

Test Date -

Test Format - 30 True/False

Define the following terms -

Josef Stalin

Yalta Conference

Iron Curtain

Harry Truman

Truman Doctrine

Marshall Plan

Mao Zedong

Robert Taft

Thomas Dewey

Dwight Eisenhower

"Baby Boom"

~~U-2 Crisis~~ U-2 Crisis

Douglas MacArthur

Julius & Ethel Rosenberg

Joseph McCarthy

Sputnik

Peace Corps

NASA

Fidel Castro

John Glenn

Containment

George Marshall

Berlin Airlift

United Nations

NATO

Warsaw Pact (Alliance)

G.I. Bill of Rights

Taft-Hartley Act

The Fair Deal

Adlai Stevenson

Standard of Living

~~Francis Gary Powers~~ Francis Gary Powers

Alger Hiss

Whittaker Chambers

Nikita Khrushchev

"Arms Race"

John F. Kennedy

Ho Chi Minh

Cuban Missile Crisis

Strom Thurmond

1

HARRY S TRUMAN

(1884–1972, P. 1945–1953)

The nation was focused on the death of FDR in the days following April 12, 1945, and Americans had tears in their eyes as the caisson slowly moved his body down Pennsylvania Avenue for the last time. After FDR's death, Harry Truman had called on Mrs. Roosevelt and asked what he could do for her. She said: "Is there anything we can do for you? For you're the one in trouble now."

Few believed Truman was up to the tasks ahead. He had neither the formal education nor the background in international affairs most felt was needed for the job. FDR had not told him about many of the problems the world and nation faced. Truman had never met such clever and experienced leaders as Churchill and Stalin. His military background was limited to his days in the National Guard and field artillery in World War I. Worse, it was a well-known fact that he had been part of a corrupt political machine, and he was sometimes called "the Senator from Pendergast" behind his back. His abilities and determination had not been discovered yet.

Harry Truman was born in Lamar, Missouri, in 1884. As a boy, his poor eyesight and thick glasses made it impossible for him to play sports, so he read instead, and he especially liked history. The family moved to Independence, Missouri, when he was six years old. By the time he was 14, he had read every book in the Independence Public Library. He dreamed of going to West Point, but his eyesight kept him out. His father's financial problems made it impossible for him to attend college. After working in the Kansas City area, he returned to the farm. In August 1917, his National Guard unit was called up, and he was sent to France as a first lieutenant. His unit, Battery D, was in some of the worst fighting. He left the army as a captain. He married Bess Wallace, his childhood girlfriend, seven weeks after returning from the war.

Truman and a Jewish friend, Ed Jacobson, opened a men's clothing store in Kansas City. Business was good at first, but the hard times of 1921–1922 forced the store to close. Truman worked years to pay off its debts.

Before the store closed, Jim Pendergast, whom Truman had known in France, came in to shop. They talked, and Jim introduced Truman to his uncle, Boss Tom Pendergast, who ran politics in Kansas City and Jackson County. With Pendergast's help, Truman was elected a county judge (commissioner) and proved more honest and independent than anyone could have imagined. His only election loss came in 1926 when the Ku Klux Klan opposed him because he used Irish Catholic workers on county projects. He was elected to the Senate in 1934, where he supported New Deal programs. After he was re-elected in 1940, he began hearing about waste and corruption in the building of military camps. The Truman Committee was created to watch for waste, and it saved taxpayers billions of dollars.

In 1944, Vice President Henry Wallace was very unpopular, and FDR was pressured into choosing a new running mate. The person chosen was Truman, who had made no effort to



get the job. His vice presidency lasted less than five weeks. When he was informed that FDR had died, he asked friends to pray for him. He told the press it felt "like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me."

TRUMAN AS PRESIDENT. Events were moving at lightning speed, and Truman reacted quickly to them. The war was coming to an end, and the meeting to form the United Nations was to be held later that month. Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945, and Truman met at Potsdam, Germany, with Stalin and Churchill in July. Big issues faced the leaders as to what would happen to the small nations of Eastern Europe. Little was accomplished because Stalin wanted to make the region Communist.

Truman was not told about the atomic bomb project until after he became president. He appointed a committee to study the moral and military issues involved in using the bomb, but he made the final decision to use the bombs. The cities destroyed by the bombs were Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the Japanese surrendered five days after the bomb fell on Nagasaki.

The end of World War II was the beginning of Truman's struggles with Congress. He proposed a number of New Deal-type programs including federal aid to education, an increase in the minimum wage, medical insurance and civil rights laws. He wanted to continue the Office of Price Administration (OPA) that had kept prices under control during the war. Business was anxious to return to setting its own prices, however, so it was holding back products until controls were dropped. OPA ended in 1946, and prices rose faster than wages.

Labor unions began striking for higher wages, the most critical being strikes by the coal miners and railway unions. Truman threatened to draft striking railway workers into the army and make them run the trains; the strike ended before he could carry out the threat. Coal miners ignored a court order not to strike. The union was fined \$3.5 million, and its leader, John L. Lewis, was personally fined \$10,000. Truman prepared to make a radio appeal to miners to return to work, but Lewis gave in, ending the strike. However, Truman's handling of the situation made him unpopular with unions.

In the 1946 elections, Republicans gained control of both Houses of Congress. They passed the Taft-Hartley Labor Law, which said a person did not have to join a union to work, permitted employers to sue unions for breach of contract, and required a 60-day waiting period before a strike could take place. The law passed over Truman's veto.

Truman was unable to accomplish much concerning domestic programs at this time, but he found Congress was willing to work with him on world problems. Senator Arthur Vandenberg, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, convinced other Republicans to support Truman's programs to stop Communist expansion. The most important of these were the Truman Doctrine, which provided aid to Greece and Turkey to stop the spread of Communism in that region, and the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe's economy.

The defense of the United States was changed by three actions. The War and Navy Departments were combined to form the Department of Defense. To gather information on other nations, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was formed. To give the president a better view of the world, the National Security Council (NSC) was created.

The election of 1948. Truman was chosen by the Democrats as their presidential nominee, but not without bitter arguments. Southern Democrats walked out of the convention to protest Truman's civil rights program, and they formed the States' Rights Democratic Party (Dixiecrats) led by Strom Thurmond. The Henry Wallace faction of the party blamed Truman for the troubles with Russia; they left to form the Progressive Party. The Republicans confidently

chose Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York as their candidate.

Truman blasted "that good-for-nothing 80th Congress" for the nation's troubles in a railroad "whistle stop" campaign. Dewey avoided the tough issues in carefully worded speeches. Even though Truman was far behind in the polls, his efforts paid off. The electoral vote was Truman 303, Dewey 189, and Thurmond 39. The election also put Democrats in control of both Houses of Congress.

TRUMAN AS PRESIDENT (second term). Much of Truman's time during the second term was devoted to foreign problems. Russia was expanding in Europe, and the Communist Chinese were advancing across that nation. West Berlin was like a small island in a Communist sea. In 1948 the city was cut off from the road and railroad bridge that had been its supply line across East Germany. Truman had begun an airlift of supplies to the city, which was an amazing project. A plane carrying supplies arrived at one airport every three minutes, and at another, every two minutes. By 1949, the Russians realized that they had lost and lifted the blockade. The experience had brought the United States and the Germans together, and West Germany was formed in 1949.

A setback for the United States occurred when the Communists drove the Nationalists out of China. The pro-American Nationalists set up their government in Formosa (Taiwan).

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in 1949, and in 1950, General Eisenhower was named its commander. While most American attention was on Europe, war broke out in Korea.

North Korea attacked South Korea, an American ally, in June 1950. Truman acted quickly and sent troops and airplanes to help South Korea. The North Koreans pushed the American and South Korean armies into a small area on the east coast called the Pusan beachhead. General Douglas MacArthur then surprised the North Koreans by an attack on the west coast at Inchon. With more help coming, the North Koreans were pushed back north near China. MacArthur wanted to expand the war, and he violated Truman's orders to limit the war. Finally, Truman fired him. After the war reached a stalemate, peace talks were held, but peace did not come until 1953.



Truman's Dilemma

Harry Truman was thrust into a difficult situation. In his time as vice president, he had been virtually ignored by President Roosevelt. He was **inexperienced** in dealing with foreign leaders, and his personality was aggressive and abrasive rather than diplomatic. When Roosevelt died, Truman needed to make difficult policy decisions with only limited information. Plans for conducting the victory in World War II were already made, but it was up to Truman to guide America to peace.

Truman was faced by two questions: what role was America to take in the post-war world, and what were the intentions of Joseph Stalin. As dictator of the Soviet Union, Stalin held complete control of his country's future actions. Truman needed to decide if Stalin's intentions were friendly or if they were hostile. He needed to know if the Soviet Union presented a threat to America, or if the two countries could work together to promote peace. Unlike Roosevelt, Truman viewed Stalin as a very serious threat.

America found itself in a unique position after World War II. The war had left America's enemies in ruin and its ally, Great Britain, deeply in debt. The United States and the Soviet Union were the only two remaining powerful nations. Traditionally, America had not involved itself in world affairs. The American people did not desire to rule over an **empire**. They did not wish to fight in foreign wars. America had never had a large army during times of peace. Truman, however, felt that it was time for America to assume a leadership role. Only the United States had the strength to lead after the devastation of World War II.

Truman was strongly opposed to communism, and he took a stern stance against Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union from the beginning. He viewed Stalin's actions with a skeptical eye. "Peace has to be built on power," Truman stated. Truman pushed to retain America's large army after the war despite opposition in Congress and from the public. He wished to deal with Stalin from a position of strength. A key part of that strength was the **atomic** bomb. After the war, only America had the bomb, and during World War II Truman had proved that he was willing to use it.

The alliance with the Soviet Union disintegrated quickly, and in a short time the United States and the Soviet Union were openly hostile to each other. Fearful of communist expansion in Europe and throughout the world, Truman introduced what was known as the Truman Doctrine in 1947. This **doctrine** stated that the United States would provide aid to any country that was resisting communist aggression (attack). This plan developed into an official policy of containment. The United States wished to "contain" communism within the countries where communists already ruled.



Harry Truman

Truman also put forth other policies. In 1948 he introduced the Marshall Plan, which gave American aid to the countries of Western Europe. These countries had been devastated by the war. The goal of the Marshall Plan was to stimulate an economic recovery for Western Europe, making these countries strong enough to resist communism. The Marshall Plan was extremely successful. Within a few years, Western Europe experienced robust economic growth. In 1949 Truman formed a new alliance with Great Britain, France, and the other nations of Western Europe called NATO, and its primary purpose was to oppose the Soviet Union. (See map on page 83.) Soon these nations were also re-arming in response to the perceived Soviet threat.

President Truman guided the United States into a role of world leadership. The choices he made guaranteed that the United States would be the leader of the democratic nations. However, his **assessment** of Joseph Stalin also guaranteed that the United States and the Soviet Union would oppose each other. Truman believed that the Soviet Union presented a great threat to the United States, and he took the actions that he believed were necessary to protect the United States. Some historians believe that he overestimated the danger presented by the Soviets, but other historians praise him for his actions. Clearly, he set the United States on the path that led to forty years of confrontation with the Soviet Union.

Think about It

1. President Truman viewed Stalin as a great threat to the United States. His predecessor, President Roosevelt, felt differently about Stalin. Do you think relations between the two powers would have been different if Roosevelt had lived longer? How and why?
2. Before World War II, America had not played a large role in world affairs. After the war, America emerged as a great power as Truman sought to make America a world leader. How do you think most Americans felt about this? What potential costs and benefits would people have expected if America became a world leader?

Dictionary Exercises

Find definitions to the following words:

1. Inexperienced
2. Empire
3. Atomic
4. Doctrine
5. Assessment

The Soviet Union

The Soviet Union had made a strange **ally** for the United States. The two countries were bound together in their common struggle against Hitler's Germany, but beyond that the nations had little in common. In fact, prior to World War II, the countries were hostile toward each other. As a capitalist and democratic nation, the United States was by nature opposed to communism. When Russia experienced a communist revolution in 1917, the United States refused to recognize the new communist government. There was a long history of mistrust between the two nations.

Of all the allies, the Soviet Union suffered the most from World War II. Nearly 20 million Russian soldiers and civilians died during the war. Many Russian cities were in ruins, and the countryside was devastated by the fighting. For the second time in twenty years, Russia had been invaded from the west and had fought a war on her own soil. Although they were victorious, the war was a catastrophe for the Soviets. In comparison, the United States had suffered only half a million deaths, and its cities and factories were untouched by the war.

Even during the war, many American leaders were suspicious of the Soviet Union. They did not trust Joseph Stalin, the Soviet leader. They pointed out that Stalin had often treated his own people brutally. They were strongly opposed to communism. They believed that the Soviet Union would continue to promote communist **revolutions** after the war. President Roosevelt largely ignored these arguments. He knew that the United States needed to keep good relations with the Soviets during the war.

After the war, Stalin took actions that appeared threatening to some people in the United States. While pushing back the German armies, the Soviet Union liberated several Eastern European countries. At the Yalta conference, Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill had agreed that free elections would be held in these countries. After the war, elections were held, but American government officials contended that the elections were rigged so that the communists would win. Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia were all soon ruled by communist governments. Stalin argued that it was necessary for Russia's neighbors to have friendly governments, for Russia could not afford to be invaded again. Many people in the United States were reluctant to accept this explanation. In a speech given on March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill warned that "an iron curtain is descending upon Europe." Stalin closed off all contact between Eastern Europe and the West. (See map on page 83.) American leaders could only guess what Stalin's plans were and what was happening behind the iron curtain. People wondered if Stalin was protecting the Soviet borders or planning a worldwide communist revolution. Only Stalin knew for sure.

Soon, American and Soviet leaders began to disagree about almost everything. They argued about the future of their recently defeated enemy, Germany. They argued



Joseph Stalin

about **rebellions** in Asia and Europe. They argued in United Nations meetings. They argued about the atomic bomb, which only the United States had. The alliance crumbled completely, and the two nations soon regarded each other as enemies.

Stalin worked hard to increase the Soviet Union's power. Russian troops were used to insure that Eastern European countries had governments friendly to the Soviet Union. He stripped eastern Germany of industrial equipment and natural resources as **reparations** for the war. When negotiations with the other allies over Germany's future broke down, Stalin created an independent East Germany and installed a communist government that he controlled. Also, Stalin desperately wanted to obtain the atomic bomb. He knew it gave the United States a huge military advantage. In 1949 Russian scientists stunned the world when they exploded their own atomic bomb. It marked the beginning of an arms race that lasted throughout the cold war.

Another great victory for communism occurred in 1949 when the armies of Mao Zedong won the civil war in China. Mao was a devoted communist who had rallied the support of the Chinese peasants by redistributing farm land. He drove the army of his rival, Chiang Kai-shek, to the island of Taiwan. (See map on page 85.) Mao's victory looked ominous to Americans. China had the world's largest population and had been an American ally during World War II. At the time it seemed certain that China would follow the Soviet Union's leadership. Americans believed that all communist countries worked together. Suddenly, America had lost another ally.

Think about It

1. The Soviet Union had suffered tremendously during World War II. Does this fact justify their desire to control the governments of their neighboring countries after the war? Why or why not?
2. The United States and the Soviet Union were easily the most powerful nations in the world following World War II. Was it inevitable that they would eventually regard each other as enemies? Was a lasting alliance possible considering their differences?

Dictionary Exercises

Find the definitions of the following words:

1. Ally
2. Revolution
3. Rebellion
4. Reparations

The McCarthy Era

The time period from 1948–1954 has become known as the McCarthy Era. It was a difficult and controversial period in American history. It was a time when American power was unequaled, but also a time when Americans felt most threatened from foreign sources. Some **demagogues** gained power and prestige by exploiting these fears. No politician was more adept at this than Senator Joseph McCarthy from Appleton, Wisconsin.

In the late 1940s the threat posed by communism became a significant part of American life. Daily, Americans read news of the threat in the newspapers and listened to reports of communist activities on the radio. Despite America's great military and economic strength, the threat was very real to the American people. Many believed that a war with the Soviet Union was inevitable.

A series of events fed the fear. In 1948 the Soviets blockaded West Berlin, and the communists triumphed in the Chinese Revolution in 1949. That same year, the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb, a weapon that only the United States had possessed. Finally, in 1950, communist forces invaded South Korea. It seemed that the communists were advancing everywhere. Joseph McCarthy was able to exploit this fear.

McCarthy gave a simple explanation for America's setbacks. He recklessly charged that communists had **infiltrated** the American government. In 1950 at Wheeling, West Virginia, McCarthy made the first of many speeches about communist traitors in the U.S. government. He stated: "I have here in my hand a list of 205 communists" whom he claimed were working for the State Department. There was no list. McCarthy had no proof, but he knew that making the charges would bring him fame and revive his sagging political career. Using a specific number only made his claim seem more believable.

Perhaps McCarthy understood little about communism, but he was an expert at manipulating the media. Reporters printed thousands of stories about McCarthy in the years after his speech at Wheeling. Some were positive, some negative. Either way, McCarthy was constantly in the news, and his fame and power in Washington grew. Prominent Republican leaders rallied to McCarthy's cause even though they knew his charges were baseless. They knew that McCarthy enjoyed a great deal of popular support, and his charges made President Truman, a Democrat, look bad. As time passed, McCarthy regularly charged that top government officials were actually communists. Among those accused were Secretary of Defense George Marshall, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and even President Truman. However, all of the charges were made without any evidence.

As McCarthy attacked his opponents in government, American society became more suspicious and less tolerant. **Conformity** suddenly became the greatest virtue. Those people with different views or beliefs became vulnerable. Many professors, journalists, entertainers, and clergymen lost their jobs because their loyalties were suspect. Many



Joseph McCarthy

companies refused to hire anyone who had ever been accused of having communist beliefs, even if no proof had ever been found. This practice became known as "**blacklisting**." Merely accusing someone of being a communist could get them blacklisted.

In the 1952 election the Republicans scored a great victory. Dwight Eisenhower became the new president, and the Republicans gained control of Congress. McCarthy was elevated to a new position of power, chairing the Subcommittee on Investigations. With great fanfare, McCarthy continued his efforts to track down communists in the government. Despite all of his investigations and accusations, he never found any communists, but he managed to ruin many men's careers.

McCarthy soon fell out of favor with the Republican Party, however. He was now attacking the party's own leaders and the policies of the Republican administration. In 1954 McCarthy's career reached its pinnacle—and its ruin—during his nationally televised hearings investigating communist infiltration of the U.S. Army. An enthralled nation watched as McCarthy made his usual **bombastic** charges against suspected communists in the army. It was the first time the American public truly saw McCarthy at work, rather than reading about him in the newspapers. Once again McCarthy failed to find any communists, but this time he succeeded in offending most Americans. Even many of his supporters were disgusted by his actions during the hearings.

McCarthy's political power dwindled quickly after the hearings. Soon after his army investigations, he was **censured** by the Senate. His power in Washington was effectively at an end. He died as the result of alcoholism in 1957.

Think about It

1. Senator McCarthy was considered to be a demagogue by many of his opponents. Do you think that this was an accurate description?
2. Senator McCarthy was a very powerful politician. Many of his supporters thought that he would make a good president. Do you think he would have been a good president? Why or why not?

Dictionary Exercises

Find definitions to the following words:

1. Demagogue
2. Conformity
3. Blacklisting
4. Infiltrate
5. Bombastic
6. Censured

The Korean Conflict

Korea seemed an unlikely place for American troops to be fighting. Most Americans would have been unable to locate Korea on a map at the beginning of 1950. By the end of that year, Korea was on the minds of all Americans.

For almost 50 years, the Asian **peninsula** of Korea (see map on page 85) had been under the control of the Japanese Empire. After Japan's defeat in World War II, Korea was occupied by Soviet and American troops. As the Big Three had agreed, Soviet troops occupied the northern half of Korea, while American troops occupied the southern half. The 38th **parallel** marked the border between the two Koreas. The original plan had called for elections to be held in 1948 to unite all of Korea under one government, but the Soviets failed to hold elections in the north. The northern and southern halves of Korea established their own governments, and in 1948 American and Soviet troops left. North Korea was controlled by Kim Il-Sung's communist government, while South Korea was led by Syngman Rhee.

Neither Kim Il-Sung nor Syngman Rhee was a popular ruler. Both were ambitious men who desired to rule over all of Korea, and border skirmishes between their forces were a common event after 1948. However, on June 25, 1950, Kim Il-Sung ordered a full-scale attack on South Korea. North Korean troops poured across the 38th parallel, and the South Korean army was soon in full retreat.

Today, historians believe that Kim Il-Sung acted on his own **initiative**, but American leaders did not know that at the time. They were surprised and disturbed by the North Korean invasion. President Truman and his advisors believed that the invasion was part of a larger communist plan to conquer the world. They assumed that Stalin had ordered the invasion from Moscow. The event was the first major test of the Truman Doctrine. Immediately, the United States set out to help the South Koreans.

The United States worked through the United Nations (U.N.). The U.N. had been created for just this type of situation. Its goal was to **mediate** and stop wars. The U.N. voted to order the North Korean troops to stop their invasion of the South. When the war continued, the U.N. voted to send troops to assist the South. Sixteen different countries sent troops to help defend South Korea, but the United States provided 90 percent of the troops and most of the financial aid. Led by General Douglas MacArthur, fresh American and South Korean troops turned the tide of the war. By October Kim Il-Sung's forces had retreated north to the Chinese border. Their complete collapse appeared **imminent**.

In November, Chinese communist forces suddenly poured across the Korean border, turning the tide once again. They forced the American and South Korean troops into a disorganized retreat back to South Korea. An American counter-attack in March of 1951



Douglas MacArthur

drove the communists back, and the front lines stabilized near the 38th parallel for the duration of the war.

A disagreement developed between President Truman and General MacArthur following the Chinese entry into the war. MacArthur wanted to expand the war, attacking the communists in China as well as Korea. He also wanted to use the atomic bomb against Chinese troops and cities, and first asked permission to do so on December 6, 1950. Truman seriously considered giving MacArthur permission to carry out his plans, but ultimately decided that it would be unwise to expand the war. Truman knew that America would lose the support of its allies if it dropped atomic bombs on Chinese cities, and he also believed that conventional weapons would be sufficient to win the war. MacArthur continued to ask permission to expand the war, but to no avail. In frustration, he expressed his views to American newspapers, in disobedience to Truman's orders. MacArthur was a popular general, but Truman wasted no time in removing him for insubordination. Truman wished to keep the Korean war under control. He did not want it to develop into another world war.

Think about It

1. Truman and his advisors assumed that Kim Il-Sung had orders from Stalin to invade South Korea. Now it is believed that Kim Il-Sung acted on his own. Do you think Truman might have reacted differently had he known that Stalin was not behind the North Korean aggression? What would you have done?

2. General MacArthur wanted to expand the Korean War. He wanted to use atomic weapons and to spread the war beyond the Korean borders. Truman wanted to keep the war limited. Which strategy do you agree with? What were the dangers to the United States of using atomic weapons?

Dictionary Exercises

Find definitions to the following words:

1. Peninsula
2. Parallel
3. Initiative
4. Mediate
5. Imminent