

The United States in 20th Century Europe

- ✚ United States undoubtedly acted as a positive force for prosperity, peace and democracy, though both positive and negative aspects
 1. Prosperity- primarily through the Marshall Plan and modernisation.
 2. Democracy- through European Integration, 'Empire by Invitation' and creation of 'Democratic Europe'
 - however these all had hidden agendas- America's own containment of communism
 3. Peace- short term destabilising, long term stabilising
 - through its polarisation of the continent, into Communist East and non- Comm West made large scale conflict an inevitability
 - transition to democracy also violent

1. Prosperity

Positive

- Marshall Plan (European Recovery Plan)- 1948
 - *Empower* Europe themselves- stimulus package to create and sustain internal prosperity
 - “for peace, for freedom and for welfare”
 - Rebuild shattered infrastructure, restore prosperity and block Communism
 - Economise assistance to any country, regardless of Comm or non- Comm.
 - know Communists will reject
- Prosperity in West
 - Industrial production up 35%
 - Between 1973-74, GNP in France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries grew on average 3.5%. Disposable income doubled for salary earners and volume of trade in area tripled, quadrupling for car industry
 - Successful homogenisation of European industry
- Increased standard of living
 - Eg. By mid 1970's 75% of France had washing machines, 60% had cars and 90% their own TV
 - Between 1949-57 in France, the stock of home appliances grew 400%
- Prosperity highlighted when compared with Communist countries who refused to accept eg Russia
 - US productivity and per capita consumer income 2-3 times higher than USSR
 - 51% of soviet families owned a tv, compared with 90-100 % in west while less than 5% had cars compared with 50-65% in the West
 - by 1960, industrial growth down to 9.7% and agricultural to 7.3% while overall GNP growth down to 4.2%

Negative

- Hidden agenda
 - Europeans could not through superficial altruism of Marshall Plan, which indeed served US equally as strongly as Europe
 - Firstly, by addressing financial problems in Europe aimed to create investment and prosperity in US
 - 3000 American companies to Europe between 1958-65
 - Secondly as a key component of Containment policy
 - Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan “two halves of the same walnut”
- Thus seen as a negative force
 - Fearing US interference through Marshall Plan would create capitalist wedge in the East, USSR looked to solidify communism across the east
 - Persuaded Poland, Czech, Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia
- Seen by many as form of *cultural hegemony*
 - Introduction of Consumerism
 - French resistance- loss of French identity, individualism and cultural vigour.
 - French intellectuals reject cultural and socio-economic model- one of ‘low culture’ and capitalist materialism
 - Claim was a sociocultural system heavily influenced by ideology
 - **Kuisel**- talks of the socialist and Christian opposition- view of America as Archetypal capitalist society- conservative, materialist, conformist, racist and militarist
 - Would create social and cultural malaise

2. Democracy

- Like force for prosperity, positive and negative aspects. Successful in installing, but not an entirely positive force

Positive

- Signing of NATO in 1949
 - End of US isolationism
 - Greater military presence in Europe as part of Policy of Containment
- Creation of ‘Democratic Europe’
 - Strengthened after WWII
 - Britain, France, Denmark, Norway joined by Italy, Austria, West Germany and Greece
 - ‘Empire by Invitation’
 - Democratic and capitalist principles
 - multi-lateral, top-down operations
 - Democratisation prevailed over ‘Eurocommunism’ in mid 70’s
 - US and Britain claim that ‘Europe’ had shrunk to just the West- the democratic, civilized and peaceful states
 - When ‘Iron Curtain’ fell, 17 democratic states

→ West the home of democracy and freedom, East subject to communist tyranny

Negative

- However, Democratic force not completely positive- Many countries transition to democracy not peaceful
 - After violent political struggles in Italy and France and authoritarianism in Spain, Portugal and Greece
 - Italy
 - Communist and socialist vs. conservatives
 - US support Christian democrats
 - Spain
 - Fascist vs. communist
 - Hundreds of domestic strikes, including anti-fascist student riots, assassination of President
 - France
 - Colonial struggles in Algeria destabilized homefront politics
 - Greece destabilised
 - Army clique seized power
 - Ideological differences b/w leftist and rightist parties
 - US supports right wing cliques
- America's polarisation into East and West negative force for peace
 - Brought America's Communist war into Europe
 - Created conflict on a continental scale- Cold War
- Thus, while democracy ultimately a stabilizing force, its introduction was destabilising

Positive

❖ European Integration

- Viewed European integration through the “United States of Europe” as best guarantee of capitalism, democracy and Containment of communism
- US promoted Radical integration (vs. Functionalist)
 - Political unity- Supernational Gov.
 - Cultural- European Universities
 - Military- Common European army
 - Economic- ‘open door’ unrestricted trade and monetary exchange
 - Much of this achieved:
- Economic unity
 - Jean Monnet “coal and steel community” (internal customs-free, external tariffs)
 - Euro Economic Community or “Common Market” (1958)

- France, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Germany (no Britain)
- eliminate internal tariffs, free movement of labour and capital, stabilize prices and coordinate monetary policies
- exclusively democratic
- Political Unity
 - Council of Europe (1949), European Community, Euro Commission
- Military Unity
 - NATO- mutual and collective defense
- Ultimately successful in installing Democracy in Europe
 - Copenhagen Criteria (27 members)

❖ Human Rights

- International Human Rights activism
 - Jimmy Carter- new foreign policy centred around HR
 - No unconditional support for anti-comm. States, must comply with human right standards
 - Helsinki Accords 1975
 - Growth of “liberal interventionism” and “humanitarian intervention”
 - Eg. Clinton in Yugoslav war
- Strengthening and formalization of HR a critical stabilizing force for peace
 - created a new political and social landscape
 - No targeting of minorities
 - Greater protection for smaller states
 - Protection of sovereignty
 - Ensured radical leaders and regimes could not gain impetus
- Thus, US both positive and negative force.
 - Prosperity: positive as restored, negative as cultural hegemony and hidden agenda
 - Democracy and Peace: positive through formation of Democratic Europe and European integration, negative through destabilizing introduction and East West polarization.

The Soviet Union, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany as “totalitarian regimes”

- Definition- Political Theorist Hannah Arendt: “a state which exerts complete control, subordinating the whole society to the state using:
 - Information monopoly
 - Propaganda
 - Official and all-encompassing state ideology
 - Repression system (secret police)
 - Rule of a single party
- These 3 regimes fulfilled criteria to an extent, however element of dissidence and opposition suggests did not mobilise pop. And did not have total control

Soviet totalitarianism

- Stalinism was undeniably a totalitarian state, fulfilling all criteria. However the existence of dissidence within it, albeit small, questions complete control it had over society.

1. Single Party Rule

- All political opposition crushed
 - “White” Russian nationalists, Constitutional Democrats and even fellow Marxists
 - eg. **Mensheviks** – 5,000 arrested in 1921
 - **Nikolai Bukharin**- “we may have a two party system, but one of the two parties would be in office and the other in prison!”

2. Terror

- Red Terror- (Sep-Oct 1918)
 - Mass arrests, executions and atrocities by Bolshevik gov
 - Eliminate counter-revolutionaries, “enemies of the state:
 - particularly elites, bourgeoisie and intelligentsia
 - **Red Army Journal**- “Without mercy, without sparing, we will kill our enemies in scores of hundreds”
 - Industrial uprisings crushed and perpetrators executed
 - Gulags a key instrument of political repression
- **Cheka**- Secret Police
 - Targetted:
 - Intelligentsia
 - Political opponents
 - All clergy
 - Elites and Bourgeoisie- Great Purge (1936-39)
 - Peasant rebels, partic socialist revolutionaries
 - Deportation of Ethnic groups –
 - Greeks, Polish, Koreans, German
 - have external state to which they could be loyal