

America and Southeast Asia: A Logical Development of the Policy of Containment? — An Overview of Forty Years of Globalizing Containment

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The policy of containment, which guided American foreign policy for nearly half a century, has received a mixed assessment from historians of foreign policy. On the one hand, it is credited with bringing about the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union. Of course, one could argue that communism failed in Russia for many reasons, not the least of which were its own failings, as well as the ruthlessness and yet attractiveness of capitalism as seen from afar. After all the rejoicing at the fall of the Berlin Wall had passed, however, people remembered the failures of containment as well. This was not a new realization. *In Rise to Globalism, American Foreign Policy since 1938*, one of the most popular teaching texts in courses on the history of American foreign policy, Stephen Ambrose indicted the containment policy for American involvement in Vietnam.¹ Ambrose apparently accepted President Lyndon Johnson's own assertions that he was simply following the policy of his predecessors: Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy,² and argued that America fought in Vietnam "as a logical culmination of the policy of containment".³ This perception of containment stands in need of refinement, however, particularly in light of John Lewis Gaddis's demonstration that there was, in fact, no one policy of containment, "no single or consistent approach to containment".⁴ A more correct assessment, therefore, of American policy in Southeast Asia was

the one made by George C. Herring, who argued that American involvement in Vietnam “made clear the inherent unworkability of a *global* containment policy.”⁵ (emphasis added)

The globalization of the policy of containment was not inevitable, nor was it a logical development of the original conception of containment. This essay outlines the evolution of the policy of containment which led to such a globalized, symmetrical application of strategy in Vietnam. Hopefully, an appreciation of this development will lead to a deeper understanding of the complexity of the policy which underlay American foreign policy for nearly forty years.

Harry S Truman⁶ assumed the presidency in an uneviable position. Ignored as Vice-President, and with little experience in foreign policy in general, he entered office with little knowledge of Franklin Roosevelt’s policies in particular. He had even been excluded from knowledge of the Manhattan Project. President Truman vowed to carry out FDR’s policy, but was unaware that it had been in a state of flux at the time of FDR’s death. Insecure, but wishing to appear decisive, Truman turned to Roosevelt’s advisors, who continued to advocate a tougher policy toward the Russians. Their advice was even more readily accepted by Truman than it had been by FDR, for it accorded with Truman’s own instincts. Truman also turned for guidance from the eager, but long neglected Soviet experts at the State Department, an organization which he was trying to restore to its rightful position of authority in matters of foreign policy.⁷ State had found itself left out in the cold under Roosevelt, with many of its officials denied the “key personnel” designation which would have kept them from being drafted into the war-time military. The experts at State had advocated a *quid pro quo* approach to the Soviets, and they emphasized using economic

and rhetorical leverage to gain Stalin's cooperation in a new post-War world order devoid of spheres of interest. This "carrot-and-stick" approach had failed, however. The Soviet Union seemed impervious to outside threats or cajolement, and was intent upon gaining the rewards for its immense wartime sacrifices. It looked to Eastern Europe for the majority of its recompense. Truman, and his first Secretary of State, James Byrnes, were searching for a workable alternative to *quid pro quo*, when on February 22, 1946, they received an eight-thousand word telegram from yet another State Department Soviet expert, George F. Kennan.

Kennan, an attache at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, claimed that America's policy, both before and after the war, had been wrong in regards to the Soviet Union. That policy had been based on the assumption that Soviet expansion was a product of externally-induced insecurity, and had assumed that the actions of other nations could alleviate that insecurity. Kennan, however, believed that Soviet insecurity arose from internal, historically Russian, factors, and that the Kremlin could not and "would not yield entirely to any form of rational persuasion or assurance."⁸ Therefore, Kennan advised Truman to assume a position of patience and firmness. This would entail several departures from past policy. The United States should 1) acknowledge disagreements with the U.S.S.R., but in a non-provocative manner; 2) prevent future Soviet expansion, but acquiesce in those areas already under Soviet control; 3) reconstitute American military strength, but also grant economic aid to allied nations; and 4) continue negotiations with the Soviets. Kennan, with his assumption that the United States was a nation with limited means, provided the intellectual justification for a policy of containment.

Unfortunately, at least for historians and future policy-makers, Kennan never wrote a comprehensive definition of containment. John Lewis Gaddis has done an admirable job of piecing together Kennan's assumptions from his various speeches and articles, beginning with the

“Mr. X” article, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”, published in *Foreign Affairs* during the summer of 1947.⁹ It must be remembered, however, that Kennan was a policy planner, not an implementer, and it is possible to attribute too much importance to his influence in Washington during the Truman administration.

Kennan characterized the past policy of the United States as idealistic, or “universalistic”. American leaders, imbued with a sense of mission and uniqueness, had tried to establish universal harmony and eliminate conflict from the international scene. Kennan advocated a more “realistic”, particularist approach to international relations. This realist approach attempted to maintain a balance of power among nations who had, and would probably always have, conflicting interests. Kennan’s strategy was to accept this situation, but to halt Russian expansion at minimal cost, with minimal commitments. To conserve limited resources, hard choices would have to be made in defining primary interests. In time, Kennan came to define America’s primary interests from within the framework of national security, not of principle. He selected five industrial-military power centers as crucial to that national security. These were 1) the United States, 2) Great Britain, 3) Japan, 4) West Germany and Central Europe, and 5) the Soviet Union. Russia, and Eastern Europe, were already “lost” to communism, but the United States should be interested in keeping the other four powers from communist control. Hence, the four non-communist centers were our vital interests. The United States had other, peripheral interests, but these were interests “to which we will be able to respond less promptly and less fully than to others.”¹⁰ This differentiation between vital and peripheral interests became known as strong point defense. One final caveat, which would come back to haunt administrations during the Vietnam War, was that

Finally, we must have courage and self confidence to cling to our

own methods and conceptions of human society. After all, the greatest danger than can befall us in coping with the problem of Soviet communism, is that we shall allow ourselves to become like those with whom we are coping.¹¹

In all his work, Kennan stressed that the primary threat from the Soviet Union was not military, but rather psychological. Thus the counter-pressure applied to the Soviets should be framed in psychological terms, emphasizing economic over military factors. In advocating the use of U.S. economic strength against the Soviet strength of manpower, Kennan stressed an asymmetrical response to challenge, a pattern he deemed as a traditional to America. This tactic of “applying one’s own strengths against an adversary’s weakness, rather than attempting to match the adversary in all his capabilities”¹² had most recently been illustrated in World War II, when America had assumed the role of the arsenal of democracy.

The first step in Kennan’s containment strategy was to restore confidence, in order to more readily restore the balance of power in the vacuum of power that had resulted from World War II. This was to be accomplished by massive infusions of economic and technological aid. In addition, as a second step, the United States was to assist fragmentation within the international communist bloc by siding with dominant forces of nationalism against the Kremlin. In some cases, this would mean supporting dissident communist satellites of Moscow. Kennan insisted that communism was not monolithic. He believed the threat from the Soviet Union was posed by traditional Russian expansionism, not Marxist ideology, and he objected to idea that the United States had to resist communism wherever it appeared.¹³ The goal of containment was to bring the Soviets to the negotiating table, and to convince them to conduct normal international relations. This was to be accomplished by a form of behavior modification in which the United States would respond positively

to conciliatory initiatives of the Kremlin, and firmly counter those that were not.

From 1947 until 1949, the Truman administration rather faithfully implemented at least the first two steps of Kennan's policy. Truman initiated several enormously successful economic plans to rebuild world confidence, the most notable of which was the Marshall Plan to reconstruct the West European economy. In addition, Truman tolerated the rise of communism in those nations that were not defined as vital to our national security, and even allowing in vital-interest Japan the revival of a Marxist political party. Elsewhere in Asia, in China for instance, while the rise of communism was not viewed with equanimity, was at least tolerated with an eye toward maintaining the balance of power. This toleration was encouraged by the China-experts at State, who had always equated the Chinese Communist Party with democracy, and had viewed it as independent from Moscow. Yugoslavia, with its nationalistic brand of communism under Josef Tito, was also accepted. Using the full range of non-military instruments of foreign policy, the administration encouraged further outbreaks of Titoism by means of Voice of America broadcasts, human rights campaigns, economic pressures, and covert action.

By 1949, however, Kennan's influence in Washington was waning. Even as early as March, 1947, Kennan, the policy planner, had been dismayed by the rhetorical excesses of Truman, the policy implementer, especially in regard to the Truman Doctrine. This document, was replete with universalist rhetoric to justify the particularist end of obtaining aid for Greece and Turkey. "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."¹⁴ In this document, Truman expanded the use of containment to support of those governments beleaguered from within, and "by direct or indirect aggression".¹⁵ He used words that would lead to a broad American policy directed against

communism, whether it was expansionist or not. For the next several years, however, rhetoric notwithstanding, Truman did not approach the fight against communism as a global battle.

Nonetheless, by 1949 the confusion between means and ends, which was to so plague the future development of the policy of containment, had already begun. Kennan had been displeased with the American sponsorship of the NATO alliance, the creation of an independent West German state, the maintenance of United States military forces in post-occupation Japan, and with the American decision to develop the hydrogen bomb. Despite his assertion that Soviet insecurity was caused by internal factors, Kennan insisted that these actions taken by America would reinforce the traditional suspicion and insecurity of the U.S.S.R. He believed these actions would lesson the chances of what he saw as the real goal of containment — negotiation.¹⁶ The desire for relative strength, originally intended to enhance the United States' bargaining position, was becoming an end in itself.

As the long-range goal of negotiation seemed less and less attainable, policy making became more and more susceptible to the changing mood of the domestic political scene. Truman was imbued with a sense of universalist thinking, and his idealistic rhetoric had encouraged the American public's obsession with the spread of the ideology of communism or Bolshevism, as it had been denoted in the years before World War II. Then came the year 1949, a year of tremendous shock for the American people. This was the year of the Berlin Blockade, and the year in which the Soviets successfully exploded their own bomb, eliminating America's nuclear monopoly. Further, in 1949, the American-backed Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek finally fell to the CCP, and fled in defeat to Taiwan. Shortly thereafter, the U.S.S.R. and the new People's Republic of China (PRC) signed a mutual aid agreement, which seemed to lend weight to the widespread, but erroneous belief that

communism was monolithic. In Congress, Truman was assailed for 'losing' China, a country towards whom American policy had traditionally been marked with idealism, moralism, and a sense of mission. Truman's rhetoric oversimplified the issues in the mind of the public, and almost every issue came to be viewed as one in which the United States confronted a communist menace. The distinction blurred between communism directed by Moscow, and indigenous movements espousing a brand of communist inspired nationalism. Further, under the unsavoury leadership of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the 'Red-Purge' began. This obsession with ferreting out hidden domestic communists to serve as scape-goats would mesmerize the American public, and more seriously for policy-making, would in the end eviscerate the State Department of almost all of its Asian experts.

In addition to all of these difficulties, Truman was also attempting to unify the military services as part of his effort to re-establish organizational and administrative order in the nation's capital. However, persistent inter-service debates over strategy and budget appropriations, plus the reaction to events of 1949, finally led Truman to seek a single, comprehensive statement on American policy. Such a statement could be communicated and comprehended throughout the already expanding national security bureaucracy. The resulting statement was National Security Council (NSC)-68, "one of the key historical documents of the Cold War."¹⁷

Under NSC-68 the definition of containment shifted dramatically. In 1947 the Truman Doctrine had still advocated the primary use of "economic and financial aid... essential to economic stability and orderly political process."¹⁸ Under NSC-68, the United States was to take a symmetrical approach to the problem of Soviet expansion. This meant there would be a large expansion in the military budget, and the retention of a large standing military, something that had long been anathema to most Americans. Keynesian economics explained away the problem of

limited means, and led to the postulation that as much as twenty-percent of the nation's gross national product would be devoted to arms without causing national bankruptcy.¹⁹ NSC-68 thus shifted the emphasis of containment to military measures, as opposed to the economic, political, and psychological measures advocated by Kennan. The availability of unlimited means also meant that it was no longer necessary to take a particularist approach to foreign policy. It was no longer necessary to make the hard choices inherent under the previous strategy of hard point defense. Under NSC-68, therefore, containment began to take on a global aspect with the adoption of an inclusive form of peripheral defense. NSC-68, in short, provided the "justification for America's assumption of the role of world policeman."²⁰ Significantly, American interests were to be defined by the threat, which thus shift control of our interests to the adversary, and lead to a reactive foreign policy. Furthermore, since means were expandable, obligations and commitments could also expand.

The outbreak of the Korean war, which seemed to validate its conclusions, ensured the implementation of NSC-68. Korea, once defined as a peripheral interest, was now defined as vital, by the mere fact that it had been attacked by a force espousing communism. American credibility was thus challenged, it was averred, and Korea became a symbol of American resolve. Under the umbrella of the United Nations, the United States became bogged down in this war by proxy with the Soviet Union. As the years passed, Americans became increasingly frustrated with the limitations inherent in the term containment. They no longer wished to contain, they wished to liberate. In the end, American frustration would cost the Democratic party the White House.

Truman's administration demonstrated two different versions of the "policy of containment". From 1947 until 1949, Truman followed a sensible policy of containing the real threat from Soviet Russia, but also maintaining a proper relationship between limited means, and therefore

limited ends. In 1949, policy took on a more global, militarist emphasis, and was no longer concerned with reconstructing a new balance of power in the power vacuum left by World War II, but with halting a global advance of the ideology of communism.

President Eisenhower entered office promising to end the frustration of containment: to roll back communism or liberate Eastern Europe, and more importantly, to get the United States military out of Korea. However, the complementary partnership of Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles produced a rhetoric of ideological war that was not backed up with action, as the appeals for liberation during the Hungarian Uprising were to show. Eisenhower, a president seemingly preoccupied with golf, was however, firmly in charge of the presidency, and actually continued the policy of containment, which took on yet another definition dominated by Eisenhower's concern with fiscal responsibility.

In his efforts to achieve maximum security at a minimum cost, Eisenhower developed the strategy known as the New Look. One of the components of this strategy stressed the deterrent power of alliances, and under Eisenhower, the United States took on more commitments in the form of the CENTO and SEATO alliance systems, among others. Alliances provided a means of supplying manpower to deal with local aggression, manpower that the United States was unable, or unwilling to commit, especially after Korea. Containment under Eisenhower was still defined in universalistic terms.

Eisenhower also stressed the used of psychological warfare and propaganda as a cheaper means to security, a scheme that met with mixed success in Eastern Europe. Further, Eisenhower attempted to renew Kennan's goal of negotiation with the Soviets, and arranged a summit meeting with Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev. Unfortunately, his efforts were not particularly successful; particularly in light of the U-2 incident which scuttled the summit and revealed the covert actions of the

United States.

Eisenhower was a product of the organizational revolution that swept the United States military and America during the twentieth century. He continued Truman's effort to impose order on the expanding national security bureaucracy, but in fact, contributed to its expansion. Eisenhower established a Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, and as yet another component of the New Look, he encouraged the expansion of those agencies concerned with covert action. Under his administration the Central Intelligence Agency, created under the Truman administration, grew both in size and in importance, and became indispensable to the conduct of the Cold War. It became known as the state department for unfriendly nations. The Eisenhower years were the golden years of the CIA, when under the leadership of Allan Dulles, brother of the Secretary of State, it undertook at least two dramatically successful, if not necessarily moral, missions in Iran and Guatemala. It thus made considerable contributions to American foreign policy goals within the all important constraint of minimal cost. The CIA also experienced some notable failures during these years, but if the case of Indonesia is to be taken as an example, these failures were rarely investigated.

However, the major problems and failures of the Eisenhower administration came in the Third World. Eisenhower was unable to understand the strains inherent in the modernization process, and was insensitive to the real poverty prevalent in so many developing nations. Like most Americans, he had an exaggerated fear of radicalism and revolution, and either tended to support the *status quo* or to seek a liberal alternative framed in America's image. This ethnocentric inability to deal with the inexorable forces of nationalism was evident in his mishandling of the Cuban revolution, and with even graver consequences, in Southeast Asia. In Vietnam, Eisenhower continued under the assumption, bequeathed to him by the Truman administration, that Ho Chi Minh, with

whom the American OSS had worked in the struggle against the Japanese in World War II,²¹ was an instrument of Moscow, not leader of genuine nationalist sentiments. Our involvement in Vietnam was extensive, for by the end of the French war in Indochina, the United States was paying nearly forty percent of the cost of the war. It was the price we had paid for French support of the United Nations and NATO. After the capitulation of the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Eisenhower, who had the political and military clout to do so, missed the opportunity to leave Vietnam to the nationalists, as an area not vital to the interests of United States. Instead, he chose to shore up the *status quo* in Vietnam, and backed the land-lord supported, vehemently anti-Communist Ngo Dinh Diem. Perhaps still heady from apparent successes in Japan and West Germany, the United States chose to exhibit yet again our prowess as a nation-builder. This time, however, the society to be reconstructed in our own image was a non-industrialized country, whose leader lacked the support of the majority of his country. It would end in tragedy, for Diem, for the United States, and most importantly, for the Vietnamese (and Cambodian) people.

The best known aspect of Eisenhower's New Look was its nuclear component. Ironically, the former Supreme Military Commander in Europe during World War II had firmly lowered the military budget. He returned to the use of an asymmetrical response to the Soviet/Communist threat. In practice, this meant reliance on nuclear weapons, and the ardent cold warrior John Foster Dulles tried to perfect the art of brinksmanship, threatening the use of massive retaliation even in limited confrontations. This reliance on asymmetric strategic deterrence lent an aspect of inflexibility to the Cold War, however, for it often left the United States with the choice of humiliation or all out nuclear war.

Eisenhower had wanted to lower the economic costs of containment as it had been defined in NSC-68. His policy was similar to Kennan's in that it approached foreign policy asymmetrically, but dissimilar in that it continued

Truman's latter-day assumption of global, universalist obligations, even those these obligations were discharged in less economically costly ways such as alliances and covert operations. Eisenhower's policy, with its cost-driven over-reliance on nuclear weapons, was also inflexible, especially when faced with revolutionary developments in the emerging Third World.

The youthful John F. Kennedy entered the presidency denouncing the lack of options under Eisenhower's policy. An activist by nature, and an ardent cold warrior of the containment generation, JFK turned to a policy even more reminiscent of NSC-68. Kennedy revived the conception of symmetrical response, and was unfettered by Ike's conception of limited means. He believed in virtual unlimited resources of America, in high military spending, and in America's moral obligation to fight the advance of communism, wherever it threatened. Kennedy sought the flexibility to turn to conventional or economic means to respond to any level of aggression by communism, in order to lessen the chances of escalation to nuclear conflict. Like Kennan, JFK and his advisors, usually *ad hoc* committees of experts, untainted by the national security bureaucracy he so distrusted, espoused the maintenance of a balance of power. However, they defined that balance as much more fragile than had Kennan, and tied it as much to perceptions of power as to the reality of power. Indeed, to Kennedy, perceptions were often more influential in the balance than were military, economic, or diplomatic factors. Despite his assertions that his goal was particularism, however, Kennedy also continued the universalist emphasis of his predecessors.

The problem was the set of commitments left him by the Eisenhower administration. With perceptions of power so very important, the inexperienced Kennedy felt that he, and America, could not be perceived as backing down in the face of communist advances, nor could they be perceived as reneging on commitments. One of these left-over commitments was Indochina. There was a "sense within the Kennedy

administration that Eisenhower had overextended the U.S. in Southeast Asia,"²² and in 1963, Kennedy drafted plans for a phased withdrawal from Vietnam, an indication of his growing concern over the area.²³ Nonetheless, because of Kennedy's, and later Lyndon Johnson's, perception of the fragility of the balance of power, such a withdrawal would have been equated with humiliation, especially after the Bay of Pigs. It would have led to the loss of American credibility, and the disruption of the balance of power. Therefore, Vietnam was deemed vital to America's national interests, in order to prevent such a humiliation of a defeat at the hands of guerrilla rebels, in a counterinsurgency war chosen to be the "test case of America's determination to uphold its commitments in a menacing world."²⁴

It is ironic that the strategy of flexible response chosen by Kennedy and Johnson as a strategy to prevent escalation in Vietnam and elsewhere actually created escalation. That was because of its insistence on the gradual application of symmetrical measures. To be an effective deterrent, flexible response required the actual demonstration and employment of threatened responses. Escalation was inevitable. Victory was impossible. The cost of defeat was ever increasing humiliation, and thus, unthinkable. A vicious circular argument grew out of a definition of containment which, contrary to Kennan's original thesis, confused threats and responses with interests.

President Lyndon B. Johnson was a domestic politician primarily concerned with social issues. However, he continued the escalation of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. Johnson, the social reformer, did not want to be remembered as the first president to give in to communism. By seizing upon the ambiguities in the SEATO alliance protocols, Johnson was able to send ground troops to South Vietnam after the fabricated Gulf of Tonkin incident. These troops augmented the counterinsurgency Green Berets which had been Kennedy's pride, and the already in-place military

advisors. Johnson committed troops to South Vietnam, justifying this step under the banner of containment, a strategy originally designed to prevent such a step in an area of what was really peripheral concern to the United States. As more and more troops, ground and air, went to South Vietnam, Johnson continued to justify his actions by asserting “on every possible occasion [that] he was only following in the footsteps of Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy.”²⁵

It was Lyndon Baines Johnson, however, who finally had to face the costs that this definition of containment implied. After the Tet offensive in 1968, Johnson was faced with the realization that he could not have his social programs and fight communism, although he tried to do both by debasing the currency. After Tet, the American public would no longer believe that victory was just around the corner. Media coverage of the war brought home the human costs of this flexible response version of global containment. Vietnam shattered consensus, not only on foreign policy, but on domestic policy as well.

Containment, as first practiced by the Truman administration from 1947 until 1949, was not applied globally. The first interpretation of containment, as delineated by George F. Kennan, was characterized by a particularist relation of asymmetrical, and limited, means to the desired end of halting Soviet expansion into the power vacuum left by World War II. After the shocks of 1949, however, President Truman adopted a policy of containment embodied in National Security Council (NSC)-68, a document in which containment was characterized by symmetrical responses and universalism. During this period, Truman emphasized military means, not the economic and psychological means Kennan had advocated, to achieve ends that were increasingly both less limited and also framed in ideological terms. President Eisenhower, despite the campaign rhetoric of “liberation”

and “roll back”, and despite Secretary of State Dulles’ ideological hawkish frame of mind, actually continued the policy of containment, but returned to an asymmetrical approach, guided by a keen preoccupation with fiscal constraint. Nonetheless, despite Eisenhower’s application of limited military means, he continued to operate under the universalist assumptions of NSC-68. It was Kennedy and Johnson, however, under the illusion of limitless consumption, and limitless expectations of the early 1960’s, who ranged furthest from the original conception of containment. Their policy of flexible response combined unlimited means with unlimited commitments to maintain a fragile balance of power. Their goal was to restrain the ideology of communism, wherever it manifested itself, and regardless of cost. It was this definition of containment, so different from its origin as a strategy of limited means, which, applied to Vietnam, led to massive failure. Eight long, tragic years after Tet, after the realization that America would need to extricate herself from the morass, Saigon finally fell to Vietnamese Communist forces. By 1975, American foreign policy was in shambles.

Containment as it came to be defined after 1949 was based on assumptions that proved to be incorrect. The United States was believed to have the power to control nearly all events in the world. American power was believed unlimited — often economically, almost always militarily. An irrational fear of indigenous revolution led to a policy of combatting a broadly based communism. The struggle in Vietnam, a nation previously defined as peripheral to American national security, was the outcome of a universalist confrontation with the amorphous ideology of communism, as opposed to containment’s original adversary: actual Soviet expansion. A pattern of symmetrical response rooted in the belief in unlimited resources, replaced a sensible policy of asymmetrical response. The original strategy of containment had demanded that a national first define its interests, realistically assess the threat, and make hard choices in regards to its

commitments.

Vietnam shattered the myth of invincible American power. It shattered American belief in its unique nation-building abilities. It eroded the average American's trust in government. It destroyed whatever was left of a sense of national interest. After 1975, it seemed, for a time, that finally Americans were sensitized to the limits of power that could be exercised by one nation in an increasingly multi-polar world. After 1975, it seemed, for a time, that there would be a return to a more normal balance of power after the abnormalities wrought by World War II. After 1975, it seemed, for a time, that America had regained a sense of proportion as a nation. Unfortunately, the lesson was too hard. Within the decade, led by a revived sense of mission, ethnocentricity, and an unreasonable fear of revolution, the United States once again sought a global application of containment, directed not at Asia this time, but against the countries of Central and South America.

Notes

- 1 Stephen E. Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938*, fourth edition, (New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1985), pp. 201-230, Chapter 11, entitled "Vietnam: Paying the Cost of Containment"
- 2 *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 206
- 4 John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 238
- 5 George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1979), p. 271
- 6 President Truman was adamant about the fact that the S in his name was not an abbreviation, and did not require a period.
- 7 Jerald A. Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy*, (New York:

- Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), p. 316
- 8 Thomas G. Paterson, editor, *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy: Documents and Essay, Volume II: Since 1914*, 2nd edition, (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Health and Company, 1984), pp. 295-299, "George F. Kennan's 'Long Telegram', 1946"
 - 9 Gaddis, *passim*.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 31
 - 11 Paterson, *op.cit.*, p. 299
 - 12 Gaddis, *op.cit.*, p. 61
 - 13 *Ibid.*, p. 41
 - 14 Howard Jones, editor, *Safeguarding the Republic: Essays and Documents in American Foreign Relations, 1890-1991*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1992), p. 154, in "The Truman Doctrine", Harry S Truman's special message to Congress on Greece and Turkey, March 12, 1947.
 - 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154
 - 16 Combs, *op.cit.*, pp. 336-337
 - 17 Ambrose, *op.cit.*, p.113. Robert D. Schulzinger, *American Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd edition, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), notes on page 213 that the annual expenditure of \$50 billion on defense represented a rise of 300%.
 - 18 Jones, *op.cit.*, p. 154
 - 19 Ambrose, *op.cit.*, p. 114
 - 20 *Ibid.*, p. 114
 - 21 Herring, *op.cit.*, points out that when Ho Chi Minh proclaimed Vietnamese independence from the French in 1945, he "borrowed liberally from Thomas Jefferson" (p. 1), and considered American-Vietminh ties to be warm.
 - 22 Gaddis, *op.cit.*, p. 212
 - 23 Herring, *op.cit.*, p. 95
 - 24 *Ibid.*, p. 75
 - 25 Ambrose, *op.cit.*, pp. 222-223

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