



International System: Post World War II

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International System and the Cold War

- Victorious Allied Powers dominated the international system during and post WWII. The Big Three, USA, UK, and USSR, met thrice, in [Tehran](#) (December 1943), [Yalta](#) (February 1945), and [Potsdam](#) (July 1945). Exclusive consultations among them shaped the international system that revolved around them. We will look at some of their major decisions.
- Somewhere during our discussion, the Cold War will sneak in. Unlike the two World Wars, it was an undeclared ideological systems-based war between the USSR, the sole communist power, and the capitalist members of the Alliance, as well as their future partners. The protagonists sought strategic supremacy through proxies and economic, military, and tech advancement.



References

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- Michael Brenes et al., “The Cold War,” in [The American Yawp](#), ed. Joseph Locke and Ben Wright (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018).
- Jeffrey K. Olick, *In the House of the Hangman: The Agonies of German Defeat, 1945–1948* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).
- Walter LaFeber, *The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad, 1750 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994).
- Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).
- All electronic resources are hyperlinked to relevant text.

Occupying Forces

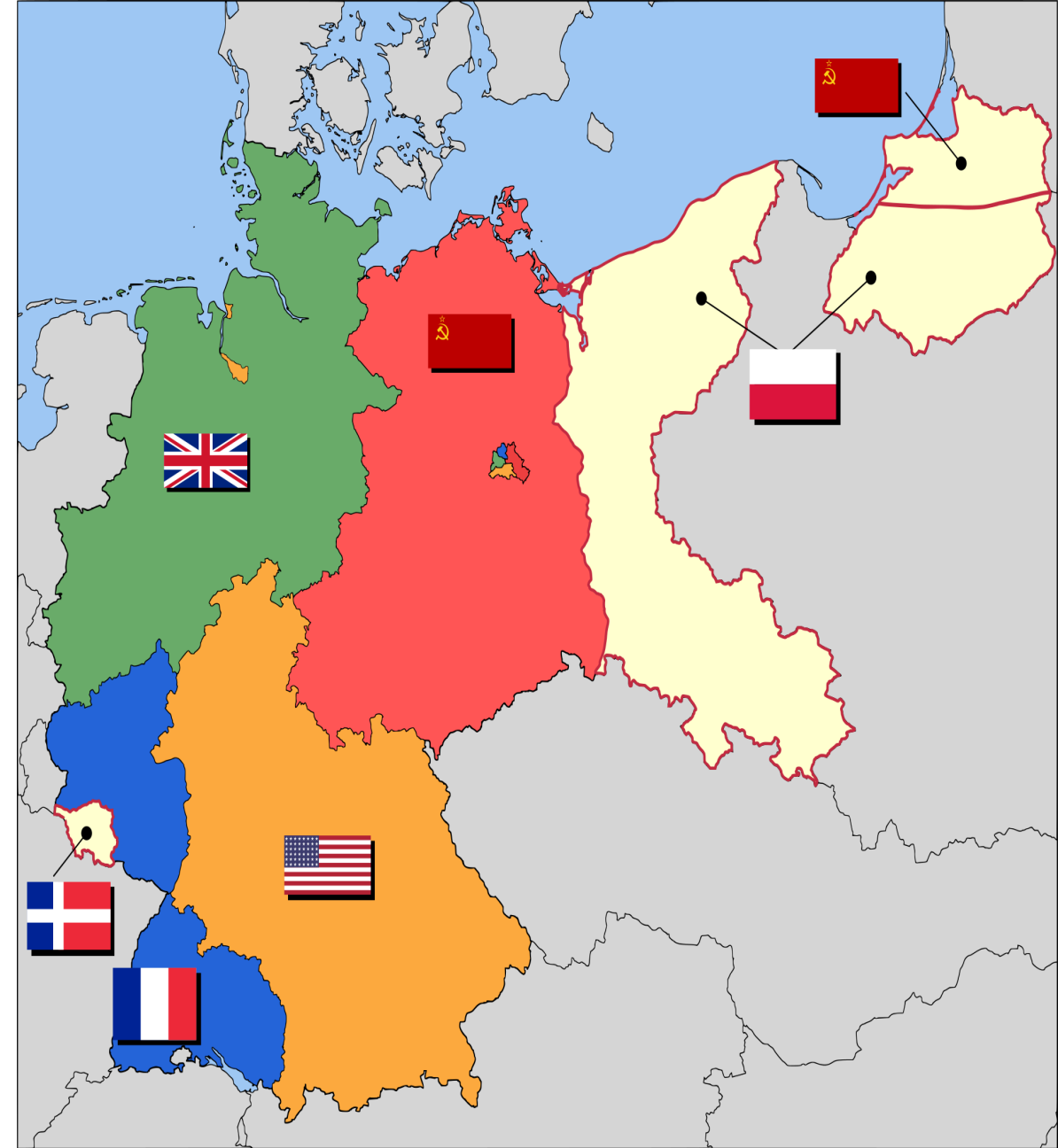
- World War I resulted in the collapse of four empires and the German surrender.
- As part of the Allied forces, France had an upper hand in defining the terms of the Treaty of Versailles that imposed reparations on Germany. The Treaty also redrew the map of Europe.
- During World War II, the Allies decided on different surrender terms for the two Axis Powers, Germany and Japan.
- The United States emerged as the uncontested leader of the Western camp of the Allied Powers. It helped make phenomenal decisions that shaped the postwar world.

Occupying Forces

- World War I left German sovereignty intact despite imposing crushing limitations on it.
- The Allied victors of World War II decided to occupy Germany directly to enforce the peace and disarmament terms they had finalized at the [Potsdam Conference in 1945](#). The agreement among the Allies provided for the complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany.
- The Allies also required that the German people accept responsibility for German “ruthless warfare and the fanatical Nazi resistance,” agreed to destroy the National Socialist Party, and abolish all Nazi laws.

Occupying Forces

- The Allies planned and punished the War criminals, planned to purge the German education of Nazi and militarist doctrines, and to make possible the successful development of democratic ideas.
- The Allies governed the sections of Germany and Berlin they controlled, but allowed administrative departments to function under the direction of the Control Council.
- They controlled German industry and all economic and financial international transactions, including exports and imports.
- The Allies collected reparations (app \$ 22 billion) from areas under their control, but also granted the USSR a share of the Western Zone assets.



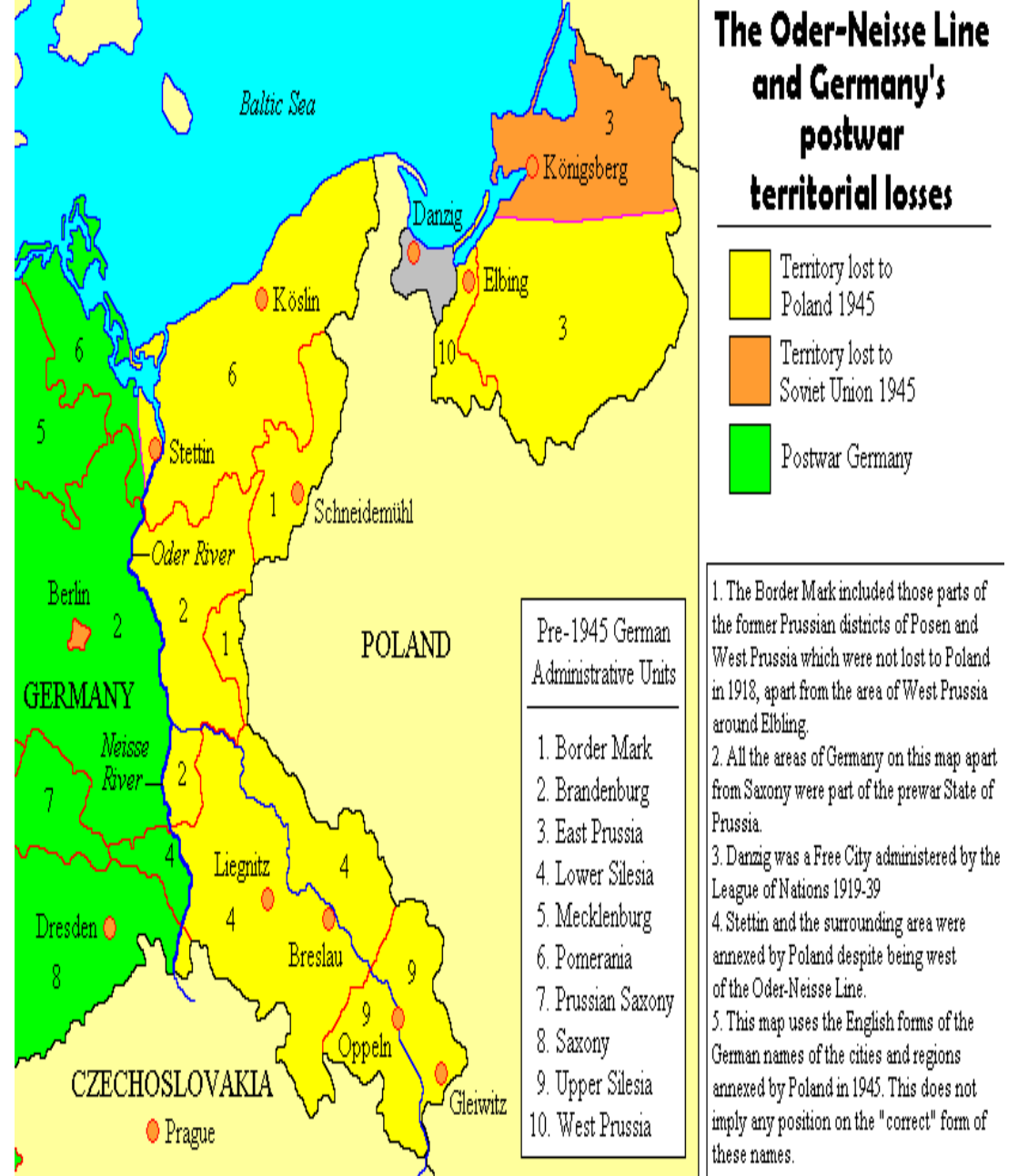
Occupying Forces

- In the European theater, the USSR had been the key factor in defeating the Nazis. They were the first to reach East Berlin.
- As a war prize, the USSR retained gains they had initially made under their alliance with Germany and later while fighting Germany.
- The West consented to the Soviet interest in having friendly governments in Eastern Europe and the territorial gains they had made in the Baltics and Poland.
- Between 1945 and 1948, all of these nations adopted communist rule.



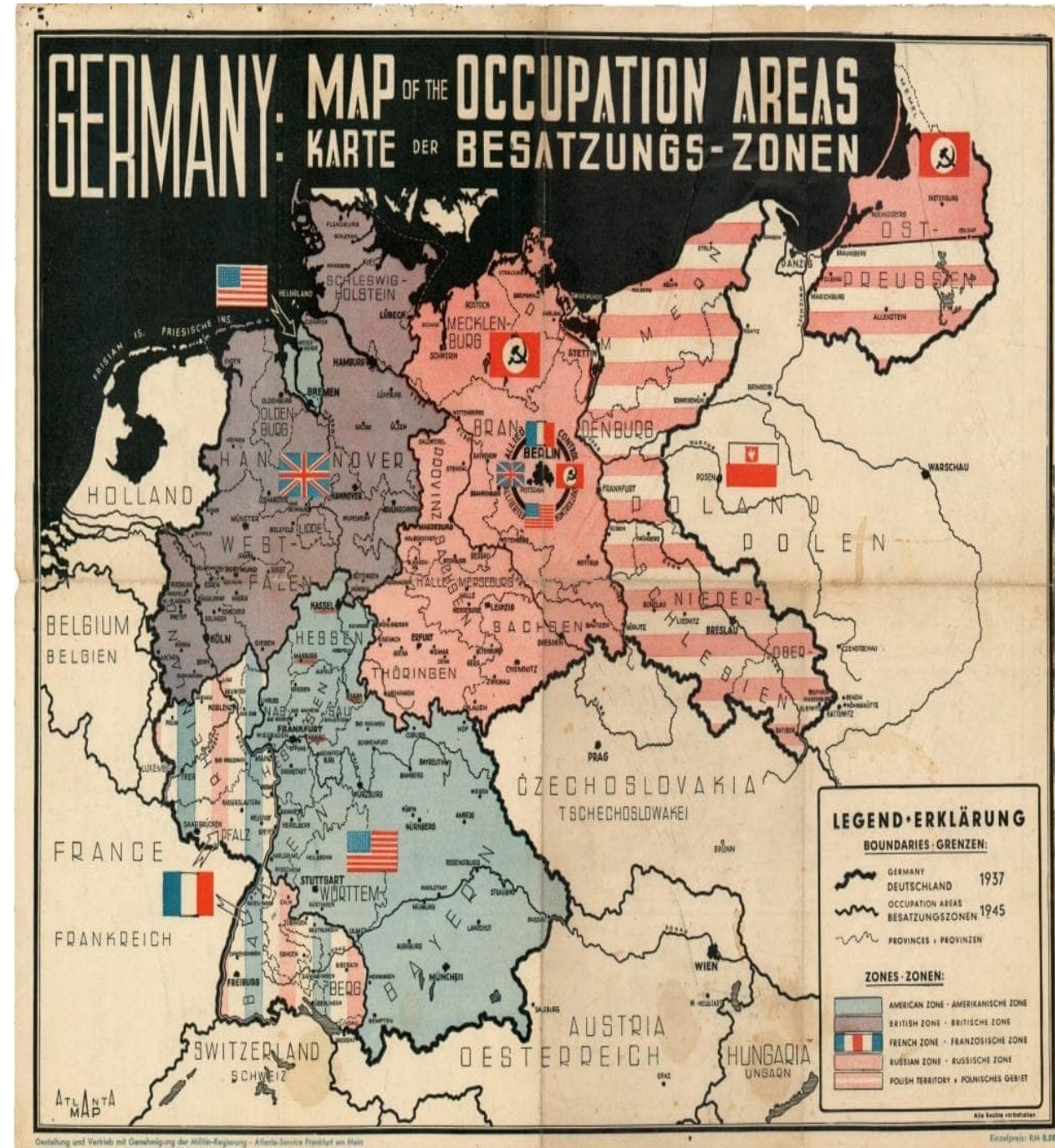
Germany-Poland-Soviet Loss/Gain of Territory

- As part of the war settlement, Germany ceded a major chunk of East German territory to Poland and the District of Königsberg to Russia. In turn, Russia retained possession of some 45% of Polish territory.
- In 1949, the occupying powers in both East and West Germany replaced their military governors with civilian leaders. The West created the Federal Republic of Germany on May 23. The Soviets established the German Democratic Republic in October. The occupation ended officially by mid-1955.
- Reunification of East and West Germany finally took place in October 1990.



Occupying Forces: Cold War

- The USSR's and the West's paths diverged over control of Germany despite their shared objectives.
- Within a year, the United States, Great Britain, and France merged their occupation zones to enhance German economic recovery. They introduced the Deutsche Mark on June 20, 1948. The Soviets perceived it as a threat to their zone's economy
- Alarmed by the emergence of a West German State, following the currency reforms, the Soviet Union immediately blocked all road access between West Germany and West Berlin.



Occupying Forces: Cold War

- As a result of the Soviet blockade, June 1948-May 1949, the United States began an 11-month-long airlift of supplies to the stranded citizens of West Berlin.
- The blockade and airlift contributed to cementing the division of Germany and Europe into East and West and marked the beginning of the Cold War.



Populations Dispossessed and Displaced

- The Allies also agreed to major population transfers. Joseph B. Schechtman, the historian of post-war population transfers in Europe, pointed to the revolutionary changes in the ethnic map of Europe.
- According to his research, nearly 20 million people in Europe moved for various reasons, such as fleeing their homes, being expelled, or officially transferred and exchanged during the process of sorting out ethnic groups between 1944 and 1951, both externally and internally.

Major Transfers of Populations 1944-51

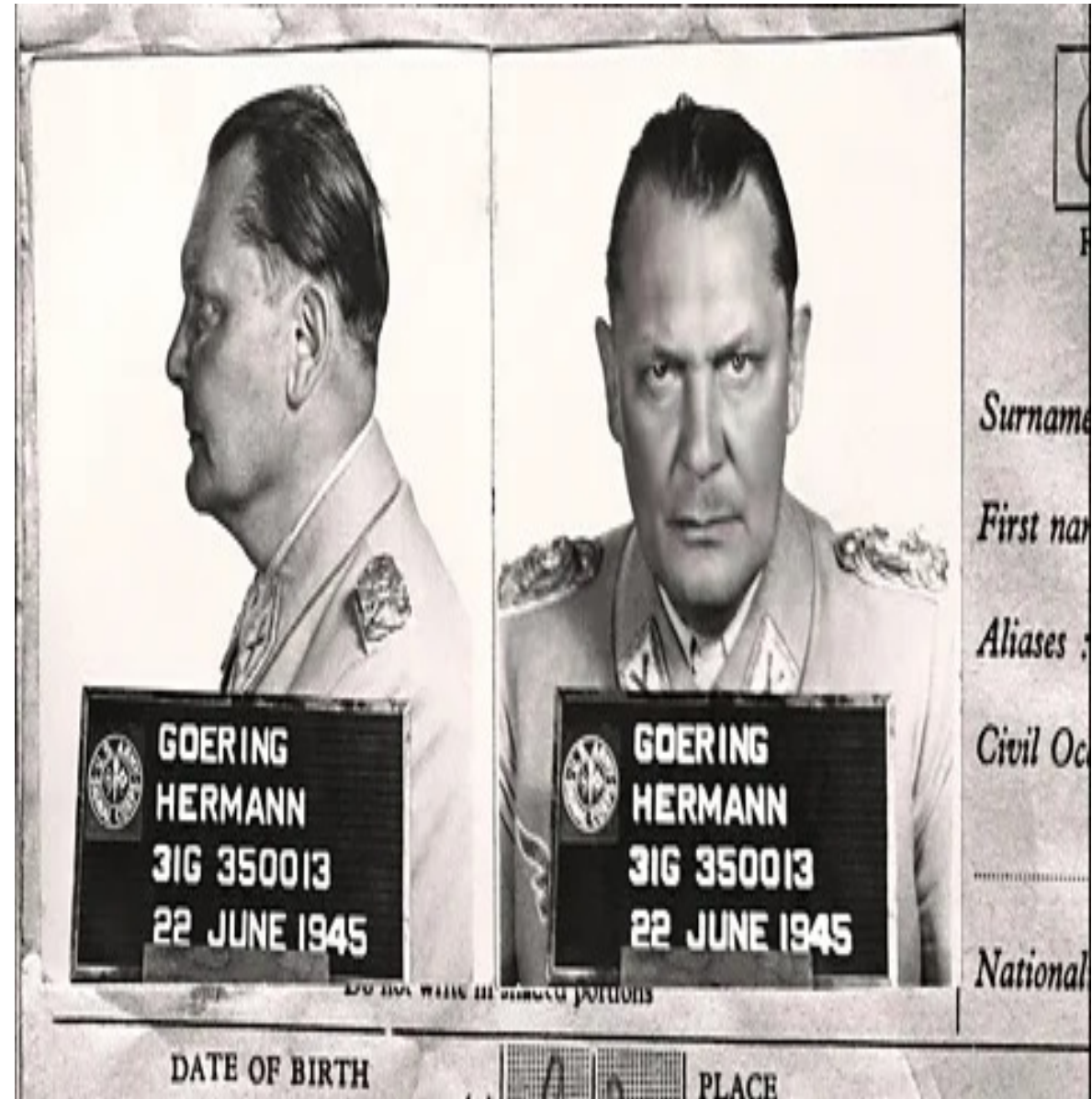
Various German groups	12.5 million
Poles repatriated from the West and the USSR as well as resettlers from Central Poland	4.48 million
Ukrainians, White Russians, Lithuanians transferred to USSR from Poland	520,000
Czechs and Slovaks resettled in Border Region	1.8 million
Hungarians and Slovaks expelled or exchanged under the agreement of February 27, 1946.	120,000
Turks transferred from Bulgaria to Turkey	160,000

Populations Moved

- The post-liberation regimes of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Hungary immediately mobilized to remove the Germans.
- The Allied Powers endorsed the Czech and Polish schemes at their Conference in Potsdam from July 17 to August 2, 1945.
- Czechoslovakia transferred 2.5 million Germans.
- Over 6.6 million were removed from the former German provinces incorporated into Poland.
- About 179,000 were taken out of Hungary, over and above the 100,000 Germans that had left there in 1944-45 with the retreating German armies.

The Nuremberg Trials (1945–1946)

- The Allies also established the first international criminal tribunals to prosecute war criminals.
- In Germany, the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg indicted twenty-two senior German political and military leaders, including Hermann Goering, Rudolph Hess, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Alfred Rosenberg, and Albert Speer.
- The IMT sentenced twelve of them to death.



Nuremberg of the Common Man?

- Historian Jeffrey Olick details the massive range of trials that Allies conducted as part of the denazification in their own zones.
- The American Military Government (AMG) had arrested 250,000 persons by the end of 1945 (p. 120).
- It also collected over 14 million responses to two surveys, *Fragebogen* and *Meldebogen*, about general responsibility and five types of offenses. The respondents categorized as major or minor offenders attracted diverse punishments (p. 125, 129).
- Moreover, twelve U.S.-run Nuremberg trials indicted 5000 criminals and sentenced 800 to death. Approximately five hundred were executed (p. 111).

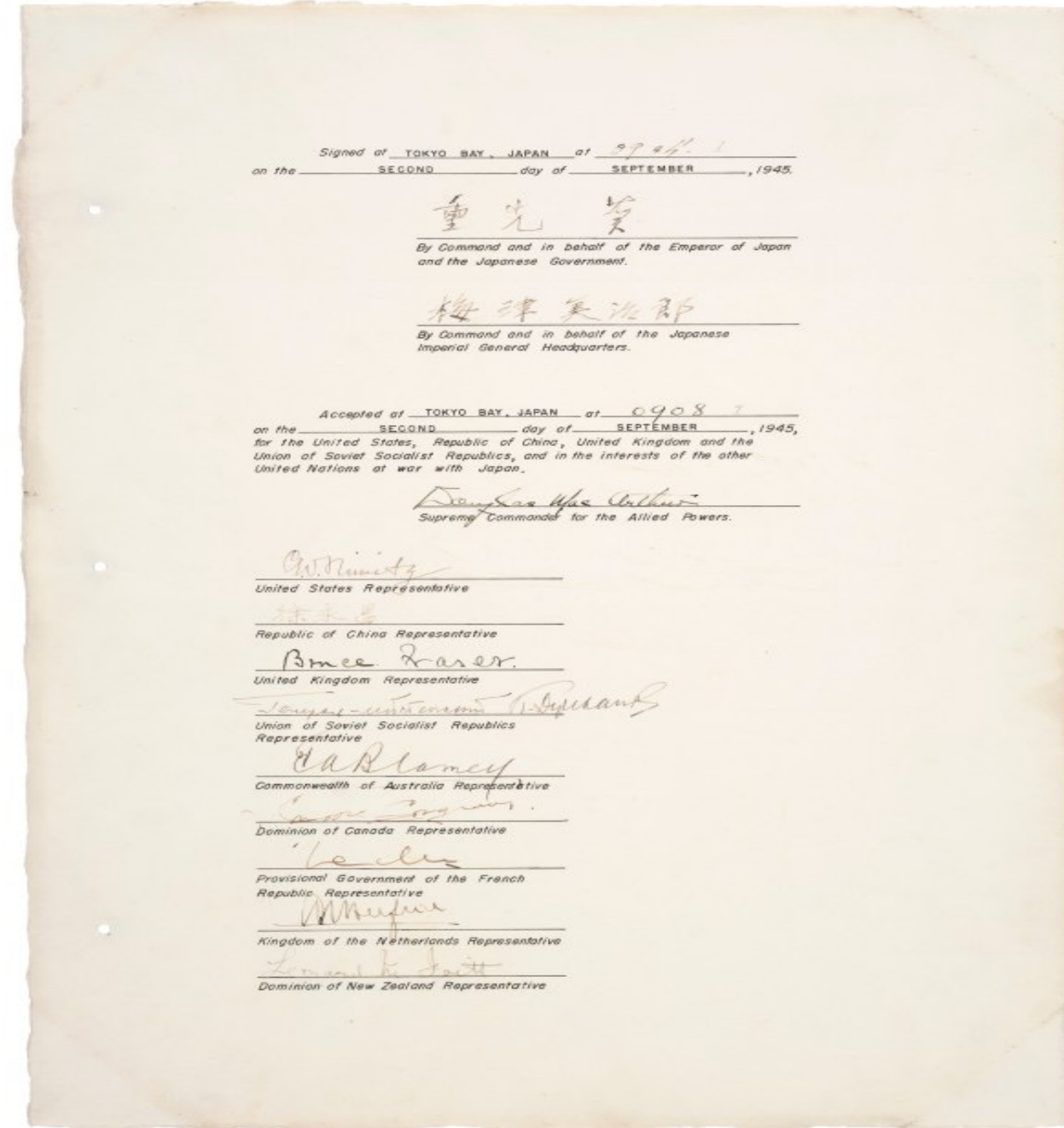
Nuremberg of the Common Man?

- The liberated concentration camps exposed the plight of some eleven million lives lost, [including six million Jews](#). Olick records the grievances of the liberated Jewish population for the non-inclusion of the Holocaust as a crime in the IMT Charter.
- In its final ruling, Olick surmises, “the IMT held that atrocities against German Jews did not fall within the jurisdiction of the court” (p. 108).
- The Holocaust victims’ quest for justice began.



Occupying Forces: Japan

- For the invaders of Pearl Harbor, the [Instrument of Surrender](#) resulted from the drastic action the United States had taken in August 1945.
- The United States single-handedly governed occupied Japan.



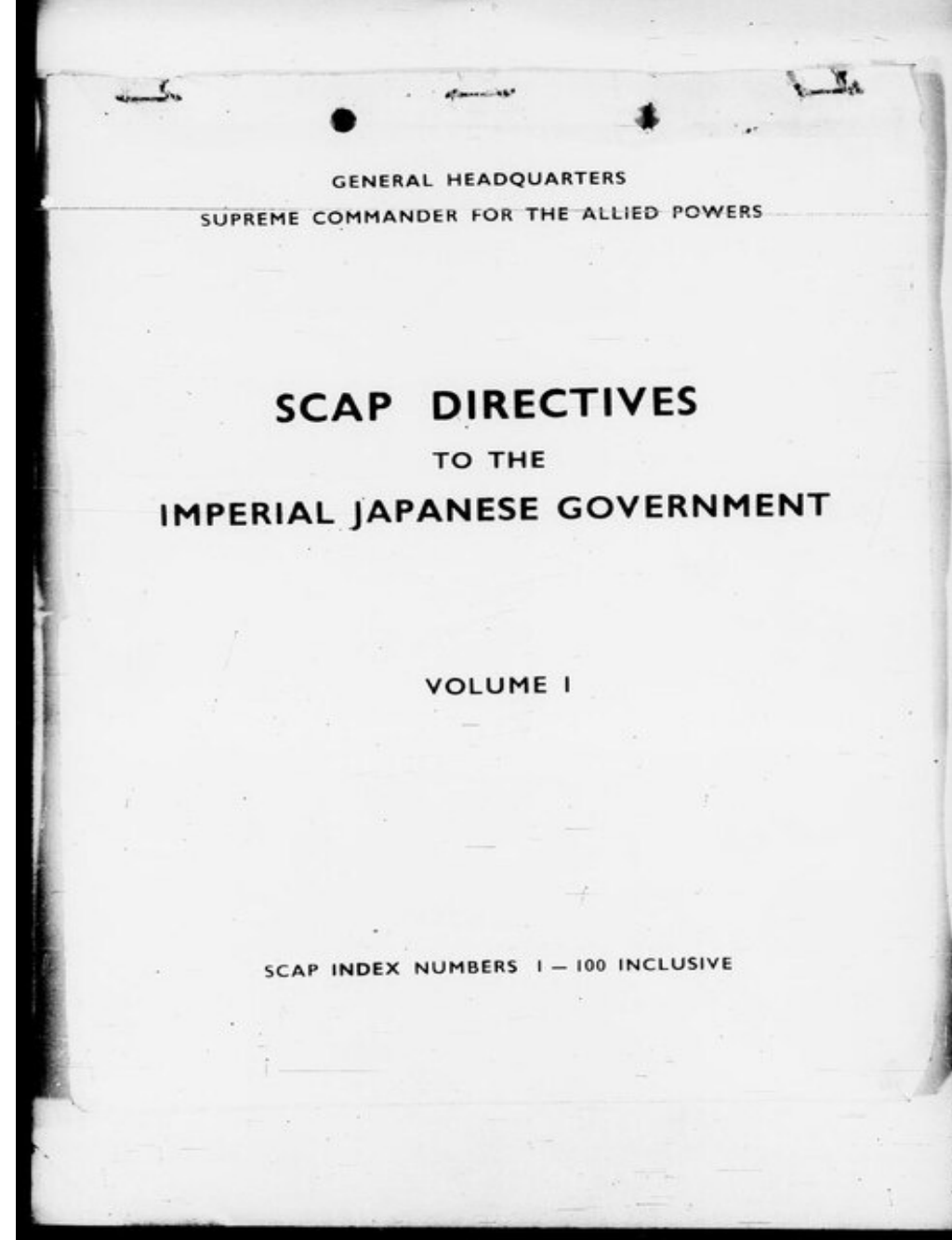
Occupying Forces

- The Instrument of Surrender, September 1945, required enforcement of all proclamations, orders, and directives deemed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) to be proper to effectuate this surrender and issued by him or under his authority.
- Japan recognized that the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate these terms of surrender.



Japan Rebuilt

- Between 1945 and 1947, the United States took both punitive and rehabilitative steps. The SCAP introduced land reform, encouraged the emergence of a free-market capitalist system, and introduced a new constitution.
- SCAP-driven Constitution downgraded the emperor's status to that of a figurehead, empowered the parliamentary system, promoted greater rights and privileges for women, including the right to vote, and renounced the right to wage war, which involved eliminating all non-defensive armed forces.



Japanese Occupation Ended

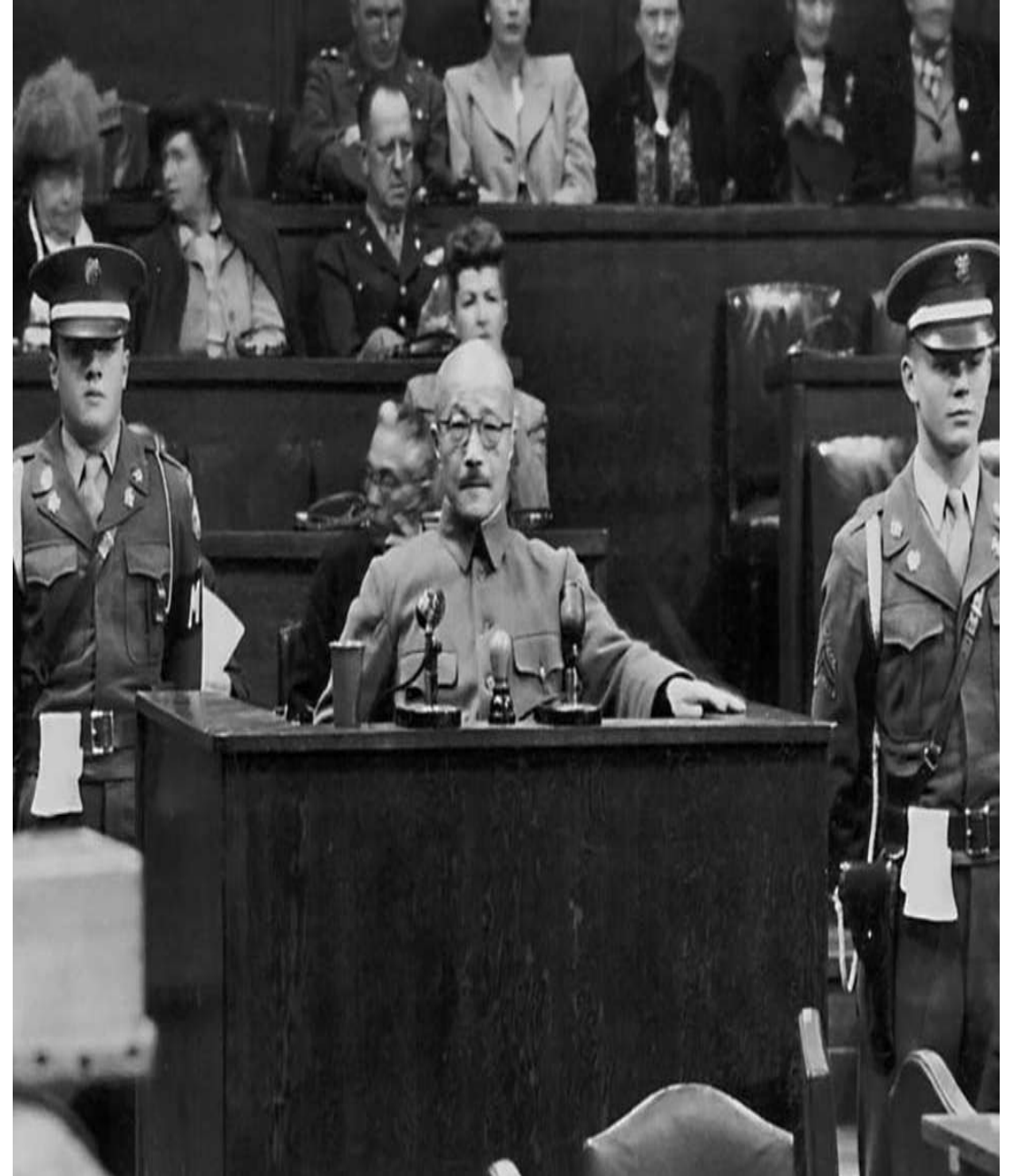
- During the Korean War (1950-53), Japan became the principal supply depot for UN forces and reaped its economic benefits.
- By 1950, the idea of a re-armed and militant Japan no longer alarmed U.S. officials.
- The final agreement allowed the United States to maintain its bases in Okinawa and elsewhere in Japan, and the U.S. Government promised Japan a bilateral security pact.
- In September of 1951, fifty-two nations met in San Francisco to discuss the treaty, and ultimately, forty-nine of them signed it. Notable holdouts included the USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.



«Мирный договор подписан» — первая полоса японской англоязычной газеты Nippon Times от 10 сентября 1951 г

The Tokyo War Crimes Trials (1946–1948)

- In Japan, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) was created in Tokyo, Japan, under a 1946 proclamation by the SCAP in occupied Japan (Japanese Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo before the Tribunal).
- The IMTFE presided over the prosecution of nine senior Japanese political leaders and eighteen military leaders.
- The Tribunal sentenced seven to death and sixteen to life imprisonment.



Southeast Asia: Cold War

Colonization to Re-Colonization and Independence

- French Indochina had the most tragic outcome.
- Ho Chi Minh declared independence in September 1945, but the American and British governments enabled France Libre to take over. This attempt at recolonization resulted in two Indochina wars, with the Cold War defining the conflict after the 1949 win of the Communists in China.
- The first war ended in 1954 with the French defeat. Indochina was divided into North and South Vietnam, as well as sovereign Laos and Cambodia.
- The second Indochina War began in 1955. It involved the United States and the communist bloc-supported Vietnam. It ended in 1975 with the North recapturing the South and the United States leaving the field.



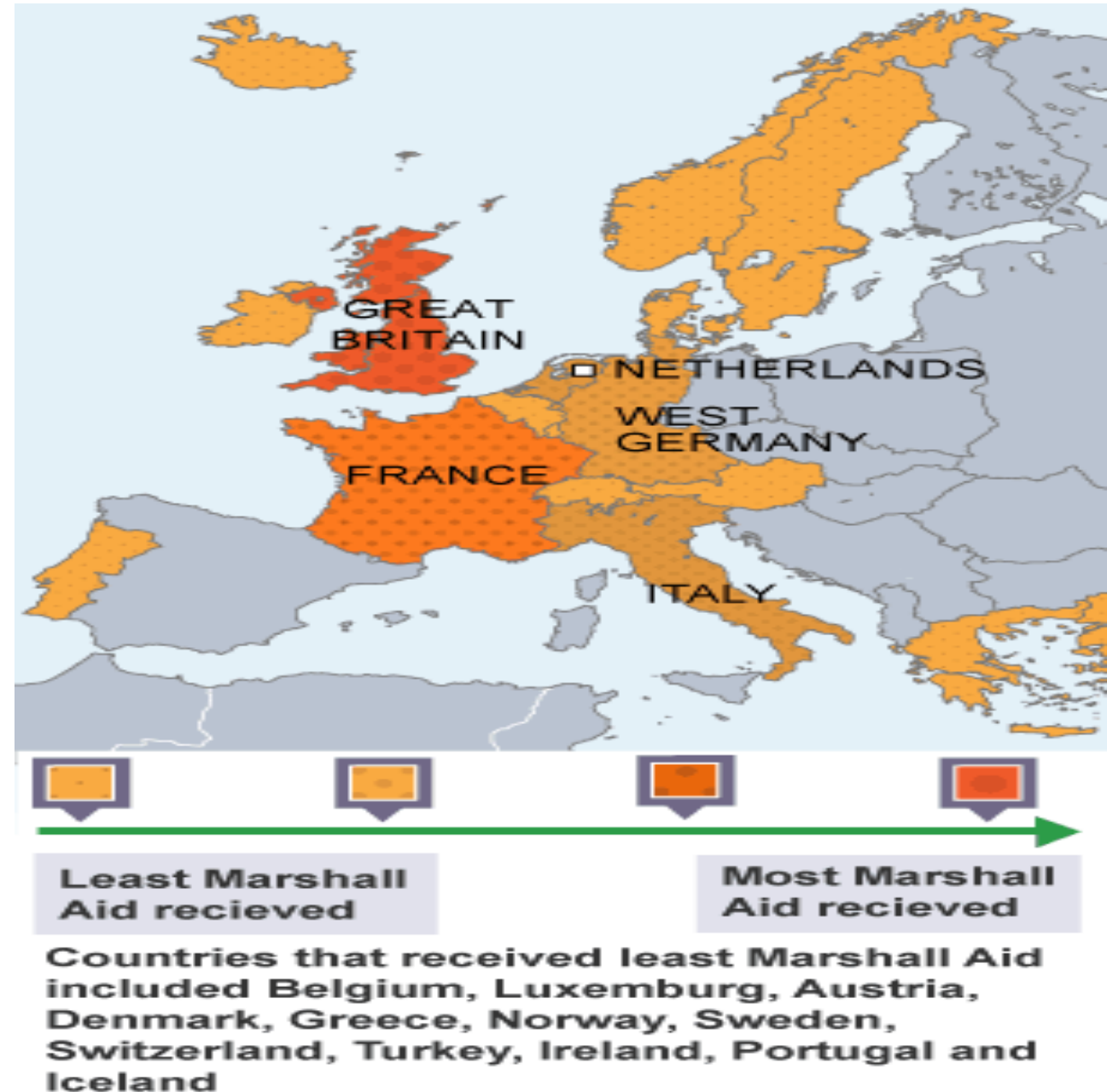
Cold War: Korean Peninsula

- Besides Indochina, the Korean Peninsula became another site for the Cold War.
- A Japanese possession since 1910, the United States and the Soviet Union divided the Peninsula at the 38th parallel in 1945.
- Between 1950 and 1953, the UN Forces combatted the North Korean forces and the Communist Bloc, ending in the establishment of the Korean Demilitarized Zone along the 38th Parallel.



Europe Revived: Marshall Plan

- In 1947, the U.S. Government began a massive aid program for Europe under the Marshall Plan.
- The Soviet Union prevented the countries along the Soviet border in Eastern Europe. Instead, the Soviet Union offered its own postwar program for economic aid.



Marshall Plan

- Secretary of State George C. Marshall called for a comprehensive program to rebuild Europe in 1947.
- Congress passed the Economic Cooperation Act in March 1948 and approved funding that would eventually rise to over \$12 billion for the rebuilding of Western Europe.
- The Marshall Plan revitalized European industrialization and brought extensive investment into the region.
- In recognition of this great humanitarian effort, Secretary of State Marshall was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1953.



United Nations

- In February 1945, the Allied Powers met at Yalta from Feb. 4 to 11 and agreed to set up the United Nations organization.
- The Allies decided that the United States would host a conference on the proposed world organization on 25 April 1945. They also finalized the list of invitees.
- USSR secured admission to original membership of two Soviet Socialist Republics, i.e., the Ukraine and White Russia (Byelorussian USSR).



United Nations

- The US held a Conference in San Francisco in April-June 1945 to adopt the Charter. Forty-six countries attended and signed.
- With a mixed record of performance, the UN has outlived the League and has a growing membership, currently 193.
- They discarded the controversial Article 16-type collective defense provision of the League of Nations' Covenant. Instead, they made their consensual decisions enforceable under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter.



United Nations

- The participants decided that each member of the Security Council should have one vote.
- Five Permanent Members, the United States, USSR, ROC, United Kingdom, and France acquired veto powers.
- PRC replaced ROC in 1971. Russia retained the USSR seat in December 1991.
- On procedural matters, the Council should decide by an affirmative vote of seven (now nine) members.
- Under Chapter VI, a permanent member party to a dispute should abstain from voting.

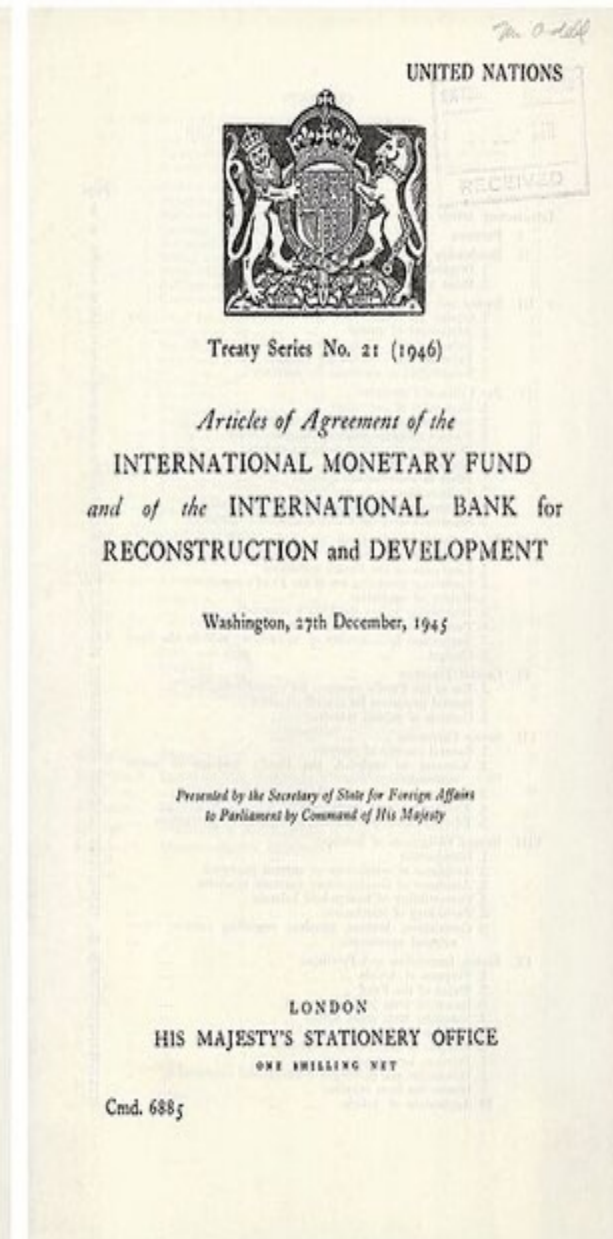
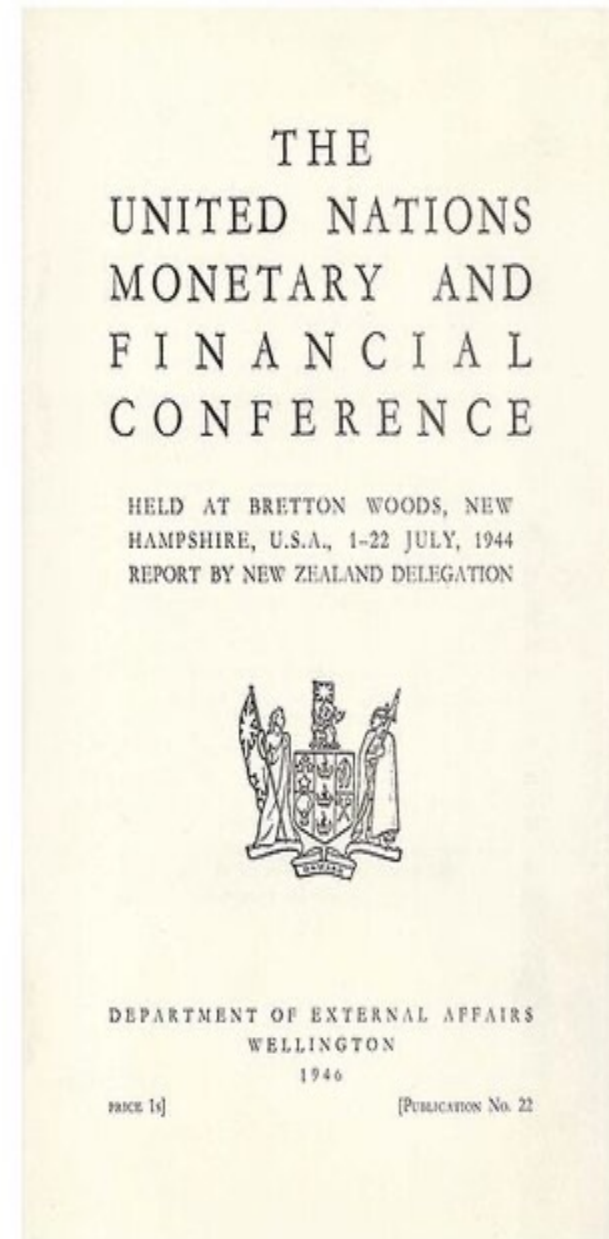


CHARTER *of* THE UNITED NATIONS

AND STATUTE *of* THE
INTERNATIONAL COURT
OF JUSTICE

Twins of Bretton Woods

- The United States also convened the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference on July 1, 1944, attended by 730 delegates from 44 nations.
- The Conference adopted on July 22, 1944, the Final Act of the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference.
- It included charters outlining the goals and mechanisms of both the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.



Cold War:

George Kennan's Long Telegram 1946

- George Kennan was the American Charge d'Affaires in Moscow in 1946. He sent a long telegram to Washington defining who the Soviets were and how America must deal with them.
- Kennan had a deep impact on America's Soviet policy, providing, perhaps unintentionally, the theoretical framework for the Cold War.

**PLEASE RETURN TO
S/P, ROOM 5146 NS**

INCOMING TELEGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF STATE—DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
TELEGRAPH BRANCH

[COPY]
No Paraphrase Necessary

8963
Moscow via War
Dated February 22, 1946
Rec'd 3:52 p.m.

ACTION:EUR
INFO: ~~SECRET~~
S
U
C
A-B
A-C
A-D
SA
SPA
UNC
EUR/X
DC/R

UNCLASSIFIED
Secretary of State,
Washington.

511, February 22, 9 p.m.

Answer to Dept's 284, Feb 3 involves questions so intricate, so delicate, so strange to our form of thought, and so important to analysis of our international environment that I cannot compress answers into single brief message without yielding to what I feel would be dangerous degree of over-simplification. I hope, therefore, Dept will bear with me if I submit in answer to this question five parts, subjects of which will be roughly as follows:

- (One) Basic features of post-war Soviet outlook.
- (Two) Background of this outlook.
- (Three) Its projection in practical policy on official level.
- (Four) Its projection on unofficial level.
- (Five) Practical deductions from standpoint of U.S. policy.

I apologize in advance for this burdening of telegraphic channel; but questions involved are of such urgent importance, particularly in view of recent events, that our answers to them, if they deserve attention at all, seem to me to deserve it at once. THERE FOLLOWS PART ONE: BASIC FEATURES OF POST WAR SOVIET OUTLOOK, AS PUT FORWARD BY OFFICIAL PROPAGANDA MACHINE, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) U.S.S.R. still lives in antagonistic "capitalist encirclement" with which in the long run there can be no permanent

UNCLASSIFIED
~~SECRET~~

Declassified by *Ambassador Kennan*
on August 22, 1963.
INFORMATION COPY

Cold War:

George Kennan Long Telegram 1946

- Here are some excerpts from the telegram:

“At the bottom of the Kremlin's **neurotic view of world affairs** is the traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity. Originally, this was the insecurity of a peaceful agricultural people trying to live on a vast, exposed plain in a neighborhood of fierce nomadic peoples. To this was added, as Russia came into contact with the economically advanced West, fear of more competent, more powerful, more highly organized societies in that area...”



Cold War: George Kennan Telegram 1946

- George Kennan continues:

“It was no coincidence that Marxism, which had smoldered ineffectively for half a century in Western Europe, caught hold and blazed for the first time in Russia. Only in this land, which had never known a friendly neighbor or indeed any tolerant equilibrium of separate powers, either internal or international, could a doctrine thrive that viewed economic conflicts of society as insoluble by peaceful means.”

Cold War: George Kennan Telegram 1946

- George Kennan continues:

“But I would like to record my conviction that the problem is within our power to solve--and that without recourse to any general military conflict... In support of this conviction, there are certain observations of a more encouraging nature I would like to make:

Cold War: George Kennan Telegram 1946

- George Kennan continues:

(1) Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany, is neither schematic nor adventuristic. It does not work with fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to the logic of reason, it is highly sensitive to the logic of force. For this reason, it can easily withdraw--and usually does when strong resistance is encountered at any point. Thus, if the adversary has sufficient force and makes clear his readiness to use it, he rarely has to do so. If situations are properly handled, there need be no prestige-engaging showdowns.”

Cold War: Truman Doctrine

- Kennan's message translated into the containment of the Soviet influence in whichever direction it spread, as outlined in the Truman Doctrine, contained in the President's address to Congress on March 12, 1947.
- The Truman Doctrine committed the United States to provide political, military, and economic assistance to all democratic nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces.



Cold War: Truman Doctrine

- The immediate cause for the Truman Doctrine was that the British Government had expressed an inability to provide military and economic assistance to the Greek Government in its civil war against the Greek Communist Party.
- Truman asked Congress to support the Greek Government against the Communists.
- Truman also asked Congress to assist Turkey, since that nation, too, had previously been dependent on British aid.



Cold War: The CIA

Section 104 (d) defines the agency's role under the [National Security Act of July 26, 1947](#).

(1) collect intelligence through human sources and by other appropriate means, except that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency shall have no police, subpoena, or law enforcement powers or internal security functions;

(3) provide overall direction for and coordination of the collection of national intelligence outside the United States through human sources ... appropriate account is taken of the risks to the United States and those involved in such collection...”



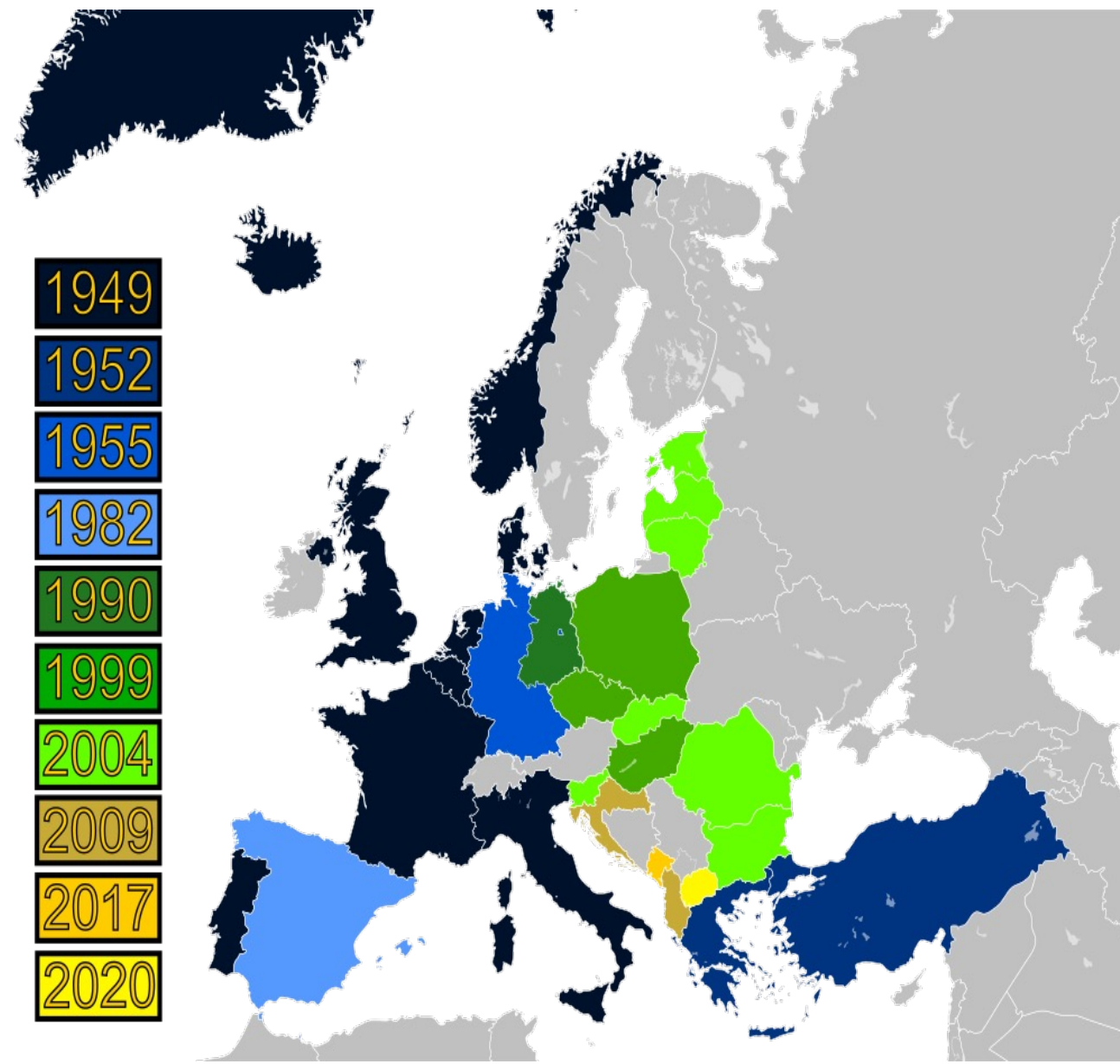
The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) 1949.

- The Western European countries sought to reinforce their common defense after the war.
- In March 1948, Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg signed the Brussels Treaty. This treaty provided collective defense; if any one of these nations was attacked, the others were bound to help defend it.
- The Truman Administration decided to lead a wider organization to defend Western democracies. Truman, unlike Wilson, took Republican Senators on board and had their consent to lead the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949.



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

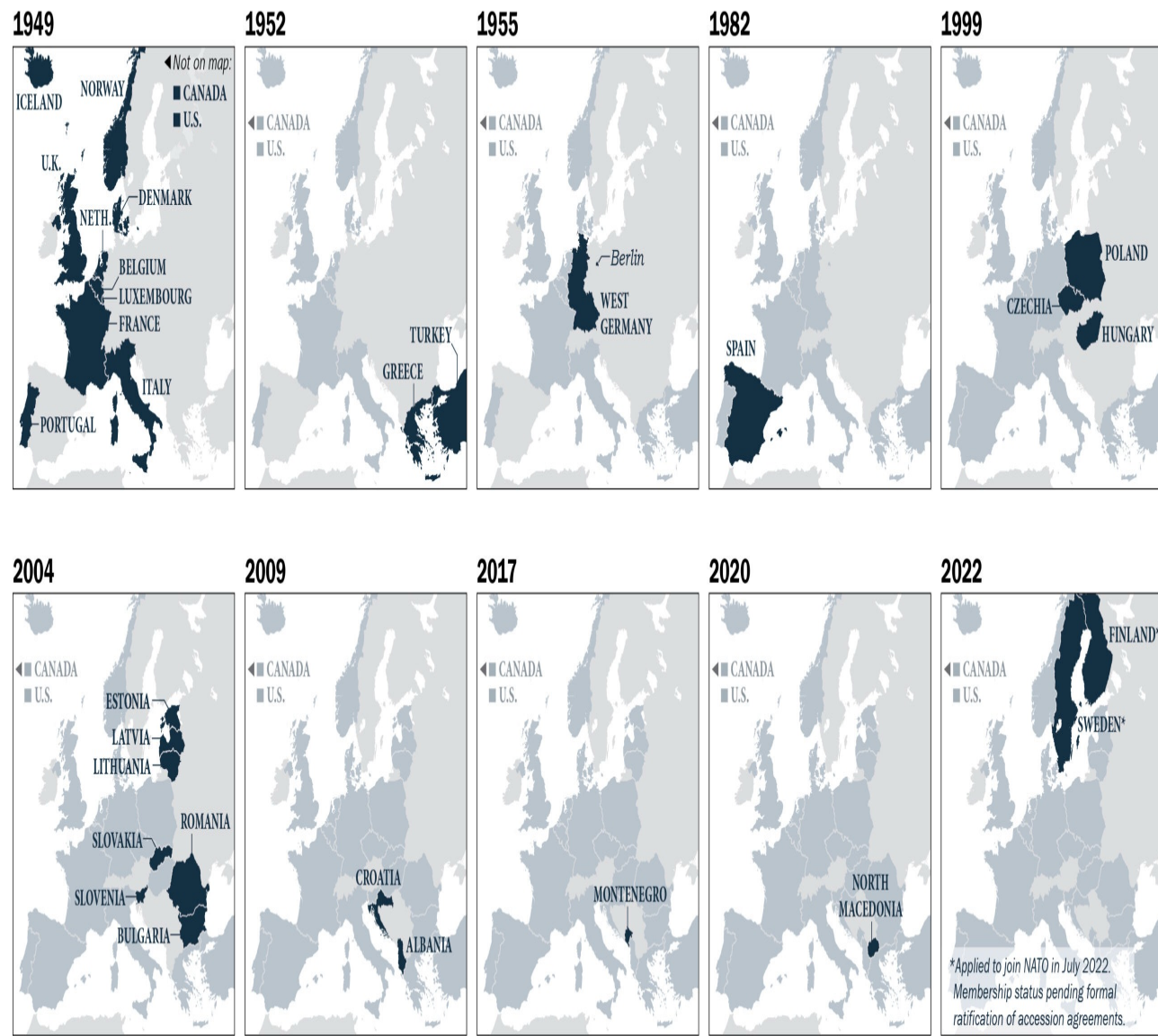
- Original NATO members, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom agreed to collective defense in Article Five of its charter, which considers an attack against one an attack against all.
- Later in 1949, President Truman proposed a military assistance program, and the Mutual Defense Assistance Program.
- Congress appropriated about \$ 1.4 billion to build Western European defenses in October.



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- The Korean War, 1950-53, expedited the member states' integration and coordination of defense forces through a centralized headquarters.
- The United States bolstered its troop commitments to Europe to provide assurances against Soviet aggression on the European continent.
- In 1952, NATO admitted Greece and Turkey and added the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955. Currently, NATO has thirty-two members.
- In response to NATO, the Soviet Union formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955 with its Eastern European satellite states as members.

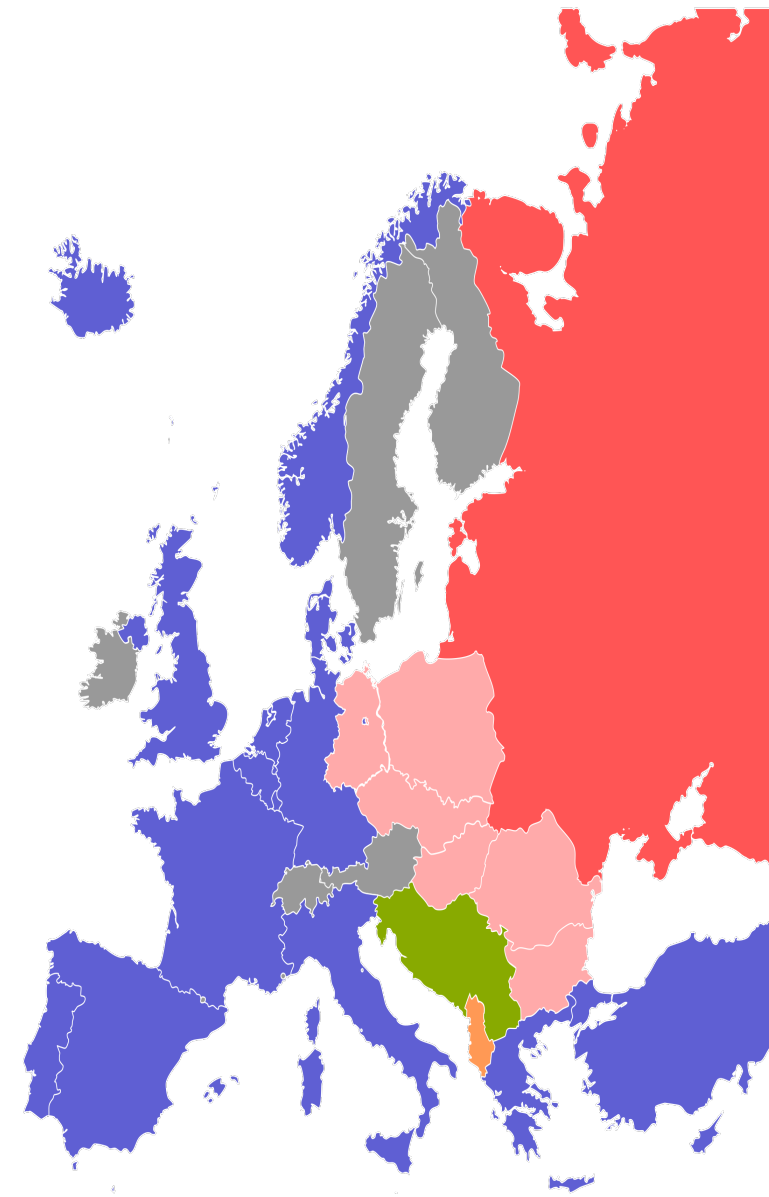
73 Years of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Enlargement, 1949-Present



Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative.

Defining Interstate Relations

- The Red threat became the defining element of security perceptions in America at home and abroad. McCarthyism of the late 1940s and 1950s, and international conflicts such as the Korean War (1950-53) and the Vietnam War (1955-75), were the most tragic expressions of growing differences between two powerful states and their people.
- The arms race reinforced the notion of Mutual Assured Destruction and, ironically, minimized the chances of war, although the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 challenged some of those certainties.



Defining Interstate Relations: Robert S. McNamara

- Interstate and intercultural relations are complex. This is what Robert S. McNamara had to say about the US involvement in the Vietnam War in terms of lessons learned, in his book, *In Retrospect*, 1995 (pp 321-323).
 - 1. We misjudged then, as we have since, the geopolitical intentions of our adversaries....and we exaggerated the danger to the United States of their actions.
 - 3. We underestimated the power of nationalism...
 - 4. Our misjudgments of friends and foes alike reflected our profound ignorance of history, culture, and politics in the area, and the personalities of their leaders...

1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER

IN

"Unsparring...a clear, concise and extremely interesting look at a crucial period of U.S. decision making. It deserves to be widely read."

—Wall Street Journal

RETROSPECT



THE TRAGEDY AND LESSONS OF VIETNAM

ROBERT S.

M McNAMARA

WITH BRIAN VANDEMARK

Defining Interstate Relations: Robert S. McNamara

- 5. We failed ...to recognize the limitations of modern high-technology military equipment, forces, and doctrine in confronting conventional, highly motivated people's movements...
- 8. We did not recognize that neither our people nor our leaders are omniscient...We do not have the God-given right to shape every nation in our own image or as we choose.
- 9. We must act only in conjunction with multinational forces supported by the international community.
- 10. We failed to recognize that in international affairs...there may be problems with no immediate solutions.



Conclusion

- We will do Decolonization in Africa next week and see a massive increase in the number of independent nation-states in the world. The international system has enabled such a growing number of inter-state and non-state actors to interact variously at the multilateral, regional, and bilateral levels.
- We must remember that the “isolationist” United States created the post-WWII international system. Although most components of the US-created international system are currently experiencing serious strains, as of now, they continue to function. The UN, with the US funding and membership, has survived longer than the League.
- Technically, the Cold War ended with the collapse of the USSR in 1990, in a great victory for the market-based capitalist democracies. We have also avoided a third world war, so far, despite different pressure points that continue to disrupt human resolve to enhance mutual understanding and live in peace.

Email

Questions/Comments

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