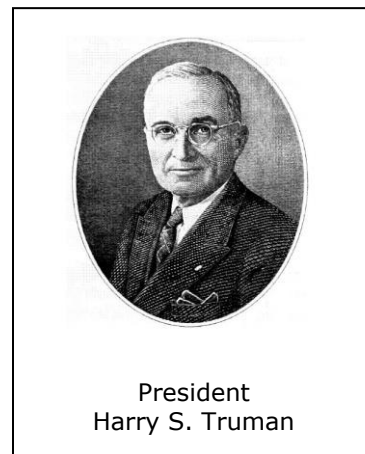


Eighty-Second Congress

Jan. 3, 1951-July 7, 1952

Second Administration of Harry S. Truman

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Historical Background

When the 82nd Congress convened, the U.S. was at war in Korea. In his January 8, 1951 State of the Union address, President Truman stated that U.S. troops were fighting alongside their UN allies because the aggression in Korea was viewed as part of the attempt by the Russian Communist dictatorship to conquer the world. The threat of Soviet advancement through subversive activities or military aggression appeared to threaten free people everywhere and their way of life. Truman explained the importance of military assistance to Europe and the importance of the North Atlantic Treaty for the defense of the free world. General Dwight D. Eisenhower assumed command of NATO forces at the beginning of 1951.

In his January 9, 1952 State of the Union Address, President Truman stated that 1952 would be a crucial year in the defense of the free world. The Soviet Union was producing more war planes than the free world and set off two nuclear explosions. Truman expressed concern that the U.S. was not moving fast enough to build up civil defenses against atomic attack. The threat of world war seemed great.

As an expression of "spontaneous, heartfelt desire of the American people to help" the Indian people in their hour of need," President Truman was authorized in June 1951 to lend India \$190 million to buy 2 million tons of American grain needed to stave off an impending famine. Authorizations totaling \$14,931,130,750 were embodied in the Mutual Security Acts of 1951 and 1952, as the United States continued its policy of supporting rearmament of Europe through economic aid.

House	Senate
Majority Party: Democrat (235 seats)	Majority Party: Democrat (49 seats)
Minority Party: Republican (199 seats)	Minority Party: Republican (47 seats)
Other Parties: Independent (1 seat)	Other Parties: none
Speaker of the House: Sam Rayburn	Majority Leader: Ernest W. McFarland

With enactment of the October 1951 Mutual Defense Assistance Control Act, provision was made for mandatory termination of aid to any country found to be shipping arms or munitions to Soviet-dominated countries. Congress in June 1952, over President's Truman's veto, passed the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act, preserving the national origins quota system of 1942, which the Administration had fought to abolish. In July, President Truman signed a congressional resolution approving the new constitution drafted by Puerto Rico and elevating the island to the status of a free commonwealth associated with the United States.

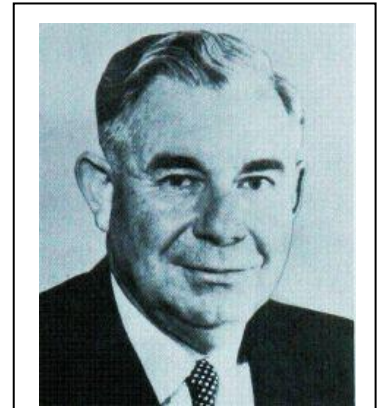
On the domestic front, an Agricultural Marketing Act, approved on July 5, 1952, maintained price supports for the basic crops in order to encourage high production to meet war needs. A "Korean G.I. Bill of Rights" for veterans of the Korean conflict was enacted on July 16. Later the same day, the Bureau of Mines was authorized for the first time to order unsafe mines shut down until they were made safe. Additional Social Security benefits were embodied in the Social Security Act Amendments of August 1952.

Sources:

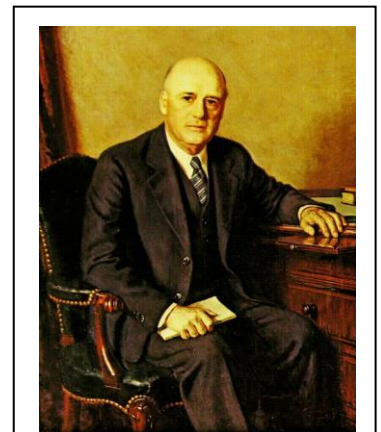
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Senate Majority Leader
Ernest W. McFarland



Speaker of the House
Sam Rayburn

War or Peace?

Korean War

On October 25, 1950, a three-division army comprising some 200,000 soldiers crossed the Yalu River from China into North Korea (DPRK), reaching the combat zone nearly 500km away in less than three weeks. The decision to send Chinese soldiers to aid the North Koreans in fighting off the United Nations operation in Korea caught U.S. war planners by surprise. Just ten days earlier, during a meeting on Wake Island, Supreme Commander in Korea General Douglas MacArthur argued to President Truman that it was unlikely that China would send troops to North Korea, that the opportunity to do so had most likely passed.

On New Year's Eve 1950/1951, the North Korean and Chinese armies launched the Chinese New Year's Offensive against UN forces near the North Korea/South Korea border along the 38th parallel. The combined attacks quickly overwhelmed UN positions, allowing the North Koreans to reconquer Seoul on January 4, though control of the South Korean capital would revert subsequent to Operation Ripper that March. The series of setbacks

experienced since China's entry into the conflict led General MacArthur to consider deploying tactical nuclear weapons in the Chinese and North Korean interior to disrupt Chinese supply lines. As it happened, General MacArthur's miscalculation in advancing beyond the 38th parallel in the mistaken belief that China would not intervene and his determination to expand the war into the Chinese interior, led President Truman to relieve the Supreme Commander in Korea and replace him with Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgway in April 1951.

The prosecution of the war over the next two years would be a long, grueling stalemate. Plenty of devastating battles were fought, including the Battle of Bloody Ridge, the Battle of Heartbreak Ridge, and the Battle of Pork Chop Hill, but with little change in the relative position of the combatants.

By May 1952 U.S. Navy and Marine aircraft had expended as much aviation ordinance in Korea as had been expended in all theaters of war during World War II. As of Sept. 26, 1952, there had been 119,379 casualties in Korea, with 18,756 killed in action and 12,658 missing.

Cold War Heats Up

On March 29, 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, an American couple with a history of activism in the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA), were convicted of espionage for their role in passing information about the development of atomic weapons to the Soviet Union during and after World War II and sentenced to death. Julius Rosenberg had been employed at the Army Signal Corps Engineering Laboratory during World War II and was recruited by the NKVD, the Soviet foreign intelligence agency and predecessor of the KGB, in 1942. Rosenberg was then able to recruit other sympathetic agents with access to U.S. military secrets, including the Manhattan Project atomic bomb effort.

The speed with which the USSR was able to stage their first atomic bomb test in 1949 caught U.S. policymakers off guard and the identification of the espionage ring with the Rosenbergs at the center presented a face-saving opportunity. Though a considerable call for clemency was raised by numerous artists and intellectuals, both left-leaning and otherwise, including Albert Einstein and Pope Pius XII, the desire for vengeance within the U.S. national security establishment was too great and the couple were executed on June 19, 1953.

In the meantime, Congress and President Truman made their open hostility to Soviet expansionism explicit with the passage of the Mutual Security Acts of 1951 and 1952. Together, these laws authorized appropriations of nearly \$7.5 billion for the defense of "free peoples" struggling against communist organizing and insurgency.

Source:

Economic Trends and Conditions

At the beginning of 1951, the U.S. faced many economic challenges related to the Korean War and the need to build up military and industrial capabilities to defend against attempts by the Soviet Union to expand their sphere of influence. The military build-up placed the biggest immediate demand on the economy. Primary national security needs included economic and military aid to other free nations and atomic energy and stockpiling. The cost of national security programs was expected to increase from 20 billion dollars at the beginning of 1951 to approximately 45-55 billion dollars by the end of the year. It was expected that national defense and security needs would divert significant amounts of copper, aluminum, rubber, and steel away from civilian use.

Government outlays for national security programs almost doubled during 1951. More than a quarter of the output of metal-working industries and construction was for defense. Unemployment decreased from 3.6% of the civilian labor force at the end of 1950 to 2.7% at the end of 1951.

At the beginning of 1952, it appeared likely that the national security program would absorb all expected gains in national output and curtail the production of consumer durable goods and private construction. By the end of the year, these expectations had been overturned. The economy was prosperous. Neither Federal spending for security or private demand expanded enough to force a rise in the general level of prices. High taxation restrained inflation, while wage and price controls curbed increases where inflationary pressures seemed greatest.

There was continued tension between industrial concerns and organized labor during the 82nd Congress. On April 9, 1952, the United Steelworkers of America planned to strike against U.S. Steel and other steelmakers. Hoping to forestall the action, President Truman nationalized the U.S. steel industry in the hours before the strike was to begin. The various steelmakers sued to regain control of their operations and in a landmark case, *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1952), the Supreme Court held that the President lacked the authority to seize the steel industry, reverting the mills to their owners.

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Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Dennis v. U.S., holding that the Smith Act, which prevents the active and knowing advocacy of overthrowing the United States government, does not violate the First Amendment, 341 U.S. 494 (1951)

Doremus v. Board of Education, dismissed by the Supreme Court, holding that the reading of verses of the Old Testament prior to the public school day in New Jersey did not violate the constitution, 342 U.S. 429 (1952)

Zorach v. Clauson, holding that the implementation of a “released time” program in New York public schools, which allowed students to participate in religious instruction in a different institution during school hours, did not violate freedom of religion, 343 U.S. 306 (1952)

Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer, holding that no U.S. law provided President Truman with authority to seize the steel mills, 343 U.S. 579 (1952)

Sources:

Costello. George A. and Johnny H. Killian. [Constitution of the United States of America, Analysis and Interpretation](#). Senate, Jan. 1, 1996. 103rd Congress, 1st Session, S. Doc. 103-6. ProQuest Congressional, 14152 S.doc.6

1951 Events

- **Jan. 4:** *Korean War* - [Chinese Communist and North Korean forces capture Seoul, the capital of South Korea](#)
- **Jan. 6-9:** *Korean War* - Ganghwa Massacre: South Korean forces execute up to 1,300 civilians who had collaborated with North Korea during their take over
- **Jan. 10:** [UN Headquarters opens in Manhattan, NY](#)
- **Jan. 16:** *First Indochina War* - [Viet Minh offensive against Hanoi](#)
- **Jan. 27:** [U.S. begins nuclear weapons testing at Nevada Test Site, dropping a device from a B-50 bomber on Frenchman Flat](#)
- **Feb. 1:** Alfred Krupp and 28 other German war criminals are freed
- **Mar. 15:** *Korea War* - [UN troops recapture Seoul and push Chinese troops back across the border](#)
- **Mar. 29:** *Red Scare* - [U.S. Communists Ethel and Julius Rosenberg are convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage during time of war and passing atomic secrets to the Soviet Union](#)
- **Apr. 5:** *Red Scare* - [U.S. Communists Ethel and Julius Rosenberg are sentenced to death](#)

- **Apr. 11:** *Korean War* - [President Truman removes General MacArthur as Commander in Korea after MacArthur openly defies Truman's plan to negotiate a peace; public opinion is against Truman and letters call for his impeachment](#)
- **May. 27:** Chinese Communists force the Dalai Lama to surrender his army to Beijing
- **July 10:** *Korean War* - Korean War armistice negotiations begin as United Nation and Communist delegations meet for the first time in Kaesong in the southern part of North Korea
- **July 21:** The Dalai Lama returns to Tibet
- **Oct. 6:** [Joseph Stalin announced that the Soviet Union had tested an atomic bomb](#)
- **Oct. 24:** *World War II* - [President Truman proclaims the official ending of U.S. hostilities with Germany](#)

1952 Events

- **Jan. 30:** *Korean War* - Truce talks are deadlocked between UN forces and the Chinese; seesaw battles continue in North Korea
- **Feb. 6:** Queen Elizabeth II succeeds King George VI to the British throne
- **Feb. 16:** *First Indochina War* - French offensive at Hanoi
- **Apr. 4:** [United Steelworkers union announces that an industry-wide strike will begin on Apr. 9](#)
- **Apr. 8:** [President Truman orders the Secretary of Commerce to seize the steel mills](#)
- **Apr. 28:** *World War II* - [Treaty of San Francisco takes effect, officially ending the American-led Occupation of Japan](#)
- **Apr. 30:** [Following issuance of a restraining order and private sector resumption of control over the steel mills the work stoppage becomes complete](#)
- **June 2:** [U.S. Supreme Court rules that no U.S. law provides President Truman with authority to seize the steel mills](#)
- **June 26:** National Day of Protest occurs in South Africa with acts of civil disobedience against apartheid; over 2,000 people are arrested include Nelson Mandela
- **July 23:** Society of Free Officers seizes control of Egyptian government in military coup staged by Colonel Gamal Abdal Nasser
- **July 24:** Steel Strike ends, having lasted 53 days, with workers receiving a 16-cent-an-hour wage increase
- **July 25:** [Puerto Rico's constitution is accepted and it becomes a self-governing U.S. Commonwealth](#)
- **Oct. 3:** Great Britain conducts its first nuclear weapon test in Australia
- **Nov. 1:** U.S. conducts a nuclear weapons test, code named 'Ivy Mike' of the first thermonuclear device (hydrogen bomb) in the Pacific Marshall Islands on Enewetak Atoll

- **Dec. 2-9:** Great Smog of London causes roughly 4,000 deaths from severe air-pollution
- **Dec. 5:** *Korean War* - President-elect Eisenhower visits Korea to assess the war and attempt to break the stalemate in truce talks
- **Dec. 31:** US Circuit Court of Appeals rejects petition of Jules and Ethel Rosenberg for release based on the contention that they had not received a fair trial

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Committee on Foreign Affairs. House. [Selected Executive Session Hearings of the Committee. 1951-56: Vol. XVII: U.S. Policy in the Far East, Part 1: U.S. Policy and Japan: the Korean War and Peace Negotiations: South Asian and Related Problems.](#) Apr. 5, May 25, July 3, 11, 1951; Jan. 18, 21, Feb. 27, May 19-20, June 5, 1952; July 16, 1953; Feb. 17, 1954; Apr. 21, 28, 1955. 82nd, 83rd, and 84th Congresses, 1st and 2nd Sessions, 81-H381-55. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1951-FOA-0005

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["MacArthur's Record of Protests."](#) Congressional Record, 82nd Congress, 1st Session (Apr. 16, 1951) Vol. 97, pp. 3919-3922. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1951-0416

[Soviet Atomic Espionage.](#) Committee on Atomic Energy. Joint. Jan. 1, 1951. 82rd Congress, 1st Session, 82 S1025-3. ProQuest Congressional, CMP-1951-AEJ-0003

Subcommittee on Labor and Labor Management Relations; Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Senate. [National and Emergency Labor Disputes.](#) Apr. 15-16, 22-24, 30, May 20-23, 26, 28, 1952. 82nd Congress, 2nd Session, 82 S1021-2. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1952-LPW-0009

[To Inquire into the Legal Authority of the President to Seize and Operate Certain Steel Plants and Facilities.](#) Committee on the Judiciary. Senate. Apr. 24, 1952. 82rd Congress, 2nd Session. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1952-SJS-0039

Truman, Harry S. [Armistice Day, 1951.](#) Numbered Presidential Proclamations, 1789-Present, Oct. 26, 1951. Presidential Proclamation No. 2951. ProQuest Congressional, 1951-PR-2951

Truman, Harry S. [Multilateral: Treaty of peace with Japan, Sept. 8, 1951.](#) Treaty Proclamations, 1789-1983, Apr. 28, 1951. ProQuest Congressional, 1952-29-5

Major Acts

India Emergency Food Aid Act of 1951. Authorized the President to loan \$190 million to famine-stricken India for the purchase of American grain. Approved June 15, 1951. ([65 Stat. 69, Chap. 138; PL82-48](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Mutual Security Act of 1951. Authorized \$7,483,400,000 in U.S. foreign economic, military, and technical aid and reauthorized an expenditure of \$816,700,000 in unexpended aid funds, stipulating that at least 10 percent of the aid be in the form of loans. Also replaced the Economic Cooperation Administration with the Mutual Security Agency. Approved Oct. 10, 1951. ([65 Stat. 373, Chap. 479; PL82-165](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Mutual Defense Assistance Control Act of 1951. Provided for mandatory termination of aid to any country found to be shipping arms or munitions to Soviet-dominated areas. Shipment of strategic goods other than arms would also lead to termination of aid, unless the President found such action was not detrimental to national security. Approved Oct. 26, 1951. ([65 Stat. 644; PL82-213](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Mutual Security Act of 1952. Extended military and economic assistance to non-Communist countries in Near East, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America. Approved June 20, 1952. ([66 Stat. 141; PL82-400](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Immigration and Nationality Act. Continued the national origins quota system, but eliminated the exclusion of Asians. Also tightened provisions for the exclusion of aliens believed to be dangerous to the country and facilitated the deportation of such immigrants. Approved June 27, 1952. ([66 Stat. 163, Chap. 477; PL82-414](#)) ([Regulatory History](#)) Certain provisions of this Act were subsequently held unconstitutional in *Afroyim v. Rusk*, 387 U.S. 253 (1967), and *Schneider v. Rusk*, 377 U.S. 163 (1964).

Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Approval. Provided approval of the new constitution drafted by Puerto Rico and elevated the status of the island to the status of a free commonwealth voluntarily associated with the United States. Approved July 3, 1952. ([66 Stat. 327, Chap. 567; PL82-447](#))

Department of Agricultural Appropriations Act, 1953 (Agricultural Marketing Act). Continued 90 percent of parity price on the six basic crops (cotton, wheat, corn, peanuts, rice and tobacco) until 1955. Also provided that price supports for these six crops would be determined through 1955 by whichever of the two parity formulas (the "old" or the "modernized") gave the higher price. Approved July 5, 1952. ([66 Stat. 335, Chap. 574; PL82-451](#))

Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952 (G.I. Bill of Rights).

Offered the Korean War veterans' home, farm, and business loan benefits, Federal contributions toward unemployment compensation benefits, mustering out payments, and educational and vocational assistance.

Approved July 16, 1952. ([66 Stat. 663; PL82-550](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Coal Mine Safety Act Amendment. Authorized the Bureau of Mines to order unsafe mines threatened with imminent disaster from fire, explosion, flooding, or cave-in to shut down until made safe. Applied only to mines with 15 or more employees. Approved July 16, 1952. ([66 Stat. 692, Chap. 877; PL82-552](#))

Social Security Act Amendments of 1952. Provided for an annual increase of \$4 million in Social Security insurance payments and a \$242.7 million rise in public assistance grants; also increased the Federal share of payments. Approved July 18, 1952. ([66 Stat. 767, Chap. 945; PL82-590](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Sources:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

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