



# Aftermath of WWII

# WWII Ends

- **September 2, 1945:** Japan formally surrenders, officially ending WWII.

Much of Europe and Asia lay in ruin from the war.



Berlin



Okinawa



# Superpowers

- Two countries emerged from WWII as international powers.

## US



## USSR



## WHY? HOW?

Both had:

- independent economies
- strong militaries
- capability to produce nuclear weapons
- remained largely undamaged from the destruction of war

# Cold War Begins

- The former allies became engaged in a 45 year long conflict lasting from 1945-1991.
  - Each country had severe distrust of the other.

## US

- worried about Soviet communism spreading
- concerned about leader Joseph Stalin's tyrannical rule of his country

## USSR

- resented the US delay in entering WWII, which resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of Soviets

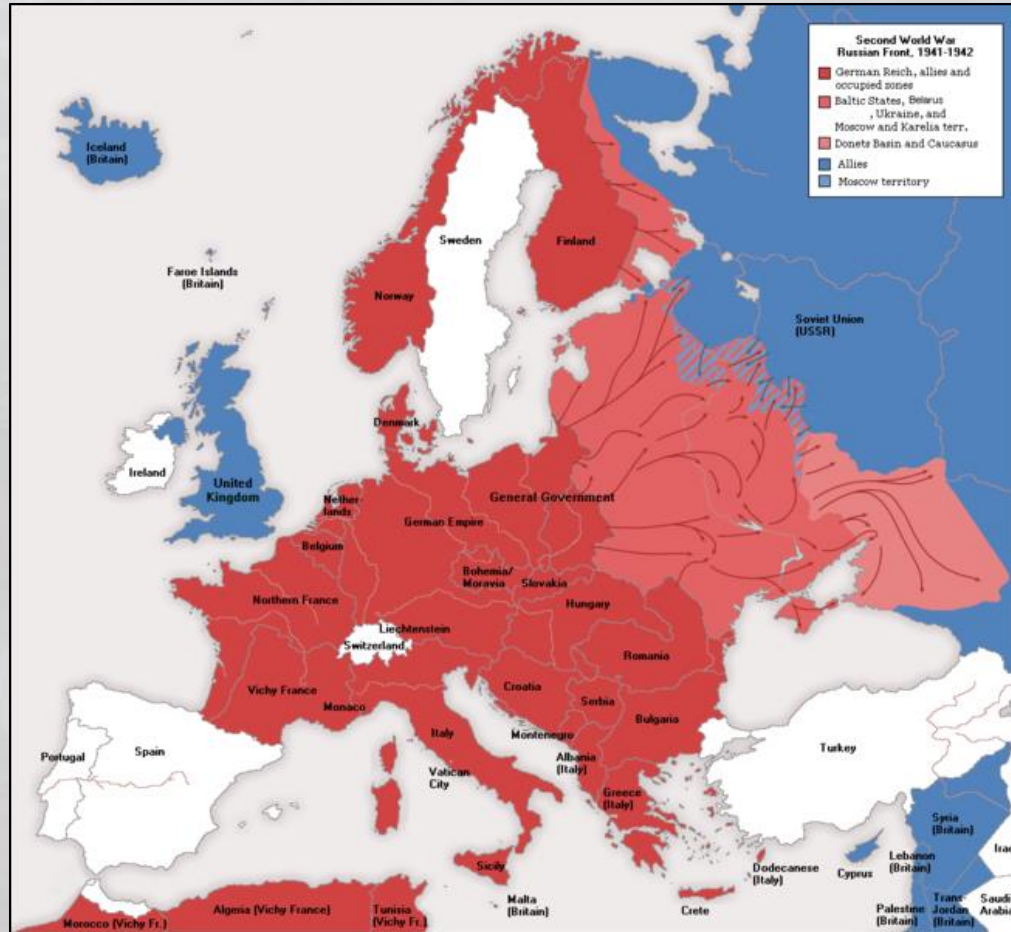


Joseph Stalin

**The events that followed the end of WWII only strengthened this mutual distrust.**

# Prewar States

- Many European countries had been conquered by Germany.



- When WWII ended, borders had to be redrawn.
- Governments had to be reestablished.
- Many European countries were able to return to their borders and governments they had before WWII began.

Germany could not.

- Germany's government was in turmoil.

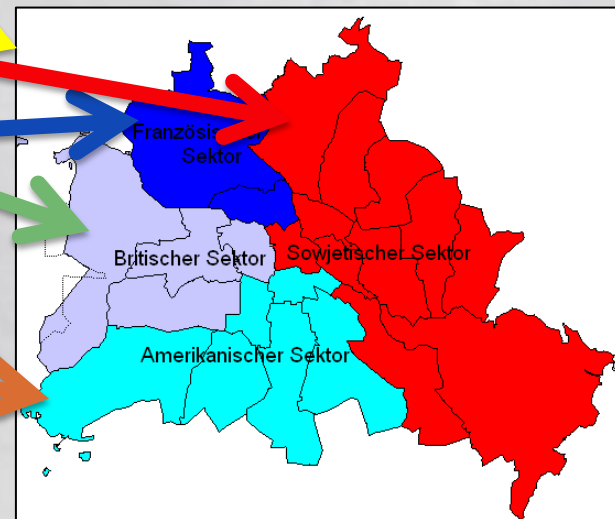
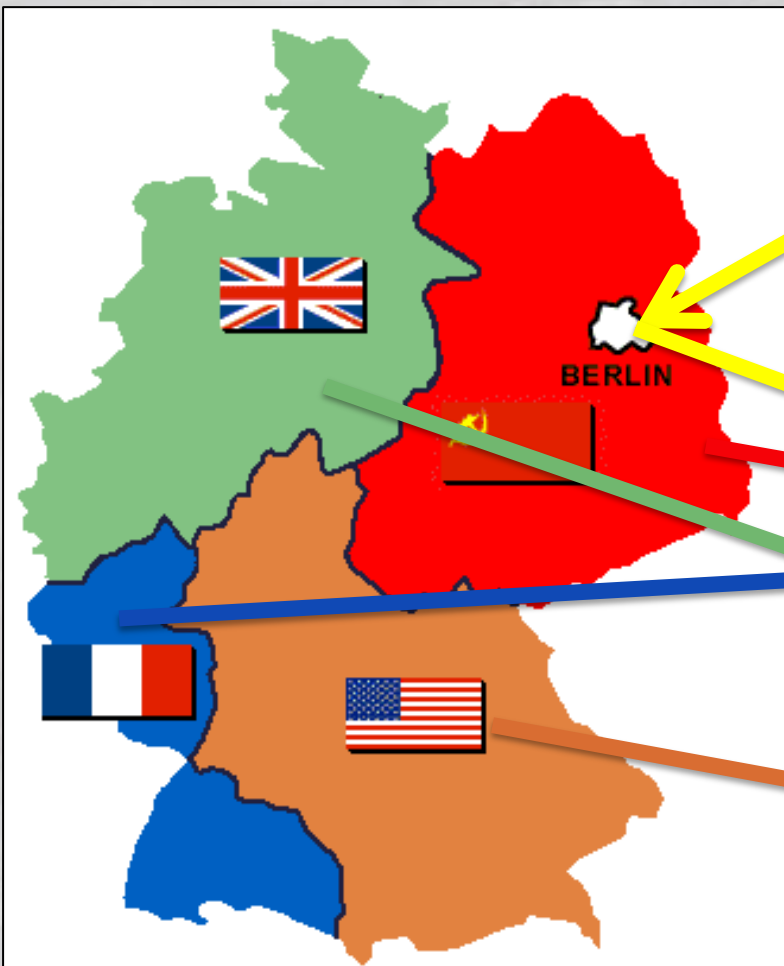
**The Allies had to intervene.**

# An Occupied Germany

- The Allies knew that Germany would not be able to recover without a stable government in place.

## Germany was divided into 4 zones.

- Each of the Allies occupied, or controlled, one zone.
- The capital of Berlin was deep in USSR controlled territory.
- But it was still divided into 4 zones, with the Allies each occupying one zone.



# A Divided Germany

- The US, UK, and France helped their occupied zones implement a democratic government.

- The USSR implemented a communist government in its occupied zone.

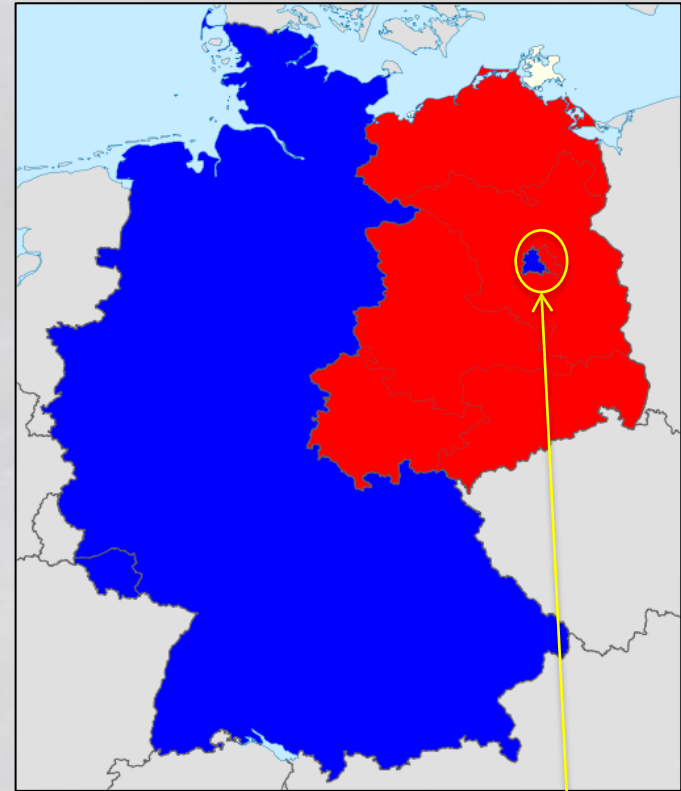
**Soon Germany became a divided country.**

West Germany

West Berlin

East Germany

East Berlin



**And Berlin became a divided city.**

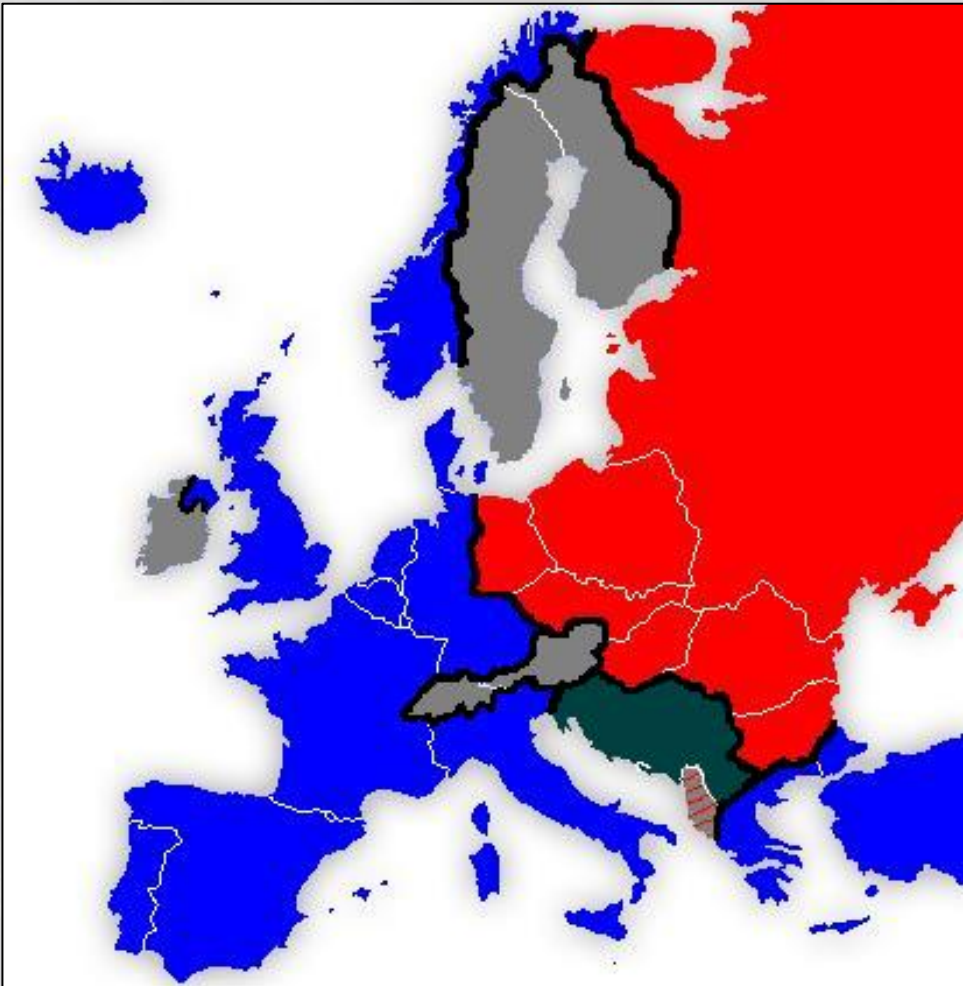
# Western & Eastern Blocs

- The USSR not only controlled East Germany, but it also controlled other eastern European countries after WWII.
- Like East Germany & East Berlin, these eastern European countries soon had communist governments.

- Like West Germany & West Berlin, most western European countries had democratic governments.

## Soon Europe became a divided continent.

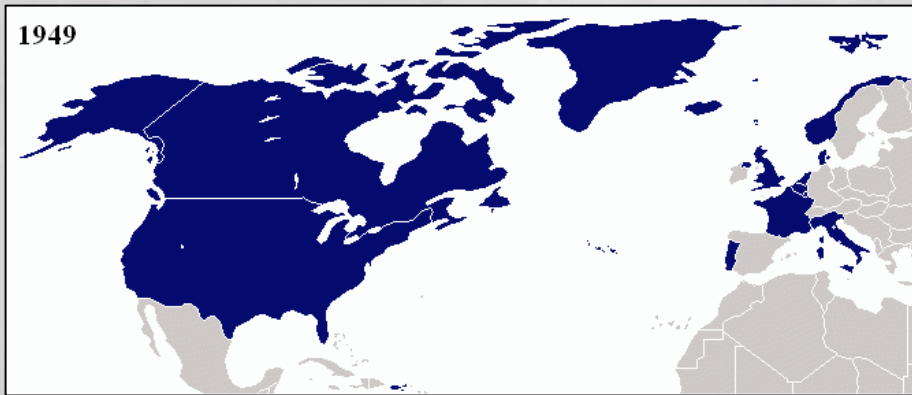
- The democratic countries, including the US, became the **Western Bloc**.
- The communist countries became the **Eastern Bloc**.



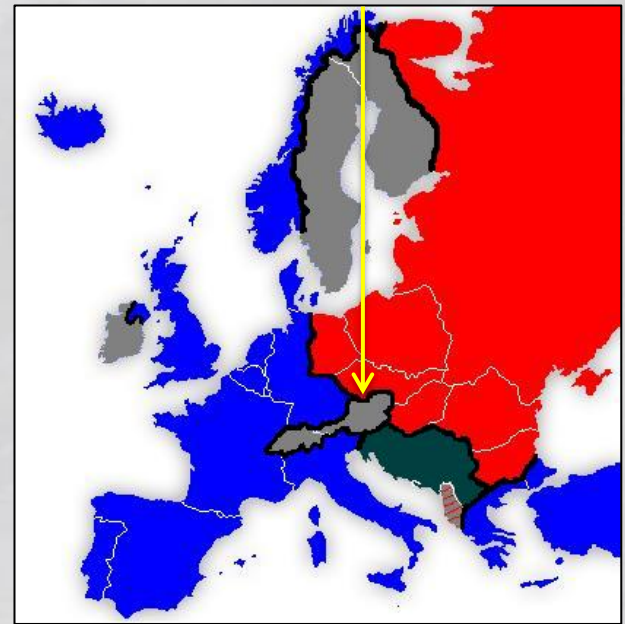


# The Iron Curtain Falls

- The leaders of the Western Bloc were fearful that communism would spread.
  - They wanted to contain, or prevent the spread, of communism.
- UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill referred to the line that divided the Western and Eastern Blocs as the **Iron Curtain**.
- Both Blocs signed their own alliances.
- The Western Bloc countries, along with a few others, signed the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, in 1949.



- Tensions increased between the US and USSR.



- The Eastern Bloc countries signed the **Warsaw Pact** in 1955.

# Occupation in Asia

- Like Germany, Japan was also occupied after the end of WWII.
- The USSR did not occupy Japan, though, and Japan became an independent country again in 1952.
- Korea, like Germany, was divided into zones.
  - The USSR occupied North Korea.
  - The US occupied South Korea.
- Occupation was only going to last until a free election could be held for all of Korea.
- However, the USSR refused to hold a free election.
  - Today Korea is two independent countries.
  - North Korea is communist, while South Korea is democratic.



# War Crime Trials

- Many leaders from Germany and Japan were brought to trial for war crimes they had committed.

## Nuremberg Trials

- held in Germany
- 1945-1949
- prosecute & punish major war criminals of the European Axis Powers



## Tokyo War Crimes Trials

- held in Japan
- 1946-1948
- prosecute & punish major war criminals of the Far East



**Those accused had committed crimes against humanity such as:**

- the Holocaust (genocide)
  - torturing prisoners of war
  - slave labor
  - some were executed
  - others sent to prison
- They violated the rules of war according to the Geneva Conventions.

# War Crime Trials

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## Nuremberg Trials

## Tokyo War Crimes Trials

## Trials

## Crimes Trials

- held in Germany
- 1945-1949
- prosecuted 10 Spanish major war criminals of the European Axis Powers
- held in Japan
- 1946-1948
- prosecuted 25 Japanese major war criminals of the Far East



**Those accused by committed crimes against humanity such as:**

- the Holocaust (genocide)
- torturing prisoners of war
- slave labor

They violated the rules of war according to the Geneva Conventions.

- some were executed
- others sent to prison

# United Nations Forms

- October 24, 1945
- There are 51 original countries that form the UN.
- There are 5 permanent Security Council Members: France, the USSR, the UK, the US, and China.
- These five countries are responsible for negotiating and maintaining peace worldwide.
- The UN exists today, with almost 200 member countries.



circa 1946

UN flag



# European Reconstruction

- By 1948, most of Europe was still struggling to rebuild itself.

## WHY?

- Many European countries were in debt or out of money because of the expenses of the war.
- Citizens didn't even have enough food to eat, much less have money to pay extra taxes.

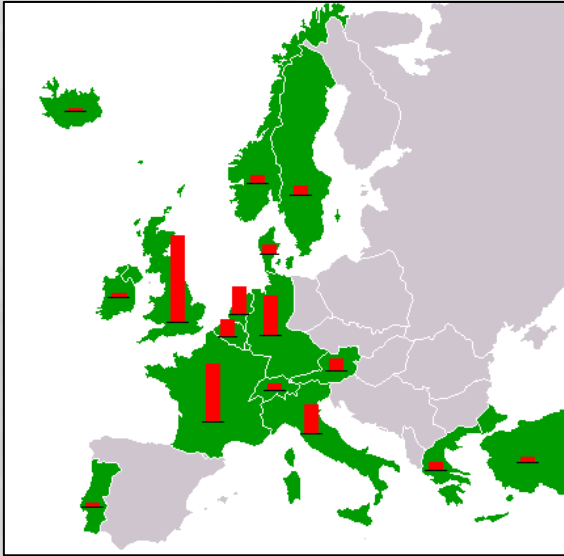
## The US economy was doing well.

- The US had not been a battleground during the war, so it did not need to rebuild itself.
  - The US was now the richest country in the world.
- The US realized that if western Europe was not able to rebuild itself quickly, it might fall to communism.

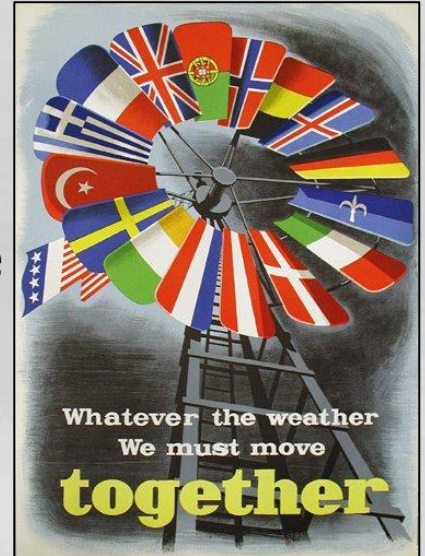
## The US knew it had to help Europe.

# Marshall Plan

- 1948-1951
- Eighteen western European countries received \$13 billion worth of food, machines, and other goods from the US.



European countries that received aid through the Marshall Plan.



Poster showing support for the Marshall Plan.

**The USSR rejected any aid for itself and the eastern European countries it controlled.**

- The economies of the western European countries improved, while the eastern European countries continued to struggle.