

## Background Essay on Point Four Program



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On a frosty January 20th, 1949, after a dramatic re-election campaign, President Harry S. Truman delivered his Second Inaugural Address. In this speech, Truman described his foreign policy goals in four direct points. The fourth point, which has become known as the Point Four Program, took the country by surprise. This fourth point declared that the United States would “embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.”

Truman’s Point Four proposal, along with the much larger Marshall Plan, would not be a totally new idea. What *was* new was how Truman made a connection between foreign aid and freedom.

*“- Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge.*

*- Only by helping the least fortunate of its members to help themselves can the human family achieve the decent, satisfying life that is the right of all people.*

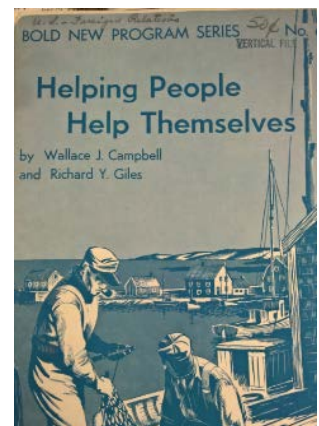
*- Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies- hunger, misery, and despair.*

*- On the basis of these four major courses of action we hope to help create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness for all mankind.”*

In 1949 the need for American aid in the world was great. European and Asian nations were still recovering from the destruction left behind by WWII. Other areas in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia were gaining their independence after centuries of control by European countries. Harry Truman knew that when people struggle and suffer they are more likely to be dominated by stronger powers. He also knew that United States was the only country in the world in a position to help.

Everyone in the audience understood the context of Truman’s speech. In 1949 the United States was locked in a competition with the Soviet Union for influence in the world. When Harry spoke of *oppressors*, he was talking about that country’s efforts to spread *communism*. Since WWII the United States had been unable to stop the Soviet Union from dominating Eastern Europe. Americans were afraid that other struggling countries would experience a similar fate.

One way Truman hoped to combat this threat was to aid the *underdeveloped* parts of the world. This aid would come, not in the form of money, but by spreading *knowledge* and *expertise*. Instead of giving food, the US would help develop farms. “More food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power . . .” Helping countries take care of themselves, it was felt, would be the best way to ensure they find “prosperity and peace”.



While the idea was instantly popular, it turned out that providing international aid is a tricky business. Agencies created by Congress sent *technicians* to countries around the world to work on specific projects. Unfortunately, by 1952, officials were still hoping to have a few pilot programs in place to highlight the potential impact of Truman's proposal. Today, decades later, 1.3 billion people live in extreme poverty. The world still struggles with ways to make a difference in these people's lives. A study of Truman's Point Four programs can help us understand this complicated process and begin to answer the question: "Why is providing International Aid harder than it sounds?"

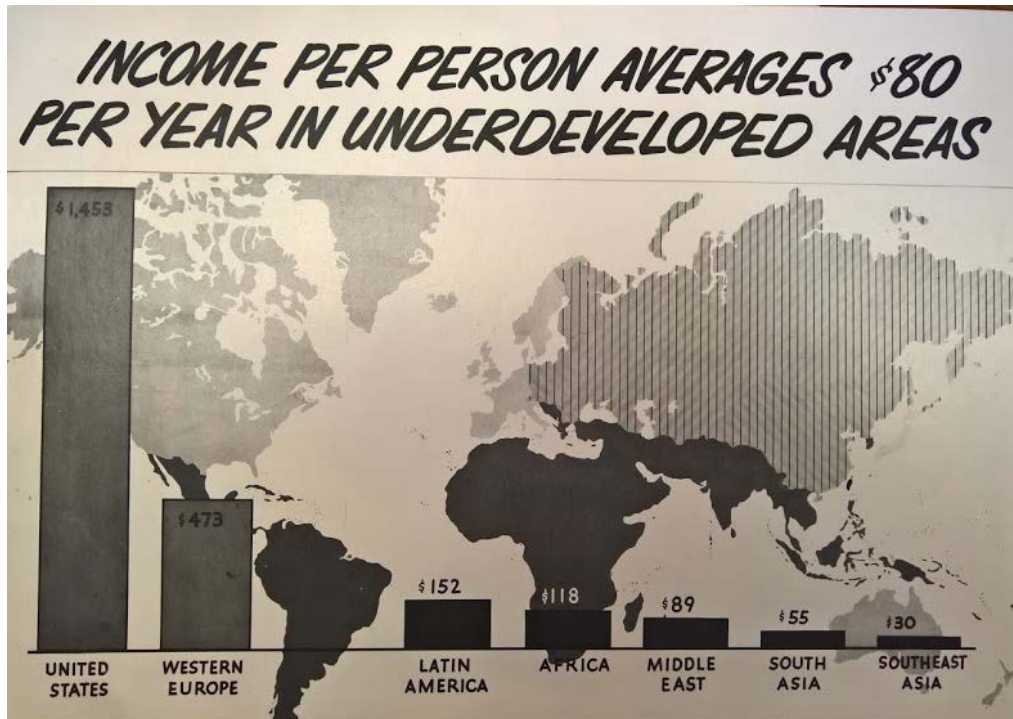
### Timeline of Significant Developments Related to Point Four

January 20, 1949	Harry Truman introduces the Four Point Program in his Inaugural Address.
June 24, 1949	President Truman asks Congress pass Four Point legislation to appropriate \$45 million dollars for implementation.
May 1950	Four Point passes as the Act for International Development. The act created the <i>Technical Cooperation Administration</i> within the State Department.
1953	TCA was merged with the <i>Mutual Security Agency</i> . It's new focus became the importation of strategic raw materials.  1,500 Point Four technicians visit 35 countries
1955	President Eisenhower merges Point Four Programs into the <i>International Cooperation Association</i>
1961	President Kennedy combines all non-military security and aid programs into the newly formed <i>U.S. Agency for International Development</i> . See the <a href="#">USAID website</a> to explore the impact of this organization today.

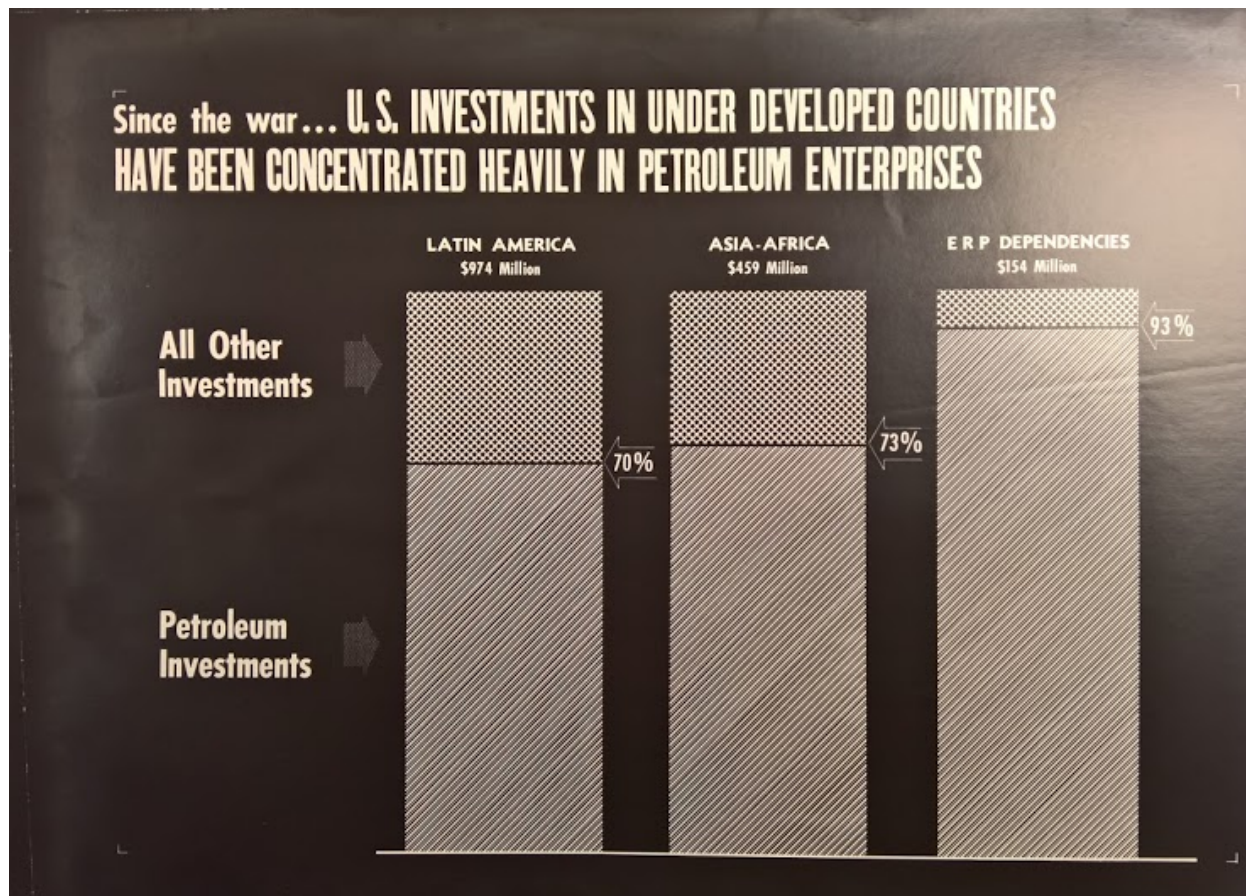
**Source 1**

Source Information: Point IV Report Supplemental Information, Records for the Agency of International Development: Records of Gordon Gray, 1948-1952

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### Using Source 1

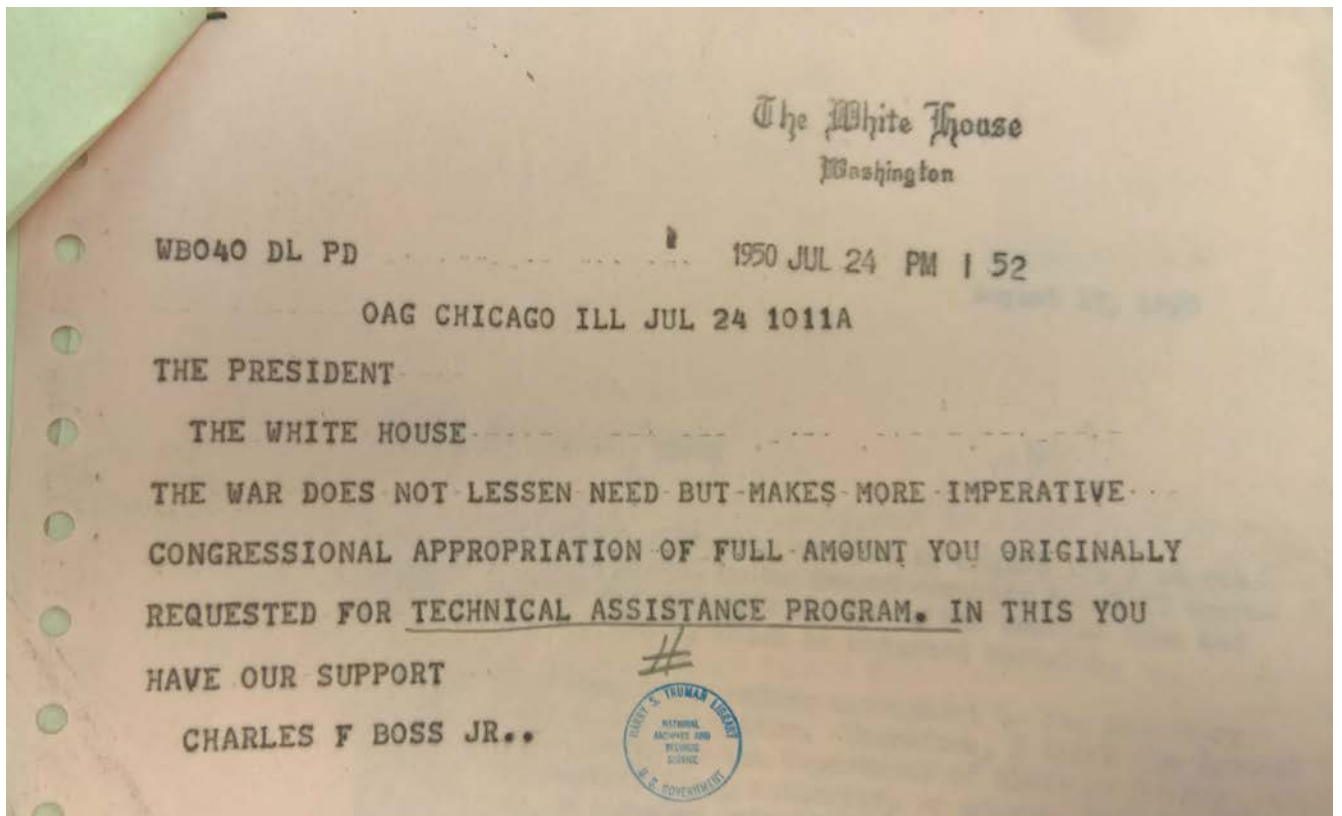
<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	When were the graphs created? What organization created the graphs?
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	When did Truman present his Point 4 Program? What issues addressed in these graphs are mentioned in Truman's Point 4 Program?
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	What do each of the graphs measure? What do other documents say about the problems faced by underdeveloped regions?
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	Why do you think a key was left off of each of these graphs? Why might the author have used all capital letters to emphasize Yellow Fever and Malaria? What conclusions can the reader draw from the graphs? What do these details indicate about the size and scope of the problems facing the world?

**Source 2**

Source Information: Telegram, Charles F. Boss to Harry Truman, July 24 1950; Benjamin Hardy Papers (Box 1)

Charles F. Boss worked in the National Council of Churches department of International Affairs and established the first Methodist office at the United Nations in the Carnegie Peace Center.

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## Using Source 2

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When was the source written?</li><li>• How does the author's job help explain his interest in this topic?</li><li>• What is the format of this source? Why did people use this method of communication?</li></ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notice the date of the source, What is going on at this time in the US? In the World?</li><li>• The author refers to "The War". What war is he talking about?</li><li>• Refer to the timeline, what is the Technical Assistance Program?</li></ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What other sources might you refer to- to better understand the telegram?</li></ul>
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the author saying about the Technical Assistance program?</li><li>• How is "the war" relevant to this program? Why is it a concern?</li></ul>

### Source 3

Source Information: Draft of Address of the President to the National Conference on International Economic and Social Development, Shoreham Hotel, Washington DC. Speech was given on April 8, 1952; David Lloyd Files, Box 20

Just take one specific example. If we could help the people of the Orient get a well-balanced diet -- three square meals a day -- instead of the few mouthfuls of rice that most of them eat now, just that one change alone would have more impact on the world than all the armies and battles of history.

It is not easy to do a job like this. To raise the level of diet means more than sending seeds and hoes abroad. It means that the people of these countries must develop farm credit institutions, and irrigation projects, and roads and railroads, and new industries and new employment for the millions who live in cities. This will take technical assistance and capital development.

It will take work by the United Nations and by the governments of other free nations. It will take work by many of our Government agencies. Point IV is not just the concern of the State Department or the Mutual Security Agency, but of the Department of Agriculture, and the Public Health Service, and other agencies.

But Point IV was never meant to be just a government program. It is a program of people -- our people -- helping other people throughout the world.

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### Using Source 3

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the audience of this speech?</li><li>• Why is the audience significant to the context of this speech?</li><li>• What do you anticipate the speech trying to accomplish?</li><li>• The speech was intended to be given by the president. Who probably wrote the speech? (See source information)</li></ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Truman was not present to deliver the speech but got called away to deal with another issue. What else happened on <a href="#">April 8, 1952</a>? Does it change the source if the President didn't actually deliver it?</li></ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notice the context of source 7. How are these documents related?</li></ul>
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the source for terminology or vocabulary that you don't understand. (Orient, agency names)</li><li>• What claim is the speech making through the example about diet? Do you agree?</li><li>• The speech recognizes several challenges in aiding other nations. How many can you find?</li><li>• What is the purpose of including these challenges in the speech?</li></ul>



## Source 4

Source Information: Oral History Interview with Samuel P. Hayes

New York, New York

July 16, 1975

by Richard D. McKinzie

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McKINZIE: Was there any real talk about the cultural differences or the imposition of American ideas or ideology on people?

HAYES: Well, I think this was more in terms of an American or Western emphasis upon a technological approach to development versus either an authoritarian or an establishment and hereditary approach. It's the idea that if you're going to get sufficient use of manpower, you've got to have mobility amongst classes and you've got to have people willing to work with their hands and give up some of the ideas that the only thing is to get a clean shirt and sit in an office. The Protestant ethic kinds of cultural value were felt to be very important. Cultural values are important in the population field as well; "What do you want children for? You want children to take care of you in your old age because you can't produce enough to take care of yourself," and so on. There are ways one can gradually change attitudes towards having children, so that population growth can be reduced. So, a lot of these things were not so much in terms of the character of Government except to the extent that the character of the Government would facilitate these modernization initiatives. You don't want to inhibit people's belief that they can get ahead, because if you do, then they won't undertake some of these changes that you want them to undertake. You have to have an open society for that purpose, but not just because freedom is a good thing.

MCKINZIE: At that same time period, did anyone anticipate the fact that if you go to a country and say, "We want to teach you how to grow better rice," that the country would say, "Thank you very much; we'd rather have a steel mill."

HAYES: Well, sure, we ran into that. Although we didn't get in as much as ECA did, we began to get into encouraging country planning, economic development planning, a consideration of different priorities, and so on. But as I say, for most of these countries the resources we put in weren't big enough to affect the countries.

## Source 5

Source Information: Oral History Interview with Stanley Andrews

Alamo, Texas

October 31, 1970

Richard D. McKinzie

I think around five or ten million dollars was all that went into Latin America.

When Mr. Truman made his inaugural address, all that came about was that he had said that we had to do something for the underdeveloped countries, the countries that were becoming new nations. He told his speechwriting staff to dig something up on that. The speechwriters began to scurry around about what the hell to have. And they come over to Agriculture and they went over to IIAA and everything else. Ben Hardy on the IIAA public affairs staff made a proposal for technical aid that was inserted in the President's address. When he made it, the State Department was caught flat footed. They didn't have the faintest idea in terms of a program or anything else. So the bureaucracy began to debate on what in the hell this all means, and who would run it.

The rivalry was between USDA and IIAA to take over the show--that's the truth.

### Using Sources 4-5

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● What is an Oral History interview? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of source?</li><li>● Note the date of the interviews? Why is that relevant?</li></ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Research the two people being interviewed. What were their positions in the Truman administration and after?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <a href="#">Samuel P Hayes</a></li><li>○ <a href="#">Stanley Andrews</a></li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read the source for terminology or vocabulary that you don't understand.</li><li>● What challenges are mentioned in Source 4? What important claim does the author make at the end of the account?</li><li>● Source 5 gives an insider account of origins of early events related to Point Four. What concern is inferred by this story?</li><li>● What other challenge is mentioned by Source 5?</li></ul>

Source 6

Source Information: Letter to President Truman from the Department of Agriculture. April 11, 1951.  
Harry S Truman Official File

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HARRY S. TRUMAN  
OFFICIAL FILE



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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SEP 29 1951

April 11, 1951

THE WHITE HOUSE

APR 12 12 30 PM '51

The President  
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

RECEIVED

This is in reply to your communication of March 9 with which you forwarded the report of the International Development Advisory Board on foreign economic policy for underdeveloped areas.

We have studied this report carefully and find that though it has many admirable qualities, there are a number of its recommendations which are subject to serious question. Perhaps some of our criticisms grow out of the very brief treatment given to agriculture in this report. We understand that three members of the Board, Robert P. Daniel, John A. Hannah and Clarence Poe, have continued work on the agricultural aspects of the report and will be happy to supply you with a supplement if you so desire. Perhaps such a supplement would clear up some of the points which we are raising. In any event it seems important to submit our frank reactions to you before any action is taken.

The responsibilities of the Department, as the food and agricultural arm of the United States Government, have resulted in many diverse operations--abroad as well as at home. Our present foreign work includes such activities as study of foreign production trends so that we may plan our own production to meet the needs of world markets and our own requirements; determining foreign allocations of U. S. agricultural commodities in scarce supply; procurement, when necessary, of foreign agricultural products, including products of critical and strategic importance; intensive efforts to secure increased production in foreign areas of such critical and strategic crops; development of foreign markets for U. S. farm products; studying methods of improving land tenure and otherwise strengthening the family farm throughout the world; and searching the world for new plants or new varieties of old plants which would be helpful to U. S. agriculture. In addition, for the past decade we have been actively engaged in a program of technical agricultural assistance to other nations. All of these functions are related to some phase of our domestic responsibilities. Some are so closely related as to be almost inseparable.

I am sure it was not the intention of the Board to remove all these functions from the Department of Agriculture. Nevertheless, it is essential that we carefully consider how these functions are to be correlated with the activities of the proposed new agency.

3. We, therefore, strongly disagree with the proposal for regional corporations to be the major organizational unit for operating the food and agriculture program. Both the language of the report and the past history of the "institute approach" indicate that the Department and the Land-Grant colleges would be used for little more than a source from which to recruit personnel, rather than as experienced institutions whose responsible and effective participation and continuity of service would be sought.

### Using Source 6

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What would prompt an executive agency to write a formal letter to the President?</li> <li>● What do executive agencies do?</li> </ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is the immediate context of the letter as referenced in the first paragraph of the letter?</li> </ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Does this source confirm or refute the account in Source 5? How do you know?</li> </ul>
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read the source for terminology or vocabulary that you don't understand.</li> <li>● What responsibilities of the Agriculture are outlined by the letter? Why might they include these?</li> <li>● What specific concern is expressed by the letter in the final paragraph: "We therefore, strongly disagree with the proposal. . ."</li> <li>● What reasons are given in the letter to support this point of view?</li> </ul>

## Source 7

Source Information: Outline of Remarks by Secretary of State Dean Acheson at the National Conference on International Economic and Social Development, April 9, 1952  
David Lloyd Files

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### Need to create desire for right kind of projects

Moreover, a general desire for technical assistance has not been enough to ensure successful cooperation. Many of the under-developed countries have had neither the experience nor the information out of which to frame requests for technical cooperation. Some have the desire to spring full-blown into an industrial development, without laying the preliminary base by agricultural, educational and health programs.

There must be a willingness to set up the government organization, the trained people, the budget that will ensure the effective utilization of technical cooperation.

### Essential element is willingness of under-developed countries

One of the major lessons of our year and a half of operations is that the optimum pace of the Program is determined chiefly by the absorptive capacity and readiness of the under-developed countries themselves. We can go only as far and as fast as these Governments are ready to go.

Fundamentally, they are the people who have to do the job. We can help, and our help is important, but the crucial ingredient is the full and willing cooperation on the part of the participating governments and their peoples.



Need to be willing to accept our technicians

Another aspect of the attitudes of cooperating countries which has governed the pace of the Point Four Program, we have found, has been a reluctance in many cases to accept our technicians, or to give our technicians access to the villages and the people where they can most usefully work.

One country said to us, in effect: "send us the money and keep your technicians." But of course we cannot do business on this basis. Point Four is not an aid program; it is primarily a means for the exchange of technical information. Unless we can get our soil experts and our public health officers and teachers away from the capitals and out among the people, where they can show how things are done and train others

## Using Source 7

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is Dean Acheson? How does his position affect his point of view on this topic?</li><li>• What is the audience of this speech?</li><li>• Why is the audience significant to the context of this speech?</li><li>• What do you anticipate the speech trying to accomplish?</li></ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How is the timing of the National Conference on International Economic and Social Development ( April 9, 1952) relevant? (How much time has been passed since Truman proposed Point Four?)</li></ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notice the context of Source 3. How are these documents related?</li></ul>
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the source for terminology or vocabulary that you don't understand.</li><li>• What challenges are mentioned in Source 7?</li><li>• Which of these challenges are new in this source? Which have been mentioned by other sources?</li></ul>

## Source 8

Source Information: Summary of Remarks by Jonathan Bingham, November 12, 1952; Harry S Truman Official File

Bingham was the Assistant Director of the Office of International Security Affairs, Department of State in 1951 and Deputy Administrator, Technical Cooperation Administration, Department of State, 1951-1953.

Summary of Remarks by Jonathan B. Bingham,  
Deputy Administrator of the Technical  
Cooperation Administration, Department of State,  
Before the New Rochelle Women's Club,  
November 12, 1952

### IS POINT 4 STRENGTHENING THE FREE WORLD?

It is a real pleasure to meet with a group of New Rochelle citizens who are both interested in the problems of our foreign relations and experienced in the study of these problems.

Recognizing your background of study and information, I am going to get right down to the question we have set for ourselves today: Is Point 4 strengthening the free world?

It is a crucial question. It states, by implication, the basic purpose of Point 4. And the answer to it will contain ~~the~~ -- also by implication -- *the* justification for Point 4.

During the last few months I have had the privilege of seeing the Point 4 Program in action, at first hand, in nine countries of the Middle East and South Asia. And so I hope the answer we are seeking today will grow out of my report of some of the things I saw, and the interpretation that you and I can draw from them.

I am often stuck by the paradox that our Point 4 Program is so well-known and so little understood, both at home and abroad. You will hear, for example, that Point 4 is a global give-away; that it is a relief program; that it is a charitable enterprise. Of course it is none of these things.

You may be told that we Americans are forcing our help on other peoples, stuffing their pockets with dollars. Of course we are doing no such thing.

On the other hand, Point 4 enthusiasts may claim that we have found in Point 4 a miracle remedy for all the world's ills, a magic wand that will make poverty disappear from the earth.

R. F. I. A.

### Using Source 8

<b>Sourcing Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the audience of this speech?</li><li>• Why is the audience significant to the context of this speech?</li><li>• What do you anticipate the speech trying to accomplish?</li></ul>
<b>Contextualization Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the title of the speech? Why might the author ask that question at this time?</li></ul>
<b>Corroboration Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The author makes specific claims about Point Four Programs. Pick one. Do the other sources support that claim?</li></ul>
<b>Close Reading Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the speech to determine the expertise of the author. What is the author's experience? How does that affect the content and point of view of the speech?</li><li>• The author makes the claim that the Point Four program is misunderstood. What specific concerns does he try to clarify?</li><li>• Does the author support Point Four? How do you know?</li><li>• What specific challenge does the author identify in his speech?</li></ul>

**Challenge 1:**

**Challenge 2:**

Why is providing International Aid harder than it sounds?



**Challenge 3:**

**Challenge 4:**



## Why is providing International Aid harder than it sounds?

	Challenges for International Aid I noticed:	Label the evidence- What's the Big Idea here?
Source 1		
Source 2		
Source 3		
Source 4		
Source 5		
Source 6		
Source 7		
Source 8		