

# The Longman Companion to America, Russia and the Cold War, 1941-1998 (Longman Companions To History)

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*The Longman Companion to*

America, Russia and the Cold War 1941–1998

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**Second Edition**

**John W. Young**

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John W. Young

6 October 1991

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John W. Young

27 March 1998

### [List of abbreviations](#)

ABM

Anti-Ballistic Missile

ANZUS

Australia–New Zealand–American Alliance

ARVN

Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam

CENTO

Central Treaty Organisation (Baghdad Pact)

CFE

Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty

CIA

American Central Intelligence Agency

Comecon

Council for Mutual Economic Aid

Cominform

Communist Information Bureau

CSCE

Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe

EDC

European Defence Community

EC

European Community

EEC

European Economic Community

Ex Comm

Executive Committee of the NSC

FNLA

National Front for the Liberation of Angola

GATT

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

ICBM

Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile

INF

Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces

KGB

Soviet secret police

MBFR

Mutual Balanced Force Reductions

MIRV

Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicle

MPLA

Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola

MX

Missile Experimental

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NSC

National Security Council

NVA

North Vietnamese Army

PFP

Partnership for Peace

SALT

Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty

SDI

Strategic Defence Initiative

SEATO

South-East Asian Treaty Organisation

SLBM

Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile

START

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

SWAPO

South-West African People's Organisation

UN

United Nations

UNITA

National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

UNRRA

UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

With thanks to Robert Frazier and Christopher Andrew

[Section One](#)

[Chronology](#)

[1. Origins of the Cold War, 1917–41](#)

**7 November 1917.** (25 October under old calendar.) The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, seize power in Russia.

**c. April 1918–November 1920.** Period of Allied intervention in Russian civil war in opposition to Bolsheviks: British, French, US and Japanese forces side with the 'Whites' against Lenin.

**15 March 1919.** Formation of Communist International, by Lenin, to encourage Communist revolution worldwide.

**21 January 1924.** Death of Lenin.

**January 1928.** Stalin becomes the dominant leader in USSR.

**17 November 1933.** US opens diplomatic relations with USSR for first time.

**23 August 1939.** Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact made, dividing Poland between Germany and USSR and establishing 'spheres of influence' in Eastern Europe.

**1 September 1939.** Hitler invades Poland.

**3 September 1939.** Britain and France declare war on Germany.

**17 September 1939.** USSR joins in invasion of Poland, and seizes half the country.

**30 November 1939–12 March 1940.** 'Winter War' fought between USSR and Finland. The war is hard-fought, but results in Soviet territorial gains.

**15–16 June 1940.** Soviet forces occupy Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania (independent since 1918), claiming there is a military threat to the Soviet Union; formally annexed on 1–8 August.

**22 June 1940.** France agrees to armistice with Germany, after German advances since May; Britain faces Germany alone; Italy allied to Germany.

**11 March 1941.** US begins 'lend-lease' economic and military aid to Britain (to USSR in November).

**22 June 1941.** Germany launches invasion of USSR.

**11 August 1941.** After meeting at sea off Newfoundland, Roosevelt and Churchill issue Atlantic Charter, promising restoration of independence to conquered states.

**August–September 1941.** British and Soviet forces occupy Iran, needed as a supply route from the West to Russia.

## [2. The 'Big Three', 1941–45](#)

**7 December 1941.** Japanese attack US forces at Pearl Harbor, forcing America into the war.

**15–18 December 1941.** Visit by British Foreign Secretary, Eden, to Moscow; he finds that Stalin hopes to retain gains made under Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact.

**22 December 1941–7 January 1942.** 'Arcadia' conference of Roosevelt and Churchill in Washington plans war strategy and agrees to set up Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff.

**1 January 1942.** Twenty-six Allied countries sign 'United Nations' declaration and agree not to make a separate peace with Germany, Italy and Japan.

**26 May 1942.** Twenty-year Soviet-British alliance against Germany signed.



**12â€"15 August 1942.** Churchill and Stalin meet in Moscow to discuss war strategy.

**8 November 1942.** US and British forces land in North-West Africa; first US military involvement on land against German forces.

**12 December 1942.** Soviet-Czech alliance signed, showing Czech desire to work with Soviets after the war.

**1943**

**14â€"24 January.** Casablanca Conference of Roosevelt and Churchill sees announcement that Germany and her allies must surrender 'unconditionally'.

**1 February.** Siege of Stalingrad ends, marking turning point in war on Russian front, after large German forces surrender to the Soviets.

**27 April.** Stalin suspends relations with Polish government-in-exile after arguments over whether Germany or USSR carried out 'Katyn massacre' of Polish officers, after their occupation of Poland in 1939.

**12â€"25 May.** 'Trident' conference of Roosevelt and Churchill, in Washington, discusses possible invasion of France.

**15 May.** Stalin dissolves Comintern to please the Western allies.

**18 Mayâ€"1 June.** Hot Springs conference near Washington discusses establishment of United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). Formally set up in November.

**10 July.** Anglo-American invasion of Sicily begins liberation of Western Europe.

**25 July.** Mussolini replaced in Italy by Marshal Badoglio, ending Fascist rule there.

**17â€"24 August.** At Quebec Conference Roosevelt and Churchill decide to invade France in mid-1944.

**8 September.** Italian armistice announced; Italy soon (13 October) changes sides in the war, joining the Allies.

**18â€"30 October.** In Moscow 'Big Three' foreign ministers lay the ground for a leaders' meeting, discuss establishment of UN organisation and set up a European Advisory Commission to discuss policy in post-war Germany.

**22â€"26 November.** In Cairo Roosevelt, Churchill and China's Chiang Kai-shek discuss strategy in Far East.

**28 Novemberâ€"1 December.** First 'Big Three' Summit between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin in Tehran, discusses war strategy and future cooperation.

**4â€"6 December.** At second Cairo Conference, Roosevelt and Churchill decide Eisenhower should be Supreme Allied Commander in West.

**1944**

**6 June.** 'D-Day': Anglo-American invasion of France, code-named Operation Overlord, begins full-scale 'second front' in the West.

**1–22 July.** Bretton Woods Conference, of forty-four nations, on financial-economic issues, agrees to establish International Monetary Fund (to stabilise currencies) and World Bank (for reconstruction and development). Soviets refuse to join.

**21 July.** Red Army sets up a Communist 'Committee of National Liberation' in Lublin, Poland, after 'liberating' eastern areas of the country.

**1 August–2 October.** Warsaw rising of Polish resistance's 'Home Army' against Germans. Soviets fail to provide support for it and the rising is eventually crushed.

**23 August.** Germany's ally Romania signs armistice following Soviet invasion.

**8 September.** Germany's ally Bulgaria changes sides in war following Soviet invasion three days earlier.

**11–16 September.** At second Quebec Conference Roosevelt and Churchill discuss post-war occupation of Germany.

**19 September.** Germany's ally Finland signs armistice with USSR.

**3 October.** British forces begin to arrive in Greece; its liberation is completed by 11 November.

**7 October.** Dumbarton Oaks Conference in America of US, USSR, Britain and China (begun 21 August) results in draft UN charter.

**9–18 October.** Moscow Conference of Stalin and Churchill includes 'percentage deal' creating British and Soviet spheres of influence in the Balkans.

**7 November.** Roosevelt re-elected president for fourth term, beating Thomas E. Dewey.

**3 December.** Fighting breaks out between British forces and the Communist resistance movement in Greece, who oppose the restoration of the Greek monarchy.

**10 December.** In Moscow France's General de Gaulle signs twenty-year Anti-German Treaty with Stalin.

**25 December.** After the fighting in Greece Churchill himself arrives in Athens to settle the differences.

1945

**1 January.** Soviets recognise their puppet Communist administration in Poland as the 'provisional government'; America and Britain refuse to recognise it.

**13 January.** Truce between British and Communist forces in Athens is followed (February) by the Varkiza Agreement promising a referendum on the return of the monarchy and other reforms.

**20 January.** Germany's ally Hungary signs armistice with USSR.

**4–12 February.** Yalta Summit in Crimea of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill discusses post-war

Europe, UN and Far East.

**6 March.** Petru Groza becomes head of Communist-led government in Romania.

**15 March.** Stalin criticises Anglo-American talks in Berne with local German commander about surrender of German forces in Italy: Stalin fears these forces will be sent to the Eastern Front.

**4 April.** Roosevelt condemns Stalin's criticisms of Berne talks as 'vile misrepresentations'.

**11 April.** Soviet-Yugoslav Treaty of Mutual Assistance signed. (Similar treaties were signed between all Communist Eastern European states including Soviet-Polish treaty on 21 April.)

**12 April.** Death of Roosevelt; succeeded by Harry S. Truman.

**23 April.** Truman strongly warns Molotov, in Washington, that Soviets must adhere to Yalta Agreements.

**25 April.** US and Soviet forces meet at Torgau on the River Elbe.

**28 April.** Mussolini captured and hanged by partisans.

**30 April.** Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.

**1 May.** Anglo-American and Yugoslav Communist forces arrive in Trieste (previously Italian) and contest its control; danger of an armed clash.

**8 May.** V-E Day: formal German capitulation in Berlin; placed under US, Soviet, British and French occupation.

**11 May.** With Germany defeated, Truman limits 'lend-lease' to goods needed for the war against Japan.

**14 May.** Austria, though under joint Allied occupation by US, Soviet, British and French is given an independent republican government under Karl Renner.

**21 May.** Tito, the Yugoslav leader, agrees to Anglo-American military government in Trieste.

**6 June.** Stalin agrees, in talks with US envoy Harry Hopkins, to expand the Polish government to include pro-Western elements.

**21 June.** Truman orders US forces in Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany to withdraw to their own occupation areas, allowing Red Army to advance into preagreed areas of occupation.

**21 June.** Leaders of Polish resistance's 'home government' are jailed in Warsaw for 'anti-Soviet activities'.

**26 June.** At end of San Francisco conference (begun 26 April) fifty countries launch UN charter, establishing a new world peace-keeping organisation.

**28 June.** New Polish government includes some former members of London-based government-in-exile.

**29 June.** Czechoslovakia hands border area of Ruthenia to USSR.

**5 July.** US and Britain recognise new Polish government, despite continued Communist predominance.

**16 July.** First atomic bomb successfully tested at Alamogordo, New Mexico.

**17 July–2 August.** Potsdam Summit of Big Three leaders establishes joint policies for the occupation of Germany.

**26 July.** British general election results in defeat for Churchill.

**6 August.** Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

**8 August.** Soviet Union enters Far Eastern War against Japan, and begins to occupy areas of Manchuria.

**9 August.** Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.

**14 August.** Soviet treaty with Chiang Kai-shek confirms Soviet territorial gains in China under Yalta Agreement.

**15 August.** Capitulation of Japan on understanding that Hirohito can remain Emperor.

**23 August.** End of America's 'lend-lease' programme.

**2 September.** Formal Japanese surrender to the Allies, on USS *Missouri* (V-J day).

### [3. The breakdown of the Grand Alliance, 1945–48](#)

**2 September 1945.** Communist resistance leader Ho Chi Minh proclaims independence of Vietnam (then part of French Indo-China).

**13 September.** After an Allied agreement on areas of occupation, British forces arrive in Saigon, southern Vietnam. (Chinese occupy northern Vietnam.)

**11 September–2 October.** London Conference: first meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers (US, USSR, Britain, China, France) set up at Potsdam to draft peace treaties with defeated enemy states, breaks down in disagreement, after various arguments between Soviets and Western states.

**5 October.** French forces arrive in Saigon, and begin to take over from the British.

**23 October.** Communists emerge as leading party in first post-war French election, but Christian Democrats and Socialists are close behind.

**24 October.** UN formally comes into existence.

**27 October.** Truman's Navy Day address restates US commitment to Atlantic Charter principles and strong armed forces.

**4 November.** Smallholders' Party emerges well ahead of Communists in first post-war Hungarian elections.

**11 November.** Rigged elections in Yugoslavia give 90 per cent vote to Tito's 'People's Front' of

Communists.

**15 November.** Truman, Attlee and Canadian premier Mackenzie King agree on basic plan to control atomic energy through UN.

**17 November.** Nationalist leader Ahmed Sukarno declares independence of Indonesia from Dutch.

**18 November.** Communist 'Fatherland Front' wins rigged elections in Bulgaria.

**20 November.** Soviets refuse to allow Iranian troops into Iranian Azerbaijan, then under Red Army occupation – leads to Anglo-American protest.

**27 November.** US General Marshall sent to China to negotiate a settlement between Nationalists and Communists, in the hope of avoiding a civil war.

**6 December.** US reconstruction loan to Britain finalised, after talks involving Lord Keynes.

**16–26 December.** US, Soviet and British foreign ministers meet in Moscow and agree to new talks on peace treaties.

**1946**

**2 January.** King Zog of Albania formally deposed by Communists.

**5 January.** Communists and Nationalists in China agree to end fighting.

**10 January.** First regular session of UN General Assembly opens in London.

**30 January.** UN calls for talks between USSR and Iran over their differences.

**9 February.** Stalin speech during Soviet elections launches new Five-Year Plan and describes Second World War as vindication of Communism.

**11 February.** Secret Yalta Agreement on Far East published, showing that Roosevelt ceded territories to USSR.

**15–18 February.** Arrests of a major Soviet spy ring in Canada.

**22 February.** From Moscow, US chargé George Kennan sends 'the long telegram' analysing Soviet expansionist tendencies, and urging American resistance.

**28 February.** Chinese agree to withdraw from northern Indo-China and restore French authority.

**28 February.** Speech by Secretary of State James Byrnes marks a toughening of US public stand against USSR.

**2 March.** Deadline passes, under wartime agreements, for Soviet troops to leave Iran; US and Britain begin diplomatic pressure to remove them.

**5 March.** Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri, condemns 'iron curtain' in Eastern Europe and calls for Anglo-American alliance. Criticised by Stalin on 13 March.

- 6 March.** US note to Moscow complains about continued presence of Soviet troops in Iran.
- 24 March.** Soviets agree to withdraw troops from Iran. (Last troops leave 6 May.)
- 31 March.** Royalists triumph in Greek elections.
- 6 April.** Fighting again breaks out, in Manchuria, between Chinese Communists and Nationalists.
- 20 April.** East German Social Democrats forced to join Communists in 'Socialist Unity Party'.
- 25 April – 16 May.** Council of Foreign Ministers, meeting in Paris, resumes talks on peace treaties (US, USSR, Britain, France).
- 1 May.** In Britain, Alan Nunn May jailed for giving atomic secrets to USSR.
- 3 May.** US deputy governor General Clay suspends reparations from US zone in Germany and blames Soviet and French policy for lack of Allied agreement on Germany.
- 15 May.** Albanians shell British ships off Corfu.
- 26 May.** Communists are leading party (35 per cent) in Czech elections, and head a coalition government with democratic parties.
- 28 May.** Large US reconstruction loan to France agreed.
- 1 June.** French governor Thierry d'Argenlieu proclaims separation of Cochin China in Southern Vietnam, undermining French government's talks with nationalist leader, Ho Chi Minh.
- 2 June.** Italian referendum puts an end to the monarchy.
- 14 June.** US Baruch Plan for control of atomic energy published; criticised by USSR.
- 15 June – 12 July.** Council of Foreign Ministers meets again in Paris and finalises draft treaties with Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Finland and Italy.
- 4 July.** US gives independence to its Far Eastern colony, the Philippines.
- 10 July.** In the Paris talks, Molotov appears to make a bid for German popular support by making a speech favouring German revival.
- 17 July.** Tito executes Yugoslav royalist leader Draja Mihailovic.
- 25 July.** First underground atomic test explosion by US at Bikini atoll.
- 27 July – 15 October.** Allied nations meet in Paris to discuss the peace treaties drafted by the Council of Foreign Ministers.
- 1 August.** McMahon Act by Congress prevents US sharing atomic secrets.
- 7 August.** Soviet note to Turkey proposes Soviet role in defence of Dardanelles; offends US and Britain, because of danger of Soviet access to the Mediterranean.

**1 September.** Greek referendum agrees to retain monarchy.

**6 September.** Speech by US Secretary of State Byrnes at Stuttgart declares more sympathetic policy towards Germany and promises to retain US troops in Germany until peace is assured.

**8 September.** Monarchy ended in Bulgaria by Communists.

**10 September.** Greek Communists launch civil war against the royal government.

**12 September.** Speech by US Secretary of Commerce Wallace calls for co-operation with USSR; as a result Wallace is forced to resign (20 September).

**19 September.** Speech by Churchill in Zurich advocates European unity.

**1 October.** End of major Nuremburg war trials: several leading Nazis executed.

**20 October.** Berlin municipal elections won by Social Democrats; Communists get one-fifth of vote.

**3 November.** New Japanese constitution promulgated.

**4 November–12 December.** Council of Foreign Ministers meets in New York and accepts most of Paris Peace Conference amendments to peace treaties.

**5 November.** Republican gains in US Congressional elections highlight need for 'bipartisan' foreign policy.

**10 November.** French elections again leave Communists as largest party.

**23 November.** French warships bombard northern Vietnamese port of Haiphong after unrest there.

**2 December.** 'Bizon' agreement fuses US and British occupation zones in Germany.

**3 December.** Greece claims in UN that Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria are aiding Greek Communists in civil war; UN sends a commission to investigate on 18 December.

**19–20 September.** Viet-Minh nationalists attack French nationals in Hanoi; first Indo-China war begins.

## **1947**

**19 January.** Rigged elections (originally promised at Yalta) held in Poland, despite Western complaints.

**25 January.** Beginning of blizzards in Western Europe, threatening popular morale and economic recovery.

**10 February.** Allies sign peace treaties with Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Finland in Paris.

**20 February.** British announce independence for India.

**21 February.** British inform Washington that they can no longer provide financial aid to the Greek government.

**4 March.** Treaty of Dunkirk, directed against revival of German aggression, signed by Britain and France.

**10 March – 24 April.** US, Soviet, British and French meet to discuss German and Austrian treaties, in Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow; fail to reach agreement.

**12 March.** Truman Doctrine speech, to joint session of Congress, requests aid to Greek and Turkish governments to help resist Communism; approved by Congress on 15 May.

**7 April.** General de Gaulle forms right-wing 'Rally of the French People' (RPF), highlighting political divisions in France.

**4 May.** Communist ministers are expelled from the French Cabinet by premier Paul Ramadier.

**5 May.** Communist ministers are expelled from the Italian government by premier de Gasperi.

**23 May.** US and Britain decide to allow German political representation in an 'Economic Council' in the Bizone.

**30 May.** Hungarian premier Ferenc Nagy resigns under Soviet pressure; criticised by Truman on 21 June.

**5 June.** Launch of the Marshall Plan: Harvard speech by Marshall offers US economic aid for a European recovery plan, which Europeans should draw up.

**27 June – 2 July.** Soviet, British and French foreign ministers meet in Paris to discuss the Marshall Plan; Molotov eventually walks out of the talks.

**July.** George Kennan's 'X' article is published in *Foreign Affairs*, providing intellectual justification for US policy of 'containment'.

**4 July.** British and French invite other European countries to discuss the Marshall Plan.

**10 July.** Under Soviet pressure, Poland and Czechoslovakia turn down the invitation to discuss the Marshall Plan.

**12 July – 22 September.** Sixteen Western European nations meet in Paris to draw up an economic recovery plan for submission to the US.

**15 August.** India and Pakistan become independent.

**29 August.** US and Britain increase industrial output of the Bizone, despite Soviet and French criticism.

**31 August.** Rigged elections ensure Communist victory in Hungary.

**2 September.** Rio Pact, on inter-American defence, signed by US and Latin American states.

**22 – 23 September.** Soviet, East European, French and Italian Communists establish an Information Bureau (Cominform) at a conference in Poland; Soviet representatives declare that the



world is now divided into two camps.

**23 September.** Bulgarian Agrarian party leader Nikolai Petkov is executed, despite Western protests.

**19 October.** De Gaulle's RPF scores major successes in French local elections.

**20 October.** US House of Representatives' 'Un-American Activities Committee' begins to investigate Communist influence on Hollywood.

**26 October.** Polish democratic leader Mikolajczyk flees the country.

**30 October.** GATT agreement signed by Western states in Geneva.

**November.** Wave of strikes breaks out in France and Italy; ends early December.

**1 November.** 'Benelux' customs union between Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg formed.

**25 November–16 December.** Council of Foreign Ministers meets in London and again fails to agree on German or Austrian treaties; no date is set for a further meeting; US, Britain and France begin to plan a joint policy in Western Germany.

**23 December.** Truman signs Bill to provide interim economic aid, especially to France and Italy, in advance of full Marshall Plan.

**24 December.** Communist Party sets up rebel government in Greece; party is banned on 27 December.

**30 December.** King Michael of Romania is forced to abdicate.

**1948**

**6 January.** Greek Communists defeated at Konitza.

**21 January.** Italian Socialists decide to fight a joint campaign with the Communists in the forthcoming election.

**22 January.** In London, Foreign Secretary Bevin calls for the creation of a 'Western Union' including a West European alliance system.

**16 February.** 'People's Republic' declared in North Korea (occupied by USSR at end of war).

**19–25 February.** Communist coup in Czechoslovakia; condemned by the West.

**23 February.** US, Britain and France begin talks in London on the future of Western Germany.

**10 March.** Czechoslovakia's democratic foreign minister, Jan Masaryk, dies after falling from a window.

**17 March.** Britain, France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg sign the Brussels Pact, including pledges of mutual defence.

**18 March.** Soviet military advisers are withdrawn from Yugoslavia because of resentment at Tito's

independence.

**20 March.** French foreign minister Bidault, in Turin, announces that US, Britain and France favour the return of Trieste to Italy; leads to Yugoslav protests.

**20 March.** Soviet representative walks out of the Allied Control Council in Germany, accusing the Western powers of destroying it.

**1 April.** Soviet officials begin regularly to interfere with Western surface traffic into Berlin.

**2 April.** US Congress approves Marshall Aid; the Economic Cooperation Administration is established to manage it.

**6 April.** Finland signs a non-aggression pact with the USSR; Western states fear Soviet pressure on Norway and Denmark to sign similar treaties.

**16 April.** European countries establish Organisation of European Economic Co-operation to run Marshall Aid.

**18 April.** Christian Democrats win the Italian election with 48 per cent of the vote, after considerable US, British and French support.

**30 April.** Organisation of American States founded at Bogota, Colombia.

**1 May.** North Korean government claims jurisdiction over all Korea.

**10 May.** USSR publicises recent exchange of correspondence between Molotov and US Ambassador Bedell Smith on possible end to Cold War.

**14 May.** Israel proclaimed a state (after British leave Palestine and UN agrees to partition it between Jews and Arabs); first Arab-Israeli war follows.

**19 May.** Yugoslav leaders refuse to attend a Cominform meeting called by USSR.

**1 June.** US, Britain and France announce London Conference decisions including establishment of a West German state.

**11 June.** US Senate passes Vandenberg Resolution authorising government to enter regional security pacts.

**16 June.** Emergency declared in Malaya against Communist insurgents.

**18 June.** Western powers begin to introduce new currency in Western Germany.

#### [4. The 'First Cold War', 1948–52](#)

**24 June 1948.** Soviets launch full blockade of surface routes to West Berlin; Eastern bloc foreign ministers in Warsaw condemn Western policy in Germany.

**26 June.** Berlin airlift begins.

**28 June.** To Western surprise Yugoslavia is expelled from the Cominform; Eastern bloc denounces Tito as 'deviationist'.

**6 July.** US, Canada and Brussels Pact states begin talks on Atlantic security in Washington.

**15 July.** 'Atomic-capable' B29 bombers are sent by US to bases in Britain.

**2 August.** Western ambassadors discuss Berlin situation with Stalin.

**15 August.** South Korea declared a Republic and recognised by US.

**15 August.** UN Commission says Greek Communists *were* aided by Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

**26 August.** Western powers decide to take Berlin issue to UN.

**1 September.** Western German representatives (in Bonn) begin to discuss 'basic law' of a new state.

**3 September.** Independent-minded Communist Gomulka is expelled from Polish government.

**14 September.** Death of Zhdanov, anti-Western hard-liner, who had been seen as Stalin's likely successor.

**October–November.** New strike wave in France and Italy.

**31 October.** Chinese Communists take control of all Manchuria after taking Mukden.

**2 November.** Truman narrowly re-elected president, defeating Thomas Dewey.

**5 December.** Social Democrats win West Berlin elections; Communists humiliated.

**31 December.** USSR and Eastern bloc launch full trade embargo against Yugoslavia.

**1949**

**22 January.** Chinese Communists capture Beijing.

**25 January.** Establishment of Comecon by the USSR and its satellites.

**6 February.** Soviet note to Norway, calling for a non-aggression pact between them, increases pressure on Western powers to include Norway in Atlantic security talks.

**8 February.** Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary condemned to life-imprisonment.

**18 February.** Berlin airlift carries its millionth ton of supplies.

**8 March.** France makes former Emperor Bao Dai the head of a new Vietnamese government.

**4 April.** North Atlantic Treaty signed in Washington.

**8 April.** In Washington, US, Britain and France reach agreement on terms for creating West German state.

**20 April.** Chinese Communist forces cross the Yangtze, shelling British naval vessels.

**4 May.** USSR agrees to lift the Berlin blockade in return for four-power talks on Germany.

**5 May.** West European countries, in London, sign Statute of Council of Europe, including a Consultative Assembly in Strasbourg; first annual session begins on 8 August.

**8 May.** West German representatives finalise 'Basic Law' of new state which comes into existence on 23 May.

**12 May.** The Berlin blockade is lifted.

**23 May–20 June.** US, Soviet, British and French foreign ministers meet in Paris to discuss future of Germany but cannot find common ground.

**30 May.** Soviets constitute an East German government.

**29 June.** US troops withdrawn from South Korea.

**13 July.** Pope Pius XII's Apostolic *Acta* condemns all who support Communism.

**20 July.** Israeli-Syrian armistice ends all fighting in Arab-Israeli War.

**25 July.** Truman asks Congress for military aid to NATO states.

**5 August.** US ends aid to Chiang Kai-shek.

**29 August.** Soviets explode their first atomic bomb; announced by Truman on 22 September.

**8 September.** US agrees its first loan to Tito's Yugoslavia.

**15 September.** Konrad Adenauer becomes first Chancellor of West Germany.

**21 September.** Mao Zedong declares the Chinese People's Republic.

**28 September.** Congress approves a 'Mutual Defense Aid Programme' to NATO.

**28 September.** USSR abrogates its mutual defence pact with Yugoslavia; other Eastern bloc states follow suit.

**7 October.** East German constitution proclaimed.

**16 October.** Greek civil war ends in government victory.

**2 November.** Holland gives independence to Indonesia.

**22 November.** Petersberg Agreement between Western powers and West Germany eases economic restrictions on West Germany.

**8 December.** Chiang Kai-shek sets up a government in Formosa (Taiwan).

**1950**

**6 January.** British recognise Communist China.

**10 January.** USSR's Yakov Malik walks out of UN Security Council in protest over continued presence of Nationalist China.

**12 January.** US Secretary of State Acheson defines a 'defense perimeter' in the Far East, running from Alaska through Japan to the Philippines; later criticised by Republicans for omitting Korea.

**14 January.** Ho Chi Minh establishes a 'Democratic Republic of Vietnam'; recognised by China on 19th and USSR on 31 January.

**25 January.** Alger Hiss, former State Department official, is condemned for perjury, following allegations by Whitaker Chambers he was a Communist; the case makes Congressman Richard Nixon a household name.

**31 January.** Truman announces that America is to build a hydrogen bomb.

**7 February.** US and Britain recognise pro-French government of Bao Dai in Indo-China.

**9 February.** Beginning of 'McCarthyism': Senator Joe McCarthy, at Wheeling in West Virginia, claims there are over 200 Communist sympathisers in the State Department.

**14 February.** Sino-Soviet alliance signed by Mao Zedong in Moscow.

**30 March.** Truman condemns McCarthy but cannot prevent beginning of an anti-Communist 'witch-hunt'.

**7 April.** US policy document NSC-68 proposes large-scale arms programme.

**9 May.** French foreign minister launches Schuman Plan for a European coal-steel authority.

**23 May.** US, Britain and France complain that East Germany's 'police-force' breaches Potsdam agreement on German disarmament.

**6 June.** East German-Polish treaty recognises the Oder-Neisse border.

**25 June.** Start of Korean War: North Korean forces invade South Korea.

**26 June.** US forces are sent to Korea (arriving 1 July); US Seventh Fleet is sent to defend Taiwan from Chinese Communists.

**27 June.** UN, in Soviet absence, approves 'Uniting for Peace' resolution, to send forces to Korea.

**26 July.** US makes major increase in military aid to French in Indo-China.

**14 September.** In Korea, UN forces under General MacArthur begin landings at Inchon which force a North Korean retreat.

**15-18 September.** The US proposes West German rearmament in meeting with Britain, France and NATO states in New York; the idea is opposed by the French.

**28 September.** Zhou Enlai warns UN forces not to invade North Korea.

**29 September.** UN forces begin to cross the 38th parallel into North Korea.

**17 October.** US makes military aid agreement with Thailand.

**20 October.** Eastern bloc foreign ministers in Prague condemn West German rearmament proposals.

**21 October.** Chinese forces invade Tibet.

**26 October.** Chinese 'volunteers' enter the Korean War.

**26 October.** The French premier launches the Pleven Plan for German rearmament within a federal European Army.

**3 November.** USSR proposes talks with US, Britain and France on Germany; they reject Soviet arguments in note of 22 December.

**26 November.** Chinese intervene in force in Korea, driving UN forces back.

**30 November.** USSR vetoes anti-Chinese resolution at UN; Truman announces there has been 'active consideration' of the use of atomic bombs in Korea.

**8 December.** US ends all trade with China; Truman assures British premier Attlee in Washington that the atom bomb will not be used.

**19 December.** NATO Council in Brussels agrees in principle to West German rearmament, but allows France to pursue this through a European federal army.

**30 December.** USSR sends new note to Western powers proposing talks on Germany; receives another cautious reply on 23 January.

## **1951**

**1 January.** In Korea, Chinese forces cross the 38th parallel; capture Seoul on 4 January.

**10 January.** Chinese advance in Korea reaches its furthest extent.

**15 January.** Truman's budget request to Congress includes greater military spending.

**1 February.** By large majority General Assembly of UN approves condemnation of China for aggression.

**5 February.** Soviet note to the US, Britain and France calls for talks on Germany; on 19 February they suggest preliminary talks in Paris.

**15 February.** France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg begin talks on a European Army in Paris – later joined by Holland.

**21 February.** First Communist 'Peace Council' begins in East Berlin.

**5 March.** At the Palais Rose, Paris, deputies of the Soviet, American, British and French foreign ministers begin talks to draft an agenda for a foreign ministers' conference.

**27 March.** In Korea, UN forces again reach the 38th parallel.

**2 April.** Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) opened in Paris, under Eisenhower.

**5 April.** In US Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are sentenced to death for passing atomic secrets to USSR during the Second World War (executed 19 June 1953).

**11 April.** General MacArthur is sacked by Truman as UN commander in Korea after making unauthorised statements, including calls for attacks against China.

**18 April.** France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux nations sign the treaty to establish a European Coal-Steel Community (ECSC).

**19 April.** Before Congress, General MacArthur criticises Truman's handling of Korean War.

**30 April.** Iranian parliament votes to nationalise the mainly British-owned oil industry; Britain complains to International Court of Justice on 26 May.

**23 May.** China takes control of Tibetan government, although the Dalai Lama remains there.

**25 May.** British spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean flee to the USSR.

**21 June.** End of the Palais Rose talks, begun on 5 March; no agreement on East-West foreign ministers meeting.

**23 June.** USSR calls for a cease-fire in Korea; UN (29 June) and China (1 July) agree to talks, which begin at Kaesong on 4 July.

**30 August.** US–Philippines mutual defence treaty signed.

**1 September.** ANZUS Pact for mutual defence signed between US, Australia and New Zealand.

**4–8 September.** San Francisco Conference, without USSR or Communist China, leads to peace treaty with Japan.

**8 September.** US–Japanese defence treaty signed.

**14 October.** Britain proposes a Middle East Command (to include Western and Middle East states) largely as a means to maintain Britain's presence in the Suez Canal; Egypt rejects this on 15 October and also abrogates its 1936 treaty with Britain.

**16–17 October.** British troops occupy Suez Canal base installations.

**23 November.** Armistice talks in Korea reach agreement on cease-fire line.

**3 December.** US Economic Co-operation Administration (set up to handle Marshall Aid) is replaced by a Mutual Security Agency (with the emphasis on military assistance).

**1952**

**2 January.** UN command says repatriation of prisoners of war in Korea should be on a voluntary basis; opens way for Communist prisoners to refuse to return home.

**18 February.** Greece and Turkey join NATO.

**27 February.** UN begins to meet in its permanent New York headquarters.

**10 March.** USSR puts forward the 'Stalin note' proposing a peace treaty that would reunify Germany; Western powers reply cautiously on 25 March.

**9 April.** A new Soviet note on a German peace treaty; Western powers delay reply until 13 May.

**26 May.** Treaty of Bonn signed by US, Britain, France and West Germany, to end the occupation and restore sovereignty to West Germany. (Entry into force depends on the Treaty of Paris below.)

**27 May.** Treaty of Paris between France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg to establish a European Defence Community, placing German forces under federal control.

**23 June.** UN forces bomb hydroelectricity stations in North Korea.

**23–26 July.** Officers under General Neguib overthrow King Farouk of Egypt.

**23 August.** New Soviet note on German peace treaty; Western Allies reply on 23 September.

**16 September.** Soviets agree to restore Port Arthur and railway rights in Manchuria (obtained at Yalta in 1945) to China.

**3 October.** Britain explodes its first atomic bomb in the Montebello islands.

**5–14 October** Nineteenth Soviet Communist Party Congress sees height of Stalin's 'personality cult'.

**1 November.** US explodes the first hydrogen bomb in the Marshall Islands.

**4 November.** Republican Dwight Eisenhower wins the US election over Adlai Stevenson.

**27 November.** Rodolf Slansky and other dissident Communists are condemned to death after a show trial in Czechoslovakia.

**3 December.** After intense debate, the UN Assembly adopts an Indian proposal on prisoners of war and a Korean armistice: rejected by Communist China on 15 December.

**5 December.** Eisenhower visits the front line in Korea, highlighting his determination to end the war.

## [5. 'The Thaw', 1953–58](#)

### 1953

**13 January.** Moscow announces arrest of Kremlin doctors, who are accused of murdering the former Politbureau member Zhdanov in the 'Doctors' Plot'.

**5 March.** Death of Stalin; succeeded on 6 March by a 'collective leadership' led by Georgi Malenkov as prime minister and party leader.

**14 March.** Malenkov surrenders leadership of the Communist Party to Nikita Khrushchev.



**19 March.** West German parliament ratifies the European Defence Community.

**3 April.** New Soviet government releases those accused in the Doctors' Plot.

**16 April.** Eisenhower speech on possibility of peace with new Soviet leadership, calls for Korean settlement and Austrian treaty.

**20 April.** First exchange of sick prisoners of war in Korea.

**11 May.** Winston Churchill speech calls for a summit meeting between Soviet and Western leaders; upsets US, France and West Germany.

**25 May.** First test of an atomic artillery shell by US.

**17 June.** The 'Berlin Rising': workers' demonstrations in East Berlin and other cities quickly put down by Red Army.

**18 June.** South Korean leader Syngman Rhee releases North Korean prisoners of war and thus threatens peace efforts (see page 91).

**5 July.** Imre Nagy, formerly criticised by the leadership, becomes Hungarian prime minister; introduces liberalisation measures.

**10 July.** Soviet security chief Beria is arrested and later (22 December) executed as a 'spy'.

**10–15 July.** Meeting of US, British and French foreign ministers in Washington invites USSR to a conference on Germany. In replies (5 and 16 August) USSR insists on Chinese representation in Great Power talks.

**27 July.** Armistice agreement signed at Panmunjom ends the Korean War.

**7 August.** UN nations involved in Korean War warn that if war is renewed it probably could not be confined to Korea.

**8 August.** US–South Korean mutual defence treaty signed.

**8 August.** Explosion of first Soviet hydrogen bomb.

**19–20 August.** CIA supports successful coup by supporters of the Shah of Iran, leading to the arrest of the radical prime minister Mossadeq.

**2 September.** Further Western note to USSR proposing a conference on Germany; Soviets reply on 28 September.

**12 September.** Khrushchev is given the title 'First Secretary' of the Soviet Communist Party.

**26 September.** Agreement on military bases between US and Franco's Spain.

**27 September.** Japan decides to recreate military forces.

**28 September.** Cardinal Wyszynski, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, is arrested; leads to street protests.

**2 October.** Iranian government begins crackdown against Communist *Tudeh* party.

**8 October.** US and Britain announce that they will return Trieste (established as a free port in 1947) to Italy; followed by protests from Yugoslavia.

**18 October.** US, British and French foreign ministers, following talks in London, send another note to USSR proposing talks on Germany; Soviets reply positively on 3 November; further exchanges on 16 and 26 November.

**20 November.** French establish a military base at Dienbienphu in northern Vietnam as part of offensive operation by General Navarre.

**4–8 December.** Eisenhower, Churchill and French premier Laniel meet in Bermuda; agree to accept proposal for a four-power conference on Germany in Berlin.

**8 December.** Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' speech given before the UN Assembly.

**14–16 December.** At NATO Council in Paris Secretary of State Dulles warns of an 'agonising reappraisal' of US security policy if France does not ratify the European Defence Community.

## 1954

**15 January.** Dulles speech says US will meet any threat through 'a capacity to retaliate instantly by means ... of our own choosing': inaugurates policy of 'massive retaliation'. \*

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This reference guide throws light on almost every aspect of postwar international history from the rise of Mao's China to the Bosnian Civil War. It provides a huge wealth of information on East-West relations setting events, crises and conflicts in their full international context.

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