

# The Origins of the Cold War: U.S. Choices After World War II



## THE **CHOICES** PROGRAM

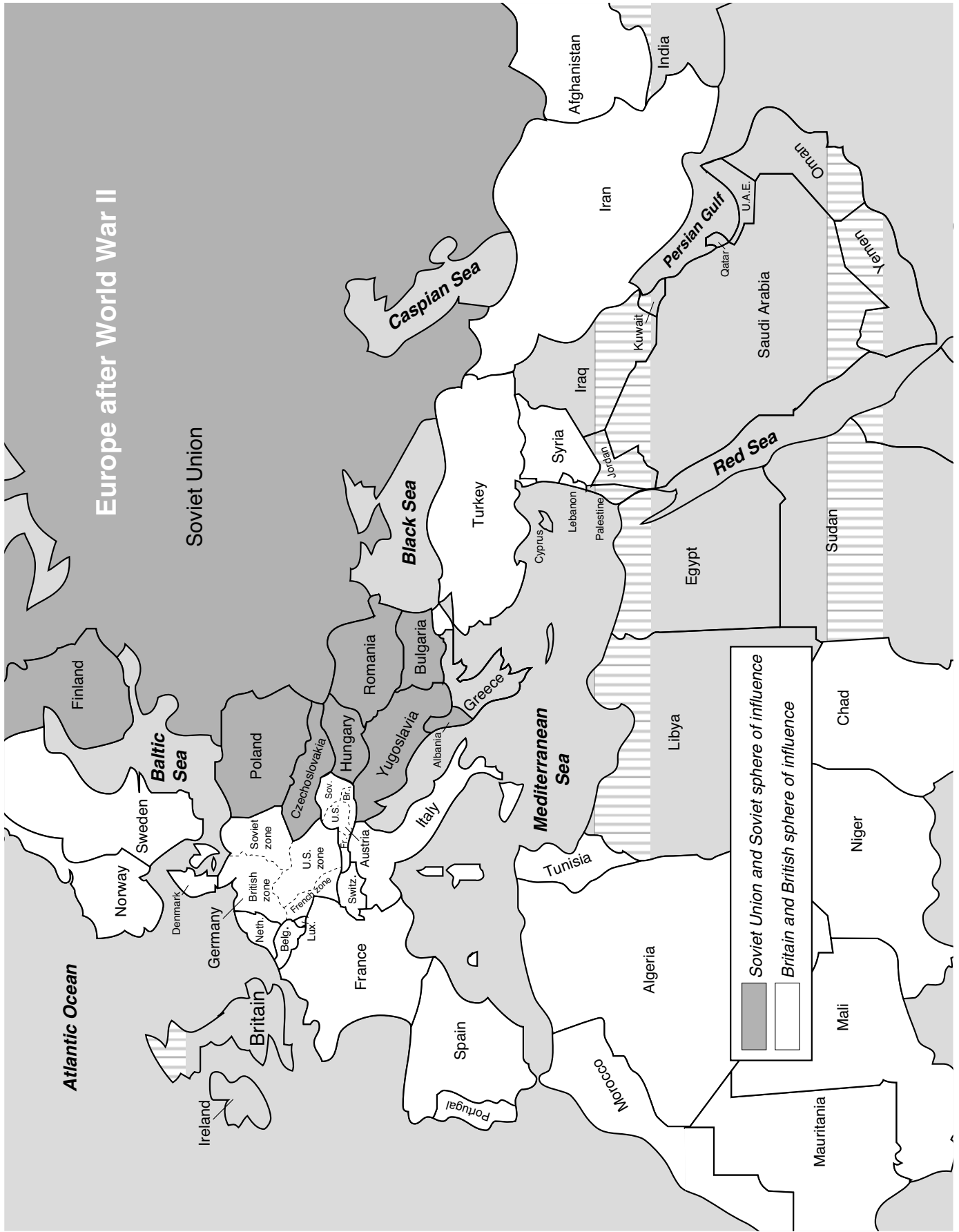
*Explore the Past... Shape the Future*

*History and Current Issues for the Classroom*

---

WATSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
BROWN UNIVERSITY [WWW.CHOICES.EDU](http://WWW.CHOICES.EDU)

# Europe after World War II



	Soviet Union and Soviet sphere of influence
	Britain and British sphere of influence

---

## U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS DURING WORLD WAR II

The United States and the Soviet Union became wartime allies on December 11, 1941, when Nazi Germany declared war on the United States. Germany had invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. The German attack on the Soviet Union had come as a shock to the Soviet leaders. Two years earlier, the Soviets had signed a treaty with Germany, the so-called Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, in which leaders of both countries committed themselves to peaceful relations.

For Americans, the U.S. alliance with the Soviet Union raised troubling questions. The United States had opposed the Soviet system since the communists had come to power in 1917. Even after Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, most Americans remained wary of helping Moscow. The U.S. entry into World War II compelled American leaders to put aside their differences in the common struggle against Adolf Hitler. President Franklin D. Roosevelt took care to emphasize the cohesion of the anti-Nazi alliance.

*"In an attempt to ward off the inevitable disaster, the Axis propagandists are trying all of their old tricks in order to divide the United Nations [the name for the coalition of nations fighting Germany]. They seek to create the idea that if we win this war, Russia, England, China, and the United States are going to get into a cat-and-dog fight. This is their final effort to turn one nation against another.... To these panicky attempts to escape the consequences of their crimes we say—all the United Nations say—...'Unconditional Surrender'.... The Nazis must be frantic indeed if they believe that they can devise any propaganda which would turn the British and American and Chinese governments and peoples against Russia—or Russia against the rest of us."*

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

### Note to Students

The period from 1947 to 1990, generally labeled the "Cold War" by historians, was a time in which the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated U.S. foreign policy, U.S. domestic politics, and international relations. Frequently, this rivalry took on the appearance of a crusade, with the United States leading the forces of the "free world" against the threat of "international communism" directed by the Soviet Union. An understanding of the critical period from 1945, when the United States and the Soviet Union were still wartime allies, to 1947, when the Cold War had clearly begun, is necessary to grasp the events of the second half of the twentieth century. The attitudes formed and the decisions made during this three-year period defined the character of the following four decades.

This unit is built around selections from letters, speeches, interviews, and memoranda written while the events you will be studying were happening. These documents, composed by the people who were shaping the decisions, express their values, perceptions, and recommendations. These primary sources are the raw material that historians work with when they write history and they should be read very carefully. Notice not only the ideas expressed, but also the words and phrases chosen to express them. What are the values and perceptions behind these opinions and what are the implications of the recommendations? Major differences of opinion frequently lie behind relatively minor differences in expression.

In these readings, you will be taken back to the 1945 to 1947 period. You will participate with those who actually shaped U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union by deciding what strategy the United States should adopt to ensure its security and world peace in the postwar period. You will have available much of the information that these decision-makers possessed at the time. For the next few days, please forget everything that you might know about the events after 1947. Just take yourself back to the time of your grandparents' schooling, before television, when a new car could be purchased for under \$500.

---

## U.S.-SOVIET TENSIONS

In spite of the necessity of maintaining the alliance against the Axis powers, areas of U.S.-Soviet friction emerged. These hidden points of conflict would influence U.S.-Soviet relations after the war.

### ***How did Soviet aggression influence relations with the United States?***

The Soviet Union took advantage of Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 to reassert its control over the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. These countries had been part of the Russian Empire before the communist revolution of 1917. The Soviet Union also attacked Finland in late 1939. Like the Baltic states, Finland had been part of the Russian Empire. After 1939, however, it was not completely incorporated into the Soviet Union. While the peace treaty of 1940 gave the Soviet Union several slices of Finnish territory, the Finns retained their independence. The American public admired the valiant defense of the Finns against their larger and stronger neighbor.

Another example of Soviet aggression was found in the secret provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Under the treaty, Germany and the Soviet Union agreed to divide up Poland, which lay between them. A few weeks after Germany invaded Poland from the west in 1939, the Soviets entered the country from the east.

### ***Why was the "second front" a point of contention?***

President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had promised the Soviet leader, Josef Stalin, that they would launch a second front against the Axis powers before the end of 1942. Stalin wanted the Allies to invade western Europe to relieve some of the pressure that the Soviet armies were facing on the eastern front. However, Churchill, like Roosevelt, feared the enormous battlefield casualties that a premature second front might produce. He strongly opposed the frontal assault on the entrenched German positions in western France, and instead urged Roosevelt to launch the Allied blow through the

Balkans, the area extending northward into Europe from Greece. This strategy, according to Churchill, would accomplish three things. First, the casualties would be lower. Second, British influence in Greece, an area of historical British concern, would be guaranteed. Third, the Allied armies would be positioned much closer to Eastern Europe, leaving British and U.S. leaders in a much stronger position to influence postwar developments in this area. Although President Roosevelt, acting upon the advice of his military leaders, rejected Churchill's specific strategy, the U.S. plan to invade North Africa in late 1942 indicated that U.S. leaders were also eager to avoid a premature second front in western Europe.

The Allied invasion of North Africa had virtually no impact upon the huge German armies in the east. Roosevelt and Churchill again promised a second front—this time landing troops on the island of Sicily and then the Italian peninsula in 1943. The invasion of Italy, while putting an Allied army on the European continent, again did not significantly lessen the Axis powers' pressure on the Soviet Red Army. The geography of the Italian peninsula made it possible for the Germans to delay the Allied armies with only a fraction of those forces used on the Russian front. The long-awaited invasion of western Europe did not come until D-Day in June 1944, by which time the Soviet armies already had inflicted costly defeats upon the Germans and had begun to force them back toward the prewar boundaries. Since the Red Army bore the brunt of the fighting in Europe during most of World War II, Soviet battlefield casualties exceeded the combined battlefield casualties of all of the other Allies in the European theater. In fact, Soviet casualties were more than fifty times those of the U.S. armies in Europe.

### ***What role did Poland play?***

Because of the absence of natural barriers such as mountain ranges and large rivers Russia historically has been very vulnerable to invasion from the west through Poland. This was the route taken by Napoleon's armies in 1812, Kaiser Wilhelm's armies in 1914, and Hitler's armies in 1941. One of Stalin's principal wartime objectives was to establish security

---

---

for the Soviet Union in this area. First, Stalin wanted to move the borders of the Soviet Union westward. Under this plan, the territory that Poland would lose to the Soviet Union would be offset by giving postwar Poland territory taken from eastern Germany. Second, the Soviets demanded a “friendly” government in Poland. To achieve this, the Soviets installed a provisional government in areas of eastern Poland liberated by the Red Army. The provisional government, based in Lublin, was staffed by pro-Russian and pro-communist Poles who had spent the war years in Moscow. Excluded initially were members of the Polish government-in-exile in London, which Stalin viewed as anti-Soviet and anti-Russian.

Two wartime incidents served to complicate the Polish issue even further. When the German armies entered the section of Poland that had been occupied by the Soviets in 1939, they discovered in the Katyn Forest mass graves containing bodies of thousands of executed Polish army officers. Although Moscow blamed this atrocity on the Germans, the Polish government-in-exile in London had no doubt about who was really to blame. As the Red Army pushed the Germans out of occupied Poland in January 1945, the Polish government-in-exile ordered the underground forces in Warsaw to rise up, to expel the Germans, and to establish their own Polish authority before the Soviet forces could take the city. Although initially somewhat successful, the underground forces soon were overwhelmed by German reinforcements. British and U.S. appeals to Moscow to send the Red Army, which was just across the Vistula River, to the aid of the underground fighters were ignored. Instead, the Soviet army waited until the uprising had been crushed before it resumed its attack on the Germans.

### ***How did differing ideologies contribute to mutual suspicion and dislike?***

Many Americans disliked the Soviet government’s policies and philosophy. In particular, the Soviet regime’s official atheism and abolition of private property violated two fundamental American values. When Germany attacked the Soviet Union prior to the U.S. entry into the war, many Americans could find little sympathy for the Soviets. Senator

Harry Truman told a reporter in June 1941: “If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help the Russians, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and in that way let them kill as many as possible.”

Soviet leaders were likewise deeply suspicious of the United States. As communists, they considered conflict with the world’s most prosperous capitalist nation inevitable. Moreover, Soviet leaders had not forgotten that shortly after the new Bolshevik (communist) government pulled Russia out of World War I in 1918, the United States sent troops onto Russian territory. While the stated purpose of this joint British-French-Japanese-American intervention was to prevent war supplies from falling into the hands of the Germans, the Soviets believed that these troops were actually assisting the Russian “White” armies—those Russians fighting the Bolsheviks in a bloody civil war. During the 1920s, the United States supported the efforts of the British and French to isolate the new Soviet regime. In fact, the United States did not extend diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union until 1933.

### ***What role did aid to the Soviet Union play?***

In March 1941, Congress approved the Lend-Lease Act, enabling the Allies to “lend” or “lease” military equipment. Although the Lend-Lease program was originally designed to help cash-starved Great Britain, the United States also began sending military supplies to the Soviets after the Nazi invasion. During the course of the war, the Soviets received about \$11 billion worth of aid. Most of these supplies had to be transported by the dangerous northern sea route, which was subject to German air and U-boat attacks. When shipments were delayed because of these dangers, the Soviets became distrustful of U.S. motives. As soon as Japan surrendered, aid was abruptly terminated by the U.S. government. The Soviet Union had suffered more physical damage than any of the other Allies, and Stalin had hoped to use Lend-Lease aid, which included trucks and railroad equipment, to help rebuild his country.

At the Big Three conference held at Yalta in February 1945, Stalin requested \$10 billion in reparations from Germany. (To appreciate the buying power

---



of \$10 billion in the 1940s, remember that a new car cost under \$500.) These reparations would not be actual currency, but rather machinery, goods, food, and anything of value that could be physically transported back to the Soviet Union. Both Roosevelt and Churchill were reluctant to approve this figure. At Yalta, Stalin also requested a postwar loan from the United States of \$1 billion—\$5 billion lower than his request of 1944. Rather than granting a loan, Washington would consider only a “credit,” which the Soviets could use to purchase American goods. The administration of President Harry S Truman also delayed action on the request until March 1946, tying the granting of the credit to the resolution of political and economic issues that had arisen.

### ***How did the Allies divide post-war Germany?***

During the war, joint plans for postwar Germany did not progress much beyond the designation of areas that the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain would occupy. These three zones (a fourth zone was created later for France) were intended to correspond roughly to areas that the victorious armies expected to occupy at the conclusion of the war. Berlin, located well to the east, would be under joint administration. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed reluctantly to the redrawn German-Polish border. Beyond agreeing that the Nazi influence had to be purged from Germany, and that in practice each occupying power could deal with the reparation issue within its own zone, the Western Allies and the Soviets seemed unable to overcome their suspicions concerning the other’s intentions. The Soviets, in particular, feared a Germany rebuilt along capitalist lines that could again threaten Soviet security.

### ***Why did the United States want the Soviet Union to commit to war against Japan?***

The United States wanted commitments from the Soviets that after Germany’s defeat the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan. The Japanese were fighting tenaciously in the Pacific war, and the weight of the huge Red Army was seen as an effective weapon to shorten the war and limit

American casualties. In return for Stalin’s promise to enter the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed at Yalta to a number of territorial concessions that would strengthen the Soviet position in the Far East. These concessions involved not only Japanese-controlled areas, but also areas that historically had been under Chinese control. China, of course, was an ally of the United States in the war against Japan.

### ***What did the Soviet Union think about the new United Nations?***

The Soviets were suspicious of President Roosevelt’s plan for a postwar international organization with the ability to enforce peace terms imposed on the defeated Axis powers, and to deal with future threats. Moscow feared that the United Nations (UN) would be controlled by capitalist, and potentially hostile, states. The Soviets insisted that each of the five major victors (Great Britain, United States, Soviet Union, China, and France) have the right to veto UN decisions. The Soviets also demanded that each of the Soviet republics be given representation in the world organization. Similarly, the establishment of the



*The Big Three shape the postwar world*

© Punch, 1943

---

World Bank, with powers to coordinate trade and economic development, was seen as a threat to the Soviet socialist system.

### **What was the importance of the atom bomb?**

The secret joint U.S.-British project to develop the military potential of atomic energy (code named the "Manhattan Project") involved more than 100,000 workers and cost more than \$1 billion. The Soviets were not officially informed of the existence of this new, immensely powerful weapon until the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. President Truman described the atomic bomb in general terms to Stalin, who already knew of its existence through unofficial sources. Since the weapon was not tested until after Germany had surrendered, it was to be used on Japan to hasten the end of the Pacific war. Although the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki would, in fact, bring about a quick end to the war the following month, Truman did not withdraw the long-standing U.S. request that the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan. The concessions promised

to the Soviets also were not withdrawn.

### **How did the Soviets regard Winston Churchill?**

The British wartime leader's opposition to Soviet communism was well-known and extended back to the days of the Bolshevik revolution, when Churchill expressed the desire to strangle it at birth. His close friendship with Roosevelt and his ability to influence U.S. policy was resented by the Soviet leaders. Throughout much of the war Moscow feared that the British and the Americans would come to terms with the Nazis at Soviet expense. Churchill's opposition to establishing an early second front in France and his advocacy of a Balkan strategy were known to the Soviets. Unlike Roosevelt, who thought that he could employ his considerable political skills to persuade Stalin to behave and cooperate, Churchill held no illusions about the tactics or long-term objectives of the Soviet dictator. Harry Truman, Roosevelt's successor, respected Churchill's opinions and was strongly influenced by Churchill's passionate anti-communism.

## Extra Challenge

Some of the perils of wartime alliances were discussed intelligently in mid-1943 by Walter Lippmann, probably the most influential American newspaper columnist at that time. Read carefully the following selection, think about Lippmann's predictions, and ask yourself whether the predictions made more sense than the expectations of those who hoped that the wartime cooperation would continue after the defeat of the Axis powers.

*"We must begin by remembering that Britain, Russia, and America are allies, not by conscious choice, but under the compulsion of their common enemies. They have been compelled, as I have tried to show, to become allies whenever a really formidable aggressive power emerged which threatened to break out of Europe into the outer world. Nevertheless, when there is no such enemy which threatens their national existence, the need for their alliance becomes submerged. Their lesser, their separate and conflicting interests are then free to assert themselves. The greater the peril from the outside, the closer is their union: the greater their security, the more their differences come to the surface.*

*"The unconditional surrender of Germany and of Japan is bound, therefore, to leave all the Allies with an immediate sense of mortal peril averted; and this will reduce the compulsion that binds the alliance together. There will then be opened up disputable secondary questions which push apart the members of the alliance.... These fissures will tend to become wider and deeper the more any one of the great powers seeks to aggrandize itself either at the expense of one of the other great powers, or at the expense of their smaller allies.... A Russian policy of aggrandizement in Europe, one which threatened the national liberties of her neighbors, would inexorably be regarded as such a threat to Britain and America that they would begin to encourage the nations which resisted Russia.... On the other hand, an anti-Russian policy in which Britain, America, and the European states sought, as they did in 1919, to blockade and even to disrupt Russia would provoke Russian communist intervention to counteract it."*

---

---

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING—SOVIET UNION

The Soviet people suffered terribly during the last war. More than twenty million of our citizens perished in the battle against fascist aggression. Our total battlefield and civilian losses exceeded the combined losses of all the other Allied powers. Our country was devastated by more than three years of Nazi occupation. Our agricultural heartland was crippled and much of our industrial structure was destroyed.

Led by Marshal Stalin and guided by the wisdom of the Communist Party, the peoples of the Soviet republics, with their courage and blood, crushed the Third Reich. This victory demonstrated the strength and superiority of our Soviet system, which confronted the full might of the combined fascist armies while the Western Allies delayed their promised second front for two years. Despite the high price that we paid for victory over Germany, we fulfilled promptly our promise to enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany's surrender. This promise had been made to the British and Americans, who knew that they could not bear the cost of defeating Japan themselves. The overwhelming blows that our armies delivered to the forces of Japan in Manchuria brought a quick and unconditional surrender. By paying one of the highest prices in history, the Soviet Union has earned the right to postwar peace and security.

Never again will Russia be vulnerable to attack from the west. Our security requires that those countries in eastern Europe which lie between the Soviet Union and potential aggressors be ruled by governments friendly to the Soviet Union. The prewar situation in which many of these countries were pro-fascist and anti-Soviet cannot recur. Specifically, Poland must not allow the prewar clique of right-wing, anti-Russian politicians to regain control. These same hate-mongers launched an unprovoked attack upon the Soviet Union shortly after World War I. In addition, Poland was the country through which the German invasion of 1941 took place. The lies that elements of the reactionary prewar government have been spreading about alleged Soviet atrocities are

slandorous to the Red Army and to the progressive, democratic national forces that now lead these countries.

The capitalist powers in the West have indicated their hostility to the Soviet Union many times. Their joint military intervention in 1918-1920; their attempt to isolate the Soviet Union in the 1920s; and their infamous deal with Hitler at Munich in 1938 all reveal the hatred of the ruling capitalist cliques in the West for the Soviet system. The capitalists' struggle is made more desperate by the realization that their contradiction-filled capitalist world is decaying and will inevitably be replaced by a more progressive, socialistic system. Already, within several Western countries, such as France, Italy, and Greece, large numbers of working people have turned to the Communist Party for leadership.

Because of its major role in the defeat of Japan, the Soviet Union was entitled to share in the postwar occupation and governing of Japan, just as the Soviet Union agreed to share the occupation and governing of postwar Germany with the three Western powers. The denial by the United States and Great Britain of this legitimate request and the refusal of the Americans and British to share the occupation of Italy with the forces of the Soviet Union indicate the desire of these countries to reserve for themselves positions of political and economic dominance in these areas. The desperate quest of imperialistic capitalism to control overseas markets has turned much of the world into private spheres of influence. Just as World War I was caused by the rivalry of the capitalist powers for spheres of influence, foreign markets, and military superiority, so this dangerous trend threatens the peace of the world today.

Shortly before the end of the last war, we requested an extension of credits from the United States to assist us in the rebuilding of our war-damaged country. As the nation that had suffered the most from the war and paid the highest price for victory, the Soviet people thought it reasonable that those nations that had also profited from the victory assist in this task. Also, U.S. officials had indicated that such cred-

---



---

its—allowing us to purchase American goods—would help the American economy deal with the postwar problems of overproduction. The abrupt cancellation of Lend-Lease shipments and the rude manner in which our loan request was handled has forced the Soviet Union to rely upon its own resources to rebuild the country. Just as the Soviet people made sacrifices during the 1920s and 1930s to industrialize our backward nation, so will the workers of the Soviet Union gladly respond to our government's call for another Five-Year Plan requiring the postponement of individual needs for the greater good of the Socialist Fatherland.

The efforts of discredited representatives of the war-mongering capitalist cliques, such as Mr. Churchill, to stir up trouble between the former war-time allies must be resisted. Mr. Churchill, who has been turned out of office by the British people, has called for an alliance of British and U.S. power to deny the Soviet people their reasonable and hard-won post-

war needs. We can only hope that more realistic and sober-minded leaders—in the tradition of President Roosevelt—will overcome these dangerous tendencies among our former allies. Similar efforts in the United Nations Organization to construct an anti-Soviet coalition consisting of the capitalist states, their colonies, and their clients have been checked only by the veto that the Soviet Union possesses to protect its vital interests.

Let all nations understand that the Soviet Union will not be intimidated by the United States' build-up of atomic weapons. We will never submit to atomic blackmail and will do everything necessary to achieve a balance of military power.

The peoples of the Soviet Union and their government desire peace, not war; economic justice, not exploitation; and security, not conquest. After defeating the forces of fascist aggression, we hope to preserve the spirit of international cooperation that made victory possible.

### **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from a speech by General Secretary Josef Stalin, February 9, 1946*

"It would be incorrect to think that the war arose accidentally or as a result of the fault of some of the statesmen. Although these faults did exist, the war arose in reality as the inevitable result of the development of the world economic and political forces on the basis of monopoly capitalism. Our Marxists declare that the capitalist system of world economy conceals elements of crisis and war, that the development of world capitalism does not follow a steady and even course forward, but proceeds through crises and catastrophes. The uneven development of the capitalist countries leads in time to sharp disturbances in their relations and the group of countries which consider themselves inadequately provided with raw materials and export markets try usually to change this situation and to change the position in their favor by means of armed force.... Thus, as a result of the first crisis in the development of the capitalist world economy, arose the First World War. The Second World War arose as a result of the second crisis.

"Now victory means, first of all, that our Soviet social system has won, that the Soviet social system has successfully stood the test in the fire of war and has proved its complete vitality.... The war has shown that the Soviet social system is a truly popular system, issued from the depths of the people and enjoying its mighty support.... The war has shown that the Soviet multinational state system has successfully stood the test, has grown still stronger during the war and has proved a completely vital state system.... Our victory implies that it was the Soviet armed forces that won. Our Red Army had won. The Red Army heroically withstood all the adversities of the war, routed completely the armies of our enemies and emerged victoriously from the war....

"In our country the Communist Party reversed the usual path of industrialization and began the industrialization of our country with the development of heavy industry. This was very hard but not impossible to achieve.... It was necessary to make large-scale agricultural economy a collectivist one.... There can be no doubt that only thanks to this firmness and grit did the Communist Party come out on

---

---

top, not only in industrialization but in the collectivization of agriculture as well.... A few words on the plans for the work of the Communist Party in the near future.... The fundamental task of the new Five-Year Plan consists in restoring the areas of the country which have suffered, restoring the prewar level in industry and agriculture, and then exceeding this level by more or less considerable amounts.... The party intends to organize a new mighty upsurge of national economy, which will enable us to increase the level of our production, for instance, threefold as compared with the prewar level.... Only under such conditions will our country be insured against any eventuality."

*Excerpts from an interview with General Secretary Josef Stalin, March 14, 1946*

"I assess it [Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946] as a dangerous act calculated to sow the seed of discord among the Allied governments and hamper their cooperation.... One is reminded remarkably of Hitler and his friends. Hitler began to set war loose by announcing his racial theory, declaring that only people speaking the German language represent a fully valuable nation. Mr. Churchill begins to set war loose also by a racial theory, maintaining that only nations speaking the English language are fully valuable nations, called upon to decide the destinies of the entire world.... Nations have shed their blood during five years of cruel war for the sake of liberty and the independence of their countries, and not for the sake of exchanging the lordship of Hitler for the lordship of Churchill. It is, therefore, highly probable that the nations not speaking English and which, however, make up an enormous majority of the world's population, will not consent to go into new slavery....

"One cannot forget the following fact: the Germans carried out an invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The Germans were able to carry out the invasion through these countries by reason of the fact that these countries had governments inimical to the Soviet Union.... The Soviet Union has lost in men several times more than Britain and the United States together.... What can be surprising in the fact that the Soviet Union, in a desire to ensure its security for the future, tries to achieve that these countries should have governments whose relations to the Soviet Union are loyal? How can one, without having lost one's reason, qualify these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as "expansionistic tendencies" of our government?... Contemporary democratic Poland is led by outstanding men. They have shown in deeds that they know how to defend the interests and worth of their homeland, as their predecessors failed to do.... Former enmity between Poland and Russia has given place to friendship between them, and Poland, present democratic Poland, does not wish any longer to be a playing ball in the hands of foreigners....

"Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Hungary are governed by several parties...the opposition, if it is loyal, is guaranteed the right to participate in the government. This, Churchill calls totalitarian and the government of police.... The growth of the influence of communism cannot be considered accidental. It is a normal function. The influence of the communists grew because during the hard years of the mastery of fascism in Europe, Communists showed themselves to be reliable, daring and self-sacrificing fighters against Fascist regimes for the liberty of peoples.... Millions of common people, having tried the Communists in the fire of the struggle and resistance to fascism, decided that the Communists deserve completely the confidence of the people. Thus grew the Communist's influence in Europe. Such is the law of historical development."

---

---

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING—UNITED STATES

**F**or the second time this century, the United States has been called upon to mobilize its people and resources to defeat aggressor nations bent on world domination. Although the historical position of the United States has been to avoid quarrels in foreign lands and to shun the centuries-old practice of conquest and exploitation so characteristic of Europe and Asia, the American people have generously shouldered the primary burden of defending democracy and Western civilization. The United States believes that its security and the security of the other nations of the world will be achieved not through territorial changes, nor through the establishment of spheres of influence and puppet governments, but through the implementation of those principles for which the United Nations fought the last war.

The occupied former Axis powers must be purged of influences that produced the last war. These nations must be reconstructed along democratic principles to prevent the resurrection of militarism. The United States views with concern the lack of cooperation by the Soviet representatives to the joint commission governing Germany. The efforts of the Soviets to set up a puppet Communist Party in their zone and to undermine with propaganda the administration of the three western zones are not consistent with their wartime pledge to cooperate in the restructuring of postwar Germany. In addition, their continuing policy of robbing the Soviet zone in Germany of its industrial production undermines the Allied goal of making Germany self-sufficient. The cost to the American taxpayer of the occupation and reconstruction of the U.S. zone is large, and the sooner national institutions are created in Germany, the sooner this burden will cease.

Moscow's financial support and direction of the Communist Party in certain Western European countries, like France and Italy, threaten the integrity of these nations. The communists are attempting to take advantage of the economic and political dislocations of the war to disrupt the democratic values of these nations and to establish minority communist regimes taking their orders from Moscow. In some nations, like

Greece, these anti-democratic forces are waging a ruthless civil war against the legitimate government. By encouraging such threats to the peace, the Soviet Union endangers the cooperative relationship developed during the war and contradicts the professed desire of the Soviets for peaceful relations between themselves and the West.

The economic prosperity upon which postwar security depends requires that all nations have free access to the resources and markets of the world. The last war demonstrated that we live in an interdependent world and that the struggle for exclusive economic and political control over areas that led to World Wars I and II can no longer be permitted. The American experience demonstrates that economic freedom leads both to economic prosperity and to the strengthening of democratic values. The actions of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe have cut off millions of Europeans from the benefits of such free trade and are forcing them into economic systems that deny basic human rights.

World trade and prosperity require that the major waterways of the world be open to the free, unimpeded use of all nations. Attempts by the Soviet Union to gain control over the straits connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean Sea would threaten the free use of this vital waterway. The pressure applied by Moscow on the government of Turkey for military, territorial, and political concessions is contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, in which the founding states renounce the use or threat of force in their relations. While we support negotiations between nations over common issues, such negotiations cannot be conducted in an atmosphere of threats or intimidation.

The fundamental right of people to choose freely their own form of government and the promises made at Yalta concerning Poland are being violated by the Soviet Union in areas of Eastern Europe under the control of the Red Army. Specifically, democratic parties have not been given the opportunity to participate freely in the political life of Poland and "free, unfettered" elections have not yet been held. The Soviet

---

---

Union gives no indication of its intent to fulfill these solemn pledges. On the contrary, throughout Eastern Europe, the Communist Party has been installed in positions of power by Soviet forces. Even in Czechoslovakia, where some semblance of democracy remains, the Soviet Union has exerted its power to ensure that communist politicians control key ministries in the coalition government. The imposition of minority governments against the will of the majority was a practice employed by the Nazis. We hope that era has passed.

A reduction in armaments is essential for world peace and security. Nations possessing large armies deprive themselves of the manpower that would be employed in productive economic activities and threaten the security of their neighbors. Again, the years prior to World War I and II illustrate this costly lesson. While the United States government has demobilized most of the sixteen million men who had been in its armed forces during the war, the Soviet Union continues to maintain a very large army. Elements of the Red Army are occupying many nations in Eastern Europe and inhibiting the development of free institutions in these nations. The sheer size of these enormous armies causes insecurity in nations to the west.

The United States promises that it will hold in trust for mankind the vast power of the atom that was developed during the war. The economic benefits that peacetime atomic energy can provide should be made available to all nations of the world. The United States is committed to the principle of international control over the development of atomic power. Until such effective international mechanisms for control can be established, the United States will not seek to exploit its sole possession of these fearsome weapons, but will

keep its atomic forces to ensure the preservation of the peace.

Using armed force to extort concessions from smaller neighbors, such as the Soviet Union has done in northern Iran this year, is a flagrant violation of United Nations principles and resembles the aggressive behavior of Hitler's Germany before the last war. The violation of Iran's territorial sovereignty by Soviet forces, and the establishment of two communist-dominated puppet governments in areas occupied by the Soviets were a breach of the peace that the United States could not accept. The United States is pleased that the Soviet forces finally have been withdrawn from Iranian territory and assumes that there will not be a recurrence of this type of activity.

The spirit of wartime cooperation that characterized relations among the United Nations allies is sadly lacking today in the meetings of the United Nations Organization because of the provocations and obstructionistic tactics of the Soviet representatives. The people of the world, weary from war, have turned to the United Nations as the best hope for the future, but the efforts of the majority, representing the freedom-loving countries of the world, are being thwarted by a minority consisting of the Soviet Union and its client regimes.

The American people feel nothing but good will toward the Soviet people. We admire the sacrifices that they made in the fight against fascism and wish to work with them in building a safe, secure world. However, the attitudes and actions of the Soviet government puzzle the American people and lead them to question whether the Soviet Union is really committed to world peace.

---



---

## **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from a speech by President Truman on Navy Day, October 27, 1945*

"We have assured the world time and time again—and I repeat it now—that we do not seek for ourselves one inch of territory in any place in the world. Outside of the right to establish necessary bases for our own protection, we look for nothing which belongs to any other power.... We seek to use our military strength solely to preserve the peace of the world. For we now know that this is the only sure way to make our own freedom secure.... Let me restate the fundamentals of the foreign policy of the United States:

"1. We seek no territorial expansion or selfish advantage. We have no plans for aggression against any other state, large or small. We have no objective which need clash with the peaceful aims of any other country.

"2. We believe in the eventual return of sovereign rights and self-government to all peoples who have been deprived of them by force.

"3. We shall approve no territorial changes in any friendly part of the world unless they accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.

"4. We believe that all peoples who are prepared for self-government should be permitted to choose their own form of government by their own freely expressed choice, without interference from any foreign source....

"5. By the combined and cooperative action of our wartime allies, we shall help the defeated enemy states establish peaceful democratic governments of their own choice....

"6. We shall refuse to recognize any foreign government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power. In some cases it may be impossible to prevent forceful imposition of such a government....

"7. We believe that all nations should have the freedom of the seas and equal rights to the navigation of boundary rivers and waterways and of rivers and waterways which pass through more than one country.

"8. We believe that all states which are accepted in the society of nations should have access on equal terms to the trade and the raw materials of the world....

"9. We believe that the sovereign states of the Western Hemisphere, without interference from outside the Western Hemisphere, must work together as good neighbors in the solution of their common problems.

"10. We believe that full economic collaboration between all nations, great and small, is essential to the improvement of living conditions all over the world, and to the establishment of freedom from fear and freedom from want.

"11. We shall continue to strive to promote freedom of expression and freedom of religion throughout the peace-loving areas of the world.

"12. We are convinced that the preservation of peace between nations requires a United Nations Organization composed of all the peace-loving nations of the world who are willing jointly to use force if necessary to insure peace....

"Differences of the kind that exist today among nations that fought together so long and so valiantly for victory are not hopeless or irreconcilable. There are no conflicts of interest among the victorious powers so deeply rooted that they cannot be resolved. But their solution will require a combination of forbearance and firmness. It will require a steadfast adherence to the high principles which we have enunciated. It will also require a willingness to find a common ground as to the methods of applying those principles."

---

---

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING—GREAT BRITAIN

Traditionally, the British people have ensured their security and independence by preserving the balance of power in Europe. The existence of Great Britain would be threatened by the domination of the European continent by any hostile power that could deprive Britain of access to European markets and resources, and endanger its sea lifelines to the British Empire. The wars against Napoleon, Imperial Germany, and Hitler's Germany were fought not for territorial gains nor for martial glory, but to restore the balance of the European system. From the fall of France in May 1940 until June 1941, Britain stood alone fighting the forces of Nazism. The physical damage suffered from five years of incessant air bombardment and U-boat attacks; the lives lost in campaigns on three continents; and the enormous drain upon British financial resources have left Britain greatly weakened and unable at this time to ensure, by her own efforts, the security and prosperity of her people.

Central to British security is the continuation of the special relationship with the United States that developed during the last war. As the two great freedom-loving democracies of the world, we must work together to promote our shared values based upon our common heritage. The responsibility for maintaining an open European system, which Britain shouldered exclusively for many years, must now be shared with the Americans. The Americans have learned the bitter lesson of the two World Wars that lawlessness and aggression in faraway regions of the Eurasian continent can lead to threats to the security of their own continental nation thousands of miles away. The British contribution to this Anglo-American partnership will be impressive. The British system of worldwide military bases, British experience in foreign affairs, and the resources of its empire will complement American industrial strength and manpower.

Since the last war demonstrated that Great Britain's concentrated centers of population and industry are vulnerable to air attacks, we are particularly concerned with the development of atomic weapons that can wipe out entire cities. Given the fact that the atomic bomb was the fruit of wartime collaboration

between Great Britain and the United States, we trust the Americans to maintain responsible custody over these weapons and to employ them only as a last resort, for the protection of our shared values. As a great power, however, Britain cannot rely exclusively on any other country for its security. Consequently, we too are obliged to develop our own atomic weapons. An atomic arsenal would be the most effective deterrent to a hostile nuclear attack on our country. Such a course should not be seen as jeopardizing our special relationship with the United States.

The British people are grateful to the Soviet people for the sacrifices they made during the last war and are sympathetic to the legitimate security interests of the Soviet Union regarding its western border. Just as Great Britain expects that its historical, economic, and political interests in certain areas of the world will be respected, so the British government recognizes the historical basis for Russian influence in much of Eastern Europe. However, the British government views with alarm the recent attempts to expand Soviet control beyond those areas traditionally dominated by Russia.

Actions by the Soviet representatives to the joint commission governing Germany have consistently blocked the rebuilding of Germany along democratic lines and the reconstruction of the German economy. An economically healthy, free Germany, purged of extreme nationalism and militarism, is a prerequisite for the re-establishment of stable, open relations among European states. Soviet demands for reparations from the British zone will, if met, endanger this goal by impoverishing Germany. After World War I, the harsh conditions of the Versailles Treaty made it impossible for the democratic Weimar Republic in Germany to survive, and led to conditions that promoted the Nazis' rise to power. Poverty and political instability breed domestic instability, which can endanger the peace and security of other nations. The elevation of the German Communist Party to a position of unrivaled dominance in the Soviet zone seems to indicate the intentions of the Soviets to retain control of their occupation zone and to thwart the

---

---

long-range goal of German unification and redevelopment. These Soviet actions in Germany and the incessant propaganda attacks upon the administration of the western zones may force the United States and Great Britain to achieve, through closer integration of their occupation zones, this goal on their own. The heavy cost which German occupation places upon the national budget of Great Britain can be reduced only by the development of a unified, economically sound Germany.

Great Britain also views a free, democratic France as necessary to the maintenance of European security. Soviet financial support and direction of the French Communist Party, and Soviet-inspired propaganda that seeks to undermine the democratic forces within France and to foment unrest, are a disturbing development.

Recent Soviet actions in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean appear to threaten historical British interests. Since the end of the war, the Soviets have attempted to force the Turkish government to accept joint control of the straits connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and to grant them bases on Turkish territory. They have also sought to acquire naval bases in North Africa and have delayed withdrawing their troops from the joint occupation of Iran. All of this seems to be a concerted attack on traditional British interests. In addition, Soviet-inspired propaganda seeks to promote anti-British feelings in these countries. Historically, Britain has possessed vital national interests in the area stretching from Greece in the west to India in the east, and from Turkey in the north to Egypt in the south. While the present British government has renounced the outmoded colonialism of past British governments, this area and the lifeline to the empire that runs through the Mediterranean must be

kept open to the British economic and political influence. On numerous occasions over the past 100 years, ranging from small border actions to the two world wars, British military forces have been employed to maintain this vital interest. Any increase in Soviet influence in this area would probably result in a decrease of British influence, and a loss of British influence in this area would mean a loss of our Great Power status.

The security of Great Britain requires unimpeded access to its far-flung empire across the world's oceans and seas. Second only to the vital Atlantic link is our communications and trade lifeline through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the South China Sea to our colonies and dominions in Southeast Asia and the western Pacific. To protect this lifeline, military installations must be maintained. The establishment by a potentially hostile power of military installations along our line of communications will not be tolerated.

The harsh economic legacy of the past war has been a difficult load for the British people to bear. With the generous assistance of the U.S. government, the British government has been engaged in the reconstruction of its industrial and population centers. While some continued loans and credits may be necessary in the near future, we expect shortly to recover the economic and financial stability that will enable us to continue to fulfill our commitments as a Great Power.

The British government has no vital interests that conflict with the legitimate security concerns of any other nation and the British people wish to retain the friendship of the Russian people that was forged during the last war. Consequently, the British government remains willing to work with the Soviet government to reduce tensions and resolve issues of common concern.

---

---

## **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from a Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee report to the British Cabinet, March 1, 1946*

"The long term aim of the Russian leaders is to build up the Soviet Union into a position of strength and greatness commensurate with her vast size and resources.... They are determined that the development of Russia's national resources shall not again be disturbed by enemy attack, and are consequently preoccupied with the military security of the Soviet Union.... They will consider it important to create and consolidate round the frontiers of Russia a "belt" of satellite states with governments subservient to their policy. Consequently we consider that at any rate the short term aim of Russia is to avoid any course of action which...may provoke a war in which the British Commonwealth or the United States participate against her.... Meanwhile, if Russia considers attempts are being made to undermine her position in the countries already comprising her "belt" she will retaliate by using all weapons, short of major war.... Russia will seek by all the above means short of war, to frustrate these attempts. She will make full use of propaganda, of diplomatic pressure and of the Communist parties abroad both to this end and to weaken foreign countries.... Russia will seek, by all the above means, short of major war, to include within her "belt" further areas which she considers it strategically necessary to dominate. Turkey and the major part of Persia [Iran] are such areas, since the southern frontier of the U.S.S.R. has at present no such protective "belt." In choosing such territories Russia will, for diplomatic reasons, direct her main effort towards those areas where she calculates that she will not come up against firm combined resistance from the United States and Great Britain.... Elsewhere she will adopt a policy of opportunism to extend her influence wherever possible without provoking a major war, leaving the onus of challenge to the rest of the world. In pursuing this policy she will use...Communist parties in other countries and certain international organizations."

*Excerpts of cables sent from the Moscow British embassy to the Foreign Minister, March 17, and March 21, 1946*

"There is one fundamental factor affecting Soviet policy dating back to the small beginnings of the Muscovite state. This is the constant striving for security of a state with no natural frontiers and surrounded by enemies.... Until 1945 Britain and Russia were never left face to face.... Now all that has changed.... The only other world power is the U.S.A. and there is clearly no reason why Britain and Russia should be brought to combine against her as a menace to their interests or to the peace of the world. Therefore Britain and Russia are now in immediate contact as never before.... The Soviet Union... approaches a partner, whom she regards as potentially hostile, endeavours to exact the maximum advantage for the Soviet Union, if possible without any return, and, having obtained what she wants, reopens this issue or raises another at the earliest possible moment in order to achieve the next item on her programme.... The rulers of the Soviet Union do not believe in the same things which Western democracies believe in...they are incapable of doing so.... Every effort is being made to develop the Soviet Union into the most powerful state in the world.... The second objective is to weaken capitalist or social-democratic countries in every way.... Everything possible will be done to keep the Americans and ourselves apart.... The full weight of Soviet propaganda, and where possible active support, will be brought to bear in favour of the so-called oppressed colonial peoples and against imperialist domination.... Soviet policy in Middle East is developing so consistently with the existence of an all-embracing conception that I cannot believe that, if it is left to the Russians, Soviet expansion will stop at achieving a security belt, even if this included domination of Turkey and of Persia. Soviet attitude over Levant and Egypt and similar clumsy propaganda campaign just beginning in respect of Iraq, coupled with clumsy Soviet overtures in respect of Dodecanese and Tripolitania [Libya in North Africa] suggest a design to extend Soviet influence throughout Arab world and in Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean...."

*Excerpts from a British Chiefs of Staff report to the Cabinet, April 18, 1946*

"Recent developments make it appear that Russia is our most probable potential enemy.... In a conflict with Russia the early and whole-hearted participation of the U.S.A. on our side would be vital.... The sea and air communications in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans which link our main support areas are of vital importance.... We should take the necessary political, economic and military measures to maintain our position and influence in Western Europe, the Middle East and South-East Asia."

---



---

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING—FRANCE

Three times during the past seventy years France has suffered unprovoked attacks from Germany. In 1870, 1914, and 1940 larger and better-equipped German armies defeated our armies and occupied sections of our country. Germany continues to be for us the major threat to the peace. The population of Germany, even after its wartime losses, exceeds ours, and the coal and iron resources of Germany far exceed ours. Just as Germany rebounded quickly from its defeat in 1918, so we fear that unless the victorious allies act decisively, Germany will again threaten the security of its neighbors. The following steps must be taken to guarantee the peace of the postwar period.

The Rhineland, the area forming the long western border between Germany and France, must be detached from Germany. By denying future German armies the Rhineland as a staging area, the likelihood of another invasion can be decreased. Also, the Ruhr Valley region, the major iron- and coal-producing area of all Europe, must not be under the control of any future German government. France, which was the world's largest importer of coal before the war, must have guaranteed access to the resources of this vital area if it is to develop its industries and fulfill the energy needs of its people. Just prior to the war, we imported an average of 400,000 tons of coal per month from this area. Now, we can obtain only 130,000 tons of coal per month. This is crippling France's recovery.

The allies must ensure that the Germany they reconstruct, while economically healthy, does not have the strongly centralized national government that made the invasions of 1870, 1914, and 1940 possible. To achieve this end, political power in the new Germany must be decentralized and located in the individual *Länder* (states) that make up Germany. The aftermath of World War I showed that France's allies could not be counted upon to cooperate with France to keep Germany from redeveloping its military potential. Therefore, Germany must be structured so as to make such a development impossible. We strongly oppose the efforts of the British, Americans, and Soviets to develop centralized German institutions designed to coordinate German reconstruction.

While we appreciate the efforts of our wartime allies in defeating the forces of Nazism and in liberating France from German occupation, we realize that we cannot depend upon them to ensure French security in the future. The British, who historically share with us a fear of a militaristic Germany, are experiencing severe economic hardships, and have difficulty financing the occupation of their zone of Germany. They now have reduced their army from 4.7 million soldiers in 1945 to 1.1 million in 1946. We recognize the strong domestic political pressures within Great Britain to scale back Britain's worldwide commitments and military establishment. The Americans, as the events of the 1920s demonstrated, cannot be depended upon to remain committed to the preservation of peace in Europe. The United States also has reduced its ground forces dramatically, from twelve million last year to fewer than three million today. Europeans must look to themselves for their own security needs.

Russia is France's oldest ally in Europe. The Franco-Russian alliance of 1894 was a major step in European efforts to check the threat of German militarism. Twice this century, we and the Russians have experienced unprovoked aggression from our common, powerful neighbor. In 1944, even before the war ended, we entered into a friendship treaty with the Soviets in which we pledged to cooperate against any future German threat and to refrain from entering any alliance directed against the other. The fact that during this fifty-year period of cooperation with Russia our domestic forms of government have been very different—France is a democratic republic and Russia is now a communist-dominated, single-party state and was an autocratic monarchy—has not prevented close cooperation in security concerns. In fact, several months ago the Soviet government, despite the Soviet Union's own economic difficulties, sent us a large shipment of wheat to help us deal with our food crisis. We oppose efforts by certain politicians in the United States and in Great Britain to create a gulf between the Soviet Union and the Western allies. France wants to remain on friendly terms with both the Soviet Union and the other Western democracies.

---

---

The French Communist Party is a responsible member of the three-party coalition that currently governs France. The French voters have given the Communist Party a large share of the popular vote (nearly 30 percent) in recent elections, and we reject the notion that the French Communist Party is controlled by Moscow. While it is true that the Communist Party has consistently urged closer ties with the Soviet Union, it is clear that this is in the security interests of France.

Our efforts to recover the Great Power position that France has occupied for many centuries will depend heavily upon our reasserting control over our colonial possessions. The U.S. government has publicly criticized French colonial policies and this causes us great concern. Similarly, actions by the British government in the Middle East appear designed to force France out of its historic position of influence in certain countries of that area (Lebanon and Syria). Both the Americans and the British must realize that a healthy, democratic France requires the resources of its restored Empire. Also, the anti-colonial propaganda that the Soviet government has been directing to this area endangers France's vital interests.

France will require extensive U.S. assistance in rebuilding, and in constructing the modern industrial society upon which its future prosperity and security will depend. The \$750 million U.S. aid package received earlier this year is a major step in this direction. Unfortunately, the resources of the French zone of occupation in Germany are much less than those of the British and U.S. zones. While the British and U.S. zones combined contain 78 percent of German coal production and 80 percent of German steel-making capacity, the French zone contains only 8 percent of the coal production and 12 percent of the steel capacity. Consequently, France must insist upon reparations from the other zones. Also, full restitution in kind must be paid by Germany for all French goods and equipment forcibly removed by the Nazis during the occupation.

In conclusion, France does not want to see the world's powers split into two antagonistic camps. The French people want to remain on friendly terms both with other Western nations and the Soviets, for only in doing so can we prevent the reappearance of a strong militaristic Germany, which we recognize as our primary security concern.

---

---

## **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from an article by French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault, July 1946*

“The troubles of the war-shattered world are like a tangled skein.... The skein is full of knots, and the main knot is Germany.... Only yesterday the breeding place of war, today a fathomless gulf, Germany is in truth the world’s Number One problem.... From the French point of view, the German question is first of all a problem of security. In this connection, no one in the world will deny that geographically and politically France constitutes a nerve center, and that when it is struck the most serious and far reaching repercussions invariably follow.... When France declares that her security and by implication world security call for certain measures, her suggestions would seem at least to be worthy of sympathetic examination....

“The security of Europe and the world requires that Germany be deprived indefinitely of the war potential represented by the resources and raw materials of the Rhine-Westphalian region, and that the Rhine districts shall never again be able to serve as a zone of passage, arsenal and base for invasion. The mines of the Sarre, transferred to French ownership by the Versailles Treaty, must again become French property, with as corollary the inclusion of that territory in the French customs and monetary systems, the two economies being complementary. As for the Ruhr, Europe’s immense treasure-house, consisting of coal mines and the factories associated with them, employing in normal times five million workers, the French Government considers that, in conformity with the general interests of humanity, it must be treated as a political entity independent of Germany and placed under a regime of internationalization both political and economic....

“Should a “hard” peace be imposed on Germany?... Is it harsh to deprive an inveterate transgressor of the means of repeating his offense?... Despite the evil they have done to us, we French know that the German people are endowed with many good qualities: they are hard working, disciplined, and inventive. Unhappily, they are also endowed with a tendency to use those qualities in a dangerous way.... The problem is not how to keep Germany in a state of misery, but on the contrary how to pull her out of it without in the process producing a new catastrophe for the world and for peace....

“The argument is also made that in this epoch of the atomic bomb it is an obsolete conception to suppose that France would gain additional security by occupying the Rhineland and thus pushing her military cover some thirty miles beyond her own border. The obvious response to this contention is that precautions of the same kind have been taken along other frontiers, despite the existence of rocket planes and other lightning weapons.... What France in fact proposes to do is not to deprive Germany of the arsenal of the Ruhr but to establish there an economic regime which will permit the freest possible exchange of goods with both the west and the east, including, naturally, the rest of Germany.... The coal which formerly sustained the Hitlerite aggression now comes in such meager amounts to warm our homes and run our factories....

“We French are not haunted by werewolves. The realities we have suffered are so bitter that we distinguish them quite easily from shadows. However, we are aware that if the phantom is given the opportunity, it will once again put on flesh. Nor is this by any means an exclusively French conviction. All the pacts of mutual assistance signed in Europe during the past year have been directed against the German peril, showing that it does not seem in the least theoretical to Germany’s near neighbors. The instinct of nations is to feel that the firmest union in peace is based on the realities that drew them together in war.”

---

---

# INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN THE POSTWAR WORLD

## Summary of Issues Affecting U.S.-Soviet Relations—1946

**Iran**—The Soviet Union withdraws its occupying forces in March from northern Iran after strong protests from the United States. The communist governments that had been installed by the Soviets in those areas are easily disbanded by Iranian armed forces.

**Greece**—Civil war is being waged by the communist-led forces (ELAS) against the right-wing government, creating economic and political chaos. British military units in Greece and massive financial aid from Great Britain and the United States prevent the collapse of the Greek government.

**Poland**—Attempts to force the communist-dominated government to hold free elections and to allow meaningful participation within the government by non-communist parties do not succeed. The new Polish boundaries make Poland more dependent upon the Soviet Union for protection against a revived Germany.

**France**—A coalition government consisting of the three largest French political parties, including the communists, is attempting to maintain good relations with both the Soviets and the West. Fears of a rebuilt Germany continue to dominate French foreign policy.

**Turkey**—The Soviets continue to pressure the Turkish government for territorial concessions and joint control of the straits connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean Sea. Soviet maneuvers near the border cause the Turkish government to seek foreign aid to modernize its army.

**Czechoslovakia**—Although still a parliamentary democracy, the coalition government is dominated by the Communist Party, which has substantial electoral support. The communists control the national police as well as the armed forces. The United States is holding up economic aid because American business interests have been nationalized and the issue of compensation is not settled.

**Great Britain**—The Labour government, experiencing a severe financial crisis, wishes to withdraw from some of Britain's worldwide commitments. The British have discussed with the United States government the possibility of the U.S. assuming some of these commitments. A very large U.S. aid package early in the year does little to revive the British economy.

**Soviet Loan**—The Truman administration declines to act upon Soviet requests made during the war for U.S. assistance to rebuild the Soviet Union. Increasing U.S.-Soviet tensions make this loan very unlikely.

**United Nations**—Emerging voting patterns reveal a split between the Western states and the Soviet Union and its allies. Increasing disagreements between these groups indicate that the Great Power collaboration upon which the United Nations was constructed is jeopardized by postwar disputes.

**Western Communist Parties**—The electoral strength of the Communist Party in several Western countries is considerable. In addition to Italy and France, where nearly 30 percent of the voters support the communists, the Communist Party enjoys significant popularity in nearly all of the other western European countries.

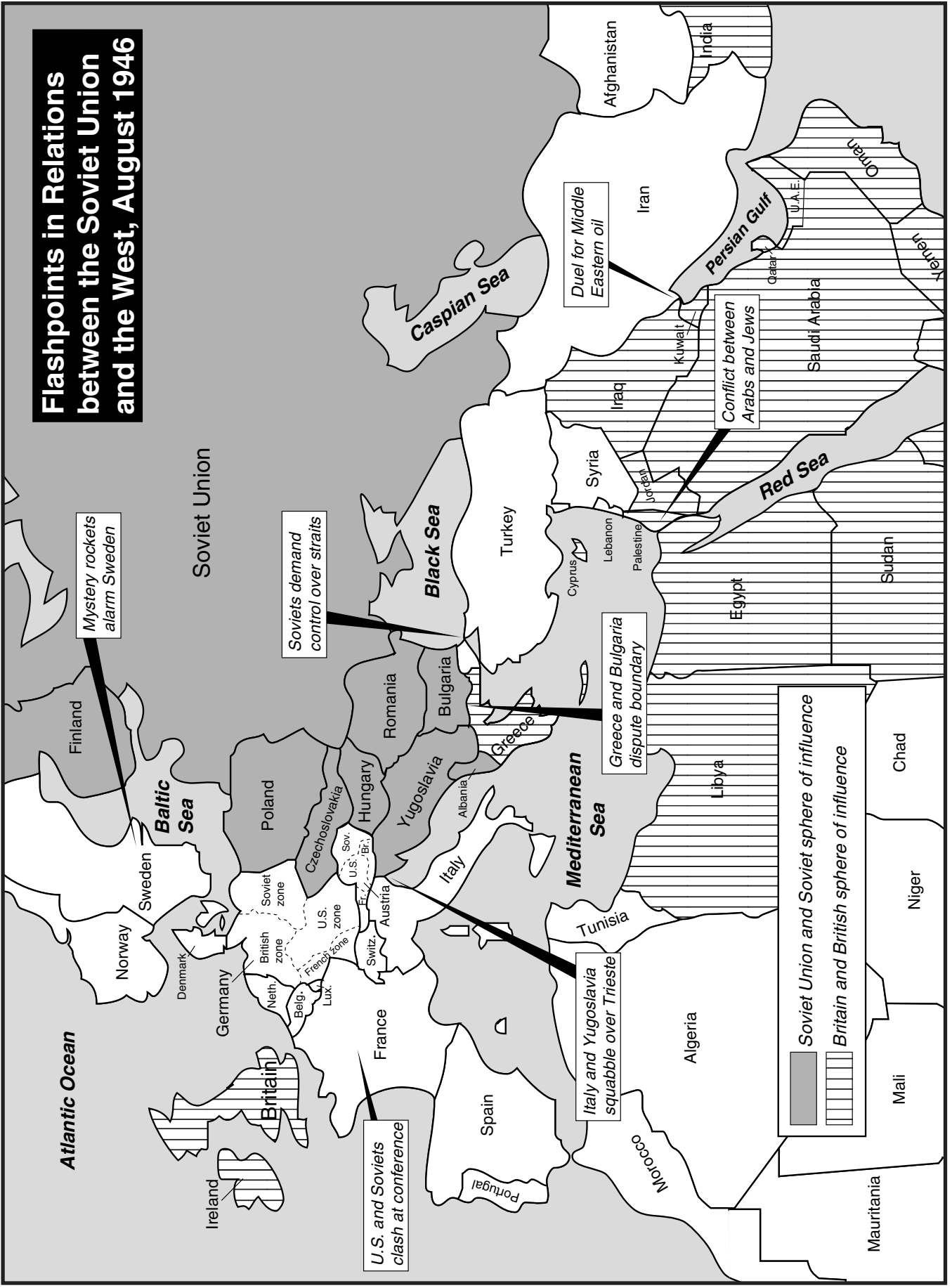
**U.S. Demobilization**—The United States government rapidly demobilizes its armed forces at the close of World War II. From a peak of about sixteen million, the U.S. armed forces now number about five million, and there is an expectation that they will be reduced even further.

**Atomic Weapons**—Most observers expect that the United States will retain its monopoly of atomic weapons for five to ten years. The United States proposes a plan to encourage the peaceful development of atomic power under international control, providing that nations developing atomic resources submit to United Nations authority.

---



# Flashpoints in Relations between the Soviet Union and the West, August 1946



Based on a map from *The New York Times*, August 18, 1946. Copyright © by The New York Times Company. Used with permission.

## INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN THE POSTWAR WORLD

### Comparing the Great Powers—1945-1950

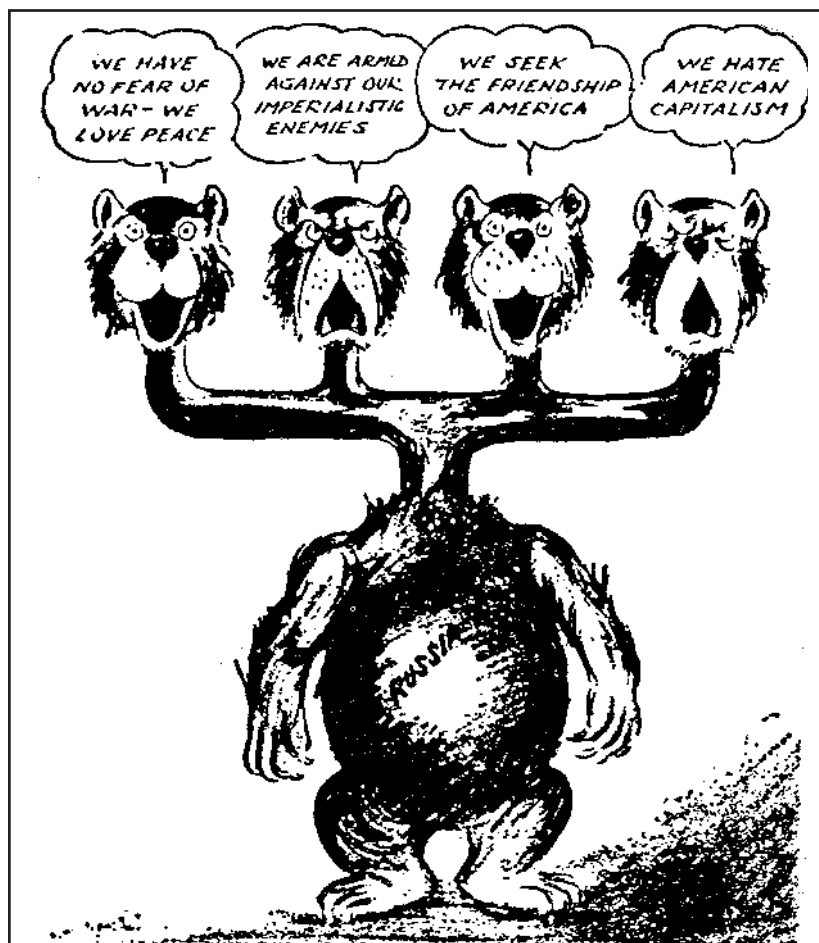
	United States	Soviet Union	Great Britain	France
<b>Area (square miles)</b>	3,023,000	8,390,000	94,000	213,000
<b>Population</b>	151,000,000	193,000,000	48,000,000	39,700,000
<b>WWII Deaths</b> military: civilian:	292,131 6,000	10,000,000 15,000,000	298,000 100,000	167,000 400,000
<b>Armed Forces, 1946</b>	5,000,000	5,000,000(+)	2,950,000	735,000
<b>Gross National Product (GNP), 1950</b>	\$381 billion	\$126 billion	\$71 billion	\$50 billion
<b>Form of Government</b>	two-party democratic republic	single-party dictatorship	two-party parliamentary democracy	multi-party parliamentary democracy
<b>Aircraft Production, 1945</b>	50,000	21,000	12,000	not available
<b>Steel Production (mil. tons), 1948</b>	80	21.5	13 (1945)	2 (1945)
<b>Electricity (mil. kwh. monthly average), 1945</b>	18,000	3,600	3,106	1,464
<b>Coal (mil. tons)</b> 1945: 1946:	631 582	149 164	186 193	35 49
<b>Defense Budget, 1950</b>	\$14.5 billion	\$15.5 billion	\$2.3 billion	\$1.4 billion
<b>Percent GNP Spent on Defense, 1950</b>	3.8	12.3	3.2	2.8
<b>International Balance of Payments</b> 1945 imports: 1945 exports: 1946 imports: 1946 exports:	\$4 billion \$9.5 billion \$5 billion \$9.5 billion	not available not available not available not available	\$4.5 billion \$1.75 billion \$5.25 billion \$3.75 billion	\$4.5 billion \$2 billion not available not available

---

# INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN THE POSTWAR WORLD

## The United States Weighs Its Options

The confusion concerning Soviet intentions that existed in the United States shortly after the war is reflected in this 1946 editorial cartoon. (Note: Political cartoonists use animals or symbolic figures to represent nations. The United States is usually represented by an eagle, Uncle Sam, or Lady Liberty, while Russia, even during the Soviet period, is typically depicted as a bear.)



Goldberg in the *New York Sun*, 1946.

### Questions for classroom discussion

1. Describe more fully the type of bear that each of these heads represents.
2. What evidence supports the existence of each of the "four bears"?
3. Does the cartoonist indicate which of the four bears he believes is the real one? Can there be more than one real bear?

*Extra Challenge:* Might a Soviet cartoonist at this time have drawn an American eagle with several different heads? If so, what might each of the heads be saying? What evidence might the Soviets cite to support the existence of these different heads?

The varying perceptions of the Soviet Union held by different U.S. decision-makers produced a wide spectrum of proposed foreign policy strategies. Four distinct options emerged during this debate. (Note: The four distinct options presented on the following pages are a simplification of the many somewhat overlapping positions advocated during this period. They reflect the major themes of the debate and do not correspond to the four heads of the above cartoon.)

---

---

## OPTIONS IN BRIEF

### OPTION 1—IMPOSE A PAX AMERICANA (AMERICAN PEACE)

No nation in modern times has had the opportunity the United States has now to shape an entire world order. At this unique juncture in history, the United States has the power to lay the foundation for a new era of peaceful international relations and to ensure that the peoples of the world have the opportunity to prosper economically and to develop politically. The last war was fought in the name of freedom. Ultimately, the justice of our cause gave us the strength to overcome Nazi Germany and Japan. Our mission, however, is not complete until freedom is within the grasp of all peoples. The Soviet Union is now the greatest threat to a just world order. Just as the aggression of the Nazis should have been stopped in the 1930s, the ambitious schemes of the Soviets must be smashed now. The Soviets must be forced—by U.S. military power if necessary—to free those peoples whom they have deprived of self-determination. They must accept the new international order based on political and economic freedom.

### OPTION 2—CONTAIN SOVIET COMMUNISM

The two world wars have shown that the United States cannot distance itself from European nations that share our economic system and political values. Like it or not, international relations in the postwar world will be dominated by a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. Soviet leaders are convinced of their mission to extend communism throughout the globe. The United States cannot turn its back on the threat of Soviet expansion. Western Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Japan are too important to U.S. national interests to leave them vulnerable to Soviet aggression. By working with other free nations we can construct a strong barrier that will contain further Soviet expansion. Communism thrives only in conditions of misery, want, and strife. The United States and its allies must be vigilant in their efforts to contain its spread.

### OPTION 3—CO-EXIST AND COMPROMISE

With the defeat of Germany and Japan, the Allied nations are in a unique position to create a new international order based on the rule of law. As history has shown, peace is possible only when the most powerful countries of the world share common goals. The United States and the Soviet Union are different in many ways. But while we reject the Soviets' economic and political system, we share a mutual desire for peace. Now is the time to build on this area of agreement to ensure a future of international stability and legality. The United States can do its part to maintain peace by refraining from the threat or use of force, whenever possible. The best way to promote the interests of the peoples of Eastern Europe would be to diminish the Soviet sense of insecurity.

### OPTION 4—AVOID FOREIGN ENTANGLEMENTS

With our victory in the last war, the security of the United States is assured. Americans can return again to making their lives better without foreign threats lurking over their shoulders. Our fortunate geographic position, with great oceans isolating us from the strife of Europe and Asia, enables us to defend our shores without bankrupting our economy. Further involvement in world affairs should be avoided. Especially dangerous are misguided plans to shape the world to fit American ideals. At a time when the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union is high, such a policy would be both expensive and reckless. Americans understand that we prosper most when the power of the central government is kept at a minimum. The individual liberties that Americans hold so dear would be threatened by the unchecked growth of executive power fed by overseas involvement.

---

No nation in modern times has had the opportunity the United States has now to shape an entire world order. Our industrial production exceeds that of the Soviet Union and all other European countries combined. Our armed forces, equipped with atomic weapons, have no equal on the face of the earth. At this unique juncture in history, the United States has the power to lay the foundation for a new era of peaceful international relations and to ensure that the peoples of the world have the opportunity to prosper economically and to develop politically. The peaceful, prosperous world order of the future must be built upon the principles of national self-determination, democracy, economic freedom, and free trade. Self-determination requires that every nation have the right to determine its own destiny, free of external coercion and control. Free economic institutions, and free and equal access to the markets of the world are necessary to produce the prosperity that provides the necessary foundations for democratic institutions.

The last war was fought in the name of freedom. Ultimately, the justice of our cause gave us the strength to overcome Nazi Germany and Japan. Our mission, however, will not be complete until freedom is within the grasp of all peoples. The Soviet Union is now the greatest threat to a just world order. To allow the Soviet Union to continue to dominate many of the nations of eastern Europe, as well as areas of Germany, makes a mockery of those principles for which the United States fought and for which so many Americans sacrificed. Just as the aggression of the Nazis should have been stopped in the 1930s, the ambitious schemes of the Soviets must be smashed now. The leaders of the Soviet Union must be made to live up to the promises they have made. The Soviets must be forced—by U.S. military power if necessary—to free those peoples whom they have deprived of self-determination. They must accept the new international order based on political and economic freedom. Any delay on our part will enable the Soviet Union to consolidate its gains and make a reversal of its conquests much more costly. Future generations will not forgive us if we allow this opportunity to create a Pax Americana slip by.



*Joe likes a firm handshake.*

### **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from General George Patton's conversation with Secretary of the Army Robert P. Patterson, May 7, 1945*  
 "Mr. Secretary, for God's sake, when you go home, stop this point system; stop breaking up these armies; give us an opportunity to keep 30 percent of our battlewise troops home on leave if you wish, etc. Send us replacements and let us start training here, keeping our forces intact. Let's keep our boots polished, bayonets sharpened, and present a picture of force and strength to these people [the Soviets]. This is the only language they understand and respect. If you fail to do this, then I would like to say to you that we have had a victory over the Germans and have disarmed them, but have lost the war.... I would have your State Department, or the people in charge, tell the people concerned [the Soviets] where their border is, and give them a limited time to get back across. Warn them that if they fail to do so, we will push them back across it.... Let's not give them time to build up their supplies. If we do, then I repeat, we have had



---

a victory over the Germans and disarmed them; we have failed in the liberation of Europe; we have lost the war!... We the Armed Forces of the U.S.A. have put our government in the position to dictate the peace. We did not come over here to acquire jurisdiction over either the people or their countries. We came to give them back the right to govern themselves. We must either finish the job now — while we are here and ready — or later under less favorable circumstances.”

*Excerpts from President Roosevelt’s Atlantic Charter statement made jointly with British Prime Minister Churchill, August 12, 1941*

“[We] desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned; ...respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them; ...will endeavor, with due respect for existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.... Such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance.”

*Excerpts from President Truman’s Navy Day speech, October 27, 1945*

“The foreign policy of the United States is based firmly on fundamental principles of righteousness and justice. In carrying out those principles we shall firmly adhere to what we believe to be right; and we shall not give approval to any compromise with evil.... Building a peace requires as much moral stamina as waging a war.... It requires undying patience and continuous application. But it can give us, if we stay with it, the greatest reward that there is in the whole field of human effort.... The possession in our hands of this new power of destruction [atomic weapons] we regard as a sacred trust. Because of our love of peace, the thoughtful people of the world know that that trust will not be violated....”

*Excerpts from President Wilson’s speech on the Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918*

“The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by.... The program of the world’s peace, therefore, is our program, and that program, the only possible program, as we see, is this: open covenants of peace, openly arrived at.... Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war.... The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations.... International guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan States should be entered into.... An independent Polish state should be erected ...whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.... For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace, such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war.... An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak.”

---

---

## **THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

1. Use all means necessary—including military force—to push the Soviets out of eastern Europe and to compel them to live up to the promises made at Yalta and in the United Nations charter.
2. Keep our military forces, both conventional and nuclear, so strong that the Soviet Union will back away from its aggressive behavior rather than risk a confrontation it cannot win.
3. Help the war-ravaged nations of Europe rebuild their economies according to American free-market principles.
4. Use our political and military might to ensure that all nations have access to the world's markets and resources and that all areas of the world be open to free trade.

## **LESSONS FROM HISTORY**

- Hitler taught us that appeasing aggressors does not achieve lasting peace. It only postpones the confrontation and makes it more costly. Therefore, aggression must be stopped when it happens.
- The failure of the democratic German Weimar Republic and the rise of Hitler were caused by Germany's economic collapse. Promoting prosperity in Europe is necessary to preserve democratic institutions and prevent the establishment of totalitarian regimes that endanger peace.
- Restrictions on international trade after World War I led to the Depression and set the stage for World War II. Therefore, a system of free international trade must be established.
- Instability in Europe has drawn the United States into war twice in this century. To prevent another global conflict, we must take the lead in establishing a sound world order based on our values of freedom.

## **ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 1**

- By standing up to aggression now, we reduce the chances of another world war.
  - The U.S. atomic monopoly and overwhelming industrial superiority make it unlikely that any aggressor would defy our wishes and challenge us militarily.
  - The era of peace that this option will produce will bring new levels of economic prosperity to the United States as well as to other nations of the world.
  - Today's circumstances give the United States an unprecedented opportunity to impose a just peace that will ensure that all nations' interests are fairly considered.
-

The two world wars have shown that the United States cannot distance itself from European nations that share our economic system and political values. As the largest and most powerful Western nation, we have no choice but to defend our partners in the free world. The defeat of Germany and Japan does not bring our international responsibilities to a close. On the contrary, the United States must not retreat to the head-in-the-sand isolationism that followed World War I. In an age of atomic weapons, there is no place to hide from international aggression. Like it or not, international relations in the post-war world will be dominated by a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. In many respects, Soviet communism presents a greater threat than that posed by Nazi Germany. Soviet leaders are convinced of their mission to extend communism throughout the globe. Not only do the Soviets reject our principles of democracy and freedom, but they believe that conflict between the capitalist nations and themselves is inevitable. The threat posed by this ideologically inspired aggressive state is unique in modern history, and the future of Western civilization hangs in the balance.

The United States cannot turn its back on the threat of Soviet expansion. Western Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and Japan are too important to U.S. national interests to leave them vulnerable to Soviet aggression. By working with other free nations we can construct a strong barrier that will contain further Soviet expansion. Foreign aid can nourish democratic institutions and undercut the appeal of the communists in France, Italy, Greece, and other countries suffering from economic and political unrest. War with the Soviet Union is avoidable if we possess the will to stand up to Soviet military aggression. Our possession of the atomic bomb, a firm commitment to strengthening our armed forces, and our control of the oceans can be used to limit Soviet military actions. Fenced in by the power of the free world, Soviet communism will eventually wither and die, making room for a new generation of democratic leaders. Communism thrives only in conditions of misery, want, and strife. The United States and its allies must be vigilant in their efforts to contain its spread.



Charles G. Werner in *The Indianapolis Star*, 1949

*But what part shall the meek inherit?*

### **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from a telegram sent by George Kennan from the U.S. Moscow embassy to the State Department, February 22, 1946*

“USSR still lives in antagonistic ‘capitalistic encirclement’ with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence.... [They believe that the] capitalist world is beset with internal conflicts, inherent in the nature of capitalist society.... Internal conflicts of capitalism inevitably generate wars... Everything must be done to advance relative strength of USSR... no opportunity must be missed to reduce

---

strength and influence, collectively as well as individually, of capitalist powers.... At bottom of Kremlin's neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity.... Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany, is neither schematic nor adventuristic. It does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to logic of force. For this reason it can easily withdraw — and usually does — when strong resistance is encountered at any point....

“We must see that our public is educated to realities of Russian situation.... Much depends upon health and vigor of our own society. World communism is like malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue.... We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of sort of world we would like to see. Many foreign peoples, in Europe at least, are tired and frightened by experiences of past, and are less interested in abstract freedom than in security. They are seeking guidance rather than responsibilities. We should be better able than Russians to give them this. And unless we do, Russians certainly will.... We must have courage and self-confidence to cling to our own methods and conceptions of human society. The greatest danger that can befall us in coping with this problem of Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.”

*Excerpts from a memorandum to President Truman prepared by Clark Clifford, special counsel to the president, September 24, 1946*

“[The Soviet leaders] with whom we hope to achieve an understanding on the principles of international peace appear to believe that a war with the United States and the other leading capitalist nations is inevitable. They are increasing their military power and the sphere of Soviet influence in preparation for the ‘inevitable’ conflict, and they are trying to weaken and subvert their potential opponents by every means at their disposal.... We should be prepared to join with the British and other Western countries in an attempt to build up a world of our own which will pursue its own objectives and will recognize the Soviet orbit as a distinct entity with which conflict is not predestined, but with which we can not pursue common aims.... [We must] as a first step to world stabilization seek to prevent additional Soviet aggression. The greater the area controlled by the Soviet Union, the greater the military requirements of this country will be.... The language of military power is the only language which disciples of power politics understand. The United States must use that language in order that Soviet leaders will realize that our government is determined to uphold the interests of its citizens and the rights of small nations.... The prospect of defeat is the only sure means of deterring the Soviet Union.... To maintain our strength at a level which will be effective in restraining the Soviet Union, the United States must be prepared to wage atomic and biological warfare.... In addition to maintaining our own strength, the United States should support and assist all democratic countries which are in any way menaced or endangered by the U.S.S.R. Providing military support in case of attack is a last resort; a more effective barrier to communism is strong economic support....

“Cooperation by the Soviets can result in increased trade.... [However,] economic aid granted to the Soviet government or other governments within its sphere, and the fruits of private trade with persons inside these countries, will go to strengthen the entire world program of the Kremlin.... Because the Soviet Union is a highly centralized state, whose leaders exercise rigid discipline and control of all governmental functions, its government acts with speed, consistency, and boldness. The United States can not afford to be uncertain of its policies toward the Soviet Union.... The American people should be fully informed about the difficulties in getting along with the Soviet Union, and the record of Soviet evasion, misrepresentation, aggression and militarism should be made public.... The United States should maintain military forces powerful enough to restrain the Soviet Union and to confine Soviet influence to its present area. All nations not now within the Soviet sphere should be given generous economic assistance and political support in their opposition to Soviet penetration.”

---

---

## ***THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:***

1. Provide foreign aid to free countries in Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and Japan to enable them to resist Soviet encroachment and communist subversion.
2. Strengthen our armed forces—specifically our ability to wage atomic and biological warfare—in order to deter further Soviet aggression and contain the expansion of Soviet influence.
3. Educate the citizens of the United States and the free nations of the West concerning the true nature of the Soviet regime, its long-term threat to Western values, and the subversive role of the Communist Party in non-communist countries.
4. Cooperate militarily with non-communist countries so as to discourage Soviet attempts at expansion and ensure that non-communist governments have sufficient military resources to combat internal communist subversion and insurrection.

## ***LESSONS FROM HISTORY***

- The Soviet threat is very different from that posed by Hitler's Germany. Soviet leaders are motivated by an ideology that predicts world conflict and conquest. In their eyes, war with the United States is inevitable. Thus, our country needs a new global strategy.
- While the Soviets have sought to take advantage of vulnerable nations along their border, they have ceased their actions when the risks became too great. The Iran crisis of early 1946 showed that the Soviets will back down when faced with determined opposition.
- Communism has grown only when the social fabric of a nation has been weakened by war, economic crises, or political strife. In nations with healthy economies and stable democracies, communism has had little appeal.
- For the past thirty years, Soviet leaders have condemned and attacked Western values of economic freedom and political liberty. There is no reason to believe that they will change their views or behavior in the foreseeable future.

## ***ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 2***

- The Soviets respect force and will stop expanding when faced with military strength, thus avoiding a major confrontation.
  - Any country that falls under Soviet control strengthens the Soviet Union in its worldwide attack against capitalism and Western values.
  - The American way of life is threatened by the avowed goals of Soviet communism and those who follow the communist ideology.
  - The costs of economic and political aid in the short run will be much less than the inevitable war that will come if the Soviet Union is allowed to become more powerful than the West. In the long run, this strategy will force the Soviets to modify their behavior and work responsibly with other nations.
-



With the defeat of Germany and Japan, the Allied nations are in a unique position to create a new international order based on the rule of law. As history has shown, peace is possible only when the most powerful countries of the world share common goals. The United States and the Soviet Union are different in many ways. But while we reject the Soviets' economic and political system, we share a mutual desire for peace. Now is the time to build on this area of agreement to ensure a future of international stability and legality. The United States can do its part to maintain peace by refraining from the threat or use of force, whenever possible. This is particularly true in the case of our relationship with the Soviet Union. After losing more than twenty million people in the last war, the Soviets are naturally fearful of outside threats. This explains the actions of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe. These strategic moves are regrettable, but understandable. The Soviets feel they need a buffer of friendly states on their borders to protect themselves from invasion. With similar logic, the United States has dominated the Caribbean for most of this century. Installing Western-style democratic governments in the Soviet sphere of influence cannot be achieved short of another world war.

The best way to promote the interests of the peoples of eastern Europe would be to diminish the Soviet sense of insecurity. U.S. economic assistance for the Soviet Union and those countries within its orbit would reduce tensions, raise living standards, lay the foundation for expanding trade, and open up access to natural resources. Finally, the U.S. monopoly over atomic weapons and the resulting "saber rattling" heard from some of our leaders present a major obstacle to better U.S.-Soviet relations. This type of talk only strengthens the hand of those elements within the Soviet ruling class that do not favor cooperation with the West. These hard-liners use signs of U.S. hostility to justify further militarization of the Soviet economy. By establishing secure international controls over atomic weapons, we could eliminate this source of friction and take another important step toward shaping a world of peace and cooperation.



*To hold it together!*

### FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

*Excerpt from testimony by General Dwight Eisenhower before the House of Representatives, November 15, 1945*  
 "There is no one thing, I believe, that guides the policy of Russia more today than to keep friendship with the United States...."

---

*Excerpt from Secretary of War Henry Stimson's letter to President Truman, September 11, 1945*

“Those relations may be perhaps irretrievably embittered by the way in which we approach the solution of the bomb with Russia. For if we fail to approach them now and merely continue to negotiate with them, having this weapon rather ostentatiously on our hip, their suspicions and their distrust of our purposes and motives will increase.”

*Excerpts from Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace's letter to President Truman, July 1946*

“American [military] actions since V-J Day...make it appear either (1) that we are preparing ourselves to win the war which we regard as inevitable or (2) that we are trying to build up a predominance of force to intimidate the rest of mankind. How would it look to us if Russia had the atomic bomb and we did not, if Russia had ten thousand-mile bombers and air bases within a thousand miles of our coast lines and we did not. Some of the military men and self-styled ‘realists’ are saying: “What’s wrong with trying to build up a predominance of force? The only way to preserve the peace is for this country to be so well armed that no one will dare attack us. We know that America will never start a war.” The flaw in this policy is simply that it will not work. In a world of atomic bombs and other revolutionary new weapons, such as radioactive poison gasses and biological warfare, a peace maintained by a predominance of force is no longer possible.... Within a very few years several countries can have atomic bombs and other atomic weapons.... The very fact that several nations have atomic bombs will inevitably result in a neurotic, fear ridden, itching-trigger psychology in all the peoples of the world, and because of our wealth and vulnerability we would be among the most seriously affected.... Insistence on our part that the game must be played our way will only lead to a deadlock. The Russians will redouble their efforts to manufacture bombs, and they may also decide to expand their ‘security zone’ in a serious way....

“...Russian history for over a thousand years has been a succession of attempts, often unsuccessful, to resist invasion and conquest.... It follows that to the Russians all of the defense and security measures of the Western powers seem to have aggressive intent.... Our resistance to her attempts to obtain warm water ports and her own security system in the form of ‘friendly’ neighboring states seems, from the Russian point of view, to clinch the case.... [We should] allay any reasonable Russian grounds for fear.... We should ascertain from a fresh point of view what Russia believes to be essential to her own security as a prerequisite to the writing of the peace and to cooperation in the construction of a world order. We should be prepared to judge her requirements against the background of what we ourselves and the British have insisted upon as essential to our respective security. We should be prepared, even at the expense of risking epithets of appeasement, to agree to reasonable Russian guarantees of security.... It is of the greatest importance that we should discuss with the Russians in a friendly way their long-range economic problems and the future of our cooperation in matters of trade. The reconstruction program of the USSR and the plans for the full development of the Soviet Union offer tremendous opportunities for American goods and American technicians....”

*Excerpts from two books written by Walter Lippmann, one in 1943, the other in 1946*

“We should not have learned the lessons of our failures in the past, especially the lesson of the failure of the League of Nations, if in our projects for organizing world peace we did not fix our attention first of all upon the powers capable of organizing it. Blueprints, covenants, contracts, charters, and declarations do not create living associations.... The will of the most powerful states to remain allied is the only possible creator of a general international order.... The worse one thinks of the Russians, the greater must be deemed the error of having elected to challenge the Russians first of all on the ground where they were most able to be, and were most certain to be, brutal, stubborn, faithless, and aggressive.... To apply the methods of domestic politics to international politics is like using the rules of checkers in a game of chess.... In a world of sovereign states conflicts are decided by power, actual or potential, for the ultimate arbiter is not an election but war.”

---

---

## **THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

1. Recognize Soviet security interests in eastern Europe and stop encouraging groups in this area to resist the Soviets.
2. Avoid threatening the Soviet Union with our atomic monopoly and work for effective international control over the development of atomic power.
3. Focus on areas of mutual concern where there are some common interests, while using the United Nations as a forum to discuss differences and negotiate settlements.
4. Assist the Soviet Union and eastern Europe to rebuild, using U.S. expertise and economic assistance.
5. Avoid political and military alliances that might appear to the Soviets to be directed against them.

## **LESSONS FROM HISTORY**

- The aftermath of World War I demonstrated that world peace cannot be maintained without the cooperation of all the Great Powers. To exclude a Great Power such as the Soviet Union from the process guarantees failure.
- While friction between Great Powers is an inevitable result of the international system, the extent of such friction in the past has been limited through diplomacy. Differences in economic and political systems do not inevitably lead to war between nations.
- Just as the United States has been historically dominant in the Caribbean and has reacted strongly to other powers meddling in the area, so the Soviet Union has been historically dominant in eastern Europe and has interests in some areas of the Middle East. This is natural behavior for a powerful state.
- The wartime collaboration showed that the United States and the Soviet Union can work together on common areas of interest, even though they have very different political and economic systems.

## **ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 3**

- Contact and cooperation with the Soviet Union is the best way to expose the Soviets to the benefits of the American democratic system. Eventually, the Soviets will become more like us.
  - U.S. assistance in the economic development of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe will lead to increased trade and access to raw materials, which will benefit the American economy and raise the American standard of living.
  - Since the U.S. atomic monopoly will not last long, the destructive power of these weapons requires that all nations refrain from threatening behavior and confrontations. No longer can the world's leaders engage in traditional games of threat and bluff.
  - Reduced defense expenditures will promote American economic prosperity. American citizens should be engaged in productive, peacetime occupations, not in nonproductive, military establishments.
-

With our victory in the last war, the security of the United States is assured. Americans can return again to making their lives better without foreign threats lurking over their shoulders. Our fortunate geographic position, with great oceans isolating us from the strife of Europe and Asia, enables us to defend our shores without bankrupting our economy. The United States' two-ocean navy and air force equipped with atomic bombs are more than sufficient to ensure our freedom and protect those areas on the periphery of Europe and Asia that may be important to us. Further involvement in world affairs should be avoided. Especially dangerous are misguided plans to shape the world to fit American ideals. The people of each country should be allowed to work out their own problems in their own ways. The role of crusader is not only doomed to failure, as was demonstrated by the aftermath of World War I, but it also tends to corrupt the values that motivate the crusade. At a time when the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union is high, such a policy would be both expensive and reckless.

President George Washington established the traditional U.S. policy of non-intervention in European affairs. This policy, faithfully followed until this century, has worked hand-in-hand with our system of economic freedom to bring the American people an unrivaled level of peace and prosperity. By shunning political and military commitments in Europe, the United States has avoided the economic burdens of maintaining oversized armed forces. Moreover, unlike the experience of many Europeans, Americans have not seen their democratic values and individual rights threatened by an overbearing military establishment. Americans understand that we prosper most when the power of the central government is kept at a minimum. The individual liberties that Americans hold so dear would be threatened by the unchecked growth of executive power fed by overseas involvement. Like military and political commitments abroad, dependence on overseas markets and resources leads to a build-up of a military establishment to protect and promote these interests. Foreign loans and credits, even when motivated by humanitarian concerns, more often than not produce friction. America can continue to prosper without excessive overseas economic commitments.



Joseph Parrish in *The Chicago Tribune*, 1949. © Chicago Tribune Company. Used with permission.

*Some day they'll come crawling back to her*

### FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

*Excerpts from President George Washington's Farewell Address, September 19, 1796*

"Nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated.... Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, ...the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake.... The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in

---

extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible.... Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns.... Even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences.”

*Excerpts from President James Monroe’s message to Congress, December 2, 1823*

“Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government de facto [in power] as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none.”

*Excerpts from speeches by Senator Robert Taft, May 1943, August 1943, and January 1946*

“[Suggestions that the United States police the world] are completely contrary to the ideals of the American people and the theory that we are fighting for liberty as well as security.... It is based on the theory that we know better what is good for the world than the world itself. It assumes that we are always right and that anyone who disagrees with us is wrong.... Other people simply do not like to be dominated....

“It may appeal to the do-gooders who regard it as the manifest destiny of America to confer the benefits of the New Deal on every Hottentot.... It can only lead to vast national armaments in all parts of the world.... Our fingers will be in every pie. Our military forces will work with our commercial forces to obtain as much of the world trade as we can lay our hands on. We will occupy all the strategic points in the world and try to maintain a force so preponderant that none shall dare attack us.... Potential power over other nations, however benevolent its purpose, leads inevitably to imperialism....

“Money loaned to governments is not likely to be repaid if loaned in such tremendous amounts. That was our experience after the last war.... I seriously question the wisdom of having one government lend money to another.... In the long run, a country which cannot stand on its own feet is not likely to succeed through assistance from some other country. Every country must work out its own salvation.... Loans from one government to another make for bad feelings. A man or a country is more likely to make enemies by lending money and asking for repayment than he or it is likely to make friends. Loans have been used and probably will be used in the future for political purposes, to tie one country more closely to another, to obtain concessions in the development of resources, and to form political blocs, which are a good deal more dangerous than economic blocs.”

*Excerpts from the testimony of Prof. Charles Beard before Congress debating the Lend-Lease Act, 1941*

“Europe is old, Asia is old, the peoples and nations of Europe and Asia have their respective traditions, institutions, forms of government, and systems of economy.... Europe and Asia have been torn by wars, waged under various symbols and slogans, since the dawn of recorded history. The history of Europe and Asia is long and violent. Tenacious emotions and habits are associated with it. Can the American people, great and ingenious though they be, transform those traditions, institutions, systems, emotions, and habits by employing treasure, arms, propaganda, and diplomatic lectures? Can they, by any means at their disposal, make over Europe and Asia, provide democracy, a bill of rights, and economic security for everybody, everywhere in the world?”

---



---

## **THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

1. Avoid interfering in the disputes concerning Soviet influence in eastern Europe.
2. Keep our navy and air force strong enough to defend the Western Hemisphere and those areas along the periphery of Europe and Asia vital to our interests.
3. Avoid alliances, political or military, with any European power, particularly those directed against the Soviet Union.
4. Limit foreign aid to outright grants of financial assistance, rather than loans.

## **LESSONS FROM HISTORY**

- The United States has prospered for 170 years because we have avoided foreign commitments and the high level of military expenditures that such commitments require.
- The aftermath of World War I showed that we cannot remake the world according to American ideals. American ideals cannot be exported or imposed upon others.
- The economic dependence of the European powers on colonies in Asia and Africa has led to tangled political commitments and military involvement abroad. This was a major reason for the war among the European powers in 1914.
- The aftermath of World War I taught us that lending money to Great Britain, France, and other countries leads to hard feelings, friction, and, frequently, non-repayment of debts.
- From the Roman Empire to Nazi Germany, history shows us that militaristic governments tend to repress the liberties of their citizens.

## **ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 4**

- We will minimize the chances of being drawn into the next European war by avoiding commitments to or alliances against any European power.
  - Our economy will not be burdened with the heavy defense and foreign aid expenditures required by foreign commitments.
  - Because of our geographic isolation and largely self-sufficient economy, the Soviet Union poses no vital threat to the United States in the long run.
  - Americans will enjoy a full range of political and economic liberties only if the United States rejects policies that result in the build-up of a large military establishment.
  - The U.S. navy and the air force, equipped with atomic weapons, can guarantee the security of the United States from attack.
-