

HTAV • SAMPLE PAGES

# MODERN HISTORY

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# COLD WAR TENSIONS

**'Let us not be deceived: we are today in the midst of a cold war.'**

HERBERT BAYARD SWOPE, JOURNALIST, 1947.

The term 'Cold War', used to describe the relations that existed between the USA and USSR in the second half of the twentieth century, was first used in the mid-1940s. British writer George Orwell employed the phrase only two months after atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, but the term was chiefly popularised by American journalist Walter Lippmann's 1947 book *The Cold War*.

The word 'cold' accurately describes the atmosphere that developed between the USA and the Soviet Union after the 1945 post-war negotiations over Europe. Unlike a 'hot war', which involves direct action in the form of battle, the two nations competed with each other on the world stage economically, socially, technologically and politically in order to prove the superiority of their own ideology and way of life. What it really meant for society was a heightened sense of fear and division as the looming threat of nuclear holocaust jeopardised the quest for peace.

## KEY EVENTS

1948 24 JUNE — The Berlin Blockade begins

1949 4 APRIL — NATO is established

1950 9 FEBRUARY — Senator Joseph McCarthy denounces communists in the US

1955 14 MAY — The Warsaw Pact is established

1957 5 OCTOBER — The USSR launches *Sputnik 1* into space

## KEY QUESTIONS

- What caused the Cold War to develop between the Soviet Union and the United States?
- What were the significant features of the tensions brought about by the Cold War?
- How did the Soviet Union and the United States demonstrate and exert their power?
- How did this rivalry affect the everyday lives of ordinary people around the world?
- How are the events of the early Cold War interpreted by historians?



**Source 2.01**  
Berliners watch a US aircraft coming in to land at Tempelhof Airport, Berlin, 1948.

## KEY INDIVIDUALS



### HARRY S. TRUMAN

Became US president after Roosevelt's death

Used atomic weapons against Japan, which brought about the end of the war in the Pacific

Issued the Truman Doctrine to contain the spread of communism



### DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Head of Allied ground forces in Europe during the late stages of World War II

President of the United States from 1953–1960



### NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

Replaced Stalin as the leader of the USSR by 1956

Condemned Stalin's rule in a secret speech to the CPSU

## CONSEQUENCE

The Cold War, which lasted from approximately 1945–1989, was an intense period of competition, rivalry and brinkmanship between the two superpowers that emerged from the ashes of World War II. In their quest for superiority, however, both the USA and the USSR ruined the lives of many of their own civilians. As you read this chapter, ask the following:

- How and why did the USSR and USA compete for dominance during the Cold War?
- What detrimental impacts did the ideological struggle have on the lives of ordinary people?

# BERLIN BLOCKADE

**PRESIDENT TRUMAN:** 'The Berlin Blockade was a move to test our ability and our will to resist.'

In late 1947, upon the establishment of **Cominform**, Soviet politician Andrey Zhdanov suggested that two clear camps had formed in Europe. Cominform—which aimed to consolidate all communist parties under Soviet direction—was a direct response to the US Marshall Plan that was aiding western Europe. With both camps now providing their own forms of assistance, Germany became the key location for this competitive rivalry to play out. In West Germany, which comprised three zones controlled by the Allied Powers, the US, British and French began rebuilding infrastructure and industries, as well as ensuring that democratic governments were established. Economically they founded a central bank for all Western zones of Germany, instigating a currency reform from 20 June 1948 called the *deutsche mark*. This currency reform was to combat the black market and remove price controls. This provoked similar changes in the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany. The Soviets also introduced a currency with the belief that it would be used across all of East Germany, including Berlin. However, upon discovery of the distribution of the *deutsche mark* in West Berlin, the Soviets felt that the West was trying to undermine their efforts to build a socialist society. Their reaction was sudden and dramatic, marking the first major event of the Cold War.

Fearing that Germany would become strong again and threaten the Soviet Union, on 24 June 1948 Stalin ordered the blockage of all roads, trainlines and canals between East and West Germany. He hoped to seize control of West Berlin, which was contained within the Soviet zone of East Germany. While interruptions and restrictions to cargo travel had been occurring since April 1948, the Soviets had now also severed all connections between the Soviet zone of Berlin and the Western zones. They stopped supplying food to the population living in non-Soviet zones of the city, and cut off the electricity supplies to Berlin, using their own generating plants in the Soviet zone. The Soviets rejected all legal claims to the use of supply routes from West Germany into West Berlin, arguing that no agreement was ever formalised and that

the Soviet Union had demonstrated goodwill by allowing access for the past three years. As a result, people living in West Berlin had thirty-six days worth of food and forty-five days worth of coal remaining. Historians have suggested that Soviet authorities believed Westerners would decide that maintaining a democratic presence in the heart of communist East Germany was too difficult and would simply give in.

However, knowing that the Soviet Union had 1.5 million troops surrounding Berlin, the Western zones decided to undertake an **airlift** of supplies using air corridors that had been agreed to in 1945. Such an operation would force the Soviets to either shoot down an unarmed cargo plane or back down. Over 321 days, the West made 272,000 flights into West Berlin until 12 May 1949 when the Soviets ended the blockade, reopening the borders and supply routes. For now, the fear of another European war breaking out was resolved.

**airlift**

When aircraft are used to transport a large amount of supplies in a short amount of time.

**Source 2.03** German children look on as bags of flour are unloaded from a US plane.

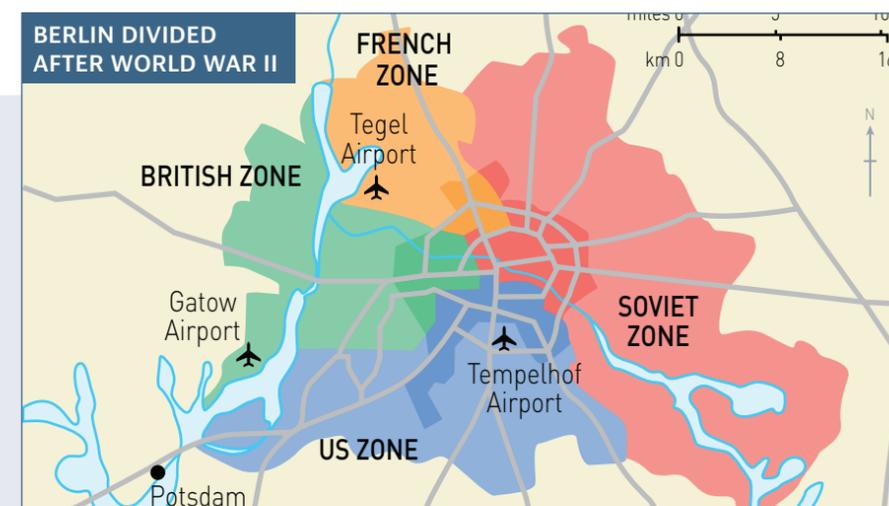


**Cominform**

Short for 'Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties', Cominform was set up by the Soviet Union in 1947 to draw together the various communist parties of eastern Europe. Activities were coordinated and information exchanged.

**Did you know?** In 1835, French traveller and writer Alexis de Tocqueville wrote the following prophetic insight about the USA and USSR in his book *Democracy in America*: 'Their starting point is different, and their courses are not the same, yet each seems marked out by the will of heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.'

**BERLIN AIRLIFT STATISTICS**



**Source 2.02** Map of Berlin showing Soviet and Allied zones after World War II.

## THE CHOCOLATE FLIER

On 17 July 1948, airlift pilot Gail Halvorsen met with many curious children who watched the aircraft land at Tempelhof Airport in Berlin, and gave them chewing gum. As long as they did not fight over it, he told them he would drop off more when he next returned. One child asked how they would know if it was him flying. Halvorsen replied, 'I'll wiggle my wings.' The following day Halvorsen dropped chocolate bars attached to a handkerchief parachute to the children below. With the crowd of children increasing daily, mail started to appear at the operation base addressed to 'Uncle Wiggly Wings' or the 'Chocolate Flier'. Soon the gesture expanded into an operation, and as the news spread, US children also began sending their own candy to help the mission. Such publicity resulted in an estimated 150,000 Chocolate Flier parachute drops.



**Source 2.04** Children in Berlin watching one of the airlift planes.

### CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE

- 1 Outline a long-term, short-term and immediate cause of the Berlin Blockade.
- 2 Create a mind map of the consequences of this event. Try to separate the consequences into economic, social and political strands, and ensure that both Western and Eastern perspectives are considered.

## ALLIANCES ESTABLISHED

**LORD ISMAY:** 'Keep the Russians out, the Germans down and the Yanks in.'

The Berlin Blockade heightened the spheres of influence within Europe and placed pressure on both the United States and the Soviet Union to confirm their superpower status by creating military alliances. Following national developments, such as the Defence Department in the **Pentagon** and the **CIA**, the USA now wished to influence the security of Europe. In line with Truman's containment policy, it became essential for the USA to maintain its position in Berlin. Berlin was considered as a listening post; it was the only access the West had to life behind the Iron Curtain, and it provided vital intelligence. Events that occurred in Berlin affected international policy-making. This was made evident when China fell to communism in 1949. The spread of communism to a country with the world's largest population was considered a huge threat to the United States. If the Soviet Union shared its technology and military power with China, communism could spread throughout Asia. It was already known that China's communist leader, Mao Zedong, had prioritised military action against nations such as Taiwan, Laos, Tibet and Burma. It seemed that the Cold War was leading towards conflict on a global scale.



**Did you know?** The label 'Third World' originally referred to a country that was not aligned with either the United States (First World) or the Soviet Union (Second World).

## NATO

On 4 April 1949 the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** was signed in Washington DC. This alliance consisted of twelve members: the USA, Canada, Great Britain, France, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal. The three main purposes of the NATO alliance were to:

- deter Soviet expansionism
- prevent a revival of national militarism
- encourage political cooperation (thus ending the US tradition of isolationism).

### Pentagon

The five-sided building in Washington DC that houses the US Department of Defense.

### CIA

Central Intelligence Agency; the chief spy organisation of the United States.

### HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 2.05 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1 Identify the two leaders represented in this image.
- 2 Identify the two features that suggest both sides are prepared to attack.
- 3 Explain why this event exemplifies the definition of a Cold War.

**Source 2.05** The US and USSR duel over Berlin. Cartoon from a British newspaper, 5 April 1948.

### North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO was formed in 1949 by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal and the United States. It stated that an attack on any of these states was an attack on the group as a whole.

All members agreed upon a system of collective and mutual defence, contained in Article 5 of the Treaty, which suggested that an attack on any member from an external party would be considered an attack on them all, allowing for armed force to be used if necessary. In 1952, Greece and Turkey also joined NATO, followed in 1955 by West Germany.

## THE DIVISION OF GERMANY

In April 1949, the French were persuaded to join the British and US zones of Berlin to form 'Trizonia'. Once it was reluctantly accepted by the occupying powers that Germany was divided and not likely to be reunited, they established the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) on 23 May 1949. Not to be outdone, the Soviets then established the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) on 7 October 1949 and handed authority over to East German officials.

## WARSAW PACT

During the early 1950s, the Soviet Union attempted to reunify Germany, set up collective security treaties for the whole of Europe and even join NATO. Except for the Austrian State Treaty, which allowed the country to return to neutrality, all of these proposals were rejected by the Western powers. In direct response to the establishment of NATO, the **Warsaw Pact** was established on 14 May 1955. The main aim of the Warsaw Pact was mutual defence and cooperation among the member countries: the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. Yugoslavia was the only communist eastern European country that did not join, as it had already established its own defence alliance and remained relatively independent. The Warsaw Pact helped to secure the ideological beliefs and strategic positions of the Iron Curtain countries, yet the largest military operations carried out by the Warsaw Pact would be against its own members.

### Warsaw Pact

Formed in 1955 by the Soviet Union and its eastern allies, it promised mutual assistance and was the Eastern Bloc's response to the formation of NATO.

## DEATH OF STALIN



↑ A bust of Joseph Stalin.

In the late 1940s, Soviet life was constrained by Stalin's strong nationalist ideals. In particular, the arts became a major form of propaganda as restrictions and purges hit theatres, literature, music and cinemas. Imperialist influences were removed so that ideological messages could be spread. This movement led to the imprisonment of many talented intellectuals in the Soviet Union. In a dramatic act of anti-Semitism, in 1953 Stalin ordered the arrest of predominantly Jewish doctors whom he believed were conspiring against Soviet officials in what was known as the Doctor's Plot.

Ironically, soon after this order was made, Stalin suffered a massive stroke. Treatment was delayed at first because people were afraid to enter his room. After waiting an entire day, a guard finally entered Stalin's room but struggled to find a doctor because of the purge. Stalin eventually died on 5 March 1953. A week later the doctors were released from prison when the alleged conspiracy was revealed to be a fraud.

## NEW LEADERS, BIG SPEECHES

**EISENHOWER:** 'America is today the strongest, most influential, and most productive nation in the world.'

The year 1953 brought about new leadership for both superpowers, with Eisenhower inaugurated as US president in January and Khrushchev emerging as the sole Soviet leader following a power struggle after Stalin's death in March. Both leaders set about establishing a new conciliatory tone to the Cold War through their policies and their speeches.



### EISENHOWER

President Eisenhower wanted to build domestic economic strength rather than devote expenditure to military operations. He developed the New Look policy, which relied upon relatively inexpensive nuclear weapons as the main form of security because of the pressure they placed on the Soviet Union. Through the New Look policy, Eisenhower hoped to reduce budget deficits by cutting land and naval forces and to create a

situation of mutual deterrence for both superpowers. In his 'The Chance for Peace' speech, Eisenhower highlighted the costs of rivalry for humanity. Additionally, his 'Atoms for Peace' speech was a propaganda campaign to quell the public's fears about a nuclear future, as atomic energy reactors had only recently been created. Furthermore, Eisenhower's 'Open Skies' speech in 1955 proposed that the US and USSR exchange maps showing military bases within their nations and allow surveillance to occur to ensure that both sides were compliant with any arms agreements formed. Khrushchev rejected the idea, believing it was an **espionage** plot.

The 1950s was a time of economic prosperity in the USA, and US goods were exported to the Western world. New companies emerged providing modern technology, and household names such as IBM, General Electric, Holiday Inn, Hush Puppies, Tupperware and Pizza Hut were established. As cities grew and new suburbs formed, **consumerism** skyrocketed, with Americans buying cars, refrigerators, toasters, vacuum cleaners and stoves. There were more than 5 million televisions sold each year during the 1950s. With so many new appliances, domestic life in the USA became an important propaganda tool to spread internationally as it promoted the nation's high standard of living.

### espionage

The practice of spying or using spies, typically undertaken by governments to obtain political and military information.

### consumerism

The idea that people buy large quantities of manufactured goods for use in the home or for leisure activities; a key feature of capitalist societies.

↪ Dwight Eisenhower, 34th president of the United States.

↪ **Source 2.06** A 1950s advertisement depicting a happy housewife with her new washing machine.



➔ Nikita Khrushchev, General Secretary of the CPSU.



## KHRUSHCHEV

Khrushchev's new stance brought about a change in international relations during the mid-1950s. Many people hoped that it would be the beginning of a 'thaw' in the Cold War—or even a *détente*. Khrushchev's new policies for the Soviet Union were expressed during the 'On the Cult of Personality' speech he gave to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party in February 1956. At this major forum in Moscow, Khrushchev gave a four-hour speech condemning the policies and actions of Stalin, stating he 'showed in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality and his abuse of power'. While not wishing to start anti-communist uprisings, Khrushchev felt it necessary to point out the many areas in which Stalin strayed from socialist ideology. This led to the policy of *de-Stalinisation* in the Soviet Union, which aimed to improve people's standard of living and remove Stalin's legacy. The son of a peasant, Khrushchev was aware of the poverty that still burdened Russians despite the revolution. In 1958 he noted the need to produce more grain and stated: 'If after forty years of Communism, a person cannot have a glass of milk or a pair of shoes, he will not believe Communism is a good thing, whatever you tell him.'<sup>2</sup>

### *détente*

A more permanent relaxation of tension between the US and USSR that evolved after the Cuban Missile Crisis and lasted until the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

### *de-Stalinisation*

A process of political reform within the Soviet Union that involved diminishing Stalin's reputation after his death in 1953.

➔ **Source 2.07** The Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home, [https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/file/chance\\_for\\_peace.pdf](https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/file/chance_for_peace.pdf)

### Eisenhower's speech: The Chance for Peace, 16 April 1953

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone.

It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities.

It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population.

It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some 50 miles of concrete highway.

We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat.

We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8000 people.

This, I repeat, is the best way of life to be found on the road the world has been taking.

This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

**Did you know?** During the Cold War, Nikita Khrushchev said to Mao Zedong: 'Berlin is the testicles of the West. Every time I want to make the West scream, I squeeze on Berlin.'

Under de-Stalinisation, Khrushchev *decentralised* the economy. This did not bring the results hoped for, as wages stagnated and expectations grew. However, the population was allowed to enjoy a little more freedom as the power of the secret police was reduced, the death penalty was abolished, and greater freedom of speech was allowed, sparking a literary renaissance. One significant change was the release of thousands of political prisoners from the *gulags*. De-Stalinisation even ensured the relocation of Stalin's body from the Red Square to the Kremlin, and statues of Stalin were removed. Apart from the domestic policy of de-Stalinisation, Khrushchev also attempted to demonstrate a theory of *peaceful co-existence* by travelling internationally and attending peace conferences such as the Geneva Summit. When visiting Britain in 1956 he stated, 'You do not like communism. We do not like capitalism. There is only one way out—peaceful co-existence.'

### *decentralise*

The process of shifting political or economic control to a greater number of people lower down in a hierarchy or power structure.

### *gulags*

The name given to prison and labour camps in the Soviet Union.

### *peaceful co-existence*

Khrushchev's term for the idea that the USSR and USA could learn to live with each other without resorting to conflict.



➔ An anti-capitalism propaganda poster from the Soviet Union.

### CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Assess how Eisenhower and Khrushchev impacted upon the dynamics of the Cold War. Structure your response in two paragraphs focusing on what they continued from the previous leadership and what they changed.

### CONSEQUENCE

- 1 Historians have argued that Eisenhower's New Look policy created a dilemma with international repercussions. Discuss how the policy of increasing nuclear weapon supplies for security may have actually led to the further endangerment of society.
- 2 What changes came about in the USSR by 1956 as a result of Khrushchev's leadership?

# COLD WAR: HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS



Historians debate the causes of the Cold War, raising various arguments as to who or what was responsible for its development. It is important to understand the perspectives of historians and eyewitnesses in order to develop your own opinion. Some believe the Cold War was caused by the Soviet Union's aggressive expansionism, while others believe it was caused by the USA's push for capitalism.

More recent historians, who have the benefit of hindsight when assessing the Cold War, prefer to look at individual events and the complicated nature of international relations from 1945–1991. Before you read the perspectives on the following pages, think about whether you would blame one superpower more than the other, or whether there was a particular event that possibly sparked this division.

## HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Read the interpretations on the next two pages then answer the following questions.

- 1 Despite placing the blame on different countries, what similarities exist between the arguments for each interpretation?
- 2 What is overlooked or omitted in each interpretation?
- 3 Which views do you believe most strongly relate to the reasons for creating alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact?
- 4 Which historical interpretation do you find most convincing? Support your response with reference to evidence.
- 5 Explain why interpretations that have arisen since the end of the Cold War may provide more useful and reliable arguments.

INTERPRETATION	ARGUMENTS	SUPPORTING QUOTATIONS FOR THIS INTERPRETATION
<p><b>THE SOVIET UNION WAS RESPONSIBLE.</b></p>  <p>This was the conventional view up until 1960s. Commonly held by US historians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western writers believe Stalin's expansionist policy was ruthless.</li> <li>• The Soviet Union wanted an international revolution.</li> <li>• The United States had no choice but to meet the challenges posed by Soviet actions.</li> <li>• Perhaps US presidents were too accepting of Soviet demands for a sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Winston Churchill:</b> <i>'The Soviet Union has become a danger to the free world.'</i></p> <p><b>Herbert Feis:</b> The Soviets <i>'were trying not only to extend their boundaries and their control over neighbouring states but also beginning to revert to their revolutionary effort throughout the world.'</i><sup>3</sup></p> <p><b>Arthur Schlesinger Jr:</b> <i>'The Cold War could have been avoided only if the Soviet Union had not been possessed by convictions both of the infallibility of the communist word and of the inevitability of a communist world.'</i><sup>4</sup></p> <p><i>'The Cold War was the brave and essential response of free men to communist aggression.'</i><sup>5</sup></p>
<p><b>THE US WAS RESPONSIBLE.</b></p>  <p>This approach reached its height during the Vietnam War.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cold War was caused by the USA's desperation to continually build its capitalist trade markets.</li> <li>• The USA was expansionist by trying to create 'dollar imperialism'.</li> <li>• The USA adopted atomic diplomacy due to its monopoly over nuclear weapons in the years following World War II.</li> <li>• Stalin's creation of buffer states was defending the Soviet Union's national interest.</li> <li>• Stalin could not risk another invasion of his country.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stalin:</b> <i>'The imperialistic powers will wring your necks like chickens.'</i></p> <p><b>William Appleman Williams:</b> On the US: <i>'One of the most unnerving features was the extensive elitism that had become ingrained in the policy-making process.'</i><sup>6</sup></p> <p><i>'Even the American public came more and more ... manipulated and controlled in the effort to establish and maintain the American Way as the global status quo.'</i><sup>7</sup></p> <p><i>'Firm conviction, even dogmatic belief, that America's domestic well-being depends upon such sustained, ever-increasing overseas economic expansion.'</i><sup>8</sup></p> <p><b>Walter LaFeber:</b> <i>'The Cold War has dominated American life since 1945. It has cost Americans \$4 trillion in defense expenditures, taken the lives of nearly 100,000 of their young men, ruined the careers of many others during the McCarthyite witch hunts ... It has not been the most satisfying chapter in American diplomatic history.'</i><sup>9</sup></p> <p><b>Gar Alperovitz:</b> <i>'American officials calculated that using the atomic bomb would enormously bolster US diplomacy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in negotiations over postwar Europe.'</i><sup>10</sup></p> <p><b>Joyce and Gabriel Kolko:</b> The <i>'basic source of the world crisis was an expansive American foreign policy'</i><sup>11</sup></p> <p><i>'To contain and reconstruct the world according to its own needs, the United States was prepared to destroy itself—morally, socially, and economically—in a deepening trauma whose effects began to weaken American capitalism.'</i><sup>12</sup></p>
<p><b>A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY.</b></p> <p>This view emerged in the later years of the Cold War.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was mutual self-interest, misperception, suspicion and reaction.</li> <li>• Not who was to blame but what was to blame, e.g. the mentality of the leaders.</li> <li>• Tension arose due to each superpower's determination to uphold its national security, which influenced policy-making.</li> <li>• The superpowers misperceived each other's ideology and way of life.</li> </ul>	<p><b>John Lewis Gaddis:</b> <i>'Both the United States and the Soviet Union had been born in revolution. Both embraced ideologies with global aspirations: what worked at home, their leaders assumed, would also do so for the rest of the world.'</i><sup>13</sup></p> <p><b>Melvyn P. Leffler:</b> <i>'It was not so much the actions of the Kremlin as it was fears about socioeconomic dislocation, revolutionary nationalism ... and Eurasian vacuums of power that triggered US initiatives to mold an international system to comport with its concept of security.'</i><sup>14</sup></p> <p><b>Ernest May:</b> <i>'There probably was never any real possibility that the post-1945 relationship could be anything but hostility verging on conflict ... Traditions, belief systems ... all combined to stimulate antagonism, and almost no factor operated in either country to hold it back.'</i></p>
<p><b>ACTIONS WERE CIRCUMSTANTIAL.</b></p> <p>This view was developed within the field of political science. It emerged after the end of the Cold War.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A power conflict between two geopolitically dominant nations wanting to secure more land.</li> <li>• Competition over practical capabilities, not related to ideologies.</li> <li>• Focus on international relations, economic power and agreements between superpowers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Kenneth Waltz:</b> <i>'So long as the world was bipolar ... the United States and the Soviet Union held each other in check.'</i><sup>15</sup></p> <p><b>Marc Trachtenberg:</b> <i>'The crux of this problem lay in Soviet fears of German power set against an American need for a remilitarized Germany to assist in Western security.'</i></p> <p><i>'It seems that both sides' leaders were more "power politics" oriented than originally perceived. Ideology did not provide an overly tight constraint on their freedom of action.'</i><sup>16</sup></p>

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: FOCUS ON RELIABILITY AND USEFULNESS

Historians and students of the past rely on primary sources. Without them we cannot know anything about what happened before our own time. They offer a crucial insight into the perspectives of those who lived in the time period we are studying. Primary sources come in many forms (documents, architecture, cartoons, newspapers, diaries, etc.), and historians use them to construct narratives and arguments about the past. Before a historian decides to use a primary source, however, they must determine the *reliability* and *usefulness* of a source.

## Reliability

The first question a historian must ask about a primary source is: 'How reliable is it?' It is important to determine how *truthful* an account of the past is, but how do we best do that? French historian Marc Bloch wrote: 'A document is a witness, and like most witnesses it rarely speaks until one begins to question it.'<sup>17</sup> In order to assess the reliability of a source, historians must ask particular questions of it.

- » What is the source? This could be a letter, a law, a speech, etc.
- » When was it produced? Was it close to the event referred to?
- » Who produced the source? Provide a name, age, gender, class, nationality, organisation, etc.
- » For whom was it produced?
- » Why was it produced? What was the intention of the author, their argument or opinion?

When sitting assessment tasks and exams it is very important to read the captions accompanying a source as these will help you to answer at least some of these questions. While no source is ever completely reliable or unreliable, if these questions can be answered then the historian should have a good idea about the degree of reliability of a source.

As with a witness, evidence from documents should be corroborated. This means that it should be compared with other sources (primary and secondary) about the past to see if there is broad agreement about the event or person being discussed. Of course, those corroborating sources also need to be checked for reliability.

## Usefulness

Once the extent of a source's reliability has been established, a historian can then think about its usefulness. This will depend on whether or not the source is reliable, and the questions about the past that the historian is asking.

Even if a source is identified as biased government propaganda that distorts the truth about the past, it still has usefulness to a historian who might want to study the nature of Soviet or American propaganda during the Cold War. Hence even one-sided propaganda is useful in this regard. On the other hand, a thoroughly reliable first-person account of the Yalta Conference, for example, might not be useful to a historian who wants to know about the impact of World War II on the lives of ordinary Europeans.

Overall, historians must carefully sift through the sources they discover in the course of their inquiry so that they can create a detailed, truthful and relevant argument about the key events and people of the past.

## HISTORICAL SOURCES: RELIABILITY AND USEFULNESS

Using Source 2.08 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

➔ **Source 2.08** A political cartoon by Leslie Illingworth that appeared in Britain's *Daily Mail* on 16 June 1947.

- 1 What is the source?
- 2 When was it produced?
- 3 Who produced the source? (You might need to conduct background reading and research on this).
- 4 For whom was it produced?
- 5 Why was it produced?
- 6 Compare this source to what else is known about the origins of the Cold War. Use three other sources (primary and/or secondary, visual and/or written) that must also be analysed for their reliability. You could use some of the historians' views on the previous pages. Copy and complete the following table to help you corroborate the source.



QUESTIONS	SOURCE 1	SOURCE 2	SOURCE 3
What is the source?			
When was it produced?			
Who produced the source?			
For whom was it produced?			
Why was it produced?			
Does it agree or disagree with the opinion expressed in Source 2.08?			

- 7 Make an overall assessment on the reliability of the document in Source 2.08. Do you think it presents a truthful assessment of the causes of the Cold War? Explain your answer with reference to other sources on this topic.
- 8 Would a historian who is interested in creating an accurate account of the origins of the Cold War find Source 2.08 useful? Explain your answer.
- 9 If you answered 'No' to Question 4, write down a historical inquiry question for which Source 2.08 *would* be considered useful. With a partner, discuss the difference between your new inquiry question and Question 4.



## THE RED SCARE

As the Cold War developed during the 1940s and 1950s, anti-communist hysteria spread throughout the USA and other western nations. Many people who expressed compassionate views towards underprivileged people, or who argued for **civil liberties**, were accused of being communists. Conservative politicians such as Senator Joseph McCarthy found that there were votes in creating a communist scare. Newspapers, film, television and advertising all tapped into the fear of communism and heightened the hysteria. This campaign, known as the 'Red Scare', also led to many arbitrary legal processes. People in the literary and artistic fields, as well as many Hollywood actors and directors, were accused on the flimsiest evidence of having 'red' (communist) sympathies. Doubt was even expressed about the loyalties of actress Katharine Hepburn because she wore a red dress to the Oscars. The Red Scare raised awareness of the possibilities of spies on home soil, and led to catch phrases such as 'Reds under the bed' and sightings of unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

J. Edgar Hoover was the first director of the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** when it was established in 1935. He remained in that position until his death in 1972. He was able to gather enormous amounts of information; only after his death did his abuse of power become known. Collecting secret files on political leaders, harassing dissenters and illegally gathering evidence meant that Hoover was so powerful that even US presidents were intimidated, allowing him to continue as director well past retirement age. In 1947, President Truman signed Executive Order 9835, which established the Federal Employee Loyalty Program. This order authorised the FBI to identify any communist sympathisers working for the government, and led to the investigation of approximately 3 million federal government employees. Of these people, 300 were dismissed as security risks. While no one was accused of spying, many employees were considered communist sympathisers (referred to as 'pinkies' or 'fellow travellers').

**Did you know?** In order to spy on communist activity, the CIA launched an operation codenamed Acoustic Kitty. This involved implanting cats with bugging devices so they could eavesdrop on Soviet conversations. Unfortunately the US\$15 million mission ended after a cat was run over.

The Loyalty Program soon spread to other institutions such as schools, and whole organisations could be considered **subversive**. By 1948, almost eighty organisations were viewed as suspicious and many migrants were deported, even if they had become US citizens. This era in the USA became known as 'the **purges**'. Individuals who admitted their guilt and begged forgiveness were still required to implicate others who were thought to be communists. People suspected of sharing secrets with the Soviet Union paid the ultimate price. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed for espionage in 1951. They were accused of leading a **spy ring** that passed secrets about the atomic bomb to the USSR. While there was much debate over the penalty chosen, President Eisenhower refused to give clemency, stating: 'I can only say that, by immeasurably increasing the chances of atomic war, the Rosenbergs may have condemned to death

tens of millions of innocent people all over the world. The execution of two human beings is a grave matter. But even graver is the thought of the millions of dead whose deaths may be directly attributable to what these spies have done.'<sup>18</sup>

## UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

The **House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)** was established in 1938 as a temporary committee to investigate anyone undertaking un-American or subversive actions. HUAC became a permanent committee in 1945, and focused on suspected communists. It had the power to subpoena citizens and hear their testimony before Congress. People suspected of assisting communists were deliberately intimidated, and any dramatic revelations from them were used to arouse public hysteria. People who refused to answer questions about their political beliefs were considered subversives, especially if they justified their silence by referring to their **constitutional rights**. Refusal to answer questions could lead to prison or **blacklisting**. Blacklisting meant that suspects would lose their jobs and be prevented from gaining alternative employment within their industry. In some instances, the tactics used by HUAC became a **witch hunt** against a specific group of people, ruining their reputations.

The most prominent example of a HUAC witch hunt was the 'Hollywood Ten' in October 1947. HUAC believed there were many communists in the film industry, so it pressured the major studios to blacklist anyone suspected of communist activity. The Hollywood Ten was a group of writers and directors who refused to cooperate with investigations, pleading the rights of the US Constitution to every question asked. They were each subsequently held in contempt, sentenced to prison for one year and ordered to pay a US\$1000 fine. All appeals were unsuccessful. Because of the fear and the focus on communists within Hollywood, some blacklisted writers kept writing under false names. One blacklisted writer even won an Academy Award, but did not collect it. The film industry blacklist continued to grow throughout the 1950s as more careers were damaged. It did not end until the 1960s. HUAC contributed greatly to the atmosphere of mistrust within the USA during this time.

### House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)

The government committee responsible for uncovering and punishing communists in the United States.

### constitutional rights

Political rights that are specifically protected by a constitution.

### blacklisting

A list of people barred from employment for holding opinions considered undesirable.

### witch hunt

When an individual or group is unjustly targeted for prosecution and mistreatment.

**Did you know?** The official title of HUAC was the House Committee on Un-American Activities (or HCUA). From 1969 it was known as the House Committee on Internal Security.

**Source 2.11** Hollywood actors protest against HUAC.



### HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND INQUIRY

Espionage undertaken during the Cold War is still classified information in many cases. Despite this, a few key organisations, individuals and projects provide insight into the tactics used on both sides. Your mission, should you wish to accept it, is to choose a topic from the list below to research. Each person will then create a top-secret pamphlet summarising their topic, and work in small 'spy rings' that swap their pamphlets with each other to ensure they are gathering intelligence.

Possible research topics:

- Alger Hiss
- Oleg Penkovsky
- CIA and UFOs
- The Petrov Affair
- The McCarran Internal Security Act
- Ursula Kuczynski
- Cambridge Five
- Rudolph Abel
- Venona project
- Peter and Helen Kroger
- Theodore Hall
- MI5
- George Blake
- Operation Gold
- KGB
- Klaus Fuchs
- GRU.

**Source 2.09** *Is This Tomorrow: Australia under Communism*, a comic published in Melbourne around 1949. The opening scene shows Parliament House in Canberra with hammer and sickle flags. In the comic, the Communist Party plans to 'engineer a total crisis'.

### civil liberties

Fundamental political rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, suffrage and the media.

### Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The American law enforcement agency that deals chiefly with serious federal crimes, counter-terrorism and counter-espionage.

### subversive

Behaviour and activities that deliberately and subtly seek to undermine a government.

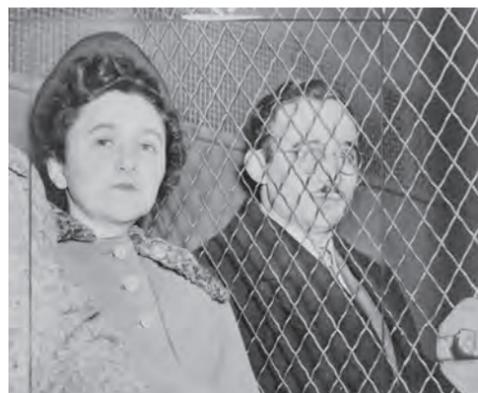
### purge

When a political party, government or other organisation expels members from its ranks, usually without fair cause or process.

### spy ring

A group of spies working together to gather evidence or undermine an enemy state.

**Source 2.10** Ethel and Julius Rosenberg.



## MCCARTHYISM

Joseph McCarthy became a prominent figure in US politics during the 1950s, when he took advantage of the Red Scare. Elected to the US Senate in 1946, McCarthy came to public attention on 9 February 1950 when he announced that 'card carrying communists' had infiltrated the government. Such allegations were supposedly supported by evidence from Hoover's FBI loyalty searches, but were never actually substantiated.

McCarthy attacked both President Roosevelt and President Truman for being soft on communism, and led a smear campaign against General George C. Marshall, who had established the Marshall Plan to prevent the spread of communism in Europe. In 1953, McCarthy became chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. This was a committee that normally dealt with waste and corruption in government. However, as chair of the committee, McCarthy decided to focus on subversion instead, especially communism. McCarthy promoted the use of HUAC and led investigations with the intention of bullying and terrifying others, often targeting high profile figures both within and beyond government. His actions against creative expression were exemplified by the removal of thousands of books from libraries, pressuring universities to fire more than 100 lecturers and encouraging the blacklisting of 324 Hollywood personalities.

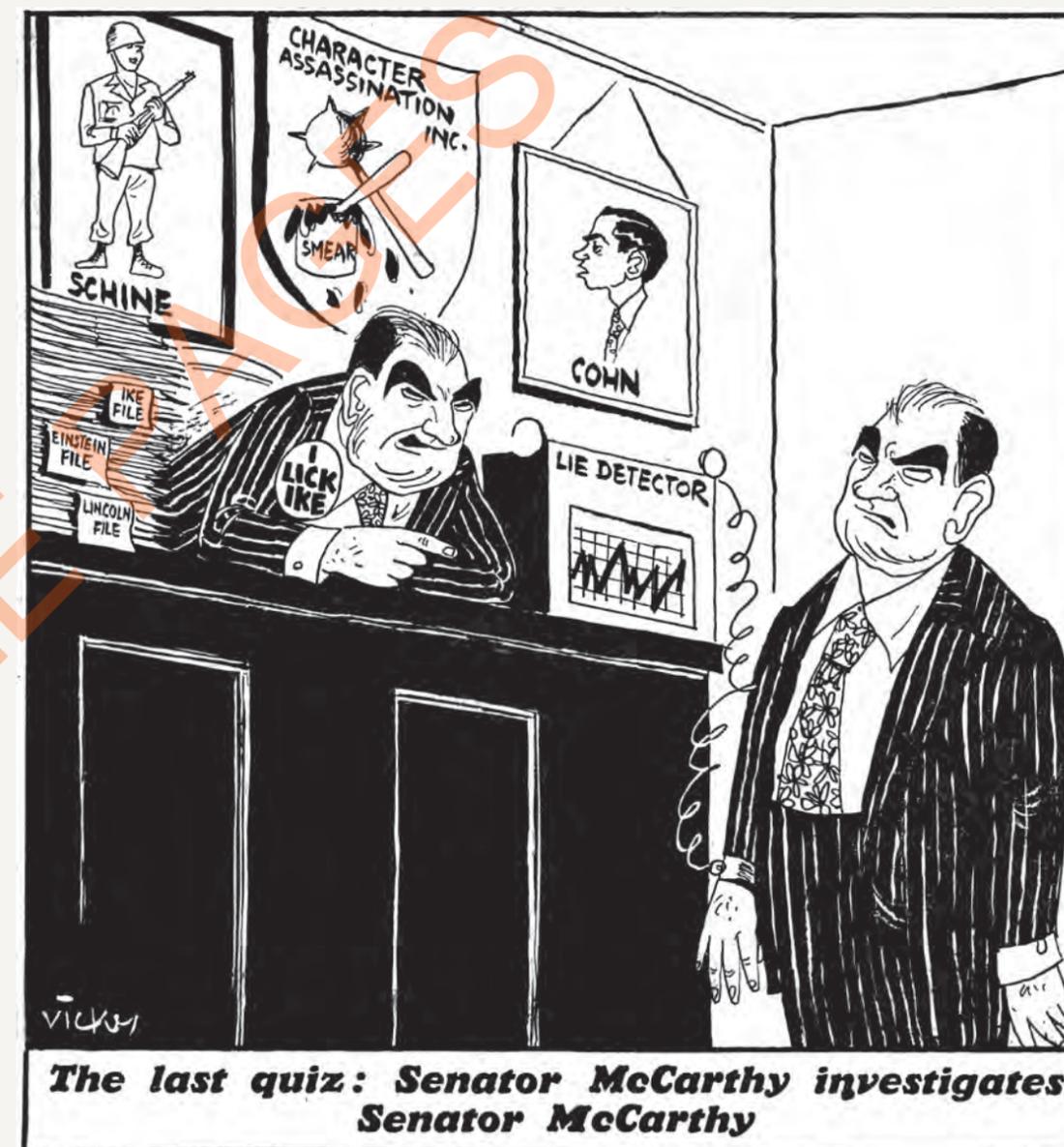


Source 2.13 Senator Joseph McCarthy.

**Did you know?** In the 1946 election to the US Senate, McCarthy campaigned for one of two seats in the Senate for the state of Wisconsin. McCarthy campaigned under the slogan, 'Congress needs a tail-gunner'. This was a reference to McCarthy's nickname during World War II—'Tail-gunner Joe'. McCarthy served in the Pacific during the war, and flew twelve missions as an observer/gunner in a dive-bomber.

However, McCarthy's provocative accusations ultimately led to his political demise during 1954, especially his claims about disloyalty in the US military. Many newspapers expressed their concerns about McCarthy's unsubstantiated claims. A television journalist, Ed Murrow, exposed the investigations undertaken by the US Air Force into its own servicemen. On 9 March 1954 Murrow broadcast an episode of his show, *See It Now*, that allowed the public to see McCarthy's underhanded tactics for the first time—and allowed McCarthy to condemn himself with his own words. The US Army then accused McCarthy of trying to get favourable treatment for a soldier who had been his aide. This led to a three-month televised hearing known as the Army–McCarthy hearings. These hearings used the same trial techniques that McCarthy had used on people he accused of being communists. McCarthy's support from the public—and even from his own party—evaporated, and it was the end of his life as a major public figure. He died three years later.

McCarthy's legacy lives on in the word 'McCarthyism', which means publicly accusing someone of being subversive or disloyal without substantial evidence.



Source 2.14 'The last quiz: Senator McCarthy investigates Senator McCarthy' by Vicky. Published in the *Daily Mirror*, 16 March 1954.

### HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 2.14 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1 Identify two items depicted in the image that refer to the tactics used by McCarthy.
- 2 Describe how McCarthy has been depicted in this cartoon. Why would the cartoonist draw him this way?
- 3 Outline the targets of McCarthy's accusations.
- 4 Evaluate to what extent this is an accurate depiction of the impact that McCarthyism had on the lives of American people during the 1950s and 60s. Use evidence to support your answer.

# ARMS RACE

**BERTRAND RUSSELL:** 'To spread ruin, misery and death throughout one's own country as well as that of the enemy is the act of madmen.'

After the impact of the atomic bomb in Japan was assessed—especially its ability to end a war within a week—it became apparent to both the USA and the USSR that atomic bombs would significantly alter the nature of warfare. America's monopoly of atomic weaponry ended in August 1949 when the Soviet Union detonated its first nuclear bomb. The 1950s marked the beginning of the **arms race** as both sides competed to create more powerful bombs. This race led to the creation of the hydrogen bomb, which was 1000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb. Instead of a fission reaction that splits the atom's nucleus, nuclear fusion causes the subatomic particles to join together, which generates an enormous amount of energy.

The arms race reached new heights in 1954 when the US Secretary of State, John Dulles, announced a policy of 'massive retaliation' should the Soviet Union launch an attack. Both superpowers spent billions of dollars producing nuclear weapons that could destroy all of humanity. However, once both sides had nuclear weapons, if one attacked and the other retaliated, they would both be destroyed. This theory became known as **mutual assured destruction**, and it prevented the outbreak of nuclear war. By the late 1950s it was realised that such bombs had no strategic military value and that a better delivery system was required instead of a plane that could easily be shot down. This led to the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), which required satellites to direct their path as they left the atmosphere and then returned. By 1960, both sides had bombers armed with nuclear weapons patrolling the Earth and missile bases placed in strategic locations. Dulles called this **brinkmanship**. The USA had short-range missiles situated throughout western Europe and Turkey that could strike the Soviet Union within minutes. These were backed up with US-based long-range missiles that could reach the USSR in 30 minutes.



**Source 2.15** A Soviet poster celebrating putting the atom to work for peace and communism.

**arms race**

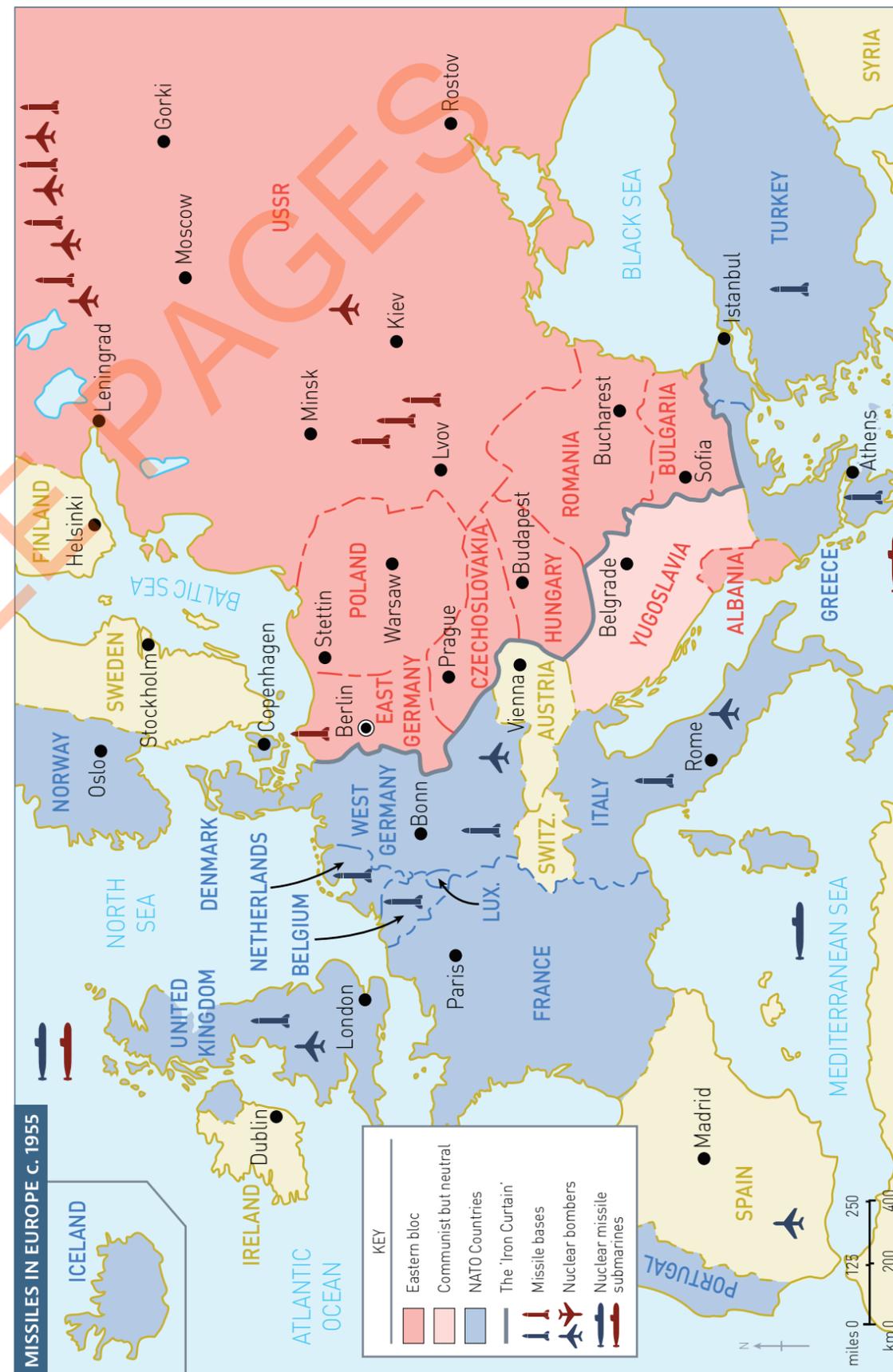
When two or more countries increase their armed forces in order to gain military and diplomatic advantage.

**mutual assured destruction**

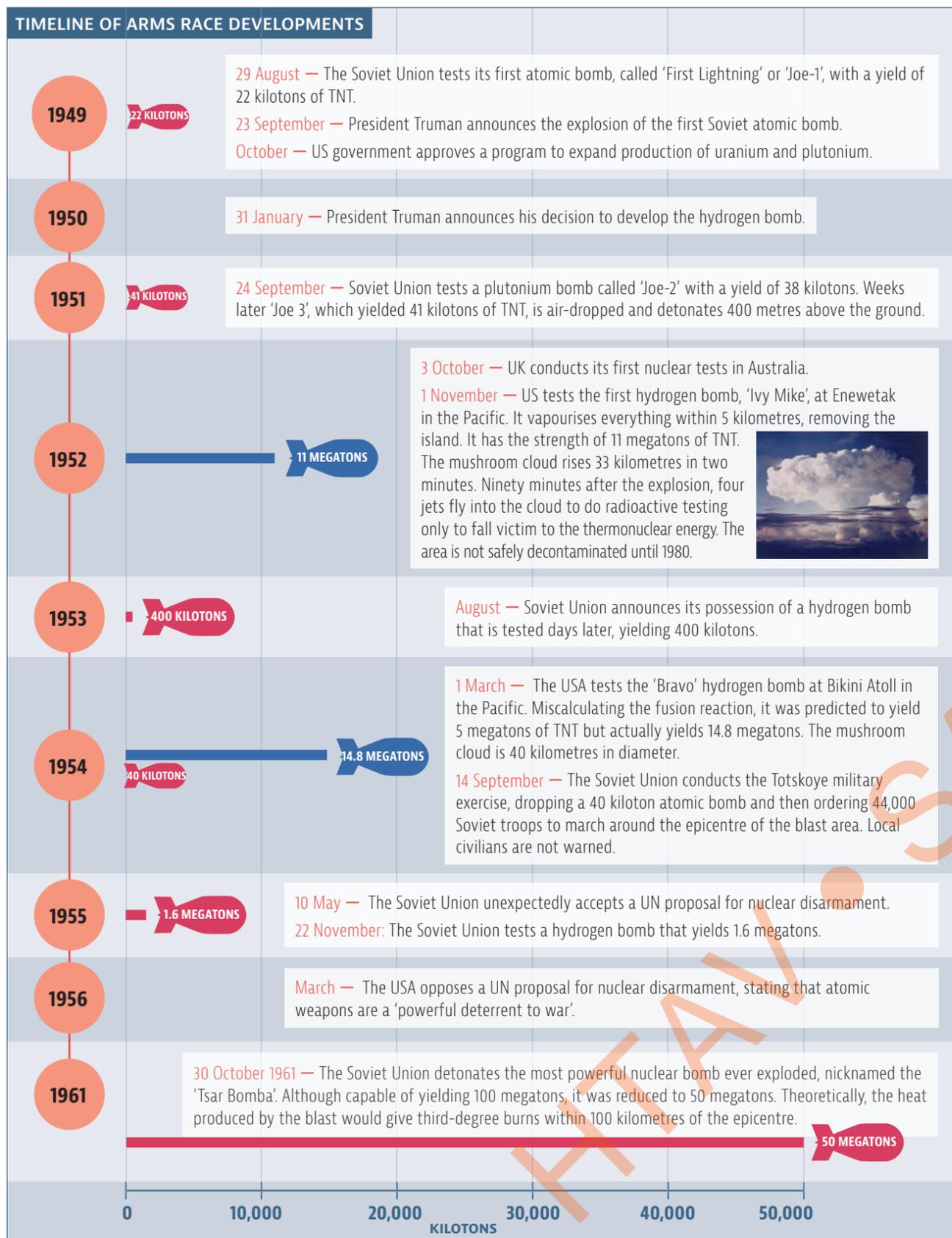
Understanding that using or retaliating with atomic or nuclear bombs will cause the complete annihilation of both the attacker and defender.

**brinkmanship**

Pushing a competitor to the brink of war, without actually precipitating war, in order to make it back down and offer concessions.



**Source 2.16** Map showing missiles in Europe c. 1955.



Note: Bomb measurements have been left in US tons (907 kg) rather than converted to tonnes (1000 kg) so that their comparative sizes are easier to understand.

During the 1960s, an international peace movement challenged the use of nuclear arms. In response, the two superpowers began to negotiate disarmament. In 1963, a **Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty** agreed to in Moscow banned the detonation of all bombs in the atmosphere or in the ocean. This meant that all future tests were to occur underground (although both China and France have since conducted above-ground tests in spite of this treaty). In 1968, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to limit the spread of nuclear weapons was signed by the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom. It was ratified by a further forty-seven countries two years later. Additional discussions took place in 1969 at the **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT)**, which aimed to cut back the development of nuclear weapons.

## DUCK AND COVER

While Americans were experiencing prosperity in the 1950s, they were also experiencing an extreme sense of anxiety over the fear of a nuclear war. In response, the US government reassured the population that they could survive a nuclear explosion. A pamphlet called 'Facts about Fallout' played down any concerns about radioactivity, suggesting that it would all be gone within a few days. This propaganda led to many families building underground fallout shelters in their backyards. Architectural designs included cubes, domes, cylinders and pods made from either steel, concrete, wood or fibreglass. Millions of dollars were dedicated to such shelters, with 200,000 built by 1965. Prices were in the range US\$100–5000, with investors predicting the business to gross at US\$20 billion. In Las Vegas, wealth could even buy you a fallout shelter with a putting green, swimming pool, bathtubs, kitchen and formal dining room. Washington DC opened its first fallout shelter in 1962; three years later it had 1000 of them spread over every corner of the city. Shelters in government buildings could provide for 36,000 people. In one fallout shelter, twenty tonnes of wheat crackers were stored for food. Today, the fallout shelter signs in the capital are preserved as monuments of this frightening time in US history.

Source 2.17 A pamphlet detailing the facts about fallout.



### Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

An agreement signed by the USA and USSR in 1963 that restricted the testing of nuclear weapons.

### Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT)

A treaty that commenced a series of formal agreements to limit arms build-ups and curb the arms race.

**Did you know?** It is believed that the Soviet Union thought that the routinely heavy traffic outside a building in the centre courtyard of the Pentagon was a top-secret meeting room or bunker, so it always had at least two missiles pointing at it during the Cold War. It turned out it was a hot dog stand.

**Did you know?** During the 1960s the USA continuously flew B-52 bombers carrying nuclear bombs around the world in case of an attack by the Soviet Union. Five of these planes crashed and two resulted in nuclear contamination, one over a village on the southern coast of Spain and the other near the coast of Greenland.

Another form of nuclear war propaganda took place within schools. Teachers were encouraged to perform air raid drills where students were expected to hide beneath their desks, clutching their heads. In some cases, schools even distributed dog tags to help identify children after an attack. From this, the government developed an educational film called *Duck and Cover*, where an animated turtle named Bert would duck his head into his shell when a monkey set off a firecracker nearby. A convoy toured America during 1952 to spread the message with posters and a film theatre that reached more than 1 million people. However, it was its distribution into schools and to television stations that increased its audience to tens of millions. Hollywood also took advantage of the arms race, producing nuclear war doomsday films such as *On The Beach*, *The Last Man On Earth*, *The Day the World Ended*, *The Atomic Kid* and *Dr. Strangelove*. The documentary film *The Atomic Cafe* is a satire of life during the 1950s that emphasises the extensive propaganda used to keep the US population optimistic about surviving possible nuclear warfare.

### Geoffrey Roberts analyses the secrecy of the arms race

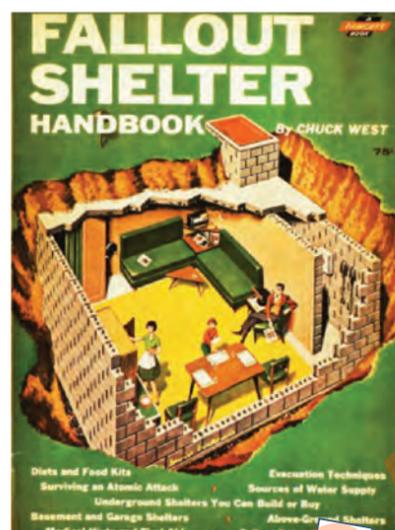
After Stalin died there were many more Soviet nuclear tests, thousands of atomic bombs were produced, and Moscow was never shy of publicising and boasting of the USSR's technological achievements in this sphere. Curiously, Moscow remained silent about the first test, which took the world by surprise and should have been a cause for celebration in the USSR. In the West, the expectation had been that it would take the Soviets many years to develop a bomb, notwithstanding their success in stealing Western atomic secrets. The news of the Soviet test was, in fact, broken to the world by Truman on 23 September [1949]. The next day the Soviet news agency Tass issued a statement claiming that the USSR had possessed the bomb since 1947 and that the recent explosion was connected to 'large-scale blasting' necessary for infrastructural building works such as mines, canals, roads and hydroelectric power stations. Such coyness may have reflected the Soviet obsession with secrecy or it may have been calculated to avoid provoking the Americans too much. It may also have been connected to Vyshinskii's [Soviet foreign minister, 1949–1953] imminent address to the UN about Soviet proposals for disarmament, the prohibition of nuclear weapons, and the control of atomic energy. Indeed, on 23 November 1949 Vyshinskii claimed at the UN that, in contrast to the aggressive US nuclear tests, those of the Soviet Union were peaceful because they were being used to level mountains and move rivers—a claim described by one incredulous American author as 'one of the most nonsensical statements ever perpetrated on an international organisation'.

Source 2.19 Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War 1939–1953* (Great Britain: Yale University Press, 2006).



Source 2.17  
Fallout shelter with provisions, c. 1957.

Source 2.18  
The *Fallout Shelter Handbook*.



### HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 2.19 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1 Explain why it was surprising that Moscow downplayed, and even denied, the detonation of the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb.
- 2 What reasons are given for the Soviet Union's 'coyness' (or secrecy) about this matter?
- 3 How does Vyshinskii contrast US testing of nuclear weapons and that carried out by the Soviet Union?
- 4 Explain how the superpowers used the UN to advance their own world view and national interests during the Cold War.
- 5 Evaluate the significance of the test of nuclear weapons and a factor that contributed to the deteriorating relations between the USA and USSR after World War II. Use evidence to support your response.

## SPACE RACE

JOHN F. KENNEDY, 1962: 'We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.'

Another showcase of power to emerge alongside the arms race was the 'space race'. Once again, the USSR and the USA sought to prove their technological might and superiority as they explored outer space. The Soviet Union took the lead when it launched the first satellite into orbit on 5 October 1957. *Sputnik 1* was launched using an ICBM. Its launch surprised the USA, which saw space as the next frontier that it would be first to explore. As the Soviet Union continued to break new records, such as the first animal and the first man in space, the USA acted with urgency to launch its own satellite, *Explorer 1*, in 1958, and create the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**. Concerns over the Soviet Union's ability to gather intelligence and send ICBMs into US air space led Eisenhower to create other space programs, such as the National Reconnaissance Office, which was a classified mission that used satellites to collect intelligence about the Soviet Union and its allies.

The competition between the two powers intensified on 25 May 1961 when the new US president, John F. Kennedy, pledged to land a man on the Moon by the end of the 1960s. To move things along, Kennedy even suggested a joint program between the USSR and USA. This was rejected by Khrushchev, who believed that the USA was trying to steal Russian space technology. From 1961 to 1964, NASA's budget increased almost 500 per cent, and 400,000 employees were required. Although spacecraft did not need to have astronauts aboard, it seemed that the world was in need of an international hero. Soviet propaganda launched tourism campaigns based on its own ability to send people to outer space, and the media maintained the hype around a possible Moon landing. Eight years after President Kennedy's statement, on 21 July 1969, the USA reached its goal when Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon. Using an Australian tracking station and telescope, the first images of Neil Armstrong on the Moon were broadcast to 600 million people on Earth, who heard the famous line, 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.' In line with the competitive rivalry between the USSR and the USA, the astronauts planted a US flag on the Moon's surface; they also spoke to the White House, signalling that the USA had won the race. Over the next three years, the USA would continue a series of Apollo missions to the Moon before it was ended due to funding cuts. The Soviet Union made four failed attempts to land on the Moon. By 1975 the space race was over. A joint mission that year between the two superpowers, called the Apollo–Soyuz Test Project, witnessed a 'handshake in space' between the two commanders. This action symbolised an improvement in relations during the Cold War era (see Chapter 5).

**Did you know?** During the Cold War, the USA developed a top-secret plan to detonate a nuclear bomb on the Moon to demonstrate its military strength. It also used bears to test the ejector seats in supersonic jets in the 1960s.

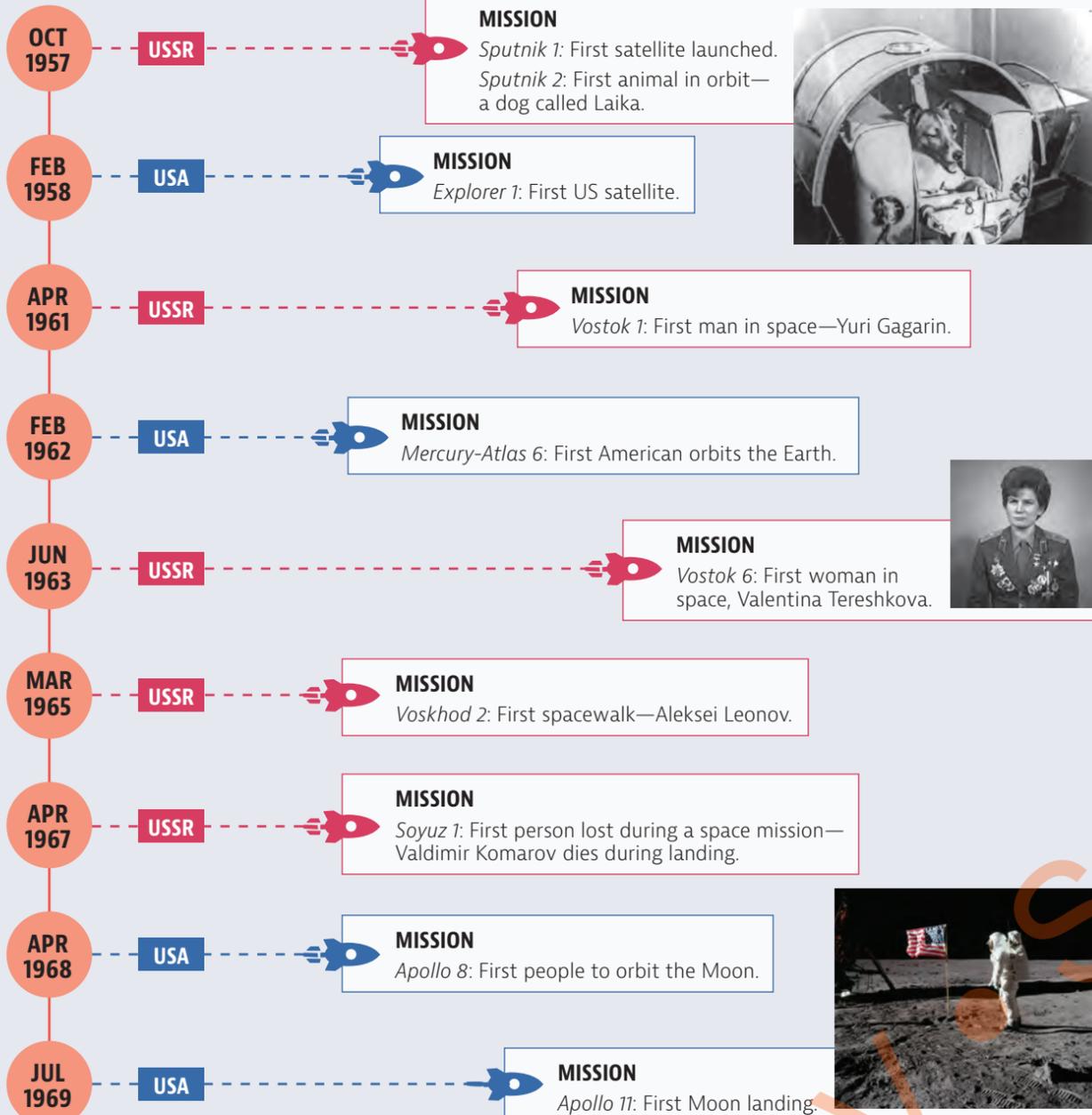
### National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

The US agency responsible for space missions and exploration.

Source 2.20 Soviet poster from 1963. 'Soviet man you can be proud, you opened the road to stars from Earth.'



## TIMELINE OF SPACE RACE DEVELOPMENTS



## HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND INQUIRY

In pairs, research the impact of the space race on both the USSR and the USA. Create four inquiry questions that explore varying factors such as social, economic, political, cultural and technological.

For example, to what extent has knowledge gained from the space race been applied to products and applications that have helped modern life (e.g. anti-icing technology used on the wings of aircraft)?

## CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1 Who started the space race, and when did it begin?
- 2 How did developments in the space race assist the arms race?
- 3 Why do you think the world was in need of an international hero? Provide multiple reasons.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW

When George Orwell first referred to the idea of a Cold War in 1945, he suggested that the world may be entering a time that was 'horribly stable'. In some respects, life during the 1950s was restrictive and personal liberties were limited as both superpowers were determined to oversee the successful implementation of their ideologies within their spheres of influence. Yet, if anything, life for most people only became more unpredictable. Politically, neither the USA nor the USSR could anticipate each other's actions or responses as leaders constantly contradicted themselves. Historian Fred Halliday has suggested this was a time of 'oscillatory antagonism', meaning that diplomatic relations were always changing. Eisenhower wanted to improve the lives of ordinary Americans by cutting military spending, but at the same time he made the public more anxious by provoking an arms race. Khrushchev suggested 'peaceful co-existence' and accepted proposals for nuclear disarmament, but years later detonated the world's largest bomb. As each country desperately tried to build its national security and power, people around the world became more uncertain about what the future would bring. The Cold War soon spread throughout the world as this atmosphere of uncertainty, propped up by intensive propaganda campaigns, elevated into protests, uprisings, hot wars and even the threat of nuclear war.

## KEY SUMMARY POINTS

- Stalin's attempt to starve the West out of Berlin failed.
- The rival alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact were formed.
- The fear of communism dominated American social and cultural life in the 1950s.
- The USA and USSR engaged in an arms race that saw the rapid development of ever-more powerful nuclear bombs.
- A space race emerged from the intense rivalry between the USA and USSR.

## REVIEW

Create a concept map that displays the key tensions of the Cold War. Categorise different types of tensions under headings such as 'Territorial', 'Military' and 'Technological'.

## EXTENDED RESPONSE

Write a 250–350-word extended response to one of the topics below. Your response should include a clear contention, arguments supported by relevant evidence and a clear conclusion.

- Explain how propaganda increased the US public's fear and suspicion during the 1950s.
- Explain how the Berlin Blockade sparked further political actions in the following years.

## ESSAY

Write a 600–800-word essay on one of the topics below. Your essay should include an introduction, paragraphs supported by relevant evidence from primary sources and historical interpretations, and a conclusion.

- Discuss how the Cold War affected each superpower. You may consider a range of social, political, technological, economic and cultural factors.
- Compare how both the USA and USSR displayed power during this era.

## EXTENSION

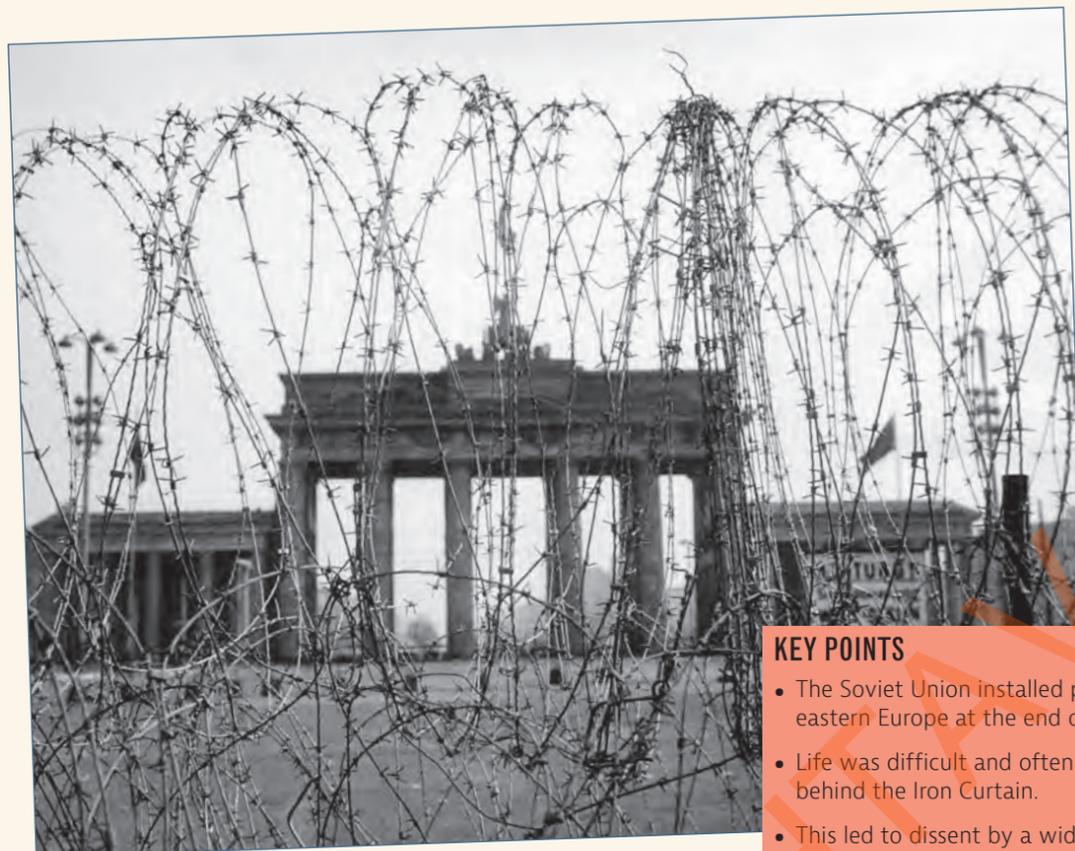
Research a Cold War topic in greater depth and write a report or create a presentation for the class. Some suggested topics are:

- film
- sport
- radio
- economies
- defence
- literature.

# STASILAND: LIFE IN EAST GERMANY

*'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 many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow.'*

WINSTON CHURCHILL, 1946



**Source 1** The Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. The barbed wire is on the Western side, and was laid by Berlin's British military command.

### KEY POINTS

- The Soviet Union installed pro-Soviet regimes in eastern Europe at the end of World War II.
- Life was difficult and often harsh for those living behind the Iron Curtain.
- This led to dissent by a wide range of people against the pro-Soviet governments.
- The Soviet Union responded quickly and brutally to displays of defiance.
- The building of the Berlin Wall had repercussions for Berlin, Germany and the world.

## LIVING UNDER COMMUNISM

The *standard of living* under communism was considerably lower than in Western democracies. The economies of communist countries were dictated and controlled by the state, which decided what would be produced, the timeline in which goods would be manufactured, and the wages that would be paid to the workers. Economies concentrated heavily on industrial manufacturing, in particular focusing on steelmaking and coalmining, with large quotas imposed upon the workers. Agriculture was subject to *collectivisation*. People were no longer able to own their own businesses and make a profit. As a result, consumer goods became rare and expensive.



### standard of living

The general conditions under which people live their lives; often measured by life expectancy, health metrics, income, assets etc.

### collectivisation

An element of socialist economics that gathers a state's productive capacity, such as farms, into large, state-owned enterprises with the aim of improving efficiency and productivity.

**Source 2** East Germans queuing in the city of Jena in 1987. The sign above the door reads, 'The stronger socialism is, the stronger the peace.'

### LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM

<p>Very limited private ownership of businesses. Economy controlled by the state.</p>	<p>Everyone had a home, often in prefabricated high-rise apartment blocks.</p>	<p>Media controlled by the government.</p>	<p>Lack of consumer goods.</p>	<p>Lower wages.</p>	<p>Secret police used to control population through fear, intimidation and terror.</p>
<p>Lack of personal freedom and individual liberties.</p>	<p>Forced collectivisation of agriculture.</p>	<p>Low standards of living.</p>	<p>Culture controlled by the state and used to promote communist ideals.</p>	<p>Free education for all.</p>	<p>No trade unions: workers unable to improve work conditions.</p>

## THE EAST GERMAN UPRISING, JUNE 1953

The Soviet Union had to suppress several uprisings in its Eastern Bloc 'allies' throughout the course of the Cold War. The first occurred in East Germany in June 1953.

### Causes

With the failure to reunify Germany in the immediate aftermath of World War II, East German communist leader Walter Ulbricht commenced the full socialisation of the economy in July 1952. There was a new focus on heavy industry, private firms were taxed heavily and agriculture was collectivised. However, these measures led to a rapid and dramatic decline in the living standards of East Germans. As collectivised farms were generally less efficient and productive, food prices rose sharply while wages for factory workers fell. Between 1951 and 1953 nearly 500,000 East Germans fled to the West! In early June 1953, the German Communist Party renounced many of its economic measures. One remained, however—the increase in hours for factory workers. For many Germans this was the catalyst for a demonstration against the regime.

### Course

After a few days of small strikes and protests, on 16 June 300 construction workers walked off the job and marched to the government buildings in the East Berlin. The next day, 80,000–100,000 East Berliners took to the streets and congregated in the city centre to demand better living conditions, fairer wages and free elections. There were similar scenes in the other major cities of East Germany. The night before, however, the East German government had called for help from Moscow. Soviet tanks and soldiers were sent in against demonstrators all over East Germany to quell the uprising. They fired into the crowds and caused dozens of deaths. It is thought that thirty-two Soviet soldiers who refused to fire on the protestors were shot by the Russian counter-intelligence agency **SMERSH**.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet troops and East German police regained control of the streets by the evening. Although there was sporadic protest activity over the next few days, it had almost entirely ceased by 24 June.

### Outcomes

The uprising was a failure, and East Germans would not challenge their government on this scale again until November 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell. The East German government responded by increasing the size and powers of the **Stasi** (*Staatssicherheit*) and never again attempted such large-scale economic reforms.



**Source 3** A Russian T-34 tank rolls through the streets of East Berlin on 17 June 1953.

#### SMERSH

The Russian counter-intelligence agency tasked with discovering and eliminating all internal threats to the Soviet state.

#### Stasi

'Stasi' was the common shortened form of *Staatssicherheit*, or state security. The Stasi was East Germany's secret police.

## GERMANY DIVIDED

Steve Phillips (author): 'West Berlin had become an island of prosperous capitalism in a sea of communism.'<sup>3</sup>

Under the terms of the Potsdam Agreement, both Germany and Berlin were divided into four zones of occupation. The Berlin Blockade had resulted in the formation of two countries: the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Berlin remained a symbolically divided city. Nowhere were the differences in lifestyles between the capitalist West and communist East more sharply highlighted than in Berlin. Berlin was in a unique position as there was fairly free movement through the city before the wall was built in August 1961. East Berliners could see for themselves the prosperity of the West, where consumer goods that were often unavailable in East Germany could be purchased cheaply. It also allowed many East Germans to flee to the West via Berlin.

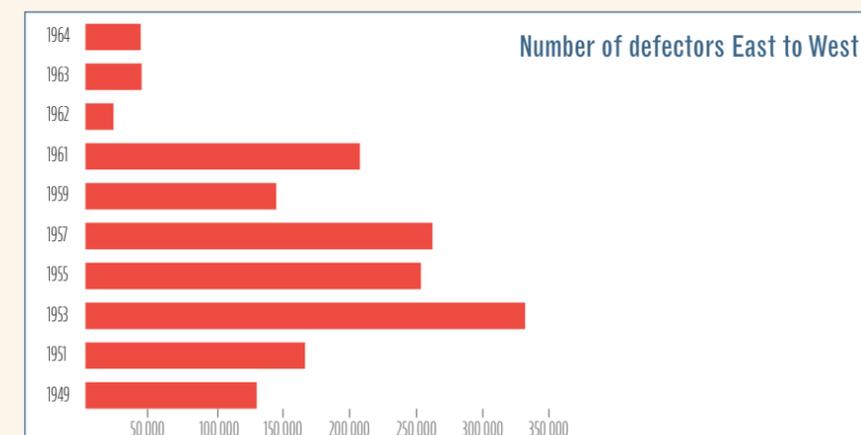
By the mid-1950s the recovery of West Germany and its entry into NATO caused concern in the Soviet Union. In 1958, Khrushchev suggested that Berlin become a neutral city and that the occupying powers should leave, but then a US spy plane was shot down in Soviet air space just before the May 1960 Paris summit, and relations between the two superpowers grew decidedly frosty. When Kennedy became US president in 1961, Khrushchev decided to try and push the new, young and inexperienced leader, who had already suffered an embarrassing international incident—the failed **Bay of Pigs** invasion (see Chapter 4). Khrushchev demanded that the West recognise East Germany, withdraw their troops from West Berlin and hand over access routes to the East German government. At the Vienna summit in June 1961, Kennedy refused Khrushchev's demands, and followed up in July by announcing increased arms spending.

**Did you know?** The leader of the East German Socialist Unity Party, Walter Ulbricht, declared two months before the construction of the Berlin Wall began that 'Nobody has the intention of building a wall.'

### THE BERLIN WALL

**Nikita Khrushchev, 1963: 'Berlin is the testicles of the West. When I want the West to scream, I squeeze on Berlin.'**

During the 1950s, Walter Ulbricht, the First Secretary of East Germany, introduced two Five-Year Plans that saw heavy industry production double. However, the benefits to industry came at a cost as there was a shortage of consumer goods and East Germans continued to suffer from low wages and food shortages. The shortage of food was exacerbated under the second Five Year Plan (1955–1959) when many farmers walked away from their farms rather than enter a state-run farm under forced collectivisation. Food production fell and rationing was reintroduced in 1961. Many people were disillusioned with life under communism and left for West Germany. So many East Germans were defecting to West Germany that the population drain was beginning to threaten the East German economy. Many of the people who were fleeing to the West were young professionals and skilled workers. Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of West Germany, called this the **Magnet Theory** as people sought freedom and higher wages in the West. In April 1961, 30,000 East Germans fled via West Berlin amid rumours that the border between East and West Berlin was about to close.



#### Bay of Pigs

The failed invasion of Cuba by an anti-Castro militia trained and equipped by the CIA in April 1961.

#### Magnet Theory

Factors that draw people to a new place, such as higher wages, more freedom or a better standard of living.



**Source 4** Construction begins on the concrete wall that eventually surrounded West Berlin.

Sunday 13 August 1961 became known as *Stacheldrahtsonntag* ('barbed-wire Sunday') as East German soldiers and police placed barbed-wire fencing along a 50 kilometre stretch, closing the border between East and West Berlin. Over the next forty-eight hours, the barbed wire was replaced with a concrete wall. The East German government called it an *Antifaschistischer Schutzwall* ('anti-fascist protection barrier').

The building of the wall extended to encompass the whole of West Berlin. Families were divided and cut off from each other. Many East Germans lost their jobs in the West. Strict travel restrictions meant that it was virtually impossible for families to visit one another. The Berlin Wall was a symbolic reality of the division between communism and capitalism. The West did nothing to prevent the building of the Berlin Wall.

In the following decades, more than 100 people died attempting to cross the Berlin Wall. One of the most well-known deaths was that of Peter Fechter in 1962. Fechter was one of the first people to be shot attempting to cross the Berlin Wall. He bled to death as East German border police refused to help him. Those in the West feared the reaction from the Eastern side and did nothing. His death was witnessed by many people.



**Source 5** East Berliners escaped through houses adjacent to the Berlin Wall before they were boarded up.



**Source 6** The body of 18-year-old East Berliner Peter Fechter being carried away by GDR border soldiers, almost an hour after he was shot.



**Source 7** 'I just closed off what's mine—for the rest I'm ready to negotiate,' by Edmund Valtman.

**Did you know?** Regarding the construction of the Berlin Wall, US President Kennedy said: 'It's not a nice solution but a wall is a hell of a lot better than war.'

**CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING**

Draw up a table to identify the differences between East and West Berlin.

- 1 Why was the Berlin Wall built?
- 2 Do you think the Berlin Wall was a good or bad thing?

**SUMMARY**

Create a diagram to show the causes and effects of defections to West Germany.

**CREATIVE**

Imagine you live in East Berlin. Write a letter to your cousin in West Berlin describing what life was like after the Berlin Wall was built.

**HISTORICAL SOURCES**

Using Source 7 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1 Identify the two leaders represented in the cartoon.
- 2 Outline two reasons why the Berlin Wall was built.
- 3 Explain the events leading up to the construction of the Berlin Wall.
- 4 Analyse the consequences of Khrushchev's decision to build the Berlin Wall on Soviet–American relations. Use evidence to support your response.

## THE STASI

The 'Stasi' used fear and intimidation to control the population of East Germany and ensure that any perceived dangers to the regime were eliminated. It was founded in 1950 and was answerable only to the government of East Germany, which was the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, or SED). The aim of the Stasi was to prevent the development of non-conformist or **dissident** ideas and behaviour. The Stasi employed 91,015 people full-time, and also had a network of unofficial collaborators who gathered information on people from all areas of society. Suspects could be arrested on suspicion without having committed any offence. Just having hair that was too long was enough for someone to appear suspicious. The Stasi used a range of methods to stamp out non-conformist ideas, from physical violence, arrests, kidnappings and show trials to rumours and manipulation. They tailed suspects, bugged telephones, installed video cameras in buildings, searched apartments and destroyed friendships and careers in the name of ensuring East Germany's security.

The Stasi targeted all aspects of people's lives in order to control and minimise subversive behaviour. Youth organisations were used to politically educate and control young people to ensure that they were loyal citizens, as well as use young people as informants. The Stasi had representatives in all walks of life: they infiltrated factories, schools and hospitals; a Stasi representative lived in every apartment block; and many clergymen were recruited as informers. Stasi officers would accompany athletes to international competitions as they were concerned that sportspeople would escape and defect once they were out of East Germany.

### Censorship

The Ministry for State Security was also responsible for culture and media. **Censorship** was applied to every aspect of culture. All novels and plays had to be submitted for review before they could be published. Anything considered to contain criticism of the communist state was not allowed, so references to life in East Germany were banned. Newspapers, broadcasting and television were all strictly controlled by the state.

### Control of sport

East Germany went to extremes to prove its superiority, and used sport as a propaganda tool. The use of drugs to enhance sporting performances became systematic from the 1970s, and it was monitored by the Stasi. East German athletes were the equivalent of rock stars. They enjoyed greater freedom than ordinary East Germans, but that freedom came at a price. Due to the state-sanctioned use of anabolic steroids (synthetic versions of the male sex hormone testosterone), female athletes suffered from infertility and miscarriages. Other athletes later suffered from liver disease, heart disease and cancer.

**Source 8** Anna Funder, *Stasiland* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2003), 5.

#### Extract from *Stasiland* by Anna Funder

The Stasi was the internal army by which the government kept control. Its job was to know everything about everyone, using any means it chose ... The Stasi's brief was to be 'shield and sword' of the Communist Party, called the SED. But its broader remit [goal] was to protect the Party from the people. It arrested, imprisoned and interrogated anyone it chose. It inspected all mail in secret rooms above post offices (copying letters and stealing any valuables), and intercepted, daily, tens of thousands of phone calls. It bugged hotel rooms and spied on diplomats. It ran its own universities, hospitals, elite sports centers and terrorist training programs for Libyans and the West Germans of the Red Army Faction. It pockmarked the countryside with secret bunkers for its members in the event of World War III. Unlike secret services in democratic countries, the Stasi was the mainstay of State power. Without it, and without the threat of Soviet tanks to back it up, the SED regime could not have survived.

#### HISTORICAL SOURCES

Using Source 8 and your own knowledge, respond to the following.

- 1 Identify two goals of the Stasi.
- 2 Identify two ways the Stasi monitored people.
- 3 Explain why the SED used the Stasi to maintain control.
- 4 Analyse the impact of security agencies on the lives of ordinary people during the Cold War. Use evidence to support your response.

#### RESEARCH

Conduct research into one male and one female East German athlete. Look at their sports, training regimes, diet, use of drugs, competitions entered, success, and longer-term impacts. Some examples include Renate Neufeld, Dagmar Käsling and Steffen Zesner.

#### dissident

Behaviour or communication that criticises and challenges a government or the status quo; also used a label for anyone who holds such views.

#### censorship

Messages spread by a government or other institution that are usually heavily biased or distort the truth in order to maintain support and control.

## THE STASI FILES

Anna Funder: 'The thoroughness of the regime was horrifying: it accumulated, in the 40 years of its existence, more written records than in all of German history since the Middle Ages. East Germany was run on fear and betrayal: at least one in 50 people—by CIA estimates, one in seven—were informing on their relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues.'<sup>4</sup>

After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, Stasi officers were ordered to destroy the files they kept on East German citizens. They were interrupted by citizen groups who occupied the Stasi headquarters. What was discovered was approximately 16,000 bags full of shredded or torn files, plus partially destroyed photos, slides and recordings.

The Stasi Records Agency was established in 1992 with the aim of preserving Stasi documents. Since 1995 it has had the painstaking task of reconstructing torn documents by hand. More recently, computer-supported techniques have been used to speed up the process.

Between 1991 and 2012, the Stasi Records Agency received more than 6.75 million requests to view files. In January 2015 it made some files available online for the first time.

#### Stasi files in numbers

- Documents:** 111 shelf kilometres
- Filmed documents:** the equivalent of 47 shelf kilometres
- File cards:** 39 million
- Photos, film negatives, slides:** 1.8 million
- Film, video and audio recordings:** 30,300
- Fragmented material:** 15,500 bags

**Source 8** Federal Commissioner for the Records of the Stasi for the former GDR, 'About the Stasi Archives,' <https://www.bstu.de/en/archives/about-the-archives/>



**Source 9** Reconstructing the Stasi files, 1996.

#### CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

- 1 What was the Stasi?
- 2 In the eyes of the East German regime, why was the Stasi necessary?
- 3 How did the activities of the Stasi affect the lives of ordinary East German people?

#### SUMMARY

Create a concept map to show the type of activities the Stasi might consider a threat to East German security.