



FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

APRIL 2006

# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS

1900 - 2001





## FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

Editor	Merle David Kellerhals, Jr.
Managing Editor	Rebecca Ford Mitchell
Contributing Editors	David A. Denny David I. McKeeby Jody Rose Platt Jacquelyn S. Porth
Associate Editor	Rosalie Targonski
Reference Specialists	Samuel Moncrief Anderson George Burkes Vivian R. Stahl
Video Researcher	Martin J. Manning
Photo Researchers	Ann Jacobs Maggie Johnson Sliker
Cover Designer	Thaddeus A. Miksinski, Jr.

Publisher	Judith S. Siegel
Senior Editor	George R. Clack
Executive Editor	Richard W. Huckaby
Production Manager	Christian S. Larson
Assistant Production Manager	Sylvia Scott
Editorial Board	Alexander C. Feldman Jeremy F. Curtin Kathleen R. Davis Kara Galles

### COVER PHOTOS

Center top: President Ronald W. Reagan (right) talks with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at a three-day summit in Washington December 8, 1987. AP/WWP

Right: Chairman Mao Zedong (left) and President Richard M. Nixon meet for the first time in February 1972 in Beijing. AP/WWP

Center bottom: British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (left), U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt (center), and Soviet Marshal Josef Stalin (right) meet in the Livadia Palace gardens, Yalta, on February 12, 1945. AP/WWP

Left: President John F. Kennedy proclaims a U.S. naval blockade against Cuba in a nationwide television and radio broadcast from the White House in Washington on October 22, 1962. AP/WWP

The Bureau of International Information Programs of the U.S. Department of State publishes five electronic journals under the *eJournal USA* logo—*Economic Perspectives*, *Global Issues*, *Issues of Democracy*, *Foreign Policy Agenda*, and *Society & Values*—that examine major issues facing the United States and the international community, as well as U.S. society, values, thought, and institutions.

One new journal is published monthly in English and followed by versions in French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Selected editions also appear in Arabic and Chinese. Each journal is catalogued by volume (the number of years in publication) and number (the number of issues that appear during the year).

Opinions expressed in the journals do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government. The U.S. Department of State assumes no responsibility for the content and continued accessibility of Internet sites to which the journals link; such responsibility resides solely with the publishers of those sites. Journal articles, photographs, and illustrations may be reproduced and translated outside the United States unless they carry explicit copyright restrictions, in which case permission must be sought from the copyright holders noted in the journal.

The Bureau of International Information Programs maintains current and back issues in several electronic formats, as well as a list of upcoming journals, at <http://usinfo.state.gov/pub/ejournalusa.html>. Comments are welcome at your local U.S. Embassy or at the editorial offices:

Editor, *eJournal USA: Foreign Policy Agenda*  
IIP/T/IS  
U.S. Department of State  
301 4th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20547  
United States of America  
E-mail: [ejforpol@state.gov](mailto:ejforpol@state.gov)

# ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Focusing on a number of seminal world events, this issue of *eJournal USA: Foreign Policy Agenda* offers a framework for examining how U.S. foreign relations have evolved over the past century, influenced by the legacy of America's founding ideals of protecting individual rights and freedom.

Like other countries operating on the global stage, the United States has both played an active role in and been acted upon by international events—and occasionally forced into a role not of its own choosing.

The Editors recognize that any selection of “major events” will ultimately be arbitrary, but it is our hope that those in this journal will provide insight into the American character and stimulate dialogue among international audiences.

Many of these past occurrences have been significant in shaping the current U.S. response to the crises, opportunities, and complex trade-offs of international relations.

One enduring political dynamic for the United States, as for most nations, is the desire to live in a free society, secure and at peace, and working in harmony with allies and trading partners toward prosperity. But America also comes to foreign policy with a unique blend of idealism and realism that combines generosity with self-interest, follows defensive wars with economic recovery programs, builds institutions that are then turned over to others, and seeks to help others find their own way toward democracy.

Walter Russell Mead, Scott Erwin, and Eitan Goldstein of the Council on Foreign Relations analyze many of the events and ideas that have shaped the evolution of American foreign relations in the last 100 years and explain why they still have significant impact in today's world. David Ellwood of the University of Bologna and Johns Hopkins University, Bologna Center, examines the role of the post-World War II Marshall Plan on the economic recovery and reconstruction of Western Europe. Warren I. Cohen of the University of Maryland at Baltimore County examines the impact and influence of President Nixon's historic opening of U.S. relations with the People's Republic of China in 1972. Maarten Pereboom of Salisbury University discusses the enormous role that trade and economics has historically played in American foreign relations. And Walter Laqueur of the Center for Strategic and International Studies examines how the United States has sought to exercise power responsibly following the end of the Cold War in 1991 as the world has sought to adjust to the new security environment.

These and other experts share their thoughts in Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations. We welcome you to this edition of *eJournal USA*.

*The Editors*



## FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE / APRIL 2006 / VOLUME 11 / NUMBER 1

<http://usinfo.state.gov/pub/ejournalusa.html>

---

### SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS

#### 4 Introduction

SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE

#### 5 The United States: Inextricably Linked with Nations Across the Globe

WALTER RUSSELL MEAD, THE HENRY A. KISSINGER SENIOR FELLOW FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY, AND SCOTT ERWIN AND EITAN GOLDSTEIN, RESEARCH ASSOCIATES, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
American diplomacy in the 20th century is largely the story of how policy-makers have sought to strike the right equilibrium between national interests and ultimate ideals.

#### 9 The Panama Canal: A Vital Maritime Link for the World

Building the Canal and Transferring Control

#### 12 The Cold War: A Test of American Power and a Trial of Ideals

MICHAEL JAY FRIEDMAN, A U.S. DIPLOMATIC HISTORIAN AND WASHINGTON FILE STAFF WRITER, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
With the defeat of Germany in 1945 and the widespread destruction the war had wrought throughout Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union represented competing and incompatible philosophies, objectives, and plans for rebuilding and reorganizing the continent.

#### 17 The Marshall Plan: A Strategy That Worked

DAVID W. ELLWOOD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA, ITALY, AND PROFESSIONAL LECTURER AT JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, BOLOGNA CENTER.  
It didn't start as a plan, and some of the veterans said it never did become a plan. Yet the European Recovery Program—better known as the Marshall Plan—has entered into history as the most successful American foreign policy project of all since World War II.

#### 23 The Marshall Plan: A Story in Pictures

#### 26 The Suez Crisis: A Crisis That Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East

PETER L. HAHN, PROFESSOR OF U.S. DIPLOMATIC HISTORY, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS  
This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Suez Crisis, when a major regional war nearly erupted between Egypt, Israel, Britain, and France that may have drawn in the Soviet Union and the United States.

#### 30 Brussels Universal and International Exposition (Expo 1958)

The Expo provided the backdrop for the cultural Cold War between the United States and Soviet Union.



### 31 Nixon In China: A Turning Point in World History

WARREN I. COHEN, DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND PRESIDENTIAL RESEARCH PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY

The 1949 victory of the Chinese communists in the Chinese civil war had a shattering impact upon the United States, but by 1972 tensions had eased and each found the need to resume normalization.

### 35 Ping-Pong Diplomacy Spearheaded U.S.-Chinese Relations

Unlikely diplomats went to play table tennis and changed history along the way.

### 37 Trade and Economics as a Force in U.S. Foreign Relations

MAARTEN L. PEREBOOM, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

Emerging as a world leader in the 20th century, the United States, while certainly continuing to pursue its own economic interests abroad, drew upon its Enlightenment roots and promoted the ideals of freedom, democracy, and open markets in the belief that “free nations trading freely” would result in the worldwide improvement of the human condition.

### 41 After the Cold War

WALTER LAQUEUR, CO-CHAIR, INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

When the Cold War came to an end in 1989 with the dismantling of the Berlin wall, when the countries of Eastern Europe regained independence, and when finally the Soviet Union disintegrated, there was widespread feeling throughout the world that at long last universal peace had descended on Earth.

## ADDITIONAL READING

### 44 Bibliography

Additional Readings on Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations.

### 46 Internet Resources

Online Resources on Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations.



### Video Online

Video Clips of Selected Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations:

- Roosevelt: Panama Canal Statement
- Churchill: “Iron Curtain”
- Truman: Soviet Union
- Kennedy: Cuban Missile Crisis
- Nixon at the Great Wall
- Reagan: “Mr. Gorbachev, Tear Down This Wall!”

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0406/ijpe/ijpe0406.htm>

# INTRODUCTION

In ordinary times, when existing ideas, institutions, and alliances are adequate to the challenges of the day, the purpose of statecraft is to manage and sustain the established international order. But in extraordinary times, when the very terrain of history shifts beneath our feet, the mission of statecraft is to transform our institutions and partnerships to realize new purposes on the basis of enduring principles.

One such extraordinary moment began in 1945, in the wreckage of one of the greatest cataclysms in human history. World War II thoroughly consumed the old international system. And it fell to a group of American statesmen—individuals like President Harry Truman, Secretaries of State George C. Marshall (1947-1949) and Dean Acheson (1949-1953), and Senator Arthur Vandenberg—to assume the roles of architects and builders of a better world.

The solutions to these past challenges seem perfectly clear now with half a century of hindsight. But it was anything but clear for the men and women who lived and worked in those times of unprecedented change.

After all, in 1946, the reconstruction in Germany was failing, and Germans were still starving. Japan lay prostrate. In 1947, there was a civil war in Greece. In 1948, Czechoslovakia was lost to a communist coup. In 1949, Germany was divided, the Soviet Union exploded a nuclear weapon, and the Chinese communists won their civil war. In 1950, a brutal war broke out on the Korean Peninsula.

These were not just tactical setbacks for the forward march of democracy. As the Iron Curtain descended across Europe and the Cold War began to take shape, it was far from evident that freedom and openness would ultimately triumph. The statesmen of that era, however, succeeded brilliantly in conceiving the doctrines, creating the alliances, and building the institutions that preserved freedom, contained the spread of communism, and ultimately resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, and the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

From 1989 to 1991, I had the opportunity to serve as the White House Soviet specialist at the end of the Cold



Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

U.S. Department of State

War. It does not get any better than that. I got to participate in events that many people thought would never occur: the liberation of Eastern Europe, the unification of Germany, and the beginnings of the peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union itself. Events that seemed impossible one day unfolded rapidly, and several days later, they seemed inevitable. That is the nature of extraordinary times. And I realize now that I was only harvesting the good decisions that had been taken in 1947, in 1948, and in 1949.

We invite you to reflect on these and other critical diplomatic choices that have defined American foreign policy. A look at these extraordinary moments can help us all gain perspective on the challenges we face today.

President Bush and I believe that we are standing again at an extraordinary moment in history. The root cause of the September 11 attacks was the violent expression of a global extremist ideology, an ideology rooted in the oppression and despair of the modern Middle East. Our response, therefore, must be broad and forward-looking. We must work to remove the very source of terrorism itself by helping the men and women of that troubled region to transform their own lives and countries.

We know that the march of democracy is not easy. Our own history is one of imperfect people striving for centuries to live up to the lofty ideal of democratic principles. As we look at others who are also striving, we owe them our respect and our confidence that they, too, can achieve their aspirations.

Just as those great architects of the post-World War II era helped to lay the ground work for the democratic gains of today, we are now making decisions that will echo for many decades to come. If we are successful, we will pass on to those who follow us a foundation on which to build a world of hope, a world in which peace and freedom reign.

*Condoleezza Rice*  
*Secretary of State*

# THE UNITED STATES

## Inextricably Linked with Nations Across the Globe

WALTER RUSSELL MEAD, SCOTT ERWIN, AND EITAN GOLDSTEIN

*It is therefore manifest that an enduring idealism shapes the character of American foreign policy. But it is only part of a dynamic and complex process. It must constantly be balanced against cold-blooded strategic imperatives.*

*Walter Russell Mead is the Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy, and Scott Erwin and Eitan Goldstein are Research Associates at the Council on Foreign Relations.*

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has written that American foreign policy is defined by its oscillations between crusading idealism and blinkered isolationism. This familiar dichotomy—a nation alternately tilting at windmills or cynically interring its collective heads in the sand while tidily, ultimately obscures the currents that have long guided U.S. foreign policy. The belief that the United States is uniquely destined to serve as an engine for the spread of democracy, free markets, and individual liberty has been an abiding element of America's encounter with the world. Policymakers have, of course, disagreed on the means by which to promote these goals, or the ability of the United States to affect such change. But American leaders from across the political spectrum have long held that the success of the American project in no small measure hinges on developments in the rest of the world.

That such bitter rivals as Presidents Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) and Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) shared similarly expansive views of America's interests in the world, marked by a belief that the United States' fortunes were inextricably linked with the character and conduct of nations across the globe, underscores the broad-base of this worldview. While Wilson argued that "We are participants, whether we would or not, in the life of the world... What affects mankind is inevitably our affair..." Roosevelt's idea of America's global role was no less far-reaching: "There is such a thing as international morality. I take this position as an American... who endeavors

loyally to serve the interests of his own country, but who also endeavors to do what he can for justice and decency as regards mankind at large, and who therefore feels obliged to judge all other nations by their conduct on any given occasion." It is therefore manifest that an enduring idealism shapes the character of American foreign policy. But it is only part of a dynamic and complex process. It must constantly be balanced against cold-blooded strategic imperatives. Roosevelt justified these exigencies and the compromises that would necessarily follow, by cautioning that "in striving for a lofty ideal we must use practical methods; and if we cannot attain all at one leap, we must advance towards it step by step, reasonably content so long as we do actually make some progress in the right direction." Thus rather than veering between isolationism and engagement, America's foreign affairs can better be understood as a reflection of the constant tension between its conflicting ideals and interests.

American diplomacy in the 20th century, then, is largely the story of how policymakers have sought to strike the right equilibrium of interests and ideals. Articulating this balancing act, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently observed that: "American foreign policy has always had... a streak of idealism... It's not just getting to whatever solution is available, but it's doing that within the context of principles and values. The responsibility, then, of all of us is to take policies that are rooted in those values and make them work on a day-to-day basis so that you're always moving forward toward a goal... So it's the connection, the day-to-day operational policy connection between those ideals and policy outcomes." Terming the administration's approach 'practical idealism,' Rice, as clearly as any of her predecessors, identified the crux of the challenge that has confronted the United States' interaction with the world in the 20th century. At critical junctures in the last century, the conflict between America's interests and ideals has appeared in stark relief. And during these



President Woodrow Wilson



President Theodore Roosevelt

times, American foreign policy has manifested both utopian optimism and ruthless pragmatism, often simultaneously.

Woodrow Wilson's very name has become synonymous with American idealism. His determination to "make the world safe for democracy" galvanized the American public, as an erstwhile isolationist nation entered the First World War. The former professor's advocacy for self-determination profoundly resonated with nationalists around the globe, and Wilson himself was regarded as an almost messianic figure. A *Washington Post* reporter chronicling Egypt's revolt against British rule in the spring of 1919, noted that the Egyptian nationalists were "fired by Wilsonian ideals" and observed that "as the rioters march and riot, they shout the Wilsonian precepts." Egyptian nationalists, invoking Wilson's credo, beseeched the U.S. Senate to support Egyptian independence. Wilson, however, rebuffed their pleas and affirmed the United States' support for British rule in Egypt. Though American support for liberty during and after the war remained largely rhetorical, Wilson's doctrine proved pivotal in the spread of democracy in the 20th century.

Wilson's crusading was, however, coupled with hardnosed realism. For example, while he deplored the Turks' reported harsh treatment of the Armenians, Wilson resisted noisy demands to declare war against the Turks for fear of jeopardizing the American missionary presence in the Middle East. Indeed, the United States' unwillingness to deploy American troops to bolster the nascent Armenian state in the wake of the First World War contributed to Armenia's hasty demise. Wilson's prosecution of the war also belied any hint of starry-eyed idealism. The full might of America's war machine was to be brought to bear, as the president averred "force without stint or measure." Thus in America's part in the First World War we see a strategy animated by a hybrid

of narrowly defined interests and deep-seated American principles.

The United States' experience in World War II would even more conspicuously demonstrate the conflict between American values and geopolitical exigencies. Almost a year prior to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) (1933-1945) delivered his famous Four Freedoms address in which he declared that humans "everywhere in the world" were entitled to freedom of speech and worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. These principles would become a rallying cry for the United States upon its entrance into World War II and provided average Americans with an ideological framework for the fight. Yet while artist Norman Rockwell was immortalizing the Four Freedoms in a series of paintings in *The Saturday Evening Post*, Roosevelt was negotiating a partnership with the totalitarian Soviet Union. Josef Stalin's Russia, beset by bloody purges, show trials, and state-orchestrated famines, made for a dubious ally in advancing the principles championed by Roosevelt.



The Navy battleship *USS West Virginia* shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, December 7, 1941.

In July 1941, Roosevelt sent his trusted advisor, Harry Hopkins, on a long trek to Russia to judge Stalin's commitment and viability as a strategic partner. Hopkins pointed to the ideological quandary posed by allying with the Soviet Union; the visit highlighted "the difference between democracy and dictatorship," he reported to





President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (right) meets with his vice president, Harry S. Truman, at the White House in 1944.

Roosevelt. The president responded by delivering one billion dollars in aid to the USSR, the beginning of what would be a massive influx of American largess, and authorized the production of a series of propaganda films to be shown in the United States that featured Stalin as a decent man and rationalized the Soviet Union's violent excesses. Roosevelt's desire to maintain the American-Soviet alliance compelled the president to compromise an abiding commitment to support for self-determination abroad. Reflecting on the eclipse of traditional American values by strategic interests, President George W. Bush lamented that America's diplomacy during World War II attempted "to sacrifice freedom for the sake of stability."

Roosevelt's embrace of the Soviet Union did not however suggest a jettisoning of American ideals. Though FDR had aligned the United States with a brutal regime, the president also seized the opportunity to advance democracy and self-determination by laying the foundation for an international order consistent with American ideals. Much to the chagrin of his European allies, FDR was an avowed foe of imperialism and sought to dislodge the British and the French from their far-flung colonies. At a dinner party with Morocco's ruler during the Casablanca Conference in 1943, Roosevelt offered his backing for Moroccan independence, while Churchill sat across the table, seething and fearful for the fate of Britain's own colonies. In addition, Roosevelt denounced British dominion in West Africa and French rule in Indochina as inconsistent with the Allies' professed war

aims. Roosevelt also aspired to rectify the mistakes of the flawed post-World War I settlement. He conceived of an international organization that would effectively ensure collective security and avert the prospects of another global conflagration. Though the creation of the United Nations would fall to his successor, the organization's original makeup greatly reflected FDR's vision. Accordingly, during the Second World War, the United States demonstrated tactical expediency in allying with a repressive dictatorship, while maintaining a broader, strategic commitment to the advance of American values.

In the immediate wake of Harry Truman's unlikely ascent to the presidency upon FDR's death in 1945, the former haberdasher was forced to grapple with enormous challenges. At first brush, Truman shared few similarities with his suave, patrician predecessor. The product of rough and tumble machine-politics and an autodidact, Truman did, like Roosevelt before him, craft a policy informed by an amalgam of American interests and ideals. In the same year that Truman visited unprecedented destruction on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he also exalted the drafting of the United Nations Charter as "a profound cause of thanksgiving to Almighty God." The president's heartfelt endorsement of an organization "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" set against the backdrop of America's "war without mercy" against Japan exemplifies the distinctive conjunction of soaring idealism coupled with pitiless realism that marked American foreign policy over the 20th century.

Truman, perhaps more than any other president during the American century, was able to marry American interests and ideals. The Marshall Plan, a massive program of relief for beleaguered post-war Europe, bolstered the continent's collapsing economies while staving off communist advances. The program's emphasis on free enterprise broke down economic barriers in Europe, triggering a rapid recovery and helped lay the foundation for European integration. Celebrated by Winston Churchill as "the most unsordid act in the whole of recorded history," the Marshall Plan providentially, if only temporarily, reconciled the tension between America's strategic constraints and deeply rooted values. During the ensuing four decades that spanned the Cold War, American policymakers rarely experienced such success in squaring principles and practicality, and more often than not, hardheaded realism carried the day.



Former Presidents George H.W. Bush (left) and Bill Clinton at the White House in 2005.

The demise of the Soviet Union and apparent triumph of liberal democracy did not augur an end to the conflict between American interests and ideals. The United States' relationship with China during the 1990s proved that this ineluctable tension remained. President Bill Clinton (1993-2001) entered office at a low-ebb in Sino-American relations following the first [George H.W.] Bush administration's 1992 sale of F-16 strike fighters to Taiwan. Sanctions from the Tiananmen Square massacre and calls from members of his own party to take a stiffer line against China's continuing human rights abuses further exacerbated the relationship, and impelled the president to sign a 1993 executive order linking human rights conditions to the renewal of China's most-favored-nation status. With the Dalai Lama and Chai Ling, a leader of the Tiananmen uprising, in attendance at the signing ceremony, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell triumphantly proclaimed, "For the first time since the events of Tiananmen Square, nearly four years ago, we have a president who is willing to act in order to bring about positive change."

This high-minded idealism quickly fell victim to a confluence of factors—American business interests in China, pressures from the Pentagon in light of a looming crisis with North Korea's nuclear weapons testing and a series of acrimonious public confrontations with Beijing—leading Clinton to reverse his trade policy toward China. Arguing that American ideals could be best advanced by integrating China into the global economy; the president adopted a policy of engagement and in May 1994 delinked China's trade status from its human rights

record. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin justified this about face explaining that it was in America's interest "to help speed the integration of the Chinese economy into the world economy... Make no mistake: we have serious disagreements with China on human rights, religious freedom, security issues, as well as economic issues... The question is what is the best way to advance our interests and beliefs. We believe that the process of engagement is the most likely means to make progress on all of the issues we have with China." In the fall of 1996, President Clinton commenced a three-year campaign to secure

China's entry into the World Trade Organization. China's eventual entry into the global economy—widely considered Clinton's greatest foreign policy achievement—was not without difficulty and signified another instance of American ideals and interests at loggerheads.

President George W. Bush's second inaugural speech demonstrated the degree to which the longstanding tension between American ideals and interests has defined U.S. foreign policy. Proclaiming "America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one," the president's vision aims to effectively harmonize competing forces. But the conflict between American values and strategic imperatives is not always so readily resolved; the president's rhetoric notwithstanding, key American allies such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia often rule in a manner counter to the American ethos. Just as in the past, balancing vital interests and fidelity to American ideals will remain the central challenge for American leaders through the 21<sup>st</sup> century. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*

# THE PANAMA CANAL

## A Vital Maritime Link for the World

When the *SS Ancon* sailed across the Isthmus of Panama on August 15, 1914, it ushered in the transformation of the American continent and the creation of a vital sea link for the entire world. The American historical writer David McCullough said that the construction of the canal that linked the Atlantic and Pacific oceans was more than a vast, unprecedented feat of engineering.

Its construction was of sweeping historic importance not unlike that of a war, he wrote in his book about the canal, and it has impacted the lives of tens of thousands of people, regardless of class, of virtually every race and nationality.

The earliest concept for the canal dates to the early 16th century when Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and king of Spain, suggested it might shorten travel to and from Ecuador and Peru. However, the first attempt to build it began in 1880 under a French-led consortium, similar to one created to build the Suez Canal. The effort ultimately collapsed and the United States stepped in to finish construction. In 1902, the U.S. Senate

considered legislation to build a canal in Nicaragua instead of Panama, but an amendment offered by Senator John Spooner of Wisconsin won over the Senate. The U.S. House of Representatives easily approved the legislation that President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) signed into law. After considerable problems negotiating a treaty with Colombia, which at the time controlled Panama, the United States finally won approval to build the canal with the newly independent government of Panama in 1904.

Construction on the canal was completed in 1914. It is approximately 77 kilometers (48 miles) in length and consists of two artificial lakes, several improved and artificial channels, and three sets of locks. An additional artificial lake, Alajuela Lake, acts as a reservoir for the canal. The canal is a key conduit for international shipping, accommodating more than 14,000 ships annually, carrying more than 203

million metric tons of cargo. The S-shaped canal connects the Gulf of Panama in the Pacific Ocean with the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

During construction, approximately 27,500 workers died out of the more than 80,000 total workers employed by the French and the American companies, in particular from two tropical diseases—malaria and yellow fever. Work by Army surgeon Walter Reed led to the creation of a yellow fever vaccine that, along with new preventive medicine techniques, eradicated the disease in the area.

The key value of the canal is the reduced time needed to reach one ocean from the other. Prior to its construction, ships had to sail around Cape Horn at the southernmost tip of the American continent with a distance of 22,500 kilometers (14,000 miles) from New York to San Francisco. Today, travel from New York to San

Francisco through the canal is a distance of 9,500 kilometers (6,000 miles).

Negotiations to settle Panamanian claims, after World War II, that the canal rightfully belonged to Panama began in 1974 and resulted in the Torrijos-Carter Treaty. President Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) and Panamanian President Omar Torrijos signed the treaty on September 7, 1977. Final handover of the canal was completed on December 31, 1999. ■

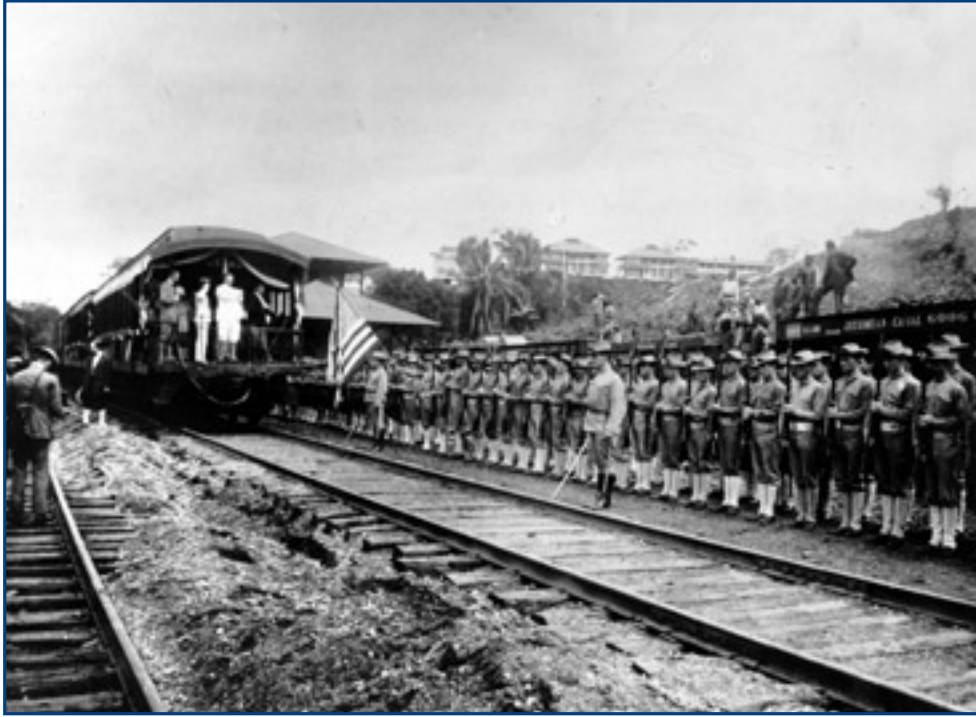


AP/WWP

President Theodore Roosevelt, center, tests a steam shovel at the Culebra Cut during construction of the Panama Canal, a project he championed, November 1906. Roosevelt's visit to Panama made him the first sitting U.S. president to travel abroad.



# Building the Canal



AP/WWP

President Theodore Roosevelt, wearing white at the rear of the train, reviews American troops in the Panama Canal Zone during an inspection of canal construction work in November 1906.

The Pedro Miguel Locks are pictured under construction in the Panama Canal Zone on June 9, 1912. The 48-mile-long canal, which opened August 14, 1914, comprised of six locks, became a shortcut for sea passage across Central America. The canal cost approximately \$352 million.



AP/WWP



# Transferring Control

A cargo ship passes through the Miraflores Locks on the Pacific side of the Panama Canal, December 13, 1999. Then President Jimmy Carter represented the United States in a ceremony transferring the canal to Panamanian control, which took effect on December 31, 1999.



AP/WWP



Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library

Then President Jimmy Carter (left) and Panamanian President Omar Torrijos at the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty September 7, 1977. The United States agreed in the treaty to transfer control of the canal to Panama by December 31, 1999.

Panamanian Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Aleman, from left, Minister of the Panama Canal Ricardo Marinelli, Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso, U.S. Secretary of the Army and chairman of the Panama Canal Commission Louis Caldera, and U.S. Ambassador Simon Ferro stand during ceremonies transferring the Panama Canal to Panamanian control December 31, 1999. The United States had controlled the canal since it opened in August 1914.



AP/WWP

# THE COLD WAR

## A Test of American Power and a Trial of Ideals

MICHAEL JAY FRIEDMAN



The U.S. Navy destroyer *Barry* pulls alongside the Russian freighter *Anosov* in the Atlantic Ocean, November 10, 1962, to inspect cargo as a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane flies overhead. The Soviet ship was carrying a cargo of missiles being withdrawn from Cuba at the conclusion of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

*The Cold War was first and foremost a war of ideas, a struggle over the organizing principle of human society, a contest between liberalism and forced collectivism. For the United States, the Cold War was the nation's first truly sustained engagement in Great Power politics, and it required Americans to confront, not always successfully, their contradictory impulses toward the outside world: the desire to stand apart and to champion liberty for other peoples—for reasons of both altruism and self-interest.*

*Michael Jay Friedman is a Washington File Staff Writer and a diplomatic historian.*

The Cold War can be said to have begun in 1917, with the emergence in Russia of a revolutionary Bolshevik regime devoted to spreading communism throughout the industrialized world. For Vladimir Lenin, the leader of that revolution, such gains were imperative. As he wrote in his August 1918 Open Letter to the American Workers, “We are now, as it were, in a besieged fortress, waiting for the other detachments of the world socialist revolution to come to our relief.”

Western governments generally understood communism to be an international movement whose adherents foreswore all national allegiance in favor of transnational communism, but in practice received their orders from and were loyal to Moscow.

In 1918, the United States joined briefly and unenthusiastically in an unsuccessful Allied attempt to topple the revolutionary Soviet regime. Suspicion and hostility thus characterized relations between the Soviets and the West long before the Second World War made



British Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946, that in a single phrase defined the Soviet influence over Eastern Europe when he said an "Iron Curtain" had fallen across Europe.

AP/WWP

them reluctant allies in the struggle against Nazi Germany.

With the defeat of Germany in 1945 and the widespread destruction the war had wrought throughout Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union represented competing and incompatible philosophies, objectives, and plans for rebuilding and reorganizing the continent. The Soviets acted from a combination of ideological commitment and geopolitical realism. The Soviet Army had, by any fair account, done the bulk of the fighting and dying on the European front and had liberated from Adolf Hitler's grasp much of Eastern and Central Europe. It soon became apparent that Moscow would now insist on communist regimes not only in those areas, but also other governments that answered directly to the Soviets, notwithstanding the wishes of Poles and Czechs, and not to mention the Romanians, Bulgarians, and other East Europeans.

The perspective from Washington was very different. American leaders now believed that U.S. political isolation from Europe after the First World War had been a huge mistake, one that possibly contributed to the rise of Hitler and nearly resulted in the continent's domination by a single, hostile power that could threaten U.S. national security. Now, with Soviet forces ensconced in half the

continent, and with communists strong in France, Italy, and, most important of all, Germany, U.S. policymakers again had reason to be wary.

The contrast between a liberal, individualistic, and relatively freewheeling United States and the centrally planned, politically repressive Union of Soviet Socialist Republics could not have been more stark, as the two began to compete for the allegiance of Europe and of the nations newly independent from colonial control.

## THE COLD WAR IN EUROPE

The U.S. effort to "contain" Soviet power within its postwar boundaries encompassed two broad phases: the immediate effort to revive Europe economically and politically, and hence stiffen its ability and willingness to resist further Soviet gains, and, later, to maintain in a nuclear age the credibility of U.S. promises to defend its European allies.

Two early initiatives demonstrated U.S. resolve to rebuild and defend noncommunist Europe. In 1947, when Great Britain informed Washington it could no longer afford financially to support the governments of Greece and Turkey against communist insurgents, President Harry S Truman (1945-1953) secured \$400 million for that purpose. More fatefully, the Truman Doctrine promised an open-ended commitment "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." The following year, the Marshall Plan injected some \$13 billion of economic aid into West European economies. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), created in 1949, formally bound the United States to the defense of Western Europe in its first formal "entangling alliance"—a situation the first U.S. president, George Washington (1789-1797), had warned against.

NATO was a response to Soviet conventional military superiority in Europe. At the end of the Second World War, the United States conducted the most rapid military demobilization in history, contracting its army from about 8.3 million in 1945 to barely 500,000 by 1948. The Red Army maintained a much larger presence in the heart of Europe and was widely believed capable of swiftly overrunning Western Europe should Stalin or his successors so choose. In that event, U.S. military plans called for retaliation with atomic and, later, nuclear weaponry, but America's European allies—on whose territory many of those bombs would necessarily land—were understandably suspicious.

Once the Soviets acquired atomic (1949) and nuclear (1953) weapons of their own, many Europeans wondered





Germans from East and West stand on the Berlin Wall in front of the Brandenburg Gate on November 10, 1989. This moment symbolized the beginning of the end of the Cold War in Europe.

whether America would defend them against a Soviet attack if Moscow could, in turn, unleash a nuclear holocaust on American cities. Would Washington sacrifice New York to defend Paris, London, or Bonn?

Much of the Cold War in Europe revolved around this question. Soviet pressure on West Berlin—a Western enclave inside communist East Germany and hence militarily indefensible—was aimed to impress on West Europeans the precariousness of their situation. America’s responses to that pressure—including the 1948 Berlin Airlift, in which the U.S. Air Force delivered food and other necessities to the Soviet-blockaded city; President John F. Kennedy’s 1963 promise, “All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin.... Ich bin ein Berliner;” and President Ronald Reagan’s 1987 challenge, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall”—all attest to American recognition of Berlin as an important symbol of the transatlantic link and of American determination to defend its European allies.

The last great European Cold War crisis reflected another Soviet effort to split the Western allies. In 1975, Moscow introduced SS-20 missiles, highly accurate intermediate range weapons capable of hitting targets in Western Europe but not of reaching the United States. These invited West Europeans again to question whether America would retaliate for an attack on Europe and thus initiate a mutually destructive Soviet-U.S. nuclear war. The NATO alliance resolved to redress the balance by negotiating with the Soviets for the removal of all intermediate range weapons, but also by vowing to introduce into Europe U.S. Pershing

II and ground-launched cruise missiles if Moscow would not remove the SS-20s.

Many West Europeans opposed these countermeasures. They acted out of a variety of motives and beliefs, but the international communist movement also helped organize and encourage elements within this “peace movement,” hoping to force West Europeans to accommodate politically Soviet military superiority. After a climactic November 1983 vote in the West German Parliament, the new U.S. missiles were deployed.

In December 1987, President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev (1985-1991) signed the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. The inability of the Soviet Union to split the United States and its West European allies was one decisive factor in how the Cold War ended.

### THE COLD WAR ON THE “PERIPHERY”

In 1947, the American diplomat George Kennan enunciated the basic U.S. Cold War strategy: “a policy of containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world.” This policy in many instances conflicted with, and over time often trumped, Washington’s real desire to support decolonization and to align with the newly independent states emerging in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, an area that strategists sometimes referred to as the “periphery,” Europe remaining the central Cold War arena.

At the end of the Second World War, U.S. policymakers anticipated the breakup of the old European colonial empires and hoped to win the friendship of these new countries. The United States thus worked hard to prevent the reassertion of Dutch authority over Indonesia, even threatening in 1949 to withhold Marshall Plan aid until The Netherlands recognized Indonesian independence. For similar reasons, President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956 forced Britain, France, and Israel to end their respective occupations of the Suez Canal and Sinai Peninsula.

There was no consistent pattern to U.S. policy on the periphery, though. In some cases, as in the Philippines in 1986, Washington sided with popular forces, even against pro-U.S. regimes. In others, American leaders were quick to see communist influence behind nationalist movements and to view nations as “dominoes”: were one to “fall” under Soviet influence, its neighbors were presumed at risk to follow.



This “domino theory” lay behind America’s most catastrophic periphery intervention—Vietnam. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, French efforts to reassert colonial authority in Vietnam met with great resistance. U.S. policymakers were tempted to urge Paris to quit Indochina, much as they had helped push the Dutch out of Indonesia. But French leaders warned that the loss of their empire could result in the loss of France to communism. Washington was unwilling to take that risk. Step by step, beginning with support of the French, then gradually introducing American trainers and then troops—nearly 550,000 of them by mid-1969—the United States expended blood and treasure in the ultimately unsuccessful effort to prevent the communist regime in North Vietnam from absorbing the rest of that nation.

While the American record on the Cold War periphery was not above criticism, its Soviet rival was similarly active in efforts to spread its influence throughout the Third World, supporting dictators and interfering in local matters.

### **A LONG-TERM CONTEST**

The containment strategy prescribed a long-term contest, what President Kennedy (1961-1963) called a “long, twilight struggle.” This was something new for a nation whose previous international engagements had been geared to overcoming specific, immediate challenges.

U.S. reaction to three early crises established that the Cold War was unlikely to end with a smashing military victory. President Truman’s 1951 decision to sack General Douglas MacArthur amounted to a decision to wage the Korean War to preserve South Korea and not, as the general wished, to liberate the North. Five years later, President Eisenhower (1953-1961) pointedly offered no tangible support when the Hungarian people rose up against their Soviet-imposed government and the Red Army troops that suppressed their revolution.

Finally, the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 established even more starkly the limits of direct conflict in a nuclear age. The Soviets sought to secretly introduce intermediate range missiles into Cuba, clearly posing a threat to the U.S. mainland. Even though the United States at this point still enjoyed overwhelming superiority in nuclear weaponry, outright war posed the threat of unacceptable damage. President Kennedy therefore concluded a secret trade, whose terms did not become known until many years later. In return for the extraction of Soviet nuclear missiles from Cuba, the United States agreed not to move against Fidel Castro’s communist regime there and, also, to retire, after a

decent interval, “obsolete” U.S. missiles based in Turkey.

The two “superpowers,” it appeared, learned different lessons from the Cuban Missile Crisis. Whereas, by 1980, the United States had mostly deferred further increases in nuclear weapons, the Soviets had launched a substantial buildup and offered no indication that they intended to slow the pace. Meanwhile, the introduction during the 1970s of Cuban armed forces into African conflicts and the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—the first direct use of the Red Army outside Eastern Europe—convinced many Americans that the Cold War was not over yet.

### **THE COLD WAR ENDS**

The reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union remain hotly debated today. Nevertheless, a few observations are possible. One is that the substantial military buildup ordered by President Reagan raised the Soviets’ cost for maintaining their relative military power. Another is that Reagan’s proposed “Star Wars” missile defense shield threatened to shift the competition to the mastery of new technologies, an arena in which the Soviet Union—a closed society—was not well-suited to compete.

The Soviet command economy was already faltering. Whatever the ability of the communist model to successfully industrialize, the budding new world of information technologies posed insurmountable challenges to a society that closely monitored its citizens and supervised even their use of photocopying machines. Far-sighted leaders like General Secretary Gorbachev understood this. The reforms he introduced, but ultimately could not control, led to the breakup of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

From an American perspective, the 40-year conflict represented a victory of ideas. The United States paid a price, indeed a number of very substantial ones, for its victory. Most obviously, there were the huge expenditures of irreplaceable lives lost on battlefields and money spent on weapons of unimaginable force rather than on perceived more noble and equally pressing causes at home and abroad. There were political costs as well. The Cold War at times obliged Americans to align their nation with unsavory regimes in the name of geopolitical expediency.

There were, however, very real achievements of Cold War America. Most obviously, Western Europe and, no doubt, much of the world were rescued from the boot of Joseph Stalin, a murderous dictator barely distinguishable from the vanquished Adolf Hitler. Equally significant in an age of thermonuclear weaponry, the captive nations of the



AP/WIDEWORLD

A gentle reminder of the historic changes that have occurred in Russia: School children take a break from studies on a toppled statue of former Soviet leader Josef Stalin in a Moscow park in 1991.

Soviet Union were freed, without recourse to a general war of unprecedented destruction. And America's democratic institutions emerged intact—indeed, thriving—and the U.S. model of social organization, one that affords the individual the political, religious, and economic freedom to pursue his

or her dreams, retained its vigor as the nation entered a new millennium. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. government.*

# THE MARSHALL PLAN

## A Strategy That Worked

DAVID W. ELLWOOD



API/National Portrait Gallery

A 1947 portrait of George C. Marshall, the first U.S. secretary of state of the postwar era. He oversaw the creation of the successful European Reconstruction Program bearing his name.

*The myth of the Marshall Plan has become as forceful as its true historical legacy. In 1955, the plan's official historian noted how, from a one-paragraph "suggestion" by Secretary of State George Marshall at a Harvard graduation ceremony, had sprung a program that "evolved swiftly into a vast, spirited, international adventure: as the enterprise unfolded, it became many things to many men." Fifty years later, such was the fame of the project, that the same could still be said.*

*David W. Ellwood is an associate professor of international history at the University of Bologna, Italy, and a professional lecturer at Johns Hopkins University, Bologna Center.*

It didn't start as a plan, and some of the veterans said it never did become a plan. Its own second-in-command, Harlan Cleveland, called it "a series of improvisations ... a continuous international happening." Yet the European Recovery Program (ERP)—better known as the Marshall Plan—has entered into history as the most successful American foreign policy project of all since World War II.

After the fall of apartheid, South Africans called for a Marshall Plan. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, East Europeans and Russians demanded the Marshall Plan they had been denied by the Soviet Union in 1947. Fearful of disintegration in Africa, the British government in 2005 proposed coordinated international intervention on the lines of the Marshall Plan.

The myth of the Marshall Plan has become as forceful as its true historical legacy. In 1955, the plan's official historian noted how, from a one-paragraph "suggestion" by Secretary of State George Marshall at a Harvard graduation ceremony, had sprung a program





The architects of the Marshall Plan discuss the progress of European reconstruction at the White House, November 1948 (from left to right): President Harry S Truman, Secretary of State George C. Marshall, Paul G. Hoffman, former president of the Studebaker automobile corporation who headed the Marshall Plan's Economic Cooperation Administration, and Ambassador Averell Harriman, also a former business executive and America's senior representative in Europe for countries participating in the Marshall Plan.

job—Churchill called him “the organizer of victory”—and his personal qualities of incisiveness, integrity, and self-abnegation made him the most authoritative public figure of the era. His patience and sense of duty were tested to the full in Moscow. A senior American diplomat, George Kennan, summarized Marshall’s pithy conclusion upon leaving the Soviet capital: “Europe was in a mess. Something would have to be done. If he (Marshall) did not take the initiative, others would.”

Kennan and his new State Department Policy Planning Staff produced one of the master documents from which the Marshall Plan eventually flowed. In part, their thinking derived from Roosevelt-era understandings of the causes of two world

that “evolved swiftly into a vast, spirited, international adventure: as the enterprise unfolded, it became many things to many men.” Fifty years later, such was the fame of the project, that the same could still be said.

### THE INCEPTION OF AN IDEA

Three contingent developments led to the creation of a special new American project to help Western Europe in the spring of 1947. The first was the physical condition of the post-World War II continent after the setbacks caused by the extreme winter of 1946-1947. Second was the failure of the recent Truman Doctrine—an outspoken scheme to help Greece and Turkey fight Soviet pressures—to indicate a constructive way forward. Third was the grueling experience of Secretary of State George Marshall in the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, dedicated to the future of Germany, in March-April 1947.

Marshall had been recalled to become secretary of state by President Harry S Truman at the beginning of 1947, after retiring from the Pentagon at the end of the war as Army chief of staff. Marshall’s success in that

wars and the Great Depression: class hatred, poverty, backwardness, and the lack of hope for change. These policymakers aimed to build a postwar world that supported the ordinary citizen’s demand for a share in the benefits of industrialism. Everywhere in the world, they believed, people with prosperity, or at least the prospect of it, did not turn to totalitarianism.

But there was a specifically European dimension to the Marshall effort. Europe’s evil genie, said people like Kennan, Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and future ERP Ambassador Averell Harriman, was nationalism. If that root of Nazi-fascism and other 20th-century rivalries could be bottled up in an integrated European economic framework, the resulting prosperity might dampen nationalist competition, prevent future armed conflicts, and obviate U.S. involvement in future European wars.

In these ways, modernization and integration became the twin objectives of the ERP, and the arguments turned on how to achieve them. It was central to the method of the Marshall Plan that the Europeans should think and act for themselves within the vision: that was what made the plan not just another aid program.



In Marshall's brief and outwardly simple comments at Harvard University in June 1947, there were, first of all, explanations of Europe's devastation and hopelessness. There were warnings for those who sought to exploit the misery politically. There was a clear signal that U.S. aid would not be conditioned on ideology; i.e., the Soviet Union and other communist nations would not for that reason be disqualified from participating.

Then came the crux of the speech, a tantalizing paragraph inviting the Europeans to agree together on what they needed and what they might do were the United States to step in. The U.S. role, Marshall said, "should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so." The secretary of state insisted that the Europeans must act jointly, and that "a cure and not a palliative" must be sought. He concluded by urging his fellow Americans to "face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country."

"We expected them to jump two inches and they've jumped six feet," wrote one American journalist. In less than two weeks, the French and British foreign ministers set in motion in Paris a Conference on European Economic Cooperation (CEEC), which, in stages between the end of June and the end of September, with the help of 14 other governments, prepared a report to the State Department on the total economic aid they thought they needed. Most of those represented did not have a national plan and some not even an overall picture of their nation's economy. With no experience of any sort in joint, continent-wide planning, the delegates arrived at a grand total of \$28 billion. The figure was rejected immediately by Washington as hopelessly high.

But the Paris CEEC event was most famous for the arrival—and swift departure—of a large Soviet delegation headed by the Kremlin's foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov. Confronted with the Western proposal for a jointly formulated and implemented pan-European recovery strategy that treated Germany as a single economic entity, the Soviets walked out, as Washington anticipated they would. The Soviet delegation charged that the Americans and their key allies sought to control Europe's economies—a case of Great Power imperialism in its latest, American, guise. Moscow exerted great pressure on East European nations to reject Marshall aid. In February 1948, a communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia instigated by Moscow reified the rupture among the World War II allies.

## SETTING THE PLAN IN MOTION

After a long winter of discussion, some stopgap help, and greatly increased tension in East-West relations, the European Recovery Program was born officially with an act of Congress signed by President Truman in April 1948. To administer the project, a new federal agency, the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), was established. Truman, a Democrat, signified his intent to secure bipartisan support for the program by appointing a Republican, Studebaker automobile company CEO Paul G. Hoffmann, as ECA head. Expenditures began to flow immediately, under tight congressional supervision.

The program's official enactment identified the supreme objective as creating in Western Europe "a healthy economy independent of extraordinary outside assistance" by 1952. To this end, comments the economic historian Immanuel Wexler, "the act stipulated a recovery plan based on four specific endeavors: (1) a strong production effort, (2) expansion of foreign trade, (3) the creation and maintenance of internal financial stability, and (4) the development of (European) economic cooperation." To the dismay of many Europeans who had counted simply on a big relief program, it soon became clear that such an agenda could only be realized by way of permanent structural change in the European economies, singly and together, as a whole. This was what Marshall had meant when he talked of "a cure rather than a palliative," nothing less.

To meet the challenge, the ongoing Conference on European Economic Cooperation (CEEC) quickly turned itself into the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), under Belgian Prime Minister Paul-Henri Spaak. In the meantime, American embassies in each of the member nations were obtaining signatures on the bilateral pacts, which spelled out the obligations of European governments toward their new sponsors. Among them was recognition of the authority of the ECA "mission" to be set up in each national capital. A formal committee would link each mission to its participating government, in order to supervise the running of the program on the ground.

The committee's key task was to make plans for spending productively the sums in the new "Counterpart Fund." This was a characterizing feature of the whole operation, the tool that most distinguished the Marshall Plan from any conventional aid program. The fund was an account at each national bank specially created to contain the proceeds from the local sale of ERP-supplied goods. Much of the help, it turned out, would not be



One of 25 designs selected in a 1950 competition to create posters capturing the goals and spirit of the Marshall Plan. 10,000 entries were submitted by artists from 13 Marshall Plan countries.

The German Marshall Fund

## SELLING THE PLAN TO ITS BENEFICIARIES

Against the plan, indeed, stood the forces of the Cominform, an international organization set up in October 1947 by the Kremlin with the explicit purpose of combating the Marshall Plan, by coordinating the political efforts of national communist parties under Soviet direction and by directing propaganda efforts within each participating nation. At a time when communist forces were leading an armed insurgency in Greece, looked capable of taking power politically in Italy, seemed to threaten chaos in France, and knew what they wanted in Germany—unlike the West at this stage—the Cold War gave an urgency to the program that concentrated minds everywhere.

Furthermore, from the very beginning, ECA planners knew that overcoming likely political obstacles would require speaking directly to the European publics over the heads of the local governing classes. Improvising swiftly, the teams of journalists and filmmakers who launched the ERP Information Program turned it, by the end of 1949, into the largest propaganda operation directed by one country to a group of others ever seen in peacetime.

## THE PLAN EVOLVES

The Marshall Plan's early years, from June 1948 to the start of the Korean War in June 1950, were remembered by all concerned as the golden epoch of pure economic action and rewards. Experts pointed to the rise of nearly a quarter in the total output of goods and services that the ERP countries enjoyed between 1947 and 1949. They asserted that the "over-all index of production, based on 1938, rose to 115 in 1949, as compared with 77 in 1946 and 87 in 1947." Agriculture also recovered, and progress on the inflation front was considered "uneven but definitely encouraging." The foreign trade of the member states was back to its prewar levels, but its most remarkable feature was a change in direction. No longer oriented toward the old European empires, trade was increasing most rapidly within Western Europe, among the ERP members themselves. Experience would show that this was a long-term structural shift in the continent's economy, which within a few years would spur political demands for European integration.

Meanwhile, by the end of 1949 it had become clear that the partner nations' visions of the European Recovery Program differed significantly in certain key aspects from those of the American planners. Western European governments badly needed the ERP dollars,

as free, or as liquid, as the Europeans had imagined. It would instead normally be merchandise sent from the United States and sold to the highest bidder, public or private. Their payments would then go back, not to the United States, but into the new fund. From it would come the money to pay for national reconstruction and modernization efforts, as decided between the ECA mission and the government in each participating capital.

At the same time the ERP was clearly a mighty weapon in the Cold War. Its senior representative in Europe, Ambassador Harriman, went so far in 1949 as to characterize the entire effort as a "fire-fighting operation." Marshall's successor as secretary of state, Dean Acheson, the individual who, in his own words, "probably made as many speeches and answered as many questions about the Marshall Plan as any man alive," remembered that "what citizens and the representatives in Congress always wanted to learn in the last analysis was how Marshall Aid operated to block the extension of Soviet power and the acceptance of communist economic and political organization and alignment."

but at the same time they sought to avoid permanent dependence on the United States and more generally to obtain American aid on terms that accounted more fully for their own political objectives.

The British went to extraordinary lengths to resist the Marshall Plan's insistence on immediate economic integration with the rest of Europe, the great string attached to Marshall aid everywhere. The Dutch resisted pressure to start dismantling their empire in the name of free trade. The Austrians refused point blank to reform their railways and their banking system as the Americans desired. The Greek people rejected a new ERP-sponsored currency because they believed that gold sovereigns were the only truly reliable form of monetary exchange. The head of the Italian industrialists told the mission chief in Rome that no matter how cheap synthetic fibers became, Italian women would always prefer clothes made in the home with natural materials. Tinned food might be sold very cheaply, he said, but Italian traditions of cooking would always be preferred. Small firms and traditional artisan skills would be central to Italy's future, just as they had been in the past.

By the start of 1950, practical experience and extensive opinion polling had brought a significant shift in outlook. Obligated to recognize that Europeans often preferred noncommunist social welfare states to the American liberal capitalist model, Marshall planners concentrated their focus on an area of substantial Euro-American agreement: security. Administrators began to insist only that ERP benefits be equally available everywhere, their aim now being less to reorganize Europe than to cut the ground from under communist attacks on both the plan and the idea of welfare-based social democratic reform.

### THE IMPACT OF KOREA

The unexpected and fear-inspiring turn of events in Asia in 1950 soon put the very existence of the Marshall Plan in doubt. The sharply intensified Cold War confrontation that started with the North Korean invasion of the South in June shortened the project in time and radically transformed it, partially employing Marshall Aid as a tool to enable general West European rearmament in the name of "Mutual Security." Congressional amendments of 1951 and 1952 to the original ERP Act provided \$400 million more for a continuing drive to persuade European employers and workers to "accept the American definition of the social and economic desirabilities [sic] of productivity," but now so that military output for national defense against

the Soviet threat could be increased at the same time as consumer goods. Everyone was expected to do more for the general effort (hence the strengthening of NATO), and so rebuild their armed forces, greatly run down since the end of World War II. The ECA teams on the ground quickly decided that there was no conflict between America's demand for general rearmament and the traditional ERP objectives: it was just a matter of bending the existing policy goals to the new requirements.

In such a context the successful ERP Information Program soon accelerated into something resembling "psychological warfare," with the world of industry and organized labor identified as the key front in the ideological Cold War against communism. As one of the ERP's most influential brains, Assistant Administrator (and later Acting Administrator) Richard M. Bissell explained in the April 1951 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, a leading U.S. journal of international relations, the United States could wage this war in Europe most effectively by the force of its economic example and the powerful appeal of its consumerist economy to Europeans of all regions and social classes:

Coca-Cola and Hollywood movies may be regarded as two products of a shallow and crude civilization. But American machinery, American labor relations, and American management and engineering are everywhere respected.... What is needed is a peaceful revolution, which can incorporate into the European economic system certain established and attractive features of our own, ranging from high volumes to collective bargaining.... [This] will require a profound shift in social attitudes, attuning them to the mid-twentieth century.

### THE BALANCE SHEET

In the end, every participating nation succeeded in carrying out its own distinctive version of Bissell's peaceful revolution. Economically, the Marshall Plan mattered far more in Greece, France, Austria, and The Netherlands than it did in Ireland, Norway, or Belgium. For some nations, such as Italy, it was perhaps truly decisive for one year only; for others, the benefits flowed for several years.

Each nation made different use of the economic impetus provided by the plan. The Danes secured raw materials and energy supplies. Other peoples, such as those in the German occupation zones, appreciated most



the food provided by the ERP. In Italy and Greece, help with rebuilding railways, roads, and power supplies gave the most lasting benefit. In France, industrial investment came first; in Britain, the Counterpart Fund was almost entirely used to pay wartime debts and refloat sterling.

Both Austria and Sweden, each in its own way, believe that its successful anchorage in the West dates back to the Marshall Plan. While communist parties continued to grow in Italy and France, they at least had not taken power, and those nations remained oriented toward the West as the Cold War progressed. Perhaps Germany benefited most overall, as the dynamic of European integration conceived and fostered by the ERP allowed the new Federal Republic to grow in strength and respectability while calming the suspicions of its neighbors. The hoped-for revolution in Franco-German relations did indeed come about. Whatever its other origins in short-term, Cold War necessities, no political development heightened the contrast with the post-World War I era more than this one.

Fifty years after the great experience, Jim Warren, a Marshall planner in Greece, rejoiced:

We had a goal; we had fire in our bellies; we worked like hell; we had tough, disciplined thinking, and we could program, strive for, and see results.

For a short time, a new, intense American presence in Europe sought ways to translate the successes of the American economic experience into recipes for the political salvation of others. Appreciative Europeans of the time spoke of “a sense of hope and confidence” these

American planners brought—of “restored courage and reawakened energy” in the Old World.

In Europe the clash of imported and native models provided the energy to set the great 1950s boom going. The European Recovery Program had supplied the spark to set the chain reaction in motion. In 1957 came the Treaty of Rome, which launched the European Economic Community. Although this scheme of fledgling economic integration was far less radical than the American visionaries of 1949 had demanded, of the inheritance left by the Marshall Plan and its promises, none was more concrete. This founding document initiated Europe’s peaceful economic integration, a process that continues to this day.

As for the Americans, following a wobbly emergence in World War I as an international power, they had finally developed foreign policies and a grand strategy “consonant with their new responsibilities as the greatest creditor, greatest producer, and greatest consumer of the 20th century”—as Vera Micheles Dean put it in 1950 in a book titled *Europe and the United States*. They had also endowed themselves with a new national image of America as a power that could successfully blend military, political, and economic leadership on an international scale, an image destined to reappear whenever nations turned from war and misery to reach forward toward a new, more hopeful future. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*

# THE MARSHALL PLAN

## A Story in Pictures



AP/WWP

A young girl at a spring fair in Vienna, Austria, in 1951, holds a bouquet of hydrogen-filled balloons advertising the Marshall Plan. Reading "Peace, Freedom, Welfare" in German, the balloons were released by visitors at the fair, carrying postcards expressing the hope that "someday goods and products will flow freely across the countries of a united and prosperous Europe" into the Eastern Bloc. The balloons were one of many ways America and its allies strived to counter negative Soviet propaganda against the reconstruction and economic development plan.

# Delivering the Goods

This map depicts countries participating in the Marshall Plan in Western Europe. While Eastern European nations were discouraged by the Soviet Union from participating, virtually all of Western Europe joined the European Recovery Program at its inception in June 1948. West Germany joined a year later once it regained a measure of self-government.



Library of Congress

A jeep carrying the banner “strength for the free world” is loaded at Baltimore harbor in 1951 for Marshall Plan use.

U.S. Ambassador to France Jefferson Caffery, at the microphone, delivers a speech in Bordeaux in honor of the first shipload of American aid delivered to France under the Marshall Plan on May 10, 1948.



AP/WWP



# Rebuilding



Library of Congress

With help from the Marshall Plan, Greece was able to accelerate mining of its bauxite reserves to provide raw materials for European aluminum production and supplies as part of European reconstruction and economic recovery.



Library of Congress

Dutch road workers take a break from the relentless task of reclaiming land. In the Netherlands, Marshall Plan funds helped to reclaim lands devastated by World War II and build roads essential to transport relief supplies across Europe.



Library of Congress

A public housing project under construction in Matera, Italy, built by the Italian government with Marshall Plan funds in 1951.

# THE SUEZ CRISIS

## A Crisis That Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East

PETER L. HAHN



Central Press/Getty Images

An aerial view of ships sunk at the entrance of the Suez Canal to prevent passage during the 1956 attack on Egypt by Israel, France and Britain.

*This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Suez Crisis, when a major regional war nearly erupted between Egypt, Israel, Britain, and France that may have drawn in the Soviet Union and the United States. Through determined diplomacy, however, President Dwight D. Eisenhower averted a larger conflict. But the crisis also affected the future balance of power in the Middle East.*

***Peter L. Hahn** is a professor of diplomatic history at the Ohio State University and currently serves as executive director of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. He specializes in U.S. diplomatic history in the Middle East since 1940.*

The Suez Crisis of 1956 was a complex affair with complicated origins and momentous consequences for the international history of the Middle East. The origins of the crisis can be traced to the Arab-Israeli conflict that swept the region during the late 1940s and to the wave of decolonization that swept the globe in the middle 20th century, which caused conflict between imperial powers and emergent nations. Before the Suez Crisis ended, it aggravated the Arab-Israeli conflict, it came close to provoking a showdown between the United States and the Soviet Union, it dealt a mortal blow to British and French imperial pretensions in the Middle East, and it provided a gateway for the United States to assume a prominent political position in the region.



President Dwight D. Eisenhower (left) meeting with his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1956.

National Park Service photo, courtesy Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

## ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT

The Suez Crisis had complex origins. Egypt and Israel remained technically in a state of war after an armistice agreement had ended their hostilities of 1948-1949. Efforts by the United Nations and various states to achieve a final peace treaty—most notably the so-called Alpha peace plan promoted by the United States and Britain in 1954-1955—failed to secure an accord. In an atmosphere of tension, violent clashes along the Egyptian-Israeli border nearly triggered the resumption of full-scale hostilities in August 1955 and April 1956. After Egypt purchased Soviet weapons in late 1955, pressure mounted in Israel to launch a preemptive strike that would undermine Egyptian Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser and dismantle Egypt's military ability before it had time to absorb the Soviet armaments.

Meanwhile, Britain and France tired of the challenges Nasser posed to their imperial interests in the Mediterranean basin. Britain considered Nasser's campaign to expel British military forces from Egypt—accomplished by a treaty in 1954—as a blow to its prestige and military capabilities. Nasser's campaign to project his influence into Jordan, Syria, and Iraq convinced the British that he sought to purge their influence from across the region. French officials chafed at evidence that Nasser endorsed the struggle of Algerian rebels for independence from France. By early 1956, American and British officials agreed to a top-secret policy, code-named Omega, to isolate and confine Nasser through a variety of subtle political and economic measures.

The Suez Crisis erupted in July 1956, when Nasser, denied economic assistance by the United States and Britain, retaliated by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company. Nasser seized the British- and French-owned firm to demonstrate his independence from the European colonial powers, to avenge the Anglo-U.S. denial of economic aid, and to garner the profits the company earned in his country. The deed touched off a four-month international crisis during which Britain and France gradually massed their military forces in the region and warned Nasser that they were prepared to use force to restore their ownership of the canal company unless he relented. British and French officials secretly hoped that the pressure would ultimately result in Nasser's fall from power with or without military action on their part.

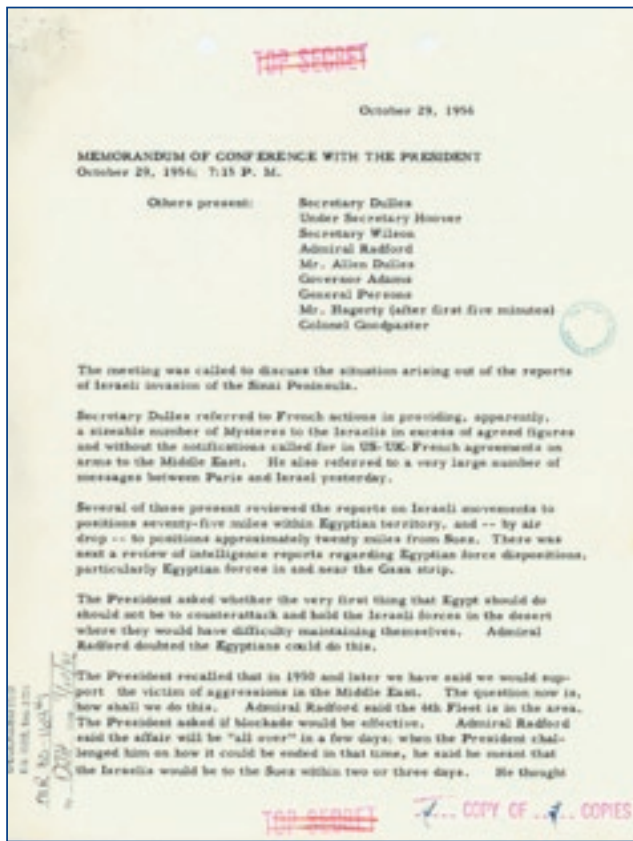
## THE U.S. RESPONSE

President Dwight D. Eisenhower approached the canal crisis on three basic and interrelated premises. First, although he sympathized with Britain's and France's desire to recover the canal company, he did not contest the right of Egypt to seize the company provided that it paid adequate compensation as required by international law. Eisenhower thus sought to avert a military clash and to settle the canal dispute with diplomacy before the Soviet Union exploited the situation for political gain. He directed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to defuse the crisis on terms acceptable to Britain and France through public statements, negotiations, two international conferences in London, establishment of a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA), and deliberations at the United Nations. By late October, however, these efforts proved fruitless, and Anglo-French preparations for war continued.

Second, Eisenhower aimed to avoid alienating Arab nationalists and included Arab statesmen in his diplomacy to end the crisis. His refusal to endorse Anglo-French force against Egypt resulted in part from the realization that Nasser's seizure of the canal company was widely popular among his own and other Arab peoples. Indeed, the surge in Nasser's popularity in Arab states short-circuited Eisenhower's efforts to settle the canal crisis in partnership with Arab leaders. Saudi and Iraqi leaders declined U.S. suggestions that they criticize Nasser's action or challenge his prestige.

Third, Eisenhower sought to isolate Israel from the canal controversy on the fear that mixture of the volatile Israeli-Egyptian and Anglo-French-Egyptian conflicts would ignite the Middle East. Accordingly, Dulles denied Israel a voice in the diplomatic conferences summoned





This declassified October 29, 1956, White House memo discusses reports that the Israelis had invaded the Sinai Peninsula and speculates on how to respond.

to resolve the crisis and prevented discussion of Israel's grievances about Egyptian policy during the proceedings at the United Nations. Sensing a spike in Israeli bellicosity toward Egypt in August and September, Eisenhower arranged limited arms supplies from the United States, France, and Canada in the hope of easing Israeli insecurity and thereby averting an Egyptian-Israeli war.

### HOSTILITIES ERUPT

In October the crisis took a new turn, unexpected by the United States. Unknown to American officials, France and Britain colluded with Israel in an elaborate scheme to launch a secretly coordinated war on Egypt. Under the ruse, Israel would invade the Sinai Peninsula, Britain and France would issue ultimatums ordering Egyptian and Israeli troops to withdraw from the Suez Canal Zone, and, when Nasser (as expected) rejected the ultimatums, the European powers would bomb Egyptian airfields within 48 hours, occupy the Canal Zone, and depose Nasser. American officials failed to anticipate the collusion scheme, in part because they were distracted by a war

scare between Israel and Jordan as well as by anti-Soviet unrest in Hungary, in part because they were preoccupied by the impending U.S. presidential election, and in part because they believed the denials of friends in the colluding governments who assured them that no attack was imminent. Yet war erupted on October 29 when Israel launched a frontal assault on Egyptian forces in the Sinai. Within days Israeli forces approached the Suez Canal.

Caught off-guard by the start of hostilities, Eisenhower and Dulles took a series of steps designed to end the war quickly. Angered that his allies in London and Paris had deceived him in the collusion scheme, Eisenhower also worried that the war would drive Arab states into Soviet dependence. To stop the fighting even as British and French warplanes bombed Egyptian targets, he imposed sanctions on the colluding powers, achieved a United Nations ceasefire resolution, and organized a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to disengage the combatants. Before UNEF could be deployed, however, Britain and France landed paratroopers along the Suez Canal on November 5.

The British and French landings pushed the crisis into its most dangerous phase. The Soviet Union, in a ploy to distract attention from its brutal repression of the revolutionary movement in Hungary, threatened to intervene in the hostilities and perhaps even retaliate by attacking London and Paris with atomic weapons. Intelligence reports that Soviet forces were concentrating in Syria for intervention in Egypt alarmed American officials who sensed that the turmoil in Hungary had left Soviet leaders prone to impulsive behavior. Prudently, Eisenhower alerted the Pentagon to prepare for war. The intersection of the Arab-Israeli and decolonization conflicts had triggered a portentous East-West confrontation.

Shaken by the sudden prospect of global conflict, Eisenhower also moved quickly to avert it. He applied political and financial pressures on the belligerents to accept on November 6 a U.N. ceasefire deal that took effect the next day, and he endorsed efforts by U.N. officials urgently to deploy UNEF to Egypt. Tensions gradually eased. British and French forces departed Egypt in December and, following complex negotiations, Israeli forces withdrew from the Sinai by March 1957.

### CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRISIS

Although quickly mitigated, the Suez Crisis had a profound impact on the balance of power in the Middle East and on the responsibilities that the United States assumed there. It badly tarnished British and French

prestige among Arab states and thus undermined those European powers' traditional authority over the region. Nasser, by contrast, not only survived the ordeal but secured a new level of prestige among Arab peoples as a leader who had defied European empires and survived a military invasion by Israel. The region's remaining pro-Western regimes seemed vulnerable to Nasserist uprisings. Although Nasser showed no immediate inclination to become a client of the Soviet Union, U.S. officials feared that the Soviet threats against the European allies had improved Moscow's image among Arab states. And the prospect of promoting Arab-Israeli peace seemed nil for the foreseeable future.

In reaction to these consequences of the Suez War, the president declared the Eisenhower Doctrine, a major new regional security policy in early 1957. Proposed in January and approved by Congress in March, the doctrine pledged that the United States would distribute economic and military aid and, if necessary, use military force to contain communism in the Middle East. To implement the plan, presidential envoy James P. Richards toured the region, dispensing tens of millions of dollars in economic and military aid to Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Libya.

Although never formally invoked, the Eisenhower Doctrine guided U.S. policy in three controversies. In spring 1957, the president dispensed economic aid to Jordan and sent U.S. Navy ships into the eastern

Mediterranean to help King Hussein suppress a rebellion among pro-Egyptian army officers. In late 1957, Eisenhower encouraged Turkey and other friendly states to consider an incursion into Syria to stop a radical regime from consolidating power there. When a violent revolution in Baghdad in July 1958 threatened to spark similar uprisings in Lebanon and Jordan, finally, Eisenhower ordered U.S. soldiers to occupy Beirut and to transport supplies to British forces occupying Jordan. These measures, unprecedented in the history of American policy in Arab states, clearly revealed Eisenhower's determination to accept responsibility for the preservation of Western interests in the Middle East.

The Suez Crisis stands as a watershed event in the history of American foreign policy. By overturning traditional assumptions in the West about Anglo-French hegemony in the Middle East, by exacerbating the problems of revolutionary nationalism personified by Nasser, by stoking Arab-Israeli conflict, and by threatening to offer the Soviet Union a pretext for penetrating the region, the Suez Crisis drew the United States toward substantial, significant, and enduring involvement in the Middle East. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*

# BRUSSELS UNIVERSAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION (EXPO 1958)

Perhaps the best-known international exhibition in the Cold War period was the 1958 Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles (Expo '58). As the first one held after World War II, it acquired broader significance: the governments of the European Western Allies—France and Britain—used the occasion to demonstrate their postwar successes, while the Axis countries—Germany, Japan, Italy—had the opportunity to refurbish their international images. Most noticeable amid the general exuberance of the fair, however, was the obvious tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, who used their pavilions to promote their rival political systems.

The theme of the U.S. exhibit, “Unfinished Business,” dealt with, among other subjects, America’s social issues, including segregation. Southern congressmen took offense and cut the remaining U.S.

exhibition budget. As a result, the number of U.S. scientific exhibits were reduced, and Russia took over the unused U.S. space in the International Hall of Science, using it to good effect as a propaganda showcase of Soviet technological advances: it had, for example, a display on the peaceful uses of atomic energy by the Soviets, contrasted with America’s use of nuclear power “for the undoing of mankind.”

At the core of the Soviet exhibit were models of its newly launched *Sputnik* satellites, which had initiated

the Russian space program the previous year, including a flight that carried a dog named Laika. Although the United States had launched its own successful satellite, *Explorer*, in 1958, it did not have its space artifact on display. *Sputnik* proved very popular with the crowds, and the Soviets used their pavilion, a high-tech tribute to communism, as an opportunity to try to convince fairgoers that a technologically and scientifically superior USSR would shortly surpass the United States in the production of material goods. America was



Featured at the Brussels Expo in 1958 is the Atomium, which was designed by Andre Waterkeyn. The structure represents an iron crystal, magnified 165 billion times. The 48-year-old landmark recently underwent a complete renovation. The Expo, the first since the end of World War II, served as the backdrop for opening of the cultural Cold War between the United States and Soviet Union.

better prepared in subsequent world fairs.

Aside from the Cold War cultural rivalries, the exposition was notable for the variety of scientific products demonstrated, including an audio encyclopedia, an electronic dictionary, pasteurized cheese, magnetic tape capable of transmitting millions of

characters in a few seconds, and a postal machine that could sort a thousand checks in 15 minutes. Belgium itself, which had held the fair to promote its economic growth, impressed audiences with its centerpiece, the towering Atomium—a futuristic building highlighting the positive side of the atomic age—and its chocolate, producing five tons of it each day of Expo '58. ■



# NIXON IN CHINA

## A Turning Point in World History

WARREN I. COHEN



President Richard M. Nixon, right, strolls across a bridge in a typical Chinese setting at Hangchow, February 26, 1972, with Chinese Premier Chou En-lai and Mrs. Pat Nixon, center rear.

*“It is to the advantage, and not to the disadvantage of other nations when any nation becomes stable and prosperous, able to keep the peace within its own borders, and strong enough not to invite aggression from without. We heartily hope for the progress of China, and so far as by peaceable and legitimate means we are able we will do our part toward furthering that progress.”*

*U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt to Chinese representative Tong Shaoyi, December 1908*

**Warren I. Cohen** is Distinguished University Professor of History and Presidential Research Professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He is also Senior Scholar with the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington. He is a historian of American foreign relations and U.S. relations with East Asia as well as the history of China and its region.

The 1949 victory of the Chinese communists in the Chinese civil war had a shattering impact upon the United States. In the first half of the 20th century, American policymakers, from President Theodore Roosevelt on, had favored the emergence of a strong and prosperous China. They assumed that China would be friendly to the United States. Americans looked back to a century of good works they had performed in China, such as the building of the Christian colleges that were the forerunners of China’s modern educational system, and the Rockefeller Foundation’s funding of rural reconstruction programs and the Peking Union Medical College, where China’s leading doctors were trained. Many Americans believed their country had championed China’s cause against Japanese and European imperialists, beginning with the “Open Door Notes” sent from Washington to the Great Powers when China’s very survival as a nation was threatened in 1899 and 1900. And, most obviously, the United States had led the fight to liberate China from Japanese aggression during World War II.



President Richard M. Nixon, center, and first lady Pat Nixon pose with a group of Chinese citizens on the Great Wall of China after a tour of the monument near Beijing, February 24, 1972. At far right is Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

AP/WIDE

and refused to discuss any issue but an end to U.S. aid to Chiang and its protection of Taiwan.

In the United States, a combination of China's hostility, domestic anticommunism intensified by the Cold War, and lobbying by Chiang's American friends prevented policymakers in the 1950s and 1960s from reaching out to Beijing. Indeed, Washington used its influence to keep the People's Republic out of the United Nations, even though President Dwight Eisenhower contended that isolating China was a mistake.

In the mid-1960s, however, awareness of the Sino-Soviet split and a reduced intensity of anticommunism as a result of disillusionment with the war in Vietnam, led to a shift in American opinion toward relations with China. Important academic and governmental leaders argued in favor of what they insisted was the more realistic policy of accepting the Beijing regime as the legitimate government of China and finding ways to work with it. They spoke of "containment without isolation." The administration of President Lyndon Johnson was mired too deeply in Vietnam, however, and the Chinese were caught up in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. No new relationship developed.

### TENSIONS EASE

Richard Nixon, Eisenhower's vice president and unsuccessful presidential candidate in 1960, was one American leader whose anticommunism and hostility to China were well known. In 1968 he was elected president of the United States and the possibility of easing tensions with China seemed more remote than ever. But Nixon agreed with the estimates of senior State Department officials that China might help the United States end the war in Vietnam and assist American efforts to counter growing Soviet power. He recognized that the changed mood of the American public, plus his own anticommunist credentials, would allow him to seek

### U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS BREAK DOWN

But the People's Republic of China (PRC), proclaimed October 1, 1949, was not friendly to the United States, and few Chinese shared the image Americans had of their historic role in China. Their new leader, Mao Zedong, was suspicious of American intentions and had ordered an anti-American campaign in June 1946. His forces harassed Americans in China. An American diplomat was beaten by police in Shanghai. The American consul-general in Mukden was kept under house arrest for a year. Worst of all was the October 1950 intervention of Chinese communist troops into the Korean War against American-led U.N. forces attempting to repel the invasion of South Korea by North Korea. As Chinese and American troops killed each other in battle by the tens of thousands, all thought of establishing normal diplomatic relations between Beijing and Washington disappeared.

For more than 20 years thereafter, the United States and China viewed each other as adversaries. Although their diplomats occasionally crossed paths at international conferences and they held sporadic ambassadorial-level talks, neither country expressed interest in reaching an accommodation. The Americans continued to recognize Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China, defeated on the mainland and surviving on the island of Taiwan, as the legitimate government of all of China. Mao and his colleagues persisted in denouncing American imperialism

an accommodation with China. Slowly, cautiously, at no risk to the security of the United States, the Nixon administration signaled its desire to improve relations with China.

Zhou Enlai, China's premier diplomatist, had been working toward the same end, as evidenced by his invitation to the U.S. ping-pong team to visit China and communications through Pakistan's leader. Gradually he persuaded a skeptical Mao that the United States was no longer a threat to China and might be useful in Beijing's efforts to stand up to Soviet pressure. The great breakthrough came in 1971.

In his State of the Union address to Congress in February 1971, Nixon spoke of the need to establish a dialogue with the PRC. He called for a place for the Beijing government in the United Nations—without sacrificing the position of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Previously, American recognition of and support for Chiang's regime had been a major obstacle to rapprochement between Mao's China and the United States. Both Mao and Chiang insisted there could be but one China and neither would acquiesce to Washington's efforts to have two, one on the mainland and one on Taiwan. In 1971, however, Nixon and Mao were eager to use each other and agreed to a compromise formula of "one China, but not now." In fact, given their perception of the strategic value of improved relations with Beijing, Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, were prepared to meet Mao more than half way on the issue. Finding a partner in the struggle against the Soviet Union was far more important.

In July 1971, the world discovered that Kissinger had just returned from a secret mission to China. Nixon announced that he, the president of the United States, had accepted an invitation to visit China. In August and September the United States, for the first time, supported the seating of Beijing's representative in the United Nations Security Council while giving nominal support to Taipei's effort to retain a seat for itself. An American motion to seat both delegations failed, undermined by Kissinger's decision to choose that time to fly to Beijing. An Albanian motion to substitute Beijing's representative for Taipei's won easily. It was one of the least painful diplomatic defeats the United States had ever suffered. Washington had taken a step closer to a one-China policy.

## A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

In February 1972, Nixon flew to China, where he enjoyed a personal audience with Mao Zedong. An astonished worldwide television audience watched Nixon sit through and warmly applaud a Chinese ballet heavily laden with communist propaganda. It was indeed a new Nixon and a new relationship with China.

In the Chinese-American joint communiqué issued at the end of Nixon's week in China, it was clear that shared resistance to the Soviets was what brought the two sides together. Their stated opposition to "hegemony" in Asia and the Pacific was a thinly veiled reference to diminishing Moscow's influence in the region. Taiwan, on the other hand, remained the principal obstacle to regular diplomatic relations, to "normalization." The Americans acknowledged the Chinese claim that Taiwan was part of China, but restated their interest in the peaceful settlement of the issue. Nixon responded to the Chinese demands for the removal of American forces from Taiwan by committing the United States to their ultimate withdrawal and promising to do so gradually as tension in the area (Vietnam) diminished. At the same time, he and Kissinger sought to alleviate Beijing's apprehension that Japanese power would replace that of the Americans on the island. He further assured Chinese leaders that the United States would not support independence for Taiwan and promised to take the steps desired by the Chinese after his anticipated reelection in 1972.

The United States was bound by a 1954 treaty to defend Taiwan. American businesses had a multibillion-dollar stake on the island. Public opinion polls indicated that the American people were unwilling to abandon the people of Taiwan, friends and allies, to the communists. Nonetheless, the Nixon administration was prepared to abrogate its defense treaty with Taiwan, gambling that in the short run the people of the island could defend themselves and that in the long run a peaceful solution could be found.

## NORMALIZATION

In 1973, China and the United States opened "liaison offices," embassies in all but name, in each other's capitals. Normalization was delayed, however, by the Watergate crisis that ultimately forced Nixon to resign in disgrace from the presidency. Nonetheless, his successors also were committed to normalization of relations with China, achieved early in 1979. The secret exchange of

military intelligence on Soviet movements, begun by Kissinger in 1971, was never interrupted.

Nixon's opening to China brought about an enormously important shift in the Cold War balance of power. The tacit alliance between the United States and the People's Republic, directed against the apparently burgeoning power of the Soviet Union, relieved Chinese anxieties about a potential Soviet attack and enabled the Americans to concentrate their military power in Europe—while the Soviets continued to be confronted by adversaries East and West, now working together against Moscow. It was a major turning point in world history and contributed ultimately to the collapse of

the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. And in 1979, American Vice President Walter Mondale traveled to Beijing where he repeated Theodore Roosevelt's words of 1908 to demonstrate anew the conviction that a strong—and presumably friendly—China was in America's interest. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*



# PING-PONG DIPLOMACY SPEARHEADED U.S.-CHINESE RELATIONS



Agence France Presse

Chinese and American table tennis players go through some practice drills before an exhibition match in Beijing in April 1971.

*Unlikely diplomats went to play table tennis and changed history along the way.*

**O**n April 10, 1971, nine American players, four officials, and two spouses, accompanied by 10 journalists, crossed a bridge from Hong Kong into mainland China to usher in the age of “Ping-Pong Diplomacy.” The eight-day adventure signaled a joint desire to relax old tensions between Washington and Beijing.

“You have opened a new chapter in the relations of the American and Chinese people,” Premier Chou En-lai said during a banquet for the visiting Americans in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. “I am confident that this beginning again of our friendship will certainly meet with majority support of our two peoples.”

That same day, April 14, the United States lifted a 20-year-old trade embargo against China. U.S. relations with China had ended in October 1949 when communist

forces led by Mao Zedong overthrew the Nationalist government led by General Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang and his government took refuge in Taiwan, and no American group had been allowed inside mainland China in the 22 years since the communist takeover.

So it was completely unexpected when on April 6, 1971, the U.S. table tennis team, in Japan for the 31st World Table Tennis Championships, was invited by the Chinese team to an immediate, all-expense paid visit to the People’s Republic of China.

From April 11 to April 17, the U.S. team played the Chinese team in exhibition matches, visited the Great Wall and Summer Palace outside of Beijing, met with Chinese students and workers, and attended social events in China’s major cities. A year later the Chinese players toured the United States, playing a series of “Friendship First” exhibition matches before enthusiastic U.S. audiences.

The United States and China had already been quietly conducting back-channel negotiations, as each nation



AP/WIDEWORLD

Members of the U.S. table tennis team attend a discussion meeting between the Chinese and U.S. teams in Beijing April 16, 1971. The Chinese team invited the U.S. team to visit China while they were playing in the World Championship matches in Japan.



AP/WIDEWORLD

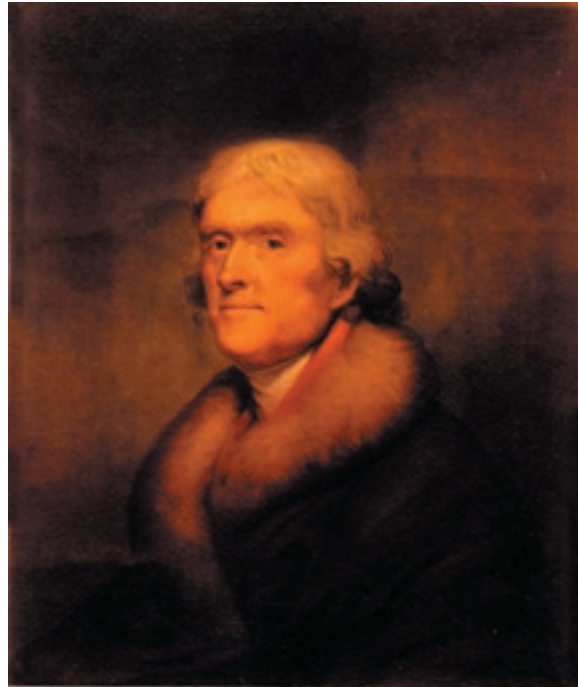
Chinese Vice Premier Li Lanqing, left, plays a game of table tennis with former U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, right, at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing March, 18, 2001. A grand reception was hosted there to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic "ping-pong diplomacy" in U.S.-China relations.

sought to improve relations, against a background of Soviet aggression. During 1971, National Security Advisor Henry A. Kissinger made two secret visits to China to establish rapprochement, and that summer, in the aftermath of the goodwill established by ping-pong diplomacy, President Richard M. Nixon announced that he, too, would go to China the following year to begin formal talks to normalize relations between the two nations.

On February 21, 1972, Nixon became the first American president ever to visit China. ■

# TRADE AND ECONOMICS AS A FORCE IN U.S. FOREIGN RELATIONS

MAARTEN L. PEREBOOM



Jefferson portrait by Peale

From the earliest days of the American republic, the “flag followed trade” as Americans sought access to world markets. In 1789, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, asked South Carolina planter Charles Drayton to go to Vietnam to seek out trade opportunities.

*“Emerging as a world leader in the 20th century, the United States, while certainly continuing to pursue its own economic interests abroad, drew upon its Enlightenment roots and promoted the ideals of freedom, democracy, and open markets in the belief that ‘free nations trading freely’ would result in the worldwide improvement of the human condition.”*

*Maarten L. Pereboom is a professor of history and chairman of the Department of History at Salisbury University in Maryland. He specializes in the history of U.S. foreign relations, World War II, the Holocaust, and the Cold War.*

**O**f all the forces that have shaped U.S. foreign relations since independence, the search for economic opportunity has been arguably the most fundamental. History tends to focus on dramatic military events and the politics and diplomacy that surround them, but, from the early days of the republic, the “flag followed trade” as Americans sought access to world markets.

Emerging as a world leader in the 20th century, the United States, while certainly continuing to pursue its own economic interests abroad, drew upon its Enlightenment roots and promoted the ideals of freedom, democracy, and open markets in the belief that “free nations trading freely” would result in the worldwide improvement of the human condition.

The United States helped to save the world from the racist vision of Nazi Germany and the disasters of



U.S. Trade Representative Robert Portman addresses the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, January 28, 2006, during crucial trade liberalization talks.

Soviet communism, but the complex demands of world leadership also challenged the role of economics as a prime factor shaping U.S. foreign policy.

Historian Bradford Perkins has described the American struggle for independence as the desire to restore the freedom, both political and economic, that the British in North America had enjoyed under the “benign neglect” of imperial rule prior to 1750. The French and Indian War (1756-1763), while eliminating French power in North America, also led the British Parliament to turn to the colonies for help paying the bills. Taxation by a Parliament in which the colonies had no representation touched off the War of Independence in which Americans kept an eye on their economic interests throughout.

### **BELIEF IN FREE TRADE**

In 1776—when the rebellious colonies needed a political and military ally against Britain—John Adams’ Model Treaty proposed nothing more than trade relations with France in which the nationality of the traders would be disregarded and the free-trading rights of each country would be fully respected, even if one of the partners wanted to trade with a country that the other was

fighting. Though the treaty never took effect, it enshrined the Enlightenment-inspired belief that free trade among free nations would create a peaceful and prosperous world.

As an independent country, the United States pursued economic opportunity in a world still dominated by fierce European imperial rivalries. Napoleon’s offer to sell the massive Louisiana territory for \$15 million, to finance France’s own wars, was an extraordinary stroke of luck. But just a few years later, the United States attempted to influence the ongoing conflict between Britain and France with the Embargo Act, depriving the warring powers of the benefits of U.S. trade, but depriving Americans of those same benefits at the same time. It remains one of the major blunders in the history of U.S. foreign relations, contributing also to the origins of the largely inconclusive War of 1812, which ended in a stalemate in 1815.

The United States assumed a more confident stance in the world of the 1820s as Europe, after Napoleon, entered an era of relative peace and much of Central and South America became independent. With the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the United States proclaimed the Western Hemisphere closed to further European colonization.

Europeans continued to invest in the Americas, however, and the resources of Central and South America also held a powerful allure for the United States. As American companies developed enterprises in mining and agriculture, U.S. foreign policy, and its armed forces, helped to ensure that local governments would remain friendly to their economic presence.

In the meantime, the republic itself expanded dramatically as Americans moved westward, fueled by dreams of economic opportunity and ideals of “manifest destiny.” To make this expansion possible, the U.S. government displaced Indians, waged war with Mexico, and negotiated with Britain to expand America’s borders all the way to the Pacific coast.

### **COMMERCE ACROSS THE PACIFIC**

The conflict over slavery limited further expansion north or south, however, and by the time the Civil War was over in 1865, William Seward, President Abraham Lincoln’s secretary of state, had developed a vision of further expansion that was less focused on territorial than on commercial expansion. Across the Pacific Ocean lay a vast potential market in Asia. While Alaska, which was purchased from Russia in 1867, became known as Seward’s Folly, its acquisition was part of a shrewd strategic effort to establish secure trade lines with the Far East. Imperial powers from Britain to Japan eyed colonial





World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz, right, greets Uganda's Minister of Energy Syda Bbumba, after she delivered her keynote address at the opening session of Energy Week 2006 at the World Bank headquarters, March 6, 2006, in Washington.

because of Britain's blockade, which the United States did not challenge as burgeoning trade with the Allied Powers dwarfed the trade lost with Germany. By 1916, American economic support for the Allied Powers with industrial goods and financial services threatened Germany with defeat on the Western Front, despite its success against Russia in the East. Challenging America's definition of neutrality, Germany directed its submarines against American shipping. The United States declared war in April 1917, joining the Allied Powers to defeat Germany in the following year.

### EMPIRE WITHOUT TEARS

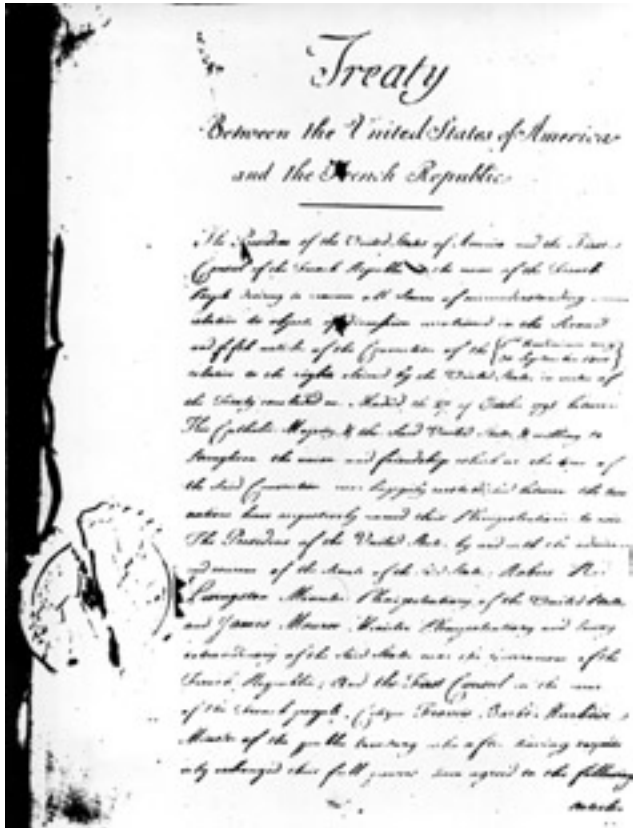
expansion in China near the turn of the century, but the United States, hoping to prevent a carving up of China comparable to the "scramble for Africa" in the 1880s, promoted an Open Door policy to preserve access to that vast potential market. An Open Door policy is the maintenance in a certain territory of equal commercial and industrial rights for the nationals of all countries.

While foreign policy continued to promote access to world markets, much of America's phenomenal economic growth after the Civil War took place within its borders. Men like John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie amassed huge personal fortunes in oil and steel, and they presided over the consolidation and expansion of these industries into monopolies or near-monopolies. The corporation, an American innovation, allowed enterprises to assume gigantic proportions and set the stage for the globalization of American economic power in the 20th century.

By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the United States was an economic superpower, accounting for almost one-third of the world's manufacturing, compared to about 15 percent for Germany and 14 percent for Britain, according to historian Paul Kennedy. As Central Powers Germany and Austria marched to war against Allied Powers Britain, France, and Russia, across the Atlantic Ocean, the United States declared a policy of neutrality "in thought and deed." The definition of neutrality echoed Adams' Model Treaty: free trade unaffected by political circumstances. Trade with Germany dwindled down to almost nothing

The First World War shattered Europe, but New York had replaced London as the world's financial capital and the U.S. economy boomed as its transatlantic rivals struggled. President Woodrow Wilson's vision of a peaceful, democratic, free-trading world challenged the old order of competing European empires, but it failed amidst the politics of the postwar world, both in the United States and abroad. Historian Warren Cohen has argued that, between the world wars, the United States opted instead for a foreign policy of "empire without tears:" dominance of world markets with an absolute minimum of military and political commitments. In the 1930s, isolationist politicians viewed intervention in the war as a mistake driven by arms manufacturers greedy for the profits of wartime trade, and the U.S. Congress passed a series of neutrality acts to ensure that trade would not draw the country into war again.

"Empire without tears" recalled the carefree days of colonial prosperity under the not-too-watchful eye of Britain. But benign neglect would not work in a world that militant extremists in Germany and Japan aspired to dominate. In the late 18th century, President George Washington had warned the fledgling republic to steer clear of warring European empires, but now the United States had the power, rooted in economic strength, to ensure that aspiring empires would not challenge its global interests. Despite lingering isolationism in the country, President Franklin Roosevelt announced the largest peacetime defense budget ever in January 1939.



Negotiations for the purchase of the Louisiana Territory between the United States and the French Republic were completed April 30, 1803, while Thomas Jefferson was president.

In March 1941, months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States pledged its economic might to crush the Axis Powers with the Lend-Lease Act. By summer, German submarines were once again challenging America's interests in an undeclared war on the Atlantic.

### **SUPERPOWERS EMERGE**

The strange alliance of the United States, the British Empire, and the Soviet Union defeated the Axis Powers in 1945. The Soviets had the human resources and determination necessary to repel the most massive invasion in history and crush the German armed forces; the United States successfully mobilized its overwhelming human and economic resources to win the biggest war in history on two different continents: As Europe declined, these two countries became the world's two superpowers. But the superpowers also represented opposing economic and political systems, and the development by both sides of immensely destructive nuclear weapons gave the

ensuing Cold War struggle an apocalyptic, all-or-nothing dimension.

The Soviet threat ensured that the United States would not retreat from a global political and military role. Economics remained crucial: In one of the truly brilliant initiatives in the history of U.S. foreign relations, the United States between 1948 and 1951 provided \$12 billion in assistance to European economies through the Marshall Plan. The United States aided countries in desperate need and helped them reject communism; but the phenomenal economic growth that resulted in Western Europe also boosted world trade, making this act of largesse an extremely shrewd investment as well. As the guardian of the global marketplace, the United States generally promoted free trade policies to support it, though Americans and their government were not entirely immune from the draw of protectionism. In general, however, Cold War politics assumed a life of its own: Though the struggle aimed to preserve a global economic system, it created a worldwide U.S. military presence and what President Eisenhower called a military-industrial complex to support it. The policy of containment defined Vietnam, for example, as a domino whose fall to communism would set off a chain reaction in Southeast Asia. At enormous cost, both economic and human, the United States sought unsuccessfully to build a noncommunist Vietnamese state.

The challenges of the Cold War also placed enormous economic pressure on the Soviet Union and its allies, and in the end the communist system could not generate the wealth necessary to sustain the competition, let alone assure its own people basic human rights, a safe environment, or a reasonable standard of living. With the collapse of communism in the late 1980s, the United States emerged as the sole superpower, and the capitalist system, more regulated than in the days of the robber barons but still not without its shortcomings and victims, prevailed. The end of that struggle did not produce the "end of history," as strategic thinker Francis Fukuyama suggested, but a contemporary world whose unruly complexities once again challenge Americans to define their national political and economic interests in a global context, and to study the past in order to deal rationally with the present and provide vision for the future. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*

# AFTER THE COLD WAR

WALTER LAQUEUR



Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, left, and former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev show off their cowboy hats during a quiet moment together, May 2, 1992, on Reagan's Rancho del Cielo, a 688 acre spread in the mountains 30 miles north of Santa Barbara, California.

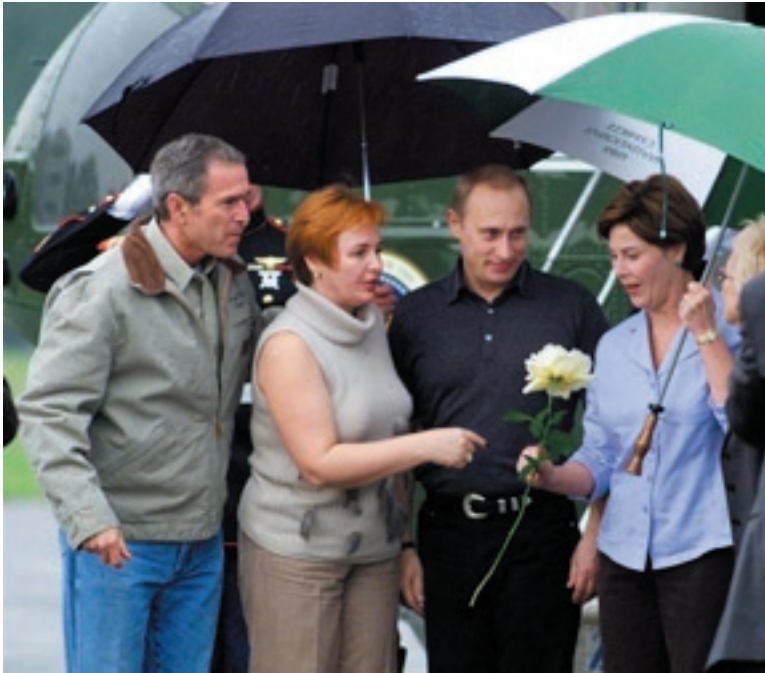
*“History shows that terrorism can operate only in free, or relatively free, societies. There was no terrorism in Nazi Germany or in Stalin’s Russia; there was (or is) none even in less harsh dictatorships. But this means that in certain circumstances, if terrorism has been permitted to operate too freely and become more than a nuisance, a high price has to be paid in terms of limitation of freedom and human rights to put an end to it.”*

*Walter Laqueur is cochair of the International Research Council at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based public research center. He has been a professor at Brandeis University and Georgetown University and a visiting professor at Harvard University, the University of Chicago, the University of Tel Aviv, and Johns Hopkins University.*

When the Cold War came to an end in 1989 with the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, when the countries of Eastern Europe regained independence, and when finally the Soviet Union disintegrated, there was widespread feeling throughout the world that at long last universal peace had descended on Earth. The fear of a war in which weapons of mass destruction would be used had vanished. A leading political scientist wrote a book titled *The End of History*; this did not, of course, imply that history had come to a standstill, but he meant that serious, major conflicts between nations no longer existed and that on certain essentials all were now in agreement.

It was a beautiful moment but the euphoria did not last long. Skeptics (which included this writer) feared that there was plenty of conflict left in the world, which had, however, been overshadowed or suppressed by the Cold War. In other words, as long as the confrontation between the two camps continued, all kinds of other conflicts, which seemed minor at the time, would not come into the open. On the contrary, the Cold War had





President George W. Bush, left, greeted Mrs. Lyudmila Putin and Russian President Vladimir Putin, center, as they arrived at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, Texas, November 14, 2001. Mrs. Putin handed a flower to Mrs. Bush as they arrived.

with impunity against their enemies and yet obliterate their traces in a proxy war?

### QUEST FOR LEADERSHIP

These are troubling questions, which have arisen in recent years and are becoming more acute all the time. There is no arbiter, no ultimate authority for the resolution of conflicts. The United Nations should have fulfilled this function. But they could do so no more than the League of Nations between the two world wars. The United Nations consists of nearly 200 member states, big and small, democratic and authoritarian, with all kinds of shades in between. Some respect human rights; others do not. They have conflicting interests; they lack a military capacity to intervene in an emergency. They can sometimes help with negotiations to reach agreement, but they are powerless if diplomacy breaks down.

When the Cold War ended, the United

in a perverse way been responsible for the preservation of some order in the world; it had been a stabilizing factor.

And it was also true that the danger of a new, horrible world war had probably been exaggerated. For there existed a balance of terror; there was mutual deterrence—precisely because there was a big arsenal of devastating weapons. And since both sides in the conflict were acting rationally, because they knew what the consequences of such a war would be, peace was preserved.

Would such mutual deterrence still be in force once the Cold War had ended? Or would the new age result in great disorder? The Cold War had not put an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction. But it had certainly slowed it down. This is no longer true today; there is not just the danger that a few more countries would achieve these weapons.

The real threat is that the acquisition of these weapons by a few will generate a general rush to follow them, because their neighbors will feel exposed and threatened. Furthermore, can it still be taken for granted that those in possession of weapons of mass destruction will act as rationally as the two sides in the Cold War did? Or will they, driven by religious or nationalist or ideological fanaticism, forget the suicidal risk they would run if they used the weapons? Or will they perhaps persuade themselves that they could use these weapons

States emerged as the only superpower and this involved great responsibilities as far as world peace was concerned. No other country was in a similar position to deal with dangers to world peace—not only its own security. But even a superpower is not omnipotent; there are limits to its capacity to do its international duty. It cannot and should not go it alone, but ought to act as a leader in international action by persuasion as much as by pressure, if necessary.

However, superpowers are never popular. This has been the case since the days of the Roman Empire, and all other empires before and after. They are feared and suspected by weaker nations, not only by their neighbors. This is a dilemma from which there is no escape. However reasonably and decently they behave, there is always the fear that suddenly their mood and behavior could change. There is the tendency of smaller nations to gang up against the leader. Hard as the superpower may try, there is no panacea to gain popularity—except by way of abdication. Once they cease to be very powerful, their chances greatly increase to become more popular. But few superpowers in history have chosen this way.

With the end of the Cold War, new centers of power have emerged, above all China and India. They have made spectacular economic progress, deemed almost unthinkable even a decade ago. But so far these countries have shown no desire to play a role in world politics



commensurate with their economic strength. They are regional great powers and, in due time, will undoubtedly become more than that. But this could be many years off, and, in the meantime, they have shown no eagerness to shoulder responsibilities in keeping world order.

For a while, after the end of the Cold War, it appeared as if Europe could play such a role alongside, if not always in unison, with the United States. There were some observers of the political scene who claimed that the 21st century would be the century of Europe, mainly because the European model had been so attractive and would be copied by the rest of the world. This was the idea of Europe as a civilian and moral superpower.

Of late, these optimistic voices have been few and far between. True, Europe had much to offer to the rest of mankind, and the movement toward European unity after 1948 has been a great success story. But the movement ran out of steam once a Common Market came into being, and even the economy functioned less well than had been hoped for; there was not enough growth to finance the welfare state, the pride of the continent. Many new members had joined the European Union, but there was no European foreign policy, let alone military capacity.

In the course of many years, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) had provided a shield for Europe and it continues to do so. There were voices arguing that NATO had lost its *raison d'être* at least in part, simply because the threat that had caused the alliance to come into being in the first place had vanished. But if the old threats had disappeared, new ones had replaced them.

The case of the doubters of NATO would have been stronger had they made an effort to establish a defense organization of their own, but this they failed to do. All this combined with Europe's demographic weakness—the shrinking and graying of the continent—were signs of weakness. Its independent diplomatic initiatives, such as in the Middle East, were unsuccessful, and when a bloody civil war broke out on its very front steps in the Balkans, it proved incapable to deal with it without outside help. The age of a moral superpower, however desirable as an ideal, had quite obviously not arrived yet.

Few would argue that time has come to abolish police and other security forces on the domestic level. Yet many have acted as if no forces of order are needed on the international level, and this at a time when dangers such as weapons of mass destruction loom larger than ever, as the damage and the casualties caused by them could be infinitely greater than at any time in the past.

## TENSIONS AND TERRORISM

There have been few volunteers to act as world policemen—it is admittedly not an attractive job, unpaid, with little gratitude to be earned. Perhaps it is unnecessary, perhaps the international order will somehow take care of itself?

Possibly, but scanning the world scene there is not much reason for excessive optimism. Russia has not yet accepted its new status in the world; there is resentment, not unnaturally, as the result of the loss of empire. There is a strong inclination to make all kind of outside factors responsible, and some are dreaming to restore the old power and glory.

There is Africa, with its millions of victims in horrible civil wars, which the international community failed to prevent.

Above all, there is the Middle East with its many tensions and terrorism, national and international. Terrorism is not a new phenomenon in the annals of mankind; it is as old as the hills. It has appeared in many forms and guises, nationalism-separatist, inspired by the extreme left and the radical right. But contemporary terrorism fueled by religious and nationalist fanaticism, operating in failed states, and sometimes instigated, financed, and manipulated by governments, is more dangerous than ever before.

There have been and are many misconceptions about the origins of terrorism. It is often argued that poverty and oppression are the main causes. Remove poverty and oppression, and terrorism will disappear. But terrorism does not appear in the poorest countries, and ethnic conflicts are seldom easily solvable; what if two groups claim the same territory and are unwilling to compromise?

The real danger is, of course, not the victory of terrorism. History shows that terrorism can operate only in free, or relatively free, societies. There was no terrorism in Nazi Germany or in Stalin's Russia; there was (or is) none even in less harsh dictatorships. But this means that in certain circumstances, if terrorism has been permitted to operate too freely and become more than a nuisance, a high price has to be paid in terms of limitation of freedom and human rights to put an end to it. Naturally, free societies are reluctant to pay such a price. This is one of the great dilemmas of our time and no one has so far found a painless way to solve it. ■

---

*The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.*

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Additional Readings on Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations

Brune, Lester H. *Chronological History of U.S. Foreign Relations*, 3 vols. New York, NY: Routledge, 2002.  
<http://www.routledge-ny.com/ref/usforelations/>

Cameron, Fraser. *U.S. Foreign Policy after the Cold War*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2002.  
<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=96411086838116>

Chang, Laurence and Peter Kornbluh, eds. *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999.  
[http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/DOC\\_readers/cmcread/cmcread.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/DOC_readers/cmcread/cmcread.html)

CNN Interactive. *A CNN Perspectives Series: Cold War Experience: Episode 1: Comrades 1917-1945 through Episode 24: Conclusion 1989-1991*. Atlanta, GA: CNN.  
[http://www.besthistorysites.net/20thCentury\\_ColdWar.shtml](http://www.besthistorysites.net/20thCentury_ColdWar.shtml)

Cohen, Warren I. *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations: Vol. 4, America in the Age of Soviet Power, 1945-1991*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993.  
<http://www.cambridge.org/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=0521381932>

*The Cold War International History Project: Cold War Files: An Online Classroom Resource for High Schools*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.  
[http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic\\_id=1409&fuseaction=topics.item&news\\_id=152941](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=topics.item&news_id=152941)

Dallek, Robert. *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

DeConde, Alexander, Richard Dean Burns and Frederik Logevall, eds. *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. New York, NY: Scribner & Sons, 2001.  
<http://www.gale.com/pdf/facts/EncAmFP.pdf>

Dobson, Alan. *U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1945*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2000.

*Documents Relating to American Foreign Policy: Documents Related to the Cold War*. South Hadley, MA: Mount Holyoke College.  
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/coldwar.htm>

Giangreco, D. M. and Robert E. Griffin. *Airbridge to Berlin: The Berlin Crisis of 1948, Its Origins and Aftermath*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1988.  
[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/berlin airlift/large/docs.php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/berlin airlift/large/docs.php)

Hogan, Michael J. and Thomas G. Paterson, eds. *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004.  
<http://www.cambridge.org/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=0521540356>

Hook, Steven W. and John Spanier. *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, 16th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2003.  
<http://www.cqpress.com/product/American-Foreign-Policy-Since-World-War-2.html>

Ikenberry, G. John. "Why Export Democracy?: The 'Hidden Grand Strategy' of American Foreign Policy." *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Spring 1999): pp. 56-65.  
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/exdem.htm>

Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri. *Changing Differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy, 1917-1994*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995.  
[http://165.230.98.36/acatalog/\\_Changing\\_Differences\\_655.html](http://165.230.98.36/acatalog/_Changing_Differences_655.html)

Jentelson, Bruce W., Thomas G. Patterson and Nicholas E. Rizopoulos. *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Jervis, Robert. *American Foreign Policy in a New Era*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005.

Kort, Michael. *The Columbia Guide to the Cold War*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Lake, David A. *Entangling Relations: American Foreign Policy in Its Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.

McCullough, David. *Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1978.

McEvoy-Levy, Siobhan. *American Exceptionalism and U.S. Foreign Policy: Public Diplomacy at the End of the Cold War*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.

Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*. New York, NY: Random House, 2001.

*The Origins of the Cold War: U.S. Choices after World War II*, 4th ed. Providence, RI: Choices Education Program, 2004.  
[http://www.choices.edu/curriculum\\_unit.cfm?id=12](http://www.choices.edu/curriculum_unit.cfm?id=12)

Pickett, William B. "The Historiography of American Foreign Policy." *Organization of American Historians Magazine of History*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 1992): pp. 13-15.  
<http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/foreignpolicy/pickett.html>

Public Broadcasting Service. *American Experience: Theodore Roosevelt's Legacy: The Panama Canal*. Arlington, VA: Public Broadcasting Service.  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tr/panama.html>

Schulzinger, Robert D. *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, 5th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Tarnoff, Curt and Larry Nowels. *Foreign Aid: An Introductory Overview of U.S. Programs and Policy*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 19 January 2005.  
<http://www.usembassy.it/pdf/other/98-916.pdf>

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations and U.S. Department of State. *Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941-49*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1950.  
<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/decade/decade.htm>

U.S. Department of State. *Foreign Relations of the United States: Original Documents on U.S. Foreign Policy*. Washington, DC: Office of the Historian, Department of State.  
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/>

U.S. Department of State. International Information Programs. *The Marshall Plan: Investment in Peace: 50th Anniversary*. Washington, DC: International Information Programs, Department of State.  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/marshall/pam-toc.htm>

U.S. Department of State. *Timeline of U.S. Diplomatic History*. Washington, DC: Office of the Historian, Department of State.  
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/>

*The U.S. Role in a Changing World*, 2nd ed. Providence, RI: Choices Education Program, 2005.  
<http://www.choices.edu/usrole.cfm>

University of Houston. *Digital History: Great Events of the Cold War Time Span: 1945-1991*. Houston, TX: University of Houston.  
[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/f\\_policy/f\\_policy2.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/f_policy/f_policy2.cfm)

Varble, Derek. *The Suez Crisis 1956 (Essential Histories)*. New York, NY: Osprey, 2003.  
[http://www.ospreypublishing.com/title\\_detail.php/title=S4183-ser=ESS](http://www.ospreypublishing.com/title_detail.php/title=S4183-ser=ESS)

Walden University. *Education World: U.S. History: 20th Century: The Cold War*. Minneapolis, MN: Walden University.  
[http://db.educationworld.com/perl/browse?cat\\_id=2724](http://db.educationworld.com/perl/browse?cat_id=2724)

---

*The U.S. Department of State assumes no responsibility for the content and availability of the resources from other agencies and organizations listed above. All Internet links were active as of April 2006.*

# INTERNET RESOURCES

## Online Resources for Significant Events in U.S. Foreign Relations

### **The American Experience: Jimmy Carter**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carter/>

Coverage includes former President Carter's Middle East policy, the Iranian hostage crisis, and post-presidency. Included in this Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) site is a film transcript, photo gallery, a synopsis of people and events, as well as a teacher's guide.

### **The American Experience: The Kennedys**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kennedys/>

An overview of the famous American family involved in national politics for over 45 years. A film transcript is included as well as speeches and statements by the Kennedys, along with a teacher's guide and bibliography.

### **The American Experience: Nixon's China Game**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/china/>

A secret diplomatic breakthrough that shocked and changed the world. In addition to the film transcript, materials include a timeline, maps, and a teacher's guide.

### **The American Experience: Reagan**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/reagan/>

Actor, governor, and president—the biography of a popular, but contradictory, man. This PBS site includes a film transcript, photo gallery, synopsis of people and events, and a teacher's guide.

### **The American Experience: TR, The Story of Theodore Roosevelt**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tr/>

"TR" looks at the life of a man who embodied the confidence and exuberance of America at the turn of the 20th century, revealing both the heroic and tragic sides of Roosevelt's character. The program combines photographs, newspapers, motion pictures, sound recordings, family diaries, and letters to create a vivid and comprehensive portrait of this larger-than-life figure.

### **The American Experience: Truman**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/truman/>

To the little-known man from Missouri would fall the burden of ending a world war and asserting American leadership in a newly-aligned and hostile international environment. Bonus materials on this site for Harry S Truman include primary sources, audio interviews, television program transcripts, and an in-depth teacher's guide.

### **The American Experience Presents Vietnam: A Television History**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/>

A seminal television event, when it premiered as a 13-part series on PBS in 1983, *Vietnam: A Television History* was edited to 11 hours and rebroadcast in 1997. This site includes transcripts for the entire series, selections from *The American Experience* mailbag about the *Vietnam* series, and a list of books and links relating to the Vietnam War.

### **The Berlin Airlift: Student Activity**

<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/teacher/berlin.htm>

This Truman Presidential Museum and Library site offers interactive materials for students studying the blockade of the city of Berlin by the Soviet Union in 1948 and 1949. Featured on the site are issues for discussion, suggestions for further reading, and additional Internet resources.

### **The Choices Program: Critical Turning Points in the History of American Foreign Policy**

[http://www.choices.edu/specialprojects\\_tah.cfm](http://www.choices.edu/specialprojects_tah.cfm)

This initiative brings groundbreaking research into secondary classrooms, using a methodology that has been shown to engage all students in consideration of the ambiguities of history and the lessons for the future. The project focuses on significant turning points in our nation's relationship to the world around us, from the triangle trade of the 18th century to the U.S. role in the world today.

### **A Chronology of U.S. Historical Documents**

<http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/>

A listing of political and diplomatic documents covering the history of the United States from colonial times through the 21st century.

### **Council on Foreign Relations: Academic Modules**

<http://www.cfr.org/educators/modules.html>

A nonpartisan resource for information and analysis that includes a primary text, teaching notes, *Foreign Affairs* articles, and multimedia teaching tools.

### **Discovery Channel: The Cold War and Beyond Lesson Plan**

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/reaganlegacy-starwars/>

This site is designed for students to review facts about the Cold War as well as research and write a news article about the Cuban Missile Crisis.

### **Discovery Channel: The Cuban Missile Crisis:**



### **Contemporary History Lesson Plan**

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/cubanmissile/>

A resource created to help students understand how the Cold War came to an end under the watch of Reagan and Gorbachev and to study the scientists and politicians who contribute to national arms policies.

### **Discovery Channel: The Role of NATO**

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/nato/>

Students can use this site to understand the political atmosphere of post-World War II Europe and the U.S. foreign policy strategy of containment, as well as research critical events that occurred prior to the formation of NATO. Students can also distinguish on a map the countries that formed the Warsaw Pact and the NATO alliance in 1955.

### **George C. Marshall Foundation: Biographical Information**

[http://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall\\_biographical\\_information.html](http://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall_biographical_information.html)

Congressional testimony, interviews, and quotes from one of the primary instigators of the Marshall Plan to assist countries after World War II are included on this site. In addition to biographical material on General Marshall, the site contains information about the Marshall Plan itself.

### **History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web**

<http://www.historymatters.gmu.edu/>

Designed for high school and college teachers and students, this site serves as a gateway to Internet resources and offers other useful materials for teaching U.S. history.

### **Images of American Political History**

[http://teachpol.tcnj.edu/amer\\_pol\\_hist/](http://teachpol.tcnj.edu/amer_pol_hist/)

A collection of over 500 public domain images of American political history.

### **The Library of Congress**

<http://www.loc.gov/>

This site showcases the resources of the Library of Congress, the nation's oldest federal cultural institution, which serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with more than 130 million items on approximately 530 miles of bookshelves. The collections include more than 29 million books and other printed materials, 2.7 million recordings, 12 million photographs, 4.8 million maps, and 58 million manuscripts.

### **The Library of Congress: Exhibits: For European Recovery: The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Marshall Plan**

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/marshall/marsintr.html>

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, the Library of Congress presents this display on the origins and effects of the Plan. Featured are photographs and cartoons from the Prints and Photographs Division and items from the papers of Averell Harriman, the European Recovery Program special representative from 1948 to 1950, whose collection in the Library's Manuscript Division contains photographs, letters, memos, and printed material that document the early days of this acclaimed international initiative.

### **National Security Archive: Cuban Missile Crisis 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Collection**

[http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba\\_mis\\_cri/](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/)

Press releases, selected documents, photographs, audio clips, and other material from the historic 40th anniversary conference in Havana are included through this site. Also available are declassified documents, analysis, and a chronology.

### **National Security Archive Online**

<http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/>

A comprehensive collection of primary important declassified documents regarding critical U.S. policy decisions.

### **Public Broadcasting Service: Global Connections: U.S. Foreign Policy**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/questions/uspolicy/>

This PBS site shows that, despite the physical distance between the United States and the Middle East, U.S. influence has been felt in every country within the region. Throughout the 20th century, strategic interests, including a longstanding competition with the Soviet Union, have provoked a variety of U.S. interventions ranging from diplomatic overtures of friendship to full-blown war.

### **Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR): Syllabus Initiative**

<http://www.shafr.org/syllabusinitiative.htm>

This site is designed as a teaching resource by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. It contains a repository of syllabi that can be used as a reference by those preparing to teach foreign relations history.

### **Suez Crisis: A Select Bibliography**

<http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/suez.htm>

This site provides access to 10 book titles concerning the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis, as cited by the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library staff.

**Truman Presidential Museum and Library:  
Berlin Airlift**

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/berlin\\_airlift/large/docs.php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/berlin_airlift/large/docs.php)  
Oral histories, documents, and lesson plans concerning the Berlin Airlift during the years of 1948 through 1951, as documented by the Truman Presidential Museum and Library staff.

**Truman Presidential Museum and Library:  
Establishing the Marshall Plan**

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/marshall/large/](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/marshall/large/)  
Documents, photographs, oral histories, lesson plans, and links about the establishment of the Marshall Plan, as created by the Truman Presidential Museum and Library staff.

**Truman Presidential Museum and Library:  
Ideological Foundations of the Cold War**

[http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/coldwar/](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/)  
Access is given to documents that highlight the ideals that formed the basis of American policy toward the Soviet Union from 1945 to 1952.

**The United Nations: An Introduction for Students**

<http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/unintro/unintro.asp>  
An introduction to the history and the work of the United Nations, created by the United Nations Cyberschoolbus (an online education component of the Global Teaching and Learning Project).

**U.S. Agency for International Development:  
Marshall Plan**

<http://www.usaid.gov/multimedia/video/marshall/>  
A resource for information about the Marshall Plan and how it made possible the rebuilding of Europe after World War II.

**U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Public Affairs:  
Office of the Historian**

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/>  
Includes access to Office of the Historian's publication *Foreign Relations of the United States* series, the official historical documentary record of U.S. foreign policy decisions.

**U.S. Department of State for Youth:  
Foreign Relations and the U.S.**

<http://future.state.gov/when/foreign/>  
Parents and teachers are provided with lesson plans and teaching activities about the official record of major U.S. foreign policy decisions.

**U.S. Department of State for Youth: Parents and  
Educators: Lesson Plans: The Cuban Missile Crisis**

<http://future.state.gov/educators/lessons/cuba/>  
Parents and teachers can access lesson plans related to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

**U.S. Foreign Policy, University of Michigan  
Documents Center**

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/forpol.html>  
Source for the University of Michigan's mega Internet documents center site, concerning U.S. foreign policy and government information.

**U.S. National Archives: Exhibits: A People at War**

[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/a\\_people\\_at\\_war/a\\_people\\_at\\_war.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/a_people_at_war/a_people_at_war.html)  
An exhibit that highlights the contributions of the thousands of Americans, both military and civilian, who served their country during World War II.

**U.S. National Archives: Our Documents: Marshall Plan**

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=82>  
Material about the Marshall Plan, one of the 100 milestone documents compiled by the National Archives and Records Administration about U.S. foreign policy.

**U.S. National Archives: Our Documents:  
Truman Doctrine**

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=81>  
Information concerning the Truman Doctrine is contained in this site, one of many created by the National Archives and Records Administration on U.S. foreign policy documents.

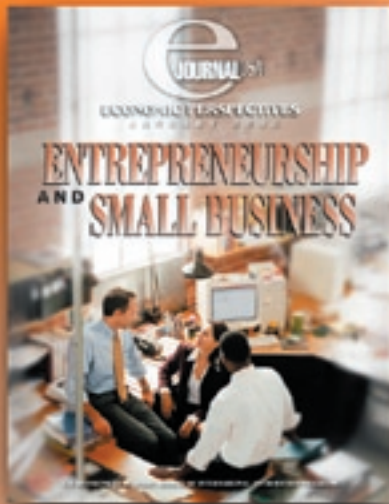
**U.S. National Archives: Presidential Libraries**

<http://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/>  
This site includes links to American Presidential Libraries; information on available documents as well as search capabilities are provided. Presidential Libraries offer museums full of presidential artifacts, interesting educational and public programs, and informative sites.

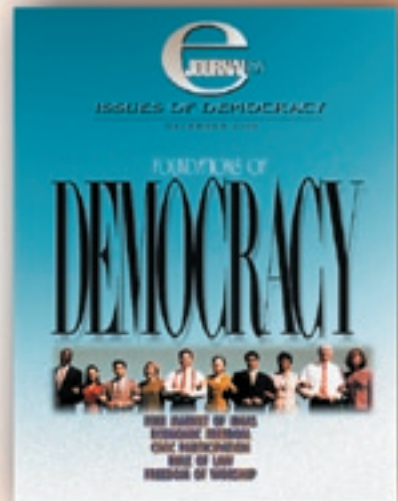
---

*The U.S. Department of State assumes no responsibility for the content and availability of the resources from other agencies and organizations listed above. All Internet links were active as of April 2006.*





**A  
MONTHLY  
JOURNAL  
OFFERED IN  
MULTIPLE  
LANGUAGES**



**REVIEW THE FULL LISTING OF TITLES AT  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/pub/ejournalusa.html>**