

East. The secretary of state... Soviet forces withdraw. At the same time, the battleship USS *Missouri* sailed into the eastern Mediterranean. The pressure seemed to work. Soviet forces withdrew, having been promised a joint Soviet-Iranian oil company, although the Iranian parliament later rejected the plan.

The Truman Doctrine

Frustrated in Iran, Stalin turned northwest to Turkey. There, the straits of the Dardanelles were a vital route from Soviet ports on the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. For centuries Russia had wanted to control this strategic route. In August 1946, Stalin demanded joint control of the Dardanelles with Turkey.

Presidential adviser Dean Acheson saw this move as part of a Soviet plan to control the Middle East. He advised Truman to make a show of force. The president ordered the new aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* to join the *Missouri* in protecting Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean.

Meanwhile, Britain tried to help Greece. In August 1946, Greek Communists launched a guerrilla war against the Greek government. British troops helped fight the guerrillas, but in February 1947, Britain informed the United States that it could no longer afford to help Greece due to Britain's weakened postwar economy.

Shortly after, Truman went before Congress to ask for \$400 million to fight Communist aggression in Greece and Turkey. His speech outlined a policy that became known as the Truman Doctrine. Its goal was to aid those who worked to resist being controlled by others. In the long run, it pledged the United States to fight the spread of communism worldwide.

PRIMARY SOURCE

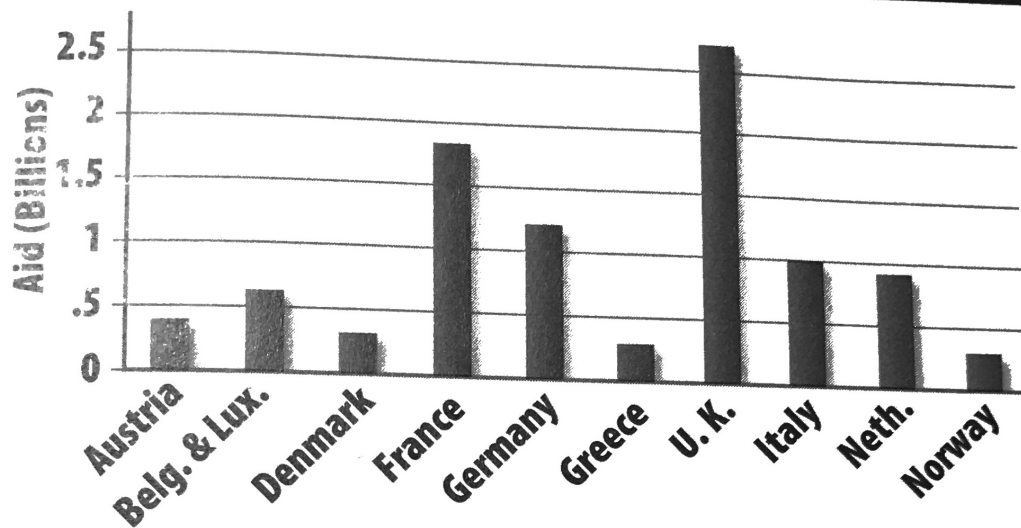
“The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement in Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. . . . I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.”

—President Truman, from his address to Congress, March 12, 1947

The Marshall Plan

Meanwhile, postwar Western Europe faced grave problems. Economies were ruined, people faced starvation, and political chaos was at hand. In June 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed the European

MARSHALL PLAN AID TO MAJOR COUNTRIES, 1948–1951



Source: The Marshall Plan Fifty Years Later.

Recovery Program, or Marshall Plan, which would give European nations American aid to rebuild their economies. Truman saw both the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine as essential for containment. Marshall offered help to all nations planning a recovery program.

Although the Marshall Plan was offered to the Soviet Union and its satellite nations, the Soviets rejected it and developed their own economic program. This action further separated Europe into competing regions. The Marshall Plan pumped billions of dollars in supplies, machinery, and food into Western Europe. The region's recovery weakened the appeal of communism and opened new markets for trade.

In his 1949 Inaugural Address, Truman proposed assistance for underdeveloped countries outside the war zone. The Point Four Program aimed to provide them with "scientific advances and industrial progress" for their improvement and growth. The Department of State administered the program until its merger with other foreign aid programs in 1953.

The Berlin Airlift

Truman and his advisers believed Western Europe's prosperity depended on Germany's recovery. The Soviets, however, still wanted Germany to pay reparations. This dispute brought the nations to the brink of war. By early 1948, American officials had concluded that the Soviets were trying to