

The success of america's policy of containment



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Americas global policy of containment appears immediately after World War Two. Competing for influence and power, the United States and Soviet Union, are brought into a Cold War which was fought by propaganda, foreign aid, multinational alliances, surrogate wars and espionage. Due to suspicion and hostility between the nations, both countries wanted to prevent the other from increasing their power. In 1946, American diplomat, George F. Kennan proposed a policy of containment, the prevention to any addition of communist rule to other countries. Although, containment in the Middle East was more successful than in Latin America, both regions allowed the policy to avoid communist ideas and actions by the funding of money, weapons, and humanitarian aid.

On March 12, 1947, President Harry S. Truman inquired the Congress for \$400 million in economic and military aid for Greece and Turkey. Truman reminded people of the issues caused by World War Two, which was then allowing fascism and communism to thrive. Truman proclaims that " by supporting 'free peoples' everywhere, the United States would both prevent future conflict and, in time, boost the international capitalist system on which America's prosperity depended. Communism, must go 'no farther'"(Ross 34). Truman's policy was known as the Truman Doctrine, an example of containment. The Truman Doctrine was a policy to get rid of communism by giving military and economic aid to countries who had the desire of becoming " free".

In the Middle East, containment was put to test in 1951 when Iran's former prime minister, Mohammed Mossadegh placed private industries of oil fields owned by Great Britain under Iranian control. To protest, Great Britain

stopped buying Iranian oil which set off the United States fear of Iran turning to Soviet Union for help. In 1953, the CIA took covert actions in Iran. The CIA gave several million dollars to Anti- Mossadegh supporters, wanting the pro-American Shah of Iran to return to power. Likewise, in Latin America, the CIA took covert actions. President Eisenhower assumed Guatemala's government had made communist actions due to the giving of more than 200, 000 acres of American owned land to peasants. As a result, the CIA trained an army to invade the country of Guatemala. The Guatemalan army rejects defending its president, which leads to the Army's leader becoming dictator of Guatemala. For the reasons of the Shah of Iran turning over control of Iranian oil fields to Western Companies, the Middle East was more successful in upholding the American containment policy.

Similarly, not only did Iran and Guatemala deal with CIA covert operations, but so did Nicaragua. In Nicaragua, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was founded in 1961. When the United States noticed Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union were supplying arms to Salvadorian rebels, they ended aid. In 1979, the Sandinistas of El Salvador " overthrow the government of Nicaragua and establish a Marxist government"(Robert J. Coates). Containment fails in Nicaragua due to the Boland Amendment. The United States House of Representatives pass the Boland Amendment in 1982, prohibiting the United States from supplying the Nicaraguan contras. In 1984, Both United States enemies and allies criticize the action, allowing Nicaragua to sue the United States in World Court. Nicaragua allowed containment because of the United States funding money in weapons to keep the contras out.

Correspondingly, the United States President, Ronald Reagan did not want Marxist, Bernard Coard, to replace Maurice Bishop which led to the marines invading Grenada on October 25, 1983. Not much has been done for this island. Grenada remains extremely poor. Containment in Grenada was not successful because Grenada invited Fidel Castro to the island, presenting a sign of Communism.

Cuba can relate to Iran, Nicaragua, and Guatemala because they all had the CIA getting involved from the United States. As for containment, the Cuban Missile crisis was successful, and the Bay of Pigs was still an attempt to prevent Communist ideas and actions. In 1960, the CIA was permitted by Eisenhower to secretly train Cuban exiles for an invasion of Cuba. The CIA and exiles hoped the invasion of Cuba would overthrow Castro. An air strike had failed to knock out the Cuban air force, however the CIA reports it was successful. President Kennedy negotiated with Fidel Castro for the release of surviving commandos and he made a payment of \$53 million in food and medical supplies. As for the Cuban missile crisis, on October 14, 1962, Soviet nuclear missiles were found. President Kennedy had let others know that if any missile attack on Cuba was done, there would be an all-out attack on the Soviet Union. Nikita Khrushchev offered to remove the missiles in return for no invasion on Cuba.

Soviet influence was at risk in Egypt. In 1955, Great Britain and the United States agreed to give financial aid to Egypt for the construction of a dam at Aswan on the Nile River. Egypt's former president, Gamal Abdel-Nasser had not let the United States know he went to Soviet Union to ask for help too. He tried to improve relations with each nation in order to get more aid.

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Nasser refused to let ships bound for Israel pass through the canal. Israel, Great Britain and France responded by sending troops. The United Nations stepped in convinced the three countries to withdraw, allowing Egypt to take control of the Suez Canal.

Tensions grew between Israel and Egypt. Syria steps in and takes Egypt's side. On October 6, 1973, Syria and Egypt invade Israel on Yom Kippur. The United States helps Israel by providing military aid. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) responded to the United States by cutting off oil sales. When nations decided to continue sales, the prices quadrupled. This worsened the problem of inflation. The war only lasted 3 weeks, killing about 16, 000 Egyptians and Syrians, and about 5, 000 Israelis. The United States worked on what became known as the " shuttle diplomacy". Israel signed an official peace accord with Egypt. Four months later in May 1974, Israel signed a cease fire with Syria.

Not only did Israel deal with the Yom-Kippur War, but to prevent communism, the United States stepped in to help Israel with the Six-Day War. Due to terrorist attacks on Israel, from June 5, 1967 to June 10, 1967, four nations including, Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Syria had fought in order to gain territory. Creating about 700, 000 Palestinian- Arab refugees, the United States had given an Aide of Memoire to Israel's right for open access to the straits of Tiran. Arab countries, such as Syria and Egypt supported the Palestinian Fatah. They drafted territories for actions made by Israel. The Soviet Union had told the government of Syria about a prepared attack from Israel. In order to prevent communism, the United Nations had pronounced the claim incorrect and denied the Soviet Union.

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Overall, the United States made an effort to prevent the spread of communism. Containment was applied to the Middle East and Latin America. Communism has something in common with all countries, equal pay. The Soviet Union attempted to make El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Grenada, Cuba, Israel, Egypt, and Iran communist. Latin America was weakened by poverty, and civil unrest. Containment, in my opinion, was more successful in the Middle East because of financial and military aid, appeasing terrorism and humanitarian aid.