

Report of the Yalta (Crimea) Conference (February 4-11, 1945)

Abstract

When Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill met in Crimea for the Yalta Conference in early February 1945, it was clear that Germany's defeat was imminent. The conference reaffirmed the plan to divide Germany into three occupation zones, but the option of adding France as a fourth victorious power was left open. In addition, a package of measures to "destroy German militarism and Nazism" was agreed upon: it included the dissolution of the *Wehrmacht* and its high command, the dismantling of the German armaments industry (or the introduction of Allied control over it), trials for war criminals, and reparations, as well as the dissolution of the NSDAP and the eradication of Nazi elements in both state and society. It was also agreed that a reparations committee would be established to determine Germany's future payments.

Source

The following statement is made by the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the President of the United States of America, and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the results of the Crimea Conference:

I. The Defeat of Germany

We have considered and determined the military plans of the three Allied Powers for the final defeat of the common enemy. The military staffs of the three allied nations have met in daily meetings throughout the Conference. These meetings have been most satisfactory from every point of view and have resulted in closer co-ordination of the military effort of the three Allies than ever before. The fullest information has been interchanged. The timing, scope and co-ordination of new and even more powerful blows to be launched by our armies and air forces into the heart of Germany from East, West, North and South have been fully agreed and planned in detail.

Our combined military plans will be made known only as we execute them, but we believe that the very close working partnership among the three staffs attained at this Conference will result in shortening the war. Meetings of the three staffs will be continued in the future whenever the need arises.

Nazi Germany is doomed. The German people will only make the cost of their defeat heavier to themselves by attempting to continue a hopeless resistance.

II. The Occupation and Control of Germany

We have agreed on common policies and plans for enforcing the unconditional surrender terms which we shall impose together on Nazi Germany after German armed resistance has been finally crushed. These terms will not be made known until the final defeat of Germany has been accomplished.

Under the agreed plan, the forces of the Three Powers will each occupy a separate zone of Germany. Coordinated administration and control has been provided for under the plan through a central Control Commission consisting of the Supreme Commanders of the Three Powers with headquarters in Berlin.

It has been agreed that France should be invited by the Three Powers, if she should so desire, to take over a zone of occupation, and to participate as a fourth member of the Control Commission. The limits of the French zone will be agreed by the four Governments concerned through their representatives on the European Advisory Commission.

It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world. We are determined to disarm and disband all German armed forces; break up for all time the German General Staff that has repeatedly contrived the resurgence of German militarism; remove or destroy all German military equipment; eliminate or control all German industry that could be used for military production; bring all war criminals to justice and swift punishment and exact reparation in kind for the destruction wrought by Germans; wipe out the Nazi party, Nazi laws, organisations and institutions; remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people; and take in harmony such other measures in Germany as may be necessary to the future peace and safety of the world.

It is not our purpose to destroy the people of Germany, but only when Nazism and militarism have been extirpated, will there be hope for decent life for Germans, and a place for them in the comity of nations.

III. Reparation by Germany

We have considered the question of the damage caused by Germany to Allied Nations in this war and recognised it as just that Germany be obliged to make compensation for this damage in kind to the greatest extent possible. A Commission for the Compensation of Damage will be established. The Commission will be instructed to consider the question of the extent and methods for compensating damage caused by Germany to the Allied countries. The Commission will work in Moscow.

[...]

Winston S. Churchill

Franklin D. Roosevelt

J. V. Stalin

Source: Report of the Crimea (Yalta) Conference (February 4–11, 1945), Cmd. 6598; reprinted in Beata Ruhm von Oppen, ed., *Documents on Germany under Occupation, 1945–1954*. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1955, pp. 4–6.

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