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Stalin, Soviet Policy, and the Consolidation of a Communist Bloc in Eastern Europe, 1944–53

Soviet policy in Eastern Europe during the final year and immediate aftermath of World War II had a profound impact on global politics.[1] The clash of Soviet and Western objectives in Eastern Europe was submerged for a while after the war, but by March 1946 the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill felt compelled to warn in his famous speech at Fulton, Missouri, that "an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent" of Europe. At the time of Churchill's remarks, the Soviet Union had not yet decisively pushed for the imposition of Communist rule in most of the East European countries. Although Communist officials were already on the ascendance throughout Eastern Europe, non-Communist politicians were still on the scene. By the spring of 1948, however, Communist regimes had gained sway throughout the region. Those regimes aligned themselves with the Soviet Union on all foreign policy matters and embarked on Stalinist transformations

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[1] The term "Eastern Europe," as used in this chapter, is partly geographic and partly political in its designation. It includes some countries in what is more properly called "Central Europe," such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and what became known as the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany). All four of these countries were under Communist rule from the 1940s until 1989. The other Communist states in Europe—Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia—are also encompassed by the term "Eastern Europe." Countries that were never under Communist rule, such as Greece and Finland, are not regarded as part of "Eastern Europe," even though they might be construed as such from a purely geographic standpoint. The Soviet Union provided some assistance to Communist guerrillas in Greece and considered trying to facilitate the establishment of Communist regimes in both Finland and Greece, but ultimately decided to refrain from moving directly against the non-Communist governments in the two countries.

of their social, political, and economic systems. Even after a bitter rift emerged between Yugoslavia and the USSR, the other East European countries remained firmly within Moscow's sphere.

By reassessing Soviet aims and concrete actions in Eastern Europe from the mid-1940s through the early 1950s, this chapter touches on larger questions about the origins and intensity of the Cold War. The chapter shows that domestic politics and postwar exigencies in the USSR, along with Joseph Stalin's external ambitions, decisively shaped Soviet ties with Eastern Europe. Stalin's adoption of increasingly repressive and xenophobic policies at home, and his determination to quell armed insurgencies in areas annexed by the USSR at the end of the war, were matched by his embrace of a harder line *vis-à-vis* Eastern Europe. This internal-external dynamic was not wholly divorced from the larger East–West context, but it was, to a certain degree, independent of it. At the same time, the shift in Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe was bound to have a detrimental impact on Soviet relations with the leading Western countries, which had tried to avert the imposition of Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe. The final breakdown of the USSR's erstwhile alliance with the United States and Great Britain was, for Stalin, an unwelcome but acceptable price to pay. Although he initially had hoped to maintain a broadly cooperative relationship with the United States and Britain after World War II, he was willing to sacrifice that objective as he consolidated his hold over Eastern Europe.

The chapter begins by describing the historical context of Soviet relations with the East European countries, particularly the events of World War II. The wartime years and the decades preceding them helped to shape Stalin's policies and goals after the war. The chapter then discusses the way Communism was established in Eastern Europe in the mid- to late 1940s. Although the process varied from country to country, the discussion below highlights many of the similarities as well as the differences. The chapter then turns to an event that threatened to undermine the "monolithic unity" of the Communist bloc in Eastern Europe, namely, the acrimonious rift with Yugoslavia. The chapter discusses how Stalin attempted to cope with the split and to mitigate the adverse repercussions elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The final section offers conclusions about Stalin's policy and the emergence and consolidation of the East European Communist regimes.

   The analysis here draws extensively on newly available archival materials and memoirs from the former Communist world. For many years after 1945, Western scholars had to rely exclusively on Western archives and on published Soviet, East European, and Western sources. Until the early 1990s, the postwar archives of the Soviet Union and of the Communist states of Eastern Europe were sealed to all outsiders. But after the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union two years later, the former Soviet archives were partly opened and the East European archives were more extensively opened. Despite the lack of access to several of the most crucial archives in Moscow—the Presidential Archive, the Foreign Intelligence Archive, the Central Archive of the Federal Security Service, and the Main Archive of the Ministry of Defense—valuable anthologies of documents pertaining to Soviet-East European relations during the Stalinist era, including many important items from the inaccessible archives, have been published in Russia over the past decade.[2] Many other first-rate collections of declassified documents have been published or made available on-line in all of the East European countries. It is now possible for scholars to pore over reams of archival materials that until the early 1990s seemed destined to remain locked away forever. In the West, too, some extremely important collections of documents pertaining to Soviet policy in Eastern Europe in the 1940s and early 1950s have only recently become available. Of particular note are declassified transcriptions of Soviet cables that were intercepted and decrypted by U.S. and British intelligence agencies. This chapter takes advantage of the documents that are now accessible, without overlook-

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[2] Of the many document collections that have appeared, two are particularly worth mentioning, both published as large two-volume sets: T.V. Volokitina *et al*. eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov, 1944–1953*, 2 vols., Vol. 1: *1944–1948 gg.* and Vol. 2: *1949–1953 gg.* (Novosibirsk: Sibir'skii khronograf, 1997 and 1999); and T.V. Volokitina *et al*. eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope, 1944–1953: Dokumenty*, 2 vols., Vol. 1: *1944–1948* and Vol. 2: *1949–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999 and 2002). The situation in the former East-bloc archives is far from ideal (especially in Russia), but the benefits of archival research usually outweigh the all-too-frequent disappointments and frustrations. For an appraisal of both the benefits and the pitfalls of archival research, see Mark Kramer, "Archival Research in Moscow: Progress and Pitfalls," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 3 (Fall 1993), pp. 1, 15–34.

ing the valuable sources that were available before the collapse of the Soviet bloc.

The Historical Setting

The Bolshevik takeover in Russia in November 1917 and the conclusion of the First World War a year later radically altered the political complexion of East-Central Europe.[3] Under the Versailles Treaty and other postwar accords, many new states were created out of the remnants of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Tsarist empires. Some of these new entities—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Estonia, and Latvia—had never existed before as independent states. Others, such as Poland and Lithuania, had not been independent since the pre-Napoleonic era. Germany, which since Bismarck's time had been the most dynamic European country, was relegated to a subordinate status by the allied powers. The new Bolshevik government in Russia was able to maintain itself in power but was badly weakened by the vast amount of territory lost to Germany in the closing months of the war (some of which was recovered after Germany's defeat) and then by the chaos that engulfed Russia during its civil war from 1918 to 1921. The extent of Soviet Russia's weakness was evident when a military conflict erupted with Poland in 1919–20. The Soviet regime was forced to cede parts of Ukraine and Belorussia to Poland, a setback that would have been unthinkable only five years earlier.[4] Although the Red Army reclaimed some of the forfeited territory after World War I ended, the new Soviet state was still a good deal smaller along its western flank than the Tsarist empire had been.[5]

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[3] Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, the Middle East, and Russia, 1914–1923* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Ruth Henig, *Versailles and After, 1919–1933*, rev. ed. (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Erwin Oberländer ed., *Autoritäre Regime in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, 1919–1944* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2001).

[4] See the useful collection of documents on the postwar settlement signed in March 1921 in Bronisław Komorowski ed., *Traktat Pokoju między Polską a Rosją i Ukrainą, Ryga 18 marca 1921: 85 lat później* (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2006).

[5] Dieter Segert, *Die Grenzen Osteuropas: 1918, 1945, 1989—Drei Versuche im Westen anzukommen* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2002), pp. 29–68.

During the interwar period, attitudes toward the Soviet Union differed widely among the countries of Eastern Europe.[6] The repressive policies and revolutionary rhetoric of the Bolshevik government, and the fierce competition for influence waged by the Germanic states and Tsarist Russia in Eastern Europe since the late eighteenth century, shaped many people's perceptions of the newly constituted USSR. Some East European leaders in the 1920s and 1930s sensed a more ominous threat from the Soviet Union than from Germany. Several nations, especially the Poles, had bitter memories—memories rekindled by the 1920 Russo-Polish War—of Russia's armed intervention against them during their struggles for independence in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of these peoples also had long separated them from their Russian neighbors. Moreover, the violent tyranny of the short-lived Soviet republic in Hungary under Béla Kun in 1919 had aroused widespread antipathy, particularly among Hungarians and Romanians, toward the Communist system that had been established in Russia.

Among other peoples in the region, however, sentiments toward the Soviet Union were distinctly warmer or at least not as hostile. The Czechs and the Serbs had traditionally relied on Russia as a counterweight against German expansion, and the Bulgarians were still grateful for Russia's assistance in liberating them from the Turks in 1873. The influence of pan-Slavism continued to prevail among many Serbs, Croats, Czechs, and Bulgarians, prompting them to look favorably upon their fellow Slavs in the Soviet Union.

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[6] For a solid overview of this period, see Joseph Rothschild, *East-Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1974). Other useful accounts include Alan Palmer, *The Lands Between: A History of East-Central Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970); Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe Between the Wars, 1918–1941*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962); Hans Hecker and Silke Spieler, *Nationales Selbstverstandnis und Zusammenleben in Ost-Mitteleuropa bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der Deutschen Vertriebenen, 1991); Antony Polonsky, *The Little Dictators: The History of Eastern Europe Since 1918* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Hans-Erich Volkmann ed., *Die Krise des Parlamentarismus in Ostmitteleuropa zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen* (Marburg/Lahn: J.G. Herder-Institut, 1967); and Wayne S. Vucinich, *East Central Europe Since 1939* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1980).

Nevertheless, even for these normally friendly East European nationalities, developments in the interwar period had engendered discord with Moscow. In the case of Bulgaria, tensions had developed after a foiled Communist assassination attempt against King Boris; in the case of Czechoslovakia, relations had deteriorated as a result of the assistance given by the Czechoslovak Legion to the anti-Bolshevik forces during the Russian Civil War and of Czechoslovakia's subsequent participation in the French-sponsored Little Entente. The entrenchment of Stalinism in the USSR, as the human toll of forced collectivization, de-kulakization, purges, and deportations of non-Russian minorities reached new heights in the 1930s, further eroded Czechoslovakia's pro-Moscow inclinations and made the prospect of an alliance with Moscow far less palatable.

The fear that many in Eastern Europe had of the Soviet Union intensified throughout the 1930s, despite the growing realization of the threat posed by Germany. Even after Adolf Hitler's dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and annexation of the Sudetenland had raised alarm about German intentions toward the whole region, the Nazi regime's strong opposition to Soviet Communism (and Hitler's policies toward the Jews) ensured at least tacit support for Germany from large segments of the Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, and other East European populations. Poland and Romania still rejected any form of military alliance with the Soviet Union, even though both had readily entered into such an arrangement with Great Britain and France.[7]

The situation in Eastern Europe took a sharp turn for the worse in August 1939, when the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a Non-Aggression Pact and soon thereafter concluded a secret protocol to the Pact. Under the terms of the secret protocol, the two signatories divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence and pledged not to interfere in each other's sphere. In mid-September 1939, Soviet troops set up a brutal occupation regime in eastern Poland and moved en masse into the three Baltic states, where they forced the lo-

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[7] I.I. Kostyushko ed., *Vostochnaya Evropa posle Versalya* (St. Petersburg: Aleteiya, 2007); Anita Prażmowska, *Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Second World War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Anita Prażmowska, *Britain, Poland, and the Eastern Front, 1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); and Hans Roos, *Polen und Europa: Studien zur polnischen Aussenpolitik 1931–1939* (Tubingen: Schutz Verlag, 1957), pp. 320–61.

cal governments to comply with Moscow's demands and eventually replaced them with puppet governments that voted for "voluntary" incorporation into the Soviet Union. The same pattern was evident in the formerly Romanian territories of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, which the Soviet Union annexed in June 1940. The only major impediment to the expansion of Soviet rule came in Finland, where the entry of Soviet troops sparked a brief but intense war that exposed severe weaknesses in the Red Army. Although the vastly outnumbered Finnish forces eventually had to surrender, the four months of combat in 1939–1940 inflicted devastating losses on the Red Army, including the deaths of at least 126,875 soldiers and wounding of 264,908.[8]

Meanwhile the German army, which had already established control over the whole of Czechoslovakia in early 1939, moved southward into the Balkans, occupying Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941. From that vantage point, Nazi officials were able to compel the governments in Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria to accede to the Axis alliance. These latter three East European states had sought to remain neutral before war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union, but they soon found themselves having to align more and more closely with Germany for both economic and politico-military reasons.

This trend accelerated sharply after Hitler launched Operation "Barbarossa" in a full-scale attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941. Although Bulgaria did not actually join in the fighting against Sovi-

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[8] See the secret report on the "lessons of the war with Finland" presented by People's Commissar of Defense Kliment Voroshilov on 28 March 1940 to the VPK(b) Central Committee, "Uroki Voiny s Flnlyandiei," in Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (APRF), Fond (F.) 3, Opis' (Op.) 50, Delo (D.) 261, Listy (Ll.) 114–158; reproduced in *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya* (Moscow), No. 4 (July–August 1993): 104–22. For other important declassified documents pertaining to the Soviet–Finnish Winter War, as well as reassessments of the war, see N.L. Volkovskii, ed. *Tainy i uroki zimnei voiny: Po dokumentam rassekrechennykh arkhivov* (St. Petersburg: Poligon, 2000); A.E. Taras, *Sovetsko-finskaya voina, 1939–1940 gg.: Khrestomatiya* (Minsk: Kharvest, 1999); Carl Van Dyke, *The Soviet Invasion of Finland, 1939–40* (London: Frank Cass, 1997); V.N. Baryshnikova *et al.* eds., *Ot voiny k miru: SSSR i Finlyandiya v 1939–1944 gg.: Sbornik statei* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S.-Peterburgskogo Universiteta, 2006), pp. 47–172 and the very useful bibliography on pp. 425–51; and M.I. Semiryaga, "'Asimmetrichnaya voina': K 50-letiyu okonchaniya sovetsko-flnlyandskoi voiny (1939–1940 gg.)," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo* (Moscow), No. 4 (1990): 116–23.

et forces, it supported Germany in numerous other ways, prompting Moscow to declare war on Bulgaria in September 1944. The Hungarian and Romanian governments, for their part, dispatched troops to fight alongside the Nazis against the Red Army, and the Romanians quickly managed to regain Bessarabia.[9] The Hungarian army, despite suffering heavy losses, fought to the end against the Soviet Union. Detachments of Slovak troops from the German-supported state in Slovakia also took up arms against the USSR, and many of the Polish units resisting the Nazi occupation subsequently fought the Red Army as it crossed the interwar frontier along the Pripet Marshes into Polish territory.[10] Czech soldiers, on the other hand, sided with the advancing Soviet troops, as did the Communist-led partisans in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Pro-Communist factions of the anti-Nazi resistance movements in most of the other countries under German occupation also received assistance and close supervision from the Soviet government and were often led by Moscow-trained émigrés. These Communist factions, having benefited from their identification with the nationalist cause and from their combat experience, served as the core of the region's Communist parties once the war was over. Their actual contribution to the victory over Germany was exiguous at best (German occupying forces were able to neutralize the resistance movements through the use of unbridled violence), but the partisans successfully fostered the myth afterward that they played a crucial role in helping the Red Army to defeat the Wehrmacht.[11]

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[9] Nicholas Dima, *From Moldavia to Moldova: The Soviet–Romanian Territorial Dispute* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1991), ch. 2. This book is a revised version of Dima's *Bessarabia and Bukovina: The Soviet–Romanian Territorial Dispute* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly Monographs, 1984).

[10] See Nikolai Bulganin's on-site report on this fighting in "Tov. Vyshinskomu," Telephone Cable (Top Secret), 3 November 1944, in Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. 07, Op. 5, Papka (P.) D. 119, LI. 8–9.

[11] For an excellent account of the Germans' ruthless suppression of the resistance movements, see Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008).

Stalin and the New Postwar Context

Nine consequences of the pre-1945 period are crucial in understanding the evolution of Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe after World War II:

First, Stalin and other leading Soviet officials were determined to ensure that, at a minimum, Eastern Europe would be converted after the war into a protective zone against future invasions from European armies and a safeguard against the threat of revived German militarism.[12] The history of Russia's (and later the Soviet Union's) vulnerability to foreign invasion—from the Napoleonic Wars to the final year of World War I to the Russo-Polish War of 1919–20 to Hitler's invasion in June 1941—and in particular the incursions by Germany, deeply colored the perceptions of Stalin and his subordinates. Protection of socialism at home, as they saw it, would require acquiescent border-states, especially because the territory of the Soviet Union at war's end had been expanded westward to the former boundaries of the old Tsarist empire and even into regions that had never been un-

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[12] This is evident from the preliminary materials released from Stalin's personal archive (*lichnyi fond*), parts of which were transferred in 1999 from the Russian Presidential Archive to the former Central Party Archive, now known as the Russian State Archive for Social-Political History. (Unfortunately, nearly all of the files in Stalin's *lichnyi fond* pertaining to foreign policy, military affairs, and foreign intelligence are still off-limits in the Presidential Archive.) Vladimir Pechatnov's two-part article, based on privileged access to still-classified files, sheds fascinating light on Stalin's views about foreign affairs at the outset of the Cold War. See "'Soyuzniki nazhimayut na tebya dlya togo, chtoby slomit' u tebya volyu…': Perepiska Stalina s Molotovym i drugimi chlenami Politbyuro po vneshnepoliticheskim voprosam v sentyabre-dekabre 1945 g.," *Istochnik* (Moscow), No. 2 (1999): 70–85; and "'Na etom voprose my slomaem ikh anti-sovetskoe uporstvo…': Iz perepiski Stalina s Molotovym po vneshnepoliticheskim delam v 1946 godu," *Istochnik* (Moscow), No. 3 (1999): 92–104. See, for example, the accounts in N.S. Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'—Vospominaniya*, 4 vols. (Moscow: Moskovskie novosti, 1999), Vol. 2, pp. 313–82; and James F. Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), pp. 30–1. I cross-checked the published version of Khrushchev's memoirs with the full, 3,600-page, marked-up Russian transcript of Khrushchev's memoirs, which was given to me by Khrushchev's son Sergei. I also listened to the original recordings of Khrushchev's reminiscences, copies of which are now stored at both Columbia University and Brown University.

der Tsarist rule.[13] The experiences of the interwar years, most notably with Poland, Romania, and Hungary, and Stalin's feelings of betrayal and humiliation when Hitler broke the Nazi–Soviet Pact and launched an all-out war against the USSR, had further convinced the Soviet leader that he must prevent the reemergence of hostile regimes anywhere along the Soviet Union's western flank. This objective did not necessarily require the imposition of Communist regimes in the region (at least in the short term), but it did presuppose the formation of staunchly pro-Soviet governments.

Other considerations pointed Stalin in the same direction. The Soviet leader viewed the establishment of a secure buffer zone in Eastern Europe as the best way to obtain economic benefits from the region, initially in the form of reparations and resource extraction.[14] From eastern Germany alone, the Soviet Union extracted some 3,500 factories and 1.15 million pieces of industrial equipment in 1945 and 1946.[15] Similar amounts of industrial facilities, manufacturing equipment, and transport systems (especially railroad cars) were taken from Hungary.[16] In addition, Stalin regarded the East European countries as a foundation for the eventual spread of Communism into France, Italy, and other West European countries that in his view would be in-

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[13] "I. V. Stalin o rechi U. Cherchillya: Otvety korrespondentu 'Pravdy'," *Pravda* (Moscow), 14 March 1946, p. 1. The Soviet Union in 1939–40 re-annexed the Baltic states and, following the war, acquired further territory from Poland, Germany (East Prussia), Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Finland.

[14] See, for example, Stalin's comments in "Zapis' besedy tov. I. V. Stalin s pravitel'stvennoi delegatsiei Vengrii, 10 aprelya 1946 g.," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 10 April 1946, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 293, LI. 2–16.

[15] Data cited in speech by A.A. Kuznetsov, VKP(b) Central Committee Secretary, to a closed meeting of the VKP(b) Department for Propaganda and Agitation, 9 December 1946, in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii (RGASPI), F. 17, Op. 121, D. 640, L. 5.

[16] "Azon vállalatok jegyzéke, amelyeket a szovjet hatóságok teljesen vagy részben leszerelték és gépi berendezésüket elszállították, amelyek nem szerepelnek a jóvátételi listán," List Prepared for the Hungarian Minister of Industry, 1945, in Magyar Országos Levéltár (MOL), Küm, Szu tük, XIX-J-1-j, 31. doboz, IV-536/5, 116/45; and "Feljegyzés az ipari miniszternek leszerelt gyárakról," Memorandum to the Hungarian Minister of Industry, 27 June 1945, in MOL, XIX-F-1-b 44. doboz, ikt. sz. n.

creasingly "ripe for socialism" as the benefits of the system elsewhere became more apparent.[17]

These diverse objectives—military, economic, and political—led almost inevitably to the sweeping extension of Soviet military power into Eastern Europe, for Stalin had increasingly come to believe, in the oft-cited comment recorded by Milovan Djilas, that "whoever occupies a territory [after the war] also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army has power to do so."[18] Even though Stalin did not set out to establish full-fledged Communist regimes in Eastern Europe overnight, he wanted to ensure that he alone would determine the parameters for political change in the region—an objective that required a large-scale Soviet military presence throughout Eastern Europe.

Second, in contrast to the experience of the interwar years, the Soviet Union after the war possessed sufficient military and political power to establish dominance over Eastern Europe. In 1919 the Soviet government had been compelled to watch helplessly as Béla Kun's Communist regime was overthrown in Hungary, and in March 1921 the Soviet Union was forced to cede parts of Belarus and Ukraine to Poland. But by the time World War II ended and the Red Army had driven back the Nazi invaders and occupied most of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union was able to use its armed forces to give support to Communist parties and pro-Moscow forces throughout the region. Complementing the USSR's vastly greater military strength was the direct political influence that Moscow had gained by overseeing the rise of Communist parties in all the East European countries, including even the countries in which Communist influence had traditionally

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[17] Silvio Pons, "Stalin, Togliatti, and the Origins of the Cold War in Europe," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring 2001): 3–27, esp. 11–7.

[18] Quoted in Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962), p. 90. The official transcript of Stalin's conversation with Djilas in April 1944 includes comments very similar, but not identical, to the remark transcribed by Djilas. See "Zapis' besedy I. V. Stalina i V. M. Molotova s predstavitelyami narodno-osvobozhditel'noi armii Yugoslavii M. Dzhilasom i V. Terzichem, 25 aprelya 1944 g.," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 25 April 1944, in AVPRF, F. 06, Op. 6, P. 58, D. 794, LI. 10–8.

been negligible or non-existent.[19] The loyalty of these parties to Moscow was unquestioned, for most of the top East European Communist officials had been trained in Moscow and owed their careers to the Soviet Union. The large majority of Hungarian, Polish, Czech, East German, and Bulgarian Communist party leaders, who later gained ascendance in their countries under Soviet auspices, had been living as émigrés in the USSR since the late 1920s and 1930s.[20] Many of them had little choice but to serve as informants for the Soviet state security apparatus. After gaining power, they more often than not remained steadfastly loyal to their Soviet mentors—a situation sharply contrasting with the hostility Moscow faced in the interwar period.

Third, although Soviet power in Eastern Europe in relative terms was much greater after World War II than during the interwar years, the reverse was true for the East European countries. The independence and relative buoyancy of the East European countries in the first decade after World War I had been possible only because the traditional rivals for overarching power in the region—Germany and Russia—had been temporarily eclipsed. By the mid-1930s, the revival of both Germany and Russia (in the form of the Soviet Union) was well under way, and the East European countries were increasingly impotent and fractioned. The wartime fighting in Europe exacted its heaviest toll in the eastern half of the continent. The territory stretching from Germany to the western regions of the Soviet Union suffered untold devastation and bloodshed. With the defeat of Germany in 1945, a power vacuum opened up in Eastern Europe, which the Soviet Union was both determined and able to fill. Power relationships are always reciprocal, but in 1945 the Soviet-East European relationship was overwhelmingly one-sided. The establishment of Soviet dominance in the region at the end of World War II was due as much to East European weakness as to Soviet strength.

Fourth, the stance adopted by the United States and Great Britain toward Eastern Europe during World War II undoubtedly bolstered a

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[19] See the discussions of individual countries in Norman Naimark and Leonard Gibianskii eds., *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 1944–1949* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

[20] The major exceptions to this rule were Władysław Gomułka and Edward Gierek of Poland, Gustáv Husák of Slovakia, and Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu of Romania.

perception among Soviet leaders that the USSR would enjoy a secure sphere of influence in the region after the war.[21] High-level U.S. officials repeatedly sought to defer allied consideration of future political arrangements for Eastern Europe until the postwar negotiations, despite the reality that was taking shape on the ground. This posture led to a series of U.S. and British concessions on Eastern Europe starting at the December 1943 Teheran Conference, where British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt acquiesced in Stalin's demands for an East-West division of military operations in Europe and a shift in the postwar Soviet-Polish border back to the Curzon Line.[22]

Significant as these concessions may have been, the real turning point came during the Warsaw uprising of August-September 1944, when the non-Communist Polish resistance (*Armia Krajowa*, or AK) had risen against the Nazis in the expectation that thousands of Soviet troops, who had already reached the outskirts of Warsaw, would aid in the liberation of the Polish capital.[23] A broadcast on Radio Moscow

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[21] V.O. Pechatnov, *Stalin, Ruzvel't, Trumen: SSSR i SShA v 1940-kh gg.— Dokumental'nye ocherki* (Moscow: TERRA-Knizhnyi klub, 2006). For a still useful assessment, see Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 279–312.

[22] Jacek Tebinka, *Polityka brytyjska wobec problemu granicy polsko-radzieckiej, 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 1998); Keith Eubank, *Summit at Teheran: The Untold Story* (New York: William Morrow, 1985), pp. 445–70; Detlef Brandes, *Grossbritannien und seine Osteuropaischen Allierten 1939–1943* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1988), esp. pp. 487–563.

[23] For valuable collections of documents and perceptive commentaries, see Piotr Mierecki *et al.* eds., *Powstanie Warszawskie 1944 w dokumentach archiwów Służb specjalnych* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2007); and Jan Ciechanowski ed., *Na tropach tragedii—Powstanie Warszawskie 1944: Wybór dokumentów wraz z komentarzem* (Warsaw: BGW, 1992). For other recent assessments of the Warsaw uprising and its implications, see Włodzimierz Rosłoniec, *Lato 1944* (Kraków: Znak, 1989), esp. pp. 172–99; and Tadeusz Sawicki, *Front wschodni a powstanie Warszawskie* (Warsaw: PWN, 1989). Soviet policy during the uprising has come under scrutiny in specialized Russian journals, though primarily by military officers and official military historians who want to absolve the Red Army of any "blame." See, for example, the introduction to the two-part series "Kto kogo predal—Varshavskoe vosstanie 1944 goda: Svidetel'stvuyut ochevidtsy," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), Nos. 3 and 4 (March 1993 and April 1993): 16–24 and 13–21,

International on the eve of the uprising had exhorted the AK forces to take up arms, declaring that "the time for action has arrived." But when the fighting actually began, the Red Army refrained from intervening and instead waited for two months on the banks of the Vistula (Wisła) River before attacking the Germans. By that time, the Polish AK fighters had either surrendered or been annihilated. The motivation behind Moscow's delay became evident when Stalin also blocked the attempts of Allied planes to airlift supplies and weapons to the Polish resistance forces from bases in Soviet-occupied territory.[24] U.S. and British officials strongly protested the Soviet leader's actions, but took no concrete measures in retaliation. Nor did they take any action when Soviet troops, after driving out the Germans, began tracking down and destroying the surviving AK units.[25] Stalin evidently interpreted the Western reaction to imply that, except for verbal protestations, the

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respectively. Each part contains a newly declassified document. For other intriguing materials from the Soviet side, see "Varshavskoe vosstanie 1944 g.: Dokumenty iz rassekrechennykh arkhivov," *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya* (Moscow), No. 3 (May–June 1993): 85–106, which includes seven detailed situation reports transmitted in September and October 1944 by Lieut.-General K.F. Telegin of the 1st Belorussian Front to the head of the Red Army's Main Political Directorate, Col.-General A.S. Shcherbakov, who in turn conveyed the reports directly to Stalin. For a recent English-language overview of the Warsaw uprising, see Norman Davies, *Rising '44: The Battle for Warsaw* (New York: Viking, 2004). Davies's book is solid and well-researched, but is marred by numerous factual errors. Moreover, his decision to anglicize Polish names makes his account unduly confusing (and the publisher's relegation of three separate sets of notes to the back of the book compounds the difficulty). Fortunately, these problems are not present in a Polish translation of Davies's book, *Jak powstało Powstanie '44*, trans. by Elżbieta Tabakowska (Kraków: Znak, 2005). The Polish edition corrects most of the factual errors and places the notes with the text itself, making it much easier to follow.

[24] The goal of allowing the AK to be destroyed is spelled out candidly in "Instruktsiya predstavitelyu Soveta Narodnykh Komissarov Soyuza SSR pri Pol'skom Komitete Natsional'nogo Osvobozhdeniya," Directive of the USSR Council of Ministers (Secret) to the Soviet envoy Nikolai Bulganin, 2 August 1944, in AVPRF, F. 06, Op. 6, P. 42, D. 551, Ll. 3–6.

[25] On these campaigns, see the documents in Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), F. R-9401, Op. 2, D. 67, many of which are reproduced in A.F. Noskova *et al.* eds., *NKVD i pol'skoe podpol'e, 1944–1945: Po 'Osobym papkam' I. V. Stalina* (Moscow: Institut slavyanovedeniya i balkanistiki, 1994).

West would not and indeed could not deny him a "free hand" in Eastern Europe after the war.[26]

This perception almost certainly increased after Churchill's efforts to arrange formal postwar "spheres of responsibility" with the USSR at his October 1944 meeting in Moscow, and after Roosevelt's announcement at the Yalta conference in early 1945 that all U.S. troops would be withdrawn from Europe no more than two years after the war. The Soviet Union, in the meantime, was rapidly creating *faits accompli* with its tanks and artillery in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland. Any lingering doubts Stalin may have had about U.S. policy toward Eastern Europe were presumably dispelled when the United States held back its own troops for several weeks to permit the Red Army to be the first to enter Berlin and Prague, two events whose political significance was not fully appreciated in Washington. (This was especially true of Prague, which U.S. troops could have entered rapidly and with minimal bloodshed. A U.S. drive toward Berlin would have required much heavier losses, something the U.S. public would have resisted so long as those costs could be borne by the Red Army instead.) Thus, long before the fighting was over, Soviet leaders had many reasons to conclude—accurately, as later events proved—that the Western countries ultimately would not pose a serious challenge to Soviet military and political hegemony in Eastern Europe.

Fifth, the role that Soviet troops played in liberating most of the East European states from Nazi occupation contributed in four ways to Soviet dominance in the region: First, it evoked at least temporary gratitude from some nations in Eastern Europe, particularly the Czechs and Bulgarians. Second, it induced the new East European regimes to continue to look to Moscow for protection against German "revanchism," a threat that was especially acute in Czechoslovakia and Poland inasmuch as these two states had been granted westward adjustments of their borders into former German territory (to help make up for the territory they had lost to the USSR) and had expelled millions of ethnic Germans from within their new boundaries.[27] Third, it

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[26] See, for example, Stalin's comments in "Zapis' besedy tov. I. V. Stalina s predstavitelyami pol'skoi pravitel'stvennoi delegatsiei vo glave s S. Mikolaichikom," 9 August 1944 (Secret), in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 358, LI. 12–6.

[27] Poland's borders were shifted westward to the Oder and Neisse (Odra and Nysa) Rivers, and several million ethnic Germans were expelled from the

provided the Soviet armed forces with a well-established military presence in the region. Fourth, it enabled the Soviet Union to ensure that Communist officials and labor activists would lead the renascent East European bureaucracies and trade unions, which served as a foothold for the subsequent Communist takeovers.

These four factors ensured preponderant Soviet influence over the coalition governments that were established in the region in 1945–1947. If Stalin's only goal had been to establish a secure buffer zone along the western flank of the USSR, the war was far more important than any peace treaties in allowing him to achieve it. To gauge the importance in later years of the Soviet Union's role in the liberation of Eastern Europe from Nazi rule, one might simply note that the two countries in the region that could claim (rightly or wrongly) to have played a major part in their own liberation during the war—Albania and Yugoslavia—were also the only two East European countries that managed to break away from the Soviet bloc before 1989.

Sixth, in several East European countries the Soviet Union's role in World War II was not favorably received. In Poland, for example, the 1939 Nazi–Soviet Pact, which resulted in the partition of the Polish state, had engendered deep and lasting resentment toward Moscow. The Soviet occupation of eastern Poland from September 1939 to June 1941 was extraordinarily harsh—far harsher indeed than the Nazis' occupation of western Poland during that same period.[28] Soviet troops and security forces undertook wholesale deportations and mass killings, including the massacre of more than 20,000 Polish officers near Katyń

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new Polish territory in Silesia, Pomerania, and West Prussia. Czechoslovakia received back the Sudetenland in western Bohemia, and some 3.1 million Germans were forcibly transferred out, resulting in great bloodshed and cruelty. For a thorough reassessment of the border changes and expulsions, drawing on new archival materials, see Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak eds., *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948* (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

[28] Piotr Chmielowiec ed., *Okupacja sowiecka ziem polskich 1939–1941* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2005); Keith Sword, ed., *The Soviet Takeover of the Polish Eastern Provinces, 1939–41* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); and Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988). This assessment, of course, does not apply to the situation after 1941, when the Nazis embarked on the mass extermination of Jews and Gypsies.

Forest in March 1940. They also engaged in widespread looting, raping, and other atrocities. The Soviet government's actions during the 1944 Warsaw uprising came as a further blow to Polish nationalist aspirations. Compounding the tensions between the Soviet Union and Poland was the USSR's postwar annexation of the Polish provinces east of the Curzon Line, which shifted Poland's borders 200 kilometers to the west.[29]

Equally bitter feelings toward Moscow existed in the Soviet zone of Germany (after 1949, East Germany), where the defeat inflicted by the Soviet Union and the brutal postwar occupation by the Red Army obviously made it difficult for the indigenous Socialist Unity Party to gain even a semblance of popular support.[30] Soviet leaders were well aware that for many years the Soviet Union would not be able to "count on the sympathies of the East German people in the way we would have liked."[31] Partly for this reason, Stalin in December 1948 instructed the leaders of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED, the name for the Communist party in Eastern Germany from April 1946 on) to be content with an "opportunistic policy" that would entail "moving toward socialism not directly but in zigzags and in a roundabout way." He said they must avoid any temptation to adopt a "premature path toward a people's democracy."[32] In an earlier conversation, Stalin had even suggested that the SED could bolster its popular support by allowing former Nazis to join its ranks.[33] The leaders of the SED were dismayed by this last idea, and they politely though firmly declined to go along with it after Stalin raised it. Nonetheless, the very fact that

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[29] Piotr Eberhardt, *Polska granica wschodnia, 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Spotkania, 1992). See also I.I. Kostyushko ed., *Materialy "Osoboi papki" Politbyuro TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b) po voprosu sovetsko-polskikh otnoshenii, 1923–1944 gg.* (Moscow: Institut slavyanovedeniya i balkanistiki RAN, 1997), pp. 133–37.

[30] Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation , 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[31] Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'*, Vol. 2, p. 326.

[32] "Zapis' besedy tov. I. V. Stalina s rukovoditelyami Sotsialisticheskoi edinoi partii Germanii V. Pikom, O. Grotevolem, V. Ul'brikhtom," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 18 December 1948, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 303, Ll. 53–79, quoted from L. 69.

[33] "Zapis' besedy tov. I. V. Stalina s rukovoditelyami Sotsialisticheskoi edinoi partii Germanii V. Pikom, O. Grotevolem, V. Ul'brikhtom," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 31 January 1947, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 303, Ll. 1–23, quoted from L. 11.

Stalin would have broached such a peculiar step was indicative of his realization that the SED was nearly bereft of public backing.

Similar hostility toward the Soviet Union was evident in the other East European countries. In a conversation with Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov in April 1947, the Hungarian Communist leader Mátyás Rákosi acknowledged that Hungary's new foreign policy orientation and social order were inherently fragile because "the Hungarian nation's traditional fear of Russians still persists."[34] One of Stalin's closest associates, Nikita Khrushchev, made the same point later in his memoirs, describing Hungary and Romania as "our involuntary allies." Khrushchev added:

> It was only natural that there should have been some resentment on their part left over from the war and the first years after the war. The Romanians and Hungarians had been dragged into the war against us by Hitler. Therefore, our army, as it pursued the retreating Hitlerite invaders back into Germany, had attacked and defeated these other countries as well… Because of the lingering hard feelings and even antagonism on the part of our allies, we found it difficult to achieve the desired degree of monolithic unity within the socialist camp.[35]

Given the initial reluctance of most of the East European states to subordinate their foreign policies to Soviet preferences indefinitely, Stalin increasingly sensed that his goal of maintaining a pliant buffer zone would require the imposition of direct Communist rule throughout the region. This realization came at the same time that Stalin had begun to restore a brutal dictatorship at home, undoing the liberalization of the wartime years.

Seventh, the "political cultures" of the East European peoples—that is, their historically-molded political values, beliefs, loyalties, practices, and expectations—were not amenable to the political *system* of Soviet Communism.[36] In the interwar period, all the East European so-

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[34] "Zapis' besedy tov. Molotova s Matyashom Rakoshi," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 29 April 1947, in RGASPI, F. 17, Op. 128, D. 1019, LI. 8–22, quoted from L. 14.

[35] Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'*, Vol. 2, pp. 345–46.

[36] Cf. the excellent volume edited by Archie Brown and Jack Gray, *Political Culture and Political Change in Communist Societies*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1979). On different conceptions of "political culture," see Richard

cieties except Czechoslovakia had experienced one form or another of dictatorship, but none of them had exhibited much popular support for a Communist alternative. Indigenous Communist parties, when permitted to organize, were generally of negligible importance in pre-1939 East European politics. Even in Czechoslovakia, which, as the lone industrialized state in the region before the war, had by far the largest Communist party, only about ten percent of the vote went to Communist candidates in pre-war parliamentary elections.[37] Although electoral support for the Communist party in Czechoslovakia increased dramatically after 1945—reaching 38 percent in the May 1946 elections—it still represented only a minority of the country. The Communist share of the vote in the 1946 elections was larger in the Czech lands than in Slovakia (where the Slovak Communist Party trailed far behind the Slovak Democratic Party), but even among Czechs the 1946 voting results were due less to an intrinsic rise of support for Communism than to the bitter disillusionment many Czechs felt toward the West for what they saw as the "betrayal" at Munich in September 1938, as well as the gratitude they felt toward the Soviet Union for its part in the defeat of Nazi Germany.[38] Moreover, Czechoslovakia was an anomaly in Eastern Europe; in no other country in the region except Bulgaria had pre-war Communist parties garnered more than trifling support; and in several countries, especially Romania, Hungary, and Poland, Communism was widely regarded as antithetical to traditional beliefs and values.[39]

Despite the enormous impact of World War II on the political cultures of Eastern Europe, popular attitudes toward the Communist

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W. Wilson, "The Many Voices of Political Culture: Assessing Different Approaches," *World Politics*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (January 2000):) 245–73; Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba eds., *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965); and Dennis Kavanagh, *Political Culture* (London: Macmillan, 1972).

[37] *Zprávy Statního uřádu statistického* (ZSUS), Vol. II, Prague, 1921, p. 2; ZSUS, Vol. VI, 1925, p. 76; ZSUS, Vol. X, 1929, p. 87b; and ZSUS, Vol. XVI, 1935, p. 72.

[38] See Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).

[39] For a useful discussion, see R.V. Burks, "Eastern Europe," in Cyril E. Black and Thomas P. Thornton eds., *Communism and Revolution: The Strategic Uses of Political Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 77–116.

parties after the war changed surprisingly little in most countries. The destructiveness and horrors of the war, to be sure, had thoroughly discredited the sociopolitical structures of the interwar period and had spawned a general desire for far-reaching social change. Leftist parties had a favorable milieu in which to operate and seek electoral support. Nonetheless, the longing of most East Europeans for a sharp break with the pre-war order—a sentiment that was evident in France, Great Britain, and Italy as well—did not translate into support for a Soviet-imposed version of Communism. The popularity of the East European Communist parties had increased as a result of their participation in the anti-Nazi resistance and their advocacy of radical change, but in only a few countries (Albania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia) was this increase of major importance. Without direct or implicit Soviet military backing, the Communist parties would not have been able to gain power in Eastern Europe except in Albania and Yugoslavia and perhaps eventually in Czechoslovakia. Indeed, in most of the East European countries the Communists would have been of little or no political consequence: In Hungary, for example, the Communist party received only 17 percent of the vote in the 1945 elections (despite Soviet browbeating), and in Poland, as Khrushchev admitted, "the recognition which the Party received from the working-class and the people was never very deep-rooted or widespread."[40] Much the same was true of Romania and Eastern Germany.

Furthermore, even if popular support for Communism had been stronger, the puissant sense of nationalism underlying the political cultures of all the East European states guaranteed that external domination by the Soviet Union would not be accepted easily. Even in Czechoslovakia, the willingness of the Communist Party to subordinate all its domestic and foreign positions to those of Moscow alienated large numbers of otherwise sympathetic voters, especially after the contrast between Czechoslovakia's democratic heritage and the Stalinist dictatorship in the USSR had become apparent. The

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[40] Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'*, Vol. 2, p. 319. On Hungary, see Peter Kenez, *Hungary from the Nazis to the Soviets: The Establishment of the Communist Regime in Hungary, 1944–1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

consequences of nationalist sentiments throughout the region were enormous: More than anything else, the Soviet Union's role in establishing Communist regimes, and the continued subordination of those regimes to Soviet preferences and policies, thwarted efforts by the East European governments to acquire genuine legitimacy among their populations.

Eighth, for both geographical and historical reasons, Soviet leaders attached special importance to East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia after the war. The northern part of Eastern Europe had been the traditional avenue for Germany's *Drang nach Osten*, and after 1945 Poland and Czechoslovakia provided crucial logistical and communications links between Moscow and the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (later renamed the Western Group of Forces). Thus, the perceived threat from West Germany appeared more exigent in those two states and in East Germany, and to a lesser extent in Hungary, than it did in Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, or Yugoslavia. Moreover, the potentially dynamic economies of East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, and the consequent ability of those states to become military powers in their own right—as the vital Northern Tier of what was later to become the Warsaw Pact—ensured that they were regarded from the outset by Soviet leaders as the key countries in Eastern Europe. Threats to Soviet relations with the Northern Tier countries, especially with East Germany, were always viewed with particular concern.

Ninth, the subordination of the East European states to Soviet power enabled the Soviet Union to set the "political agenda" for the region. Territorial disputes and other conflicts that were so common before 1945—such as those between Poland and (East) Germany, Hungary and Romania, Czechoslovakia and Poland, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria and Romania, as well as the general phenomenon of "Balkanization"—ceased to be as important in an era of Soviet hegemony. These sorts of conflicts were not totally absent during the Communist era, as the Hungarian–Romanian and Bulgarian–Yugoslav disputes illustrate; but they tended to be submerged and contained by Soviet power. To that extent, Soviet control of Eastern Europe imposed a form of ostensible order on the region that could not have existed during the interwar period.

Domestic Political Trends in the USSR and Their Implications for Policymaking *vis-à-vis* Eastern Europe

The Second World War had both short-term and long-term political effects in the Soviet Union that were important for policymaking toward Eastern Europe. In the years leading up to the war and during the fighting itself, Stalin ordered mass deportations of many national and ethnic groups from their homelands to desolate sites in Siberia, the Arctic, or Central Asia.[41] In the swaths of the western USSR that fell under German occupation, Stalinist political controls were temporarily replaced by equally harsh German rule. Elsewhere in the Soviet Union, the war brought a tightening of some political strictures (e.g., a drastic increase in the penalties for job-changing and absenteeism) but also a cessation of the violent mass terror of 1937–39 and a relaxation of some of the long-standing restrictions on peasants, religious believers, and artists. As the fighting drew to a close, many ordinary Soviet citizens were hoping that the privations of the wartime years would cease and that life would genuinely improve as the country recovered from its vast human and material losses.[42] But Stalin himself came to fear, soon after the war ended, that the Soviet Union was dangerously vulnerable to political "contamination" from outside, as soldiers and refugees returned home after having been exposed to the "alien ideas" and superior living standards in the West. To ward off this threat and reassert tight control, Stalin brought back a series of draconian restrictions and reinvigorated the internal security organs, using them to send more prisoners to the gulag. By 1946 many of the repressive measures of the prewar period were being revived—a trend that accelerated over the next six years with a resumption of political purges (albeit selectively), further mass deportations of national groups, a vicious anti-Semitic campaign, and other brutal policies. Although Stalin by the end of his

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[41] N.L. Pobol' and P.M. Polian eds., *Stalinskie deportatsii, 1928–1953* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi Fond Demokratiya—Izdatel'stvo Materik, 2005).

[42] See Elena Zubkova, *Poslevoennoe sovetskoe obshchestvo: Politika i povsednevnost', 1945–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000). See also the declassified documents compiled by Elena Zubkova in *Sovetskaya zhizn', 1945–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003).

life had not returned to mass terror, Soviet citizens' hopes of enjoying somewhat greater political freedom proved to be in vain.

Part and parcel of Stalin's effort to solidify his own political control and to shield Soviet society from Western influence was his push for ever greater conformity in Eastern Europe. His initial goal of creating a secure buffer zone against possible military threats did not require the imposition of Communist systems in Eastern Europe, but as he became increasingly worried about the political/ideological "threat" from the West he sought to close potential channels of "contamination" in Eastern Europe. To this end, he pressed the local Communist leaders to "intensify [their] class struggle," reversing his earlier emphasis on a step-by-step approach.[43] By late 1946 and early 1947, he began urging the East European Communist leaders to abandon their cooperation with non-Communist parties and to take "bolder actions" to ensure the "Communists' victory."[44] Unlike in November 1945, when the Soviet Union permitted free elections in Hungary that ended in a humiliating setback for the Communist party, Soviet leaders in 1946 and 1947 abetted the falsification of elections in Poland, Romania, and Hungary in favor of the Communists.[45] By the same token, Stalin in mid-1947 prohibited the East European countries from taking part in the Marshall Plan.[46]

Stalin's shift to a harder line in Eastern Europe was spurred not only by his desire to establish a firmer barrier against "hostile" Western influences but also by his determination to crush underground nationalist movements in the newly annexed regions of the western USSR. From the mid-1940s through the mid-1950s the Soviet army and internal security organs devoted an extraordinary amount of effort and resources to a fierce—but, at times, only partly successful—struggle

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[43] "Zapis' besedy tov. Molotova s Matyashom Rakoshi," LI. 8–22.

[44] See, for example, "Zapis' besedy I. V. Stalina s G. Georgiu-Dezh i A. Pauker, 2 fevralya 1947 g.," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), 2 February 1947, in RGASPI, F. 17, Op. 128, D. 903, LI. 89–95.

[45] See, for example, G.P. Murashko and A.F. Noskova, "Sovetskii faktor v poslevoennoi Vostochnoi Evrope, 1945–1948 gg.," in L.N. Nezhinskii ed., *Sovetskaya vneshnyaya politika v gody "kholodnoi voiny" (1945–1985): Novoe prochtenie* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1995), pp. 93–4.

[46] For relevant declassified evidence, see Volokitina et al. eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov*, Vol. 1, Docs. 224, 226, and 227.

against underground nationalist "bandits" and resistance fighters in western Ukraine, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, and western Belarus.[47] Even after Soviet MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) units wiped out the main guerrilla forces by the early 1950s (a process accompanied by great cruelty and bloodshed, especially through mid-1948), some of the underground national movements survived.[48]

The emergence of these armed resistance groups deeply angered Stalin, who demanded a "merciless campaign to eradicate them." He frequently and harshly criticized the Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Belarusian,

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[47] Countless declassified materials about the Soviet campaign against underground nationalist movements (and against nationalist sentiment in general) are available in the archives of Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine (Kyiv and L'viv). In Moscow, the bulk of documents about this topic in the Presidential Archive and the State Archive of the Russian Federation (in Fond R-9478, "Glavnoe upravlenie po bor'be s banditizmom MVD SSSR, 1938–1950 gg.") are still classified, but many important items have been released since 1992. For some valuable samples of the enormous quantity of newly available documentation outside Russia, see "Vsem nachal'nikam UO NKVD Latv. SSR," Report No. 1/90ss (Top Secret), directive for the Latvian NKVD, 14 July 1945, in Latvijas Valsts Arhīvs (LVA), Fonds (F.) 1822, Apridos (Apr.) 1, Lietas (Li.) 244, Lapa (La.) 165; "Ob usilenii politicheskoi raboty, povyshenii bol'shevistskoi bditel'nosti i boevoi vyuchki v istrebitel'nykh batal'onakh zapadnykh oblastei USSR: Postanovlenie TsK KP/b/u," 18 April 1946 (Strictly Secret/Special Dossier), in *Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Hromads'kykh Ob'ednan' Ukrainy* (TsDAHOU), F. 1, Op. 16, Sprava (Spr.) 50, Ll. 44–50; "O nedostatkakh v rabote organov MVD, MGB, Suda, i Prokuratury po bor'be s narushitelyami sovetskoi zakonnosti v zapadnykh oblastyakh USSR: Postanovlenie TsK KP/b/u," 24 July 1946 (Strictly Secret), in *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 16, Spr. 50, Ll. 92–104; "O nedostatakh bor'by s narusheniyami sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti i merakh po ikh ustraneniyu: Postanovlenie No. Soveta ministrov Ukrainskoi SSR i Tsentra'lnogo Komiteta KP(b)U," 24 August 1946 (Top Secret), in *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 16, Spr. 50, Ll. 122–32; and "Sekretaryu TsK KP(b) Latvii tov. Kalnberzin," Report No. 00293 (Top Secret) from Lieut.-Colonel A. Boikov, head of the military tribunal of the Latvian Internal Affairs Ministry, 26 May 1948, in LVA, F. 1219s, Apr. 8, Li. 102, La. 86–93.

[48] "Spravka o sostoyanii bor'by s ostatkami bandounovskogo podpol'ya v zapadnykh oblastyakh USSR," Memorandum No. 49/a (Top Secret), May 1952, from F. Golynnyi, deputy head of the UkrCP CC Administrative Department, in *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 190, Spr. 72, Ll. 81–93. See also "Spravka," Informational Memorandum (Top Secret) from N. Koval'chuk, Ukrainian minister of state security, 23 April 1952, in *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 190, Spr. 72, Ll. 94–6.

Estonian, and Latvian party leaders and internal security forces for their failure to destroy the clandestine nationalist organizations in their respective republics. Stalin repeatedly ordered the union-republic governments to finish off the task as soon as possible, but his injunctions initially had little effect, as underground nationalist fighters continued to challenge the Soviet regime. The Soviet leader eventually concluded that the task of combating the guerrilla movements would be greatly facilitated if the Soviet Union could enlist the help of several East European countries, notably Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and what became East Germany. Before the East European countries came under Communist rule, Soviet proposals for joint operations against resistance fighters in the western USSR often were abortive or resulted in only limited help. In western Ukraine, for example, local party officials complained in early 1946 that they were "not receiving the timely assistance [they] needed" from Polish troops and security units and that this was "posing grave complications."[49] Soviet leaders came to believe that wider and more sustained deployment of the East European security forces against "hostile, anti-Soviet elements" along the border with the USSR would be infeasible unless Communists gained sway in those countries. This perception reinforced Stalin's growing inclination to press ahead with the establishment of Communist rule in Eastern Europe.

Stalin's judgment on this particular matter proved to be correct. Once Communist regimes were in place in Eastern Europe, joint campaigns against the anti-Soviet guerrillas became far more efficacious, as was underscored in a top-secret analysis prepared by the deputy chairman of the Soviet State Security (KGB) apparatus:

> Direct contacts were established among the [East-bloc] state security organs [in the late 1940s], and they began to convene periodic meetings of their senior officials. As a result of this cooperation, the state security organs of the USSR, Romania, and Poland arranged joint measures to

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[49] "Pro seryozni nedoliky v roboty orhaniv MVS ta partiinykh orhanizatsii po likvidatsii reshtkiv band ta pidpillya ukrains'kykh burzhuaznykh natsionalistiv v zakhidnykh oblastyakh ukrains'koi RSR: Postanovka TsK KP Ukrainy," Memorandum (Top Secret) to the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, 4 December 1953 (Top Secret), in *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 190, Spr. 87, LI. 174–81.

liquidate the bands of the [Ukrainian] underground and to safeguard
their borders. […] Cooperation among the state security organs of
the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR contributed to the
[USSR's] successful struggle against Ukrainian, Belorussian, Lithu-
anian, Latvian, and Estonian nationalists. With the help of the state
security organs of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR, all of which
provided valuable operational means of studying nationalist organiza-
tions and their agents as well as means of uncovering lines of commu-
nications and their control mechanisms, the Soviet state security organs
were able to infiltrate agents into the underground nationalist centers,
recruit a number of spies within the nationalist organizations (OUN,
NTS, etc.), establish control over the channels for setting up agent net-
works and over their communications, and achieve other aims.[50]

Although armed partisan groups in the western USSR were not fully
extirpated until the mid-1950s, the turning point in the Soviet govern-
ment's struggle against clandestine nationalist organizations came with
the ascendance of Communist governments in Eastern Europe. This
factor alone would have given Stalin a powerful incentive to encourage
the East European Communist leaders to "act more boldly" in their
"bid for power."[51]

The Entrenchment of Communist Rule
in Eastern Europe

The emergence and consolidation of Communist regimes in Eastern
Europe proceeded at varying rates.[52] In Yugoslavia and Albania, the

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[50] See the lengthy, top-secret textbook compiled by Lieutenant-General V.M.
Chebrikov *et al.*, *Istoriya sovetskikh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, No.
12179 (Moscow: Vysshaya Krasnoznamennaya Shkola Komiteta Gosudarst-
vennoi Bezopasnosti, 1977), pp. 485, 486.

[51] "Zapis' besedy I. V. Stalina s G. Georgiu-Dezh, 10 fevralya 1947 g.," Tran-
script of Conversation (Top Secret), 10 February 1947, in RGASPI, F. 558,
Op. 1, D. 361, LI. 67–71.

[52] For a first-rate, concise overview, see L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Problemy Vostoch-
noi Evropy i nachalo formirovaniya sovetskogo bloka," in N.I. Egorova and
A.O. Chubar'yan eds., *Kholodnaya voina, 1945–1963 gg.: Istoricheskaya ret-
rospektiva—Sbornik statei* (Moscow: OLMA-PRESS, 2003), pp. 105–36.
See also N.E. Bystrova, *SSSR i formirovanie voenno-blokogo protivostoyaniya
v Evrope, 1945–1953 gg.* (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2007); and the essays

indigenous Communist parties led by Josip Broz Tito and Enver Hox-ha had obtained a good deal of political leverage and military strength through their participation in the anti-Nazi resistance during World War II. Tito's and Hoxha's partisan armies had also fought against their domestic rivals throughout the war and were able to gain control of their countries as the fighting came to an end. Once in power, they quickly moved to establish Stalinist regimes that were closely modeled on the Soviet system.

In Bulgaria and Romania, Soviet troops who had occupied the countries in the late summer of 1944 enabled Communist-dominated governments to assume power in late 1944 and early 1945. The Bulgarian and Romanian Communist parties had been of negligible influence prior to and during World War II, but the presence of Soviet military forces on Bulgarian and Romanian territory shifted the balance of political power sharply in favor of the Communists during the final months of the war.[53] The new, Soviet-backed governments in both countries initially took the form of coalitions in which non-Communist parties were allowed to take part. But that arrangement was mostly cosmetic, intended to forestall any immediate frictions with the United States and Britain. No sooner had the governments in both countries been set up then the Communists began methodically eliminating their potential opponents, paving the way for Stalinist transformations.[54]

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in Norman M. Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii eds., *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997). Older monographs on this subject that remain exceptionally useful are Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution*, 3rd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1956); Zbigniew K. Brzeziński, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); and R.V. Burks, *The Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).

[53] See Mito Isusov, *Politicheskiyat zhivot v Bulgariya, 1944–1948* (Sofia: Univ. Izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Okhridski," 2000); Lyubomir Ognyanov, *Durzhavno-politicheskata sistema na Bulgariya, 1944–1948* (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bulgarskata akademiya na naukite, 1993); and Flori Stănescu and Dragoş Zamfirescu eds., *Ocupaţia sovietică în România: Documente, 1944–1946* (Bucharest: Vremea, 1998). See also the relevant documents in Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov,* 2 vols.; and Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope,* 2 vols.

[54] Isusov, *Politicheskiyat zhivot v Bulgariya*; pp. 190–227, 258–342; Ognyan, *Durzhavno-politicheskata sistema na Bulgariya*, pp. 137–201; and Ioan Scur-

In the eastern zone of Germany, the Soviet occupation forces and administrators did not move immediately after the war to establish a Communist system, and Stalin (as noted above) repeatedly urged the leaders of the SED to adopt a "cautious approach." From the beginning, however, the Soviet occupation authorities took a number of steps that—perhaps unintentionally—ensured that the SED would eventually gain preeminent power. By the time the East German state, known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR), was formally created in October 1949, a Soviet-style polity was firmly entrenched in East Berlin under Walter Ulbricht.[55] Stalin by that point had largely abandoned any further hope of creating a unified German polity and had overcome his ambivalence about the desirability of setting up a Communist system in the GDR.

Elsewhere in the region—in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia—events followed a more gradual pattern. Local Communists who had spent many years in the Soviet Union returned to their native countries after World War II and worked jointly with fellow Commu-

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tu ed., *România—viaţa politică în documente: 1945* (Bucharest: Info-Team, 1994). On the process of forced collectivization in Bulgaria (a country that was predominantly agrarian in 1945), see Kalin Iosifov, *Totalitarnoto nasilie v bulgarskoto selo (1944–1951) i posleditsite za Bulgariya* (Sofia: Univ. izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Okhridski," 2003).

[55] For a comprehensive account of the Soviet role in the eastern zone of Germany, see Naimark, *The Russians in Germany*. See also Stefan Creuzberger, *Die sowjetische Besatzungsmacht und das politische System der SBZ* (Köln-Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1996). Some extremely important collections of declassified East-bloc documents regarding Soviet policy in Germany during this period have been published over the years. See Georgii Kynin and Jochen Laufer eds., *SSSR i germanskii vopros, 1941–1949: Dokumenty iz Arkhiva vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 3 vols. (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1996, 1999 and 2004); Rolf Badstubner and Wilfried Loth eds., *Wilhelm Pieck—Aufzeichnungen zur Deutschlandpolitik, 1945–1953* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994); Bernd Bonwetsch, Gennadii Bordyugov, and Norman Naimark, eds., *SVAG: Upravlenie propagandy (informatsii) i S. I. Tyul'panov* (Moscow: Rossiya Molodaya, 1994); and Elke Scherstjanoi ed., *Das SKK-Statut: zur Geschichte der Sowjetischen Kontrollkommission in Deutschland, 1949–1953* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1998). For valuable memoirs by former Soviet and East German officials, see K.I. Koval', *Poslednii svidetel': "Germanskaya karta" v kholodnoi voine* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1997); M.I. Semiryaga, *Kak my upravlyali germaniei: Politika i zhizn'* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1995); and Erich W. Gniffke, *Jahre mit Ulbricht* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1966).

nists who had stayed at home during the war and had taken part in the anti-Nazi resistance (or had kept a low profile). In all three countries, the resurgent Communist parties played a leading role in the formation of what initially were broad coalition governments that carried out extensive land redistribution and other long overdue economic and political reforms. The reform process, however, was kept under tight Communist control, and the top jobs in the ministry of internal affairs went exclusively to Communist party members. From those posts, they could oversee the purging of the local police forces and armies, the execution of alleged "collaborators," the control and censorship of the mass media, and the intimidation and ouster of non-Communist ministers and legislators.

With the backing of the Soviet Army, the Communist parties in these countries gradually solidified their hold through the sedulous use of what the Hungarian Communist party leader Mátyás Rákosi later called "salami tactics."[56] The basic strategy in each case was outlined by Stalin in 1946 when he told the Polish Communists that "there is no need to rush." He urged them to "move gradually toward socialism by exploiting elements of the bourgeois democratic order such as the parliament and other institutions." The aim of these incremental steps, Stalin said, would be to "isolate all your enemies politically," to "resist the constant pressure from reactionary circles," and to lay the groundwork for a "decisive struggle against the reactionaries."[57]

Moscow's role in the Communization of the region was strengthened in September 1947 by the establishment of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), a body responsible for binding to-

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[56] Mátyás Rákosi, "Népi demokráciánk útja," *Társadalmi Szemle* (Budapest), No. 3 (March 1952), pp. 115–49. On p. 134, Rákosi declares that "'Salami Tactics' ("*Szalámi taktikának*"), as we called this approach, involved the cutting out of reaction in slices from the Smallholders' Party." Rákosi originally presented these remarks to a session of the higher party school of the Hungarian Workers' Party on 29 February 1952. He provides a remarkably candid description of the strategy and tactics used by the Hungarian Communists in their gradual seizure of power.

[57] "Zapis' besedy tov. I. V. Stalina s B. Berutom i E. Osubka-Moravskim, 24 maya 1947 g.," 24 May 1947 (Top Secret), in Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskii Federatsii (APRF), Fond (F.) 558, Opis' (Op.) 1, Delo (D.) 355, Ll. 330–62, reproduced in Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov*, Vol. 1, pp. 443–63.

gether the East European Communist parties (as well as the French and Italian Communist parties) under the exclusive leadership of the Soviet Communist Party.[58] Because the Cominform was formally created a few months after the U.S. secretary of state, George Marshall, made his historic speech at Harvard University proposing a European Recovery Program (i.e., the Marshall Plan), some Western analysts have speculated that the enunciation of the plan is what spurred Soviet leaders to set up the Cominform.[59] Archival materials that have recently come to light in both Russia and Eastern Europe contravene this notion. It is now clear that Soviet planning for an organization like the Cominform began in the early part of 1946 (and possibly earlier), long before the Marshall Plan was even contemplated, much less announced.[60] The establishment of the Cominform was motivated not by the Marshall Plan but by Stalin's growing conviction that the East European states must conform to his own harsh methods of dictatorial

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[58] For a meticulously documented analysis of the origins of the Cominform, see L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Kak voznik Kominform: Po novym arkhivnym materialam," *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya* (Moscow), No. 4 (July–August 1993), pp. 131–52. See also G.M. Adibekov, *Kominform i poslevoennaya Evropa, 1947–1956 gg.* (Moscow: Rossiya molodaya, 1994). The voluminous files of the Cominform, from 1947 to 1956, have been available for research since early 1994 in Fond 575 at the former Central Party Archive (now known as the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History) in Moscow. Declassified materials from the Cominform conferences held in 1947, 1948, and 1949 are available in Grant Adibekov *et al.* eds., *Soveshchaniya Kominforma, 1947, 1948, 1949: Dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998).

[59] See, for example, Michael Cox and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, "The Tragedy of American Diplomacy? Rethinking the Marshall Plan," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Winter 2005), pp. 97–134; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 103–7; Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 27–8; Scott Parrish, "The Turn toward Confrontation: The Soviet Response to the Marshall Plan, 1947," CWIHP Working Paper No. 9 (Washington, D.C.: Cold War International History Project, March 1994), pp. 32–6; and William C. Taubman, *Stalin's American Policy: From Entente to Détente to Cold War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), pp. 215–45. For more nuanced views, see Martin Schain ed., *The Marshall Plan: Fifty Years After* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[60] L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Forsirovanie sovetskoi blokovoi politiki," in Egorova and Chubar'yan eds., *Kholodnaya voina*, pp. 137–86.

rule. Stalin's determination to prevent any further "contamination" from the West in the USSR necessitated the Stalinization of Eastern Europe.

The final step in the establishment of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe came with the seizure of power by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (*Komunistická strana Československa*, or KSČ) in February 1948. From that point on, "People's Democracies" allied with the Soviet Union were in place all over Eastern Europe. Although the USSR ultimately withdrew its support for the Communist insurgency in Greece and refrained from trying to establish a Communist government in Finland or even a Soviet–Finnish military alliance, Soviet power throughout the central and southern heartlands of the region was now firmly entrenched.

The Split with Yugoslavia

Despite the formation of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the June 1948 Cominform summit revealed the emergence of a schism in the Soviet bloc. Yugoslavia, which had been one of the staunchest postwar allies of the Soviet Union, was expelled from the Cominform and publicly denounced. Tension between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had been developing behind-the-scenes for several months and had finally reached the breaking point in March 1948. The rift stemmed from substantive disagreements, domestic political maneuvering, and a clash of personalities.[61] Documents released since 1990 indicate that

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[61] The origins of the Soviet–Yugoslav split are much better understood now than before 1991, thanks to newly declassified archival materials collected by Leonid Gibianskii and other researchers in Moscow, Belgrade, and other East European capitals. See, for example, Leonid Gibianskii, "The Origins of the Soviet–Yugoslav Split," in Naimark and Gibianskii eds., *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe*, pp. 291–312; Jeronim Perović, "The Tito–Stalin Split: A Reassessment in Light of New Evidence," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Spring 2007): 32–63; and L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Ot 'nerushimoi druzhby' k besposhchadnoi bor'be: Model' 'sotsialisticheskogo lagerya' i sovetsko-yugoslavskii konflikt," in L.Ya. Gibianskii, ed., *U istokov "sotsialisticheskogo sodruzhestva": SSSR i vostochnoevropeiskie strany v 1944–1949 gg.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1995), pp. 137–63. For an insightful and more extended analysis, see A.S. Anikeev, *Kak Tito ot Stalina ushel:*

the level of animosity between the two countries by mid-1948 was even greater than Western analysts had previously thought.

The most serious differences between Moscow and Belgrade had arisen over policy in the Balkans.[62] Stalin was increasingly wary of Tito's efforts to seek unification with Albania and to set up a Yugoslav-dominated federation with Bulgaria—an issue that figured prominently in the final face-to-face meetings between Stalin and Tito, in May–June 1946.[63] Although the relationship between the two leaders in mid-1946 was not yet acrimonious, it deteriorated over the next year. Stalin was

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Yugoslaviya, SSSR i SShA v nachal'nyi period "kholodnoi voiny" (Moscow: Institut slavyanovedeniya RAN, 2002), esp. pp. 86–206. For a good sample of the newly available documentation, see "Sekretnaya sovetsko-yugoslavskaya perepiska 1948 goda," *Voprosy istorii* (Moscow), Nos. 4–5, 6–7, and 10–11 (1992): 119–36, 158–72, and 154–69, respectively; as well as the multitude of relevant documents in Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa;* and Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope.* The materials released in the early 1990s were discussed extensively in a number of articles at the time, including I. Bukharkin, "Konflikt, ktorogo ne dolzhno bylo byt' (iz istorii sovetsko-yugoslavskiikh otnoshenii)," *Vestnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del SSSR* (Moscow), No. 6 (31 March 1990): 53–7; L.Ya. Gibianskii, "U nachala konflikta: Balkanskii uzel," *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (Moscow), No. 2 (March–April 1990): 171–85; I.V. Bukharkin and L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Pervye shagi konflikta," *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir* (Moscow), No. 5 (September–October 1990): 152–63; L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Vyzov v Moskvu," *Politicheskie issledovaniya* (Moscow), No. 1 (January–February 1991): 195–207; and the related series of articles by L.Ya. Gibianskii, "K istorii sovetsko-yugoslavskogo konflikta 1948–1953 gg.," in *Sovetskoe slavyanovedenie* (Moscow), No. 3 (May–June 1991): 32–47 and No. 4 (July–August 1991): 12–24; and *Slavyanovedenie* (Moscow), No. 1 (January–February 1992): 68–82 and No. 3 (May–June 1992): 35–51.

[62] For an insightful discussion of this issue, see L.Ya. Gibianskii, "Ideya balkanskogo ob"edineniya i plany ee osushchestvleniya v 40-e gody XX veka," *Voprosy istorii* (Moscow), No. 11 (November 2001): 38–56.

[63] "Zapis' besedy generalissimus I. V. Stalina s marshalom Tito" (Secret), 27 May 1946, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 397, LI. 107–10. The secret Yugoslav transcript of these talks, from Arhiv Josipa Broza Tita (AJBT), F. Kabinet Maršala Jugoslavije (KMJ), I–1/7, pp. 6–11, was published in *Istoricheskii arkhiv* (Moscow), No. 2 (1994): 24–8, along with valuable annotations by Leonid Gibianskii. The two transcripts are complementary for the most part, rather than duplicative. For more on Moscow's concerns about the Balkan issue, see several dozen top-secret cables and reports to Stalin and Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov in Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. 0144, Op. 30, Papka (Pa.) 118, D. 10.

especially irritated by Tito's failure to consult with Moscow and to wait for Stalin's explicit approval before taking any steps *vis-à-vis* Bulgaria and Albania. After Yugoslavia neglected to obtain Soviet approval for a treaty it signed with Bulgaria in August 1947, Stalin sent a secret cable to Tito denouncing the treaty as "mistaken" and "premature."[64] Tensions increased still further over the next several months as Yugoslavia continued to pursue unification with Albania, despite Moscow's objections.[65] Under pressure from Stalin, Tito promised in January 1948 not to send a Yugoslav army division to Albania (as Yugoslavia had tentatively arranged to do after deploying an air force regiment and military advisers in Albania the previous summer to prepare the country to "rebuff Greek monarcho-fascists"). This concession, however, failed to alleviate Stalin's annoyance. In February 1948, Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov warned Tito that "serious differences of opinion" about "relations between our countries" would persist unless Yugoslavia adhered to the "normal procedures" of clearing all actions with Moscow beforehand.[66] Concerns about following "normal procedures" were at least as salient as any substantive disputes in the bilateral exchanges over the Balkans.

A few other points of contention had also emerged between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the early postwar years. In particular, Tito was far more willing than Stalin to provide military and financial assistance to Communist guerrillas in "gray-area" countries, notably in Greece.[67] On other issues, too, the Yugoslav leader had occasionally

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[64] "Shifrtelegramma" No. 37-443-506 (Strictly Secret), from Stalin to Tito, 12 August 1948, in AJBT-KMJ, I-2/17, L. 70.

[65] See the valuable collection of declassified documents from the Soviet foreign ministry archive in "Stranitsy istorii: Konflikt, kotorogo ne dolzhno bylo byt' (iz istorii sovetsko-yugoslavskikh otnohenii)," *Vestnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del SSSR* (Moscow), No. 6 (31 March 1990): 57–63, esp. 57 and 59.

[66] "Iz telegrammy V. M. Molotova A. I. Lavrent'evu dlya peredachi I. Broz Tito 31 yanvarya 1948" and "Iz telegrammy V. M. Molotova A. I. Lavrent'evu dlya peredachi I. Broz Tito 1 fevralya 1948 g," both of which are reproduced in the valuable collection of declassified documents from the Soviet foreign ministry archive in "Stranitsy istorii: Konflikt, kotorogo ne dolzhno bylo byt'," pp. 57 and 59, respectively.

[67] For useful analyses of the Yugoslav, Soviet, and Bulgarian roles in the Greek civil war, see Peter Stavrakis, *Moscow and Greek Communism, 1944–1949* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Jordan Baev, *O emfylios polemos*

objected to what he regarded as the Soviet Union's excessively concil-
iatory policies toward the West—an ironic position in view of subse-
quent developments. Nonetheless, the disagreements between the two
sides, important though they may have been, were hardly sufficient in
themselves to provoke such a bitter and costly schism. For the most
part, the Yugoslav Communists had been unstinting in their support
for Stalin and the Soviet Union until early 1948. Indeed, the steadfast
loyalty of Yugoslavia on almost all issues—loyalty that was spontane-
ous and not simply coerced—was evidently one of the major factors
behind Stalin's decision to seek an abject capitulation from Belgrade
as an example to the other East European countries of the unwavering
obedience that was expected.[68]

Far from demonstrating Soviet strength, however, the split with
Yugoslavia revealed the limits of Soviet coercive power—economic,
political, and military. The Soviet Union and its East European allies
imposed economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and adopted a number
of political measures to destabilize and precipitate the collapse of Tito's
regime. But the economic pressure came to naught when Yugoslavia
turned to the West and to Third World countries for economic assis-
tance and trade (including supplies of energy and key raw materials)
and when Tito rebuffed Moscow's attempts to force Yugoslavia to pay
for hundreds of millions of rubles' worth of aid supposedly provided by
the USSR in the first few years after the war.[69]

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sten *Ellada: Diethneis diastaseis* (Athens: Filistor, 1996); Vladislav Zubok and
Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrush-
chev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 56–7; and Ar-
tiom Ulunian, "The Soviet Union and the Greek Question, 1946–53: Prob-
lems and Appraisals," in Francesca Gori and Silvio Pons eds., *The Soviet
Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1943–53* (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp.
140–58. Among many examples of the Soviet leadership's relatively cautious
approach, see "Beseda tov. Zhdanova s Zakhariadisom," 22 May 1947 (Top
Secret), Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii
(RGASPI), F. 17, Op. 128, D. 1019, Ll. 35–6.

[68] This point is well illustrated by the documents in "Stranitsy istorii: Konflikt,
kotorogo ne dolzhno bylo byt'," pp. 57–63. See also "Krupnoe porazhenie
Stalina—Sovetsko-yugoslavskii konflikt 1948–1953 godov: prichiny, posled-
stviya, uroki," *Moskovskie novosti* (Moscow), No. 27 (2 July 1989): 8–9.

[69] "Tovarishchu Stalinu I. V. ," Memorandum No. 12-s (Top Secret) from
A.A. Gromyko, M.A. Men'shikov, A.M. Vasilevskii, A.G. Zverev, and B.P.
Beshev to Stalin, 18 December 1950, with attached draft resolution of the

Soviet efforts to encourage pro-Moscow elements in the Yugoslav government, Communist party, and army to launch a coup against Tito proved equally ineffective when the Yugoslav leader liquidated the pro-Moscow factions in these bodies before they could move against him.[70] The Soviet and East European governments broke diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, annulled the bilateral treaties of friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance they had signed with Belgrade over the previous few years, and inundated Yugoslavia with radio broadcasts condemning Tito as a "fascist" and a "traitor to the socialist cause." The broadcasts also exhorted the Macedonians and other ethnic groups to "rise up against the oppressive regime" and claimed (falsely) that widespread violent turmoil had broken out in Yugoslavia and within the Yugoslav army.[71] The broadcasts were intended to demoralize the Yugoslav population and to spark social disorder, but they actually had the opposite effect of uniting the country more solidly behind Tito.

Nor was Stalin any more successful when he attempted to rely on covert operations to undermine the Yugoslav government. The Soviet state security and intelligence organs devised a multitude of secret plots to assassinate Tito, including several as late as 1953 that involved a notorious special agent, Josif Grigulevich, who had been posing under aliases as a senior Costa Rican diplomat in both Rome and Belgrade. The idea was for Grigulevich (codenamed "Max") either to release deadly bacteria during a private meeting with the Yugoslav leader or to

Communist Party Central Committee and draft note to the Yugoslav government, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 66, D. 910, Ll. 167–74, reproduced in T.V. Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope, 1944–1953*, 2 vols., Vol. 2: *1949–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2002), pp. 429–33.

[70] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "National Intelligence Estimate: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952," NIE-29/2 (Top Secret), 4 January 1952, p. 3, in Harry S. Truman Library (HSTL), President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 213: National Intelligence Estimates.

[71] CIA, "Memorandum: Analysis of Soviet and Satellite Propaganda Directed to or about Yugoslavia," 00-F-125 (Top Secret), 1 September 1950, pp. 1–6, in HSTL. President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence File, 1946–53, Box 211: Memoranda 1950–52.

fire a concealed, noiseless gun at Tito during an embassy reception.[72] Other plots, devised as early as the summer of 1948, envisaged the use of Bulgarian, Romanian, Hungarian, and Albanian intelligence agents acting at the behest of the Soviet Union. In addition to these covert operations directed against Tito, the Soviet and East European intelligence agencies spirited a large number of saboteurs and subversives into Yugoslavia to foment social chaos, disrupt economic activity, and incite a popular uprising against Tito's government.[73] Soviet-bloc officials also smuggled in huge quantities of newspapers and leaflets in the various national languages of Yugoslavia urging "all true Communists"

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[72] For a description of the bizarre plots involving Grigulevich, see the handwritten memorandum from S.D. Ignat'ev, chief of the State Security Ministry, to Stalin, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 24, D. 463, Ll. 148–9. The full text of the memorandum is transcribed in Dmitrii Volkogonov, "Nesostoyavsheesya pokushenie: Kak sovetskii agent Maks gotovilsya k terroristicheskomu aktu protiv Tito," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 11 June 1993, p. 7, which was the first publication to mention this scheme. It is discussed far more fully in the book by the late head of the Stalin-era covert operations branch of the Soviet foreign intelligence service, Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spestoperatsii: Lubyanka, Kreml', 1930–1950 gody* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 1998), pp. 528–32. On other plots to assassinate Tito, see Marko Lopušina, *KGB protiv Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Evro, 2001), pp. 69–75; Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), pp. 355–8; and the first-hand observations in Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'*, Vol. 3, p. 119.

[73] See, for example, "Protokol za zasedanieto na plenuma na TsK na BKP, sustoyal se na 16 i 17 yanuari 1950 godina," 16–7 January 1950 (Top Secret), in *Tsentralen Durzhaven Arkhiv* (TsDA), F. 1-B, Op. 5, arkhivna edinitsa (a.e.) 55, Ll. 15–20; and "Stenogramma ot suveshchanie na aktivistite na sofiiskata organizatsiya na BRP(k) po makedonskiya vupros," 9 October 1948 (Secret), in *TsDA*, F. 214b, Op. 1, a.e. 71, Ll. 66–117. See also CIA, "National Intelligence Estimate: Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951," NIE-29 (Top Secret), 20 March 1951, p. 3, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 213: National Intelligence Estimates. The East European state security forces also sought to disrupt alleged rings of spies and subversives in their own countries and "turn" them so that they could be used as double agents against Yugoslavia. See, for example, "Predlozhenie otnosno: Realiziranata v D. S.—G. Dzhumaya razrabotka 'Izmennik,'" 10 February 1949 (Strictly Confidential), in *TsDA*, F. 1-B, Op. 7, a. e. 1560, Ll. 1–4.

to "expose and remove the Tito–Ranković clique."[74] In the end, however, all of these clandestine schemes proved infeasible or were thwarted by the Yugoslav state security forces, which remained firmly beholden to Tito.

The ineffectiveness of political, economic, and covert pressure against Yugoslavia left Stalin with the unattractive option of using large-scale military force, an option he never ultimately pursued. Stalin's hesitation about launching an invasion of Yugoslavia evidently stemmed from many factors, including the prospect that Soviet troops would encounter staunch Yugoslav resistance, the burden of deploying large numbers of Soviet soldiers at a time when the Soviet armed forces were already overstretched, the transport and logistical problems of crossing Bulgaria's mountainous terrain into Yugoslavia, the possibility of provoking a war with the West (a concern that became more acute after the United States and its European allies began forging closer political, economic, and even military ties with Yugoslavia), and a belief that Tito could be ousted by non-military means.[75] If Yugoslavia had

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[74] "Informatsiya ob organizatsii nelegal'nogo rasprostraneniya na territorii Yugoslavii izdanii yugoslavskikh politemigrantov," Memorandum No. 61ss (Top Secret) from V.G. Grigor'yan to V.M. Molotov, 22 August 1951, in RGASPI, F. 82, Op. 2, D. 1379, LI. 106–10.

[75] General Béla Király, the commander of Hungarian ground forces in 1949–1950, later claimed that the vigorous U.S. response to North Korea's attack against South Korea in June 1950 was the main thing that caused Stalin to abandon plans for an invasion of Yugoslavia. See Béla Király, "The Aborted Soviet Military Plans against Tito's Yugoslavia," in Wayne S. Vucinich ed., *At the Brink of War and Peace: The Tito–Stalin Split in a Historic Perspective* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1984), pp. 273–88. Király may be correct about the *short-term* impact of the U.S. intervention in Korea on Stalin's calculations, but declassified materials reveal that the Soviet leader was emboldened after China intervened in the war and the U.S. military effort bogged down. At a top-secret conference in Moscow in January 1951, Stalin declared that the U.S. failure to defeat China and North Korea demonstrated that "the United States is unprepared to start a third world war and is not even capable of fighting a small war." See the declassified notes of Stalin's remarks at the conference, transcribed in C. Cristescu, "Strict Secret de importanţă deosebită—Ianuarie 1951: Stalin decide înarmarea României," *Magazin istoric* (Bucharest), Vol. 29, No. 10 (October 1995): 15–23. Király's argument is further belied by the concrete evidence of Soviet and East European military preparations for a possible invasion of Yugoslavia. Before the Korean War broke out, Soviet and East European preparations for armed

been adjacent to the Soviet Union or had been located in the center of Eastern Europe rather than on the periphery, Stalin might have been quicker to rely on armed force. Khrushchev, who took part in deliberations about the matter, later said he was "absolutely sure that if the Soviet Union had shared a border with Yugoslavia, Stalin would have resorted to military intervention."[76]

It is conceivable, of course, that if Stalin had lived longer, he would eventually have ordered Soviet troops to occupy Yugoslavia. There is considerable evidence that in the final two years of his life he was seeking the capability for a decisive military move in Europe, possibly against Yugoslavia. Initially, from 1948 through mid-1950, the Soviet Union and its East European allies made only limited preparations for military contingencies *vis-à-vis* Yugoslavia.[77] Declassified U.S. intelligence documents reveal that, as of January 1950, the combined armed

intervention in Yugoslavia were minimal, whereas at the height of the Korean War, in 1951–52, the Soviet-bloc states were engaged in a massive military buildup, which would have been of great use for an invasion of Yugoslavia.

[76] Khrushchev, *Vremya, lyudi, vlast'*, Vol. 3, p. 118.

[77] See, for example, CIA, "Estimate of the Yugoslav Regime's Ability to Resist Soviet Pressure During 1949," ORE 44-49 (Top Secret), 20 June 1949, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 215: O.R.E.; CIA, "The Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action during 1949," ORE 46-49 (Top Secret), 3 May 1949, p. 4, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 215: O.R.E.; and László Ritter, "War on Tito's Yugoslavia? The Hungarian Army in Early Cold War Soviet Strategy," Working Paper of the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact, February 2005. Ritter skillfully debunks the claims made by Béla Király about alleged Soviet preparations in 1948–50 for an invasion of Yugoslavia, but Ritter's impressive analysis contains a few important shortcomings. First, he focuses so much on Király's account that he fails to give due weight to the crucial changes that occurred in the final two years of Stalin's life. Second, Ritter refers to East-bloc planning and preparations for a "counteroffensive" against Yugoslavia (and against Western countries that might join Yugoslavia in attacking the Soviet bloc), but he fails to acknowledge that planning and preparations for a "counterattack" would be just as useful in carrying out an invasion of Yugoslavia. Nothing about these preparations was inherently "defensive." Third, Ritter focuses solely on Hungary and does not discuss the buildup and preparations under way in Romania and Bulgaria, two countries (especially the latter) that would have played far more important roles than Hungary in any prospective Soviet-bloc incursion into Yugoslavia.

forces of the four Soviet-bloc countries adjoining Yugoslavia (Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania) numbered only 346,000 troops organized in 28 divisions, or roughly the same size as Yugoslavia's army of 325,000 soldiers in 32 divisions.[78] Even though Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania had been receiving substantial inflows of Soviet-made weaponry and equipment, none of the 28 East European divisions had attained a high level of combat readiness. The documents also indicate that the Soviet Union at that point had only a token number of troops still deployed in Bulgaria and Albania and only four to six ground divisions (numbering 60,000 to 90,000 troops) in Romania and Hungary, equipped with roughly 1,000 battle tanks.[79] Moreover, only one of the Soviet units, the 2nd Guards Mechanized Division, which had been relocated from Romania to Hungary in mid-1949, was actually deployed near the Yugoslav border.[80]

The East-bloc divisions arrayed against Yugoslavia as of early 1950 would have been sufficient for relatively limited contingencies, but they fell well short of the quantity and quality of forces needed to achieve decisive military results in the face of stiff Yugoslav resistance. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) concluded in May 1950 that the East European armies at their existing force levels would be "incapable of waging offensive war" unless they received much greater Soviet backing. An invasion of Yugoslavia, the CIA estimated, would require "a minimum of 25–30 Soviet divisions plus overwhelming air and

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[78] CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952," pp. 4–5.

[79] Figures derived from CIA, "Possibility of Direct Military Action in the Balkans by Soviet Satellites," Special Evaluation No. 40 (Top Secret), 29 July 1950, p. 2, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–1953, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 219, Special Evaluation Reports; and "Appendix, Table 1: Soviet Forces Estimated to Be Stationed in the Satellites July 1954," in "National Intelligence Estimate: Probable Developments in the European Satellites Through Mid-1956," NIE 12-54 (Top Secret), 24 August 1954, p. 19, in Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, White House: National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948–61, Executive Secretary's Subject File Series, Box 1, Miscellaneous File.

[80] "Review of the Military Situation in Hungary: The Likelihood of an Immediate Offensive against Yugoslavia Discounted," Memorandum (Secret) from G.A. Wallinger, British ambassador to Hungary, to the Foreign Office, 11 August 1950, in The National Archives of the United Kingdom, FO 371/87865, p. 4.

armored support." Anything short of that, the agency added, "would probably result in a prolonged stalemate."[81]

Nonetheless, even though Soviet and East European military preparations for a possible invasion of Yugoslavia were initially modest, the mobilization of East-bloc forces that could have been used against Yugoslavia increased drastically during the final two years of Stalin's life. This shift, which began in late 1950, reached a feverish pace after Stalin summoned the East European Communist party leaders and defense ministers to Moscow for a meeting on 9–12 January 1951 that was held in complete secrecy and was not disclosed at all in public afterward. Stalin and his chief political and military aides (Molotov, Georgii Malenkov, Lavrentii Beria, the Military Minister Marshal Aleksandr Vasilevskii, and the chief of the Soviet General Staff Army-General Sergei Shtemenko) took part in the meeting, as did the principal Soviet military advisers assigned to the countries around Yugoslavia. The full stenographic transcript of this four-day conclave has not yet been released from the Russian archives, but detailed notes taken by some of the East European participants reveal that Stalin used the sessions to call for a huge expansion of all the East-bloc armed forces, including those in the countries contiguous with Yugoslavia.[82] Soviet

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[81] CIA, "Evaluation of Soviet–Yugoslav Relations (1950)," ORE 8-50 (Top Secret), 11 May 1950, p. 5, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 216: O.R.E./1950.

[82] The most extensive notes were taken by the Romanian defense minister, Emil Bodnăraş, and by the Hungarian Communist party leader, Mátyás Rákosi, both of whom recorded Stalin's comments and provided many other details of the proceedings. Bodnăraş's notes were declassified in the 1990s and published in a monthly Romanian historical journal. See Cristescu, "Strict Secret de importanţă deosebită," pp. 15–23. Rákosi's detailed account, evidently based on the contemporaneous notes he was able to take with him to Moscow in 1956, can be found in his memoirs, *Visszaemlékezések*, Vol. 2: *1940–1956* (Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó, 1997), pp. 860–6, esp. 860–2. A shorter account, attributed to the Czechoslovak defense minister, Alexej Čepička, was published by the historian Karel Kaplan in *Dans les archives du Comité Central* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1978), pp. 164–6. See also the brief but interesting retrospective comments of Edward Ochab in Teresa Torańska, *Oni* (London: Aneks, 1985), pp. 46–7. Although Ochab was not the leader of the Polish United Workers' Party in 1951, he attended the conference in place of Bolesław Bierut, the party leader, who apparently was ill. Because

leaders had been emphasizing the need for sharply increased military deployments since early 1950 in their discussions with Bulgarian and Romanian officials, and at the January 1951 conference Stalin extended this demand to the whole Soviet bloc and laid out a much more compressed timetable—a timetable suitable for a crash war effort.[83]

Stalin opened the meeting on 9 January by declaring that it was "abnormal for [the East European countries] to have weak armies." He already knew from Soviet military and intelligence personnel that the East European armed forces were in woeful shape. This assessment was amply corroborated on 9 January when each of the East European defense ministers presented a status report indicating that his country's military forces were "currently unable to meet the requirements of a war."[84] Stalin warned his guests that "this situation must be turned around" as soon as possible. "Within two to three years at most," he declared, the East European countries must "build modern, powerful

Stalin had not yet decided how far he would go in allowing East Germany to deploy a regular army, no East German officials took part in the conference. Albania also was not represented at the conference, but Stalin and several other high-ranking Soviet officials met in Moscow in early April 1951 with the Albanian Communist leader, Enver Hoxha, and the chief of the Albanian General Staff, General Bekir Baluku, and discussed the need to strengthen the Albanian armed forces, particularly by equipping them with more tanks and combat aircraft. For a summary transcript of the meeting, see "Zapis' besedy I. V. Stalina s E. Khodzei, 2 aprelya 1951 g.," Memorandum of Conversation (Top Secret), 2 April 1951, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 249, Ll. 90–7, reproduced in T.V. Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov, 1944–1953*, 2 vols., Vol. 2: *1949–1953 gg.* (Novosibirsk: Sibirskii khronograf, 1998), pp. 504–9. The transcript tallies surprisingly well with the account of this meeting in Hoxha's memoirs, *With Stalin: Memoirs*, 2nd ed. (Tirana: 8 Nëntori Publishing House, 1981), pp. 201–19. According to the transcript, Hoxha told Stalin that the Albanian army already numbered 150,000–175,000 troops plus 218,000 reserves, but these figures, compared to U.S. intelligence estimates, are much too high even if the Albanian security forces are included with the army.

[83] On the earlier demands, see, for example, "Protokol za zasedanieto na plenuma na TsK na BKP, sustoyal se na 16 i 17 yanuari 1950 godina," L. 18. Stalin provided similar "advice" to the Hungarian authorities in the last few months of 1950. See "Tovarishchu Stalinu Iosifu Vissarionovichu," 31 October 1950 (Top Secret), letter from Mátyás Rákosi to Stalin, in APRF, F. 558, Op. 1, D. 293, Ll. 80–2.

[84] Cristescu, "Strict Secret de importanţă deosebită," p. 18.

armies" consisting of more than 3 million soldiers. More than 1.2 mil-
lion of these troops were to be deployed in peacetime in fully "combat-
ready" condition, "poised to go to war" at very short notice.[85] Another
1.85 million to 2 million military reserves in Eastern Europe were to be
trained and equipped for rapid mobilization in the event of an emer-
gency.[86] Stalin's blunt remarks at the conference clearly indicated that
he believed a large-scale military confrontation in Europe was coming
in the near future, and that he wanted to make sure that the Soviet
and East European armed forces would be successful in any campaign
they might undertake. Stalin was pleased that the United States had
"failed to cope with even a small war in Korea" and that U.S. troops
would "be bogged down in Asia for the next two to three years." "This
extremely favorable circumstance," he argued, would give the East-
bloc countries just enough time to complete a massive buildup of their
armed forces.[87]

Initially, most of the East European officials were caught off-guard
by the onerous task Stalin was assigning them. The Polish national de-
fense minister, Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski, insisted that the force
levels set for Poland could not be achieved "before the end of 1956."
Poland, he said, would find it "enormously difficult" to complete such
a large buildup in the short amount of time Stalin was proposing.[88]
The Bulgarian Communist Party leader, Vulko Chervenkov, expressed
similar reservations. Stalin replied that "if Rokossowski [and Cherven-
kov] can guarantee that there will be no war by the end of 1956, then
[a scaled-back program] might be adopted, but if no such guarantee
can be offered, then it would be more sensible to proceed" with a crash
buildup. This rebuke made clear to the East European leaders that Sta-
lin was not there to bargain with them over the terms of the expansion
and modernization of their armed forces. Although many of the East
Europeans remained uneasy about the strain their countries would en-

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[85] *Ibid.*, pp. 17–8.
[86] *Ibid.*, p. 19. These figures, which were stipulated by Soviet Defense Minister
    Marshal Aleksandr Vasilevskii and approved by Stalin, come from the docu-
    ments transcribed by Bodnăraș. I have adjusted them slightly to take account
    of Albania's projected troop levels, which were not specified at the meeting.
[87] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[88] Rákosi, *Visszaemlékezések*, Vol. 2, p. 861.

dure from the pace and magnitude of the envisaged buildup, they knew they had no choice but to comply with Stalin's wishes.[89]

No sooner had the conference ended than the East European governments embarked on programs to fulfill the inordinately ambitious numerical goals established for them by the Soviet High Command, which also oversaw a crash buildup of the Soviet Union's own armed forces. The troop strength of the Soviet military had been cut precipitously after World War II, declining to only 2.9 million soldiers by 1948 from a wartime peak of nearly 12 million. During the final two years of Stalin's life, the size of the Soviet armed forces nearly doubled, reaching 5.6 million troops as of March 1953.[90] These new forces, many of which were equipped with the latest weaponry, were almost entirely located in the westernmost portion of the Soviet Union, including hundreds of thousands of combat troops who could have been assigned to any possible contingencies against Yugoslavia. The number of Soviet ready reserves also sharply increased, giving the Soviet General Staff the capacity to deploy more than 10 million combat troops within thirty days of war mobilization.[91] The sheer scale and rapidity of this peacetime military buildup were unprecedented, especially in a country that not yet fully recovered from the damage of World War II. The vast expansion of the Soviet armed forces in 1951–53 allowed for military deployments that would have been infeasible in 1948–50.

In Eastern Europe, too, the results of the crash military buildup were evident almost immediately. By January 1952 the combined armed forces of the four East-bloc countries bordering on Yugoslavia had expanded to 590,000 troops in 38 divisions, or nearly double the

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[89] *Ibid.*, pp. 862–3, 865. See also Cristescu, "Strict Secret de importanţă deosebită," pp. 17–20.

[90] "Spravka-doklad G. K. Zhukova o sokrashchenii vooruzhenykh sil," Report to the CPSU Presidium (Top Secret), 12 August 1955, in *Voennye arkhivy Rossii* (Moscow), No. 1 (1993): 280–1; and "Zapiska G. Zhukova i V. Sokolovskogo v TsK KPSS," Report to the CPSU Presidium (Top Secret), 9 February 1956, in *Voennye arkhivy Rossii* (Moscow), No. 1 (1993): 283–8.

[91] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "Report by the Standing Group to the North Atlantic Military Committee on Estimate of the Relative Strength and Capabilities of NATO and Soviet Bloc Forces at Present and in the Immediate Future," M.C. 33 (Top Secret—Cosmic), 10 November 1951, pp. 21–5, in NATO Archives (Brussels), C8-D4.

size of the Yugoslav army, which had not increased at all since 1950.[92] The East European armies continued to grow at a breakneck pace during the final year of Stalin's life, reaching the target goal of roughly 1.2 million soldiers. Furthermore, the quality of the weapons deployed by the Bulgarian and Romanian armed forces (and to a lesser extent by the Hungarian and Albanian armies) improved a great deal, whereas the opposite was the case for the Yugoslav army, which was no longer receiving any new armaments, spare parts, munitions, or support equipment from its erstwhile supplier, the USSR. Although Yugoslavia by the early 1950s had begun receiving small amounts of weapons and military-related equipment from a few Western countries, these items were hardly enough to make up for the loss of Soviet-made weaponry, communications gear, and spare parts.[93] In early 1952, U.S. intelligence analysts reported that the Yugoslav armed forces were plagued by grave weaknesses, including the "insufficient quantity and obsolescence of much of [their] equipment," a "lack of spare parts and of proper ammunition," a "severe shortage of heavy weapons, particularly of antitank artillery, antiaircraft artillery, and armor," and the "lack of experience of the [Yugoslav] general staff in the tactical and technical utilization of combined arms."[94] Thus, even as the Soviet and East European armed services were rapidly expanding and gearing up for a military confrontation in Europe, the Yugoslav army was declining and was unfit for combat.

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[92] CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952," p. 5.

[93] Some aspects of the Western military supplies to Yugoslavia were reported at the time—though not always accurately—in the American press. See, for example, "U.S. Arms Delivered to Yugoslavia for Defense of Her Independence," *The New York Times*, 20 June 1951, pp. 1, 7. For more on this issue, see Anikeev, *Kak Tito ot Stalina ushel*, pp. 189–203; Lorraine M. Lees, *Keeping Yugoslavia Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), pp. 81–119, esp. 98–111; Franklin Lindsay, *Beacons in the Night: With the OSS and Tito's Partisans in Wartime Yugoslavia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), pp. 334–6; and Beatrice Heuser, *Western Containment Policies in the Cold War: The Yugoslav Case, 1948–53* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 117–24, 155–72, esp. 160–4.

[94] CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952," p. 4.

The military buildup in the Soviet bloc was ostensibly intended to deter or, if necessary, repulse an attack from outside, but the Soviet General Staff assumed that scenarios involving a war against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were not really separable from contingency plans for an invasion of Yugoslavia.[95] Soviet and East European preparations for a massive "counterattack" against enemy forces could just as easily have been adapted for an incursion into Yugoslavia if Stalin had eventually decided to launch one. As part of the post-January 1951 buildup, the USSR provided each of the East European countries with dozens of Tu-2 high-speed bomber aircraft, which would have played a crucial role in any coordinated East-bloc move against Yugoslavia.[96] Stalin had emphasized to the other leaders at the January 1951 conference that "you will need to have a bomber force, at least one division per country initially, to carry out offensive operations."[97] As a further boost to the East European countries' offensive capabilities, the Soviet Union supplied large quantities of Il-10 ground-attack aircraft for airborne assault forces, which would have spearheaded an attempt to seize strategic positions in Yugoslavia, including fortifications around Belgrade.[98]

Moreover, under Soviet auspices the armed forces of the four East-bloc states adjoining Yugoslavia conducted war games in 1951 and

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[95] "O deyatel'nosti organov Severo-atlicheskogo Soyuza v svyazi s sozdani-em atlicheskoi armii i remilitarizatsiei zapadnoi Germanii," Intelligence Memorandum (Top Secret), forwarded by the Soviet Communist Party Politburo to the leaders of the East European countries, February 1951, in Český Národní Archiv (ČNA), Archiv Ústředního vyboru Komunistické strany Československa (Archiv ÚV KSČ), F. 100/24, Svazek 47, Archivní jednotka 1338. I am grateful to Oldřich Tůma for giving me a copy of this document. Vojtech Mastny cites the document in his first-rate analysis of Soviet and East-bloc responses to NATO during the early years of the alliance, "NATO in the Beholder's Eye: Soviet Perceptions and Policies, 1949–56," CWIHP Working Paper No. 35 (Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project, March 2002).

[96] "Appendix, Table 3: Estimated Satellite Air Forces, July 1954," in CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in the European Satellites Through Mid-1956," p. 19. Bulgaria received three divisions of Tu-2 bombers totaling 120 aircraft, and Hungary and Romania each received one division of 40 bombers.

[97] Cristescu, "Strict Secret de importanţă deosebită," p. 20.

[98] Nicolae Balotescu *et al.*, *Istoria aviaţiei române* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi enciclopedică, 1984), pp. 375, 380–1.

1952 that envisaged "forward deployments" and "large-scale offensive operations" to encircle and destroy enemy troops on Yugoslav territory. The Hungarian army in its exercises was specifically responsible for "seizing the Belgrade area" and other strategic sites in Yugoslavia.[99] This task, though depicted in the context of a counterattack against an enemy occupier, obviously would have been an integral part of any joint Soviet–East European campaign to invade and occupy Yugoslavia. The Romanian and Bulgarian armed forces conducted similar exercises near their projected entry routes into Yugoslavia.[100] The Romanian government supported its army's preparations in June 1951 by forcibly deporting more than 40,000 civilians from the Banat and Oltenia regions along the Yugoslav border to the forbidding reaches of the Bărăgan Steppe.[101] This mass deportation, which was closely coordinated with leaders in Moscow, was intended to remove "hostile elements" and "Titoist sympathizers" who might otherwise hinder Romanian military operations against the "reactionary Yugoslav state."[102] The Romanian army subsequently stepped up its maneuvers in the cleared-out regions,

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[99] See the guidelines for the Hungarian army's war game held on 8–12 May 1951, Report No. 02609 (Top Secret) from Endre Matekovits, 7 May 1951, divided into four parts, "Feladat tisztázása," "Vázlat a front feladatáról," "Köveztetések," "Tájékoztató jelentés," plus a planning map, in Hadtörténelmi Levéltár, Magyar Néphadsereg iratai (HL MN), 1951/T/24/2 őrzési egység (ő.e.), pp. 207–26, document provided by László Ritter.

[100] Mircea Chiriţoiu, *Între David şi Goliath: România şi Iugoslavia în balanţa Războiului Rece* (Iaşi: Demiurg, 2005), pp. 132, 135, 138–41. See also Gheorge Vartic, "1951–1953: Ani fierbinţi din istoria Războiului Rece în relatarea generalului (r) Ion Eremia, opozant al regimului stalinist din România," in *Geopolitică şi istorie militară în perioada Războiului Rece* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, 2003), pp. 84–5.

[101] Silviu Sarafolean ed., *Deportaţii în Bărăgan, 1951–1956* (Timişoara: Editura Mirton, 2001), esp. the 39-page introductory essays; Rafael Mirciov, *Lagărul deportării: Pagini din lagărul Bărăganului, 1951–1956* (Timişoara: Editura Mirton, 2001); and Chiriţoiu, *Între David şi Goliath*, pp. 247–8. The book edited by Sarafolean includes a remarkably detailed, 590-page list of those who were deported.

[102] "Zapis' besedy s A. Pauker," Memorandum No. 70-k (Secret) from S. Kavtaradze, Soviet ambassador in Romania, to Soviet Foreign Minister A. Vyshinskii, 1 March 1951, in AVPRF, F. 0125, Op. 39, P. 198, D. 76, LI. 234–5; and "Zapis' besedy s A. Pauker," Memorandum No. 166-k (Secret) from S. Kavtaradze, Soviet ambassador in Romania, to Soviet Foreign Minister, A. Vyshinskii, 11 July 1951, in AVPRF, F. 0125, Op. 39, P. 190, LI. 33–6.

simulating large-scale thrusts across the border. By learning how to "organize and command large-scale offensive operations in difficult conditions on the ground and in the air," how to "concentrate forces that are superior in troop strength and equipment to break through enemy defenses," and how to "distribute forces for the optimal structure of attack," high-ranking East-bloc military officers gained the training they needed for a prospective invasion of Yugoslavia.[103]

The rapid military buildup in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the experience derived from war games meant that, from mid-1952 until Stalin's death, the Soviet-bloc forces confronting Yugoslavia posed a daunting military threat to Tito's regime. NATO intelligence analysts reported in late 1951 that the East European armies were acquiring "significant offensive capabilities" against Yugoslavia, even without Soviet support.[104] A number of highly classified U.S. intelligence assessments in the early 1950s, which kept close track of military developments in the USSR and the four Communist countries surrounding Yugoslavia, warned that "the groundwork is being laid for a possible invasion of Yugoslavia" and that a full-scale Soviet and East European "attack on Yugoslavia should be considered a serious possibility."[105] Although U.S. intelligence analysts believed that such an attack was "unlikely" in the near term, they concluded as early as March 1951 that if Soviet and East European forces embarked on a concerted offensive against Yugoslavia they would be able to occupy the country, destroy the Yugoslav army, and, over time, quell all guerrilla resistance:

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[103] "Feladat tisztázása," p. 210.

[104] NATO, "Estimate of the Relative Strength and Capabilities of NATO and Soviet Bloc Forces," p. 22.

[105] See CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952"; CIA, "NIE: Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951"; and CIA, "National Intelligence Estimate: Review of the Conclusions of NIE-29 'Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951,'" NIE-29/1 (Top Secret), 4 May 1951, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 213: National Intelligence Estimates. See also CIA, "National Intelligence Estimate: Soviet Capabilities and Intentions," NIE-3 (Top Secret), 15 November 1950, pp. 17–8, in HSTL, President's Secretary's Papers, Intelligence File, 1946–53, Central Intelligence Reports File, 1946–53, Box 213: National Intelligence Estimates.

> The continuing military build-up in the neighboring Satellite states (increase in armed forces, stockpiling, re-equipment, gasoline conservation, stepping-up of war industry, etc.) has reversed the previous balance of military strength between the Satellites and Yugoslavia and has given the Satellites the capability of launching a major invasion of Yugoslavia with little warning. […] Combined Soviet-Satellite forces could successfully invade Yugoslavia, overcome formal military resistance, and eventually render guerrilla operations ineffective.[106]

This judgment was reinforced by the immense expansion of the East-bloc armies following the January 1951 conference.

To be sure, the Soviet bloc's growing *capacity* to invade Yugoslavia did not necessarily signal an *intention* to move in. U.S. intelligence agencies in 1952 deemed it "unlikely" that the Soviet bloc would embark on an all-out military attack against Yugoslavia by the end of the year. Western intelligence assessments in 1951–52 pointed out that the various signs of Soviet and East European preparations for an invasion—the "rapid increase in the capabilities of the armed forces" in the four East-bloc states contiguous with Yugoslavia, the fact that the East European "countries adjacent to Yugoslavia have evacuated the majority of the civilians from key border areas," the unrelenting Soviet and East European "propaganda [and] psychological preparations" designed to "justify an attack on Yugoslavia," the increased registration for compulsory military service in the four East-bloc states adjoining Yugoslavia, the "recurrent concentrations of [East-bloc] troops along the Yugoslav border," and the increasing frequency of border incidents coupled with "rumors from Cominform circles of an impending attack on Yugoslavia"—did "not necessarily reflect a Soviet intention to launch an attack upon Yugoslavia" in the near term.[107] U.S. intelligence analysts noted that these actions might simply be part of a larger Soviet-bloc effort to gear up for an East–West war in Europe, rather than being directed specifically against Yugoslavia. The analysts also surmised that if the USSR genuinely intended to invade and occupy Yugoslavia, it would wait to do so until "the Bulgarian, Romanian, and Hungarian armed forces […] complete their reorganization and reach maximum effectiveness"

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[106] CIA, "NIE: Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951," pp. 5–6.
[107] See the sources adduced in notes 77, 79, and 105 *supra*.

at the end of 1953 and until the Albanian military reached a similar state in mid-1954.[108] Stalin's death in March 1953 came well before the reorganization of the East European armies was completed.

Thus, even though Stalin toward the end of his life was overseeing a huge expansion of the East-bloc armed forces and was thereby "laying the groundwork" for an invasion of Yugoslavia (regardless of whether that was the main purpose of the buildup), it is impossible to say what he actually would have done if he had lived another few years.[109] Despite the Soviet bloc's extensive military preparations, and despite Moscow's efforts to stir acute fears in Yugoslavia of a looming Soviet–East European attack, the available evidence suggests that Stalin never firmly decided—one way or the other—about military intervention in Yugoslavia.

Reconsolidation of the Soviet Bloc

Short of actually launching an all-out invasion, the Soviet Union had to put up, at least temporarily, with a breach in the Eastern bloc and the strategic loss of Yugoslavia *vis-à-vis* the Balkans and the Adriatic Sea. Other potential dangers for Moscow also loomed. Yugoslavia's continued defiance raised the prospect that "Titoism" would spread and "infect" other East European countries, causing the Soviet bloc to fragment and even to collapse. To preclude any further challenges to Soviet control in Eastern Europe, Stalin instructed the local Communist parties to carry out new purges and political trials and to eliminate anyone who might be seeking to emulate Tito. The repressions took a particularly severe toll in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary.[110]

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[108] CIA, "NIE: Probable Developments in Yugoslavia and the Likelihood of Attack upon Yugoslavia, through 1952," p. 5.

[109] The quoted phrase comes from CIA, "NIE: Probability of an Invasion of Yugoslavia in 1951," p. 5.

[110] Mito Isusov, *Stalin i Bulgariya* (Sofia: Universitetsko Izdatelstvo Sv. Kliment Okhridski, 1991), pp. 171–218; George H. Hodos, *Show Trials: Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe, 1948–1954* (New York: Praeger, 1987); Wolfgang Maderthaner, Hans Schafranek, and Berthold Unfried eds., *"Ich habe den Tod verdient": Schauprozesse und politische Verfolgung im Mittle- und Osteuropa 1945–1956* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1991); and Adam B. Ulam, *Titoism and the Cominform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univer-

   The political purges that swept through Eastern Europe in 1949–
54 differed fundamentally from the repressions that took place earli-
er, in 1944–48. The earlier crackdowns were targeted predominantly
against non-Communists, whereas the purges in 1949–54 were focused
mostly on Communists, including many high officials who had avidly
taken part in the initial repressions. The show trials of Communist
leaders were intended not only to root out anyone who might strive for
a degree of autonomy from Moscow, but also to instill a general sense
of fear in society. Both of these goals contributed to the mobilization of
the East-bloc countries for war. The sudden discovery of alleged Tito-
ist and Western "spies" in the ruling organs of the Communist parties
created a war psychosis and fostered the perception that no one—not
even those who seemed to be unwaveringly loyal—could really be trust-
ed. Stalin had used this same approach in the USSR in the late 1930s
when he wanted to secure the home front in the face of an approach-
ing war. By early 1951 he once again believed that an armed conflict
was nearing, and he therefore was transferring Soviet methods to the
East European countries so that they could uproot the "Titoist fifth
columns" in their midst.

   Within the Soviet Union, the drive against potential "fifth colum-
nists" and the mobilization for war entailed a violent anti-Semitic cam-
paign, preparations for a sweeping high-level purge (perhaps targeted
against Molotov, Anastas Mikoyan, and Beria), and ruthless counter-
insurgency operations in the western areas of the country. All of these
policies, to one degree or another, were adopted in Eastern Europe
under Soviet supervision. The pronounced anti-Semitic overtones of
the East European show trials, for example, were directly patterned on
Stalin's own anti-Semitic repressions. As the East-bloc Balkan coun-
tries geared up for a military confrontation, they also carried out mass
deportations along their borders with Yugoslavia and arrested tens of
thousands of people each year. In Romania alone, 6,635 people were

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sity Press, 1952), pp. 145–202. See also Vladimir Zelenin, "Sovetsko-yu-
goslavskii konflikt 1948–ogo goda i Repressii v Vostochnoi Evrope," *Novoe
vremya* (Moscow), No. 31 (July 1989): 34–5. There is no longer any doubt
that Stalin and his aides directly supervised the purges in Eastern Europe,
especially the most spectacular of the show trials. See, for example, the rel-
evant documents in Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Vostochnaya Evropa*, Vol. 2; and
Volokitina *et al.* eds., *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope*, Vol. 2.

arrested by the Securitate in 1950, 19,235 in 1951, and 24,826 in 1952.[111] The aim of the deportations and arrests was not only to ensure that strategically vital border areas would be free of "Titoist sympathizers" and other "enemies of the people," but also to forestall any possibility of internal disruption. The deportations were larger in Romania than elsewhere, but the same basic policy was adopted in all of the countries adjoining Yugoslavia.

Stalin's efforts to prevent a spillover from Yugoslavia and to promote a common anti-Tito front had the desired effect. Soviet influence in Eastern Europe came under no further threat during his lifetime. From the late 1940s through the early 1950s, all the East-bloc states embarked on crash industrialization and forced collectivization programs, causing vast social upheaval yet also leading to rapid short-term economic growth. The drastic expansion of the East European armed forces in the early 1950s required an ever greater share of resources to be devoted to the military and heavy industry, with very little left over for consumer output. However, because ordinary citizens in the Soviet bloc were largely excluded from the political sphere and were forbidden to engage in political protest, they had no choice but to endure a sharp decline in living standards and many other hardships, both material and intellectual. No conflict between "viability" and "cohesion" yet existed in the Communist bloc, for Stalin was able to rely on the presence of Soviet troops, a tightly-woven network of state security forces, the wholesale penetration of the East European armies and governments by Soviet agents, the use of mass purges and political terror, and the unifying threat of renewed German militarism to ensure that regimes loyal to Moscow remained in power.[112] By the early 1950s, Stalin had established a degree of control over Eastern Europe to which his successors could only aspire.

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[111] "Dinamica arestărilor efectuate de către organele Securităţii Statului in anii 1950-31.III.1968," Statistical Report (Top Secret) to the director of the Securitate, 17 April 1968, in Consiliul Naţional pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securităţii, Dosar 9572, Vol. 61, Foaie 1. See also Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 19–24.

[112] The notion of a trade-off between "viability" and "cohesion" is well presented in James F. Brown, *Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its East European Allies: A Survey*, R-1742-PR (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1975).