

DEDICATION OF THE
HARRY S TRUMAN BUILDING



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
September 22, 2000

President William Jefferson Clinton
Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright

Front Cover—

Portrait of President Truman

by Greta Kempton

Photos courtesy of

The Truman Library

The Foreign Policy of the United States is based firmly on fundamental principles of righteousness and justice. In carrying out those principles we shall firmly adhere to what we believe to be right; and we shall not give our approval to any compromise with evil. But we know that we cannot attain perfection in this world overnight. We shall not let our search for perfection obstruct our steady progress toward international cooperation. We must be prepared to fulfill our responsibilities as best we can, within the framework of our fundamental principles, even though we recognize that we have to operate in an imperfect world.



From President Truman's Address on Foreign Policy, October 27, 1945

“With the dawn of the nuclear age and the Cold War, and with the economies of Europe and Asia in shambles, President Truman persuaded an uncertain and weary nation, yearning to shift its energies from the front lines to the home front, to lead the world again.”

President William Jefferson Clinton

“President Truman understood clearly the importance of vigorous diplomacy backed by the potential use of force. He knew from the experience of his generation the value of strong alliances, the need to oppose evil, the power of human liberty, and the imperative of American leadership. He spoke plainly about large truths, and his memory will always be cherished by those who love freedom.”

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright



Harry S. Truman

Only by helping the least fortunate of its members to help themselves can the human family achieve the decent, satisfying life that is the right of all people. Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies – hunger, misery, and despair.

From President Truman's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1949



President Truman, George C. Marshall, Paul G. Hoffman and W. Averell Harriman in the Oval Office of the White House



President Truman (standing, left) at United Nations Charter signing

- April 12, 1945** Harry S Truman is sworn in as President on the death of President Roosevelt.
- May 7, 1945** V-E Day.
- June 25, 1945** President Truman attends the signing of UN Charter in San Francisco.
- July 17–
August 2, 1945** The Potsdam Conference attended by President Truman, Stalin, and Churchill (and later Attlee) leads to a surrender ultimatum to Japan and agreement on European questions.
- September 2, 1945** Japan surrenders, ending World War II.
- February 10, 1947** Treaties of Peace are signed with Italy, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Finland.
- March 12, 1947** President Truman announces to Congress the Truman Doctrine, an economic and military aid program of \$400 million to resist “direct or indirect” aggression against Greece and Turkey.
- June 5, 1947** Secretary Marshall proposes long-range plans for European economic recovery (Marshall Plan), resulting in \$13 billion in U.S. foreign assistance from 1947 to 1952.
- September 2, 1947** President Truman participates in Rio de Janeiro conference leading to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, a regional collective security agreement.
- May 2, 1948** The Charter of the Organization of American States is signed at Bogotá.
- May 14, 1948** President Truman recognizes State of Israel.
- June 24, 1948–
May 4, 1949** An airlift successfully supplies the city of Berlin during the Soviet Union’s blockade.
- January 1949** President Truman announces in his inaugural address the Point Four Program, a long-term program to give technical assistance to developing nations.
- April 4, 1949** The North Atlantic Treaty, calling for 12 members to take “such action as it deems necessary” if a member was attacked, is signed in Washington.
- June 27, 1950** Following North Korean invasion of South Korea, President Truman orders U.S. military resistance to the invasion and wins UN endorsement for assistance by member states.
- September 8, 1951** The Japanese Peace Treaty is signed at San Francisco.
- November 1, 1952** The United States successfully tests the first hydrogen bomb.
- January 20, 1953** President and Mrs. Truman depart Union Station en route Independence, Missouri.

FOREIGN POLICY

The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world—and we shall surely endanger the welfare of our own Nation. Great responsibilities have been placed upon us by the swift movement of events.

From President Truman's Address to Congress on Aid to Greece and Turkey, March 12, 1947

There are times in world history when it is far wiser to act than to hesitate. There is some risk involved in action—there always is. But there is far more risk in failure to act. For if we act wisely now, we shall strengthen the powerful forces for freedom, justice, and peace which are represented by the United Nations and the free nations of the world.

We must be ready to take every wise and necessary step to carry out this great purpose [securing the peace and preventing war]. This will require assistance to other nations. It will require adequate and balanced military strength. We must be prepared to pay the price of peace or assuredly we shall pay the price of war.

From President Truman's Address to Congress on the Threat of Aggression by the U.S.S.R., March 17, 1948

We believe that it is possible for nations to achieve unity on the great principles of human freedom and justice, and at the same time permit, in other respects, the greatest diversity of which the human mind is capable. Our faith in this kind of unity is borne out by our experience here in the United States in creating one nation out of the variety of our continental resources and the peoples of many lands.

From President Truman's Address on the Signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, April 4, 1949



President Truman signs and puts into effect the North Atlantic Treaty



Harry S Truman addressing the closing session of the UN Conference in San Francisco



Secretary of State Dean Acheson giving President Truman a report of the North Atlantic countries

Harry S. Truman

HARRY S TRUMAN BUILDING

The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died. We must keep that hope alive. The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedom.

Truman Doctrine (Greece/Turkey), Address before joint session of Congress,

Acknowledgments:

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