Fear at Home

How Cold War fears shaped American institutions and civil liberties

SS24.US2.9d "Analyze the domestic responses to the Cold War, including the impact of McCarthyism."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one domestic response to the Cold War in each paragraph. Number one consequence of each response 1, 2, or 3 to match its paragraph.

Security and Suspicion

1. In 1947, as tensions with the Soviet Union grew, President Harry Truman ordered loyalty reviews for federal employees. Officials hoped to keep sensitive jobs out of the hands of people who might aid a foreign rival. Investigators examined workers' backgrounds and could consider reports from unnamed informants. A worker might lose a job even without being charged with a crime. Many Americans welcomed the program as a security measure, but critics warned that suspicion could replace evidence. The policy showed how fear of Soviet espionage could reshape ordinary rules for government employment.

2. Congress also investigated alleged communist influence. The House Un-American Activities Committee, or HUAC, called witnesses from the film industry to testify about their political associations. Some refused to answer questions and were cited for contempt of Congress. Studios then refused to hire the Hollywood Ten, a group of writers and directors, for years. The committee argued that public questioning exposed threats to national security. Yet the blacklist punished people beyond any court sentence and encouraged others to avoid controversial opinions. A congressional investigation could therefore change private employment and public debate, even when no espionage was proved.

3. Senator Joseph McCarthy made dramatic claims that communists had infiltrated the federal government, often without presenting reliable proof in public. His accusations could damage careers because employers and voters feared appearing soft on communism. This style of accusation became known as McCarthyism. In 1954, televised hearings about McCarthy's conflict with the Army let viewers see his aggressive questioning. Public support weakened, and the Senate censured him later that year. His decline did not end concerns about Soviet spying. It did show that journalists, viewers, and other officials could challenge tactics that treated accusation as proof.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Truman's loyalty reviews address a security concern, and what risk did they create for workers?

2. How did HUAC's investigation affect people beyond the witnesses who testified?

3. What problem did critics of loyalty reviews and critics of McCarthy's accusations both see?

4. How did the televised Army-McCarthy hearings change the public response to McCarthy's methods?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In 1953, your school board proposes requiring teachers to name coworkers they suspect of communist sympathies before those coworkers may teach. Write a 75 to 95 word statement recommending that the board adopt, reject, or revise the plan. Use two distinct details from the passage to explain a security concern and a danger to employment or civil liberties.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one domestic response to the Cold War in each paragraph. Number one consequence of each response 1, 2, or 3 to match its paragraph. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Truman's loyalty reviews address a security concern, and what risk did they create for workers?	**The reviews aimed to keep people who might aid a foreign rival out of sensitive jobs. Workers risked losing their jobs based on suspicion or reports from unnamed informants, even without criminal charges.**
2	How did HUAC's investigation affect people beyond the witnesses who testified?	**Studios stopped hiring the Hollywood Ten for years, and others were encouraged to avoid controversial opinions. The investigation affected private employment and public debate.**
3	What problem did critics of loyalty reviews and critics of McCarthy's accusations both see?	**Both responses could treat suspicion or accusation as proof, harming people's jobs or reputations without reliable evidence.**
4	How did the televised Army-McCarthy hearings change the public response to McCarthy's methods?	**Viewers saw McCarthy's aggressive questioning, public support weakened, and the Senate later censured him.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would reject the board's plan while supporting careful investigation of specific threats. Truman's loyalty reviews aimed to protect sensitive jobs, so the board's concern about security is understandable. But those reviews could rely on unnamed informants and cost workers jobs without criminal charges. HUAC's questions also helped create a film-industry blacklist that lasted for years. Asking teachers to name coworkers based on suspicion could spread the same harm. The board should investigate credible evidence of wrongdoing through a fair process, not treat an accusation as proof.

Accept adopt, reject, or revise if the statement weighs security against a potential harm and accurately uses two distinct passage details. The sample is 87 words.