

Containment

Containment of the Soviet Union became American policy in the postwar years. George Kennan, a top official at the U.S. embassy in Moscow, defined the new approach in the Long Telegram he sent to the State Department in 1946. He extended his analysis in an article under the signature "X" in the prestigious journal *Foreign Affairs*. Pointing to Russia's traditional sense of insecurity, Kennan argued that the Soviet Union would not soften its stance under any circumstances. Moscow, he wrote, was "committed fanatically to the belief that with the United States there can be no permanent *modus vivendi*, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted." Moscow's pressure to expand its power had to be stopped through "firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies. ..."

1. Who defined the U.S. policy of containment?

The first significant application of the containment doctrine came in the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean. In early 1946, the United States

demanded, and obtained, a full Soviet withdrawal from Iran, the northern half of which it had occupied during the war. That summer, the United States pointedly supported Turkey against Soviet demands for control of the Turkish straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. In early 1947, American policy crystallized when Britain told the United States that it could no longer afford to support the government of Greece against a strong Communist insurgency.

2. Describe the U.S. policy of containment in your own words.

In a strongly worded speech to Congress, Truman declared, "I believe that it must be the policy of the United