

hope alive. The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world—and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation. . . .

Discussion Questions

1. How did Truman underscore the gravity of the situation in Greece and Turkey?
2. What reasoning did Truman use to convince his listeners that economic aid would help prevent the spread of communism?
3. This speech has been characterized as America's "declaration of Cold War." Do you consider this an accurate description? Why or why not?
4. How might Stalin have reacted to Truman's speech? Why?
5. What aspects of this speech suggest that the Truman Doctrine could become part of a global strategy, with implications going far beyond Greece and Turkey?

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The Marshall Plan, 1947

SHORTLY AFTER THE PROCLAMATION of the Truman Doctrine, US Secretary of State George Marshall traveled to Moscow to attend a conference of foreign ministers. There he spoke extensively with Stalin and learned that the Soviet leader was convinced that European capitalism was in its death throes. War-torn Europe had never recovered from the devastation of World War II, and in France and Italy, it appeared that widespread economic misery would enable Communists to win the 1948 elections. Returning to Washington, DC, Marshall informed Truman of his concerns and set the State Department to work on measures designed to promote European economic recovery.

On 5 June 1947 Marshall embodied the final version of these measures in a commencement address at Harvard University. Although the proposal was officially called the European Recovery Program, it became widely known as

the Marshall Plan, in hopes that Marshall's immense popularity would help win congressional approval for the large expenses involved. As matters developed, approval came easily, both because of widespread fear of communism and because of the plan's preference for grants of credits to purchase American goods rather than outright gifts of money. The purchases stimulated the prosperous US economy even further, and the Marshall Plan fueled spectacular economic recovery in Western Europe during the following decade.

MARSHALL'S COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, 5 JUNE 1947

I need not tell you gentlemen that the world situation is very serious. That must be apparent to all intelligent people. I think one difficulty is that the problem is one of such enormous complexity that the very mass of facts presented to the public by press and radio make it exceedingly difficult for the man in the street to reach a clear appraisal of the situation. Furthermore, the people of this country are distant from the troubled areas of the earth and it is hard for them to comprehend the plight and consequent reactions of the long-suffering peoples, and the effect of those reactions on their governments in connection with our efforts to promote peace in the world.

In considering the requirements for the rehabilitation of Europe, the physical loss of life, the visible destruction of cities, factories, mines, and railroads was correctly estimated, but it has become obvious during recent months that this visible destruction was probably less serious than the dislocation of the entire fabric of European economy. For the past ten years conditions have been highly abnormal. The feverish preparation for war and the more feverish maintenance of the war effort engulfed all aspects of national economies. Machinery has fallen into disrepair or is entirely obsolete. Under the arbitrary and destructive Nazi rule, virtually every possible enterprise was geared into the German War machine. Long-standing commercial ties, private institutions, banks, insurance companies, and shipping companies disappeared, through loss of capital, absorption through nationalization, or by simple destruction.

In many countries, confidence in the local currency has been severely shaken. The breakdown of the business structure of Europe during the war was complete. Recovery has been seriously retarded by the fact that two years after the close of hostilities a peace settlement with Germany and Austria has not been agreed upon. But even given a more prompt solution of these difficult problems, the rehabilitation of the economic structure of Europe quite evidently will require a much longer time and greater effort than had been foreseen. . . .

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability, and no assured peace.

Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. Such assistance, I am convinced, must not be on a piecemeal basis as various crises develop. Any assistance that this Government may render in the future should provide a cure rather than a mere palliative. Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government. Any government which maneuvers to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments, political parties, or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit therefrom politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States.

It is already evident that, before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government. It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all, of European nations.

An essential part of any successful action on the part of the United States is an understanding on the part of the people of America of the character of the problem and the remedies to be applied. Political passion and prejudice should have no part. With foresight, and a willingness on the part of our people to face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country, the difficulties I have outlined can and will be overcome.

Discussion Questions

1. Why was Marshall so concerned about the economic situation in Europe? Why did he think American aid was essential?
2. Why was it likely that destitute Europeans might turn to communism if nothing was done to alleviate their poverty?
3. What arguments might have been advanced in 1947 by Americans opposed to helping Europe recover?
4. Why did Marshall insist that Europeans take a principal role in the plan's implementation? Why did the plan favor grants to purchase US goods rather than outright gifts of money?

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George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 1947

GEORGE FROST KENNAN WAS A CAREER foreign service officer in the US Department of State and a highly regarded student of Russian and Soviet affairs. Early in 1946, while serving at the American embassy in Moscow, he sent a lengthy message to Washington providing an expert analysis of Soviet behavior. Placing Soviet expansionism squarely within the context of traditional Russian suspicion and insecurity, he argued that the USSR could not be fully trusted or reasoned with by the West and must instead be treated with firm resistance and strength. This "Long Telegram" made a deep impression on Kennan's superiors and helped shape their thinking about US foreign policy.

Returning to Washington later that year, Kennan wrote a paper entitled *Psychological Background of Soviet Foreign Policy*. Early in 1947, he was asked to submit an article for publication in the journal *Foreign Affairs*. The State Department authorized him to do so, as long as he did not use his own name. He took the paper he had written, signed it with an "X," and sent it to the journal.

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