

# Truman doctrine essay

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Truman Doctrine was a reaction of the US towards Britain's move to cut military and financial aid for Greece in 1946. Britain had cited the reason that the war was tough and protracted and it could not make it alone if US continued with its isolation policy. According to the US ambassador in Moscow, George Kennan, the US had to embark on a containment policy or else the Soviet Union take control of the world. It could also be termed as the number of measures that the US government took to check the spread of communism in Greece and Turkey by the Soviet Union. At this period, Greek war was at war with communists' rebels and it desperately needed that assistance if it was to survive.

This paper will mainly focus on Truman Doctrine that is what transpired its formation, its content and the outcomes of the doctrine. According to Spalding (2006), situation that surrounded Greek's government led US to reconsider its stand something that led to its abandonment of its war time isolationism policy. This came as Britain declared that it would cut the military and economic aid it provided to the Greek government because it could no longer afford it citing the reason that the war between the government forces against communist rebels was far from being won. The US government saw this as a loophole towards the expansion of the Soviet Unions' communism ideologies. The situation was such serious that the US government had no choice except to drop its wartime policies to salvage the situation. This forced the then US president Harry Truman on 12th March 1947 to request the Congress to approve the provision of military and financial aid to both Greek and Turkey as they were both dependent on Britain's assistance. As a result Greek was granted three hundred US million

dollars while Turkey got one hundred million dollars. (US Department of State) All this time the US government was in the belief that the Soviet Union was assisting the Greek rebels with both aids that is military and financial because of their war persistence but this was not the case.

The truth was that the Soviet Union had long stopped giving any aid to Greek and if anything, it had forced Yugoslavia to cut its aid to Greek too something that strained the relationship between the two countries.

(Gort) For this and other reasons, the US government left with no other choice except to see the expansion of the Soviet Union, was forced to intervene. Some of the other reasons that made this to happen was the fact that the Soviet Union intended to force Turkey to allow them to have an access to Turkish straights and also to allow them to establish a military base in their territory, the Soviet Union also forcefully wanted oil concessions to be granted by the Iranian government. Another reason was that the Soviet Union had refused to withdraw its troops from Iran as it was agreed in the 1943's Tehran Declaration and the final reason was that the Soviet Union had rejected the international move to control nuclear energy and weapons under a plan dubbed as Baruch Plan in 1996. " In light of the deteriorating relationships with the Soviet Union and the appearance of Soviet meddling in Greek and Turkish affairs, the withdrawal of British assistance to Greece provided the necessary catalyst for the Truman administration to reorient American foreign policy" (US Department of State). In Truman's view, if Greeks Communist Party won, Turkey's political stability would have been compromised something that would have resulted to further ramifications in the Middle East and to the United States' security. US being on the front line

against totalitarian regimes, it could not have waited to see the Soviet Union advance and spread their totalitarian ideologies against the will of free people because if this was let to happen the international peace would have been hurt and in particular it would have had serious consequences to the United States. The US' intention to support Greek and turkey was in line with its policy of assisting free nations from subjugation by outsiders and armed minorities.

(Frazier, 1999)Truman argued that US security was not only dependent on its physical boundaries but also on international peace and security and thus there was need for the US government to act and move with speed to curtail the Soviet's move to expand its dictatorial ideologies. Though United States in peacetime avoided involvement with foreign commitment on matters falling outside the western hemisphere, the US government deemed it of political importance to intervene so that political integrity of Greek and Turkey would be preserved while at the same time checking the speed at which the Soviets were expanding their communist ideologies. (Digital History, 2009)The danger that was looming to the Greeks had to experience was not new as they had already experienced the same in the past. By the time the Liberation forces entered Greek, they found that the Germans had destroyed almost everything that was there.

In fact there was virtually nothing that was left as they had destroyed all communication lines such as the railway lines, roads and marine systems (Jones, 1989). Properties worth millions of US dollars had been destroyed and many other catastrophic events had taken place in Greek and thus the US

was not ready to stand aside and witness the repeat of the same. According to the Domino Theory, if communist countries were allowed to conquer free countries they would further inch to take the whole world and this was not something the US was not prepared to see happen (Jeffrey, 2000). Truman successively convinced the congress to approve provision of both military and financial aid to help Greece and Turkey to contain political advances made by communists against their free people. It was feared that lack of taking counteraction in good time would have indirectly lead to the outbreak of a Third World War as the Russians would have been in a better position to curtail the provision of any related aid incase there was a war outbreak. In the consequence of the British government to withdraw its financial and military assistance, the Truman Doctrine was born. The doctrine was a trial by the then US president, Harry Truman to convince the US congress to approve military and financial assistance to both Greek and Turkey.

This was because Britain was no longer willing to provide this assistance which was badly needed if democracy was to prevail in these two nations. Indeed Truman doctrine was very important in preserving Greek's peace and security. References: Digital History., 2009. Post War America 1945-1960: The Truman Doctrine. Available at [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article\\_display.cfm?HHID=484](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=484)Frazier, R. 1999. Acheson and the Formulation of the Truman Doctrine. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 17(2).

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