The United States and the Cold War: 1945 – 1953

Essential Questions:
1. What series of events and ideological conflicts prompted the Cold War?
2. How did the Cold War reshape ideas of American Freedom?
3. What were the major initiatives of Truman’s domestic policies?
4. What effects did the anti-communism of the Cold War have on American politics and culture?

At the end of the unit, I will be able to:
1. Describe what major ideological conflicts, security interests, and events brought about the Cold War
2. Explain the major changes in traditional U.S. foreign policy that enabled America to fight the Cold War
3. Analyze how framing the Cold War in absolute terms as a battle between freedom and slavery influenced Americans' ability to understand many world events
4. Determine why the United States did not support movements for colonial independence around the world
5. Describe government attempts to shape public opinion during the Cold War
6. Explain the differences between the United States’ and the Soviet Union’s application of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
7. Analyze how the anticommunist crusade affected organized labor in the postwar period
8. Evaluate the long-term significance of the 1948 presidential election for the politics of postwar America
9. Explain how Strom Thurmond and the Dixiecrats used ideas of freedom to justify their positions on civil rights and race
10. Identify the major ways in which the anticommunist crusade affected civil liberties in the United States

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yalta &amp; Potsdam Conferences</th>
<th>Brinkmanship</th>
<th>Philippine Independence</th>
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<td>Truman Doctrine</td>
<td>Federal employee loyalty program</td>
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<td>Taft-Hartley Act</td>
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<td>Dennis v. United States</td>
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<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>Cuban Missile Crisis</td>
<td>Nuclear Arms Race</td>
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Readings:
1. Foner, Give me Liberty, Chapter 23
2. Zinn, CH. 16 A People’s War? P.301 – 327
THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

Define *Containment:*

REVIEW: What global precedents were set at Yalta and Potsdam that served to increase tension between the US and the Soviet Union?

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**Excerpt from The Long-Telegram**
Source: “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” by X, *Foreign Affairs*, April 1947

“In these circumstances it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”

1. What would historians probably agree is the most important single word in this document passage?

2. Who was X?

3. What do you think X would say to an American president who wanted to invade the Soviet Union? Explain.

4. Revisit your definition of Containment. Does it still stand? Revise or add to it if necessary.
CONTAINMENT IN ACTION

Directions: Define/summarize each event/policy below and explain how each served to contain the spread of communism in Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event / Policy (Define/summarize each)</th>
<th>Reflection of Containment How did this event/policy serve to contain communism?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iron Curtain Speech (March, 1946)</td>
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<td>Truman Doctrine (March, 1947)</td>
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<td>Marshall Plan (June, 1947)</td>
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<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO (1949)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berlin Blockade &amp; Airlift (June 1948 – May 1949)</td>
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**Rhetoric of Freedom: Establishing the Cold War Ideology**

*Directions: Read and annotate each of the primary source documents below. Take notes in the space provided in the margin. For each document your notes should include:*
- The main idea of each paragraph
- What is the speaker’s argument?
- What evidence does the speaker use to back up his argument? **Underline** the words/phrases/sentences that support the speaker’s argument.

**Document A: The Iron Curtain Speech (Modified)**

*Source: Excerpt from the “Iron Curtain Speech” delivered by Winston Churchill, March 1946 in Fulton, Missouri*

We cannot be blind to the fact that the liberties enjoyed by individual citizens throughout the British Empire are not valid in a considerable number of countries, some of which are very powerful… All this means that the people of any country have the right, and should have the power by constitutional action, by free unfettered elections, with secret ballot, to choose or change the character or form of government under which they dwell…. 

It is my duty, however, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe. From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia; all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject, in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and in some cases increasing measure of control from Moscow.

In a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers and throughout the world, Communist fifth columns are established and work in complete unity and absolute obedience to the directions they receive from the Communist center.

I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines.

But what we have to consider here today while time remains, is the permanent prevention of war and the establishment of conditions of freedom and democracy as rapidly as possible in all countries.

**Document B: The Truman Doctrine (Modified)**

*Source: Excerpt from the “Truman Doctrine Speech,” delivered by President Truman to Congress on March 12, 1947.*

The United States has received from the Greek Government an urgent appeal for financial and economic assistance…Greece is in desperate
need of financial and economic assistance to enable it to resume purchases of food, clothing, fuel, and seeds.

The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists, who defy the government's authority...Greece must have assistance if it is to become a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy. The United States must supply this assistance...No other nation is willing and able to provide the necessary support for a democratic Greek government.

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion.

It is necessary only to glance at a map to realize that the survival and integrity of the Greek nation are of grave importance in a much wider situation. If Greece should fall under the control of an armed minority, the effect upon its neighbor, Turkey, would be immediate and serious. Confusion and disorder might well spread throughout the entire Middle East...Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as to the East.

The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died. We must keep that hope alive. The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world. And we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation.... Great responsibilities have been placed upon us by the swift movement of events.

**Document C: The Marshall Plan**

*Source: Secretary of State George Marshall Commencement Address, Harvard University, June 15, 1947*

The truth of the matter is that Europe’s requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products - principally from America - are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help or face economic, social and political deterioration of a very grave character. The remedy lies in breaking the vicious circle and restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole. The manufacturer and the farmer throughout wide areas must be able and willing to exchange their products for currencies the continuing value of which is not open to question.

It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is
directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. Such assistance, I am convinced, must not be on a piecemeal basis as various crises develop. Any assistance that this Government may render in the future should provide a cure rather than mere palliative. Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government. Any government which maneuvers to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments, political parties, or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit therefrom politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States.

It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from the Europeans. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all, European nations.

**Document D: Novikov Telegram (Modified)**
*Source: Excerpt from a telegram sent by Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Novikov to Soviet Leadership in September 1946*

The foreign policy of the United States, which reflects the imperialist tendencies of American monopolistic capital, is characterized in the postwar period by a striving for world supremacy. This is the real meaning of the many statements by President Truman and other representatives of American ruling circles; that the United States has the right to lead the world. All the forces of American diplomacy -- the army, the air force, the navy, industry, and science -- are enlisted in the service of this foreign policy. For this purpose broad plans for expansion have been developed and are being implemented through diplomacy and the establishment of a system of naval and air bases stretching far beyond the boundaries of the United States, through the arms race, and through the creation of ever newer types of weapons.

...during the Second World War...[American leaders] calculated that the United States of America, if it could avoid direct participation in the war, would enter it only at the last minute, when it could easily affect the outcome of the war, completely ensuring its interests.

In this regard, it was thought that the main competitors of the United States would be crushed or greatly weakened in the war, and the United States by virtue of this circumstance would assume the role of the most powerful factor in resolving the fundamental questions of the postwar world.
Rhetoric & Ideology

**Rhetoric** is the art of *spoken or written language*, wherein the writer or speaker aims to *inform, persuade*, or *motivate* a particular audience about a specific topic or in specific situation. Rhetoric typically utilizes a *persuasive language* to present an argument in order to *appeal to its audience*. According to Greek philosopher Aristotle, successfully persuasive audience appeals fall under three categories: *logos, pathos, and ethos*. (See Rhetorical Triangle below)

**Ideology** is a set of *opinions or beliefs*, conscious and unconscious ideas, that an individual, group, or society has. Very often, *ideology* refers to *a set of political beliefs* or *set of ideas that characterize a particular culture*.

Often, *rhetoric* serves to inform and create a particular ideology.

**Rhetorical Triangle:**

![Rhetorical Triangle Diagram](image)
Rhetoric of Freedom: Establishing the Cold War Ideology

“Among other things, the Cold War was an ideological struggle, a battle, in a popular phrase of the 1950s, for the “hearts and minds” of people throughout the world” How did the Cold War rhetoric established in the postwar shape the ideology that fueled the Cold War?

Directions: Review the primary source documents with your group. For each:

1. Determine which rhetorical strategy was used to try and win the “hearts and minds” of its audience (ethos, logos or pathos)
2. Circle or highlight the words/phrases that influenced your answer and explain

Then answer the critical thinking questions that follow.

Document A: The Iron Curtain Speech, Winston Churchill
The rhetorical strategy used is ______________________________
Explain:
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Document B: The Truman Doctrine, President Truman
The rhetorical strategy used is ______________________________
Explain:
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

The rhetorical strategy used is ______________________________
Explain:
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Document D: Novikov Telegram, Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Novikov
The rhetorical strategy used is ______________________________
Explain:
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
The Ideology of the Cold War: Critical Thinking Questions

1. The language of different policies of containment served to shape the western ideology behind the Cold War. Describe the ideology that was created and America’s role in it.

2. How did the Truman Doctrine create the ideology of a worldwide struggle over the future of freedom? Use specific examples from the document to support your answer.

3. How did the Marshall Plan supplement the ideology created from the Truman Doctrine? What did freedom mean to George Marshall and what did he argue was America’s role in upholding those values?

4. Explain how the ideology of freedom was used as a justification for the geopolitical and economic interests that shaped American foreign policy. What judgments can you make about the relationship between American political and economic global interests and their ideological mission to spread the values of freedom?

5. How does Novikov describe the foreign policy of United States? What evidence does he use to support his description? Is there validity behind his accusations?
Containment Through Action – Mini-Q

Berlin, Korea, and Cuba: How did the U.S. contain communism through proxy wars and brinkmanship?

Overview:
From the end of WWII in 1945 to 1991, the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a battle of nerves called the Cold War. Throughout almost all of this period, the United States was guided by the ideology of freedom which served to justify their foreign policy of containment. Working primarily from maps, this Mini-Q asks you to analyze and describe three different events in which the United States defended their ideology of freedom by utilizing proxy wars or brinkmanship to contain the threat of communism.

The Documents:

- Document A: The Berlin Blockade and Airlift
- Document B: The Korean War
- Document C: The Cuban Missile Crisis
Containment Through Action – Mini-Q

Berlin, Korea, and Cuba: How did the U.S. contain communism through proxy wars and brinkmanship?

Understanding the Question

1. What is the analytical question asked by this Mini-Q?

2. What terms does the question need to be defined?

3. Rewrite the question in your own words

Background & Vocab: Use the below section to list elements of any background information you wish to include on the Cold War and the American policy of Containment. Also include any vocabulary words you may not know.

Pre-Bucketing Exercise

Directions: Using any clues from the Mini-Q question, think of logical analytical categories by which to organize a possible essay response and label the buckets accordingly. We suggest a three-bucket format but there may be other possibilities.
The Truman Presidency

How did the Truman Presidency (& his opponents) utilize the Cold War ideology of freedom in American domestic policy?

TRUMAN AND THE POSTWAR CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Harry Truman Video:
On June 29, 1947, Truman is the first president to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

1. I should like to talk to you today about ______________________ and ______________________.”

2. Why is it “more important today than ever before that all Americans deserve these rights”?

3. What did Truman pledge was his immediate task for Civil Rights? What is the “barrier” he refers to?

4. Name at least three rights that Truman expressed should be shared by all people.

5. Why could this speech be considered unprecedented in American History?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Fair Deal Notes</th>
<th>Secure these Rights Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What were the components of Truman’s Fair Deal?</td>
<td>What programs did Truman propose/implement to “secure these rights”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Discussion Question: How do these programs represent a change in racial policy?
CAMPAIGN FOR THE 1948 ELECTION

Using Foner, describe each party’s idea of freedom in their campaign for the 1948 election. Find a quote from Foner that exemplifies each party’s freedom ideology. Then, answer the questions that follow.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democratic Party – Truman</th>
<th>Republican Party – Dewey</th>
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<tr>
<th>Dixiecrats (States Rights Party)- Thurmond</th>
<th>Progressive Party – Wallace</th>
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Discussion Questions:

1. Describe two reasons for the Republican resurgence in the midyear elections.

2. Think about Truman’s Fair Deal & civil rights activism. Which groups of people did Truman’s policies and his 1948 campaign appeal to? Explain why it appealed to them.

3. How did Truman’s campaign and idea of freedom challenge Southern Traditions?
4. Describe why Wallace’s progressive campaign for racial desegregation and a social welfare was linked to communism.

5. How did the Truman Presidency utilize the Cold War ideology of freedom in his American domestic policy? How did his opponents utilize the Cold War ideology of freedom? Provide examples for both.

Setting the Stage for the Civil Rights Movement:
How did the ideological fight of the Cold War influence the birth of the Civil Rights Movement?

DOCUMENT A1:
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
December 10, 1948

The General Assembly,
Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article I
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

DOCUMENT A2:
W.E.B BuBois, Director of Research of the NAACP, 1947

We appeal to the world to witness that this attitude of America is far more dangerous to mankind than the Atom bomb; and far, far more clamorous for attention than disarmament or treaty. To disarm the hidebound minds of men is
the only path to peace; and as long as Great Britain and the United States profess democracy with one hand and deny it to millions with the other, they convince none of their sincerity, least of all themselves...

... Therefore, Peoples of the World, we American Negroes appeal to you; our treatment in America is not merely an internal question of the United States. It is a basic problem of humanity; of democracy; of discrimination because of race and color; and as such it demands your attention and action. No nation is so great that the world can afford to let it continue to be deliberately unjust, cruel and unfair toward its own citizens.

1. What does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights strive to uphold?

2. American representative, Eleanor Roosevelt was largely involved in drafting the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Why is that ironic?

3. What is Dubois exposing to the world about America, and why might that be problematic in terms of their ideological justification of the Cold War?

4. According to these two articles, how did the ideological fight of the Cold War influence the birth of the Civil Rights movement?

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**DOCUMENT B1:**

**1948 Democratic National Convention Address**

*Hubert H. Humphrey, July 14, 1948*

Mr. Chairman, fellow Democrats, fellow Americans:

I realize that in speaking in behalf of the minority report on civil rights as presented by Congressman DeMiller of Wisconsin that I'm dealing with a charged issue -- with an issue which has been confused by emotionalism on all sides of the fence...

...because of my profound belief that we have a challenging task to do here -- because good conscience, decent morality, demands it -- I feel I must rise at this time to support a report -- the minority report -- a report that spells out our democracy, a report that the people of this country can and will understand, and a report that they will enthusiastically acclaim on the great issue of civil rights.

... My friends, to those who say that we are rushing this issue of civil rights, I say to them we are 172 years late. To those who say that this civil-rights program is an
infringement on states’ rights, I say this: The time has arrived in America for the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states’ rights and to walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights. People -- human beings -- this is the issue of the 20th century. People of all kinds -- all sorts of people -- and these people are looking to America for leadership, and they're looking to America for precept and example.

DOCUMENT B2:

Blacks, led by A. Philip Randolph (left), picketing at the 1948 Democratic national convention

1. Based on Document B1, what idea you think the minority report supports? Explain two reasons Humphrey gives for defending the Minority Report?


3. What are the posters in the poster appealing to?

4. According to these two articles, how did the ideological fight of the Cold War influence the birth of the Civil Rights movement?
In fact, the postwar economy soared, producing a level of material abundance unequaled in American history. Millions of citizens acquired new homes in the suburbs; purchased new cars, appliances, and television sets; and spent freely on leisure-dine activities.

The economic boom affected all aspects of the American experience in these years. Politically, the twenty-year reign of the Democratic Party--the party of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal--ended in 1952 as voters gave the Republicans control of Congress and elected the war hero Dwight Eisenhower as president. The return of prosperity had a profound social and cultural impact as well. Some spoke of postwar America as a "consumer culture"--a culture in which the production, marketing, and acquisition of the material symbols of the good life became the central reality shaping society and its values. Conservative social values prevailed as a newly affluent but uneasy middle class resisted real or imagined threats to the status quo.

But the security, happiness, and tranquility that such abundance promised eluded the nation in these years. Not only did large pockets of poverty and social distress persist amid the general abundance, but the prospering middle class itself--particularly women--experienced stress and tensions as it tried to live up to a social ideal emphasizing domesticity and devotion to family. Cultural critics, intellectuals, and alienated youth probed the flaws and fault lines beneath the smooth facade of Eisenhower prosperity; racial segregation in the South increasingly emerged as a compelling social issue; and anxieties induced by the cold war and the nuclear arms race mocked the era’s surface placidity. American society between 1945 and 1960 thus presents a complex and paradoxical picture of dramatic advances in material well-being uneasily coexisting with severe but only half-acknowledged social problems and cultural strains.

1. “America as a "consumer culture"--a culture in which the production, marketing, and acquisition of the material symbols of the good life became the central reality shaping society and its values” In the economic boom of the 1950s described above, analyze who you believe enjoyed this renewed consumer culture.

2. Explain two reasons why American society between 1945 and 1960 presented a paradoxical picture of material wealth coexisting with social problems and cultural strains.

3. How might this continued discrimination through the postwar boom have inspire the civil rights revolution?