagy demonstrations by force. Still, he seemed to have mixed feelings about the unfolding events in Hungary as they went beyond the demand for reform and took on a more openly anti-communist and anti-Soviet character.[62] While Tito favoured separate roads to socialism, he dreaded the spectre of uncontrollable revolutionary movements for his own country.[63] Just how ugly events could become had been demonstrated in the case of Poland. In June 1956, during the brief period of de-Stalinization, the country experienced large-scale anti-government demonstrations in Poznan and other

Polish cities, which escalated into violence causing the death of some 60 people.[64]

If Tito was concerned that events in Hungary should not spill out of control, Khrushchev was eager to obtain Yugoslav support for Soviet military intervention to make Moscow's actions look more legitimate to its communist allies in Eastern Europe as well as the larger international community.[65] Before Moscow's troops moved in a second time on 4 November to suppress the Nagy revolution, Khrushchev secretly met with Tito at the Brioni residency on 2–3 November to gain the latter's support for military intervention. During the meeting, the Soviets indeed managed to secure Yugoslav support. They also obtained Tito's approval of a new Hungarian government led by János Kádár, and Tito promised to use his influence on Nagy to convince him to stay out of this government.[66]

As soon as the Soviet tanks started rolling on 4 November, however, relations between Moscow and Belgrade experienced a first severe strain, when on that same day, Nagy and around a dozen other party leaders were granted refuge in the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest, where they stayed until their departure on 22 November (after which Nagy was arrested by the Soviets, deported to Rumania and eventually tried and executed in June 1958).

If the precise reasons for Tito granting Nagy asylum remain somewhat obscure – in a secret letter to Khrushchev on 8 November 1956, Tito cited the sheer 'speed of events' and unclear information[67] – the incident caused severe irritation in the Kremlin. Tito angered the Soviet leaders further when, in a public speech in Pula on 11 November 1956, he portrayed the events in Hungary as a revolution from below, which went astray due to errors on the part of the political leadership. While Tito – to the dismay of Nagy and the Western audience – again called the second intervention 'necessary', he criticized the Soviets for the first intervention in very sharp language.[68]

The Kremlin rulers were furious and summoned the Yugoslav ambassador, Veljko Mićunović, to inform him that friendly relations between the two sides had come under severe strain, but this time, Khrushchev exclaimed, it was the Yugoslavs who had started the quarrel.[69] While the Soviets kept their resentment against the Yugoslav leadership secret, they went public when Tito's Pula speech was published on 16 November 1956 in *Borba*. In response, *Pravda* retorted a day later with an article condemning certain passages of Tito's speech. If *Pravda* somewhat euphemistically called Tito's comments on the Soviet intervention in Hungary a 'contradiction', the article sharply criticized the

section where Tito referred to Yugoslavia's 'useful and positive influence' beyond its borders, which *Pravda* depicted as hinting that Yugoslavia's path was the 'only true and even the only possible development toward Socialism'.[70]

Denying any ties with anti-Soviet forces in Hungary or any Yugoslav involvement in the events, Tito in his secret letter to Khrushchev of 8 November sought to clarify that

> Yugoslavia exists just as it is, with all its revolutionary past, with all its experience and understanding of Socialist construction. If separate people in Hungary spoke about her [i.e. Yugoslavia], that does not give anyone the right to impute responsibility to Yugoslavia for internal events which have entirely different sources and other culprits.[71]

The episode of the Hungarian crisis ultimately demonstrated that normalization of ties between the two countries would always remain difficult. Yugoslavia presented a constant annoyance to Moscow as long as it was allowed to act outside the official Moscow line. It would thus come as little surprise that relations would deteriorate from this point onwards, only to face yet another serious rift in spring 1958. The trigger to the so-called 'second Soviet–Yugoslav conflict', which was again accompanied by a war of words and economic sanctions, was the text of the new Yugoslav Party Program adopted in April 1958, which in Moscow's view resembled a manifesto, declaring anew that socialism could not be homogenous and that, inevitably, there would be different paths to socialism.[72]

Tito's non-aligned foreign policy

After the Hungarian crisis, Belgrade was forced to acknowledge that successful balancing would be difficult if the country stood alone, without alliances outside the blocs. Instead of winning credit for their actions from either Moscow or Washington, the Yugoslavs complained that each of their moves was judged in the context of the competition between the blocs. As Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo, a high-ranking figure in the Yugoslav government, explained during talks with Khrushchev in Belgrade in October 1956, the Yugoslavs often felt they were being beaten 'from both sides'.[73]

Instead of retreating to a position of passive neutrality, such as Austria or Finland, Tito sought new ways to emerge from this situation with an

ambitious and fairly original strategy of seeking alliances with the non-aligned countries in the Third World. This, he hoped, would provide the country with its own distinct platform for conducting international relations, and the necessary sources to move beyond the policy of East–West balancing. Moreover, he sought the kind of recognition for his country that he felt he had been denied after the expulsion from the Cominform in 1948.

As part of this strategy, Yugoslavia thought it necessary to discontinue the US military aid programme. When ties between Belgrade and Moscow deteriorated after the Hungarian crisis, Washington came forward with renewed offers of rapprochement, including increased military cooperation and a possible delivery of US aircraft, using the rationale that the Yugoslavs should not be forced to obtain these from the Soviets.[74] Tito remained committed to friendly relations with the West, especially since the Yugoslav economy continued to depend heavily on Western credits and loans, yet he had long nurtured mixed feelings at being seen as depending on a military lifeline from Washington. Given that the danger of a Soviet attack on Yugoslavia had passed, US military aid was ultimately seen as presenting an obstacle to Yugoslavia's credibility to act as a power in her own right.[75] While Yugoslavia would continue to buy Western arms of her own accord, Tito in December 1957 declared that his government would discontinue receiving US military aid via Washington's assistance programme.[76]

At the same time, Yugoslavia reached out to countries of the recently de-colonized world in Asia and Africa. The Yugoslavs had first made contact with Asian countries in the months after the split with Stalin. But it was only from the mid-1950s that Belgrade started to intensify and expand these relations with Tito's visit to India in late 1954. Already during the visit to India, the basic principles of non-alignment were defined. Tito stated in a joint declaration with Nehru that the policy of non-alignment did not include 'neutrality or neutralism and therefore passivity, but is a positive, active and constructive policy seeking to lead to a collective peace (...)'.[77] The ideological basis of Yugoslav foreign policy thus rested not only on the premise of mere 'peaceful co-existence' (a term that had already been used by Lenin[78]), but stressed 'active co-existence', a concept that Tito explained at great length in a speech delivered before the Yugoslav National Assembly in March 1955.[79]

Tito thus subscribed to the principles of non-alignment, yet he had neither developed the concept originally, nor did he initially take an active personal role in promoting the Non-Aligned Movement. The

situation changed only from the late 1950s onwards, when Tito set out to take a leading role in shaping the Non-Aligned Movement in order to strengthen Yugoslavia's international position.[80]

In order to gain support, he went on several grand tours of Asia and Africa. During 1958–59, he visited Egypt (i.e. the United Arab Republic), Indonesia, Burma, India, Ceylon, Ethiopia and Sudan. In 1961 he travelled to Ghana, Togo, Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.[81] All these efforts culminated in the conference of non-aligned countries, which Tito organized in Belgrade from 1–6 September 1961, attended by official delegations from 25 almost exclusively Asian and African countries.[82]

According to Dragan Bogetić, a renowned historian of Cold War Yugoslav foreign policy, the conference of 1961 brought the essentially 'anachronistic and amorphous' strategy of Yugoslav foreign policy of the early 1960s to the fore. The task that the Yugoslavs had set was simply too ambitious. The interests of countries invited to the conference were far too heterogeneous to present anything even closely resembling a united force in world politics, or a real alternative to the existing Western and Eastern blocs.[83]

While the conference did not produce any definite results or indeed strengthen the movement, it did lead to a sharp worsening of relations between Yugoslavia and the West, and also caused some disquiet among the conference participants. In fact, the conference started in an atmosphere of shock and confusion as on the opening day, 1 September 1961, Moscow chose to resume nuclear testing. While many participants, among them India's Nehru, showed indignation, Tito, in an unexpected pro-Soviet turn, was more understanding. He attacked the Western powers in extremely harsh words, while supporting the Soviet Union in every major question, especially with regard to the Berlin crisis.[84]

Tito's sudden pro-Soviet turn would ultimately also stir considerable irritation among members of his own government. George F. Kennan, who in May 1961 was appointed US ambassador to Yugoslavia and attended the conference personally, speculated that

> [t]here is evidence [that] sudden distortion of Yugoslav policy at conference in direction [of] pro-Soviet positions did not have approval [of] all elements within GOY [Government of Yugoslavia]. Suspect it was even opposed by certain members [of the] Yugoslav delegation at conference, among whom its main protagonist would probably have been [Assistant Foreign Minister] Djerdja, possibly also Kardelj.

> Others must have argued such line would involve serious risk of affecting our attitude toward Yugoslavia.[85]

In fact, Tito's ideological attacks on the West and his siding with the Soviet Union during the conference did cause displeasure in the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry, as Tito's about-face at the conference not only angered the West, but also weakened the country's position among some of the participants, who had more pressing problems than the dispute over Berlin. Koča Popović, who had headed the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry since 1953, favoured the establishment of relations with Third World countries as guided by practical trade interests, not ideology, and clashed with the proponents of an ideological course. He was also interested in maintaining pragmatic relations with the West based on economic interests. In early January 1962, and in an effort to amend US–Yugoslav ties that had worsened dramatically due to Tito's anti-Western turn, Popović had a 'long and frank' discussion with Ambassador Kennan, who noted in his dispatch to Washington that Popović 'pleaded that we not attach long-term significance to things said within context of a specific moment and for achievement of momentary effect'.[86]

This was not the first time that Tito's behaviour brought discomfort to Yugoslav diplomats. In 1956, when Tito during his visit to Moscow agreed with Khrushchev that Yugoslavia would send an observer to the meeting of the highest representatives of the states of the socialist bloc, the Yugoslav embassy in Moscow was neither consulted nor informed about this important shift in policy. Thus, when, two days after Tito left Moscow, Yugoslav deputy ambassador to Moscow Bogdan Osolnik was to be picked up by a car to take him to the Kremlin to attend the meeting, he was shocked and refused to get in until he got confirmation later in the day from Belgrade that Tito had indeed agreed.[87]

Rinna Elina Kullaa rightly observes in her research that the existing literature does not do justice to the important role that the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry played as a stabilizing element in Yugoslav foreign relations, especially from 1958 onwards, when it became a bureaucracy autonomous from the top party leadership and was able to initiate policy more independently.[88] At the same time, however, Tito, due to his dominating role in both the Yugoslav party and government, could easily disrupt any of the ministry's efforts and immediately receive the full attention of the world community.

To outside observers such as Kennan, the root of Yugoslavia's irritating foreign policy behaviour rested precisely with the personality of Tito.

In a dispatch on 28 November 1962, he concluded that while Yugoslav society had changed since the split with Stalin due to close interaction with the West, Tito had not:

> Nothing that we did served to produce any great change in Tito's view of himself as a communist; in his concern for the opinions of other communist leaders; in his determination – as a supreme political goal – to win respect and acceptance from the communist world by which he had been rejected. His views on world problems continued to be colored by ideological prejudice. He could be brought to like individual Americans, but not America as such. He persisted in viewing American aid cynically and without gratitude, as something extended for selfish imperialistic reasons which placed no claim on his appreciation. He avoided, where he could, being put in the position of asking for our aid or expressing public appreciation for it; he did his best to avoid bringing to public attention its nature and its extent. Under his personal influence, Yugoslav attitudes towards the broader cold war issues continued to show a partiality to the communist side (though in their own bilateral relationships with the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. the Yugoslavs remained correct and impartial). Similarly, the intensive relations which Tito cultivated with the new African and Asian countries, particularly in the period 1959–1961, were pursued in a spirit which was distinctly anti-Western.[89]

Western in content, Communist in form

Ultimately, the West never broke with Yugoslavia, nor did Yugoslavia break with the West. Nevertheless, the relationship remained complicated. In reaction to Tito's anti-Western outburst, the US Congress in October 1962 eventually voted to suspend Yugoslavia's most-favoured-nation status, thus applying the same restrictions for US trade as with any other communist state.[90] The Yugoslavs reacted with dismay, as Tito regarded Western aid and economic privileges simply as something his nation was entitled to due to their 'great material and human losses in the war', as the Yugoslav leader explained to Kennan during one of their conversations.[91]

The United States was not interested in a further worsening of relations with Yugoslavia, but in order for the Congress to reconsider the Yugoslav most-favoured-nation status, Washington needed Tito to come forward with some action underlining Yugoslavia's desire to cooperate with the West. If Tito's personalized diplomacy at times complicated

international relations, it was also a factor that helped to improve them quickly.

The incentive for Tito to act was provided by US President John F. Kennedy when he mentioned during a press conference on 24 January 1963, that he thought Yugoslavia should again be included into the list of most-favoured-nations, notwithstanding its ideological orientation.[92] On 7 April 1963, in a long letter to Kennedy, Tito explained the Yugoslav position, assuring him that Yugoslavia's rapprochement with the Soviet Union was not directed against the United States, as Yugoslavia had never intended to establish foreign relations with one country at the expense of another.[93] This exchange laid the groundwork for a process of rapprochement, which culminated in the first official visit of Tito to Washington, where he met Kennedy on 17 October 1963. Shortly afterwards, Congress passed legislation to restore Yugoslavia's most-favoured-nation status.[94]

Notwithstanding recent US–Yugoslav rapprochement, Tito continued to be an outspoken critic of Western policy, which would again become obvious from 1964 onwards, when he repeatedly condemned the Americans for their military engagement in Vietnam. At the same time, Tito would not support the Viet Cong militarily and remained committed to strong economic ties with the West, never shy to ask for financial assistance.[95] Washington in turn remained supportive of Yugoslavia as long as it remained formally outside the Soviet-dominated bloc, holding to the belief that official Yugoslav actions and statements had to be understood in the specific context of the country's ideological and geographical position.

Tito maintained the principles of non-aligned policy throughout his reign, yet already by the early 1960s, Yugoslav foreign policy essentially returned to a policy of balancing, as the country's role in the Non-Aligned Movement decreased rapidly after the Belgrade conference. Most indicative of the decline of the movement, as well as Yugoslavia's role in it, was Tito's failed attempt in March 1965 to convince a group of non-aligned states to sign a declaration denouncing the United States over its war in Vietnam. However, while the Non-Aligned Movement declined in importance, Tito continued to pursue a policy of cooperation with Third World countries. In a speech on 4 October 1967, Tito revealed that Yugoslavia had given about $600 million in credit to underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa. While some criticized this help as economically unsustainable and part of Tito's 'megalomaniac' understanding of Yugoslavia's role in world affairs, Tito pointed out that the aid helped to establish Yugoslavia as a 'strong moral-political factor in the world'.[96]

To some extent, Yugoslavia compensated for the decline of the Non-Aligned Movement by enhancing cooperation with Western Europe, where it enjoyed good relations with all the major states, with the exception of West Germany, where relations were strained over Belgrade's official recognition of East Germany (Yugoslavia and West Germany re-established their diplomatic ties only in 1968). During the 1960s, relations with the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union also expanded on all levels. Trade with the Soviet Union grew constantly, and since the early 1960s also included significant aid and sales of military equipment. Yugoslavia's multi-vectored foreign policy was reflected in a diversified geography of trade. In the first ten months of 1966, trade with communist countries accounted for 33 per cent of the country's foreign commerce, with the Soviet Union representing Yugoslavia's single largest trading partner. Another 38 per cent of Belgrade's foreign trade was with Western Europe, 10 per cent with the United States and 19 per cent with non-aligned countries.[97]

While the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia continued their friendly relationship during much of the 1960s, finding common ground also in their frequent attacks on US foreign policy, relations between the two countries ultimately remained cautious. Moscow continued to worry that the Yugoslav experiment might persuade some countries within the socialist camp to imitate Belgrade's course. This tension became appallingly clear in the summer of 1968, when Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia and crushed any hopes that Moscow would eventually accept national paths to communism. The events of 1968 caught many world leaders by surprise – including Tito, who had not believed that the Soviet Union would attack another country. After this, the Yugoslavs lost trust in the Soviets completely, and it would take another 20 years, until Gorbachev's visit to Yugoslavia in mid-March 1988, for bilateral ties to be fully restored once again.[98]

Overall, however, Yugoslavia had found a way of adjusting satisfactorily to her international situation during the early Cold War period, profiting from trade relations with all sides, as well as receiving economic and financial assistance from both Moscow and Washington. Yet while the country remained ideologically oriented towards the East, its economy and society had, during the 1960s, moved distinctly westwards. While the political system remained fairly closed, its borders were wide open. Every summer, millions of tourists poured into the country to enjoy vacations on the Dalmatian coast, the vast majority of them coming from Western Europe.[99]

The tension between economic liberalization and societal freedoms on the one hand, and a political system that was still centred very much

on Tito and communist ideology on the other, would prove to represent the biggest challenge for a multinational country, whose main domestic tensions ran very much along ethnic lines. Economic liberalism and the decentralization of political power structures, which Tito strove to achieve during his last years in power, did not defuse domestic tensions, but accelerated them. The Yugoslav Communist Party was already in disarray in the late 1960s, yet it managed to hold together as long as Tito lived and as long as the international Cold War setting demanded a minimal amount of national unity. With these two factors gone by the end of the 1980s, the dysfunctional elements of the Yugoslav system came to the fore, tearing the country apart in a series of savage ethnic wars during the 1990s.

Notes

1. George F. Kennan's Memorandum of Conversation with Josip Broz Tito on Brioni (Yugoslavia) on 17 July 1961, and dispatched to Washington, DC, on 19 July 1961. *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), 1961–1963, vol. XVI, Doc. 93, p. 196.
2. Raymund H. Anderson, 'Giant Among Communists Governed Like a Monarch', *New York Times*, 5 May 1980, A1; A12. For a critical view of Tito from one of his closest confidants and later dissident, see: Milovan Djilas, *Tito: The Story from Inside* (New York, 1980).
3. Jeronim Perović, 'The Tito-Stalin Split: A Reassessment in Light of New Evidence', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2007), 32–63.
4. Richard West, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (New York, 1994).
5. Leslie Benson, *Yugoslavia: A Concise History* (Basingstoke, 2004), especially chapter 5; Holm Sundhaussen, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens 1918–1980* (Stuttgart, 1982), especially 137–45.
6. The report is contained in: AVPRF (Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation), Fond (F.) 6, Opis (Op.) 7, Poruchenie (Por.) 867, Papka (P.) 53, List (L.) 9.
7. L. Ya. Gibianskii, *Sovetskii Soiuz i novaia Yugoslaviia 1941–1947 gg* (Moscow, 1987), 143.
8. Memorandum from Sadchikov, 18 December 1945, in: AVPRF, F. 6, Op. 7, Por. 867, P. 53, L. 49.
9. On the founding of the Cominform: L. Ya. Gibianskii, 'Kak voznik Kominform: Po novym arkhivnym materialam', *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, no. 4 (1993), 131–52; and G. M. Adibekov, *Kominform i poslevoennaia Evropa, 1947–1956 gg* (Moscow, 1994), 48–103.
10. L. Ya. Gibianskii, 'Forsirovanie Sovetskoi blokovoi politiki', in N. I. Egorova and A. O. Chubarian (eds), *Kholodnaia voina 1945–1963: Istoricheskaia retrospektiva* (Moscow, 2003), 137–86, here 150–51.
11. On Soviet strategic thinking during the Second World War with regard to the Southern Balkans: Vladimir O. Pechatnov, 'The Big Three after World War II: New Documents on Soviet Thinking about Post War Relations with

the United States and Great Britain', Working Paper no. 13, Cold War International History Project, Washington, DC, July 1995.

12. On the Trieste question in 1944–45: L. Ya. Gibianskii, 'Tretskii vopros v kontse vtoroi mirovoi voiny (1944–1945)', *Slavianovedenie*, no. 3 (2001), 3–26; and Gibianskii, 'Tretskii vopros v kontse vtoroi mirovoi voiny (1944–1945)', no. 4, 3–30. See also Roberto G. Rabel, *Between East and West: Trieste, the United States, and the Cold War, 1941–1954* (Durham, 1988).
13. Perović, 'The Tito–Stalin Split', 43.
14. 'Iz telegrammy A. I. Lavrent'eva v MID SSSR, 28 ianvaria 1948 g.', *Vestnik MID SSSR*, no. 6 (1990), 59.
15. See the notes of a discussion between Soviet Ambassador Lavrent'ev and A. I. Ivanov, the first counsellor of the Soviet embassy in Belgrade, with Yugoslav Foreign Minister Stanoje Simić on 18 February 1948: AVPRF, F. 6, Op. 10, Por. 1106, P. 79, Ll. 32–34.
16. Perović, 'The Tito-Stalin Split', 52–57.
17. The letter of 27 March 1948 is reproduced in L.Ya. Gibianskii, 'Sekretnaia sovetsko-iugoslavskaia perepiska 1948', *Voprosy istorii*, nos. 4–5 (1992), 119–36, here 127–29.
18. Stalin's letter from 14 July 1948 is cited in: Dmitrii Volkogonov, *Sem' vozhdei: Galereia liderov SSSR v 2-kh knigakh*, in 2 vols, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1995), 246. See also Svetozar Rajak, 'The Cold War in the Balkans, 1945–56', in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War,* 3 vols (Cambridge, 2009), vol. 1, 198–220, here 212ff.
19. Perović, 'The Tito-Stalin Split', 58.
20. On the impact of the rift on domestic Yugoslav politics: Ivo Banac, *With Stalin Against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (Ithaca, 1988).
21. Vladimir Dedijer (ed.), *Dokumenti 1948*, in 3 vols, vol. 1 (Belgrade, 1979), 376.
22. Nataša Mišković, 'The Pre-history of the Non-Aligned Movement: India's First Contacts with the Communist Yugoslavia, 1948–50', *India Quarterly*, vol. 65, no. 2 (2009), 185–200, here 194.
23. On the number of purged 'Cominformists': Banac, *With Stalin against Tito*, 145–51.
24. See László Ritter, 'War on Tito's Yugoslavia? The Hungarian Army in Early Cold War Soviet Strategy', Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact, February 2005; online text at http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/coll_tito/intro.cfm (accessed 3 June 2010).
25. Vladimir Dedijer, *Novi prilozi za biografju Josipa Broz Tito*, 3 vols, vol. 3 (Belgrade, 1984), 428.
26. Mišković, 'The Pre-history of the Non-Aligned Movement', 193.
27. Jovan Čavoški, 'Jugoslavija i Azija (1947–1953)', in Slobodan Selinić et al. (eds), *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije 1950–1961. Zbornik radova* (Belgrade, 2008), 526–43.
28. Beatrice Heuser, *Western 'Containment' Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–53* (London and New York, 1989), 83.
29. 'Telegram, The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kohler) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, January 13, 1949', FRUS, 1949, vol. V, 856.

30. On the US definition of 'Titoism', see 'Telegram, The Ambassador in Yugoslavia (Cannon) to the Secretary of State, Belgrade, April 25, 1949', FRUS, 1949, vol. V, 886–89.
31. Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia and the Cold War* (University Park, PA, 1997), 81–120.
32. Ibid., 129. On Tito's visit to Britain in 1953: Katarina Spehnjak, 'Josip Broz Tito's Visit to Great Britain in 1953', *Review of Croatian History*, no. 1 (2005), 273–94.
33. Bojan Dimitrijević, 'Jugoslavija i NATO 1951–1958', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije*, 255–74, here 263–64.
34. Milan Terzić, 'Tito i Balkanski Pakt', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije*, 573–86.
35. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 139.
36. Peter Schmid, 'Tito's übereilte Revolution – Brief aus Belgrad', *Der Monat*, no. 5 (1949), 55–61.
37. Desimir Tochitch, 'Collectivization in Yugoslavia', *Journal of Farm Economics*, vol. 41, no. 1 (1959), 26–42.
38. For early controversial discussions about the worker management councils in the literature: Benjamin Ward, 'Workers' Management in Yugoslavia', *The Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 65, no. 5 (1957), 373–86; Branko Horvat and Vlado Rascovic, 'Workers' Management in Yugoslavia: A Comment', *The Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 67, no. 2 (1959), 194–98.
39. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 141.
40. A. B. Edemskii, *Ot konflikta k normalizacii: Sovetsko-iugoslavskie otnosheniia v 1953–1956 godakh* (Moscow, 2008), especially 113–33. On Soviet–Yugoslav relations during the period 1953–57, see also Svetozar Rajak, *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, Comradeship, Confrontation, 1953–57* (London and New York, 2010).
41. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 139.
42. Ernest Bauer, 'Tito und die Sowjetunion', *Osteuropa*, no. 2 (1954), 94–101, here 95.
43. Heuser, *Western 'Containment' Policies in the Cold War*, 200–05.
44. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 135.
45. Bauer, 'Tito und die Sowjetunion', 96–98.
46. Correspondence in English translation can be obtained in the 'Virtual Archive' of the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, at www.wilsoncenter.org.
47. For the texts of Khrushchev's speech and comments in the Western, Yugoslav and Soviet press, see 'Das sowjetisch-jugoslawische Gespräch', *Ost-Probleme*, nos. 25–26 (1955), 978–90.
48. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 160.
49. 'Yugoslav-Soviet Communiqué Confirms Principles of Belgrade 1955 Declaration', 2 July 1979, *Open Society Archives* http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/113-1-311.shtml (accessed 3 June 2010). For further reading: Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, 'Jugoslavija i odjek Beogradske Deklaracije u susednim "Informbiroovskim" zemljama', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije*, 188–206.
50. Anatolii Anikeev, 'Nachal'nyi period normalitsatsii sovetso-iugoslavskikh otnoshenii (1953–1954gg.)', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije*, 87–88.

51. Jan Pelikán, 'The Yugoslav State Visit to the Soviet Union, June 1956', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavije*, 93–117, here 96.
52. Dmitrii Shepilov, 'Vospominaniia', *Voprosy istorii* , no. 3 (1998), 6.
53. Pelikán, 'The Yugoslav State Visit to the Soviet Union', 102, 114–16.
54. Phyllis Auty, 'Yugoslavia's International Relations (1945–1965)', in Wayne S. Vucinich (ed.), *Contemporary Yugoslavia: Twenty Years of Socialist Experiment* (Berkeley, 1969), 154–202, here 178.
55. Ibid., 178.
56. 'National Security Council Report, Draft Statement of U.S. Policy Toward Yugoslavia, Washington, February 28, 1958', FRUS, Doc. 120, pp. 312–19, here pp. 315–16.
57. Johanna Granville, 'Reactions of the Events of 1956: New Findings from the Budapest and Warsaw Archives', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 38, no. 2 (2003), 261–90, here 272–73.
58. Pelikán, 'The Yugoslav State Visit to the Soviet Union, June 1956', 114.
59. Ibid., 115.
60. Vladimir Petrović, 'Pošteni posrednik: Jugoslacija između starih i novih spolnopolitičeskih partnerstva sredinom pedesetih godina', in *Spoljna Politika Jugoslavija*, 459–82, here 462–63. For a list of Tito's travels abroad: http://www.titoville.com/travels.html (accessed 10 June 2010).
61. Petrović, 'Pošteni posrednik', 468–70.
62. Dragan Bogetić, 'Jugoslavia u hladnom ratu', *Istorija 20. veka*, no. 2 (2008), 343–99, here 351.
63. That Tito was indeed concerned about spill-over effects for his own country is, for example, evident from a conversation with Soviet Ambassador to Belgrade, Nikolai Firiubin, two months after the Soviet military crackdown in Hungary. Tito pointed out that especially in Croatia 'reactionary elements' incited employees of the Yugoslav security organs to violence. Johanna Granville, 'Josip Broz Tito's Role in the 1956 "Nagy Affair" ', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 76, no. 4 (1998), 672–702, here 683.
64. Granville, 'Reactions of the Events of 1956', 264.
65. Granville, 'Josip Broz Tito's Role in the 1956 "Nagy Affair" ', 688–89.
66. Tito wrote to Khrushchev on 8 November 1956 that '(...) [i]t is true that, during our conversations at Brioni, we agreed on the assessment that the weakness of Imre Nagy's government and the series of concessions made by that government to reactionary forces led to the risk of the destruction of the existing socialist achievements in Hungary. We agreed that the Hungarian communists should not remain in such a government any longer and that they should rely on the laboring masses and resist reaction in the most decisive manner. There is no need to remind you that from the very beginning, and also throughout our entire conversation, we expressed our doubts as to the consequences of open help from the Soviet Army. But bearing in mind that, in accord with your evaluation that such help had become unavoidable, we considered that nonetheless it would be necessary to do everything possible in order to minimize harm to the task of socialism. (...) [I]n connection with all of this we put forward our thoughts on trying to keep communists, and perhaps Nagy himself, out of this government, in which different anti-socialist elements were located and which for this very reason was not in a condition to halt the [forces of] reaction on their path to power. Comrades

Khrushchev and Malenkov did not reject these thoughts. On the contrary, they agreed with them, with some exceptions as to Nagy. We considered that in this government and around it there were honest communists who could be very useful in creating the new government of Janos Kadar and in liquidating the activity of anti-socialist forces. On the basis of this conversation at Brioni, we took some measures in Budapest on the afternoon of Saturday, 3 November of this year'. Cited from: 'Letter of the CC UCY to the CC CPSU with an exposition of the views of the leadership of the UCY on the events in Hungary', 8 November 1956. Original source from APRF (Archive of the President of the Russian Federation), F. 3, Op. 64, D. 486, Ll. 61–67. Copy. RGANI (Russian Government Archive of Contemporary History), F. 89, Per 45, Document no. 38. Translated English version contained in the CWIHP's Virtual Archive at www.wilsoncenter.org.

67. Ibid. For a further discussion: Granville, 'Josip Broz Tito's Role in the 1956 "Nagy Affair"', 687–90.
68. Tito's speech titled 'Govor Tita u Puli' was published in *Borba* on 16 November 1956.
69. Veljko Mićunović, *Moskauer Tagebücher 1956–1958* (Stuttgart, 1982), 207–10.
70. 'Vystuplenie Josipa Broz Tita v Pule', *Pravda*, 19 November 1956.
71. 'Letter of the CC UCY to the CC CPSU with an exposition of the views of the leadership of the UCY on the events in Hungary', 8 November 1956.
72. Dragan Bogetić, 'Drugi jugoslavensko-sovjetski sukob 1958', *Istorija 20. veka*, no. 2 (2004), 123–54.
73. 'Note from N. Krushchev to the CPSU CC Presidium regarding conversations with Yugoslav leaders in Belgrade', 6 October 1956. Original source from APRF, F. 52, Op. 1, D. 349, Ll. 64–113. Translated English version contained in the CWIHP's Virtual Archive at www.wilsoncenter.org.
74. Lees, *Keeping Tito Afloat*, 209.
75. Ibid., 210.
76. Dimitrijević, 'Jugoslavija i NATO 1951–1958', 270. From 1950–58, military aid amounted to $745 million, of which $681 had been delivered by the time Yugoslavia cancelled the program. In comparison, US economic aid during the same period totalled some $783 million, including the aid programmed for 1958. Figures from 'National Security Council Report, Draft Statement of U.S. Policy Toward Yugoslavia, Washington, February 28, 1958', FRUS, 1958–1960, vol. X, Doc. 120.
77. *The New York Times*, 24 December 1954.
78. Russell H. Fifield, 'The Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence', *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 52, no. 3 (July 1958), 504–10.
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80. For general readings: Peter Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement: The Origins of a Third World Alliance* (London, 1978); A. W. Singham (ed.), *The Nonaligned Movement in World Politics* (Westport, 1978); William Zimmerman, *Open Borders, Nonalignment, and the Political Evolution of Yugoslavia* (Princeton, 1987); Ranko Petković, *Non-Aligned Yugoslavia and the Contemporary World: The Foreign Policy of Yugoslavia, 1945–1985* (Belgrade, 1986).
81. http://www.titoville.com/travels.html (accessed 3 June 2010).
82. Bogetić, 'Jugoslavia u hladnom ratu', 372.

83. Ibid., 371.
84. Slobodan Stankovic, 'Tito and "Non-Alignment" ', *Radio Free Europe Research*, 6 December 1967, http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/holdings/300/8/3/text/133-5-9.shtml (accessed 3 June 2010).
85. 'Telegram From the Embassy in Yugoslavia to the Department of State, Belgrade, September 15, 1961', FRUS, 1961–1963, vol. XVI, Doc. 97, p. 204.
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87. Pelikán, 'The Yugoslav State Visit to the Soviet Union', 113.
88. Rinna Elina Kullaa, *From the Tito-Stalin Split to Yugoslavia's Finnish Connection: Neutralism Before Non-Alignment, 1948–1958*, University of Maryland, PhD thesis, 2008, 22–23, 124, 284; published in electronic format at http://test.lib.umd.edu/drum/bitstream/1903/8764/1/umi-umd-5783.pdf (accessed 3 June 2010).
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90. On the most-favored-nation policy of the United States: Vladimiar N. Pregelj, 'Most-Favored-Nation (Normal-Trade-Relation) of the United States', in Erneste Simon (ed.), *Foreign Policy of the United States*, vol. 1 (New York, 2000), 63–80.
91. 'Telegram From the Embassy in Yugoslavia to the Department of State, Belgrade, January 30, 1963', FRUS, 1961–1963, vol. XVI, Doc. 152, p. 333.
92. Dragan Bogetić, 'Jugoslavia i SAD – od sporenja ka saradnji: Iskušenja na putu normalizacije odnosa tokom 1963', *Istorija 20. veka*, no. 2 (2009), 115–30, here 120.
93. Ibid., 125.
94. The memorandum of the conversation between Tito and Kennedy is contained in: 'Memorandum of Conversation, October 17, 1963, Washington', FRUS, 1961–1963, vol. XVI, Doc. 162, pp. 355–59.
95. In July 1965, for instance, the Yugoslavs approached the United States with a request for assistance to carry out a far reaching program of economic reform in cooperation with the IMF: 'Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, July 22, 1965', FRUS, 1964–1968, vol. XVII, Doc. 178, pp. 475–78.
96. Stankovic, 'Tito and "Non-Alignment" '.
97. 'National Intelligence Estimate, Washington, April 13, 1967', FRUS, 1964–1968, vol. XVII, Doc. 183, p. 495.
98. *Vizit General'nogo Sekretaria TsK KPSS M.S. Gorbacheva v Sotsialisticheskuiu Federativnuiu Respubliku Jugoslaviiu: 14–18 marta 1988 g. Dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow, 1988).
99. In summer 1968, Yugoslavia had 10 million foreign tourists, 95 per cent of them from the West: 'Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, October 4, 1968', FRUS, 1964–1968, vol. XVII, Doc. 195, p. 520.

8
Mao Zedong

Yafeng Xia

Mao Zedong was born in 1893 into a peasant family in a valley called Shaoshan, in the province of Hunan, in the heartland of China. In 1910, Mao entered Dongshan Advanced Elementary School, in neighbouring Xiangxiang County. It was during his time at Dongshan School that Mao was first exposed to a wide world of contemporary events. He was very interested in history and read widely on Chinese and world history and geography. He read a book called *Great Heroes of the World* and learned a maze of new names – such as Napoleon, Catherine the Great, Wellington, Gladstone, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Washington and Lincoln – and their accomplishments.[1]

Mao was enrolled in No. 1 Provincial High School in 1912 in Changsha, the provincial capital. Early in October 1911, the Qing dynasty, which had ruled China since 1644 finally collapsed after a massive military mutiny in Wuhan, not far from Changsha. The Republic of China was founded in 1912. But China's trouble and disorder were far from over. In the fall of 1912, Mao conducted an intensive period of private study at the Hunan Provincial Library. Mao had his first glimpse of a map of the world hanging on the wall of the library's hall. He established a rigorous reading schedule and read widely. Among Western social science, he read the Chinese translation of *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith, *On the Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, *Logic* by Herbert Spencer and others.[2] Like many Chinese youths of his generation, Mao longed to be a hero in China's salvation.

It was common for young Chinese to go abroad to study in the early twentieth century. Many future Chinese communist leaders went to France, such as Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, and to the Soviet Union, such as Liu Shaoqi, Wang Jiaxiang and Zhang Wentian. Many of Mao's friends went to France. In 1920, Mao thought of going to the Soviet

Union, but he had no aptitude for learning foreign languages. He tried to learn Russia, but with little progress. He went to neither France nor Russia.[3] During the rest of his life, Mao attempted to learn English – even during the very difficult war years in Yan'an. He picked up English again in 1954 and continued for about ten years. According to his political secretary Lin Ke, in his later life, Mao was able to read English articles with an English–Chinese dictionary, but could speak only a few English words. His knowledge of the outside world was from his voracious reading of a wide range of newspapers – Communist, Nationalist and from Hong Kong – translated abstracts of all types of news, reports and cables from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reports from the International Liaison Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee, civilian and military intelligence agencies, and from his talks with foreign visitors.[4]

But Mao developed a true love for maps. As a military strategist, maps accompanied Mao throughout his life. During the war years from 1927 to 1949, Mao ordered his troops to explore and examine the geographical situation wherever they were. After becoming paramount leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Mao's love for maps continued. He always had Chinese and world maps around when he was in office, travelling or reading.[5]

Although adopting a communist ideology, Mao and his comrades were determined to rid their country of all the 'national humiliations' since the 1840s and to restore China to its rightful place in the world of nations. As the historian Chen Jian put it, 'Mao's revolutionary programs aimed at reviving China's central position in the world.'[6] Experienced in Chinese domestic struggle with the Nationalists and warlords for many years of civil war, Mao viewed the world through the lens of class struggle. He considered the Chinese revolution as part of the world proletariat revolution. The foremost thing in international struggle was to identify friends from foes and form a united front against enemies. The so-called united front strategy in essence is one of Maoist 'class struggle' tactics to solve the problem.

'Intermediate zone' theory – to form an anti-American united front

Early in 1946, in anticipation of a possible confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, Mao Zedong proposed his theory of the 'intermediate zone', stressing that there was a large intermediate zone in addition to the two opposing superpowers – the United States

and the Soviet Union. In an interview with Anna Louise Strong, a left-wing American journalist on 6 August 1946, Mao put two large tea cups on the table to represent the 'US imperialist' and the Soviet Union. Mao said the 'US imperialist' wanted war while the Soviet Union opposed war. He then placed several smaller wine cups encircling the large 'US tea cup', stating they represented the American people and were opposed to war.[7] Mao told Strong,

> To start a war, the U.S. reactionaries must first attack the American people. They are already attacking the American people – oppressing the workers and democratic circles in the United States politically and economically and preparing to impose fascism there. The people of the United States should stand up and resist the attacks of the U.S. reactionaries . . . .[8]

Mao further explained to Strong that if the US reactionaries could subdue domestic opposition, they would then have to deal with European capitalist countries. To elaborate his point, Mao placed several smaller tea cups, a matchbox and an ashtray in between the two cups representing the United States and the USSR. He explained that the US imperialists could not directly attack the Soviet Union until they had managed to control the 'intermediate zone', including China. Mao said, 'Here are many capitalist countries and colonial and semi-colonial countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America. It is impossible for the U.S. reactionaries to attack the Soviet Union before it is able to bring these countries to their knees.'[9] Chen Jian argues that the 'intermediate zone' theory 'revealed a powerful tendency toward Chinese ethnocentrism in Mao's and the other CCP leaders' definition of the post-war world situation'. In Chen's words, 'Mao and his comrades contended that whether or not the United States would be able to control the intermediate zone would be determined by the result of the struggles between China and the United States.'[10]

Mao viewed the world democratic forces as consisting of three parts: the people in the United States, in other capitalist countries, and in colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Soviet Union was the pillar of these world democratic forces. In early 1947, Lu Dingyi, the head of CCP's propaganda, elaborated on Mao's 'intermediate zone' concept in an important article, published in *Renmin ribao*, the CCP's mouthpiece.[11] Lu argued that the post-war confrontation on the world scene was between the 'anti democratic force' headed by Washington and the 'peace-loving and democratic forces' headed by Moscow. Lu stressed,

'. . . the principal contradictions in today's world are those between the American people and the American reactionaries, between Britain and the United States, and between China and the United States.'[12] As the historian Michael Sheng has noted, 'The essential message conveyed in Mao's intermediate-zone theory was the determination to fight U.S. imperialism and its "running dog" – the Nationalist government in China, and the formation of an anti-American united front at home and abroad.'[13]

China's place in the US–Soviet Cold War

After the beginning of the US–Soviet Cold War confrontation and the emergence of the two opposing blocs, China adopted the 'lean-to-one-side' (the side of the Soviet Union) foreign policy and was in the socialist bloc after the success of the Chinese Communist revolution in 1949. Mao and the CCP leaders 'immediately proclaimed that revolutionary China, as a natural ally of the "oppressed peoples" in the intermediate zone, would hold high the banner of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism, challenging the United States and other Western imperialist/colonial powers'.[14] The Truman administration settled on a policy of non-recognition of the PRC. As the United States had supported the Chinese Nationalists during the civil war, and Washington refused to cut off relations with the Nationalist government in Taiwan, the CCP regarded the United States as a serious threat to the PRC.

In 1949, when the PRC was founded, Mao travelled to Moscow to seek a political and military alliance with the Soviet Union. In April 1950, about one month after returning from his trip, in a speech to the sixth session of the Central People's Government Council, Mao further claimed that the victory of the Chinese revolution had 'defeated one enemy, the reactionary forces at home'. But, the chairman reminded his comrades, 'there are still reactionaries in the world, that is, the imperialists outside China.' Therefore, China needed friends. With the making of the Sino–Soviet alliance, Mao emphasized, China's external position had been strengthened. Mao further declared, 'If the imperialists prepare to attack us, we already have help.'[15] To Mao, it seemed that the alliance was a realistic choice he could make in a world of fierce struggle between socialist and capitalist camps.

Prior to the founding of the PRC, in late June to August 1949, Liu Shaoqi, the CCP's second in command, led a high-ranking delegation to Moscow to prepare for Mao's summit with the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. At one point, Stalin mentioned that 'the centre of the

[world] revolution has moved from the West to the East, and has now moved to China.'[16] Stalin proposed that in the international revolutionary movement, China and the Soviet Union should each accept responsibilities and that there should be a cooperative division of labour between them. He hoped that China would take more responsibility for assisting national democratic revolutionary movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries, since the Chinese revolution itself and China's revolutionary experience would exercise great influence, and could be studied and assimilated by these movements. Stalin stated,

> Therefore, in the interest of world revolution, let our two countries divide our labour: You do more work in the East and among colonial and semi-colonial countries, working by way of your positive role and influence. We will take on more duties and do more work in the West.[17]

Mao was doubtless elated and confirmed in his belief in the applicability and universality of the Chinese Communist revolutionary experience – of a violent revolution to seize political power. This might also explain why, against all the dissenting voices from his comrades, Mao decided in the autumn of 1950 to send poorly equipped Chinese People's Volunteers to fight the modern American army in Korea.

After the Korean War, Mao picked up the intermediate zone concept again. Speaking at a CCP Central Committee Politburo enlarged meeting on 7 July 1954, Mao said, 'The main purpose of the United States is to punish the intermediate zone, including the entire area from Japan to Britain, and to make these countries cry.'[18] Mao envisioned the entire area excluding both the United States and the Soviet Union as a possible anti-American ally. In a meeting with a visiting delegation of the British Labour Party on 24 August 1954, Mao contended that the so-called anti-communism was not to be taken at face value. Mao opined, 'In my view, the United States is making use of anti-communism to serve its other purpose – first of all, to occupy the intermediate zone stretching from Japan to Britain.' Mao claimed that the aim of the United States was to occupy those countries in this vast intermediate zone, to bully them, to control their economies, to establish military bases on their territory. The United States attempted to weaken these countries, including Japan and Germany.[19] Now Mao included Western capitalist countries and newly independent Afro-Asian nations in the intermediate zone.

During the Geneva Conference of 1954, Mao hoped to improve relations with the United States through serious negotiations. This was the

prelude to Sino–American ambassadorial talks, which lasted from 1955 to 1970, first in Geneva and then in Warsaw. The PRC then undertook a conciliatory position by showing willingness to unilaterally release some detained Americans and to discuss less controversial issues, such as the US economic embargo against China and a ban on cultural exchanges. Subsequently, Beijing expected to draw Washington into serious discussions over significant issues, including recognizing the PRC's legitimacy, resolving the Taiwan issue, and acknowledging China's rightful place in world affairs. From mid-1956, faced with an uncompromising US attitude on substantive issues, the Chinese leaders lost interest in improving relations through secret negotiations. Nonetheless, they still maintained this communication channel with the United States. Beijing's use of the suspension of the talks as an excuse to launch the Second Taiwan Straits crisis in 1958 did bring the United States back to the negotiating table, but failed to change the US negotiating position.[20]

In launching the 'Great Leap Forward' in 1958, Mao announced that Chinese diplomacy should cast off conservative thinking. Early in the year, Mao told Marshal Chen Yi, who would soon replace moderate Zhou Enlai as China's new foreign minister, that he had instructed Chinese diplomats to make contact with American officials during the Geneva Conference. This instruction, however, had not been consistent with his usual line of thinking. Now, Mao said, it appeared that his usual line of thinking had proved to be superior: China should vigorously struggle against American policies with no attempt to develop relations with the US government.[21] Chinese policy towards the United States should demonstrate that the Chinese people had truly stood up, and the Chinese people would not forget the long history of imperialist invasion of China. He further argued that China should take advantage of US policies of political containment and economic embargo to close its doors and concentrate on self-reliant socialist development.[22] At an extended Politburo meeting on 16 June 1958, which focused on discussing foreign policy, Mao said,

> I said it was all right to make contact with the American during the Geneva Conference. In actuality, the Americans were not necessarily willing to deal with us. It is to our advantage to be in an impasse with the United States. . . . The United States would have to recognize us in 101 years.[23]

It seemed that Mao was agitated about US policy and decided to take the offensive. It was then that Mao resurrected the concept of an

'intermediate zone' between the United States and the Soviet Union. At the fifteenth Conference of Supreme State Affairs, on 8 September, Mao claimed that the United States wanted to control four continents: Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The United States dared not attack the Soviet Union unless the Soviet Union and China collapsed.[24] This was his rationale for continuing the Soviet alliance.

In the first half of the 1950s, the Sino–Soviet relationship was cordial and the top priority of the PRC's diplomacy. The contacts between the two governments were frequent, and bilateral negotiations were often conducted between top leaders. After Stalin's death, the personal charisma of the new Soviet leaders was not sufficient to entice and lead the international communist movement. The twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in February 1956 supported a policy of peaceful coexistence between capitalism and socialism. After the twentieth Congress, Mao became concerned about the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's political views and experiences, believing that the CCP should assert itself to ensure the stability of the international communist movement. He cast serious doubt on Khrushchev's ability to lead the international communist movement after the outbreak of the Polish–Hungarian crises in October 1956. Mao began to regard himself as the potential leader of the socialist bloc and Khrushchev as a transitional figure.[25]

In the 1960s, although Washington believed that the Soviet threat was still the predominant one, the Third World became a major battleground between the great powers. The rise of nationalism as a result of communist infiltration seemed to pose an increasing challenge to the United States and the 'Free World'. It was within this area that China stood out as the world's leading revolutionary state, threatening not only Western democracy but also Moscow's claim to the leadership role within the socialist bloc.

Since its founding in 1949, the PRC had given high priority to its relations with nationalist and colonial countries in Africa and Asia. Mao believed that a strong coalition of countries in Africa and Asia could be decisive in Cold War confrontations. China's first effort to assume influence in these areas came in April 1955, when it attended the Bandung Conference of Asian and African states. China's strategy emphasized building political coalitions in Africa and Asia on two different levels. First, China supported 'national liberation struggle' both to force out the remaining colonial regimes and to overthrow those independent governments that were most closely allied with the West. Secondly, China attempted to build close cooperative relations with the rest of the

independent governments in Africa and Asia, urging them to reject the West.[26]

After the fallout of relations with the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, China competed for the leadership role with the Soviets in the world revolutionary movement. At a foreign affairs working conference on 13 November 1962, the Chinese foreign minister, Chen Yi, told his audience, 'In today's world, only our Chairman Mao is able to develop Marxism-Leninism. The practice of Chinese revolution fully proves this. [The Soviet] revisionists could not match our Chairman.' Chen declaimed, 'The centre of world revolution has moved to our country.' He further claimed that the struggle of world revolutionary people with revisionism should be guided not only by Marxism, but *Mao Zedong Thought* as well.[27] But Mao's aspiration to become the leader of the third force, replacing the Soviet Union as the leader of world revolution, to struggle against imperialists (the United States), revisionists (the USSR) and reactionaries (India and Japan), had made little headway by the late 1960s.

To stimulate and to lead the revolution of world people, especially people in the Third World countries, remained Mao's final goal and ideal. When Mao stepped up his left-turn in China's foreign policy in 1962, he was more active in leading world revolutionary movements. The Chinese actively supported leftists – Maoists in the international communist movement in an attempt to divide the world into three parts: imperialists headed by the United States, revisionists headed by the Soviet Union and Marxists headed by China. The Chinese actively promoted Mao as the leader of world revolution, claiming 'Those who want revolution should come to Beijing . . . *Mao Zedong Thought* has become the centre of unity for all Marx-Leninists and ideological weapon of all revolutionary people.'[28]

In September 1965, *Renmin ribao* published an article on revolution in developing countries, entitled 'Long Live the Victory of People's War!' in the name of Lin Biao, China's defence minister. It was approved by Mao Zedong. The article attempted to apply the Maoist strategy in the Chinese revolution to the world scene, arguing that the 'rural areas of the world' in Asia, Africa and Latin America would eventually conquer the 'cities of the world' of the affluent countries of the West, following *Mao Zedong Thought*. Lin called on all the oppressed nations and peoples to rise up in a united front struggle against their enemies to win victory for world revolution.[29]

To implement Mao's radical policy, from 1966 to 1970, the CCP made extensive contacts with those revolutionary parties and secret groups

that were willing to carry out violent revolution. The Chinese government invited their representatives to China, introducing them to Chinese revolutionary experiences, such as the rural area encircling the cities, setting up a separate regime by force of arms, strategies and tactics of guerrilla warfare. In addition to providing funds and materials, the Chinese also established special military institutes for foreign revolutionaries who secretly came to China to learn tactics of armed struggle and violent revolution.[30] As China could offer very limited economic assistance or advanced military equipment, its effort during the 1960s and 1970s to shape the Third World into a third force in international politics opposed to both of the two superpowers largely failed.

Mao's world revolution ideal meant that he used ideological standards to interpret state-to-state relations. Thus, the territorial factor in China's relations with its neighbours was only an appendage to international class struggle. For example, when discussing Sino–Indian border conflicts with the delegation of the Indian Communist Party (ICP) leftists on 13 December 1967, Mao indicated that he didn't really want to acquire the 90,000 square kilometres of disputed land with India. However, because India was an imperialist, feudalist and bureaucratic capitalist government, China had to fight for every inch of the land. China had been using dilatory tactics in dealing with this issue. Mao claimed that 'If the ICP leftists come to power and establish revolutionary people's government, China would sign a treaty with them and return all the land south of the McMahon Line to them.'[31]

Two intermediate zones – to expand the international united front

In the 1960s, Mao came to realize there were significant divergences and contradictions among Western countries, for example Great Britain, France and the United States. As part of the united front strategy, Mao attempted to distinguish those countries from the United States, viewing them as a part of the intermediate zone.[32] In a meeting with Yasui Kaoru, the chairman of the Japanese Association for the Prevention of Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, in January 1962, Mao stated, 'The Socialist bloc is one side, the United States is the other . . . Everybody else belongs to the intermediate zone. But the nature of these countries in the intermediate zone is very different.' Mao claimed that most people of former colonialist powers, such as England, France, Belgium, Holland, West Germany and Japan, could be 'indirect allies of the people'.[33]

Since the Sino–Soviet split, Mao's categorization of the 'intermediate zone' had expanded. He began to reassess the changing balance of power between the two opposing blocs. He started to accept the wording of 'Third World', frequently mixing up the two concepts. For example, on 28 September 1963, he proposed at the CCP Central Committee work conference, 'I think there are two intermediate zones, one is Asia, Africa and Latin America; the other Europe.' Mao claimed that neither Japan nor Canada was satisfied with the United States. He also mentioned that relations between the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries were tense.[34] In January 1964, Mao told a group of Japanese visitors that 'The United States and the Soviet Union own nuclear weapons. They attempt to dominate the whole world.'[35] He maintained that there were two 'Third Worlds': 'The first third world refers to Asia, Africa and Latin America; the second third world refers to a group of highly developed capitalist countries, even some imperialist countries mainly in Western Europe.' Mao's two 'Third Worlds' concept evolved from his 'two intermediate zones' terminology. Mao even drew a clear distinction between East European countries and the Soviet Union. He also openly separated China from the Soviet bloc. Mao said, 'There are 13 countries in the socialist bloc. Khrushchev doesn't have majority support.'[36]

Mao was not able to clearly distinguish the intermediate zone from the category of class and revolution. In a conversation with a French Parliamentary delegation on 30 January 1964, Mao pointed out that there was similarity between China and France although France believed in capitalism, while China was a socialist country. Mao said, 'Whether it is a capitalist or socialist country, no matter who wants to control us, we will oppose them . . . ' This is the first time that Mao referred to China as a Third World country. Mao stated, 'Haven't you talked about setting up a "third world"? If the "third world" consists of only France, it won't do. [You should] unite whole Europe . . . to expand the "third world" from London, Paris to China and Japan.'[37] Besides, Mao gave more attention to worldwide revolutions driven by revolutionary parties. Thus, during this period, he usually regarded the 'intermediate zone' as an indirect ally of anti-imperialist revolution.

As the concept of 'the Third World' had a specific implication, Mao used the formulation of the intermediate forces in 1970, declaring 'the first intermediate force is the third world' while England, France and Germany and many others are the 'second intermediate force'.[38] As he clearly identified the United States and the Soviet Union as the nations to oppose and struggle against, such a formulation constituted the embryonic form of Mao's theory of 'three worlds'.

Opening relations with the United States – to form an anti-Soviet alliance

Since 1965, China and the Soviet Union had continually expanded their military forces along their shared border. Tensions between the two countries increased further during the Cultural Revolution (starting in 1966), and by 1968–69 each side had amassed several hundred thousand troops along the border. In early 1968, Sino–Soviet conflict erupted around Qilixin Island, on the Chinese side of the main channel of the Ussuri River, the prelude to large-scale armed conflicts the following year.[39] The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 heightened Chinese leaders' concern about Soviet intentions.

When intense armed conflicts between Chinese and Soviet border forces broke out in March 1969 on Zhenbao Island (called Damansky Island in Russian) near the bank of the Ussuri River, China's security situation dramatically worsened. Soon, border conflicts spread to other areas as tension increased along the entire length of the border. These incidents brought China and the Soviet Union to the brink of a major military confrontation.[40]

In mid-May, premier Zhou Enlai, at Mao's behest, asked four veteran marshals – Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian and Nie Rongzhen – to pay special attention to international affairs. Although the Four Marshals' Study Group believed that the Soviet Union would probably not wage an all-out war against China, they emphasized the need for Beijing to be prepared for a worst-case scenario. Chen Yi and Ye Jianying argued that in order for China to be ready for a major confrontation with the Soviet Union, 'the card of the United States' should be played. In a written report, 'Our Views about the Current Situation', completed on 17 September, they pointed out that although Moscow was intending to 'wage war against China' and had actually deployed forces for this purpose, the Soviet Politburo was unable 'to reach a final decision' because of political considerations. The marshals proposed that, in addition to waging 'a tit-for-tat struggle against both the United States and the Soviet Union', China should use 'negotiation as a means of struggle against them'. Perhaps the Sino–American ambassadorial talks should be resumed 'when the timing is proper'.[41]

According to Mao's physician, Li Zhisui, in the middle of the war scare in August 1969, Mao told Doctor Li,

> Think about this. We have the Soviet Union to the north and the west, India to the south, and Japan to the east. If all our enemies

> were to unite, attacking us from the north, south, east, and west, what do you think we should do? . . . Think again. Beyond Japan is the United States. Didn't our ancestors counsel negotiating with faraway countries while fighting with those that are near?[42]

Although Li's recollections may not be completely reliable, this episode adds context and nuance to Mao's decision for rapprochement with the United States.

The perception of a grave threat from the Soviet Union pushed Mao to lift existing theoretical restrictions in order to improve relations with the United States in the early 1970s. US President Richard Nixon's high-profile summit meetings in February 1972 with the Chinese leaders, in effect, replicated Nixon's national security adviser Henry Kissinger's earlier visits to Beijing in July and October 1971. Determined to move ahead but firm on the principal issues, the leaders of both sides proved worthy negotiating opponents. At the core of the US–China summit diplomacy was the common concern over the Soviet threat. Each side aspired to utilize the other to balance that threat. This was the beginning of the US–China–Soviet triangular diplomacy during the Cold War.

But Mao was not a consistent strategic planner. He was constantly vacillating between promoting world revolution and seeking a détente with US 'imperialists'. Mao was psychologically uncomfortable and hesitant when he switched from his hard-line anti-American policy to a more conciliatory approach in the early 1970s. This switch was due to Mao's perceived threat from the USSR and the lack of momentum in the hoped-for world revolution. It seems that China received instant gratification in its foreign relations from its reconciliation policy with the United States. Mao, who was accustomed to the strategy of 'defeating the enemies one by one' [gege jiepo] in military and the united front work, was obviously excited. He thus put forth a new concept. He was thinking of utilizing Sino–American common concern over Soviet expansionism to establish a geopolitical complex of countries he termed a 'strategic line', which extended from Europe, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, to China, Japan and the United States. This geopolitical complex also included many countries outside the line as well. Mao thought that this plan might be able to defeat the Soviet Union as its first objective.[43]

During his meeting with Henry Kissinger on 17 February 1973, for the first time, Mao proposed the plan. Mao said, 'We were enemies in the past, but now we are friends.' Not only did the Soviet threat to Europe

and Asia exist, but it was also growing. Mao proposed his strategy of establishing 'a horizontal line [yitiaoxian] – the US – Japan – [China] – Pakistan – Iran – Turkey and Europe' in order to 'deal in common with a bastard [the Soviet Union]'. Mao later proposed the concept of 'a big terrain' [yidapian] during a meeting with the Japanese foreign minister Masayoshi Ohira in early January 1974, referring to those countries adjacent to the 'horizontal line'.[44] Kissinger was non-committal.

Nonetheless, not every one appreciated Mao's decision for rapprochement with the United States. A large number of the world's revolutionary parties and leftist groups, including the Albanian leaders, who had been following China's position of countering imperialism and revisionism, raised strongly worded doubts about the reversal of China's policy towards the United States. What irked Mao most was that US–Soviet relations improved in spite of his efforts to the contrary. An important precondition for better US–China relations and 'alliance with the United States to deter the Soviets' was Mao's belief that the US–Soviet differences were much greater than their ability to compromise and conspire against China. China was presented with a substantial possibility of 'utilizing the contradiction and defeating them one by one'. However, Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union in May 1972, the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev's return visit to the United States in June 1973 and the signing of several treaties greatly improved US–Soviet relations.[45] This put Mao in an awkward position. The US–Soviet détente confirmed the correctness of the criticism and accusation of the CCP from the party of Labour of Albania and other small parties. It seemed to prove that Mao's new policy towards the United States was indeed a blunder.

Whether Mao's view of US–Soviet relations was realistic or not, his strategic design of 'alliance with the United States to deter the Soviets', 'a horizontal line' and 'a big terrain' was not. Mao was disheartened to see the frequency of US–Soviet summits resulting in positive outcomes. During Kissinger's sixth visit to China (his first as secretary of state) from 10 to 14 November 1973, in a meeting with Kissinger on 12 November, Mao came to realize that the United States was in a very advantageous position and no longer in dire need of the China card after its exit from the Vietnam quagmire. Mao began the conversation by discussing the Soviet threat to China. Kissinger seized the opportunity to emphasize a possible Soviet attack on China and declared that the United States would not allow a violation of China's security. Mao, a man with a strong sense of self-respect, felt he was being forced into a defensive position. He felt resentful and humiliated.[46]

Theory of 'Three Worlds' – to struggle against the two superpowers

It was in 1973 that Mao changed the concept from the 'intermediate zone' to the theory of 'Three Worlds'. During this year, he first accepted the contemporaneous interpretation, clearly defining the boundary of his concept of the 'Third World'. He stated with certainty that the 'Third World' referred to the developing countries, and China was a developing country. This was the first time that Mao clarified China's position in the world political structure since the onset of the Soviet–American Cold War and of China's holding high the banner of anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism. This was such a new concept in Chinese political philosophy that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent Mao's new instruction to Chinese envoys overseas.[47]

Mao's theory of 'Three Worlds' is fundamentally different from the idea of 'a horizontal line' and 'a big terrain'. He discussed his new thinking on international issues with Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda on 22 February 1974. Mao said, 'The United States and the Soviet Union belong to the First World; the middle elements, such as Japan, Europe, and Canada, belong to the Second World; and we are the Third World . . . . All Asia except Japan belong to the Third World, all Africa the Third World, all Latin America the Third World.'[48]

To a large extent, the theory of 'Three Worlds' was a product of Mao's thinking on the international united front. There are at least two reasons. First, China's standing in the Soviet–American Cold War structure was changing and hard to define; secondly, the practice of world revolution and his understanding of 'imperialists, revisionists and reactionaries' as enemies was constantly challenging Mao's criterion for distinguishing international friends from enemies. The reason why this theory didn't coalesce until 1974 was the disintegration of the China-centred anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism bloc in the wake of the Sino–American rapprochement. For this reason, it was no longer possible to jumpstart the world revolution. Mao also came to realize that his idea of 'a horizontal line' and 'a great terrain' was unrealistic. The most logical thing for him to do was to return to his familiar thinking pattern of the international united front, further utilizing his class struggle mode of thinking, emphasizing the oppressing and the oppressed. He thus altered his 'horizontal line' conception, which paid less attention to class analysis to the new theory of 'Three Worlds', which put greater emphasis on class relations. Thus, Mao changed his mind from a united front including the United States to counter the

Soviets to a united front against both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Mao's emphasis on class relations did not have its basis in social relations but in state relations. This was the method that allowed him to relinquish his world revolution ideology. According to the world revolution analytical model, the class analysis method is to combine social relations with international relations. Now, from the angle of the international united front, it was necessary to distinguish social relations from international relations. The criterion was anti-United States and anti-Soviet Union – the two superpowers. Thus, the reactionaries of all countries – that is, those who suppressed communist revolutionaries, such as prime minister Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, and president Marien Ngouabi of the Republic of the Congo – became the natural objects to win over against both the United States and Soviet Union.

After the establishment of the theory of 'Three Worlds', it was out of tune to stress 'revolution' in international politics. In 1974, Mao eventually compromised on this position. In a discussion with Zhou and his associates on the international situation, Mao conceded, 'Now we may not mention that the current world tide is revolution.'[49] From then on, this viewpoint that had been publicized in the Chinese press for more than ten years, disappeared. No matter what Mao had in mind, China's foreign policy started to move further and further away from the foreign policy dominated by revolutionary ideology.

After the death of Mao in 1976 and the advent of the Deng Xiaoping era several years later, the theory of 'Three Worlds' was no longer relevant. This is mainly because the core of the theory of 'Three Worlds' was to create a united front in state-to-state relations among Third World governments. The main goal of a united front diplomacy was to protect China's national interests. With the disappearance of the world revolution goal, the anti-hegemony point in the theory of 'Three Worlds' became superfluous. It is not surprising that the theory of 'Three Worlds' disappeared from the Chinese media in the Deng Xiaoping era.

Conclusion

Mao never travelled abroad before assuming national power in 1949, and made only two foreign trips during his lifetime – both to Moscow. He had limited knowledge of the outside world, and a narrow vision of future world developments. In domestic politics, Mao believed in the theory of class struggle and relied on violent revolution to win political power. He also resorted to the united front tactics to distinguish friends

from foes in order to defeat his enemies one by one. In international politics, Mao's thinking and tactics revolved around this familiar pattern. He read mainly to confirm his established principles and beliefs. After the Korean War, Mao rarely listened to his senior colleagues. Nor did he seek advice from international affairs experts. His mental make-up comprised three main aspects: his own personal experience (i.e. many years of brutal war and revolution); Chinese traditional culture and ideas, especially the history of political struggles and court intrigues; and lastly Marxism–Leninism, especially on class struggle and violent revolution.[50]

Mao's mental map on international power politics was changing and adaptive. When he proposed the theory of the 'intermediate zone' in 1946, which was based on his united front experiences with the Nationalists and his interpretation of China's national interests, Mao attempted to form an anti-American united front for the purpose of defeating the Nationalists in the Chinese civil war. In 1949, seeking an alliance with the Soviet Union to offset the US threat to communist rule in China, Mao declared the policy of leaning to the Soviet Union in US–Soviet Cold War confrontation. After the breakdown of the Sino–Soviet alliance in the early 1960s, Mao expanded his 'intermediate zone' theory. He proposed the concept of 'two intermediate zones' to include former colonialist countries such as England, France, West Germany and Japan in his international united front, calling it an 'indirect alliance of the people'.

Mao was neither a great diplomat nor a consistent international strategic thinker. He created no miracle in Sino–American relations in his last years just as he had previously failed to handle Sino–American relations successfully. After years of pursuing his doctrine of 'class struggle' in international politics, Mao had brought Sino–Soviet relations to the brink of war in 1969. To a great extent, Mao was compelled to adopt tactics to protect China's national security interests. He decided to exploit the opportunity presented by Nixon temporarily to relax tension with the United States, which was opportunistic on his side. He did not lessen his nationalistic pride or realize that his doctrine of 'class struggle' was seriously flawed. As he was so familiar with the doctrine of 'class struggle', Mao reverted to his familiar method of united front strategy in order to adjust his policy. When he was obliged to receive the olive branch from the American government, formerly the No. 1 enemy, Mao was not going to follow the policy of détente in full. He was always aware of the fundamental differences between China and the United States. He was also very sensitive to any compromise he had to make with the United States. When he failed to form an anti-Soviet alliance

with the United States, Mao felt obligated to propose the so-called theory of 'Three Worlds' to distinguish China from the United States and the Soviet Union in order to maintain China's independent identity in the Sino–Soviet–US Cold War structure. Mao aimed to win over 'the reactionaries of all countries' to form an international united front to counter the two superpowers. This would also leave leeway for him to return to the policy of class revolution at a later time. In Mao's mental map, China was always at the centre of the struggles. Mao attempted to utilize all types of conflict and contradiction to alter the balance of power in China's favour in international power politics.[51]

Mao was recalcitrant and rarely deviated from the doctrines of class analysis and class struggle in understanding and interpreting international power relations and world politics. Although Mao never overemphasized China's role in the US–Soviet Cold War structure, it was his so-called 'principle of strength' which prompted his decision to adjust China's diplomatic tactics. Mao's natural inclination was towards rebellion and worldwide revolution. When he believed that China was powerful enough, Mao would adhere to the doctrine of class struggle and supporting world revolution. When he came to realize that China was in a disadvantageous power position in international power struggle, Mao would move away from class revolution and make an effort to establish a united front in order to protect China's strength. But in Mao's mental map, there was a focal point: China was the model for the liberation of all the oppressed nations and peoples of the world.

Notes

1. Pang Xianzhi, chief ed. *Mao Zedong nianpu, 1893–1949* [Chronology of Mao Zedong, hereafter cited as *MNP*], 3 vols. (Beijing, 1993), 1: 8–9; Jonathan Spence, *Mao Zedong* (New York, 1999), 8–9.
2. *MNP*, 1: 13; Spence, *Mao Zedong*, 20–21; Ling Shen, 'Mao Zedong yu ditu de gushi' [Mao Zedong and Maps], *Ditu* [Map], vol. 26, no. 4 (2005), 87.
3. *MNP*, 1: 36–38.
4. From 1954 to 1966, Lin Ke served as Mao's political secretary on international issues. One of his tasks was to teach Mao English. For details, see Lin Ke, 'Yi Mao Zedong xue yingyu' [A Recollection on How Mao Zedong Learned English], in Gong Yuzi, et al., *Mao Zedong de dushu shenghe* [Stories on How Mao Zedong Read Books] (Beijing, 1986), 248–62; Also see He Di, 'The Most Respected Enemy: Mao Zedong's Perception of the United States', in Michael Hunt and Niu Jun eds, *Toward a History of Chinese Communist Foreign Relations, 1920s–1960s: Personalities and Interpretive Approaches* (Washington, DC, 1995), 51.
5. Ling, 'Mao Zedong yu ditu de gushi', 87–88.
6. Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 12.

7. Xie Lifu, *Mao Zedong miandui Meiguo* [Mao Zedong Facing the United States] (Beijing, 2000), 136; Mao Zedong, 'Conversation with American Journalist Anna Louise Strong', 6 August 1946, in *Mao Zedong waijiao wenxuan* (Beijing, 1995, hereafter cited as *MZWW*), 58–60.
8. Mao, 'Conversation with American Journalist Anna Louise Strong', 59.
9. Regarding this point, see Mao, 'Conversation with American Journalist Anna Louise Strong'.
10. Chen Jian, 'Bridging Revolution and Decolonization: The "Bandung Discourse" in China's Early Cold War Experience', *The Chinese Historical Review*, vol. 15, no. 2 (Fall 2008), 214.
11. Lu Dingyi, 'Explanations of Several Basic Problems Concerning the Postwar International Situation', *Renmin ribao* [People's Daily], 4 and 5 January 1947. Mao revised and approved the article before its publication.
12. Ibid. Also see Chen, 'Bridging Revolution and Decolonization', 213.
13. Michael M. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism: Mao, Stalin, and the United States* (Princeton, 1997), 153.
14. Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 5.
15. 'Mao Zedong's address to the Sixth Session of the Central People's Government Council', 11 April 1950, in *Jiangguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong's Manuscript since the Founding of the PRC, hereafter cited as *JYMZW*] (Beijing, 1987), 1: 291.
16. Jin Chongji, chief ed. *Liu Shaoqi zhuan* [A Biography of Liu Shaoqi] (Beijing, 1998), 651.
17. 'Liu Shaoqi to the CCP CC Secretariat', 27 June 1949, in Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian* [Together with Historical Giants: Shi Zhe Memoirs] (Beijing, 1991), 414–15; Ivan Kovalev, 'Dialog Stalin s Mao Tszdunom' [Stalin's Dialogue with Mao Zedong], *Problemy dal'nego vostoka* [Far East Affairs], vol. 21, no. 1–3 (1992), 78–79.
18. Speech, Mao Zedong, 'To Unite and Cooperate with All Countries Willing to Live Peacefully', 7 July 1954, *Mao Zedong wenji* [A Collection of Mao Zedong's Papers] (Beijing, 1999), 6: 334.
19. Speech, Mao Zedong, 'On Intermediate Zone, Peaceful Coexistence, and Sino-British and Sino-American Relations', in *MZWW*, 159–60.
20. For a detailed discussion of Sino-American ambassadorial talks, see Yafeng Xia, *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S.-China Talks during the Cold War, 1949–1972* (Bloomington, 2006), chapters 4 and 5.
21. Quoted in Chen Yi, 'Zai waijiaobu dangzu wuxuhui shang de fayan' [Speech at a General Meeting of the Party Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], 17 June 1953, cited in Jiang Changbin and Robert Ross eds, *Cong duizhi zouxiang huanhe-Lengzhan shiqi de ZhongMei guanxi zai tantao* [From Confrontation to Detente: Re-examining Sino-American Relations during the Cold War] (Beijing, 2000), 181, 193 fn. 30.
22. Guoji Zhanlue Xuehui, comp. *Huanqiu tongci liangre – Yidai lingxiu de guoji zhanlue sixiang* [It is the Same Temperature around the Globe: The International Strategic Thinking of a Generation of Chinese Leaders] (Beijing, 1993), 266–67.
23. Transcript of Mao Zedong's Talk on International Situation, 16 June 1958, cited in Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, chief eds, *Mao Zedong zhuan* [A Biography of Mao Zedong, 1949–1976] (Beijing, 2003), 1: 851.

24. Mao Zedong, 'Talking about International Situation at the 15th Conference of Supreme State Affairs', 8 September 1958, in *MZWW*, 350.
25. For detailed analysis, see Zhihua Shen and Yafeng Xia, 'Hidden Currents during the Honeymoon – Mao Zedong, Khrushchev and the 1957 Moscow Conference', *Journal of Cold War Studies,* vol. 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009), 74–117.
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27. Chen Yi's Speech at Foreign Affairs' Conference, 13 November 1962, Guangxi Autonomous Region Archives, 1/31/164, 195, 203, 204, 212.
28. Relaying Points for the Sixth National Foreign Affairs Conference, February 1963, Changchun Municipal Archives, 1/1–16/53, 18, 19, 21; Kang Sheng's Speech, 8 November 1962, Jilin Provincial Archives, 50/1–18/148, 65, 88.
29. *Renmin ribao*, 3 September 1965.
30. For details, see Cheng Yinghong, 'Exporting Revolution to the World – A Preliminary Analysis of the Effect of the "Cultural Revolution" on Asia, Africa and Latin America', *Dangdai Zhongguo yanjiu* [Contemporary China Study], vol. 13, no. 3 (2006), 75–89.
31. 'Minutes of Mao Zedong's Conversation with the ICP Leftists' Study Delegation', 13 December 1967, author's personal collection.
32. For Western Scholarship on Mao's intermediate zone thesis, also see John Gittings, *The World and China, 1922–1972* (New York, 1974), 144–45, 218–19, 232–34, 261–64; J. D. Armstrong, *Revolutionary Diplomacy: Chinese Foreign Policy and the United Front Doctrine* (Berkeley, 1977), 88–89.
33. Mao Zedong, 'The Nature of Those Countries in the Intermediate Zone is Very Different', 3 January 1962, in *MZWW*, 487.
34. Mao Zedong, 'There are Two Intermediate Zones', 28 September 1963, in *MZWW*, 506–07.
35. Mao Zedong, 'Minutes of Conversation with Japanese Communist Delegation', 5 January 1964, in *MZWW*, 507–08.
36. 'Mao Zedong's Conversations with Anna Louise Strong, Frank Coe, Solomon Adler, Israel Epstein, Sidney Rittenberg', 17 January 1964, in *MZWW*, 514–15.
37. Mao Zedong, 'Similarities between China and France', in *MZWW*, 520–22.
38. 'Mao Zedong's Conversation with the Burmese Communist Party Vice Chairman Thakin Ba Thein Tin', 1 October 1970, *China's Central Archives*, Beijing, China.
39. Yang Kuisong, 'From the Battle at the Zhenbao Island to Sino-American Rapprochement', *Dangshi yanjiu ziliao* [Materials on Party History Research], vol. 19, no. 12 (1997), 7–8; and Xu Yan, 'The Sino-Soviet Border Conflict of 1969', *Dangshi yanjiu ziliao*, vol. 16, no. 5 (1994), 6–10.
40. See Yafeng Xia, 'China's Elite Politics and Sino-American Rapprochement, January 1969–February 1972', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Fall 2006), 6.
41. Xiong Xianghui, *Wo de Qingbao yu Waijiao Shengya* [My Career in Intelligence and Diplomacy] (Beijing, 1999), 184–86.
42. Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (New York, 1994), 514.

43. For details, see Kuisong Yang and Yafeng Xia, 'Vacillating between Revolution and Détente: Mao's Changing Psyche and Policy toward the U.S., 1969–1976', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 34, no. 2 (April 2010), 395–423.
44. William Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts: The Top Secret Talks with Beijing and Moscow* (New York, 1998), 83–101; Gong Li, *Deng Xiaoping yu Meiguo* [Deng Xiaoping and the United States] (Beijing, 2004), 104–09. In the published minutes in English, which had been supplied by the Chinese, there is no mention of 'China', but the word is in the Chinese record.
45. Gao Wenqian, *Wannian Zhou Enlai* [Zhou Enlai's Later Years] (Hong Kong, 2003), 286.
46. Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts*, 183–84; Pang and Jin, chief eds, *Mao Zedong zhuan*, 2: 1669–70.
47. See *Wang Youping huiyilu*, author's personal collection.
48. 'Mao Zedong on the Division of Three Worlds', 22 February 1974, in *MZWW*, 600–01. For an English article on the theory of 'three worlds', see Herbert S. Yee, 'The Three World Theory and Post-Mao China's Global Strategy', *International Affairs*, vol. 59, no. 2 (spring 1983), 239–49.
49. Cited from Xu Dashen, chief ed. *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shilu* [A Factual Record of the People's Republic of China] (Changchun, 1994), vol. 3, 1159–60.
50. He, 'The Most Respected Enemy', 51–52.
51. For this point, see ibid., 53.

9
Ho Chi Minh

Sophie Quinn-Judge

> I'll go home to Old Marx, to Old Lenin, and all the other revolutionary ancestors.
>
> From Ho Chi Minh's *Last Will and Testament*

Biographers have been trying to enter the mind of Ho Chi Minh for decades, yet most of us would be unwilling to claim success. The letters, notes and propaganda he composed in his early career give one a sense of the distance between his private voice and the public persona, but in his later years in power, he becomes much harder to read. His public utterances sound wooden and scripted, not abnormal in the case of a communist bureaucrat. Occasional visitors record snippets of enlightening conversation with Ho in the 1960s, but otherwise he left behind little of an intimate nature. In his *Last Will and Testament* we find the whimsical, folksy Ho Chi Minh one final time, yet we know full well that this is in part a propaganda document aimed at the hearts of his countrymen, exhorting them to continue their drawn-out struggle for independence. (It is also a plea for a modest cremation, as well as for tax relief for the hard-pressed peasants.)

Situating Ho in his time and place can be a more fruitful exercise than attempting to read his mind – this at least brings the biographer closer to the man. He was born during a momentous shift in Vietnam, when the Chinese cultural world of his father's generation gave way to a hybrid French culture, which required that the colonial elite become Francophone, if not Gallicized. He travelled to Europe as a cabin boy, encountering the West as a worker. He came into contact with an amazing range of people, from his crew mates to the Parisian intellectual left, Korean and Caribbean anti-colonial activists and the statesmen who attended the Paris Peace Conference at the close of the

First World War. From his vantage point in Paris he began to learn about the Russian Revolution from French socialists. In 1923 he made his way to Moscow, in time to witness Lenin lying in state and to experience the last days of Trotsky's political respectability at the Comintern Congress in 1924. By the close of that year he was in southern China, preparing to teach Vietnamese exiles the fundamentals of communist revolution. It would not be until he had lived through Jiang Jieshi's anti-communist coup, the show trials in Moscow and the complexities of international politics during the Second World War that Ho would finally declare Vietnamese independence in September 1945. By then the boundaries of his world had been stretched so far beyond the experience of the average Vietnamese peasant that the gulf between him and his countrymen might have seemed insurmountable. This is the challenge his life poses: how to explain his success in creating a popular, anti-French communist movement in a backward peasant country?

Contemporary biographers are wary of claiming that individual great men shaped history; in the case of an enigmatic figure such as Ho Chi Minh, we may have to be content with smaller claims and the depiction of our subject's different performances and changing modes, as opposed to a consistent psychological portrait. Still, the pursuit of historical biography – the attempt to recreate historical reality as refracted by one individual life – has been given a fresh imprimatur of respectability in a recent round table in the *American Historical Review* (*AHR*). What biographers can usefully attempt, as the introduction to the *AHR* round table proclaims, is 'to envision the worlds of their subjects as perceived and made meaningful by them'.[1] We can, for example, begin to construct Ho Chi Minh's subjective reality from a careful examination of his reading, the events he lived through, the places he experienced and the people he knew. For his early political career, when he was tracked by the French police and in frequent contact with the Comintern, there are more direct artefacts to work with than in his later years in power. But in all phases of his life, we can gain a deeper appreciation of his 'mental map' if we augment the archival record by considering the ideas that were circulating in his immediate world, as he came of age politically, experienced the worst years of Stalinism and rose to leadership in Vietnam.

In this chapter I will attempt to describe Ho's mental map by bringing together what we know of his intellectual milieu and some of the documentary evidence of his own thinking. My thesis is that Ho's greatest political gift was his simplicity. He was able to inhabit and integrate very different political worlds, thanks to his syncretic thinking and broad

experience of humanity. His secret may have been *not* that he was a shape-shifter, but rather that he was open and accessible to different sorts of people. His mental map seemed to be constructed within a Confucian–Leninist universe of devoted men trying to win the mandate of heaven (and power). His imagined community of the Vietnamese nation defined his place on that map.

The turn-of-the-century milieu

The world in which Ho Chi Minh was born was one of unpredictable, rapid change. The examinations to select a cadre of Chinese-educated mandarins to staff the emperor's bureaucracy had shaped the lives of Vietnamese elite males for centuries. Although in central Vietnam these would continue to take place at regular intervals until 1918; by the early part of the twentieth century, the mandarins had lost much of their power and prestige. In 1898 the French had taken control of the emperor's privy council and imposed their own taxes to fund infrastructure development in the colony. Their abuse of the corvée system and monopolies on salt, alcohol and opium was the source of deep grievances among the peasants. At the same time they made use of the indigenous mandarins to implement their policies and turned a blind eye to their corruption. By 1904–05, a small but active core of anti-French scholars had come together: men who sought ways to force the French out of Vietnam. The best known of these, Phan Boi Chau, made contact with Chinese nationalists exiled in Japan, who introduced him to their patrons in the Japanese government. In 1905, he began a campaign to send young men to Japan to study and receive military training, in preparation for an armed uprising to expel the French. Phan Chau Trinh, another scholar from Annam (central Vietnam),[2] who passed the national exams at the same time as Ho's father, placed more emphasis on cultural transformation as a means to strengthen the Vietnamese nation. He gave voice to popular grievances in a letter to Governor General Paul Beau in 1905, in which he called on the French to reform Vietnamese society by allowing freedom of expression and creating a modern educational system.[3]

Ho's father, Nguyen Sinh Huy, had devoted many years to passing the exams for the mandarinate, and when in 1901 he finally succeeded at the national level, with a second-rank diploma, his future seemed guaranteed. The French archival evidence does not show that he followed the example of his friend Phan Chau Trinh, who gave up his post in the Hue bureaucracy in 1904 as a protest against the degeneration of

the mandarinate. Unlike Phan Chau Trinh, Nguyen Sinh Huy was not a younger son from a well-off family. He was the adopted only son of the village teacher, who also became his father-in-law. Thus, he had heavy obligations towards his adoptive family. As a member of the bureaucracy, he was able to enrol his two sons in the most prestigious school in central Vietnam, the *Quoc Hoc* or National Studies Academy in Hue. Thus, after spending his early years learning the Chinese classics, Ho Chi Minh was able to study for his French primary certificate from 1908 to 1910 – enough study to achieve a basic knowledge of French. His life among the Hue elite came to an end in 1910, however, after his father was removed from his new post as a district chief in Binh Dinh province to the south. Mandarin Huy was accused by the French of caning a prisoner under his jurisdiction, a traditional form of punishment, which they claimed caused the prisoner's death a few months later. Although Huy denied the link between the caning and the prisoner's death, he was removed from his post and demoted four ranks. The disgrace for this scholar, widely respected for his knowledge of Chinese, drove him to leave central Vietnam and he spent the rest of his life as an itinerant teacher and peddler of eastern medicine in southern Vietnam.

This would be a straightforward story of a family's fall from grace were it not for the events that took place in 1908. That year, after a bad harvest, anti-tax protests in Hue led to the deaths of unarmed peasants marching on the French resident's compound. As a student, Ho Chi Minh witnessed these shootings; his later memories of this episode show that it shocked him profoundly.[4] The extreme French reaction to these events deepened the gulf between colonizer and colonized. One of the best-known scholars, Tran Quy Cap, was beheaded on the beach in Nha Trang. A number of other reformers were arrested as the purported ringleaders of the protest movement, among them Phan Chau Trinh. The modern schools he had helped to establish in rural Quang Nam were forcibly closed down by French-led troops. Phan Chau Trinh and scores of other scholars were deported to the prison island of Con Son, where most of them remained until the end of the First World War. We can only guess as to whether the French suspected Nguyen Sinh Huy of some connection to this movement or to the plots of Phan Boi Chau, an acquaintance from his native district in Nghe An. However, from the time Nguyen Sinh Huy left Hue for the South, the French demonstrated suspicion of his motives, turning to informers for information on his travels.[5]

The French were also interested in his son in those years, noting in their intelligence reports that he was known to have disappeared from

his lodging in Hue in 1910. The young man had travelled first to Phan Thiet, where he became a tutor at a school founded by one of Phan Chau Trinh's friends. This school had been started in 1904, after Phan Chau Trinh spent several months recuperating in the founder's home during a southern trip. First a club for physical culture, the Duc Thanh School became a vehicle for Phan Chau Trinh's ideas on modern learning and development. Both French and the romanized *Quoc ngu* script were taught at the school, along with maths and science. The founder also developed a *nuoc mam* (fish sauce) factory alongside the school, to implement Trinh's ideas on the need for Vietnamese to develop their own industry and commerce. The fact that the young Ho Chi Minh found work in this school shows that he was in some sense a disciple of Phan Chau Trinh. This is not a place where he would have turned up at random, as it would have been risky to declare adherence to Trinh's thinking in the years after 1908.

As it was an early influence on Ho Chi Minh, I should explain more thoroughly the genesis of Phan Chau Trinh's thinking. From the little that we know of his life before his exile to Paris in 1911, it appears that the main source of his ideas was the writing of the two key Chinese reformers, Kang Yuwei and Liang Qichao. Kang was most influential before 1898, when his ideas on reforming the Chinese monarchy were tested during the 'Hundred Days'. He was an advocate of modern technology and learning, combined with the restoration of true Confucian virtue. The suppression of this experiment led a number of reformers to flee to Japan, where the Meiji reforms were transforming the state. Among these reformers was Liang Qichao, whose intellectual evolution was chronicled in his newspaper, *Xinmin congbao* (*Renewing the People*), published in Yokohama from 1902 to 1905. In these years Liang became the predominant influence on Chinese students as he moved away from the idea that China could restore itself by restoring the traditional culture of Confucian morality. He came to see that, just as the West had rejected its own tradition of religious authority, China needed to reject its Confucian tradition and allow free thought to flourish. Liang came to view the creation of a modern Chinese nation, with active citizens and strong public morality, as the basis for China's renewal. His newspaper printed translations of Western philosophers, from Rousseau to Herbert Spencer. Social Darwinist ideas became a strong influence on East Asian nationalists, who took to heart the idea that their people might die out, overrun by the technologically superior West. Fond of Anglo-Saxon culture, Liang had travelled widely in the United States in 1903 and written in detail about what he saw there, from the Philadelphia Navy Yard

to the planned St Louis Exposition and the mediocrity of government personnel.[6]

Phan Chau Trinh's exposure to Liang's writings is usually dated to 1904, when we know from the memoirs of Huynh Thuc Khang that *Renewing the People* was available to scholars in Hue. These memoirs describe Phan Chau Trinh as getting so excited by the new ideas that 'he couldn't sleep, forgot to eat'. From that point he had a complete change in his thinking.[7] As his biographer explains: 'He often said that the poison of autocratic rule and outmoded tradition had produced an uncontrollable sickness in our country and the ideals of Western freedom and democracy were the appropriate medicine to eliminate that sickness.'[8] It was after this awakening that he resigned from his position in Hue and began his months of travels in southern Annam, to propagate his anti-monarchical ideas. The younger mandarins, Huynh Thuc Khang and Tran Quy Cap, joined him in breaking with the system and on his travels south.

Thanks to his friendship with a few French socialists, Phan Chau Trinh was amnestied in 1911 and that March was allowed to join a group of students heading for Paris. By that time, Ho Chi Minh and his father were both in Cochinchina, the French designation for their colony in the southern part of Vietnam. The French suspected that Nguyen Sinh Huy had travelled south to consult with Phan Chau Trinh after his release. He may have been consulting him on his son's future. Although Ho had enrolled for a six-month course in a naval mechanics school in Saigon, he left before completing the course in June to sail for Paris on the Latouche-Tréville, part of the French merchant fleet. Without the backing that Phan Chau Trinh received, he was forced to sail as a crew member. Another of his father's acquaintances was on board, Bui Quang Chieu, a French-educated agricultural specialist and the future leader of Vietnam's Constitutionalist Party. He later recalled sailing on the same crossing as Ho, when he was questioned by the French police in 1919. The disgraced mandarin Nguyen Sinh Huy may no longer have been a social equal of Bui Quang Chieu or Phan Chau Trinh, but there is evidence that they felt sympathy for him and kept an eye on his son. While he was in England during the First World War, Ho kept up a correspondence with Phan Chau Trinh, even writing to him when he was imprisoned for a second time in Paris. But what is perhaps most important about this family connection is that it represents a clear choice on the part of Ho and his father: to opt for a Western education instead of following Phan Boi Chau, a native of their own province, to Japan or China.

Ho Chi Minh never succeeded in obtaining a formal education in the West, although he did apply to a French training school for colonial administrators. This application was rejected, as it was determined that he 'had not exhausted his possibilities of education in the colony'.[9] But clearly Ho had gone abroad with the object of learning more about the West and its politics. After a year or so of working on merchant ships, he moved to England, perhaps to escape recruitment for the French war effort, but also to learn English. In a postcard sent to Phan Chau Trinh around August 1914, Ho offered his opinion about the world war:

> The five great powers are in a struggle. Nine countries are making war. I am reminded suddenly of what I said to you a few months ago, about the storm that was threatening. Destiny is saving more surprises for us and it is impossible to say who will win this. The neutrals are still undecided and the belligerents cannot guess their intentions. In these circumstances, if someone sticks his nose into the business, he will be forced to choose sides . . . We should stay calm.[10]

This piece of advice foreshadows the Ho Chi Minh who would become an actor on the international stage – he shows himself to be cautious and centred on the interests of Vietnam. Unlike some of his compatriots, who were accused of accepting German aid for attacks on French power in Vietnam, he appeared to favour a wait-and-see attitude. But in another card to Phan Chau Trinh, he also demonstrates his long-term commitment to Vietnam, assuring Trinh that he would 'continue his work'.[11]

There is a strong possibility that Ho ventured even further to the West before making his public political debut at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. In 1938, he told the Comintern that he had worked for a wealthy family in Brooklyn in 1917 and 1918, returning to France in 1919. He also told the US peace activist, Dave Dellinger, that he had heard Marcus Garvey speak in Harlem. Garvey, the Jamaican-born 'back-to-Africa' activist, arrived in the United States in 1916 and often spoke in Harlem in 1917–18, on such topics as the resurgence of lynching in the American south.[12] One other piece of evidence exists to support the idea that Ho was in the United States immediately before the Paris Peace Conference: this is an interview with Nguyen Ai Quoc in the Chinese paper *Yishibao [Yi Che Pao]*, which refers to him as 'the Vietnamese delegate to the Peace Conference', who had arrived in Paris from America. The introduction to this interview refers to Ho/Nguyen Ai Quoc as 'a man of thirty, with a bold and youthful appearance. He knows English,

French and Chinese; knows characters well enough to be able to converse in writing.'[13] The interviewer also notes that Nguyen Ai Quoc had been comparing notes with Korean activists in the United States.

Thus, in this early phase of Ho's travels, we see a man who had close links with the westernizing Confucian scholar, Phan Chau Trinh; who was comfortable conversing in both English and French, yet knew Chinese characters; and who was becoming literate in world politics. His contacts with the unofficial Korean delegates to the Paris Peace Conference – both in the United States and in Paris – place him in the middle of one distinct stream of Asian nationalism. He was one of those nationalists willing to adopt aspects of Western democratic political culture, along with the West's science and technology, in order to build a strong, independent nation. At the same time, by 1918 he already identified with the oppressed peoples of the world, including Caribbean blacks, the Irish, Koreans and all colonized peoples of the French Empire. The disappointment of the Paris Peace Conference would further politicize him, and turn his attention back towards the East and the Communist International. By then his political repertoire would include both open and clandestine methods of action. He would remain a political actor with a strong commitment to rational analysis, combined with the ability to compromise and change course in the face of harsh realities.

Yet, as we shall see, Ho also possessed an ability to evoke a powerful, emotional nationalism in his own countrymen. David Marr singles out 'his ability to weld together revolutionary aspirations and selected traditional morality, often employing language that only a few years before had been the forte either of the Neo-Confucian literati or of the French-educated schoolteachers . . . ' This ability 'represents one of the pillars upon which Ho Chi Minh's political accomplishments were built', Marr believes.[14]

From Paris to Moscow

Ho Chi Minh's campaign for Vietnamese rights at the Paris Peace Conference, organized with his compatriots in the 'Group of Vietnamese Patriots', clearly grew out of his familiarity with Woodrow Wilson's *Fourteen Points*. The expectations raised by president Wilson's promises were compounded by the hopes of around 100,000 Vietnamese drafted to serve as support personnel for the French war effort – vague French statements made during the war had raised hopes that they would be rewarded with increased freedom after the victory. The general

disappointment with the Versailles Treaty on the part of Vietnamese, Koreans, Chinese and Indians who believed that Wilson's promises might include their right to self-determination pushed many Asian patriots to a new level of militancy. The March 1919 demonstrations in Korea against Japanese rule and the May Fourth Movement in China were both reactions against the decisions taken by the European powers in Paris.

Interestingly, Ho Chi Minh and his fellow expatriates at first continued to look for ways to publicize the injustices of French rule within France. They took their complaints to the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, attended meetings of the Freemasons and grew closer to the French Socialist Party branch in their neighbourhood, the 13th arrondissement. By the time Ho attended the Tours Congress of the Socialist Party at the end of 1920, he had read Lenin's *Theses on National and Colonial Questions* and was beginning to develop his own critique of imperialism, based on Lenin's ideas. He had grown more cynical about the French justification of its colonial policy as a 'civilizing mission'. In an article for *L'Humanité* around the time of the Tours Congress, he wrote that '...behind the three colours of liberty, equality and fraternity, France introduces alcohol, opium and prostitution to all of her colonies and sows misery, ruin and death along with her ill-gotten riches.' This article makes clear his motive for siding with the radical faction of the Socialist Party, which voted to join the Comintern: 'Since the majority of the Party decided to join the Communist International and Lenin presented his Colonial Theses to the Second Congress, our comrades have begun to talk about the colonies ...' he wrote.[15]

From the time he affiliated himself with the radical French socialists, soon to become the French Communist Party, Ho Chi Minh had begun his spiritual voyage back to Asia. He would travel to Russia in the summer of 1923, where he would receive his early Comintern training at the University of the Toilers of the East. Russia's position somewhere between East and West, as a tortured soul torn in two directions, makes it an ambiguous site to locate on a mental map. It is significant that in the first years of Ho's association with the Comintern, this organization was turning its focus from Europe to Asia. The failure of communist uprisings in Germany had persuaded the Russian leadership that China might prove a more rewarding territory for their efforts to spread the Marxist faith.

Lenin had taken Marxist theory as the guiding force for his revolutionary state, and on the surface, nothing could be more rational and western than materialist Marxism. But by combining it with his

theory of the 'revolutionary vanguard', he had already moved away from Marxist determinism into a universe where the force of human will counted for as much as his country's stage of economic development. The vanguard party would lead the state to rapid economic development, which would then make possible the establishment of true communism. Lenin established the precedent, later to be copied in China, Korea and Cambodia, of founding a communist state on the rubble of a nation devastated by war. (In spite of a severe famine in the north, Vietnam had suffered much less war damage than its Asian neighbours, when the Democratic Republic of Vietnam declared its independence in 1945.) However, the Marxist theoretical component of the Marxist–Leninist revolution that began in 1917 was less clearly articulated than the methods of Leninist democratic centralism that were used to govern Russia by the communists. By the time that Lenin had consolidated Bolshevik power and formed the Communist International, he was ready to advise a more leisurely course to communism for agricultural Asian nations than he had chosen for his own state.

We know that during the years of Ho's first stay in Moscow, he absorbed the idea that countries at different stages of self-government and development would have to progress towards communism at different rates. There was no question of an undeveloped, peasant country such as Vietnam having a communist revolution in the immediate future. The role of a communist party in a colonial, agricultural country such as Vietnam was to support the nationalist bourgeoisie in winning independence in an 'anti-imperialist, anti-feudal' revolution. This was one of the key points in Lenin's *Theses* dealing with national and colonial issues. The communists in the metropolitan countries were exhorted to offer their support to the colonial fighters for independence, as a way of weakening Western imperialism. This was a message that suited Ho Chi Minh extremely well – his immediate concern was to eliminate French power in Vietnam, and Lenin's *Theses* gave him a lever to prize support from his European comrades.

This does not mean that Ho was indifferent to issues of social justice – he had a strong sense of grievance against the French and repeatedly denounced their oppressive system of corvée labour, deceptive labour recruitment for French-run plantations, and their monopolies on salt, alcohol and opium. But he resisted an in-depth emphasis on class analysis of Vietnamese society, believing that in a colonial country the vast majority of people are exploited. He appeared to believe that Asian peoples would need something different from the political

lectures he heard in Russia to attract them to communism. While in Moscow, he nursed the idea of an Asian Communist Federation, to enable the eastern peoples to learn from each other. 'How useful for the Annamites to learn how their brother Hindus are organizing to struggle against English imperialism, or how the Japanese workers unite to combat capitalism, or how the Egyptians are making sublime sacrifices to demand their liberty', he wrote. 'The eastern peoples are generally sentimental; and one example is more valuable to them than one hundred propaganda lectures', he explained.[16] When he worked as a Comintern operative in Canton, Ho helped to bring such a federation into being in 1925, in the form of a League of Oppressed Peoples of the East.

However, the different requirements for revolutionary training in the East did not mean that Ho saw the tasks for communists in the West as divorced from his world. On the contrary, he viewed the politics of East and West as inextricably linked. One of his earliest public appearances in Moscow, at a conference of the 'Peasant International' or Krestintern, gave him a chance to make this point. He made sure that an anti-war resolution passed at the end of the conference included a reference to colonial oppression. His amendment stated that 'the peasants of the colonies constitute a very important factor in questions of war and peace.'[17] In other words, no one should take their docility for granted. Having come face to face with French power at an early age, he was not prepared to let the Europeans in the Comintern forget their responsibilities towards Asia and Africa. During the Fifth Comintern Congress in June 1924, all of his interventions were narrowly focused on the need for more Comintern action on colonial issues. His suggestion that the communist newspaper *L'Humanité* begin a forum on colonial issues was eventually implemented, as was his request that more colonial students be recruited for the University of the Toilers of the East. (In 1924, an enrolment list for the university showed that the largest Asian contingents were composed of Korean (67) and Chinese (109) students, plus 16 Mongolians and six Malays/Indonesians.)

The Leninist Confucian

When Ho returned to Asia in late 1924, as part of the large Soviet aid mission to Sun Yatsen's young republic, he had been abroad for 13 years. While he might have been expected to show some anxiety regarding his ability to influence his countrymen, to judge from the Comintern record, he was far more concerned about his own personal security in a

city (Canton) that he expected to be 'teeming with spies'. Within a few months he was able to gather a group of patriotic exiles around him, and the revered nationalist leader Phan Boi Chau was handing over his place as acknowledged chief. Clearly, Ho took advantage of the prestige that came from being sent from Moscow and living in Borodin's house, if only for a short time. After all, when the Russians started sending arms and military instructors to Guangzhou to defend the Chinese Republic, they appeared to be the men of the future. Ho's correspondence with the Comintern shows that, in fact, he had come out to China empty-handed, at first with nothing more than his translator's salary to support the training of Vietnamese revolutionaries. But in this situation, as in many in his later life, he showed that he had the patience to make the most of a bad hand.

One of his advantages was that his family was known to some of the expatriates – his father and Phan Boi Chau had taken tea together when Ho was still a boy in Nghe An, while another figure he came to depend on, Lam Duc Thu, was the son of one of his father's acquaintances. His link to the world of the Parisian exiles, too, would have made him a source of valuable information about France and French politics. But his willingness to teach and write in the style of a Confucian moralist was also a key element of his long-term success with his fellow Vietnamese. In the various political pamphlets and periodicals which his *Thanh Nien* (Youth) Association published in Canton, one can find elements of both 'traditional anti-colonial patriotism and bolshevism', as Huynh Kim Khanh points out. An article in the paper *Thanh Nien* in February 1927, for example, says, 'As far as we Vietnamese are concerned, let us perfect ourselves intellectually by reading the works of Confucius and revolutionarily by reading the works of Lenin.'[18] Confucian virtues such as loyalty and righteousness were to be focused on the nation and people, as opposed to the traditional focus on the family and ruler. Ho 'repeatedly exhorted everyone to be loyal (*trung*) to the Fatherland and pious (*hieu*) toward the People', Marr emphasizes.[19]

While scholars have argued in recent years that the Vietnamese and their revolution were not deeply influenced by Confucianism, this would not seem to apply to the petty bourgeoisie of Ho's generation.[20] (In fact, it is an argument that may only apply to segments of the southern population and takes an overly narrow view of those who responded to Ho's message.) Shawn McHale takes this line of attack one step further, criticizing attempts to 'link communism to Vietnamese tradition and thus, in nativist fashion, to mask communism's European (and therefore alien) origins'.[21] Earlier cultural critics, however, such

as Paul Mus and Nguyen Khac Vien, have made a strong case for the compatibility of Confucianist and Marxist–Leninist world views.

A doctor and communist publicist Nguyen Khac Vien, in his essay, 'Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam', made an explicit case for the ideological continuity of Confucianism and Marxism – both world views are humanistic, centred on political conduct and governance. It is in the *source* of human values that the doctrines differ, Confucianism positing a mysterious cosmic communication between heaven (*thien*) and man; while Marxism views human values as derived from man's material condition.[22] When a Confucian man moves from a traditional society to a socialist society, 'he adopts a new social discipline, but in the depths of his being he has never been hostile to the principle of collective discipline, like the bourgeois intellectual . . . ', writes Vien.[23]

It is a powerful part of Ho Chi Minh's tradition, then, to suppress one's personal needs in order to serve a larger goal, such as service to one's monarch or nation. To ask whether Ho Chi Minh was manipulating these Confucian values to install a Marxist government in Vietnam is to miss the point of his whole political life. It might be summed up as 'use whatever is effective, so long as it promotes the popular well-being, independence and national unity.' He was a syncretic thinker who believed in using a variety of tools to win independence, including traditional Vietnamese virtues and support from stronger nations. He turned eagerly to the United States in both 1919 and 1945, when it appeared that the Americans held the power to grant Vietnam its freedom. In 1923 and 1947 he switched his entreaties to the Soviet Union, when it began to promote its role as liberator of colonial peoples. When faced with the challenge of reconciling social justice with support from the Vietnamese bourgeoisie, he generally tried to find compromise solutions which would maintain harmony within the revolutionary movement. For example, in 1951, in his address to the Second Party Congress, he advocated strictly carrying out the reduction of land rent and interest rates, while redistributing abandoned land to the peasants, but no confiscation of land from landlords and landowners who remained on their land or supported the revolution.[24] His tragedy was that extremists in his own party were strengthened by the consistent failure of the West to support Ho's vision for Vietnam. By the final phase of the land reform, these extremists would be destroying village and national solidarity by not just confiscating the land of landlords, but also of middle peasants who had fought in the Resistance. Both categories of farmer, many from the Viet Minh, would be put on trial as 'enemies of the people'.

Between East and West

Ho Chi Minh would not achieve his goal on his first trip back to Asia in the 1920s. He would be forced to return to Moscow and Western Europe in mid-1927, after Jiang Jieshi's coup disrupted the communist–Guomindang alliance. He would make several more voyages out to the West, and then return to Asia to exploit the new information and contacts he had acquired, or simply to take advantage of a changed political conjuncture. He would not succeed in getting back to Vietnam until 1941, and even then would not spend much time inside the country until 1945. Always there would be compromise and disappointment involved – compromise with entrenched structures in his own party and disappointment with the lukewarm or non-existent support he received from the West, including the Soviet Union.

In 1928–31, when he returned from Moscow, Paris, Brussels and Berlin to found Vietnam's official communist party, the radicalism of the Sixth Comintern Congress, seeping into Vietnam via other, younger communist trainees, derailed his programme for a broad-based, national revolutionary movement. While Ho sat in Hong Kong, the younger, radicalized cadres pushed peasant demonstrations towards the takeover of village and district structures. These 'red villages' or 'soviets' in central Vietnam were before long destroyed by massive French retaliation. These events impressed the Comintern but caused untold damage to the political structures which Ho had patiently begun building from Canton. As he would report to the Comintern in 1935, 'the majority of comrades, – even those in charge – do not understand the meaning of "the bourgeois democratic revolution".'[25] His arrest in Hong Kong in June 1931 brought this period of his political activity to an end. After his return to Moscow in the autumn of 1934, he spent several years as a half-forgotten Comintern instructor, not trusted for any major role, but unable to leave Moscow.

His next chance to bring change to Vietnam came on the eve of the Second World War, when the threat of war in Europe awakened the Stalinist Comintern to the need for united fronts in Europe and Asia. Ho was finally allowed to return to the Vietnamese border area in southern China to advise his fellow Vietnamese on constructing a nationalist alliance against fascism. But although he left Moscow in the autumn of 1938, he was not able to re-establish his authority within his own party until June 1941. By then he was well-prepared for the most important role of his career: negotiating and cajoling his way to leadership of a united front for Vietnamese independence, the Viet Minh; and to

an alliance with the precursor of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). These achievements required luck and all of his knowledge of Chinese and American culture. He also needed a great deal of patience in dealing with rival Vietnamese nationalists attached to different factions of the Guomindang. Ho's frequent method of handling such rivals was to bring them into his own organizations, something he succeeded in doing for brief periods in the early 1940s, and again in a national unity government in 1946. But as the Cold War began to divide the world into two camps, the shadow of Stalinism quickly put an end to Ho's links with Western allies. After 1947 it becomes difficult to say who we are dealing with when we speak of the communist Vietnamese leadership. Increasingly, from the end of 1946 on, Ho's views and decisions would be contested by the party's general secretary, Truong Chinh, and his allies.

When Ho finally became a major figure on the world stage at the close of the Second World War, the West had a short window of time to observe him in action, before he slipped back into the Maquis and returned to armed struggle. He delivered his American-inspired Declaration of Independence on 2 September 1945, with the OSS in attendance, but within a month had to watch his tenuous US support slip away. The French return to Indochina, first in the British-occupied South, meant that once again Ho had to exert his full charm and powers of persuasion to avoid a direct French assault on his shrinking area of control. The November decision to dissolve the Indochinese Communist Party appears to have been his own initiative, taken to reassure the occupying nationalist Chinese forces, but possibly also to enable him to get a firmer grip on the situation. Scattered violence and reprisals in September and October against landlords and collaborators of the French and Japanese threatened national unity, and there is no evidence that these acts were carried out under Ho's orders. His reach or control of underground networks still did not extend much beyond his inner circle within the Viet Minh Central Committee.

'To halt the excesses and to build unity among the people: these were the two objectives that Ho Chi Minh and his team worked on', Philippe Devillers claims.[26] Ho tried to persuade the future president of South Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem, to join the Viet Minh-led resistance at this time, without success. He personally intervened to have Diem released from the Hanoi prison, where he was being held in 1945.[27] Initially, however, Ho did succeed in convincing the deposed monarch Bao Dai to become an official councillor of the independent state and arranged his candidacy for the National Assembly.[28]

In March 1946, the French negotiated their return to Hanoi with the Nationalist Chinese forces occupying the northern half of Vietnam, under the provisions of the Potsdam Agreement. Ho made the French return more palatable to his own forces by working out a provisional agreement with French representative Jean Sainteny. This document made Vietnam a 'free state' within the French Union, and agreed on a referendum to decide the fate of Cochinchina. It permitted French troops to remain in Vietnam for five more years. Ho calculated that a compromise with France to prevent bloodshed was preferable to having the Chinese remain as occupiers; yet this was a long way from the full independence he had hoped for in 1945. The reality was that as of March 1946, no foreign power had recognized Vietnamese independence. The French High Commissioner, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, ignored the Sainteny agreement and proceeded to unilaterally create an autonomous republic in Cochinchina. This was the one point on which neither Ho nor his more hot-headed comrades would yield.

Ho left Vietnam from June to October, to travel by ship to France, where another round of negotiations was held at Fontainebleau to settle the question of Vietnam. He circulated widely in France, broadening his network of acquaintances, while his younger colleague, Pham Van Dong, tried to pry some firm commitments out of his French counterparts at the negotiating table. Ho impressed the director of protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as someone who was 'playing the role of Mahatma', yet whose simplicity was 'quite genuine'.[29] Ho expressed his optimism about the French Union to two politicians from Madagascar in a way that makes his strategy clear:

> We will reach an agreement at the Fontainebleau Conference, of this I am certain. We have a stake in it, France has a stake in it. The key is to rid the French Union of all imperialist ideas, and above all to bestow upon it this character of free consent, which makes it both new and original . . . your task, our task, is the following: to win over the sympathy of the French people.[30]

His optimism was, however, misplaced. The French failed to agree to a schedule for a referendum in Cochinchina, and the Fontainebleau talks ended with little more than an agreement to continue talking in January. Ho had to return to Vietnam from his talks in France with one of the weakest hands of his life. His rivals, both within the communist movement and in other nationalist parties, treated his continued

appeals for patience as little short of treason. Leaflets found in Hanoi after his return read: 'When one stays a long time in foreign countries, one becomes their slave.'[31] Jean Sainteny's final talks with Ho in December 1946 present a scene of tragic failure: a defeated Ho, lying down and too feverish to stand, speaking in a feeble voice, and both sides aware that they had come too far to back down.[32]

With the outbreak of the French Indochina War at the end of 1946, Ho Chi Minh disappears behind the bamboo curtain; from then on he is known to us largely by his political speeches. Political reminiscences by his comrades are carefully polished to present a jolly, avuncular but austere patriot, who inspires those around him with his calm common sense. He takes on the role of the 'soul and inspiration of the revolution', assigned to him by *Nhan Dan* in a 1951 biography. At times over the next 20 years there are hints to visiting newsmen that 'Uncle Ho' has lost his acuity, is becoming '*gâteux*'. In 1963 he tells the Soviet ambassador on Christmas day that he will be retiring from day-to-day political life. One of the last visions we get of a politically active Ho Chi Minh comes from the chronicle of two unofficial US peace envoys, Harry Ashmore and William Baggs. They met Ho in January 1967, when neither the Vietnamese nor the US side was yet willing to express a strong interest in negotiations. They held a two-hour conversation with Ho, during which he often spoke directly to them in English or corrected his interpreter. Their 'summary impression was one of a stubbornly independent, highly skeptical cast of mind'. He presented himself as 'a man who often has been sold down the river, who now accepts the record of the past without undue rancor, but who is bound and determined not to be taken again'.[33] At one point, Ho reminded them 'in his impeccable English' that he had once spent a good deal of time in New York, and inquired: 'Tell me gentlemen, is the Statue of Liberty Standing on her head?'[34]

Conclusion

It is not difficult to see that Ho Chi Minh was a leader with a sophisticated knowledge of the world and an expansive mental map. He was also undoubtedly a 'wily opportunist', as US consul Charles Reed described him in 1949. But so was Franklin Roosevelt. At several points in his career his global outlook helped him to connect with those he needed to win over. He was the right man to deal with the OSS at the end of the Second World War. But once a security-conscious communist party solidified its power in North Vietnam after 1946, his knowledge

and skills may actually have decreased his freedom of action. Fear of subversion from the West may have been responsible for the restriction of Ho's contact with foreign visitors. Men with less sophisticated mental maps became the decision-makers in communist Vietnam. Criticism within his own party of his preference for compromise over war continued sporadically from 1946 to 1963. In that latter year the idea that Ho Chi Minh had committed two key mistakes gained currency: the first mistake came in 1946, when he allowed the French to return to Vietnam; and the second in 1954, when the Democratic Republic of Vietnam agreed to a temporary division of the country at the Geneva Conference.[35] A third 'mistake' for which he was heavily criticized in 1950 was his dissolution of the party in 1945.

There will continue to be arguments about the 'real' Ho Chi Minh, given that after 1946 his political utterances become routinely orthodox and appear to represent a unified party view. The disappearances and assassinations of rival political leaders from 1945 to 1946 are often presented as evidence that Ho was a two-faced tyrant who played cat-and-mouse games with opponents. Similarly, critics of Ho Chi Minh see the tragic excesses of the Land Reform from 1953 to 1956 as ultimately his responsibility. The historians and commentators of the Vietnamese Communist Party maintain a lofty, impersonal stance on these events, preferring to see the party as an independent organism, one which makes mistakes but corrects them in a timely fashion. Yet the archives of former communist countries, including the Comintern archives in Moscow, pierce this opacity by providing glimpses of the real political struggles that Ho Chi Minh lived through, struggles that he often lost.

The truth about Ho Chi Minh seems to lie in the basic weakness of Vietnam: no one there could become a powerful leader in 1945 or 1950 without the backing of a foreign patron. When first the Americans and then the French rejected an alliance with him, he had to turn back to the Soviet Union and China. A distant and war-weary USSR had little to offer the Vietnamese and preferred to leave the direct advisory role to its Chinese allies in the 1950s. (This situation only changed when the Sino–Soviet rivalry became a battle for allies within Asian communism.) By 1951, when the Vietnamese party formally resurfaced as the Workers' Party, it was Ho's rival, Truong Chinh, who claimed the role of 'builder and commander' of the Vietnamese revolution and who became the strongest proponent of Maoist ideology in the Vietnamese party. At this point Ho Chi Minh's mental map could have little bearing on the policies of the party he had founded.

Notes

1. David Nasaw, 'Introduction to "Historians and Biography" Roundtable', *American Historical Review*, 114 (2009), p. 577.
2. The term Annam was used by the French to refer to the territory that now comprises Vietnam, but also to refer specifically to the central provinces of Vietnam, which they made a protectorate and one of the five regions of French Indochina.
3. David G. Marr (1971) *Vietnamese Anticolonialism* (Berkeley: University of California), p. 163.
4. Aix-en-Provence, Archives d'Outre-mer (hereafter AOM), *Service de Protection du Corps expéditionnaire* (SPCE) 364, note confidentielle, Edouard, 17 November 1919, p. 3.
5. AOM, SPCE 365, Saigon, 13 November 1923.
6. Joseph R. Levenson (1959) *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 69–76.
7. Huynh Thuc Khang (ed.) (1959) *Phan Tay-Ho* [*Phan, the Western Tiger*] (Hue: Anh Minh XB), p. 14.
8. Ibid., p. 16, cited and translated by Marr (1971) *Vietnamese Anticolonialism*, p. 157.
9. Daniel Hémery, 'Jeunesse d'un colonisé, genèse d'un exil. Ho Chi Minh jusqu'en 1911', *Approches Asie,* 11 (1992), p. 133; Appendix, Document no. 8: Fonds de la Résident Supérieur de l'Annam, 28, 6971, 25 May 1912.
10. AOM, SLOTFOM III, 29, p. 21.
11. AOM, SLOTFOM III, 29, *procés verbal d'information* (*interrogation de Cao Dac Minh*), 22 May 1915.
12. David Dellinger, 'Conversations with Ho', *Libération* (October 1969), pp. 3–4. In 1924 Ho published an article on lynching in the US South in the Comintern press.
13. AOM, SPCE 372, note no. 12 du S. R. de Pékin.
14. David G. Marr (1981) *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial: 1920–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 57.
15. AOM, SPCE 364, 13 December 1920.
16. Russian State Archive for Social-Political History, 495 (Comintern Collection), 18, 282.
17. Russian State Archive for Social and Political History, 535 (Krestintern Collection), 1, 2, pp. 68–69.
18. Huynh Kim Khanh (1982) *Vietnamese Communism, 1925–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 79–80.
19. Marr (1981) *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial*, p. 133.
20. See Robert Brigham (2007) 'Ho Chi Minh, Confucianism and Marxism', in David L. Anderson and John Ernst (eds) *The War That Never Ends: New Perspectives on the Vietnam War* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press), pp. 105–20, for a summary of the non-Confucian argument.
21. Shawn McHale (2004) *Print and Power: Confucianism, and Buddhism in the Making of Modern Vietnam* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), p. 104.
22. Nguyen Khac Vien (1970) 'Confucianisme et Marxisme au Vietnam', in *Expériences vietnamiennes* (Paris: Editions sociales), pp. 231–32.
23. Ibid., p. 228.

24. Bernard B. Fall (ed.) (1967) *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution, Selected Writings 1920–1966* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc. (Signet Edition)), p. 206.
25. Russian State Archive for Social Political History, 495, 154, 686, p. 13; Lin's letter of 16 January 1935 to the Eastern Secretariat.
26. Philippe Devillers (1952) *Histoire du Viet-nam de 1940 à 1952* (Paris: Editions du Seuil), p. 182.
27. Georges Boudarel and Nguyen Van Ky (1997) *Hanoi 1936–1996: Du drapeau rouge au billet vert* (Paris: Editions Autrement), p. 103.
28. Le Van Hien (1986) *Chuyen cong can dac biet* [*Journey for a Special Mission*] (Danang: NXB Danang), p. 18.
29. Pierre Brocheux (2007) *Ho Chi Minh: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 121.
30. Ibid.
31. Devillers (1952) *Histoire du Viet-nam de 1940 à 1952*, p. 311.
32. Ibid., p. 347.
33. Harry S. Ashmore and Willam C. Baggs (1968) *Mission to Hanoi: A Chronicle of Double-Dealing in High Places* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons), p. 42.
34. Ibid., p. 28.
35. Martin Grossheim, ' "Revisionism" in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam: New Evidence from the East German Archives', *Cold War History*, 5, no. 4 (2005), p. 454.

10
Jawaharlal Nehru

Judith M. Brown

Introduction

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) is a very significant candidate for inclusion in any study of the mental maps of world leaders in the Cold War era. He was one of Asia's most thoughtful and articulate politicians of international significance in the 1950s and early 1960s. As the first nationalist activist turned national leader of a country which had obtained independence from the British Empire, in a new era of decolonization, he had to navigate the waters of the Cold War as the newly independent India forged its domestic and international identity. Nehru's life spanned two centuries. Born a colonial subject of Queen Victoria, he received his political training in the politics of Indian nationalism under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, became India's first democratic prime minister at his country's independence in 1947, and held both this post and that of foreign minister until his death in 1964. His insistence on duplicating roles and holding the foreign affairs portfolio indicated his long-lasting concern for world affairs, unlike many of his contemporaries whose sights were set primarily on domestic issues. Even in his earlier days he had been Gandhi's main source of information and advice on foreign matters. This chapter analyses the different forces and experiences which helped to draw his personal mental map, and then asks how this internal orientation and sense of the world prompted him to conduct his country's foreign relations. In particular, it examines how he determined to lead his country into new forms of international connection, which were designed to safeguard India's integrity, and also to forward a vision of what the post-world war and post-imperial world order should be like.

A note on sources

The historian has a wealth of sources to draw on for such a study. Nehru was a highly educated man with strong intellectual interests, who delighted in the power of the written word. He read widely and learned to write in an English style which was direct yet subtle, powerful and at times poetic. His two major books which combine history, philosophical reflection and autobiography are his *Autobiography*, written almost entirely in prison and first published in 1936, and *The Discovery of India*, again written in prison, and published in 1946. Writing, as well as reading,[1] helped to keep him sane in prison, and also gave him time and opportunity to examine his mental world, often in the company of leading fellow nationalists, who were kept together by the British imperial rulers in prisons away from general criminals. As Nehru wrote late in 1945 in the preface to the first edition of *Discovery*, he owed much to the innumerable discussions with his fellow prisoners in Ahmadnagar Fort, which had helped him greatly

> to clear my own mind about various aspects of Indian history and culture. Prison is not a pleasant place to live in even for a short period, much less for long years. But it was a privilege for me to live in close contact with men of outstanding ability and culture and a wide human outlook which even the passions of the moment did not obscure.[2]

He also wrote a number of significant articles and pamphlets, and throughout his life engaged in a vast correspondence with people in India and abroad. In his time as prime minister, some of the most important 'set-piece' letters were those he wrote regularly to the chief ministers of the states within the Union of India, expounding problems and policy.[3]

Creating the map

The origins of Nehru's mental map lie in his highly privileged upbringing, as the only son of Motilal Nehru, one of India's most successful and wealthy lawyers.[4] This distinguished him from many of the other Third World leaders with whom he was to later deal with in a Cold War context, such as Chairman Mao or Colonel Nasser, both of whom came from relatively humble backgrounds. In this, Nehru was in fact more like the elite British rulers of India – a fact which did not go

unnoticed by his contemporaries and indeed led to Indian jibes about him as an English gentleman.[5] Motilal was determined that his only son should have the best education his money could buy, and after being privately tutored by an Englishman at home, Jawaharlal was sent to Harrow School, in London, then to Trinity College, Cambridge, and lastly to the Inns of Court in London. At Cambridge he read Natural Sciences, which left him with a lifelong respect for scientific methods, and a determination to tackle social and economic problems 'scientifically' and not to be held back by tradition. He was also socialized into contemporary Edwardian British society and read the books his British contemporaries were reading, and agonized with his fellow students over the same sorts of problems as them. His emerging political radicalism at Cambridge threatened a serious rift with his father, who was at that time a moderate in Indian politics.

Although an English education gave Nehru valuable intellectual tools and an entrée into a European intellectual world, he returned to India with little ambition for a political career, even less for a career following his father in his legal practice, and only a rather vague nationalist sentiment. The impact of the First World War on India gradually drew him into politics, but as he remembered his 'own political and public activities in the early war years were modest and I kept away from addressing public gatherings. I was still diffident and terrified of public speaking'.[6] This changed dramatically as the war radicalized Indian politics and produced the circumstances for Gandhi's emergence in Indian politics. Gandhi had a significant reputation as a social worker and champion of Indian rights in South Africa, but only shot to prominence in India in 1920, when unexpectedly the Indian National Congress (INC) adopted his suggested policy of non-violent non-cooperation with the British imperial regime.[7] This novel form of direct action electrified the younger Nehru and many of his generation. He later wrote of a sense of intoxication which filled them in 1921 – excitement, optimism, a buoyant enthusiasm and, above all, a sense of freedom and pride in that freedom.[8] It was as Gandhi's protégé that Nehru became a key player in the politics of nationalism, and was, as independence became imminent, designated as Gandhi's 'heir'. Their relationship was neither straightforward nor untroubled. For personal and political reasons they worked together, their lives became deeply intertwined in friendship as well as shared public endeavour, and the younger man recognized that he owed the Mahatma an enormous debt. Nehru gained from Gandhi not only a pathway to a political career, but also a passionate commitment to India's freedom and socio-economic reconstruction, and an

example of extreme rectitude in politics, as well as a belief in moral means in the public sphere. However, Nehru never became a 'Gandhian' like those who joined Gandhi's ashram communities. He was never committed to Gandhi's total simplicity of lifestyle, and did not share his religious convictions or his belief in non-violence in all circumstances. Moreover, their vision of India's future also differed, particularly as Nehru developed his plans for industrialization and state-sponsored socialism, whereas Gandhi stayed firmly with a conservative vision of a village society producing for sufficiency rather than profit and economic growth. Nonetheless, Gandhi was one of the key figures in Jawaharlal's mental map, or to change the metaphor, a lodestar in the lonely years of his prime ministership long after the assassin's bullet had removed the living and supporting presence of Gandhi from Nehru's life.

A third defining influence in Nehru's understanding of his world was foreign travel. Most Indians never travelled outside their home regions when he was growing up. Again, Motilal's wealth enabled the family to travel, particularly to Europe. In 1926–27 the whole family spent nearly two years in Europe, partly to enable the treatment of Nehru's wife, Kamala, who had been firmly diagnosed as suffering from tuberculosis, at a time when there was little treatment for the disease except mountain air and rest. But Switzerland offered Nehru more than just relaxation after Indian politics and his first imprisonment, or the enjoyment of winter sports. Geneva was the home of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, and he met many Europeans who visited these institutions. He also represented the INC at a congress in Brussels against colonial oppression and imperialism in 1927, where he met representatives of many countries under the influence of European imperialism, in particular those from China; a meeting which triggered his growing interest in China and his belief that these two ancient civilizations had much in common and were natural allies. Late in 1927 he also visited Moscow with his father briefly for celebrations to mark the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. He was immensely impressed by what the revolution was trying to do so quickly, though he admitted he found the whole experience quite disorientating. He subsequently wrote a series of articles about it for an Indian newspaper which were re-published as a book.[9] As a nationalist leader, Nehru visited Britain and Europe several further times before 1947. As prime minister he delighted in foreign travel as part of his role, learning about other countries, forging connections with like-minded leaders, engaging in negotiations and representing India. He was one of the first international leaders to recognize and use the possibilities afforded by air travel,

and he visited the United Kingdom regularly, the United States several times, Russia, China and other parts of Asia. By the 1950s he was truly an international man, navigating intellectually and physically through a complex mental map of the world.

Defining aspects of the map

Nehru's emerging mental map can be seen as a palimpsest, with one layer over another; though this is not an entirely helpful comparison as the different layers or facets of the mental map interacted constantly with each other in the course of Nehru's long public life, as changing problems confronted him and as the world in which he operated changed markedly around him. However, there were at least four key facets of this inner way of seeing the world – geography, the idea of modernity, radical political ideology and an understanding of international power relations.

As we have seen, education and later travel made Nehru a truly international man, with a clear geographical understanding of the world and the interconnections between different regions. His politics were always practised in the light of this global view rather than merely under the compulsions of local or even national political pressures. The way his mental map was developing was clear in 1927, when at his urging he represented the INC at the international congress in Brussels against imperialism. He sent two long reports home to the INC, urging them to understand the significance of international affairs for India and to set up a department for this purpose in their own organization. He believed that they would have to recognize that India neither could nor should remain isolated from the rest of the world, and needed to cultivate multiple global links rather than relating to the world through the British connection.

> The Congress must therefore take cognisance of the forces and policies that are shaping the future of the world and lay down its policy and programme accordingly. We cannot remain aloof from them; else our best laid plans will break down and we will find ourselves suddenly faced with crises for which we are wholly unprepared . . . .[10]

The Brussels congress was the point at which his interest in China and its significance for India began to take shape. From then onwards he was convinced that what happened in China was crucial for India, for reasons to do with geography, ideology and civilizational values. In the

1920s the struggles engulfing China for Nehru reflected key ideological issues – the struggle against global imperialism and the nature of the capitalist system. In the longer term he was convinced that China and India were natural allies, as great Asian countries which were both heirs to ancient civilizations and facing similar problems. Together they should work for a resurgent Asia which would take its rightful place in the world. Even after the collapse of the nationalist regime in China, Nehru continued to believe that India and China were Asian brothers. This pan-Asian vision was eventually wrecked in 1962 when China invaded India, and he learned to his cost that Chinese communism and nationalism combined had created a security hazard of the direst proportions for India. Nehru was also keenly aware of the geopolitical aspects of India's north-western borders: he could hardly help this given the long-standing concerns of the British for the potential infiltration of the Russian Bear into their Indian empire. Although the departure of the British eased this fear, one of the reasons for his commitment to Kashmir as part of India was its logistical significance on India's mountain borders. Of course, his primary concerns about Kashmir were to do with the aftermath of the partition of the subcontinent, particularly its status as one of the only Muslim majority areas in the new India which would testify to the secular nature of the new India and undermine the idea of 'two nations' on the subcontinent, defined by religion. After independence and partition Nehru's sense of India's geographical place in the world was profoundly modified by the presence of the new state of Pakistan, an apparently hostile neighbour carved out of the old Indian empire, with which India now shared a long land border, which was in striking distance of some of India's major cities, including the capital, New Delhi. No longer was India naturally defended by her coastline and northern mountain ranges, and Pakistan became a potential nightmare which influenced not only domestic policy but also many of Nehru's international calculations and connections.

Even before Nehru became prime minister and was thrust on to a global stage, he had developed a keen sense of India's international position and potential role, unlike the vast majority of his compatriots. However, like them, he spent much of his time grappling intellectually and in practical politics with the domestic problems of India. To put it bluntly, why had India fallen under the sway of British imperial rule and on what basis could she reform her society and polity? This was a set of questions which deeply perturbed several generations of Indians through the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and went right to the heart of their understanding of Indian identity.[11] For Gandhi

the question was at its root a moral one: Indians had abandoned their traditional morality grounded in religion, and had run after the false gods of Western civilization, thereby laying themselves open to British rule, and even collaborating with it. As he wrote in his famous tract, *Hind Swaraj* (1909), 'The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them.'[12] For him the answer was to return to morality and to work towards an India where mutual esteem and sufficiency were valued, rather than competitive social relationships and the struggle for material gain at the expense of one's neighbours. Although Nehru was deeply fond of Gandhi, and admired his moral stance and political sagacity, they differed profoundly on these issues.[13] Gandhi's mental map was profoundly religious, though in an individual sense as a pilgrim seeking for truth rather than as a follower of a particular 'religion'.[14] Nehru consciously rejected most of his Hindu tradition very early in his life, and his inner bearings were a commitment to humanity and what he saw as 'modernity' as opposed to 'medievalism'. Where Gandhi saw moral decay as the cause of India's social and political problems, Nehru discerned a flight from reason, rationality and the application of scientific principles.

Sketching what he saw as India's 'problem' on the broadest canvas, Nehru wrote in the 1940s,

> The search for the sources of India's strength and for her deterioration and decay is long and intricate. Yet the recent causes of that decay are obvious enough. She fell behind in the march of technique, and Europe, which had long been backward in many matters, took the lead in technical progress. Behind this technical progress was the spirit of science and a bubbling life and spirit . . .

Or again, 'A people who are weak and who are left behind in the march of time invite trouble and ultimately have only themselves to blame.'[15] Nehru wanted his country to regain vitality and the capacity to reform its society and polity by harnessing the forces of science and rationality. In practical terms this meant reconstruction of the economy, using the means which contemporary economists thought most productive – particularly by economic planning on a national scale, by investing in heavy industry, and by using modern technology wherever useful, as in the construction of large dams to provide hydro-electric energy. Only these novel applications of a wide range of sciences would confront the problem of poverty and enable serious investment in economic and

social capital. If India was to become a modern society there would have to be 'vast measures of social change', as he indicated before independence.[16] When faced with the need for multiple social reforms, in such areas as the treatment of women or of lower caste people, Nehru relied on appeals to reason over against religion and tradition. His attempts to reform by legislation the status of women in the 1950s, for example, echoed the nineteenth-century liberal viewpoint that one could judge a people by the way it treated its women. Moreover, appropriate treatment of women would liberate the potential and energy of women in the making of the new India. Just as important in Nehru's eyes was the need for Indians to reject a sense of national identity based on religion. For him, a religious, or in Indian terms communal, definition of the nation was the height of 'medievalism'. It was backward-looking, destructive and played into the hands of those who wanted to exploit the poor and ill-educated. As early as 1923, when confronted with violence and disunity among Indians in the name of religion, he pleaded with politicians in his home province of India,

> We seem to have drifted back to a state of affairs which prevailed in Europe during the dark ages when to think rationally was considered an evil. I think it is time for persons who wish to regard religion as something good and sacred, and the exercise of rational thought as essential for human progress, to protest with all their might against all kinds of bigotry and superstition.[17]

Or again in 1945 he wrote how from early in his life religion had seemed to him 'to be closely associated with superstitious practices and dogmatic beliefs, and behind it lay a method of approach to life's problems which was certainly not that of science. There was an element of magic about it, an uncritical credulousness, a reliance on the supernatural.'[18] The India of his vision was a 'composite nation', bringing together the best of the many traditions which had a home in India, and working for the good of the whole, taking India into the modern world as a vibrant community rather than retreating into conservative isolationism in the name of tradition.

Nehru was a serious thinker, an intellectual, though not a trained philosopher, and ideology was a significant element in his mental map of the world. The roots of his ideological commitments lay in the West rather than in India's own traditions – in his reading in Western political theory, his understanding of the history of the Western world, and his travels and personal experiences in Europe. (As he admitted, he

had later to 'discover' India.) Consequently, one core aspect of his ideological stance was a conviction that the nation state was the most natural and appropriate political form, and, unlike Gandhi, he never questioned this. Following on from that was a commitment to national self-determination, in its external sense of freedom from external controls such as imperialism, and in its internal sense of democratic political arrangements. Imperialism, he felt, was morally wrong and had profound and corrosive effects on the economic, cultural and personal lives of those subjected to it. (Here Gandhi would have agreed with him though for different reasons.) He recorded that as he grew up he was 'obsessed' with the idea of India and its freedom. 'It seemed monstrous to me that a great country like India . . . should be bound hand and foot to a far-away island which imposed its will upon her. It was still more monstrous that this forcible union had resulted in poverty and degradation beyond measure.'[19] Although empires had existed in many phases of history, modern imperialism, he was convinced, was intimately connected with processes of exploitation inherent in capitalism. This was one of the main themes of his first and lengthy report to the INC on his role in Brussels as its representative at the congress against imperialism.[20] His commitment to self-determination led him in practice to over 25 years of struggle against British rule in India, involving long spells in prison and the destruction of all normal family life for the Nehru household. Once India had gained independence he was as firmly committed to fighting any covert or neo-imperial control over India by any external powers, and to sustaining India's nascent democracy, whatever the temptations of his dominant position in Indian politics.[21]

Nehru's insistence on the link between capitalism and imperialism reflected the influence on his thinking of European theories of socialism, particularly Marxism. He was asked some time in the late 1930s by an American publisher to write an essay on his philosophy of life. He did not write the essay in the end, but returned to the topic in his *Discovery of India*. Here he accepted that studying Marx and Lenin had 'produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me to see history and current affairs in a new light'.[22] What he called 'the fundamentals of the socialist theory'[23] he could readily accept, and they seemed to link with his visceral commitment to rational thought and scientific method. He was also deeply impressed with the experiments in social engineering carried out by the Soviet Union which he had witnessed at first hand in 1927. These experiments seemed to him to parallel what India would have to do at independence in her work of post-imperial reconstruction. He had enunciated his hopes for India

in October 1933 in an important series of newspaper articles, later reprinted as a pamphlet entitled, *Whither India?*,[24] in which he placed India's own problems firmly in an international economic and political context. Surely India's journey, he asked, was towards 'the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class, to national freedom within the framework of an international cooperative socialist world federation'. As a young man Nehru experienced acute frustration and discomfort within the INC because of his clear position on the left of the party. But he was determined never to split the party, which seemed to him to be the only possible organization which could gain independence. Nor was he able to break loose from Gandhi's influence and leadership, however much they disagreed on matters of ideology. (Even in 1934 when a group of radicals founded a Congress Socialist Party, Nehru did not join them.) Later, as a mature political leader and as prime minister, and as he gained experience of actual government, he recognized increasingly that India would have to discover, refine and adapt its own socialist path. There could be no simple borrowing from Europe; and India was embarking on a totally new enterprise of socio-economic revolution by democratic means. It was a project which hugely excited him after independence. For him, India's socialism or 'socialist pattern' was not doctrinaire, but people-led. It bore the hallmarks of Gandhi's teaching that everything should be measured by the good it did for the mass of Indians, and for Nehru this meant finding ways of providing the six basic necessities of life for his compatriots – food, clothing, housing, healthcare, education and employment. However, he discovered to his cost that although the INC never broke away from his leadership, nevertheless many of its members did not share his socialist vision, while the deeply conservative forces at work in Indian society often nullified his hopes of reform and redistribution of wealth. Among the most glaring cases of opposition to his hopes were the great problems he encountered in trying to reform the legal status of women, or his attempts to place upper limits on landholdings and to redistribute land to the rural poor.[25]

The fourth element in the palimpsest which was Nehru's mental map can broadly be called his understanding of power relations in international affairs. We have already anticipated this somewhat by noting Nehru's absolute hostility to imperialism as he saw it at work in the twentieth-century world. Perhaps surprisingly he saw its evils and drivers primarily in cultural, political and economic terms, and paid comparatively little attention to issues of race. Had he come from a

country where there was white settler society he might well have viewed imperialism rather differently. After India gained its own independence he was determined to assist, by example and encouragement and organization, any country which was attempting to gain its independence. He saw himself as a senior mentor to other Third World leaders such as Nasser in Egypt or the leaders of South East Asia. He was also keenly aware of the possibilities, in a profoundly unequal world, of covert or neo-imperialism through aid packages, or the supply of arms, and saw how it would be possible for the emerging dominant world powers, Russia and the United States, to use these much sought-after goods to buy alliances among poorer states and build up opposing power blocs. However, it was only comparatively late in his career that he seems to have recognized that socialist states were as capable of imperialism (and aggressive nationalism) as were capitalist ones. As we have seen, he found it almost impossible to conceive of China as a potential aggressor towards its Asian 'brother'; and his condemnation of Russia's invasion of Hungary in 1956 was belated compared with his response to the Franco–British role in the Suez Crisis. One particular aspect of Nehru's mental map in the realm of international power relations was his belief that the India influenced so much (at least in its public rhetoric) by Gandhi's teachings on non-violence held the high moral ground in global politics. India was the country which could uniquely testify to the importance of peaceful global relations; India was the nation which built its wider relations on morality rather than power. To a considerable extent this was self-delusion, but it contributed significantly to Nehru's belief that he – as India's leader and representative internationally – had an important role to play on the global stage.

Navigating the Cold War era

Nehru became independent India's prime minister and foreign minister in 1947. It is important to consider how momentous this was, for him personally and also historically. No other dependency within the British Empire, apart from the white settler Dominions, had gained its freedom at this stage and no other leader of such a 'new' nation state had had to stake out a foreign policy after years of colonial rule. During the Raj the British had determined foreign policy for India on principles which buttressed Britain's global position, and had managed India's foreign affairs; moreover they had not built up an Indian Foreign Service with skills and a reservoir of institutional memory.[26] Indeed it took the Soviet Union several years to recognize that India actually

had an independent foreign policy and was not just the camp follower of Britain. Nehru's determined and innovative role in foreign affairs was consequently remarkable in a way we can easily forget from the perspective of over half a century later. Nehru developed his personal role and the ground plan of Indian responses to the wider world in the era of the Cold War. If the Cold War was one significant international constraint and determinant, so also was the urgent need to defend India against Pakistan, and eventually China, with all that that entailed in terms of military expenditure and increasing reliance on external allies. Perhaps even more crucial were the domestic constraints which impinged on foreign policy and threatened to throw India on to the mercy of richer nations. India in the 1950s was still desperately poor, unable to feed its own people, and lacked the capital available for the planned economic and social reconstruction which Nehru believed was central to the building of a new India.

In these complex circumstances Nehru always tried to keep his sights on the broad and long-term goals. He was, above all, a visionary. Some would say he was a poor administrator, and it is true that he found the details of administration frustrating but did not know how to delegate to free himself for primarily strategic roles. In the realm of foreign relations he made it plain early in his premiership how he saw India's position. Admitting late in 1947 that India's foreign policy was vague and rather inchoate,[27] he worked to lay out its principles in the subsequent year. India would strive to pursue world peace and would endeavour to combat racism and imperialism. It would also seek to revive the place and role of Asia in world affairs but without attempting to build up an Asian 'bloc'. Further, India would not align itself with either of the two power blocs emerging in the aftermath of the Second World War, but would follow a policy of non-alignment, judging issues as they emerged on their merits and according to India's interests. He was, however, under no illusion about the difficulty of this stance, particularly when India had such great economic needs.[28] Nehru envisaged India as developing multiple international roles in a complex web of global connections – as a potential Asian power in its own right, as a champion of countries still under colonial rule, particularly in Asia, as a nation with a significant Muslim minority, as a democratic state with historical and ideological links with the West, as a country bent on socio-economic revolution by peaceful means and thus sharing some of the goals of the Soviet bloc. However, at the same time India had serious problems encompassing both security on its land borders and the need of outside assistance to build its economy.

Nehru responded to the challenges of India's needs and aspirations in the context of the Cold War era with three principal strategies. I will deal with them broadly in chronological order. The first was certainly not part of any 'grand plan' on Nehru's part but was the somewhat fortuitous response to the question of India's connections with her former British rulers. Nehru had close emotional and cultural ties with Britain, and greatly enjoyed visiting Britain. He had been educated in Britain, had many close British friends, despite the traumas of nationalist politics in opposition to the British, had an easy entrée into the world of the British political establishment[29] and had as one of his models for the Indian polity Britain's practice of democracy. For technical constitutional reasons India had attained independence as a Dominion within the British Commonwealth; but by 1948–49 it became clear that her new constitution would be a republican one, and this raised the question of whether India would leave the Commonwealth or whether some sort of continuing link or mode of membership could be achieved despite the fact that the British sovereign was at that stage sovereign of each part of the Commonwealth. For his part Nehru had always envisaged a clean political break with Britain.[30] However, the world was now looking a rather different and threatening place. On her borders India faced a new and threatening neighbour in Pakistan, as well as Pakistani-backed conflict in Kashmir, while to the north-east, China was engulfed in turmoil which ended with the defeat of the nationalist forces Nehru had supported. Some of Nehru's colleagues were clear that the British connection was even more vital in these circumstances, particularly if Pakistan stayed within the Commonwealth. Attlee's government in London was also anxious to find a way of keeping India in the Commonwealth for its own reasons, including its strategic and political concerns in South East Asia, and its hopes that India would be a bulwark against the spread of Communism in Asia. Nehru was increasingly aware of the practical benefits to be gained for India from some sort of Commonwealth connection. These included easy access to the sterling balances which India had accumulated in London during the war and were central to her economic planning, access to defence supplies for an army which still had British equipment, mutual trading ties, anticipation that the Commonwealth would protect the interests of Indians living in other Commonwealth countries and – not least – the hope that the Commonwealth connection would help in India's relations with Pakistan. He also thought that this nexus would forward the prospects of global peace and save India from having to lean too much towards the United States. Eventually a formula was reached,

whereby a republic could remain within the Commonwealth, by accepting the British Crown as the symbol of free association.[31] So was born an unprecedented association of states with shared values and history.

The Commonwealth became for Nehru one of the major international arenas in which his significance, and that of his country, was increasingly accepted. He regularly attended the meetings of its prime ministers, and used it as a stage on which to promote the status and role of Asia in world affairs, and to urge the importance of aid and development as the surest way to combat the spread of communism. The British government clearly also used Nehru as a sounding board and as an interpreter as the strength of the old empire ebbed away and they had to find ways of protecting British interests in a changing world. Ironically this least-intended development so early in Nehru's premiership, which was a pragmatic response to the changing world, was one of his major legacies in international affairs and organizations.

Nehru's second and perhaps most well-known strategy in manoeuvring the dark waters of the Cold War world was his policy of non-alignment for India itself and increasingly for a group of other countries, most of which were emerging from various types of imperial influence. This policy boosted his personal standing as a global figure, but also worked to further his concerns for India's independence of either great power bloc, for the resurgence of Asia in global affairs, and for the ending of overt or covert colonialism. Both global camps would have wished India to be firmly embedded within their sphere of influence, but at the cost of tricky relations with both the United States and the USSR, Nehru took India down the non-aligned path in the 1950s. He also urged the expansion of this stance among independent countries in Asia and Africa, leading to the famous Bandung conference of 1955. As a world movement non-alignment achieved little except a vaguely ideological connection between very disparate countries. It also landed Nehru into some acute dilemmas, particularly late in 1956 when the Suez Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Hungary occurred simultaneously, and impinged on each other, leading to criticism that he was prepared to condemn the neo-colonialism of the West but not of the Soviet bloc. These two crises almost overwhelmed him and underlined the weakness of India's administration of foreign affairs, and Nehru's lack of a strong foreign minister whom he could trust and who was prepared to inform and challenge the prime minister if need be.[32] However, the weakness of non-alignment as a cornerstone of foreign policy was ultimately made plain in 1962 when China invaded India – an attack which was most unexpected, even though for some years China had

clearly been challenging India's border positions. Given the prospect of utter military collapse and a potential Chinese attack on Delhi, the capital, Nehru's government had no choice but to turn to its old Western friends. In the aftermath of the war the main sources of long-term military assistance were the United States, Britain, Australia and Canada. There could have been no greater declaration of who India's friends were in a crisis, and how the realities of aggression and force could trump non-alignment.

Nehru's third global strategy, which dovetailed with non-alignment, was his policy of accepting aid for development purposes from multiple donors. In a real sense he was exploiting the opportunities provided by the Cold War. Both the Russian and the American blocs wanted a strong and supportive India. For the Russians this meant increasing Soviet world influence (particularly as their relations with China deteriorated). For the United States (and to an extent Britain) India was seen as a bulwark against communism and a potential market if its economy began to take off. As China appeared to be lost to Western influence, so India became the more important, and with that so did Nehru himself. As the US secretary of state, Dean Acheson, commented in 1949, 'He was so important to India and India's survival so important to all of us, that if he did not exist – as Voltaire said of God – he would have had to be invented.'[33] Nehru was more than prepared to use his influence – both in the demands he made and also in personal diplomacy. He visited both the United States and Russia and also welcomed their leaders to India; and was happy to receive aid from both sources provided there were no strings attached to compromise India's ability to make its own policies. He felt much more comfortable in the company of Russia's post-Stalinist leadership than with their predecessors: he considered them to be pragmatic and less doctrinaire, and less committed to world domination by a single ideology. US politicians began to wonder how far he could suit their purposes, and at one stage relations with the United States dipped to a considerable low when the United States engaged in a military pact with Pakistan in 1954, and Nehru feared that the subcontinent would become a pawn in the Cold War. He extracted from President Eisenhower both a promise that aid to Pakistan would not be turned against India, and also further and substantial economic and technical aid to India. However, even given its pact with Pakistan, America was India's largest source of aid in the mid-1950s; and by 1960–61 was giving India nearly $348 million. In Nehru's eyes this careful manoeuvring in the matter of foreign aid was in India's interests. It was perhaps easier for him because he shared something of the ideological priorities of both

camps – a commitment to a form of socialism on the one hand, and to freedom and democracy on the other. Moreover even in the early 1950s he was convinced that the opposing camps in the Cold War had little to do with ideology and much to do with the aspirations to power of the United States and the USSR, and so had no compunction about dealing with both when it was in India's interests.

Conclusion

A brief paper cannot do justice to the thinking and practice of a man of Nehru's stature. He was one of the giants of the mid-twentieth century in domestic and foreign affairs, at a time when the Cold War and the period of British decolonization gave him opportunities and leverage on the international stage, empowering him in the pursuit of domestic and global goals. His 'mental map' was most unusual for an Indian of his generation, leading to his vision of a newly emergent India in which he combined a passion for domestic development and social change and a commitment to the importance of foreign affairs and to broad values to be pursued internationally alongside national interests. It would have been so much easier for him to concentrate on domestic issues or to rely on one power bloc for aid. Instead he was prepared to work ceaselessly through the thickets of conflicting foreign interests in his country, balancing them to gain the most for India; while at the same time he stood up for his commitments and policies in the face of criticism at home. Criticism can be levelled against his tight control of foreign affairs and his failure to build up expertise in this field and his moralizing view of India's unique position in pursuit of global peace and equality; and India has paid the price for both failings. But it is hard to see how India could without Nehru's particular gifts and insights have so rapidly achieved a significant status as a world player and as a regional power.

Notes

1. Nehru's prison diaries indicate the wide range of his reading during forced inactivity. They are reproduced at their appropriate chronological place in his *Selected Works*: see Note 3. He read mainly in English and was particularly fond of history and philosophy.
2. J. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, first edn. 1946 (Bombay, 1960), ix.
3. Nehru's correspondence and speeches, pamphlets, notes and so on are in process of publication in chronological order under the title *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (*SWJN*). The first series was edited by S. Gopal, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972–84. The second series is still being published,

edited by S. Gopal, R. Kumar and H. Y. S. Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, New Delhi. The letters to Chief Ministers are in these volumes in their chronological place but are also published as G. Parthasarathi ed., *Letters to Chief Ministers 1947–1964*, 5 vols (J. Nehru Memorial Fund, New Delhi, 1985–89). On Nehru as a 'man of letters', see chapter 14 of B. R. Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman* (Delhi, 1995).

4. On Nehru's upbringing, see his *An Autobiography* (London, 1936), and the autobiographical work of his sister, V. L. Pandit, *The Scope of Happiness: A Personal Memoir* (London, 1979). See also Judith M. Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (New Haven and London, 2003), chapter 2.
5. Cited in Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman*, 262.
6. Nehru, *Autobiography*, 33.
7. Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915–1922* (Cambridge, 1972).
8. Nehru, *Autobiography*, 69.
9. J. Nehru, *Soviet Russia, Some Random Sketches and Impressions* (Allahabad, 1928), reprinted in *SWJN*(*1*), vol. 2, 379–451.
10. Report on the Brussels Congress for the All India Congress Committee, 17 February 1927, *SWJN*(*1*), 293. The two reports dated 19 February and 7 March 1920 are in ibid., 278–97, 299–303.
11. A good introduction to this is B. Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse*, revised edition (New Delhi, Thousand Oaks and London, 1999). He sets Gandhi's own thinking in a longer tradition of Hindu responses to British rule.
12. A. Parel ed., *Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1997), 39.
13. On this issue see chapter 4 of Judith M. Brown, *Windows into the Past: Life Histories and the Historian of South Asia* (Notre Dame, 2009).
14. Gandhi subtitled his autobiography 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'. It was first published in 1927 and has run through many editions.
15. Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 41, 306.
16. Press interview, 27 February 1946, *SWJN*(*1*), vol. 15, 10–11.
17. 13 October 1923, *SWJN*(*1*), vol. 2, 211.
18. Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 12.
19. Ibid., 36.
20. See Note 10.
21. On Nehru's total commitment to democracy as Prime Minister and his nurturing of democratic forms and practice, see parts 4 and 5 of Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*.
22. Nehru, *Discovery of India*, 15.
23. Ibid., 17.
24. *SWJN*(*1*), vol. 6, 1–16, 18–31.
25. For discussion of the desperate frustration of many of Nehru's hopes and plans, see chapters 12, 14 and 15 of Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*.
26. The need to build up a Foreign Service from scratch is an aspect of Nehru's work which has received far too little attention. By contrast of course Indians had risen high in the Indian Civil Service and outnumbered English members of the Service by independence.
27. Debate in the Constituent Assembly, 4 December 1947, *SWJN*(*2*), vol. 4, 594–603.

28. Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*, 245–46 and notes. See also S. Raghavan, *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Ranikhet, 2010).
29. Winston Churchill, a fellow Harrovian, developed a close bond with Nehru despite their earlier and profound disagreements on India. Nehru also had a close relationship with Lord and Lady Mountbatten, and stayed at their country home in Hampshire when visiting Britain.
30. Even in April 1947 Nehru had said to a close colleague that India would have to leave the Commonwealth at independence. Nehru to Baldev Singh, 8 April 1947, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, J. Nehru Papers post-1947, 2nd Instalment, File of correspondence with Baldev Singh, No. 33.
31. On these complex issues and negotiations, see Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*, 251–55; also R. J. Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth* (Oxford, 1987).
32. On the juxtaposition of Suez and Hungary, see Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life*, 261–65.
33. D. Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969), 334–36.

11
Gamal Abdel Nasser

Laura M. James

Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, who ruled Egypt between 1952 and 1970, was the third major partner in the Non-Aligned Movement. His era saw a massive upheaval in both the literal and the mental maps of the Middle East. Nasser came to political maturity at a time when the region was almost entirely dominated by British and French colonialism. The coup d'état led by his coterie of free officers was the beginning of the end for British influence in Egypt. However, the country's stance (and that of much of the rest of the Arab world) in the face of the new Cold War divisions took longer to define.

Making of a revolutionary

Gamal Abdel Nasser was born in the final year of the First World War, in Alexandria. His parents both came originally from peasant families in Upper Egypt, and he retained links with his father's home village, Beni Murr, near Assiut. However, in Gamal's early childhood, his father's job as a post office clerk kept the family (he was the eldest of 11, including the children of a second wife, after his mother's premature death) travelling all over the country. In 1924, aged six, he was sent to stay with his uncle, Khalil Hussein, in Cairo, where he went to primary school.[1]

By that time, Egyptian nationalist unrest had forced an end to the British protectorate over Egypt, under Lord Allenby. In 1922, Egypt was recognized as a sovereign state under a constitutional monarch, King Fouad, and in 1923 a new constitution was drawn up. However, more changed in theory than in practice, as the British High Commissioner maintained an influential role, and Britain reserved the right to protect her imperial communications (through the Suez Canal), manage Egypt's defence against external attack, protect foreigners and minorities

in the country, and control the Sudan – technically an Egyptian colony. The result was an unstable balance of power between King, High Commission, and a new force, the Parliament, dominated by the nationalist Wafd Party – with shifting alliances and generally unsatisfactory outcomes.

The young Nasser, therefore, developed his political awareness in a context where colonialism was over in theory but not in practice, and where unhindered nationalist rhetoric far outstripped political realities. When he saw aeroplanes flying overhead as a young child, he remembered shouting:

> O God Almighty, may
> A calamity overtake the English.[2]

When he went to secondary school, first in Alexandria then from 1933 in Cairo, he became more overtly politicized, taking part in demonstrations and spending the night in jail on at least one occasion.

At school, Nasser read works on the Prophet Mohammed and Gandhi, as well as biographies and polemics of early Egyptian and other Arab nationalists. By the time he finished school in 1936 (passing his exams by the skin of his teeth and in high dudgeon over the Wafd Party's compromises over the Anglo–Egyptian treaty concluded in the same year), he was chairman of the executive committee of Cairo secondary school students and 'so involved in politics that he spent only forty-five days actually in school'.[3] All of these experiences seem to have combined to form a basic view of the world as divided between an oppressed, underdeveloped East and an exploitative, imperialist West. This was refined in his later thought, but always remained an underlying assumption.

In 1937, after an abortive period studying law at Cairo University, Nasser joined the military academy to train as an army officer. Here he found a number of like-minded associates with whom to continue nationalist debates, many of whom later joined him in the Free Officers' conspiracy. In the Second World War, Nasser was posted to Sudan for three years, where he saw little action and had limited opportunity to expand his geopolitical horizons. In 1942, however, when he had returned to Cairo, an incident occurred which he later identified as formative – although he had no direct involvement.[4] When the British feared that King Farouk was wavering in his allegiance to the Allied cause, the ambassador, Sir Miles Lampson, sent a battalion of troops and armoured cars to surround the Abdin Palace, telling him he must

choose a new prime minister as instructed or himself abdicate. Nasser, like many Egyptians, began to 'boil with anger', which was now even more specifically directed at Britain.[5] He stepped up his revolutionary activities, assisted by his new post as an instructor at the military academy.

The next important expansion of Nasser's geographical horizons came in 1948 when, a major freshly out of staff college, he was part of the Egyptian army intervention in the Palestine War. It was partly as a result of this experience that his conception of nationalism moved from being centred purely on Egypt to comprehend the broader Arab world. At the same time, however, he gained a certain respect for the military prowess of the nascent Jewish state. He also developed reasonable relationships with individual Israelis, through routine negotiations over the repatriation of dead bodies and small gifts of oranges and chocolate.[6] He admitted to having been inspired by conversations with one particular captain, Mordechai Cohen, about how the Jewish secret resistance movement was organized and world opinion mobilized against the British.[7] Much later, he confirmed to a US diplomat:

> that in addition to his friend in Israel he has contacts in Paris and in Turkey through whom he attempts to keep informed about the situation in Israel. He said that, although an eventual settlement with Israel is in his mind, his present contacts are for informational purposes only.[8]

Opposing Britain in the 1950s

By the time that he led the Egyptian Free Officers' coup in July 1952, therefore, the 34-year-old Gamal Abdel Nasser had developed a fairly stable mental map, in which Egypt, as leader of the Arab world, was preparing to cast off British colonialist oppression, which had expressed itself first in its long-standing interference in Egyptian national affairs (especially the stationing of British troops in the Canal Zone) but also elsewhere, including through encouragement of the 'Zionist entity'. He was not yet much exercised by non-European imperialism, nor indeed by the colonial experience of African and Asian countries outside the Arab world. The Cold War had not had much impact on his thinking, and he was initially quite well-disposed to the United States – in fact, he was popularly known in the early months following the coup as 'Colonel Jimmy', as a result of his perceived closeness to the US ambassador.[9]

Immediately after the revolution, there were certainly very friendly relations between the Free Officers and the US embassy – which some observers even suggested had known of their plans in advance.[10] The US ambassador, Jefferson Caffery, was invited to dine just a month after the coup with the new regime's figurehead, General Mohammed Naguib, and nine principal officers, including Nasser. The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) emphasized their friendly intentions and desire for financial and diplomatic assistance, especially over relations with the British.[11] Nasser himself developed a friendship with William Lakeland, the second secretary at the US embassy.[12] He also got on well with US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, whom he met in May 1953.[13] Nasser deliberately avoided describing the Americans as imperialist in either the original Free Officers' manifesto or in his later book, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*.[14] It is clear, then, that at this stage, the United States was not naturally ranked among Egypt's imperialist enemies.

However, though the United States was seen as representing the non-imperialist future (*al-gāyin*, 'the coming'), this was in contrast to Nasser's continued vehement dislike of the colonial British past (*al-rāyin*, 'the going').[15] 'Britain' and 'imperialism' were practically synonyms in Nasserist rhetoric. The main motivation for the overthrow of the King was to facilitate the eviction of the British, who were blamed for everything that the plotters found to be wrong with their country. Nasser announced:

> Imperialism closed our factories, trimmed the wings of our army, destroyed our navy, and closed the door of honour in our faces. Therefore the revolution undertook to liberate the country from occupation and the assistants of occupation.[16]

Even though the British no longer had influence over the government after 1952, they were still seen as imperialist interveners, owing both to their role in Sudan (at least until the two countries agreed on Sudanese independence in February 1953) and to the presence of a large British military base in the Suez Canal Zone.

This was the point at which Cold War and Arab nationalist world views first began to clash. Nasser complained that Egypt could not feel 'free and sovereign' until the troops departed. 'We have a record of sixty-five promises that they were going to be withdrawn but they are still there.'[17] He threatened holy war if they refused to evacuate and sent guerrilla fighters to attack them.[18] Dulles attempted to persuade him of

the need to form a Middle East defence organization against the Soviet threat, but Nasser asked:

> How can I go to my people and tell them I am disregarding a killer with a pistol sixty miles from me at the Suez Canal to worry about somebody who is holding a knife a thousand miles away?[19]

British observers noted that the Free Officers had 'a real hatred for us politically in their hearts'.[20] Winston Churchill's envoy, Robin Hankey, also noted in June 1953 that Nasser had 'a deep emotional dislike of the British'. However, he added that it seemed to be conflicting with 'a very considerable admiration of us', and others agreed.[21] Despite the rhetoric, quiet 'contacts with the British were maintained calmly', according to Khaled Mohieddin, an RCC member.[22] In January 1953, Cairo Radio broadcast Nasser's words to the *Daily Mirror*:

> I am not against the British people, but I am opposed to the British forces' occupation of the Canal Zone. If this question were settled, a great friendship would exist between us.[23]

And once the British agreed to evacuate the Canal Zone, Nasser repeatedly expressed the hope (which regime insiders claim was sincere) that Britain and Egypt could work together at last.[24] 'Co-operation between Egypt, Britain and every peace-loving nation', he predicted, 'will consolidate Egypt's freedom, strengthen its sovereignty and not commit or hinder it in any way.'[25] He claimed later that he had 'hoped, after a long period of British occupation and domination which lasted about eighty years, to begin new relations based on equality and respect'.[26]

However, the long dispute over the British presence had by then begun to have a negative impact on Nasser's view of the United States. He blamed US 'support for the imperialist powers in order to win them over to her side in her dispute with communism'.[27] He began to believe that the Americans were 'just fooling around', according to a member of his staff.[28] 'Do not believe that the USA will ever help us', Nasser announced in one speech, 'for she and her ally, Britain, have one plan and their policy is determined in advance.'[29] He complained to Lakeland, among others, that the United States was losing out because it 'always sides with Britain'.[30] In particular, the United States was seen as bowing to British pressure not to provide weapons to Egypt.

This all came to a head in 1954, when Nasser moved against the regime figurehead, General Naguib, in order to take power openly for

himself. Allegedly, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) cooperated with this operation in return for Nasser's secret offer of concessions in the Evacuation Agreement with Britain.[31] At the same time, Nasser believed that, in return for his signature on the deal, the United States was committed 'to give him some military help'.[32] He was offered an arms deal worth $20 million in October 1954, but this was barely one-fifth of what he had been expecting.[33] In any case, he argued that domestic pressures made it impossible for him to accept the supervisory military mission required by US legislation. Apparently the CIA tried to get round that obstacle by handing over just $3 million in a suitcase, but this was taken as an insult by Nasser, who used the money to build a radio tower.[34] Moreover, there was another irritant to relations. As Nasser allegedly told one US intelligence officer in November 1954, he 'considered American attachment to Israel dangerous', in the long run, to US interests.[35]

Nasser, who said that the revolution's enemies were 'our own superior officers, other Arabs, the British and the Israelis – in that order', did not initially pay much attention to the Jewish state, despite his brief Palestine experience.[36] The question of Israel had not been a high priority for the Free Officers before the revolution.[37] 'The idea of throwing the Jews into the sea is propaganda', Nasser told a British politician in December 1953.[38] And it seems that he was initially 'open to contact' by the Israelis on the subject of peace.[39] Ambassador Caffery was told by the foreign minister in early 1953 that Nasser was considering the 'possibility of eventual agreement with Israel'.[40] When Israel had suggested secret talks to the Free Officers in August 1952, Nasser was the most ready to respond. Moreover, though at that time he was overruled, he maintained secret contacts with Tel Aviv through a number of intermediaries until 1955.[41] By late 1954, 'what Egyptians consider to be recent Israeli aggressive tactics' had caused the regime to stop discussing the 'possibility of eventual agreement with Israel', according to Caffery.[42] Nevertheless, Nasser still showed no sign of expecting a military confrontation.

Developments in 1955, however, made it increasingly difficult to ignore the Cold War context. As a result of defence agreements in the Arab world, perceived Israeli aggression and (partly in consequence) his increased involvement with the emerging Non-Aligned Movement, Nasser became increasingly at odds with broader 'Western' interests. First, he believed that the Baghdad Pact, a mutual defence agreement signed by Turkey and Iraq on 24 February, 'was an attempt, led by Britain, to suck in the other Arab states and isolate Egypt'.[43] When the

British foreign minister, Sir Anthony Eden, suggested that Nasser should not treat the Baghdad Pact as a crime, the Egyptian leader laughed as he retorted, 'No, but it is one.'[44] 'Nasser is convinced', reported the British ambassador in March 1955, 'that Nuri in concluding the Pact with Turkey is working to isolate Egypt and thus fulfil his original conception (dating from 1942) of an Arab League in which Egypt would have no part.'[45] At about the same time Nasser's first meeting with the new US ambassador, Henry Byroade, was also entirely devoted to discussion of the Baghdad Pact. Byroade noted that the Egyptian leader's hatred of his Iraqi counterpart seemed personal, based on the feeling that he had been 'cast aside' by the United States in Nuri's favour.[46]

This deep distrust of the Baghdad Pact can be partly explained in the context of Arab regional rivalries. The existence of an anti-Soviet defence agreement in the Middle East did not in itself bother Nasser. However, he suspected that it constituted a Western attempt to sideline Cairo in favour of Baghdad.[47] Throughout his political career, Nasser's triumvirate of enemies was to consist of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction. In his early conception, however, the third term had generally been applied to hostile groups *within* Egypt. But by 1955, the mental map had developed further, and the Egyptian leadership began to use the concept of a conspiratorial imperialist–Zionist–reactionary enemy against Iraq. 'Britain and the USA – the perpetrators of the Palestine tragedy – are today the cherished allies of Nuri al-Said.'[48]

The second complicating factor in 1955 was that the developing regional dynamics of the Arab–Israeli conflict ruled out any US arms sales to Egypt. In February 1955, Israel launched a raid on Gaza, in response to guerrilla attacks, for which Egypt, the administering power, showed itself to be totally unprepared. This poor performance was a major embarrassment for a military regime. Although Nasser had always seen Israel as potentially aggressive in the long term, the Gaza raid came as a nasty shock because it implied an imminent threat.[49] As a result, the need for the United States to supply weapons came to be seen as much more urgent. 'Now we are asking for them to save our lives', Nasser told Byroade. 'The situation has changed completely. Now I can't wait.'[50] He warned Byroade that, while he sincerely wished to retain his friendship with the United States, he had concluded that he should seek arms from the USSR, since 'if Israel really started a war the Western powers would again boycott the Arab world as they did before, but still let Israel obtain equipment.'[51] On 27 September 1955, therefore, Nasser announced the 'Czech' arms deal, despite what he called the 'uproar in Washington' over his dealings with the USSR.[52]

These developments took place in the context of a new emerging conception of Egypt's place in the world. Nehru and Tito were among the earliest international visitors to Cairo after Nasser came to power. Listening to the ideas espoused by the other Non-Aligned Movement leaders, Nasser sought to reject the binary division into US and Soviet spheres of influence, instead trying to add a new Afro–Asian dimension to the map. Although the Movement's success in this dimension was limited, as it was seen as drifting closer to the USSR, it certainly played its part in severing Nasser from the Americans. When he returned from the Bandung Conference with Nehru and Tito in late April 1955, the Egyptian president was clearly extremely suspicious of Ambassador Byroade.[53] He complained that:

> US personnel in Egypt and Arab states were spreading rumours about the Revolutionary Command Council's instability, the American representative in the Sudan was conspiring against Egypt, the Eisenhower Administration was sabotaging foreign support for the High Aswan Dam and undermining the Egyptian economy through its cotton policy, and the Americans were intending to pressure Egypt into making peace with Israel.[54]

This new paradigm provided the context for the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company in July 1956, and the major international crisis that followed. Nasser felt himself to be surrounded by 'Western' enemies. Britain and the United States 'suck the blood of peoples and usurp their rights', he declared, linking all his principal enemies in a grand alliance:

> America, the leader of the free world, supports imperialist France in murdering the Algerians in Algeria. Britain also supports her . . . Israel is America's protégé and gets assistance – because Israel without assistance cannot live.[55]

'You fellows are out to kill me', he told the US ambassador. 'And all I can do is protect myself. I tell you this, I am not going to be killed.'[56]

The detailed 'appreciation of the situation' that Nasser apparently wrote on the night of 20 July, as he decided how to respond to the US withdrawal of funding for the Aswan Dam, gives a good conception of his current 'mental map' of potential enemies and allies. Though he did expect active enmity from the Western powers, he believed that they would be unable to attack him openly. He related this in the short term

to their lack of an immediate military capability in the region; and in the long term to anticipated support for Egypt from the Third World and Soviet bloc. 'I intend to stand back and wait for world opinion to save me', Nasser said at a later point in the crisis, and throughout he followed global reaction to the events in his country extremely carefully.[57] However, he also still saw the US position as ambiguous. Thus, he attempted to win Byroade's sympathy by presenting the nationalization as a straightforward fundraising measure – and in fact, a relatively pro-Western alternative to accepting Soviet aid for the Aswan Dam.[58] The core of Nasser's strategy depended on his perception that the United States could be separated from her European allies. He 'believed that the United States aspired to replace Britain and France in the region, and he sought to exploit these rivalries'.[59]

In the event, though Nasser proved to be broadly correct, the outcome was to cement his growing alienation from the Americans and tactical alignment with the Soviet Union. Although the United States prevented Anglo–French victory over Suez, it did so with limited enthusiasm. And on 5 January 1957, Washington announced the 'Eisenhower Doctrine', which explicitly justified US involvement in the Middle East in order to balance Soviet influence. This was interpreted as absolute proof that Cairo had been right all along, and the Americans had only ever wanted to take over Britain's old colonial role in the Arab world. Nasser also blamed the United States for a post-Suez settlement which he saw as fundamentally unjust, rewarding Israel for her aggression. The brief thaw in US–Egyptian relations came to an abrupt end. By contrast, the Soviet Union provided increasing assistance to Egypt, even taking the place of the United States and the World Bank in funding the Aswan High Dam project.

Shifting alignments in the 1960s

Despite the growing inability of the Non-Aligned Movement to balance East against West, the independent, integrated identities of the Arab countries and – to a lesser extent – Africa loomed increasingly large in Nasser's conception of the world in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the aftermath of Suez, the Egyptian president's anti-colonialist credentials were firmly established. As a result, he became an even more powerful influence within the Non-Aligned Movement. At the same time, he focused on backing popular struggles against imperialism everywhere, especially in Africa, which he saw as one of three regional 'circles' in which Egypt could play a catalytic role.[60]

This was less important to him, however, than his role as the inspiration of the Arab Revolution. 'Nasserism' combined anti-colonialism, Arab socialism and the ideal of Arab political union. The third aspect proved to be the most difficult. For one thing, the geographic location of Israel, blocking Egyptian access to the Arab East, remained a nagging anomaly. For another, the ideal was much more attractive in theory than in practice. In 1957, the military leaders of an increasingly unstable Syrian state abandoned the search for domestic compromise and begged to unite with Egypt under Nasser's rule. Nasser was initially reluctant, foreseeing all sorts of practical problems. When the Syrians accepted his stringent conditions, however, including the dissolution of their political parties, he had to choose between acquiescence and ideological retraction. The two countries combined to create the United Arab Republic (UAR) on 1 February 1958.

Following this union, Nasser's influence in the Arab world seemed to be unchallenged. Even the highly reactionary imamate of Yemen sought a federal association with the UAR in March 1958 – although it was refused. King Saud of Saudi Arabia, whom the United States had hoped to back as an Islamic figurehead to rival Nasser in the Middle East, had little support in comparison. The government of Lebanon, which had accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine, was destabilized by a series of insurrections blamed on Egyptian influence. Although the Hashemite kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan announced a nominal union in 1958 in a vain attempt to balance Nasser, this was forcibly abolished by a nationalist coup only five months later, in which Nasser's old enemy Nuri was killed.[61]

However, this winning streak did not last. The union of Egypt and Syria was brief and ill-fated, and on 28 September 1961 Syria seceded from the UAR, which now existed in name alone.[62] This was a great blow to Nasser's prestige. He made speeches blaming the secession on global 'imperialism' and regional 'reaction' – naming Saudi Arabia and Jordan, at this time in close alliance, as instances of the latter. The role of Arab arch-enemy vacated by Nuri Said did not remain empty for long, as the clash between Egypt and 'reaction' came to be seen as a life-or-death struggle. Egyptian–Saudi relations had been worsening since the Suez Crisis, when King Saud was frightened by Nasser's growing regional popularity. From 1957, the two leaders were opposed in a war of conspiracies and radio broadcasts. After the Damascus coup, Nasser finally severed diplomatic relations with King Saud, whom he accused of sending $2 million to the Syrian rebels.

The heightened struggle against the conservative Arab monarchies again brought Britain into prominence from Nasser's perspective, as a powerful enemy. Britain was even blamed for the Syrian secession, with Nasser warning the new UK ambassador, Harold Beeley, that 'suspicions of course existed', and he had to ask himself 'whether they were merely suspicions or something more'.[63] Britain was portrayed as the lead conspirator amongst the enemies who were 'co-ordinating their steps' against the Egyptian regime and 'plotting to bring about Nasser's downfall'.[64] Although Nasser was also concerned about British influence in Africa, the key Egyptian complaint regarded the British military presence in Aden and southern Arabia. Nasser now wanted to end Britain's colonial influence throughout the Arab world, and was afraid that her planned unification of these territories within the South Arabian Federation (SAF) would provide an ongoing foothold, supporting his local enemies.

This conflict was brought into sharp relief by the Yemeni Revolution in 1962, to which the Egyptian regime sent military assistance. This was an ideological decision, but also a strategic one.[65] The success or failure of the Yemeni Revolution would affect Nasser's prestige, in that it would be seen as a victory or defeat in a broader, ongoing struggle against his enemies. A strongly pro-Egyptian regime in Sana'a would also bring a geopolitical advantage in confronting Saudi Arabia and the British presence in Aden.[66] Involvement in Yemen allowed Nasser to bring direct pressure to bear on Britain's last major outpost in the Arab world, through cross-border contacts with the insurgents in Aden and the protectorates. In its wake, he noted publicly that the British were 'concerned about oil and their colonies in the Arabian Peninsula'. He added a prediction: 'They know that imperialism is bound to die, that Aden is bound to be liberated, that the South is bound to be delivered from imperialism.'[67]

He may have been correct, but it took five years of bitter struggle, and permanently destroyed Nasser's relationship with the United States. The Yemeni Civil War has often been described as Egypt's 'Vietnam'. It sucked in troops as royalist tribes in the mountains launched guerrilla counter-attacks. What had been planned as a symbolic intervention required 50,000 troops by the end of 1964, peaking at about 70,000 the following year. At least 10,000 Egyptian soldiers and officers were killed, and many others suffered a dramatic loss of morale and discipline.[68] The commitment of a substantial proportion of the Egyptian army in Yemen would contribute to the defeat of June 1967. Moreover, the war was not only expensive, but also highly unpopular. Nasser

came to realize that Yemen was a 'trap', but saw no easy way of escape.[69]

This was because Nasser was increasingly convinced that he was the target of a conspiracy between Britain, Saudi Arabia and the United States. His fear focused on the call by the new Saudi king, Faisal, for an 'Islamic Conference', which was first raised during a series of official visits paid to other Arab monarchs at the end of 1965. Nasser perceived this as a serious new attempt to isolate him in the Arab world.[70] Egyptian distrust of Saudi Arabia immediately deepened, and peace talks to end the proxy war between Egyptian and Saudi-backed forces in Yemen faltered once more. One of Nasser's senior advisers complained in January 1966 about the 'mysterious and evasive game' being played by Faisal.[71] At the same time, a £125 million Anglo–American arms deal with Saudi Arabia was announced, and condemned in the Egyptian press as proof positive of conspiracy. Nasser responded with a speech threatening to attack 'the bases of arms and aggression' in Saudi Arabia itself, and he also told the US ambassador that a clash with Saudi Arabia was imminent.[72]

In the early 1960s, although relations with the United States were definitely not sunny, there had been a distinct improvement. Substantial US economic assistance – officially without strings, but balanced against certain assumptions – had begun to be provided in 1959.[73] Nasser, in June 1962, sent a grateful letter to President Kennedy, underlining US–Egyptian 'mutual understanding' and expressing confidence that any differences could be kept 'within limits not to be exceeded'.[74] But the confrontation in Yemen with US allies Saudi Arabia and Britain could not but push at those limits. 'Britain has been transformed into a US colony', Nasser claimed, 'to a degree which does not allow it even to express views on any international question before choosing words and obtaining Washington's permission.'[75] Saudi Arabia was supplying Yemeni royalists with US arms, and US planes were protecting Riyadh from Egyptian counter-attack.

There were also a number of other factors driving the decline in US–Egyptian relations. Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, was seen by Nasser as much less well-disposed towards the Arab world.[76] The two countries disagreed on a multitude of global issues, from Yemen to Vietnam. Nasser's support of African 'wars of liberation' – especially in Congo – was identified by the US secretary of state, Dean Rusk, as the core of the problem between the two countries.[77] In November 1964, the United States flew in Belgian paratroopers to rescue a group of Western hostages in Congo, and a furious Egyptian mob attacked the US Information Agency Library in Cairo. In December, an aircraft

belonging to a friend of President Johnson was shot down by the Egyptian air force.

Nasser interpreted all these problems as part of a broader Western attack on the Non-Aligned Movement. In July 1965, he told Chou En Lai, Sukarno and others that he was convinced that the United States had begun a counter-offensive against radical Third World regimes and the CIA was seeking to topple him.[78] By 1967, Nasser claimed that US intelligence was actually seeking to assassinate him. He blamed a worldwide imperialist onslaught against progressive regimes for the replacement of Nkrumah in Ghana and Sukarno in Indonesia by right-wing, pro-Western figures, and the interventions in the Dominican Republic, the Congo and Vietnam.[79] In early May, he told the Egyptians that the battle they were fighting was not an easy one: 'it is a major battle led by America, the greatest power in the world.'[80]

By this point, shortly before the Six-Day War, Nasser's long-standing triune enemy of imperialism, Zionism and reaction ('only different names for the same thing')[81] had seen some marked changes in emphasis. 'Imperialism' was now represented primarily by the United States, and only secondarily by her 'lackey' Britain and the rest of 'the West'. The imperialists were seen as habitually despising and ignoring the Arabs, trampling on their legitimate rights. The 'Arab reactionaries' were seen as local stooges, supported by imperialism, covertly cooperating with Israel to split the Arab world. Though they came in for the most vituperation, the reactionaries were seen as the most subservient.[82] Imperialism was 'the origin and the source of planning'; the others were 'only satellites spinning in the US orbit and following its steps'.[83] And finally there was 'Zionist' Israel, created by and dependent on the West, formulaically described as the 'imperialist base in the heart of the Arab homeland'.

While there was a sense in which Israel had remained the ultimate rhetorical enemy throughout the Nasser era, after the Suez Crisis the presence of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping troops on the Sinai border had defused the confrontation. Nasser agreed with the United States in the early 1960s that he would try to keep the Arab–Israeli conflict 'in the ice-box'. However, deteriorating relations with the Arab reactionaries (and some competition among the revolutionaries, especially with Syria) meant that this strategy was no longer sustainable. Quarrels over the Jordan waters, the activities of Palestinian guerrillas and Israel's nuclear ambitions resulted in growing tensions. And a series of raids on Jordan and Syria in late 1966 and early 1967 made it extremely difficult for Egypt to remain removed from the crisis.

Nasser's speeches and private conversations in early 1967 suggest that by this time he saw Israel as hostile, threatening, deceitful and aggressive. She was portrayed as intrinsically expansionist: 'the fundamental enemy who is a manifestation of perpetual aggression'.[84] She was, however, subordinate to external forces: the international Zionist movement, Western imperialism and the United States. 'Today, Israel is America', Nasser announced.[85] An Israel isolated from the aid of global imperialism was consistently portrayed as weak. It was generally believed that she had only survived the Suez conflict with the help of Britain and France. The United States had now taken the place of the European powers as Israel's protector. Nasser pointed out that 'Israel could not live for one day without US economic and military aid.'[86]

This perception explains Nasser's actions during the crisis preceding the June 1967 war. The first half of 1967 had seen increased instability in the Middle East. A weak regime in Damascus was impelled to seek popularity through militant radicalism. In early April, Syrian troops fired on an Israeli tractor attempting to cultivate land in a demilitarized zone on the border, and Israeli forces responded. The clash culminated in an air battle in which Israeli planes shot down six MiGs over Syrian territory and performed a triumphant overflight of Damascus. The Egyptian government's refusal to intervene to help Syria, on the grounds that this was merely a local action, provoked strong criticism from the conservative Arab states. Such border incidents, on a smaller scale, continued into late April and early May, both sides engaged in belligerent rhetoric and Nasser was finally goaded to act, moving his troops into the Sinai peninsula in mid-May. Events moved quickly: the Egyptian regime demanded the withdrawal of the UN force, occupied Sharm al-Sheikh and then closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel. Thereafter, they seemed to consider an offensive strike, improved Arab alliances and maintained their belligerent rhetoric.

There is some controversy among historians over the question of what particular quirk in Nasser's mental map caused him to provoke a conflict with an enemy that was to prove so vastly superior in military capability. This chapter argues that it was related both to a long-standing underestimation of Israel and to the way he had come to view the wider Cold War conflict.[87] All of Nasser's plans depended on the assumption that the Israelis would make the initial move. He believed that the united Arabs could defeat Israel as long as the United States did not intervene. At a press conference on 4 June, Nasser forecast: 'If war breaks out between Israel alone and us alone, I think that it will be restricted to this area.'[88]

An Egyptian first strike was therefore politically impossible, as he thought it would give the United States a pretext to join in on Israel's side and further its long-standing aggressive plans against Egypt.[89] However, if the Israelis struck first, he thought that international opinion (especially of the 'Third World', which still loomed large in his geopolitical calculations) and the Soviet threat would prevent US intervention, and allow the Arabs at least the sort of military stalemate and political victory they had achieved at Suez. Nasser had asked his military commanders on 2 June: 'Would you like us to begin and lose the whole world?'[90] According to his unwilling ally, King Hussein of Jordan, Nasser seemed confident that if the United States took 'aggressive action', the Soviet Union would provide 'the required support'. Hussein also told US representatives that the Egyptian president 'believed the United States had the power to prevent Israel from going to war'.[91]

After the Six-Day War

As a result, the events of 5–7 June constituted a severe shock for Nasser. The war not only revised the geographical boundaries in the Middle East, but also, as they sank in, altered Nasser's own mental map of the world. On the morning of Monday 5 June, Israel launched an attack on Egypt, destroying most of her air force on the ground. Egyptian troops were promptly routed from the Sinai peninsula, and Jordanian forces, under Egyptian command, which had responded to the outbreak of war with an attack on Israel, suffered a crushing counter-attack. On 7 June, Israeli forces took Sharm al-Sheikh, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. By the following day, the entire West Bank and Sinai peninsula had been occupied, and the Egyptian government agreed to a ceasefire late that evening.

In the first few days of the war, taken by surprise, Syria did little but fire across the border. When the other Arab states had been defeated, Syria also requested a ceasefire, but a few hours later, at dawn on 9 June, Israel launched an attack. The Soviets told the United States that they would intervene, and this warning was passed on to the Israeli premier Levi Eshkol, who ignored it. The United States then moved up the Sixth Fleet to deter the USSR, and a genuine superpower confrontation seemed a possibility. Eventually, however, Soviet pressure facilitated a final ceasefire on the evening of 10 June. By that time, Syria had also lost the Golan Heights.

The Egyptian regime was stunned by the defeat, with Nasser later recalling those days as 'one continuous nightmare'.[92] One Egyptian

diplomat remembers seeing the president walking in his garden just before the ceasefire, stooped over like a broken man.[93] On 9 June, Nasser publicly resigned his office. An official who saw him just afterwards remembered that his face was pale, and 'his eyes were wide open and staring straight ahead'.[94] Nasser himself later told a US diplomat: 'We were in a state of confusion, uncertainty and doubt. We did not know, but we feared what the Israelis were going to do.'[95] On 11 July, Tito reported to Soviet bloc leaders that they had to be aware Nasser was still in a state of shock and incomprehension: 'I don't know if it is possible to talk yet with him.'[96]

Although the defeat forced a redrawing of Nasser's mental map, this was not immediate. Initially, he failed to comprehend the full scale of the defeat, assuming events would follow the Suez pattern and planning to settle various issues 'after the withdrawal' of Israeli troops from Arab territory.[97] Gradually, however, as the situation became clear, Nasser's identifications of enemies and allies underwent a change. The regime's hostility was now reserved primarily for Israel, seen as the 'Zionist' occupier of Arab territory, and secondarily for the United States, her 'imperialist' protector. More slowly, the Soviet Union came to be seen as the only sure ally. At the same time, European countries and Arab monarchies, formerly enemies, were viewed as increasingly irrelevant, allowing relations to thaw in many cases.

Nasser 'felt that as there was an outside threat he should not quarrel with other Arab countries', according to one diplomat, Mohammed Riad.[98] He 'tried to promote more harmonious relations' with the Arab kings after the war – and, as he was no longer undermining their regimes by trying to claim leadership of the Arab nationalist cause and foment revolution, they responded positively. A common interest in pursuing a relatively moderate policy towards Israel (prioritizing the return of their newly occupied territories over the land taken from the Palestinians in 1948) brought Nasser and King Hussein of Jordan closer together. Nasser forbore from criticizing Hussein for negotiating with the West and generally backed him.[99] In addition Saudi–Egyptian relations turned over 'a new page', partly because Egypt had been forced to withdraw forces from Yemen.[100] France, under President de Gaulle, was now seen as firmly friendly, and by the end of 1967 there had even been a substantial improvement in relations with Britain.[101]

There was, of course, some continuity in the ways Nasser now saw Israel and the United States. The Egyptian president argued that the June war had 'proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that Israel has an aggressive nature and that it is imperialism's major base in the Middle

East' – just as he had always said.[102] He also continued to believe in a US conspiracy against him. 'I do not trust the Americans and their intentions', he told King Hussein.[103] To an aide he was more explicit: 'The American position is clear', he said. 'They want to topple the regime and to destroy Abdel Nasser personally.'[104] But while the United States was confirmed as a dangerous enemy, Israel was now seen as much more of an active, independent threat. Nasser told the army that the fundamental objective of Egypt's 'deceptive', 'cunning', 'vicious' and 'depraved' foe was 'expansion at the expense of Arab territory'.[105] Moreover, his belief in collusion between the United States and Israel led him to conclude that they were even more intimately associated than had previously been thought, now engaging in full 'strategic co-operation' over Middle Eastern issues.[106]

It was this new perception that finally forced an unwilling Nasser fully into the arms of the USSR. By 1970, this resulted in the first-ever dispatch of Soviet combat personnel to a non-communist country, and meant that Egypt could no longer even pretend to be following a non-aligned policy in the Cold War world. Nasser told the visiting Soviet chairman, Nikolai Podgorny, that he was 'willing to conclude either a secret or an open treaty' in the summer of 1967. 'What is important is that we now recognise that our main enemy is the United States and that the only possible way of continuing our struggle is for us to ally ourselves with the Soviet Union.'[107] Nasser saw war as his only option, believing he could not negotiate with Israel from a position of weakness.[108] It would be 'impossible to reach a reasonable political solution', he announced, without the inevitable military battle.[109] Egypt was able to replace most war losses of military equipment by October 1967, in exchange for allowing the Soviet Union privileges such as air force facilities at Suez and a base at Mersa Matrouh from which to monitor the US Sixth Fleet.[110]

Nasser was not comfortable with this situation, and made some efforts to avoid being left entirely at the mercy of the Soviets.[111] He told an unofficial US envoy, Robert Anderson, in November 1967, that he was 'eager for a political settlement, for a political peace', and that he would welcome any US stance 'that would give him an excuse to turn away from the Soviets'.[112] However, all efforts to improve relations failed. As negotiations over a resolution calling for withdrawal proceeded in the United Nations, the Egyptian president complained that the stance of the US delegate Arthur Goldberg was '100% identical to Israel's position', concluding that 'America's aim at the present stage is to freeze the situation and to leave it unresolved.'[113] He told Hussein in April 1968 that

'the Americans are playing a very despicable game, and want all of us Arabs to sell out.' Similarly, he predicted to his Council of Ministers that in 1969 the United States 'would spend between £E15 and £E20 million' on stirring up domestic unrest in Egypt to overthrow his regime.[114]

The Egyptian president became ever more convinced that the United States would never force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories, while Israel would never step back voluntarily from land on which 'he had set his boots'.[115] An Israeli commando raid on Beirut airport in December 1969, which destroyed 13 Arab planes on the ground, finally convinced Nasser, he said, 'that it is Israel which exerts pressure on America and not the other way round'.[116] As a result, he believed there could be no political solution to the occupation, and Egypt would have to fight – probably alone, as became clear from the lack of Arab support evinced at the Rabat summit in 1969. The consequence, according to Nasser's foreign minister, was that he 'found himself with no choice but total dependence on the Soviet Union, economically and militarily'.[117] He travelled to Moscow to make the requisite deals, and in March 1970 Soviet combat personnel began to be dispatched to Egypt. By early summer the USSR had sent several thousand troops, with separate bases and modern equipment.

Thus, just months before his death in September 1970, Nasser finally achieved his goal of deterring Israeli raids across the Suez Canal – but at the cost of giving the Soviet Union operational control of most Egyptian airfields and much of the armed forces. This would never have been an acceptable outcome to the young colonel in the 1950s, whose main goal had been to exclude foreign troops from his country, nor to the respected president who, as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, saw the 'Third World' of Africa, Asia and the Middle East as a new force, counterbalancing East and West. But in the end, those earlier, perhaps more naïve, mental maps had proved unable to withstand the stark geopolitical realities of the Cold War world.

Notes

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12
Fidel Castro

Clive Foss

Forming a mental map

Castro's view of the world was the product of his character, his physical and social environment, and his education.[1] As a child, born in 1926, he was indulged, headstrong and rebellious. He was extremely intelligent, but much more devoted to athletics than intellectual pursuits. Castro grew up in a region dominated by the estates and mills of absentee US owners. His father was a rich, rough, unpretentious self-made man, who passed no bourgeois or aristocratic attitudes on to his children. The young Castro was an enthusiastic explorer and mountain climber who developed a great familiarity with all kinds of terrain.[2] His first lessons in politics involved seeing his father and other landowners control the votes of the peasants.[3]

Jesuit teachers instilled in Castro an austere lifestyle and a sense of honour and duty. Their lessons were dogmatic and not to be questioned, but Castro was an inattentive student who crammed at the last minute and always got good marks. Later, at university, he routinely skipped classes, relying on his stupendous memory to get him through.[4] His style of learning later led him to believe that he was expert in fields that he knew from voracious reading rather than practical experience.[5]

Castro remembered his first encounter with political geography at the age of nine or ten, when he saw a globe with colours representing the colonial empires, only later realizing, he claimed, the evil they represented.[6] His favourite subjects were history, geography and the lives of famous men. The French Revolution fascinated him as did the ongoing Spanish Civil War. His greatest hero was Cuba's famed writer and patriot José Martí, who warned that Cuban and Latin American independence had to be defended against US imperialism. In school, Castro was named

Cuba's outstanding collegiate athlete, but he also developed a talent for debate and public speaking. Winning arguments, like athletics, suited his determination to succeed.

By 1945, when he entered university, Castro's views were taking shape. Self-doubt was alien to him: 'I can't recall ever having had doubts or a lack of confidence.'[7] He had to be first:

> Fidel Castro is there to win. I don't believe there is anybody else in the world that is such a sore loser . . . he doesn't even admit defeat, and he will not have a minute of peace as long as he is unable to invert the terms of the situation and convert defeat into victory.[8]

He was ready to rebel against any perceived injustice or a slight to his honour. He had no ability to subordinate his interests to those of others, whether individuals or a group.

At the university, Castro's interests turned to politics: he wanted to become president of the student union, but his determination to be first made him impossible to work with, while his disapproval of immorality and corruption didn't increase his popularity. By his third year, his horizons broadened to national politics, as he used his oratorical skills to denounce the rampant corruption of the government. This got him his first mention in the newspaper in 1947, when he was 21.

The same year, Castro joined a new reformist political party, hoping that real change could be achieved through normal politics. He also embarked on his first foreign adventure, a planned attack on the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, which involved some training in guerrilla warfare, but got nowhere. This was Castro's first step towards the revolutionary internationalism that became fundamental to his world view.

In 1948, Castro went to Bogotá to participate in an anti-imperialist student congress. Instead, the delegates confronted a massive uprising when Colombia's populist leader was assassinated. Castro joined the riots which devastated the city and left 3500 dead. This was a formative experience: 'the uprising influenced me greatly in my later revolutionary life . . . I wanted to avoid the revolution sinking into anarchy, looting, disorder and people taking the law into their own hands.'[9]

The Bogotá uprising, a model example of class struggle, may have stimulated Castro's interest in communism. By his own account, Marx, Engels and Lenin, whom he read at this time, opened his eyes: 'the simplicity, clarity and direct manner in which our world and society are explained in *The Communist Manifesto* had a particularly great impact

on me'; 'Marxism taught me what society was.'[10] He also came to believe that only revolution could lead to fundamental reform.[11]

When did Castro actually become a communist? The question is not simply academic, for communism brings a mental map of its own, dividing the world between antagonistic systems and advocating change through violent revolution. The answer also determines how far Castro was honest or deceptive as he struggled for power. He first publicly declared that his revolution was socialist in April 1961 and that he was a Marxist the following December. Until then, he sounded like a liberal, not a communist. He did not join the Cuban Communist Party, nor did it support him until the last stages of the revolution. If Castro had adhered to communism since he was a student, then his publicly expressed mental map was deceptive. But if he only became a communist after facing the hostility of the United States, then portraying himself as a young Marxist was a projection of the present into the past to justify later actions. In any case, he never submitted to the organized training of a disciplined party, and developed his own idiosyncratic version of communism, deeply permeated with nationalism.

Politics, rebellion and propaganda

After graduating in 1950, Castro practised law and entered politics as a candidate for Congress in the 1952 elections. He looked certain to join the next government. Later, he claimed that, once elected, he would break party discipline and mobilize the population for a revolutionary programme. For the moment, though, his ostensible mental map included democracy. Fulgencio Batista's didn't. On 10 March 1952, Cuba's former president led a military coup that brought politics to an end.

In response, Castro secretly organized an uprising. He had never served in the army nor received any formal military training – and consequently never developed a disciplined military mentality – yet he made sure his men got weapons and learned how to use them. He audaciously planned to take over the Moncada military base in Santiago, Cuba's second city, and from there to proclaim the revolution. His 150 attackers moved at dawn on 26 July 1953, but were rapidly defeated. The survivors were put on trial.

Castro conducted his own defence, the first systematic expression of plans for Cuba.[12] He proposed to restore constitutional government, carry out land reform, ensure benefits for the workers, nationalize

public utilities and crack down on corruption. He quoted Milton, Locke, Rousseau, Paine, the American Declaration of Independence, the French Rights of Man, and concluded with José Martí. He never mentioned Marx or Lenin. His programme was to be implemented by a democratic regime and focused entirely on Cuba.[13] It was, as Castro later remarked, as far as he could go under prevailing conditions, even though he already had a Marxist formation.[14]

In prison, Castro read extensively and wrote letters, one of them ominously revealing:

> Conditions indispensable for the integration of a true civic movement are ideology, discipline and leadership. All three are essential but leadership is basic . . . The apparatus of propaganda and organization should be so powerful as to implacably destroy anyone trying to create fissures, cabals, and schisms or to rise against the movement.[15]

This viewpoint foreshadowed future developments.

Released in an amnesty in 1955, Castro made his way to Mexico, where he gathered and trained revolutionaries to liberate Cuba. There, he met Che Guevara, a theoretician with a mental map of his own, which featured the United States as responsible for the backwardness and poverty of Latin America. He was a devoted Marxist but, like Castro, had never joined the party or undergone its training and discipline.[16] Castro's other close associate was his younger brother Raul, who had pronounced communist sympathies.[17]

In December 1956, Castro and 81 followers landed in Cuba. Within three days, most of them were destroyed by Batista's forces, but when the survivors regrouped in the Sierra Maestra mountains, Castro's unfailing self-confidence led him to proclaim 'now we can win this war'.[18] That seemed an unlikely outcome for a dozen poorly armed guerrillas in a remote and unfamiliar land, but here Castro's mental map of terrain served him well: 'Fidel had never been in these mountains before. But in six months he knew the whole area better than any guajiro [peasant] who had been born there. He never forgot a place that he went. He remembered everything – the soil, the trees, who lived in each house . . . '[19] This knowledge paid off: Castro's mobile forces came to dominate the mountains, while Guevara established an organized base area. Castro learned from reading as well as experience, notably Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, whose realistic portrayal of a guerrilla force facing a conventional army greatly helped him envision his own situation.[20]

Batista's most formidable opposition came not from the remote mountains but from revolutionaries in the cities. In order to coordinate with them and to assert his position as a leader, Castro was obliged to make public compromises, revealing a moderate mental map in his Sierra Madre Manifesto of July 1957 and the joint Caracas Pact a year later. The former called for unity and a provisional government that would conduct free elections.[21] Its proposed reforms dealt with corruption, illiteracy, education, land reform and removing the army from politics. The Caracas Pact advocated similar reforms and a provisional government to establish constitutional and democratic rights.[22] The communists alone did not sign, but soon established a permanent representation in the Sierra.[23] Castro considered the party as inflexible and dogmatic. He was perhaps only half facetious when he remarked: 'I would have joined the party if I could have been Stalin.'[24]

So far, Castro's mental map seemed entirely focused on Cuba, but he was fully aware of his powerful northern neighbour and knew the value of propaganda and deception. His first real success was not military but political, when he received a *New York Times* correspondent, Herbert Matthews, and persuaded him that the rebel forces controlled much of the Sierra at a time when he only had 18 men. Matthews' story caused a sensation when it appeared on the front page of *The Times*.[25] It described Fidel as a nationalist, who believed in democracy and opposed communism. As Che Guevara remarked, 'The presence of a foreign journalist, preferably American, was more important for us than military victory.'[26]

Castro sounded more moderate than ever when he addressed the American public in the popular *Coronet* magazine of February 1958.[27] He advocated a provisional government to conduct general elections where Castro himself would not be a candidate. He would ask the provisional regime to free political prisoners, end censorship, restore constitutional rights and abolish corruption and illiteracy. He retreated from earlier proposals to nationalize public utilities and promised that foreign investments would always be welcome. He told the Americans just what they wanted to hear. In fact, during the whole period of the civil war, Castro expressed no hostility to the United States or to free enterprise, for he needed to gain domestic support and defuse potential opposition from his all-powerful neighbour.

The reality was different: in 1961, Castro recounted that 'If we had stopped at the Pico Turquino [the highest point of the Sierra Madre] when there were very few of us and said "we are Marxist-Leninists" possibly we would not have been able to get down to the plain . . . '[28] – that is, if the rebels had admitted what they believed, they would not have

succeeded. More ominously, Castro wrote in 1958 that 'The Americans are going to pay dearly for what they are doing. When this war is over, a much wider war will begin for me, the war I will wage against them.'[29] Castro's public and private mental maps seriously diverged.

In a bipolar world

Ambiguity only increased after the triumph of the revolution on 1 January 1959. Castro established the promised provisional government, under a respected judge, Manuel Urrutia, who restored the constitution of 1940 and promised elections. The United States quickly recognized the new regime. Officially, Castro was only commander of the army, but in fact ran the whole show with his secret Office of Revolutionary Plans and Coordination, whose leaders were Marxists.[30] Castro soon began negotiations with the Cuban Communist Party which had experience, discipline and organization. But he was not a member of the party, and few believed he was a communist at all. The Soviets paid little attention to him; for them, he was leader of a bourgeois nationalist revolution.[31] At this stage, the USSR hardly appeared on Castro's mental map.

Castro put his announced programme into effect. Agrarian reform came first; then an urban reform that drastically reduced rents and utility charges. The government confiscated illegally acquired property, ended racial discrimination, and established free education and medical care. Democracy, though, was taking a beating. From the beginning, Castro encouraged 'direct democracy', where he engaged in a dialogue with vast crowds who invariably shouted 'yes'. He took over as prime minister a month after the revolution, then deposed Urrutia in July. The promised elections were never held. As communist influence grew and the regime carried out increasing nationalizations while building a large new army, the suspicions of the United States hardened into hostility. Castro, who resented what he saw as the Americans' condescending attitude, easily reciprocated.[32]

Castro's mental map included Latin America, where he sponsored attempts to undermine unfriendly regimes. But this was on a very small scale since he was occupied with major transformations at home and with a greater world dominated by two superpowers.[33] His attention naturally turned to the Soviet Union, enemy of his enemy and leader of the Marxist world. As the Cuban revolution became more openly radical, Soviet attitudes warmed.[34] Castro received a high-ranking Soviet 'journalist' (KGB agent) in October 1959 and the following February, Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan arrived in Havana to open a

successful trade fair. The Soviets agreed to establish diplomatic and cultural relations. Cuba was entering the international stage as it never had: previous presidents were all concerned with domestic matters, especially their own profits from high office.

In 1960, the Cuban government took over the media and nationalized US-owned oil refineries. That September, Castro made a theatrical visit to the United Nations, where he exchanged a warm embrace with Premier Khrushchev. The next month, President Eisenhower banned US exports (a blockade still in effect) and Cuba nationalized banks and hundreds of companies, many of them American, confiscating more than $1 billion worth of property. Cuba appeared headed for communism, but of a unique kind. Instead of purges, massacres or physical destruction of opposing classes, Castro followed a much cleverer policy, by allowing dissidents to leave (without their valuables).

The new president, John F. Kennedy, inherited plans to remove Castro. They led to the Bay of Pigs, where a force of 1500 Cuban exiles met disaster in April 1961. Unfortunately for them, Castro had recently explored the area. His typical understanding of the terrain and immediate response to the attack, combined with poor planning and inadequate support, doomed the attackers. Kennedy didn't give up; instead, he organized a huge Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation to find ways of getting rid of Castro by revolt or assassination.[35] Castro knew that he and his revolution were under threats greater than he could face alone. Fortunately, he had friends. Already in July 1960, Khrushchev had 'metaphorically speaking' promised to defend the Cuban revolution with nuclear weapons if necessary.[36] For the moment, nobody imagined that would happen, but they learned where Castro stood. During the crisis of the Bay of Pigs, on 16 April 1961, he announced that his revolution was socialist.[37] In the aftermath of the invasion, he merged existing movements into one unified party. On 1 December 1961, he announced that the new party would be Marxist–Leninist, and so was he: 'I believe absolutely in Marxism.'[38] His mental map was taking clear shape.

The missile crisis and its aftermath

After the Bay of Pigs, the likelihood of a second US invasion loomed over Cuba: the CIA's timetable called for overthrowing the Castro regime by October 1962. In January 1962, the Organization of American States expelled Cuba and in March and April, the United States carried out practice amphibious landings in the Caribbean. The Soviets believed that an attack was imminent.[39]

Premier Khrushchev conceived the idea of installing nuclear missiles in Cuba in April 1962.[40] This would protect a valued ally and move the strategic balance with the United States closer to equality.[41] In May, the Soviets persuaded Castro, who had hoped only for a declaration that an attack on Cuba would be considered tantamount to an attack on the USSR. His view of Cuba's place in the world made him sceptical about missiles because he did not want Cuba to appear as a Soviet military base, but he liked the idea that nuclear weapons would strengthen the socialist camp and defend Cuba at the same time. He felt complete trust in the Soviet Union and gratitude for its support.[42] Soviet ships secretly brought some 40,000 troops, with ballistic missiles capable of striking most of the United States.

Activity on this scale could not be concealed. The crisis began on 16 October, when Kennedy learned that ballistic missiles had been installed in Cuba. The Soviets denied everything. On the 22nd, Kennedy demanded removal of the missiles and proclaimed a 'quarantine' of Cuba. The greatest mobilization of US forces since the Second World War had begun. Threatening words flew between Washington and Moscow as Cuba mobilized all its forces, fully expecting to be attacked. Soviet ships, however, turned back when faced with the blockade, and Khrushchev, recognizing the danger of a war he couldn't win, proposed to withdraw the weapons if the Americans pledged not to invade Cuba. He admitted that he was not speaking for Castro. When he and Kennedy reached agreement on the 28th, the immediate crisis was over.

During the crisis, Castro had virtually no influence, though he had strong, even bellicose, opinions. He could not understand why the Soviets didn't shoot down the U2 spy planes that discovered the missiles.[43] At the height of the crisis, Castro and the Cuban population were calm, resigned to their fate even if it meant destruction in a nuclear holocaust. He was ready to use nuclear weapons if he had them and to die in the defence of his country rather than see it conquered and occupied.[44]

On 26 October, he wrote a letter that shocked Khrushchev:

> If . . . the imperialists invade Cuba with the goal of occupying it, the danger that that aggressive policy poses for humanity is so great that following that event, the Soviet Union must never allow the circumstances in which the imperialists could launch the first nuclear strike against it. I tell you this because I believe that the imperialists' aggressiveness is extremely dangerous and if they actually carry out the brutal act of invading Cuba in violation of international law and

> morality, that would be the moment to eliminate such danger forever through an act of clear legitimate defense, however harsh and terrible the solution would be, for there is no other.[45]

Khrushchev took this to mean that Castro was inviting the Soviets to launch a nuclear first strike against the United States.[46] He was so alarmed that he moved quickly to resolve the crisis.[47] Castro, however, maintained that his words were misinterpreted and that he had advocated striking back only if the United States actually invaded.[48]

Just as Castro was preparing to fight and die, he got word of the Soviet/US agreement. He was furious that he had not been consulted or even informed: 'The idea of withdrawing the weapons simply didn't cross our minds.' He believed that if he had been included in the negotiations, Cuba could have got some real concessions (among them, ending the economic blockade and subversion, and return of the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay) rather than a vague and unenforceable promise by Kennedy not to invade Cuba.[49] He felt his country had been humiliated.[50]

Castro's world view changed during the crisis. At first came caution, as he considered his relations with Latin America; then, unqualified trust combined with pragmatism, as he recognized the help he received from his powerful ally. At the height of the crisis, his experience of leading a small band to victory against overwhelming odds seriously misled him. After all, he had not seen large-scale warfare and apparently did not conceive of the destruction a nuclear war might entail. The fearless risk-taking of the guerrilla actually had no place in this situation. Finally, he felt his honour and dignity betrayed and his faith in the Soviets seriously undermined.

Khrushchev did what he could to mollify his truculent ally.[51] Cuba now received all its Soviet weapons free of charge.[52] Then, in April 1963, Castro embarked on a 40-day tour of the Soviet Union, where he was received with unprecedented honour and enthusiasm. He returned the following January for meetings that promised Cuba a high price for its sugar and cheap Soviet oil. The two countries were locked in an embrace from which they could not escape; Cuba depended economically on the Soviets, while the Soviets could not afford to lose their prize ally in the New World.

Latin America and Africa

Castro's chief goal was to defend the Cuban revolution, but now with the added dimension of reducing his dependence on the unreliable

Soviets. He knew he could never oppose the United States directly, but could hope to open new fronts against them: 'The United States will not be able to hurt us if all Latin America is in flames.'[53] He also wanted new revolutionary allies who might form a Cuban-led block in the socialist camp.[54] Ever since the revolution, Castro favoured revolutionary movements.[55] Already in 1959, he had sent small-scale aid to rebels in the Caribbean and Latin America, proclaiming a fiery slogan that the Andes would become the Sierra Maestra of the Americas.[56] For the moment, though, pragmatism dominated, as he needed good relations with Latin American states to stem the tide of US influence.

In September 1961, Castro's mental map expanded. By sending a delegation to Belgrade, Cuba became a founder of the Non-Aligned Movement, and its only member from Latin America. Castro saw the broad horizons of the Third World, but his main activity was closer to home.

In January 1962, the Organization of American States (OAS) expelled Cuba after its leader announced that he was a Marxist. Castro responded with a theme he would never abandon: that Latin America was kept in poverty by US economic exploitation. He declaimed: 'The duty of every revolutionary is to make revolution. It is known that the revolution will triumph in America and throughout the world. But it is not for revolutionaries to sit in the doorways of their houses waiting for the corpse of imperialism to pass by.'[57]

Castro actively supported leftist rebels in South America in an effort to end Cuba's increasing isolation (in July 1964, the OAS declared sanctions on Cuba, and all its members except Mexico broke off relations). He worked closely with Che Guevara, who believed that it was only necessary for a small group of dedicated revolutionaries to establish a guerrilla base, a *foco*, preferably in a remote rural area; from there, with the increasing support of the local people, other bases could be sent out till the whole country seethed with rebellion.[58] In this, Castro's experience in the Sierra Maestra made him a victim of his own propaganda: he and Guevara evidently believed that the revolution had been won from the Sierra, when actually the cities had played a major role.

Castro and Guevara were doomed to disappointment, especially bitter in Che's native Argentina, where a Cuban-supported band was wiped out in April 1964 after only a few months' activity. The Cuban effort failed because the United States was strengthening the military in most Latin countries and providing aid through its Alliance for Progress, while the Soviets supported local communist parties who believed that revolution started with the urban proletariat and took a dim view of Cuba's unorthodox regime.

Failure in Latin America did not deter Castro, who turned his attention to the other land ripe for revolution, Africa. Involvement began on a small scale, when Cuba sent military aid to Algeria's National Liberation Front in December 1961.[59] An armed force followed two years later, when Algeria was involved in a border dispute with Morocco. Although this was resolved peacefully, the Cubans stayed behind to train Algerian forces and provide medical and other aid. This model of internationalism has been characterized as 'a degree of idealism unusual in foreign affairs'.[60] Though altruism may have been a factor, Castro never lost sight of his goal: to win friends, influence and prestige in the Third World. If he succeeded, an American attack on Cuba would risk antagonizing many countries with which the United States desired friendly relations.

Che Guevara laid the foundation for larger-scale Cuban intervention when he embarked on a three-month tour to Africa's most radical states in December 1964. Its first manifestation was in the (ex-Belgian) Congo, where a civil war had drawn in the great powers.[61] Castro and Guevara decided to support the left-wing Simbas of Laurent Kabila, who were making a stand against the pro-western regime of Moise Tshombe. In January 1965, Castro created a force of black Cubans (who would not be conspicuous in Africa), telling them only that they were going on an internationalist mission. Che determined to participate in person even though Egypt's President Nasser warned him that he risked looking like a white Tarzan leading the natives.[62] Che and his 130 men crossed into Congo in April, only to discover that the Simbas weren't expecting them and that Kabila was nowhere to be seen. He had great plans to train guerrillas to establish bases for further advances, but discovered that the rebel forces were uncooperative, undisciplined and deeply divided ethnically. Despite his best efforts, Che accomplished nothing and left in November. The Cuban revolutionary model proved useless here.

Castro had greater success in neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville, where Cubans trained local troops and guarded the regime (1965–68).[63] In Guinea-Bissau, Castro's forces helped support and train the rebels fighting Portuguese rule, beginning in 1966.[64] They were still there in 1972 when Castro visited on his first African trip, and they stayed until independence two years later.

Castro's mental map was consolidating as he built up a network of friends in the Third World. Its clearest manifestation was the Tricontinental Conference held in Havana in January 1966, attended by 513 delegates from 83 countries.[65] The meeting, described as 'the most powerful gathering of pro-Communist, anti-American forces in

the history of the Western Hemisphere'[66] was dedicated to the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism and promised support to revolution, especially in Latin America. In his peroration, Castro declared that 'Cuban fighters can be counted on by the revolutionary movement in any corner of the earth.'[67]

The largest foreign delegation to the Tricontinental Conference was the Soviet; the Chinese were second. In many ways, Cuba had more in common with China than the USSR: Castro and Mao had both led guerrilla wars based in the countryside; both supported revolutionary liberation movements and opposed peaceful coexistence; both were given to radical social and economic experiments at home.[68] Cuba's relations with China had been warm up to and through the Missile Crisis, but deteriorated as Cuba depended ever more heavily on assistance from the Soviets at a time when Sino–Soviet relations had plummeted.[69] Castro's mental map always contained a radical, romantic element, but inevitably, practical considerations triumphed. As his sister, Juanita, pointedly remarked: 'Fidel's heart is in Peking . . . his stomach is in Moscow.'[70]

Cuban and Soviet interests soon diverged. In August 1967, Castro told the new Organization of Latin American Solidarity that the revolution must be led from the countryside, by guerrillas, not from the cities, and that a peaceful transition to socialism was impossible.[71] He was making clear his opposition to the policies of the Brezhnev regime. By then, Cuban revolutionaries were operating in Latin America. After the Congo fiasco, Castro urged Guevara to prepare a guerrilla campaign in Bolivia, which seemed to offer ideal conditions: poverty, instability, remote mountain terrain and borders with the most important countries of South America.[72] Che and his men set out in October 1966. As usual, he counted on the *foco* theory, but not on the opposition of Moscow and the Bolivian communists, nor the suspicion or hostility of the local Indians towards the foreign Cubans.[73] The campaign was a disaster; Che was captured and executed on 8 October 1967. Expeditions sent to stir revolution in Guatemala, Venezuela and Colombia collapsed soon after.

Castro's support for guerrilla wars soured his relations with the Soviets. He refused to attend the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution in 1967 and the following January put the so-called 'microfaction' of the Cuban Communist Party on trial for allegedly conspiring with Moscow against him. A radical move followed in March, when overnight Castro nationalized the innumerable surviving small businesses. The consequent economic disruption was made worse when the Soviets reduced fuel deliveries. Castro finally had to face

reality: when the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia in August 1968, he endorsed their action. He re-entered the Soviet fold, but not without a last radical effort to achieve greater self-sufficiency by producing a record harvest of 10 million tons of sugar in 1970. This too failed. In 1972, Cuba officially joined Moscow's trade organization (Comecon) and in 1975 promulgated a new Soviet-style constitution.[74] Castro's growing realism included the surprising view that 'Latin America is not yet on the eve of the kind of overall changes that lead, as happened in Cuba, to sudden socialist transformations.'[75] But he was not giving up on the rest of the world.

Angola and the Third World

Castro's last great foreign adventure, which plunged Cuba back into the Cold War, began unexpectedly in 1975, at a time when the United States was weakened by the traumas of Vietnam and Watergate. Agostinho Neto, leader of Angola's Marxist rebels, appealed to Castro for emergency aid.[76] Cuba had been in contact with the Angolan rebels since Che's Africa trip in 1965, but relations were minimal until the Portuguese Revolution of April 1974 was followed by plans to end colonial rule. In Angola, three factions contended for power: the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) in the north, supported by Zaire and the West; the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in the south, backed by South Africa and the United States; and the Marxist People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) closest to the capital, Luanda. Castro sent 480 instructors with supplies and weapons for the MPLA. They arrived in September 1975 and secured the crucial Cabinda enclave, the source of Angola's oil. Castro requested Soviet assistance, but the Soviets were busy pursuing détente.

The situation changed drastically when an invading South African force swiftly pushed towards Luanda, while the FNLA moved in from the north. Castro moved fast. Putting Cuba's air fleet and merchant marine to full use, he shipped an army 6000 miles to Africa. For the first time, the Cubans were not just advisers or auxiliaries, but engaged in a full-scale war. They arrived in time to save Luanda for the MPLA, who thus controlled the capital on Independence Day, 11 November. Not long after, the Cubans stopped the South Africans. By spring 1976, 36,000 Cubans – all supposedly volunteers – were fighting in Angola: as Castro remarked, 'in a situation of this sort, you can't make the mistake of being weak.'[77] All this was done independently: 'we acted on our own decision. The Soviet Union expressed only concerns in 1975. But that

was a free and sovereign decision made by our country.'[78] After the war got going, though, there was extensive coordination, with the Cubans supplying men and light arms and the Soviets heavy weapons and ships and planes for transport. The Cubans intervened willingly, according to Castro: 'We are fulfilling an elementary internationalist duty when we help the Angolan people! We are not looking for oil, or copper, or iron; we are not looking for anything at all. We are simply practising a policy of principles.'[79] He added that Cuba and Angola were united by ties of blood since so many of Cuba's black population had originally come as slaves from Angola.[80]

Castro took a direct personal interest in the operation, as his friend, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, recounted in a passage that gives a vivid image of Castro's involvement with maps, real and mental:[81]

> Fidel Castro kept himself informed of the minutest details of the war . . . there was not a single dot on the map of Angola that he was unable to identify, nor any feature of the land that he did not know by heart. His absorption in the war was so intense and meticulous that he could quote any statistic relating to Angola as if it were Cuba itself, and he spoke of its towns, customs and peoples as if he had lived there all his life. In the early stages of the war, when the situation was urgent, Fidel Castro would spend up to fourteen hours at a stretch in the command room of the general staff, at times without eating or sleeping, as if he were on the battlefield himself. He followed the course of battles with pins on minutely detailed wall-sized maps, keeping in constant touch with the MPLA high command on a battlefield where the time was six hours later.

When Castro visited Angola in March 1977, he received a triumphant welcome and optimistically planned to withdraw his troops. Instead, problems with Zaire, internal instability and renewed attacks from South Africa kept the Cubans in Angola, where they became an occupying force spread throughout the country, their number constantly increasing till they exceeded 50,000 by 1983.[82] By then, Castro was involved in another African venture.[83]

During his African trip, Castro had called in South Yemen where he tried to mediate between Ethiopia and Somalia, involved in a bitter territorial dispute. Cuban interest in Ethiopia was minimal until February 1977, when the Marxist Mengistu Haile Mariam seized power. He promptly broke relations with the United States but had to face an invasion from Somalia. Cuba denounced this aggression and sent

military advisers to Mengistu. In January 1978, Raul Castro flew secretly to Ethiopia and Moscow and worked out plans for a coordinated operation. A force of 16,000 Cubans was rapidly assembled, transported by the Soviets, who provided heavy weapons and the commanding officers. Once again, Cuban intervention was decisive; by March 1978 the Somalis had been driven out. In the north, however, Eritrea was in revolt and Mengistu hoped for Cuban aid there, but Castro refused on the grounds that this was an internal matter, not a case of foreign invasion or of supporting a liberation movement. Nevertheless, Cuban troops long remained in Ethiopia, though in ever-diminishing numbers.

The Ethiopian operation was very different from the Angolan both in execution and motivation. From the beginning it was closely coordinated with the Soviets. Castro justified intervention with the usual internationalism, reinforced by sympathy with a revolution that seemed similar to Cuba's.[84] Yet there was no escaping the fact that the Soviets were in charge, which allowed sceptics to claim that Cuba was acting merely as an agent of the USSR.

Cuba's role in Africa was not only military. Far more numerous than the soldiers were the foreign aid workers, especially in Angola where eventually 430,000 internationalist volunteers served.[85] From the beginning, Cuban foreign policy featured humanitarian aid. Cuba was not a rich country that could support massive development projects, but it did have skilled technicians, educators and doctors who could be sent abroad at relatively little cost. Furthermore, aid from Cuba carried none of the entangling implications that came with aid from the great powers.

These evidently selfless activities, combined with military success and constant propaganda, lifted Cuba's prestige in the Third World. Already bolstered by the Tricontinental Conference, and by Cuba's attendance at Non-Aligned meetings, it soared at the 1976 summit, where Cuba was praised for its actions in Angola, and Havana was unanimously chosen as the site of the next meeting.[86] This meant that Castro would preside, set the agenda and make the final declaration that defined the movement's policies till the next summit.

Castro's reputation and influence reached their height in 1979. His mental map, which had long seen the Third World as a counterweight to the hostile United States and domineering Soviet Union, triumphed. Castro's keynote address to the summit encompassed the whole world: he celebrated liberating victories in Iran, Nicaragua and Grenada, denounced continuing oppression in southern Africa and Palestine, praised revolutionary movements everywhere, and attacked the United States and its new friend, China. For him, the main division

of the world was not ideological but economic, with the developed countries living extravagantly off the exploitation of the poor nations.[87]

Castro developed this theme further in his most glorious public moment, his address to the United Nations on 12 October as spokesman for the Third World.[88] His voice had lost its revolutionary tone. He praised peaceful coexistence and détente, denounced colonialism and imperialism (especially of the United States and Israel), and proposed that the developed nations should provide massive aid to the poor. He concluded by advocating peace and an end to the arms race and claimed, 'I have not come here as a prophet of the revolution. I have not come here to ask or to wish that the world be violently convulsed.' The revolutionary had become a statesman, his international ambitions finally fulfilled.

Epilogue

Decline and disaster followed on the heels of triumph. In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. The United Nations voted overwhelmingly to condemn the invasion. Castro was in an impossible position; he wanted to maintain his leadership of the Third World, but could hardly afford to offend his patrons. When Cuba voted in favour of the Soviets, its international prestige rapidly collapsed.[89] Castro's mental map didn't change, but he was no longer in a position to exert much influence. Even worse, 1980 brought the election of Ronald Reagan, whose own mental map had no place for a communist Cuba. He made sure that Castro's ally, Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, could never consolidate his control or expand his (and Cuba's) influence in Central America. Meanwhile, in Africa, Cuban forces had got bogged down in occupying much of Angola and defending it against South African attacks until finally, in 1988, a negotiated settlement led to their withdrawal.[90] Cuban forces left Ethiopia in 1989. Large-scale foreign adventures were over, but worse was to come: the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was a disaster for Cuba. Castro's mental map contracted as he fought for Cuba's economic survival, showing remarkable powers of adaptation, even allowing some opening to the hated free enterprise, encouraging foreign tourism and lifting restrictions on the Church.

Until 2006, when ill health forced him to resign as president, Fidel Castro survived as the last cold warrior. He went on believing in communism despite all the evidence; he maintained full control and never lost confidence in his own judgment. He genuinely believed in helping the

poor at home and abroad (perhaps without reflecting that his policies had impoverished Cuba), but always put Cuba's interests first. He collaborated with the Soviet Union as long as it existed; he never abandoned his opposition to the United States. He maintained a broad mental map of the whole world, seen through the lens of communism and dominated by the exploitation of the South by the North. He was always capable of considerable deception and, perhaps, self-deception also.

Notes

1. There are innumerable biographies of Fidel Castro. Most useful and objective is probably Volker Skierka, *Fidel Castro* (Cambridge, 2004). Robert Quirk, *Fidel Castro* (New York, 1993) is most detailed; Tad Szulc, *Fidel, A Critical Portrait* (New York, 1986) most vivid and Peter Bourne, *Fidel* (New York, 1986) most psychological. For Castro's early life, all rely heavily on an autobiographical interview, Frei Betto, *Fidel and Religion* (New York, 1987; henceforth 'Castro/Betto'), to be supplemented now by Fidel Castro and Ignacio Ramonet, *Fidel Castro, My Life, a Spoken Autobiography* (New York, 2007; henceforth 'Castro/Ramonet').
2. He later looked back on these activities as contributing to his success as a guerrilla: Bourne, 28; cf. Castro/Ramonet, 97 on the 1947 expedition against Trujillo: 'I believed in irregular warfare out of instinct – I'd been born in the country, I knew the mountains'.
3. Castro/Betto, 107.
4. Ibid., 123, 133, 140–41; Castro/Ramonet, 93.
5. See Samuel Farber, *The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 57–58 for Castro as a dilettante and economic illiterate.
6. *Fidel Castro: Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, Interview by Jeffrey M. Elliot and Mervyn M. Dymally (New York, 1986), 105–07.
7. Elliot and Dymally, 23.
8. Farber, 75, quoting Castro's friend Gabriel Garcia Marquez.
9. Fidel Castro, *My Early Years* (Melbourne, 1998), 126–27.
10. Castro/Betto, 142; Castro/Ramonet, 100.
11. Castro/Betto, 146–51; Castro/Ramonet, 99–103.
12. For the full text, see Rolando Bonachea and Nelson Valdes eds, *Revolutionary Struggle 1947–1958, Volume I of the Selected Works of Fidel Castro* (Cambridge, 1972), 164–221; The speech is also published separately under the title *History Will Absolve Me*.
13. Castro's proposals differed little from those of Cuban leftists of the 1930s: see Theodore Draper, *Castroism Theory and Practice* (New York, 1965), 5–8.
14. Lionel Martin, *The Early Fidel, Roots of Castro's Communism* (Secaucus, 1978), 144; cf. Castro/Ramonet, 111: 'If we hadn't been inspired by Marti, Marx and Lenin, we couldn't possibly have conceived the idea of a revolution in Cuba'.
15. Ann Louise Bardach and Luis Conte Aguero eds, *The Prison Letters of Fidel Castro* (New York, 2007), 45 (English), 145 (Spanish); written on 14 August 1954.

16. See Jorge Castaneda, *Companero, the Life and Death of Che Guevara* (New York, 1997), 86, 91–92.
17. Castro had given Raul his first lessons in Marxism before the Moncada attack: Castro/Ramonet, 111; Martin, 79.
18. Castro/Ramonet, 185.
19. Quirk, 129 quoting Guillermo Garcia.
20. Castro/Ramonet, 209.
21. Text in Bonachea and Valdes, 343–48.
22. Ibid., 386–89.
23. Early in 1957, the Party had already sent one of its leaders to the Sierra to tell the local communists to cooperate with the rebels: Martin 197, and in mid-1957, it dispatched a cadre to the area Che had organized to carry out political indoctrination of the rebel troops and to incorporate local communists into the rebel army. The Communists established a school in the mountains for these purposes: Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York, 1997), 297.
24. Bourne, 56; I have not found the quote attested elsewhere.
25. 24 February 1957.
26. Ernesto Che Guevara, *Escritos y discursos* 4 (Havana, 1977), 12.
27. Text in Bonachea and Valdes, 364–67.
28. Draper, 17, quoting from *Revolucion* of 22 December 1961.
29. Letter to Celia Sanchez 5 June 1958, constantly quoted: text in Bonachea and Valdes, 379. The letter was genuine, for Castro quoted it in the 1993 conference: Castro in Blight et al., 92.
30. Szulc, 472–78.
31. Farber, 144–45; cf. Castro/Ramonet, 288: Soviets gave no support to the revolution and in January 1959 Castro didn't know a single Soviet.
32. Note his typical later remarks about US leaders in Elliot and Dymally, 11–12: 'it is impossible not to sense the contempt, the derision they feel for the peoples of Latin America'.
33. Here and elsewhere, I treat Castro's plans and Cuban foreign policy as virtually identical, because of his overwhelming influence on that policy: see the chapter, 'How Cuban Foreign Policy is Made' in Jorge Dominguez, *To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 1989), 248–82.
34. Farber, 145–47.
35. See Don Bohning, *The Castro Obsession: U.S. Covert Operations Against Cuba 1962–1965* (Washington, DC, 2005).
36. Szulc, 519.
37. Ibid., 547.
38. Ibid., 569.
39. See, for example, the statement of Khrushchev's special assistant for international affairs, Oleg Troyanovsky, in Blight et al., 71–72. Robert McNamara, US Secretary of Defense at the time, however, maintained that Kennedy had no plan or intention to invade Cuba except during the actual crisis: ibid., 160, 289. It is also possible that the Soviets were exaggerating the threat to Cuba to persuade Castro to go along with their plans to install missiles.
40. The crisis has generated a huge literature. Most important for understanding Castro's point of view is James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn and David A. Welch,

Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse (New York, 1993: report of the 1992 conference in Havana where Castro participated actively). For the US and Soviet viewpoints, see Anatoli I. Gribkov and William Y. Smith, Operation *ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago, 1994) and Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York, 1999; a work of political science), and for the Cuban, Carlos Lechuga Hevia, *Cuba and the Missile Crisis* (Melbourne, 2001) and Philip Brenner, 'Thirteen Months: Cuba's Perspective on the Missile Crisis', in James A. Nathan, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited* (New York, 1992). James A. Nathan, *Anatomy of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Westport, 2001) and Don Munton and David A. Welch, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A Concise History* (New York, 2007) are recent summary accounts with critical bibliographies; Keith Eubank, *The Missile Crisis in Cuba* (Malabar, 2000) is a convenient guide; like Nathan, it includes a selection of translated documents. For a recent Cuban discussion, see Eugenio Suárez Pérez, Acela Caner Román, *Fidel: crisis de octubre* (Havana, 2002), with many extracts from the sources.

41. Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers* (Boston, 1970), 488–504 and *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes* (Boston, 1990), 170–83. There is a great deal of discussion about Khrushchev's motives for installing the missiles: the desire to redress the strategic balance with the United States seems to have been paramount.
42. Castro in Blight et al., 83, 197–99, 242; Castro/Ramonet, 272.
43. Castro in Blight et al., 86.
44. Ibid., 252: 'I wish we had had the tactical nuclear weapons'; cf. Che Guevara's editorial expressing his willingness 'walk by the path of liberation even when it may cost millions of atomic victims' (ibid., 319).
45. Quoted in Blight et al., 481. Note that there is no Spanish original of this letter; Castro dictated it at the Soviet embassy whose officials translated it on the spot. It was sent in Russian only: Castro in Blight et al., 108–09. The Castro/Khrushchev correspondence is also quoted in Ramonet/Castro, 278–84.
46. See Khrushchev's letters of 28 October (U2: Blight et al., 483) and 30 October (first strike, ibid., 486; cf. *Glasnost Tapes,* 177 where Khrushchev recalls his astonishment).
47. Blight et al., 359–64.
48. Castro to Khrushchev 31 October: Blight et al., 490; cf. ibid., 109–11 for Castro's rationalization. Whatever Castro meant, Che Guevara would have fired the missiles if they had been under Cuban control: Anderson, 545.
49. Castro in Blight et al., 214–15. Quote: ibid., 253.
50. Ibid., 217, 221.
51. For Cuba's difficult relations with the Soviet Union in the 1960s, see Dominguez, 61–77.
52. Castro in Blight et al., 245.
53. Spoken in 1963, according to Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *'One hell of a gamble': Khrushchev, Castro, Kennedy, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1958–1964* (London, 1997), 141, quoting from Soviet archives.
54. For Cuban foreign policy 1959–1975, see H. Michael Erisman, *Cuba's International Relations: The Anatomy of a Nationalistic Foreign Policy* (Boulder,

1985), 15–67 and Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill, 2002), 21–29, 214–29. For Cuba's support of revolutionary movements in the context of its foreign policy aims see Dominguez, 113–46.

55. A theme constantly emphasized by Castro, clearly stated in his address to the first Communist Party congress in 1975 (quoted by Erisman, 8): 'The starting point of Cuban foreign policy . . . is the subordination of Cuban positions to the international needs of the struggle for the national liberation of the peoples'. See also the texts in Michael Taber, ed., *Fidel Castro Speeches: Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy 1975–1980* (New York, 1981).
56. 1959 expeditions: see *Tricontinental* (below, n. 65) 31–32 Andes: Castro was already using this slogan by mid-1960: see *Time* 22 August 1960; it may have first appeared in Havana's newspaper *Revolucion* on 20 April 1959 (non vidi).
57. The 'Second Declaration of Havana' in Martin Kenner and James Petras, eds, *Fidel Castro Speaks* (New York, 1969), 93–117 at 115.
58. See Pamela Falk, *Cuban Foreign Policy* (Lexington, 1986), 34–35.
59. Cuba in Algeria: Gleijeses, 30–56. The assertion that Cuba sent a military mission to Ghana as early as 1961 is apparently incorrect: ibid., 30 with n. 3.
60. Ibid., 54.
61. Ibid., 57–76, 101–59; Anderson, 630–63.
62. Gleijeses, 91.
63. Ibid., 160–84.
64. Ibid., 185–213.
65. United States Senate. Committee on the Judiciary. Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, *The Tricontinental Conference of African, Asian, and Latin American Peoples: A Staff Study* (Washington, DC, 1966).
66. *Tricontinental,* 1.
67. Ibid., 91.
68. For China's support of revolutionary movements, see Yafeng Xia's paper in this volume.
69. Falk, 21–22 gives a brief sketch of Sino-Cuban relations.
70. Speaking to the US House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities on 11 June 1965; cited in *Tricontinental,* 40.
71. Kenner and Petras, 161–80.
72. Gleijeses, 215. There has been much speculation about the motives of Castro and Guevara, see ibid., 215–17.
73. For Che in Bolivia, see Castaneda, 326–90 and especially, Che Guevara, *The Bolivian Diary* (Melbourne, 2006).
74. For Cuba's relations with the Soviets after 1968 see Dominguez, 78–112.
75. From Castro's report to the first Communist Party congress in December 1976, quoted by Erisman, 87.
76. For Cuba's involvement in Angola and the first stage of the war through 1976, see Gleijeses, 246–372 and Edward George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965–1991* (London, 2005), 49–115. Enrique Ros, *La aventura africana de Fidel Castro* (Miami, 1999) presents an unfavorable view of the operations in Angola and Ethiopia. For these activities in the context of Cuba's foreign policy, see Erisman, 68–125 and Dominguez, 147–62. For Castro's own view see Castro/Ramonet, 316–34.

77. Castro/Ramonet, 321.
78. Castro in Blight et al., 202.
79. Castro in his closing speech to the first Party Congress, Havana, 22 December 1975, the occasion when he first announced the Angolan operation: *Fidel Castro Speeches,* 80.
80. See his speech of 26 July 1976, where Neto was in the audience: David Deutschmann, ed., *Changing the History of Africa* (Melbourne, 1989), 76–84.
81. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, 'Operation Carlota' in Deutschmann, 41–60 at 56.
82. See George, 116–38.
83. For what follows, see William M. LeoGrande, *Cuba's Policy in Africa, 1959–1980* (Berkeley, 1980), 35–51.
84. See Castro's speech of 15 March 1978 in *Fidel Castro Speeches,* 117–27 and the comments of LeoGrande, 41–42.
85. See George, 143–63 for this aspect.
86. For a sketch of Cuba's role in the Non-Aligned Movement, see Dominguez, 220–24, 233–37.
87. Taber, 162–79.
88. Ibid., 180–209.
89. For Afghanistan and its effects, see Erisman, 126–34.
90. For Cuba's last decade in Angola, see George, 164–255.

13

John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson

Andrew Preston

In the American mind, the Cold War represented both an expansion and a contraction of the globe. The sheer scale of the world had certainly expanded: US interests could be found on every continent and previously unheard of countries – or ones which had only recently come into existence – now posed the sharpest of foreign policy dilemmas. But in another, equally important sense, by the 1960s the world was also shrinking, thanks to the early stages of a process we now call globalization. Rapid advances in communications, computerization and transportation were bringing people closer together, while the integration of much of the world economy – including, albeit only partially, the command economies of some communist states – bound countries together increasingly tightly. Moreover, concerns that would have once been considered problems for merciful philanthropy to solve – overpopulation, famine, starvation, urbanization and disease – were now deemed utmost matters of national security because of their potential to spread instability. Interdependence changed the way Americans thought of their foreign policy, and their mental map of a wider world changed along with it. The era, then, heralded the arrival of globalized national security.

Throughout the 1960s, two presidents steered the United States through this complicated set of challenges. John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson differed greatly in personality and temperament. Yet they shared both a fundamentally optimistic vision of the state's capacity to bring about progress and a darker, more pessimistic view of the international challenges that confronted the United States. In a general sense, Kennedy and Johnson had the same mental map of the world. When they looked at a map of the world, they saw how America could apply its domestic values and New Deal-style technocratic solutions to the

problems of disease and hunger. But when they looked at the same map from a slightly different perspective, they also saw all the world's hotspots – Cuba, Congo, Berlin, and of course, Vietnam – as interconnected pieces within a vastly larger pattern that, if unchecked, could harm the United States. To Kennedy, Soviet missiles in Cuba were actually a move on West Berlin; to Johnson, if Ho Chi Minh was not stopped in Saigon, then Tokyo, Seoul and Bangkok – or even San Francisco – would be next.

It was not simply the conditions of the Cold War that shaped Kennedy and Johnson's mental map. Indeed, it is doubtful that the conditions of the Cold War were new at all. Both Kennedy and Johnson were born and raised in a world that was already expanding and shrinking under pressures from the same set of forces that commentators in the 1960s and 1970s would consider novel, even revolutionary: global interconnectedness and interdependence through rapid improvements in communications and transportation; through the movement of people; through trade; and through advances in military technology, which not only deepened interconnections but also heightened vulnerabilities. Thus the world Kennedy and Johnson experienced in the 1930s and 1940s was just as important in forming their mental map as the Cold War they confronted in the 1950s and 1960s.

The world into which Kennedy and Johnson were born marked a period of fitful globalization, with the technological innovation and economic integration that had begun in the late nineteenth century interrupted by the World Wars and the Great Depression.[1] Yet among many Americans an internationalist consciousness survived throughout, even during the supposedly isolationist interwar years. According to this internationalist view, the world was becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Because no single country managed or oversaw global integration, it was up to the United States to lead the way in ensuring that this emerging world system was stable, open and prosperous. In 1921, Robert Lansing, an eminent lawyer who had served for five years as Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state, best captured the mood that prevailed among internationalist Americans during Kennedy and Johnson's youth. Even after the senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles, and with it US membership in the League of Nations, Lansing saw the world in 1921 as 'a single social organism all-inclusive and universal, which minimizes the sovereignties in states, affects their realities, and raises the question whether such sovereignties are real or artificial.' Such a view, Lansing contended, 'compels the conviction that the entire human race ought to be considered, and in fact is, a single

community which awaits the further development of modern civilization to complete its organization and make of all mankind a great, universal political state'.[2]

Instead, after the Depression began in 1929, the United States retreated from world politics. Isolationism is a problematic term because it is inaccurate and therefore misleading, but it does convey the overwhelming consensus among Americans that they would not intervene in the crises gripping Europe and East Asia. The Nazi advance through Europe, and especially the aggressive nature of their racist, autocratic system, undermined isolationism, and in 1941 Pearl Harbor killed it off. Wilsonianism, once derided, was vindicated as the best strategy for the United States. Isolationism now seemed irresponsible, immature and completely unbecoming of a great nation. This was the national and international narrative that shaped the world of young John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, six weeks after the United States entered the First World War in 1917. As a child of wealthy parents, Kennedy was educated in several of the nation's most elite private schools before attending Harvard College as a freshman in the autumn of 1936. Between 1935 and 1941 – in the years between the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and American intervention in the Second World War – Kennedy travelled extensively in Europe, the Middle East and South America. He studied briefly at the London School of Economics, stayed with his father Joseph while he served as the US ambassador to Britain, and toured France, Germany and the Soviet Union. In August 1939, only weeks before Germany invaded Poland, Kennedy was travelling in Czechoslovakia. In 1940, he wrote his undergraduate dissertation on Britain's appeasement of Germany at Munich; it was later published, with a considerable subvention from his father, as the book *Why England Slept*. American intervention in the war brought him into military service for the first time. He volunteered for the US Navy, became a patrol boat commander and quickly rose to the rank of lieutenant. After Pearl Harbor, he was posted to the Pacific, where his ship, *PT-109*, came under attack in August 1943. He was badly injured, decorated for bravery and discharged shortly before the war ended in 1945. A year later, he returned to Massachusetts and successfully ran for Congress; after six years in the House of Representatives, he was elected to the US Senate. Kennedy's senate career came to an end when he was elected the thirty-fifth president of the United States in 1960.[3]

Lyndon Baines Johnson was born in the Hill Country of central Texas, in August 1908. His family's circumstances were starkly different from Kennedy's: though both sides of the family could point to deep Texas roots that brought local respect and stature, they lived on modest means, had little formal education and could not afford foreign travel. After a brief stint working in southern California, Johnson returned to his home state to enrol at Southwest Texas State Teachers' College. He graduated in 1930, had a brief career as a school teacher, and then moved to Washington to work as a congressional aide to Texas representative Richard Kleberg. Johnson's father had been a long-serving state legislator, and from an early age Johnson knew politics would be his vocation. When his home congressional district became open in a special 1937 election, he decided to enter politics for himself. He ran, won and represented the district for the next dozen years. He lost his first bid for the US Senate in another special election in 1941, but ran again in 1948 and this time won. Throughout this period, he was a staunch supporter of Franklin D. Roosevelt and an ardent New Dealer. Johnson had been just a boy during the Great War, but in the Second World War he enlisted as a navy reservist. As a key legislative ally of the president's, it was unlikely that Johnson would ever be sent into combat. Instead, he inadvertently and indirectly saw action during an inspection tour of US facilities in the South Pacific. Flying from a base in Australia, the bomber fleet in which Johnson's plane was travelling came under heavy fire from Japanese fighters and anti-aircraft. General Douglas MacArthur, the overall US commander in the Pacific theatre, personally awarded Johnson a Silver Star for his role in the mission. After his election victory in 1948, Johnson would remain in the US Senate, eventually becoming majority leader, until Kennedy selected him to be vice presidential running mate in 1960.[4]

Their backgrounds could not be more different: one was an urban, urbane, north-eastern Roman Catholic raised in the leafy, privileged suburbs of Boston and New York and educated in the finest schools and universities; the other was a rural, rough-worn, south-western evangelical Protestant raised on modest means and educated at the most provincial of state colleges. Yet despite this vast social and cultural gulf, Kennedy and Johnson shared a political milieu and similar personal experiences that led them to embrace the world view of globalized national security. Four developmental experiences, which they both shared, ultimately forged a global imagination for these future presidents.

First, they both spent time in the Pacific during the Second World War. Their direct experiences were markedly different – Kennedy's sunken patrol boat and serious injuries, Johnson's passive role on a fact-finding mission for Roosevelt – but more important was the fact they were even there in the first place. Kennedy and Johnson experienced the war at its outer fringes, which sealed their impression of the world as a unified, integrated whole in which events in the distant periphery had tremendous importance for those at the centre. The Second World War was not America's first foreign conflict; nor was it even America's first war in the Pacific. But the US campaign against Japan was the nation's first experience with modern war in Asia and the Pacific. America had few cultural ties to Asia; the case for intervening there was not as apparent as it was in Europe. Yet in Europe, Africa and Asia, Americans were now fighting a truly global war that, thanks to globalization and modern military technology, especially air power, was couched in the language of a war not only for the national interest and national values, but also as a matter of national survival. After Pearl Harbor, this once fantastical notion had quickly become conventional wisdom.[5]

Secondly, as Democrats, both Kennedy and Johnson belonged to the worldly, interventionist party. This marked something of a change in American politics, for it was the Democratic president Grover Cleveland who had refused to wage war against Spain in 1896 and Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan who had based his 1900 campaign on opposing the annexation of the Philippines. By contrast, it was the Republicans William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge and their friend, the naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan, who had framed the world in terms of interconnectedness and interdependence that called for a larger, more active American role. But in the First World War, Democrat Woodrow Wilson portrayed a world in which the United States could no longer choose to remain confined to the Western hemisphere, where threats to American values and security would, if not stopped at their source in Europe, grow until they threatened the United States directly.[6] Since then, the Democratic Party had embraced the concept of globalized national security. In the interwar period, the parties completed their role reversal, with the Democrats becoming the party of internationalism and the Republicans assuming the mantle of conservative unilateralism and isolationism. Even by the late 1930s, it was the Republican view that resonated more strongly with popular opinion. But among Democrats who marched forward confidently as the foot soldiers for Roosevelt's New Deal, the rest of the world was not so distant. They saw themselves as citizens of the world.

For Kennedy, who could afford international travel and had studied in London, this was a natural instinct, and he almost certainly would have adopted internationalism had he been a Republican. But for Johnson, who could not afford overseas travel, party affiliation probably made an enormous difference.

Thirdly, and related, both Kennedy and Johnson were not just Democrats, but liberal Democrats. This too was an important distinction, because within both parties it was the progressives who encountered the world more often and situated the United States within it.[7] Liberal or progressive Republicans, for example William Howard Taft and Henry L. Stimson, were more internationalist than conservative southern Democrats. In all walks of American life, the liberal vision was more internationalist, the conservative view more nationalist. Liberals valued integration, while conservatives prized autonomy and sovereignty. At home, in domestic matters, both liberals and conservatives were committed to federalism, but within that political system liberals favoured a strong, activist central government and conservatives promoted states' rights and individual autonomy. In religion, liberal modernist Protestants – such as Lansing and his nephew, John Foster Dulles – were the strongest supporters of the League of Nations, the World Court, and other multilateral, international organizations, while conservative fundamentalists were fiercely opposed to any concessions of sovereignty or dilutions of identity in a dreaded new world order.[8] The liberal imagination was expansive, cosmopolitan and fixated on problem-solving; by comparison, the conservative world view was nationalistic, parochial and fiercely autonomous. For young Kennedy and Johnson, political ideology went a long way in setting a distant, internationalist horizon. Moreover, their responses to the problems of world order were conditioned by liberalism. They had seen how effective the US military could be during the war, but as progressives they also supported Roosevelt's attempts to establish a regulatory framework for ensuring international order. As liberals, then, their natural response was to favour managerial, regulatory solutions to problems, to support what Elizabeth Borgwardt has called the Roosevelt administration's 'new deal for the world'.[9]

Fourthly, Kennedy and Johnson were both politically ambitious from a very early age, and set out to establish their political careers in an era when liberal internationalism reigned triumphant. During the interwar period, Wilsonianism and military intervention seemed to be catastrophic errors that the United States should never repeat. But the rise of the dictators in the 1930s, in Germany, Italy, Spain, the Soviet Union

and Japan, made isolationism seem more irresponsible, even immoral, than war itself. After the Second World War, Presidents Roosevelt and Truman revived Wilsonianism and infused it with a more pragmatic strain of liberal realism.[10] There was little dissent in implementing this vision during the transition from world war with Germany and Japan to Cold War with the Soviet Union – indeed, most opposition came from anti-communists who thought that Roosevelt and especially Truman had not gone far enough. Isolationist Republican holdovers, such as Senator Robert A. Taft, could not even resonate within their own party, let alone nationally. Thus, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when Kennedy and Johnson ran several successful races for the House and Senate, not only party affiliation and political ideology but also electoral necessity led them to call for a larger American role in leading and managing the new world order.[11]

Kennedy and Johnson's political careers blossomed in Congress in the late 1940s and 1950s, at the height of the Cold War. As a reflection of globalization, the Cold War was not new, but it did mark the apotheosis of globalized national security. The Second World War may have been a global conflict, but in terms of its geographical scope it was but a faint, shadowy precursor of the 'global Cold War'.[12] When Theodore Roosevelt and Alfred Thayer Mahan or Woodrow Wilson and Robert Lansing had pointed to globalization and interconnectedness in the first decades of the century, it was still contested and controversial; when Harry Truman and Dean Acheson or Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles did so in the early Cold War, it was commonplace. The once fantastical notion that Americans were no longer protected by the oceans was now the consensus. Indeed, the hysteria of McCarthyism, and why it lasted longer and had a broader impact than the earlier Red Scare of 1919–20, can in large part be explained by the rapid escalation of the Cold War.[13] Americans feared that communism not only had designs on Western Europe and East Asia, but also through its network of spies was poised to strike at the heart of America and through its sympathizers was infecting the very fabric of American society and culture.[14] This is not to say that the politics of national security were uncontroversial between 1945 and 1953 – quite the opposite, even during the Second World War.[15] But despite their partisan differences over the specifics of policy, world events had convinced the vast majority of Americans that they needed a global, activist foreign policy. The pace of events in the early Cold War – the Berlin blockade and airlift in 1948–49, the communist victory in China in 1949, the Soviet test of an atomic bomb that same year, the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, to name only

a few – brought home to Americans the global nature of their Cold War challenge.

As senators in the 1950s, Kennedy and Johnson deeply immersed themselves in foreign affairs. Johnson is normally portrayed as having been concerned only with domestic policy, but this is more of a myth than a reflection of reality. Both were well-versed in foreign relations, both served on important national security and defence committees, both were committed to containment, both were supportive of maintaining the non-communist independence of Taiwan, South Korea and South Vietnam, both supported the isolation of the People's Republic of China, both called for greater spending on the military, and both placed tremendous emphasis on international organizations and multilateral diplomacy even though they believed that only the United States could be the true leader of the 'free world'. They were patriotic Cold War politicians through and through, but more importantly they were liberal internationalists to their core.

As president, both Kennedy and Johnson pursued foreign policies consistent with their upbringing, political ambitions and ideology. As liberal Democrats, they were both Keynesians to a certain extent (Johnson much more so than the somewhat more fiscally conservative Kennedy) and so unlike Dwight D. Eisenhower[16] – whose diplomacy they criticized as static, even passive – they were not concerned with balancing the needs of national security with the limitations of public funding. Both, in other words, were willing to spend in order to pursue a more activist foreign policy. In his inaugural address, Kennedy famously pledged to 'pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe' in prosecuting the Cold War.[17] He made good on this promise by establishing counter-insurgency programmes to match the strength of national liberation movements on the ground around the world; by increasing defence spending to give the United States a more 'flexible response' than Eisenhower's blunt reliance on the strategic superiority offered by America's dominant nuclear arsenal (however, though Kennedy increased conventional capabilities, he never did abandon the reliance on nuclear weapons);[18] and by taking the initiative in crisis zones, such as Cuba, Berlin and Vietnam.[19]

Central to Kennedy's foreign policy was the idea that all these conflicts were somehow related, usually because they were controlled by Moscow or Beijing. When Kennedy decided that Laos, then mired in a civil war between Washington-backed royalists and Hanoi-backed communists, was not worth the risk of war, he did not negotiate with the North Vietnamese who sponsored the Lao communists, or even with

the Pathet Lao themselves, but with the Soviets. 'Since we misjudged the independence of the North Vietnamese', recalled William H. Sullivan, one of the American negotiators at Geneva, 'we felt the only ones among those [at Geneva] who really mattered were the Soviets.'[20] Similarly, when the Soviets placed nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962, Kennedy feared they were actually 'getting ready to squeeze us in Berlin'. This was, Kennedy told British prime minister Harold Macmillan at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, 'obviously his [Khrushchev's] purpose. And that's why we feel that we have to take some action.'[21] As Kennedy explained in a statement to the American people on the Missile Crisis, which makes little sense without considering his belief in globalized national security: 'Any hostile move anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed – including in particular the brave people of West Berlin – will be met by whatever action is needed.'[22]

To a certain extent, Kennedy also believed in the domino theory. First articulated by Eisenhower in 1954, the domino theory was simple: if communist insurgents were victorious in one country, they would be able to take over neighbouring countries. Eisenhower used the domino theory to explain the significance of Vietnam, a faraway nation of no intrinsic importance to the United States. Should the Vietnam domino fall, Eisenhower explained, the neighbouring dominoes of Laos and Cambodia would fall next, and possibly set off a regional chain reaction. Kennedy worried about this possibility, especially one that originated in south-east Asia and rippled through the more pivotal regions of East and South Asia. Though there is evidence that Kennedy, along with many of his advisers, began to doubt the validity of the domino theory, he never rejected it outright. When David Brinkley of NBC News asked Kennedy in September 1963, only two months before his death, if he 'had any reason to doubt this so-called "domino theory," that if South Viet-Nam falls, the rest of southeast Asia will go behind it?' Kennedy replied:

> No, I believe it. I believe it. I think that the struggle is close enough. China is so large, looms so high just beyond the frontiers, that if South Viet-Nam went, it would not only give them an improved geographic position for a guerrilla assault on Malaya, but would also give the impression that the wave of the future in southeast Asia was China and the Communists. So I believe it.[23]

But even more important to Kennedy was the psychological domino theory – credibility – to which Eisenhower had not paid as much

attention. By the early 1960s, Laos and Cambodia still tottered but Thailand seemed stable. But while the geographical dominoes now seemed somewhat firmer, Kennedy was much more concerned with what other countries thought about the United States. This was another characteristic of liberal Democrats because public opinion was one of the most important aspects of the Wilsonian legacy. Should Kennedy back down on issues which he admitted had little actual strategic importance in themselves – Laos, South Vietnam, even missiles in Cuba – he feared that other nations would begin to doubt America's resolve to wage the Cold War. In other words, if the United States simply walked away from its commitment to defend South Vietnam, what would stop other countries from doubting the American commitment in their part of the world? It is interesting to note that a harried and worried Kennedy felt that Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had put him on the defensive throughout 1961 – in Laos, Congo, Berlin, and at the June summit in Vienna – even though in every one of these confrontations the United States came out ahead or US interests were successfully defended. Khrushchev had merely given the *impression* that the Soviet Union was advancing past the United States; in reality, the reverse was true. Eisenhower had dealt with the same confrontational Khrushchev but, perhaps because he was a Republican from an older generation, he did not much care that the Soviets seemed to be dynamic and the Americans static. Eisenhower was content with actual power, not how it appeared.

Johnson's concerns about credibility were even more exaggerated than Kennedy's. Johnson was not the rube portrayed by historians critical of his handling of the Vietnam War. He may not have been as worldly or sophisticated as his predecessor, but he had an excellent grasp of diplomacy and of America's role in the world. Unsurprisingly, with the benefit of hindsight, archival openings and distance from Vietnam, recent historiography has been much kinder to Johnson.[24] Indeed, it may have been Johnson's extraordinary sensitivities to diplomacy, especially to the needs of America's Asian allies, that made him escalate the war in Vietnam. Without American support, Johnson told Senator J. William Fulbright in 1964, 'Vietnam will collapse and the ripple effect will be felt throughout Southeast Asia, endangering independent governments in Thailand, Malaysia and extending as far as India and Indonesia and the Philippines.'[25] Even more than Kennedy, Johnson thought it was vital to maintain the image of a United States that would bear any burden not because it was wise, but because it was expected. Johnson worried most of all about the psychological

dominoes that would fall – even as far away as Tokyo, Berlin and Paris – if the United States withdrew from South Vietnam. He also worried about how it would affect America's credibility with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. 'I knew that if the aggression succeeded in South Vietnam', he told a biographer, 'then the aggressors would simply keep on going until all of Southeast Asia fell into their hands, slowly or quickly, but inevitably at least down to Singapore, and almost certainly to Djakarta.' If the United States dithered, 'Moscow and Peking would be moving to expand their control and soon we'd be fighting in Berlin or elsewhere. And so would begin World War III.'[26]

Vietnam, in other words, was never important to the United States for what it was, what it possessed, or who its people were, but for what it represented within a larger, integrated system. Saving Vietnam in 1963, then, was little different from saving a lonely island in a far-flung archipelago that just happened to lie en route to Japan in 1943.

Kennedy and Johnson's appreciation of globalization also made them aware of challenges that had not normally been considered vital to foreign policy, such as world poverty, hunger, disease and the environment. For centuries, when such problems occurred outside America's borders they had been considered matters of Christian charity, not national security, and the only Americans who had cared much whether Chinese or Africans were ill-fed and poorly clothed were Protestant and Catholic missionaries. But a globalized world changed things. As historians have recently pointed out, the late 1960s and 1970s saw the re-emergence of globalization and a monumental economic shift away from industry and manufacturing towards finance, services and technological innovation.[27] Hungry Chinese and drought-stricken Africans could affect the United States by triggering a flow of refugees into neighbouring countries and destabilizing them all, or by ousting local and national governments that could cause wars. Furthermore, it seemed that instability and poverty usually gave rise to communist or leftist national movements, what Khrushchev called 'wars of national liberation' that were allied to Moscow or Beijing and hostile to Washington. 'Now the trumpet summons us again', Kennedy proclaimed in his inaugural address,

> not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need – not as a call to battle, though embattled we are – but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out . . . against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.[28]

Kennedy's words were noble, to be sure, but behind them lay colder calculations of national security.

This had not been the foreign policy of the Eisenhower administration, which had paid scant attention to development issues. But to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, they were crucial. When he entered the White House in 1961, Kennedy brought with him several foreign policy advisers, mostly academics, who had been arguing for a decade that international development was as vital to foreign policy as military affairs. These modernization theorists, led by Walt Rostow of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, concluded that the new nations emerging from the decolonizing world would be vulnerable to social and economic pressures. If the United States left them to their own devices, democratic capitalism would almost surely never take hold, especially when the Soviet Union would do everything it could to prevent it. These countries would then most likely suffer through leftist insurgency and civil war, and eventually become communist. They would ally with the Soviet Union and/or China, vote against the United States at the United Nations and foment anti-American insurrections in their regions. It was thus imperative for the United States to support Third World development by donating much larger amounts of foreign aid, extending credit and providing military assistance, equipment and training to Third World countries not already aligned with the communist world. The key was to help developing countries successfully modernize while they were still vulnerable to outside pressures and internal revolution. This was not altruism, Rostow and other modernization theorists explained, but enlightened self-interest, helping others to provide for America's long-term self-defence.[29] Kennedy needed little convincing and asked Rostow to advise him during the 1960 presidential campaign. After beating Richard Nixon, Kennedy named Rostow as his deputy national security adviser; he would later become chief of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, and eventually Johnson's national security adviser in 1966.[30]

Though it would become overshadowed by more traditional foreign policy crises in Germany, Cuba and Vietnam, Kennedy acted on Rostow's advice and made modernization theory a central aspect of American foreign policy. He would make good on his inaugural promise to 'pay any price' – literally. Aside from a general increase in foreign aid, two initiatives stand out: the Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress.[31] The first was a programme to send young Americans across the globe to assist development in poorer Third World countries; the second was

a massive effort to help Latin America spend its way into creating a stable middle class. Both were devised not as charity programmes but as antidotes to instability that would originate far away but could eventually harm the United States itself. On this, Kennedy was explicit. Every 'young American who participates in the Peace Corps', he explained at the programme's announcement in March 1961, 'will know that he or she is sharing in the great common task of bringing to man that decent way of life which is the foundation of freedom and a condition of peace'.[32] Two weeks later, at the launch of the Alliance for Progress, Kennedy observed that poverty and hunger, critical shortages in education and employment, were plaguing many Latin American nations. 'Population growth is outpacing economic growth', he noted, and as a result 'discontent is growing.' By injecting capital into Latin America, the Alliance would help meet people's 'basic needs' for 'homes, work and land, health and schools'.[33] Cuba was the most dramatic example of what would happen if problems were left to fester, with Fidel Castro promising to export communist revolution throughout the Western hemisphere.

Johnson let the Alliance languish, but he appreciated the importance of Third World development to US foreign policy nonetheless. Indeed, as the most progressive president since Franklin Roosevelt – and some historians would say Johnson was even more progressive – fighting poverty was second-nature to him. Johnson intended to stake his presidency on a sweeping programme of domestic reform he called the Great Society. But he felt the same about foreign policy. And he also shared Kennedy's concern that if the United States left social and economic problems to fester abroad, they would soon haunt Americans at home. Johnson sought to export the Great Society abroad, most notably in Vietnam, where advisers such as McGeorge Bundy and Robert Komer encouraged his belief that non-military measures could help satisfy the needs of ordinary Vietnamese and thus turn the tide against the insurgency. First, in April 1965, Johnson tried to bribe the North Vietnamese with an offer to spend over a billion dollars on developing the Mekong and Red River deltas for hydroelectric power if they gave up their support of the insurgency in South Vietnam. When Hanoi pointedly refused, Johnson launched 'the other war' in South Vietnam, using money, food, roads and consumer goods, in addition to bombs and bullets, to defeat communism.[34]

Finally, both Kennedy and Johnson were highly attuned to the way their own country, and not just its diplomacy, was perceived abroad – and how those perceptions could in turn affect US foreign policy.

Americans were long accustomed to seeing themselves as the world's standard bearers. As Johnson put it in 1966, 'the best way to judge America's foreign policy is to look at our domestic policy.'[35] It was perhaps a poor choice of words given the race riots at home and war against Asians in Vietnam, but Johnson meant it all the same. Nonetheless, because both he and Kennedy were sensitive to the fluctuations of world opinion, they were concerned with the image the United States presented to the world. Kennedy experienced this first-hand when ambassadors from newly independent African nations complained to him personally that they had been subjected to Jim Crow racism in the United States. Such concerns not only spurred Kennedy to act on civil rights at home, they also pushed him to adopt a more activist agenda on Africa.[36]

But the expansive vision of Kennedy and Johnson was not limited to a globalized world. Their world views were not merely earthly, but celestial. Combining the motivational spurs of America's scientific and economic prowess with its fear of international communism, Kennedy and Johnson launched the United States on its most ambitious project yet: a voyage to the moon. Space exploration would counter the Soviets' emerging intercontinental missile and satellite programmes and ensure American dominance in what many thought would be the next realm of international relations. This bold leap into the distant unknown represented the biggest expansion of the American mental map since Woodrow Wilson sailed for Europe in 1919.

Kennedy announced his intentions in a self-styled 'second State of the Union' address in May 1961. While the State of the Union was traditionally 'an annual affair', Kennedy explained, 'this tradition has been broken in extraordinary times. These are extraordinary times. And we face an extraordinary challenge. Our strength as well as our convictions have imposed upon this nation the role of leader in freedom's cause.' Worldwide, particularly in the Third World, the communists were on the march, and the United States risked falling dangerously behind. Led by the Soviet Union, the united communist forces of the world

> possess a powerful intercontinental striking force, large forces for conventional war, a well-trained underground in nearly every country, the power to conscript talent and manpower for any purpose, the capacity for quick decisions, a closed society without dissent or free information, and long experience in the techniques of violence and subversion.

Against these powerful forces of darkness, Kennedy pledged that Americans would 'stand, as we have always stood from our earliest beginnings, for the independence and equality of all nations. This nation was born of revolution and raised in freedom. And we do not intend to leave an open road for despotism.'

But what was the solution? Kennedy promised that the problem could be solved, but also warned that there was 'no single simple policy' that would win the Cold War. Instead, America had to implement several complementary measures in all realms of national life: economic, political, cultural, military, diplomatic and scientific. And the culmination of all these would be a national space programme, an endeavour matched only by the Manhattan Project in terms of its ambition and difficulty. Still, Kennedy believed that Americans had no choice but to embark upon an exploration of space. With the Soviets seemingly ahead with their own space programme, exemplified by the launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957, it was a matter of national security. If 'we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny', Kennedy warned, Americans must pursue 'dramatic achievements in space . . . Now it is time to take longer strides – time for a great new American enterprise – time for this nation to take a clearly leading role in space achievement, which in many ways may hold the key to our future on earth.' Failure to do so would be tantamount to surrender in the Cold War. The Soviets had already made great gains, and the United States had much to do to catch up. While 'we cannot guarantee that we shall one day be first' in the space race, 'we can guarantee that any failure to make this effort will make us last.' And with that, Kennedy vowed the United States would land a man on the moon before the end of the decade, and return him home safely to Earth. It was a colossal undertaking, but the dictates of national security left Americans with no other choice. As Kennedy put it a year later in a speech to the students of Rice University in Houston, an institution that was deeply tied to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and its stewardship of the space programme, 'the coming age of space' would determine the world's future. And Americans

> mean to be a part of it – we mean to lead it. For the eyes of the world now look into space, to the moon and to the planets beyond, and we have vowed that we shall not see it governed by a hostile flag of conquest, but by a banner of freedom and peace.[37]

As with the commitment to a non-communist South Vietnam, Johnson vowed to continue Kennedy's extension of national security into outer space. As vice president, Johnson had been chairman of the National Space Council. And as a Texan, he understood the economic importance of government spending on research and development for NASA, headquartered in Houston, and for universities, such as Texas, Texas A&M and Rice, that had strong science and engineering departments. But Johnson also understood intuitively, as he did on Vietnam, the importance Kennedy had ascribed to extending America's first line of defence into the heavens as well as all over the Earth. Indeed, if anything, Johnson felt it more acutely than Kennedy ever had. In May 1963, while still vice president, he declared, 'I do not think this generation of Americans is willing to go to bed each night by the light of a Communist moon.'[38] A year later, now president, Johnson told an audience in St Louis that he would 'fight Communism' everywhere, including through 'the exploration of outer space'.[39]

But the Cuban Missile Crisis had spurred another development in the Cold War: détente. Frightened at their nuclear near-miss and determined never to come so close to war again, Kennedy and Khrushchev began exploring ways to smooth superpower tensions so they would never lead to war.[40] After Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and Khrushchev's ouster a year later, Johnson enthusiastically pursued superpower détente on his own even while he escalated the Vietnam War.[41] The fate of the world depended upon the ability of Washington and Moscow to behave responsibly, everywhere. National security demanded that tensions be managed so that nuclear war would not threaten human existence. Though Vietnam continued to pose problems, Johnson endeavoured to work with the Soviets in Europe and elsewhere, including in space. 'I earnestly hope', he revealed in 1966, 'that the Soviet Union – whose space achievements have been very great – will feel as we feel in America: that the rapid evolution of space technology makes early conclusion of a treaty between us governing the use of space a most urgent matter,' because 'it is a matter of the highest common interest, for the future peace of the world and the security of all men may very well be at stake as a result of our efforts.'[42] Within a year, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Outer Space Treaty that guaranteed the denuclearization of space and the demilitarization of the moon. And two years after that Neil Armstrong fulfilled the Kennedy–Johnson vision by becoming the first human to set foot on the surface of the moon. This was a logical terminus for a world view that had expanded without limit.

Notes

1. On the influence which a globalized, 'shrinking' world had on U.S. foreign policy in the early twentieth century, see A. Iriye, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations*, vol. III, *The Globalizing of America, 1913–1945* (Cambridge, 1993); F. Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, 1994), xi–xviii, 1–68; F. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy since 1900* (Chicago, 1999), esp. 12–14, 17–25; D. Ryan, *US Foreign Policy in World History* (London, 2000), 73–93; and M. H. Hunt, *The American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Wielded Global Dominance* (Chapel Hill, 2007), 48–51, 68–69. On the increasingly global context of U.S. foreign policy during this period, see T. Smith, *The Pattern of Imperialism: The United States, Great Britain, and the Late-Industrializing World since 1815* (Cambridge, 1981); and E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York, 2007). On how the United States was both situated within and affected by the world system in this era, see T. Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York, 2006), 182–295.
2. R. Lansing, *Notes on Sovereignty: From the Standpoint of the State and of the World* (New York, 1921), 56.
3. There are many biographies of Kennedy, but I have especially relied on R. Dallek, *An Unfinished Life: John F. Kennedy, 1917–1963* (Boston, 2003).
4. Of the many Johnson biographies, I have found the following to be most useful for his early life: R. Dallek, *Lone Star Rising: Lyndon B. Johnson and His Times, 1908–1960* (New York, 1991); and R. B. Woods, *LBJ: Architect of American Ambition* (New York, 2006).
5. See M. S. Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power: The Creation of Armageddon* (New Haven, 1987); G. C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York, 2008), 538–94; and J. A. Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA, 2007).
6. See especially Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power*; and Ninkovich, *Wilsonian Century*.
7. On the foreign exchange of culture and social thought among transatlantic progressives in this period, see J. T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (New York, 1986); and D. T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA, 1998).
8. For the competing worldviews of modernists and fundamentalists, see, respectively, J. S. Nurser, *For All Peoples and All Nations: The Ecumenical Church and Human Rights* (Washington, 2005); and M. Ruotsila, *The Origins of Christian Anti-Internationalism: Conservative Evangelicalism and the League of Nations* (Washington, DC, 2008).
9. E. Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).
10. R. A. Divine, *Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II* (New York, 1967).

11. For the influence of partisan politics on the framing and making of U.S. foreign policy, see C. Craig and F. Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA, 2009).
12. On the unprecedentedly worldwide scale of the Cold War, see especially O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2005).
13. On the links between foreign policy and domestic anti-communist ideology, see M. P. Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1994).
14. Within the vast literature, see especially S. J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 1996); and R. M. Fried, *The Russians Are Coming! The Russians Are Coming! Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold War America* (New York, 1998).
15. S. Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War against Nazi Germany* (New York, 2001); S. Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950–1953* (New York, 2008).
16. See A. L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, 2000).
17. J. F. Kennedy, 'Inaugural Address', 20 January 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1961*, 1 (hereafter *PPP*).
18. F. J. Gavin, 'The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe during the 1960s', *International History Review*, 23 (2001): 847–75.
19. On 'flexible response' and the Kennedy crises, see, respectively, J. L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, rev. ed. (New York, 2005), 198–236; and L. Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York, 2000).
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14
Nikita Khrushchev

Matthias Uhl (translated by Jonathan Wright)

At the end of a conversation with Nikita Khrushchev in January 1956, the American jurist Marshall MacDuffie expressed his astonishment at the small size of the United States on the map in Khrushchev's study – at home, the United States would look different and would certainly be placed at the centre. The Soviet party leader responded that, naturally, in a map in his place of work 'the USA would not stand at the centre'.[1]

That was, of course, not correct. The United States represented the yardstick for the Kremlin leader and stood at the centre of all his thinking. It was the leading capitalist power in the class struggle as well as the main opponent in the competition for influence, economic power and technological leadership. Again and again Khrushchev considered the United States – despite its 'imperialist decadence' – as the unchallenged point of reference. At times, the 'role' of the United States as 'leading the way' took grotesque forms. Although in public he was triumphant in May 1960 over the shooting down of the CIA U-2 spy plane, in secret the Soviet party and state chief ordered an exact replica to be built of the American 'miracle bird'.[2]

Whereas Stalin's policy was characterized above all by concentration on Europe, his successor Khrushchev enlarged the area of conflict with the imperialist system to the globe. It soon became apparent, however, that even this sphere of competition between the systems was too small for the Soviet party leader. With the launching of Sputnik on 4 October 1957, Khrushchev carried the 'battle' between capitalism and socialism into the cosmos.

Like Stalin, Khrushchev was enthused by technology. Moreover, as leader of the Soviet party and state, he rapidly grasped the new possibilities offered by a combination of rocket and nuclear technologies. Whereas after his assumption of power he had still favoured enormous

long-distance bombers and airfields in the Arctic to overcome the geographical distance to the United States, the designer Sergey P. Korolev provided him in the intercontinental missile with a weapon which met his boldest dreams. Now it was possible to project unprecedented military power over almost unlimited distances. As a result, Khrushchev believed it would be possible to achieve specific political demands from the West and its leading power, the United States, by using the threat of military force.

As the Suez Crisis had already showed, and later the Berlin and Cuban missile crises, Soviet foreign policy had changed crucially from that of Stalin. Military threats towards the West became an important link between military potential and foreign policy goals and thereby the dominant characteristic of the new Kremlin leader's foreign policy.

That Khrushchev's views were shaped less by the trenches of the Second World War than by the technical discoveries of the twentieth century, and that he saw himself as the first Soviet player on the global stage, is also clear from the way in which he allowed the Soviet Union to become active for the first time on almost all the world's continents. He constantly sought new partners in Asia, Africa and America, as supporters in the ideological contest with capitalism, so as to reach his main goal – to demonstrate the superiority of socialism throughout the world and in all areas of society, the economy, technology, sport and culture.

However, with this policy Khrushchev overstretched the limits of the Soviet Union's capacity to act. Because he did not succeed in a real modernization of society, and above all the economy, and because he dissipated his energies in contesting countless areas with the West, his ambitious policy was bound to fail. His successor Brezhnev therefore drew back again, as 1968 showed, primarily to the preservation of the Soviet empire.

Childhood, youth and political beginnings

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was born on 17 April 1894 in the Russian–Ukrainian frontier village of Kalinovka. The boy grew up here in a poor peasant family. His parents laboured as agricultural workers on the estate of the Schaufuss family, who came originally from the Baltic. As, however, their earnings were not sufficient for survival, from the time that Nikita was six, his father worked in the coal mines of Yuzovka (now Donetsk) which the Welshman, John Hughes, had erected together with metal works some 400 kilometres south-east of Kalinovka.

Khrushchev's later enthusiasm for technology must have originated in part from here.

The boy received his education first under the influence of his mother, who was a strong believer in the parochial church school, where he was given instruction mainly in religious subjects. He learned to read and write through the Bible. A little later the boy became one of the best pupils at the village state school, where a teacher called Lydia Shevchenko had great influence on him. This young atheist and would-be rebel impressed Khrushchev so greatly that 50 years later he invited her to the Kremlin.[3]

From her he also received his first political education and access to prohibited literature. There was though not much time in which to learn as he attended the school for only two whole years. Moreover, school took place only from November to February because in the spring and summer the children had to help in the fields. Once the young Nikita could count to 30 his father took him out of school since 'he could never have more than thirty roubles to count anyway.'[4] All his life Khrushchev felt the stigma of his lack of education, and right up to old age he continued to try to fill the gaps by teaching himself.

His picture of the world around him was early on shaped much less by the village environment, where he tended the cattle and sheep of the landowner to contribute to the family income, than by the industrialization of the Donetsk basin. Several times he went with his father by rail to Yuzovka so that at 14 – even though it required changing trains twice – he found his way there alone. In this way he got used to travelling early, and covering the long distances expanded his horizon. Attracted by the machines and technology, he was drawn to the mines, where to begin with he cleaned boilers. At 15, against the will of his father, he was apprenticed as a fitter in the mining town which was at the heart of the Tsarist industrial landscape. Here too the young man showed himself highly talented and keen to learn. He even built himself a motorbike from pieces of scrap metal.

In 1912 he took part in a strike for the first time and lost his job. He then thought briefly of emigrating to the United States, which shows that, despite his limited education, he had a clear picture of the world and for the first time compared his own experience of Russia to the distant continent. However, he soon found another job and a little later he married and became the father of two children. During the First World War he was indispensable as a skilled worker and exempted from military service.

With the revolution of 1917, his life too was transformed. He got to know Lazar Kaganovich, the local Bolshevik leader and later companion of Stalin, and aspired to a political career himself. First, he decided to join the Red Army as a volunteer to fight the troops of General Kaledin. The adventure ended less than heroically when the small force had to retreat before the advancing German army and the young revolutionary had to hide for several months in his home village. In summer 1918 he joined the Communist Party and was once again conscripted into the Red Army. In the fighting against Denikin with the 9th Army he covered more than 1000 kilometres from the Don basin to the Black Sea coast and rose from being leader of a party group to the political commissar of a battalion. At the same time, after attending a short course in July 1920, he became an instructor in the political department of the army of the Kuban region.

At the end of 1920 Khrushchev returned to the Donbas and found a post as the deputy director of the mine in which he had himself worked before the First World War. A short time later his wife died of typhus and he had to care for the children. This was probably the reason why he decided to study at the newly established Mining Technical College in Yuzovka. In fact, there was little time for the study of mining as he was soon appointed party secretary of the college. In 1922 and 1923 he took part in local and regional party congresses and through his activism and energy he attracted the attention of the higher echelons of the party.

After a brief second marriage had come apart, in 1924 Khrushchev married the Ukrainian, Nina Kukharchuk.[5] Nina remained loyal to him to the end of his life, gave him three children and shared with him all the perils on his path to power.

Party career

In 1925 Khrushchev finally became a small cog in the party machine. As party secretary of the Petrovo-Marinsky district he was responsible for 715 party members. Already, in this job, he was seldom at his desk. As district secretary he was constantly on the move, engaged in agitation and propaganda. Clearly, information about the rapid success of the young party worker reached Moscow, for at the end of December, aged 31, he was invited to be a delegate to the 14th party congress in the Soviet capital. Here he met Stalin for the first time and became an ardent supporter of the rising dictator. Khrushchev showed his loyalty to Stalin by persecuting followers of Trotsky. He was rewarded with

attending another party congress and in 1928 being transferred to the party organization of the Ukrainian capital, Kiev.

Shortly afterwards, his former political mentor, Kaganovich, moved to Moscow, and Khrushchev soon followed him. In 1929 he was admitted to the elite school of the Industrial Academy, in which experienced party members were trained to be technicians and engineers. Here, too, he did not have much time for study as once again he was soon appointed party secretary of the institution. Despite tough competition, the young party official's career continued to progress surprisingly rapidly in Moscow. In 1931 he was appointed party secretary of the city's Baumann district, and in January 1932 second secretary of the Moscow party organization. In this capacity he was responsible not only for the work of the party organization but also for supervising the two great construction projects of the capital – the Moscow-Volga canal, built by forced labour, and the Moscow Underground, the Metro. For this work he was decorated with the Order of Lenin.

In 1934, finally as a member of the party's Central Committee, he joined the circle of top officials around the party leadership. His prominent position was confirmed by his appointment as Moscow region party secretary at the beginning of 1935. During the great purges, when thousands upon thousands ended their lives shot by the secret police (NKVD) or in the Gulag, Khrushchev showed his adherence to Stalin once more, denouncing even his closest colleagues and former associates. He was rewarded for his loyalty, becoming a full member of the Politburo in 1939, one year after he had been appointed to head the party in the Ukraine.[6]

Here, his task was to get the party, state and economic organization moving again after the purges. From the autumn of 1939 he was also responsible for the 'liberated' areas of Poland which had fallen to the Soviet Union as a result of the Hitler–Stalin pact. The German attack on the Soviet Union marked a new stage in his restless life. As a political commissar and representative of the party leadership, he was to be found at almost all the decisive fronts and battles of the war.

He experienced in Kiev the first serious defeat of the Red Army and for the first time felt himself in conflict with Stalin, who refused to withdraw his troops even when the city risked being surrounded by the enemy. Khrushchev also let Stalin know his experience of the first months of the war. In February 1942 he criticized the short-sighted military planning as too mechanical and narrowly conceived. For example, troops had not known how to proceed once they reached the positions

they had been ordered to take, after a successful offensive, as further instructions were simply lacking.[7]

A little later Khrushchev was involved in both the struggle for Stalingrad and the tank battle of Kursk. Finally, he pushed forward with the Red Army again into the Ukraine and entered liberated Kiev with Soviet troops. Overall, during the war, he had experienced more than any other Soviet party leader, and at close quarters, the horror of battle and witnessed the gruesome reality of the German war of liquidation in different parts of the country. At the same time, in countless journeys, he visited almost ever corner of the European part of the Soviet Union. Whereas Stalin never flew during his whole life, the flight record of Khrushchev's personal pilot for 1941–44 shows that he took 93 flights in this period and was in the air for more than 228 hours.[8] Journeys and travelling long distances were essential to Khrushchev's activity, since he usually wanted to see the situation at first hand. The experience of war also had a further influence on his political career. He had seen very clearly that the Soviet Union had been saved neither by the genius of Stalin nor that of his generals but by the bloody and wasteful commitment of the mass of the population.

After the end of the war, Khrushchev, as Ukrainian party secretary, again carried the political responsibility for rebuilding the Ukraine, for taking measures against starvation and for the continuing battle against Ukrainian nationalists. From 16 December 1949 to 7 September 1953 finally Khrushchev occupied the post of secretary of the Central Committee and from 1950 head of its agriculture department. After a conflict with Stalin over so-called 'agro-cities' in spring 1951, he lost that function and was responsible for party organization. At the same time he held the office of first secretary of the Moscow region party organization. When Stalin died as a result of a stroke in March 1953, Khrushchev belonged to the innermost circle of the Soviet leadership, even if his chances were hardly rated in the coming struggle for power.[9]

Rise and fall of the first secretary

Khrushchev was numbered among the handful of those closest to Stalin, but not among those directly in line to succeed him. Brought back by Stalin from the Ukraine in 1949 as Moscow party chief, he was expected to have influence on the power game in the Kremlin but not a decisive one. The secret police chief, Lavrenti Beria, and Georgi Malenkov, who led the party's personnel department, were considered to be the most powerful contenders.

But both claimants to the throne saw themselves outmanoeuvred in the following months by the surprise candidate. Khrushchev first used the fear felt by all the top comrades towards Beria to organize a plot against Stalin's most reliable hangman. On 26 June 1953 he had Beria arrested – still completely on Stalin's model – as an agent of imperialism and at the end of the year shot after a secret trial.

Malenkov, despite his close relations to the secret police chief, supported Khrushchev, but then made a fatal mistake by declining a seat in the secretariat of the Central Committee in order to be prime minister. But it was soon apparent that power lay with the party not the state. So Khrushchev, as first secretary of the party from 13 September 1953, was able gradually to displace Malenkov and in February 1955 to force his resignation as prime minister. Later, Khrushchev connected the ouster of Beria and Malenkov to their alleged betrayal of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). In a conversation with the GDR party chief, Walter Ulbricht, in November 1960, he declared: 'Malenkov and Beria wanted to liquidate the GDR, but we got rid of one and shot the other and declared our support for socialist Germany.'[10]

Khrushchev had his economic programme to thank for his new popularity, for after Stalin's death it was finally possible to readjust the economic priorities. Above all, there was a strong demand to overcome the food shortage. Khrushchev realized clearly the advantages of such a policy. But he also saw the opposition that such a change of course would arouse, above all from the armed forces and other groups who continued to give priority to heavy industry and the defence sector. With his virgin lands plan, he proposed something which appeared to make both objectives possible. The previously uncultivated steppes on the far side of the southern Volga offered the greatest gain from the least investment to make better provision for the Soviet people's needs. Almost 100 million hectares of arable land were to be won that way. When on 2 March 1954 the Central Committee took the decision, the party chief was sure that he had almost succeeded in squaring the circle. Full of pride, he told a delegation of French socialists 'That in terms of production costs the cheapest bread came precisely from the virgin land territories.'[11]

Khrushchev's further rise to power was bound up with his campaign of de-Stalinization. With his violent criticism of Stalin at the 20th party congress, Khrushchev took the bull by the horns. He wanted to cleanse the Soviet version of socialism from the stains of Stalinist excesses so as to awake new enthusiasm for the true goals of the communist project. Khrushchev saw himself as one of the last believers to hold fast to

the Bolshevik legacy. This had less to do with fanatical idealism and Marxist–Leninist ideology; rather his sense of mission sprang from his instinctive feeling for social justice inherited from his peasant origins. During his whole career in the party, Khrushchev had never forgotten the promise of Lenin's revolution: a life worth living for all and peace for the war-weary population. He therefore proceeded, with the greatest of self-confidence, in the belief that the old rotten capitalist world was inevitably doomed and a new bright communist future would inevitably take its place.[12]

In 1960, for instance, the Kremlin chief confidently asserted to the Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, that by 1964 a six-hour day would have been adopted in the Soviet Union. That would be possible because the present growth rate was 7 per cent and in some sectors even 10–11 per cent. Since the American economy was growing by only 2 per cent, they would have caught up with the United States by 1970 and would be producing twice as much by 1980.[13] Therefore, the day was not far off when no one in the Soviet Union would be materially worse off than a middle-class American.[14]

His further economic reforms, which aimed at a controversial decentralization of industrial planning and direction, also served this goal. These reform attempts brought his old opponents on to the scene and he could maintain his position only with the greatest difficulty against the 'antiparty group', led by Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov, who attempted to oust him.

In the years following, Khrushchev was at the zenith of his power. An obvious sign of his dominance was that in March 1958 he took over from Bulganin the position of prime minister as well. For the first time since Lenin, the party and state leadership was again united in one person. Khrushchev wanted to use the new power to advance reforms for the construction of a communist society. When, however, despite all his efforts success failed to materialize, his star began to sink. The unfulfilled promises of a rising living standard not only made Khrushchev the butt of social ridicule but also led to violent mass unrest in the south Russian industrial city of Novocherkassk. Because of the general food crisis, Khrushchev had felt forced to raise prices by up to 35 per cent, while at the same time wages were noticeably cut.

The protest was crushed with bloodshed but the decline of the man at the top continued unchecked. Agricultural yields remained far below expectations, since the extensive cultivation of the steppes meant that, because of the climate conditions, the soil was overworked, with the result that harvests continually produced less. What had succeeded in

Canada, failed in the Soviet Union because in the Soviet Union rapid success was sought instead of careful cultivation and large investment. The general secretary had quite simply underestimated the climatic conditions in the south of the Soviet Union, where wind and drought destroyed what had been laboriously planted. In addition, Khrushchev's favourite crop, maize, failed. With his usual audacity, not to say lightheadedness, he had placed his hopes on maize in order to raise meat production. Already in 1956 he went into raptures about how even in the polar circle one hectare of maize would produce up to 400 hundredweight of silage, and how much milk, smetana and butter one could make from that. Where wheat or barley would grow, one could just as easily plant maize.[15] So the Kremlin chief had 'sausage on stalks' planted where earlier grain had been grown and its production was now moved out to Kazakhstan and Siberia. But once more it turned out that the 'peasant' Khrushchev had underestimated the role of climate. The maize ripened only on 7 million hectares out of the total of 37 million and for the rest it was harvested green. So there were soon inadequate supplies of both maize and grain. The consequence was that in 1963, for the first time for 20 years, the Soviet Union had to buy grain again from the class enemy and chief opponent, the United States, which badly damaged the prestige of the Kremlin chief.

The Soviet Union had in any case suffered humiliation in its foreign policy from the United States in the autumn of the previous year, in the Cuban missile crisis. When Khrushchev subsequently tried to divide the party into separate strands for industry and agriculture, the organizational chaos was complete. Khrushchev had increasingly forgotten the strength, which had made his rise possible, 'the ability to gather around him a strong clientele in the "party apparatuses" and to satisfy their wishes'.[16] He may have wanted his reforms to serve the goal of satisfying the needs of the masses, but in this he increasingly overrode the interests of influential groups in the party, state, economy and army. With his lack of caution and realism, and his erratic decision-making, he offended opponents in key political and social groups who now, despite all their differences, found common ground in the failure of Khrushchev's reforms.

With Brezhnev and Nikolai Podgorny in the lead, his opponents, wanting to provide security and positions for their clientele, planned well in advance to oust him. On 13 October 1964, he was ordered back from holiday to Moscow, where the top party leadership presented him with the decision to dismiss him. That was confirmed the following day by the Central Committee. Nonetheless, the extent to which the former

general secretary had de-Stalinized the Soviet Union was apparent as, for the first time, a party leader had been forced out of office without heads rolling. On the contrary, Khrushchev was able to retire with a pension of 550 roubles and write his memoirs.

New directions in foreign policy

Until Stalin's death, Khrushchev had never had anything to do with foreign policy. He explained in October 1962 to the US ambassador Foy D. Kohler:

> Stalin – that was his misfortune and his sickness – trusted no one completely, even if they were very close to him. He had certain secrets from me too. . . . He shared neither his ideas nor his plans. . . . With the exception of Molotov, we were all kept at a distance in questions of foreign policy. I never received or read any documents on those issues. . . . I never met foreigners. That kind of thing would have been regarded almost as treason.[17]

Khrushchev was, therefore, almost self-taught in the sphere of diplomacy as well. Nevertheless, this did not prevent him from finding himself at home in this new role with his usual speed. Thanks to him, the ponderous operation of Soviet diplomacy was transformed into a vigorous, and even sometimes imaginative, foreign policy, which was, however, also at times a constant gamble.

Under Khrushchev, Soviet foreign policy changed decisively. There were, of course, some basic continuities. Like Stalin, the new Soviet party chief tried to strengthen the power and influence of communism worldwide and to consolidate the power of the Soviet Union. At the same time, however, the Soviet Union became under his leadership a true world power. Its new self-confidence was drawn above all from the successful launch of Sputnik and other technological successes and its rise to being a proper nuclear power, and also the disintegration of the European colonies and the rise of independent states in Asia and Africa. In addition, as a result of the constant travels of the Kremlin chief – during his period in office he made 53 visits to 23 countries – the Soviet Union became recognized as a global player on the international stage.

However, Khrushchev also made it clear – as the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 showed – that he would not tolerate any rebellion against the socialist order, although he compared his own inner struggle over the decision to invade with Stalin's struggle to decide on

the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.[18] The European sphere which the Soviet Union had conquered after the Second World War was to remain under Soviet hegemony in all circumstances. The massive scale of the Soviet intervention is clear from the simple fact that about 120,000 Soviet soldiers were sent in against just 60,000 rebels.[19] During the fighting, 2652 Hungarians lost their lives and 19,226 were wounded. The Soviet side also paid a high price in securing its hold on the region – 720 officers and men dead, 1540 wounded and 51 missing. The political cost was still greater. The Soviet party chief lost his reputation as a reformer and détente suffered a serious setback, marking the beginning of its decline.[20]

Fearing for his dominance in the Eastern bloc, the Kremlin chief viewed with great scepticism the cautious attempts of individual Eastern bloc countries to establish contact with the West. He assumed that in the short or long term the Warsaw Pact would in any case be victorious in the conflict between the two systems:

> We are not against establishing contact with socialist countries in individual cases, between Poland and Czechoslovakia with France. On the contrary, we have ourselves recommended establishing such relations and using them in the interests of socialism. When however our countries establish contact with capitalist lands, we should prick up our ears. . . . One has to watch closely to see who is beating whom. We think that we – the socialist states – will win this game.[21]

Under Khrushchev, the Soviet Union identified itself with new élan with the revolutionary movements in Africa, Asia and South America. In October 1961, the new party programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) allotted an important role to the young sovereign states in the global conflict between imperialism and socialism. It assumed that, above all, the American position in Asia had been weakened and that here the Soviet Union could certainly make its influence felt.[22]

The Soviet sense of its special mission – as ambitious as it was ambivalent – was also to be seen in Khrushchev's new official diplomacy. In 1960 his international actions were marked by his participation in the debates of the 15th United Nations General Assembly, which attracted wide media attention and world publicity. As the leading figure in Soviet diplomacy, he behaved as though there was a natural alliance between the Second and Third Worlds. However, he clearly underestimated the importance of the Third World's own self-interest.[23]

Soviet foreign policy under Stalin had concentrated essentially on extending and controlling the territory around it, but under Khrushchev the Soviet Union made its influence felt in almost all important international crises on whichever continent they were to be found. The Soviet Union's gradual emergence as a nuclear power, above all, made this policy possible. With strategic missiles, it disposed of a weapon which allowed it to project military power to a previously unknown extent and to use it for its foreign policy goals.

During the Suez Crisis, Khrushchev first used the potential threat of Soviet military power for his foreign policy ambitions towards the West. Together with Bulganin, as head of the Soviet government, he openly threatened France and Britain with nuclear missiles. A short time later, in March 1957, the Soviet Union warned Denmark and Norway in advance of nuclear attack should these countries provide bases for the remote-controlled nuclear weapons of their NATO partners. In the Syrian crisis of the same year, the USSR again threatened to use nuclear missiles. The list of such Soviet attempts at blackmail can be continued almost at will.[24]

Khrushchev even threatened nuclear destruction in a confidential letter to President Kennedy on 24 July 1961, at the height of the Berlin Crisis:

> We know that when a war breaks out there will be nothing left of West Germany, no stone left standing. One must draw the right conclusions from that and not play with war or terrify anyone. France, Britain, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Norway, Denmark, Holland etc. are all in the same situation. What will become of these small lands given the destructive capacity of thermonuclear weapons? Nobody will remain to carry away the corpses, there will be nothing but ashes. You can say that the Soviet Union will also be affected. Yes, we will suffer colossal damage and loss, as will the USA. The United States has never conducted a war on its territory, it just threatens others, attacks them and interferes with them. It may be therefore that your people cannot imagine the consequences of this war properly. But when the USA is involved in the war, then you will experience on your territory what war means, for modern technology knows no distances, no seas, no oceans, for it there are no obstacles.[25]

Khrushchev's threats marked a decisive change in Soviet foreign policy. Whereas Stalin mostly refrained from express threats towards the West and relied on the fact of strong Soviet conventional forces, Khrushchev

now settled for a close connection between nuclear weapons and foreign policy.[26] Military threats towards the West became, as Hannes Adomeit pointed out, 'an important link between the military potential and the goals of foreign policy and a dominant characteristic of Khrushchev's foreign policy'.[27]

The fact that during the Suez Crisis and afterwards the Soviet party chief was only bluffing was at first not understood by the West's secret services. For in fact the first strategic nuclear missiles began to be introduced into the armed forces of the USSR only in 1958. Even these missiles could hit only European goals, and the first intercontinental missiles capable of action of the type R-7A were available only from 1960.[28]

This was also the main problem facing Khrushchev during the whole second Berlin Crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis. He had succeeded in re-establishing his absolute dominance in the party and, therefore, also in the army,[29] but he lacked the military power necessary to carry out his foreign policy ambitions and to ensure Soviet security. Although the Soviet party and state leadership committed themselves from the mid-1950s to the rapid construction of strategic nuclear weapons and devoted huge resources to the programme, there still remained an imbalance in favour of conventional forces. This confronted Khrushchev with the dilemma that as a result of the enduring strategic inferiority of the Soviet Union in comparison to the United States, his military lever was always too short to achieve his far-reaching political goals. This cardinal problem ran like a red thread through the whole of Khrushchev's policy during the Berlin and Cuban Missile Crises.

The West showed itself increasingly unimpressed by the Soviet policy of threats and made it clear to the Kremlin chief that the understanding which he wanted would not be possible this way. That was seen in a conversation between Khrushchev and the New Zealand prime minister, Walter Nash. As the Kremlin chief repeatedly threatened 'that Britain will simply be destroyed', the New Zealander remarked soberly, 'The possibility of such a perspective should not lead our discussions. One cannot face the partner with the choice – either you agree to my proposals or you will be destroyed.'[30]

Khrushchev's mental map in crisis situations

When in his speech as head of the CPSU on 10 November 1958 and the ultimatum presented on 27 November Khrushchev set off the second Berlin Crisis,[31] he wanted to get rid of the problem of West Berlin

as the 'shop window' and obtain a peace treaty giving the GDR recognition in international law. Allied troops would leave West Berlin and the GDR would become fully sovereign over its territory, including control of the transit routes to West Berlin. Khrushchev's assumption was clearly that the Western powers would accept his proposal, would not risk war for Berlin and ultimately would give in. Together with establishing the political status of the East German state, Khrushchev intended to increase his own prestige by the peace treaty and, above all, to secure the East German state once and for all as part of the Soviet sphere of influence.[32] For as he had said to Tito already in 1956, 'Our people lost much blood defeating the enemy and we will not allow East Germany to be taken from us. The imperialists are calculating on uniting Germany to create as a result an aggressive, militarist Germany which would threaten the socialist states.'[33]

Khrushchev already had a clear assessment of the military situation when he started the Berlin conflict. Despite knowing his strategic inferiority, he believed at the beginning of the crisis in his political strength. He saw the actual use of military power to back up his Berlin demands as a secondary problem. Confirmed in the impression he had gained at Geneva in 1955 that the United States was more afraid of the Soviet Union than the Soviet Union of the United States, and his false conclusion from the Suez Crisis that the threat of nuclear attack had not only caused the military withdrawal of Great Britain and France but also prevented US intervention, he assumed that his political goals in respect of Berlin could be achieved by threats and bluff alone.[34]

Khrushchev, therefore, thought that he could to a large extent do without military and defence preparations for his 27 November 1958 Berlin ultimatum. This was a dangerous misjudgment. On 19 November, the former chief of military intelligence and now Soviet military attaché in the GDR, Colonel General Mikhail A. Schalin, warned the Kremlin chief against an ill-considered Berlin policy. He advised that while Britain and France 'would consent to withdraw their forces from West Berlin if the Soviet and East German governments acted decisively, the USA would resist'.[35] Western diplomats too had formed the impression from personal conversations with the Soviet leader 'that Khrushchev dangerously misjudges real situation' when he believed 'that it was unthinkable . . . that West would fight over Berlin'.[36] Khrushchev did not change his view, however, that it would be possible to force the Western allies to withdraw from Berlin simply by threatening nuclear war. Undeterred by objections from the Soviet foreign ministry and also from close friends and advisers, the Soviet leader

believed unconditionally in the success of his risky gamble.[37] Here it was evident that Khrushchev, despite all his efforts, was incapable from his cultural background of putting himself into the position of the West.

When he set off the second Berlin Crisis, Khrushchev was fully aware of how very inferior the Soviet Union was in military terms compared with the United States. Above all, in strategic weapons the Soviet army had little to set against the United States. In the summer of 1958, almost the whole weight of the nuclear attack capacity of the USSR was in the hands of long-distance bombers. The total strength of the air force shortly before the beginning of the Berlin conflict was 308 bombers with nuclear weapons with an explosive power of 200 kilotons of TNT. Only 18 of these, though, were capable of reaching the territory of the United States.[38] A further 199 aircraft were able to drop nuclear bombs of one to two megatons, but of these only 17 Tupolev TU-95 and 36 Myasishchev 3M could operate over the United States. These 71 strategic bombers constituted, at the beginning of the Berlin conflict, the entire Soviet threat potential against the United States.[39] That the number of Soviet intercontinental bombers would not increase significantly during the Berlin dispute was already clear to Khrushchev and the Soviet leadership at the beginning of the crisis. By the end of 1960 the number of available strategic bombers had risen to at most just over 100.[40] In comparison, in the same year, on average 122 bombers and tankers of the US Strategic Air Command patrolled the skies every day and an air refuelling took place every 6.8 minutes.[41]

On the other hand, the potential of intercontinental missiles – so often advertised in numerous speeches – which were capable of attack, was in fact still less. In the spring of 1959, despite all the Soviet efforts, it was nil. Although the Soviet leadership presented the first successful test – after many failed attempts – of an R-7 missile a few days later to the world as the successful start of an 'intercontinental multi-stage ballistic distance missile',[42] the Kremlin knew that a usable weapon was still a long way off.

At the end of the 1950s, the Soviet navy was also not in a position to exercise significant influence on the United States and its allies. Despite extensive armaments programmes and a fleet of more than 460 submarines, the Soviet naval forces were scarcely more than a mere coastal navy. It was only in 1955 that one Soviet submarine dared for the first time to undertake a 30-day operation into the Norwegian Sea and shadow the NATO ships there. In the summer of 1956, two submarines from the Pacific fleet for the first time got near to the Midway Atoll.

As the ships used for this operation were, however, largely unsuitable for these southern latitudes – it was not uncommon for the temperature inside the ships to reach over 50 degrees – at the end of the voyage 122 members of the crew had to be decommissioned from active service because of cardiovascular problems. In 1957 three submarines of the northern fleet operated for the first time in the Atlantic, and a Soviet submarine crossed the equator for the first time in the Pacific. In 1958 a Soviet submarine did the same in the Atlantic, and Soviet naval forces came within reach of the US navy submarine defence system. Between November 1958 and January 1959, a submarine operated off the American east coast, while in the western Atlantic two further submarines were on joint patrol. Therefore, it is scarcely surprising that it was not before May 1959 that the US navy detected a Soviet submarine in the seas around Iceland and forced it to surface.[43]

Unfavourable as the total strategic situation was for the USSR, the tactical situation around Berlin favoured the Soviet forces. With the available Soviet and East German strength, the city could have been sealed off or blockaded at any time if required.[44] Any attempt by the Allies to relieve West Berlin by land with a convoy under military protection could also have been prevented by Soviet troops and their East German allies thanks to their superior forces: 'The United States does not have military capability to enforce continuous access to Berlin or the maintenance of our rights there.'[45]

The strategic resources of the Soviet forces in the GDR to support its first ultimatum were, however, limited essentially to sending a brigade armed with medium-range missiles there.[46] The central purpose of stationing these missiles was to create a better strategic position for possible military conflict in the Berlin Crisis, which the Soviet leader had himself provoked. Already at the time of the Suez Crisis, Soviet political and military leaders had to recognize that they had no real military force available to apply pressure on Western Europe if put to the test. By transferring nuclear missiles of the type R-5M to the GDR they hoped to remedy this strategic disadvantage, which they saw as decisive. At the same time, one can assume that the nuclear outposts of the Soviet Union were intended to overcome the existing imbalance of nuclear weapons in Europe, which had so far favoured the United States. As the Soviet Union was not in a position to oppose something of equal military value to the supposed threat from the Strategic Bomber Command of the United States, it replied by deploying missiles.[47]

For the United States and NATO it was clear that the Soviet missiles deployed in the GDR were the most important means of pressure

behind the Berlin ultimatum. Khrushchev himself made this clear in a conversation with the US politician Averell Harriman in Moscow:

> It would take only a few Soviet missiles to destroy Europe: one bomb was sufficient for Bonn and three to five would knock out France, England, Spain and Italy. The United States would be in no position to retaliate because its missiles could carry a warhead of only ten kilograms whereas Russian missiles could carry 1300 kilogram.[48]

Not least for that reason, the Western allies, under the leadership of the United States, had to make it clear to the Soviet Union that no compromises were possible in the Berlin question. Khrushchev himself, however, did not want the crisis to escalate to the war, which NATO would have been prepared to conduct if necessary. Bluff belonged to the tactics of the Soviet leader in the Berlin Crisis. His readiness to risk a Third World War for Berlin was limited. When he recognized that further confrontation would develop into a military conflict, Khrushchev had to withdraw his missiles from their forward positions as a visible sign of détente.[49]

At the same time Khrushchev had to recognize that it was impossible to safeguard his Berlin policy by taking individual, isolated military steps. The West showed itself most unimpressed by those kinds of measures.[50] If the Soviet leader wanted to achieve an understanding over Berlin on his terms, after the pause that now intervened, the crisis so far had shown that he had to make a radical change in his military and security policy because in their existing state they were inadequate for his goals. A new attempt required not only that the strategic position of the USSR be improved by new armament programmes. If Soviet aims were to succeed, it was also imperative that the Soviet forces be integrated into a complete plan for the solution of the crisis. For this, all available resources had to be mobilized, including the support of allies. As the further course of the crisis showed, the Soviet leader had learnt the military political lessons of the failure of the first ultimatum. He had to threaten the West with the total Soviet military potential and hold this ready to attack and, if necessary, demonstrate its strength effectively. Without significantly greater commitment of military resources, Soviet policy over Berlin was no longer viable.

As the documents show, from the middle of 1960 Khrushchev wanted to arm for a military solution of whatever kind to the Berlin problem. Therefore, internally he ended the disarmament policy of the USSR,

which was still officially maintained, and ordered an increase of more than 30 per cent in expenditure on arms for 1961.[51] The Kremlin leadership, the military and, above all, the armaments industry wanted in particular to see strategic weapons strengthened. Whereas in 1959 the Soviet Union invested 810 million roubles equipping the armed forces with nuclear missiles, in 1961 it was to be 2287 million roubles, an increase of more than 250 per cent.[52] Contrary to previous assumptions, conventional weapons were also not ignored. The armed forces on land could reckon with 2600 new tanks and 2000 armoured personnel carriers, while the air force was to get up to 800 new combat aircraft. 10,600 anti-aircraft missiles were planned for air defence and the navy was to receive 122 warships, including 30 submarines, seven of them nuclear powered.[53]

What mattered to Khrushchev evidently in acting this way was to underpin his former Berlin policy at last with the actual disposable military power so as to be able to modify it in due course. He had to acknowledge that his propaganda, which was based on the repeated claim to strategic superiority of the USSR in missiles, had been so far largely unsuccessful. Worse still, the United States was stepping up its own rearmament effort, as a reaction to constant Soviet threats, with the result that the military balance was rapidly developing further in favour of the United States. Khrushchev's attempts to use the success of the Soviet space flight as proof of its military strength had completely failed by the end of 1960,[54] and as a result also his policy of getting the Western powers by the mere threat of force to conclude a peace treaty. In consequence, Khrushchev was attempting to increase the military strength of the USSR significantly and so strengthen the threat potential towards the West to compel them to a solution of the Berlin problem on Soviet terms.

Khrushchev took the final decision for the use of military measures to secure his Berlin policy on 26 May 1961, together with the presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The Soviet leader emphasized in his speech to the presidium that the USSR had shown patience in the Berlin question since November 1958. However, it was now time to cut the knot of West Berlin and sign the peace treaty. He knew that NATO would threaten war because of this. But on the basis of the secret intelligence information available to him, Khrushchev considered armed intervention by the British or French unlikely. The Federal Republic of Germany too did not worry him, he maintained, thereby contradicting his continuing propaganda against German rearmament. The most dangerous power was America, for the United States 'could

[begin] a war'.[55] In general, the Kremlin chief saw in the United States the aggressive leader of the capitalist world 'who could set off a war'.[56]

Here, one can see that Khrushchev did not intend to repeat the mistake of the first Berlin ultimatum. He wanted to act from a position of strength. At the same time he departed from his previous concept for the Berlin question, in that he expressly reserved for himself the first use of military means and thereby assumed the responsibility for a possible war with the West.[57] Even in the presidium there was no longer certainty that with this way of proceeding armed conflict would not break out. Mikoyan even thought there was a 10 per cent risk of war. When the question arose as to whether presents had to be got ready in any event for the meeting with Kennedy in Vienna, Khrushchev replied, 'Obviously, yes, presents will be given even before the war.'[58]

The much-cited Kennedy speech of 25 July 1961, therefore, clearly had no influence on the way the decision was reached to build the Berlin wall. When the US president gave his television address, which has gone down in history, the decision to seal the frontier had already been taken. Kennedy's speech at the most may have contributed to bringing forward the date which had originally been planned.[59] At the same time Khrushchev reacted with extreme emotion and a complete lack of understanding to Kennedy's declaration. He saw the speech as an ultimatum and told John McCloy: 'Let history show by all means which of us was right and which will survive this war. We think that we will survive.'[60] At the same time, he felt confirmed in his mistrust towards the United States and its expansionist drive and even compared the US president to Hitler: 'During the Second World War Hitler attacked us. Now the USA wants to take over Hitler's role, although they are already the world's policeman.' Nevertheless, Khrushchev's ideological convictions made him confident of victory: 'I tell you in advance that you will suffer a defeat and we will do everything necessary for it.'[61]

The decision for the exact date of the action by the armed forces of the GDR and the USSR to close the frontier in Berlin fell shortly before the meeting of the Political Committee of the Warsaw Pact in Moscow. On 1 August 1961, Ulbricht and Khrushchev discussed in confidence the details of closing the frontier. Berlin was to be surrounded 'by an iron ring'. In addition, the Kremlin chief showed himself resolute whatever the consequences, declaring that 'if they force war on us, war there will be'.[62] Two days later, on 3 August 1961, in a preliminary discussion with Ulbricht directly before the opening of the meeting of leaders of the socialist camp, Khrushchev fixed the date of sealing the frontier to West Berlin as 13 August 1961.[63] Although Khrushchev succeeded in closing

the frontiers to the Western sectors of Berlin, he failed in his attempt to force the West back to the negotiating table by military pressure. For the West showed their readiness to defend allied rights in Berlin, if necessary by force.[64]

Khrushchev's Berlin policy became trapped in an impasse in the early summer of 1962. He therefore made a new move in the Cold War and ordered the stationing of middle-range missiles on Cuba. By this he hoped to shift the existing imbalance of power in favour of the Soviet Union. According to Soviet general staff planning at the end of May 1962, this would make it possible for 64 targets in the United States to be attacked in a possible first nuclear strike instead of 24. The missiles on Cuba therefore served, as defence minister Malinovsky remarked in a conversation with Khrushchev on 20 May 1962, 'not only the defence of Cuba but above all the interests of the defence capability of the USSR'.[65] Khrushchev hoped by altering the ratio of strength to be able to end the conflict over Berlin in his favour and force the United States to give in.

But the plan failed also because, as so often in Khrushchev's policy, it was conceived only in terms of the overall picture without taking account of practical realities and local conditions. As before, Khrushchev was undone by his own wishful thinking. The Soviet missile bases on the raw sugar island were already detected before they had been completed and the enterprise collapsed like a house of cards. Lack of planning, together with complete ignorance of the local situation, were mainly responsible. The missile units reported after the end of the operation,

> Originally the intention was to house the men of the missile units in earth huts. However thorough examination of the soil and the climate showed that this plan was not practicable because of the high rainfall and tropical conditions. In that connexion, tent camps had to be built to house the personnel, which proved to be one of the main causes for the detection of the missile forces on Cuba.

In addition,

> in assessing the available natural material for camouflage on Cuba it was wrongly assumed that palm groves were suitable for the laying out of missile machinery. In fact however using them to prevent detection from the air is almost impossible as their potential for camouflage is very limited. Measurements carried out on the spot showed that there are on average 50 palm trees per hectare, so the distance

> between individual trees amounts to 12–15 metres. The crown of the trees is small with diameters of 3–4 metres. So an area of one hectare is only one sixteenth covered by plantation. With this kind of camouflage it was . . . not possible to construct unwieldy rocket equipment in palm groves unnoticed.[66]

In the end, however, the crisis gave the superpowers a healthy shock. During his secret correspondence with Kennedy – he liked secret diplomacy, as Kennedy did, for 'only in confidential correspondence can one say what one thinks without having to consider the press and public opinion'[67] – Khrushchev realized that the United States did not want to wipe the Soviet Union off the map of the world but rather, like him, was interested in reaching an understanding based on the status quo.

Conclusion

Khrushchev was without doubt one of the most fascinating Soviet politicians. He breathed new energy into the politics and life of the Soviet Union after Stalin's death. He wanted to bring the country forward in great leaps to the goal of Lenin's revolution which was so full of promise: to achieve communism. For this it was necessary in his eyes to alter the map of the world and turn its colour into a shining red. For this reason too he considered almost every country that achieved independence in this period a natural ally and showered it with his 'internationalist solidarity'.

At the same time, he assumed that the 'blue' share of the world map would naturally grow ever smaller, because capitalism was condemned to die. Despite this, the leading power of the 'imperialist camp' – the United States – held an irresistible attraction for Khrushchev. He wanted to join it in a competition for the better world order and prove that communism would catch up with and overtake capitalism. This project was bound to fail, however, because he massively overestimated the possibilities on his side and completely underestimated the power of the market. His plan to create a socialist world also failed because, despite all his efforts, the attraction of communism declined continuously. When Khrushchev was ousted at the end of 1964 he had achieved merely the preservation of the status quo; his world map had not become 'redder'.

Nevertheless, the greatness of Khrushchev lies in the fact that he decided to bring to light the truth about Stalin's crimes and to bring renewal to the ossified structures of society. His inconsistency, his

indecisiveness and his faith in his own infallibility brought about his fall. He could not resist the temptations of power and therefore lost it.

Notes

1. Conversation between Khrushchev and MacDuffie, 25 January 1956, Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, Moscow (RGANI), 52/1/578, p. 73.
2. Order No. 414/60 of the State Committee for Armaments for copying the U-2, 2 September 1960; Russian State Archive of the Economy (RGAE), 298/1/1433, pp. 66–68.
3. Iurii Shapoval, 'The Ukrainian Years' in William Taubman, Sergeii Khrushchev and Abbott Gleason, eds, *Nikita Khrushchev* (New Haven and London, 2000), 8–9.
4. George Paloczi-Horvath, *Khrushchev: The Road to Power* (London, 1960), 14.
5. On Khrushchev's second marriage, see William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (London, 2003), 58–59.
6. Fedor Burlatskii, *Khrushchev and the First Russian Spring* (London, 1991), 42–62; Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 61–120.
7. Telegram from Khrushchev to Stalin, 3 February 1942, in *Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev. Dva cveta vremeni: Dokumenty*, Vol. I (Moscow, 2009), 16.
8. Flight record of Colonel Zybin, 1941–1944, in *Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev*, 64–76.
9. CIA-Memorandum: Caesar-2. The Death of Stalin, 16 July 1953, in www.foia.cia.gov (accessed 2 September 2010).
10. Conversation between Ulbricht and Khrushchev, 30 November 1960, RGANI 52/1/557, p. 102. See also Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 247–49.
11. Conversation between Khrushchev and a delegation of French socialists, 4 May 1960, RGANI 52/1/588, pp. 51–52.
12. Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, 1996), 177–79.
13. Conversation between Khrushchev and Nehru, 6 October 1960, RGANI 52/1/513, p. 156.
14. Conversation between Khrushchev and a delegation of French socialists, 4 May 1960, RGANI 52/1/588, p. 54. In complete ignorance of the situation he also asserted that the mass of Soviet workers and peasants already had a significantly better living standard than their counterparts in France.
15. Ibid., p. 53.
16. Manfred Hildermeier, *Geschichte der Sowjetunion 1917–1991* (München, 1998), 767.
17. Conversation between Khrushchev and Kohler, 16 October 1962, RGANI, 52/1/582, p. 87.
18. Conversation between Khrushchev and the Secretary of the World Peace Council, Isabelle Blume, 8 December 1956, RGANI, 5/1/594, p. 16.
19. V. Vartanov, 'Die Sowjetunion und die Ereignisse in Ungarn im Herbst 1956' in *Die Ungarnkrise 1956 und Österreich* (Wien, 2003), 73–88.
20. R. T. Göllner, 'Die ungarische Revolution von 1956' in M. Agethen and G. Buchstab, eds, *Oppositions- und Freiheitsbewegungen im früheren* Ostblock

(Freiburg, 2003), 116–20; S. L. Rogoza and N. B. Ashkazov, *Zasekrečennye vojny 1950–2000* (Moscow, 2004), 76–97.

21. Conversation between Tito and a Soviet government delegation led by Khrushchev, 6 June 1956, RGANI, 52/1/594, p. 16.
22. Conversation between Khrushchev and John Bernal, 11 November 1957, RGANI, 52/17552, p. 70.
23. Andreas Hilger, 'Sowjetunion, Staatssozialismus und Dritte Welt' in Hilger, ed., *Die Sowjetunion und die Dritte Welt. UdSSR, Staatssozialismus und die Antikolonialismus im Kalten Krieg 1945–1991* (München, 2009), 13.
24. E. Biorklund, 'Lenkwaffen und die Zukunft' in *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau,* 11 (1957), 599; Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe 1945–1970* (London, 1970), 80–89.
25. Draft of a confidential letter from Khrushchev to Kennedy, 24 July 1961, RGANI, 52/1/644, p. 131. The letter was, however, not delivered after Kennedy's speech of 25 July 1961.
26. Vladislav M. Zubok and Hope M. Harrison, 'The Nuclear Education of Nikita Khrushchev' in John Gaddis et al., eds, *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb* (Oxford, 1999), 141–68.
27. H. Adomeit et al., *Die Sowjetunion als Militärische Macht* (Stuttgart, 1987), 214.
28. Order No. 42 of the Chairman of the State Committee for Defence Technology 'Over the introduction of the R-7 into service', 1 February 1960, RGAE, 298/1/1429, pp. 115–30; *Raketnyj ščit otetčestva* (Moscow, 1999), 68–80.
29. Roy Medvedev, *Khrushchev* (New York, 1983), 122–23; Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 361–64.
30. Conversation between Khrushchev and Nash, 20 April 1960, RGANI, 52/17575, p. 89.
31. G. Wettig, 'Die sowjetische Politik während der Berlinkrise 1958–1962' in *Deutschland Archiv*, 30 (1997), 383–98. Before Khrushchev started the crisis, he secured the endorsement of the Presidium of the CC (CC) of the CPSU. Of those present, only Mikoyan expressed doubts about the success of the enterprise, but his exact words are unfortunately not recorded in the minute. Memorandum No. 190 of the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU, 6 November 1958, printed in A. A. Fursenko, ed., *Prezidium CK KPSS 1954–1964*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 2006), 338–39; Decision of the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU No. P 190/VII 'About Germany', 6 November 1960, printed in ibid., vol. 2, *Postanovlenija 1954–1958*, 895.
32. Michael Lemke, *Die Berlinkrise 1958 bis 1963. Interessen und Handlungsspielräume der SED im Ost-West Konflikt* (Berlin, 1995), 103–06.
33. Conversation between Tito and a Soviet government delegation led by Khrushchev, 6 June 1956, RGANI, 52/1/594, p. 15.
34. Gerhard Wettig, *Chruschstchows Berlin-Krise 1958 bis 1963. Drohpolitik und Mauerbau* (München, 2006), 27; Taubman, *Khrushchev*, 352–60.
35. A. S. Orlov, *Tajnaja bitva sverchdažav* (Moscow, 2000), 415.
36. Thomas S. Blanton et al., ed. *The Berlin Crisis 1958–1962: Guide and Index* (The National Security Archive, 1991), Doc. 00516, Telegram from Ambassador Thompson to Secretary of State, 15 December 1958. Thompson was referring to information from the Norwegian ambassador who had spoken to Khrushchev two weeks earlier.

37. Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 198; Očerki istorii Ministerstva inostrannych dei Rossii 1802–2002, v.3.t.T 2 1917–2002 (Moscow, 2002), 395–96.
38. Letter of Dement'ev, Veršinin and Tichomirov to the CC of the CPSU, 9 July 1958; RGAE, 29/1/35, pp. 220–21. Of the 308 nuclear bombers 269 were Tu-16, 21 M-4 and 18 Tu-95.
39. Letter of Dement'ev, Veršinin and Tichomirov to the CC of the CPSU, 4 May 1958; RGAE, 29/1/35, pp. 80–81.
40. Letter from Ustinov and Malinovsky to the CC of the CPSU, 23 June 1958; RGAE, 29/1/35, pp. 229ff.
41. L. Wainstein et al., Study – S-467. The Evolution of U.S. Strategic Command and Warning 1945–1972 (Arlington, 1975), 169–205.
42. *Pravda*, 27 August 1957.
43. Letter of Malinovsky and Golikov to the CC of the CPSU, 23 May 1959; RGANI, 5/30/311, pp. 70–71. V. S. Borisov and L. V. G. Lebed'ko, *Podvodny front 'cholodnoy voyny'* (Moscow, 2002), 306–09; *Podvodny flot Rossii* (Moscow, 2005), 88–95; *Kursom česti i slavy* (Moscow, 2006), 132–33; *Podvodny sily Rossii 1906–2006* (Moscow, 2006), 286ff. In contrast US submarines on spying operations penetrated Soviet coastal waters systematically from 1948. On this, see Sherry Sontag and Christopher Drew, *Blind Man's Bluff: The Untold Story of Cold War Submarine Espionage* (London, 1999).
44. USAREUR Special Intelligence Estimate 2–59, Soviet Intentions, Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action Regarding Berlin, 28 February 1959, pp. 21–63; National Security Archive (NSA), Washington, Berlin Crisis, Box 29. Bruno Thoß, *NATO-Strategie und nationale Verteidigungsplanung* (München, 2006), 302–06.
45. Notes by the Secretaries to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on State Defense JCS: Ad hoc Working Group report on Possible Courses of Action on Berlin, 28 November 1958; *The Berlin Crisis*, Doc. 00428.
46. *Raketnyj ščit*, 68. In 1959 the Soviet Union had only 32 operational rocket platforms available, all of the type R-5M. By 1960 two launching facilities for intercontinental rockets of type R-7A as well as 176 for medium-range rockets of type R-5M (4) and R-12 (172) had been added. At the time the Soviets classed rockets with a range of 500 kilometres as strategic. See Khrushchev's comments at the session of the Commanders of the Military Districts, Defence Forces Groups, Naval and Air Defence Districts and members of the Military Councils and Chiefs of Staff to consider the Soviet disarmament proposals, 18 December 1959; Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI), 17/165/152, p. 17.
47. Matthias Uhl, *Stalins V-2* (Bonn, 2001), 239.
48. J. L. Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997), 242.
49. M. Jochum, *Eisenhower und Chrushtschow* (Paderborn, 1996), 107; Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 199; G. Bruce, 'Die Sowjetunion und die ostdeutschen Krisen 1953 bis 1961' in T. Diederich and I-S. Kowalczuk, *Staatsgründung auf Raten?* (Berlin, 2005), 39–64.
50. Harriman-Khrushchev conversations, 19 July 1959; *The Berlin Crisis*, Doc. 01509. In his letter Harriman informed the US president that he regarded the

above-mentioned threat as a bluff and that the Soviet party leader showed 'present lack of confidence in his missiles'.

51. Letter of Kosygin, Kozlov, Brezhnev, Malinovsky and others to the CC of the CPSU, 23 December 1960; RGAE, 4372/79/659, pp. 2–15. It is interesting that Khrushchev officially announced the increase in Soviet defence expenditure, which had already been decided in 1960, on 8 July 1961, and presented it as a reaction to the increase in military expenditure of NATO. See Hannes Adomeit, *Die Sowjetmacht in internationalen Krisen und Konflikten* (Baden-Baden, 1983), 322, 350–55.
52. Memorandum of the size of arms deliveries to the Ministry of Defence 1959–1962, 16 December 1960; RGAE, 4372/79/659, pp. 85–86.
53. Letter from GOSPLAN about the production of military technology in the first war year (1961), 24 October 1960; RGAE, 4372/79/161, pp. 2–4.
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