ure, in my opinion, and the defeat of the National Government of China were due primarily to their refusal to heed Marshall’s advice.

It is important to repeat that Marshall was advising, not dictating. I had sent him to China not to intervene in the affairs of that country but to render whatever aid we could to the cause of peace there. He was not sent to do Chiang Kai-shek’s job for him. If General Marshall returned from his mission without results, it was because neither of the parties really wanted to live up to the agreement to form a coalition government to unite China.

The solution I tried to reach through Marshall was the only one by way of which Chiang Kai-shek might have saved himself without full-scale military intervention by the United States. To achieve a proper and fair appraisal of Marshall’s mission, it is important to bear in mind that even before he left for China there already existed a formal agreement in writing between the Central Government and the Communists to work toward national unity. This is the agreement that was brought about previously with the assistance of Ambassador Hurley when he headed our diplomatic mission to China, and had this not already been in existence I would not have sent Marshall to China. My sole purpose in sending him was to help carry out a program willingly subscribed to by the Chinese leaders. In no sense was it our intention to impose our will upon the Chinese people.

CHAPTER 7

In early 1946 Russian activities in Iran threatened the peace of the world.

Russia and Britain had concluded an agreement with Iran in 1942 which allowed Russian and British troops to be stationed on Iranian soil for a period ending six months after the termination of hostilities. At the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in September 1945, Bevin and Molotov had agreed that this meant that all foreign troops would be withdrawn from Iran not later than March 2, 1946.

However, during the month of November the State Department received reliable reports that instead of preparing for withdrawal the Russians were adding to their forces. It was also reported that the Russians were interfering with efforts by the government in Teheran to suppress rebellious elements in the northern part of the country, and especially in the province of Azerbaijan.

On November 23 I had Secretary Byrnes bring up the matter before the Cabinet. Byrnes suggested at that time that we speed up the departure of American troops in Iran. We had used Iran as a supply route to Russia by arrangement with the British, the Russians, and the Teheran government. This meant that we maintained a few thousand service troops in the country. While this involved only a relatively small force, we intended to set the example of withdrawal and then ask the Russians to agree that all foreign troops would be out of that country by January 1.

The approach to Russia was made on this basis, but on December 3 the Russians rejected the proposal. A few days later the Moscow radio informed the world that a revolutionary government had been set up in Azerbaijan. The Iranian government at once charged that this rebel
government owed its existence to the Russians and was supported by Russian military forces.

When Byrnes was in Moscow for the conference of Foreign Ministers later in December, the Russians refused even to discuss the question of withdrawal of foreign troops from Iran.

On January 19 Iran formally charged Russia before the Security Council of the United Nations with interference in her internal affairs. But the Security Council was unable to act because Russia contended that the dispute was not a matter which that body was competent to handle. The Russians simply announced that they would ignore any questions they might be asked about Iran. The Security Council then agreed to let Russia and Iran settle the matter by direct negotiation. It was, of course, unlikely that Iran would be able to resist Russian demands while Soviet troops were still occupying her territory. Under such conditions there could hardly be any equality at the bargaining table.

March 2, the day on which the Russians had agreed with Britain and Iran that they would withdraw their troops, came and passed, but the Russians did not leave Iran. On the contrary, Moscow announced that "some troops" would remain in Iran for an unspecified time.

This was a gross violation of the agreements made. It also meant that Iran would be required to negotiate with Russia while a gun was at her head. I decided that the Russian government ought to be informed on how we felt about this kind of conduct in international relations. I asked Secretary Byrnes to bring with him, to his weekly conference with me, all available documents on the Iranian situation.

At this conference, on March 4, we discussed all aspects of the problem and reviewed its many dangerous implications. As a result, Byrnes sent a note to Moscow that would, while still being diplomatically polite, make it very plain that we did not like the way Russia was behaving in Iran and, specifically, that Russian troops were still there in spite of the solemn promises repeatedly made by the Kremlin that they would be out of Iran not later than March 2.

The note which George F. Kennan, our Chargé d'Affaires, delivered at the Kremlin on March 6 said in part, "... The decision of the Soviet Government to retain Soviet troops in Iran beyond the period stipulated by the Tripartite Treaty has created a situation with regard to which the Government of the United States, as a member of the United Nations and as a Party to the Declaration Regarding Iran dated December 1, 1943, can not remain indifferent... The Government of the United States, in the spirit of friendly association which developed between the United States and the Soviet Union in the successful effort against the common enemy and as a fellow member of the United Nations, expresses the earnest hope that the Government of the Soviet Union will do its part, by withdrawing immediately all Soviet forces from the territory of Iran, to promote the international confidence which is necessary for peaceful progress among the peoples of all nations...."

There was no official reply to this note. Russian press reports, however, said that the State Department was "mistaken," that there were no Russian troop movements in Iran. Then the Kremlin shifted tactics and began hammering away at Winston Churchill for his Fulton, Missouri, speech and at me for sponsoring the speech. It was at Westminster College in Fulton that Churchill first referred to the "iron curtain" publicly. The Russians had resorted to the old game of kicking up the dust when you do not want the other fellow to see too well.

But our intelligence continued to report the presence of Russian troops in Iran. The Iranians, moving into areas from which the Russians had said they had pulled out, found the roads blocked by Russian troop units. Three major Russian columns were reported on the march, one toward the capital city of Teheran, another swinging toward the Turkish-Iranian border. The signs were plain that Russia was determined to have her way and that she intended to ignore the U.S. and the U.N. alike.

As I saw it, three things were involved. One was the security of Turkey. Russia had been pressing Turkey for special privileges and for territorial concessions for several months. The Turks had resisted all these demands, but their position would be infinitely more difficult if Russia, or a Russian puppet state, were able to outflank her in the east.

The second problem was the control of Iran's oil reserves. That Russia had an eye on these vast deposits seemed beyond question. If the Russians were to control Iran's oil, either directly or indirectly, the raw material balance of the world would undergo a serious change, and it would be a serious loss for the economy of the Western world.

What perturbed me most, however, was Russia's callous disregard of the rights of a small nation and of her own solemn promises. International co-operation was impossible if national obligations could be ignored and the U.N. bypassed as if it did not exist.

I talked over all these points with Secretary Byrnes and Admiral Leahy. Then I told Byrnes to send a blunt message to Premier Stalin. On March 24 Moscow announced that all Russian troops would be withdrawn from Iran at once. The threat to Turkey had been removed, although it had not vanished and continued to demand our attention. Iran could negotiate with Russia without feeling threatened; indeed, its parliament rejected later the accord entered into by its government, a clear sign that fear had been removed from the land.
The world was now able to look more hopefully toward the United Nations. But Russia's ambitions would not be halted by friendly reminders of promises made. The Russians would press wherever weakness showed—and we would have to meet that pressure wherever it occurred, in a manner that Russia and the world would understand. When Communist pressure began to endanger Greece and Turkey, I moved to make this policy clear and firm.

It was not long before the same issue was presented to us again in the same part of the world. Turkey and Greece had become subjected to heavy pressures from the Russian bloc. Each of them had valiantly sought to repel these pressures, but now their strength was waning and they were in need of aid.

Turkey, of course, an age-old objective of Russian ambitions. The Communists were only continuing what the Czars had practiced when they tried to gain control of the area that blocked Russian exit into the Mediterranean Sea. Stalin had brought up the subject of the Dardanelles at the Potsdam conference. But Attlee and I had stuck firmly by the principle that had been laid down in the Montreux Convention, that the straits should be open to the commercial shipping of all nations. For that reason nothing more was done about this subject at Potsdam, except to agree that each of the powers might discuss the subject directly with Turkey. This was entirely appropriate since the agreement, by its terms, was up for review in 1946.

Our ideas on the revision of these terms were transmitted to the Turkish government in a note on November 2, 1945. We informed the Turks that we would wish any revision to conform to three principles: (1) The straits to be open to the merchant vessels of all nations at all times; (2) the straits to be open to the transit of warships of the Black Sea powers at all times; (3) save for an agreed limited tonnage in time of peace, passage through the straits to be denied to the warships of non-Black Sea powers at all times, except with the specific consent of the Black Sea powers or except when acting under the authority of the United Nations. Copies of this note were sent to the Soviets—who made no reply—and to the British, who followed with a similar statement to the Turkish government.

Meanwhile, however, the Russians, in addition to their efforts to outflank Turkey through Iran, were beginning to exert pressure on Turkey for territorial concessions. In July 1946, Moscow sent a note to Ankara proposing a new regime for the Dardanelles that would have excluded all nations except the Black Sea powers. In other words, both we and the British would have been eliminated from any future agreement, and Turkey would have been faced by a combination of three Communist states: Russia, Rumania, and Bulgaria. The second and far more ominous part of the Soviet proposal was that the straits should be put under joint Turkish-Russian defense.

This was indeed an open bid to obtain control of Turkey. If Russian troops entered Turkey with the ostensible purpose of enforcing joint control of the straits, it would only be a short time before these troops would be used for the control of all of Turkey. We had learned from the experience of the past two years that Soviet intervention inevitably meant Soviet occupation and control. To allow Russia to set up bases in the Dardanelles or to bring troops into Turkey, ostensibly for the defense of the straits, would, in the natural course of events, result in Greece and the whole Near and Middle East falling under Soviet control.

The Turkish government sought our advice, and Acting Secretary of State Acheson placed the matter before me. I directed the State, War, and Navy Departments to make a careful study of the situation. The Secretaries of the three departments, with the Chiefs of Staff, moved with speed and brought me a unanimous recommendation that we take a strong position, which was at once communicated to the Turkish government. At the same time, the Turkish government received similar views and support from the British and French.

In addition, I told the Acting Secretary to have our Ambassador in Ankara tell the Turkish leaders orally that, in the language of diplomats, the reply to Moscow should be "reasonable, but firm."

The note to Russia made it plain that, if the straits should become the object of Russian aggression, the "resulting situation would constitute a threat to international security and would clearly be a matter for action on the part of the Security Council."

The Turkish government, encouraged by the American attitude, rejected the Soviet demands and showed admirable determination to resist if Russia should resort to open violence. But Turkey's Army, though sizable, was poorly equipped and would have been no match for the battle-tested divisions of the Kremlin.

More serious still was the drain which this continued exertion made on the nation's economy. Toward the close of 1946 our Ambassador reported from Ankara that "Turkey will not be able to maintain indef-
But as early as the fall of 1945 the British had suggested to us that they would like our assistance in Greece, especially financial help to the Greek government.

I had authorized the State Department to enter into discussions with the British on terms of economic aid to Greece, but we were also anxious to assure that conditions in Greece would justify any loans which might be granted. For that reason I approved the sending of a note to Greece in January 1946 which urged the government of that country to apply itself to a program of economic stabilization. We offered to aid in such a program with both advisers and funds.

Little progress was made, however, as the cleavage between the extremes of Right and Left in Greece seemed to become wider and wider. The return of the King only added fuel to the flames. At last, in December 1946, the Greek government complained to the Security Council of the United Nations that outside assistance was being received by the insurgent groups. A United Nations mission was dispatched to Greece to investigate the situation. At about the same time, the Greek government accepted our long-standing offer of technical advice on their economic problems, and I sent Paul Porter, former Administrator for the OPA, as the head of an economic mission.

However, before Porter was in a position to draw any conclusion from his inspections on the spot, events forced a decision that made Porter's mission—and our earlier approach to the problems of Greece—outdated.

On February 3 a cable to the State Department from Ambassador MacVeagh in Athens reported rumors that the British would withdraw their troops from Greece, or at least a sizable part of them. On February 12 Secretary of State Marshall brought me a dispatch from MacVeagh urging that we give immediate consideration to supplying aid to Greece. The British, the Ambassador reported, were not able to keep up even the little they were doing.

On February 18 Mark Ethridge of the U. S. Investigating Commission cabled that all the signs pointed to an impending move by the Communists to seize the country. On February 20 our embassy in London reported that the British Treasury was opposing any further aid to Greece because of the precarious financial condition in which Britain found herself.

But the crisis came sooner than we expected. In the late afternoon of Friday, February 21, the British Ambassador asked to see General Marshall. However, he was out of town, attending the bicentennial celebration of Princeton University. An appointment was made for Monday, and the State Department obtained from the British Embassy a copy of the official note which the Ambassador would deliver to the Secretary.
The note informed us that Britain would have to pull out of Greece no later than April 1. Acheson telephoned me immediately about the contents of the note, and I asked him to go to work on a study of the situation with which we were faced. Acheson alerted the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, and over the weekend they prepared a memorandum of recommendations of what ought to be done.

On Monday, February 24, Secretary Marshall brought me the official copy of the note which he had received formally that morning from the British Ambassador. This note set forth the difficulties confronting the United Kingdom in the fulfillment of her overseas commitments and advised us that as of March 30, 1947, it would be necessary for the United Kingdom to withdraw all support to Greece.

General Marshall and I discussed the impending crisis with Secretaries Forrestal and Patterson, and the three departments pressed their study of all aspects of the situation. In his talk with the British Ambassador, Secretary Marshall learned that the British were planning to take their troops out of Greece as soon as this could be conveniently done.

The urgency of the situation was emphasized by dispatches from our representatives in Athens and Moscow. General Smith recorded his belief that only the presence of British troops had so far saved Greece from being swallowed into the Soviet orbit. From Athens, Ambassador MacVeagh sent a picture of deep depression and even resignation among Greek leaders; their feeling seemed to be that only aid given at once would be of use. Time, MacVeagh urged, was of the essence.

At three o’clock on Wednesday, February 26, Marshall and Acheson brought me the result of the studies of our experts. The State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee had met that morning in an extended session and had agreed on a general policy recommendation. General Eisenhower furnished a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff supporting the conclusion reached from a military point of view.

Under Secretary Acheson made the presentation of the study, and I listened to it with great care. The diplomatic and military experts had drawn the picture in greater detail, but essentially their conclusions were the same as those to which I had come in the weeks just passed as the messages and reports went across my desk.

Greece needed aid, and needed it quickly and in substantial amounts. The alternative was the loss of Greece and the extension of the iron curtain across the eastern Mediterranean. If Greece was lost, Turkey would become an untenable outpost in a sea of Communism. Similarly, if Turkey yielded to Soviet demands, the position of Greece would be extremely endangered.

But the situation had even wider implications. Poland, Rumania, and the other satellite nations of eastern Europe had been turned into Communist camps because, in the course of the war, they had been occupied by the Russian Army. We had tried, vainly, to persuade the Soviets to permit political freedom in these countries, but we had no means to compel them to relinquish their control, unless we were prepared to wage war.

Greece and Turkey were still free countries being challenged by Communist threats both from within and without. These free peoples were now engaged in a valiant struggle to preserve their liberties and their independence.

America could not, and should not, let these free countries stand unaided. To do so would carry the clearest implications in the Middle East and in Italy, Germany, and France. The ideals and traditions of our nation demanded that we come to the aid of Greece and Turkey and that we put the world on notice that it would be our policy to support the cause of freedom wherever it was threatened.

The risks which such a course might entail were risks which a great nation had to take if it cherished freedom at all. The studies which Marshall and Acheson brought to me and which we examined made it plain that serious risks would be involved. But the alternative would be disastrous to our security and to the security of free nations everywhere.

What course the free world should take in the face of the threat of Russian totalitarianism was a subject I had discussed with my foreign policy advisers on many occasions in the year just passed. To foster our thinking in long-range terms I had approved the establishment in the State Department of a Policy Planning Staff. George F. Kennan, one of our foremost experts on Russia, was to head this group.

A President has little enough time to meditate, but whenever such moments occurred I was more than likely to turn my thoughts toward this key problem that confronted our nation.

We had fought a long and costly war to crush the totalitarianism of Hitler, the insolence of Mussolini, and the arrogance of the warlords of Japan. Yet the new menace facing us seemed every bit as grave as Nazi Germany and her allies had been.

I could never quite forget the strong hold which isolationism had gained over our country after World War I. Throughout my years in the Senate I listened each year as one of the senators would read Washington’s Farewell Address. It served little purpose to point out to the isolationists that Washington had advised a method suitable under the conditions of his day to achieve the great end of preserving the nation,
and that although conditions and our international position had changed, the objectives of our policy—peace and security—were still the same. For the isolationists this address was like a biblical text. The America First organization of 1940–41, the Ku Klux Klan, Pelley and his Silver Shirts—they all quoted the first President in support of their assorted aims.

I had a very good picture of what a revival of American isolationism would mean for the world. After World War II it was clear that without American participation there was no power capable of meeting Russia as an equal. If we were to turn our back on the world, areas such as Greece, weakened and divided as a result of the war, would fall into the Soviet orbit without much effort on the part of the Russians. The success of Russia in such areas and our avowed lack of interest would lead to the growth of domestic Communist parties in such European countries as France and Italy, where they were already significant threats. Inaction, withdrawal, "Fortress America" notions could only result in handing to the Russians vast areas of the globe now denied to them.

This was the time to align the United States of America clearly on the side, and the head, of the free world. I knew that George Washington's spirit would be invoked against me, and Henry Clay's, and all the other patron saints of the isolationists. But I was convinced that the policy I was about to proclaim was indeed as much required by the conditions of my day as was Washington's by the situation in his era and Monroe's doctrine by the circumstances which he then faced.

There are a great many men who labor diligently behind the scenes before a policy statement can be announced. The President, of course, can neither speak nor listen to each and every one of them. But their work ends where the President's work begins, for then he has to make the decision. And where they have spent days, perhaps months, in the study of just one situation, the President faces a multitude of decisions every day. To illustrate, this is what was happening. At the time that I was weighing the problem of aid to Greece and Turkey, Ernest Bevin had just made a public statement about our Palestine policy that cast a dark shadow over our relations with Britain; the economy bloc in the new Eightieth Congress was threatening to cut some vital government programs out of the budget, including our overseas information services; Secretary Marshall was getting ready to attend his first Foreign Ministers' conference; there were events in Argentina, in Indonesia, in China that called for decisions; Senator McKellar was blocking the atomic energy program by his stubborn opposition to the confirmation of David Lilienthal as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission; the bill for the unification of the services was at last ready for Congress; the press

wanted me to announce my plans for 1948. Amidst all these demands on his time, the President must be ready to perform the necessary functions of a head of state, whether they be ceremonial or informal, and he can, of course, never close his doors to the public and, even less so, to the press.

Yet decisions like these cannot be made in a hurry, and I never did make momentous decisions without hard preparatory work, study, and much thought. I always made it a point to listen to as many people as I could. And after that first sad experience with the Lend-Lease termination, I never put my initials of approval on a piece of paper without reading it with care.

The vital decision that I was about to make was complicated by the fact that Congress was no longer controlled by the Democratic party. While expecting the help of such fine supporters of the idea of bipartisanship in foreign affairs as Senator Vandenberg and Congressman Eaton of New Jersey, I realized the situation was more precarious than it would have been with a preponderantly Democratic Congress. It seemed desirable, therefore, to advise the congressional leadership as soon as possible of the gravity of the situation and of the nature of the decision which I had to make. I asked Secretary Marshall and Acheson to return the following day at ten, when I would have the congressional leaders present. At ten o'clock on the morning of February 27 Senators Bridges, Vandenberg, Barkley, and Connally, Speaker Martin, and Representatives Eaton, Bloom, and Rayburn took their seats in my office. Congressman Taber had been invited but was not able to be present. He called later in the day, and I discussed the situation with him.

I explained to them the position in which the British note on Greece had placed us. The decision of the British Cabinet to withdraw from Greece had not yet been made public, and none of the legislators knew, therefore, how serious a crisis we were suddenly facing. I told the group that I had decided to extend aid to Greece and Turkey and that I hoped Congress would provide the means to make this aid timely and sufficient.

General Marshall then reviewed the diplomatic exchanges and the details of the situation. He made it quite plain that our choice was either to act or to lose by default, and I expressed my emphatic agreement to this. I answered congressional questions and finally explained to them what course we had to take.

The congressional leaders appeared deeply impressed. Some in the group were men who would have preferred to avoid spending funds on any aid program abroad. Some had, not so long ago, been outspoken isolationists. But at this meeting in my office there was no voice of
dissent when I stated the position which I was convinced our country had to take.

During the days that followed, State Department experts busied themselves with different aspects of the situation. The economic offices sought to estimate how much aid the Greek economy would need and could effectively use. The political offices were engaging in consultations with British, Greek, and Turkish representatives. The legal offices were preparing drafts of the necessary legislation. Other departments, too, were giving top-level attention to the Greek problem. Secretary of the Navy Forrestal, in particular, participated actively and had several lengthy conversations with Dean Acheson. It was the latter, however, as Under Secretary of State, who co-ordinated the planning being done. General Marshall was due to leave for Moscow shortly and was concentrating on plans for the Foreign Ministers' conference there.

I had to absent myself from Washington for several days on a state visit—the first one ever undertaken by an American President—to our neighboring republic of Mexico.

On my return to the capital in the late hours of March 6 I received a full report of all developments, including those affecting the Greek situation. The Greek government had formally asked for American aid. Both our embassy and the Porter mission asked for urgent consideration of the request.

I had planned to spend a few days in Key West to get away from the daily round of callers and get some work done without interruption, but decided to remain in Washington and go before Congress at the earliest moment to ask for the aid which Greece—and Turkey—so desperately needed.

There was much to be done and little time to do it. One of the first things was to place the matter before the Cabinet. A meeting was scheduled for March 7, and the greater part of it I devoted to a review of the Greek situation. I told the Cabinet of the decision to send aid to Greece and asked their advice on the best way to do it. Acheson outlined the problem that confronted us. He reviewed the role the British had played and what their withdrawal would mean. He informed the Cabinet, however, that the British had agreed to continue some support of the Greek government for another three months.

I explained the proposed request to Congress for the sum of $250,000,000 for Greece and $150,000,000 for Turkey but that I realized that this would be only the beginning.

There was general agreement. Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach had some misgivings of a political nature: He suspected that anti-British elements at home might charge that we were "again" pulling British chestnuts out of the fire. Several members of the Cabinet stressed the need for governmental reform in Greece. There was considerable discussion on the best method to apprise the American people of the issues involved.

On this last point I asked Secretary of the Treasury Snyder to head a committee to make recommendations to me. This group, with Acheson, Forrestal, Harriman, Patterson, Clinton Anderson, Schwellenbach, and John Steelman as members, met the next day. The committee recommended that, in order to emphasize the gravity of the situation, I appear in person before a joint session of the Congress.

I had already invited a group of congressional leaders to meet in my office on March 10. This group was larger than the one which had met with me on February 27. It included Senators Barkley, Connally, Taft, Vandenberg, and White, Speaker Martin, and Representatives Bloom, Cannon, Eaton, Halleck, McCormack, Rayburn, Short, and Taber. Dean Acheson was also present, and for two hours he and I discussed the Greek situation with the lawmakers. Vandenberg expressed his complete agreement with me. I answered questions by the congressmen similar to those asked at the first meeting. There was no opposition to what had to be done.

The drafting of the actual message which I would deliver to the Congress had meanwhile been started in the State Department. The first version was not at all to my liking. The writers had filled the speech with all sorts of background data and statistical figures about Greece and made the whole thing sound like an investment prospectus. I returned this draft to Acheson with a note asking for more emphasis on a declaration of general policy. The department's draftsmen then rewrote the speech to include a general policy statement, but it seemed to me half-hearted. The key sentence, for instance, read, "I believe that it should be the policy of the United States . . . ." I took my pencil, scratched out "should" and wrote in "must." In several other places I did the same thing. I wanted no hedging in this speech. This was America's answer to the surge of expansion of Communist tyranny. It had to be clear and free of hesitation or double talk.

On Wednesday, March 12, 1947, at one o'clock in the afternoon, I stepped to the rostrum in the hall of the House of Representatives and addressed a joint session of the Congress. I had asked the senators and representatives to meet together so that I might place before them what I believed was an extremely critical situation.

To cope with this situation, I recommended immediate action by the Congress. But I also wished to state, for all the world to know, what the position of the United States was in the face of the new totalitarian...
challenge. This declaration of policy soon began to be referred to as the “Truman Doctrine.” This was, I believe, the turning point in America’s foreign policy, which now declared that wherever aggression, direct or indirect, threatened the peace, the security of the United States was involved.

“I believe,” I said to the Congress and to a nationwide radio audience, “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.”

After I delivered the speech, the world reaction to it proved that this approach had been the right one. All over the world, voices of approval made themselves heard, while Communists and their fellow travelers struck out at me savagely. The line had been drawn sharply. In my address I had said that every nation was now faced with a choice between alternative ways of life.

“One way of life,” I said, “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.

“The seeds of totalitarian regimes,” I said in closing, “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.”

When I ended my address, the congressmen rose as one man and applauded. Vito Marcantonio, the American Labor party representative from New York, was the only person in the hall who remained seated. Congress began the following day to work on legislation to put the program into effect. Meanwhile, members of my official family were busy rushing such aid and encouragement to Greece as I could provide without special congressional approval. Secretary Forrestal, on my instructions, dispatched the aircraft carrier Leyte and nine other vessels on a visit to Greece as a token of our intention, hoping to persuade the British to stay on, at least until our aid to Greece became effective.

Ambassador to Greece MacVeagh, the Ambassador to Turkey, Edwin C. Wilson, and Paul Porter were called back to Washington to give the benefit of their on-the-spot observations and their advice.

On April 5, on the occasion of the annual Jefferson Day Dinner, I added further emphasis to the ideas I had expressed in the address to Congress.

“We know,” I said, “that as long as we remain free, the spirit of Thomas Jefferson lives in America. His spirit is the spirit of freedom. We are heartened by the knowledge that the light he kindled a century and a half ago shines today in the United States. It shines even more strongly and steadily than in his time. What was then an untried faith is now a living reality.

“But we know that no class, no party, no nation, has a monopoly on Jefferson’s principles. Out of the silence of oppressed peoples, out of the despair of those who have lost freedom, there comes to us an expression of longing. Repeated again and again, in many tongues, from many directions, it is a plea of men, women and children for the freedom that Thomas Jefferson proclaimed as an inalienable right.

“When we hear the cry of freedom arising from the shores beyond our own, we can take heart from the words of Thomas Jefferson. In his letter to President Monroe, urging the adoption of what we now know as the Monroe Doctrine, he wrote:

“ ‘Nor is the occasion to be slighted which this proposition offers of declaring our protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another.’

“We, like Jefferson, have witnessed atrocious violations of the rights of nations.

“We, too, have regarded them as occasions not to be slighted.

“We, too, have declared our protest.

“We must make that protest effective by aiding those peoples whose freedoms are endangered by foreign pressures.

“We must take a positive stand. It is no longer enough merely to say, ‘We don’t want war.’ We must act in time—ahead of time—to stamp out the smoldering beginnings of any conflict that may threaten to spread over the world.

“The world today looks to us for leadership.

“The force of events makes it necessary that we assume that role.
"This is a critical period of our national life. The process of adapting ourselves to the new concept of our world responsibility is naturally a difficult and painful one. The cost is necessarily great.

"But it is not our nature to shirk our obligations. We have a heritage that constitutes the greatest resource of this nation. I call it the spirit and character of the American people."

"We are the people who gave to the world George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"We are a people who not only cherish freedom and defend it, if need be with our lives, but we also recognize the right of other men and other nations to share it.

"While the struggle for the rights of man goes forward in other parts of the world, the free people of America cannot look on with easy detachment, with indifference to the outcome.

"In our effort to make permanent the peace of the world, we have much to preserve—much to improve—and much to pioneer. . . ."

Meanwhile, Congress debated the aid-to-Greece bill thoroughly and conscientiously. My hope that it would be passed before March 31 was not realized, but the Senate approved the legislation on April 22, and the House voted for it, 287 to 107, on May 9. On May 22, 1947, I signed the bill. With this enactment by Congress of aid to Greece and Turkey, America had served notice that the march of Communism would not be allowed to succeed by default.

The Communist rebels in Greece and their accomplices north of the border realized, of course, that the arrival of American aid would prove their undoing. They made every effort, therefore, to secure a victory before our aid might become effective. There was no doubt that the rebels were masterminded from the satellite countries. On May 23, 1947, the United Nations Balkan Investigating Commission had formally concluded that Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania were supporting the uprising against the Greek government. The vote in the Commission was 8 to 2; Russia and Poland, of course, were the "nays"; France abstained. Early in June the situation in northern Greece turned increasingly worse for the government forces. On June 9 our embassy reported "marked deterioration"; on the sixteenth the Greek government appealed for speed in the shipment of aid; it also asked that a larger proportion of the aid to be given be devoted to military equipment.

On July 9 the British Foreign Office told our Ambassador in London that their experts were extremely concerned over the Greek situation and thought that all prospects were gloomy. On July 16 General Marshall sent me a memorandum on the situation in Greece that began with the words, "The Greek situation has taken a serious turn in the last three days." Sizable guerrilla units had crossed the frontier from Albania. It appeared that they were aiming at the occupation of some larger communities that could serve as centers for a "people's republic."

I called the Secretary of the Navy and asked him how large a part of our Mediterranean fleet he might be able to move to Greek ports. Secretary Forrestal informed me that it would be entirely practicable to have a large part of the Mediterranean squadron shifted on short order. He expressed a belief that such a visit would have some deterrent effect on the activities of the Communist guerrillas but was unwilling to estimate how the American public might react.

Meanwhile, Dwight P. Griswold, former governor of Nebraska, whom I had named to be the administrator of our aid program in Greece, had arrived there. He was vigorously starting to build up a staff and to make arrangements for the reception and distribution of aid supplies. The Greek government, however, continued to show itself mostly concerned with military matters. The Greeks wanted equipment, advisers, money to expend its army, and would have given all our aid to the military if we had let them do it. Both Ambassador MacVeagh and Griswold worked steadily to induce the government to broaden its base and to seek the widest possible popular support.

Thus, even as we undertook to bolster the economy of Greece to help her combat Communist agitation, we were faced with her desire to use our aid to further partisan political, rather than national, aims. The overriding task that seemed to confront American policy in Europe was to provide an incentive for the Europeans to look at the situation in the broadest possible terms rather than in narrowly nationalistic, or even partisan, focus. Indeed, by the time this problem came to beset us in Greece, General Marshall had already made his famous Harvard speech, out of which grew the Marshall Plan.