



The Atomic Age: Truman & Eisenhower

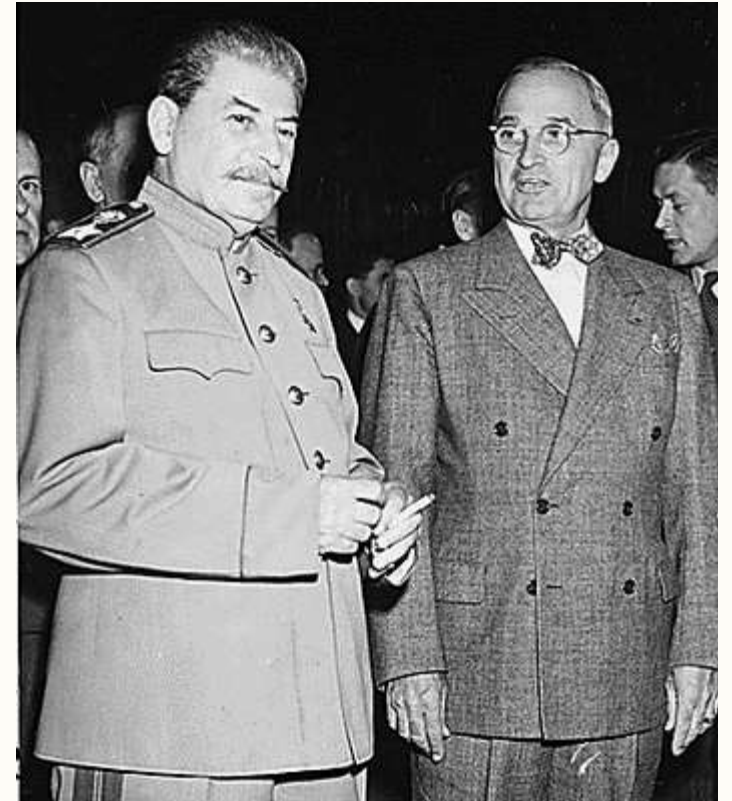
Post-war
Confidence and
Anxiety

1945-1960

The International
Impact of
the Cold War

Origins of the Cold War

- US President Harry Truman and Soviet Union dictator Joseph Stalin disagreed on how Germany and Eastern Europe should be controlled after WWII
- Recall US was *capitalist*; Soviet Union was *communist*
- Stalin's army ended up occupying almost all of Eastern Europe making them satellite states of the USSR
- The rivalry for control between the US and the USSR led to a 46 year conflict known as the Cold War



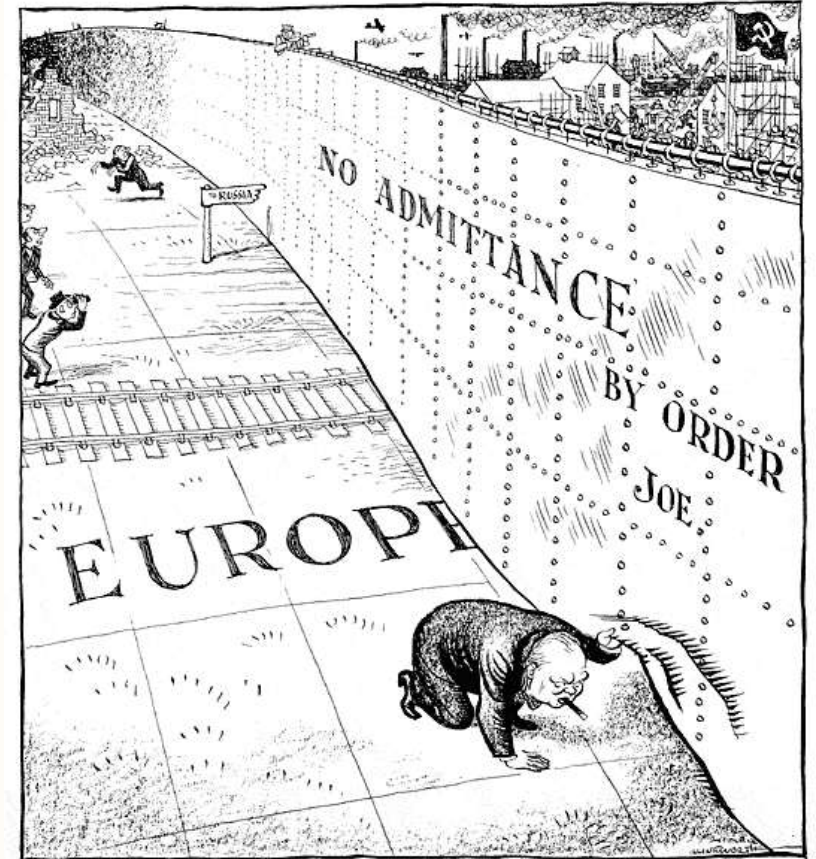


Division of Germany, 1945



The “Iron Curtain”

- British Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed with Truman that Stalin was attempting to spread Soviet influence throughout the world.
- He commented that the world was now divided in two by an “iron curtain”; on one side communist, the other side capitalist.



Berlin Splits in Two

- Later (1961), the Berlin Wall was constructed *physically* separating communist East Berlin from capitalist West Berlin







Truman Doctrine

- The Soviet Union attempted to expand its influence over the struggling nations of Greece and Turkey.
- President Truman pleaded to Congress in 1947 to financially assist these two countries to deter them from falling under Soviet control.
- Truman's promise to aid nations struggling against communist movements became known as the Truman Doctrine, setting a new course for American foreign policy.



Containment Policy

- In July 1947, George Keenan, an American diplomat, published an article about the global intentions of the Soviet Union.
- Keenan argued that the Soviet Union would be persistent and patient in its attempts to expand communist influence.
- His article presented a blueprint for the American policy of suppressing communism called containment.



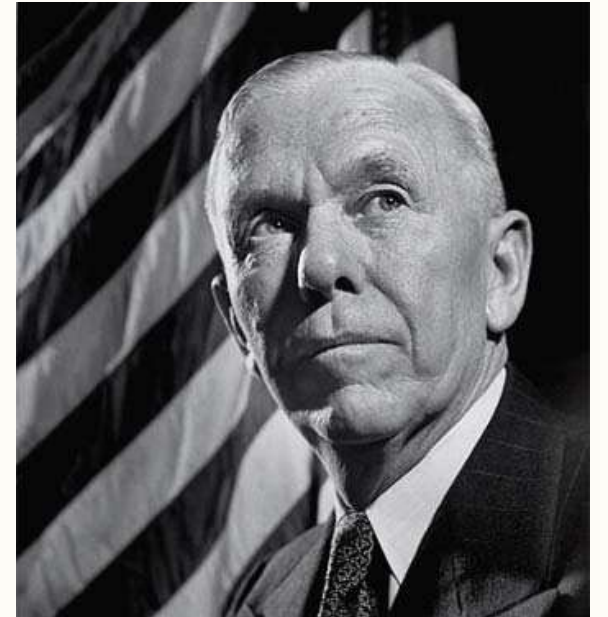
NSC-68

Cold War policy for more than 2 decades
Top-secret until 1975

- The report began by noting that the United States was facing a completely changed world.
- The Soviet Union posed a new and frightening threat to US power. Animated by “a new fanatic faith” in communism, the Soviet Union sought nothing less than the imposition of “its absolute authority over the rest of the world.” Clashes with the United States were, therefore, inevitable. According to the report, the development of nuclear weapons meant, “Every individual faces the ever-present possibility of annihilation,” and, as a result, “the integrity and vitality of our system is in greater jeopardy than ever before in our history.”
- According to the report, the United States should vigorously pursue a policy of “containing” Soviet expansion. NSC-68 recommended that the United States embark on rapid military expansion of conventional forces and the nuclear arsenal, including the development of the new hydrogen bomb. In addition, massive increases in military aid to US allies were necessary as well as more effective use of “covert” means to achieve US goals. The price of these measures was estimated to be about \$50 billion; at the time the report was issued, America was spending just \$13 billion on defense.

Marshall Plan

- After WWII, European countries were in dire need for food, fuel and medical supplies.
- Secretary of State George Marshall proposed a plan to help Europe financially recover, called the Marshall Plan.
- This aid helped facilitate good relationships between Western Europe and the US and also helped reduce the influence of communism on the continent.



The Berlin Air Lift

- June 1948 --Stalin cut off Berlin from Western contact
- All land routes to into city were blockaded by Soviet troops
- Truman decided to fly supplies to the cities citizens by air
- Berlin Airlift delivered supplies to the city for 11 months
- Possibility of war loomed
- Stalin finally reopened city



NATO & The Warsaw Pact

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

- 1949
- Truman broke tradition dating to Washington's presidency, as he joined an alliance with European countries

Warsaw Pact

- Stalin responded to NATO by forming the Warsaw Pact in 1955
- Provided the same protection, but once a member a country could never leave alliance

These alliances created an atmosphere of competition and resulted in an arms race. 1952: The US developed its first hydrogen bomb. Roughly 1000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb, this temporarily gave the US an advantage in the arms race.





Communists Takeover China

- In 1949 Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong emerged victorious in the Chinese Civil War.
- US had supported anti-communist forces in China during the war, but refused to intervene militarily.
- Americans were shocked at the communist victory in China; seen as a failure of the containment policy







朝鮮人民軍中國人民志願軍勝利萬歲!

The Korean War

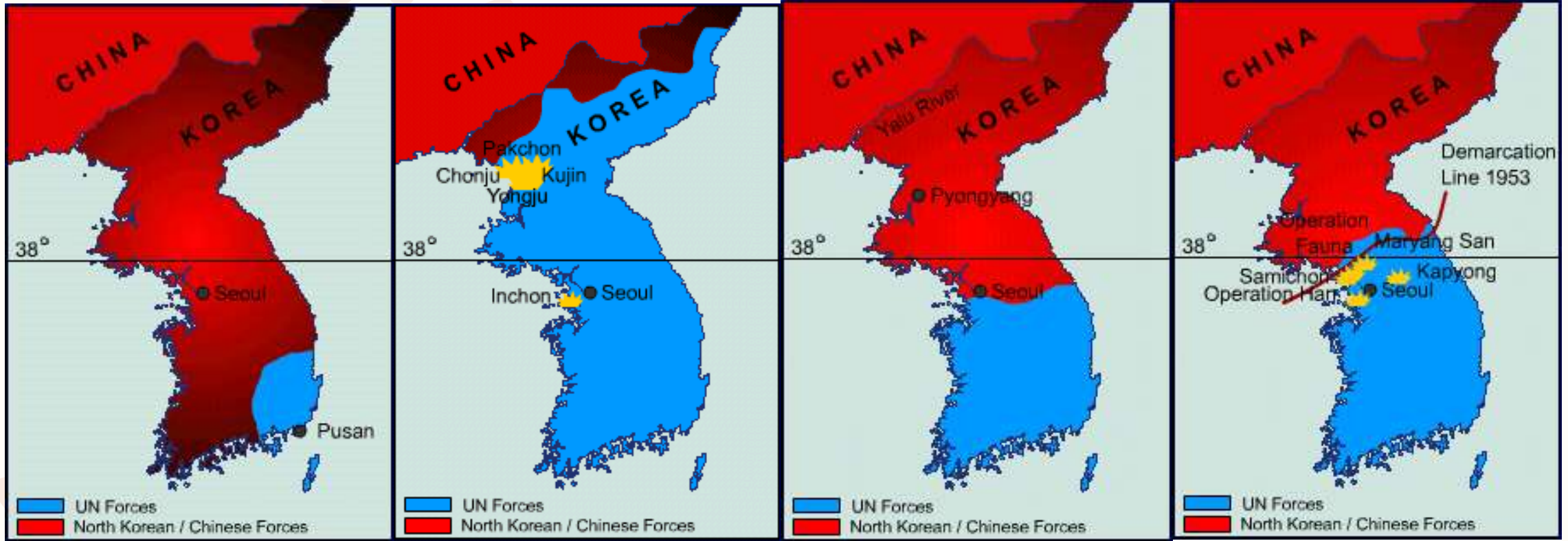


- After WWII, the Korean peninsula was divided at the 38th parallel.
- North Korea was under the control of the Soviet Union.
- South Korea was under the control of the United States.

The Korean War

- In 1950, communist North Korea attacked south of the 38th parallel into South Korea with weapons supplied by the USSR.
- In response, President Truman sent in US troops to push back the North Korea army.
- When the US forced North Korea's army back above the 38th parallel China decided to send troops to assist the North Koreans.
- War ended in 1953 as a stalemate; no territory was gained or lost by either side





The Domestic Impact of the Cold War

Another Red Scare

- After WWI, Americans became very concerned with the spread of communism and socialism in the world.
- This fear was revived after WWII.
- With the “loss” of China and the thousands of troop deaths in the Korean War, many Americans again became concerned about the growing influence of communism.
- This “Second Red Scare” caused more alarm, spreading deeper and wider than the Red Scare of the 1920’s.
- HUAC: House on Un-American Activities Committee created to search for communists in all aspects of American life. (government, army, unions, education, etc.)

Spy Cases Worry Americans



- Americans feared that spies were working within the United States to help steal secrets about constructing atomic weapons.
- Married couple Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were accused of helping pass along atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.
- Both were executed in 1953 for treason.

The Rise of Joe McCarthy

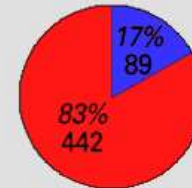
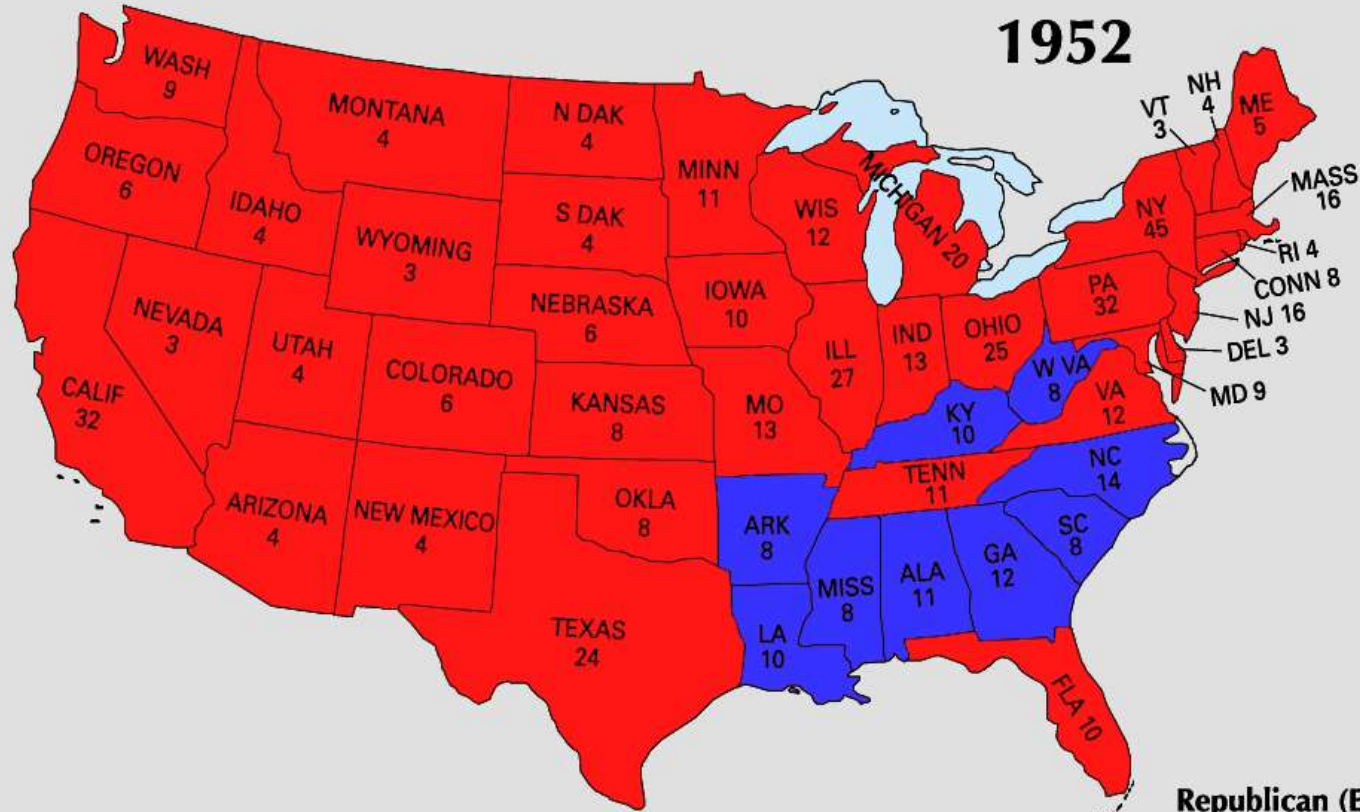
- In 1950, Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed that the US state department was overrun with communists.
- The victory of Zedong's communist regime in China and the outbreak of the Korean War only served to increase the popularity and power of Joseph McCarthy and his accusations.
- His quest to rid the government of communists became known as McCarthyism.



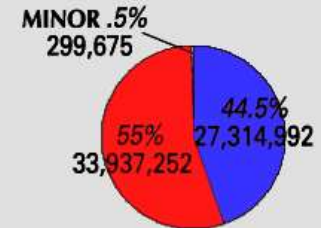
Eisenhower's Administration

1952-1960

1952



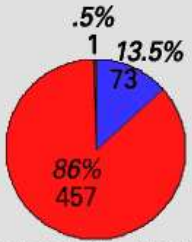
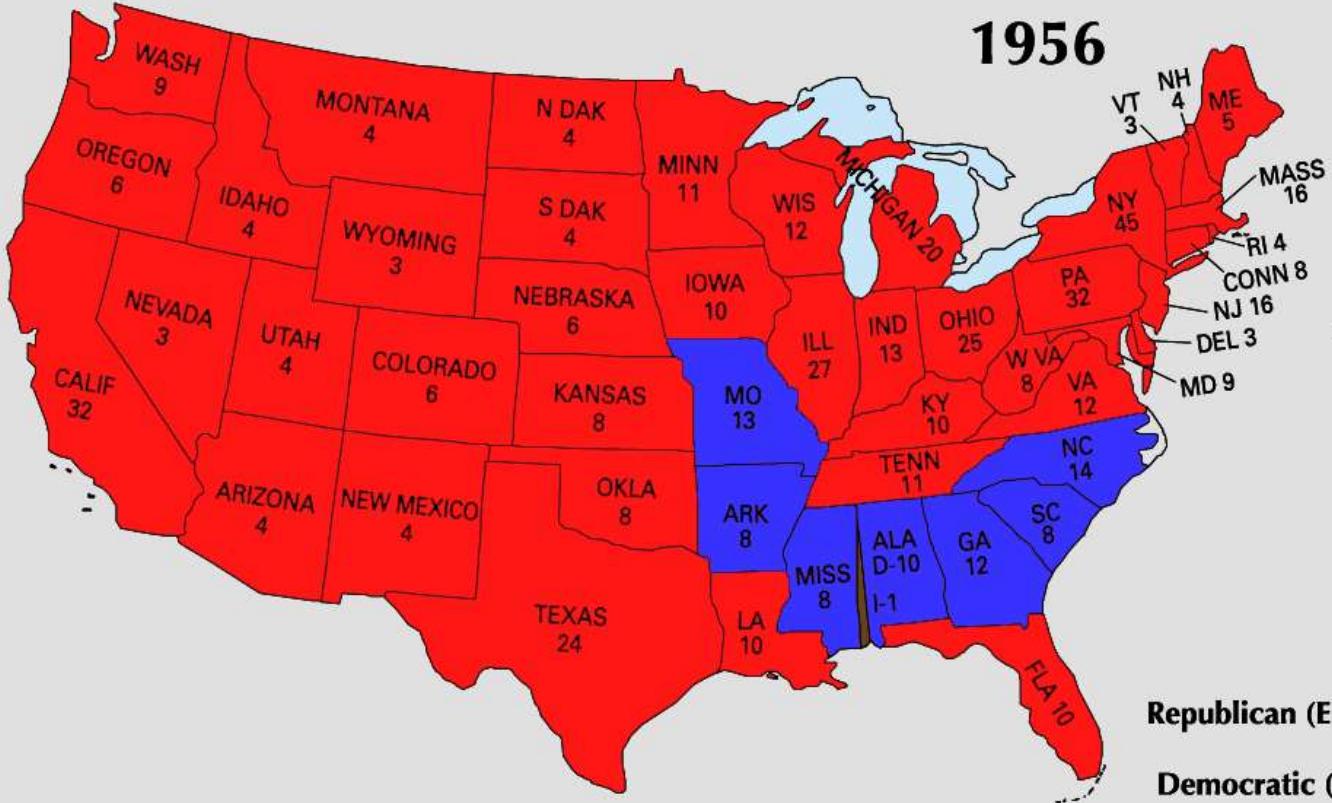
ELECTORAL VOTE
TOTAL: 531



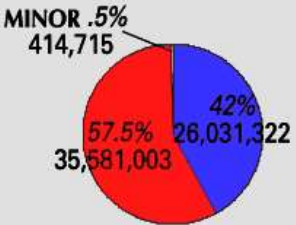
POPULAR VOTE
TOTAL: 61,551,919

Republican (Eisenhower) 
Democratic (Stevenson) 

1956



ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 531



POPULAR VOTE TOTAL: 62,027,040

- Republican (Eisenhower) ■
- Democratic (Stevenson) ■
- Independent (Jones) ■

Eisenhower's Presidency



- Dwight D. Eisenhower was president from 1952-1960.
- Architect of D-Day during WWII
- Richard Nixon was his vice president
- John Foster Dulles was his secretary of state
- Dulles advocated for brinksmanship: active support for nations that wanted liberation from communism –The US would push the aggressor nation to the brink of nuclear war, forcing it to back down and make concessions in the face of American superiority
- He wanted to emphasize nuclear and air power more than traditional troops and weapons
- Massive retaliation: the US would unleash its arsenal of nuclear weapons on any nation that attacked it

US Intervention

- As colonial governments collapsed in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa, the US struggled to keep up with the need to avoid communist take over in these vulnerable countries
- In addition to brinkmanship and massive retaliation, Dulles supported the use of covert action to fight the Cold War
- In 1953, the CIA staged a coup that led to the return of the liberal, corrupt, and ruthless shah of Iran
- Similarly, the CIA aided in the overthrow of a left-leaning government in Guatemala

Geneva Convention

- The French were losing control of their colonies in Indochina; without US assistance, the French were forced to give up the colony entirely
- As a result of the Geneva Convention, the region was divided into three countries: Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos
- The convention also decided to divide Vietnam at the 17th parallel, with the communists led by Ho Chi Minh in the north and the Nationalists led by Ngo Dinh Diem in the south (It further decided that elections to reunite the country would occur in two years)
- Ngo Dinh Diem became increasingly dictatorial
- Fearing a communist take over, the elections were never allowed to take place



Domino Theory

- Domino Theory: where one Asian nation would fall to communism and the rest would follow
- Dulles was urged to action by the domino theory
- He created the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), which resembled NATO, to give mutual military assistance to member nations to hold up Ngo's crumbling regime

Eisenhower & the Middle East

- Middle Eastern countries were also a concern
- Egyptian leader Nasser asked the US to assist in building the Aswan Dam
- The US refused, as Egypt seemed to threaten the security of the new Jewish state of Israel
- Nasser seized the foreign-held Suez Canal in response
- This cut-off the free flow of oil from the Middle East to Europe and the US

Eisenhower & The Middle East

- Unbeknownst to Eisenhower, Britain, France, and Israel launched a surprise attack on Egypt and regained control of the Suez Canal
- An angry Eisenhower called upon the UN Security Council to denounce the surprise attacks and call for the immediate removal of multinational forces
- The UN complied, and Britain and France fell from their role as world leaders



Eisenhower Doctrine

- Eisenhower seized this opportunity to become more of a presence in the Middle East by proclaiming the Eisenhower Doctrine
- Like the Truman Doctrine, but was pointed at the Middle East

The Soviet Union & Hungary

- Stalin died of a stroke in 1953
- Many looked for relief from Cold War tensions
- Signs existed that this was a possibility
- Hungary successfully overthrew a Soviet puppet government
- The new government demanded Hungary's removal from the Warsaw Pact
- The new Soviet premier, Nikita Khrushchev, ordered Soviet troops to crush the resistance
- The US did not respond
- Eisenhower feared that sending US troops would begin World War III
- USSR brutally crushed Hungarian resistance, killing many

Spy Planes over the Soviet Union

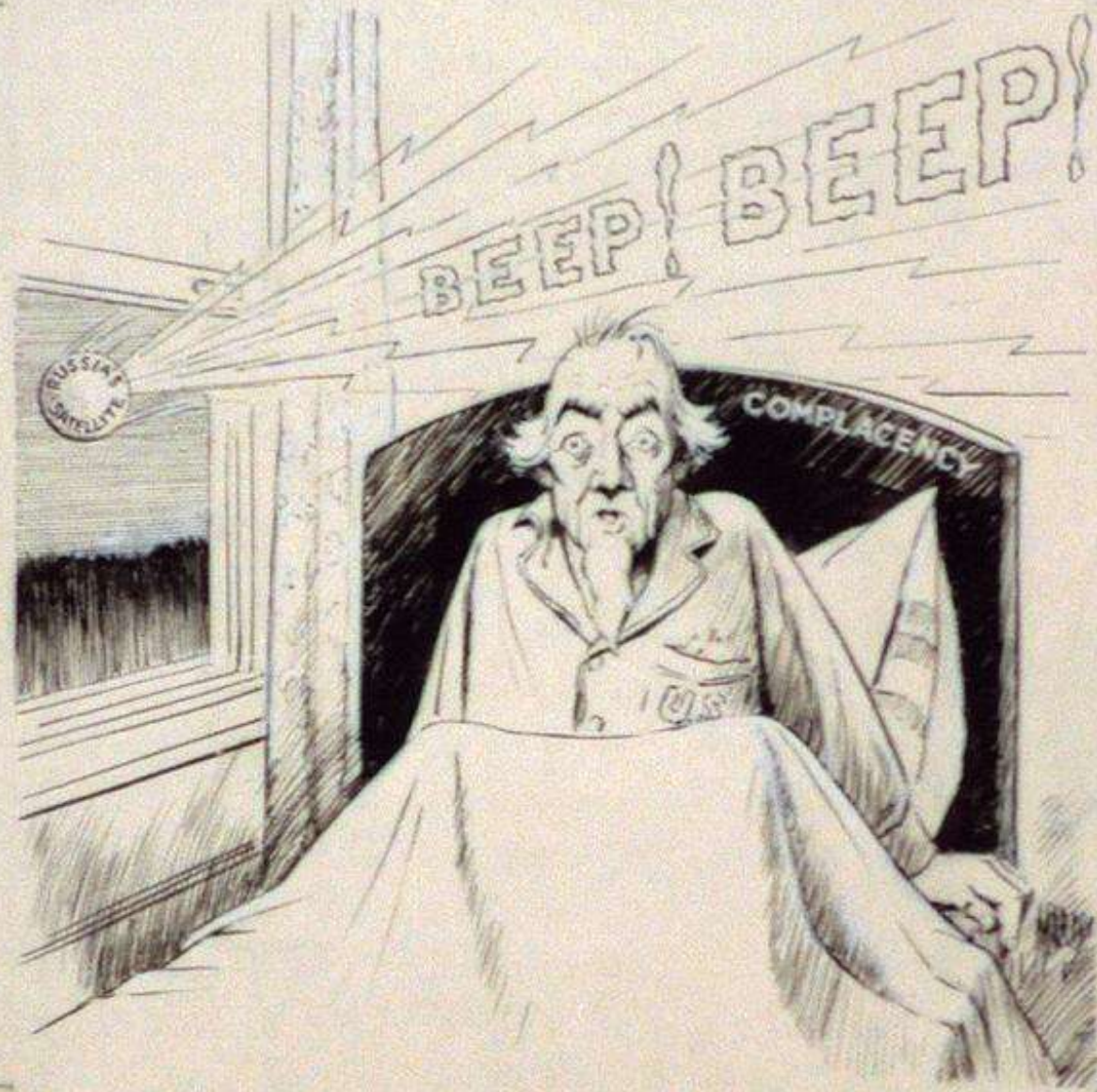
- Khrushchev demanded in 1958 that Western troops be removed from Berlin within 6 months
- Eisenhower called an urgent meeting with the Soviet premier, and they agreed to hold off any decision until they could meet again in Paris in 1960
- Unfortunately, this meeting would never occur
- A US U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union two weeks before the meeting in Paris
- It was revealed that the US had been flying regular spy missions over the USSR since 1955
- Khrushchev called off the Paris talks

Cold War Blasts into Space

- October 1957 – USSR launches the *Sputnik I* satellite into space
- Official start of the “Space Race”
- Americans were shocked by the apparent superiority of USSR’s technological advances



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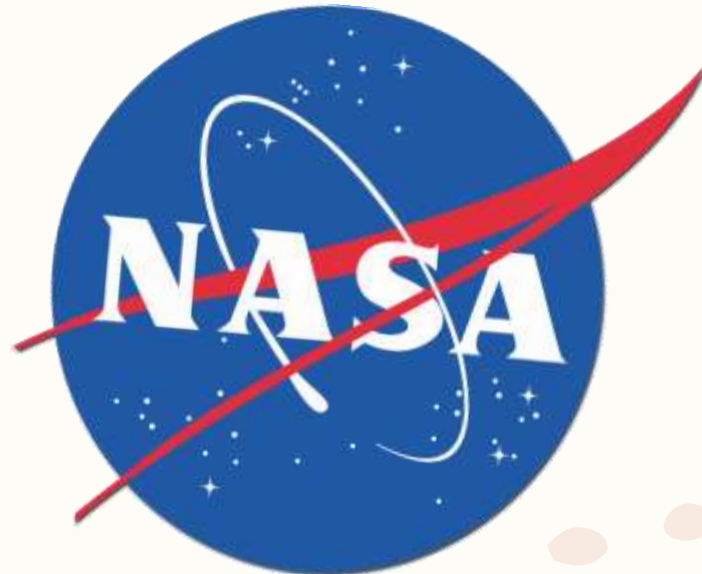
AWAKE AT LAST?

NEWT
6/10/66



Congress reacts to *Sputnik I*

- President Eisenhower supported the National Defense Education Act – a billion dollar program intended to produce more scientists and teachers of science
- Congress created NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)



Revolutions in Science, Technology, and Medicine

- The electronics industry experienced the most growth during the 1950s.
- 95% of American homes were electric powered
- Record players, refrigerators, and new “transistor radios” revolutionized the lives of Americans
- Consumer spending of the 1950s surpassed that of the 1920s.

Revolutions in Science, Technology, and Medicine

- Super computers opened doors for engineers and designers in space, aeronautics, and automobiles. What once took weeks to calculate, the computer could churn out in a matter of hours.
- Air travel was no longer affordable only for the ultra wealthy, as commercial flights became more accessible for people to travel around the country and even the world

A longer life

- Medical discoveries increased life expectancy
- Penicillin, an antibiotic discovered in the 1940s, improved the chances of someone surviving infection by bacteria.
- Polio is a debilitating disease that was a constant threat to people all over the world.
- Jonas Salk's discovery of the vaccine serum successfully immunized people
- Polio was nearly eradicated in the US by 1960

Baby Boom changes society



- Soldiers returning from WWII come home and have a lot of babies
- At the peak of the “baby boom” 4.3 million babies born in a year (1 every 7 seconds)
- With rapid population growth comes changes in the structure of society

IN BAD TIMES, FEWER BABIES BORN



SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

Americans move to the suburbs

- “Baby Boom” families move in mass to the suburbs after WWII
- Automobiles allow easy transport from urban centers to suburbs
- William Levitt – leader in the mass production of suburban homes
- These communities designed by Levitt became known as Levittowns.



Construction of Interstate Highway System



- Eisenhower pushed legislation for the new interstate highway system.
- Eisenhower deemed it necessary to homeland security.
- Would allow the military easy transport in case the US was attacked or invaded by the Soviet Union.
- Multi-lane expressways that would connect major cities
- Single largest construction endeavor in American history
- Allowed for the growth of suburbs as travel routes became more efficient and quicker to and from urban centers.

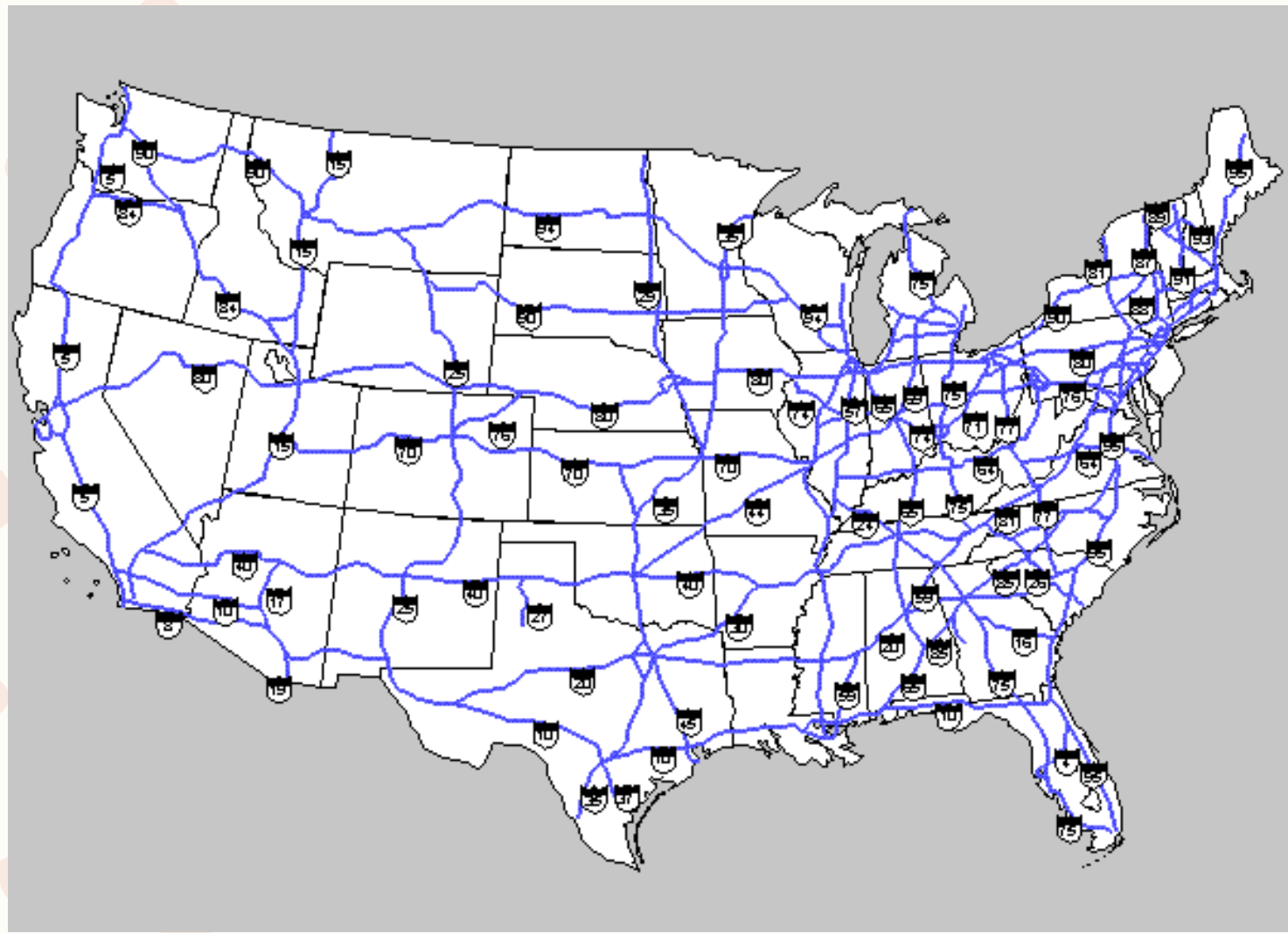








Photo by C. B. Woodruff

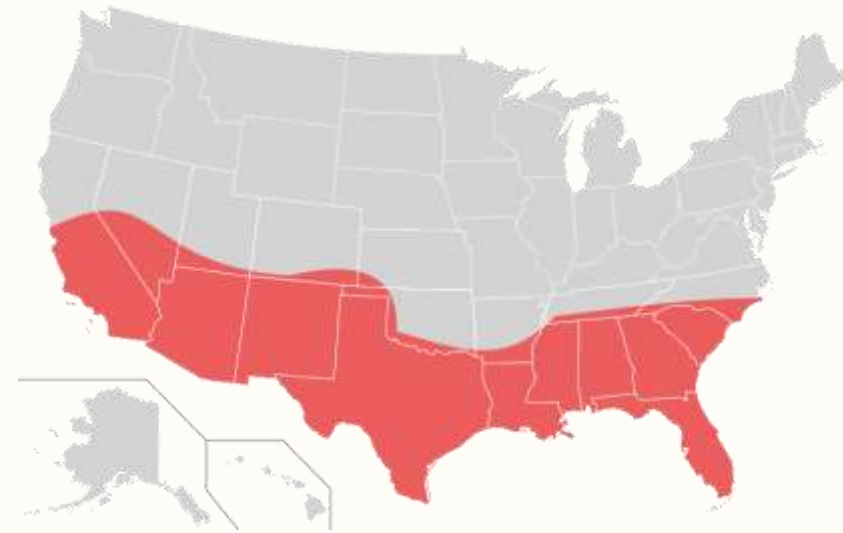
Back roads as this one hamper rapid movement of mechanized units of the Army and must be widened and realigned for National Defense

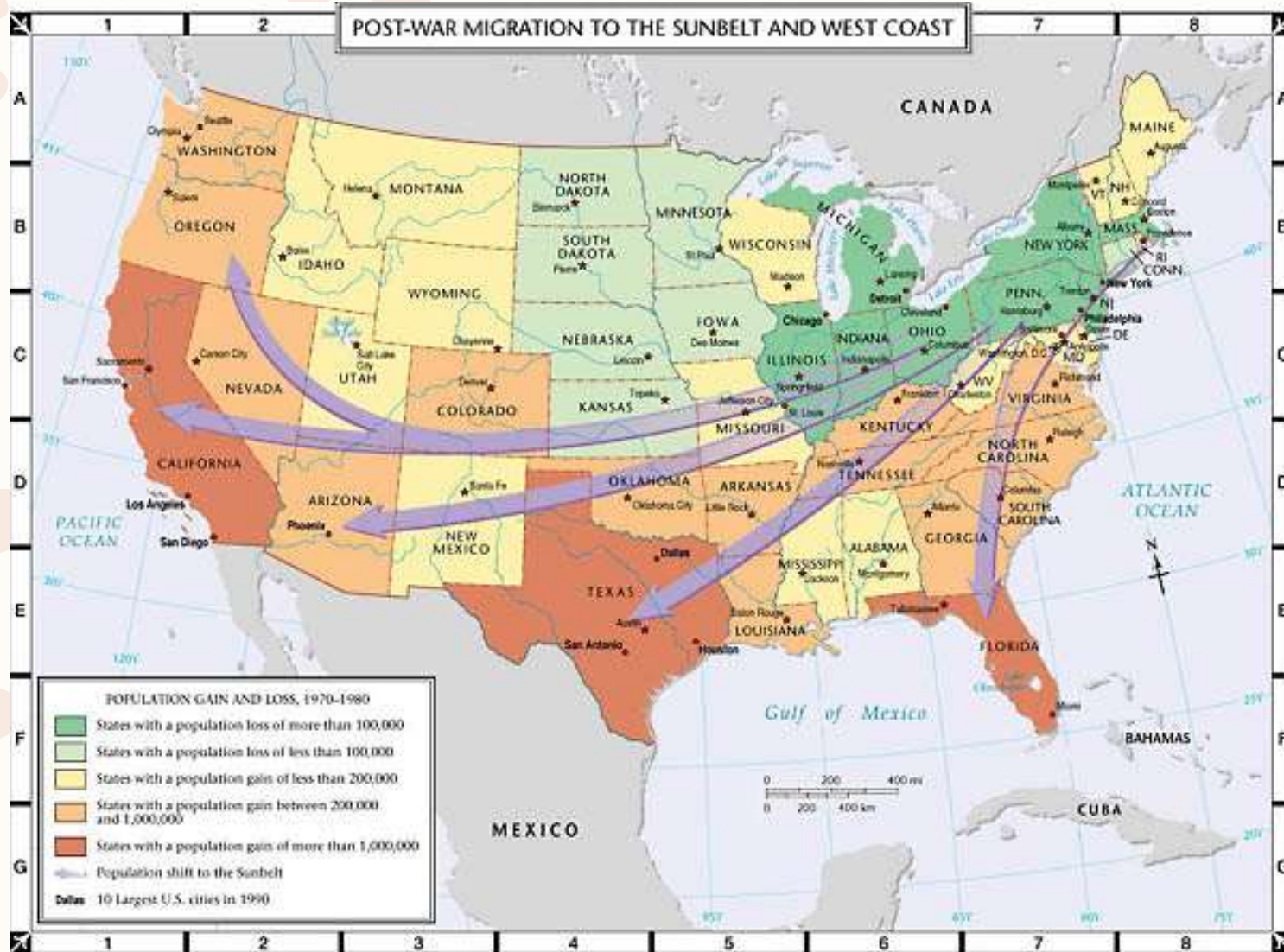
Highways for National Defense

By C. H. PURCELL, State Highway Engineer

Migrating to the Sunbelt

- Post-WWII people flock to the Sunbelt – name given to the South and Western states
- 1958 -Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants move to CA (symbolic of the migration patterns of the entire country)
- Air conditioning attracts many to the once unbearable climates
- Political power shifts from the Rust Belt and Northeast to the South and West







The invention of air-conditioning led to a population explosion in cities such as Phoenix, Dallas, Miami, Los Angeles and Atlanta.



Television changes perceptions of society

- TV shows such as “Leave It to Beaver” and “Father Knows Best” paint the picture of the American nuclear family (father, mother and 2.4 kids)
- Network newscasts become standard in American homes
- Rock-n-Roll grows in popularity thanks to the images seen on television (Elvis Presley)



TV images of
the “nuclear
family”.





At left – Legendary CBS news anchor
Walter Cronkite

He would be the face of American
television for nearly 3 decades.

- Families would gather
around the television set
and watch the network
evening news broadcasts



Elvis Presley on The Ed Sullivan show

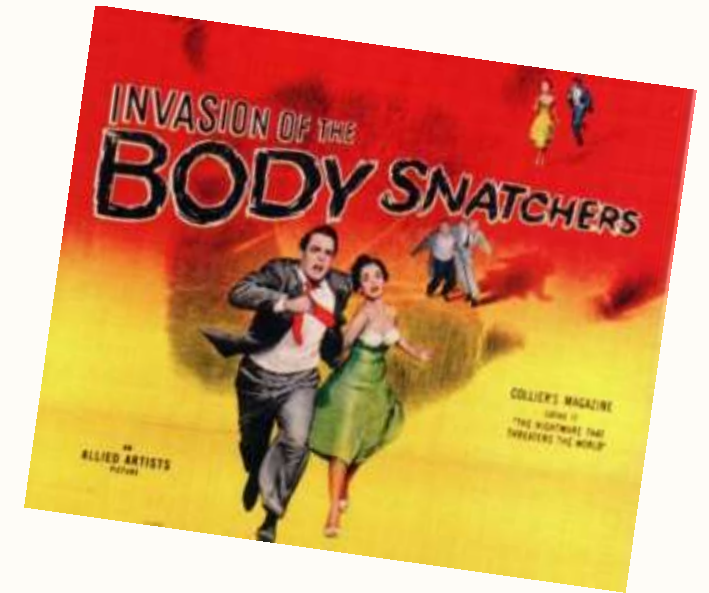


The Cold War weighed on the minds of adults and children alike

- Bomb shelters were big business as families and businesses constructed them and supplied them with canned goods, bottled water, and Geiger counters to survive a nuclear attack
- Children practiced duck and cover at schools

Cold War effects on the Entertainment Industry

- “Spy gear” that had once been novelty became popular as Americans hoped to be able to outsmart neighbors who might be Russian double agents.
- Comic book character, Captain America, fueled America’s thirst for “commie hunting”



Eisenhower's Warning

- Eisenhower was concerned about the Cold War's effects on the US
- In his farewell address, he warned of the “military industrial complex,” whereby the nation would be driven by the needs of the arms race and war machine

Non-conformity of Youth and Artists

Non-Conformity

- Not all Americans bought into the middle-class, suburban myth.
- Some in the academic, art, and entertainment worlds defied or criticized the norms of 1950s culture
- While most Hollywood films celebrated the consumerist/conformist lifestyle of the 1950s, some filmmakers challenged it with films movies such as *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, based on the novel by Sloan Wilson.

Abstract Expressionism

- This style developed in the US after WWII
- It aimed to convey emotion instead of figurative images
- It was influenced by psychology and jazz
- These painters viewed painting as a struggle between self-expression and the chaos of the unconscious
- This style helped move the center of the western art world from Paris to New York



The Transcendental, Richard Pousette-Dart, 1941



Arshile Gorky, The Liver, 1944



Hans Hoffman, The Gate, 1959



Franz Kline, Painting No. 2, 1954



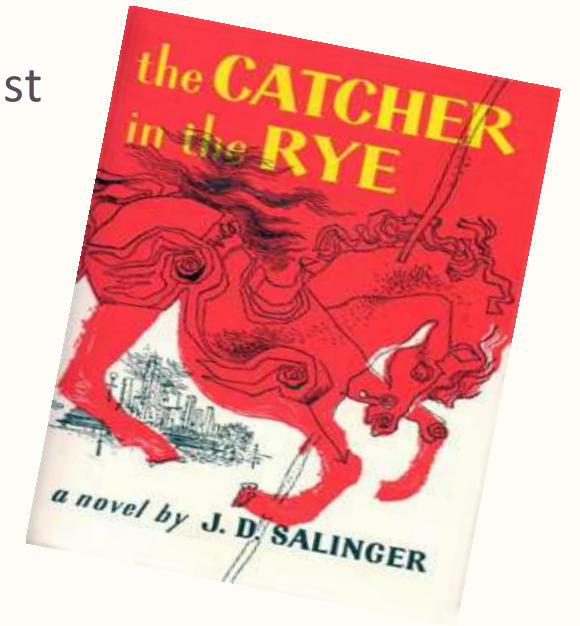
Mark Rothko, No. 61, 1953



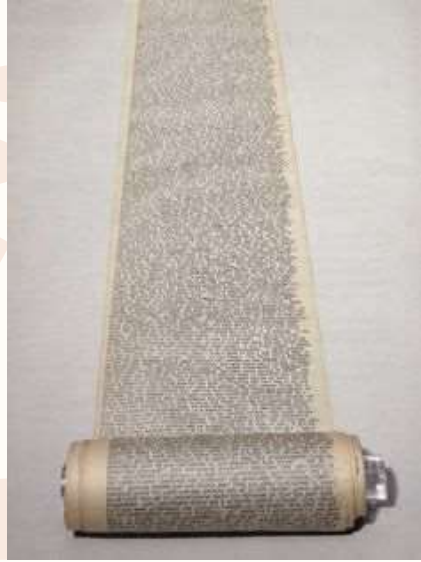
Jackson Pollock, Lavender Mist, 1950

“Catcher in the Rye”

- Told the adventures of anti-hero and nonconformist Holden Caulfield
- Some novelists satirized the American dream and challenged readers to think for themselves



The Beats



- The stereotype of Beatniks: sometimes used mind-altering drugs; rebelled against social standards; studied art, poetry, and philosophy; criticized society; participated in “free verse” open microphone poetry readings, where participants were encouraged to speak their minds

--provided the mold for the “hippie” of the 1960s

- Beat literature encouraged individuality in and age of conformity
- Led by alternative writers such as Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac