
Summary

Cold War- In many ways, the Cold War began even before the guns fell silent in Germany and in the Pacific in 1945. Competing ideologies and visions of the postwar world prevented U.S. president Harry S Truman and Soviet premier Joseph Stalin from working together. Stalin intended to destroy Germany's industrial capabilities in order to prevent the country from remilitarizing and wanted Germany to pay outrageous sums in war reparations. Moreover, he wanted to erect pro-Soviet governments throughout Eastern Europe to protect the USSR from any future invasions. Truman, however, wanted exactly the opposite. He believed that only industrialization and democracy in Germany and throughout the continent would ensure postwar stability. Unable to compromise or find common ground, the world's two remaining superpowers inevitably clashed. Truman created the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and funded the rebuilding of Japan under General Douglas MacArthur. In 1947 Truman outlined the Marshall Plan, which set aside more than \$10 billion for the rebuilding and re-industrialization of Germany. The Marshall Plan was so successful that factories in Western Europe were exceeding their prewar production levels within just a few years. Although Stalin joined with the US in founding the United Nations, he fought Truman on nearly every other issue. He protested the Marshall Plan as well as the formation of the World Bank and IMF. In defiance, he followed through on his plan to create a buffer between the Soviet Union and Germany by setting up pro-Communist governments in Poland and other Eastern European countries. As a result, the so-called iron curtain soon divided East from West in Europe. Stalin also tried unsuccessfully to drive French, British, and American occupation forces from the German city of Berlin by blocking highway and railway access. Determined not to let the city fall, Truman ordered the Berlin airlift to drop food and medical supplies for starving Berliners. The Berlin crisis, as well as the formation of the Eastern bloc of Soviet-dominated countries in Eastern Europe, caused foreign policy officials in Washington to believe that the US needed to check Soviet influence abroad in order to prevent the further spread of Communism. In 1947, Truman incorporated this desire for containment into his Truman Doctrine, which vowed to support free nations fighting Communism. In 1949, Truman also convinced the Western European powers to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), so that they might mutually defend themselves against the danger of Soviet invasion. Threatened, the USSR sponsored a similar treaty of its own in Eastern Europe, called the Warsaw Pact, in 1955. Developments in Eastern Europe, the fall of China to Communist revolutionaries in 1949, and the Soviet Union's development of nuclear weapons terrified Americans, who feared that Communists would try to infiltrate or attack the US from within. Congressman Richard M. Nixon and the House Un-American Activities Committee led the earliest Red hunts for Communists in the government, which culminated with the prosecution of federal employee Alger Hiss and the executions of suspected spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Truman initially supported these inquiries and even established a Loyalty Review Board to assist in the search. Cold War tensions between the US and the USSR eventually exploded in Korea when Soviet-backed North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950. Determined not to let Communism spread in East Asia, Truman quadrupled military spending and ordered General MacArthur to retake the southern half of the peninsula. MacArthur succeeded and then pushed the North Koreans almost up to the Chinese border. Threatened, over a million soldiers from Communist China poured into Korea, forcing MacArthur to retreat back to the 38th parallel, which had originally divided North Korea from South Korea. US forces remained entrenched at the 38th parallel for two more years, at the cost of more than 50,000 American lives. Both sides declared a cease-fire only after the new U.S. president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, threatened to use nuclear weapons in 1953. Eisenhower's election in 1952 ushered in an unprecedented era of economic growth and prosperity in the US. The average national income doubled during the 1950s and then doubled again the following decade, primarily due to continued defense spending and to the 1944 Montgomery G.I. Bill, which helped returning veterans buy homes and go back to school. The postwar "baby boom" contributed to population growth, while the Great Migration of African-Americans to northern cities, "white flight" from the cities to the suburbs, and the rush to the Sun Belt altered population demographics. By 1960, most American families had a car, a television, and a refrigerator and owned their own home. Republican senator Joseph McCarthy, meanwhile, exploded onto the national political scene in 1950, when he accused more than 200 federal employees of being Communists. Even though McCarthy had no proof to support these claims, Americans supported his endeavors to find more "Soviet agents" hiding in Washington. Eisenhower along with Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower devised a New Look at foreign policy that emphasized the use of nuclear weapons, rather than conventional weapons and troops, to contain Communism. Eisenhower threatened the USSR with "massive retaliation," or nuclear war, against Soviet aggression or the spread of Communism. Eisenhower also made full use of the newly created CIA to help overthrow unfriendly governments in developing countries. He resolved the Suez crisis peacefully before it led to war and committed American funds to fighting Ho Chi Minh's pro-Communist forces in Vietnam after the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The Soviet launch of the Sputnik satellites in 1957 started the space race, prompting Eisenhower to create the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and sign the National Defense Education Act. Kennedy and his foreign policy team devised a new doctrine of "flexible response" designed to give the president more options to fight Communism. In addition, Kennedy committed thousands of American troops to South Vietnam to support Ngo Dinh Diem's corrupt regime but claimed the troops were merely "military advisors." In Latin America, Kennedy took a different approach, funneling millions of dollars into the Alliance for Progress to thwart Communists by ending poverty. Despite the new doctrine, Kennedy was unable to prevent Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev from constructing the Berlin Wall in 1961. Kennedy's greatest Cold War challenge came in Cuba. Hoping to topple Cuba's new pro-Communist revolutionary leader, Fidel Castro, Kennedy authorized the CIA to train and arm a force of more than 1,000 Cuban exiles and sent them to invade Cuba in the spring of 1961. When this Bay of Pigs invasion failed embarrassingly, Kennedy authorized several unsuccessful assassination attempts against Castro. Outraged, Castro turned to the USSR for economic aid and protection. Khrushchev capitalized on the opportunity and placed several nuclear missiles in Cuba. Kennedy consequently blockaded the island nation, pushing the US and the USSR to the brink of nuclear war. Khrushchev ended the terrifying Cuban missile crisis when he agreed to remove the missiles in exchange for an end to the blockade. Kennedy also removed American missiles from Turkey and agreed to work on reducing Cold War tensions. Tragically, Kennedy was assassinated in late 1963, just as tensions were rising in Vietnam—which would prove to be the next, and most costly, theater of the Cold War.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/history/american/coldwar/summary.html>

Possible Essay Questions

The below section includes possible essay questions and answer ideas. Make sure you understand the below section just has ideas you still have to give examples and/or explain with a full response.

1. **What were the origins of the Cold War?** + disagreement over how deal with Germany + competing ideologies in regards to government and economics + Competition and hysteria over the thought of WWII or nuclear action taken against one another.
2. **What role did the US play in the Cold War and what was the home front like?** + US was lead member in NATO + led the way for Truman Doctrine, containment, and Marshall Plan +Key member in the United Nations + key player during the Cold War + on home front they had Red Scare which was led by Senator McCarthy + people built bomb shelters + led US into space race with Soviet Union. +technology greatly improved: microwaves, phones, television, satellites, hydrogen bombs, cars, appliances, etc...

Key Terms

Cold War: A political, military, and social tension between the US, and the Soviet Union. It consisted of outgunning and outsmarting the enemy, and although the two groups did not actually declare war– the event was considered a war because of the extreme measures both sides took against each other.

Satellite countries: Eastern European countries that came under the control of the Soviet Union after World War II.

Iron Curtain: British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in a March 1946 speech in Fulton, Missouri; proclaimed that the Soviet Union was establishing an "iron curtain" between the free countries of Western Europe and the communist-controlled countries of Eastern Europe.

Containment Policy: policy devised by American diplomat George F. Kennan; Kennan believed that the US needed to implement longterm military, economic, and diplomatic strategies in order to "contain" the spread of communism. Kennan's ideas became official U.S. government policy in the late 1940s.

Truman Doctrine: this policy stated that the US would support any democratic nation that resisted communism.

Marshall Plan: American plan that spent \$12 billion for the rebuilding of Western Europe after World War II; the plan produced an economic revival and helped stave off the growth of communist influence.

Berlin Airlift: American effort that flew in supplies to West Berlin after the Soviet Union and the East German government blocked the roads to that city beginning in June 1948; American airplanes flew in supplies for 15 months, causing the Soviet to call off the blockade.

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a military alliance between the US and Western European countries that was formed in April 1949.

Warsaw Pact: a military pact formed in 1955 between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellite countries.

HUAC: House Un-American Activities Committee; in 1947 this committee began to investigate the entertainment industry for communist influences.

Blacklist: list created by HUAC and various private agencies indicating individuals in the entertainment industry who might be communists. Not allowed to work...

McCarthyism: term used to describe the accusations by Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy and his supporters in the early 1950s that certain people in government, academia, and the arts were secret communists. McCarthy's charges were largely unsubstantiated.

House Un-American Activities Committee: An investigating group within the House of Representatives that was charged with the goal of discovering and arresting communists within America.

Nuclear Arms Race: A deadly race between The USSR and the US to create the most powerful nuclear weapons in an attempt to outgun the enemy side.

Sputnik: the first artificial satellite, launched in 1957 by the Soviet Union; this led to the Space Race.

H.B.7 a-j- Analyze the impact of WWII and the Cold War on US foreign and domestic policy, to include: (a) Origins, dynamics, and consequences of the Cold War tensions between the US and the Soviet Union; (b) new role of the US as a world leader (e.g., Marshall plan, NATO); (c) need for, establishment and support of the united nations; (d) Implementation of the foreign policy of containment, including the Truman Doctrine; (e) Red Scare (McCarthyism, House Un-American Activities Committee, nuclear weapons arms race); (f) External confrontations with communism (e.g., Korea); (g) Sputnik and the space race; (h) image of 1950s affluent society; (i) Political protests of Vietnam Conflict (War); (j) Counter culture in the 1960s. H.B.8a-c- Analyze the impact of the post-cold war Era on US' foreign policy, to include: (a) role of the US in supporting democracy in eastern Europe following the collapse of the Berlin wall; (b) new allegiances in defining the new world order; (c) role of technology in the information age



This cartoon illustrates the Cold War in a simple way, using animals to represent both. The gorge between the two and the problems on paper between them are caused, according to this cartoonist, by the two things written on paper: “Deepening suspicions” and “Irresponsible Statements.”



This cartoon illustrates the hypocrisy of US and Communist peace talks. Both sides claimed they wanted peace, yet they threatened each other with atomic bombs rather than peacefully discuss the idea of peace.