The Truman Doctrine vs. The Bush Doctrine: Justifying War with Iraq

Lindsay St. Germain
Western Michigan University, linswma@hotmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses

Part of the Political Science Commons

Recommended Citation
St. Germain, Lindsay, "The Truman Doctrine vs. The Bush Doctrine: Justifying War with Iraq" (2003). Honors Theses. 957.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses/957
Lindsay St. Germain, having been admitted to the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College in Fall 1999 successfully presented the Lee Honors College Thesis on June 24, 2003.

The title of the paper is:

"The Truman Doctrine vs. The Bush Doctrine: Justifying War with Iraq"

Mr. Timothy Farrow, Political Science Department

Dr. Brian Schaffner, Political Science Department
It is commonly thought that presidential doctrines set a precedent for the country to follow. These doctrines are intended to reflect the attitudes, and values of not only the president in power, but the best interests of the United States in general. Using public opinion surveys, historical documents, and current news articles and books, I will analyze the Truman Doctrine, enunciated in 1947, and the Bush Doctrine, put forth in 2001. In doing so, I hope to compare military actions justified using both doctrines, and point out what I see to be the flaws and triumphs of the Bush Doctrine; which, in the end, will give explanation for why military action sought against Iraq was taken.

In my thesis, I will attempt to explain why a war with Iraq was not only understandable, but also necessary, given that the Bush Doctrine was written. I will show, through historical analysis of the Truman Doctrine, why military action was used to sustain this doctrine. By showing historically how doctrines can justify military action, I will then analyze how the Bush Doctrine is being used to justify recent military action.
Doctrines

A concrete study of foreign policy must begin with an understanding of doctrines. Essentially, a doctrine is a statement of major policy significance made officially by the President of the United States regarding foreign relations.

Doctrines are statements made to get a specific point across. For example, the Truman Doctrine was aimed at communist regimes, while the Bush Doctrine was directed towards terrorism. Doctrines are usually reserved for times of intense international political crisis or upheaval; therefore, not every president issues one. However, once doctrines are issued, there is no recanting on behalf of the United States; a fear that the image of the U.S. will be tarnished makes the doctrine a fundamental statement. Therefore, presidents must be aware of the political situation in which they are issuing a doctrine.

Literature Review

Since the first presidential doctrine, the Monroe Doctrine, was issued in 1823, historians and political scientists alike have written about the importance of doctrines on the political and foreign policy process. The History News Network states, that although presidential doctrines “do not have the force of law behind them, they invariably carry tremendous weight and are usually respected by succeeding administrations” (Staff 1). That same article goes on to say that there have only been eleven presidential doctrines in the history of the United States.

President Monroe was the first president to issue a doctrine. His motive was to protect American interests in the Western Hemisphere. Therefore, he chose to declare that the U.S.
“called for the end of colonization of the Western Hemisphere by European nations” (Faragher 162). In issuing his doctrine, President Monroe was setting a precedent that the country continues to follow today. Ironically, Monroe never officially called his policy a doctrine. In 1848, Congressman Isaac E. Holmes of South Carolina reported that President James K. Polk “had taken the opportunity of reiterating a doctrine which was said to be the doctrine of Mr. Monroe” (Safire 2). Hence, the construction of presidential doctrines began.

The United States Constitution, in Article II, Section II, states, “The President shall be the “Commander-in-Chief” of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States when called into the actual service of the United States…” (Corwin 98). With this clause, it can be argued that presidential doctrines that threaten the use of military force, or U.S. intervention of any kind, do have the force of law behind them. Due to the fact that the Constitution is such a vague document, many different interpretations of the limits to government power arise. When the Constitution was first written, the purely military aspects of the Commander-in-Chief role were stressed. Supreme Court Chief Justice Taney, for example, said, “His [the President’s] duty and power are purely military” (Corwin 99). Henceforth, when President Monroe first issued his doctrine, he said the U.S. “would stop any European nation from interfering in the affairs of a country not already colonized” (Staff 1). Therefore, it could be seen as an acceptable extension under Article II, Section II of the Constitution.

Several court cases throughout American history have also widened the scope of the presidential “Commander-in-Chief” power. One case in particular, the 1850 case of Fleming v. Page, asserted that the President possesses all the powers given to any supreme commander under International Law, by saying, “He may invade the hostile country, and subject it to the sovereignty and authority of the United States” (Corwin 102). This case’s decision widened the
scope of the powers of the president. Although officially declaring war is the duty of Congress, the president did get, through judicial precedent, the power to execute more decisive military action.

Another reason the president seems to have wider power when it comes to doctrines, is that they are often issued in crisis, or at least perceived crisis, and “during periods of crisis, Congress finds it difficult, if not impossible, to oppose the president” (Edwards 428). This once again demonstrates how the power of doctrines could be argued to be acceptable because of the “Commander-in-Chief” role of the president.

Understanding what has been written about the doctrines issued under other presidents can help us understand the importance of doctrines in general. The Polk Doctrine, issued in 1845, was the second doctrine to be issued by a president. Its purpose was to reiterate the Monroe Doctrine, by warning the Europeans to stay out of North America. After Texas had won its independence from Mexico in the Mexican-American War, France publicly stated that it felt Texas should remain independent. In an effort to declare America’s authority, President Polk reiterated the ideas of President Monroe by saying that the fate of the North American continent would be decided by Americans, not Europeans.

The Roosevelt Corollary (corollary is the name for doctrines in Roosevelt’s time), issued in 1904, by President Theodore Roosevelt, was once again, a spin-off of the Monroe Doctrine. It was based on the premise that European countries were seeking to collect back payments from small Caribbean states they had lent money to. In fear that the Europeans would begin interfering too much in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt “announced that the United States would force the countries to repay their debts, thereby preserving the Monroe Doctrine” (Staff 1). By involving the U.S. in this matter, Roosevelt was ensuring that the
Hemisphere remained dominated by the United States. As George C. Edwards III writes, he also was “assuming an assertive posture in both foreign and domestic affairs…” and by doing so, he “expanded the president’s policy making roles” (Edwards 6).

The next doctrine issued by a president was the Truman Doctrine, in 1947, to urge the U.S. to prevent the spread of communism. Just ten years later, President Eisenhower proclaimed the Eisenhower Doctrine expanding the Truman Doctrine to include that the U.S. would “intervene militarily in the Middle East to protect legitimate governments from communist subversion” (Staff2). Nixon, in 1969, was the next to issue a doctrine. His was slightly different from previous doctrines, in that it did not promote American intervention. In fact, it did just the opposite, by encouraging “Asian allies to slowly wean themselves off U.S. military aid in the war on communism” (Staff 2). Nixon did not want to be involved in the unpopular Vietnam War, and used his doctrine to justify the slow removal of troops from Vietnam in his first term of office (Staff 2).

In response to the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, President Carter issued the Carter Doctrine in 1980, committing the United States “to protect the countries of the Persian Gulf from outside interference” (Staff 2). Carter stated that any attack would be defended with any means necessary, including military force. Just four short years later, the Weinberger Doctrine was issued, in 1984. Named in honor of Ronald Reagan’s Secretary of Defense, it states “it is the policy of the United States to use its military forces only in the defense of American vital interests” (Staff 3). With American military forces being overextended in conflicts like Vietnam, and with the previous Carter Doctrine pledging military support in the Persian Gulf in case of an attack, the Reagan administration took the route of Nixon, in attempting to limit U.S. intervention.
The three most recent doctrines include the Powell Doctrine, the Clinton Doctrine, and the Bush Doctrine. The Powell Doctrine, set forth in 1990, states that military force should only be used to win certain victory in a short period of time. Colin Powell, who served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during George H.W. Bush's presidency, was “determined never to commit U.S. troops to another war unless all-out victory was the goal” (Staff 3). What has become known as the Clinton Doctrine of 1999, is an informal doctrine, never officially accepted by the administration, but an idea continually followed, which “argued that the best way to ensure stability in regions of interest to the U.S. was to combat instability wherever it may occur” (Staff 3). The reasoning was that no matter how seemingly small the areas of instability, disorder can spread and ultimately threaten U.S. interests. The most recent doctrine issued by a president, is that of the Bush Doctrine, in 2001. This enunciates that the U.S. will go after all terrorists and countries that harbor them.

The eleven doctrines issued by various presidents and staff members throughout history are not all the same, yet they all deal with some form of military action, or threat of military action. Therefore, it is easy to see how some may justify the use of doctrines based on the "Commander-in-Chief" role of the President found in the Constitution.

Not everyone believes that the Constitution is a defense for doctrines. As I mentioned earlier, the History News Network writes, “doctrines do not have the force of law...” (Staff 1). Without a specific mention of doctrines in the Constitution’s description of the president, there is open debate on whether or not presidents really do have the ability to place the United States wholly behind such an individual policy. Also, because of this lack of specificity in the Constitution, presidential doctrines “are not carved in granite” (Safire 2). There is no legal reason that subsequent presidents should be bound by any doctrines of their predecessors.
Due to the fact that doctrines are often in response to broad political problems, William Safire, in an article for *The New York Times*, writes “neither a policy nor a program is as grand and sweeping as a doctrine…” (Safire 1). Not only are doctrines broad, but they are also, undoubtedly very important public announcements of United States policy. Therefore, presidents may like to issue them for recognition. Safire touches on this, when he writes, “A president likes to have his policy rated as a historic doctrine and to have his own name attached to it…” (Safire 1).

Presidential doctrines are statements, which shape American policy in many different ways. They can be used to involve military force, as with the Truman Doctrine, threaten the use of military force, as with the Carter Doctrine, or even minimize military force, like with the Nixon Doctrine. Yet, the ties between presidential doctrines and military action are undeniable. Therefore, it is my objective to research why the military conflict in Iraq can be justified using the Bush Doctrine.

**PART I**

**Political Background to the Truman Doctrine**

At the end of World War II, the United States was left with a much greater role in world affairs. Great Britain, the previous world power, “handed over virtually the last of her responsibility for preserving the world balance of power” when it asked the U.S. to get involved with the political situation in Greece and Turkey (Phillips 167). With the new role of the world’s
"policeman" on its shoulders, and a desire to protect its own interests of capitalism and protect those people having a political ideology forced upon them, the United States found an archenemy in communism. It was becoming more and more of a threat to not only the United States, but the rest of the democratic free world as well. In effect, the U.S. had "equated communist aggression with a threat to American security and subordinated the precise assessment of the security value of countering any particular aggression to the general requirements of containment" (Osgood 9). Preventing the spread of communism, or "containing" it, had become a primary interest for the U.S. Essentially, the years after World War II (usually referred to as the Cold War) were seen as a zero-sum contest between two ideologies; the Communists (represented most notably by the Soviet Union) and democracy (as seen through the United States). Therefore, a fear that any aggression by a communist state would shift the world balance of power toward the communist bloc was prevalent. Or, as the Joint Chiefs of Staff put it in 1952, "each Communist gain directly involves a loss to the Western world" (Stuart 51).

Due to this fear of a communist takeover, it is no surprise that President Harry Truman enunciated the Truman Doctrine in an attempt to prevent the spreading of communist ideology. Yet, it must be noted that the Truman Doctrine's primary mission "was not to provide a correct statement of American foreign policy but to assure Congressional approval of the Greco-Turkish Aid Program" (Freeland 102). Although a strong statement of foreign policy may not have been the purpose of the Truman Doctrine, it did become just that, a document pledging a new era of American assistance to communist ridden countries.
The Truman Doctrine

I have included below, the full text of President Truman's doctrine, which was issued as an address to a joint session of Congress on March 12, 1947. I have also chosen to highlight what I believe to be key phrases of the doctrine, which, I will discuss later.

"Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress of the United States:

The gravity of the situation which confronts the world today necessitates my appearance before a joint session of the Congress. The foreign policy and the national security of this country are involved.

One aspect of the present situation, which I wish to present to you at this time for your consideration and decision, concerns Greece and Turkey.

The United States has received from the Greek Government an urgent appeal for financial and economic assistance. Preliminary reports from the American Economic Mission now in Greece and reports from the American Ambassador in Greece corroborate the statement of the Greek Government that assistance is imperative if Greece is to survive as a free nation.

I do not believe that the American people and the Congress wish to turn a deaf ear to the appeal of the Greek Government.

Greece is not a rich country. Lack of sufficient natural resources has always forced the Greek people to work hard to make both ends meet. Since 1940, this industrious and peace loving country has suffered invasion, four years of cruel enemy occupation, and bitter internal strife.

When forces of liberation entered Greece they found that the retreating Germans had destroyed virtually all the railways, roads, port facilities, communications, and merchant marine. More than a thousand villages had been burned. Eighty-five per cent of the children were tubercular. Livestock, poultry, and draft animals had almost disappeared. Inflation had wiped out practically all savings.

As a result of these tragic conditions, a militant minority, exploiting human want and misery, was able to create political chaos, which, until now, has made economic recovery impossible.

Greece is today without funds to finance the importation of those goods which are essential to bare subsistence. Under these circumstances the people of Greece cannot make progress in solving their problems of reconstruction. Greece is in desperate need of financial and
economic assistance to enable it to resume purchases of food, clothing, fuel and seeds. These are indispensable for the subsistence of its people and are obtainable only from abroad. Greece must have help to import the goods necessary to restore internal order and security, so essential for economic and political recovery.

The Greek Government has also asked for the assistance of experienced American administrators, economists and technicians to insure that the financial and other aid given to Greece shall be used effectively in creating a stable and self-sustaining economy and in improving its public administration.

The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists, who defy the government's authority at a number of points, particularly along the northern boundaries. A Commission appointed by the United Nations Security Council is at present investigating disturbed conditions in northern Greece and alleged border violations along the frontier between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the other.

Meanwhile, the Greek Government is unable to cope with the situation. The Greek army is small and poorly equipped. It needs supplies and equipment if it is to restore the authority of the government throughout Greek territory. Greece must have assistance if it is to become a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy.

The United States must supply that assistance. We have already extended to Greece certain types of relief and economic aid but these are inadequate.

There is no other country to which democratic Greece can turn.

No other nation is willing and able to provide the necessary support for a democratic Greek government.

The British Government, which has been helping Greece, can give no further financial or economic aid after March 31. Great Britain finds itself under the necessity of reducing or liquidating its commitments in several parts of the world, including Greece.

We have considered how the United Nations might assist in this crisis. But the situation is an urgent one requiring immediate action and the United Nations and its related organizations are not in a position to extend help of the kind that is required.

It is important to note that the Greek Government has asked for our aid in utilizing effectively the financial and other assistance we may give to Greece, and in improving its public administration. It is of the utmost importance that we supervise the use of any funds made available to Greece; in such a manner that each dollar spent will count toward making Greece self-supporting, and will help to build an economy in which a healthy democracy can flourish.

No government is perfect. One of the chief virtues of a democracy, however, is that its
defects are always visible and under democratic processes can be pointed out and corrected. The Government of Greece is not perfect. Nevertheless it represents eighty-five per cent of the members of the Greek Parliament who were chosen in an election last year. Foreign observers, including 692 Americans, considered this election to be a fair expression of the views of the Greek people.

The Greek Government has been operating in an atmosphere of chaos and extremism. It has made mistakes. The extension of aid by this country does not mean that the United States condones everything that the Greek Government has done or will do. We have condemned in the past, and we condemn now, extremist measures of the right or the left. We have in the past advised tolerance, and we advise tolerance now.

Greece's neighbor, Turkey, also deserves our attention.

The future of Turkey as an independent and economically sound state is clearly no less important to the freedom-loving peoples of the world than the future of Greece. The circumstances in which Turkey finds itself today are considerably different from those of Greece. Turkey has been spared the disasters that have beset Greece. And during the war, the United States and Great Britain furnished Turkey with material aid.

Nevertheless, Turkey now needs our support.

Since the war Turkey has sought financial assistance from Great Britain and the United States for the purpose of effecting that modernization necessary for the maintenance of its national integrity.

That integrity is essential to the preservation of order in the Middle East.

The British government has informed us that, owing to its own difficulties can no longer extend financial or economic aid to Turkey.

As in the case of Greece, if Turkey is to have the assistance it needs, the United States must supply it. We are the only country able to provide that help.

I am fully aware of the broad implications involved if the United States extends assistance to Greece and Turkey, and I shall discuss these implications with you at this time.

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion. This was a fundamental issue in the war with Germany and Japan. Our victory was won over countries which sought to impose their will, and their way of life, upon other nations.

To ensure the peaceful development of nations, free from coercion, the United States has taken a leading part in establishing the United Nations; The United Nations is designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all its members. We shall not realize
our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. This is no more than a frank recognition that totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States.

The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. I must also state that in a number of other countries there have been similar developments.

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.

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio; fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid, which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

The world is not static, and the status quo is not sacred. But we cannot allow changes in the status quo in violation of the Charter of the United Nations by such methods as coercion, or by such subterfuges as political infiltration. In helping free and independent nations to maintain their freedom, the United States will be giving effect to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is necessary only to glance at a map to realize that the survival and integrity of the Greek nation are of grave importance in a much wider situation. If Greece should fall under the control of an armed minority, the effect upon its neighbor, Turkey, would be immediate and serious. Confusion and disorder might well spread throughout the entire Middle East.

Moreover, the disappearance of Greece as an independent state would have a profound effect
upon those countries in Europe whose peoples are struggling against great difficulties to maintain their freedoms and their independence while they repair the damages of war.

It would be an unspeakable tragedy if these countries, which have struggled so long against overwhelming odds, should lose that victory for which they sacrificed so much. Collapse of free institutions and loss of independence would be disastrous not only for them but for the world. Discouragement and possibly failure would quickly be the lot of neighboring peoples striving to maintain their freedom and independence.

Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as to the East.

We must take immediate and resolute action.

I therefore ask the Congress to provide authority for assistance to Greece and Turkey in the amount of $400,000,000 for the period ending June 30, 1948. In requesting these funds, I have taken into consideration the maximum amount of relief assistance which would be furnished to Greece out of the $350,000,000 which I recently requested that the Congress authorize for the prevention of starvation and suffering in countries devastated by the war.

In addition to funds, I ask the Congress to authorize the detail of American civilian and military personnel to Greece and Turkey, at the request of those countries, to assist in the tasks of reconstruction, and for the purpose of supervising the use of such financial and material assistance as may be furnished. I recommend that authority also be provided for the instruction and training of selected Greek and Turkish personnel.

Finally, I ask that the Congress provide authority which will permit the speediest and most effective use, in terms of needed commodities, supplies, and equipment, of such funds as may be authorized.

If further funds, or further authority, should be needed for purposes indicated in this message, I shall not hesitate to bring the situation before the Congress. On this subject the Executive and Legislative branches of the Government must work together.

This is a serious course upon which we embark.

I would not recommend it except that the alternative is much more serious. The United States contributed $341,000,000,000 toward winning World War II. This is an investment in world freedom and world peace.

The assistance that I am recommending for Greece and Turkey amounts to little more than 1 tenth of 1 per cent of this investment. It is only common sense that we should safeguard this investment and make sure that it was not in vain.

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 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.

I am confident that the Congress will face these responsibilities squarely.”

Defining the Truman Doctrine’s language

In order to fully understand the Truman Doctrine, it is important to understand some key political terms mentioned. In the doctrine, Truman refers to: Communism and totalitarian regimes, which, in order to understand his doctrine’s significance, should be explained.

Communism is a state controlled government characterized by advocating the overthrow of capitalism for control by the government (Dictionary.com). This ideology, being against the ideals of the American economic system, was particularly threatening to the United States because of its [the U.S.’s] strong capitalistic background.

A totalitarian regime is “a government controlled completely by one party; exercising complete political control” (Webster’s Dictionary 419). After World War II, totalitarian (or authoritarian) regimes became closely associated with Communism, in countries such as North Vietnam, North Korea, and Cuba. Hence, totalitarian regimes, which prevent political involvement, and citizen interaction, go against all that America through capitalism and democracy, stands for as well.
Analysis of the Truman Doctrine

President Harry Truman declared his famous Truman doctrine in 1947, just two years after the end of World War II. It was written in response to the request for financial and economic assistance from the government of Greece. As a result of World War II, when the Germans left Greece, they “destroyed virtually all the railways, roads, port facilities, communications, and merchant marine...Inflation had wiped out practically all savings” (Truman Doctrine). Due to these conditions, Truman felt that Greece was in political chaos and was being “threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists...” (Truman Doctrine). Greece needed the monetary support of the United States to help itself become a self-supporting democracy.

Turkey, Greece’s neighbor, was also specifically addressed with the Truman Doctrine. Turkey sought financial and economic assistance “for the purpose of effecting that modernization necessary for the maintenance of its national integrity” (Truman Doctrine). In Truman’s doctrine, he expressed his belief that, “If Greece should fall under the control of an armed minority, the effect upon its neighbor, Turkey, would be immediate and serious. Confusion and disorder might well spread throughout the Middle East,” (Truman Doctrine). What is known as the “domino theory,” is being demonstrated in this idea of the doctrine. This theory argues that “if the United States did not take a strong stand against communist pressure in one country, that country would become communist and would, in turn, expose its neighbors to communist pressure” (Farnsworth 223). This domino theory can be used to understand the strong containment policy of the U.S. Therefore, it was the policy of the Truman Administration to request funds from
Congress for not only Greece, but Turkey as well. Containment was also emphasized when Truman said, “I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation” (Truman Doctrine). As one author stated, with that sentence, “the president had captured the quintessence (or personification) of containment” (Donovan 201).

However, the Truman Doctrine had more broad implications regarding the growing uncertainties and increasing influence of the Communist party and the Soviet Union during the years following World War II. Its purpose was to warn possible totalitarian regimes stating that the United States would protect any country having communism forced upon it. The Truman Doctrine saw it as America’s responsibility to look out for others. Due to the fact that the U.S. had just developed into a new position of being a world superpower at the end of World War II, the United States now had a duty to protect those needing protection. Also, the doctrine claims, “there is no other country to which democratic Greece can turn” (Truman Doctrine). Great Britain, could no longer give assistance to Greece because of their own war debts; therefore, the U.S. had an obligation to take the responsibility of protecting the world from the evil of communism.

The Truman Doctrine started out as a speech given to Congress in an attempt to convince them to give money to help Greece and Turkey rebuild after WWII. It ended up however, as a doctrine committing the United States to years of protection against the spread of communism.
Major Military actions in the name of the Truman Doctrine

Although under the original intent of the Truman Doctrine, the “United States assumed the protective British role in Greece and Turkey and provided military and economic assistance to contain the possible spread of Soviet influence...”, the U.S. also proclaimed that they would protect any country in danger of the influence of communism (Donovan 45). With the addition of this broad statement, the Truman Doctrine was virtually guaranteeing that the U.S. would eventually have to be involved not only economically, but also militarily in foreign affairs beyond Greece and Turkey. So, it is no surprise that military conflicts being justified by the Truman Doctrine arose.

The Korean War: The Korean War is the first example of the Truman Doctrine being used to justify a major war. Before the attack, a National Security Council study had examined what the U.S. should do if the communist North Korea invaded South Korea. The study suggested, but ultimately rejected, that “the United States extend the Truman Doctrine to South Korea, providing large-scale military aid, or intervene unilaterally with its own forces” (Donovan 95). The study instead felt that the U.S. should appeal to the United Nations Security Council if an invasion occurred. When an attack did occur, on June 24, 1950, the U.S. agreed with the National Security Council’s original suggestions; by getting involved in Korea, they extending the Truman Doctrine without the U.N., who was stalled by the Soviet Union’s veto of joint action (Donovan 95). This communist attack was exactly what the United States feared, and Truman had to live up to his doctrine. Some diplomats regarded the conflict as a civil war, but
Truman treated the invasion as a major test of the U.S. policy of containment towards communism (Faragher 809).

So, on June 27, 1950, President Truman ordered American air and sea forces to go to the defense of the Republic of Korea (Stuart 59). In response, Chinese communist forces intervened in October 1950, which surprised the United States. The U.S. had “seriously underestimated China’s resolve to protect its borders” (Farnsworth 205). This intervention by a Communist stronghold further encouraged the American idea that they must fight to protect communism from spreading. The war did not finally end until a stalemate was declared in July 1953.

For the United States, the Korean War also had the effect of extending the principle of containment far beyond Europe and enlarged the geographical range of the Cold War to include East Asia (Faragher 811). This enlargement of the geographical impact of the Truman Doctrine only made the document a larger factor in American foreign policy.

**The Vietnam War:** We can look at the Vietnam War as another excellent example of America’s responsibility towards the Truman Doctrine. The North Vietnamese government was spreading its communist rule to the South. The South did not have the proper resources to fight the North on its own. Therefore, when the South looked to the outside world for help, the U.S. could not refuse. A refusal would essentially mean directly ignoring the basic principle of the Truman Doctrine’s containment policy that “…it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting against subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures”
(Truman Doctrine). A refusal could also run the risk of weakening the authority of America’s presidents, and make it virtually impossible for the world to believe any future decrees.

Although the U.S. did get involved in Vietnam, its participation was eventually deeply controversial within American society. Throughout vast amounts of America’s foreign relations history, it has continually shown strong dedication to world order and other missions. But, “the nation does not consistently carry out policy that has to be executed with military power unless transcendent purposes coincide with a definite perception of security interests” (Osgood 7). In Vietnam, the United States was beginning to move away from the idea of the Truman Doctrine. Many people did not see the threat of communism as being enough of an excuse to involve innocent American soldiers. Also, some felt that no matter what America’s interests were, it did not justify armed conflict with Asians on Asian territory. President Lyndon B. Johnson was even quoted as saying, “We are not going to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away to do what Asian boys ought to be doing themselves” (Osgood 6). Yet, ultimately Johnson did do just that, and in the eyes of the government, the war was consistent with the idea of containment.

However, domestic considerations played a role in the involvement in the Vietnam War. Due to China becoming communist in 1949, and the McCarthy period in the U.S. (a fight lead by Senator McCarthy to scourge the U.S. government of suspected communist infiltration), “no U.S. president could politically afford to lose another country to communism without a fight…” (Farnsworth 225). Waging a war based on containment, could be defended, if one looks at the precedent President Truman set with
Korea. Therefore, President Johnson did get involved in the war. The prolonged
duration of the war led to immense unpopularity and a backlash of citizen mistrust of
government military plans that can still be seen in some today. In the next section I will
show some citizen's feelings regarding military action as justified by the Truman
Doctrine.

Public opinions regarding the Truman Doctrine

It is my intent to see how well the American public was informed of government
policy during the time of the Truman Doctrine, and in doing so, attempt to understand
how people felt about government decisions to hopefully infer feelings about the doctrine
itself. I want to see if the doctrine did justify policy in the eyes of American citizens.
After searching through The Odum Institute and Lexis-Nexis's archives on public
opinion polls, I found surveys regarding popular feeling toward the United States'
involved in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. I have included some poll results
below.

#1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizens feelings toward the U.S. role in the Korean War</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proud Moment</td>
<td>21.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Moment</td>
<td>40.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interpreting this survey, one can notice how split people's opinions were on the U.S. role in Korea. Considering how strong anti-Communist sentiments still were in the country at the time (1974), I would have expected a higher percentage of people to say that the U.S. role in Korea was a proud moment in American history. However, since this question was asked just after involvement in Vietnam (the war ended in 1973), popular sentiment was most likely still swayed by the unpopularity of that war. The Vietnam War was seen by many as a gross misuse of government intervention. So, asking a question about another military intervention when emotions were still running strong throughout the country about Vietnam, seems somewhat leading.

#2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses to being asked: we fought the war to keep South Korea from falling into communist hands and we have an obligation to defend them with troops if they're attacked again</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>41.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>44.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>14.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this survey again show no clear majority. Yet, it does show that more people did not believe in the U.S. reason for going to war or its obligation to defend Korea if they are attacked again. Because the question is double-barreled, it is difficult to infer which part of the question people did not agree with. It points out however, that citizens did not see the real reason why the government justified the war. This question
does a nice job of getting an opinion on the general principles of the Truman Doctrine such as containing communism, and the U.S.’s obligation to defend others.

#3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did the Vietnam War teach us that we have to back governments we don’t like because communist takeover is worse?</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taught</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not teach</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question, taken from Lexis-Nexis, clearly shows that U.S. citizens in 1974 felt that the containment of communism was an important idea, not only with the government, but with the average person as well. It also shows that people saw it as a core principle that should be taken from the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, despite many people’s objections to the war.

These surveys seem to show that U.S. citizens did understand the threat of communism, and the importance of the government’s policy of containment. However, it is hard to see whether or not the average person truly understood the importance of the Truman Doctrine, and its implications on containment and preventing the spread of communism.

Leaving the Truman Doctrine behind

After the conclusion of the Vietnam War, Americans were left with a sense of dissatisfaction and disillusionment with military intervention. Many felt the war was
unnecessary and unjustified. Due to this sentiment, political leaders became extremely apprehensive of military action. Also, with the end of the Cold War, and the disintegration of the communist regime in the Soviet Union in 1989, communism does not continue to be a threat to the stability of the United States, making the Truman Doctrine no longer as pertinent.

Terrorism has since replaced communism as the major threat to the United States, which I will address in the next section, through analysis of the Bush Doctrine.

PART II

Political Background to the Bush Doctrine

On the morning of September 11, 2001, two hijacked commercial passenger airliners struck both the World Trade Center towers, while a third hit the Pentagon, and a fourth hijacked plane crashed in a remote field in Pennsylvania. In the largest terrorist attack ever on United States soil, Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda terrorists killed thousands of innocent Americans. Speaking in Lima, Peru just hours after the attack, Secretary of State, General Colin Powell said, "A terrible, terrible tragedy has befallen my nation, but...you can be sure that America will deal with this tragedy in a way that brings those responsible to justice" (Woodward 10). Therefore, it is no surprise that the Bush administration would declare such a strong statement of policy with the Bush
Doctrine. Defense, and preemptive attack became the philosophy of choice for the United States.

The Bush Doctrine

The Bush Doctrine was not as clearly defined in an address to Congress like the Truman Doctrine. Instead, it is more of an ideology, like containment, held constant and continuously stated. Throughout the days immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, Bush made many speeches reinforcing his ideology, which would become known as the Bush Doctrine. Before the September 11th attacks, Bush and the United States were focusing on many domestic issues, such as “mobilizing his party’s narrow congressional majority to advance one of the issues on which he had campaigned—his proposal for a $1.6 billion tax cut” (Greenstein 6). After 9/11, however, all those priorities were “reframed through a policy lens of singular focus: ridding the world, but more specifically the United States, of the scourge of terrorism internationally and domestically” (Renshon 278). Due to this single focus, the United States immediately stepped into action, and Bush proclaimed what we now refer to as “The Bush Doctrine.” Speaking on September 11, 2001, “Bush’s brief address to the nation…was strong in content” (Greenstein 8).

I have included below, a copy of the speech, given at 8:30 p.m. on 9/11, and highlighted the phrase that has formed the basis of the Bush Doctrine.

“Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or
in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms
and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil,
despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing,
have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of
mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have
failed; our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the
foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America.
These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and
opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the
best of America -- with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers
and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency
response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are
working in New York City and Washington, D.C. to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every
precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in
Washington, which had to be evacuated today, are reopening for essential personnel
tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong,
and the American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full
resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those
responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the
terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly
condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world
leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the
world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism. Tonight, I ask for your
prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for
all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be
comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even
though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.”

In an address at West Point, on June 1, 2002, President Bush elaborated on earlier themes, and spelled the Bush Doctrine out further. He first said that the U.S. would no longer rely on Cold-War ideas of containment or deterrence. He instead issued the idea of preemptive threats, saying the U.S. would “take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge” (Kaplan 74). Secondly, Bush promoted the idea of the U.S. actively promoting principles abroad, stating, “the requirements of freedom apply fully to Africa and Latin America and the entire Islamic world” (Kaplan 74). Finally, Bush said that the U.S. would do whatever it takes to remain the world’s superpower. He said, “America has, and intends to keep, military strengths beyond challenge…” (Kaplan 74). With these added statements, it is easy to see that September 11 and a threat from Iraq are factors in Bush’s doctrine that was responding to the broad dangers placed upon the United States.

Defining the Bush Doctrine’s language

As with the Truman Doctrine, in order to fully understand the Bush Doctrine, we must understand a key political term mentioned in it. In the doctrine, Bush refers to:
terrorism. For the sake of my thesis, I have chosen a definition that most relates to the current political environment, and is used currently by our own government agencies.

The Intelligence Community, and the Central Intelligence Agency are guided by a definition of terrorism contained in Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f(d). It states, "The term 'terrorism' means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience" (www.cia.gov). Unmotivated attacks aimed at innocent citizens, like the September 11th attack, are without a doubt included in this definition of terrorism.

After September 11, 2001, the United States was able to clearly target Osama bin Laden as a terrorist leader. However, it was not easy to catch him; he "and the network were a difficult, elusive target" (Woodward 34). Terrorism unlike communism can be defined differently by any person you ask. Clearly the attack on America was terrorism. Yet, terrorists are almost impossible to spot. As President Bush himself said after the attacks, "A faceless enemy has declared war on the United States of America" (Woodward 41).

Also like the Truman Doctrine, which had the main focus of preventing the spread of communism, the Bush Doctrine held steady to one main focus: that of preventing terrorism.

Analysis of the Bush Doctrine

President Bush wanted to make a strong statement to the world with his declaration. "In final form, what would later be called the Bush Doctrine said, 'We will
make no distinction between those who planned these acts and those who harbor them.’ It was an incredibly broad commitment…” (Woodward 30). This broad wording allowed Bush to put a face on the “faceless enemy.” Bush also deliberately chose to include the phrase “those who harbor them,” hoping to scare potential terrorists (and those who help them) from attacking. The broadness can also be explained by the emotions at the time. “He [Bush] had been swimming in a sea of broad concepts and rhetoric, fueled by the rawness, the surprise and the carnage of the terrorist attacks and by his own instincts” (Woodward 73).

Speaking at Fort Campbell, Bush said, “America has a message for the nations of the world: If you harbor terrorists, you are a terrorist, if you train or arm a terrorist, you a terrorist. If you feed a terrorist or fund a terrorist, you’re a terrorist, and you will be held accountable by the United States and our friends” (Renshon 295). This statement, the core aspect of the Bush Doctrine, says that anyone involved at any level of terrorism will be held accountable.

The statements made in June of 2002, have clear implications toward Iraq. Here, the Bush Doctrine is being, “unequivocal in its commitment to promoting democracy,” and promoting the American ideals (Kaplan 75). Preemption, became the basis of the doctrine, due partly because “the old policy of containment was eroding” (Pollack xxiv).

**Major Military actions in the name of the Bush Doctrine**

The Bush Doctrine is still very new in the context of political history. Therefore, it is impossible to look at many years of historical precedence. We can however look at
the two most recent military conflicts involving the United States where it [the Bush Doctrine] was the main justification for United States involvement.

**The War in Afghanistan:** Osama bin Laden, the leader of the terrorist group known as al Qaeda, was found to be behind the terrorist attacks of September 11th. In a statement on October 7, 2001, he said, “I tell them [Americans] that these events have divided the world into two camps, the camp of the faithful [Muslims] and the camp of the infidels” (Prados 13). Bin Laden, who had suddenly come to the center of a worldwide manhunt, by virtually declaring war on the United States, was thought to be hiding in Afghanistan, so the United States’ first target in the war on terror was clear.

Afghanistan, which was under the rule of the Taliban regime, was harboring bin Laden. Therefore, due to the wording of the Bush Doctrine, Afghanistan was inevitably going to become the target of military action. “It’s not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable, but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor terrorism” (Woodward 60). The Taliban in Afghanistan was sponsoring terrorism, and under the Bush Doctrine, they were accountable.

The main aspect of the campaign in Afghanistan was not only to get rid of bin Laden himself, but also to send a message to the rest of the world. It was not enough for Bush to proclaim his doctrine; he also had to act. He later said of the war in Afghanistan, “the ideal result from this campaign would be to kick terrorists out of some places like Afghanistan and through that action persuade other countries that had supported terrorism in the past, to change their behaviors” (Woodward 81).
In a deliberate effort to dissuade any public concern over another possible Vietnam-like war, Bush spoke to the military. He said, “Your mission is defined; your objectives are clear; your goal is just; you have my full confidence; and you will have every tool you need to carry out your duty” (Woodward 209). The government did not want another Vietnam disaster, and Bush was determined to make his motives for invading Afghanistan clearly known.

During the war on terrorism, the United States managed to destroy the Taliban regime, and make way for a new government to come to power in Afghanistan. Yet, Bush and his administration would not be happy stopping with the Taliban. “...The president had ordered a global war on terrorism. The focus was terrorist organizations, state sponsors of terrorism and nonstate sponsors including terrorist funding organizations. Another focus was directed at weapons of mass destruction” (Woodward 190).

With the fall of the Taliban, the United States began to withdraw its focus from Afghanistan. Gradually, a more serious approach began to focus on Saddam Hussein, and Iraq. The fundamental change was the idea that nations could be attacked for harboring terrorists.

**Operation Iraqi Freedom:** As early as September of 2001, Bush’s advisors saw Hussein as a serious threat to U.S. security. “Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was a menace, a leader bent on acquiring and perhaps using weapons of mass destruction. Any serious, full-scale war against terrorism would have to make Iraq a target—eventually” (Woodward 49).
Bush's advisors knew that if they were serious about the Bush Doctrine, a war with Iraq was inevitable; yet, they hesitated, for fear of creating another Vietnam situation, in which the majority of the public (and the rest of the world) was against the invasion. However, the Bush administration would not give up. Therefore, one important outcome of September 11 is that "it has made Americans think twice about the risks inherent in the purely dovish position on Iraq that has so far predominated in U.S. policy" (Pollack 108).

Keeping this in mind, using a preemptive strike, or hitting Iraq before they could hit us, became the ideology of the Bush Administration. "Given the goals of the rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past" (Kaplan 79). By using the notion of preemption in Iraq, the U.S. was in essence defending Bush's doctrine. "Success in a new war against Iraq would be a defining moment in the evolution of the 'Bush Doctrine.' In the aftermath of September 11, we have seen growing coherence and confidence in this strategy of offensive defense" (Dodge 1).

The Bush Doctrine's wording does not tolerate moderates in the campaign against terrorism; the U.S. was deeply hurt by terrorism, and wants to receive clear support from other countries. A country is either with or against terrorism, and Iraq is indeed with terrorism. "By engineering regime change in Baghdad, Washington would clearly signal its commitment to the Bush doctrine as well as the lengths it would go to achieve its core foreign policy goals" (Dodge 2).

After several U.N. weapons inspections, and U.N. resolutions, the United States made the decision to militarily disarm Iraq on March 19, 2003. In doing so, President
Bush chose to cut through the debate over who has the right to enforce United Nations resolutions or overthrow brutal regimes (Sanger 1). He made it a priority of the United States.

Just 48 hours before the decision to enter Iraq, President Bush pleaded the United States case for war in a televised address. He explained that as a condition for ending the Persian Gulf War in 1991, Hussein pledged to reveal and destroy all its weapons of mass destruction. However, the Iraqi regime failed in diplomacy for 12 years, and Bush said that “intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised…” (press release 3/17/03). Along with this statement, Bush claimed that Iraq had already used these weapons against its neighbors and its own people. “He turns America’s first new national security strategy in 50 years—doctrine of pre-emptive military action against potential enemies amassing weapons of mass destruction—into rationales for America’s latest war” (Sanger 1).

Bush’s strongest claim toward justifying the war using the Bush Doctrine came when he said that Iraq aided, trained and harbored terrorists, including members of al Qaeda. “The danger is clear: using chemical, biological or, one day, nuclear weapons, obtained with the help of Iraq, the terrorists could fulfill their stated ambitions and kill thousands of innocent people…” (press release 3/17/03). Saddam’s terrorist ties also became obvious when terrorist, Abu Nidal, died in Baghdad in August 2002. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer commented on the death when he said, “The fact that only Iraq would give safe harbor to Abu Nidal demonstrates the Iraqi regime’s complicity with global terror” (Kaplan 25).
Bush went on to justify action by arguing against appeasement. He said, “In one year, or five years, the power of Iraq to inflict harm on all free nations would be multiplied many times over. With these capabilities, Saddam Hussein and his terrorist allies could choose the moment of deadly conflict when they are strongest. We choose to meet that threat now…” (press release 3/17/03).

In ending his speech on March 19, President Bush echoed the feeling of the Truman Doctrine when he spoke of protecting all citizens. His statements were strong and defiant, “My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others and we will prevail” (press release 3/19/03).

Although the war with Iraq was ultimately successful in removing Hussein from power, many in the international community did not support Bush’s war effort. France, the main country speaking out against the war, did not oppose the basis of the war, it simply felt that the U.S. was acting too quickly. French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin spoke to the French Parliament on February 26, 2003, saying, “We think force can only be the last resort. But the use of force is not justified in the current circumstances because there is a credible and effective alternative to war: disarming Iraq through inspections” (Schuck 2). France, Germany, and Russia, all believed that the U.S. did not exhaust all options in attempting to disarm Iraq peacefully. President Bush and his administration on the other hand, justified action by stating that they did indeed, try all peaceful options.

Since the success of United States military operations in Iraq, the Bush Administration seems to be reframing the Iraq war with the objective of freeing the Iraqi
people, rather then purely fighting terrorism. Bush himself, spoke of the need for a “humble approach to the world” (Sanger 1). This is consistent with the Bush Doctrine, in that Bush stated the U.S. would promote its principles abroad and stay as the sole world superpower. Regime change then, became the topic of conversation at the end of the war in Iraq, because in his doctrine, Bush was essentially saying, the U.S. cannot coexist with governments such as Saddam Hussein’s in Iraq, which “seek to develop weapons of mass destruction, threaten their neighbors and brutalize their own citizens” (Kaplan 95). If taken literally then, the United States, because of the Bush Doctrine “reserves the right to bring about-whether through diplomatic or military means-the demise of these regimes” (Kaplan 95). Therefore, with the war being essentially over, and Saddam Hussein ousted from power, it has become the policy of the United States, to help oversee the rebuilding of Iraq.

President Bush has had a harder time justifying the war with Iraq based on his doctrine. Without solid proof of terrorist ties, or weapons of mass destruction as of yet, many people, both in the United States and abroad, find it difficult to justify war. However, the Bush administration has said continually that they are convinced that Iraq does indeed possess weapons, and is connected to terrorists. Until the administration provides evidence of such ties, critics will still argue that Bush rushed into an unnecessary war.

Public opinions regarding the Bush Doctrine

Since the Bush Doctrine is new, there is less public opinion data available regarding the “War on Terrorism” and Operation Iraqi Freedom. I did however, after
searching *The New York Times*, and *The USA Today*, choose a few surveys that I wanted to address to show how Americans feel regarding these conflicts.

#1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking about the September 11 attacks, should we attack people suspected of terrorism against the US even if we’re not sure if they’re responsible?</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question shows the feelings of the majority of the American people. This survey was taken just shortly after the September 11th attacks, so emotions may still have been sensitive. Yet, it is obvious that Americans do favor attacking people suspected of terrorism, although the percentages are not overwhelmingly in support. The fact that they would favor action, even against those individuals that were not directly involved in the 9/11 attacks proves that the American public truly wants to combat terrorism.

#2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you feel about President Bush’s handling of Iraq?</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approve</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This survey regarding feelings on Iraq, was taken March 23, 2003, just days after the outbreak of war. It shows that a majority of Americans did indeed favor the war with Iraq. Granted, this question is somewhat vague. Yet, it does show an overwhelming support for the war. This may demonstrate an increased understanding of the United States commitment to the Bush Doctrine and its aims at combating terrorism. However, it could just be a “rally around the flag” effect, which shows that people usually support the President in times of crisis.

#3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings toward sending American troops to remove Saddam Hussein from power</th>
<th>Percent responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favor</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This last survey, taken shortly after September 11, 2001, well before the threat of military conflict with Iraq had become a reality, shows that even then, Americans believed in the importance of attacking Iraq and removing Saddam Hussein from power.

**Comparing the doctrines**

Both Harry S. Truman, and George W. Bush’s presidential agendas were greatly influenced by their doctrines. “The main emphasis of Truman’s policy in his first term,
therefore, was on creating political stability and on strengthening with American aid the economies of supposedly vulnerable countries through the Truman Doctrine...” (Donovan 56). Similarly, President Bush has made fighting terrorism the main focus of his administration. Also, Bush’s political competence, like Truman’s was widely viewed as being strengthened after the doctrine was issued. Bush was likened to Truman in a newspaper article that said, “…the unassuming Truman had risen to the challenge of the Cold War presidency...” the writer then went on to declare that Bush, “had grown before our [the world’s] eyes, becoming more profound and more sure-footed” (Greenstein 1).

However, there are also differences in the ideas of the doctrines. The Truman Doctrine was a clearly stated political document targeting a specific group of countries easily identifiable by their government ideology. On the other hand, the Bush Doctrine was proclaimed as a quick response to a national tragedy. Yet, both have been used to justify military action, often with political opposition. Bush’s doctrine can be seen however, as looking back to the era of Truman, when American exceptionalism, and protection of others was at its height. Yet, Bush’s doctrine does seem to be more concerned with U.S. security and safety. Truman had denounced totalitarian regimes imposing their will on others, while Bush, is denouncing terrorist organizations harassing innocent people. Both, in their doctrines, commit the full force of the United States to prevent the spread of their individually recognized “evils.” Ultimately, both doctrines believe in the same precedent of protecting America’s freedom, and the freedom of others. “Just as on March 12, 1947, Truman unveiled the doctrine that carries his name, pledging to confront Soviet expansionalism wherever it emerged and to promote freedom, so...Bush previewed the doctrine that carries his name, pledging to preempt
threats wherever they arose and to promote freedom” (Kaplan 113). Therefore, the doctrines can be seen as being somewhat similar.

Conclusion

All military conflicts are the result of many complex factors. It would be very time consuming to commit myself to a study of all the factors that led up to U.S. involvement in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. I attempted, with this study to scratch the surface of the importance of doctrines in justifying military action. It was always my interest to purely use the wording of the doctrines, and the historical basis of precedent regarding them to explain one justification for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In consideration of what I have just explained, Operation Iraqi Freedom can be justified, based purely on the wording of the Bush Doctrine. The Bush Doctrine clearly stated its purpose and intent in foreign policy time and time again. Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime defied this doctrine. Therefore, based solely on the doctrine’s rhetoric, President Bush’s undertaking in Iraq was both justifiable and necessary.


d3e383&docnum=3&wchp=dGLbVzblSlzV&_md5=5a2bb0303e07bd05781b7261d2cf5034 (4/16/03).


“President Bush Addresses the Nation.”
www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/print/20030319-17.html (3/19/03)
“President Harry S. Truman’s Address to a Joint Session of Congress March 12, 1947.”
www.luminet.net/~tgort/truman.htm.

“President Says Saddam Hussein Must Leave Iraq Within 48 Hours.”

Renshon, Stanley A. and Deborah Welch Larson. Good Judgment in Foreign Policy.


Sanger, David E. “Threats and Responses: News Analysis; A New Doctrine for War.”

Schuck, Nathalie. “France Says Iraq War Now Would Split International Community,
Be Seen as ‘Illegitimate’.” Associated Press online.

Staff, the History News Network. “How Many Presidential Doctrines Have There Been?”

“Statement by the President in His Address to the Nation.”

Stuart, Jack. Succession or Repudiation? Realities of the Truman Presidency. Simon

