

EX-PRESIDENT TRUMAN PASSES



FORMER PRESIDENT DIES — Harry S. Truman, the people's President, passed into history when he passed away last week a day after Christmas. During his tenure as the nation's President, he made some of the greatest decisions any President ever had to make.

Nation Mourns Death Of Its 33rd President

Harry S. Truman died last Tuesday morning in Kansas City's Research Hospital at the age of 88, finally defeated by his illnesses.

Thursday was proclaimed a national day of mourning by President Nixon, who called the nation's 33rd

president "a fighter who was best when the going was toughest." Flags were ordered flown at half-mast for 30 days on federal office buildings, most of which were closed Thursday.

Death came to the former president at 3:50 a.m. AST. Bess Truman, his wife of 53 years, and their daughter Margaret who saw him for 20

minutes Christmas Day were at home in Independence at the time.

The funeral, in accordance with Truman's wishes, was kept simple, involving none of the show usually granted great statesmen. Services and burial were at noon AST in the courtyard of the Harry S. Truman Memorial Library.

Truman, who died of what hospital officials called "a complexity of organic failures, causing a collapse of the cardiovascular system," was president during one of the roughest periods in American history.

To him fell the responsibility of dropping the world's first nuclear weapons in order to end World War II. He had to deal with the Cold War with Russia. And he watched it grow much hotter as troops from North Korea invaded South Korea and the United Nations was called in.

And it was Truman who set up the UN, NATO, the Marshall Plan and a number of other foreign aid programs. His "Truman Doctrine," with its extension of aid to Greece and Turkey in 1947 was "crucial to the defense of liberty in Europe and the world," President Nixon said.

Although Truman was in-

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volved with problems and decisions that affected the whole world, he never lost his Missouri farmer plainness of thought and speech. His nickname of "Give-'em-hell Harry" was well earned, and he became famous for such things as his "The Buck Stops Here" plaque on his desk and his statement, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

He was never afraid to say what he was thinking to or about anyone or anything. He called the White House "the finest prison in the world" and added, "No man, if he knows what it is all about, would want to be president. It is the most terrible job in the world as well as the most honorable."

He termed civil rights workers "northern busybodies" who should "stay at home and clean up their own back yard." And he said that Dewey, whom he defeated in the 1948 election, simply didn't tell people the truth.

But in spite of his bluntness — or perhaps because of it — he earned the respect and admiration of millions of people. He had a reputation for decisiveness and courage that appealed to many, especially the middle Americans who shared a background with the man.

His domestic policies were in line with this background. His postwar program for Congress called for full employment, increased minimum wages, private and public housing programs and a national health program. He also supported aid to education, job rights for blacks, higher farm prices and continuation of wartime economic controls.

He also did a great deal for Alaska, starting with being the first president to support its statehood. He also, according to former Sen. Ernest Gruening, helped the territory in a number of other ways. He credited Truman with ordering the first survey of conflicting and overlapping land withdrawals in the territory.

In addition, he said that Truman also helped improve territorial air service during the 1950's and helped spur on some badly needed highway appropriations for Alaska.

Truman's death Tuesday was

mourned by people all over the world, including political and government leaders. Both his friends and enemies praised him as a common man who was an honor to his office.

Former President Lyndon B. Johnson issued a statement from Austin, Tex. that said, "A 20th century giant is gone. Few men of any times ever shaped world as did the man from Independence."

"His decisive leadership in the crucial years of his presidency was an example in courage. He did not hesitate to make difficult decision he felt were right," said Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C. Thurmond deserted the Democratic party in 1948 to run against Truman as a Dixiecrat.

And President Nixon also said, "In launching the Marshall Plan, he began the most far-sighted and most generous act of international rebuilding ever undertaken. With his characteristically decisive action in Korea, he made possible the defense of peace and freedom in Asia."

Wednesday's funeral was kept simple and natural as the family wanted it. Only 250 people, most of them friends and relatives, attended services in the library. Truman's body lay in state for 21 hours as an average 1,500 to 2,000 people an hour filed past the coffin. An Army spokesman estimated the line to be at least a mile long at one point.

Mrs. Truman, tired from the strain of her husband's three-weeks of terminal illness, did not attend the services. Instead, their daughter Margaret, her husband Clifton Daniel of the New York Times and their four sons stood before the catafalque in the library lobby. The ceremony lasted 20 minutes from start to finish.

Earlier, townspeople had lined the streets and bridges by the thousands as the body was carried in a motorcade through Independence to the library. As the coffin was carried in, 36 Air Force planes flew by and a 21-gun salute was fired.

Foreign officials and other individuals will commemorate Truman's death Jan. 5 in a service at Washington's National Cathedral.