

The Cold War at Home

Slide 1:

1. Soviet domination of Eastern Europe and the Communist takeover of China alarmed the American public.
2. 80,000 Americans also claimed citizenship in the Communist Party.
3. 1947, President Truman is going to set up the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, which also included the Loyalty Review Board

Slide 2:

1. Purpose was to investigate government employees and dismiss those who were disloyal to the U.S. government
2. 1947-51 3.2 million employees were investigated and 3.2 million employees dismissed.
3. Another 2,900 resigned because they felt the investigation violated their constitutional rights.
4. People under investigation could not see the charges brought against them

Slide 3:

1. Another agency investigated possible Communist influence both inside and outside the U.S. government
2. House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated Communist influence in the movie industry
3. They believed the movie industry was slipping propaganda into films, pointing to pro-Soviet films made during WW2, even though the Soviet Union was a U.S. ally.

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1. HUAC subpoenaed 43 witnesses from Hollywood film industry in September 1947
2. Gary Cooper, a famous actor, claimed he turned down scripts that had Communist ideas
3. Ten "unfriendly" witnesses were called to the stand, they were known as the Hollywood Ten.
4. They decided not to cooperate because they thought the hearing was unconstitutional
5. They went to prison for refusing to answer questions

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1. These hearings produced a Hollywood executives blacklist, a list of people whom they condemned for having a Communist background
2. 500 actors, writers, producers and directors had their careers ruined
3. Two spy cases also added to the fear that was spreading across the country. One included former State Department official named Alger Hiss

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1. 1948 a former Soviet Union spy named Whittaker Chambers accused Alger Hiss of spying for the Soviet Union

2. He produced a microfilm of government documents that he claimed had been typed on Hiss's typewriter.
3. Too many years had passed and the government could not charge Hiss with espionage, but a jury convicted him of perjury, for lying about passing the documents and sent him to jail

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1. Richard Nixon, a young conservative republican congressman at the time, gained fame for pursuing the charges against Hiss
2. Within four years he was elected vice president of the U.S.
3. Hiss claimed he was innocent and chambers had forged the documents
4. Soviet cables released by the national security agency seem to prove Hiss's guilt

Slide 8:

1. September 3rd, 1949 Americans learned the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic bomb.
2. Many thought it would be 3-5 years until the soviet could make a bomb. many were convinced soviet spies were leaking atomic secrets from the U.S.
3. A second spy case would confirm that suspicion

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1. In 1950, German-born physicist Klaus Fuchs admitted giving the Soviet Union information about America's atomic bomb.
2. Information helped soviet scientists develop their own atomic bomb years earlier
3. Implicated in the Fuchs were Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, activists in the American Communist Party
4. Rosenbergs denied the charges against them and pleaded the 5th amendment

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1. They claimed they were being persecuted against, because they were jewish and had radical beliefs
2. Rosenbergs were found guilty and sentenced to death.
3. Judge Irving Kaufman declared their crime "worse than murder"
4. And they were responsible for clashes of the cold war.
5. Many protested and said the evidence was to weak to warrant a death sentence

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1. Appealed to the U.S. supreme court, who would not overturn the verdict
2. Ethel and Julius Rosenberg died via electric chair in 1953
3. Most famous anti communist activist was senator Joseph McCarthy, a republican from Wisconsin.
4. He was an ineffective legislator and knew he needed a winning issue to be reelected.
5. He charged that communists were looking to take over the government

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1. He made one unsupported accusation after another.
2. These attacks became known as McCarthyism
3. This referred to the unfair tactic of accusing people of disloyalty without providing evidence.
4. He claimed to have up to 205 names of communists in the U.S. government, but never provided one name

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1. He also blamed the democrats for allowing communist infiltration into the government
2. Only did his name calling in the senate, where he had legal immunity that protect him from being used for slander.
3. Republicans did not stop McCarthy's attacks because they believed they could win the president election if the public saw them pursuing the communists.
4. Only a small group of senators would speak out, such as Margaret Chase Smith of Maine.

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1. McCarthy made accusations against the military in 1954.
2. McCarthy bullied the witnesses and alienated the audience, which lost him public support
3. Senate condemned him for improper conduct.
4. Three years later, Joseph McCarthy suffered from alcoholism and died broke

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1. McCarthy wasn't the only one trying to root out the communists.
2. By 1953, 39 states had passed laws making it illegal to advocate the violent overthrow of the government
3. Even though these laws violated constitutional right of free speech. across the nation, cities and towns passed similar laws.

Slide 16:

1. Fear of communism had no limits
2. Professional wrestlers had to take a loyalty oath
3. In experiments run by newspapers, people were afraid to sign petitions that quoted the Declaration of Independence because they were afraid the ideas were communist
4. government investigated union leaders, librarians, newspaper reporters and scientists