

The Truman Doctrine



Elements of biography

- ▶ Born in Missouri in 1884: rural background
- ▶ Varied experience: bank, clerk, farmer, artillery officer, politician, county administrative officer//judge and eventually senator = elected in 1934
- ▶ Attracted public attention with a watchdog committee on defence spending during WWII : saved the gvt immense sums of money.
- ▶ As a csq he was elected as a vice president.
- ▶ Successor of Roosevelt
- ▶ As president tried to carry on in the Roosevelt tradition
- ▶ Personality :He was said to be his worst enemy,insulted opponents instead of trying to convince them.Read books but distrusted ideas. He was prone to interpret past events in the manner that suited his current convenience

Background to the speech

International scene unsettled by WWII

- ▶ Germany was in ruins
- ▶ Great-Britain suffering severe economic aftershocks from WWII
- ▶ Italy weakened
- ▶ France facing internal divisions
- ▶ No problem of borders
- ▶ Fewer casualties than the other countries
- ▶ The only one to have the atomic bomb
- ▶ Strongest world power
- ▶ Worried about the influence the USSR could have on European countries
- ▶ Maintained bases in Europe to face potential risk

EUROPE

THE US

The USSR

- ▶ The Soviets refused to be part of the new world bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as these institutions were dominated by the Americans.
- ▶ These institutions aimed at promoting private investment and world trade
- ▶  Tools of capitalism

Perception of the USSR by The US

- ▶ Early 1946 : appearance of a new policy based on George F Kennan's ideas.
- ▶ Saw the world as divided into socialist and capitalist camps.
- ▶ Irreconcilable differences
- ▶ Nothing would reduce Soviet hostility
- ▶ Two alternatives for the US :
- ▶ 1 – Resist Russian aggression firmly wherever it appeared
- ▶ 2 – Wait for time to bring change in Soviet policy

Goals of the Truman doctrine

- ▶ After WWII, Britain was responsible for the protection of the Middle East+ military assistance+financial assistance
- ▶ Britain = unable to guarantee peace and security in the region between Greece and Turkey
- ▶ Feb 22 1947 It gave up
- ▶ USSR controlled E.Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania, E.Berlin

Determining factors

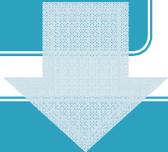
USSR tried to extend south towards the Middle East, Greece and Turkey, which therefore needed help from the British.



USSR → pressure on the southern borders, up Turkey



→ supported communist guerilla warfare in Greece and Turkey



Growing insecurity, civil war which Britain could no longer control

Need of US help

US happy to intervene because of growing communist fear+ desire to take Britain's place as the Supreme arbiter of world affairs

1947 US policy of containment : Pb : need for Congress support

Decision to intervene Feb 21, 1949

- ▶ Arguments put forward in Truman's speech :
- ▶ Stop communist advances
- ▶ Why ? The line of US foreign policy : a matter of national security ↪ civil war
- ▶ How ? No direct intervention
- ▶ Through financial and economic assistance
- ▶ Goals : Defend Turkey and Greece from Communist guerilla or aggression
- ▶ Make sure that Greece and Turkey remain free nations, self-supporting and self-respecting democracies

- ▶ Early relief and economic aid: not sufficient
- ▶ Greece and Turkey need a strong economy, to
- ▶ Provide jobs, to rebuild the nation, to make it strong enough to control discontent and terrorist activities
- ▶ No other democracy can help : all affected by WWII, others are undemocratic
- ▶ Britain close to bankruptcy. No longer a super power
- ▶ Action must be immediate

Truman's request

- ▶ \$400 million asked from Congress
- ▶ \$250 for Greece
- ▶ \$150 for Turkey
- ▶ For military and economic assistance
- ▶ For freedom, democracy, recovery

The Truman doctrine March 12, 1947

Contrast of ideals

- ▶ Democracy– self–gvt, self–determination
- ▶ Peace, freedom,
- ▶ independence, prosperity
- ▶ Free institutions, democracy, for the defence of the people (by, for, from)
- ▶ The will of the majority
- ▶ Representative gvt– Congress controls decisions
- ▶ Freedom of speech
- ▶ Totalitarian regime
- ▶ Anti–democratic
- ▶ For war, aggression,
- ▶ Dependency
- ▶ Not free, not for prosperity but for military expansion
- ▶ Totalitarian institutions
- ▶ Decisions imposed from above
- ▶ No popular consultation
- ▶ Military oppression of the people

USA

USSR

Contrast of ideals

- ▶ Free elections–division of powers,
- ▶ Individual liberty, rights, laws
- ▶ Freedom of speech, expression, religion
- ▶ Freedom from political oppression
- ▶ Military regime
- ▶ No will of the majority
- ▶ Few people control a large number of other people
- ▶ No free election
- ▶ A party power
- ▶ People have no say in the process
- ▶ No individual laws, rights or liberty

USA

USSR

- ▶ No civil laws, rights, liberty
- ▶ No freedom of speech: papers, radio, TV controlled by the state
- ▶ No freedom of expression → prison
- ▶ No freedom of religion : no religion allowed
- ▶ political oppression

The USA

The USSR

Totalitarian regime

- ▶ Communism : the dictatorship of the proletariat
- ▶ State regime : no freedom, no religion, all suppressed by force
- ▶ No free people except for those of the party against people's will
- ▶ The will of a minority : the party  growing terror and oppression

Consequences of the doctrine

- ▶ Congress consulted : a democratic decision in the US. The Senate voted in favour of Truman's request by 67 to 23 votes.
- ▶ Growing threat of communist dictatorship undermined the foundation of international peace and security of the US
- ▶ Communist opposed to democracy therefore constitute a threat for democracy+ a threat to the US

US intervention

- ▶ Financial and economic help given to Greece and Turkey
- ▶ Greece and Turkey did not turn communist
- ▶ Growing commitment to oppose communist expansion
- ▶ ☹ Cold war between the the US and The USSR
- ▶ Yet no military intervention
- ▶ Only ideological, political economic and financial one
- ▶ Greece and Turkey ↗ strategic military and economic position

Conclusion

- ▶ US foreign policy of communist containment led to :
- ▶ Mac Carthyism
- ▶ Cold war
- ▶ Committed the US to support unworthy regimes as they were not democracies(C and South America)
- ▶ Yalta : US–USSR–Britain ↪ division of the war