

The Impact of WWII on Europe

What happened in Europe?

- *Much of the infrastructure (roads, railways, bridges, canals) in Europe was destroyed*
- *No gas, electricity, running water in most of the places, and disease and malnutrition were widespread as there were desperate shortages of medicine and healthcare everywhere*
- *Many (over 50 million) people lost or forced to leave their homes*

Decline of the Western European powers

- *Three major European powers: Britain, France, Germany*
- *Britain: was not invaded/defeated, but exhausted all resources of its people and industries, became virtually bankrupt (almost bankrupt)*
- *France: was occupied by Germany in 1940, then liberated in 1944, but they lost a lot of their influence and power*
- *Germany: 1945, defeated in WWII, basically in ruins*

Early Tensions Between US and USSR

History of suspicion and mistrust before 1939

- *1917: Russia became communist state, USSR*
- *USSR had a vision aligned to Communist Manifesto → garner communist worldwide to come together and overthrow capitalist states → Got US and Western European states worried that this would influence ppl in their own country + cause communist revolutions*
- *1919: Paris Peace conference → Germany was decided not to be split up → British + America afraid of the possibility of a new communist state in Russia and the consequences of it/afraid that Russia would influence the weak Germany to be communist → Wanted Germany to be a barrier to communism, highlights their suspicion toward Russia*
- *1918-1921: Civil war in Russia → War between reds (Bolsheviks) and whites (anti-communists) → Reds won though despite US and British troops being sent in*
- **REMEMBER: US SENT TROOPS IN TO SUPPORT THE "WHITES", AKA THE SIDE THAT LOST, AND THAT WAS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY GOT DISTRUST**

- 1920s: US had a "red scare" → arrested + imprisoned a lot of ppl (mostly Russian immigrants that were innocent)
- 1930s: British and French had appeasement policy toward Hitler → bc. they were afraid USSR were trying to spread communism by force → British hoped Hitler's Germany would oppose communism → But appeasement threatens USSR's security as they thought POA implied Hitler was free to take over Eastern Europe
- 1939: USSR + Germany signed NAZI SOVIET NON AGGRESSION PACT → surprised the world cuz they thought USSR was supposed to sign an alliance with Britain and France against Hitler → nothing happened though
- During WW2, Germany continuously attacked → Stalin **urged** Britain and US to open a second front in France to end war as quickly as possible → bc. Soviet troops faced a lot of pressure due to Germany → US and B only did it during 1944 through operation overlord → led Stalin to think US and Britain only did that to minimise their own losses → deepen distrust

Different ideologies

- US and USSR ideologies clashed → at the very beginning of communist rule in USSR → US and other democratic countries opposed them → many businessmen and politicians hated and feared communism ideas as they felt it might threaten their way of life
- USSR also did not like US → thought US was acting selfish to build its own empire and political influence in the world → tensions and mistrust between both of them

Yalta and Potsdam

Breakup of US, UK, USSR: Yalta conference (Feb 1945)

- Yalta (part of Soviet territory)
- At this time, it was clear that the Big Three were going to win → but US and USSR were mostly dominating discussions and had different views on what would happen after the war
- Agree:
- USSR to enter the war once Germany surrenders → Germany to be divided into 4 zones: US, F, B, SU + Berlin (capital) to be split up into 4 zones + Nazi war criminals responsible for the Holocaust to be tried before an international court

- **Countries liberated from German occupation (no longer under Nazi rule) to be allowed to hold free elections to choose they wanted (Churchill + Roosevelt request)**
- The Big Three to join the United Nations, which was an organisation designed to keep peace after the war
- E.E: (countries between USSR and Western Europe, so like buffer states) to be a Soviet Sphere of influence as Stalin was concerned about the future security of the USSR in view of the wartime sufferings it had gone through (Stalin's request) , BUT Roosevelt and Churchill made a **compromise** and said that those countries USSR wanted to control **had** to have **free elections**
- Disagree: Stalin wanted Soviet border to move westwards into Poland and argued that Poland, in turn could move its border westwards into German territory → Churchill + Roosevelt unhappy → Roosevelt was eventually persuaded by Churchill to accept it as long as USSR did not interfere with Greece, where the British were trying to prevent a communist takeover → later accepted by Stalin

	Views	Reasons
US	- believed in having peace, safety and prosperity in post-war world - Believed <u>capitalism and democracy is a model for international development</u> → also a method to gain political influence + benefit economically through trade - Believed <u>recovery of Western Europe was essential for international stability and US prosperity from trade</u>	- <u>Alarmed by Soviet-supported communist parties in Eastern Europe who seemed like they were taking action to seize power according to the Communist Manifesto</u> - <u>Trade with Europe was disrupted bc. of WW2</u>
USSR	- Wanted to establish buffer states in Eastern Europe to prevent another invasion - Believed that Eastern Europe must remain friendly to USSR - Wanted massive war reparations from Germany to repair its own economy and ensure that Germany could not threaten it again	- Russia/USSR was <u>invaded by Germany twice through Poland</u> - WW2 resulted in <u>at least 20 million Soviet citizens dead and devastation of USSR's industries and cities</u> Having buffer states could <u>buy them more time</u>, cuz other countries would have to go through them first, and that could <u>tire</u> them out - Also USSR wanted pro communist governments so those countries would not ally with the west/ allow western troops to come

End of Conference:

- *Stalin + Churchill: clashed on numerous issues, and relationship was tense*
- *Roosevelt: more willing to work with Stalin*
- *But they put up a front in front of the whole world to show they're united and very friendly with each other → After the conference: Churchill wrote to Roosevelt to express his concerns that USSR might jeopardise world peace, and he even ordered his military commanders to make plans for a possible war against USSR*

Potsdam conference (July-August 1945): War against Germany + Japan ended/ending

What were the changes when the big three met this time round?

- *Leaders of US and Britain changed; Leader of US: Harry Truman*
- *Truman did not have the same relationship as Roosevelt (USA) did with Stalin as he assumed power after the war-time alliance (the Big Three) between USSR and US had broken down*
- *Why did they not have a good relationship?: mutual enemy (Germany) is out of the picture → Truman is not Roosevelt + concerned about the potential threat USSR posed to security of Western Europe → started disagreeing with Stalin on major issues*
- *Changes to Soviet Union?*
 - *Soviet troops now controlled most of Eastern Europe → helped liberate most of the countries there from Germany → but still left troops there to control the Baltic states (Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania)*
 - *Poland: USSR went ahead and set up a communist government in Poland, despite their wishes*
 - *USSR also encourage communists in other states to take power → Britain + US protest → against what they agreed on (free elections for those countries) in the Yalta Conference*
 - *Britain worried about USSR as they went to war over Poland in 1939 → USSR got trauma from being invaded twice by Germany through Poland → wanted security*

—> insisted that his control of Eastern Europe was just a defensive measure against possible attacks

- *Manhattan Project*
 - 1941: US was secretly developing an atomic bomb to end the war —> part of a state-funded nuclear development programme called the Manhattan Project
 - 1945: Finally finished —> US told USSR, only told USSR at Potsdam conference though that bomb was successfully tested—> but Stalin not surprised as he had Soviet spies on the inside —> but he knew that US was keeping this from him and he grew more suspicious of US intentions
- *What disagreements were there?*
 - All forms of mass communications (news, radio broadcast, etc.) very heavily stressed on the unity of the Big Three, but they were becoming more tense
 - Stalin: wanted Germany to be completely crippled + wanted compensation
 - Truman: disagreed with the “cripple” part because he did not want to repeat the mistake of Treaty of Versailles + agreed to the compensation first, but changed his mind later —> STALIN GREW SUSPICIOUS AND THOUGHT US WANTED TO PROTECT GERMANY
- *Disagreements over Eastern Europe*
 - At Yalta Conference, it was agreed that Eastern Europe would be a Soviet sphere of influence
 - To Stalin, this meant he could set up communist governments loyal to him and control them —> But this was more than what Truman had in mind —> suspected that Stalin wanted to control all of Europe

Worsening relations after Potsdam

- *Atomic Bomb*: Truman told Stalin about the bomb to get him worried, but Stalin was not at all because his Soviet spies told him about it before and he even ordered scientists to prepare another atomic bomb that was achieved before the Potsdam Conference
- *Soviet control of Eastern Europe*:
 - There was already tensions at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences due to these two issues, but Stalin was determined to control the governments, and he did so by

adopting “salami tactics” and remove opponents one by one to make sure that communist governments were loyal to him

- Salami tactics: He would first support local coalitions where the communist party was quite popular, then those parties would work with other parties at first, but overtime they would be isolated and suppressed in the coalition, then they would be banned and their leaders would be exiled, arrested, beaten up or murdered
- Example: Jan Masaryk, a passionate and intelligent politician that beat the Czechoslovakia Communist party in the elections a few times, but he was followed by Soviet spies, and almost killed by a parcel with a bomb inside, sent by his enemies. However he died in 1948 with the official verdict being that he committed suicide, but a lot of speculation was that he was killed or murdered
- Iron curtain
 - Stalin: Controlling Eastern Europe makes sense → traditional route to attack USSR was through Eastern Europe, so having buffer states meant that it was challenging to invade USSR as they would have to go through the other states first
 - Truman: Stalin's actions to him were evidence that he was building an empire → but many people in America did not want to get involved with International Affairs (were wary and weary of them) → think that Stalin's actions did not have anything to do with them
 - Truman: asked Churchill (Britain) for help → although not president anymore, but he still was respected, especially in US → Truman set up a speech for him in 1946, where Churchill warned the dangers of USSR and used the term “**the iron curtain**”
 - Speech had a huge impact → many Americans were alarmed → gave Truman the attention and support he needed to get US more involved with IA → speech also drew angry responses from Soviet media and Stalin himself

Development of Cold War

Truman Doctrine and Containment Policy:

- 1946-1947: relationship between US and USSR worsened → Truman took a tough stand against Stalin, and the eventual result was the Truman Doctrine

- *March 1947: Truman Doctrine was announced by Truman that the US would provide money, military equipment and advice to democratic countries that might be threatened by communist influences → Truman Policy was the beginning of containment — an attempt to stop the spread of communism, and was introduced as a result of events in Turkey and Greece*
- *Developments in Turkey and Greece*
 - *Greece was occupied by German in WW2, then after the war, run by British until a new government could be set up → disagreements whether it should be run by communist government or return to monarchy*
 - *1946: civil war broke out → British could not control due to lack of resources and announced their withdrawal in 1947 → Truman faced with the prospect of another vulnerable country that might fall to communism*
 - *Stalin: trying to gain influence in Turkey → wanted to get his hands on Turkish straits so Soviet ships could travel from Black sea to Mediterranean Sea → Truman concerned that if Turkey became an ally → Stalin could use that to spread communism influence in the middle east + This area is IMPORTANT to US as it has oil reserves*
 - *To gain support in the US, Truman exaggerated the scale of threat (USSR) in Turkey and Greece (by using American newspapers, → Supported Truman's policy of increasing US involvement in IA)*
 - *1947: US congress passed the Greece and Turkey Aid bill → aid package of \$400 million → secure Turkey as an ally, propped up Greece to a monarchist government → But as Truman exaggerated the threat of USSR → worsened his and Stalin's relationship as Stalin actually made a promise to Churchill in 1945 he would not help the communists in Greece*
- *Increasing tensions*
 - *US would not withdraw from world affairs → instead it would be actively resisting the spread of communism*
 - *Stalin was alarmed by Truman Doctrine → founded Cominform*
- *Marshall Plan*

- June 1947: Truman told US secretary of state (George Marshall) to come up with an economic aid plan → announced to the world on June 1947 → put 13 BILLION DOLLARS into helping Europe to recover
- April 1948: Food, machinery, animals, other items were shipped to democratic countries in Europe → Truman wanted people to get back to work and MAKE MONEYYY + feel good about capitalism so they wouldn't go to communism
- EUROPE: SUPER GRATEFUL
- BUT US needed Europe economy to recover as they needed a market to export their goods to → most financial aid also only went to closest allies, France and Britain → Countries who received the aid MUST be democratic (e.g. Italy only received aid after a non-communist government took power in 1948)
- IN THE END:
 - Helped bind people against Communism, Europe and war-ravaged West Germany recovered super fast
- USSR response to the Marshall Plan: Cominform and Comecon
 - Stalin was angered by the Marshall Plan → Seemed to him that US was tying Western Europe in the same way that USSR was controlling Eastern Europe → but too Stalin the difference was that US did not need a defensive buffer zone
 - Stalin concerned about US domination of Western Europe would lead to threatening Soviet control in Eastern Europe
 - Stalin, in the end, could not do anything about what was happening in Western Europe, so he tightened his grip on the Eastern European states and ordered them to have nothing to do with the Marshall Plan
 - Then he turned them into SATELLITE STATES, which were FORCED to stay close to USSR
- Cominform (Sept 1947)
 - includes the leaders of the communist parties in E.E.
 - Published propaganda that would unite the communist states in Europe → ensure that satellite states implement a Soviet-style communism and trade mainly with other Cominform states
 - Used to tighten control over satellite states and ensure US could not gain any political influence

- Some policies they had to follow:
 - rejecting financial support from Marshall Plan
 - Cut off trade and any other kind of contact with countries that did not belong to Cominform → Only country that argued with Stalin was Yugoslavia, and got expelled from Cominform in 1948
- Comecon (Jan 1949)
 - in response to Marshall Plan
 - Stalin wanted to make sure that satellite states were free from any kind of control or influence by US
 - Comecon members would trade mostly with one another, not the West, and satellite states were promised benefits similar to the Marshall Plan, BUT in reality → Comecon FAVOURED USSR heavily, e.g. Poland was forced to sell its coal to USSR for a tenth of what it is on the market
- THE BERLIN BLOCKADE
 - Escalation of Tensions (1944)
 - US drew up the Morgenthau Plan → break up Germany and dismantle their industries such that it could never wage war ever again
 - BUT with increasing tensions → Truman began to see Germany as a possible future against the USSR → Britain and France also keen for Germany to start rebuilding its economy as controlling the zones was a waste of resources → US + B + F combined their zones of Berlin into TRIZONE → introduce a new currency
 - TO STALIN: this was like rebuilding his own enemy → as he could not stop the allies, he thought he could make a point by forcing them out of Berlin
 - (June 1948): Carried out the Berlin Blockade → cut the rail and road links from allied zones to West Berlin → also DISRUPTED water and power supplies → if allies stayed in Berlin → west Berliners would have no food, supplies and DIE
 - But Truman was not prepared to be driven out of Berlin → he ordered Berlin airlift → for almost a year (10 months), the allies supplied West Berlin with coal, food and medicine by air
 - Western media praised the courage and endurance of the air crews, Soviet media criticised the constant flights as unsafe → EVENTUALLY Stalin saw he could not drive them out hence he gave up and lifted the blockade on MAY 1949

- *Consequence of Berlin Blockade*
 - *Separation in two camps: Western Europe and US VS Eastern Europe and USSR*
 - *Creation of East Germany → May 1949: Truman announced that B+F and US zones would be united to create the Federal Republic of Germany or West Germany → Stalin announced that Soviet zone would be called German Democratic Republic (make it sound nice) or East Germany*
 - *Berlin → also divided into East and West Berlin → division of Berlin would later take the form of a concrete wall dividing East and West (known as Berlin Wall)*
- *Creation of NATO*
 - *Western powers met in Washington and signed an agreement to work together → results in North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in APRIL 1949*
 - *Most important part of treaty: if any member was attacked, ALL NATO members would agree to go to war → Truman wanted to show Stalin that US would intervene in Western Europe*
 - *NATO countries could provide US forces with secure bases in Europe, US allies such as Britain were happy to have US forces in Western Europe as it guarantees their protection from a possible Soviet attack*
 - *USSR : saw it as a threat by Western powers that split the world into two military blocs*
- *Continuing tensions : 1949-1955*
 - *1949: USSR announced that it had developed its own atomic bomb, China became a communist country*
 - *1950: Korean war broke out*
- *Warsaw Pact 1955*
 - *West Germany invited to join NATO → which proved to be too much for USSR → Stalin died in 1953, but East-West tensions remained → USSR thought it was definitely a threat*
 - *entrenched the Soviet Rule in Eastern Europe → USSR had legal and military control all over Eastern Europe, so if there were any uprisings or riots, USSR troops could crush any resistance + if any country wanted to leave, it is seen as “betrayal” and USSR could use that to invade or threaten the country + AND it really split both sides, so no country can switch sides without going through crisis*

- *It strengthened USSR command of all armies in satellite states → in the next 35 years, both sides put much energy into plans to stop possible invasions from either sides (e.g. thousands of US troops, tanks , aircrafts, weapons were stationed in bases across Europe (more in West Germany though))*
- *Conclusion*
 - *Bi-polarity: ONLY two superpowers in the world*
 - *Behaviours of both US and USSR showed that both sides found it hard to see eye to eye on any issues as they did not trust each other → neither could accept that the other had a valid case or was acting responsibly or morally → each side also formed alliances, while also arguing that any alliance formed by the other side was aggressive and threatening*
 - *BUT both US and USSR did not want to go to war, even if they were prepared to stir up trouble, criticise, support each other's enemies, they still found a way to avoid war → (mostly cuz) both sides had nuclear weapons and a war could destroy the earth + it was a zero-sum game, if one won, the other must have lost, so This thinking made both sides **paranoid** about any shift in power or ideology*