

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. We made this promise 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 ele-

ments of the reactionary prewar government have been spreading about alleged Soviet atrocities are slanderous 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, socialist 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 is 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 United States and Great Britain's denial 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 credits—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.

We must resist the efforts of discredited representatives of the war-mongering capitalist cliques, such as Mr. Churchill, to stir up trouble between the former wartime allies. 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 postwar 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

For 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 Moscow applied 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 Soviet Union is violating the fundamental right of people to choose freely their

own form of government in areas of Eastern Europe under the control of the Red Army. The Soviets are also violating the promises made at Yalta concerning Poland. 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, Soviet forces have installed the Communist Party in positions of power. 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 Soviet-occupied areas occupied 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 obstructionist 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. If any hostile power came to dominate the European continent, it could deprive Britain of access to European markets and endanger our sea lifelines to the British Empire. Great Britain's very existence would be threatened. 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. Americans must now share the responsibility for maintaining an open European system, which Britain shouldered exclusively for many years. 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 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 that Russia traditionally dominated.

The Soviet representatives' actions towards 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 one hundred 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 to recover shortly 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 pre-occupied 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 Dodeca-

nese 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. Denying future German armies the Rhineland as a staging area could decrease the likelihood of another invasion. 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 devel-

opment 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 1930s 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 was an autocratic monarchy and is now a communist-dominated, single-party state—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 further 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, Germany must pay full restitution in kind for all French goods and equipment that the Nazis forcibly removed 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. 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."

Name: _____

Study Guide—Background Briefing

Instructions: You are representing your country at a meeting of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, and France held in the summer of 1946. The purpose of the conference is to discuss ways to reduce tensions and minimize threats to the peace. Since your country was one of the victorious powers in World War II and serves as one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, you feel entitled to shape the postwar world to promote your national security interests and well-being. To assist you in preparing a convincing presentation of your country's security concerns, carefully answer the following questions after you have read the background briefing.

Your country: _____

1. What are your country's specific security concerns?
2. What issues and values, fundamental to your country, lie behind these concerns?
3. What are the historical precedents for these concerns?
4. In your judgment, what attitudes do the other powers at the conference hold toward your country?
5. What evidence supports your perception of these attitudes?
6. According to the perspective of your country, what are the major threats to postwar peace?