

The Cold War

Document-Based Question

Task:

How effective was the United States government in its attempt to halt the spread of communism in Europe and Asia between the years 1945 and 1975?

After reading primary source documents, write an essay that discusses the Cold War and evaluates U.S. strategies and their level of success in containing the Communist influence throughout the world. Be sure to support your position with evidence from the texts.

Document A

Source: *The Chicago Tribune* (1947)

Mr. Truman made as cold a war speech yesterday against Russia as any president has ever made except on the occasion of going before Congress to ask for a declaration of war...

The outcome will inevitably be war. It probably will not come this year or next year, but the issue is already drawn. The declaration of implacable hostility between this country and Russia is one which cannot be tempered or withdrawn. . . .

Mr. Truman's statement constituted a complete confession of the bankruptcy of American policy as formulated by Mr. Roosevelt and pursued by him. We have just emerged from a great war which was dedicated to the extinction of three nations [Germany, Italy, Japan] which were as vocally opposed to Russia as Mr. Truman proclaims himself to be now. If communism was the real danger all along, why did Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman adopt Russia as an ally, and why, at Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam, did they build up Russia's power by making her one concession after another?

Document B

Source: President Truman, March 12, 1947

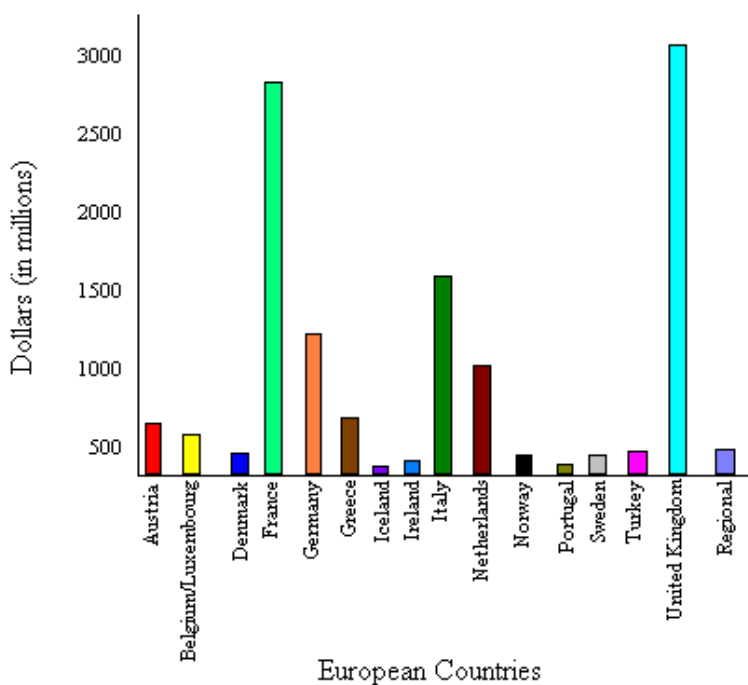
One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion...To ensure the peaceful development of nations, free from coercion, the United States has taken a leading part in establishing the United Nations. The United Nations is designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all its members...

... I believe that 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....

... I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

Document C

Source: Economic assistance to European nations provided April 1948 to June 1952



Document D

Source: *The North Atlantic Treaty*, Washington DC, April 4, 1949

The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all, and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually, and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

Document E

Source: Korean War Armistice, 1953. *United States Treaties and Other International Agreements*, Vol. 4, Part I, 1953, p. 236–348

ARTICLE I

1. A Military Demarcation Line shall be fixed and both sides shall withdraw two (2) kilometers from this line so as to establish a Demilitarized Zone between the opposing forces. A Demilitarized Zone shall be established as a buffer zone to prevent the occurrence of incidents which might lead to a resumption of hostilities.
2. The Military Demarcation Line is located as indicated on the attached map (Map 1).
3. The Demilitarized Zone is defined by a northern and a southern boundary as indicated on the attached map.

Document F

Source: John Foster Dulles Speech, "By Any Means," 1954. Department of State, Press Release No. 165, p. 1–10.

Those fighting under the banner of Ho Chi Minh have largely been trained and equipped in Communist China. They are supplied with artillery and ammunition through the Soviet-Chinese Communist bloc. Captured material shows that much of it was fabricated by the Skoda Munition Works in Czechoslovakia and transporter across Russia and Siberia and then sent through China into Vietnam....But if they [Viet Minh] achieved military or political success, it is certain that they would subject the people to a cruel Communist dictatorship taking its orders from Peiping and Moscow. The tragedy would not stop there. If the Communist forces won uncontested control over Indochina or any substantial part thereof, they would surely resume the same pattern of aggression against other free peoples in the area...

Document G

Source: British Political Cartoon. 1956.



Document H

Source: Fidel Castro. Source: Radio and Television speech to the Cuban people, 22 October 1962.

If they blockade our country they will exalt our nation, because we will resist... We are part of humanity and we run the necessary risks, yet, we are not afraid. We must learn how to live in our allotted times and with the dignity with which we know to live. Everybody, men and women, young and old, we are all one in this moment of danger.

Document I

Source: Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change: 1953–56* [New York: Doubleday, 1963], pp. 421–27

The major factor in the successful outcome was the disaffection of the Guatemalan armed forces and the population as a whole with the tyrannical regime of Arbenz. The air support enjoyed by Castillo Armas, though meager; was important in relative terms; it gave the regular armed forces an excuse to take action in their own hands to throw out Arbenz. The rest of Latin America was not in the least displeased...

By the middle of 1954 Latin America was free, for the time being at least, of any fixed outposts of Communism.

Document J

Source: Barry Goldwater, *Where I Stand*, 1964.

No responsible world leader suggests that we should withdraw our support from Vietnam. To do so would unhinge a vast and vital area, thereby committing to Communist domination its resources and its people. This we cannot do. Therefore, we need the dedication and the courage to face some hard and unpleasant facts. We are at war in Vietnam and we must have the will to win that war.

This nation must back up its resolve with whatever manpower, equipment, and weaponry it may take, first to stem the Communist advance in Laos and Vietnam, and then to help these countries, along with their neighbors in Thailand, to create conditions of stability and freedom in Southeast Asia. The security of all Asia hinges on this crucial battle.

Document K

Source: Nixon Doctrine, 1969. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the U.S., Richard Nixon*, 1969, p. 544–556.

I have already indicated that the answer to that question is not an easy one—not easy because we will be greatly tempted when that question is put to us to indicate that if any nation desires the assistance of the United States militarily in order to meet an internal or external threat, we will provide it. However, I believe that the time has come when the United States, in our relations with all of our Asian friends, be quite emphatic on two points: One, that we will keep our treaty commitments, our treaty commitments, for example, with Thailand under SEATO; but, two, that as far as the problems of internal security are concerned, as far as the problems of military defense, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, that the United States is going to encourage and has a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by, and the responsibility for it taken by, the Asian nations themselves.