

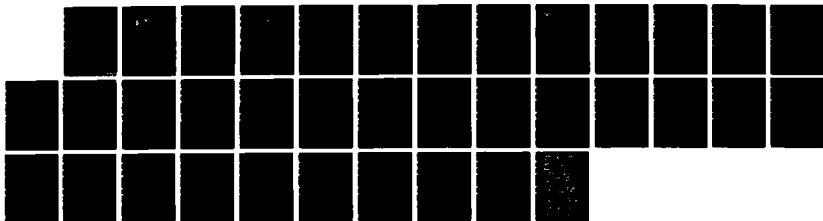
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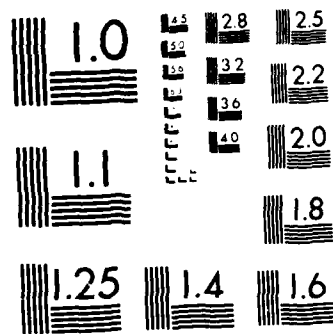
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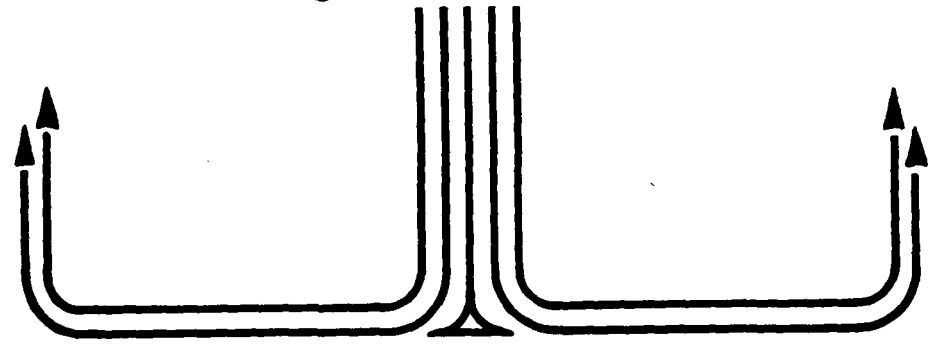
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# AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

**STUDENT REPORT**  
BOOK ANALYSIS: THE UNITED STATES  
AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR,  
1941-1947  
MAJOR GARY V. KAHN 88-1415  
"insights into tomorrow"



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**TITLE** BOOK ANALYSIS: THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR, 1941-1947

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of  
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19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) THIS REPORT ANALYZES JOHN LEWIS GADDIS' 1972 BOOK, <u>THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR, 1941-1947</u> , SEEKING TO VALIDATE THE ACCURACY OF GADDIS' HISTORICAL ANALYSIS. THIS ANALYSIS PRESENTS THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION BY USING DIFFERENT HISTORIANS' INTERPRETATIONS OF PARTICULAR KEY EVENTS BETWEEN 1941 AND 1947. THE AUTHOR RECOMMENDS THE BOOK AS AN ACCURATE AND READABLE PRESENTATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LIMITATIONS PLACED ON ELECTED OFFICIALS DURING THE POLICY FORMATION PROCESS. THE AUTHOR RECOMMENDS THE BOOK FOR PME STUDENT STUDY OF THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR.					
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## PREFACE

Military officers must support and advise the civilian elected officials of the government. To give valid advice, officers should have an understanding of the public pressures placed on the Administration and the Congress during the policy formulation process. John Lewis Gaddis' book, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947, gives the reader a clear, complete presentation of internal and external political pressures on the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations as the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union developed during the 1940s. This report shows the merit of the book by presenting historians' interpretations of several key events which precipitated cold war development.

Chapter One is an overview of the report.

Chapter Two gives a short prewar background, discussing President Roosevelt's vision of the postwar world.

Chapter Three describes key political events during World War II, particularly problems associated with planning the "second front" allied invasion, and Roosevelt's persistent attempts to establish free, democratic, and self-determined postwar governments.

Chapter Four presents the postwar economic picture, Truman's accession to the Presidency, and how the United States maintained control of atomic weapons.

Chapter Five analyzes the prelude to and formulation of The Truman Doctrine, wherein America took a clear position against communist insurgencies. This chapter presents a summary of the final events which caused the cold war, according to many moderate historians.

Chapter Six is a brief conclusion summarizing the academic validity of Gaddis' book.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

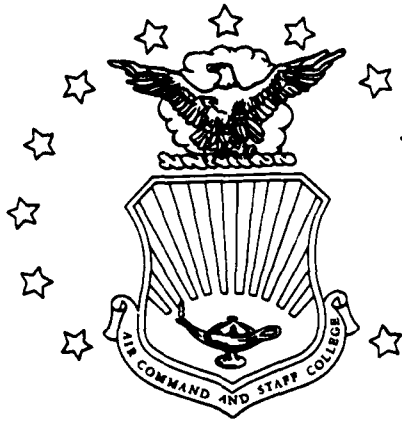
The author wishes particularly to recognize the assistance of his advisor, a naval officer, in this report's formulation, and also, the editorial help of his wife, Debra.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Gary V. Kahn is a United States Air Force senior pilot. He is a member of the Air Command and Staff College Class of 1988. He began his Air Force career as a student pilot at Columbus AFB, Mississippi, after being commissioned through Air Force ROTC. Following pilot training, Major Kahn flew C-141s at McChord AFB, Washington, where he became a simulator instructor and flight examiner aircraft commander in the 8th Military Airlift Squadron and the 62nd Military Airlift Wing. In 1983, Major Kahn was selected to become an Air Training Command instructor pilot at Williams AFB, Arizona. At Williams, Major Kahn was a T-37 flight commander in the 96th Flying Training Squadron, chief of the T-37 class commander section in the 82nd Student Squadron, and a runway supervisory unit (RSU) controller in the 82nd Flying Training Wing.

Major Kahn holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English from the University of Washington, and a Master of Public Administration Degree in Administrative Organization and Management from Golden Gate University.





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REPORT NUMBER

88-1415

AUTHOR(S)

MAJOR GARY V. KAHN

TITLE

BOOK ANALYSIS: THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR, 1941-1947.

Since the end of World War II, world public opinion has been actively concerned with the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. America's diplomatic relationship with the Soviets is largely based on attitudes and beliefs born during the early cold war period. In a chronological format, this report describes and evaluates several key events which led to the cold war. The author analyzes John Lewis Gaddis' 1972 book, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947. American historians' foreign policy interpretations are used to appraise the government's role in the era of cold war development. Limitations placed on the government by public opinion are also considered. The report references moderate traditional and revisionist historians to support Gaddis' conclusions.

The author has identified four areas which, according to Gaddis, facilitated cold war development. These are: first, the allied delay in opening the second front in France; second, nonrecognition by Roosevelt and Churchill of Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe; third, the abrupt cutoff of lend-lease aid to Russia at the end of the war, and subsequent denial

## CONTINUED

of postwar economic assistance; and finally, the United States' decision to retain full control over our atomic weapon monopoly.

The author highly recommends Gaddis' book as a clear, complete, and easy to read analysis of the origins of the cold war. It is a very useful tool for PME students seeking an understanding of the 1940's international political relationships, and also the internal workings and limitations of our own government.

## CHAPTER ONE--OVERVIEW

By the fall of 1945 the American people had many reasons to be delighted. Germany and Japan had been overcome. American troops, after winning everywhere, would soon be coming home. The Nazis and Japanese had been overcome by the largest display of force in history. This force had been brought together to fight for the freedom of mankind. The Allies had mutually pledged to uphold freedom and autonomy, with requisite promises supporting freely elected governments. At least that was the way we Americans looked at it.

Even before the year's end the glowing hopes began to fade. Signs of mounting tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union began to appear which raised disturbing questions regarding our wartime ally. In his famous speech at the graduation ceremonies of the small Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, on March 5th, 1946, Winston Churchill provoked and condemned the Soviets. The President of the United States, Harry Truman, had invited Churchill to give the address. After being introduced by Truman, the former Prime Minister said:

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Sofia, all these famous cities, and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet Sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow.... I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines.... I am convinced that there is nothing they [the Russians] admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness.... If the population of the English-speaking Commonwealths be added to that of the United States with all that such cooperation implies in the air, on the sea, all over the globe and in science and in industry, and in moral force, there will be no quivering, precarious balance of power to

offer its temptation to ambition or adventure. On the contrary, there will be overwhelming assurance of security. (2:77-78)

Churchill's address produced no immediate change in American policy, but it strengthened President Truman's resolve to stop Soviet expansionism. (5:60) But the question arose: Should America stop the Russians, and if so, how? President Truman's resolve was put to the test by a crisis in Greece and Turkey in March, 1947. His response to the crisis, his statement of America's foreign policy goals, became "The Truman Doctrine." American actions resulted in Russian reactions. Russian actions resulted in American reactions. This chain of events resulted in what historians now call the cold war.

This report analyzes the origins of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Foreign policy interpretations by American historians have been used to try to come to some appraisal of how American foreign policy affected the era of cold war development.

The postwar period gave rise to spirited debate among historians. The standard American interpretation, popular in the 1950s, presented the cold war as America's brave and necessary response to the Soviet military and ideological expansionism. This academic viewpoint about cold war development is often called "traditionalist." These ideas resulted from analyzing Stalin's postwar creation of a protective geographic bloc around the Soviet motherland, aimed at preventing another devastating invasion as had occurred in World War I and World War II. (4:204-207) The idea of containing this Soviet bloc became "the basis of official policy during the Truman years" (5:327) and developed between 1945 and 1947. (10:107-128)

Beginning in the 1960s, "revisionist" historians presented a somewhat different academic viewpoint. Revisionists thought the Soviets had a right to feel greatly threatened by the imperialist Western powers whose foreign policy responses grew fundamentally out of economic pressures and perspectives. (3:Ch1)

Beginning in the late 1960s, historians had sufficient information to compare these viewpoints, at least from the American point of view. Works analyzing differing viewpoints resulted in the most impartial historical interpretations.

Specifically, this report analyzes John Lewis Gaddis' 1972 book, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947. Professor Gaddis is internationally recognized as a leading American historian of United States' foreign policy during the cold war. He has taught since 1969 at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where he is Distinguished Professor of History. Professor Gaddis has been Bicentennial Professor of American

Studies at the University of Helsinki and Visiting Professor of Strategy at the United States Naval War College, and he is a recent recipient of the Guggenheim fellowship. Winner of the Bancroft Prize for History for The United States and Origins of the Cold War, he is also the author of Strategies of Containment and, in 1988, is working on an autobiography of George Kennan. (9:249)

Professor Gaddis described his goal in writing the book in the preface:

I have sought to analyze the evolution of United States policy toward the Soviet Union from the formation of the Grand Alliance in 1941 to the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. I have proceeded on the assumption that foreign policy is the product of external and internal influence, as perceived by officials responsible for its formation. In seeking to understand their behavior, I have tried to view problems of the time as these men saw them, not solely as they appear in retrospective. (1:vii)

Gaddis readily admits to the unavoidable bias of not including firsthand Soviet viewpoints: "...we have little reliable information about what went on inside the Kremlin during the same period [1941-1947]." (1:vii) This limitation is a very important consideration. Any free world historian has limited access to Soviet sources. Since we really do not know what went on in Stalin's Politburo meetings, our historians can not completely understand Soviet political limitations, or lack thereof.

This analysis will present different historian's interpretations of particular key events between 1941 and 1947. Each event will include an explanation, placing it in context, and primarily using factual information from Gaddis' book. Where appropriate, events will be analyzed from a traditional point of view, or from a revisionist point of view, and finally, from Professor Gaddis' viewpoint, which is usually a synthesis of available viewpoints. Herbert Feis, is the primary traditional historian consulted, particularly his 1957 book, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: the War They Waged and the Peace They Sought, and his 1970 book, From Trust to Terror: the Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950. Feis (1893-1972) was an economist, historian and political scientist who served as an economic advisor to the State Department from 1931-43, special consultant to the Secretary of War from 1944-46, and member of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, from 1948-63. Feis was also visiting professor at Harvard and Columbia Universities. (12:206) The primary revisionist historian is Walter LaFeber, Cornell University Professor of History, particularly his 1972 book, America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1971. While there

are certainly differences between Feis' and LaFeber's viewpoints, their similarities are very extensive. Both are legitimate historians; that is to say they carefully document their facts and base their analysis on a comprehensive comparison of available sources. Gaddis' book emphasized the common points of the traditionalist versus revisionist debate. In regard to this debate, Gaddis' goal was to balance and merge viewpoints in The United States and the Origins of the Cold War. (1:Ch1,Ch11)

This analysis will address four of Gaddis' primary criticisms of revisionist historical accounts. Gaddis thinks, "Revisionists are correct in emphasizing the importance of internal constraints, but they have defined them too narrowly: by focusing so heavily on economics, they neglect the profound impact of the political system on the conduct of American foreign policy." (1:357) According to Gaddis, four major areas which facilitated cold war development are (1:358):

1. The delay in opening the second front.
2. Nonrecognition of Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.
3. The denial of economic aid to Russia after the war.
4. The decision to retain control of the atomic bomb.

In Gaddis' thesis, events prior to 1941 indirectly affected the national political attitudes in the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. These political attitudes, as we shall see, resulted in strained international relationships, distrust, and poor communication on many levels both during and after World War II, which directly resulted in the cold war.

## CHAPTER TWO--PREWAR BACKGROUND

### America's prewar vision of the postwar world

The German invasion of Russia turned the Soviet Union into an ally of Great Britain and subsequently of the United States. The need to defeat Germany and Japan resulted in a working wartime relationship between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. This alliance worked in war, but might be expected to dissolve once the mutual enemies were defeated. Regardless of the alliance's origin, President Franklin Roosevelt retained high hope for future international understanding and communication, and therefore, did not want a postwar dissolution. (1:Ch1)

America delayed entering World War II in large part because our politicians were under extreme political pressure to remain isolated. Before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt, President of the United States since 1932, got strong political pressure to keep America out of war. As Feis points out, "Public opinion can inspire or frustrate a President. He can neither ignore nor yield supinely to it. He must be its judge, not its servant." (2:6) In a press conference on February 3rd, 1939, seven months before the Nazis attacked Poland, President Roosevelt said:

The foreign policy has not changed and it is not going to change. If you want a comparatively simple statement of the policy, I will give it to you:  
No. 1: We are against any entangling alliances, obviously. No. 2: We are in favor of the maintenance of world trade for everybody-all nations-including ourselves. No. 3: We are in complete sympathy with any and every effort made to reduce or limit armaments. No. 4: As a nation-as American people-we are sympathetic with the peaceful maintenance of political, economic and social independence of all nations in the world. (2:381)

A combination of later world events altered America's public opinion which permitted the President's publicly announced policy to change from isolation to total involvement in the war. After France fell, and Britain retreated from the Continent, the United States provided arms and munitions for the British through the lend-lease program. Feis viewed Roosevelt's change of heart this way: "Roosevelt concluded that we must support Britain through thick and thin at any risk. When early in 1941 he

proposed to Congress that we extend essential lend-lease aid, he announced that it was the end of any attempt at appeasement '...The end of compromise with tyranny and the forces of oppression.' " (2:8) Feis thought Roosevelt's goal was to keep belligerent countries from pushing our friends around.

LaFever expanded on this idea: "Since becoming a major world power in the 1890s, the United States had viewed anything in the world resembling [a tyrant's] iron fence as incompatible with American objectives. An open, free world had no such divisions." (3:2) LaFever points out that even large-scale American economic generosity failed to induce perfect accord between the Russian government's position and Roosevelt's vision: "Hitler's invasion of Russia in June 1941 forced a four-year partnership upon the Soviets and Americans. Despite the wartime cooperation and the goodwill generated by \$9.5 billion of lend-lease materials sent to Russia, conflicts erupted over war strategies and plans for postwar peace." (3:5) The Russians were not easily bought.

Gaddis' view of prewar American political attitudes combined elements of both the traditional "fight for right" and shifting American economic priorities. He presents Franklin Roosevelt's assertions that America's isolationism had been a blunder. (1:1) The President's December 9, 1941, fireside chat "concluded forcefully: 'We are going to win the war, and we are going to win the peace that follows.'" (1:1) Ferently striving for a harmonious postwar world, America shared her wealth as a sort of down payment on future Russian goodwill. Within days after the Nazis invaded Russia, Roosevelt pledged military and economic aid to help the Soviet people expel the Germans. By November, 1941, the United States had granted extensive lend-lease credits to the Soviets.

Roosevelt believed the peace after World War II could only succeed if the Russians understood and could engage in effective, two-way communication with the Western powers, particularly the United States: "I think the Russians are perfectly friendly; they aren't trying to gobble up all the rest of Europe or the world. They don't know us, that's the really fundamental difference." (1:6) He thought it was America's responsibility to help the Russians financially, particularly through a program like lend-lease where postwar debts were accountable and documented. Gaddis thought Roosevelt wanted to teach the Soviets about democratic values and economic goals, and also about international communication and public relations. The President thought Russians didn't know how to act in the public eye of the civilized world. Roosevelt tried to help the Soviets improve their image in the United States and Europe. (1:39-40) Unfortunately, the more Roosevelt "taught" Stalin, the better the Soviet dictator became at manipulating events in the Soviet's favor.

Professor Gaddis points out Stalin was first, last, and always a dictator, dedicated to advancing his own vision of communist doctrine. But Stalin was realistic. He didn't care what political or religious affiliation his allies preferred. Any ally who furnished soldiers, equipment, or money to help fight Russia's enemies found instant welcome. This was merely a pragmatic political arrangement, for when allies were no longer needed or useful, they would be discarded. (1:60-62) Also, Americans continually tried to insinuate American values on communists. As Gaddis illustrates, the American public often tried to insinuate American values and lifestyles on foreigners:

Confronted with evidence that the Russian people were willing to fight for their government, many Americans jumped illogically to the conclusion that the Soviet Union had suddenly become a democracy. These inaccurate perceptions left the United States ill-prepared for postwar developments. (1:62)

Roosevelt's "vision of the postwar world... grew out of determination to avoid mistakes which had led to World War II." (1:31) He thought a weak armistice agreement ending World War I had fostered economic crisis, depression, and allowed Germany to quickly regain political power and rearm. Therefore, he thought the goal of the victors ought to be unconditional surrender, political freedom through self-determination, a revival of world trade, and establishment of a more effective "League of Nations" type of international organization. (1:29-31) President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Marshal Stalin quickly agreed the Nazis should be forced into an unconditional surrender. Stalin, however, was disappointed that Roosevelt and Churchill publicly announced the surrender terms. Stalin thought the announcement would make the Germans fight harder. (1:10; 11:108-111) Also, Stalin could not fully accept Roosevelt's concept of self-determination. Stalin knew he would have a tough time selling the idea of postwar Eastern European political freedom to his politburo colleagues. (1:Ch5) This would be a major contended issue at the upcoming summit conference in Yalta.

Clearly the victors would decide if Germany and Japan would be "repressed or rehabilitated." "The Big Three (the US, Great Britain, and the USSR) shared an obvious interest in keeping Germany under control, but unless they could agree before the end of the fighting on how to do this, disputes among the victors would almost certainly arise." (1:95) In the debate over American occupation policy in Germany, advocates of repression thought the Versailles treaty ending World War I had been too lenient, resulting in Germany's uncontrolled, bellicose development during the 1930s. Some State Department officials in the Roosevelt Administration advised very severe treatment,

especially for Germany's wartime leaders, so "successors to Hitler could not arise." Others in the government planned for a more moderate peace, with Germany's economy left sufficiently intact to avoid a massive economic collapse which would encumber the United States with a massive relief operation. These moderates thought the United States should at least leave the Germans the minimum required tools to rebuild to some level of self-sufficiency. (1:96)

## CHAPTER THREE-IN THE WAR

### Second front and summit conference problems

As soon as the United States entered the war, a very important issue arose concerning where and when the Allies would launch a second front against the Axis (the first front being the German-Soviet front in Russia and Eastern Europe). Roosevelt and Churchill could not agree in their June, 1942, meeting in the White House. "The Americans wanted priority for a cross-channel operation against the Germans in France, a beach-head to be secured in 1942, and a strike at the heart of the Reich in 1943." The British favored delay, wanting to avoid casualties as had occurred in World War I, hoping to prevent trench warfare development. (6:1017)

Stalin sent his foreign minister to Washington, begging for a second front soon enough to relieve pressure on Russian armies as the Germans advanced toward Moscow and laid siege to Stalingrad. To Stalin's dismay, a compromise resulted in the Allied "Operation Torch" invasion of North Africa. As LaFerber clearly points out, second front delays generated Soviet distrust which resulted in continued communication and diplomatic problems throughout the period when the alliance debated postwar territorial allocation. (3:Chs1-2) Again, Moscow's Eastern European "sphere of influence" is overlooked:

Stalin became increasingly suspicious and resentful. Nor did the Russian dictator care for the Anglo-American refusal to assure him that after the conflict the Soviet borders would essentially be those recognized by the Nazi-Soviet treaty, that is, that the Baltic states and parts of Poland, Finland, and Rumania would be absorbed by Russia. The United States instead asked Stalin to wait until the end of the war to settle those territorial problems. (3:5)

LaFerber's judgement that America refused to assure Stalin is too harsh. LaFerber does not fully consider the powerful effect of public opinion. Churchill, especially, could not support a second front until victory could be assured. Roosevelt, always the patient politician, thought that by delaying territorial allocation decisions he could improve the chances for lasting postwar political independence in occupied nations. (1:66-70)

At the Casablanca Summit Conference in January, 1943, where the "Big Three" publicly announced their official unconditional

surrender policy, Stalin again asked for a second front. The German and Italian military had proved to be a tougher foe in North Africa than Allied "Operation Torch" commanders had expected. Roosevelt and Churchill decided to attack Sicily, hoping to knock Italy out of the war, regain Allied control of the Balkans, and also, tie up many German divisions in defense of Italy. (11:106) With the Sicily invasion, there would be no Allied landing in France in 1943. Again, Stalin was extremely disappointed and angry. Gaddis thought domestic political constraints in America and England severely limited our leaders options. Neither country's voters would tolerate a major military loss, so no major operation was mounted until the probability of military success was very high. (1:Ch1,Ch3,Ch11)

The Russians did not like this Anglo-American caution. They were already in a large-scale, bloody fight and could not accept the decision to delay. Tensions continued to build as Stalin developed his own postwar political agenda. Gaddis thought the delayed second front:

...severely strained the alliance with the Soviet Union, leaving the Russians to feel, with considerable justification, that they had been left to do most of the fighting against Germany. The absence of a second front brought Soviet-American relations to a low point in the summer of 1943, leading some observers to consider the possibility that Stalin might yet conclude a separate peace with Germany. (1:72-73)

So, very early in the war, the policy decisions of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, began to influence Stalin negatively. Even though Anglo-American decisions were fully justified and supported within their own governments, Soviet goals and perspectives were different. From his point of view, Stalin needed the geopolitical protection which could only be afforded by a sphere of Soviet geographic control around the central Russian homeland. (7:--)

In late November, 1943, the Big Three leaders held a summit meeting in Teheran, Iran. At this meeting, Stalin got assurance that planning for the long-sought second front was well under way. The more general problem of Eastern Europe's postwar status was left dangling. As Feis points out, Roosevelt was optimistic, convinced his own personal charm and charisma would play a large role in resolving postwar geopolitics. Roosevelt still, as always, hoped the Grand Alliance would continue into the period after the war. (11:Chs26-28)

Gaddis thought, "Washington officials knew what they wanted in Eastern Europe: maximum possible self-determination for the people of that region without impairing the unity of the Grand Alliance." (1:133) George Kennan, counselor to the American Embassy in Moscow in December, 1944, pointed out that the Soviets

had a different agenda. Kennan thought the Soviets "had never stopped thinking in terms of spheres of influence." (1:157)

The February, 1945, Yalta summit conference resulted in controversial political misunderstandings between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union which quickened cold war development. (1:Ch5;2:Chs5-8;3:Chs1-2,129;11:Chs51-57) Conservative critics think Roosevelt's concessions at the conference resulted in the loss of America's ability to negotiate postwar political freedoms for occupied nations. Gaddis' and Feis think the Yalta agreements represented a victory for Roosevelt's wartime diplomacy. The cold war might not have occurred if Stalin had honored the United States' interpretation of Soviet wartime commitments.

Unfortunately, Stalin's interpretation of Yalta was different than America's or Britain's. LaFeber points out, "the Soviets had no intention of allowing the history of 1919-1939 to repeat itself; if they could gather the requisite power, Eastern Europe and particularly Poland, across which German armies had invaded Russia twice in less than twenty-five years, would come under de facto Soviet control." (3:15) Stalin promised to set up a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity including both pro-communist and pro-Western elements. Roosevelt and Churchill agreed this postwar government could be friendly to the Soviets, but insisted it represent the popular Polish will, including "democratic political parties" with "free elections." (1:Ch5) As Gaddis points out, the Soviet interpretation of a free election was a Soviet style election in which the democratic and peace-loving Communist Party had the only candidates on the ballot. Thus, the one-party slate always won a clear majority! Therefore, Stalin thought he had installed freely elected communist governments in occupied Poland and Rumania. (1:161-172)

After Yalta, LaFeber thought the State Department:

tried to buckle Stalin's iron fence with economic pressure.... When Stalin asked for a six billion dollar loan in January 1945, the State Department refused to discuss the matter unless...Stalin became more receptive to American demands in Europe. After the German surrender in May, President Truman abruptly cut off lend-lease aid. (3:22)

As we will see, the Soviets would not submit to economic blackmail.

## CHAPTER FOUR--AFTER THE WAR

### Postwar economics, the new President, and the atom bomb

Gaddis discusses America's economic relationship with the Russians and perceived changes when Truman became President: "Although the Russians viewed American economic aid as an important part of their reconstruction program, they were never willing to sacrifice major political objectives to obtain it." (1:175) In August, 1945, Stalin asked for a one billion dollar loan. LaFeber points out:

Somehow, the United States government lost this request, but it was discovered after failure of the Foreign Ministers Conference in December. On March 1, 1946 the State Department offered to discuss the loan if the Soviets would pledge "non-discrimination in international commerce" by accepting membership in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. (3:22)

To gain and maintain membership in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the Soviets would have to open their records to foreign accountants and administrative personnel, predominately Americans. Stalin quickly rejected this offer, clearly wanting to retain "technical and economic independence" as specified in their new (March 13, 1946) Five-Year Plan. (3:22-23) Though the US and the USSR were allies of necessity during the war, the Soviets were communists first and foremost. Proletariat revolution resulting in the worldwide demise of capitalism was always an underlying goal of communist doctrine. (10:107-114) In 1946, Stalin could not tolerate the political openness required to participate in such large-scale, world economic affairs. (2:248)

With Roosevelt's death, "tactful diplomacy" was cut short, replaced by Truman's direct, decisive manner. Many in Truman's new cabinet appreciated his swift decision making because they quickly knew exactly where the President stood. On April 23, 1945, only eleven days after taking office, President Truman met Soviet foreign minister Molotov in the White House and sharply admonished him for his government's hostility toward non-Communist politicians in liberated Poland:

When Molotov tried to explain that the Soviet government was following what it considered to be the correct interpretation of the Yalta agreement, Truman cut him off. The United States wanted cooperation with

the Soviet Union, Truman said, but not as a one way proposition. "I have never been talked to like that in my life," Molotov huffed. Truman replied angrily: "Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that." (1:204)

The new President was determined to hide his initial inexperience in foreign relations. He attacked foreign diplomats trying to take advantage of him with displays of toughness and temper. This new "abruptness" in American foreign policy temporarily confused the world diplomatic community, particularly the Soviets. According to Gaddis (1:205), "There is little doubt the Russians interpreted Truman's stormy interview with Molotov as evidence that the new administration had abandoned Roosevelt's policy of cooperation with the Soviet Union." However, though harsh, "Truman's tough rhetoric of April, 1945, was just that--rhetoric--and did not signify an end to American efforts to reach an accommodation with the Soviet Union." (1:205) Again, international political misunderstanding stemmed from communication limitations. (1:204-206)

The American atomic weapon monopoly in 1945 "drastically altered the postwar balance of power, making it at least technically feasible for the United States to impose its will on the rest of the world." (1:245) Gaddis discusses problems created by the use of atomic weapons: "Atomic diplomacy proved to be a surprisingly ineffective means of securing American objectives." (1:246) The bomb could not be used effectively to place political pressure on the Soviets. They correctly guessed we would not use atom bombs again unless extremely vital national interests were at stake. Also, American congressional support for atomic programs lagged after the war. Few in Congress, the press, or the public could make informed, democratic policy decisions on atomic issues because the technology was so new, complicated, and often highly classified. The Truman Administration learned it would take time to inform, educate, and develop support for American atomic policy. More importantly, the President and his staff had to decide which direction our atomic policy would take. In one policy option, the United States could try to keep our atomic monopoly as long as possible. As another option, we could quickly relinquish control to an international regulatory agency as a gesture of good faith to the world, showing our resolve to avoid an atomic arms race. (1:Ch8)

Scientists in 1945 agreed atomic bomb construction "had evolved from the application of widely known scientific laws, and that given time any major industrial nation, including the Soviet Union, could emulate the American achievement." (1:247) Thus, a United States atomic monopoly would be short lived at best. A major revisionist premise grew around this issue. (24:--) Since the US could not maintain a monopoly, why did the government try to pressure other nations, particularly the Soviets, by holding

the atom bomb over their heads?

Within the State Department, Dean Acheson thought an atomic arms race would be useless. On September 25, 1945, Acheson told Truman "...there could be no defense against the bomb, and use of it might destroy civilization. Under these circumstances, the advantage of being ahead in such a race is nothing compared with not having the race." (1:252) Feis thought the US "possession of atomic weapons did not significantly affect the main lines of foreign policy of the Western Allies. But it probably made them more confident and stubborn in the clashes that arose..." (2:139) Feis goes on to present his interpretation of American and Soviet atomic policy goals:

The American Government sincerely wished to bring about the elimination of atomic weapons-forever-provided it could maintain its advantage until it was sure that no other country could in the interim obtain them by stealth. The Soviet Government wanted to nullify our advantage by having a ban imposed immediately on the production and use of the weapons while it strove to secure them.... Equality with the United States-perhaps superiority-was the well hidden secret at the heart of its "atomic diplomacy." (2:140)

LaFeber, recounting the events of 1946, essentially agreed with Feis' interpretation. (3:34-36) At the United Nations in June, 1946, the United States proposed formation of an international Atomic Energy Commission which would globally manage and inspect all materials necessary to create atomic energy. These proposed inspections, like those of the International Monetary Fund (which the Soviets had already rejected), would be predominately controlled by American scientists. In this international AEC, no control or inspection vetoes would be allowed. Members had to give inspectors access to records, factories, and strategic mining operations. Majority vote would rule. During peacetime, atomic plants would be setup according to strategic and geographic criteria which favored the US and Europe, and severely limited plant development in Russia's vast but undeveloped eastern territory.

A Soviet counter-offer insisted on "destruction of all atomic weapons, the cessation of their production, agreement of all powers not to use these weapons, and then a discussion of controls." (3:35) Truman, under strong pressure from the Congress and his military advisors, rejected the Soviet counter-offer. LaFeber described the United States Government's response which eliminated meaningful US participation in international atomic control agencies and increased the likelihood of an escalating arms race:

Instead [of considering the Russian counter-offer], Congress established a United States Atomic Energy Act of 1946. Under strong military pressure, the act prohibited any exchange of information on the use of atomic energy with any nation until Congress should decide by joint resolution that "effective" international controls were in force. (3:36)

Thus, LaFeber thought, "The Pandora Box of atomic energy remained open.... American plans to use multilateral, international agencies to weaken the iron curtain had failed." (3:36) Here, LaFeber carefully covers the facts, but his analysis and judgement of "failure" does not fully consider public opinion's constraining power on the Executive Branch. Gaddis provides a reason for Congress' action:

Legislators on Capitol Hill reflected in general the attitudes of their constituents on the international control of atomic energy. Opinion polls showed that to a surprising extent Americans realized that their monopoly over the bomb would not last. ...85 percent of those questioned wanted the United States to retain exclusive possession of the weapon as long as possible. ...70 percent of the public opposed turning nuclear weapons over to the United Nations. Clearly the Truman Administration would have to overcome considerable skepticism on the part of Congress and the public if it was to implement its program of international control. (1:257)

In this event the United States Government might have avoided nuclear arms escalation, but the chance slipped away because communication proved too difficult. Truman couldn't convince the public quickly enough that nuclear proliferation would later become bad policy. Also, due to distrust on both the American and Russian sides, the Truman Administration could not work out acceptable, compromise settlements with Stalin. Thus, while Truman's postwar policies continued in line with his predecessor, his ability to communicate, persuade, and compromise in the international political arena left much to be desired when compared with Roosevelt.

## CHAPTER FIVE--TRUMAN GETS TOUGH

### The Truman Doctrine

The March, 1947, Truman Doctrine address to Congress is often touted by traditional historians as the first instance where America took "a public stand against Soviet Communist intrusion into the lives of other nations, everywhere." (2:192) Gaddis presents Truman's policy shift which began a year earlier, in March 1946. America's accommodation policy toward the Russians deteriorated and political compromise possibilities faded, replaced by the United States' rejection of any type of appeasement. Russian behavior since the end of the war had gradually "convinced many Washington officials that Stalin had no interest in self-determination, the revival of world trade, or collective security." (1:283) If Stalin's main goal was not simply guaranteeing Soviet security, what was it? The question of whether Stalin sought world communist domination, or simply, geographic security, may never be answered because the Soviets have not opened their files and records for international review. President Truman had to make policy decisions based on the advice and information available at that time. He dealt with events as they occurred each day, constantly scrutinized by public opinion.

Gaddis reviewed the development and implementation of the Truman Doctrine, emphasizing the role of George F. Kennan. In Moscow on February 9, 1946, Stalin made a rare public speech restating traditional Soviet doctrine wherein communism and capitalism are mutually exclusive and completely incompatible. As LaFaber points out, Stalin went on to warn his fellow Russians "that because of outside threats they would have to revert to rigid state control and make additional sacrifices under new five-year plans." (18:337) Many Anglo-American officials interpreted this speech as Stalin's "declaration of World War Three," with the USSR ready to contest the rest of the world as a whole. (18:337) Two weeks after Stalin's speech, Kennan, the American charge d'affaires in Moscow, sent an eight-thousand word "long telegram" to the State Department. He analyzed Soviet behavior, noting "the relationship between [communist] ideology and Soviet diplomacy." (1:284) This analysis was later expanded and printed in Foreign Affairs, July, 1947. (10:107-128) The article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", became a major framework for the Truman Doctrine because the President, in trying to understand Soviet actions, was beginning to view Russia "not as an estranged ally but as a potential enemy, whose vital interests could not be recognized without endangering those of the United States." (1:284) Kennan thought the Marxist-Leninist

Soviet government saw the world as divided into hostile capitalist and communist camps between which there could be no peace:

... there can never be on Moscow's side any sincere assumption of a community of aims between the Soviet Union and powers which are regarded as capitalist. ...If the Soviet Government occasionally sets its signature to documents which would indicate the contrary, this is to be regarded as a tactical maneuver permissible in dealing with the enemy. (10:115)

During the war the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviets jointly occupied Iran to assure a delivery route for Russian supplies and to reduce chances of a fascist takeover in the vital oil producing region. The allies agreed to leave Iran not later than six months after armistice. Stalin refused to evacuate troops by a March 2, 1946, deadline, claiming the Iranians, under Western pressure, were not "honoring earlier agreements on oil and security along the Iranian-Russian border." Stalin did not want Western oil companies to gain a stronger postwar foothold in the Persian Gulf. (18:337) The United States opened the issue to public discussion in the newly formed United Nations and sent Moscow strongly worded telegrams, also publicly announced, demanding a prompt Soviet explanation. (1:311) All along Moscow was willing to negotiate; in fact, the Soviets settled directly with Iran, on Iranian terms, and withdrew their troops. Clearly, to Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov's distress, America had abandoned appeasement in favor of an intensified public anti-communist education campaign. But the President was limited, unlike Stalin, because Truman had to address public opinion, as Gaddis points out here:

...whereas before a public event such as the retention of Soviet troops, beyond the treaty date, in Iran had occurred, it was possible to attempt privately to arrange matters in dispute, but once a public event such as in this case occurred, the issue had to be met in the light of public opinion, and it was impossible then to settle such things on the basis of any deal. (1:312)

Gaddis describes how American public opinion, reflected by congressional activity, "was no longer disposed to make concessions on important questions.... Soviet popularity in the United States had been completely dissipated by Moscow's behavior." (1:312)

In February, 1947, the British government announced it would suspend economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey. Turkey posed no immediate problem. Greece, however, needed continued help to overcome a communist guerrilla insurgency. The State

Department thought these insurgents were "an instrument of Soviet policy, ...supplied from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania and feeding on the economic distress wrought by years of war and government ineptitude." (1:348) By the end of February, the President and his staff agreed that the United States should fill the economic and military gap left by the withdrawing British. But they had "to convince an increasingly economy-minded Congress to undertake this new and expensive commitment." (1:348) In a meeting with bipartisan congressional leaders, Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson did the trick, gaining congressional support for the Administration's aid policy by describing aid as "a sober and realistic effort to protect the security of the United States by strengthening the ability of free people to resist communist aggression and subversion." (1:349) The congressmen were impressed by Acheson's argument. As public support rapidly increased, the first \$400 million aid package was approved.

The main theme of The Truman Doctrine was presented to Congress in a joint session address on 12 March 1947. The Administration had three goals in mind while formulating the proclamation:

1. To make possible the formulation of intelligent opinions by the American people on the problems created by the present situation in Greece through the furnishing of full and frank information by the government.
2. To portray the world conflict between free and totalitarian or imposed forms of government.
3. To bring about an understanding by the American people of the world strategic situation. (1:350)

In the address, President Truman elaborated a global policy:

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one.... I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures. I believe we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. (2:194)

Feis and LaFever agree the President's address was informative and very well received by the American public, thus fulfilling Truman's three goals. But they both point out there were clearly undisclosed costs in implementing the policy. With limited economic support, the policy's scope could not be truly global. America could not possibly fight communism everywhere. (2:Chs24-27;3:44-48) LaFever points out Kennan's specific objection to sending military aid to Turkey, so near the Soviet border, and also his disagreement with "the harsh ideological

tone and open-ended commitment." (3:45) Also, LaFever points out, "The Doctrine itself suggested no real limitations to the scope of the American effort, but six weeks after Truman's speech, Secretary of State Marshall reoriented policy by concentrating State Department attention upon Europe." (3:47) Feis discusses the doctrine's indefinite scope:

Congress gave Truman a standing ovation. Most Americans found temporary relief for their own exasperation and fears in Truman's blunt challenge to Communism and its agents in many lands. Perhaps some did not realize that it would necessitate great increase in our military forces and readiness to use them when other means failed. Some may have been beguiled by the thought that as sole possessor of atomic weapons, our warnings would be like thunderbolts. Most European diplomats were amazed by the assertiveness of Truman's message. The tenor of most European comment was gratified but grave. (2:198)

According to Gaddis, issuance of the doctrine:

...constituted a form of shock therapy: it was a last ditch effort by the Administration to prod Congress and the American people into accepting the responsibilities of world leadership, which one year earlier, largely in response to public opinion, Washington officials had assumed by deciding to "get tough with Russia." (1:351)

Of course, Truman never intended to try to fight communism everywhere. Later executive branch explanations to Congress noted that approved aid to Greece and Turkey should not be precedent setting. Future requests by other countries besieged with communist insurgencies would be individually evaluated by the Administration, the State Department, and Congress. Realistic criteria would be used such as the requester's real need level, consistency with current American foreign policy objectives, the requestor's sincerity, and the probability that aid would effectively overcome the country's insurgency problems.

Gaddis concludes, "American leaders did not want a Cold War, but they wanted insecurity even less." (1:353) The process was a series of actions and reactions, signals and interpretations wherein "policy makers in both the US and USSR were constantly weighing each other's intentions, as they perceived them, and modifying their own courses of action accordingly. ...The power vacuum in central Europe caused by Germany's collapse made Russian-American confrontation likely; it did not make it inevitable." (1:360)

Stalin's ideology did not restrict his actions. Unlike Western leaders, who are forever responsible to Congress and the

people, Stalin was "the master of communist doctrine, not a prisoner of it, and could modify or suspend Marxism-Leninism whenever it suited him to do so." (1:360)

Gaddis concludes with an evenhanded overall analysis, deciding that the policy-making process is not one sided, that "both the United States and the Soviet Union were constantly weighing each other's intentions, as they perceived them, and modifying their own courses of action accordingly (1:360):

The Cold War grew out of a complicated interaction of external and internal developments inside both the United States and the Soviet Union. ... Leaders of both superpowers sought peace, but in doing so yielded to considerations which, while they did not precipitate war, made a resolution of differences impossible. (1:361)

Because the Administration presented The Truman Doctrine as a simple ideological conflict between two ways of life, the United States Government was strapped into "an ideological straitjacket almost as confining as that which restricted Soviet foreign policy." (1:352) Truman's carefully planned and orchestrated anti-communist rhetoric left subsequent United States leaders in a position where it was "difficult to respond to the conciliatory gestures which emanated from the Kremlin following Stalin's death." (1:352) Thus, in Gaddis' opinion, although intended for worldwide good, the Truman Administration's inflexibility regarding communism in 1946 and 1947 strained the international political relationship between the US and USSR, increased distrust, accelerated the "onslaught of McCarthyism" and "may well have contributed to the perpetuation of the Cold War" by artificially limiting communication between the superpowers. (1:352) In 1947, internal constraints in the US and USSR kept leaders from compromising with each other. By the 1950s, these restrictions had become a stubborn national ideological mindset which suppressed meaningful communication with the Soviets.

## CHAPTER SIX--CONCLUSION

This analysis presented different historian's interpretations of particular key events between 1941 and 1947 which led to the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. The analysis has attempted to use historical evidence to determine whether or not John Lewis Gaddis' book, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947, is an accurate representation of the events leading to the cold war. Where appropriate, moderate traditional and revisionist viewpoints have been integrated into the analysis of particular events thus reinforcing Gaddis' academic validity. In short, the author highly recommends Gaddis' book as a clear, complete, and easy to read analysis of the origins of the cold war. It is a very useful tool for PME students seeking an understanding of the 1940's international political relationships, and also the internal workings and limitations of our own government.

At the outset, the author proposed to analyze events from a separate traditional or revisionist viewpoint whenever appropriate. However, the author discovered that when dealing with conscientious historians, there are rarely substantial differences in factual discussions of the same historical event by different authors. Interpretations by radical historians, whether far left or far right on the political spectrum, which omit relevant facts when trying to make some particular point, have been disregarded by the author. Legitimate historians like Gaddis, Feis, and LaFeber don't alter the facts to make their point. Instead, they carefully gather all available sources, extract and analyze all possibly relevant facts, and present as much detail as publishing space allows, very carefully editing only when absolutely necessary.

With very few exceptions, the primary traditionalist historian, Feis, and the primary revisionist, LaFeber, have agreed with Gaddis' event presentations, supporting analysis, and his overall thesis that the cold war grew from a complicated set of interrelated actions and reactions, and communication problems among the participants. Those rare exceptions, such as LaFeber's incomplete consideration of American public opinion's effect on policy makers in the delayed second front and Atomic Energy Act issues, are presented in more detail in the text.

In particular, Feis and LaFeber both basically agree with Gaddis' proposition that events in the following four areas facilitated cold war development. First, the Anglo-American delay in opening the second front in France infuriated Stalin and

furthered his distrust of the West. Second, nonrecognition by Roosevelt and Churchill of Moscow's need for a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe left the Soviets feeling threatened and reduced the chances for postwar self-determination in the occupied countries. Third, the abrupt cutoff of lend-lease aid to Russia at the end of the war, and subsequent denial of postwar economic assistance drove Stalin and his government away from potential membership in international support organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund. And finally, the United States' decision to retain full control over our atomic weapon monopoly, while concurrently implementing a well orchestrated anti-communist campaign, scared the Soviets away from international atomic regulatory agencies, and, at best accelerated an arms race between the superpowers.

President Truman's creation of a national anti-communist ideology is an excellent example of a government campaign to educate the population. Truman's policies were intended to do good, and they were based on the best advice available at the time. Unfortunately, the anti-Soviet rhetoric became inflexible, spawned McCarthyism, and severely limited the ability of Presidents after Truman to engage in meaningful communication with the more temperate Soviet leaders after Stalin's death.

## POSTSCRIPT

### Author's Comments

Since the end of World War II, the world has been very concerned with the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. As Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev stated in an August, 1986, foreign policy speech:

Prenuclear thinking essentially lost its significance on August 6, 1945. Today it is no longer possible to ensure one's own security without taking into account the security of other states and peoples. There can be no genuine security unless it is equal all around and all-encompassing. To think otherwise means to live in a world of illusions, in a world of self-deception.  
(21:364)

Politicians and scholars have written volumes about the cold war. Such articles, books, and documents form a wealth of information from which the society may build historical opinions which can be used to relate to present developments and subsequently shape the future.

United States and Soviet diplomatic interactions are largely based on historical mistrust and communication problems, principally due to the events during the closing months of World War II (8:Ch1). Our national anti-communist actions, rising out of Truman's "get tough with Russia" policy, set the tone for international diplomatic conduct in the 1950s and 1960s.

America is not doomed to continue on the same course of continuous diplomatic struggle between the US and USSR, particularly in light of contemporary Russian leadership. General Secretary Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika could create a new climate where dramatic and meaningful diplomatic change and communication can occur. (23:--)

Military officers work under civilian authorities. Often these elected civilian leaders are severely limited by public opinion pressures and international communication problems. To build toward progressive changes, it is important to develop a clear understanding of why we are where we are today. Therefore, military officers should study history. As tomorrow's military leaders, officers might give advice that decides America's future. Future elected leaders--our bosses--will need our help.

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