

Options in Brief

Option 1: Impose a Pax Americana [American Peace]

No nation in modern times has had the opportunity the United States has now to shape an entire world order. At this juncture in history, the United States has the power to lay the foundation for an era of peaceful international relations and to ensure that the peoples of the world have the opportunity to prosper economically and to develop politically. The last war was fought in the name of freedom. The justice of our cause gave us the strength to overcome Nazi Germany and Japan. But our mission is not complete until freedom is within the grasp of all peoples. The Soviet Union is now the greatest threat to a just world order. Just as the aggression of the Nazis should have been stopped in the 1930s, the ambitious schemes of the Soviets must be smashed now. The Soviets must be forced—by U.S. military power if necessary—to free the peoples they have deprived of self-determination. They must accept the new international order based on political and economic freedom.

Option 2: Contain Soviet Communism

The two world wars have shown that the United States cannot distance itself from European nations that share our economic system and political values. Like it or not, international relations in the postwar world will be dominated by a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. Soviet leaders are convinced of their mission to extend communism throughout the globe. The United States cannot turn its back on the threat of Soviet expansion. Western Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Japan are too important to U.S. national interests to leave them vulnerable to Soviet aggression. By working with other free nations we can construct a strong barrier that will contain further Soviet expansion. Communism thrives only in conditions of misery, want, and strife. The United States and its allies must be vigilant in their efforts to contain its spread.

Option 3: Co-Exist and Compromise

With the defeat of Germany and Japan, the Allied nations are in a unique position to create a new international order based on the rule of law. As history has shown, peace is possible only when the most powerful countries of the world share common goals. The United States and the Soviet Union are different in many ways. But while we reject the Soviets' economic and political system, we share a mutual desire for peace. Now is the time to build on this area of agreement to ensure a future of international stability and legality. The United States can do its part to maintain peace by refraining from the threat or use of force, whenever possible. The best way to promote the interests of the peoples of Eastern Europe would be to diminish the Soviet sense of insecurity.

Option 4: Avoid Foreign Entanglements

With our victory in the last war, the security of the United States is assured. Americans can return again to making their lives better without foreign threats lurking over their shoulders. Our fortunate geographic position, with great oceans isolating us from the strife of Europe and Asia, enables us to defend our shores without bankrupting our economy. Further involvement in world affairs should be avoided. Especially dangerous are misguided plans to shape the world to fit American ideals. At a time when the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union is high, such a policy would be both expensive and reckless. Americans understand that we prosper most when the power of the central government is kept at a minimum. The individual liberties that Americans hold so dear would be threatened by the unchecked growth of executive power fed by overseas involvement.

Option 1: Impose a Pax Americana [American Peace]

No nation in modern times has had the opportunity the United States has now to shape an entire world order. Our industrial production exceeds that of the Soviet Union and all other European countries combined. Our armed forces, equipped with atomic weapons, have no equal on the face of the earth. At this unique juncture in history, the United States has the power to lay the foundation for a new era of peaceful international relations and to ensure that the peoples of the world have the opportunity to prosper economically and to develop politically. The peaceful, prosperous world order of the future must be built upon the principles of national self-determination, democracy, economic freedom, and free trade. Self-determination requires that every nation have the right to determine its own destiny, free of external coercion and control. Free economic institutions, and free and equal access to the markets of the world are necessary to produce the prosperity that provides the necessary foundations for democratic institutions.

We fought the last war in the name of freedom. Ultimately, the justice of our cause gave us the strength to overcome Nazi Germany and Japan. Our mission, however, will not be complete until freedom is within the grasp of all peoples. The Soviet Union is now the greatest threat to a just world order. To allow the Soviet Union to continue to dominate many of the nations of eastern Europe, as well as areas of Germany, makes a mockery of those principles for which the United States fought and for which so many Americans sacrificed. Just as the aggression of the Nazis should have been stopped in the 1930s, the ambitious schemes of the Soviets must be smashed now. The leaders of the Soviet Union must be made to live up to the promises they have made. The Soviets must be forced—by U.S. military power if necessary—to free those peoples whom they have deprived of self-determination. They must accept the new international order based on political and economic freedom. Any delay on our part will enable the Soviet Union to consolidate its gains and make a reversal of its conquests much more costly. Future generations will not forgive us if we allow this opportunity to create a Pax Americana slip by.



Joe likes a firm handshake.

Hugh Hutton in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1948. Used with permission.

The United States should take the following steps:

1. Use all means necessary—including military force—to push the Soviets out of eastern Europe and to compel them to live up to the promises made at Yalta and in the United Nations charter.

2. Keep our military forces, both conventional and nuclear, so strong that the Soviet Union will back away from its aggressive behavior rather than

risk a confrontation it cannot win.

3. Help the war-ravaged nations of Europe rebuild their economies according to American free-market principles.

4. Use our political and military might to ensure that all nations have access to the world's markets and resources and that all areas of the world are open to free trade.

Lessons from history

- Hitler taught us that appeasing aggressors does not achieve lasting peace. It only postpones the confrontation and makes it more costly. Therefore, aggression must be stopped when it happens.

- The failure of the democratic German Weimar Republic and the rise of Hitler were caused by Germany's economic collapse. Promoting prosperity in Europe is necessary to preserve democratic institutions and prevent the establishment

of totalitarian regimes that endanger peace.

- Restrictions on international trade after World War I led to the Depression and set the stage for World War II. Therefore, a system of free international trade must be established.

- Instability in Europe has drawn the United States into war twice in this century. To prevent another global conflict, we must take the lead in establishing a sound world order based on our values of freedom.

Arguments for Option 1

- By standing up to aggression now, we reduce the chances of another world war.

- The U.S. atomic monopoly and overwhelming industrial superiority make it unlikely that any aggressor would defy our wishes and challenge us militarily.

- The era of peace that this option will

produce will bring new levels of economic prosperity to the United States as well as to other nations of the world.

- Today's circumstances give the United States an unprecedented opportunity to impose a just peace that will ensure that all nations' interests are fairly considered.

From the Historical Record

Excerpts from President Wilson's speech on the Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918

"The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by.... The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our program, and that program, the only possible program, as we see, is this: open covenants of peace, openly arrived at.... Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas,

outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war.... The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations.... International guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan States should be entered into.... An independent

Polish state should be erected...whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.... For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace, such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war.... An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak.”

Excerpts from President Roosevelt's Atlantic Charter statement made jointly with British Prime Minister Churchill, August 12, 1941

“[We] desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned; ...respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them; ...will endeavor, with due respect for existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.... Such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance.”

Excerpts from General George Patton's conversation with Secretary of the Army Robert P. Patterson, May 7, 1945

“Mr. Secretary, for God's sake, when you go home, stop this point system; stop breaking up these armies; give us an opportunity to keep 30 percent of our battlewise troops home on leave if you wish, etc. Send us replacements and let us start training here, keeping our forces intact. Let's keep our boots

polished, bayonets sharpened, and present a picture of force and strength to these people [the Soviets]. This is the only language they understand and respect. If you fail to do this, then I would like to say to you that we have had a victory over the Germans and have disarmed them, but have lost the war.... I would have your State Department, or the people in charge, tell the people concerned [the Soviets] where their border is, and give them a limited time to get back across. Warn them that if they fail to do so, we will push them back across it.... Let's not give them time to build up their supplies. If we do, then I repeat, we have had a victory over the Germans and disarmed them; we have failed in the liberation of Europe; we have lost the war!... We the Armed Forces of the U.S.A. have put our government in the position to dictate the peace. We did not come over here to acquire jurisdiction over either the people or their countries. We came to give them back the right to govern themselves. We must either finish the job now—while we are here and ready—or later under less favorable circumstances.”

Excerpts from President Truman's Navy Day speech, October 27, 1945

“The foreign policy of the United States is based firmly on fundamental principles of righteousness and justice. In carrying out those principles we shall firmly adhere to what we believe to be right; and we shall not give approval to any compromise with evil.... Building a peace requires as much moral stamina as waging a war.... It requires undying patience and continuous application. But it can give us, if we stay with it, the greatest reward that there is in the whole field of human effort.... The possession in our hands of this new power of destruction [atomic weapons] we regard as a sacred trust. Because of our love of peace, the thoughtful people of the world know that that trust will not be violated....”

Option 2: Contain Soviet Communism

The two world wars have shown that the United States cannot distance itself from European nations that share our economic system and political values. As the largest and most powerful Western nation, we have no choice but to defend our partners in the free world. The defeat of Germany and Japan does not bring our international responsibilities to a close. On the contrary, the United States must not retreat to the head-in-the-sand isolationism that followed World War I. In an age of atomic weapons, there is no place to hide from international aggression. Like it or not, international relations in the post-war world will be dominated by a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. In many respects, Soviet communism presents a greater threat than that posed by Nazi Germany. Soviet leaders are convinced of their mission to extend communism throughout the globe. Not only do the Soviets reject our principles of democracy and freedom, but they believe that conflict between the capitalist nations and themselves is inevitable. The threat posed by this ideologically inspired aggressive state is unique in modern history, and the future of Western civilization hangs in the balance.

The United States cannot turn its back on the threat of Soviet expansion. Western Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and Japan are too important to U.S. national interests to leave them vulnerable to Soviet aggression. By working with other free nations we can construct a strong barrier that will contain further Soviet expansion. Foreign aid can nourish democratic institutions and undercut the appeal of the communists in France, Italy, Greece, and other countries suffering from economic and political unrest. War with the Soviet Union is avoidable if we possess the will to stand up to Soviet military aggression. Our possession of the atomic bomb, a firm commitment to strengthening our armed forces, and our control of the oceans can be used to limit Soviet military actions. Fenced in by the power of the free world, Soviet communism will eventually wither and die, making room for a new generation of democratic leaders. Communism thrives only in conditions of misery, want, and strife. The United States and its allies must be vigilant in their efforts to contain its spread.



**But what part shall the
meek inherit?**

Charles G. Werner in *The Daily Oklahoman*, 1949.

The United States should take the following steps:

1. Provide foreign aid to free countries in Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and Japan to enable them to resist Soviet encroachment and communist subversion.

2. Strengthen our armed forces—specifically our ability to wage atomic and biological warfare—in order to deter further Soviet aggression and contain the expansion of Soviet influence.

3. Educate the citizens of the United States and the free nations of the West

concerning the true nature of the Soviet regime, its long-term threat to Western values, and the subversive role of the Communist Party in non-communist countries.

4. Cooperate militarily with non-communist countries so as to discourage Soviet attempts at expansion and ensure that non-communist governments have sufficient military resources to combat internal communist subversion and insurrection.

Lessons from history

- The Soviet threat is very different from that posed by Hitler's Germany. Soviet leaders are motivated by an ideology that predicts world conflict and conquest. In their eyes, war with the United States is inevitable. Thus, our country needs a new global strategy.

- While the Soviets have sought to take advantage of vulnerable nations along their border, they have ceased their actions when the risks became too great. The Iran crisis of early 1946 showed that the Soviets will back down when faced with determined opposition.

- Communism has grown only when the social fabric of a nation has been weakened by war, economic crises, or political strife. In nations with healthy economies and stable democracies, communism has had little appeal.

- For the past thirty years, Soviet leaders have condemned and attacked Western values of economic freedom and political liberty. There is no reason to believe that they will change their views or behavior in the foreseeable future.

Arguments for Option 2

- The Soviets respect force and will stop expanding when faced with military strength, thus avoiding a major confrontation.

- Any country that falls under Soviet control strengthens the Soviet Union in its worldwide attack against capitalism and Western values.

- The avowed goals of Soviet communism and those who follow the communist ideology threaten the American way of life.

- The costs of economic and political aid in the short run will be much less than the inevitable war that will come if the Soviet Union is allowed to become more powerful than the West. In the long run, this strategy will force the Soviets to modify their behavior and work responsibly with other nations.

From the Historical Record

Excerpts from a telegram sent by George Kennan from the U.S. Moscow embassy to the State Department, February 22, 1946

“USSR still lives in antagonistic ‘capitalistic encirclement’ with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence.... [They believe that the] capitalist world is beset with internal conflicts, inherent in the nature of capitalist society.... Internal conflicts of capitalism inevitably generate wars.... Everything must be done to advance relative strength of USSR.... No opportunity must be missed to reduce strength and influence, collectively as well as individually, of capitalist powers.... At bottom of Kremlin’s neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity.... Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany, is neither schematic nor adventuristic. It does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. Impervious to logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to logic of force. For this reason it can easily withdraw—and usually does—when strong resistance is encountered at any point....

“We must see that our public is educated to realities of Russian situation.... Much depends upon health and vigor of our own society. World communism is like malignant parasite which feeds only on diseased tissue.... We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of sort of world we would like to see. Many foreign peoples, in Europe at least, are tired and frightened by experiences of past, and are less interested in abstract freedom than in security. They are seeking guidance rather than responsibilities. We should be better able than Russians to give them this. And unless we do, Russians certainly will.... We must have courage and self-confidence to cling to our own methods and conceptions of human society. The greatest danger that can befall us in coping with this problem of Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.”

Excerpts from a memorandum to President Truman prepared by Clark Clifford, special counsel to the president, September 24, 1946

“[The Soviet leaders] with whom we hope to achieve an understanding on the principles of international peace appear to believe that a war with the United States and the other leading capitalist nations is inevitable. They are increasing their military power and the sphere of Soviet influence in preparation for the ‘inevitable’ conflict, and they are trying to weaken and subvert their potential opponents by every means at their disposal.... We should be prepared to join with the British and other Western countries in an attempt to build up a world of our own which will pursue its own objectives and will recognize the Soviet orbit as a distinct entity with which conflict is not predestined, but with which we can not pursue common aims.... [We must] as a first step to world stabilization seek to prevent additional Soviet aggression. The greater the area controlled by the Soviet Union, the greater the military requirements of this country will be.... The language of military power is the only language which disciples of power politics understand. The United States must use that language in order that Soviet leaders will realize that our government is determined to uphold the interests of its citizens and the rights of small nations.... The prospect of defeat is the only sure means of deterring the Soviet Union.... To maintain our strength at a level which will be effective in restraining the Soviet Union, the United States must be prepared to wage atomic and biological warfare.... In addition to maintaining our own strength, the United States should support and assist all democratic countries which are in any way menaced or endangered by the U.S.S.R. Providing military support in case of attack is a last resort; a more effective barrier to communism is strong economic support....

“Cooperation by the Soviets can result in increased trade.... [However,] economic aid granted to the Soviet government or other governments within its sphere, and the fruits of private trade with persons inside these

countries, will go to strengthen the entire world program of the Kremlin.... Because the Soviet Union is a highly centralized state, whose leaders exercise rigid discipline and control of all governmental functions, its government acts with speed, consistency, and boldness. The United States can not afford to be uncertain of its policies toward the Soviet Union.... The American people should be fully informed about the difficulties in getting along with the Soviet Union, and the record of Soviet evasion, misrepresentation, aggression and militarism should be made public.... The United States should maintain military forces powerful enough to restrain the Soviet Union and to confine Soviet influence to its present area. All nations not now within the Soviet sphere should be given generous economic assistance and political support in their opposition to Soviet penetration.”

Option 3: Co-Exist and Compromise

With the defeat of Germany and Japan, the Allied nations are in a unique position to create a new international order based on the rule of law. As history has shown, peace is possible only when the most powerful countries of the world share common goals. The United States and the Soviet Union are different in many ways. But while we reject the Soviets' economic and political system, we share a mutual desire for peace. Now is the time to build on this area of agreement to ensure a future of international stability and legality. The United States can do its part to maintain peace by refraining from the threat or use of force, whenever possible. This is particularly true in the case of our relationship with the Soviet Union. After losing more than twenty million people in the last war, the Soviets are naturally fearful of outside threats. This explains the actions of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe. These strategic moves are regrettable, but understandable. The Soviets feel they need a buffer of friendly states on their borders to protect themselves from invasion. With similar logic, the United States has dominated the Caribbean for most of this century. Installing Western-style democratic governments in the Soviet sphere of influence cannot be achieved short of another world war.

The best way to promote the interests of the peoples of eastern Europe would be to diminish the Soviet sense of insecurity. U.S. economic assistance for the Soviet Union and those countries within its orbit would reduce tensions, raise living standards, lay the foundation for expanding trade, and open up access to natural resources. Finally, the U.S. monopoly over atomic weapons and the resulting "saber rattling" heard from some of our leaders present a major obstacle to better U.S.-Soviet relations. This type of talk only strengthens the hand of those elements within the Soviet ruling class that do not favor cooperation with the West. These hard-liners use signs of U.S. hostility to justify further militarization of the Soviet economy. By establishing secure international controls over atomic weapons, we could eliminate this source of friction and take another important step toward shaping a world of peace and cooperation.



To hold it together!

Haddad in The Providence Journal, 1946.

The United States should take the following steps:

1. Recognize Soviet security interests in eastern Europe and stop encouraging groups in this area to resist the Soviets.

2. Avoid threatening the Soviet Union with our atomic monopoly and work for effective international control over the development of atomic power.

3. Focus on areas of mutual concern where there are some common interests,

while using the United Nations as a forum to discuss differences and negotiate settlements.

4. Assist the Soviet Union and eastern Europe to rebuild, using U.S. expertise and economic assistance.

5. Avoid political and military alliances that might appear to the Soviets to be directed against them.

Lessons from history

• The aftermath of World War I demonstrated that world peace cannot be maintained without the cooperation of all the Great Powers. To exclude a Great Power such as the Soviet Union from the process guarantees failure.

• While friction between Great Powers is an inevitable result of the international system, the extent of such friction in the past has been limited through diplomacy. Differences in economic and political systems do not inevitably lead to war between nations.

• Just as the United States has been historically dominant in the Caribbean and has reacted strongly to other powers meddling in the area, so the Soviet Union has been historically dominant in eastern Europe and has interests in some areas of the Middle East. This is natural behavior for a powerful state.

• The wartime collaboration showed that the United States and the Soviet Union can work together on common areas of interest, even though they have very different political and economic systems.

Arguments for Option 3

• Contact and cooperation with the Soviet Union is the best way to expose the Soviets to the benefits of the American democratic system. Eventually, the Soviets will become more like us.

• U.S. assistance in the economic development of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe will lead to increased trade and access to raw materials, which will benefit the American economy and raise the American standard of living.

• Since the U.S. atomic monopoly will not last long, the destructive power of these weapons requires that all nations refrain from threatening behavior and confrontations. No longer can the world's leaders engage in traditional games of threat and bluff.

• Reduced defense expenditures will promote American economic prosperity. American citizens should be engaged in productive, peacetime occupations, not in nonproductive, military establishments.

From the Historical Record

Excerpt from Secretary of War Henry Stimson's letter to President Truman, September 11, 1945

“Those relations may be perhaps irretrievably embittered by the way in which we approach the solution of the bomb with Russia. For if we fail to approach them now and merely continue to negotiate with them, having this weapon rather ostentatiously on our hip, their suspicions and their distrust of our purposes and motives will increase.”

Excerpt from testimony by General Dwight Eisenhower before the House of Representatives, November 15, 1945

“There is no one thing, I believe, that guides the policy of Russia more today than to keep friendship with the United States....”

Excerpts from Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace's letter to President Truman, July 1946

“American [military] actions since V-J Day...make it appear either (1) that we are preparing ourselves to win the war which we regard as inevitable or (2) that we are trying to build up a predominance of force to intimidate the rest of mankind. How would it look to us if Russia had the atomic bomb and we did not, if Russia had ten thousand-mile bombers and air bases within a thousand miles of our coast lines and we did not. Some of the military men and self-styled ‘realists’ are saying: ‘What’s wrong with trying to build up a predominance of force? The only way to preserve the peace is for this country to be so well armed that no one will dare attack us. We know that America will never start a war.’ The flaw in this policy is simply that it will not work. In a world of atomic bombs and other revolutionary new weapons, such as radioactive poison gasses and biological warfare, a peace maintained by a predominance of force is no longer possible.... Within a very few years several countries can have atomic bombs and other atomic weapons.... The very fact that several nations have atomic bombs will inevitably result in a neurotic, fear ridden, itching-trigger psychology in all the peoples of the world, and because of our wealth and

vulnerability we would be among the most seriously affected.... Insistence on our part that the game must be played our way will only lead to a deadlock. The Russians will redouble their efforts to manufacture bombs, and they may also decide to expand their ‘security zone’ in a serious way....

“...Russian history for over a thousand years has been a succession of attempts, often unsuccessful, to resist invasion and conquest.... It follows that to the Russians all of the defense and security measures of the Western powers seem to have aggressive intent.... Our resistance to her attempts to obtain warm water ports and her own security system in the form of ‘friendly’ neighboring states seems, from the Russian point of view, to clinch the case.... [We should] allay any reasonable Russian grounds for fear.... We should ascertain from a fresh point of view what Russia believes to be essential to her own security as a prerequisite to the writing of the peace and to cooperation in the construction of a world order. We should be prepared to judge her requirements against the background of what we ourselves and the British have insisted upon as essential to our respective security. We should be prepared, even at the expense of risking epithets of appeasement, to agree to reasonable Russian guarantees of security.... It is of the greatest importance that we should discuss with the Russians in a friendly way their long-range economic problems and the future of our cooperation in matters of trade. The reconstruction program of the USSR and the plans for the full development of the Soviet Union offer tremendous opportunities for American goods and American technicians....”

Excerpts from two books written by Walter Lippmann, one in 1943, the other in 1946

“We should not have learned the lessons of our failures in the past, especially the lesson of the failure of the League of Nations, if in our projects for organizing world peace we did not fix our attention first of all upon the powers capable of organizing it. Blueprints, covenants,

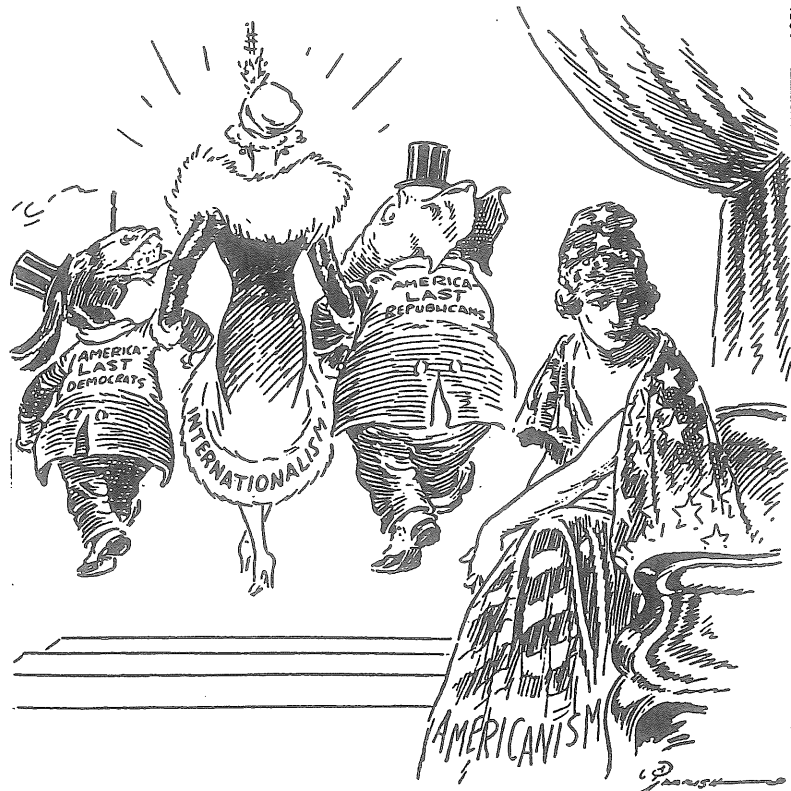
contracts, charters, and declarations do not create living associations.... The will of the most powerful states to remain allied is the only possible creator of a general international order.... The worse one thinks of the Russians, the greater must be deemed the error of having elected to challenge the Russians first of all on the ground where they were most able to be, and were most certain to be, brutal, stubborn, faithless, and aggressive.... To apply the methods of domestic politics to international politics is like using the rules of checkers in a game of chess.... In a world of sovereign states conflicts are decided by power, actual or potential, for the ultimate arbiter is not an election but war.”

Option 4: Avoid Foreign Entanglements

With our victory in the last war, the security of the United States is assured. Americans can return again to making their lives better without foreign threats lurking over their shoulders. Our fortunate geographic position, with great oceans isolating us from the strife of Europe and Asia, enables us to defend our shores without bankrupting our economy. The United States' two-ocean navy and air force equipped with atomic bombs are more than sufficient to ensure our freedom and protect those areas on the periphery of Europe and Asia that may be important to us. Further involvement in world affairs should be avoided. Especially dangerous are misguided plans to shape the world to fit American ideals. The people of each country should be allowed to work out their own problems in their own ways. The role of crusader is not only doomed to failure, as was demonstrated by the aftermath of World War I, but it also tends to corrupt the values that motivate the crusade. At a time when the risk of confrontation with the Soviet Union is high, such a policy would be both expensive and reckless.

President George Washington established the traditional U.S. policy of non-intervention in European affairs. This policy, faithfully followed until this century, has worked hand-in-hand

with our system of economic freedom to bring the American people an unrivaled level of peace and prosperity. By shunning political and military commitments in Europe, the United States has avoided the economic burdens of maintaining oversized armed forces. Moreover, unlike the experience of many Europeans, Americans have not seen their democratic values and individual rights threatened by an overbearing military establishment. Americans understand that we prosper most when the power of the central government is kept at a minimum. The individual liberties that Americans hold so dear would be threatened by the unchecked growth of executive power fed by overseas involvement. Like military and political commitments abroad, dependence on overseas markets and resources leads to a build-up of a military establishment to protect and promote these interests. Foreign loans and credits, even when motivated by humanitarian concerns, more often than not produce friction. America can continue to prosper without excessive overseas economic commitments.



Some day they'll come crawling back to her.

Joseph Parish in The Chicago Tribune, 1949. Used with permission by TMS.

The United States should take the following steps:

1. Avoid interfering in the disputes concerning Soviet influence in eastern Europe.
2. Keep our navy and air force strong enough to defend the Western Hemisphere and those areas along the periphery of Europe and Asia vital to our interests.
3. Avoid alliances, political or military, with any European power, particularly those directed against the Soviet Union.
4. Limit foreign aid to outright grants of financial assistance, rather than loans.

Lessons from history

- The United States has prospered for 170 years because we have avoided foreign commitments and the high level of military expenditures that such commitments require.
- The aftermath of World War I showed that we cannot remake the world according to American ideals. American ideals cannot be exported or imposed upon others.
- The economic dependence of the European powers on colonies in Asia and Africa has led to tangled political commitments and military involvement abroad. This was a major reason for the war among the European powers in 1914.
- The aftermath of World War I taught us that lending money to Great Britain, France, and other countries leads to hard feelings, friction, and, frequently, non-repayment of debts.
- From the Roman Empire to Nazi Germany, history shows us that militaristic governments tend to repress the liberties of their citizens.

Arguments for Option 4

- We will minimize the chances of being drawn into the next European war by avoiding commitments to or alliances against any European power.
- Our economy will not be burdened with the heavy defense and foreign aid expenditures required by foreign commitments.
- Because of our geographic isolation and largely self-sufficient economy, the Soviet Union poses no vital threat to the United States in the long run.
- Americans will enjoy a full range of political and economic liberties only if the United States rejects policies that result in the build-up of a large military establishment.
- The U.S. navy and the air force, equipped with atomic weapons, can guarantee the security of the United States from attack.

From the Historical Record

Excerpts from President George Washington's Farewell Address, September 19, 1796

"Nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated.... Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, ...the jealousy of a

free people ought to be constantly awake.... The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible.... Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to

our concerns.... Even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences.”

Excerpts from President James Monroe's message to Congress, December 2, 1823

“Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government de facto [in power] as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none.”

Excerpts from the testimony of Prof. Charles Beard before Congress debating the Lend-Lease Act, 1941

“Europe is old, Asia is old, the peoples and nations of Europe and Asia have their respective traditions, institutions, forms of government, and systems of economy.... Europe and Asia have been torn by wars, waged under various symbols and slogans, since the dawn of recorded history. The history of Europe and Asia is long and violent. Tenacious emotions and habits are associated with it. Can the American people, great and ingenious though they be, transform those traditions, institutions, systems, emotions, and habits by employing treasure, arms, propaganda, and diplomatic lectures? Can they, by any means at their disposal, make over Europe and Asia, provide democracy, a bill of rights, and economic security for everybody, everywhere in the world?”

Excerpts from speeches by Senator Robert Taft, May 1943, August 1943, and January 1946

“[Suggestions that the United States police

the world] are completely contrary to the ideals of the American people and the theory that we are fighting for liberty as well as security.... It is based on the theory that we know better what is good for the world than the world itself. It assumes that we are always right and that anyone who disagrees with us is wrong.... Other people simply do not like to be dominated....

“It may appeal to the do-gooders who regard it as the manifest destiny of America to confer the benefits of the New Deal on every Hottentot.... It can only lead to vast national armaments in all parts of the world.... Our fingers will be in every pie. Our military forces will work with our commercial forces to obtain as much of the world trade as we can lay our hands on. We will occupy all the strategic points in the world and try to maintain a force so preponderant that none shall dare attack us.... Potential power over other nations, however benevolent its purpose, leads inevitably to imperialism....

“Money loaned to governments is not likely to be repaid if loaned in such tremendous amounts. That was our experience after the last war.... I seriously question the wisdom of having one government lend money to another.... In the long run, a country which cannot stand on its own feet is not likely to succeed through assistance from some other country. Every country must work out its own salvation.... Loans from one government to another make for bad feelings. A man or a country is more likely to make enemies by lending money and asking for repayment than he or it is likely to make friends. Loans have been used and probably will be used in the future for political purposes, to tie one country more closely to another, to obtain concessions in the development of resources, and to form political blocs, which are a good deal more dangerous than economic blocs.”

Epilogue: Crisis in the Mediterranean and the Truman Doctrine

Introduction

You are one of several members of Congress who have been called to the White House to be briefed on the situation in Greece and Turkey. As you read “Crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean—March 1947,” consider how the United States should respond to a crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean. You should base your arguments on the option that you presented in class to President Truman. Be prepared to answer the following question in class: *What actions, if any, should the United States take?*

After you read “Crisis in the Mediterranean—March 1947,” you will read excerpts from Truman’s speech responding to the crisis. On March 12, 1947, President Truman delivered the speech to a joint session of Congress. The policy he put forth in the speech would become known as The Truman Doctrine.

As you read the excerpts, consider the following questions:

1. Do the ideas in President Truman’s speech resemble the ideas of your option group? If not, which of the other options does he draw most from? (Mark at least two lines from Truman’s speech that support your answer.)

2. The language used in the speech is very broad and general. Underline at least five of these broad, general statements. Why did President Truman choose to be general, rather than specific?

Crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean—March 1947

On February 28, 1947, the British government sent two diplomatic notes to Washington, indicating that the ongoing financial crisis would soon force the British to cut off the aid they had been sending to Greece and Turkey. Hopes that the British economy would rebound were dealt a serious blow

when the British Isles experienced the most severe winter of the century. Shortages in energy supplies required many British industries to shut down temporarily. Lacking the money to import food and raw materials, and unable to revive its export industries, Britain has been forced to ration food and energy. The British government now realizes that it can no longer afford the expense of maintaining the foreign commitments of a great power. British commitments to Greece and Turkey will be among the first to be reduced. It is feared that cutting off this aid will lead to a collapse of the Greek government’s efforts to fight a civil war against Greek communists, and that this would increase neighboring Turkey’s vulnerability in the face of Soviet pressure for territorial concessions.

Background Information

Greece: A poor country with few natural resources, Greece (population 9.5 million) suffered from German occupation during the war. Civil war broke out following the German evacuation. The communist-led Greek opposition party (ELAM) and its military forces (ELAS), which number about thirty thousand, have significant support among the Greek people. Many Greeks view the government as corrupt, inefficient, and dominated by right-wing politicians. The ELAS forces receive most of their supplies from Yugoslavia in the north, where a communist government was installed after World War II. Unlike other eastern European countries, where communist governments were installed by the Soviets, a powerful national communist movement seized power in Yugoslavia without significant Soviet assistance. During the war, former British Prime Minister Churchill ordered units of the British army into Greece to put down a Communist revolt that followed the German evacuation. British forces, equipment, and financial aid have continued to play a central role in propping up the Greek government.

Presenting Your Option

Your Assignment: The year is 1946. Your group has been called upon to advise President Truman about the course of U.S. foreign policy. Your assignment is to persuade the president that the United States should adopt your option. On Day Four, your group will be called on to present a persuasive three-to-five minute summary of your option to the president. You will be judged on how well you present your option. This worksheet will help you prepare. Keep in mind that your group's presentation may include only information that was available in the fall of 1946.

Organizing your Group: Each member of your group will take a specific role. Below is a brief explanation of the responsibility of each role. Before preparing your sections of the presentation, work together to address the questions below. The **group director** is responsible for organizing the presentation of your group's option to the president. The **political expert** is responsible for explaining why your option is most likely to succeed in the current domestic and international climates. The **historian** is responsible for explaining how the lessons of history justify your option. The **military expert** is responsible for explaining how the military situation supports your option.

Questions to Consider:

1. According to your option, what role should the United States play in the world?
2. According to your option, how should the outcome of World War II affect the direction of U.S. foreign policy?
3. According to your option, what should the U.S. attitude be toward the Soviet Union?
- 4a. How will your option affect people in the United States?
- 4b. How will your option affect people in countries other than the United States?
5. According to your option, what should we learn from history in charting the course of U.S. foreign policy?
6. In summary, why should the United States adopt your option?

President Truman

Your Role: It is 1946. You have asked your advisors for their recommendations on U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union. These presentations will introduce you to four distinct approaches that the United States could take. The decision faced by the president is a serious one and of vital importance to the nation.

Your Assignment: While the four option groups are organizing their presentations, each of you should prepare two questions regarding each of the options. Your teacher will collect these questions at the end of role play.

Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Option 1 might be:

In light of the huge number of troops that would be required to execute this option, how would the government explain this action to the people of the United States?

On the day of the role play, the four option groups will present their positions. After their presentations are completed, your teacher will call on you and your fellow committee members to ask questions. The "Evaluation Form" you will receive is designed for you to record your impressions of the options. Part I should be filled out in class as the option groups make their presentations. Part II should be completed as homework. After this activity is concluded, you may be called upon to explain your evaluation of the options.

Name: _____

Options: Graphic Organizer

	Is the Soviet Union a threat to the United States?	Should the United States provide aid to the countries of Eastern Europe?	Should the United States use military force to roll back the Soviet occupation of Europe?	Should the United States form military alliances with other countries to counter the Soviet threat?	Should the United States reduce its role in Europe and around the world?	Should the United States cooperate with and provide aid to the Soviet Union?
Option 1						
Option 2						
Option 3						
Option 4						

Role-Playing the Four Options: Debate and Discussion

Objectives:

Students will: Articulate the leading values underlying the debate on U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union in 1946.

Explore, debate, and evaluate multiple perspectives on the future of the Soviet Union.

Sharpen rhetorical skills through debate and discussion.

Cooperate with classmates in staging a persuasive presentation.

Handouts:

“Evaluation Form—President Truman”
(TRB-23)

In the Classroom:

1. Setting the Stage—Organize the room so that the option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Truman committee. Distribute “Evaluation Form” to President Truman committee members and instruct the students to fill it out during the course of the period and to complete the last question for homework.

2. Managing the Simulation—Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five

minute presentations by each option group. Encourage students to speak clearly and convincingly.

3. Guiding Discussion—Following the presentations, invite the members of the President Truman group to ask clarifying questions. Make sure that each committee member has the chance to ask at least one question. The questions should be evenly distributed among all the options groups. During questioning, allow any group member to respond. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of the other groups. During the questioning, allow any option group member to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit clarifying questions following the presentation of each option.)

Homework:

Students should read “Epilogue: Crisis in the Mediterranean and the Truman Doctrine” (pages 39-41).

Name: _____

Evaluation Form: President Truman

Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?

What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?

Option 1:

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 2:

Option 3:

Option 3:

Option 4:

Option 4:

Part II

Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.