United States postwar communism change

Surbhi Varma

December 10, 2019.

United States postwar communism change

After the end of WWII, the United States and USSR were the only countries that emerged as giants in global politics. Each among them was in a race to influence global politics, in a more effervescent manner. Such a gambit created by the US and USSR, resulted in the creation of two blocs with many countries trying to maintain a balance between them. The US was led by the capitalists, whereas the USSR promoted the expansion of a communist world. Fearing that communism might threaten the capitalist narrative, the US promoted the policy of containment against communism. Containment in the foreign policy domain is referred to as limiting the influence of a hostile power. With the years that followed after the end of WWII, the US indulged itself in containing the expansion of the communist narrative. In the process of containment of communism, the US expanded its influence in countries like Afghanistan, Vietnam, and Cuba.

The US followed the strategy of supporting democratic regimes and anti-communist movements. The major contours of the anti-communist campaign were decided in the Truman doctrine. In this doctrine, the US aimed at supporting free people around the world, which the US establishment perceived as the best tool to fight communism. The Presidency of Henry Truman had been the most important tenure in the US polices against communism. The Presidency under Henry Truman assured that each soft element of their foreign policy is intact and is working to fight communism. After Truman, President Eisenhower continued policies of containment initiated by President Truman. It was the time of intense strategic restraint being followed by both the USSR and the US. Different from President Truman and President Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy’s policies were more aggressive against the spread of communism. His administration proposed using military means to deter Soviet aggression.

Another aspect of its fight against communism was the US support against the conservative government in Greece. Greece was an important country to expand US influence across the Balkans and Mediterranean. To assure an impeccable approach against communism, the United States’ forces landed in Greece, after President Truman made a speech in the US Senate in March of 1947. In his speech in the US Congress, Truman assured the people of America that it will go to the last extent to prevent the democratic norms and influence from being deterred at the hands of communist regimes. This initiative against the communist regime was applauded by the government in Athens, and the US was able to smash the communist narrative in Greece. For the US, it was just another strategy against communism, however, it changed the foreign policy orientation of Greece, which still affects its affairs in global politics. In the wake of US initiatives against communism, the US started involving itself in the domestic politics of Greece which the US believed provided an assurance, that Greece would not fall in the hands of communist regimes. In fighting against the communist regimes, the US presented *“Democracy”,* as an alternative and most suited form of governance, but it remained to fail in bringing the majority of the countries out of the influence of the USSR.

Some of these initiatives, taken under the Presidency of Henry Truman, suggest that his presidency remained most workable against communism. There could be several instances, which one might cite, to authenticate his stance against communism. Truman’s effort against the communist regime in the USSR provided a base to the future efforts of the US for curbing the communist rise. There is no second opinion on the fact that the policy of the US, fought efficiently in curbing the communist rise. The collapse of the USSR, therefore, finally paved the way for the US being the only superpower in the world. The later Presidencies therefore, became stuck in the ways of how they could help naïve democracies, as a result of their fight against communism. Some analysts also opine that in its efforts against communism, the US attempted to bring new threats to the world, like terrorism and extremism. From a financial perspective, the US war against communism had been too costly, ranging from 1.2 to 1.4 trillion dollars.