

Superficial Similarities

United States:

- Born from revolution
- Ideologies with global aspirations
- What worked here, is best for the rest of the world
- 3rd largest country at the time
- Entered WWII as result of a surprise attack: Pearl Harbor 1941

Russia (USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics):

- Born from revolution
- Ideologies with global aspirations
- What worked here, is best for the rest of the world
- 1st largest country at the time
- Entered WWII as a result of a surprise attack: Germany invaded 1941

Important Differences

United States:

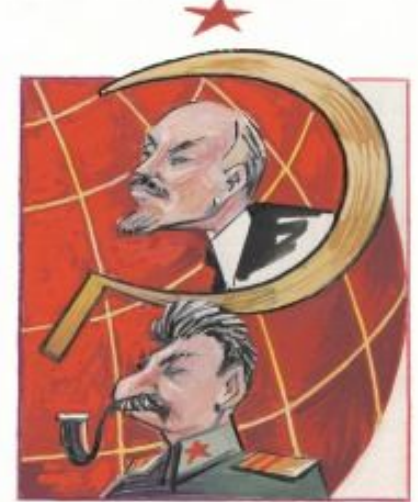
- American Revolution
 - Distrust of concentrated authority: Monarchy
- Constitution
- Abundant natural resources
- Geographically isolated
- Powerful
- Limited government control of people's lives
- 1945: Freest society in the world.

Russia (USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics):

- Bolshevik Revolution
 - Embraced concentrated authority
 - Overthrow class enemies
 - Allow poorer class revolution all over the world
- Lenin could not wait for the poor to revolt

Russia (USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

- Lenin seized control of Russia and imposed Marxism
 - Russia was an agrarian society
- Stalin later imposed Marxist-Leninism and redesigned Russia into a heavily industrialized nation with NO FREEDOM at all.
- 1945: Most authoritarian society in the world.



Wars 1941-1945: United States

- Fought Germans in Europe and Japanese in the Pacific at the same time
- Relatively few casualties: @ 300,000 dead (combined)
- No significant attacks on the country (Pearl Harbor)
- Together with Britain, U.S. chose where and when and under what circumstances to fight (Pearl Harbor)
 - British suffered @ 357,000 dead
- U.S. economy was thriving at war's end
 - Wartime spending almost doubled production

Wars 1941-1945: USSR (Russia)

- Fought only one war during these years
 - Arguably the most terrible war in all of history
 - Left its country, cities, and towns destroyed
 - Industry was ruined
 - Had to fight where the enemy chose to fight
- Roughly 27 million dead
 - @ 90 times the American dead
- 1945: USSR was a shattered state
 - It still had significant assets after the war despite its terrible losses

- On the issue of how to resettle Europe after WWII, U.S. and USSR were more evenly matched
 - America still held tightly to its longstanding tradition of remaining isolated from European affairs
 - Yet, the U.S. and Britain could not have defeated Hitler without Stalin's help
 - WWII was a victory over fascism only, not over authoritarianism (communism) as in Russia
 - Russia had, arguably, suffered more in defeating Hitler
 - Therefore, Russia had a “moral” claim to possess greater influence in how Europe would be resettled
 - Authoritarian communism was as equally possible for postwar Europe as was democratic capitalism in 1945

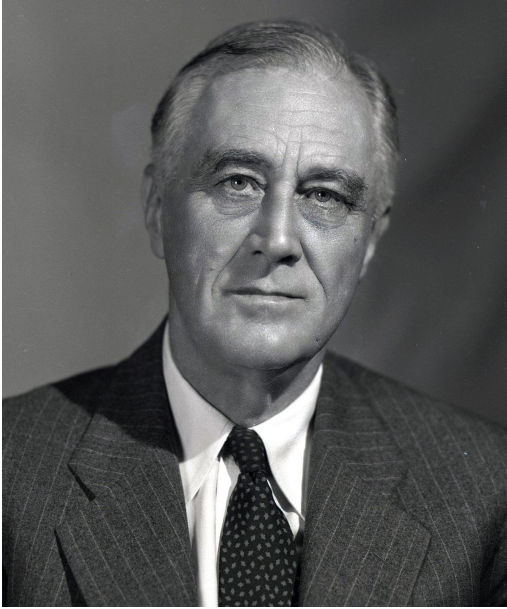
- One notable Russian advantage at the end of WWII:
 - Among the Big Three victors of WWII, Russia was the only one to emerge with war-tested leadership.
 - Stalin had ruled Russia since 1929
 - He remade the country
 - He led it to victory in WWII
 - Most importantly, he knew exactly what he wanted in Europe after the war
 - 65 years old at the time
 - Physically exhausted
 - Personally lonely
 - Surrounded by sycophants (those who did whatever he asked)



- Scrawny mustache
- Discolored teeth
- Pock-marked face
- Yellow eyes
 - An American diplomat once said of Stalin's appearance, it *"...gave him the aspect of an old battle-scarred tiger...An unforewarned visitor would never have guessed what depths of calculations, ambition, love of power, jealousy, cruelty, and sly vindictiveness lurked behind this unpretentious facade."*
- Short (5'4")
- Paunchy (with a belly)

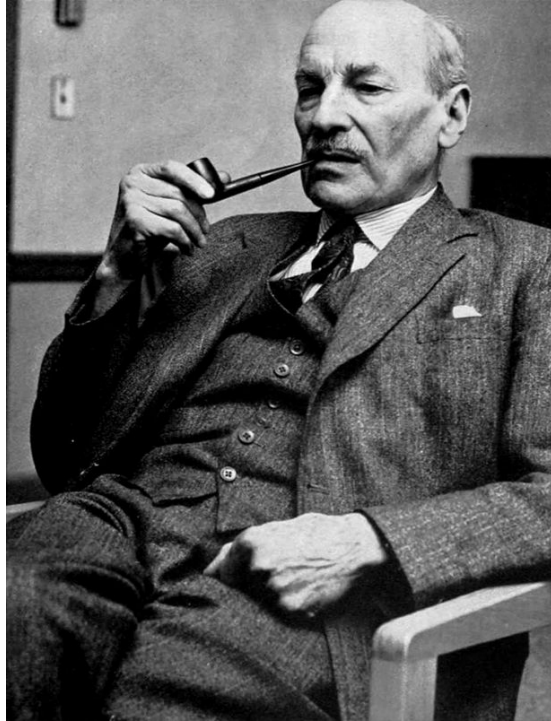


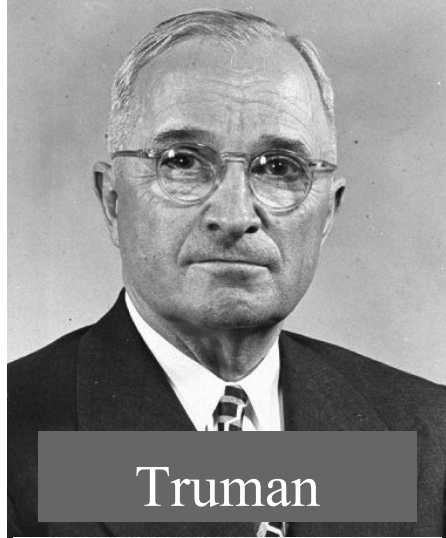
- Conversely, in the United States:
 - President Roosevelt died in April 1945 passing leadership to the inexperienced and ill-informed vice president Harry Truman.



Historical Note:
Truman had only been vice president for 82 days before Roosevelt died and Truman took over the presidency.

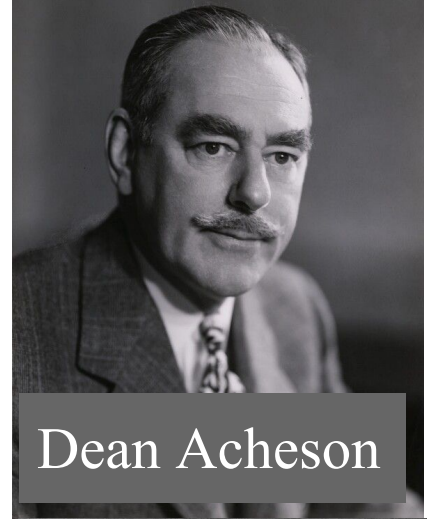
- In Great Britain:
 - Winston Churchill's unexpected defeat allowed for the less formidable Labour Party leader, Clement Attlee, to be elected prime minister.



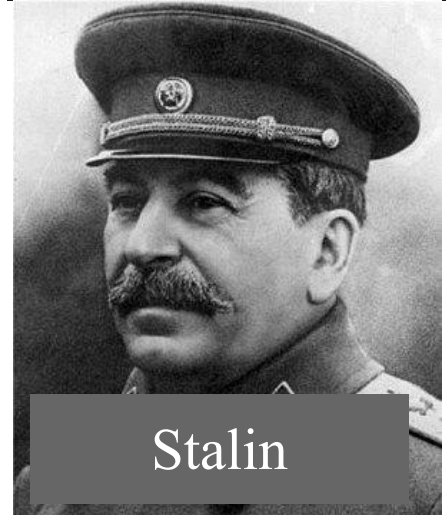


Truman

Secretary of State

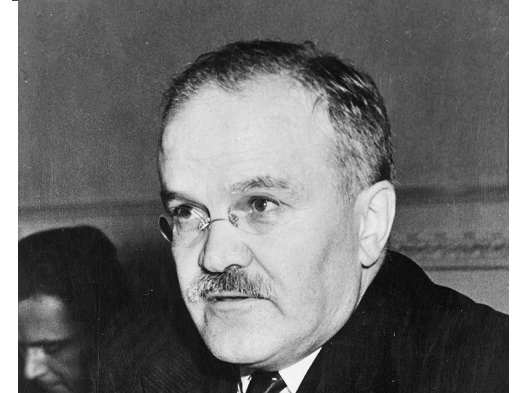


Dean Acheson



Stalin

Foreign Minister



Vyacheslav Molotov