

Origins of the Cold War

Yalta Conference

The Yalta Conference took place in February 1945. World leaders met to discuss post-war Europe. The main leaders were Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin. They agreed to divide Germany into four zones. Each zone would be controlled by one of the Allies. The leaders also planned for the United Nations to keep peace. However, tensions began to grow over Eastern Europe. Stalin wanted to control more countries in the region.

Potsdam Conference

The Potsdam Conference happened in July-August 1945. This meeting included Truman, Churchill, and Stalin. They discussed how to implement the decisions made at Yalta. The leaders were concerned about the spread of communism. Truman did not trust Stalin after Yalta. The atmosphere was tense and disagreements increased. Truman's strong stance on democracy worried Stalin. They could not reach an agreement on future elections in Eastern Europe.

Impact of the Conferences

These conferences set the stage for the Cold War. They highlighted the differences between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The lack of trust led to a divided Europe. Eastern Europe became communist, while Western Europe leaned towards democracy. The conflicts from Yalta and Potsdam fueled a rivalry that lasted decades. This rivalry formed the basis of the Cold War.