

Cold War

After World War II, the foreign policy of America was notably reshaped placing the United States at the top in advocating for communism and the promotion of democratic capitalism. This resulted in an ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union and influenced almost all aspects of U.S. foreign relations, resulting in policies that were based on intervention, deterrence, and alliance-building (McCormick, 2023).

The Truman Doctrine of 1947 was one of the key aspects in the definition of the foreign policies of the Cold War. It formed a precedent for giving military, political, and economic aid to countries whose independence was threatened by communism. Friedrichs & Tama (2022) note that the Truman Doctrine highlights the beginning of the strategy of the United States in containment as George Kennan articulates. It looked to stop the spread of the influence of the Soviet Community worldwide. This policy was further stretched by The Marshall Plan (1948) providing financial aid to war-torn European economies for rebuilding. This ensured their alignment with the Western bloc was compact.

In the Military, the Cold War fuelled the formation the NATO in 1949 with a primary role as a collective defense pact designed to counter the aggressiveness of the Soviets. Additionally, the U.S. notably increased spending on defense, which established a permanent military-industrial complex and promoted the development of nuclear arms, as evidenced by the arms race. Domestically, the Cold War influenced the development of foreign policies by promoting a climate of anti-communism, as seen during the era of McCarthy. This increased vigilance led to the blurring of the lines between political paranoia and genuine security concerns (Friedrichs & Tama, 2022).

References

Friedrichs, G. M., & Tama, J. (2022). Polarization and US foreign policy: Key debates and new findings. *International Politics (The Hague)*, 59(5), 767.

McCormick, J. M. (2023). *American foreign policy and process*. Cambridge University Press.

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