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POTSDAM CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS, 1945:
The Presidential Documents Series
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Catalogue Reference:
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Title:
POTSDAM CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS, 1945: The Presidential Documents Series

Date(s):
1945, 1980

Level of description:
collection level

Extent and medium of the unit of description (quantity, bulk, or size):
2 reels

Context

Name of creator(s):
President Harry S Truman, and political and military representatives at the Potsdam Conference, 1945

Administrative / Biographical history:
The Potsdam Conference, 17 Jul 1945-2 Aug 1945, was the meeting of the principal Allies of World War Two, the United States, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Great Britain, to clarify and implement agreements reached previously at the Yalta Conference, 4-11 Feb 1945. The chief representatives were US President Harry S Truman, Soviet Premier Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, British Prime Minister Rt Hon Winston (Leonard Spencer) Churchill and, after Churchill's defeat in the British general elections, Rt Hon Clement Richard Attlee. The representatives agreed to transfer the chief authority in Germany to the American, British, Soviet, and French military commanders in their respective zones of occupation and to a four-power Allied Control Council for matters regarding the whole of Germany. The Allies set up a new system of rule for Germany which outlawed the Nazi Party, disarmed Germany, and introduced representative and elective principles of government. The German economy was to be decentralised, and monopolies dismantled. The question of Polish sovereignty was discussed, and all former German territory east of the Oder and Neisse rivers was transferred to Polish and Soviet administration, pending a final peace treaty. The German population in these territories was to be transferred to Germany and a mode of reparations payments was outlined. Finally, the Potsdam Declaration, 26 Jul 1945, presented an ultimatum to Japan, offering the nation the choice between unconditional surrender and total destruction. The material in this collection contains President Harry S Truman's diary and official papers relating to the Potsdam Conference, 29 Mar-2 Aug 1945.

Immediate source of acquisition or transfer:

Content & structure

Scope and content:
Potsdam Conference Documents, 1945: The Presidential Documents Series is a themed microfilm collection including the personal and official documents and correspondence of President Harry S Truman during proceedings of the Potsdam Conference, 29 Mar-2 Aug 1945. Papers are drawn from a variety of originating bodies including US President Harry S Truman; US Gen of the Army George Catlett Marshall; US Gen of the Army Douglas MacArthur; Gen Dwight David Eisenhower, Supreme Commander Allied Forces Europe; George
Frost Kennan, US Chargé d’affaires in Moscow; Rt Hon Winston (Leonard Spencer) Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain (until 26 Jul 1945); Rt Hon Clement Richard Attlee, Prime Minister of Great Britain (after 28 Jul 1945); Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek; Soviet Premier Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin; the US Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Papers relate to US foreign policy concerning the reconstruction of Western Europe; the partition, de-nazification, demilitarisation, and future reparations payments of Germany; the trial of major war criminals; the unconditional surrender of Japan; former Axis satellite states; Austria; Yugoslavia; the withdrawal of Allied forces from Iran; the retention of Allied forces in Italy; Lend-Lease liquidation; Bulgarian reparations payments to Greece; the reconstruction of Poland, Czechoslovakia; Yugoslavia and the Balkans; Anglo-Soviet rivalry in the Middle East; civil affairs in China.

System of arrangement:
Arranged into the following sections based on subject of material and origination: the diary kept by President Truman at the Potsdam Conference; agenda and supplementary documents; background information on Europe, economic matters, the Near East, and the Far East; territorial studies; US bilateral discussions with the USSR and Great Britain; US Joint Chiefs of Staff memoranda and recommendations; papers and minutes of the Combined Chiefs of Staff; minutes of meetings with heads of government; minutes of meetings of foreign ministers; correspondence of President Truman with heads of government; miscellaneous documents; report on the Tripartite Conference of Berlin. Each section is arranged chronologically therein.

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Language/scripts of material:
English

Finding aids:

Allied materials

Existence and location of originals:
King's College London College Archives

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Description control

Rules or conventions: