

# WHO'S WHO IN LIBERATION

(Image: National Archives and Records Administration, ww2-194.)



## HARRY S. TRUMAN

The 33rd President of the United States, Harry Truman took over the office of the presidency following Franklin Delano Roosevelt's sudden death in April 1945. Truman led the United States through the final months of World War II and was instrumental in shaping the global power and foreign policy of the United States in the years following the war. Truman's decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki helped force the surrender of the Japanese. Truman also authorized the desegregation of the US military, supported the Marshall Plan, ordered the Berlin Airlift, and made the United States a founding member of both the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Truman's actions in the critical juncture that followed the end of World War II proved significant for the successive era, as his doctrine calling for use of military power to contain the spread of **communism** came to shape the trajectory of US involvement in the emerging **Cold War**.

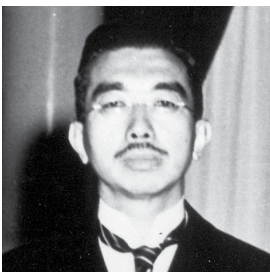
(Image: Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, 97-138)



## JOSEPH STALIN

Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin's actions during the end and aftermath of World War II had an enduring effect on the succeeding decades and the emergence of the **Cold War**. The Red Army's advance and capture of Berlin gave the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) an **occupation** zone in divided Germany. The trauma of the German invasion of the Soviet Union shaped Soviet foreign policy going forward. Stalin's push for the installation of communist governments in Eastern European countries created satellite states to serve as a buffer against future invasions. Western Allies viewed these actions as an expansion of communist rule. The creation of the Eastern Bloc and the division of Germany between Soviet and American control—in particular Berlin—laid the groundwork for the emerging **Cold War**. The use of spies to steal information on atomic weapons from the United States gave the Soviets the techniques they needed to build their own atomic bombs. With the first test of a Soviet atomic bomb in 1949, Stalin oversaw the beginnings of the **Cold War** and the conflicts it spurred between the global forces of **communism** versus capitalism.

(Image: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-11988.)



## HIROHITO

Emperor of Japan Hirohito resisted opportunities to surrender to the United States, most notably the demand for unconditional surrender issued by the Allies at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. Counseled by his leading military and civilian officials, Hirohito refused the demand to surrender. Following the use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, coupled with a declaration of war on Japan from the Soviet Union and a Soviet invasion of Manchuria, Hirohito made the decision to surrender unconditionally. Giving a radio speech, known as the "Jewel Voice Broadcast," on August 15, 1945, Hirohito spoke directly to the Japanese people informing them of the war's end. As a part of the surrender agreement with the United States, Hirohito retained his position as Emperor, serving as a figurehead to help implement American control during the **occupation** period after the war. Due to this arrangement, Hirohito avoided going on trial for **war crimes**.

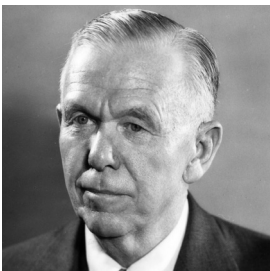
(Image: Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, 98-2431.)



## DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

Five-star General and Field Marshal of the Philippine Army, Douglas MacArthur was the Supreme Commander of the Allied powers in the Pacific theater following Japan's surrender in August 1945. MacArthur held power over the entire Japanese government, including Emperor Hirohito, who retained his position as Emperor in order to ease American rule over the **occupation** of Japan. MacArthur's decision to protect Hirohito from investigations helped secure US control over Japan, but it also had enduring consequences in the way the public perceived the trials against Japanese political and military leaders. Under MacArthur's leadership, the **occupation** government oversaw land reform and the abolition of Japanese financial business conglomerates known as the **zaibatsu** in an effort to prevent the spread of **communism** in Japan. MacArthur sought to use his accomplishments to advance his political ambitions, primarily by running for President. However, MacArthur failed to secure early primary wins, ultimately pushing him to withdraw his name and allowing Thomas Dewey to win the Republican nomination.

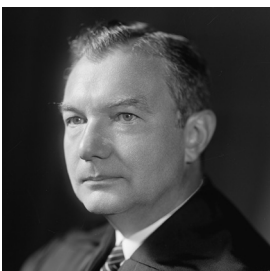
(Image: Naval Historical Center, USA C-2413.)



## GEORGE C. MARSHALL

US Army General and Chief of Staff for Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, George C. Marshall led coordination efforts for Allied operations in both the European and Pacific theaters of war, earning him five-star ranking by 1945. As Secretary of State under President Truman, Marshall proposed a program that became the European Recovery Program, commonly known as the Marshall Plan, that included a \$12 billion dollar investment in countries affected by the war. The focus on economic stability as a means of preventing further warfare proved successful, and in 1953 Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize. Marshall continued to provide his leadership to the United States, holding the position of Secretary of Defense during the Korean War. His service ultimately came to an end with his retirement in 1951, after which he returned to his home in Virginia.

(Image: US Army, Courtesy of Harry S. Truman Library, 97-1841.)



## ROBERT JACKSON

Associate Justice of the Supreme Court from 1941 to 1954, Justice Robert Jackson also served as the US Solicitor General and US Attorney General throughout his career. He is also the last justice to serve on the Supreme Court without a law degree. Justice Jackson received particular world attention for his role in presiding over the Nuremberg Trials, which featured the trial and prosecution of leading Nazi officials for **war crimes**. Appointed as the US Chief Prosecutor for the International Military Tribunal, Justice Jackson was vocal in his support of a fair trial to bring justice to those who orchestrated **crimes against humanity**. Unlike his counterpart from the USSR, Justice R.A. Rudenko, Jackson insisted on a presumption of innocence rather than guilt and relied upon the presentation of evidence to determine his views. This helped strengthen the credibility of the trials, as well as the precedent of holding military and world leaders accountable for violations of **war crimes** or for **crimes against humanity**.

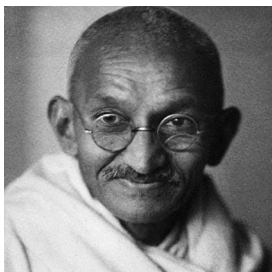
(Image: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, 2016862701.)



## ANNE FRANK

German Jewish diarist, and one of the most recognizable victims of the Holocaust, Anne Frank gained posthumous renown following the publication of a diary she kept while in hiding from the Nazis. Born in Frankfurt in 1929, Frank and her family fled Germany for Amsterdam after the Nazis rose to power in the early 1930s. After Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940, Frank's father Otto prepared a hidden apartment to protect his family. Before going into hiding, Anne received what would become her famous diary on June 12, 1942, as a present for her 13th birthday. In this diary, she recorded glimpses into the lives of Jewish residents of occupied Amsterdam and the hardships they faced. The family spent two years hidden in the apartment Anne called the Secret Annex. Later betrayed, Nazis arrested the occupants in August 1944 and sent Anne to the Bergen-Belsen camp in October of that year. Anne and her sister Margot remained at the camp until succumbing to an outbreak of typhus. While no records of her death exist, historians believe that Anne Frank died mere weeks before British soldiers liberated the camp on April 15, 1945.

(Image: Anne Frank Stichting, Amsterdam, Unknown Photographer.)



## MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

Activist and leader of the Indian independence movement Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became a renowned advocate for nonviolent civil disobedience. Known more commonly as Mahatma, a Sanskrit word meaning “venerable,” Gandhi became the “Father of the Nation” to many across India. Born into the merchant caste in India, Gandhi trained as a lawyer and first practiced civil rights law in South Africa. He returned to India in 1915 and turned his attention toward organizing resistance to British taxation and imperial rule. As the Indian independence movement gained momentum with the withdrawal of British rule in 1947, the separation of India into two states—India and Pakistan—led to outbreaks of violence. In an effort to encourage an end to the fighting, Gandhi fasted to the point of near death. The violence caused by this separation of two states led to Gandhi’s assassination by Nathuram Godse on January 30, 1948.

(Image: Dinodia Photos, A2FP81.)



## MAO ZEDONG

Communist revolutionary and founding Chairman of the People’s Republic of China, Mao Zedong established the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army in the years following Japan’s defeat in World War II. As a power vacuum followed the fall of the Japanese Empire in 1945, civil war broke out in China. Zedong, who was a founding member and eventual head of the Communist Party of China, led the communist forces in China against the Nationalist Chinese government. Successfully pushing the Nationalist forces out of China, Zedong declared the foundation of the People’s Republic of China on October 1, 1949. This established a single-state system with Zedong at the head. The “loss” of China to **communism** appeared as a catastrophe to President Harry S. Truman and others in his administration, and it factored heavily into **Cold War** fears that other powers might similarly fall.

(Image: PD-China.)



## KATHERINE JOHNSON

Mathematician and physicist Katherine Johnson joined the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) in 1953 and developed the calculations necessary to make manned space flights possible. As the United States raced against the Soviet Union to gain a leading edge in the race to outer space, and later the moon, the work done by Johnson helped ensure the success of Alan Shepard’s mission to become the first American in space. Born in West Virginia, Johnson became one of three African American students selected to integrate West Virginia’s graduate school programs in 1939. When NACA became the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in 1958, Johnson contributed to Project Mercury, helping to send Americans safely into space, including John Glenn’s famous orbital mission in 1962.

(Image: NASA, 1966-I-06717.)

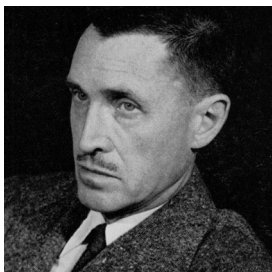


## MARGARET HUTCHINSON ROUSSEAU

Born in Texas, Margaret Hutchinson Rousseau became a chemical engineer who helped to design the first commercial penicillin production plant, making large-scale production of penicillin a possibility. In 1937, Rousseau became the first woman in the United States to earn a doctorate in chemical engineering from MIT. During World War II, Rousseau oversaw and contributed to designs of the plants made to produce penicillin at levels to support the demands of the war. The designs contributed to deep-tank fermentation of the penicillin mold, a process that led to the mass production of the necessary antibiotic. In addition to working on the production of penicillin, Rousseau also took part in the development of technology—such as high-octane gasoline used in aviation fuel—that aided the war effort.

(Image: Walter P. Reuther Library, 1854.)

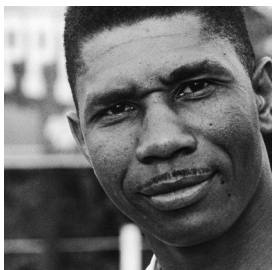




## GEORGE STOUT

An American museum director and art conservation specialist, George Stout was also a member of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) unit known colloquially as “The Monuments Men.” Stout served in a military hospital during World War II, but after the war he pursued an education and career centered on art conservation. Working at Harvard’s Fogg Art Museum, Stout found new ways to conserve art that incorporated scientific knowledge and techniques. With the start of World War II, word of Adolf Hitler’s interest in stealing classic pieces of artwork and sculptures began to spread. In response, Stout joined the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives section of the Allied military forces, which sought to locate, recover, and return stolen artwork. Through the efforts of Stout and his fellow “Monuments Men,” the repatriation of millions of pieces of artwork was possible.

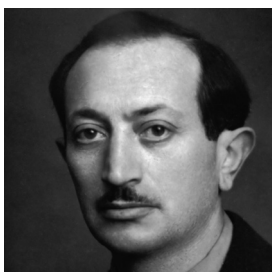
(Image: The National WWII Museum.)



## MEDGAR EVERS

Civil rights activist and WWII veteran, Medgar Evers became a leading voice in the movement for civil rights for African Americans in the decades following World War II. Evers fought in the US Army and participated in the Normandy invasion on June 6, 1944, and was honorably discharged as a sergeant after the war came to an end. In the years following his service in World War II, Evers began organizing boycotts and other civil rights demonstrations to draw attention to racist laws and to protest segregation in his home state of Mississippi. When the US Supreme Court ruled against segregation in public schools, Evers attempted to apply to the University of Mississippi Law School, but the school denied his admittance due to his race, highlighting the disparity of opportunities offered to WWII veterans. Evers, who remained a vigilant leader of civil rights until his assassination by a white supremacist in 1963, was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

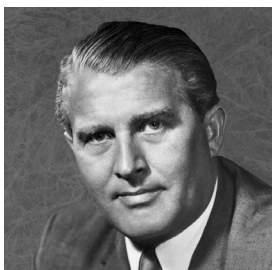
(Image: AP, 090122047591.)



## SIMON WIESENTHAL

Born in Austria-Hungary, Simon Wiesenthal was among the Jewish residents forced into the Lwów Ghetto in Poland. In 1941, the Nazis moved Wiesenthal and his wife to Janowska concentration camp where he endured forced labor on the Eastern Railway. Escaping execution on multiple occasions, Wiesenthal ended up at the Mauthausen concentration camp a few months before US forces liberated the camp in May 1945. Following his liberation, he began making a list of Nazi war criminals and worked with the American Office of Strategic Services to collect information on victims as well as perpetrators of the Holocaust. Wiesenthal developed a reputation for being a “Nazi hunter,” and his efforts ultimately helped lead to the capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann, a key architect of the Nazi **Final Solution**. In addition to hunting fugitive Nazis to bring them to justice, Wiesenthal also cofounded the Jewish Historical Documentation Centre in Austria and the Documentation Centre of the Association of Jewish Victims of the Nazi Regime in Vienna.

(Image: Nationaal Archief, 116-0527.)



## WERNHER VON BRAUN

German aerospace engineer Wernher von Braun initially worked for the Nazis, designing and developing the V-2 rocket during World War II. Though an official member of the Nazi Party, he tried to distance himself from the Party in memoirs written after the war. While working for the Nazis, he visited the Mittelwerk plant where the Nazis used slave labor to construct the V-2 rockets. Von Braun described the conditions as repulsive, and he denied ever visiting the nearby Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp; however, inmates contested this claim stating they saw von Braun at the camp selecting laborers. With the war coming to an end, von Braun surrendered to the American forces. In September 1945, he joined other German scientists and engineers recruited by the US military to participate in **Operation Paperclip**, which centered on the development of rockets for the emerging American space program. Von Braun’s career with NASA lasted until 1972.

(Image: NASA, MSFC-9131095.)