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## BACKGROUND BRIEFING—SOVIET UNION

The Soviet people suffered terribly during the last war. More than twenty million of our citizens perished in the battle against fascist aggression. Our total battlefield and civilian losses exceeded the combined losses of all the other Allied powers. Our country was devastated by more than three years of Nazi occupation. Our agricultural heartland was crippled and much of our industrial structure was destroyed.

Led by Marshal Stalin and guided by the wisdom of the Communist Party, the peoples of the Soviet republics, with their courage and blood, crushed the Third Reich. This victory demonstrated the strength and superiority of our Soviet system, which confronted the full might of the combined fascist armies while the Western Allies delayed their promised second front for two years. Despite the high price that we paid for victory over Germany, we fulfilled promptly our promise to enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany's surrender. This promise had been made to the British and Americans, who knew that they could not bear the cost of defeating Japan themselves. The overwhelming blows that our armies delivered to the forces of Japan in Manchuria brought a quick and unconditional surrender. By paying one of the highest prices in history, the Soviet Union has earned the right to postwar peace and security.

Never again will Russia be vulnerable to attack from the west. Our security requires that those countries in eastern Europe which lie between the Soviet Union and potential aggressors be ruled by governments friendly to the Soviet Union. The prewar situation in which many of these countries were pro-fascist and anti-Soviet cannot recur. Specifically, Poland must not allow the prewar clique of right-wing, anti-Russian politicians to regain control. These same hate-mongers launched an unprovoked attack upon the Soviet Union shortly after World War I. In addition, Poland was the country through which the German invasion of 1941 took place. The lies that elements of the reactionary prewar government have been spreading about alleged Soviet atrocities are

slandorous to the Red Army and to the progressive, democratic national forces that now lead these countries.

The capitalist powers in the West have indicated their hostility to the Soviet Union many times. Their joint military intervention in 1918-1920; their attempt to isolate the Soviet Union in the 1920s; and their infamous deal with Hitler at Munich in 1938 all reveal the hatred of the ruling capitalist cliques in the West for the Soviet system. The capitalists' struggle is made more desperate by the realization that their contradiction-filled capitalist world is decaying and will inevitably be replaced by a more progressive, socialistic system. Already, within several Western countries, such as France, Italy, and Greece, large numbers of working people have turned to the Communist Party for leadership.

Because of its major role in the defeat of Japan, the Soviet Union was entitled to share in the postwar occupation and governing of Japan, just as the Soviet Union agreed to share the occupation and governing of postwar Germany with the three Western powers. The denial by the United States and Great Britain of this legitimate request and the refusal of the Americans and British to share the occupation of Italy with the forces of the Soviet Union indicate the desire of these countries to reserve for themselves positions of political and economic dominance in these areas. The desperate quest of imperialistic capitalism to control overseas markets has turned much of the world into private spheres of influence. Just as World War I was caused by the rivalry of the capitalist powers for spheres of influence, foreign markets, and military superiority, so this dangerous trend threatens the peace of the world today.

Shortly before the end of the last war, we requested an extension of credits from the United States to assist us in the rebuilding of our war-damaged country. As the nation that had suffered the most from the war and paid the highest price for victory, the Soviet people thought it reasonable that those nations that had also profited from the victory assist in this task. Also, U.S. officials had indicated that such cred-

its—allowing us to purchase American goods—would help the American economy deal with the postwar problems of overproduction. The abrupt cancellation of Lend-Lease shipments and the rude manner in which our loan request was handled has forced the Soviet Union to rely upon its own resources to rebuild the country. Just as the Soviet people made sacrifices during the 1920s and 1930s to industrialize our backward nation, so will the workers of the Soviet Union gladly respond to our government's call for another Five-Year Plan requiring the postponement of individual needs for the greater good of the Socialist Fatherland.

The efforts of discredited representatives of the war-mongering capitalist cliques, such as Mr. Churchill, to stir up trouble between the former war-time allies must be resisted. Mr. Churchill, who has been turned out of office by the British people, has called for an alliance of British and U.S. power to deny the Soviet people their reasonable and hard-won post-

war needs. We can only hope that more realistic and sober-minded leaders—in the tradition of President Roosevelt—will overcome these dangerous tendencies among our former allies. Similar efforts in the United Nations Organization to construct an anti-Soviet coalition consisting of the capitalist states, their colonies, and their clients have been checked only by the veto that the Soviet Union possesses to protect its vital interests.

Let all nations understand that the Soviet Union will not be intimidated by the United States' build-up of atomic weapons. We will never submit to atomic blackmail and will do everything necessary to achieve a balance of military power.

The peoples of the Soviet Union and their government desire peace, not war; economic justice, not exploitation; and security, not conquest. After defeating the forces of fascist aggression, we hope to preserve the spirit of international cooperation that made victory possible.

### **FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD**

*Excerpts from a speech by General Secretary Josef Stalin, February 9, 1946*

"It would be incorrect to think that the war arose accidentally or as a result of the fault of some of the statesmen. Although these faults did exist, the war arose in reality as the inevitable result of the development of the world economic and political forces on the basis of monopoly capitalism. Our Marxists declare that the capitalist system of world economy conceals elements of crisis and war, that the development of world capitalism does not follow a steady and even course forward, but proceeds through crises and catastrophes. The uneven development of the capitalist countries leads in time to sharp disturbances in their relations and the group of countries which consider themselves inadequately provided with raw materials and export markets try usually to change this situation and to change the position in their favor by means of armed force.... Thus, as a result of the first crisis in the development of the capitalist world economy, arose the First World War. The Second World War arose as a result of the second crisis.

"Now victory means, first of all, that our Soviet social system has won, that the Soviet social system has successfully stood the test in the fire of war and has proved its complete vitality.... The war has shown that the Soviet social system is a truly popular system, issued from the depths of the people and enjoying its mighty support.... The war has shown that the Soviet multinational state system has successfully stood the test, has grown still stronger during the war and has proved a completely vital state system.... Our victory implies that it was the Soviet armed forces that won. Our Red Army had won. The Red Army heroically withstood all the adversities of the war, routed completely the armies of our enemies and emerged victoriously from the war....

"In our country the Communist Party reversed the usual path of industrialization and began the industrialization of our country with the development of heavy industry. This was very hard but not impossible to achieve.... It was necessary to make large-scale agricultural economy a collectivist one.... There can be no doubt that only thanks to this firmness and grit did the Communist Party come out on

top, not only in industrialization but in the collectivization of agriculture as well.... A few words on the plans for the work of the Communist Party in the near future.... The fundamental task of the new Five-Year Plan consists in restoring the areas of the country which have suffered, restoring the prewar level in industry and agriculture, and then exceeding this level by more or less considerable amounts.... The party intends to organize a new mighty upsurge of national economy, which will enable us to increase the level of our production, for instance, threefold as compared with the prewar level.... Only under such conditions will our country be insured against any eventuality."

*Excerpts from an interview with General Secretary Josef Stalin, March 14, 1946*

"I assess it [Churchill's speech at Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946] as a dangerous act calculated to sow the seed of discord among the Allied governments and hamper their cooperation.... One is reminded remarkably of Hitler and his friends. Hitler began to set war loose by announcing his racial theory, declaring that only people speaking the German language represent a fully valuable nation. Mr. Churchill begins to set war loose also by a racial theory, maintaining that only nations speaking the English language are fully valuable nations, called upon to decide the destinies of the entire world.... Nations have shed their blood during five years of cruel war for the sake of liberty and the independence of their countries, and not for the sake of exchanging the lordship of Hitler for the lordship of Churchill. It is, therefore, highly probable that the nations not speaking English and which, however, make up an enormous majority of the world's population, will not consent to go into new slavery....

"One cannot forget the following fact: the Germans carried out an invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The Germans were able to carry out the invasion through these countries by reason of the fact that these countries had governments inimical to the Soviet Union.... The Soviet Union has lost in men several times more than Britain and the United States together.... What can be surprising in the fact that the Soviet Union, in a desire to ensure its security for the future, tries to achieve that these countries should have governments whose relations to the Soviet Union are loyal? How can one, without having lost one's reason, qualify these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as "expansionistic tendencies" of our government?... Contemporary democratic Poland is led by outstanding men. They have shown in deeds that they know how to defend the interests and worth of their homeland, as their predecessors failed to do.... Former enmity between Poland and Russia has given place to friendship between them, and Poland, present democratic Poland, does not wish any longer to be a playing ball in the hands of foreigners....

"Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Hungary are governed by several parties...the opposition, if it is loyal, is guaranteed the right to participate in the government. This, Churchill calls totalitarian and the government of police.... The growth of the influence of communism cannot be considered accidental. It is a normal function. The influence of the communists grew because during the hard years of the mastery of fascism in Europe, Communists showed themselves to be reliable, daring and self-sacrificing fighters against Fascist regimes for the liberty of peoples.... Millions of common people, having tried the Communists in the fire of the struggle and resistance to fascism, decided that the Communists deserve completely the confidence of the people. Thus grew the Communist's influence in Europe. Such is the law of historical development."