

# THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

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Searching through vast scholarly writings regarding the Truman Doctrine and its origins one is able to gain an understanding of the historical importance of this decisive speech. Since 1947, the Truman Doctrine has been analyzed by historians in terms of how it was created, who influenced its creation, those it affected and how it has impacted American foreign policy. There has been great acclaim attributed to the Truman Doctrine and its significant influence in regards to American foreign policy. Joseph Jones expresses the importance of the events which took place beginning February 21, 1947, “[a]ll who participated in the extraordinary developments of that period were aware that a major turning in American history was taking place.”<sup>1</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, in his article, “Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?” challenges conventional thinking and argues that the Truman Doctrine was “very much in line with the previously established precedents for dealing with shifts in the European balance of power”.<sup>2</sup> Focusing on the literature the Truman Doctrine inspired, it is possible to establish a historical consensus regarding whether or not the Doctrine was a radical change in American foreign policy, or was it as Gaddis claims, “far from representing a revolution.”<sup>3</sup> While policies established within the Truman Doctrine are often associated with the end of World War II, the literature represents the address before Congress as a revolutionary step in American foreign policy.

## *The Truman Doctrine*

The Truman Doctrine, as it has come to be recognized, originated as an address given by President Harry S. Truman on March 12, 1947 to a joint session of Congress asking for aid to help Greece and Turkey.<sup>4</sup> The President stressed the importance of aid claiming that, “it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by

1. Joseph Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks (February 21-June 5, 1947)*, (New York: The Viking Press, 1955), vii.
2. John Lewis Gaddis, “Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?,” *Foreign Affairs* 52, no. 2 (1974), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20038005> (accessed March 10, 2009), 386.
3. Ibid.
4. Judith S. Jeffery, *Ambiguous Commitments and Uncertain Policies: The Truman Doctrine in Greece, 1947-1952*, (New York: Lexington Books, 2000), 1.

outside pressures.”<sup>5</sup> Throughout the address, the President stressed the urgency with which the United States needed to provide support to countries who were enduring disastrous circumstances that might ultimately result in their falling to communism.

In 1941, the Nazi forces invaded Greece. In October of 1944 Greece was liberated from the occupational forces.<sup>6</sup> However, liberation did not bring peace to Greece. G. M. Alexander claims that, “Greece suffered many upheavals in the first half of the twentieth century: dictatorships, civil war, and

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numerous *coup d'état[s]*.”<sup>7</sup> While the situation in Greece is not easy to understand, L. S. Stavrianos emphasizes the uniqueness of Greece’s predicament by stating that “Greece is the country where World War II has

not yet ended.”<sup>8</sup> The continuing violence was a result of the division between the resistance movements throughout Greece. EAM, or the National Liberation Front was founded in 1941.<sup>9</sup> While the other major resistance movement was the British backed EDES, known as the Greek National Democratic League.<sup>10</sup> Despite the fact that they were both in opposition to the occupying forces, EAM and EDES would soon lead Greece into a bloody civil war. In his address to Congress, President Truman described the situation in Greece as such.

Greece is not a rich country...Since 1940, this industrious and peace-loving country has suffered invasion, 4 years of cruel enemy occupation, and bitter internal strife.

When forces of liberation entered Greece they found that the retreating Germans had destroyed virtually all the railways, roads, port facilities, communications, and merchant marine. More than a thousand villages had been burned...Livestock, poultry, and draft animals had almost disappeared. Inflation had wiped out practically all savings.<sup>11</sup>

President Truman argued that instability and political unrest was the result of these tragic conditions. He claimed that “[t]he very existence of the Greek State is today threatened by the terrorist

5. Harry S. Truman, “Recommendation For Assistance To Greece And Turkey” (Address of the President of the United States, Joint session of Congress, Washington, D.C., March 12, 1947) [http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/doctrine/large/index.php](http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/doctrine/large/index.php) (accessed March 9, 2009).

6. Jeffery, 4-5.

7. G.M. Alexander, *The Prelude to the Truman Doctrine: British Policy in Greece 1944-1947*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 1.

8. L.S. Stavrianos, *Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity*, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), v.

9. *Ibid.*, 65.

10. *Ibid.*, 67.

11. Truman, “Recommendation For Assistance To Greece And Turkey.”

activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists".<sup>12</sup> These armed men Truman spoke of were members of EAM/ELAS, which was gaining support from the Greek Communist Party, KKE.<sup>13</sup> By 1943, it was evident to the State Department that the return of the British-backed monarchy to govern Athens would lead to a left-wing rebellion, possibly resulting in a civil war.<sup>14</sup>

In the early months of 1947, Europe was undergoing drastic leadership changes, which led to the urgency of the speech before Congress on the 12 March 1947. According to Dean Acheson, the winter of 1947 was one like no one could remember. "That awful winter" was difficult to endure even for the most resilient country in Europe: Great Britain.<sup>15</sup> Throughout 1946 Britain was beginning to feel the strain of their international commitments. Not wanting to completely abandon their role throughout Europe, British officials felt they would be able to entice the United States into helping maintain their policies in Greece. In 1946 the United States understood that complete isolation was no longer possible. Hence, while providing assistance to Britain was not entirely opposed, the United States did not want to intervene in Greece and maintain the current British policies. Yet, toward the end of 1946 it became apparent that Britain was going to have to withdraw from Greece, and the fear of leaving Greece subject to Soviet rule was unacceptable.<sup>16</sup> Acheson in his memoir recalls that,

The situation in Greece, bad at the end of December, deteriorated rapidly during January and February 1947. All three of our scouts...sent back increasingly alarming reports of imminent collapse due to mounting guerilla activity, supplied and directed from the outside...and Greek governmental inability to meet the crisis.<sup>17</sup>

The situation in Greece was grim, although no one foresaw the events that would take place during the first few months of 1947. February 21, 1947 was therefore a historic day at the State Department. Acheson vividly recalls the British Ambassador urgently attempting to deliver "a blue piece of paper" to General Marshall.<sup>18</sup> When Marshall was not available, Acheson was directed to make decisions. "They were shockers," claimed Acheson, "British aid to Greece and Turkey would end in six weeks."<sup>19</sup> Not only could the British no longer manage their international position, they were declaring that they were no longer able to help maintain the status quo.<sup>20</sup> According to Joseph Jones, John D.

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12. Ibid.

13. Howard Jones, *"A New Kind of War": America's Global Strategy and the Truman Doctrine in Greece*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 17.

14. Lawrence S. Wittner, *American Intervention in Greece, 1943-49*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 13-4.

15. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1969), 212.

16. Wittner, 61-7.

17. Acheson, 217.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., 216-7.

20. Ibid., 217.

Hickerson the Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs realized at once that “Great Britain had within the hour handed the job of world leadership, with all its burdens and its glory, to the United States.”<sup>21</sup> The result of this transformation was unique as Jones recalled that “[r]apidly, in an orderly manner, and with virtually no dissent, the executive branch of the government decided to act.”<sup>22</sup> Jones describes the outcomes of these actions:

This sudden spark set off a dazzling process which within fifteen weeks laid the basis for a complete conversion of American foreign policy and of the attitudes of the American people toward the world...It is a story of American democracy working at its finest...made identifiable contributions to the development of a new American foreign policy, and worked together to accomplish a national acceptance of world responsibility.<sup>23</sup>

On March 12, 1947 President Harry Truman stood before a joint session of Congress and instilled a heightened fear of Communism. In the address President Truman discussed the agency of each country to choose their way of life. There were some, he argued, that chose not to tolerate the freedom allowed in a democratic society. Truman articulated the importance that government manipulations, by authoritarian governments, went against every democratic notion. For these countries, on the verge of collapse to this “second way of life”, this meant the will of the minority became forced upon the majority, which created oppression and terror, consequently suppressing personal freedoms.<sup>24</sup> Truman claimed that it was now the responsibility of the United States to protect these nations because without our protection, “the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as to the East.”<sup>25</sup> Communist takeovers would be felt worldwide if the United States did not intervene. President Truman connected what was taking place in Europe to the national security of the United States by stating, “[t]he free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter...we may endanger the peace of the world—and we shall surely endanger the welfare of our own Nation.”<sup>26</sup> The result of the address was encouraging. The Greek-Turkish Aid Act passed the Senate and the House of Representatives and was signed into law by the President on May 22, 1947.

### *The Literature*

Throughout the decades that followed the passing of the Greek-Turkish Aid Act, the Truman Doctrine was being analyzed in regards to its influence on American foreign policy. While a majority of these works were written with different objectives in mind, their commonality was that they all argued

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21. Joseph Jones, 5-7.

22. Ibid., 11.

23. Ibid., 8-9.

24. Truman, “Recommendation For Assistance To Greece And Turkey.”

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

that Truman Doctrine was a turning point in American foreign policy.

With the change of administrations, those who had been a part of the events in 1947 began writing memoirs of the creation and implications of the Truman Doctrine. The most influential and detailed is Joseph Jones' *The Fifteen Weeks (February 21-June 5, 1947)*. Jones argues that, "[t]here was nothing...in anybody's mind to suggest that the most revolutionary advance in United States foreign policy since 1823 would occur within the next fifteen weeks."<sup>27</sup> In his book, Jones details the British withdrawal from Greece and how it had a significant impact upon the United States decision to intervene. While he acknowledges that official policy toward the Soviet Union stiffened in 1946 on specific issues, neither President Truman nor Secretary of State Byrnes, or other governmental leaders, openly recognized or outlined a policy towards the Soviet Union until the Truman Doctrine.<sup>28</sup> Beginning with the Truman Doctrine, Jones claims that President Truman declared a new policy of the United States when he acknowledged that it was the responsibility of the United States "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."<sup>29</sup> Jones emphasizes the enormity of the events which occurred:

[A] number of other bold policies and actions, beyond aid to Greece and Turkey and the Marshall Plan, had their roots in the national conversation of the Fifteen Weeks: The North Atlantic Alliance, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Military Defense Assistance Program, the Far Eastern programs of Economic Cooperation Administration, the Mutual Security Program, the Point IV Program, the prompt commitment of American power against Communist aggression in Korea, the Manila Pact...And the process of drawing together and strengthening the free world...<sup>30</sup>

Another important, yet less glorified version of the event can be found in the memoirs of Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson in his book, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*. Acheson gives a behind the scenes account of how the policies of the United States were affected on a daily basis. In Acheson's description of events he includes a quote from Joseph Jones' *The Fifteen Weeks*, "All...were aware that a major turning point in American history was taking place..." The inclusion of this quote demonstrates that Acheson was aware of the significance of the Truman Doctrine.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to books written by members of government, there are numerous secondary sources concerning the Truman Doctrine and its impact on American foreign policy. Herbert Druks offers an in depth examination of the forces behind the Truman Doctrine and those who denounced President

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27. Joseph Jones, 3.

28. Ibid., 11.

29. Ibid., 11-13.

30. Ibid., 262-3.

31. Acheson, 220.

Truman and his foreign policies in his chapter “The Truman Doctrine” in *Harry S. Truman and the Russians 1945-1953*. Druks argued that while Truman had always been determined to “keep the free world free” he chose to reverse the traditionally isolationist Monroe Doctrine and put America on the offensive.<sup>32</sup> Through Druks analysis it becomes clear that a reversion by President Truman to traditional foreign policies would have been irresponsible. Druks argues that without President Truman’s decisive leadership American foreign policy might have taken a different course.<sup>33</sup> Norman Graebner claims that the Truman Doctrine was a crusade and not a policy in *Cold War Diplomacy 1945-1960*.<sup>34</sup> In his critical examination of postwar policies, Graebner argued that the Doctrine was too vague to be a policy rather, that the American policy of containment began with the Marshall Plan and culminated with the article by George Kennan in July 1947 entitled, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” Richard Challener in his book, *From Isolation to Containment, 1921-1952: Three Decades of American Foreign Policy from Harding to Truman*, claims that the Truman Doctrine was only the beginning of the revolution in foreign policy, but that the Doctrine itself was no more than a committee document.<sup>35</sup> It is evident that those who attempt to fault the Truman Doctrine have a difficult time separating the policies and turn of events, which were a direct result of the address to congress.

L.S. Stavrianos in *Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity* regards Greece as “a critical testing ground for our foreign policy,” continuing by stating that, “We proclaimed the Truman Doctrine with that country primarily in mind.”<sup>36</sup> Stavrianos examines the Truman Doctrine and its consequential impact on Greece. He demonstrates the uniqueness of the Truman Doctrine, illustrating America’s previous approach to intervention in Greece. Stavrianos describes an incident where Ambassador MacVeagh explained to an EAM emissary that the United States was, in 1944, preoccupied on the Western front and in the Pacific; hence, the decision of the Middle East was left to Great Britain.<sup>37</sup> He stresses the importance of the Truman Doctrine, insisting that it was a defining policy, thrusting the United States into the fight against Communism. He argues that the British abandonment of Greece portrays the escalating crisis throughout the world by focusing on the disintegration of the Big Three.<sup>38</sup> Stephen Xydis, like Stavrianos, writes about the Truman Doctrine with respect to Greece in, *Greece and the Great Powers 1944-1947: Prelude to the “Truman Doctrine”*. Xydis argues that with the Truman Doctrine “[a] new era, thus, started not only in Greek-American relations but also in the entire foreign

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32. Herbert Druks, *Harry S. Truman and the Russians 1945-1953*, (New York: Robert Speller & Sons Publishers, Inc., 1966), 124, 144.

33. *Ibid.*, 144-5.

34. Norman Graebner, *Cold War Diplomacy 1945-1960*, (New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962), 41-3.

35. Richard D. Challener, *From Isolation to Containment, 1921-1952: Three Decades of American Foreign Policy from Harding to Truman*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 14.

36. Stavrianos, v.

37. *Ibid.*, 182-3.

38. *Ibid.*, 183-185.

policy of the United States.”<sup>39</sup> He alludes to the Monroe Doctrine and America’s determination to remain solely engulfed in the affairs of the New World while avoiding affairs of the Old World, or Europe.<sup>40</sup> Xydis argues that the Truman Doctrine was not merely the result of Greek-American relations or even that of Soviet-American relations. The United States had become determined to take part in world affairs, not only with its membership in the United Nations but also “by acting as a Power with global capabilities and responsibilities of a very substantial character within the world society of nations.”<sup>41</sup>

Historians appeared to agree that the Truman Doctrine significantly impacted American foreign policy. Whether historians agreed or disagreed with the details of the Doctrine, many were able to attribute it to the beginning of the process that changed American foreign policy. That was until 1974, when an article appearing in *Foreign Affairs* by Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis was published. “Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?” breaks the mold of praising the revolutionary consequences of the Truman Doctrine by arguing that the Truman Doctrine was not revolutionary at all.<sup>42</sup> In fact, he argues that the Truman Doctrine was “very much in line with previously established precedents for dealing with shifts in the European balance of power”.<sup>43</sup> Gaddis claims that for the United States, concern over the domination of a single hostile state throughout Europe had been prevalent since the turn of the century; hence, the United States attempts to maintain this balance were nothing new. Gaddis clarifies his argument by illustrating how Woodrow Wilson entered into World War I in order to assist the allies, and once again, to help Great Britain evade the totalitarian rise of Hitler after the fall of France in 1940.<sup>44</sup>

Gaddis claims that the Truman Doctrine did not mark a fundamental shift in American foreign policy but that with the Doctrine the objectives of American policy became focused with the Soviet Union.<sup>45</sup> After World War II American policy had been in cooperation with the Soviets, events occurring by 1946 no longer made this possible. Therefore the “actual decision to resist further Soviet expansion came early in 1946, one year before the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine.”<sup>46</sup> Gaddis insists that the administration underwent a transformation in regards to its stance on relations with

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39. Stephen G. Xydis, *Greece and the Great Powers 1944-1947: Prelude to the “Truman Doctrine”*, (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1963), 502.

40. *Ibid.*, 502-3.

41. *Ibid.*, 503.

42. Gaddis, “Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?,” 386.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, 387.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*

the Soviet Union as a result of the unpublished analysis of George Kennan (later to be published with the title, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct"), which described the increasingly hostile behavior of the Soviet Union. In the fall of 1946, Presidential aid Clark Clifford submitted a report to President Truman advocating, "a global policy of containing the Soviet Union through the use of propaganda, economic aid, and even military force".<sup>47</sup> Gaddis indicates that American policy began to change in 1946 with a firmer position taken toward the Soviet Union from the Truman Administration. It was then that Truman vehemently supported Winston Churchill's speech at Fulton, along with blatant opposition to Soviet demands in Iran and Turkey. These events, combined with negotiating tactics of then, Secretary of State Byrnes, Gaddis argues, clearly demonstrates the change in direction of American foreign policy.<sup>48</sup> Gaddis asserts that the decision to intervene in Greece was nothing more than an attempt to maintain the balance of power throughout Europe. The withdrawal of the British threatened the stability of Greece; therefore, the stability of the Mediterranean was in question. According to Gaddis, the United States had previously demonstrated that they would step in and participate in European affairs once it became a question of maintaining the balance of powers.<sup>49</sup>

Gaddis maintains that "the real commitment to contain communism everywhere originated in the events surrounding the Korean War, not the crisis in Greece and Turkey."<sup>50</sup> Gaddis argues that the original goal of the Truman Doctrine was to contain the Soviet Union and that the sweeping language utilized throughout the Doctrine was misleading. Gaddis cited George Kennan and General Marshall as having reservations in regards to the language of the Doctrine.<sup>51</sup> Gaddis states that Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson claimed that the Truman Doctrine was not destined by the Administration to be a precedent of aid to all countries threatened by communism; all other requests were to be reviewed on a case by case basis.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, Gaddis argues that the Doctrine was not a real turning point because it was not viewed as a universal policy by the administration. Gaddis explains the case of China in effort to display the limited nature of the Truman Doctrine. The United States, Gaddis claims, did not foresee any long-term ramifications of China becoming a Communist country; hence, the Administration felt there was no need to intervene with every country at risk of a Communist takeover.<sup>53</sup>

Aside from the language used and the implications of the Truman Doctrine, Gaddis claims that American foreign policy shifted with the initiation of the Korean War and the events in April of 1950. Throughout the article Gaddis describes American intervention as primarily influenced by political and economic forces, but by 1949, the United States had begun to implement military assistance as a result

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47. Ibid., 389.

48. Ibid., 383-89.

49. Ibid., 387-90.

50. Ibid., 386.

51. Ibid., 390.

52. Ibid., 390-392; can also be found in John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947*, (New York: Oxford Press, 1972), 351.

53. Gaddis, "Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?", 395.

of the Soviet development of atomic weapons. This increase in military assistance caused the State Department to increase defense spending, resulting in the nation's first formal statement of national security, NSC-68.<sup>54</sup> In the end, John Lewis Gaddis claims that the actual policies of the United States varied greatly from the Doctrine. There was not one clear policy to the problems arising in Europe. Each situation was evaluated individually, and "distinctions were made, sometimes ruthlessly, between peripheral and vital interests."<sup>55</sup>

Overall, Gaddis does not grant the Truman Doctrine the respect deserved for changing American foreign policy. "Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?" is only one article in the vast body of work presented by Gaddis discussing United States foreign policy and participation in the Cold War. In *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War 1941-1947*, Gaddis argues that the Truman Doctrine was a last-ditch effort by the government to convince Congress that America needed to accept responsibility of world leadership. The world leadership position, Gaddis argues had been in place since its "get tough with Russia" policies implemented in 1946.<sup>56</sup> In addition, Gaddis pays particular attention to the dissent within the administration regarding the perception of the Truman Doctrine and its implications on the whole of American foreign policy. Gaddis argues that while Kennan was in support of aid to Greece and Turkey "he objected to placing it 'in the framework of a universal policy'".<sup>57</sup> The question of the "universal" language of containment is discussed in various Cold War histories written by Gaddis. These works include: *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*, *The Long Peace: Inquiries Into the History of the Cold War*, *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations*, and finally, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*.<sup>58</sup> Gaddis often attributes the Truman Doctrine with little significance; instead, he credited the Marshall Plan with being much more influential in transforming American foreign policy. In *We Now Know*, Gaddis claims that the policy of Containment originated from the Marshall Plan, not the Truman Doctrine, or as he claims the "stopgap military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey".<sup>59</sup>

A majority of analysis of the Truman Doctrine disagrees with the historical position of John Lewis Gaddis. *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-1947* by Robert Frazier directly challenges Gaddis. He agrees that the question of Communism had been raised

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54. Ibid., 396.

55. Ibid., 402.

56. John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 351.

57. Ibid., 350.

58. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); *The Long Peace: Inquires Into the History of the Cold War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsideration, Provocations*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

59. Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 38.

before, but that it was not until the Truman Doctrine that the foreign policy of the United States became directed toward an ideological movement rather than being opposed to Soviet expansionism.<sup>60</sup> Frazier acknowledges Gaddis's article throughout his discussion on the Truman Doctrine, yet offers this insight:

One can accept Gaddis's view that there was a turning point in early 1946 in American attitudes, but this does not vitiate the proposition that the Truman Doctrine *was also* a turning point; one of far greater importance in the development of American foreign relations. It marked the first implementation of a policy designed to oppose the expansion of Communism backed with Congressional approval and the appropriation of funds. It was also the first decision to provide military aid to another country in peacetime...it must rank at least equally with the decision to use military force in peacetime...the distinguishing feature of the Korean War.<sup>61</sup>

Frazier is confident in his conclusion that it is possible to have more than one transformation in postwar foreign policies. By addressing the article by Gaddis, Frazier acknowledges that there have been those who doubt the changing policies, yet he clearly claims that beginning with the British notes in February 1947, American foreign policy was to transform.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to Robert Frazier, Denise Bostdorff is the most current author who refutes the case made by Gaddis by asserting that the Truman Doctrine was an important turning point in American history. In *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: The Cold War Call to Arms*, Bostdorff argues that while Korea may have marked a turning point in the application of American foreign policy, the Truman Doctrine was the symbolic turning point, which made the full transition possible.<sup>63</sup> Bostdorff agrees with Gaddis that the Korean War jumpstarted the Cold War arms race. However, Bostdorff argues that without the Truman Doctrine intervention in Korea never would have been possible.<sup>64</sup> *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* by Andrew Bacevich is another contemporary book that alludes to the connection of current American foreign policies with those created throughout the Truman Administration and enforced through the Truman Doctrine. Citing the Truman Doctrine as "a blank check for intervention," Bacevich claims that it "provided political and moral cover for actions overt and covert, wise and foolish, successful and unsuccessful..."<sup>65</sup> Essentially, Bacevich and Bostdorff are claiming that without the Truman Doctrine, the foreign policies of the United States would inevitably

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60. Robert Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 159.

61. *Ibid.*, 164.

62. *Ibid.*

63. Denise M. Bostdorff, *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: A Cold War Call to Arms*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 146.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), 228.

have been vastly different.

While some authors attempt to separate them, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan should be discussed as part of the same transformation in policy. Gaddis argues that the Marshall Plan was “an ambitious attempt to reconstitute a political balance in Europe by economic means.”<sup>66</sup> Like Gaddis, Wilson Miscamble, author of *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima and the Cold War*, argues that the Truman administration never purposely embarked on a path to change American foreign policy. Miscamble argues that neither the Truman Doctrine nor the article by Kennan clearly outlined a policy for dealing with the Soviet Union and its actions. He then contends that the Marshall

***“The Truman Doctrine was the first official stance for a policy of openness.”***

Plan “was the decisive step in establishing a political balance in postwar Europe.”<sup>67</sup> *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, by Robert Schulzinger, refers to the Truman Doctrine as “only one part of the concentrated strategy”.<sup>68</sup> The association between the Truman

Doctrine and the Marshall Plan is evident when Bostdorff quotes President Truman as stating that the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan “were two halves of the same walnut.”<sup>69</sup> Examining the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan separately can be equated to only learning a fragment of the story. The Marshall Plan was the economic partner to the military aid lent from the Truman Doctrine; this essential component cannot be viewed separately if one hopes to gain a full understanding of the transformation of United States foreign policy. *The Fifteen Weeks* by Joseph Jones demonstrates the relation between the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan by encompassing the period from February 21, 1947, the British announcement of retreat, to June 5, 1947 and the speech by George Marshall to launch the Marshall Plan.<sup>70</sup>

Since 1974 not all of the scholarship on the Truman Doctrine has been a direct rebuttal of the work presented by John Lewis Gaddis. Cecil Crabb, author of *The Doctrines of American Foreign Policy: Their Meaning, Role, and Future*, argues that the Truman Doctrine expressed America’s “internationalist” or “interventionist” approach to foreign relations. Like Gaddis, Crabb argues that the Doctrine set out to readdress the balance of power.<sup>71</sup> Throughout Crabb’s analysis he claims that the Truman Doctrine was “the culmination of trends that had begun as early as 1945” therefore representing

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66. Gaddis, *The Long Peace*, 56.

67. Wilson D. Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 310-11.

68. Robert D. Schulzinger, *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 209.

69. Bostdorff, 143.

70. Joseph Jones.

71. Cecil Crabb, *The Doctrine in American Foreign Policy: Their Meaning, Role, and Future*, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 111-13.

“no abrupt departure in U.S. policy.”<sup>72</sup> Although, by the end of Crabb’s analysis he argues that, “[n]o postwar American foreign policy principle...outranks the Truman Doctrine in terms of its impact upon the diplomacy of the United States.”<sup>73</sup> There appears to be a discrepancy in his analysis. One could argue that although the Truman Doctrine may have roots in events beginning in 1945, it was the declaration to Congress that essentially impacted the future of the policies of the United States. In the sixteenth edition of *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, John Spanier and Stephen Hook argue that the Truman Doctrine, while initiating a policy of containment, was “activated by its desire to prevent a major nation from achieving dominance in Europe, an occurrence that twice in the twentieth century has led the United States to war.”<sup>74</sup>

*The Vision of Anglo-America: The US-UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War 1943-1946* by Henry Butterfield Ryan illustrates the emergence of the United States on the international forum. In referring to the Truman Doctrine, he claims that, “[t]his declaration, with its extremely vague and general terms but its clear intent to confront communist expansion...remains basic to American foreign affairs.”<sup>75</sup> Butterfield Ryan, unlike Gaddis, is able to accept the vagueness of the Doctrine while recognizing the impacts that were made on American foreign policy. Another author that acknowledges the vagueness of the Truman Doctrine while accepting its impacts is Howard Jones. Jones, in his article, “A Reassessment of the Truman Doctrine and Its Impact on Greece and U.S. Foreign Policy,” argues that the Truman Doctrine “marked the beginning of a global foreign policy that was flexible, restrained, and not necessarily military in nature.”<sup>76</sup> Jones attributes the Truman Administration with crafting a foreign policy that was capable of transforming and shifting to meet its needs. A foreign policy that is constantly able to shift allowing for adjustments as threats change.<sup>77</sup>

The Truman Doctrine, as depicted by historians, played a significant role in the transformation of American foreign policy. There are some historians, like John Lewis Gaddis, that argue that the policies set forth in the Truman Doctrine had begun forming with the end of World War II, and that they did not culminate into universal policy until the Korean War in 1950. While, these were important steps throughout the transformation, the evidence in the literature is clear. The Truman Doctrine was the first official stance for a policy of openness. Policies began forming when World War II ended, but it was not until President Truman stood before the joint session of Congress and delivered the general statement

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72. Ibid., 121.

73. Ibid., 138.

74. Stephen W. Hook and John Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, 16<sup>th</sup> edition, (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2004), 47-9.

75. Henry Butterfield Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America: The US-UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War 1943-1946*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 169.

76. Howard Jones, “A Reassessment of the Truman Doctrine and Its Impact on Greece and American Foreign Policy,” in *The Truman Doctrine of Aid to Greece: A Fifty Year Retrospective*, ed. Eugene T. Rossides, 24-41 (New York: The Academy of Political Science; Washington, D.C.: American Hellenic Institute Foundation, 1998), 27.

77. Howard Jones, 27-8.

of principle, which would drive U.S. foreign policy.<sup>78</sup> The speech is significant in that it enabled the United States the ability to embrace a new, official foreign policy. The literature on the topic has been extensive, deriving from every facet the Truman Doctrine influenced. Since 1947, the scholarship on the topic has swayed from one extreme to another. Those writing on the Doctrine in its infancy glorified the event, while authors like John Lewis Gaddis attempted to debunk the significance attributed to the Congressional address. While it is possible to examine authors directly opposed to the Truman Doctrine and its significance, it has become overwhelmingly more common to find authors who argue that while the Truman Doctrine did not alone change American foreign policy, it was an influential first step toward a more open foreign policy than America had ever experienced.

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78. Alonzo L. Hamby, "Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the Truman Doctrine," in *The Truman Doctrine of Aid to Greece: A Fifty Year Retrospective*, ed. Eugene T. Rossides, 12-23 (New York: The Academy of Political Science; Washington, D.C.: American Hellenic Institute Foundation, 1998), 12.