

Two Nations Live on the Edge

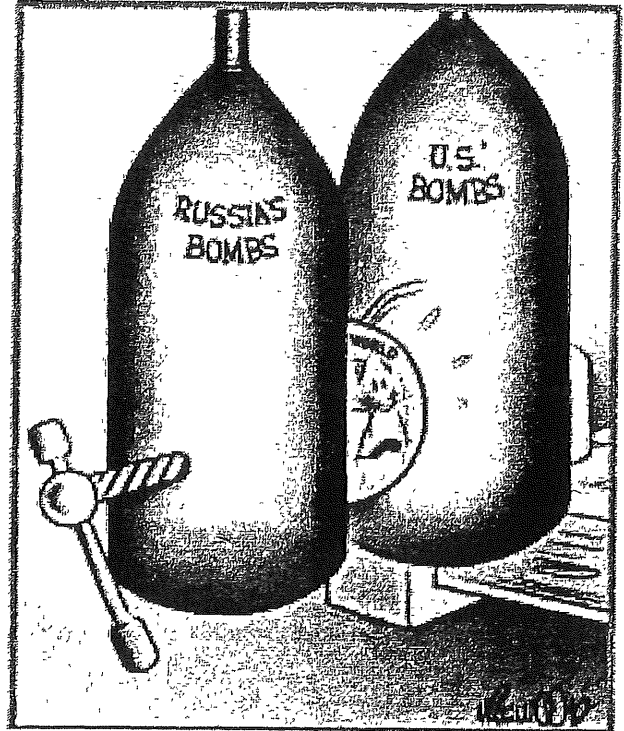
BRINKMANSHIP RULES U.S. POLICY

What was the arms race?

The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949. American leaders wanted to develop a more powerful weapon. In 1952, the United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb, or H-bomb.

But the Soviets tested their own H-bomb in 1953. Dwight D. Eisenhower was president during this part of the Cold War. His secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, was very anti-Communist. He said America must not compromise and instead advocated for an aggressive policy towards Communism.

The United States must be prepared to use all of its nuclear weapons against any aggressor. This willingness to go to the edge, or brink, of war was called brinkmanship. The United States began making more nuclear weapons. So did the Soviet Union. This was called the arms race. Many Americans feared a nuclear attack at any time. They had air-raid drills and fallout shelters to prepare for these attacks.



THE COLD WAR SPREADS AROUND THE WORLD

What events increased Cold War tensions?

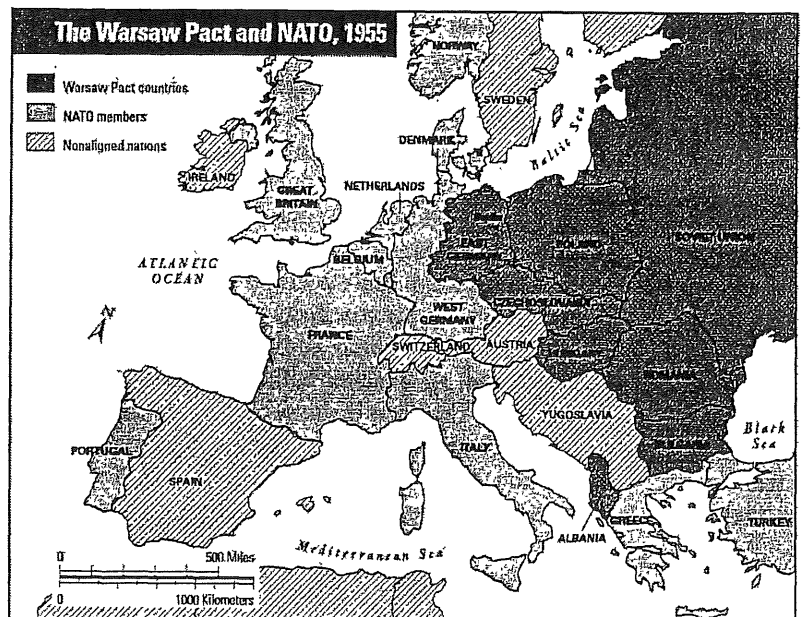
The United States was in competition with the Soviet Union all over the world. President Eisenhower began to rely on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The CIA used spies to get information abroad. It also carried out covert actions, or secret operations, to weaken or overthrow governments unfriendly to the United States.

One CIA action involved Iran. In 1953, the CIA convinced the Shah, or monarch, of Iran to get rid of a prime minister who was not friendly to the West. In 1954, the CIA took action in Guatemala. Eisenhower believed Guatemala was friendly to the Communists. The CIA trained an army that overthrew Guatemala's government.

Soviet dictator Josef Stalin died in 1953. At first, tensions eased between the superpowers. People called it a thaw in the Cold War. But when West Germany joined NATO, the Soviet Union formed a military alliance with its satellite nations in 1955. This alliance was called the Warsaw Pact.

In 1956, a crisis developed in the Middle East. Egypt seized control of the Suez Canal. The Canal was located in Egypt but owned by Britain and France, who had built it. Egypt was an ally of the Soviet Union. Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt to take the Canal back. The Soviets threatened to bomb Britain and France. The United States threatened to retaliate. War was prevented when the UN imposed a cease-fire. During the crisis, Eisenhower issued a warning, known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. It said the United States would defend the Middle East against Communist attack.

In 1956, the people of Hungary rose in revolt and called for a democratic government. The new government promised free elections. But when the Hungarians asked to leave the Warsaw pact in 1956, Soviet tanks rolled into Hungary. They crushed the reform movement. Many Hungarian reformers were killed, and others fled the country.



THE COLD WAR TAKES TO THE SKIES

What was the missile race?

The Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, came to power in the years after Stalin's death. Unlike Stalin, he believed communism could triumph through peaceful means.

On October 4, 1957, the Soviets shocked the world by launching Sputnik I. It was the first artificial satellite to orbit the earth. American scientists also worked hard to catch up. The first attempt to launch a U.S. satellite was a humiliating failure. On January 31, 1958, the United States successfully launched its first satellite.

Meanwhile, the United States had been flying spy missions over the Soviet Union. The CIA used U-2 aircraft that flew so high they could not be shot down. Or so the Americans thought. On May 1, 1960, a U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union. The pilot, Francis Gary Powers, was captured and convicted of spying. However, he was soon released in exchange for a Soviet spy.

This U-2 incident happened right before a meeting between Eisenhower and Khrushchev. At the meeting, Khrushchev criticized the United States and walked out. The U-2 incident hurt Eisenhower's ability to deal with the Soviets.

Dwight D. Eisenhower's Statement on the U-2 Incident

When Nikita Khrushchev announced that an American U-2 had been shot down over Soviet territory, U.S. officials at first denied that the U-2 was a spy plane. Then, President Dwight D. Eisenhower decided to tell the truth in a TV and radio broadcast. As you read this excerpt from his speech, keep in mind the reasons he gives for spying on the Soviets.



Our safety, and that of the free world, demand, of course, effective systems for gathering information about the military capabilities of other powerful nations, especially those that make a fetish of secrecy. This involves many techniques and methods. In these times of vast military machines and nuclear-tipped missiles, the ferreting out of this information is indispensable to free-world security. . . .

I take full responsibility for approving all the various programs undertaken by our government to secure and evaluate military intelligence.

It was in the prosecution of one of these intelligence programs that the widely publicized U-2 incident occurred.

Aerial photography has been one of many methods we have used to keep ourselves and the free world abreast of major Soviet military developments. The usefulness of this work has been well established through four years of effort. The Soviets were well aware of it. . . . Only last week, in his Paris press conference, Chairman Khrushchev confirmed that he knew of these flights when he visited the United States last September.

Incidentally, this raises the natural question—why all the furor concerning one particular flight? He did not, when in America last September, charge that these flights were any threat to Soviet safety. He did not then see any reason to refuse to confer with American representatives. This he did only about the flight that unfortunately failed, on May 1, far inside Russia.

Now, two questions have been raised about this particular flight: first, as to its timing, considering the imminence of the summit meeting; second, our initial statement when we learned the flight had failed. As to the timing, the question was really whether to halt the program and thus forgo the gathering of important information that was essential and that was likely to be unavailable at a later date. The decision was that the program should not be halted. The plain truth is this: When a nation needs intelligence activity, there is no time when vigilance can be relaxed. Incidentally, from Pearl Harbor we learned that even negotiation itself can be used to conceal preparations for a surprise attack.

Next, as to our government's initial statement about the flight, this was issued to protect the pilot, his mission, and our intelligence processes, at a time when the true facts were still undetermined.

Our first information about the failure of this mission did not disclose whether the pilot was still alive, was trying to escape, was avoiding interrogation, or whether both plane and pilot had been destroyed. Protection of our intelligence system and the pilot, and concealment of the plane's mission, seemed imperative. . . .

I then made two facts clear to the public: first, our program of aerial reconnaissance had been undertaken with my approval; second, this government is compelled to keep abreast, by one means or another, of military activities of the Soviets, just as their government has for years engaged in espionage activities in our country and throughout the world.

from Department of State Bulletin , June 6, 1960

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Examine the controversy surrounding the proliferation of nuclear technology in the US and the world (A.6.11)

Analyze the significant foreign policy events during the Eisenhower administration (A.6.13)

	How did the United States react and why?
The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949	
In 1951, the Iranian prime minister placed the oil industry in Iran under the Iranian government's control	
The Guatemalan head of government gave American-owned land in Guatemala to peasants	
In 1956, Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt and occupied the Suez Canal	
Soviet tanks invaded Hungary and fired on protesters in 1956	
In 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik	
In 1960, the Soviet Union brought down an American U-2 piloted by Francis Gary Powers	
Describe the significance of the following terms and names:	
Dwight D Eisenhower	
Eisenhower Doctrine	
Military Industrial Complex	
Nikita Khrushchev	
John Foster Dulles	
Brinkmanship	
Massive Retaliation	
Arms Race	
Domino Theory	
Space Race	