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The Potsdam/Berlin conference of the 1945, causes and significance

Questions to ponder

1. Examine the causes and significance of the 1945 **Potsdam/Berlin conference**

(Give a brief background of **Potsdam/Berlin conference**. Identify and explain causes and significance of the 1945 **Potsdam/Berlin conference** Make a conclusion).

Summary of the Potsdam/Berlin conference of 1945

The **Potsdam Conference**, held from **July 17 to August 2, 1945**, was a significant meeting of the "Big Three" Allied leaders: **Harry S. Truman** (United States), **Joseph Stalin** (Soviet Union), and **Clement Attlee** (United Kingdom, who replaced Winston Churchill during the conference). Here are the key points:

Causes:

1. **Post-War Administration:** To decide how to administer post-war Germany and Europe.
2. **Demarcation of Boundaries:** To demarcate the boundaries of post-war Europe, particularly Poland.
3. **Reparations:** To determine the reparations Germany would pay.
4. **War Against Japan:** To discuss the continuation of the war against Japan and the Soviet Union's entry into the war.
5. **Occupation Zones:** To establish the four occupation zones in Germany and Berlin.

Significance:

1. **Division of Germany:** The conference confirmed the division of Germany into four occupation zones controlled by the U.S., Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.
2. **War Crimes Trials:** It was decided that major war criminals would be tried before an international court, leading to the Nuremberg Trials.
3. **Soviet Entry into the Pacific War:** Stalin agreed that the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan, which contributed to Japan's surrender.

4. **Cold War Tensions:** The conference highlighted the emerging tensions between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, foreshadowing the Cold War.
5. **Post-War Order:** The Potsdam Agreement laid the groundwork for the post-war order and peace settlements in Europe.
6. The conference concluded agreement on the joint efforts against Japan. As result the Soviet Union declared war on Japan on august 8, 1945.
7. It led to disarmament and demilitarisation of Germany
8. The Borders of Poland were fixed.
9. Nazism in Germany was ended.
10. Germany was charged War reparations which were awarded to Soviet Union, USA, Britain, and France.
11. Germany was subdivided as agreed in Yalta conference and the subdivision awarded to Soviet Union, USA, Britain, and France.
12. Reforms in education were promoted in Germany to destroy Nazism

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