

# 18b. the marshall plan assignment

[History](#)



18b. The Marshall Plan Using these four sources and your own knowledge, assess the view that the US policy of Marshall in 1947 was motivated mainly by the altruistic desire to help the economic recovery of Europe. There are three views Historians have on the cold war these are revisionist, orthodox and post-revisionist. The revisionist view which blames the USA while the orthodox view blames Stalin and and USSR finally post-revisionist blames them both USA and USSR.

All Four of these sources tell different views on what the real aim of the Marshall plan to help the recovery of Europe or US personal gain. The Marshall plan also know as ' The European Recovery Programme' created by George Marshall, the plan was set up because the economic infrastructure of Europe had been destroyed by WW2 one didn't focus on the destruction caused by the WW2. But to modernize European industrial and business practices using American models, reduce artificial trade barriers, and instill a sense of hope and self-reliance

After reading all of the sources they don't support the fact that the main motivation was a altruistic desire to help the recovery of Europe but source D does in some way stating that ' Marshall's new programme was made to all European countries without distinction' and Enthusiastic American New Dealers urged upon European colleagues the virtue of freer trade, international collaboration and inter-state integration' but none of the other source even mention any altruistic in their sources.

One view point of the Marshall plan was that is was set up for USA to benefit from, many revisionist historian saw this as USA opportunity to control

Western and spread capitalist ideas just as the Soviets had with Eastern Europe, interpretation A view on the Marshall plan was that it was a set up to spread the use of capitalism, he wrote 'to win the mouth and minds of west European people so as to prevent them from turning communist' this shows the American fear of communism meaning they wanted to boost capitalism around the world which 'was being resuscitated and given a prosperity highly lluring to countries on the fringe of the USSR' USA was also trying to encourage Cominform countries to join capitalism Source D suggests aid was a 'programme to reform the European economy' this is backed up with Stalin's and Molotov suspicions of the terms 'Marshall was proposing quite incompatible with the closed Soviet economy'. Molotov viewed aid as 'an attempt by American capitalists to capture additional markets'. The Marshall plan in source B was viewed in the same way he believe that Marshall aid was motivated by US self-interest he wrote 'an expanding European market would take more U.

S goods' this would greatly improve the market for US because there market is been used by the nations which accept there help and in turn this would help USA 'capture additional markets and thus avoid depression' (source A) this is further supported by Source C who argued that financial aid would provide 'psychological benefits' and because 'soviet union would not accept such aid' this made it possible for USA to contain communism and give a huge boost to the American market.

The sources show American lack attempts to help Russia. This could mainly be because America didn't help any fascist or communist countries and there was and there is evidence in the plan to stop communism for instance

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America funding 'productivity missions' which brought managers, technicians and trade unionist to study the American way of business' this enforces the view that America was trying to stop the influence of communism from spreading through out Europe.

The next view the Source have is the attempt to spread capitalism into Europe. Source B believes 'the programme obligated European governments to plan ahead and calculate future investment needs' and this is supported by the figure taken between 1948 and 1952 this was the fastest period of growth in European history industrial production increased by 35%.

Agricultural production substantially surpassed pre war levels the poverty and starvation of the immediate post war years disappeared. An good example to prove this is France who need 'German reparations' but US take them the money instead to boost the French recovery after WW2. The plan also allowed Germany to grow economically because they would allow Europe to become a huge trade power which will benefit USA because they will be able to sell their goods asier then if hey left Germany to suffer for what the did during WW2, but USA could of seen Germany as a threat if they left them alone because Stalin and the Soviets could of easily of taken over Germany if they were weakened and this would have led to great consequences for America Secondly Source D say that 'the offer of aid through Marshall's new programme was made to all European countries without distinction' this suggest that USA didn't just want to contain Communist countries but try to persuade them to join the capitalist ideology.

All of the source suggest that Marshall plan would gain popularity if it had a negative impact on communism. Source C wrote ' the risk that hunger, poverty and despair might cause Europeans to vote their own communists into office" this suggest that this was a huge threat of a outbreak of communism in western Europe. This view is enforced by source B who says ' by linking it to anti-Communism the concept would be very popular in the USA'.

This anti communist view of the Marshall plan is continued by source A and D who both have the view that USA was trying to contain communism within eastern Europe and Source A believes that the only reason why the plan was passed was because the US put a ' considerable amount of emphasis had been laid on the danger of communism in Europe' this is backed up with source D who says ' Marshall Aid was to be confined to the west' but it can be argued that aid was offered but because Stalin ordered his fellow communists not to accept aid from US and even set up his own form of aid called Comecon.

The Final reason that the Marshall Plan was passed could be to do with Military power this view is enforced by Source A ' but the plan later came to be given a more military significance, the Americans plan was to ' enable Britain and France to resume their roles as great powers' this could be true because Britain and France where two of the major receivers of aid from USA but this is mainly because they had greater capita then the other countries which received the aid.

But this view can be dismissed because there was no wars were fought in Europe after WW2 as well as the three other sources don't have many mention the military aspect of the plan In conclusion four sources in general suggest that the main motivation for the Marshall plan was to stop the spread of communism and spread capitalism.

The problem with the sources is that they all seem revisionist and don't really give a different view point of the Marshall plan and seem bias. Also from my knowledge the Marshall plan may have had many benefits towards America but the economies of the participant of the Marshall plan had surpassed pre war levels and it also improved trading throughout Europe erasing trade barriers.