

DBQ: Harry S. Truman & Mid-20th Century Events

By John A. Braithwaite

DIRECTIONS:

The following DBQ is based upon the accompanying documents and your knowledge of the time period involved. This question tests your ability to work with historical documents. Your answer should be derived from the documents, however, you **MUST** refer to historical facts, materials, and developments **NOT** mentioned in the documents. You should assess the reliability of the documents as historical sources where relevant to your answer.

QUESTION FOR ANALYSIS:

Harry S. Truman was a historical accident! He did not want to be President, but fate made him the President. During his tenure of office several major issues of American historical concern occurred. Discuss the issues he faced, the high points of his achievements, and the near failures he experienced.

PROMPT:

- Formulate a thesis statement
- Use documents as well as your own outside knowledge of the period.
- Deal evenly with all aspects of the questions
- Be sure to cover the time period given
- Assess the validity of the documents
- Draw effective and specific conclusions whenever possible

TEXTBOOK & BIOGRAPHY RECOMMENDATIONS

David McCulloch	<i>Truman: "One Tough Son-of-a-bitch of a Man."</i>
James M. Patterson	<i>Grand Expectations</i>
Robert J. Donovan	<i>Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman</i>
Alonzo Hamby	<i>Man of the People: Life of Harry S. Truman</i>
Robert H. Farrell	<i>Harry S. Truman: A Life</i>
Robert H. Rarrell	<i>Harry S. Truman and the Modern Presidency</i>
Robert Dallek	<i>Hail to the Chief.</i>

Document A:

Source: Harry Truman: "One Tough Son-of-a-Bitch of a Man." Taken from Stephen Oates *Portrait of America*, Volume 2, pp. 290-305.

When he learned that Roosevelt had died that he was now President of the United States, Truman told a group of reporters: "Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now. I don't know whether you fellows ever had a load of hay fall on you; but when they told me yesterday what happened, I felt like the moon, the stars, and the planets had fallen on me."

He [Truman] did not want to be president, and he certainly did not look like one: though cheery and brisk always dressed in a spotless suit "as if he had just stepped from a band box," as his wife said, he was short, slight, and plain looking, wore thick spectacles, spoke in Missouri twang, and radiated ordinariness. But, as a friend said, behind that plain-looking façade was "one tough son-of-a-bitch." Though not privy to Roosevelt's war strategy and military secrets, Truman stepped into the job with alacrity and confidently made decisions that led the country to victory in the Second World War

In the post war world, he faced a vortex of difficulties that would have daunted a lesser man. At home, the United States had to demobilize its vast military forces and convert wartime industry back to peacetime production. Abroad, the Allied victory proved to be a victory without peace. For out of the muck and rubble of the Second World War emerged a Cold War between the Soviet Union and the West that threatened the very survival of humankind. The genesis of the Cold War, as Truman learned, went back to the early days of the Second World War and involved control of Eastern Europe. Russia and the Western Allies clashed over that area. . . .

Document B:

Source: Harry S. Truman Directive—Potsdam: “Dropping the A-Bomb on Hiroshima”

My own knowledge of these (atomic) developments had come about only after I became President, when Secretary (of War) Stimson had given me the full story. He had told me at that time that the project was nearing completion, and that a bomb would be expected within another four months. It was at his suggestion, too, that I had then set up a committee of top men and had asked them to study with great care the implications the new weapon might have for us. . .

It was their recommendation that the bomb be used against the enemy as soon as it could be done. They recommended further that it should be used without specific warning, and against a target that would clearly show its devastating strength. I had realized, of course, that an atomic bomb explosion would inflict damage and casualties beyond imagination. On the other hand, the scientific advisers of the committee reported, "We can propose no technical demonstration likely to bring an end to the war we see no acceptable alternative to direct military use." It was their conclusion that no technical demonstration they might propose, such as over a deserted island, would be likely to bring the war to an end. It had to be used against an enemy target.

The final decision of where and when to use the atomic bomb was up to me. Let there be no mistake about it. I regarded the bomb as a military weapon, and never had any doubt that it should be used. The top military advisers to the President recommended its use, and when I talked to Churchill, he unhesitatingly told me that he favored the use of the atomic bomb if it might aid to end the war.

In deciding to use this bomb I wanted to make sure that it would be used as a weapon of war in the manner prescribed by the laws of war. That meant that I wanted it dropped on a military target.

Four cities were finally recommended as targets: Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata, and Nagasaki. They were listed in that order as targets for the first attack. The order of selection was in accordance with the military importance of these cities, but allowance would be given for weather conditions at the time of the bombing.

HST

Document C:

Part of [World War II](#), the [Pacific War](#)



A [Marine](#) of the [1st Marine Division](#) draws a bead on a Japanese [sniper](#) with his [Thompson](#) as his companion ducks for cover

Date [April 1, 1945 - June 21, 1945](#)
Location [Okinawa, Japan](#)
Result [Allied](#) victory

Combatants

 United States Australia, Canada, UK, New Zealand	 Empire of Japan
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Commanders

 Ray Spruance	 Mitsuru Ushijima†
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Strength

548,000 regulars 1300 ships ? aircraft	100,000 regulars & militia ? aircraft / ships
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Casualties

12,513 dead or missing 38,916 wounded 33,096 non-combat wounded 79 ships sunk & scrapped 763 aircraft destroyed	66,000 dead or missing 17,000 wounded 7,455 captured 16 ships sunk & scrapped 7,830 aircraft destroyed 140,000 civilians dead
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Document D:

Source: George C. Marshall's Speech to Harvard University. June 5, 1947

In considering the requirements for the rehabilitation of Europe, the physical loss of life, the visible destruction of cities, factories, mines, and railroads was correctly estimated, but it has become obvious during recent months that this visible destruction was probably less serious than the dislocation of the entire fabric of European economy. For the past ten years conditions have been abnormal. The feverish preparation for war and the more feverish maintenance of the war effort engulfed all aspects of national economies. Machinery has fallen into disrepair or is entirely obsolete. Under the arbitrary and destructive Nazi rule, virtually every possible enterprise was geared into the German war machine. Long-standing commercial ties, private institutions, banks, insurance companies, and shipping companies disappeared through loss of capital, absorption through nationalization, or by simple destruction. In many countries, confidence in the local currency has been severely shaken. The breakdown of the business structure of Europe during the war was complete. Recovery has been seriously retarded by the fact that two years after the close of hostilities a peace settlement with Germany and Austria has not been agreed upon. But even given a more prompt solution of these difficult problems, the rehabilitation of the economic structure of Europe quite evidently will require a much longer time and greater effort than has been foreseen.

There is a phase of this matter which is both interesting and serious. The farmer has always produced the foodstuffs to exchange with the city dweller for the other necessities of life. This division of labor is the basis of modern civilization. At the present time it is threatened with breakdown. The town and city industries are not producing adequate goods to exchange with the food-producing farmer. Raw materials and fuel are in short supply. Machinery is lacking or worn out. The farmer or the peasant cannot find the goods for sale which he desires to purchase. So the sale of his farm produce for money which he cannot use seems to him an unprofitable transaction. He, therefore, has withdrawn many fields from crop cultivation and is using them for grazing. He feeds more grain to stock and finds for himself and his family an ample supply of food, however short he may be on clothing and the other ordinary gadgets of civilization. Meanwhile, people in the cities are short of food and fuel, and in some places approaching the starvation levels. So the governments are forced to use their foreign money and credits to procure these necessities abroad. This process exhausts funds which are urgently needed for reconstruction. Thus a very serious situation is rapidly developing which bodes no good for the world. The modern system of the division of labor upon which the exchange of products is based is in danger of breaking down.

The truth of the matter is that Europe's requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products - principally from America - are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help or face economic, social, and political deterioration of a very grave character.

The remedy lies in breaking the vicious circle and restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole. The manufacturer and the farmer throughout wide areas must be able and willing to exchange their product for currencies, the continuing value of which is not open to question.

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. Such assistance, I am convinced, must not be on a piecemeal basis as various crises develop. Any assistance that this Government may render in the future should provide a cure rather than a mere palliative. Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government. Any government which maneuvers to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments,

political parties or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit there-from politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States.

It is already evident that, before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government. It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all, European nations.

An essential part of any successful action on the part of the United States is an understanding on the part of the people of America of the character of the problem and the remedies to be applied. Political passion and prejudice should have no part. With foresight, and a willingness on the part of our people to face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country, the difficulties I have outlined can and will be overcome.

I am sorry that on each occasion I have said something publicly in regard to our international situation. I've been forced by the necessities of the case to enter into rather technical discussions. But to my mind, it is of vast importance that our people reach some general understanding of what the complications really are, rather than react from a passion or a prejudice or an emotion of the moment. As I said more formally a moment ago, we are remote from the scene of these troubles. It is virtually impossible at this distance merely by reading, or listening, or even seeing photographs or motion pictures, to grasp at all the real significance of the situation. And yet the whole world of the future hangs on a proper judgment. It hangs, I think, to a large extent on the realization of the American people, of just what are the various dominant factors. What are the reactions of the people? What are the justifications of those reactions? What are the sufferings? What is needed? What can best be done? What must be done? Thank you very much.

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Document E:

Source: Truman's Civil Rights Message Came in 1948.



FOR PRESIDENT TRUMAN
WITH STRONG BELIEF
AND DEEPER SURE

Document F:

Source Discussion of Truman's 1948 Election. This account comes from historian Liz Cohen of Harvard University, writing in the 13th edition of *The American Pageant*. pp. 875-877

"Truman's nomination split the party wide open. Embittered southern Democrats from thirteen states, like their fire-eating forebears of 1860, next met in their own convention in Birmingham, Alabama. . .nominated J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina.

To add to the confusion within Democratic ranks, former vice president Henry Wallace threw his hat into the ring. Having parted company with the administration over its get-tough-with-Russia policy. . . nominated by the new Progressive Party—a bizarre collection of disgruntled former New Dealers, starry-eyed pacifists, well-meaning liberals, and communist-fronters.

The seemingly doomed Truman, with little money and few active supporters, had to rely on his "gut-fighter instincts and folksy personality. Traveling by train to deliver his three hundred "give 'em hell" speeches, he lashed out at the Taft-Hartley" slave law, and the "do-nothing" Republican Congress. . .

On election night the Chicago Tribune ran off an early edition with the headlines "DEWEY BEATS TRUMAN" But in the morning, it turned out that "President" had embarrassingly snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

The popular vote was 24,179,345 for Truman, 21,991,291 for Dewey, 1,179,345 for Thurmond, and 1,157,291 for Wallace. To make the victory sweeter, the Democrats regained control of Congress as well."

Smiling and self-assured, Truman sounded a clarion note in the fourth point of his inaugural address, when he called for a "bold new program" [Point Four]. The plan was to lend money and technical aid to the underdeveloped lands to help themselves. . . .

At home Truman outlined a sweeping "Fair Deal" in his message to Congress in 1949.

Document G:

Source: 1948 Election cartoon of Karl Kae Knecht makes the point loud and clear about Truman's Civil Rights programs.



Document H:

Source: "President In His Own Right!" Frederick Q. Seibel, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Located at University of Virginia, Charlottesville. p.115.



Document I:

Source:

Executive Order 9981 is an executive order issued on July 26, 1948 by U.S. President Harry S. Truman. It expanded on Executive Order 8802 by establishing equality of treatment and opportunity in the Armed Services for people of all races, religions, or national origins.

The operative statement is:

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.

The order also established a committee to investigate and make recommendations to the civilian leadership of the military to realize the policy

Signed by: Harry S. Truman

Document J:

Source: 1952 State of the Union Message. *Karl Kae Kneckt. P.148*



Document K:

Source: James T. Patterson's account of Truman's role in the preparation of the H-Bomb. Found in *Grand Expectations*. Oxford University Press,

"On January 31, 1950, Truman decided in favor of development. [The H-Bomb]. He was influenced in part by the position of the Joint Chiefs, particularly by General Bradley, whom Truman admired greatly. He was also keenly aware, as was Dean Acheson, of the criticism he would get from conservatives. . . if he opposed the H-Bomb. He asked "Can the Russians do it?" Acheson, Lillenthal, and Defense Secretary Johnson, Truman advisers all nodded yes. "In that case, . . .we have no choice. We will go ahead. [We] had to do it—make the bomb—though no one wants to use it. But . . . we have got to have it if only for bargaining purposes with the Russians." (This quotation of Truman was cited from John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, p.82).

"When Truman announced his decision, many liberals were appalled. Max Lerner wrote, "One of the great moral battles of our time has been lost." Other liberals however, backed the President. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., replied to expose itself to the threat of absolute destruction. . .

"The explosion exceeded all expectations, throwing off a fireball five miles high and four miles wide and a mushroom cloud twenty-five miles high and 1,200 miles wide. Eniwetok disappeared, replaced by a hole in the Pacific floor that was a mile long and 175 feet deep. Scientists figured . . . it would have vaporized cities the size of Washington and New York."

Document L:

Source: Truman's Veto of Taft Hartley Act was over-ridden by both House and Senate. James Berryman "Did Anybody Get That Number?" from the Washington Star pg. 47.



Document M:

Source: Point Four Program, January 20, 1949 Inauguration Speech.
State Department Bulletin XX, No. 500, January 30, 1949.

Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of undeveloped areas.

More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are the victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat to them and to more prosperous areas. . . .

I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

All countries, including our own, will greatly benefit from a constructive program for the better use of the world's human and natural resources. Experience shows that our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically.

Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies—hunger, misery, and despair. . . .

Document N:

Source: Organization of NATO. Treaty

The North Atlantic Treaty

Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the [Charter of the United Nations](#) and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments.

They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.

They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty :

Article 1

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the [Charter of the United Nations](#), to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Article 2

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.

Article 3

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

Article 4

The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.

Article 5

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 .

Article 6 (1)

For the purpose of Article 5, an armed attack on one or more of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack:

on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France (2), on the territory of or on the Islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer;

on the forces, vessels, or aircraft of any of the Parties, when in or over these territories or any other area in Europe in which occupation forces of any of the Parties were stationed on the date when the Treaty entered into force or the Mediterranean Sea or the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.

Article 7

This Treaty does not affect, and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations under the Charter of the Parties which are members of the United Nations, or the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 8

Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third State is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

Article 9

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet promptly at any time. The Council shall set up such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary; in particular it shall establish immediately a defense committee which shall recommend measures for the implementation of Articles 3 and 5.

Article 10

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

Article 11

This Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the United States of America, which will notify all the other signatories of each deposit. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the ratifications of the majority of the signatories, including the ratifications of Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, have been deposited and shall come into effect with respect to other States on the date of the deposit of their ratifications. (3)

Article 12

After the Treaty has been in force for ten years, or at any time thereafter, the Parties shall, if any of them so requests, consult together for the purpose of reviewing the Treaty, having regard for the factors then affecting peace and security in the North Atlantic area, including the development of universal as well as regional arrangements under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 13

After the Treaty has been in force for twenty years, any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the United States of America, which will inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

Article 14

This Treaty, of which the English and French texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the United States of America. Duly certified copies will be transmitted by that Government to the Governments of other signatories.

Document O:**Source:**

"With deep regret I have concluded that General of the Army Douglas MacArthur is unable to give his wholehearted support to the policies of the United States Government and of the United Nations in matters pertaining to his duties...I have, therefore, relieved General MacArthur of his commands...

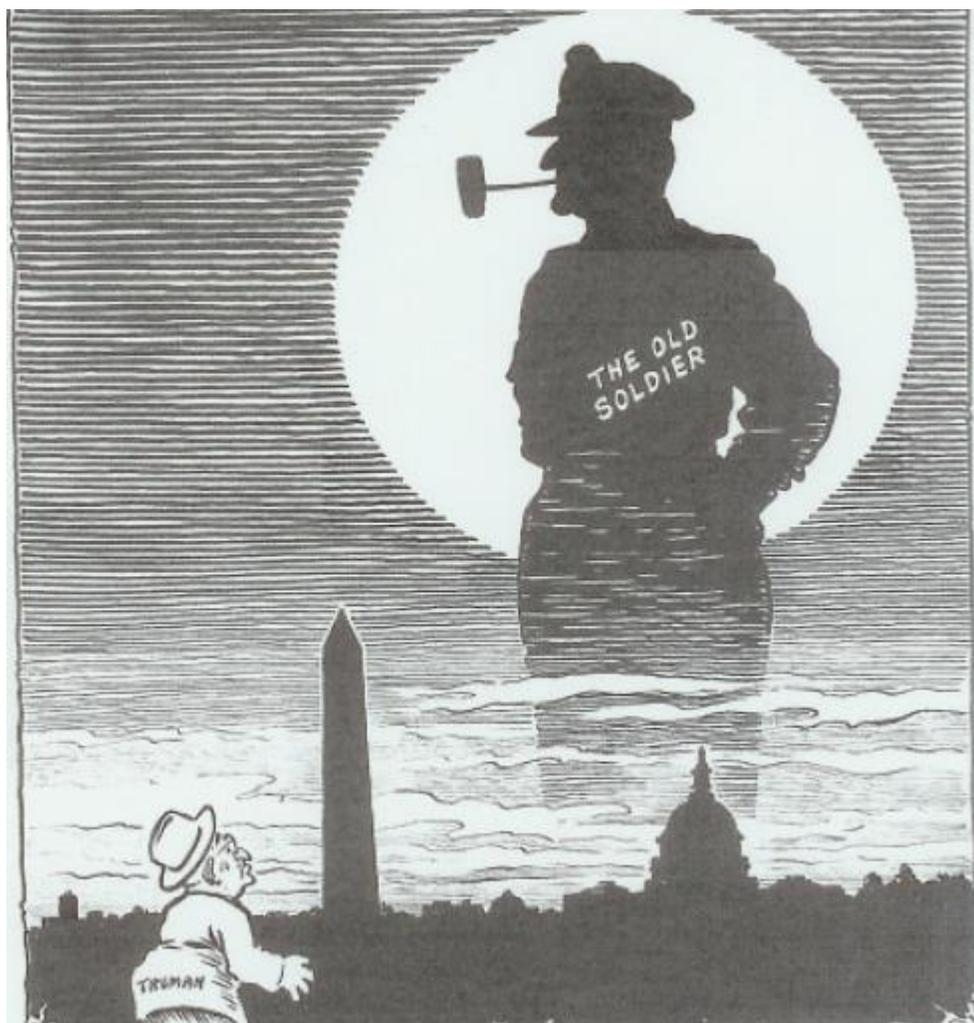
Full and vigorous debate on matters of national policy is a vital element in the constitutional system of our free democracy. It is fundamental, however, that military commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and Constitution. In times of crisis, this consideration is particularly compelling."

HST



Document P:

Source: "When Is He Going To Fade Away?" Frederick Seibel *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. p.215



Document Q:

Source: Gen. Douglas MacArthur, *Speech To Congress*, April 19, 1951.

I trust, therefore, that you will do me the justice of receiving that which I have to say as solely expressing the considered viewpoint of a fellow American.

I address you with neither rancor nor bitterness in the fading twilight of life, with but one purpose in mind: to serve my country.

But once war is forced upon us, there is no other alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's very object is victory, not prolonged indecision.

In war there is no substitute for victory.

There are some who for varying reasons would appease Red China. They are blind to history's clear lesson, for history teaches with unmistakable emphasis that appeasement but begets new and bloodier war. It points to no single instance where this end has justified that means, where appeasement had led to more than a sham peace

I am closing my fifty-two years of military service. When I joined the army, even before the turn of the century, it was the fulfillment of all my boyish hopes and dreams.

The world has turned over many times since I took the oath on the plain at West Point, and the hopes and dreams have long since vanished, but I still remember the refrain of one of the most popular barracks ballads of that day which proclaimed most proudly that old soldiers never die; they just fade away.

And like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away, an old soldier who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty. Good-by.

Document R:

Presidential Photograph. Truman Library in Independence Missouri.



Document S:

Source:

TRUMAN TALKS ABOUT WHY HE RAN IN '48

By: Harry Truman Memoirs
Volume Two: Years of Trial & Hope

If I had heeded the desire of my family, I would have made plans to leave the White House at the end of my first term. I took no steps and made no moves at any time to discourage anyone from seeking nomination to succeed me. From a personal standpoint, I had no desire, just as I had none in 1944, to undertake a national political campaign merely for the sake of gratifying private ambitions. I had already been President of the United States for more than three and a half years.

The compelling motive in my decision to run for the presidency in 1948 was the same as it had been in 1944. There was still "unfinished business" confronting the most successful fifteen years of Democratic administration in the history of the country. The hard-earned reforms of the years since 1933 which insured a better life for more people in every walk of American life were taking permanent root in the 1940's. These benefits were still vulnerable to political attack by reactionaries and could be lost if not safeguarded by a vigilant Democratic administration.

I never wanted to fight for myself or to oppose others just for the sake of elevating myself to a higher office. I would have been happy to continue serving my community as a county judge. I would have been even happier as a senator, and would have been content to stay entirely clear of the White House. I had accepted the nomination as Vice-President not with a sense of triumph but with a feeling of regret at having to give up an active role in the Senate.

I have been asked how I could have had a part in a campaign for a fourth term for Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944 against my conviction that no President should serve more than two terms.

The answer is simple - I knew what would have happened in 1944 if Roosevelt and his ideals were not allowed to continue through those extremely critical times. If the forces of reaction could gain control during the emergency when both domestic and foreign affairs were in a dangerously volatile condition, I knew that within a matter of months the postwar period would witness the repeal or nullification of much of the enlightened social program for which Roosevelt and the Democrats had fought so hard since 1933. Even though the President was physically not as strong, he was a sure winner for the forces of liberalism, and I wanted to do all I could to help.

Again in 1948 there was no doubt as to the course I had to take. The world was undergoing a major readjustment, with revolution stalking most of the "have-not" nations. Communism was making the most of this opportunity, thriving on misery as it always does. The course of freedom was being challenged again - this time from a new and powerful quarter, Soviet Russia.

In 1948 I felt that just as my years in the Senate had prepared me for the presidency, the years I spent serving out the term of Roosevelt prepared me to carry out our proposed program of domestic development and foreign security. I also felt, without undue ego, that this was no time for a new and inexperienced hand to take over the government and risk the interruption of our domestic program and put a dangerous strain on our delicately balanced foreign policy.

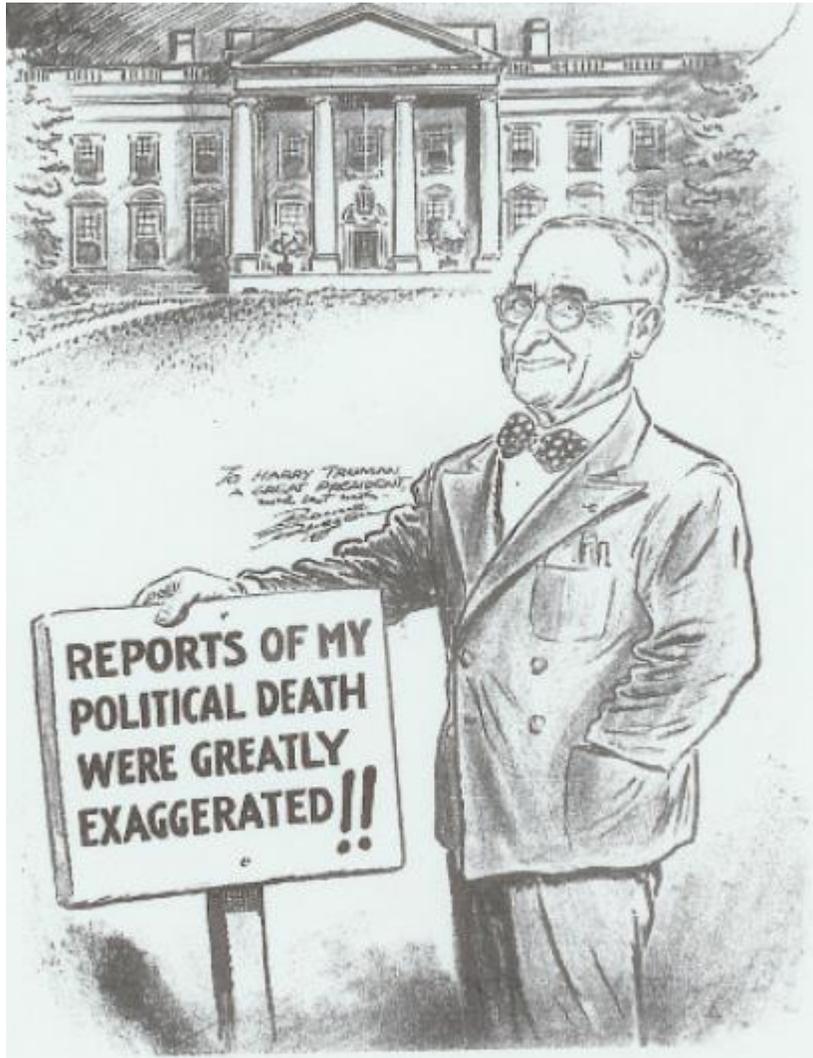
Document T:

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Document U:

Source:



Document V:

Source: Truman in Cartoon and Caricature, by Professor James Giglio, [new edition]. pp. 112-113.

The president experienced further disappointment in 1950. His difficulties worsened with the 81st Congress. Despite the Dixiecrat party collapse, southern leadership continually frustrated Truman's Fair Deal proposals. Civil rights legislation had no chance in this Congress. Federal aid to education invited more opposition. . . . Responding to the American Medical Association's strong campaign against "socialized medicine", Congress ignored Truman's national health insurance proposal. . . . The Taft-Hartley Act met with defeat

Truman's continued efforts to implement the Fair Deal heightened conservative criticism in late 1950. . . .led to Communist aggression in South Korea.

Afterwards, two other issues plagued the president's hellish final years. One concerned the seizure of the steel mills in the spring of 1952

Truman also had to face the charge of administration corruption. . . . General Harry Vaughn was engaged in influence peddling. By 1951 a congressional investigation revealed that federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation had lent money for favor. One occasion the payoff was an \$8,000 mink coat. . . .The Bureau of Internal Revenue, which high officials accepted bribes to fix tax evasion cases. L I I Attorney General Howard McGrath failed to cooperate with independent investigator probing Justice Department activities...

Truman himself came under intense criticism for defending subordinates though no one accused him of financial wrongdoing.

Truman had tentatively decided not to seek reelection. As his popularity crumbled, he found little reason to change his mind. Truman thus settled on Adlai Stevenson, the popular and efficient governor of Illinois, who expressed little interest in running.

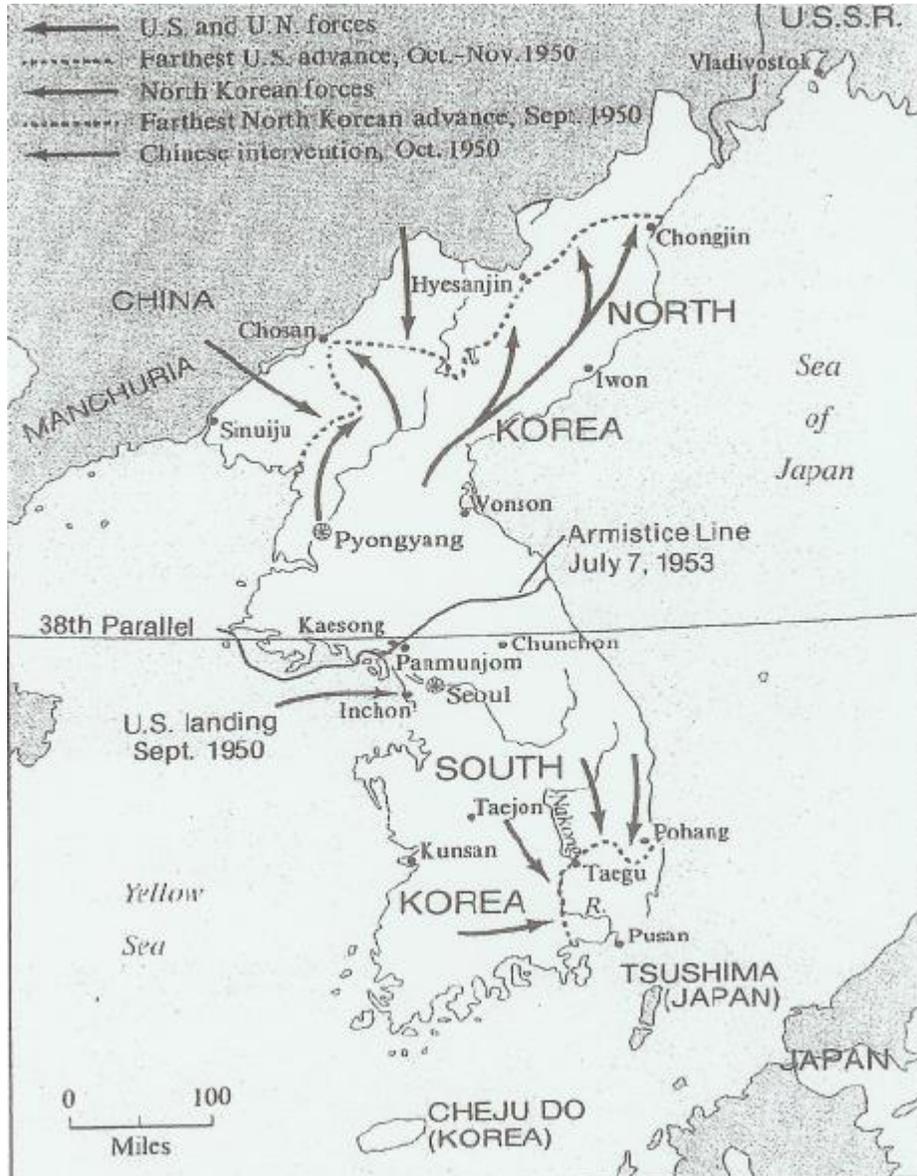
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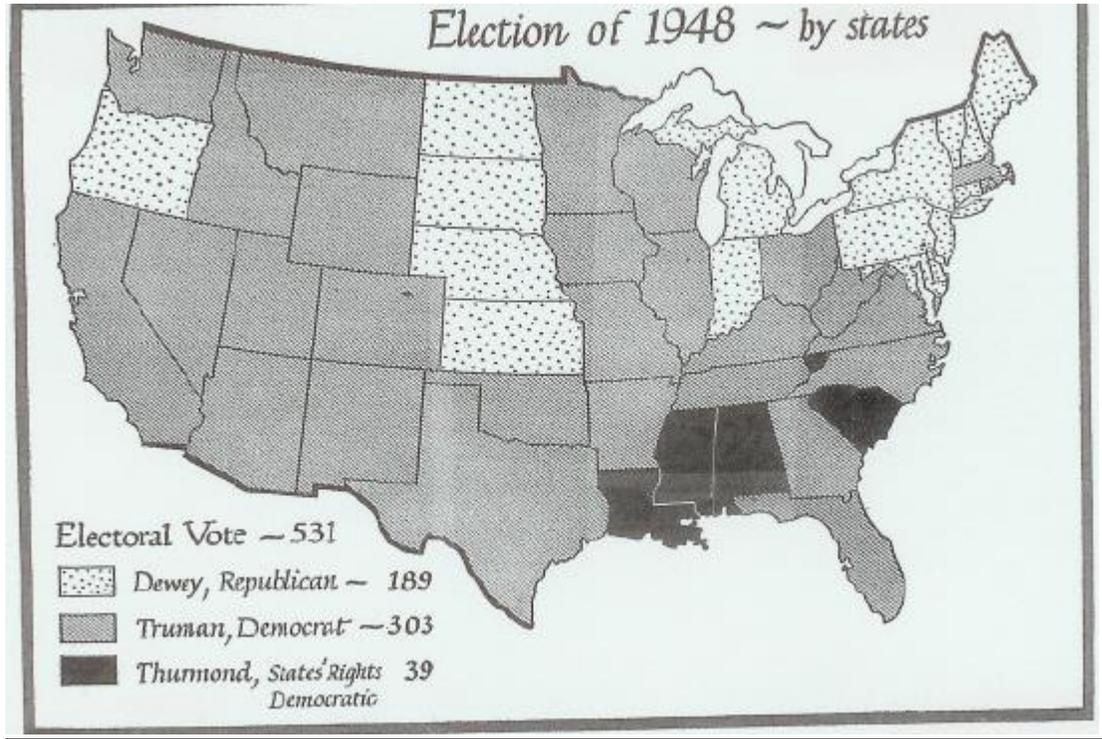
Document X:

Source:



Document Y:

Source:



Document Z:

Source:

White House renovations



View of the interior shell of the White House during reconstruction in 1950.

In 1948 Truman ordered a controversial addition to the exterior of the [White House](#): a second-floor balcony in the south portico that came to be known as the "Truman Balcony."

But at the same time it was becoming clear that the building, much of it over 130 years old, was in a dangerously dilapidated condition. That August a section of floor actually collapsed and Truman's own bedroom and bathroom were closed as unsafe. No public announcement was made until the election had been won, by which time Truman had been informed that his new balcony was the only part of the building that was sound. The Truman family moved into nearby [Blair House](#); as the newer [West Wing](#), including the [Oval Office](#), remained open, Truman found himself walking to work across the street each morning and afternoon. In due course the decision was made to demolish and rebuild the whole interior of the main White House, as well as excavating new basement levels and underpinning the foundations. (The famous exterior of the structure, however, was buttressed and retained while the renovations proceeded inside.) The work lasted from December 1949 until March 1952.¹

Truman Fact Sheet & Time Line

WEEK TWENTY-SEVEN: COLD WAR AND CONTAINMENT

TIME LINE OF EVENTS:

1945	Yalta Conference FDR dies, Truman becomes President
1946	Potsdam Conference-Orders the dropping of A-Bomb on Hiroshima & Nagasaki American plan for controlled atomic energy fails Atomic Energy Act Iran Crisis
1947	Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech Truman Doctrine Marshall Plan Announced House Un-American Activities Comm. CIA established
1948	July 26, 1949 =Truman orders <u>Desegregation of the Armed Forces</u> Berlin airlift Israel created by U.N. Rise of Richard Nixon Hiss-Chamber Case
1949	Soviets test atomic bomb NATO established
1950	Mao Zedong's forces win Chinese Civil War Truman authorizes hydrogen bomb development McCarran Internal Security Act
1950-53	Korean War
1951	Truman Fires Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander <u>Dennis vs. U.S.</u>
1952	Eisenhower elected President McCarthy investigation begins
1953	Stalin dies, Khrushchev consolidates power
1954	Shah of Iran returns to power Fall of Dien Bein Phu Geneva Conference
1956	Mao's forces shell Quemoy & Matsu Shez Incident Eisenhower reelected Hungarian freedom fighters suppressed
1957	Russians launch <u>Sputnik</u>
1958	U.S. troops go to Lebanon
1959	Castro deposes Batista in Cuba

Readings:

Michael R. Beschloss, "Eisenhower and Kennedy: Contrasting Presidencies"
 Larry L. King, "Trapped: Lyndon Johnson and the Nightmare of Vietnam"
 Stephen Ambrose, "The Ike Age"
 Stephen Oates, "The Trumpet of Conscience—MLK"

LECTURE OBJECTIVE: This discussion will explore the causes of the Cold War and evaluate some of the responses to it. Careful attention given to the evolving diplomatic events will be stressed (Read Gary Reich, *Politics as Usual: The Age of Truman and Eisenhower*, Davidson Publisher's).

- I. Demobilization under Truman
 - A. Truman's background and character
 - B. Demobilization
 - 1. Rapid reduction of forces
 - 2. Demobilization did not bring depression to U.S.
 - 3. Pent up demand for consumer goods
 - C. The problem of inflation
 - 1. Demand for wage increases
 - 2. Strikes
 - 3. Steel workers
 - 4. United Mine Workers
 - 5. Railroad workers
 - D. Truman's response to strikes
 - 1. End of Office of Price Stabilization
 - 2. Price controls ended after 1946
- II. Truman's Domestic Policy
 - A. Significant legislative achievements
 - 1. Employment Act of 1946
 - 2. Control of atomic energy
 - B. Congressional Election 1946 (80th Congress)
 - 1. Discontent with Democrats
 - 2. Republicans win majorities
 - C. Record of Republican Congress
 - 1. Taft-Hartley Act
 - 2. Tax Reduction
 - D. National Security Act
 - E. Presidential Succession Act
 - F. 22nd Amendment to Constitution
 - G. Hoover's Commission on the Organization of the Executive Branch
- III. Development of the Cold War
 - A. The United Nations
 - B. Outline of the U.N.
 - C. War crimes trials - Justice Jackson
 - D. Difference with the Soviets
 - E. Postwar settlement of Eastern Europe
 - F. The Policy of Containment
 - 1. Formulated by George Kennan
 - 2. Iranian crisis avoided
 - 3. The Truman Doctrine
 - 4. The Marshall Plan
 - 5. Dividing & controlling Germany
 - 6. North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- IV. Domestic Politics
 - A. Division of the Democratic Party
 - 1. Southern conservatives
 - 2. Northern liberals
 - 3. Left upset over firing of Henry Wallace

- B. Clark Clifford's "game plan" to shore up the New Deal coalition
- C. The 1948 election
- D. Truman's stunning victory
- E. Fair Deal Proposals
 1. Higher minimum wage and Social Security Extension
 2. Truman lost on civil rights, national health insurance, and federal aid to education

V. The Cold War Heats Up

- A. Truman's foreign policy—An issue of "Containment"
- B. China problems
 1. Russia detonated Atomic Bomb
 2. Truman orders Hydrogen bomb built—liberal objections to it
 3. Call for conventional forces build up

VI. The Korean War

- A. America's entry
 1. Korea from WWII to 1950
 2. North Korean invasion
 3. U.N. sanctioned aid to South Korea - "police action"
 4. Truman ordered American military forces to Korea under U.N. auspices
- B. America in the Korean War
 1. Gen. MacArthur commanded U.N. forces
 2. Chiefly an American affair
 3. Congress never voted a declaration of war
- C. Military developments
 1. Decision to invade the North
 2. Chinese Communists entered the war
- D. Dismissal of MacArthur
 1. Different views of the Korean War
 2. Mac Arthur criticized Truman
 3. MacArthur dismissed
 - a. Public reaction
 - b. Senate investigation
 - c. MacArthur's speech to congress
- E. End of the war
 1. Snags in negotiations
 2. Truce signed
 3. Costs of the war
 4. Eisenhower's role

VII. Another Red Scare

- A. Evidences of espionage
- B. Truman's loyalty program
- C. The Hiss Case
 1. Whittaker Chambers
 2. Hiss convicted
- D. The Rosenbergs
 1. Charged with giving atomic bomb secrets to the Russians
 2. Executed (Sacco-Vanzetti)
- E. Joseph R. McCarthy
 1. Rise of McCarthy
 2. Anti-Communist tactics
 3. Assessment of McCarthy
- F. McCarran Internal Security Tactics
 1. Passed over Truman's Veto
 2. Attempt to control Communist activities

VIII. Assessment of the Cold War

ESSAYS FOR COMPOSITION AND COMPREHENSION:

1. Describe the social and economic effects of post WWII demobilization.
2. Analyze and evaluate the “Red Scare” that followed the war. What factors caused it? What were its major results?
3. “Harry S. Truman was a realistic, pragmatic president who skillfully led the American people against the menace posed by the Soviet Union.” Assess the validity of this generalization.
4. How successful was the policy of containment in (1) Europe, (2) Asia, and (3) in Latin America? Why?

NAMES, TERMS, CONCEPTS, AND TOPICS FOR TESTING:

United Nations	SEATO	NATO
Rosenberg Case	War Crimes Trials	Truman Doctrine
Cold War	Alger Hiss	Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy
Dean Acheson	Hiroshima	D. Eisenhower
Alban W. Barkley	Ernest Hemingway	Point Four Program
Marshall Plan	Richard Nixon	George Kennan
Army-McCarthy Hearings	Joe DiMaggio	Rodgers & Hammerstein
Gen. Arthur H. Vandenberg	Jackie Robinson	Do-nothing Congress
Movies	Sports	Klaus Fuchs
Wittaker Chambers	John L. Lewis	Missouri Gang
Bernard Baruch	“Iron Curtain”	Berlin Airlift
Thomas E. Dewey	CIA	

DBQ: Cuban Missile Crisis - Braithwaite

The Cold War & Containment

Michael J. Hogan	<i>Hiroshima in History and Memory</i>
Barton Bernstein *	<i>The Atomic Bomb: The Critical Issues</i>
Ronald Takaki	<i>Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Bomb</i>
Thomas G. Paterson	<i>Meeting the Communist Threat</i>
Thomas G. Paterson	<i>On Every Front: The Making & Unmaking of Cold War</i>
Richard Rhodes	<i>The Making of the Atomic Bomb (Pulitzer Prize)</i>
Walter LaFeber	<i>America, Russia and the Cold War</i>
John L. Gaddis	<i>We Know Now</i>
George M. Kennan	<i>Memoirs, 1925-1950</i>
Melvyn P. Leffler	<i>Preponderance of Power</i>
Melvyn P. Leffler	<i>The Specter of Communism</i>
Stephen E. Ambrose	<i>Rise to Globalism</i>
Ralph Levering *	<i>The Cold War. 1945-1972</i>
H.W. Brands	<i>Cold Warriors</i>
Frederick W. Marks	<i>Power and Peace</i>
Ronald E. Powaski	<i>The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union</i>

The Truman Years In America

Thesis statement:

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Point #2:

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Point #8:

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Conclusions:

Supplemental Documents for information and writing:

A-1



Jackie Robinson, 1947

B-1

Part of the [Cold War](#)



Soldiers of the victorious [People's Liberation](#)

Statement by General Marshall, January 7, 1947

In this intricate and confused situation, I shall merely endeavor here to touch on some of the more important considerations-as they appeared to me -during my connection with the negotiations to bring about peace in China and a stable democratic form of government.

In the first place, the greatest obstacle to peace has been the complete, almost overwhelming suspicion with which the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang regard each other.

On the one hand, the leaders of the Government are strongly opposed to a communistic form of government. On the other, the Communists frankly state that they are Marxists and intend to work toward establishing a communistic form of government in China, though first advancing through the medium of a democratic form of government of the American or British type. . . .

I think the most important factors involved in the recent break-down of negotiations are these: On the side of the National Government, which is in effect the Kuomintang, there is a dominant group of reactionaries who have been opposed, in my opinion, to almost every effort I have made to influence the formation of a genuine coalition government. . . . This group includes military as well as political leaders.

On the side of the Chinese Communist Party there are, I believe, liberals as well as radicals, though this view is vigorously opposed by many who believe that the Chinese Communist Party discipline is too rigidly enforced to admit of such differences of viewpoint. Nevertheless, it has appeared to me that there is a definite liberal group among the Communists, especially of young men who have turned to the Communists in disgust at the corruption evident in the local governments-men who would put the interest of the Chinese people above ruthless measures to establish a Communist ideology in the immediate future. The dyed-in-the-wool Communists do not hesitate at the most drastic measures to gain their end They completely distrust the leaders of the Kuomintang and appear convinced that every Government proposal is designed to crush the Chinese Communist Party. I must say that the quite evidently inspired mob actions of last February and March, some within a few blocks of where I was then engaged in completing negotiations, gave the Communists good excuse for such suspicions. . . .

Sincere efforts to achieve settlement have been frustrated time and again by extremist elements of both sides. The agreements reached by the Political Consultative Conference a year ago were a liberal and forward-looking charter which then offered China a basis for peace and reconstruction. However, irreconcilable groups within the Kuomintang, interested in the preservation of their own feudal control of China, evidently had no real intention of implementing them. . . .

Between this dominant reactionary group in the Government and the irreconcilable Communists who, I must state, did not so appear last February, lies the problem of how peace and well-being are to be brought to the long-suffering and presently inarticulate mass of the people of China. The reactionaries in the Government have evidently counted on substantial American support regardless of their actions. The Communists by their unwillingness to compromise in the national interest are evidently counting on an economic collapse to bring about the fall of the Government, accelerated by extensive guerrilla action against the long lines of rail communications-regardless of the cost in suffering to the Chinese people.

Source:

from *The Department of State Bulletin*, XVI, No. 394 (January 19, 1947), pp. 83-85.

C-1

Sweatt v. Painter

Docket: 44
Citation: 339 U.S. 629 (1950)
Petitioner: Sweatt
Respondent: Painter

Case Media

No multimedia is currently available for this case.

- [Written Opinion](#) (Justia)

Abstract

Oral Argument: April 4, 1950
Decision: June 5, 1950
Subjects: None

Advocates

Facts of the Case

In 1946, Herman Marion Sweatt, a black man, applied for admission to the University of Texas Law School. State law restricted access to the university to whites, and Sweatt's application was automatically rejected because of his race. When Sweatt asked the state courts to order his admission, the university attempted to provide separate but equal facilities for black law students.

Question

Did the Texas admissions scheme violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment?

Conclusion

In a unanimous decision, the Court held that the Equal Protection Clause required that Sweatt be admitted to the university. The Court found that the "law school for Negroes," which was to have opened in 1947, would have been grossly unequal to the University of Texas Law School. The Court argued that the separate school would be inferior in a number of areas, including faculty, course variety, library facilities, legal writing opportunities, and overall prestige. The Court also found that the mere separation from the majority of law students harmed students' abilities to compete in the legal arena.

Supreme Court Justice Opinions and Votes was 9-0