

The Reaction of the USA: The Truman Doctrine / Marshall Aid

Stalin's takeover of Eastern Europe convinced the USA – rightly or wrongly – that the Soviet Union was a threat to world peace. In response, the American government formed The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.



The Truman Doctrine ("Containment")

"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." – President Truman

The Marshall Plan

"The seeds (of Communism) are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty. In Europe, People are crying for help, for coal, for food and for most of the necessities of life. The patient is sinking" – George Marshall, Secretary of State



FLASHPOINT	Events	Reaction of USA	Reaction of USSR
Greece & Turkey	Britain tells USA that it does not have the money to protect Greece and Turkey from communism, and that the USA must take over as policeman of Europe.	Political: Truman Doctrine makes it the policy of the USA to provide help to any country threatened by communism ("Containment").	Political: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> USSR sets up COMINFORM (Communist Information Bureau) to co-ordinate the policies of all the Soviet satellite states.
Czechoslovakia	The last East European state with an independent government; communists brutally seize power in March 1948 (one pro-Western minister, Masaryk, is found dead after "falling from a window")	Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshall Aid provides economic aid to all countries protected by the Truman Doctrine. \$13.5 billion flows into 16 countries across Europe 	Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> USSR forbids all her satellite states from accepting Marshall Aid. Sets up COMECON (Communist Economic Council) to co-ordinate the economies of the Soviet satellite states.

Task 1: Structured Questions

- a. Why was the policy set out by the Truman Doctrine known as "containment"?
- b. Why were the states which surrounded the USSR known as "satellite" states?
- c. George Marshall said his plan was "Directed against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos". So why did the USSR refuse Marshall Aid?
- d. Truman always described Marshall Aid and the Truman Doctrine as "Two halves of the same walnut". What do you think he meant by this?

Task 2: Cartoon Analysis

a. Look at the sources on the following page, and use them to complete this grid.

Source	Is the source FOR, AGAINST or UNBIASED about the Marshall Plan?	Interpretation: What point is the cartoonist trying to make about the Marshall Plan?	Detail: What features of the cartoon create this impression?
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
I			

Source A



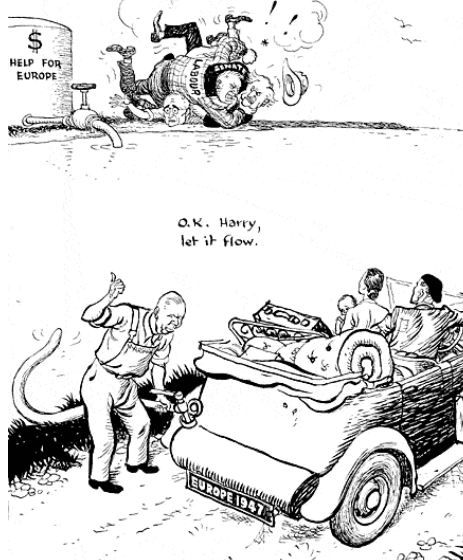
Source B



Source C



Source D



Source E



Source F



Source G



Source H



Source I



Task 3: Write-up

- With your grid completed, you are now ready to write up your findings as a mini-essay. Use the sources and your completed grid to complete this table (note: you do not need to use all of the sources).

When George Marshall announced his plan for economic aid to Europe, he placed himself in a very dangerous position.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...
The Soviet Union was opposed to the Marshall Plan because they thought it would make Europe the slave of America.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...
Many Americans were against the Marshall Plan because they could not see how it benefitted them.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...
As a result, the Marshall Plan was not approved immediately, and this created fears that Europe would fall to the communists.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...
Marshall argued that the American people were turning a blind eye to the disastrous results that the collapse of Europe could have for the USA.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...
The plan was eventually put into action, and was much more successful than Stalin's own "COMECON" plan.	This is demonstrated by Source...	Which depicts...

Discussion Point

After World War One, the USA retreated into a policy of "Isolationism". After World War Two this did not happen. Why do you think this was?