

Senior Studies in History
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Table listing various historical topics and authors, including 'The Origins of the Cold War' and 'The Cold War, 1941-1949'.

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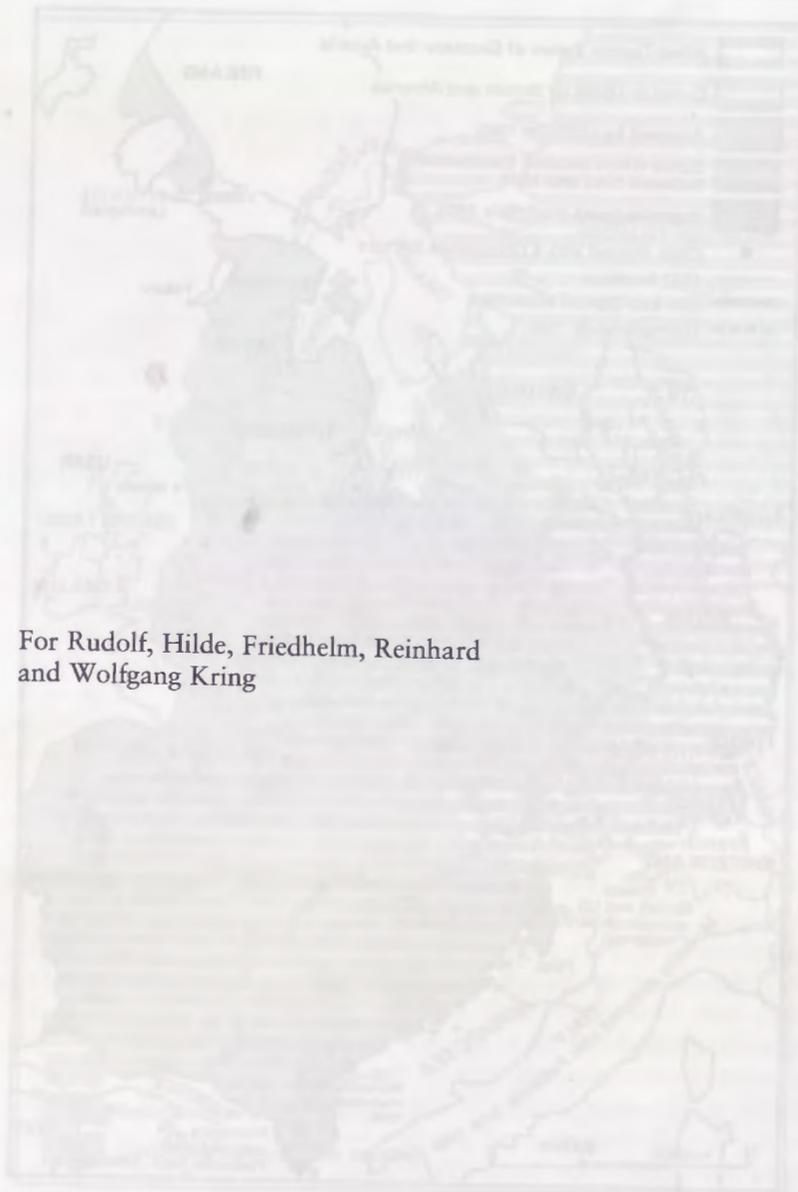
SECOND EDITION

MARTIN MCCAULEY

Table listing chapters and page numbers, including 'Setting the Scene', 'Early Two-Descriptive Analysis', 'The Origins of the Cold War', 'The Cold War, 1941-1949', and 'The Cold War, 1949-1991'.



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For Rudolf, Hilde, Friedhelm, Reinhard and Wolfgang Kring

PART ONE: THE BACKGROUND

1 SETTING THE SCENE

The intervention of the United States in April 1917 tipped the scales in favour of the Entente Powers in the First World War. Americans, first and foremost President Woodrow Wilson, wished to ensure that such mutual self-destruction never occurred again. His vision of a world free from the awful threat of war involved national self-determination for all peoples, representative government, the promotion of political changes through constitutional gradualist means and not by revolutions, and the fostering of enlightened public opinion. Wilson perceived in the guiding principles of pre-1914 diplomacy – namely, spheres of influence and the balance of power – the seeds of inevitable doom. He wished to render these principles obsolete by the establishment of an organisation, universal in its reach, which would group all independent states in a league of nations. It would ensure that the legitimate security needs of all states were recognised and respected. Crises could be defused through negotiation and the moral authority of the league. A major plank in the platform of Wilsonianism was an ‘open door’ world economy. This implied that tariff barriers, imperial preference and all other state-erected obstacles to the free flow of capital and goods world-wide must be dismantled. In short, Wilson had a gleaming liberal capitalist vision of the future, and his political assumptions were based on civil liberties and freedom for every individual to develop his talents and abilities not only in the United States but throughout the whole world. Wilsonianism, then, was the expression of faith of a confident, strong nation. American values, it was confidently assumed, would in due course become universal values.

The Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 was the first decisive rejection of President Wilson’s views. The communist state represented the opposite pole of political thinking. It was collectivist in that through democratic centralism it subordinated party members to the leaders and the rest of the population to the party. It sought to establish a socialist economy, in which the market

economy would be abolished. It placed the interests of Soviet Russia ahead of those of any person or group of persons; hence national self-determination, despite its espousal by Lenin, was unlikely to be high among its priorities. The Soviet state was based on rule by one class, the working class (tactically allied to the poorer strata of the peasantry in the short run), to the exclusion of other classes, and the bourgeoisie and the capitalist ethic were vilified. It announced its unremitting hostility to the world capitalist system and international economy, foretelling doom for them both.

If Wilsonian idealists were appalled by the October revolution, so too was the American business community. Both groups comforted themselves with the belief that such an un-American system of government and economy could not survive very long.

There was another group which took a jaundiced view of the turn of events in Petrograd and Moscow; namely, the American diplomats who specialised in Russia and eastern Europe. Some of them had known and relished service in Imperial Russia and one of them, Joseph Grew, found the fact that Western diplomats negotiated with their 'red' counterparts at Genoa and Rapallo in 1922 'profoundly disgusting'. The United States declined to recognise the new Soviet state, but in order to acquaint itself with its thinking a Division of Russian Affairs was established in the State Department. A key centre for research on the Soviet Union was Riga, capital of Latvia, which had been part of Russia until the October revolution, but was now an independent republic and a haven for many middle- and upper-class Russian exiles. The views and attitudes developed in Riga had a profound influence on the policy formulations drawn up by the Division of Russian Affairs in Washington, which Yergin dubs the 'Riga axioms' [167]. Great stress was laid, in these, on the world revolutionary goals and practices of Soviet leaders, and the advice emanating from Riga took the Soviet 'threat' very seriously and warned the United States to be on its guard. Charles Bohlen and George Kennan were two of the brightest stars in the Riga firmament. Immersed in Russian language and cultural studies, they consciously and unconsciously acquired the thought patterns of the highly civilised, non-radical elite of Imperial Russia, now in exile. Kennan, not surprisingly, had very explicit views about the value of an alliance with the USSR. 'Never', he declared, 'neither then nor at any later date did I consider the Soviet Union a fit ally or associate, actual or potential, for this country' [83].

As the 1920s passed it became palpably clear that the Soviet

Union had come to stay, and with the Great Depression undermining confidence in the capacity of the market economy to regulate itself and the Soviet Union bounding ahead industrially, the latter became more attractive. The American business community, led by Henry Ford, began to contribute to Soviet industrialisation. American diplomatic attitudes began to change after Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, which boded ill for China, an area of special concern to the United States. The realisation that the Soviet Union might be of some use in restraining Japanese imperialism led to formal diplomatic recognition in 1933, with the USSR promising not to interfere in internal American politics and the United States talking about a loan if Moscow acknowledged the debts run up by the Provisional Government. President Franklin D. Roosevelt chose William Bullitt as the first US ambassador to Moscow. He was no stranger to the Soviet capital, for in 1919 he had negotiated a *modus vivendi* between Soviet Russia and the West which had subsequently been rejected by the British and US governments.

The new honeymoon lasted just under a year. Even George Kennan was caught up in the general enthusiasm, as a special relationship with the Soviet Union appeared to be within reach. However, internal Soviet events had a decisive impact on relations. The murder of Sergei Kirov in December 1934 marked a major step forward in Stalin's mastery over the party, government and political police. This was to be completed in 1936. The Soviet Union turned more and more inward as it paid off its external debts, cut back on industrial imports from the capitalist world and made a determined bid for autarky. The reasons behind the purges are still not clear, but they affected mainly those in middle and senior positions in the party and state bureaucracies, industrial management, the military, and the creative and technical intelligentsia. It was as if the Stalin leadership wanted to proletarianise the bureaucracy and other key positions in the state. This change in the political climate chilled the Americans to the bone. They were appalled by the trials and the execution of many Soviet officials whom they had known personally. Gradually almost all those whom they knew disappeared, leaving them with a profound sense of loss; the Soviet world they knew was fast vanishing and they had great difficulty in comprehending the new one coming into being. Their sense of isolation was increased by vituperative abuse which was hurled at them from all sides. Kennan thought that the Soviets were out to create the impression that they, the Americans, were devils, evil and

dangerous. As such, no Soviet citizen would voluntarily approach them. Bullitt became disillusioned and longed to escape from the place. When he left in mid-1936 he had become a 'hardliner', who believed that the advance of Bolshevism in Europe had to be stopped and that a *rapprochement* between France and Germany might be one way in which to do this. The brief Moscow spring of 1933-34 had raised such high hopes that the dashing of them led to the opposite extreme – an almost unquestioning acceptance of the 'Riga axioms'. These events were to have a lasting impact on the formation of US policy towards the Soviet Union, for many of the key Americans involved in policy-making in the 1940s had earlier seen service in Moscow and Riga.

The Soviet state presented the Western analyst with peculiar problems. To what extent did ideology determine Soviet foreign policy? Marxism-Leninism claimed universal validity, and regarded the final victory of socialism as inevitable. On the one hand this seemed to imply that the Soviet Union did not need to conduct an aggressive foreign policy since events were bound to move in its favour. But it could also be argued that Soviet intervention might speed up the revolutionary transformation of the world. Just what was the relationship between Soviet internal and external policy? Would Stalin's aggressive domestic policy inevitably produce a thrustful foreign policy? Would Stalin follow in Hitler's footsteps? The conventional wisdom of American specialists on the Soviet Union was that Marxism-Leninism made the USSR potentially and actually an expansionist, aggressive force. Hence the United States must always be on its guard and maintain a state of constant vigilance. Someone who did not share this view, much to the chagrin of the professionals, was Joseph Davies, US ambassador in Moscow in 1937-38. He was not a career diplomat, but had been awarded the Moscow embassy for his part in securing the re-election of President Roosevelt. His task was to improve US-Soviet relations and to win Stalin's confidence, if possible. His first-hand experience of Stalinism led him to believe that the inherent contradictions of communism doomed it to oblivion and that the Soviet planned economy represented state socialism. He perceived a re-emphasis of the profit motive in the USSR and the emergence of a new upper class, and he regarded these as further indications that the Soviet Union was returning to economic orthodoxy. The progressive social policy of the Soviet state had done much to improve the lot of the ordinary person. As for the international communist organisation, the Comintern, this was not to be feared,

for it was long on rhetoric and short on influence, especially in America. In any case, the Soviet Union's participation was needed if Europe was to be stabilised.

These views, so diametrically opposed to the prevailing wisdom, did not endear Davies to his staff. Nevertheless he underlined the gulf between the perceptions of the professional Soviet-watchers and the domestic politicians in the United States – one which was to appear many times in the succeeding years. Davies later wrote a highly successful book, *Mission to Moscow* (1941), which was turned into a film in 1943 and achieved great popular acclaim. This demonstrated the US public's predilection for a rosy analysis of Soviet reality. Yet Davies's successor, Laurence Steinhardt, reverted to the traditional line. In his experience, he stated, the Soviets only responded to force, and, if force could not be applied, 'oriental bartering or trading methods' were in order.

The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 did not surprise the US 'professionals' as much as it did British and French diplomats. The events which followed – the joint Soviet-German attack on Poland, resulting in another partition; the Winter War with Finland; the incorporation of the Baltic states and Bessarabia into the USSR – strengthened the conviction that the Soviet state was expansionist and aggressive. Besides the 'hardliners' or, as they saw themselves, the 'realists' in the State Department – Bohlen, Loy Henderson and Kennan in particular – there were other voices in the United States which also articulated the 'Riga axioms'. One of these was that of Joseph C. Kennedy, US ambassador to the Court of St James, whose anti-Soviet views led him to support British appeasement of Germany. Another was the Republican leader Robert Taft, a strong isolationist and opponent of US involvement in the war. There were also vociferous east European pressure groups, especially the Poles, with the Roman Catholic Church often prominent.

Great Britain's relations with the Soviet Union before 1941 went through various phases. The Anglo-Soviet treaty of 1921 regulated commercial relations but diplomatic relations remained coldly formal. Great store was placed on the British working class by the Comintern, and in September 1925 an Anglo-Russian committee was set up at the Trades Union Congress. The failure of the General Strike of May 1926, however, led to the demise of the committee in 1927. In the same year Great Britain broke off diplomatic relations and cancelled the 1921 trade treaty. Stalin claimed that the 'British Tory government' had definitely undertaken to start a war against

the Soviet Union. One of the early show trials involved British Metro-Vickers engineers and this soured relations. The united front tactics adopted at the VIIth Comintern Congress in 1935 had little impact in Britain. The Communist party of Great Britain remained small and, on the whole, working-class loyalties belonged to the Labour party whose leadership was unimpressed by Soviet achievements. Labour leaders had been a traditional target of communist abuse and this had hardened their attitude towards Moscow. Marxism was unattractive as an ideology and was little studied. The USSR attracted support from some intellectuals, but again many of these radicals, some to be found in the left wing of the Labour party, were not Marxists. Just as direct contact with the Soviet Union disillusioned some Americans so it did Sir Stafford Cripps. His fervent advocacy of the popular front in 1938 had led to his expulsion from the Labour party, but in May 1940 he became British ambassador in Moscow. He quickly changed his mind about the Soviet Union, even though he remained as ambassador there until January 1942.

On the right, politicians such as Winston Churchill – an active supporter of intervention in Soviet Russia between 1918 and 1920 – were never in two minds about the eventual goals of the USSR. However, Churchill was a realist and perceived early that Germany posed the more immediate threat to European security.

The abortive Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union in 1939 took place against the background of Stalin's decimation of the Red Army's officer corps, which was thought to have gravely damaged the defences of the Soviet Union. There now seemed to be little military advantage in an alliance with the USSR. Indeed, it looked increasingly likely that Britain and France, far from supporting the Soviet Union, would go to the aid of its victims, and this was one of the reasons why Stalin brought the Winter War against Finland to a rapid conclusion in the spring of 1940.

The German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 was a major turning-point in European and world history. Now it was war to the death, and the victor would inevitably be the dominant power on the European continent and a competitor with the United States for supreme influence over world affairs. Should Great Britain and the United States hold aloof and allow Germany to tear the USSR apart? (Just after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union the future Vice President and President, Harry Truman, expressed himself very forcibly: 'If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help Russia, and if Russia is winning we should help Germany and

in that way let them kill as many as possible.' However, Truman added, he did not want Hitler to be victorious under any circumstances.) This presumed that Germany was the stronger power. What if the Red Army and the Wehrmacht were more or less equal? Would it not be advisable to stay on the side lines and watch as both dictatorships destroyed each other, to the common benefit of mankind? Churchill was in no doubt about which policy to adopt. 'We shall give whatever help we can to Russia and the Russian people,' he declared in a radio broadcast at 9 o'clock on the evening of the invasion. 'This is not a class war, but a war in which the whole British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations is engaged, without distinction of race, creed or party.' Churchill's loathing and fear of Hitler was summed up in a famous quotation: 'If Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons.' Roosevelt expressed himself in like vein to Joseph Davies: 'I can't take communism nor can you, but to cross this bridge I would hold hands with the Devil.' (In theological terms the Devil is a cunning, powerful adversary, someone with whom one avoids confrontation. Roosevelt was notoriously unwilling to confront Stalin.) Roosevelt sent his associate Harry Hopkins to see Stalin in July 1941 to discuss American aid for the Soviet war effort. Both powers thus decided to tip the balance against Germany, which was seen as the greater evil. This was to have momentous consequences. Once the Third Reich had been swept away a power vacuum would be created in eastern and south-eastern Europe, and much depended on who filled it. But little thought was devoted to this problem in London and Washington in 1941. The primary goal of the British and Americans was to win the war; all other questions were of secondary importance. Roosevelt possessed an infinitely complex mind. He was clearly aware that the Soviet Union was a dictatorship and that the differences between Soviet and American culture, ideology and economic systems were immense. Hence he saw eye to eye with some of the propositions advanced by the Soviet specialists in the State Department. However, he differed from them in some significant respects. He made a distinction between the Soviet dictatorship and national socialism (Nazism). The latter, he believed, was much more concerned with expansion than the former, and this implied that if the Soviet Union's legitimate security needs were met it might be possible to wean Moscow away from supporting communist movements abroad. The end of the war would, most likely, find the Soviet Union economically weak and confronted with

the enormous task of rebuilding the shattered country. In this situation if it were possible to overcome Soviet suspiciousness about Western capitalist intentions, Soviet energies could be deflected from expanding communist influence through the Communist International (Comintern) to concentrating on the reconstruction of the homeland. If this came about the West would benefit considerably. The success of Hopkins's mission led Roosevelt to hope that if negotiations were conducted at the highest level – in other words with Stalin personally, thereby avoiding entanglements in the all-embracing Soviet bureaucracy – an agreement could be reached. The United States was economically much stronger than the USSR and this would make peacetime collaboration all the more attractive to a Soviet Union seeking industrial imports. The Manhattan Project, the construction of the atomic bomb, would provide the Americans with another card to play. The only alternative to a *rapprochement* with the USSR was the division of the world into blocs, increasing military arsenals and probably war. Such an eventuality was unthinkable and quite unacceptable.

Informal discussions about the post-war world at heads-of-government level took place at the first meeting of the Big Three at Tehran in November 1943 and appeared to presage success for Roosevelt's grand design. Stalin's request for the Soviet western frontier of 1941 was granted; this involved placing the Baltic states, eastern Poland and Bessarabia in the Soviet Union, as well as northern Bukovina which had historically never been part of Imperial Russia. The Polish frontier was moved westwards – and it was agreed that no confederation of central European or Balkan states should be allowed to come into existence whose goals were inimical to Soviet security interests. Stalin said that it was not easy to force communist regimes on other people, and in any case, as he pointed out, he had other problems to deal with. The mood of Roosevelt and his advisers was one of great optimism. They thought that a new day had dawned, as Harry Hopkins later put it. Stalin's behaviour had demonstrated that he was reasonable and far-sighted; there seemed no reason to doubt that a long-term agreement could now be negotiated with the USSR. The east and south-east Europeans would learn to live with the Soviet Union, and anyway they were not going to be bolshevised. The Soviet Union, in the United Nations, would play a major role in keeping peace throughout the world. This rosy view lasted until the next meeting of the Big Three, at Yalta, in February 1945. Doubts then began to set in [*Doc. 11*]. The wartime honeymoon meant that the 'Riga

axioms' had been forced into the background. The view that a constructive relationship could be achieved with the Soviet Union if obligations were scrupulously carried out became known as the 'Yalta axioms'. As long as cooperation lasted and bore fruit they would stay there, but if the high hopes entertained were not fulfilled it was inevitable that the 'Riga axioms' would make a comeback. This happened increasingly in 1945, and by 1947 an open breach had appeared between Moscow and Washington. The conflict associated with this turn of events, primarily involving the United States and the USSR, is known as the Cold War. (The phrase 'Cold War' was first used by the fourteenth-century Spanish writer Don Juan Manuel who was analysing the conflict between Christendom and Islam. A hot war either ended in death or peace but a cold war 'brings neither peace nor honour to those who wage it'. The phrase was popularised by Walter Lippmann, a critic of it, in 1947.) Who was responsible for it? Was it inevitable? Was Stalin genuinely interested in a post-war agreement? Was a great opportunity lost by the world powers, one which could have brought immense benefits to both sides as well as to the rest of the world?

There are several major explanations for the Cold War:

- 1 the orthodox or traditional;
- 2 the revisionist;
- 3 the post-revisionist (mark 1);
- 4 the post-revisionist (mark 2);
- 5 the post-revisionist (mark 3).

1 The orthodox or traditional interpretation was trenchantly formulated by George F. Kennan in his famous 'long telegram' of 22 February 1946 [*Doc. 18*] and in his anonymous (Mr X) article 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct' in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs* [*Doc. 26*]. By the end of 1948 the overwhelming majority of American and west European politicians had adopted his analysis. It was articulated in academic works, among which the books of William H. McNeill [112] and Herbert Feis [49–52] were particularly influential.

According to these writers [*Doc. 1*], the wellsprings of the Cold War are to be found in Marxism-Leninism with its doctrine of class struggle leading to revolution on a world scale; in the bitter struggle for survival of the young Soviet regime between 1918 and 1920; and in the Soviet leadership's need to mobilise the population against a perceived external threat, thereby increasing its internal

control. Orthodox historians regard the policies of the Soviet government *vis-à-vis* capitalist states as fundamentally hostile, merely tempered by cooperation when deemed necessary. They take it for granted that the Soviets always sought ways of undermining the authority of non-communist powers so as to expand the communist world. During the Second World War Stalin hoped that the capitalist states would engage in mutual self-destruction, allowing the USSR to intervene when deemed advantageous. The German attack forced the Soviet Union into a tactical alliance with the Western Powers, but Stalin always sought to expand his influence by using indigenous communists and the Red Army. Not content with eastern and south-eastern Europe, the USSR attempted to draw the whole of Germany into the Soviet orbit and, by fomenting strikes and social unrest in western and southern Europe and in Asia, sought to expand communist influence in those regions as well.

According to the orthodox view, President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State (Foreign Minister) Cordell Hull (to April 1945) and afterwards President Truman and his Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, misjudged the ambivalent and potentially expansionist nature of Soviet foreign policy. Harboring vain hopes about the democratisation of the Soviet regime and fearing that the American public would not countenance a long-term commitment in Europe, they acceded to Stalin's request for pro-Soviet states in eastern and south-eastern Europe as representing the legitimate security needs of the Soviet Union. At the same time they hoped to integrate the USSR in a liberal democratic world order.

Because the American leaders had no clear vision of what the post-war world would be like, they were prepared to make political concessions in return for short-term military gains – despite the warnings of the British. In order to secure Stalin's cooperation they approved a strategy which resulted in the Red Army penetrating right to the centre of Europe. They accorded the Soviet Union a major say in the future of Germany and did not utilise the potential resistance to the sovietisation of eastern and south-eastern Europe. For instance, in May 1945 they recognised the Polish Provisional Government after a few London Poles had been added; at Potsdam they accepted the moving of the Polish frontier westwards; and they tolerated the economic exploitation of the Soviet zone of Germany. At the Moscow meeting of the council of foreign ministers in December 1945 they acknowledged Bulgaria and Romania as communist states; and by accepting the peace treaties with Bulgaria,

Romania, Hungary and Finland at the end of 1946 they abandoned all hope of influencing events in those regions.

Despite increasing exasperation at Soviet intransigence in the United Nations, and at their inability to pierce the 'iron curtain', the Truman administration continued to seek cooperation with the USSR. The Baruch Plan, in June 1946 [Doc. 17], proposed joint US-USSR control over the production of atomic weapons. The Americans were also prepared, in July 1946, to sign an agreement with the Soviets which would have resulted in foreign troops leaving Germany, on the understanding that both the United States and the USSR would be entitled to intervene if German policies came to be seen as a threat to their security. In June 1947 the United States even invited the Soviet Union and its eastern and south-eastern European supporters to participate in the reconstruction of Europe – the Marshall Plan.

The division of Europe into blocs became inevitable when the Soviet Union refused all these offers of cooperation. The major American priority now became the containment of communist expansionism, and in order to prevent the economic collapse of the non-communist European states the US leadership in 1947 decided to embark on a huge aid and investment programme. The three Western occupation zones in Germany were to be included in this recovery programme, and as a consequence the division of Germany had to be regretfully accepted. The reaction of the Soviet government was to step up the bolshevisation of its zone of occupation in Germany and in eastern and south-eastern Europe and to seize power in a coup in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. Coercion, chicanery and the brutal use of force accompanied Soviet actions. Moscow attempted to disrupt western and southern Europe by means of a communist-led wave of strikes from November 1947 onwards, and to force the Western Powers out of Berlin by blockading all the road, rail and water routes to the German capital. The Soviet offer in March 1952 to discuss the formation of a united, demilitarised, neutral and democratic Germany was another move in the same direction. European states west of the iron curtain felt themselves threatened by Soviet political and military power and sought American protection. This led to the formation of the Organisation of European Economic Cooperation in 1948, to the setting up of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1949, and to the re-arming of West Germany and its integration into NATO as a result of communist aggression in Korea between 1950 and 1953. As a consequence Soviet expansion in Europe was halted, but the

desire to expand had by no means been eliminated.

2 The revisionist interpretation [Doc. 2] rejects the traditional analysis as Western-orientated, as a self-serving capitalist exposé based on a profound misconception of Soviet internal reality and external goals. The early revisionists are to be found among the critics of Truman's foreign policy, such as the former vice-presidential candidate Henry A. Wallace, and among European opponents of Western integration, in the 'neutral' movement (between the United States and the USSR) of the late 1940s. The works of the historian William A. Williams, whose first major publication appeared in 1959 [163], had a seminal influence, and the research to which the protest movements against the Vietnam War gave rise, especially those of the 'New Left' in the late 1960s and early 1970s, completed the process. Books by ex-students of Williams figured prominently among the works of the revisionists, especially those by Gabriel Kolko [87-89]. Other important studies were penned by Gar Alperowitz [8], Barton J. Bernstein, Lloyd C. Gardner [60; 61] and Thomas G. Paterson [127-129].

The revisionist school of thought believes that the Soviet Union cannot be held responsible for the Cold War. It only narrowly escaped defeat during the Second World War, and its enormous human and material losses meant that by 1945 it was near economic ruin. It was confronted by a prosperous United States, whose gross national product had more than doubled during the war, and which furthermore enjoyed a monopoly of atomic weapons. Under Stalin the USSR had concentrated primarily on building up its economy and had devoted little attention to world revolutionary goals. Its security needs led it to seek governments in contiguous states which were not anti-Soviet and to ensure that no military threat ever emanated again from German soil. These goals did not inevitably mean that eastern and south-eastern Europe would be sovietised. Communist behaviour west of the Soviet sphere of influence was calculated not to cause offence to the United States. Indeed, the socialist movement in Scandinavia and western and southern Europe at the end of the war was held in check by Moscow and thereby contributed to the survival of capitalism long before the Marshall Plan was drafted.

The reasons for the confrontation, according to the revisionists, are to be found in the American economic and political system. The liberal capitalist US economy needed ever-increasing trade and investment opportunities to overcome its endemic weaknesses; this

in turn implied the expansion of American political influence. This produced the 'open door' policy which required that the United States be afforded 'equal opportunity' in all foreign markets, leading to free trade and the elimination of tariffs and preferential systems. Because the United States was the leading economic power, this policy of equal opportunity could only lead to increasing American domination, both economically and politically, of the world. Wartime propaganda in favour of 'one world' or the 'open world' in which the United States and the USSR would join hands to the mutual benefit of mankind was not eyewash; it was the conscious policy of the American leadership which had grasped the realities of American development. The goal was a *Pax Americana* over the whole world, with American power ensuring global peace.

As the revisionists see it, the decisive factor which led to US involvement in the war against Japan and Germany was the desire to maintain and to expand where possible the US share in the world economy, since Japan and Germany were in the process of establishing autarkic empires. The same policy was conducted against Great Britain. During the whole war the struggle against the sterling area and imperial preference was of primary importance to US diplomacy. The long-drawn-out negotiations on the Lend-Lease agreement, on the founding of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – concluded at Bretton Woods in 1944 – and the loan extended to Great Britain by the United States in November 1945 [Doc. 15] resulted in Great Britain being forced to open up its traditional markets to US competition. The United States seized the opportunity of replacing the British in Latin America and of stepping up competition against British Middle East oil interests. As for American-Soviet relations, the struggle with the USSR over the future of eastern and south-eastern Europe acquired greater significance in and after 1945. This area had traditionally been of little consequence to the United States, but now the 'open door' policy was applied here, to ensure the viability of liberal capitalism and American influence.

The Soviet leadership, from this revisionist viewpoint, could not tolerate such a threat to its security interests in eastern and south-eastern Europe, particularly as American trade and investment were frequently accompanied by militant anti-communism. The USSR countered by affording revolutionary movements a free hand and concluding bilateral treaties in an attempt to protect its sphere of influence against American penetration. The Truman administration responded by applying further pressure to force the 'open door'

policy on eastern and south-eastern Europe; the Soviet request in January 1945 for a large credit was deliberately ignored; Lend-Lease deliveries abruptly ceased at the end of hostilities in Europe; at Potsdam the Americans refused to agree to the level of German reparations necessary to ensure the rapid recovery of the Soviet economy; and in May 1946 all reparation deliveries from the US zone were terminated. Washington also tried to use its atomic monopoly to force the USSR to become more amenable. It postponed the Potsdam conference until the atomic bomb was ready for use, and it attempted by means of the Baruch Plan [*Doc. 17*] to ensure an American atomic monopoly for decades and to gain control over the Soviet economy. The Marshall Plan was designed to implant an informal American empire in Europe – including eastern and south-eastern Europe – and thereby to extend American political influence over the USSR itself.

When the Soviet will to resist could not be broken, the Americans, according to the revisionists, settled for their sphere of influence. A policy leading to the division of Germany and of Europe was consciously conducted from early 1946 onwards. American isolationism and European capitalist and socialist opposition were overcome by creating a myth about Soviet expansion on a world scale. The Truman Doctrine in 1947 was the political corollary of the Marshall Plan; the establishment of NATO was decided during the Berlin blockade, and during the Korean War the constellation of political forces in the United States and Allied countries was pushed to the right. American pressure and the Western decision to form blocs resulted in the Soviet Union seeking greater political conformity in eastern and south-eastern Europe. It was this that led to the emergence of people's democracies, often by brute force. This widened the gulf between East and West, but the Soviet Union always harboured the hope that a *rapprochement* with the West might come about.

3 Post-revisionist interpretations seek to avoid the polarities of blame-it-all-on-the-Soviets or blame-it-all-on-the-Americans. They see the situation as so infinitely complex that no generalisation about who was to blame will suffice. The weaknesses of the orthodox and revisionist analyses are evident: the former pays little attention to the legitimate security needs of the USSR, while the latter ignores Soviet behaviour which gave rise to shifts in American policy. Neither analysis has had access to Soviet sources. Neither can make up its mind whether the Cold War should be seen as an almost

inevitable consequence of the collision of two diametrically opposed socio-political systems or whether the whole episode could have been avoided if the signals from each side had been read correctly and acted upon. The mishandling of the information available to the US government on Japanese intentions before Pearl Harbor does not inspire confidence in American intelligence, and American incompetence was certainly paralleled on the Soviet side. It is asking too much to expect two states which had very little experience of dealing with each other before 1941 to learn to 'read' each other correctly so quickly.

Dissatisfaction with the orthodox and revisionist analyses, allied to the increased access to official documents, has produced a flood of post-revisionist studies which attempt to stand back from the battle, avoid blatant partisanship and, at the remove of a generation or more, to pass a cold, critical eye over the 'sins' of all participants [57–59; 69; 74; 95; 102; 103; 167]. These studies are post-revisionist (mark 1).

4 The post-revisionist (mark 2) interpretation is by John Lewis Gaddis who takes the above studies further and develops a sophisticated analysis based on containment before and after Kennan [57]. The United States and Britain needed Stalinist Russia as an ally to defeat Germany and Japan. Given the extent of the fighting, victory was secured quickly and with remarkably few American and British casualties. However, the price that had to be paid for this strategy was the emergence of an even more powerful and less understandable totalitarian state. Containment, the term generally used to describe US policy towards the USSR after 1945, may be regarded as a series of attempts to deal with the consequences of the bargain struck during the Second World War. The object of this policy was to restrain the Soviets from re-shaping the international order in a way that would have been as dangerous to Western interests as that which would have been implemented by Germany and Japan had they won the war. The term 'containment' was coined by George F. Kennan in July 1947, when he appealed publicly for a 'long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies' [*Doc. 26*]. During the war Roosevelt, Truman and their advisers were aware of the problem of Soviet expansionism. What they attempted, and failed, to do was to square the circle of helping the Soviet Union defeat Germany while at the same time ensuring that Moscow abided by the ideals for which the war was being fought, expressed in the Atlantic Charter [*Doc. 4*].

One way of resolving the dilemma would have been to come up with military operations which would have contained the Russians while attracting their support to the extent necessary to defeat Germany and Japan. The concept was already there, articulated by Truman, but at that time he was not in government. The orthodox view of the Cold War regards US policy as flawed since it did not take sufficiently into consideration the effects of the crushing Soviet victory in 1945. In other words, the United States concentrated too much on military policy and neglected military-political policy. William C. Bullitt expressed this view succinctly in 1948 when he averred that America had won the war but lost the peace.

Bullitt had proposed an alternative policy in a series of memoranda to President Roosevelt in 1943. He argued that Stalin's war goals were not those of the West. Those who claimed that participation in the anti-fascist coalition had purged the Soviet dictator of his autocratic and expansionist tendencies were assuming, on the basis of no evidence whatsoever, that he had undergone a conversion similar to that of Saul on the road to Damascus (when the scourge of the Christians had, in a blinding flash, realised that Christ was the Son of God, and thereafter became Paul the Apostle). A Europe run from Moscow would be just as dangerous as a Europe run from Berlin. The problem was to prevent the domination of Europe by the Moscow dictatorship without losing the participation of the Red Army in the war against the Nazi dictatorship. The policy Bullitt put forward was reminiscent of that advocated by Churchill later – namely, that of introducing Allied troops into eastern Europe and the Balkans. The goal would be twofold: to defeat Germany, and to prevent the Red Army from overrunning Europe. Bullitt echoed Stalin's (and Clausewitz's) sentiments when he pointed out to Roosevelt in August 1943 that war was an attempt to achieve political objectives by fighting, and political objectives had to be kept in mind when planning operations [57]. Roosevelt did reveal some interest in Anglo-American military operations in the Balkans (much to the dismay of the US military). According to Pogue [131], Churchill did not formally propose to Roosevelt the deployment of Anglo-American forces in order to contain the Soviets until after the Yalta Conference in early 1945. However, Roosevelt never adopted the dual policy of deploying troops so as to secure victory and contain the Soviets.

There were various reasons for this. One was the President's understanding of the balance of power. American security was best

served by preventing various hostile states coming together. The diplomatic recognition of the USSR in 1933 was partly to counter and keep Germany and Japan apart. The Nazi-Soviet Pact was a body-blow to this policy and potentially very dangerous. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 Roosevelt attempted quickly to repair relations with Moscow. After Pearl Harbor (December 1941) the President was always concerned to prevent a German-Soviet *rapprochement* and to enlist Moscow's help in defeating Japan.

Another reason was the effect left on the President by the First World War, which he had experienced at first hand. According to Averell Harriman [72], Roosevelt

had a horror of American troops landing again on the continent and becoming involved again in the kind of warfare he had seen before – trench warfare with all its appalling losses. I believe that he has in mind that if the great armies of Russia could stand up to the Germans, this might well make it possible for us to limit our participation largely to naval and air power.

The United States never committed more than 90 divisions, instead of the 215 thought necessary, for the defeat of Germany and Japan. General Marshall admitted that this had only been possible because of Soviet manpower. Consequently, Roosevelt viewed the United States as a base for military technology which would provide the war matériel while others provided the manpower to do the actual fighting.

The United States was obliged to bear most of the burden of the war against Japan. Although the defeat of Germany was always given priority, the US public would not long have tolerated heavy defeats at the hands of Japan while the United States was committing large forces to the war against Germany. The war against Japan was conceived of as a long operation, one that would require Soviet help after the defeat of Germany. In the event, it was remarkable that the two wars came to an end almost simultaneously without heavy US casualties. No one could have envisaged that the atomic bomb would be available in 1945 to be used to hasten the end of hostilities against Tokyo. Roosevelt could argue that he had taken into account political as well as military objectives. Had the war against Japan been over in 1943 or 1944, then US policy towards Moscow might have been different.

Roosevelt sought to build a stable post-war world by offering the

Russians a prominent role in it – Russia would be one of the world's four policemen, alongside the United States, Britain and China, to impose world order, bombing recalcitrants into submission whenever necessary. The President appeared to believe that Soviet hostility emanated from insecurity, which was spawned by external threats. These were the challenge of Germany and Japan, the West's unremitting hostility to communism and the refusal of the international community to afford Russia its rightful place in the world. Roosevelt regarded Russians as friendly people who did not have any foolish ideas of conquest, and so forth: and now that they had got to know the Americans, they were much more willing to accept them [57]. Hence he expected Stalin's suspicions of US intentions gradually to fade away.

Roosevelt did not regard Marxism-Leninism as a great threat. It had limited appeal to the American working class. Communism, which concentrated on subversion and propaganda, was not as dangerous as fascism, which deployed force and coercion. He perceived that Russian national interest was more significant than ideology in fashioning Stalin's policies.

Roosevelt believed in collective security and an open world, and this involved breaking down the barriers which existed. He was most effective in his goal of breaking up the British Empire and opening its markets by astute political and economic pressure. He never got round to doing the same *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union but he did regard German reparations and a large post-war reconstruction loan for Russia as weapons in his armoury. Interestingly enough, he refused to inform the Soviets officially about the atomic bomb even though he was aware they knew about it. Did he envisage using it as a bargaining chip?

Roosevelt was mindful of the need to avoid a post-war settlement which contained the seeds of future conflict. Given Stalin's powerful position in the Soviet Union, a better relationship, based on mutual respect, had to start at the top. In view of his arch-suspiciousness of the motives of others, it is astounding that Stalin had ever trusted Hitler, but after having his fingers burned there he was unlikely to fall into the same relationship with an American President. Nevertheless, one cannot blame Roosevelt for trying. Yet despite all his efforts he could not overcome the suspicion in Stalin's mind that the delay in launching the second front was aimed at bleeding Russia white and sparing American lives. The D-Day landings in June 1944 did not dispel his doubts. As late as April 1945 Stalin was warning subordinates that the United States and Britain might

forge an alliance with the Germans to fight Moscow. The same month the Red Army began constructing defensive installations in eastern Europe. It appeared that Roosevelt's policy of banking on Stalin was unravelling. The President was also aware that he had to convince the American public that an eastern Europe dominated by Moscow was a good deal. That would not be easy and, had he lived, it is likely that he would have introduced policy linkages (military, political and economic) aimed at encouraging the Russians to follow his agenda.

The tide of war turned for the Red Army at Stalingrad (February 1943), and in 1944 Soviet forces began to penetrate eastern and south-eastern Europe. It was now a matter merely of *when* Germany would be defeated. Stalin seized the initiative and made demand after demand for equipment. By late 1944 American officials, who had felt the sharp edge of Russian tongues, were quite hostile to Roosevelt's policy of turning the other cheek. Professional Soviet watchers were also of like mind and their unease was accentuated by Roosevelt's exclusion of the State Department from important dealings with Moscow. They were acutely aware of the growing gap between Stalin's war aims and the ideals of the Atlantic Charter.

Averell Harriman, US ambassador to the Soviet Union since 1943, and General John R. Deane, head of the US military mission in Moscow, articulated these views most forcefully. Both began as believers in Roosevelt's policy of winning friends and influencing people by extending aid without strings attached. Inside a year they had been disillusioned by Soviet behaviour. In September 1944 Harriman expressed his convictions clearly, unless the US took issue with the present policy there was every indication the Soviet Union would become a world bully wherever their interests were involved [57]. To Deane each transaction was negotiated on its own merits, irrespective of past favours. Harriman and Deane were not as pessimistic as George Kennan about establishing a *modus vivendi* and a *modus operandi* with the Russians. Kennan could not foresee any agreement with Moscow other than conceding separate spheres of influence. Harriman, Deane and Charles E. Bohlen, then in Washington, did not believe that the American public would countenance the concession to the Soviets of eastern and south-eastern Europe as their sphere of influence where they could impose any policy they desired. Harriman suggested that the best solution would be to strengthen the hand of those around Stalin who wanted to play the game along US lines and to show Stalin that the advice of the counselors of a tough policy was leading him into difficulties

[57]. The United States should adopt a firm but friendly *quid pro quo* attitude. Roosevelt wanted to win the war first and then turn the screw. Harriman and the others regarded this as misguided since Lend-Lease could be more effectively used during wartime than after the war. If the United States waited until after victory, the issues it would wish to take up might already have been resolved in Moscow's favour.

President Truman, excluded by Roosevelt from decision making, was woefully ignorant of foreign affairs. He immediately turned to the former President's key advisers and they grasped the opportunity to push the give-and-take policies which Roosevelt had failed to adopt. Now there had to be a *quid* for every *quo*. Truman gave Molotov a dressing down (the Soviet Foreign Minister spluttered that he had never been talked to like that before – in itself a white lie). Truman thought he was implementing Roosevelt's policy, but to Moscow he had reversed it. His Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, had as little experience of foreign affairs as he had. Nevertheless Truman was very keen to reach an accommodation with Moscow. He did not accede to Churchill's wish to deploy troops in Germany in such a way as to restrict the Red Army to as little of that country as possible, and in May 1945 he sent the terminally ill Harry Hopkins to Moscow in the hope of cutting a deal.

The Americans overestimated Russia's dependency on them. Washington thought that Moscow could be made amenable by its anticipated need of large loans for post-war reconstruction; world public opinion could be mobilised against it and there was the ultimate weapon, the atomic bomb. Things never worked out like this. Moscow would do its own re-building, albeit more slowly, and anyway a huge Soviet loan would never have got through Congress, where many would have demanded free speech in the Soviet Union and the removal of Moscow from eastern Europe. Adverse publicity was no problem to Stalin. What else could one expect of the capitalist press? Stalin's spies in London and Washington assured him that the atomic bomb could not actually be used. Anyway, domestic pressures forced Truman to accept the principle of international control of atomic weapons before Secretary Byrnes had had an opportunity to attempt to prise concessions out of Moscow.

By the time of the Moscow foreign ministers' conference in December 1945 Byrnes had come to the same conclusion as Roosevelt a year earlier about the impossibility of reconciling the goals of the Atlantic Charter and the Soviet need for security. The only solution was to paper over Russian hegemony in eastern

Europe as best one could. Moscow made some concessions on Bulgaria and Romania and the United States on Japan, but these met with a hostile reception in America where the Secretary of State was regarded as gaining little and giving away a lot.

The *quid pro quo* tactics were unsuccessful because the United States was unwilling to use the ultimate weapon, the threat of war, to extract concessions. Once in control of eastern and south-eastern Europe and part of Germany, Russia could strip these countries to benefit Soviet industrial reconstruction. Moscow would have benefited from Western loans but was not willing to pay the American price. An example of this was the Bretton Woods agreement in 1944 which set up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. As late as December 1945 Molotov was forwarding positive memoranda to Stalin on joining these organisations. What turned the tide was the need to declare gold and foreign currency reserves and adhere to strict criteria (including IMF inspections to check on implementation) to qualify for loans.

Stalin and his close advisers lacked the sophistication to realise the damage they were causing the Soviet Union by implementing a no-concession policy towards the United States. Others, such as Maxim Litvinov, dismissed as Foreign Minister in 1939 and who favoured a cooperative policy with the West, did perceive the cost but lacked access to Stalin. However, Stalin might not have listened to him.

Frustration at American inability to influence significantly Soviet actions by demonstrating trust or exerting pressure found expression in George Kennan's 8,000-word 'long telegram' of February 1946 [Doc. 18]. The State Department had been puzzled by the increasing torrent of anti-Western references in the speeches of Soviet policy-makers and had requested Kennan to provide an explanation. He did so with gusto, and stated simply that US foreign policy towards the Soviet Union during and after the Second World War had been based on fallacies. One was that Stalin's trust could be won by being completely open with him, and another was that his respect could be gained by a *quid pro quo* policy. Yet another was that if Washington chose the right option Moscow would be amenable. Kennan regarded Soviet foreign policy as being conditioned by Soviet domestic policy and not by what the West did or did not do. He thought that a hostile international environment was the breath of life for the prevailing internal system in this country [57]. The disappearance of Germany and Japan meant that the United States and the United Kingdom would have to be dressed up to replace

them. There could be no permanent resolution of differences with a government which relied on a fictitious external threat to maintain domestic legitimacy. In March Kennan noted:

We are thus up against the fact that suspicion in one degree or another is an integral part of the Soviet system, and will not yield entirely to any form of rational persuasion or assurance. ... To this climate, and not to wishful preconceptions, we must adjust our diplomacy. [57]

Kennan was astonished by the impact his analysis of Soviet behaviour had in Washington. After all, he was not proposing a new policy but explaining Soviet behaviour. The consequences for policy were quickly drafted. In the future, conflicts with Moscow would be aired openly – though not in a provocative manner – and there would be no more concessions to the Soviet Union. A line would be drawn beyond which Soviet expansionism would be resisted, but there would be no attempt to liberate occupied areas; Allies could call on the United States for military and economic aid to resist communism. Negotiations with Moscow would continue, but only to ensure that the Russians accepted American positions, or to demonstrate Soviet intransigence so as to win allies abroad and support at home. The goal of the new policy, based on patience and firmness, was to encourage the Soviets to negotiate and compromise. In September 1946 Clark Clifford expressed the hope that the Russians would change their minds and work out with the US a fair and equitable settlement when they realised that the Americans were too strong to be beaten and too determined to be frightened [57].

The new policy bore immediate fruit. The Soviets were induced to remove their troops from Iran and to abandon hopes of forcing Turkey to make boundary concessions and grant bases. In Greece, aid was to be extended to those fighting communist insurgents, and the US Sixth Fleet was to be permanently based in the eastern Mediterranean. The United States refused to concede the Soviet Union a significant role in the occupation of Japan and made clear it would not permit a Soviet takeover of the whole of Korea. In Germany, reparations from the US zone were stopped and plans set in motion to merge the western zones. At the same time, Moscow was offered a four-power treaty guaranteeing the disarmament of Germany for 25 years. Soviet efforts to acquire former Italian territory in the Mediterranean basin were rejected, but the United States continued to seek agreement on peace treaties with Germany's

wartime allies. The most dramatic *démarche* was the Truman Doctrine [Doc. 24], couched in the terms of a commitment to Greece and Turkey but containing the seeds of a world-wide commitment to resist Soviet expansionism. Truman's declaration that it 'must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures' [Doc. 24] has been seen by most observers as the beginning of the Cold War in earnest.

Ironically, President Truman enunciated this policy at a time when US defence spending was falling rapidly. The number of troops had declined to 3 million in July 1946 and to 1.6 million a year later. Defence expenditure in the fiscal year 1946 had dropped to \$44.7 billion and \$13.1 billion in 1947. The stark reality was that the United States was incapable of taking on communism on a global scale. What had to be done was to distinguish between core and peripheral interests and then to find the resources to defend the former.

Kennan used the term 'containment' for the first time in his famous Mr X article [Doc. 26]. It was not intended as a detailed analysis of national strategy, and contains some passages which appear to contradict Kennan's own government's policies. In this and other utterances Kennan made clear that the goal of universal harmony, a world without wars and conflicts, was a myth. The United States should pursue its own national interest instead of trying to re-structure the world order – he referred to this as universalism – and concentrate on the particularist approach of trying to maintain equilibrium within it, so that no single country, or group of countries, could dominate the world. Hence some parts of the world were more important to the United States than others. Of prime importance was the need to identify those countries which were absolutely vital to the United States, countries in which regimes should be friendly towards Washington. This list ranged from western Europe to Canada, Iceland, Greenland, Scandinavia, the British Isles, the Iberian peninsula, Morocco, the west coast of Africa, South America, the Mediterranean countries and the Middle East as far as Iran, and Japan and the Philippines. He refined his thinking shortly afterwards, and stated that there were only five centres of military and economic power in the world which were important for US national security: the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Central Europe, the USSR and Japan. These centres had the requisite resources to ensure an amphibious attack on the United States. Of these, only one, the USSR, was in hostile hands.

The goal of US policy should be to ensure that none of the others fell into unfriendly hands. The United States needed to establish a list of priorities which would permit it to react quickly or slowly in given circumstances, bearing in mind its limited resources. The United States should refrain from intervening in the domestic affairs of other states wherever possible.

Kennan had supported the alliance against Hitler, but the consequence of Germany's defeat was to place the Soviet Union in a position where it might gain control of two or more power centres inimical to the United States and its allies. Russian traditional habits of thought blended well with Marxist-Leninist ideology. The latter helped to legitimise an illegitimate government. However, ideology was not a reliable guide to Soviet behaviour. This was because it was amorphous and permitted the Soviet leadership to enunciate any particular thesis it found tactically useful. Hence truth was not a constant but was actually created by the Soviet leaders themselves [57]. Ideology served the function of justifying action already decided upon. Stalin might not feel secure until he dominated the world. His march to world domination would not be in response to the need to establish a world classless society but the fruit of his own insecurity. Therefore the goal of containment should be to limit Soviet expansionism; communism was only a threat inasmuch as it served as the instrument of that expansionism. Kennan did not believe that Moscow would resort to war to achieve its aims. Stalin was no Hitler, with a timetable of aggression. He would prefer to make gains by political rather than military means.

The threat to the political centres of western Europe and Japan was real, but it was psychological rather than military. It was possible that the demoralised peoples of these regions would succumb to communism either through a coup or free elections. It was vital for the United States that these centres did not fall under the sway of communism – and by extension Soviet domination – because if this happened it would reduce Americans to a 'position of helplessness and loneliness and ignominy among the nations of mankind'. Since Kennan saw the Soviet challenge as essentially psychological his policies to counter it were also partly psychological. Restore self-confidence in states under the threat of Soviet expansionism, exploit the differences between communist states and between them and Moscow, and modify the Soviet concept of international behaviour in order to secure a negotiated settlement of outstanding issues. The announcement of American economic aid to western Europe would boost confidence there and would encourage

European integration. This in turn would reintegrate Germany into Europe. Aid to eastern Europe would help to detach the region from Moscow (this was never a serious plan). Kennan was thinking of a future European federation as the optimal way of protecting large and small states against Soviet attempts at domination. The Soviet threat meant that thoughts of punishing Germany, Italy and their allies had now to recede. The same was true in Japan. Occupation should give way to rehabilitation. Without military forces the United States could not successfully pursue such a policy. There had to be a soldier behind the diplomat. However, there was a limit to military power. Since the Soviet threat was not military but political, it could not be overcome solely by military force. Kennan therefore did not propose a military alliance for western Europe, but rather its political and economic recovery.

In Asia he advocated that the US secure island bases in the western Pacific, such as Okinawa and the Philippines, and not become entangled on the mainland. The expansion of communism as such was not significant; it all depended where. China, for instance, was not important to US security interests, and should not be mentioned in the same breath as Greece and Turkey. Kennan looked to the emergence of independent power centres in Europe and Asia, not the transformation of the world into American and Soviet zones of influence. These new independent power centres, by definition, would be friendly towards the United States.

Besides promoting these policies, the United States should also, argued Kennan, seek to restrict the capacity of the Soviet Union to exert influence beyond its borders. This could be done by encouraging and exploiting tensions within the world communist movement. The history of the Comintern demonstrated that Moscow could not tolerate diversity, and its attempts to impose its will would lead, over time, to a steady stream of disillusioned former followers. This would present the United States and Europe with a range of opportunities to challenge communist hegemony. Kennan perceptively regarded China as posing a greater threat to Soviet security and its control of the international communist movement than to the United States, since it lacked the industrial base to construct the air and amphibious power necessary to invade America. Soviet communism – in reality, imperialism – contained the seeds of its own destruction. It would crumble just like the Roman Empire which found it impossible to control faraway provinces.

The most effective method of modifying Soviet behaviour lay in a

combination of deterrents and inducements, called 'counter-pressure' by Kennan. Soviet leaders

are prepared to recognize *situations*, if not arguments. If, therefore, situations can be created in which it is clearly not to the advantage of their power to emphasize the elements of conflict in their relations with the outside world, then their actions, and even the tenor of their propaganda to their own people, *can* be modified. [57]

The way to bring this about was for Americans to be themselves. The United States 'must demonstrate by its own self-confidence and patience, but particularly by the integrity and dignity of its example, that the true glory of Russian national effort can find its expression only in peaceful and friendly association with other peoples and not in attempts to subjugate and dominate those peoples' [57]. He likened American-Soviet relations to a long-range fencing contest in which the

weapons are not only the development of military power but the loyalties and convictions of hundreds of millions of people and the control or influence over their forms of political organization. ... It may be the strength and health of our respective systems which is decisive and which will determine the issue. This may be done – and probably will be done – without a war. [57]

Containment as a strategy meant the abandonment of universalism. The dream of re-shaping the world through a fundamental re-structuring of the world order, which included the disarmament of past and potential adversaries, the application of the principle of national self-determination, the opening up of the world economy by reducing barriers to trade and the flow of capital, and – most important of all – the creation of an international organisation to implement such a programme, lingered on. These two strands of US foreign policy, the particularist and the universalist, coexisted uneasily during these years and later. Hence there has always been a duality to US foreign policy. In 1947 the United States had to face the reality that there was an adversary which also had a universalist dream for mankind, and that the two could not be reconciled. There were now two worlds, and it would be futile to pretend that one world could be created out of them.

There was general agreement that the Soviet Union must not be permitted to expand into key political centres. However, the

resources of the United States were limited. It was quite incapable of taking on the security of the whole world, so the policy adopted was to identify core centres of interest to defend. Kennan accepted that there were areas which could fall under Soviet control without endangering American security. These included the mainland of Asia, from Afghanistan to Korea. If communist regimes took over in the non-industrialised Asian mainland this did not require the United States to intervene, since hostility was no threat but only became so when allied to industrial power.

An effective way of enhancing US security was to extend economic and technological aid to key political centres. A major advantage of this was to obviate the necessity to station US troops there to maintain the balance of power. Hence President Truman, in 1947, decided to concentrate on the economic recovery of western Europe and Japan. This involved cutting back on US defence expenditure. In December 1947 James Forrestal, Secretary for Defence, put American objectives succinctly. They were: economic stability, political stability and military stability, in about that order. This policy was based on the assumption that the Soviet Union was not preparing for war. After all, Washington had the atomic bomb. The Americans believed that the emergence of self-confident, prosperous centres of political power would enhance US security rather than establish spheres of influence. The policy in Europe, as one State Department official put it, was to 'create a third force ... strong enough to say no both to the Soviet Union and the United States, if our actions should seem so to require' [57].

The Truman administration implemented the first part of Kennan's containment strategy very conscientiously. The second part of his strategy was to promote the fracturing of the world communist movement. Because the administration had no intention of resisting communism world-wide, it began to adopt the term 'totalitarian' rather than 'communist'. The Russians could not complain that they were the target, since if they had done so they would have admitted they were totalitarian. There was also the important point that anti-communism was negative and that a positive policy was always preferable – such as the defence of free peoples everywhere. Offering Marshall Plan aid to the USSR and its east European allies would force Moscow to choose – almost certainly against – but this would place the blame for splitting Europe economically on the Russians' shoulders. Should an east European communist state accept the aid, this would be used to lessen that state's economic reliance on the Soviet Union. Such an

opportunity did occur in 1948 when Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform.

The third plank in Kennan's strategy had been to engineer changes in the Soviet perception of international relations, in order to persuade Russian leaders that they would be better served by learning to live with a diverse world than by trying to remould it in their image. Neither war nor appeasement was effective by itself. Both positive and negative policies were needed, and this involved negotiating wherever there was a good chance of results. Yet Kennan regarded many of the US administration's moves between 1948 and 1950 – the formation of NATO, the establishment of a West German state, the decision to keep US troops in Japan after occupation ended, and the decision to build the hydrogen bomb – as guaranteed to increase Soviet suspiciousness and insecurity and consequently to reduce the opportunities for successful negotiations.

Kennan left as head of the Policy Planning Staff in late 1949 because he found that the soil was no longer as receptive as previously to his ideas. Nevertheless, US policy bore the indelible mark of his imprint and would do so for decades to come.

Halliday [69], in a post-revisionist (mark 3) interpretation, suggests various theoretical approaches to explain the origins of the Cold War. First, Soviet threat theorists place the blame on the policies of the USSR. Crises were the result of Soviet expansionism and aggressiveness. Whether Soviet behaviour was the result of Marxist-Leninist theory or of the traditional values of pre-1914 Russian society is of secondary importance. The fact that Soviet actions were responsible for crises in world politics is self-evident, irrespective of whichever explanation one favours.

Secondly, US imperialism theorists produce, in essence, a mirror image of the Soviet threat view. Again the responsibility is focused on the policies of one state, and the actions of the other, innocent, one are not regarded as having contributed to the impasse. These theorists locate the aggressiveness and belligerence of the West in the social system of capitalism, which they regard as needing confrontation and military production to survive.

Thirdly, the super-power theorists place the blame on the two major powers, arguing that the United States and the USSR jointly subordinated the world to their common interests and remaining differences. Popularised by China in the 1960s, the super-power theory identifies the two major powers as 'colluding and contending' in their efforts to dominate the world. This view was popular

among those who wanted a third alternative to the super-powers, whether they were European conservatives, anti-Soviet Marxists or Third World nationalists.

Fourthly, arms-race theorists identify the stockpiling of weapons, particularly of nuclear weapons, as the central factor in world politics. The danger of the destruction of the economic, social and cultural fabric of the world by nuclear weapons, and the apparent lack of control of the arms race, were regarded as so significant as to explain the course of world politics. The political and social impact of the arms race was regarded as broadly similar in East and West.

Fifthly, north-south theorists locate the driving force of world politics essentially in the conflict between rich and poor states, between imperial and colonial, dominant and dominated states. The great importance this issue has assumed since 1945 and the immiseration of millions in the Third World have contributed to a situation where these issues override the East-West conflict and generate these and other conflicts. The production of weapons and the conflicts between rich states are, in reality, means of consolidating their influence over weaker and poorer states.

Sixthly, the West-West theorists see world politics dominated by conflicts between the richer capitalist states, reminiscent of the period before 1914. From this perspective, the US conflict with the USSR is a mask to hide the real conflict with its major capitalist rivals – western Europe and Japan. The Soviet threat is the only ideological instrument available to unite the major capitalist states. Turmoil in the Third World is the consequence of these inter-capitalist rivalries.

Seventhly, the intra-state theorists identify the primary causes in the inner workings of the major world powers. International relations are an extension of domestic affairs. Changes in foreign policy are the result of shifts in internal power relations, or of weaknesses and changes in the economy and/or social composition of the countries concerned. Those in charge of foreign policy may pretend that they are responding to forces and states abroad, but, in reality, are attempting to resolve domestic policy disputes.

Lastly, class-conflict theorists perceive international politics to be determined by the flow of social revolution and the conflict between capitalism and communism, on a world scale. They believe that it is the simultaneous unity and diversity of the world as transformed by capitalism which explains the turmoils of the post-war world. Sometimes it is expressed in rivalry between the major states of the capitalist and communist blocs.

This study is an attempt at post-revisionism. Its aim is not to apportion blame but to attempt to unravel some of the complexities of the issues which gave rise to the Cold War and to consider whether the whole episode could have been avoided.