

The exhibition aims to give a quick but meaningful portrait of the role played by the USA in the history of the 20th and 21st century.

Going back in time, starting from the City of New York and its symbols like the World Trade Center or Wall Street, we have faced the Cold War and the Second World War, trying to be more aware of what has made and still makes the US the first international superpower.



Manhattan is the economic and cultural centre of the city. It is an island between the estuaries of the Hudson and East rivers. It is linked to the other parts of the city by tunnels and bridges, the most famous being Brooklyn Bridge.

In 1626 a Dutchman bought Manhattan Island for £24 and named the place New Amsterdam. The English took it in 1664 and renamed it New York.



The Statue of Liberty

Next to the flag, it's America's most famous symbol for freedom. It's in Hudson Bay, downtown, and ferries to go there leave from Battery Park Manhattan at this circular fortress called Castle Clinton.

Here is some history of the **Statue of Liberty**: located on Liberty Island in New York Harbour, the Statue of Liberty was a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States. The construction of the Statue began in France in the year 1875, by sculptor August Bartholdi, and it stood in Paris until it was dismantled in early 1885. The Statue of Liberty was dedicated on October 28, 1886 and was designated a National Monument in 1924. The Statue of Liberty is the most visited tourist attraction in New York City.

The statue is of a woman holding a lit flame, and is made of a sheeting of pure copper, hung on a framework of steel with the exception of the flame of the torch, which is coated in gold leaf. In the other hand the statue holds a tablet with the inscription of the date of the Independence Day. The statue is 305 feet (92.96 m) tall.

Little Italy is the most famous Italian quarter in the USA and it's in the southern part of Manhattan. From the half of the twentieth century, the Italian-Americans have begun to move to other city suburbs, more peripheral and from then the extension of Little Italy has been reduced. Every September, the **festivity of Saint Gennaro**, saint patron of Naples, takes place, and has the duration of approximately two weeks. The Chinese quarter has absorbed good part of what once was Little Italy.

Chinatown in New York City is one of the oldest quarters in Manhattan. Immigrants arrived in significant numbers in the New York area in the late 1870s. With anti-Chinese violence mounting in the West of the country, Chinese began creating Chinatown enclaves for protection and migrated eastward. The Chinese community began to take root. In 1882 the Exclusion Act was passed, making Chinese workers the first nationality to be prohibited from immigrating into the United States. The Exclusion Laws, not repealed until 1943 when China and the U.S. became allies in World War II, effectively prohibited Chinese labourers and their families from entering America. Discrimination forced immigrants into low-status service jobs in restaurants and hand laundries.

Ellis Island has had a unique history as an immigration station. Immigrants from all over the world funnelled through Ellis Island: Italians, Irish, Polish, British, and German immigrants are a few. Many had to leave famished countries and endure months of weary travel, often separated from their families for years. Over 40% of the American population can trace their ancestors to Ellis Island. More than 22 million people entered the United States through Ellis Island, landed here in their search of freedom of speech and religion, and for economic opportunity.

A Green Card is the official card issued by the US Immigration Service (USCIS) to foreign nationals granting them permanent residency in the USA. A Green Card allows you to live and work in the United States of America. It is officially called Form I-551, the Permanent Resident Card. Green Card holders are known as 'Lawful Permanent Residents' of the USA ('Immigrants').

The **Empire State Building** is a 102-story skyscraper in New York City. Its construction of the building itself started symbolically on March 17—St. Patrick's Day.

The building was officially opened on [May 1, 1931](#). The Empire State Building was the first building in the world to have more than 100 floors. It remained the tallest skyscraper in the world for 41 years. It was surpassed by the North Tower of the [World Trade Center](#) in 1972. With the destruction of the World Trade Center, the Empire State Building again became the tallest building in New York City. The American Society of Civil Engineers declared the Empire State Building as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

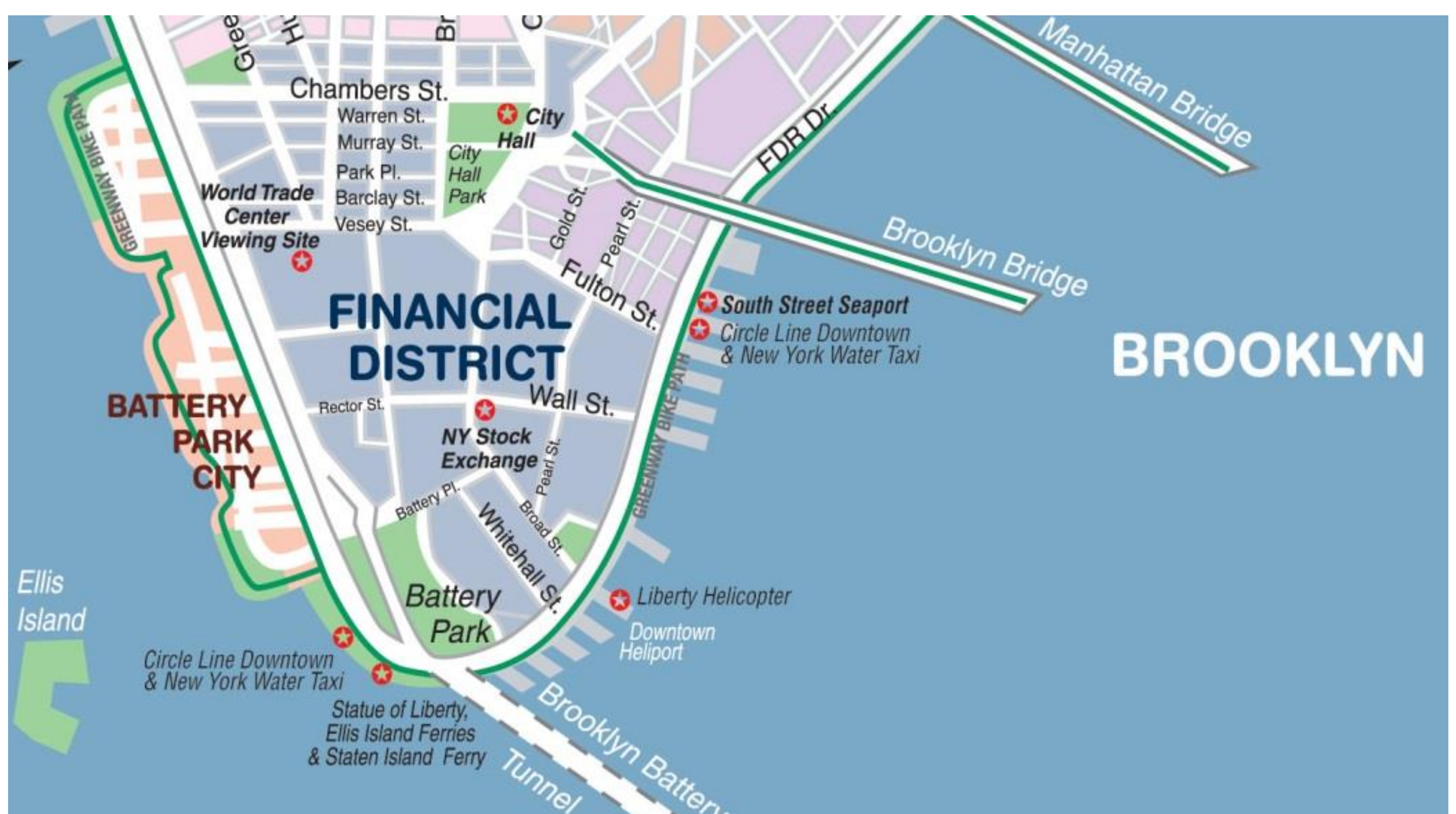
The ESB rises to 1,250 feet or 381 metres at the 102nd floor, and its full structural height (including broadcast antenna) reaches 1,472 feet or 448 metres.

The New York Stock Exchange traces its origins to 1792. As the 20th century dawned, the NYSE was firmly established as one of America's pre-eminent financial institutions.

The **Wall Street Crash of 1929**, also known as the **Crash of '29**, was the most devastating stock market crash in the history of the US. Three phrases (Black Thursday, Black Monday, Black Tuesday) are used to describe this collapse of stock values. The initial crash occurred on Black Thursday (October 24, 1929), but it was the catastrophic downturn of Black Monday and Tuesday (October 28 and October 29, 1929) that precipitated widespread panic. The collapse continued for a month.

The crash in America came near the beginning of the Great Depression, a period of economic decline in the industrialized nations, and led to the institution of landmark financial reforms and new trading regulations.

The Dow did not return to pre-1929 levels until late 1954.



July 23, 1892

CHINESE?

NO! NO! NO!

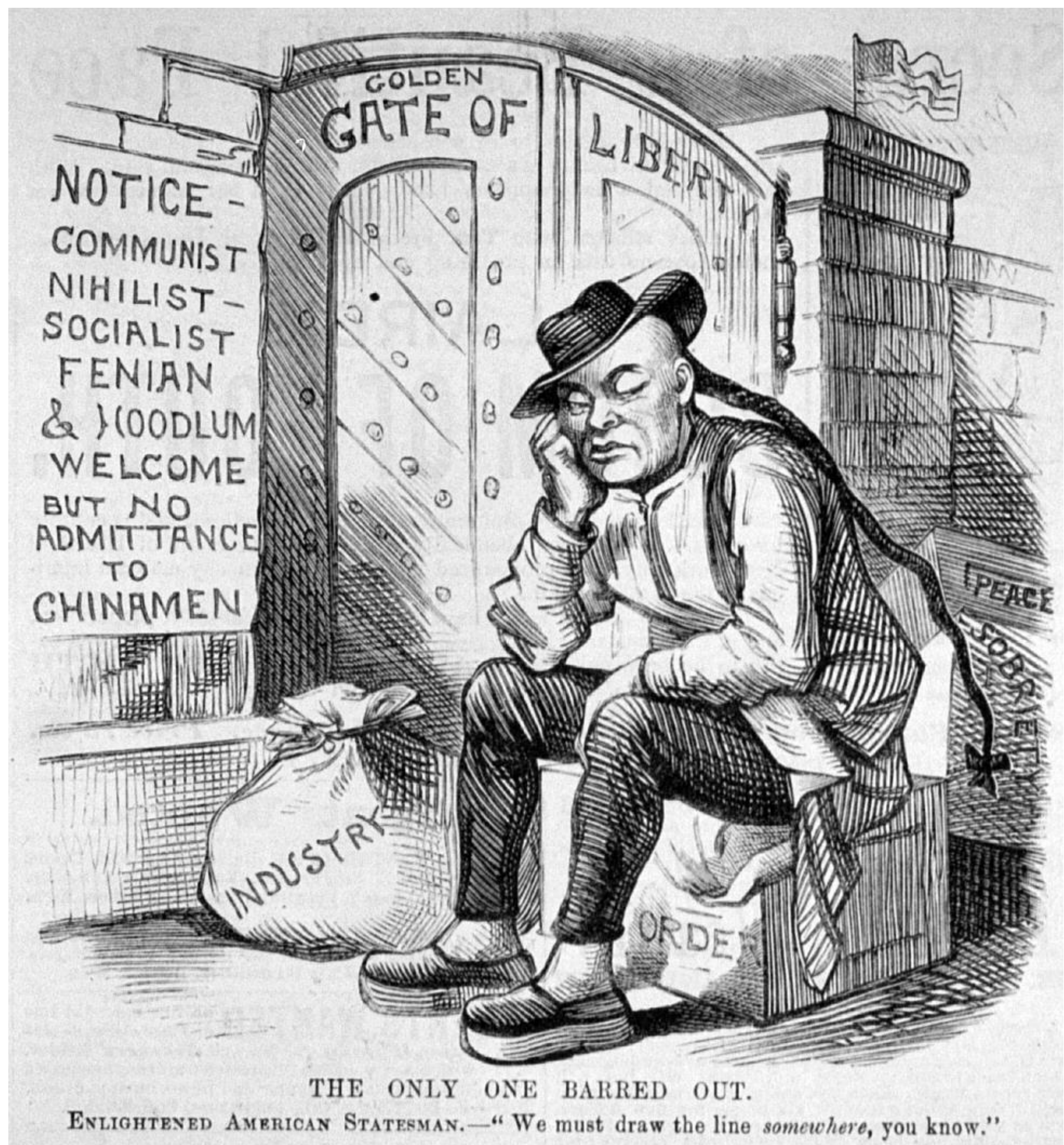
Come to 10th and A Streets at 7:30 Monday evening and express your opinion on the Chinese question.

SHALL WE HAVE

CHINESE

NO! NO! NO!

Image courtesy of the
Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma



Page Five CHINESE PRESS Friday, September 10, 1911

FOR JUSTICE—
For Chinese,
American Friendship

WRITE, WIRE
Your CONGRESSMAN Today
Asking Him To Support The

REPEAL of the CHINESE
EXCLUSION ACT!

Congress Conven's September 13th

On September 11, 2001, beginning at about 8:45 in the morning, a series of terrorist attacks destroyed the **Twin Towers** of the World Trade Center and damaged the Pentagon. At about 9:58, the South tower collapsed, followed by the North tower at 10:28.

Hijacked jetliners hit the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon outside Washington. A fourth hijacked plane crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. Trading on Wall Street was stopped. The Federal Aviation Administration halted all flight operations at the nation's airports for the first time in U.S. history. U.S. military was placed on high alert. Hundreds of New York City firemen and policemen sent to rescue WTC workers were lost when the WTC Twin Towers collapsed.

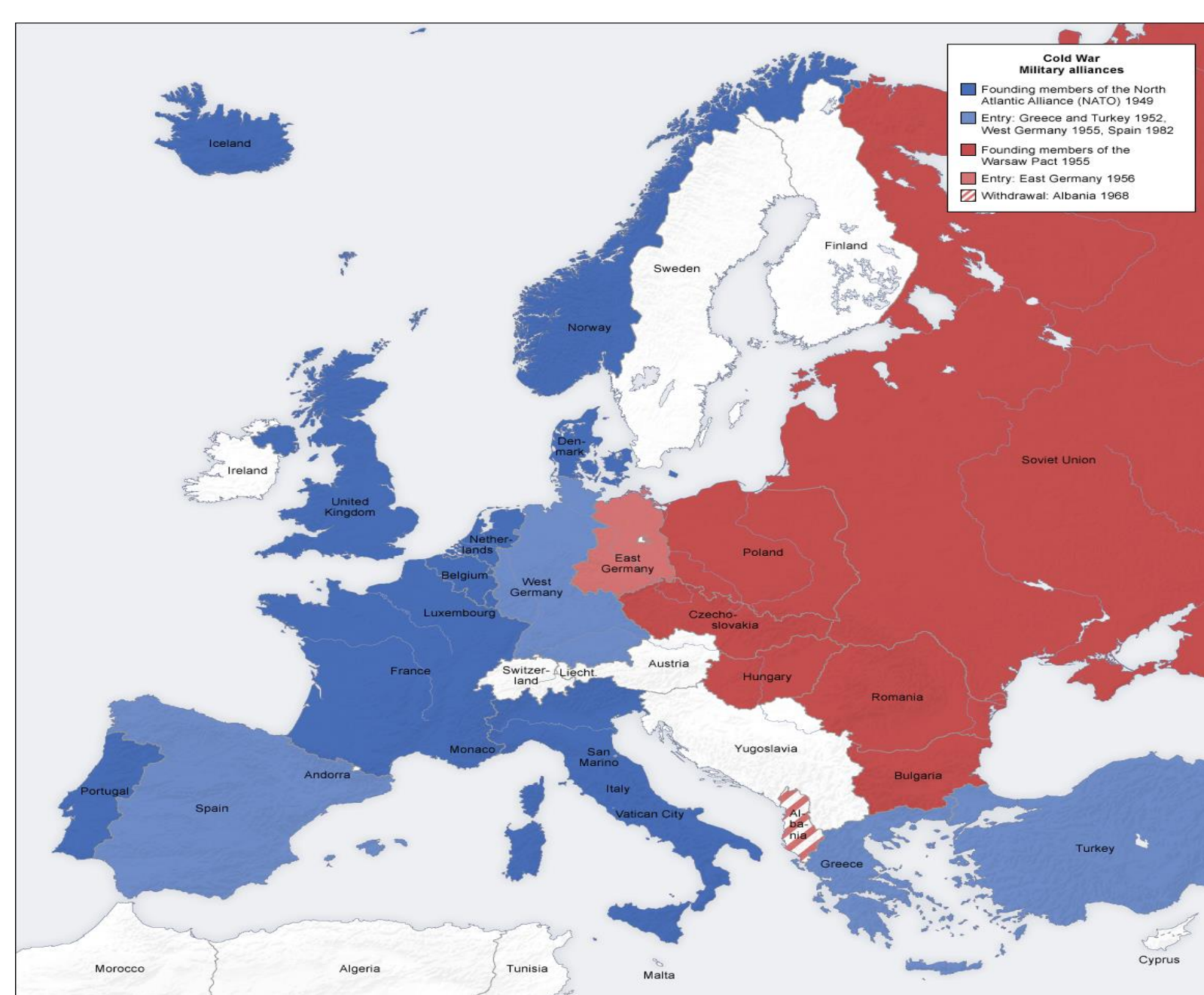
The north tower was opened in December 1970 and the south one in January 1972. they were dedicated in April 1973. they were the world's tallest buildings for only a short time, since the Sears Tower in Chicago was completed in May 1973.



Cold War

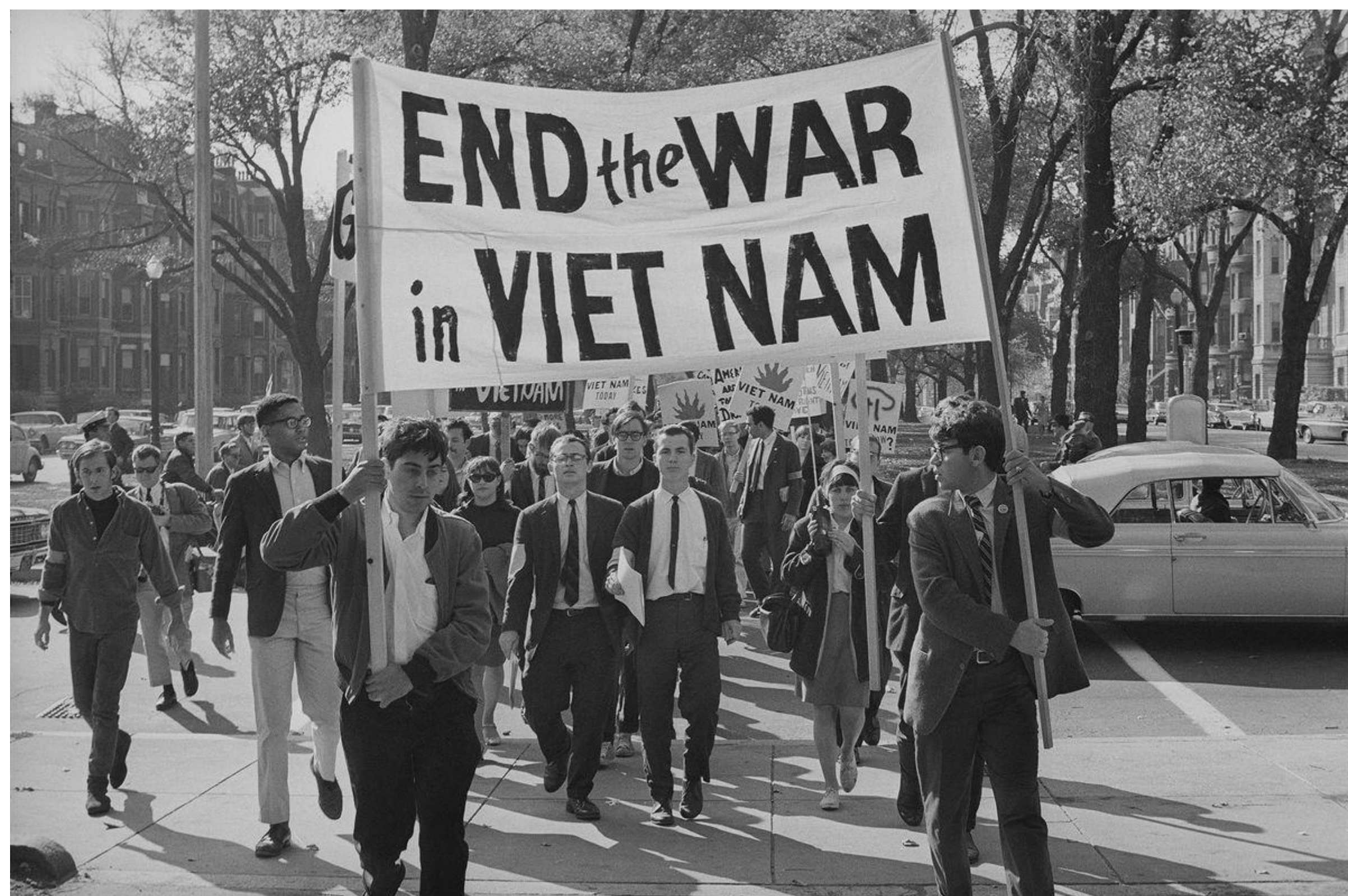
This term is used to describe the relationship between America and the Soviet Union 1945 to 1980. Neither side ever fought the other but they did 'fight' for their beliefs using **client states** who fought for their beliefs e.g. [South Vietnam](#) was anticommunist and was supplied by America during the war while North Vietnam was pro-Communist and fought the south (and the Americans) using weapons from communist Russia or communist China.

In [Afghanistan](#), the Americans supplied the rebel Afghans after the Soviet Union invaded in 1979.



The fight against subversion at home mirrored a growing concern with the Soviet threat abroad. In June 1950, the first military action of the Cold War began when the Soviet-backed North Korean People's Army invaded its pro-Western neighbor to the south. Many American officials feared this was the first step in a communist campaign to take over the world and deemed that nonintervention was not an option. Truman sent the American military into Korea, and the war ended in 1953 separating Korea into two different states.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in Vietnam, where the collapse of the French colonial regime had led to a struggle between the American-backed nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem in the south and the communist nationalist Ho Chi Minh in the north. Since the 1950s, the United States had been committed to the survival of an anticommunist government in the region. However, what was intended to be a brief military action spiraled into a 10-year conflict.



CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

Other international disputes followed. In the early 1960s, President Kennedy faced a number of troubling situations in his own hemisphere. The Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and the Cuban missile crisis the following year seemed to prove that the real communist threat now lay in the unstable, postcolonial “Third World”.

The Cuban Missile Crisis was one of the few times that the ‘rules’ of the Cold War were nearly forgotten: it was the only time when ‘hot war’ could have broken out. In the 1950’s Cuba was led by a right-wing dictator called Batista. He treated opponents with extreme harshness and many Cubans were very poor. He was not tolerant of communists and received the support of the Americans: for instance, the army which was equipped by the Americans. Over \$200 million was actually invested in Cuba itself. For all the money coming into Cuba, the poor remained very poor.

Some young Cubans, who had read about socialism and what it offered the poor, reacted against Batista’s corruption and oppression. It was only a matter of time before the ‘message’ spread to other areas of Cuba and by 1959, the rebels lead by **Fidel Castro** felt strong enough to overthrow the government of Batista. This they easily achieved as they were aided by popular support.

Castro's first task was to punish those who had abused the poor. Those found guilty were executed. He then nationalised all American firms in Cuba so that their wealth would be invested in Cuba itself. The money made from this measure was primarily spent on a national health system so that all medical treatment was free and on education.

America reacted by refusing to do any trade with Cuba whatsoever. This trade embargo would have bankrupted the island as her biggest money earner was exporting sugar to America.

However, the trade embargo brought Russia and Cuba together as Russia stepped in to buy Cuba's sugar and other exports.

Now with a supporter of communism only 50 miles from Florida, the new American president – J F Kennedy – decided to give support to the anti-Castro Cubans who had gone to Florida. A group of armed Cuban exiles tried to land in Cuba at the **Bay of Pigs** in 1961 with the sole intention of overthrowing the Castro government. It proved a fiasco.

After the fiasco of the Bay of Pigs episode, Cuba obviously felt threatened by her massively powerful neighbour. Castro started to look for a closer relationship with Russia who could offer her protection.

In **Sept 1962**, anti-Castro Cuban refugees reported to the CIA that there was a build-up of Russian bases in Cuba.

On **October 16th 1962**, a U2 spy plane took high level photographs over Cuba and the resulting photographic prints revealed a base for missiles.

On **October 17th 1962** the CIA reported to the president that the 16 to 32 missiles identified could kill 80 million.

On **October 25th 1962** more U2 photographs showed that the bases would be fully operational in a few days .

On **October 27th** the matter was made worse when a U2 was shot down by a Russian missile and the pilot killed.

Following American protests, Khrushchev, the Russian leader, sent Kennedy two letters both of which sent conflicting messages.

One letter said that the missiles would be withdrawn if Kennedy promised not to invade Cuba. The other was more threatening claiming that as USA had bases actually in Turkey, why should not the USSR have bases in Cuba? Khrushchev said that if USA removed her missiles from Turkey then USSR would remove them from Cuba.

Kennedy offered the following: USSR was to remove its missiles from Cuba and USA was to end Cuba's quarantine and to give out a promise not to invade Cuba. If the USSR did not respond by **October 29th**, USA would launch a military invasion of Cuba. On **October 28th**, Khrushchev replied that the USSR would remove the missiles. Just one year later in 1963, both nations signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Almost as soon as he took office, President Richard Nixon began to implement a new approach to international relations. Instead of viewing the world as a hostile, “bi-polar” place, he suggested, why not use **diplomacy** instead of military action to create more poles?

Despite Nixon’s efforts, the Cold War heated up again under President Ronald Reagan. Like many leaders of his generation, Reagan believed that the spread of communism anywhere threatened freedom everywhere. As a result, he worked to provide financial and military aid to anticommunist governments and insurgencies around the world. This policy, particularly as it was applied in the developing world in places like Grenada and El Salvador, was known as the Reagan Doctrine.

Even as Reagan fought communism in Central America, however, the Soviet Union was disintegrating. In response to severe economic problems and growing political ferment in the USSR, Premier Mikhail Gorbachev took office in 1985 and introduced two policies that redefined Russia’s relationship to the rest of the world: “glasnost,” or political openness, and “perestroika,” or economic reform. Soviet influence in Eastern Europe waned.

In 1989, every other communist state in the region replaced its government with a noncommunist one. In November of that year, the Berlin Wall—the most visible symbol of the decades-long Cold War—was finally destroyed, just over two years after Reagan had. By 1991, the Soviet Union itself had fallen apart. The Cold War was over.





THE USA IN WORLD WAR TWO

US President Franklin Roosevelt recognised that the conflict threatened US security, and looked for ways to help the European democracies without direct involvement in the war. But in **June 1940**, the fall of France left Britain as the only democracy standing between Nazi Germany and America.

2. Churchill attempted to convince Roosevelt to enter the war.

3. The day after the bombing of the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbour on **7th December 1941**, President Roosevelt declared war on Japan. Only one congressman opposed the declaration of war; the vote in the senate was unanimous.

4. In **November 1942**, Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa, became the first US military offensive of the war in the West. Allied troops cornered German forces in North Africa, who surrendered in **May 1943**.

5. By the beginning of 1943, the opening of a 'second front' was a crucial issue. Churchill favoured an attack through Italy while Roosevelt pushed for an assault on France. The success of Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily launched in July 1943, allowed the Allies to invade the Italian mainland, capturing Rome on **4 June 1944**.

August 6th 1945: the horrific bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan - the war came to an end.