Lines of Containment

Read how postwar tensions shaped American responses.

USH.C.6.1 "Analyze the origins of international alliances and efforts at containment of communism immediately following World War II. Analyze the effect of massive aid given to Western Europe under the Marshall Plan on the rebuilding of Europe..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two causes of Cold War tension and circle three responses to that tension. Write C beside one consequence of each response you circled.

Choices After World War II

1. In 1945, the United States and Soviet Union emerged from war with different visions. Americans defended multiparty elections and private business; Soviet leaders ruled through one party and directed much of the economy. Soviet-backed communist governments took power across Eastern Europe, creating what Winston Churchill called an "iron curtain" between East and West. The United States adopted containment, a policy of limiting further communist expansion rather than removing every existing communist government. The new United Nations sought international security and cooperation on economic, social, and humanitarian problems.

2. In 1947, the Truman Doctrine promised aid to governments resisting communist pressure, beginning with Greece and Turkey. The Marshall Plan sent billions of dollars to Western Europe, helping rebuild industries and transport while strengthening governments against communist parties. In 1948, the Soviet Union blocked land routes to West Berlin, a Western-held area inside Soviet-controlled eastern Germany. Western planes supplied the city until the blockade ended in 1949. The crisis showed how containment could protect an isolated ally without directly attacking Soviet forces.

3. In 1949, the United States and Western European nations formed NATO, pledging collective defense. In 1955, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies formed the Warsaw Pact. These alliances hardened rival spheres of influence: each side supported friendly governments and viewed threats to allies as threats to itself. When North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950, President Truman sent U.S. troops under a United Nations command to defend the South. The war showed that containment could mean armed intervention, not just economic aid or air deliveries.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did differences between the American and Soviet systems help cause Cold War tension?

2. How did the Marshall Plan serve both a rebuilding goal and a containment goal?

3. Why was the Berlin Airlift a way to practice containment without directly attacking Soviet forces?

4. How did the responses to Soviet expansion differ in Western Europe and Korea?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A Western European country in 1950 has damaged factories and fears outside political pressure. Write four sentences recommending two responses from the passage, explaining how each would help, and naming one possible limitation.

ANSWER KEY

Lines of Containment

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.6.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two causes of Cold War tension and circle three responses to that tension. Write C beside one consequence of each response you circled. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did differences between the American and Soviet systems help cause Cold War tension?	**The United States defended multiparty elections and private business, while Soviet leaders ruled through one party and directed much of the economy.**
2	How did the Marshall Plan serve both a rebuilding goal and a containment goal?	**Its aid helped rebuild Western European industries and transport while strengthening governments against communist parties.**
3	Why was the Berlin Airlift a way to practice containment without directly attacking Soviet forces?	**Western planes supplied blockaded West Berlin, protecting the isolated city without attacking Soviet forces.**
4	How did the responses to Soviet expansion differ in Western Europe and Korea?	**Western nations used economic aid, air deliveries, and a defensive alliance in Europe. In Korea, Truman sent U.S. troops under a UN command after North Korea invaded the South.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The country should seek Marshall Plan aid to repair its factories and transport. A stronger economy could also help its government resist communist pressure. It should consider joining a defensive alliance like NATO to discourage an attack. Alliance membership might increase tension with the Soviet Union.

Accept other passage-supported causes and responses for the marking job. For Part 3, accept a different pair of relevant responses if the student explains both and identifies a plausible limitation.