

DBQ 20: THE COLD WAR BEGINS

Historical Context

Between 1945 and 1950, the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union broke down. The Cold War began. For the next forty years, relations between the two superpowers swung between confrontation and détente. Each tried to increase its worldwide influence and spread its competing economic and political systems. At times during this period, the competitors were at the brink of war.

■ **Directions:** The following question is based on the accompanying documents in Part A. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and the author's point of view. Be sure to do each of the following steps:

1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
2. Read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes. Answer the questions that follow each document before moving on to the next document.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the document-based question.
4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. You should present your essay logically. Include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge beyond the documents.

PART A

The following documents provide information about the Cold War. Examine each document carefully. In the space provided, answer the question or questions that follow each document.

(continued)

Name _____

Date _____

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Document 1

This excerpt is adapted from Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech of March 5, 1946.

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. . . . All these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject, in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and in some cases increasing measure of control from Moscow.

How was the "iron curtain" a dividing line?

Document 2

This excerpt is adapted from President Truman's speech to Congress on March 12, 1947.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation [domination] by armed minorities or by outside pressures. . . . Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far-reaching to the West. . . . We must take immediate and resolute action. I therefore ask the Congress to provide authority for assistance to Greece and Turkey in the amount of \$400 million. . . . The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died.

What policy did President Truman suggest in this speech? _____

(continued)

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Document 3

This excerpt is adapted from a speech by U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall on June 5, 1947. In it, he explained his plan for European recovery.

I need to say that the world situation is very serious. . . . Europe must have a great deal of additional help, or face heavy economic, social, and political damage. This would have a harmful effect on the world at large. There are also possibilities of disturbances because of the desperation of the people concerned. The effect on the economy of the United States should be clear to all. So the United States should do whatever it can to help restore normal economic health to the world. Without this there can be no political stability or peace. Our policy is directed . . . against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos [disorder]. Its purpose is to revive a working economy in the world.

Why did Secretary of State Marshall suggest this plan for European recovery?

Document 4

This excerpt is adapted from the North Atlantic Treaty. It was signed by the United States, Canada, and ten nations of Western Europe in 1949. It established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO.

The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or in North America shall be considered as an attack against them all. They agree that if such an armed attack occurs, each of them will assist the party or parties so attacked. Each will immediately take whatever action it considers necessary to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. It will, if necessary, use armed force.

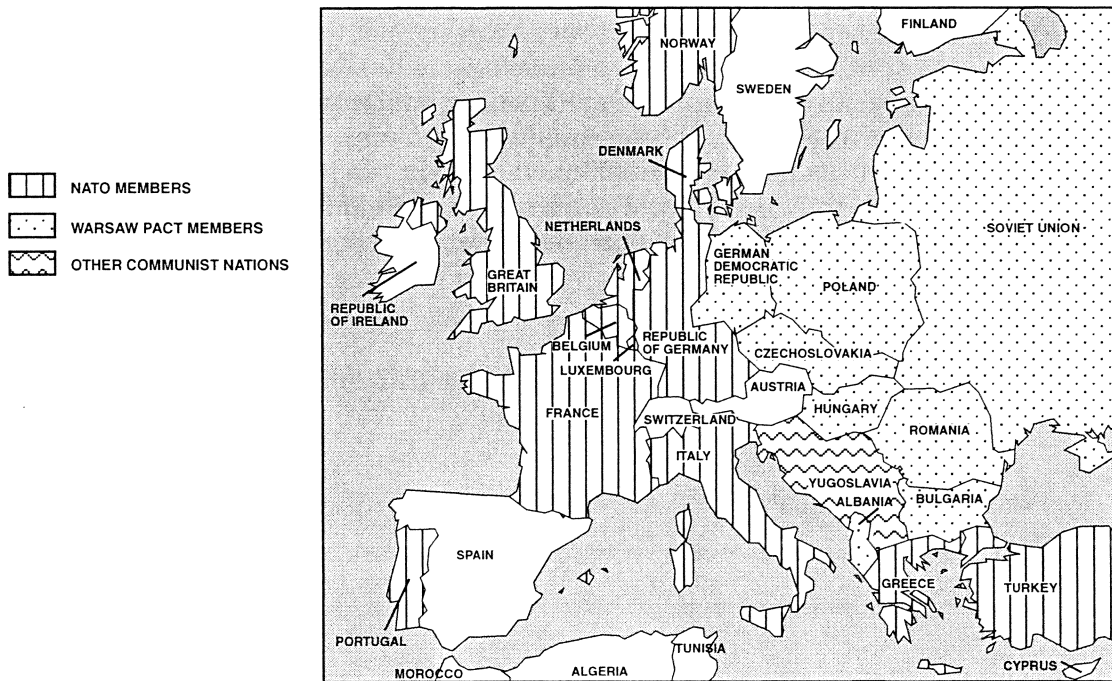
What was the purpose of NATO? _____

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Document 5

The Soviet Union responded to NATO by creating its alliance, the Warsaw Pact. The map below shows Warsaw Pact and NATO member nations in 1955.



How did the Warsaw Pact “satellite” members provide a buffer for the Soviet Union?

(continued)

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Document 6

This excerpt is adapted from a speech by Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in 1956. In it, he explains his point of view about U.S. actions.

The inspirers of the “cold war” began to establish military blocs—the North Atlantic bloc, SEATO, and the Baghdad pact. [They claim] they have united for defense against the “communist threat.” But this is sheer hypocrisy! We know from history that when planning a redivision of the world, the imperialist powers have always lined up military blocs. Today the “anti-communism” slogan is being used as a smoke screen to cover up the claims of one power for world domination. The United States wants, by means of blocs and pacts, to secure a dominant position in the capitalist world. The inspirers of the “position of strength” policy assert that it makes another way impossible because it ensures a “balance of power” in the world. [They] offer the arms race as their main recipe for the preservation of peace! It is perfectly obvious that when nations compete to increase their military might, the danger of war becomes greater, not lesser. Capitalism will find its grave in another world war, should it unleash it.

What was Khrushchev’s view of U.S. actions? According to Khrushchev, what would happen?

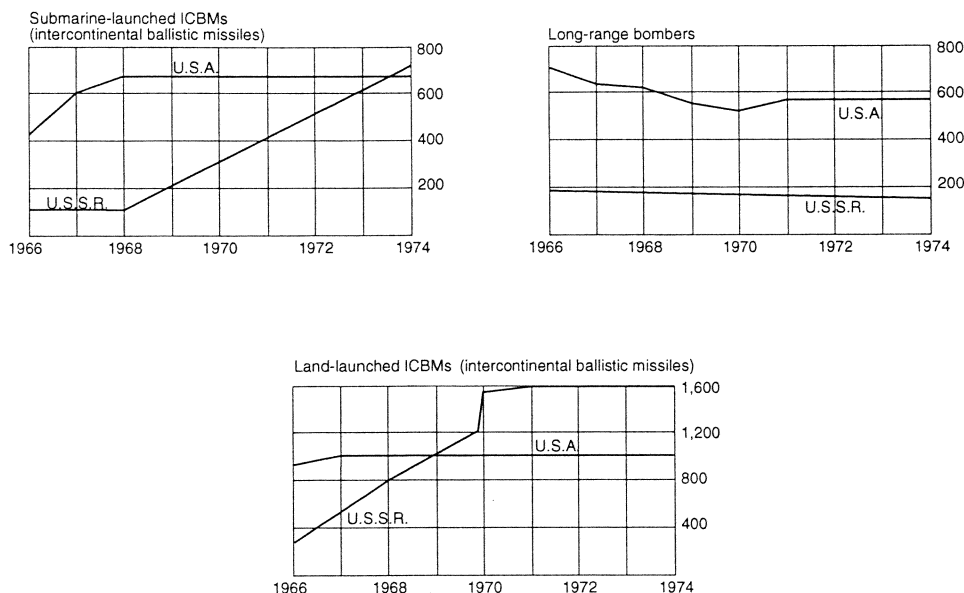
Document 7

The arms race was an important part of the Cold War. Both superpowers developed technology and used their nuclear power to build as many weapons as possible. This nuclear buildup led to a “balance of terror,” which some saw as a deterrent to war. But others feared the use of these weapons. The charts on the next page show the buildup of ICBMs and long-range bombers between 1966 and 1974.

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ICBMs and Long-Range Bombers, 1966-1974



What impact did this arms race have on the world? _____

Document 8

The threat of nuclear war was obvious during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. This excerpt is adapted from President John F. Kennedy's televised speech to the American people on October 22, 1962. It explains the position of the United States.

We have unmistakable evidence that a series of offensive missile sites is now being built on that island. . . . Cuba has been made into an important strategic base by the presence of these long-range offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction. This is an open threat to the peace and security of all the Americas. Our objective must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country. We must secure their withdrawal from the Western Hemisphere. . . . I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this secret and reckless threat to world peace.

(continued)

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What was the basis for President Kennedy's demand that the missiles be removed from Cuba?

Document 9

Kennedy ordered a quarantine of all offensive military equipment being sent into Cuba. Soviet Premier Khrushchev responded with this message.

Mr. President, . . . the Soviet Government decided to render assistance to Cuba with the means of defense against aggression—only with means for defense purposes. . . . We have supplied them to prevent an attack on Cuba.

I regard with respect and trust the statement you made in your message of October 27, 1962, that there would be no attack, no invasion of Cuba, and not only on the part of the United States, but also on the part of other nations in the Western Hemisphere. . . .

It is for this reason that we instructed our officers . . . to take appropriate measures to discontinue construction of the aforementioned facilities, to dismantle them, and to return them to the Soviet Union.

How did Premier Khrushchev explain why missiles were placed in Cuba and why they could now be removed?
