

# COLD WAR - Soviet Policy 1945-48

## Source 1

of Eastern Europe. The physical Soviet presence, and corresponding western impotence, and unscrupulous Soviet disregard of the Yalta and later agreements, led to the consolidation of the "Soviet sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe. The process had begun when the Red Army overran Poland (part of which was seized by the USSR under the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact) in the summer of 1944. Its culmination, following Soviet rejection of the Marshall Plan in 1947, was the communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. It is noteworthy that just as no act at Yalta underwrote a Soviet sphere of interest in Europe, so none had assigned Czechoslovakia to such a sphere. The West's conclusion of the Brussels Treaty in March 1948, with firm US and Canadian support; the creation of a West German state; and the establishment of NATO in April 1949, were the perhaps inevitable Western responses and a further manifestation of the

/division

division of the continent - a division which existed before and after Yalta but was not determined by it. Yalta had in this respect been no more than a temporary resting-place on the way to a new balance of power resulting from the war and Stalin's expansionist ambitions.



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## Source 2

### Fundamental Principles.

5. The Soviet leaders are inspired by the conviction that the capitalist world is bound to collapse. They are also convinced that capitalist governments are likely eventually to resort to force against the Soviet Union in an attempt to avert their own collapse. The Soviet Government believe it to be their duty to protect the Soviet Union against such attacks by hastening the elimination of capitalism in all parts of the world as a long term policy, and as a short term policy to ensure by all possible means the security of the U.S.S.R. This belief inspires the immediate aim of the Soviet leaders, which is to ensure by all possible means the security of the Soviet Union.

### Resultant Policy.

11. Against this background, the long term ideological struggle, and the immediate search for security described in paragraph 5 above, manifest themselves in present Soviet policy in the simultaneous pursuit of five main objectives:-

First, the reconstruction of Soviet economy and its development to a point where it will rival and eventually outstrip that of the United States.

Secondly, the establishment of a protective belt of subservient countries round the frontiers of the Union.

Thirdly, the avoidance of a major war, at least until circumstances are judged to be sufficiently favourable to the Soviet Union.

Fourthly, the continued aggressive promotion of communism throughout the world under Moscow's direction.

Fifthly, the disintegration and weakening of the capitalist world wherever possible, both by political infiltration and the promotion of unrest at home and in colonial territories, and by the prevention of any move towards closer association among the

Part of a report summarising the British government's view of Soviet policies 1946-47



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Source 3

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*Printed for the Cabinet. May 1947*

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*(Also C.O.S. (47) 102 (O))*

*22nd May, 1947*

**CABINET**

**Defence Committee**

**FUTURE DEFENCE POLICY**

**REPORT BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF**

A report to the British Cabinet in 1947 summarising future British policy towards the USSR



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Source 3 page 2

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## **FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR DEFENCE POLICY**

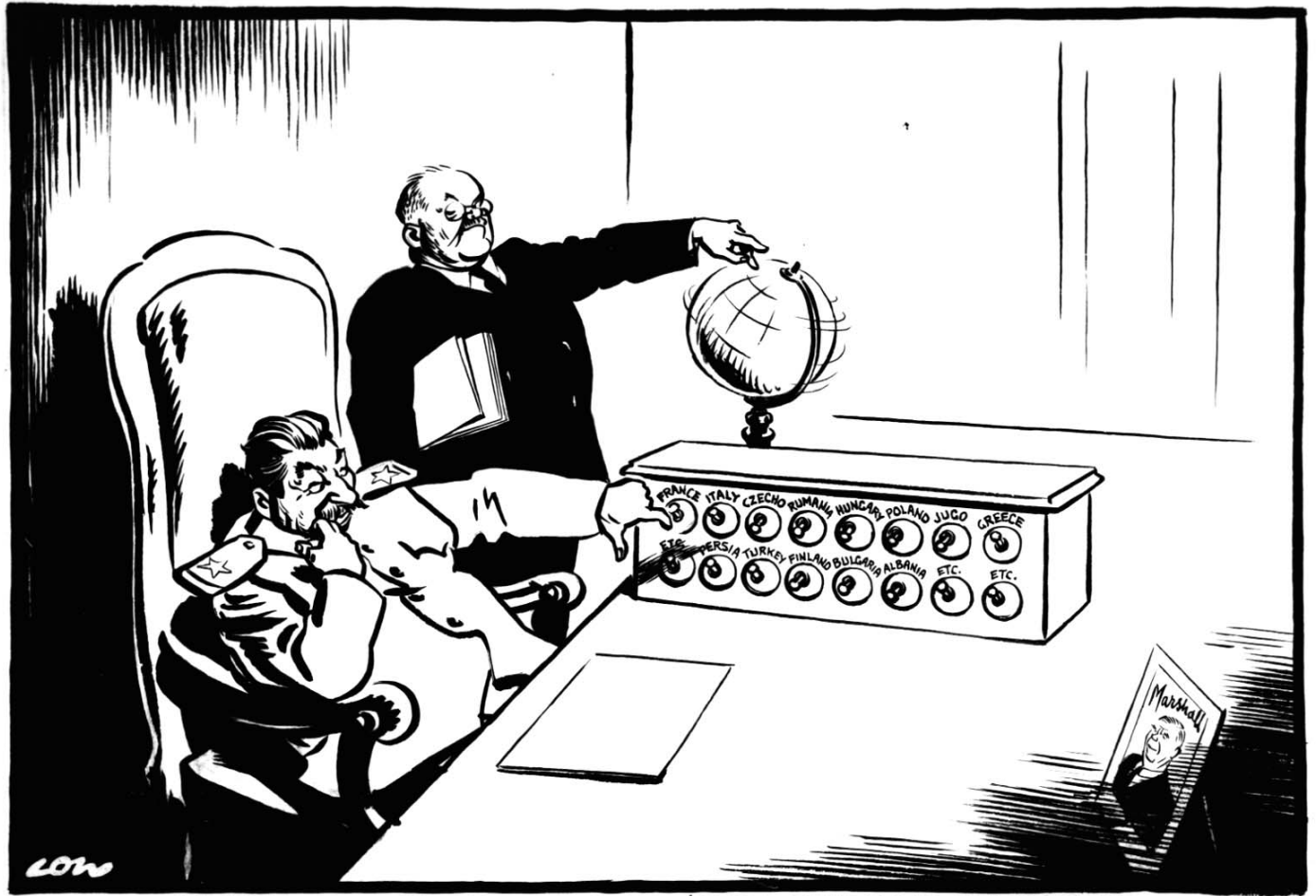
**33. From all the above factors we can now deduce the fundamentals of our Defence Policy :—**

- (a) The supreme object of British policy is to prevent war, provided that this can be done without prejudicing our vital interests. This entails support of the United Nations and ability to defend our own interests.
- (b) The most likely and most formidable threat to our interests comes from Russia, especially from 1956 onwards, and it is against this worst case that we must be prepared, at the same time taking every possible step to prevent it.
- (c) The most effective step towards preventing war is tangible evidence that we possess adequate forces and resources, that we are fully prepared, and that we have the intention and ability to take immediate offensive action.
- (d) Essential measures required in peace to give us a chance of survival and victory in the event of war are :—
  - (i) Retaining at a high state of readiness properly balanced armed forces for immediate use on the outbreak of war, with the necessary reserves of resources to support them.
  - (ii) Maintaining the united front of the British Commonwealth and doing everything possible to ensure that in the event of war we have the immediate and active support of all its members.
  - (iii) Ensuring that we have the active and early support of the United States of America and of the Western European States.
  - (iv) Increasing and exploiting our present scientific and technical lead, especially in the development of weapons of mass destruction.
  - (v) Actively opposing the spread of Russian influence by adopting a firm attitude to further Russian territorial and ideological expansion, particularly in all areas of strategic value to the defence of the British Commonwealth.
  - (vi) Arresting by all possible means the deterioration that has already begun in our own position and prestige in the Middle East, and encouraging the continued independence of Greece and Turkey.
  - (vii) Maintaining our Intelligence Organisations at a high standard of efficiency.
  - (viii) Being prepared to take offensive air action from the outset since the war will rapidly reach a climax and the endurance of the United Kingdom cannot be guaranteed for any considerable period against attacks by modern weapons, still less by weapons of mass destruction. The best bases for this offensive action are United Kingdom, Middle East and if possible North-West India.
  - (ix) Being ourselves prepared, equipped and able to use weapons of mass destruction as a part of this offensive action.



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Source 4



**"WHO'S NEXT TO BE LIBERATED FROM FREEDOM, COMRADE?"**

A cartoon from the British newspaper the Evening Standard published in March 1948

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## Source 5

I have set out in the Annex headed "Considerations" in greater detail than in my earlier paper (C.P.(48) 7) the steps that have been taken by Soviet Russia from the days of the war-time conferences until the present.

There is only one conclusion to draw. After all the efforts that have been made and the appeasement that we followed to try and get a real friendly settlement on a four-Power basis, not only is the Soviet Government not prepared at the present stage to co-operate in any real sense with any non-Communist or non-Communist controlled Government, but it is actively preparing to extend its hold over the remaining part of continental Europe and, subsequently, over the Middle East and no doubt the bulk of the Far East as well. In other words, physical control of the Eurasian land mass and eventual control of the whole World Island is what the Politburo is aiming at - no less a thing than that. The immensity of the aim should not betray us into believing in its impracticability. Indeed, unless positive and vigorous steps are shortly taken by those other states who are in a position to take them, it may well be that within the next few months or even weeks the Soviet Union will gain political and strategical advantages which will set the great Communist machine in action, leading either to the establishment of a World Dictatorship or (more probably) to the collapse of organised society over great stretches of the globe.

Extract from a report from the Foreign Secretary to the British Cabinet in March 1948. The Title of the report was 'The Threat to Western Civilisation'



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## Source 6

Secondly, the following circumstance must not be forgotten. The Germans conducted their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. They were able to invade through these countries because the latter were ruled at the time by Governments hostile to the Soviet Union. As a result of the German invasion the Soviet Union, in battles with the Germans and also thanks to the German occupation and the rounding-up of Soviet people for forced labour in Germany, suffered the irretrievable loss of about 7,000,000 people.

In other words, the Soviet Union suffered human losses ... several times greater than Britain and the U.S.A. put together. Possibly people in some places are inclined to cast to oblivion these colossal sacrifices of the Soviet nation which secured the liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite Regime. But the Soviet Union cannot forget about them. It is asked what is surprising in the fact that the USSR, wishing to secure itself for the future, attempts to realise the existence in these countries of governments which are loyal in their relations to the Soviet Union. How can anyone but a lunatic describe these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as the expansionist tendencies of our state?

Stalin's comments on his policies in Eastern Europe, printed in the Communist Party newspaper Pravda in March 1946

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## Source 7

( MOSCOW RADIO IN ENGLISH 2000 ) COMMENTARY BY DRAYASHEV: -  
EVERY NOW AGAIN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE USA AND BRITAIN  
ACCUSE HUNGARY, RUMANIA AND BULGARIA OF VIOLATING THE PEACE  
TREATIES. RECENTLY SUCH ACCUSATIONS WERE MADE BY THE US STATE  
DEPARTMENT AND BY THE BRITISH MINISTER OF STATE, MCNEIL. BOTH ASSERTED  
XX ASSERTED THAT THESE COUNTRIES WERE NOT OBSERVING THE PEACE  
TREATIES WHICH BOUND THEM TO SAFEGUARD HUMAN RIGHTS AND ~~EXS~~  
BASIC LIBERTIES, TO CUT DOWN THE ARMED FORCES,  
AND PROTECT THE PROPERTY RIGHTS AND ~~ECONOM~~ ECONOMIC INTERESTS  
OF THE UN AND THEIR CITIZENS OF THESE COUNTRIES. WELL, THESE  
ACCUSATIONS ARE ABSOLUTELY GROUNDLESS.

(MF) 2258 4/4 IRY.

BBC translations and summaries of broadcasts by Moscow Radio in 1949



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Source 7 page 2

50:= ACCUSATIONS (2). = NO VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS =

IN REALITY ALL THESE COUNTRIES ARE STRICTLY OBSERVING THE  
TERMS OF THE PEACE TREATIES. HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT VIOLATED IN  
ANY OF THEM. POLITICAL FREEDOM IS SECURED TO ALL CITIZENS  
IRRESPECTIVE OF RACE, SEX, NATIONALITY, OR CREED. THESE RIGHTS  
ARE EMBODIED IN THE NEW CONSTITUTIONS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF  
EXERCISING THEM IS SAFEGUARDED. RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IS A CRIME  
PUNISHABLE BY LAW. WOMEN ENJOY THE SAME RIGHTS AS MEN. THERE IS  
FULL FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE. FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, ORGANISATION,  
AND THE PRESS IS SECURED. THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE WORKING  
PEOPLE OF THESE COUNTRIES ARE ORGANIZED IN POLITICAL, TU, CULTURAL AND  
COOPERATIVE UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS, ON A DEMOCRATIC BASIS. THERE  
IS NO CENSORSHIP IN RUMANIA, BULGARIA AND HUNGARY. AN ENORMOUS  
NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES OF THE MOST VARIED TRENDS ARE  
PUBLISHED IN THE THREE COUNTRIES.

(MFD) BBC MON. 2307 4/4 IRY

BBC translations and summaries of broadcasts by Moscow Radio in 1949



# COLD WAR - Soviet Policy 1945-48

Source 7 page 3

WHEN THE US STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE BRITISH MINISTER MCNEIL SPEAK OF HUNGARY, RUMANIA AND BULGARIA VIOLATING THE PEACE TREATY. TERMS RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS, THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT THINKING OF THE HONEST CITIZENS OF THESE COUNTRIES WHO ENJOY FULL POLITICAL FREEDOM, BUT OF THEIR OWN AGENTS, SPIES AND WRECKERZ. MCNEIL EVEN NAMED THE PEOPLE HE HAD IN MIND. THESE ARE THE REACTIONARY FASCIST GROUPS AND GANGS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF SUBVERSIVE TERRORISTIC ACTIVITIES, DESIGNED TO OVERTHROW THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS OF THESE COUNTRIES. BUT THE GOVERNMENTS OF RUMANIA, BULGARIA AND HUNGARY IN NO WAY VIOLATED THE PEACE TREATIES WHEN THEY ADOPTED MEASURES TO FRUSTRATE THE CRIMINAL, ANTI-DEMOCRATIC ACTIVITIES OF MANIU, PETKOV NAGY AND THEIR LIKE. ON THE CONTRARY, THESE GOVERNMENTS ACTED IN FULL ACCORDANCE WITH THE TREATIES, WHICH BIND THEM NOT TO SUFFER THE EXISTENCE OR THE ACTIVITY OF ORGANISATIONS OF FASCIST TYPE, PURSUING THE AIM OF DEPRIVING THE PEOPLE OF THEIR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE.

BBC translations and summaries of broadcasts by Moscow Radio in 1949