

The Cold War Problematic Situation at Yalta



STUDENT ACTIVITY

DIRECTIONS

In this activity, you are going to read about a situation that occurred at the conference at Yalta as though you were an advisor to President Roosevelt dealing with the issue of “spheres of influence” in post-World War II Europe.

1. Read “Spheres of Influence.”

Spheres of Influence

The year is 1945. You are on an advisory team for the ailing President Franklin D. Roosevelt as he attends a conference at Yalta in Russia. The United States and Great Britain (represented by Winston Churchill) are advocates of nations forming their own governments based on a democratic process once the war ends. You enter the conference with hope for a national German government. Soviet representative Joseph Stalin wants Germany to be permanently weakened so it would never be a threat to Russia again. After many months of work, the European Advisory Commission presents the members of the Yalta conference with protocols and documents calling for three zones of occupation in Germany and three sectors of occupation in Berlin. The USSR would have the eastern zone of Germany and the northeastern sector of Berlin. Great Britain would have the northwestern zone of Germany and the northwestern portion of Berlin. The United States would have the southwestern zone of Germany and the southern part of Berlin. Each zone would have a commander in chief who would exercise supreme authority over that zone. These commanders in chiefs could only be overruled by a unanimous decision of the Allied Control Council that would deal with matters affecting Germany as a whole. If this arrangement was confirmed, western Berlin would become an “island in a Soviet-occupied sea.”

2. Based on your knowledge of world events in 1945, and the fact that President Roosevelt thinks the United States needs Russia’s help to defeat Japan, what information would you need before presenting President Roosevelt with your recommendation?

3. Below, categorize your team's and the classes' questions into three categories.

Social Issues	Political/Military Issues	Economic Issues

4. After you have met in your expert groups and completed your research, write your advice to President Roosevelt in the space below. This advice should be based on the information found in your expert groups. Rationale, with as much evidence as possible, should be provided to support each point of the advice you give.