

# Truman doctrine narrative essay

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Truman Doctrine In February of 1947, Britain informed the United States that it could no longer provide financial aid to Greece and Turkey. The U S had been monitoring Greece economically and their political problems, paying close attention to the rise of the Communist-led insurgency known as the National Liberation Front, or the ( Trumanlibrary2011). They were also monitoring events taking in Turkey. Turkey's government was weak and they were being pressured by the Soviets to share control of the Dardanelle Straits” ( Trumanlibrary2011). Secretary of State Dean Acheson expressed to Congress and state department officials the ominous theory. Acheson made it known that more was at stake than just Greece and Turkey, and that if those key states should fall, Communism would likely spread south to Iran and as far east as India ( Trumanlibrary2011). In March, of 1947, President Truman asked a joint session of Congress for an excessive amount of funds for military and economic assistance for Greece and Turkey and established the Truman Doctrine, that would guide U. S. diplomacy for the next 40 years (Trumanlibrary2011). President Truman declared, " It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures" ( Trumanlibrary2011). Aid to Greece and Turkey by Congress indicated the beginning of cold war foreign policy. That later was referred to as containment. He also took measures to contain Soviet influence in Europe, including the Marshall Plan and NATO . Containment required detailed information about Communist activity, and the government increasingly relied on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). As an extra measure of security he also approved a statement of containment policy called NSC 20/4 in November 1948, the first statement of security policy ever created by the <https://assignbuster.com/truman-doctrine-narrative-essay/>

United States ( Bowen, 2011). The Soviets first nuclear test in 1949 caused the National Security Council to create a revised security doctrine known as NSC 68( Bowen, 2011). The United States prevented Greece from falling to Communism. It added Greece to its sphere of influence and gained influence in the region. It also supplied the military and economic power to enable the Greek monarchy to defeat an army of communist-led insurgents in 1947- 49 and won a victory that became a model for U. S. relations toward civil wars and insurgencies (Barnet, 1968) . Almost two decades later the President of the United States was defending his intervention in Vietnam by pointing out Truman's success in Greece. The American experience in Greece set the pattern for subsequent interventions in internal wars and also suggested the criteria for assessing the success or failure of counter-insurgency operations( Barnet, 1968). Greece was the first major police task which the United States took on in the postwar world. The Marshall plan is said to be the most successful full scale aid program ever orchestrated (Truman Library 2011), and was beneficial for the American economy itself as it allowed the European to continue buy American goods while cementing the transatlantic political ties (Gaddis, 1974). With the end of the Cold War, Turkey tried to reposition itself as still useful to the West, opening up its military bases to the United States and its western European allies in 1990 for the United Nations- sanctioned war to liberate Kuwait from an Iraqi invasion. But two things have turned the tide against Turkey's centrality since then: the 2003 U. S. war on Iraq and the Arab Spring.

First, the Arab Spring of 2011-12 has eroded Turkey's distinction as leader of the democratic Muslim world. Now Egypt and Tunisia are fledgling

democracies, Jordan and Morocco have been pressured to liberalize, Iraq had already been dragged bloodily into the democratic world, even Libya has elections scheduled, while Syria and Yemen may even be fully democratic before long. Although Islamism is making inroads in some of these areas after the revolutions, the West, if it plays its cards right, could have a whole host of friendly regimes to work with all over the Middle East. And not all of them will be as grumpy and difficult as the Turkish government usually is. Moreover, this year Arab Spring-style street politics has begun to make an appearance in Turkey's large Kurdish communities in a big way (see my recent blog article on the Kurdish Spring). Ankara has not yet figured out how to respond to this, and it is intersecting messily with Syria's ongoing civil war, where Kurds are participants with shifting alliances (see my recent blog article on these dynamics). Turkey is now at serious risk of looking unambiguously like one of the Bad Guys in the movement for democracy in the region, no matter how strongly it sides against Syria. (See my blog article on prospects for the partition of Syria. ) Secondly, earlier, in the Iraq War, the U. S. occupied and established a long-term military presence in Iraq and replaced Saddam Hussein with a democratic (more or less) government that includes an autonomous Kurdish quasi-state in the north. The U. S. treats Iraqi Kurdistan in most respects like an independent state, and Turkey fears it is potentially sympathetic to Turkey's deeply popular but brutally repressed Kurdish separatists just over the border and their armed resistance.

Because of the Kurdish entity, which came into existence gradually in the decade between the two Iraq wars under U. S. nurturing, and for other

reasons, Turkey was not so accommodating to the U. S. -and-allied military during that second Gulf War. Then, as Israel and the U. S. (NATO, not so enthusiastically) have swiveled their gunsights over to Iran as the next great Satan to be defeated, Turkey, though it borders Iran, is not really needed at all anymore. Iraqi Kurdistan and the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan are the new staging grounds for U. S. and Israeli cold war and covert ops against Iran.

For Turkey, this stings: Azerbaijan, a fellow Sunni Muslim and Turkic-speaking nation, did not turn out to be as staunch a Turkish ally as was hoped, and now Azerbaijan's new B. F. F. s seem to be Israel and America. The consolidation of alliances between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) and between the US and Japan, as well as the strengthening of ties between Japan and the ROK in recent years, has further intensified tensions on the Korean Peninsula, the world's only region that has remnants of the Cold War, and made it an urgent task to promote denuclearization on the peninsula and maintain its peace and stability. In late 2010 and early 2011, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the US, two key rivals in the region, had some engagements under the brokering of China, which to some extent eased tensions on the peninsula. In the meantime, the DPRK embraced a restrained attitude toward the joint military exercises conducted between the US and the ROK and expressed its willingness for engagement with Washington and Seoul and the unconditional resumption of the stalled Six-Party Talks. It even said it would agree to discuss its uranium enrichment plan during talks.

In response, the US put forward a plan for three-stage talks, with talks between the two Koreas first and then consultations between itself and Pyongyang. Only after that, it said, would the six-way talks be resumed. At the same time, warmer ties between China and the US, Japan and the ROK since the start of this year, together with its improving ties with the DPRK, have brought some positive effects to the evolution of the Korean Peninsula situations. However, the stances between the US, the ROK and Japan on one side and the DPRK on the other have so far remained widely divergent on how to resume the Six-Party Talks, which also comprises China and Russia. In particular, Washington and Seoul still remain suspicious of Pyongyang's motive in returning to the long-stalled talks, demanding Pyongyang take concrete actions to show its sincerity before the restarting of the multilateral talks. Since last year, some positive trends have emerged within the DPRK, such as the greater importance it has attached to reforms and improving people's livelihoods. To ensure a smooth transition of political power and extricate itself from lingering economic and security dilemmas, the country has made goodwill gestures to China in the hope of acquiring more support from its neighbor, as indicated by the three visits to China by its supreme leader Kim Jong-il since last May. By Zhang Tuosheng China Daily, June 16, 2011 In conclusion, at the time, Congressmen, government officials, journalists and other elements debated the merits of the Truman Doctrine, and its still being debated today. Defenders have seen Truman address as the turning point when Americans abandoned isolationism and accepted their responsibilities as a world power. Critics have seen it as the beginning of the United States becoming a world policeman, committing resources and manpower all over the world in an attempt to contain a mythical,

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international Communist conspiracy" (Gaddis, 1974). The Truman Doctrine became the way to keep a nation free of communist influence. Although it was targeted for Turkey and Greece, it was envisioned for a broader reach. This was made very clear when he requested as part of a general policy to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. His doctrine was the first step in the containment strategy of the Soviet Union esigned to prevent the spread of communist influence in Western Europe (Gaddis, 1974). References HYPERLINK " [http://www. foreignaffairs. com/](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/)" [http://www. foreignaffairs. com](http://www.foreignaffairs.com), John Lewis Gaddis, 1974 (Gaddis, 1974) Mary Baldwin College, Prof. Gordon L. Bowen, Ph. D. , Foundations of U. S. Cold War Policies: The Truman Doctrine ( Bowen, 2011) HYPERLINK " [http://www. trumanlibrary. org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/doctrine/large/index. php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/doctrine/large/index.php)" [http://www. trumanlibrary. org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/doctrine/large/index. php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/doctrine/large/index.php) ( Trumanlibrary2011) Intervention and Revolution , The United States in the Third World. , Richard