

The Policy of Containment in Europe

Intro.

American leaders responded to the Soviet control of Eastern Europe by developing a policy of **containment** – the United States would prevent communism from spreading to additional countries, even though it would not challenge communism where it already existed.

1. The Truman Doctrine (1947)

Vice President Harry Truman became President when FDR died in 1945. Truman had met Stalin at Potsdam, and had made the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan, ending the war.

Truman became alarmed about the rapid expansion of communism in Eastern Europe after the war.

When communist rebels threatened the governments of Greece and Turkey in 1947, President Truman gave those countries military aid. With this help, the Greek and Turkish governments were able to defeat the communist rebels.

The Truman Doctrine cont.

Truman declared that America would **support any country that was fighting communism.**

This announcement, known as the Truman Doctrine, marked the start of America's policy of containment.

2. The Marshall Plan (1948)

Truman was convinced that communism was attractive to people only when they were **desperate and miserable**.

Therefore, he believed that by fighting **poverty in** Europe he could make Europeans more resistant to **communism**.

As a result, Secretary of State George Marshall proposed that aid be given to the countries of western Europe to **help them rebuild their economies**.

2. The Marshall Plan cont.

Marshall and Truman **hoped to avoid the economic chaos** that had followed World War One.

They believed that **economic aid would create strong European allies and future trading partners for the United States.**

The Marshall Plan, as it became known, was **extremely successful: it speeded the economic recovery of Western Europe and created new good will towards the United States.**

The Division of Germany and the **Berlin Airlift (1948)**

After WWII, Germany was divided into **four zones of occupation**. In 1948, the **French, British and Americans united their zones into a single West German state**. **Berlin**, the former capital of Germany, was located 110 miles **within the Soviet zone**.

Because of the importance of the city, **Berlin had also been divided into four sectors, each occupied by a different power**.

Stalin reacted to the merging of the Western zones of Germany by announcing a **blockade of West Berlin**, and closed all its highway and railroad links.

The **Western Allies refused to abandon the two million West Berliners, and began a massive airlift to feed and supply the city**.

Every few minutes, day and night, Allied planes landed in Berlin with supplies. **After 11 months**, Stalin admitted defeat and **lifted the blockade**.



The Formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact

In response to the tensions of the Cold War, the **U.S, Canada and ten Western European countries formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949.**

NATO's purpose was to **protect Western Europe from communist aggression.** The alliance was based on the idea of **collective security – each NATO member pledged to defend every other member if it was attacked.**

Formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact

The Soviet Union responded to the formation of NATO by creating the Warsaw Pact in 1955 with the eastern European countries that were under its control.

