YALTA CONFERENCE: The Pinnacle of Wartime Diplomacy

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Paper

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How did I choose my topic and how does it relate to the annual theme?

Recently, I read *A Night Divided* by Jenifer A. Nielsen, and it highly intrigued me. The plot revolved around the construction of the ‘Berlin Wall’. I started researching, about the events that led to the division of Germany. While doing so, I studied about the ‘Yalta conference’, additionally; I read books and articles to understand ‘Diplomacy’ for the NHD theme. As diplomacy is an art of dealing and negotiation between countries to solve problems, short of war and violence, I perceived that the Yalta Conference was an example of diplomacy as the leaders compromised and worked together to achieve their desired results.

How did I create my project?

Before researching the topic, I aimed to understand the NHD theme. I explored diplomacy, its tools, skills needed by a diplomat, and the parameters which define a diplomatic meeting successful. My next aim was to choose a category, writing a paper was the best option as; I wanted to work with my comfort, convenience, and pace. With a thorough analysis, I presented my perspective about the successful diplomacy at the Conference.

How did I conduct my research?

I started my research by knowing the premises of the Yalta conference such as why it was held, why the participating nations formed an alliance, what their political inclination and intentions were etc. The book *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference* by Edward R. Stettinius Jr. who, as Secretary of State, sat at the table, helped me understand all that happened at Yalta. I carefully examined all the primary and secondary sources which...
were accessible. This included borrowing book from the library, discussions with a teacher, watching interviews and documentaries, reading old newspaper clips, etc. In the light of the pandemic, most of my research was done online, and Presidential Libraries proved very helpful. Throughout my research, I kept the details of all the resources relevant to the topic, which helped me to write a bibliography.

What is my historical argument?

A successful diplomacy has results that are win-win situations for all the participating nations. When only two nations are present it is much easier, but the situation gets tricky when more than one counterpart is involved. Successful diplomacy must create an arrangement where all nations involved feel satisfied and can at least achieve their most prioritized objective. The participating nations at the Yalta conference achieved their main goal and compromised on certain aims in exchange for rewards. In the end, each leader felt satisfied with the outcome of the conference.

In what way is my topic significant in history?

Yalta conference influenced the fate of millions of people throughout the 20th century and shaped modern history. At Yalta, Europe and Germany were divided, plans for the project ‘United Nation’ were laid out, conditions for the USSR to enter the Pacific War were discussed, etc. The Yalta conference serves as an early example of a high level of cooperation, despite severe differences, to end World War II and to eventually achieve lasting peace.
YALTA CONFERENCE: The Pinnacle of Wartime Diplomacy

Abstract

At the Yalta conference, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin, accompanied by other delegates, made major decisions about the future progress of World War II and debated on a just settlement of the war-torn nations in Europe. ‘The Big Three’, as they were named, had their own set of agendas. The British wanted to restore the English Empire. The Soviets wanted to strengthen and secure their conquest over Europe, both for protection and to spread communism. The Americans wanted a successful conclusion of the Pacific War, and to replace the League of Nations with, ‘United Nations’.

To accomplish their individual goals and work out specific deals, the leaders negotiated hard and generated a win-win situation. They mutually accepted a middle ground on their interests to put an end to the constant state of war. The agreements reached were on a whole, a diplomatic triumph, the difficulties came ‘after’ Yalta when the promises were not respected.

Although it is difficult to measure the success of a diplomatic meeting, sufficient evidence suggests that at Yalta, the pressing problems of war and peace were solved very skillfully, serving as an example of international cooperation.

Introduction

The Yalta Conference, also known as 'The Crimea Conference' was held from February 4th to 11th, 1945 in the resort city of Yalta, located near the Black Sea in the Crimean Peninsula. It was one of the three significant wartime meetings between the Allied powers and their leaders, Franklin D. Roosevelt (32nd President of the US), Winston Churchill (The British Prime Minister), and Joseph Stalin (The Soviet Premier), preceded by

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the Tehran Conference in 1943, and followed by the Potsdam Conference in 1945. The conference commenced with all three participating nations confident that their combined efforts had already put Germany on the verge of defeat and unconditional surrender. The Western Allies had liberated France and Belgium and were fighting on the western border of Germany. In the east, the Soviet army had pushed back Germans from Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and was just miles away from Berlin. The overriding goal of the Yalta conference was to determine the fate of defeated Germany and to divide it into zones occupied by the principal Allied powers. Additionally, the settlement on the idea of deconstruction of the German military, prosecution of war criminals, and establishment of a special commission in Moscow to work out the details of the war reparations were also planned. Besides Germany, many crucial decisions were taken regarding Poland, Eastern Europe, the Pacific War, and the replacement of the League of Nations with the United Nations. With diplomacy, each leader influenced the decision of the others, and maintained the wartime alliance that was necessary to defeat the Axis Power. But, due to ideological and political differences between communist Soviet and capitalist Western Allies, the government to be formed in newly liberated countries in Eastern Europe became a bone of contention and hinted to the cold war to come.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt**

The USA did not enter the war until 1941; it followed the policy of isolation by the ‘Neutrality Acts of 1939’. Japan, Germany’s powerful ally, secretly attacked the American
naval base of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. This brought America into the war, its superior military and machinery dramatically changed the course of the war in the favor of the Allies and the victory in Europe became imminent. Imperial Japan, however, showed no sign of quitting but was a growing threat. To end the Pacific war with a reduced number of casualties and time Roosevelt pressured Stalin to declare war against Japan. Stalin agreed to enter the war “two or three months” after Germany’s surrender; in return he secured geopolitical benefits. For Soviet cooperation, the other Allies agreed, the Soviet Union would gain control of the southern Sakhalin (Karafuto) and the Kuril Islands. Stalin also demanded access to Port Arthur and partial control of railroads in the Chinese province of Manchuria. Stalin kept his word and declared war against Japan in August 1945. The atomic bombs along with the Soviet invasion of Manchuria eventually led to the total surrender of Japan.

Roosevelt’s other desired aim was to persuade the Soviets to participate in the newly formed United Nations, a World Organization- similar to the League of Nations. The basic principles for the establishment of the UN were already laid out in the various declarations that were issued from 1941 onward. The more precise details, along with the “one nation, one vote” policy, were discussed in Dumbarton Oaks, 1944. To Stalin, however, the General Assembly seemed packed with British dominions and subservient Latin American nations that could collaborate with Britain and the United States against Soviet interests. He was uncertain about the UN's efficacy and doubted that it could conspire against Soviet interests. Stalin demanded one vote for each of the 15 socialist provinces of the USSR in the General

12 See Appendix C
Assembly in exchange for its participation, to which Roosevelt did not agree. After an exhausting debate, a compromise was made in which the Soviets and the United States each secured two extra votes. Stalin, who initially was hesitant, finally agreed to participate in the group.\textsuperscript{16}

The Yalta conference was a diplomatic triumph for Roosevelt, as it laid the foundation of establishing the United States as the dominant postwar global power. The Soviet's agreement on joining the United Nations, and fighting against Japan was a major victory for President Roosevelt.

“The work, my friend, is peace. More than an end of this war—an end to the beginning of all wars.”

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

Winston Churchill

The reason for Britain to declare war on the Nazis on 3rd September 1939 was the German invasion of Poland.\textsuperscript{17} Churchill considered the restoration of Poland’s independence and the British Empire in Eastern Europe as one of its main objectives at Yalta. At the time of the conference, two Polish governments existed: The British and Americans recognized democratic government-in-exile based in London called “London Poles” and Stalin recognized communist friendly “Lublin Poles”.\textsuperscript{18} The question, however, was who was going to govern Poland post-war. Churchill pressed for free elections and a democratic government in Poland. For Stalin, the Polish question was an issue of both honor and security because both countries had long-lived disputes between themselves and a strong Poland would not become again “a corridor for an attack on Russia”.\textsuperscript{19} Out of fear of future German invasion, Stalin insisted on a Polish government loyal to the Soviets. For Roosevelt, without a democratic solution of Poland, the credibility of the UN will be suspected. On one side it was

\textsuperscript{16} See Appendix D
Roosevelt’s and Churchill’s desire for the Poles to be free to choose their government, on the other side it was Stalin’s determination to keep Poland. But, there wasn’t much that the western powers could do as it was impossible to get the Soviets out of Poland except by starting another major war with uncertain results, which neither the US nor Britain wanted. After an extensive debate, Stalin agreed that his Lublin government would be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and Poles abroad. He also promised free elections in Poland as early as possible. In return, Stalin acquired eastern Poland as a Soviet territory, and Poland was further expanded north and eastwards into Germany. In the end, Churchill compromised with the Soviets, maintained the allied coalition, and struggled to establish a framework for postwar cooperation. Churchill later said that, “the agreement on Poland was the best he could get.”

Churchill supported keeping France strong as he believed the US would retire from Europe and return to isolationism after the war. He admired the idea of two Western nations helping each other to face the colossal Soviet Union. Even without the French leader DeGaulle’s presence, Churchill proposed a French zone of occupation in a defeated Germany. Stalin agreed to this proposal, provided it came out of the Western Alliance territory. Churchill also got France a veto at the United Nations, which he believed would help to re-establish the British Empire in Europe.

Thus with a commitment to Poland’s free election and securing a large role for France in postwar Europe, Yalta proved to be a diplomatic success for Churchill.

“When nations are strong, they are not always just, and when they wish to be just, they are no longer strong.”

– Winston Churchill

20 See Appendix E
23 See Appendix F
Joseph Stalin

In August 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed a Non-Aggression Pact, promising not to attack each other.\(^{24}\) Despite the pact, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941. After a series of massive battles and the loss of millions of Soviet troops, the Soviets eventually took over the Nazi army and dethroned them from all the territory they had occupied in Eastern Europe.\(^{25}\) With the Russian army having a strong grip on Eastern Europe, Stalin was in a position to take most of what he wanted. Stalin was happy with the decision to divide Germany but also wanted Germany to pay heavy reparations for the war damage it had caused. The Soviet Union badly needed to replenish its resources both human and material depleted by the war. The three leaders eventually agreed that Germany would pay with goods and forced laborers. They also agreed that the Soviet Union would get about half of the yet to be determined amount.\(^{26}\)

Stalin’s priorities were to protect the expanded Soviet State and to be accepted as a superpower. He did not want the postwar world arranged by the old imperialist power, Britain, or the new military and economic superpower, America. He wanted to impose communist regimes on the countries which the Soviet army had liberated from the clutches of the Nazi army.\(^{27}\) Although he signed the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe stating that the liberated nations of Europe have the right to create a democratic institution of their own choice, he was sure that neither the US nor Britain would seriously demand democracy and freedom in the Soviet-occupied territories. The promises the US and Britain extracted from...
Stalin to allow democratic governments in the liberated countries were easily broken. There was no way for the West to enforce them.28

The Yalta conference was a major diplomatic success for both the USSR and Stalin. The USSR gained territories in Eastern Europe, Japan, and China, and got the lion’s share in war reparations. Stalin believed that the wartime alliance would continue after the war, with him getting the war credits and would be remembered in history as a spreader of communism and a war ‘hero’.

“Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army can reach.”

- Joseph Stalin

Controversy

After the end of World War II, it was clear that the US and the Soviets would be the dominant postwar powers. As a capitalist, democratic nation, the USA promoted free elections, personal freedom, free press, and free markets in Western Europe, things that were not present in Eastern Europe controlled by communist, totalitarian USSR. The situation went further downhill because of the expansionist goals of the Soviet Union, contravening with the Yalta Declaration, which was supposed to give European Countries the autonomy to choose their own government.29 Especially in Poland, the Soviets decided to not allow more than three non-communist Poles to serve in the 18-member Polish government. Another turning point in Soviet-US relations was Stalin’s suspicion that Eastern Europe could be a doorway for an attack on the Soviet Union; he desperately created a ring of ‘buffer zones’ surrounding the USSR with Communist parties taking full control of Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary.30 The setting up of communist government in Eastern Europe became a major concern for the Western Allies as it gave the impression that freedom from one dictator was replaced by another and the whole purpose of World War II seemed to be

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lost in return. As a result, a state of tension emerged between the USSR and the West, firstly dividing Europe into two hostile blocs, then spreading to the rest of the world. In a 1946 speech, Winston Churchill said Europe was divided by an “Iron Curtain”. Many people feared that Communist control would spread to the West. They began to talk of a ‘Cold War’ between two armed camps: the US-backed NATO countries on one side, and the Warsaw Pact countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR on the other. As the cold war began so soon afterward, Yalta has become a byword for failure and broken promises.

In reality, the Cold war was bound to happen, Yalta played little to no role in it. Russia’s beliefs, ideologies, work ethics, culture, history….everything was in stark contrast to that of the Western world to such a degree that a clash between them was inescapable. They were allies under the principle of “The enemy of my enemy is my friend”, they never fully trusted each other. The United States and Great Britain were barely on speaking terms with Stalin’s communist regime but both eventually joined forces with the ‘Reds’ because they shared a common enemy. “Any man or state that fights against Nazism will have our aid,” Winston Churchill told the British people in a radio address.

The US carefully prosecuted the ‘Manhattan Project’ without sharing it with the Soviets. Stalin however, knew about it and had sent spies. Also, Roosevelt did not look favorably on the British colonialism policy and was committed to deconstructing the British Empire. This implied, they were allies only in the fight against Axis power and it was just a matter of time before their differences created a rift between them. Thereupon to say that Yalta was a failure and that Western Allies ‘gave away’ Eastern Europe is false. It is not Yalta that is the trouble, but subsequent failure to adhere to the policies and to carry out

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agreements reached at the conference. “The conference itself was an honest effort to set the world on the road to lasting peace.”

**Diplomatic success**

Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt were both, ambitious and forceful men. Together they had a huge impact on the course of the war and thus on the shape of the modern world. The Yalta conference was a key event in history as the pressing political and economic problems were solved by democratic means of work and discussion. “The conference successfully laid the groundwork for Germany and Japan to rebuild and recreate themselves as modern democracies, thereby acting as stabilizing forces in Europe and Asia. But perhaps most significantly, the framework and structure of what would become the United Nations came from the meeting at Yalta.” Shortly after the Conference most American newspapers applauded and praised what had been accomplished there. Later Roosevelt said, “… we did not go as far as Britain wanted in the certain area; we did not go as far as Russia wanted in certain areas, and we did not go as far as I wanted in certain areas. It was a compromise”. This affirms that when the conference closed on February 12, 1945, all three greats had lost and won.

Diplomacy is conventionally equated as an alternative to war, and war as a failure of diplomacy. The Yalta conference thus was a diplomatic success, as the ultimate purpose to prevent another global tragedy was triumphantly achieved.

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Appendix A


In the picture above, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin can be seen sitting together on the patio of a Russian resort in the Crimean Peninsula. The Standing figures include General Sir Alan Brooke at far left, US Admiral William D. Leahy, and US General George Marshall. ‘The Big Three’ met at Yalta in Crimea to plan the nature of the post-Axis peace.
The above map shows how the Allied armies advanced from both the east and west of Germany in the closing months of World War II. In February 1945, Stalin’s troops were only 70 km away from Berlin. On the west side, British and American armies still had a distance of 500 km to cover. Stalin, therefore, had the strongest hand at the table.
Appendix C

Agreement on the conditions of the USSR joining the Pacific war. Digital Image.

“FDR at Yalta Final”, FDR LIBRARY,
<https://www.fdrlibrary.org/documents>

This is the agreement by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin about the conditions of the Soviet’s entrance into the Pacific War. It also states that the demands made by Stalin would be fulfilled after the defeat of Japan. This document was kept secret from the Chinese government and was not released publicly until early 1946.

The final agreement on the creation of the UN was reached in 1945 at the Yalta Conference. This is a translation of a letter Stalin sent to Roosevelt after extracting two extra General Assembly votes for the Soviet Union in exchange for Soviet participation in the United Nations. The foundations of international law by which we live to this day were laid in Crimea.
The above map represents the revised borders of Poland mutually planned by the Americans, British, and Soviet delegations at the Yalta Conference. Poland was shifted around 200 kilometers westwards on the map of Europe. Eastern Poland, over 70,000 square miles, became a part of the Soviet Union.
Appendix F


“Churchill and the great republic”, The Library of Congress,

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/churchill/interactive/_html/wc0223.html>

This hand-drawn map was meant to be used to redesign Germany into three occupation zones, each controlled by one of the Allies. Later on Churchill’s insistence at the Yalta Conference, it was agreed to split Germany into 4 zones. Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and France would each control one zone. The same four countries also split Berlin into 4 zones.
On February 13, 1945, the New York Times on its front page wrote news complimenting the outcome of the conference. It stated “The alliance of the Big Three stands firm. Progress has been made. The hope of further gains is high. The conference marks a milestone on the road to victory and peace.”
Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

“Britain at War with Germany.” The Guardian, 4 Sept. 1939, www.theguardian.com/world/1939/sep/04/germany.secondworldwar

Neville Chamberlain broadcasted the announcement of Britain and France declaring war on Germany, to the nation at 11:15 on 3rd September. A British ultimatum demanding that Germany withdraw its troops from Poland expired without a reply. As the tension in Europe had been building for years and the outbreak of war did not come as a surprise.


This book by Alanbrooke, one of the most prominent British generals in the Second World War, is an interesting record of how World War II was fought and won. It provided an insider’s view of strategic and tactical discussions and disputes from the British side of war.


This source is an extract from an interview with Captain Mitsuo Fuchida (who is perhaps best known for leading the first wave of air attacks on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941) of the Japanese navy that took place after the war had ended. The Japanese believed this surprise attack would set back the American military capability to allow them to rapidly expand across the Pacific.
“February 11, 1945, Yalta Conference Agreement, Declaration of a Liberated Europe.”
Wilson Center Digital Archive, 1945,
digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116176.pdf?v=aa91dee05174f33bcb0cefd1e4d561eb

This document is the original text of the agreements reached at the Yalta conference between the Big Three. It was agreed that the War Reparations were to be divided by those countries which had borne the main burden of the war. Stalin demanded $20 billion in reparations from Germany, half of this sum to be destined for the Soviet Union. The reparations were extracted from Germany in the form of goods, and German labor. They also jointly declare their mutual agreement in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany and the peoples of the former Axis satellite states of Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems.

“History of the United Nations.” United Nations, 1945,
www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/history-united-nations

The United Nations Charter is the treaty that established the United Nations, it was ratified on 24 October 1945. The various series of events led to the writing of the Charter, and the UN’s founding. To prepare a blueprint that had to be accepted by many nations, representatives of China, Great Britain, the USSR, and the United States met at Dumbarton Oaks, a private mansion in Washington, D. C. in 1944. The important issue regarding the voting procedure in the Security Council that had been left open at Dumbarton Oaks was addressed at Yalta

Accessed 17 Oct. 2021

The Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor was one of the great defining moments in history. The Naval base at Pearl Harbor was one of the closer targets distance-wise in the United States from Japan and it was home to a large portion of the country’s naval fleet. America, unprepared and now considerably weakened, was abruptly brought into the Second World War as a full combatant. This collection includes historic photographs and a detailed overview.

The Neutrality Act of 1939 was passed by congress on 4th November. It permitted democratic European nations to buy American war materials but only on a ‘Cash and Carry’ basis. The ban on loans, however remained in effect, and American ships were barred from carrying goods to belligerent ports.


Franklin D. Roosevelt intended on working with Stalin to have a more peaceful world order. Allying with Stalin was a calculated risk taken by both Churchill and Roosevelt, after the Conference, they both hoped for a favorable outcome. President Roosevelt addressed Congress on March 1, 1945, where he stated that "...the question of whether it is entirely fruitful or not lies to a great extent in your hands." He also had the firm belief that the conference was a good start on the road to a world of peace.


The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, also known as the Treaty of Nonaggression between Germany and the USSR, was signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939, by the Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov and the German foreign minister Joachim Von Ribbentrop. The two countries agreed not to attack each other or help another party attack them for 10 years. The pact however was abruptly broken when Germany invaded the Soviet Union in 1941.


This book proved quite useful while writing my paper because it strengthened my opinion that the conference was a success, as it clearly explained how all the bitter statements criticizing the Conference were unjust. It took into account the
circumstances under which the Conference was held and the importance of compromise to achieve a bigger cause. “Although it is sometimes alleged that there is something evil in compromise, actually, of course, compromise is necessary for progress as any sensible man knows”


This noteworthy source consists of various original diplomatic papers regarding the entire American history. Initially, this source provided me with the very brief and to-the-point details of the Yalta Conference. Later, I used this very same source to access the diplomatic documents and understand the participation by the United States in the formation of the United Nations.

Secondary Sources


After Germany's defeat in the Second World War, the four main allies in Europe - the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and France - took part in a joint occupation of the German state. As a result, Germany was divided into 4 zones of occupation and was made to pay the heavy war reparations.


This meticulous article helped me understand what diplomacy is and how its machinery works. With the help of it, I grasped the way diplomats manage international affairs and how diplomacy is used to influence the decisions and behavior of other parties through dialogue, negotiation, and rewards. At Yalta, by diplomacy, the three competing powers interacted with each other to reach agreements beneficial to all.

The alliance between the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union had initially operated via correspondence and a series of bilateral conferences. As the war progressed, however, plans were made to bring the heads of government of these three allied powers together to discuss key issues arising from the conflict. Three major wartime conferences were held, what happened at these summits is presented in a sophisticated manner in this article.


This book is a perfect guide of World War II in chronological order. To me, this was very helpful because I was able to, correctly, and precisely understand the complex events during 1939-1945. With its many useful features, I had first-hand information about the War to begin my research with.


Prime Minister Churchill did as much as he could do to secure Poland’s independence, both before and after Yalta. His goal was an independent Poland with its own freely chosen government and its own domestic policies. Later, he agreed with Roosevelt that a new Polish government must be friendly to the USSR; he wanted it largely based on the Polish government in London.


Many wartime conferences were held between the leaders of Allied powers. These conferences were important gatherings that allowed them to discuss plans, debate
strategies, and share the unique and enormous burden of leading nations in defending democracy on a global scale. The Yalta conference was held when the victory in Europe was in sight. Roosevelt critics claim that because the President was in failing health he granted the Soviets too many concessions. But there was a lot that was achieved there, for Eastern Europe the road ahead was still difficult at-least Western Europe got freedom. Also, Germany and Japan got the chance to develop and flourish as modern democracies.

Churchill, who had been defeated for re-election as prime minister in 1945, was invited to Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri where he gave a speech condemning the Soviet Union’s policies in Europe and declares "an iron curtain has descended across the continent." Churchill’s “iron curtain” phrase immediately entered the official vocabulary of the Cold War. The British, Americans, and Russians—allies against Hitler less than a year before the speech—were drawing the battle lines of the Cold War.

One of the focal points of discussion in Yalta was the Polish issue that consisted of two major questions. The first one was the borderline on both the west and the east side of Poland and the second question was who was going to govern the country as in early 1945, there were two Polish governments. Stalin was aware that Poles disliked the Russians and he liked the idea of using Poland as a buffer state between the USSR and the west.
The Big Three leaders played a game of diplomacy and power politics to reach agreements at the expense of the rights of countries and individuals, including Prisoners of War for whom enforced repatriation could mean death. Promises were made that no one had any intention of fulfilling. This source was on the contradicting line of thought and provided me with a different outlook on the conference. But again it established that they all wanted to continue the wartime practice of sorting out global issues between themselves even though their priorities were different, and did not necessarily coincide.

Grossberg, Matthew. M. Yalta, A Tripartite Negotiation to Form the Post-War World Order: Planning for the Conference, the Big Three’s Strategies. ScholarWorks, 2015, scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/7978/Yalta%20Matthew%20Grossberg.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

This article helped me to establish my claim that for successful diplomacy all participating nations must secure the acceptance of their principal objective. At Yalta, the major diplomatic goals and political objectives of all three participating nations have largely been secured. The Big Three achieved real success in imprinting their ideas onto the emerging order.

In the agreement at the end of the Yalta Conference, the Big Three swore to bring freedom and democracy into the new world order. How much this sentence was worth was revealed very quickly after the Yalta conference, held from Feb. 4 to Feb. 10. It became true for only one half of Europe, while the other spent the next few decades under further dictatorship.


Poland fell victim to the aggression of two totalitarian systems, German National Socialism, and Soviet communism. For Poles, the struggle for freedom began in 1939 with the outbreak of war, which lasted for 50 years. Only in 1990 the first free elections since the Second World War were held.


The Yalta Conference marked the high tide of British, Russian, and American cooperation on the war and the postwar settlements. This source provided me with easy access to the select documents from the FDR Library and excerpts from the historical debate.


President Roosevelt's goal was to put Russia in a war against Japan. To achieve it the Soviet Union was granted control of territory it had lost in 1904-1905. Stalin and Roosevelt both were happy with the outcome, both great leaders had lost and won. This article perfectly explains how the end of World War II came with great speed along with the disputes among the Allies.
The problem with the allies was that their thoughts and beliefs didn't match; it was a difference between capitalism and socialism. The most fundamental difference between these two systems is the government intervention within an economy. In a purely socialist system, all means of production are collective or state-owned whereas, in a capitalist economy, property and businesses are owned and controlled by individuals. This difference was one of the main reasons for the beginning of the Cold War.


At the beginning of this book, six well-illustrated maps are printed. These maps explain well the location of Yalta, the expansion of the Soviets into the Far East, changes in Poland's boundary after 1945, and the position of the Red Army during the conference. It may have even helped me the most because it explained the geopolitical aspect of the conference. Many unanswered questions were explained like Stalin's insistence to hold the conference in a land controlled by Soviet troops, why Roosevelt and Churchill never got the time to discuss their strategy alone, how Poland's boundary was changed, etc.


On the 2nd day of the conference, Roosevelt announced that American troops will leave Germany in two years. Churchill thought it would leave Britain to occupy single-handed the entire western portion of Germany … a task far beyond their strength. So Churchill supported keeping France strong by giving it a zone of occupation in Germany.

When Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939 it did so for only one reason - Germany had invaded Poland, and Britain had guaranteed to support her ally like it had supported Belgium in WW1. On September 1, Germany invaded Poland and Britain honoring their guarantee, declared war 2 days later.


This book was important for my research because it explained that even though America and the USSR were allies in World War II, they were not friends and had no trust and faith in each other. So, I was able to conclude that the allyship between the USA and the USSR was temporary and behind the curtain, they were arch enemies.


By 1949 a large proportion of the world had been divided along ideological lines – the US-backed NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) countries on one side, and the Warsaw Pact countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR on the other. While these alliances were not specifically in conflict with one another, it was clear that a spat between any two members of opposing alliances could easily escalate into a much larger conflict.


The US and Britain never looked favorably at Stalin, they allied with the USSR to ensure the defeat of Nazi Germany. Without the efforts of the Soviet troops on the Eastern Front, the United States and Great Britain would have found it difficult to score a military victory over Germany. On the other hand, the Soviets earlier signed a pact with Germany where the Soviets could take control over parts of Eastern Europe without fear of German retaliation. Thus the Allies, despite being poles apart, were partners under the principle of ‘desperate times call for desperate measures.’
In 1945, one major war ended and another began. America and its allies struggled to keep the communist, totalitarian Soviet Union from expanding into Europe. All across Eastern Europe governments aided by the Soviet Red Army came to power. Stalin was determined to create a buffer zone to prevent any future invasion of the Russian heartland. Although he blatantly reneged the promises made during the Yalta Conference about the freedom of Eastern Europe but jumped into the Pacific war at the last moment when the United States no longer needed their aid to collect on Western promises. All these factors contributed to a climate of mistrust that heightened tensions at the outbreak of the Cold War.

Before the Yalta Conference, the three leaders met in November 1943 in Tehran, Iran, to form a plan for the next phase of the war against the Axis Powers in Europe and the Pacific. At Yalta, the “Big Three” Allied leaders discussed the post-war fate of defeated Germany and the rest of Europe, the terms of Soviet entry into the ongoing war in the Pacific against Japan, and the formation and operation of the new United Nations. By February 1945, an Allied victory in Europe was on the horizon.

Each leader came to Yalta to prevent another global war—but they differed on tactics. The greatest debate in Yalta came over the fate of Eastern Europe, especially over the issue of the postwar status of Poland. Although free elections were promised, Stalin was able to turn Eastern Europe into a satellite state. The animosity and mistrust between the USA and the Soviet Union became most readily apparent.
The Atlantic Charter was the statement of principles agreed to by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill of Great Britain at their first wartime conference, August 9-12, 1941. This meeting helped in creating a vision of the new world after the war by bringing eight principles, to which many countries agreed later. Also, the agreement is often cited by historians as one of the first significant steps towards the formation of the United Nations.