

**Winston Churchill's "Iron-Curtain" Speech II**

**Lead: In March, 1945 Winston Churchill gave his famous "Iron-Curtain" Speech in Fulton, Missouri. It was not given as an idle gesture.**

**Intro.: "A Moment in Time" with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: In the days after World War II, the United States began to explore the path of accommodation with the Soviet Union. Under the new President, Harry Truman, and Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, America began to draw away from the British, who were increasingly isolated**

**and under Soviet pressure in the Balkans, Iran and the Mediterranean. Truman was following the course laid out by his predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, but as 1945 drew to a close, important elements of public opinion began to criticize this policy. Secretary of Defense James Forrestal and other military leaders were fearful of Soviet power and expansion and urged the President to a more militant approach to the Russians. This was echoed by certain key Republicans such as Senator Arthur Vandenberg and influential shapers of opinion like Henry R. Luce, publisher of Time Magazine, and the editors of the New York Times.**

**By early 1946 President Truman, at that point ready to establish his own course in foreign policy, was becoming alarmed at Stalin's aggressive actions in southern Europe and the Middle East. The time for a shift in policy was approaching. This coincided with an invitation by Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri to Winston Churchill to give a speech. The two met in Washington on February 10, 1946 and agreed on the substance of the speech. Truman accompanied the wartime Prime Minister to Fulton and introduced him. In the speech Churchill described Eastern Europe as threatened by a descending Iron Curtain of Communist domination and he called for an Anglo-American alliance to combat this increasingly**

**aggressive form of Soviet-inspired evangelical Marxism.**

**Reaction to the speech was predictable. The left wing of American politics disapproved, the right supported the ideas. But as prophet Churchill proved to be correct. He accurately predicted the post-World War II landscape. The Cold War had begun.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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**Harbutt, Fraser J. *The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America, and  
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