U.S. DEFENSE POLICIES SINCE WORLD WAR II

Major world events and crises of the post-World War II (WWII) period were important benchmarks in the evolution of U.S. national security policies, international security and arms control agreements, bilateral and multilateral summits, and use of military force. However, over time the correlation of these world events with U.S. defense policies and U.S. decisionmakers can become confusing and out of sequence. The chart that follows attempts to overcome this problem by providing a chronological reference to the major world events and crises which shaped U.S. national security policies.

The original chart covered the period from the end of WWII through 1984 and was used in the courses of instruction at the U.S. Army War College and U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. With the end of the Cold War symbolized by the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the time was right to update the chart. It was updated through 1989 and again through 1993 by the ILW staff.

The Cold War had an East-West orientation with the major arena focused on Europe and the potential for a NATO-Warsaw Pact war and escalation possibly to a thermonuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. Events tended to be perceived through a common set of Cold War prisms. That period, as frightening as the prospects for mutual destruction were, is now regarded as far more ordered and predictable than the era going into the 21st century.

The world events of the post-Cold War era have extended into otherwise unfamiliar geographic areas. In place of a world war are the prospects of regional, ethnic wars where weapons of mass destruction — chemical, biological and nuclear — could come into play. The U.S. armed forces have been involved in a wide range of operations — peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance as well as warfighting — as the events recorded on the chart reflect.

This third update of the chart extends the timespan of major national security events through 1995.
### U.S. Defense

#### Atomic Deterrence (US Monopoly)
- Hiroshima
- Nagasaki
- V-J Day
- V-E Day
- British Note on Med
- Czech Coup
- Truman Doctrine

#### Rearmament
- 1ST MID-East War
- Berlin Blockade
- Truce
- US Attack on South
- US H-Bomb
- Stalin Dies
- Soviet A-Bomb

#### Perceived Bomber Gap
- Korean War
- Cold War

#### Perceived Missile Gap
- Sino-Soviet Split
- Chinese A-Bomb
- Cuban Missile Crisis
- Kennedy Assassination

#### Massive Retaliation
- "New Look" - Economic Retrenchment
- "Massive Retaliation"

#### Flexible Response
- Counterforce-Assured

#### Secretary of War

#### Truman
- Stimson
- Marshall
- Acheson
- Lovett
- UN Founded
- Marshall Plan
- NSC-20
- NSC-68
- Korean War
- Geneva Conf
- SEATO Treaty
- Anzus Treaty

#### Eisenhower
- Wilson
- NSC-162
- Ike Doctrine
- Mideast
- EEC Formed
- Reserves Mobilized

#### Kennedy
- McNamara
- Limited Test Ban Treaty
- Special Forces Emphasized
- EEC Formed

#### NATO Defense
- NATO Def Treaty
- Vandenburgh Resolution
- Rio Treaty