

# Harry truman biography examples

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Harry Truman became the 33rd president of United States of America in the year 1945, following the sudden death of President Franklin Roosevelt. He encountered challenges during his two terms in office. First, the republicans and the press, severely, criticized his administration in terms of both domestic and foreign affairs. However, his policies abroad helped many generations. Domestically, he protected reforms. This paper discusses Harry Truman's background, early life, accomplishments, shortcomings, and failures.

## **Background and early life**

Harry Truman was born in Lamar, in the year 1884. Different historians give varying stories about Truman's childhood. Some believe that he enjoyed his childhood, while others say he did not enjoy it like most of his age mates. His spectacles, however, prevented him from participating in several childhood activities. Truman's mother encouraged him to read hard. Some historians believe that this shaped Truman's political career because he came to understand the American history, but others insist that his presidency became affected by the challenges he faced during his childhood. According to Mayle, (2006), Truman's father encouraged him to be a masculine boy, but his poor eyesight prevented him from competing with other boys, for example, in sports. In general, he was unable to interact well with both boys and girls of his age (Verney, 2006).

Harry Truman did not further his studies after high school due to financial struggles experienced by his parents. He was also unable to join a Military Academy following his poor eyesight. At one time, he worked for a railroad in an attempt to better his life. This was after he dropped from a business

college due to lack of finances. To save himself from the farm life, he worked in a bank. Circumstances back home, however, demanded that Truman went back home, once in a while, to help in the farm. For a period of twelve years, Truman worked as a farmer, which made him change his personality making him confident and less withdrawn (Geselbracht, 2007). It was then that he began taking part in Democratic Party's politics. He also joined several organizations such as Masons. In 1922, Harry became a county judge in Jackson County. In the year 1934, Harry Truman contested for the post of a senator, and he won. He headed a commission, Truman Commission, investigating fraud in contracts given to the defense ministry. He saved the government millions of dollars. He served as a senator for a period of ten years when President Roosevelt asked him to become his running mate in 1944. The win made him the vice president, and after a period of less than three months, Roosevelt died unexpectedly, which made Harry Truman the 33rd President of the U. S (Mara, 2011).

## **Accomplishments**

Harry Truman assisted the U. S in forming the United Nations immediately after taking presidency, following the death of President Franklin Roosevelt. He also helped in instituting the European Recovery Program. This program aimed at rebuilding Europe, which had been torn by war. Truman established the containment policy that aimed at doing away with communism. President Truman supported the creation of state of Israel through the United Nations. He continually fought for peace through his four point program. This program marked the start of United States commitment in helping the underdeveloped countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The president

took a controversial and aggressive action, in 1950, when South Korea became attacked by the communist forces (Geselbracht, 2007). This helped in preserving Korean Independence but at the expense of many lives. On the domestic accomplishment, Truman promoted a deal that instituted improvements in America. These improvements included allocation of funds (federal funds) to housing, increased minimum wage, expansion of social security benefits, among others. Another notable improvement was desegregating armed forces. However, some of the legislations did not go through when taken to the congress. Therefore, historians hold different views regarding Truman's program. Harry Truman also achieved a lot in promoting the legislation of civil rights. However, he faced considerable resistance from the Congress (Mara, 2011).

Harry Truman oversaw the American Economy being converted from its initial footing of World War II, to a military as well as consumer production economy. Truman fought publicly on the issue of civil rights. Finally, the president achieved politically. Republicans got control of the Congress in the year 1946 when Truman was still the president. This was spearheaded by the mid-term elections, held the same year. In 1948, Truman, in a general election, defeated the New York Governor who was also a presidential aspirant (Devine, Watson & Wolz 2008). He defeated the governor in the general election.

President Truman protected New Deal's gains. He also managed to preside over the U. S economy which marked notable growth for over two decades after he took office. When it came to foreign affairs, the president established American Foreign Policy foundation such as American Soviet

relations. This policy guided America in the coming decades. In general, the president is celebrated by scholars, politicians, and the public for the job well done (Mayle, 2006).

## **Shortcomings and failures**

Some historians have marked certain faults in Truman's history as the president of United States. First, they argue that Harry Truman quickly accepted the advice given by Douglas Arthur, yet he needed to question the assessment by the commanding generals in China. Other historians argue that the president failed to keep other politicians and the public well informed concerning the government's policy towards the civil war against the Chinese (Verney, 2006). They further add that Truman's administration was reserved regarding Jiang, which destroyed political firestorm that came after the Mao emerged victorious. The critics point here is that Truman's response to Senator McCarthy was slow. He is also criticized for having an underwhelming support for African American civil rights. Finally, some other historians criticize Truman for encouraging government intervention in the U. S economy when it was necessary. This was in the year 1946, and many argue that advocating for liberal initiatives was an error made by Harry Truman (Devine, Watson & Wolz 2008).

However, these critiques need to understand that President Truman was facing difficult circumstances politically. The major problems arose because Truman's party comprised of different constituencies that were grievously divided between conservatives and progressives in the south. The republican detractors also gave very strong opposition because they were determined to return to the White House. Harry Truman, therefore, had to

play his cards wisely and cautiously (Geselbracht, 2007). When people look at Truman's achievements from this perspective, they get to understand that he tried in achieving in both domestic and foreign affairs. This is so because he had to confront several challenges, which have never been faced by any American president.

## **Conclusion**

Harry Truman became the president of America in the year 1945 following the death of President Roosevelt. During his time in office, he faced several criticisms. Some historians argue that Truman could not give the right leadership because of the hardships he went through when he was a young boy. He came from a middle class family, and his family was financially unstable, which denied him a chance to enroll in a college school. Truman's poor eyesight also affected him because he could not interact with his age mates in activities such as sports. Historians argue that the president did not know how to relate with people including, his fellow politicians. Other historians, on the other hand, commend Truman for a job well done. They say that he performed exemplary as the president given the situation in America at the time he became the president. The discussion brings to the readers knowledge that Truman left his office as an unpopular president since his administration was criticized for being corrupt and soft of communism. However, many scholars believe that although Truman failed to measure America's tenor accurately, and made some blunders in policy making, the president achieved notably. For example, he spearheaded the civil rights, New Deal's gains, and he also oversaw economic growth of America (Verney, 2006).

## **Overall opinion of Truman**

Harry Truman is today regarded as an important, former American president. He was a strong and confident leader in that he made the toughest decision ever by deciding to drop atomic bombs, in order to end World War II. He is also the president who initiated U. S efforts to expand Soviet Imperialism. This helped a great deal in saving Western Europe's democratic governments. The Soviet Communism policy, however, collapsed following the election of other presidents. Harry Truman should also be remembered because he was the first president to make use of Federal Policies, in ending racial segregation that existed in America. For example, he managed to desegregate the U. S Military, yet many powerful people such as General Eisenhower, were against this policy. Truman's efforts to fight for civil rights are also quite remarkable. This showed his courageous nature as the president of the United States. Although he was once unpopular, by the time he was leaving office; most historians have classified him as one of the greatest American President.

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