

D. The World Police Power Emerges Once and For All: The Truman Doctrine (1947)

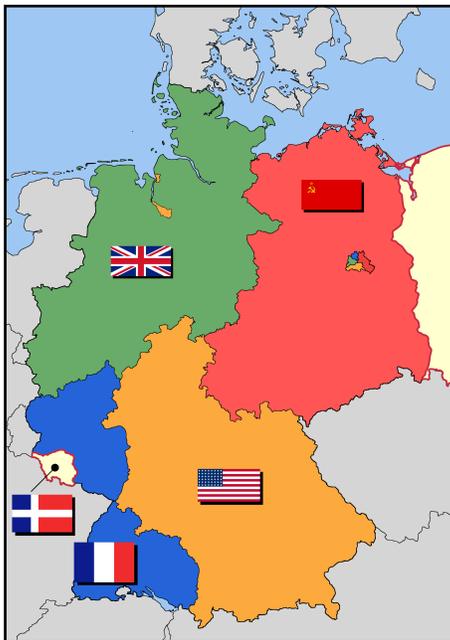
1. Once America and its allies had defeated Japan and Germany in World War II, the United States had a new set of problems to solve.
2. The United States had liberated western Europe; instead of liberating eastern Europe, however, Russia conquered its peoples and forced them to accept communist governments. (*Communism* is a form of government in which no individual has the right to the “pursuit of happiness,” but rather all property is controlled by the government.)
3. Could America simply retreat back to its borders, and allow communist Russia to impose a different kind of empire on Europe, and possibly much else of the world?
4. Faced with this situation, president Harry Truman made the decision to police the world. American troops would be *permanently* stationed around the world, to prevent communism from being imposed by force anywhere else.
6. The key passage of the **Truman Doctrine** is “*I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.*”

E. The Truman Doctrine in Action

1. With United States taking on the role of protecting Europe, Russia wanted to know if America was serious, and just how far it would go.
2. Germany had been divided by its conquerors into multiple zones. Russia had been assigned one of those zones, surrounding the capital city of Berlin, which had also been divided between the four major powers that defeated Germany.
3. Since the Russian zone completely surrounded Berlin, the Russians believed they might be able to force their former allies out by blockading the city.
4. They shut down all road and rail traffic into the city, to see whether or not they could get their allies turned rivals to leave the city.
5. The United States responded by enacting the *Berlin Airlift* in **1948**. This kept the city of Berlin alive for a year, and proved how far America was willing to go to protect Europe from Russia.
6. Russia was forced to back down.
7. To protect Europe permanently, the United States agreed to the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO) in **1949**.
8. NATO is a defensive alliance between the United States and Canada on one side of the Atlantic ocean, and western Europe on the other side. It has stood since **1949**, and was successful in its mission.

F. Police Actions in Korea and Vietnam

1. In **1949** China also became a communist country after a long civil war.
2. The United States became very worried about the fate of the surrounding area of East Asia.



The occupation zones of Germany (map left) included an eastern zones under Russian control, and the city of Berlin inside of that zone, divided between the major allies. When Russia blockaded Berlin by land, the United States conducted the almost unimaginable feat of keeping the city alive by supplying it exclusively by air. The Berlin Airlift proved how for America was willing to go, to protect Europe from Russia.

3. At the end of World War II, Russia has invaded Japanese-held northern Korea, and was assisting Korean communists to create a new government there, while the United States was trying to create a competing government in southern Korea. Just like in Germany, the two occupation zones were dividing a country that had once been united.
4. The communists in the North invaded southern Korea, with the intention of imposing their government on the whole country. America responded by fighting the **Korean War (1950-3)** which caused the country to be divided into North Korea and South Korea to this day.
5. Soon a communist takeover of Vietnam (in Southeast Asia) seemed imminent, and the United States against decided to act as the world police in the **Vietnam War (1964-73)**.
6. This time things went very badly, and when American troops withdrew from Vietnam in the country was taken over by a communist government. It was a pitiful defeat for the “world police power.”



The **Korean War (1950-3)** ended with Korea divided into two countries with a military stand-off at the 38th parallel.