

CASE STUDY**Cold War World Politics Headlines*****June 25, 1950: War Is Declared by North Koreans; Fighting on Border***

The single-column article begins by stating that “The Russian-sponsored North Korean Communists invaded the American-supported Republic of South Korea today and their radio followed it by broadcasting a declaration of war.” This article and others that followed in the next few days contained statements from the State Department that hold the Soviet Union responsible for the attack; statements by Republicans linking the invasion to “weak” U.S. foreign policy in Asia; criticism of the Central Intelligence Agency for not anticipating the attack; speculation about the spillover effects of the invasion on the U.S. position in other Asian states and the damage done to U.S. prestige; reports from a special session of the United Nations Security Council that found North Korea guilty of breaking the peace and demanding its withdrawal; and stories about President Truman sending U.S. troops into combat.

March 26, 1957: Europeans Unite in Customs Union and Atom Agency

The signing of two treaties in Rome by West Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg is described as the “birth certificate of a European Federation of States.” The article describes the goal of the newly created common market as laying the foundation for the ultimate establishment of a central European government. Unity is to be gradual and future political institutions are to include a Court of Justice, Parliament, and a European Cabinet. It also notes that the agreement falls far short of the political–military unity that would have come about had the plans for a European Defense Community not failed due to French opposition.

June 2, 1973: West Yields to Demands of Oil-Exporting Lands

Buried on page 39 in the business section, this medium-length article contained the subhead “Dispute That Threatened to Reduce Production and Intensify World Energy Crisis Believed at End.” It reported on a decision by the major petroleum companies to yield to demands of the major oil-exporting countries for full compensation for the loss of revenue to them resulting from the devaluation of the dollar and its steady depreciation in foreign exchange markets. The agreement was to be in force until 1975. Taking part in the agreement were 8 of the 11 OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) members: Abu Dhabi, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. Together, it was noted, these states accounted for 23 million barrels of oil per day, 15 percent of which went to the United States. The article stated that in the absence of an agreement it was feared that a repeat would occur of a 1970 crisis that led to higher oil prices. By the end of the year this agreement was in shambles, as was the international economy. An October 1973 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors led OPEC to place an embargo on oil for the West and to raise the price of oil to previously unimagined heights.