Security at Stake

Trace how Cold War fears shaped decisions at home and abroad.

USH.C.6.3 "Analyze the escalation of international tensions by examining the series of events and their long-term foreign and domestic consequences during the height of the Cold War..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two places where a perceived threat led to a U.S. action. Circle one effect on Americans at home and one result of negotiations.

From Sputnik to a Test Ban

1 On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first artificial satellite. Americans heard its radio beeps and wondered whether Soviet rockets could also carry nuclear weapons across oceans. The United States and Soviet Union already held growing nuclear arsenals, so a satellite became a sign of possible military danger. In 1958, Congress created NASA to pursue civilian space research. Its missions aimed to advance science and demonstrate American technological ability without placing space exploration entirely under military control.

2 In his 1961 farewell address, President Dwight Eisenhower warned that a permanent arms industry and a large military could gain too much influence over government decisions. He called this partnership the military-industrial complex. The warning did not mean he opposed national defense. Instead, he feared that spending and policy might serve powerful institutions rather than the public interest. His concern gained force when fear of falling behind encouraged expensive weapons programs and intense competition with the Soviet Union.

3 In 1962, U.S. intelligence discovered Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. President John F. Kennedy ordered a naval quarantine to block further deliveries and demanded their removal. Americans feared nuclear attack as both sides prepared for war. The Soviets withdrew after the United States pledged not to invade Cuba and secretly agreed to remove its missiles from Turkey. The crisis showed how brinkmanship could endanger civilians. In 1963, both nations signed a treaty banning nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and in space.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Sputnik change Americans' sense of security, and what U.S. response followed?

2. Why might Eisenhower have questioned a growing arms buildup even though he supported defense?

3. How did Kennedy's quarantine put pressure on the Soviet Union while also raising the danger of war?

4. How did the Cuban crisis help explain the decision to sign a nuclear test ban in 1963?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a newspaper editor in 1963. Write a four- or five-sentence editorial arguing whether U.S. leaders should rely more on military pressure or negotiated limits in future nuclear standoffs. Use two different events or concerns from the passage and address one possible objection.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two places where a perceived threat led to a U.S. action. Circle one effect on Americans at home and one result of negotiations. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Sputnik change Americans' sense of security, and what U.S. response followed?	**It raised fears that Soviet rockets could deliver nuclear weapons. Congress then created NASA to pursue civilian space research and demonstrate U.S. technological ability.**
2	Why might Eisenhower have questioned a growing arms buildup even though he supported defense?	**He feared that the military and arms industry could gain too much influence, causing spending and policy to serve those institutions rather than the public.**
3	How did Kennedy's quarantine put pressure on the Soviet Union while also raising the danger of war?	**It blocked further missile deliveries and pressed for the missiles' removal, but both sides prepared for war while the crisis continued.**
4	How did the Cuban crisis help explain the decision to sign a nuclear test ban in 1963?	**The crisis exposed the danger of nuclear confrontation. The treaty limited nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and in space.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

U.S. leaders should rely more on negotiated limits than military pressure in future nuclear standoffs. The confrontation over missiles in Cuba brought Americans close to nuclear attack, while the 1963 test ban offered a way to reduce danger. Some argue that Kennedy's naval quarantine proved pressure works, since the Soviet Union removed its missiles. But the risk of war during the quarantine shows why pressure should create room for talks rather than replace them.

Accept other supported causal explanations and either editorial position. The editorial should use two distinct details from the passage and respond to an objection.