The Aftermath of World War II
1945-1949
Events of the Period

- 1945: A-bomb
- 1945: United Nations
- 1946: USSR & Iran
- 1946-1949: China
- 1946-1948: Eastern Europe
- 1946-1949: Greece & Turkey
- 1947: OAS
- 1948: Marshal Plan
- 1948: Berlin Crisis (I)
- 1949: Communist China
- 1949: NATO
- 1949: Soviet A-Bomb
- 1949: “Super” Decision
1945-1947

Hopeful Disengagement & Policy Innovation
The World as Seen from the US in 1945

- Harry Truman U.S. President
- Among the Industrial Powers only the US economy intact
  - Europe & Asia in ruins
- World trade decimated
- Colonial empires shaky (UK, FR, Dutch)
- US has 12 million troops overseas
The World -- 1945
What Were U.S. Vital Interests?

- The Domestic Economy
  - U.S. Domestic Economic Strength
- International Economy & trade
  - Access to foreign markets
    - natural resources
    - industrial markets
- Democratic free-markets among Industrial Powers
# US Military Priorities

(JCS 769/1 4/1947)

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Threats to U.S. National Security

- **Over-Militarized U.S. Economy**
  - ~40% GNP devoted to war effort ($82 billion)
  - labor strikes, inflation, meat shortages in 1946
  - Republicans called for tax cuts (20%) & defense cuts

- **US military posture**
  - ~12 million troops over seas -- straddling Western & Central Europe, Asia, and North Africa
  - 1000 B-29s, no A-bombs
Threats

- Future of Germany & Japan
- Political & Economic Weakness of our Western Allies
- Soviet expansion: Intentions & Capabilities?
  - mission to spread communism
  - Soviet forces ~12 million troops
    - Central/Eastern Europe
    - China, Korea
    - Iran
    - Demobilization largely unrecognized (~2 million by 1947)
  - using economic & social turmoil to create opportunities for communist entry
Threats

- Physical & psychic exhaustion of people of Europe/Asia opens door for communism
  - feelings of disillusionment, insecurity, apathy
  - destruction & depreciation of physical plant and equipment
  - depletion of financial reserves, foreign exchange
  - social & economic dislocation
  - delay in converting German economy to peace time production

- Soviet assistance to indigenous communist cells
Views of the Soviet Threat

- **FDR on Eve of Cold War:**
  - Soviet hostility due to unfamiliarity with West, exclusion, lack of interaction
  - Cooperation, trust, good will can change Soviet behavior

- **Kennan:** Soviet hostility is internally generated, nature of system & leadership experience
  - Gestures of good faith will be seen as weakness; policy of firmness & patience demanded
  - *Containment* as the foundation of policy
U.S. National Security Policy 1945-1947

- Use of economic & diplomatic power
  - not military engagement
- De-militarize US Economy

US Defense Spending

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>80</td>
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40% GNP in 1945
5% GNP in 1947
De-mobilize the Armed Forces

- Domestic pressures immense (80,000 letters/week to Congress)
- 1945: 12 million troops
- 1946: 6.1 million troops
- 1948: 1.6 million troops
- Disorganized demobilization left all units under-strength
  - Actual US military strength was far weaker than numbers suggest
  - "hollow" force
Diplomatic Accommodation with USSR in Europe

- Negotiations through the UN
  - Withdrawal from Central Europe
  - Withdrawal from China
  - Nuclear Weapons control

- Positive diplomacy meant not harping on Soviet threat
  - Essential for demobilization
Institutional Innovations

- **UN for collective security & economic redevelopment (1945) as per American agenda**
  - western dominated General Assembly
  - Western dominated Security Council

- **Baruch Plan (1946)**
  - internationalize atomic technology
  - stop Soviets from getting A bomb
Institutional Innovations

- **AEC 1946**
  - takes custody & control of nuclear programs from Army
  - retains warhead/bomb control until 1953

- **National Security Act 1947**
  - emerges after 2 years of furious infighting
  - original plan called for dominant Sec Def
    - Navy Dept. fought and won it to prevent subordination
  - sets up NSC: Secs Army, AF, Navy dominate NSC
  - Air Force becomes independent service
  - Sec Defense created, in parallel with Secs of Army, Navy, and Air Force
  - CIA created
  - JCS (consensual system)
Events

- 1945: A-bomb
- 1945: United Nations
- 1946: USSR-Iran Crisis
- 1946-1949: China Crisis
- 1946-1948: Eastern Europe Crisis
- 1946-1949: Greece & Turkey Crises
- 1947: OAS
Truman Doctrine (1947)

- **Response to Crises in Greece & Turkey**
  - “...Totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States…”
  - “...I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures…”

- **To help nations engaged in self-defense**
  - provide surplus arms & training & funding to build indigenous forces
  - No U.S. forces on the ground
1948-1949

Crises & Reaction
Marshall Plan (1948)

- $13 billion to rebuild Europe
- Russians & satellites invited to join
  - assumed they would not
  - might drive wedge between Soviets & satellites
Force Structure Debate

- **Long War**
  - Army: mobilization strategy – re-fight WWII
    - Small standing army
    - Universal military training
  - Navy
    - Super carrier

- **Short War**
  - Air Force
    - Air Power (70 wings)
    - Nuclear Weapons
    - Overseas air bases in Europe, N. Africa, and Asia
Institutional Innovations

- Army pushes universal military training
- Women’s Armed Forces Integration Act (1948)
  - Military careers for women: nurses, administrative help
Institutional Innovations

- **Executive Order 9981 (1948)**
  - mandatory racial integration of units
  - Military argues that integration would hurt recruitment, harm morale & discipline, cut readiness
    - Air Force, Army, & Marines maintain segregated subunits
    - Navy shuffles blacks into stewards branch, shore logistics
  - note this was an *executive order*, not a law....why?
    - And why was this done?

- **National Security Act 1949 Amendment**
  - result of inter-service squabbling over missions and nuclear weapons
    - Reorganization based on money, budgets, & inter-service rivalry
  - Creates single Defense Dept
  - Armed services subordinated to Sec Def & extends authority
  - Sec Def gets deputy and 3 assist Sec Defs
Events of the Period

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A-Bomb

“Fat Man”

“Little Boy”

B-29
Berlin Crisis
Berlin Crisis