

Original Paper

From “Lend-Lease” to “Containment”: The Transformation of American Foreign Policy (1941-1963)

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Abstract

During World War II, Japan's surprise attack brought great humiliation to the United States, and voices calling for participation in the war grew increasingly strong. President Roosevelt, possessing an internationalist consciousness, utilized “fireside chats” to break through the prevailing isolationist sentiment and actively engage in international affairs. Taking the Lend-Lease Act as the starting point, the United States gradually positioned itself at the center of global currents. However, after the war, fundamental conflicts between ideology and national interests led the United States and the Soviet Union toward mutual hostility. Consequently, the United States transformed its overall postwar diplomatic plans and, using George Kennan's containment policy as a blueprint, began to formulate a foreign policy strategy that would permeate the entire Cold War era.

Keywords

lend-lease act, containment policy, economic cold war, nuclear weapons, grand strategy, cuban crisis

Since its founding, the United States had long sought to isolate itself from world affairs. Throughout American history, there had been several attempts to break through isolationism the Open Door Policy and Wilson's Atlanticism both challenged the isolationist approach, yet all ended in failure. During World War II, Japan's surprise attack provided the United States with an excellent opportunity. Roosevelt, like Wilson, possessed an internationalist consciousness and utilized this opportunity to gradually dismantle isolationist sentiment, ultimately achieving this goal during the Truman administration. Roosevelt's first step was the promulgation of the Lend-Lease Act. After the victory in World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union moved toward confrontation due to conflicts between ideology and self-interest, and the United States also transformed its foreign policy strategy to implement containment against the Soviet Union.

Contemporary research generally focuses on specific periods of American foreign policy without paying sufficient attention to its continuity and overall coherence. As the foundational tone of American foreign relations during the Cold War, the containment policy guided the diplomatic strategy of successive administrations throughout that period. Although specific implementations varied, they were fundamentally two sides of the same coin. This article begins with Roosevelt's first attempt to break through isolationist consciousness through the Lend-Lease Act and extends to Kennedy's containment policy toward the Soviet Union, discussing American diplomatic measures in international affairs during the first half of the Cold War.

1. The Enactment, Application, and Expansion of the Lend-Lease Act

1.1 The Birth and Initial Application of the Lend-Lease Act

Before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States had maintained an isolationist foreign policy, believing that the best approach to national security was to remain detached from external affairs and refrain from participating in any military conflicts or alliances. This diplomatic policy had been deeply rooted in American foreign policy since the nation's founding. Even President Roosevelt, who had earned his reputation for helping the country weather and ultimately resolve the economic crisis, was compelled to compromise by passing three Neutrality Acts between 1935 and 1937. However, facing the increasingly rampant offensive of the German, Italian, and Japanese fascist powers, the U.S. government also began to express concerns. When war broke out in Europe in 1939, Roosevelt already recognized that the existing neutrality legislation might actually be helping the aggressors while failing to provide assistance to the victims. Under pressure from Britain and France, the U.S. government decided to amend the Neutrality Acts, announcing the abolition of the embargo clause so that the United States could provide aid, but requiring recipient nations to adhere to Cash and Carry. Although this clause did not commit the United States to entering the war, the abolition of the embargo nevertheless removed the first legal obstacle to the formal introduction of lend-lease aid.

At this time, in order to resist German invasion and maintain the basic living standards of its domestic population to bolster the courage to fight fascism, Britain adopted gold payments for all goods imported from the United States. As it turned out, although this approach enabled Britain to successfully resist fascist aggression, it also caused Britain's gold reserves to rapidly deplete, and by the end of 1940, Britain's gold reserves had been virtually exhausted. Meanwhile, to secure the safety of Atlantic maritime lifelines, Britain urgently needed destroyers to increase its anti-submarine capabilities. Thus, on September 2, 1940, the United States and Britain signed an agreement whereby Britain leased territories including Newfoundland, Bermuda, and Jamaica in the extraterritorial Atlantic to the United States for ninety-nine years in exchange for the transfer of fifty aged American destroyers. From this point, the prototype of lend-lease assistance began to take shape. On December 29, 1940, Roosevelt delivered his famous fireside chat, elaborating on the potential threats facing the United States and shifting the pressure onto Congress. Faced with the mounting calls of the people and

Roosevelt's continuous efforts, on March 11, 1941, the U.S. Congress formally passed the Lend-Lease Act, and the United States officially began to intervene in world affairs. At this time, although the United States had begun to engage with global currents and attempted to intervene in the European situation, isolationist sentiment within the country remained quite strong. William Foster, leader of the American Communist Party, once wrote that the majority of the American people, like all other nations, are peace-loving and fully sympathetic to the great global struggle, yet they still sincerely hope to avoid being drawn into the war. They are willing to help in this war, but they do not wish to participate in it. Consequently, the U.S. government did not dare to openly declare war on fascist countries until the outbreak of the German-Soviet War and Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

1.2 The Expansion of the Lend-Lease Act

The original purpose of the Lend-Lease Act was to aid Britain, but due to the needs of the European battlefield, the number of recipient nations gradually expanded to more than forty. American lend-lease assistance was conditioned on obtaining the economic circumstances of recipient nations and controlling the use of aid materials, but aid to the Soviet Union was a particularly special form. On June 22, 1941, Germany unilaterally tore up the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and launched a full-scale offensive against the Soviet Union. British Prime Minister Churchill, observing the shift in the wind, immediately declared on the day Germany attacked the Soviet Union that the British government was willing to do everything possible to help the Soviet Union, requiring only that the Soviet Union specify what assistance was needed. That evening, Churchill delivered a radio address, candidly stating that although he had consistently opposed communism in the past, the only enemy now was Nazi Germany, and announced that Britain would provide all possible aid to the Soviet Union. For historical reasons, the Soviet Union's response to Britain's statement was very cool but not oppositional. Britain's attitude toward the Soviet Union attracted American attention. President Roosevelt, who had long possessed an internationalist perspective, was also considering whether the United States should aid the Soviet Union, but this idea from the White House faced tremendous pressure from domestic politics and public opinion.

After the Soviet Union was passively drawn into the anti-fascist camp, in order to safeguard American vested interests in Europe, a considerable number of people still advocated aiding the Soviet Union. American domestic public opinion polls also showed that among those surveyed, 35 percent favored aiding the Soviet Union while 54 percent opposed it. The primary reason for majority opposition still lay in ideology due to traditional fear and suspicion of communism, as well as the experiences described by the first ambassador to the Soviet Union, Bullitt, all of which made the American public unenthusiastic about the Soviet Union. However, as the Soviet Union suffered successive defeats on the battlefield, the U.S. government gradually realized the possibility of American involvement in the war and began to incorporate the Soviet Union into the scope of Lend-Lease aid and formulate assistance plans for the Soviet Union. American aid to the Soviet Union can be said to be the most important manifestation of the expansion of the Lend-Lease Act. It consisted of four lend-lease agreements in

total.

The first agreement, the Moscow Protocol (October 1, 1941 to June 30, 1942): During the negotiations for this agreement, the Moscow Conference for the first time reflected the unconditional aid policy designed by Roosevelt and Hopkins to remove obstacles to aiding the Soviet Union. This principle differed from other recipient nations such as Britain. In the words of American delegation head Harriman, We should do exactly as they wish. During the first phase of negotiations for aid to the Soviet Union, the event that most affected the United States during World War II occurred the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, causing the greatest loss to the United States in World War II. After this event, sentiment for entering the war grew increasingly strong within the United States. Faced with this situation, Roosevelt seized the opportunity to promote his internationalist ideals, attempting to break through the isolationist sentiment prevailing domestically in one stroke and actively intervene in world affairs.

The second agreement, the Washington Protocol (July 1, 1942 to June 30, 1943): With reduced domestic opposition, aid to the Soviet Union could proceed on a broader scale, but the main problem troubling them at this time was that limited transport capacity could not simultaneously meet the needs of the Eastern Front in Europe and the Second Front. This was also the main issue in the second agreement negotiations. At this time, Stalin urgently hoped to open a Second Front to relieve pressure on the domestic battlefield. Roosevelt also expressed agreement, but Churchill sent a letter at this point informing him that Britain would stop convoy escorts on the Arctic route and decided to postpone opening the Second Front. Stalin was furious about this, and in his subsequent reply to Churchill, he pointed out unceremoniously that the Soviet Union could not accept these practices. Seeing this situation, the United States, considering the overall situation of the war, proposed a plan to increase aid materials to the Soviet Union to appease Soviet emotions and made every effort to make up the quota for the Soviet north and make all necessary arrangements, including prioritizing production for the Soviet Union, to fulfill the commitments of the agreement.

The third agreement, the London Protocol (July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1944): At this time, the anti-fascist war had gradually begun to enter a comprehensive counteroffensive phase. The Soviet Protocol Committee led by Roosevelt and Hopkins opposed changing the current policy. With Roosevelt's strong promotion, the unconditional aid policy was sustained, which to a large extent ensured the satisfactory fulfillment of the third agreement. The fourth agreement, the Ottawa Protocol (July 1, 1944 to May 12, 1945): The main negotiation difficulty of this agreement lay in the Soviet Union's insistence on supplying long-range industrial equipment through lend-lease that could only be delivered after the war. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Harriman attached great importance to the Soviet Union's postwar reconstruction issues, but he firmly opposed any practice of providing postwar materials to the Soviet Union in lend-lease form. On April 12, 1945, Roosevelt passed away. The person who most steadfastly implemented unconditional lend-lease aid to the Soviet Union and had the most authority was gone. On April 17, more than two months before the termination of validity, Soviet representatives

had no choice but to sign the fourth lend-lease agreement in Ottawa.

1.3 The End of Lend-Lease and the Beginning of Confrontation

After Germany's surrender, U.S. officials emphasized that aid to the Soviet Union should be stopped and redirected to European allies with ideologies similar to the United States. Truman, who had succeeded as vice president, immediately agreed to this policy. However, because Japan had not yet surrendered at this time, plus the previously signed Yalta Agreement, Truman also gave this policy certain flexibility. After Japan's surrender, the United States immediately implemented an embargo against the Soviet Union. The attitude and position of the Soviet Union in lend-lease negotiations, especially in the 3-C agreement negotiations, undoubtedly generated great resentment and disappointment in the United States. This was also an important factor in why the spirit of lend-lease cooperation became difficult to sustain. This attitude and position also stemmed from traditional ideological cognitive misconceptions. From the Soviet perspective, the United States would inevitably fall into periodic capitalist economic crises after the war, and for the United States to smoothly overcome these crises and solve the problems of unemployment and capital surplus, it would necessarily depend on the vast Soviet market. The Soviet Union's blind confidence in its own system was an important reason for its postwar detachment from the international economic system and also became the economic foundation for the path toward confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

2. The Emergence of the Containment Policy and the Transformation of American Grand Strategy

2.1 The Emergence and Implementation of the Containment Policy

The United States and the Soviet Union, having ended their wartime honeymoon, saw their postwar relations take a sharp turn for the worse. After Truman came to power, his policy toward the Soviet Union departed from Roosevelt's approach. The Soviet Union, relying on its tenacious strength, had defeated fascist invasion. Despite the substantial aid provided by the United States and other countries, the world had seen the superiority of the socialist system, and after the war, an increasing number of countries began to move toward the socialist path. This aroused a strong sense of crisis in capitalist countries led by the United States. As an opposing ideology, the United States, having acquired enormous war benefits during World War II, naturally could not tolerate the expansion of the Soviet Union's socialist system. As the Soviet Union gradually consolidated its control over Eastern Europe, the British and American governments were terrified. Britain and the United States defined Soviet behavior as territorial expansion, which was also the main focus of the Kennan Long Telegram. But in fact, this was the basic security strategy that the Soviet Union had formulated as early as the 1930s the island consciousness. Simply put, it was about expanding one's own territorial scope, trading space for time, expanding territory as much as possible, particularly controlling strategic points, even occupying them.

In 1946, George Kennan, the American charge d'affaires in the Soviet Union, sent back a long telegram. This telegram established the basic thinking of the containment policy. The following year, in an anonymously published article titled *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*, he explicitly stated that for reasons of ideology and history, the Soviet Union is constantly expanding. In order to exercise rule, Soviet leaders must convince their people that the world outside the Soviet Union is a hostile capitalist world. Historically, Russia lived on an unprotected plain surrounded by hostile nomadic peoples, which led Russian rulers to find security in conquest. The Soviet Union does not want war because they take a long-term view. According to communist theory, the demise of capitalism is inevitable, so they have no need to take risks. Therefore, the United States must adopt a long-term, patient, yet firm and vigilant containment policy. The conclusion drawn from Kennan's long telegram and article was that the Soviet Union's purpose was external expansion, and therefore the United States must implement a containment policy. In fact, according to later information, Kennan's analysis had problems. The Yalta system had already guaranteed Soviet security. But the containment policy in this telegram conformed to the interests of the largest political group in the United States at the time.

Changes in economic structure caused changes in foreign strategy, leading the American Northeast to reach consensus with the South, which had long tended toward free trade. To ensure the realization of its continuously expanding overseas trade and investment interests, the United States had to increase military spending, deepen coordination with allies, and develop multilateral trade cooperation to ensure that overseas markets were safe from security threats and ideological impact from the Soviet Union. Coupled with Churchill's fanning the flames from behind, this immediately stirred up anti-Soviet containment sentiment within the United States. In 1947, facing the Soviet Union's expanding influence in Eastern Europe, the United States formally introduced the Truman Doctrine. The Truman Doctrine was not merely a policy statement aiding Greece and Turkey but a declaration expanding American influence worldwide. It marked that American foreign policy had completely freed itself from the influence of isolationism and begun to transform from partial expansion to global expansion.

2.2 Acheson-Led American Foreign Policy and the Formal Launch of the Cold War

Given that Europe was a gathering place for American allies, adhering to the Europe first principle established during World War II, postwar American policy toward Europe led the general direction of early Cold War American diplomacy. Then-Under Secretary of State Acheson dominated the formulation of early Cold War foreign policy. Acheson consistently implemented the concept of power and diplomacy in his foreign policy. He was the key figure in the ultimate successful practice of Atlanticism that had germinated since the Wilson era, and he was also the main architect of the postwar American dual containment strategy. On the one hand, while taking into account American national interests, Acheson also had to create a new balance of power in Europe and throughout the West, using Western European power to achieve the strategic goal of containing the Soviet Union. In his view, national strength was the prerequisite for the smooth implementation of foreign policy. Therefore, he advocated permanent involvement in overseas affairs, particularly European affairs, and thus he also

helped the Truman team usher in a new golden age of American foreign policy. Acheson's total diplomacy and strategy of uniting Europe outlined the blueprint for Secretary of State Marshall's subsequent introduction of the European Recovery Program.

In July 1947, Secretary of State Marshall proposed the European Recovery Program to help Europe recover what we call the Marshall Plan. The introduction of this plan can be said to mark the endpoint of U.S.-Soviet cooperation and the starting point of confrontation. The Soviet Union also from this point began to decide to cut itself off from the world economic order led by the United States. The complete termination of U.S.-Soviet cooperation marked the formal beginning of U.S.-Soviet confrontation. Thereafter, the spearhead of American foreign policy was directed straight at the Soviet Union.

2.3 The Implementation of Total and Indiscriminate Containment and the Economic Cold War

Since the United States and the Soviet Union had completely fallen out, precautions against the Soviet Union and communism had to be carried out in all respects. After defining America's fundamental national interests under Cold War conditions, National Security Council Document 68 (NSC-68) was born. This document proposed measures for total, indiscriminate containment, and American containment strategic planning began to develop in an all-around direction. The document provided reasons for implementing these measures from four aspects military, political, economic, and diplomatic. Based on these four aspects, it was believed that the United States absolutely could not continue implementing current policies but must rapidly strengthen political, economic, and military strength in the free world to achieve long-term, comprehensive containment of the Soviet Union.

The implementation of the total, indiscriminate containment policy strategy was divided into five main points, briefly summarized as follows: First, attach importance to the significance of nuclear weapons; second, maintain vigilance against the Soviet threat; third, reaffirm American Cold War objectives; fourth, specific foreign policies and domestic defense requirements; fifth, strengthen ties with allies. But this policy had a significant drawback this unrestrained increase in military and other expenditures caused serious imbalance in the domestic economy, declining living standards, rising unemployment, and easily triggered social unrest. Therefore, in 1952, after Eisenhower assumed the U.S. presidency, he proposed from the beginning of his term that the most fundamental purpose of American economic policy was to ensure that the free economy based on private enterprise had sufficient vitality, so as to ensure domestic stability in the United States and support America's global Cold War strategy. To comprehensively implement this policy, the Eisenhower administration formulated the Great Balance strategy.

3. New Offensives Against the Soviet Union and American Cold War Efforts

3.1 New Strategic Offensives Against the Soviet Union

After the new government came to power, in terms of economic Cold War, it changed the previous administration's unrestrained economic output and began to continue confronting the Soviet Union

while ensuring its own economic development. At the economic level, since the United States abandoned large-scale economic Cold War, it naturally needed a new diplomatic strategy to guide the new situation. In 1954, the United States introduced measures to be taken in the face of Soviet communist expansion: First, make the aggressor suffer far more than it gains; second, repair the rift between France and Germany; third, exacerbate the Soviet Union's internal difficulties, using party strife to promote nationalism; fourth, revitalize liberalism as a spiritual force against communism. Because at this time the United States had already formed an alliance with Western Europe in the strategy of containing the Soviet Union, America's new round of diplomatic offensives against the Soviet Union naturally also needed to be discussed with Western European allies. Western European countries raised objections to the United States' third measure, believing that adopting internal intervention is too dangerous. Given the historical colonialism of European countries, these communists can easily label their intervention as imperialist. This would likely cause newly established national democratic countries to defect to the Soviet camp, thereby further expanding its sphere of influence.

3.2 American Cold War Efforts

Based on the new situation of American foreign offensives and the suggestions of Western European allies, the United States began to make new efforts in the Cold War. First, current national security policy recognized that Soviet communism's current focus was the use of subversive forces and techniques, and specifically called for greater American efforts to oppose the growing red threat in this field. Second, it called for major countries of the free world to have programs aimed at improving understanding of and influencing attitudes toward the current world struggle. Third, in order to promote overseas understanding or influence foreign attitudes to support American policies and objectives, it reviewed the effectiveness of American international broadcasting programs and American overseas educational activities. Fourth, through working groups, tasks were assigned to institutional personnel to collect data and understand the relevance of other free world countries conducting similar programs.

From existing declassified archives, American Cold War efforts were mainly directed at allies and other friendly countries, rather than enemy-controlled countries. The goal of these efforts was not to destroy the main threat to American security but to rebuild the political, economic, and social structures of Western Europe and Asian neighbors. The United States insisted on destroying the military forces of Germany and Japan near the end of World War II, with the purpose of finding excuses to limit Soviet expansion. According to American analysis of the Soviet Union, Soviet development mainly relied on large-scale extraction of natural resources, but due to reduced birth rates during World War II, the Soviet Union would experience depletion of labor resources. Based on the above analysis, the American side believed that to ultimately translate American efforts into practice, the most crucial factor was still the strength that Acheson had advocated. One important reason why the United States had always dared not truly go to war with the Soviet Union was that the Soviet Union had already mastered nuclear weapons technology by 1949. Nuclear capability had always been the most important

weapon in American foreign deterrence.

4. Nuclear Confrontation in a Stalemate

4.1 American Nuclear Strategy Planning

As mentioned above, the Soviet Union's mastery of nuclear weapons caused the United States to lose its greatest advantage over the Soviet Union. In order to ensure its control over Western Europe and prevent the spread of communism in Europe, the United States decided to provide nuclear armament to Western European allies, including the Federal Republic of Germany. Although the Adenauer government had declared to the Soviet Union that it would not deploy nuclear weapons, under American intervention, nuclear weapons were still deployed in the Federal Republic of Germany. This was also an important cause of the Second Berlin Crisis. But not every Western European country chose to accept American measures, with Britain and France being the foremost among those who opposed. They worried that this might further strengthen American control over Western Europe, causing them to live forever in America's shadow. In 1956, during the Suez Canal Crisis, with American involvement, Egypt regained ownership of the canal, which greatly annoyed Britain and strained Anglo-American relations. After the Polish and Hungarian events, the Soviet Union's intervention in Eastern European countries grew increasingly strong, which also greatly alarmed Britain, France, and other countries, and they gradually began to change their attitudes toward American deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe.

In 1959, the U.S. State Department proposed the tripwire and shield policies for European defense, aimed at increasing nuclear deterrence and maintaining strong Western European military forces to resist the Soviet Union. Therefore, while maintaining conventional forces, nuclear forces also had to be maintained.

4.2 Changes in Soviet Attitude and the Origins of the Cuban Crisis

Facing such an aggressive American posture against the Soviet Union in Europe, if Stalin had been in power, he would certainly have taken corresponding equivalent measures against the United States. But in the view of his successor Khrushchev, he clearly recognized the Soviet Union's own insufficient strength and therefore attempted to pursue equal footing with the United States through peaceful coexistence, making the United States recognize that the Soviet Union had equal rights with the United States to dominate the world. The Three Peaceful line thus became the mainstream of Soviet policy toward the United States at this time. Following this policy, the United States and the Soviet Union held the famous Camp David Summit in September 1959. Although this summit did not achieve actual relaxation, it demonstrated to the world the desire of both countries for peaceful coexistence. But unexpectedly for the Soviet Union, only one year later, the Soviet Union shot down an American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft within its territory. Faced with conclusive evidence, the United States also admitted to ongoing espionage activities. The spirit of Camp David instantly vanished, and U.S.-Soviet

relations shifted from the previous relaxation to the lowest point since the beginning of the Cold War. At this same time, the revolutionary regime led by Castro had fully taken control of Cuba, directly threatening American interests less than three hundred kilometers away. In order to ensure its hegemonic position in the Americas, the United States began to plot offensive action against Cuba. The newly inaugurated Kennedy administration also needed a victory to enhance its reputation. In 1961, the thoroughly prepared Bay of Pigs Operation was implemented. But the United States obviously had not realized the extent of domestic support for the new regime in Cuba. Under Cuba's stubborn resistance, the operation ended in failure. After the Bay of Pigs failure, a strong anti-Cuba sentiment permeated the United States. The Kennedy administration was particularly eager to rewrite the record of failure to avoid being criticized by political opponents. To this end, the Kennedy administration formulated and implemented a plan codenamed Operation Mongoose, launching various covert actions against the Cuban government, including sabotage, intelligence gathering, propaganda, organizing underground armed forces, and assassinations. American covert actions against Cuba deepened Cuban leaders' concerns about their own security and also pushed Cuba closer to the Soviet Union, laying the groundwork for Cuba's subsequent acceptance of Soviet missiles and the outbreak of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

4.3 The Outbreak of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Responses of the United States and the Soviet Union

In May 1960, the Soviet Union and Cuba established diplomatic relations, and relations between the two countries rapidly warmed. In January 1961, the United States announced the severance of diplomatic relations with Cuba. Coupled with the Bay of Pigs Incident that broke out in April, the Castro government formally declared Cuba a socialist country in May 1961, which also provided conditions for Soviet aid to Cuba. After the outbreak of Operation Mongoose, Cuban leaders, out of concern for Cuban security, formally began to seek Soviet support and assistance. Khrushchev also used the issue of American military bases in Turkey as a pretext to begin transporting missiles to Cuba. To reduce American vigilance, the Soviet Union publicly claimed that the missiles being transported were merely defensive, intended to ensure Cuba's security and strengthen Cuba's self-defense capabilities. Until American satellites photographed missile launch bases under construction in Cuba, the United States immediately implemented a naval blockade of Cuba, and the army, navy, and air force entered the highest state of alert.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis occurred, the Soviet Union adopted a relatively mild attitude toward the United States and actively sought meetings with American representatives. The American side also believed that the Soviet Union would not excessively undertake the responsibility of defending other communist parties. Khrushchev's future general policy depended on the outcome of resolving the crucial issue of Berlin. Therefore, National Security Advisor Rostow urged Kennedy not to let American foreign policy lose balance because of the Cuban situation. In his report, he pointed out that the central goal of the United States is to more closely link the northern part of the free world and begin

constructively linking it with the southern part. This also conformed to the sword in one hand, olive branch in the other peace strategy measures introduced after Kennedy came to power.

This strategy had five main points, implemented until the Johnson administration. First, military strength must be strengthened to have the capability to contain the expansion of communism. Second, seek dialogue with the Soviet Union. Kennedy emphasized both the fundamental conflict of interests with the Soviet Union and the need to seek cooperation and dialogue in areas where both sides agreed. Third, expand contacts with Eastern European countries and carry out peaceful evolution. Fourth, use the name of aid to expand into the Third World. Fifth, firmly defend Western interests. The peaceful resolution of the Cuban Crisis was ultimately achieved, and frequent dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union played a decisive role in this outcome. This crisis also led both the United States and the Soviet Union to abandon brinkmanship policies. The two sides established a hotline to prevent accidents and forced Americans to acknowledge that the Soviet Union was on equal footing with them in terms of destructive power. After Kennedy's assassination, the succeeding Johnson administration continued to routinely use the peace strategy measures formulated during the Kennedy period, promoting America's global strategy.

5. Conclusion

Since breaking through isolationist policy during World War II, whether the Lend-Lease Act or the containment policy that permeated the entire Cold War period, all were manifestations of satisfying American self-interest. To ensure American superiority in the world, the postwar United States adopted a strategy of containing Soviet development. But when socialist forces in the world grew increasingly strong, the United States also directed its strategic objectives at the entire communist camp. The means employed developed from initially focusing primarily on the political sphere to encompassing political, economic, cultural, and military spheres. It can be said that all means except the use of force were employed. Of course, the United States also made partial adjustments to its policies according to its own development situation, such as the U.S.-Soviet detente at the Camp David Summit. In the 1960s, as the United States became deeply mired in the Vietnam War quagmire and domestic economic contradictions threatened to erupt, the Kennedy administration also began to seek cooperation and exchanges in policy toward the Soviet Union. Subsequent Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush administrations also planned American foreign relations within the framework of the containment policy until the end of the Cold War. In summary, the Lend-Lease Act can be said to be both the starting point and endpoint of U.S.-Soviet cooperation. The containment policy that replaced it became the foundational tone of American foreign policy during the Cold War, and successive U.S. governments after Truman implemented their own measures on this basis. Today, in Sino-American relations, we can still faintly see the shadow of the containment policy. American containment of the communist camp continues unabated.

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