HARRY TRUMAN'S PRESIDENCY AND THE COLD WAR
I. Roots of the Cold War
   A. U.S. point of view
      1. Stalin seemed intent on creating "spheres" of influence in Eastern Europe
         a. Yalta Conference: Soviet pledge to allow democratic elections in E. Europe was
            broken incl. Poland, Romania, Bulgaria. Later Czechoslovakia & Hungary dominated
            by Moscow.
         b. USSR refused to release E. Germany while the US, British and French allowed their
            western zones to be unified into a new democratic West Germany.
      2. US wanted democracy spread throughout the world with a strong international
         organization to maintain global peace (United Nations)
      3. Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech warned Americans of Soviet expansion
   B. Soviet point of view
      1. US did not open western front in W. Europe early enough; millions of Soviet soldiers died
         fighting the brunt of Nazi armies alone until mid-1944.
      2. The US and British froze Russia out of the atomic bomb project.
      3. US terminated lend-lease to Moscow in 1945 and refused $6 billion plea
         from Stalin while granting Britain $3.75 billion in 1946.
      4. Soviets wanted a security guarantee for the Soviet western border, especially in Poland
         a. USSR twice attacked by Germany in 20th century.
         b. Eastern Europe would become a "buffer zone"
   C. Partitioning
      1. Korea & Vietnam split into northern and southern zones controlled by communists in the north
         and pro-democracy forces in the south.
      2. Germany split into 4 zones with Berlin also being split in to quadrants. Issue of Berlin nearly
         resulted in full-scale war in 1948-49
II. Shaping the Postwar World
   A. Bretton Woods Conference (1944): International Monetary Fund (IMF) created by western Allies
      1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) founded to promote
         economic growth in war-torn and underdeveloped areas; stabilize currencies
      2. Soviets declined to participate
   B. United Nations
      1. Yalta Conference -- "Big Three" had called for a conference on world
         organization to meet in April 1945 in the United States
      2. Dumbarton Oaks Conference (August 21-October 7, 1944)
         -- Laid the basis for the United Nations Charter
         a. UN Charter created a General Assembly composed of all member nations which
            would act as the ultimate policy-making body.
         b. Security Council composed of US, USSR, China, Britain, and France (+ 6
            additional nations elected by the General Assembly for 2 year terms)
III. The German Question
   A. Nuremberg Trials
      1. Potsdam Conference had decided on punishing war crimes and for a program
         of denazifying Germany.
      2. Allies tried 22 top Nazis at Nuremberg, Germany during 1945 and 1946.
      3. 12 Nazis hanged and seven sentenced to long jail terms.
      4. Legal critics in U.S. condemned proceedings as judicial lynchings because the victims
         were tried for offenses that had not been clear-cut crimes when the war began.
   B. Partition of Germany
      1. Soviets dominated their Eastern German zone after WWII.
         a. Sought to strip E. German resources and ship them to Russia as compensation for war losses.
         b. Did not want revitalized Germany that could once again pose a threat
      2. U.S. and W. Europeans felt German economy vital to recovery of Europe
      3. 1949, a democratic West Germany created; East Germany created under Soviet domination.
IV. Reconstruction of Japan
B. Japanese war criminals tried between 1946-48; 7 hanged (including Tojo), 18 sent to prison
C. A constitution adopted in 1946 renouncing militarism & introducing Western-style democracy.
D. Within decades, Japan would become an economic powerhouse.

V. Policy of "Containment"
A. 1947, US Ambassador to Russia, George Kennan, warned Truman that Russia sought to expand its empire.
   1. Soviet leaders had an ideology that "the outside world was hostile and that it was their duty eventually to overthrow the political forces beyond their borders."
   2. Soviet policy in E. Europe, Germany, and Middle East of great concern.
   3. Kennan's ideas became the basis for Truman's "containment" policy.
B. Truman Doctrine -- Defined US foreign policy for next 20 years.
   "It must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."
   1. Truman doctrine initiated a policy of "containment": prevent the spread of communism
   2. March 12, 1947, Truman asked Congress for $400 million to support democracy in Turkey and Greece since the British were no longer able.
   3. Truman quickly recognized Israel in 1948 as the new country would be a bastion of democracy in the Middle East.
C. Marshall Plan (1947)
   1. France, Italy and Germany were still suffering from economic chaos after WWII.
   2. US feared Communist parties could exploit these hardships and take control.
   3. Sec. of State George C. Marshall invited Europeans to create a joint plan for economic recovery. US would provide financial assistance.
      b. Congress at first balked at huge monetary proposal but changed course after the Soviet-sponsored coup d’ etat in Czechoslovakia in Feb. 1948 which extended the influence of communism in Eastern Europe.
   4. Plan allocated $12.5 billion over four years in 16 cooperating countries.
   5. Within a few years, most recipients of the plan's aid were exceeding prewar output
   6. Czechoslovakia initially interested in aid but pressure from Moscow forced a veto.
D. Organization of American States (OAS) created to prevent communism in Latin America
E. U.S. government reorganization and rearmament
   1. National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense
      a. National Security Council (NSC) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) created by Truman in 1948 and 1949.
      b. NSC Number 68 (1950)
         i. Issued in response to the fall of China and onset of hostilities in Korea.
         ii. U.S. would implement a rigorous worldwide defense of Communism with "an immediate and large-scale build up of our military."
   2. 1948, first peacetime military draft enacted
   3. "Voice of America" authorized by Congress beamed US broadcasts behind iron curtain
   4. Atomic Energy Commission created in 1946 -- established civilian control over nuclear development and gave president sole authority over the use of atomic weapons in warfare.
F. Berlin Airlift (1948-49)
   1. Berlin, deep inside E. Germany, was cut off from the west by Soviet forces in 1948.
      a. Russian response to the creation of the Federal Republic of German (West Germany)
      b. US, French, & British zones in Berlin became an "island" inside E. Germany
   2. US organized massive airlift for nearly a year; 277,000 flights, 2 million tons of supplies.
   3. Many thought World War III was inevitable
VI. The Cold War during Truman's second term under Secretary of State Dean Acheson

A. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

   a. In 1953, Turkey & Greece joined.
   b. West Germany joined in 1954
   c. Created in response to Berlin Crisis.
2. Collective security organization that essentially warned Moscow that a threat to any of the signatories would be met with force.
3. In 1955 USSR formed Warsaw Pact as a response to NATO which included all eastern bloc countries -- satellite countries

B. Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in Sept. 1949; U.S. no longer had monopoly

C. China becomes Communist in 1949

1. US supported Nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi (Chang-Kai-Shek) during WWII
2. In late 1949, Mao Zedong's (Mao Tse-tung) communist forces defeated the last of Jiang's forces and the Nationalists fled to Formosa (Taiwan).
3. Loss of China seen as a major defeat for US.
4. U.S. refused to recognize the People’s Republic of China (“Red China”) and maintained Jiang’s regime on the UN Security Council

D. The Hydrogen Bomb

1. U.S. exploded H-bomb in 1952
2. In 1953, Soviets successfully exploded an H-bomb; nuclear arms race continued.
3. For the first time in history, humankind had the ability to end civilization.

E. Korean War (1950-53)

1. Background
   a. During WWII, Russian troops occupied northern Korea while US troops occupied southern Korea.
   b. Before leaving in 1949, both set up rival regimes on each side of the 49th parallel.
      -- North Korea led by Communist dictator Kim Il-Sung
   c. Sec. of State Dean Acheson claimed Korea was outside essential US defense perimeter in the Pacific and U.S. forces were reduced there.
3. Truman resurrected NSC-68, a call to quadruple US defense spending, and ordered a massive military buildup well beyond the purposes of the war.
4. UN Security Council (with Russia absent) called for members to restore peace and condemned the invasion with a vote of 9-0
5. UN votes to establish UN force with Truman’s choice, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, as UN commander who took his orders from Washington
6. By August 1950, North Korea captured virtually all of S. Korea
7. MacArthur directs surprise amphibious landing at Inchon behind Korean lines.
   a. Within two weeks, UN forces recapture nearly all of S. Korea as North Koreans retreat behind 38th parallel.
   b. Although original objectives are complete, MacArthur orders UN forces to cross 38th parallel with support of Truman and UN.
   c. UN calls for the establishment of a unified, independent, and democratic Korea.
8. November 1950, 300 thousand Chinese soldiers pour across Yalu River into N. Korea and force UN troops to retreat with heavy losses across 38th parallel.
9. Truman fires MacArthur
   a. Truman seeks limited war (and announces it Nov. 28, 1950)
   b. MacArthur against limited war -- “No substitute for victory”
   c. MacArthur circumvents Truman and demands total N. Korean surrender.
d. Truman removes MacArthur from command and orders him back to US.
e. Significance: Civilian control of US military is reaffirmed

10. Cease-Fire
a. Negotiations begin in July 1951 and continue for 2 years while war continues.
b. Cease-fire signed on July 27, 1953 (armistice still in effect today)
   i. 38th parallel as boundary is restored.
   ii. DMZ along boundary
c. Americans disappointed at unclear conclusion (WWII had been a clear victory)

11. Results of Korean War
a. 54,000 US soldiers & 3,000 UN soldiers dead; 103,000 UN soldiers wounded
   (including Americans); 2 million civilians dead (mostly in South Korea); over 1.5 million
   dead Chinese and N. Korean soldiers.
b. UN successfully repelled N. Korean attack on S. Korea
c. US gov’t demonstrated its determination to enforce “containment”

VII. Truman’s First Term -- domestic policy
A. Taft-Hartley Act -- June 1947 (passed by Congress over Truman’s veto)
   1. Conservative response to powerful labor unions (Republicans gained Congress in 1946)
      a. In 1946, over 4 million workers went on strike demanding higher wages.
      b. Shutdowns in the auto, steel, electric, railroad, and maritime industries ensued.
      c. Much striking activity orchestrated by John L. Lewis, president of the
         United Mine Workers, who demanded higher pay, safer work conditions, and
         a small tax on coal to fund worker pensions.
   2. Major provisions of Taft-Hartley Act
      a. Most important: 80 day cooling-off period for strikers in key industries
      b. Outlawed the “closed-shop” (process of hiring only union members)
      c. Unions still flourished; AFL had 8 million in 1950; CIO 6 million
   3. By 1954, 15 states passed “right to work” laws outlawing the “union-shop.”
B. Civil Rights: gains for African Americans
   1. 1946, Truman created the President’s committee on Civil Rights
      -- In 1947, committee published To Secure These Rights, calling for desegregation in
      American society, anti-lynching legislation and an end to poll taxes.
   2. 1948, president banned racial discrimination in federal government hiring practices
      and ordered desegregation of the armed forces; blacks integrated in 1953
C. Presidential Succession Act of 1947
   1. Created as a contingency for nuclear war.
   2. After the vice-president, the Speaker of the House, president pro tempore (Senate)
      and secretary of state the next in line for succession.
D. 22nd Amendment (1951)
   1. Limited president to two terms; or a maximum of 10 years if he, as vice president,
      assumed the presidency due to the death or departure of a previous president.
   2. Largely a conservative move in the face of over 17 years of continuous Democratic rule
      in the White House (FDR and Truman)

VIII. Anti-Communist Crusade -- “Red Scare”
A. American Fears -- Paranoia about communism and its sympathizers began to set in due to:
   1. Communism at home: fear of spies infiltrating U.S. gov’t: Alger Hiss, Rosenbergs
   3. Spread of communism around the world (E. Europe, fall of China in 1949, Korea)
   4. Demagogue politicians using fear for gain (HUAC, McCarthy)
   5. Fear of another depression (recessions in 1946-47 and early ‘50s triggered concerns)
   6. Culture reflected these fears: movies such as Invasion of the Body Snatchers, The Blob, They
B. Smith Act of 1940
   1. Made it illegal to advocate the overthrow of the government by force or to belong
      to an organization advocating such a position.
   2. Used by Truman administration to jail leaders of the American Communist Party.
C. Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) indicts Alger Hiss, 1947
1. HUAC created in 1945 to root out communism during the “Red Scare” after WWII that lasted into the mid-1950s.
   a. Committee was sensationalistic, including going after public figures in Hollywood.
   b. Liberals and members of the New Deal targeted
   c. Senate counterpart to HUAC also active in anti-communist investigations.
2. Richard Nixon led the movement to indict Alger Hiss, a distinguished member of the “eastern establishment,” prominent ex-New Dealer, and current member of U.S. State Department
3. Hiss denied being a Communist agent in the 1930s but was convicted of perjury in 1950 and sentenced to 5 years in prison.
4. The case brought Nixon national prominence; was elected vice president 5 years later.

D. Truman’s “loyalty” program
   1. Truman countered HUAC with anti-communist programs of his own.
      a. Attorney General identified 90 “disloyal” organizations who were not given the right to prove their innocence.
      b. Truman gave FBI approval and resources to go after suspected “reds”
   2. Loyalty Review Board investigated more than 3 million fed. employees
   3. Loyalty oaths were increasingly demanded of employees, esp. teachers
   4. Many felt civil liberties were being suppressed.
5. Gov’t employees forbidden to:
   a. Criticize US foreign policy
   b. Advocate equal rights for women
   c. Own books on socialism
   d. Attend foreign films

E. McCarran Internal Security Bill (1950)
   1. Required communist-front organizations to register with the attorney general and prevented their members from defense work and travel abroad.
   2. Truman vetoed this bill which authorized the President to arrest and detain suspicious persons during an “internal security emergency”.
      a. Many felt this bill was a step towards a police state.
      b. Congress passed it anyway

F. The Rosenbergs, 1954
   1. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted and executed for allegedly giving atomic bomb secrets to the Soviets.
   2. Both were avowed communists.

G. Blacklisting
   1. Many actors, writers, and directors had dabbled with the Communist Party in the 1930’s when it was considered fashionable.
   2. 10 of these movie industry people, the “Hollywood Ten” refused to testify and decided to go to prison rather than testifying to the HUAC claiming protection from the Constitution.
   3. The industry responded by denying work to 250 actors, writers, and directors.

H. McCarthyism
   1. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (Republican from Wisconsin) became a demagogue
   2. In Feb. 1950, asserted that scores of unknown Communists were in the Dept. of State
      a. His technique was to make sweeping accusations, employ guilt by association and documents out of context
      b. Public convinced he was looking out for national security.
      c. Was unable to substantiate his claims but ruined many gov’t officials.
      d. Almost no one was safe from his accusations.
      e. Supporters tended to be Republican and blue-collar
   3. Other Accusations:
      a. Claimed Democratic party was guilty of 20 years of treason
      b. Wanted Truman impeached for being soft on communism
      c. Claimed George Marshall was an instrument of Soviet conspiracy.
      d. Hinted Eisenhower was “soft on communism.”
e. McCarthy would slander people and claim they were homosexual as well as communist.
4. McCarthy’s Senate hearings created an atmosphere of conformity and fear
5. Eisenhower despised McCarthy but did little to oppose him
6. Downfall of McCarthy occurred when he took on the Army in 1954
   a. McCarthy was intensely examined by Joseph Welch, Army attorney.
   b. By Dec., 1954, Senate passed a resolution condemning McCarthy 67-22
   c. McCarthy died three years later from alcohol and exhaustion.
7. Did the end of McCarthy signal the end of the red scare? Not really, but hysteria did mellow.
   a. Sputnik caused some hysteria in 1957; Americans feared Soviets technologically superior.
   b. Many Americans built bomb shelters in their back yards fearing nuclear war with Soviets
   c. School’s continued “duck and cover” drills to prepare for a nuclear attack.
   d. John Birch Society, an ultra-conservative nationalist group, emerged in late 1950s.
   e. Aggressive rooting out of suspected communists still existed.

IX. Election of 1948 -- Truman defeats Dewey in a stunning upset (303-189)
A. Democrats were split into three camps: Truman, southern States’ Rights Party led by Strom Thurmond of S.C., and the new Progressive party who nominated Henry Wallace.
B. Thomas Dewey was nominated by the Republicans; Earl Warren v.p. nominee
   -- Platform included anti-“big-labor” plank and reduction of New Deal policies.
C. Truman called for housing, full employment, and higher minimum wage, better farm supports, new TVAs and extension of Social Security and more civil rights for African Americans.
D. Truman’s victory came with support from farmers, workers, and blacks who felt threatened by the Republicans.
E. Democrats established clear majority in both houses of Congress

X. The “Vital Center”: 1948-1968
A. A political consensus developed in America, although bitter political wrangling continued to characterize America.
B. Three major components to the “vital center” common in both major parties:
   1. Anti-communism; containment
   2. Belief that economic growth can solve all of society’s problems
   3. Political pluralism: belief that a variety of ideas can compete in America.
C. The “vital center” elected Truman in 1948; Eisenhower in 1952 & 1956; Kennedy in 1960; and Johnson in 1964.
D. Flaws in the “vital center”
   1. Vietnam War exposed problems with containment
   2. As many as 25% of Americans lived in poverty; the economic boom did not “lift all boats”
   3. Jim Crow demonstrated lack of true pluralism in America
E. “Vital Center” is shattered in 1968
   1. Vietnam War pits hawks against doves; amplifies generation gap
   2. White conservative backlash against liberalism— “Great Society” programs of Johnson, the civil rights movement, and apparent lack of law and order. -- Popular TV show: All in the Family with Archie Bunker as a “loveable” bigot

XI. Truman’s FAIR DEAL
A. The only major successes were raising the minimum wage, public housing and extending old-age insurance to more beneficiaries (SSA of 1950)
B. Sec. of Agriculture’s proposed program of continued price supports for farmers failed to be passed by Congress and surpluses continued to pile up.
C. In essence, Truman was able to preserve New Deal programs but unable to add to it.
D. Coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats prevented little more than the maintenance of existing programs.
E. Truman decides not to run for reelection in 1952
   1. Military deadlock in Korea, war-induced inflation, and White House scandal.
   3. Election of 1952, Eisenhower defeats Stevenson 442-89. Nixon is VP.

XII. American Society in the Post-WWII era (1945-1970)
A. GI Bill of Rights
1. Response to unemployment fears resulting from 15 million returning GIs from WWII.
2. Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 sent millions of veterans to school.
   a. Majority attended technical and vocational schools.
   b. Eventually, about $14.5 spent on program.
3. Veteran’s Administration (VA) guaranteed about $16 billion in loans for veterans
to buy homes, farms, and small businesses.

B. Baby Boom
1. In the 1950s, population grew by over 28 million; 97% in urban and suburban areas.
2. Between 1946 and 1961, 63.5 million babies were born
3. Proportional growth in population unprecedented in American history.

1. National income nearly doubled in 1950s; almost doubled again in 1960s.
   a. Americans enjoyed about 40% of world’s wealth despite accounting for only 6%
of population.
   b. By mid-1950s, 60% of Americans owned their own homes compared with
only 40% in the 1920s.
   c. Majority of postwar jobs went to women in urban offices and shops.
   d. Economy largely fueled by the growth of the defense industry.
   e. Cheap energy and increased supply of power facilitated growth.
   f. Rising productivity (due to increases in education and technology) increased
the average Americans standard of living two-fold.
2. Consumerism mushroomed as Americans had more disposable income
3. Middle class
   a. 5.7 in 1947; over 12 million by early 1960s.
   b. Suburbs
      i. Grew 6X faster than cities in 1950s.
      ii. Resulted from increased car production, white flight from urban areas due to black
migration into Northern and Midwestern cities, and gov’t policies that insured both
builders and homeowners.
   c. Cult of domesticity re-emerges
      i. A few advocated that science supported the idea that women could only find
fulfillment as a homemaker.
      ii. The concept of a woman’s place being in the home was widespread in magazines,
TV, and society in general. -- TV shows included Father Knows Best, Ozzie & Harriet,
Leave it to Beaver,
      iii. Dr. Benjamin Spock: The Commonsense Book of Baby and Child Care
          -- Sold an average of 1 million copies per year between 1946 and 1960.
          -- Message: Women’s primary responsibility was to stay home and nurture their children.