

**Roots of the Cold War**  
Stalin, Kennan, Truman and Churchill  
A History Lesson Plan by Terese Trebilcock

**Objective 1:** To analyze and describe how a series of speeches and articles in early 1946 set the stage for the Cold War.

**Objective 2:** To analyze Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" speech, March 5, 1946.

**Objective 3:** To analyze primary sources for point of view.

**Objective 4:** To identify some of the tools of diplomacy, and to analyze and assess their usage in the early Cold War period.

**Lesser**

**Objective 5:** An optional extension of the lesson: To examine Churchill's speech in New York City ten days later on March 15, 1946.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LESSON PLAN

- Part 1. An introductory lecture review, "Europe in Context: World War to Cold War," using a worksheet with a note-taking organizer.
- Part 2. An analysis of Josef Stalin's speech at an election meeting, February 9, 1946
- Part 3. An analysis of George F. Kennan's "Long Telegram," February 22, 1946
- Part 4. An analysis of Winston S. Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" speech, March 5, 1946
- Part 5. An analysis of Stalin's interview with *Pravda*, mid-March, 1946
- Part 6. Conclusions/Assessments
- Part 7. Optional – examination of Churchill's March 15<sup>th</sup> speech
- Appendix A Winston S. Churchill, "The Darkening International Scene," March 15, 1946 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York City
- Appendix B Summary of British Newspaper Headlines on "The Sinews of Peace"
- Appendix C Excerpts from American Newspaper Headlines on "The Sinews of Peace"
- Appendix D Excerpts from American Newspaper Headlines on Churchill's New York speech

MATERIALS

The following are sources for good printable documents:

--Document 1: Stalin's Election Speech

<http://revolutionarydemocracy.org/stalin/speech020946.htm>

Audio available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WC8WaG1KqQ4>

-- Document 2: Interview with Vladislav Zubok, **for teacher background**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/bomb/filmmore/reference/interview/zubok3.html>

--Document 3: Kennan's Long Telegram to Secretary of State James Byrnes

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>

--Document 4: Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" Speech

Registration is free on [www.winstonchurchill.org](http://www.winstonchurchill.org)

BBC Audio and text available [here](#)

--Document 5: Stalin's Interview with *Pravda*, in response to Churchill

<http://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/Stalin/pravda031346.htm>

Printed in the *New York Times*, March 14, 1946

- Worksheet 1: Europe in Context: World War to Cold War, page 7
- Worksheet 2: Analysis for Stalin's Election Speech
- Worksheet 3: Analysis for Kennan's Long Telegram
- Worksheet 4: Analysis for Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" Speech
- Worksheet 5: Analysis for Stalin's Interview with Pravda
- Worksheet 6: Questions on Churchill's speech in NYC on March 15, 1946

#### OTHER RESOURCES

Archival documents to use as slides or PowerPoint or in group work folders to show students examples will be available at Churchill Archives <http://www.churchillarchive.com/>

- CHUR 5/4/83 A single psalm-style page of "The Sinews of Peace" speech
- CHPC 23 Press cuttings showing reporting in the British press of Churchill's speech:
  - News Chronicle*, 6 March 1946
  - Evening News*, 6 March 1946
  - Yorkshire Post*, 7 March 1946
- For excerpts from British newspapers, see Appendix B
- For excerpts from American newspapers, see Appendix C
- CHAR 2/229/46-47—Analysis of letters sent in response to "Sinews of Peace" by British Consulate in New York, 3/27/46

Additional press clippings:

- Stalin Blames Capitalism for 2 Wars, *The Washington Post* (1923-1954); February 10, 1946; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Washington Post* (1877-1994), pg. M1.
- Program of Action by Barnet Nover. *The Washington Post* (1923-1954); March 7, 1946; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Washington Post* (1877-1994), pg. 11.

Books:

Judge, Edward H. and John W. Langdon, Eds. *The Cold War: A History through Documents* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2009)

Larres, Klaus, *Churchill's Cold War: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)

Leaming, Barbara, *Churchill Defiant: Fighting On 1945-1955* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010)

Muller, James, Ed. and Intro., *Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech Fifty Years Later* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999)

## **PART 1: INTRODUCTORY LECTURE REVIEW, “EUROPE IN CONTEXT: YALTA TO POTSDAM”**

I. Introduction: ask students to make a list of five adjectives that describe war. Make a class list on board/overhead/chart paper. Ask: Is the word “cold” on the list? Why or why not? Ask students, “what was the Cold War?” “Why is it referred to as “cold”?”

II. Tell students that today we will follow our study of the Yalta Conference with an analysis of early post-World War II events and documents which show an escalation of words and actions that lead to the Cold War.

III. Pass out Worksheet 1: Europe in Context: Yalta to Potsdam. Review with students the Dates and Events in the first two columns from their previous textbook reading on Yalta, Potsdam, and the early postwar period. Students should take notes in the right column, Consequence/Result/Analysis. Break this review when you reach January 1946. Ask: considering the post-war results to this point, how would you characterize the relationship among the former Allied government leaders? Why?

The feeling now among major Allies was that even though WWII had been won and was over, there was still much tension and frustration about the future of a Europe that they had fought so hard to liberate from the fascists. As the former allies began to return to life as “normal,” these concerns and even suspicions began to creep into their public speeches and documents. Next, we will look at several of these documents to analyze not only the point of view of the documents, but also to evaluate how the language, media, and audience of the documents contributed to the start of the Cold War.

## **PART 2: AN ANALYSIS OF JOSEF STALIN’S SPEECH AT AN ELECTION MEETING, FEBRUARY 9, 1946**

### **First, we will look at Stalin’s speech of Feb 9, 1946—The “Election” Speech**

- A. Context—On February 9, 1946, Stalin delivered an “election” speech to an assembly of voters in Moscow. In the USSR, elections were not designed to provide voters with a choice between competing candidates or programs. There was only one candidate for each position, and that candidate always endorsed the Communist Party’s positions on questions facing the nation. Election speeches were therefore used to inform citizens of the Party’s positions, to defend and justify those positions, and to identify the candidate as a person worthy of trust and responsibility. When one of the Party leaders spoke, everyone listened attentively, for such a speech might contain hints as to the future actions of the Soviet government. The speech was given at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.
- B. Hand out Worksheet 2: Analysis for Stalin’s Election Speech, and go over the first side with students. This paper recaps the context given above, and asks students to analyze point-of-view, content, and language of the document. Next, hand out Document 1: Stalin’s Election Speech, and have students read and complete the questions on the first side.
- C. Debrief the reading and questions; you might start with projecting a copy of the first page of the speech and playing an excerpt from the speech on YouTube. Go over the questions with students. For example, the context section gives much insight for point-of-view—the audience was Moscow voters, the purpose was to outline and emphasize Communist Party policies and new direction for postwar, motivation was to get voters to accept new austerity period. What elements/language in this speech might have worried American and British government officials?
- D. Have students turn this paper over and brainstorm possible reactions of Stalin’s World War II allies. How might government officials in the United States and Great Britain have reacted? If you were President Harry Truman or Prime Minister Winston Churchill (now out of office), how would you have reacted to this speech? Review these possibilities together. Next, share with the students, either on paper or on the overhead/document reader/projector, the sources that show reactions to the speech. Pass out to the students the article “Stalin Blames Capitalism for 2 Wars,” from the *Washington Post*; have students add the contents of the reactions to the second set of questions, and, together, compare them to their predictions. Source: “Stalin Blames Capitalism for 2 Wars,” *The Washington Post* (1923-1954); February 10, 1946; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Washington Post* (1877-1994), pg. M1.

**Teacher Note:** Now that the class has successfully analyzed the first of the four documents, you may choose to continue to work as a class on the remaining documents, or divide the students into three groups and have them share their work on the overhead, or by making a poster or PowerPoint

### **PART 3: OFFICIAL REACTION IN THE UNITED STATES—KENNAN’S “LONG TELEGRAM” OF 22 FEBRUARY 1946**

- E. Well, not many average Americans heard Stalin’s speech, but government officials did, and had strong reactions—
- F. Although it was broadcast all over the Soviet Union, it was not generally available, translated into English, for Americans.
- G. American officials in the US Embassy in Moscow, however, heard, translated, and analyzed it. They asked George F. Kennan, a career foreign service officer in the US Department of State and a highly-regarded student of Russian and Soviet affairs, to share his own analysis of the Soviet situation. Early in 1946, while serving as the senior political officer at the American Embassy in Moscow, he sent a lengthy message to Washington, providing his own expert analysis of Soviet behavior. Placing Soviet expansionism squarely within the context of traditional Russian suspicion and insecurity, he argued that the USSR could not be fully trusted or reasoned with by the West, and must instead be treated with firm resistance and strength. This “Long Telegram” was widely circulated within the government and made a deep impression on Kennan’s superiors, helping to shape their thinking about US foreign policy. Later that year, Kennan was encouraged to submit an article for publication based on this telegram; it was published in *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947, signed “X.”
- H. Hand out Worksheet 3: Analysis for Kennan’s Long Telegram. This paper recaps the context given above, and asks students to analyze point-of-view, content, and language of the document. Next, hand out Document 3: Kennan’s Long Telegram, and have students read and complete the questions on the first side.
- I. Debrief the reading and questions; you might start with projecting a copy of the first page of the telegram or of the *Foreign Affairs* article. Go over the questions with students. For example, the context section gives much insight for point-of-view—Kennan was a long-time Soviet expert, he had a close-up view of the actions and attitudes of the Soviet government because he lived in Moscow. What elements/language in this speech might have worried Americans, British, and Soviets? What about timing? Remember, in February, the contents of the Telegram would have been available to only top government officials in the US and Britain (probably in the USSR, too).
- J. Have students turn this paper over and answer the first question how might government officials in the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union have reacted? (It is likely that the Soviet government was able to obtain a copy of the telegram.) If you were President Truman or Winston Churchill (now out of office), how would you have reacted to this speech?
- K. It wasn’t until July 1946—after Churchill’s speech and Stalin’s interview—that the average citizen would have known about Kennan’s analysis. Have students answer the second question, considering why, after some time, the US government would have encouraged that Kennan publish his analysis? How did its publication escalate the rhetoric?

### **PART 4: MAKING IT PUBLIC—CHURCHILL’S “SINEWS OF PEACE” SPEECH, 5 MARCH 1946**

- A. Churchill first communicated his forebodings over Stalin to Truman in an anguished telegram on May 12, 1945, and followed up at Potsdam in July 1945. Following his party’s defeat in the July 1945 general election, Churchill was no longer Prime Minister, remaining only a Member of Parliament (M.P.) from the new Woodford Division, winning by a majority of over 17,000 in his own constituency. Nationally Labour won 393 seats to only 189 for the Tories, so Churchill was now became Leader of the Opposition. He received hundreds of invitations to lecture, but one that came to him in October 1945 was from President Truman, who forwarded a letter from Franc L. McCluer, president of Westminster College in Truman’s home state of Missouri. Truman had written at the bottom of the letter, “Hope you can do it. I’ll introduce you.” After seeking approval of the new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, Churchill accepted, making the journey to Fulton part of an extended American vacation. He saw it as an opportunity to “deliver an address . . . on the world situation under your aegis.”

- B. On March 2, the Soviets faced an Allied deadline to withdraw their forces from Iran; they seemed likely to ignore it. At this point, the government officials in the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union were aware of a growing antagonism between the Soviets and their plans for East Europe, and the US and Britain. In early February 1946, Churchill and Truman traveled together by train from Washington, D.C to Missouri for the speech; while en route, Churchill showed Truman his speech. The candid speech, in which Churchill used the term “iron curtain” to describe the barrier Moscow had placed between the West and the communist-dominated nations of Eastern Europe, startled many Americans and infuriated Stalin. Churchill issued a ringing call for the continuation of Anglo-American wartime cooperation, this time against a Soviet Union he viewed as bent on world domination. The small town of Fulton had a population of sixty-five hundred, but thirty thousand people came for the event. The address made headlines throughout the world. When the speech came under heavy attack by certain groups, Truman claimed he had not seen it in advance.
- C. Hand out Worksheet 4: Analysis for Churchill’s “Sinews of Peace” Speech. This paper recaps the context given above, and asks students to analyze point-of-view, content, and language of the document. Next, hand out Document 4: Churchill’s “Sinews of Peace” Speech, and have students read and complete the questions on the first side. Review the class’s answers together.
- D. Debrief the reading and questions; you might start with projecting a copy of the significant page of the speech (CHUR 5/4/83) and listening to the audio of the speech. Go over the questions with students. For example, the context section gives much insight for point-of-view—Churchill is no longer a government official, so he may speak more frankly; he has been invited and introduced by Truman so his speech may have Truman’s approval, Truman may be using Churchill to test the reaction of public opinion to what has happened in East-West relations. What elements/language in this speech might have worried Americans, British, and Soviets?
- E. Have students turn this paper over and predict how might government officials in the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union might have reacted. If you were a private citizen in the US, Britain, or USSR, how might you have reacted? Why? How might government officials in the USSR have reacted? Why? Share.
- F. Next, share with the students, either on paper or on the overhead/document reader/projector, the sources that show reactions to the speech; have students answer the second question with the contents of these reactions and, together, compare them to their predictions. Note in the “World News Summarized” that the Red Army in Iran, which the Soviets had agreed to withdraw, was now double its wartime size and marching toward Europe. Does this verify Churchill’s warning?

**Reactions:**

CHPC 23: the following press cuttings:

--*News Chronicle*, 6 March 1946

--*Evening News*, 6 March 1946

--*Yorkshire Post*, 7 March 1946

CHAR 2/229/46-47—Analysis of letters sent in response to “Sinews of Peace” by British Consulate in New York, 3/27/46

“Program of Action” by Barnet Nover. *The Washington Post* (1923-1954); March 7, 1946; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The Washington Post* (1877-1994), pg. 11

Appendices B and C, British and American Newspaper Headlines regarding “Sinews of Peace”

**PART 5 THE SOVIETS REACT—STALIN’S INTERVIEW WITH *PRAVDA*, MID-MARCH 1946**

- A. Stalin’s reaction to the “iron curtain” speech was vigorous and direct. In an interview in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda*, published in mid-March 1946, he characterized the former British Prime Minister as a man bent on war against the Soviet Union. He defended Soviet actions in Eastern Europe, pointing out the importance of that region for Soviet security and insisting that the governments there were democratic. Considering it unlikely that Truman would have appeared on the platform with Churchill had he disagreed with the latter’s remarks, Stalin also asserted that the Americans and British were banding together against their former wartime allies.
- B. Hand out Worksheet 5: Analysis for Stalin’s Interview with *Pravda*. This paper recaps the context given above, and asks students to analyze point-of-view, content, and language of the document. Next, hand out Document 5: Stalin’s Interview with *Pravda*, and have students read and complete the questions on the first side.

- C. Debrief the reading and questions; you might start with projecting a copy of a typical front page of Pravda. ([http://bearinahat.blogspot.com/2009\\_11\\_01\\_archive](http://bearinahat.blogspot.com/2009_11_01_archive)). Go over the questions with students. For example, the context section gives much insight for point-of-view—Stalin is defending his country’s policies and casting his critics as enemies. What elements/language in this speech might have worried Americans, British, and Soviets?
- D. Have students turn this paper over and answer the first question—how might government officials in the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union have reacted? If you were a private citizen in the US, Britain, or USSR, how might you have reacted? Why? How might government officials in the USSR have reacted? Why? Share.

## **PART 6: CONCLUSIONS/ASSESSMENTS**

Ask: how did these four key documents reveal the lingering tensions among the wartime Allies and sow the seeds of the Cold War? How did the governments’ use of popular media contribute to the growth of Cold War tensions? What was the role of language and rhetoric in creating this war? Was there reality amidst the rhetoric?

As a summary/assessment, ask students to do one of the following:

- create an annotated timeline based on the events studied.
- research additional news articles describing international reactions to the works of Churchill, Kennan, and Stalin.
- write a follow-up article, speech, or letter to the editor which would cool down or heat up the tensions; underline the words or phrases which you think would be particularly effective.
- draft a “government” cable in which you present a policy that would cool down the Cold War.
- Analyze Churchill’s “Sinews of Peace” speech on the basis of “Rhetoric vs. Reality.” Did Churchill’s speech alter the behavior of governments?
- Compare/contrast Churchill’s two speeches: the first in Fulton, MO on March 5, 1946 and the second ten days later on March 15 in New York City. How did the audiences and purposes of the speeches affect their content?

## **PART 7: OPTIONAL – CHURCHILL’S SPEECH OF MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>**

Churchill gave another speech—“The Darkening International Scene”—several days after the “Sinews of Peace” speech in Missouri. The occasion was a dinner at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, hosted by Governor Thomas Dewey. This dinner, planned before the Fulton speech, was in Churchill’s honor, and he used it as an opportunity to clarify his previous comments. Have students read the speech and answer the questions on Worksheet 6. This would be a good follow-up homework assignment. In reviewing student answers to the questions, highlight for the students how the audience and purpose of a speech may affect its content.

**Worksheet 1: Europe in Context: World War to Cold War**

Date	Event	Consequence/Result/Analysis
12/12/1942	Soviet-Czech alliance agreed; Czechs agree to cooperate with USSR after the war	
4/27/1943	USSR breaks off relations with Polish government-in-exile over arguments about the Katyn Massacre	
7/1943	Battle of Kursk ends with Soviet victory, arguably the turning point of the war in Europe	
11/22-11/26/1943	Cairo Conference Attendees: WSC, FDR Agenda: 1. Meant to set groundwork for how to deal with JS 2. Discussed future policy with China, Japan	
11/28-12/1/1943	Tehran Conference Attendees: FDR, WSC, JS (his first) Agenda: 1. Plan final strategy for war against Nazi Germany and its allies 2. Relations with Turkey and Iran	
6/6/1944	D-Day: Allied forces land successfully in France, opening a second front which liberates Western Europe before Russia needs to	
7/21/1944	Having “liberated” east Poland, USSR sets up the Committee of National Liberation in Lublin to govern it.	
8/1-10/2/1944	Warsaw Uprising: Polish rebels attempt to overthrow Nazi rule in Warsaw; Red Army, less than 50 miles away, sits back and allows it to be crushed to destroy the rebels and their leaders.	
Autumn/Winter 1944-45	8/23—Romania signs armistice with Russia following their invasion; coalition government is formed 9/9—Communist coup in Bulgaria 10/9-18—Moscow Conference; WSC and JS agree to percentage “spheres of influence” in Eastern Europe 12/3—Conflict between British and pro-Communist Greek forces in Greece 1/1/1945—USSR “recognizes” its communist puppet government in Poland as the provisional government; US and UK refuse to do so, preferring	

	the exiles in London	
2/4/1945	<p>Yalta Conference</p> <p>Attendees: FDR, WSC, JS</p> <p>Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Future of the liberated states</li> <li>2. Future of Germany</li> <li>3. German reparations</li> <li>4. Poland</li> <li>5. Poland's eastern border</li> <li>6. International organization (UN)</li> </ol>	
Spring/Summer 1945	<p>March –Communist-dominated coup in Romania</p> <p>4/12 FDR dies</p> <p>4/21—Agreements signed between newly “liberated” communist Eastern nations and USSR to work together</p> <p>4/23--HST scolds Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov and tells him that the US will take a tougher stance versus the USSR</p> <p>5/8—Germany surrenders to Allies; WWII ends in Europe, V-E Day</p> <p>7/5—US, UK recognize communist-dominated Polish government after it allows some members of the government-in-exile to join.</p> <p>7/24—HST tells JS that USA successfully tested first atomic bomb on 7/16.</p>	
7/16-8/2/1945	<p>Potsdam Conference</p> <p>Attendees: HST; JS; WSC, followed by Clement Attlee</p> <p>Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The establishment of post-war order</li> <li>2. Peace treaties issues</li> <li>3. Countering the effects of war.</li> </ol>	
8/6-9/2/1945	<p>Events in Japan:</p> <p>8/6: US drops first atomic bomb on Hiroshima</p> <p>8/8: USSR declares war on Japan</p> <p>8/9: US drops second atomic bomb on Nagasaki</p> <p>9/2 Japan officially surrenders unconditionally, after agreeing on 8/14 V-J Day.</p>	
Post War attitudes	<p>Western Europe:</p> <p>Citizens angry at leaders who, they believe, had blundered into Great Depression and WWII; increasing popularity of liberalism and</p>	



	<p>communism in some areas.</p> <p>USSR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stalin's power grows.</li> <li>2. USSR hurt badly by war, but still had world's largest army.</li> <li>3. Continued hostility to capitalism, continuing since Russian Revolution</li> <li>4. Allies' delay in launching D-Day added to hostility.</li> </ol> <p>USA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Now has new President</li> <li>2. Also has atomic bomb</li> <li>3. Population still isolationist</li> </ol>	
9/5/1945	Discovery of a Soviet nuclear spy ring operating in Canada and other western countries.	
December 1945	Moscow campaigned to annex some Turkish territories, build military bases in Dardanelles.	
Late 1945	Council of Foreign Ministers (Br, USA, USSR, Ch, Fr), established at Potsdam as part of UN, were to meet to complete peace treaties with Axis countries; broke up without agreement; acrimony continued to grow throughout 1946.	
<b>To this date,</b>	<b>how would you characterize the Allied</b>	<b>relationship? Why?</b>
January 1946	Enver Hoxha declares the People's Republic of Albania, with himself as Prime Minister.	
2/9/1946	Stalin's election speech: blames WWII on capitalism, dedicates USSR to new Five-Year Plans to outpace the West.	
2/22/1946	George F. Kennan sends his Long Telegram to Washington, interpreting objectives and intentions of USSR.	
March 1946	Hostilities in Greece turn into civil war, with Great Britain-backed conservative/monarchists fighting against Soviet-backed resistance/communists.	
3/2/46	British soldiers withdraw from their zone of occupation in southern Iran. Soviet soldiers remain in northern sector, past the agreed date.	

3/5/46	Churchill delivers his Iron Curtain speech in Fulton, MO, warning of Communist advances in Europe.	
3/10/46	HST demands that Soviet troops evacuate Iran.	
March 1946	British diplomat Roberts sends series of telegrams interpreting Soviet actions and motives.	
3/15/46	WSC speaks in New York to clarify Iron Curtain comments; US officials cancel their attendance; WSC asks JS to vacate Iran as a sign of goodwill, hands off Turkey, hold elections in East Europe	
4/5/46	Soviets evacuate Iran.	
August 1946	HST sends an aircraft carrier to the eastern Mediterranean to protect Turkey from Soviet pressure.	
7/4/46	Philippines gains independence from USA; begins fighting communist Huk rebels.	
9/6/46	US Secretary of State James F. Byrnes states US intention to keep troops in Europe indefinitely.	
9/8/46	Bulgaria votes for establishment of a People's Republic, deposing King Simeon II. Western countries dismiss the vote as fundamentally flawed.	
September 1946	Civil war erupts in Greece between the British-supported government and Communist guerillas.	
12/19/46	French landings in Indochina begin the First Indochina War. They are resisted by the Viet Minh communists, who want national independence.	

**Context:** On February 9, 1946, Stalin delivered an “election” speech to an assembly of voters in Moscow. In the USSR, elections were not designed to provide voters with a choice between competing candidates or programs. There was only one candidate for each position, and that candidate always endorsed the Communist Party’s positions on questions facing the nation. Election speeches were therefore used to inform citizens of the Party’s positions, to defend and justify those positions, and to identify the candidate as a person worthy of trust and responsibility. When one of the Party leaders spoke, everyone listened attentively, for such a speech might contain hints as to the future actions of the Soviet government. The speech was given at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

**Guiding Questions:**

- Consider the point of view of Stalin (audience, background, purpose, beliefs, motivation, position, etc.) in making this speech.
  
- What does Stalin identify as the cause of World War II?
  
- How does Stalin’s explanation relate to Marxist principles?
  
- Although the Red Army had obviously achieved the military victory, why did Stalin emphasize so strongly that the Soviet social and state systems had triumphed?
  
- What words or phrases did Stalin use that contributed to the inflammatory nature of his speech?

## Worksheet 2: Stalin's Election Speech

## part II

I. How would you expect government officials of the United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Union to react to this speech? Consider, in particular, his World War II allies, President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill. Why would you expect these reactions?

II. We tend to think of the Soviet Union as a quite closed society, but the international press covered this speech. Read the *Washington Post's* "Stalin Blames Capitalism for 2 Wars," and consider

--How does the *Post* summarize Stalin's speech?

--What is the point of view (audience, background, purpose, beliefs, motivation, position, etc.) of the *Post*?

--Can we presume that the views of the *Post* represent those of US government officials? Of US citizens? Why or why not?

**Context:** American officials in the US Embassy in Moscow, however, heard, translated, and analyzed it. George F. Kennan was a career foreign service officer in the US Department of State and a highly regarded student of Russian and Soviet affairs. Early in 1946, while serving at the American Embassy in Moscow, he sent a lengthy message to Washington, providing his own expert analysis of Soviet behavior. Placing Soviet expansionism squarely within the context of traditional Russian suspicion and insecurity, he argued that the USSR could not be fully trusted or reasoned with by the West, and must instead be treated with firm resistance and strength. This “Long Telegram” made a deep impression on Kennan’s superiors and helped to shape their thinking about US foreign policy. Later that year, Kennan was encouraged to submit an article for publication based on this telegram; it was published in Foreign Affairs in July 1947, signed “X.”

**Guiding Questions:**

- Consider the point of view of Kennan (audience, background, purpose, beliefs, motivation, position, etc.) in writing this telegram.
  
- According to Kennan, what are the main principles of Communist ideology?
  
- According to Kennan, what were the main reasons for Soviet hostility toward the West?
  
- Why did Kennan believe that the Soviet leaders could never fully be trusted by the West?
  
- How did Kennan recommend that the West should counter Soviet expansion?
  
- Why did Kennan caution Western leaders to avoid gestures of outward “toughness” toward the USSR?
  
- What did Kennan think was US policy’s role in the breakup or mellowing of Soviet power?
  
- What words or phrases did Kennan use which increased the inflammatory nature of his telegram?

I. How would you expect government officials and private citizens of the United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Union to react to this telegram, and later to the Foreign Affairs article? Why?

II. Kennan's treatise was later edited, declassified, and published in Foreign Affairs in July 1946.

A. What do you think prompted President Truman and the Department of State to make Kennan's concerns available to the general public?

B. How do you think the public reacted in the US? Great Britain? USSR? Why?

**Context:** In February 1946, several weeks after Stalin’s election speech, former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill visited the United States. Increasingly concerned over Soviet behavior, he confided his fears in President Truman. The two men decided that Churchill should deliver a major address in Fulton, Missouri (Truman’s home state), to alert the world to the Soviet threat. That candid speech, in which Churchill used the term “iron curtain” to describe the barrier Moscow had placed between the West and the communist-dominated nations of Eastern Europe, startled many Americans and infuriated Stalin. Churchill issued a ringing call for the continuation of Anglo-American wartime cooperation, this time against a Soviet Union he viewed as bent on world domination. The address made headlines throughout the world.

**Guiding Questions:**

- Consider the point of view of Churchill (audience, background, purpose, beliefs, motivation, position, etc.) in making this speech.
  
- What evidence did Churchill give of Soviet expansionism? What events convinced him that Anglo-American cooperation must be preserved after World War II?
  
- If Churchill recognized “the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers,” why did he object so strongly to what the Russians were doing in Eastern Europe?
  
- Why did Churchill assert that “the old doctrine of the balance of power is unsound”? With what did he propose to replace it?
  
- Since Churchill was no longer Prime Minister, why did his speech have such a powerful impact?
  
- What words and phrases did Churchill use which made his speech so inflammatory?

## Worksheet 4: “Churchill’s Sinews of Peace” Speech

## part II

How would you expect government officials and private citizens of the United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Union to react to this speech? Why?

Next, look at the headlines and other materials related to this speech. How did the governments and private citizens actually react? Why?



**Context:** Stalin's reaction to the "iron curtain" speech was vigorous and direct. In an interview in the Soviet newspaper Pravda, published in mid-March 1946, he characterized the former British Prime Minister as a man bent on war against the Soviet Union. He defended Soviet actions in Eastern Europe, pointing out the importance of that region for Soviet security and insisting that the governments there were democratic. Considering it unlikely that Truman would have appeared on the platform with Churchill had he disagreed with the latter's remarks, Stalin also asserted that the Americans and British were banding together against their former wartime allies.

**Guiding Questions:**

- Consider the point of view of Stalin (audience, background, medium, purpose, beliefs, motivation, position, etc.) in giving this interview.
  
- Was Stalin's accusation that Churchill's speech reflected Anglo-American racism justified? Why/not?
  
- Why did Stalin consider Churchill's list of "iron curtain" cities inaccurate?
  
- How did Stalin explain the Soviet presence, physical or otherwise, in many Eastern European countries? How did he explain the growth of communist parties in those countries?
  
- Why did Stalin contend that Churchill had no legitimate basis for criticizing recent developments in Poland?
  
- What words or phrases did Stalin use which made his interview more inflammatory?

How would you expect government officials and private citizens of the United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Union to react to this interview? Why?

Next, look at the headlines and other materials related to this interview. How did the governments actually react? Why?  
See Appendix C

**Worksheet 6: Questions on Churchill's "The Darkening International Scene," New York City, March 15, 1946**

1. What is Churchill's purpose in giving this speech? Who is his audience? In what ways have these factors altered the content and tone of his speech?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Has Churchill's analysis changed? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. In his third paragraph, Churchill mentions that the world situation has changed greatly since his speech in Fulton, Missouri. What has happened? (See Worksheet 1: Europe in Context) Why have these events happened?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. One troubling situation existed in Iran—what was happening there? What did Churchill suggest would improve it?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Churchill praises the Soviet effort in World War II and notes that it was amply rewarded. What did The Soviet Union gain in the settlement agreements?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Despite this, there remained tensions in the Dardanelles—what was happening there? How does Churchill propose that this problem will be resolved?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What does Churchill foresee, generally, as the role of the United Nations Security Council?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Read the news excerpts in Appendix D—how have the speeches and articles of these few weeks in history altered how people view the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union?



## Appendix A

### THE DARKENING INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Winston S. Churchill

March 15, 1946 • Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York

*Churchill's Fulton speech had aroused a storm. Pravda had denounced him and accused him of trying to destroy the United Nations; Stalin had declared that Churchill called for war against the Soviet Union; in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Attlee pointedly declined comment on "a speech delivered in another country by a private individual." Meanwhile, the continued presence of Russian troops in Iran was the subject of an appeal by the Iranian Government to the U.N. Security Council. Churchill was unrepentant, and in this speech he set out to clarify his position.*

When I spoke at Fulton ten days ago I felt it was necessary for someone in an unofficial position to speak in arresting terms about the present plight of the world. I do not wish to withdraw or modify a single word. I was invited to give my counsel freely in this free country and I am sure that the hope which I expressed for the increasing association of our two countries will come to pass, not because of any speech which may be made, but because of the tides that flow in human affairs and in the course of the unfolding destiny of the world. The only question which in my opinion is open is whether the necessary harmony of thought and action between the American and British peoples will be reached in a sufficiently plain and clear manner and in good time to prevent a new world struggle or whether it will come about, as it has done before, only in the course of that struggle.

I remain convinced that this question will win a favourable answer. I do not believe that war is inevitable or imminent. I do not believe that the rulers of Russia wish for war at the present time. I am sure that if we stand together calmly and resolutely in defence of those ideals and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, we shall find ourselves sustained by the overwhelming assent of the peoples of the world, and that, fortified by this ever-growing moral authority, the cause of peace and freedom will come safely through and we shall be able to go on with the noble work in which the United States has a glorious primacy of averting of averting famine, of healing the awful wounds of Hitler's war and rebuilding the scarred and shattered structure of human civilisation. Let me declare, however, that the progress and freedom of all the peoples of the world under a reign of law enforced by a World Organisation, will not come to pass, nor will the age of plenty begin, without the persistent, faithful, and above all fearless exertions of the British and American systems of society.

In the last ten days the situation has greatly changed as the result of decisions which must have been taken some time ago. Instead of a calm discussion of broad and long-term tendencies we now find ourselves in the presence of swiftly moving events which no one can measure at the moment. I may be called upon to speak about the new situation when I get back home.

There are however a few things I am bound to say to-night lest a good cause should suffer by default. If any words that I have spoken have commanded attention, that is only because they find an echo in the breasts of those of every land and race who love freedom and are the foes of tyranny. I certainly will not allow anything said by others to weaken my regard and admiration for the Russian people or my earnest desire that Russia should be safe and prosperous and should take an honoured place in the van of the World Organisation. Whether she will do so or not depends only on the decisions taken by the handful of able men who, under their renowned chief, hold all the 180 million Russians, and many more millions outside Russia, in their grip. We all remember what frightful losses Russia suffered in the Hitlerite invasion and how she survived and emerged triumphant from injuries greater than have ever been inflicted on any other community. There is deep and widespread sympathy throughout the English-speaking world for the people of Russia and an absolute readiness to work with them on fair and even terms to repair the ruin of the war in every country. If the Soviet Government does not take advantage of this sentiment, if on the contrary they discourage it, the responsibility will be entirely theirs.

There is for instance a very good way in which they could brush aside any speeches which they dislike. It is a way which is open to them now in the next fortnight. The British Government of which I was the head, signed a treaty with Russia and with Persia solemnly undertaking to respect the integrity and sovereignty of Persia and to evacuate that country by a certain date. This treaty was reaffirmed at Teheran by the Tri-partite Agreement signed by the Head of the Soviet Government, by the late President Roosevelt and by me. In fulfilment of this Agreement the United States and the British have already left that country. But we are told that the Soviet Government instead of leaving, are actually sending in more troops. Now this is one of those cases for which the United Nations Security Council was especially devised, and I am very glad to read in the newspapers that the Soviet representatives will attend the meeting of the Security Council which is to take place in New York on 25 March. By all means let the matter be thrashed out there and let respect be shown even by the greatest or more deeply-interested powers, to the conclusions of the Security Council. In this way the reign of world law and the international foundations of enduring peace would be immeasurably consolidated.

There is no reason why Soviet Russia should feel ill-rewarded for her efforts in the war. If her losses have been grievous, her gains have been magnificent. Her two tremendous antagonists, Germany and Japan, have been laid low. Japan was overthrown almost entirely by American arms. Russia recovered almost without striking a blow all that she lost to Japan forty years ago. In the west the Baltic states and a large part of Finland have been reincorporated in Russia. The Curzon Line is no longer questioned. Then we come to the Straits of the Dardanelles. I welcome the Russian flag on Russian ships on the high seas and oceans. I have always told our Soviet allies that Great Britain would support the revision of the Montreux Convention about the Straits. At Potsdam the Americans and British offered to Russia a joint guarantee of the complete freedom of the Straits in peace and war, whether for merchant ships or ships of war. To this guarantee Turkey would gladly have subscribed. But we were told that that was not enough. Russia must have a fortress inside the Straits, from which she could dominate Constantinople. But this is not to keep the Straits open but to give the power of closing them to a single nation. This is out of harmony with the principle urged by the United States representatives of the freedom of the great waterways of Europe, the Danube, the Rhine and other rivers, which run through many countries. At any rate, there was the offer and I have no doubt it is still open, and if Soviet Russia still persists in putting pressure on Turkey, the matter must in the first instance be pronounced upon by the United Nations Security Council. Thus early will come a very great test for the World Organisation on which so many hopes are founded.

It has been frequently observed in the last few days that there is a great measure of misunderstanding. I entirely agree with that. Could you have a greater example of misunderstanding than when we are told that the present British Government is not a free democratic government because it consists only of the representatives of a single party, whereas Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and other countries have the representatives of several parties in their governments. But this also applies to the United States, where one party is in office and wields the executive power. All this argument overlooks the fact that democratic governments are based on free elections. The people choose freely and fairly the party they wish to have in office. They have every right to criticise that party, or the government based upon it and can change it by constitutional processes at any time they like or at frequent intervals. It can hardly be called a democratic election where the candidates of only one party are allowed to appear and where the voter has not even the secrecy of the ballot to protect him. These misunderstandings will be swept away if we get through the present difficult period safely and if the British, American and Russian peoples are allowed to mingle freely with one another and see how things are done in their respective countries. No doubt we all have much to learn from one another. I rejoice to read in the newspapers that there never were more Russian ships in New York harbour than there are to-night. I am sure you will give the Russian sailors a hearty welcome to the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Now I turn to the other part of my message - the relations between Great Britain and the United States. On these the life and freedom of the world depend. Unless they work together, in full loyalty to the Charter, the organisation of the United Nations will cease to have any reality. No one will be able to put his trust in it and

the world will be left to the clash of nationalisms which have led us to two frightful wars. I have never asked for an Anglo-American military alliance or a treaty. I asked for something different and in a sense I asked for something more. I asked for fraternal association, free, voluntary, fraternal association. I have no doubt that it will come to pass, as surely as the sun will rise to-morrow. But you do not need a treaty to express the natural affinities and friendships which arise in a fraternal association. On the other hand, it would be wrong that the fact should be concealed or ignored. Nothing can prevent our nations drawing ever closer to one another and nothing can obscure the fact that, in their harmonious companionship, lies the main hope of a world instrument for maintaining peace on earth and goodwill to all men.

I thank you all profoundly for all your gracious kindness and hospitality to me during this visit I have paid to your shores. Mine is not the first voice raised within your spacious bounds in the cause of freedom and of peace. Nor will it be the last that will be encouraged by the broad tolerance of the American people. I come to you at a time when the United States stands at the highest point of majesty and power ever attained by any community since the fall of the Roman Empire. This imposes upon the American people a duty which cannot be rejected. With opportunities comes responsibility. Strength is granted to us all when we are needed to serve great causes. We in the British Commonwealth will stand at your side in powerful and faithful friendship, and in accordance with the World Charter, and together I am sure we shall succeed in lifting from the face of man the curse of war and the darker curse of tyranny. Thus will be opened ever more broadly to the anxious toiling millions the gateways of happiness and freedom.

## Appendix B

### British Newspaper Headlines: “The Sinews of Peace”

#### **EAGER AMERICAN AUDIENCE INTEREST IN TWO ALLIES RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA**

**From Our Own Correspondent**

... Mr. Churchill spoke to the students of a little college but spoke also to a national audience eager to hear him, and the more eager since there is growing everywhere the feeling that, whatever else it be, the Soviet State relies upon and practises conspiratorial methods in its dealings with others. It is toward this that developments have been heading for some time past, with all it may imply; and there can no longer be the slightest doubt that in the vast majority of Mr. Churchill's American audience the feeling is hardening to conviction. . . .

*The Times* (London), 6 March 1946

#### **The Voice of Churchill**

... For years before the recent conflict Winston Churchill's voice was uplifted in warning, admonition, ever preaching the then uncomfortable and little-regarded doctrine: Arm and Unite, within the framework of the League of Nations, to preserve peace and ward off aggression. His warnings were unheeded. . . . Now if Churchill utters words of warning, they have nothing of aggression or war-mongering about them. They are a call to strengthen Anglo-American comradeship, within the framework of the United Nations . . .

*The Evening News* (London), 6 March 1946

#### **Reactions to the Churchill Plan**

As was to be expected, Mr. Churchill's speech advocating an Anglo-United States alliance as the surest safeguard of peace, has met with a mixed reception. Early comment from Canada and Australia seems to have been warmly favourable. . . . The dominions, by reason of their geographic situation, tend to think . . . in terms of world strategy: and they see . . . what . . . a joint use of all naval and air bases . . . throughout the world, would mean in the atomic age.

American opinion, very naturally, is more reserved, though the responsible “New York Times” recognizes that the United States and Britain are governed by a common destiny which brought them together in two world wars and would inevitably do so in any future war. American hesitations, it would seem, arise principally from the fear that an alliance would tie the United States too closely to British foreign and colonial policies.

*The Yorkshire Post*, 7 March 1946

#### **BRITAIN AND AMERICA IN PEACE MR. CHURCHILL APPEALS FOR “SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP” SUREST BASIS OF EFFECTIVE UNO SOVIET “IRON CURTAIN” IN EUROPE**

... So far from being inconsistent with the overriding loyalty to a world organization, this was probably the only means by which the organization could achieve full stature . . . It would be wrong, however, to entrust the secret knowledge or experience of the atomic bomb to a world organization still in its infancy.

*The Telegraph* (London)



## Appendix C

### American Newspaper Headlines: “The Sinews of Peace”

#### **Mr. Churchill’s Address Calling For United Effort for World Peace**

New York Times, 6 March 1946. The full text of the speech was printed under this headline.

#### **CONGRESS SPLITS ON CHURCHILL PLEA**

##### **Senators Pepper, Kilgore and Taylor Hit It as ‘Shocking’ — Others Call It Realistic**

WASHINGTON, March 6 — Three Senators called Winston Churchill’s speech “shocking” today, while other Congressmen discussed it pro and con, sometimes with considerable heat. . . .

“Mr. Churchill’s proposal would cut the throat of the United Nations Organization. It would destroy the unity of the Big Three, without which the war could not have been won and without which the peace cannot be saved.” . . .the speech should warn the American people against “those would-be political statesmen in our country who are the counterpart to the Chamberlain-Churchill-Tory spokesman of Great Britain and not let these American Tories lead us into another war.” . . .

Representative Colmar of Mississippi call Mr. Churchill’s address “a great speech by a great man — a realistic speech by a realistic man.”

Representative McCormack of Massachusetts issued a statement asserting that Russia “is going out of its way openly to attack religion in an effort to divide the religions of the Western World.” He declared that Moscow “has been unwilling to date to cooperate for world peace,” . . .

Representative Smith of Ohio asserted that “an outright military alliance between the United States and Great Britain would mean a third World War with the United States carrying the burden . . .

Representative Ellis of West Virginia saw the speech as “a build-up” for the British loan.

Representative Voorhis of California told the House that he regretted “the implication that the United States and Britain are the only civilized nations in the world.” . . .

## **Appendix D**

# **American Newspaper Headlines Regarding Churchill's New York Speech**

### **Acheson, Pleading Urgent Matters, Won't Speak at Churchill Dinner**

Dean Acheson, Under-Secretary of State, . . . abruptly canceled yesterday his plans to attend . . . no official representative of the United States Government will now speak . . . Mr. Churchill expects to deliver a thirty-minute address that he is confident will be a subject of world-wide interest . . . led to speculation that possibly the Administration was reluctant to be linked. . .  
By Frank S. Adams, The New York Times, p.1, March 15, 1935

### **World News Summarized Friday, March 15**

Unless Russia settles her differences with Iran . . . the matter will be presented to the UNO Security Council . . . Tass, the official Soviet news agency, broadcast an "authorized statement that word of Russian troop movements in Iran "does not correspond to facts" . . . the State Department continued to receive information contradicting Tass. . . .  
The Red Army in Iran, reliably reported to number 60,000, twice the former figure, was reported to have swung west toward Turkey.

### **BEVIN RENEWS BID FOR 50-YEAR PACT Asks Soviet Friendship, End to Aggression by Propaganda — Disowns Churchill Speech**

LONDON, March 16 —Undismayed by Premier Stalin's attack in Pravda, Soviet Communist party newspaper, or by Russian actions in Iran, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin renewed tonight his offer to extend the Soviet-British treaty of alliance from twenty to fifty years and rejected all responsibility for Winston Churchill's speech in Fulton, Mo., advocating a fraternal association of power of the English-speaking countries. . . .  
Mr. Bevin declared that the different philosophies of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union would adjust themselves in time if the nations were patient and not dogmatic about them. . . .  
No one here doubts that Russian troops are moving in Northern Iran, but where . . . and their purpose . . . no one knows. This strengthens the wide-spread belief here that it is part of a war of nerves to intimidate Teheran, Iraq and Turkey. . . .  
Izvestia's attack on Iran for granting oil concessions to Britain but not to the Soviet Union is taken seriously — not because it is a correct statement of facts, which it is not, but because it shows a trend that can mean trouble.  
By Herbert L. Matthews By Wireless to the New York Times

### **BRITAIN IS SHAKEN BY RUSSIA'S MOVES**

#### **Pravda Attack Seen Lining UP World Reds—Attlee Declines to Comment on Churchill**

LONDON, March 11—Pravda's assault on Winston Churchill for his speech at Fulton, Mo., provided the main story for London newspapers today. In the House of Commons the dissident left wing of the Labor party pitched into the Government in criticism of Mr. Churchill, trying to get Prime Minister Attlee to repudiate what the former Prime Minister had said, but all Mr. Attlee had to do was take refuge in the obvious reply that Mr. Churchill had spoken as a private citizen.  
By Herbert L. Matthews By Wireless to the New York Times