

# The Cold War Heats Up

## READING FOCUS

- How did the Marshall Plan, the Berlin airlift, and NATO help to achieve American goals in postwar Europe?
- How did Communist advances affect American foreign policy?
- How did the Cold War affect American life at home?

## MAIN IDEA

As the Cold War intensified, American foreign policy focused on rebuilding and unifying Western Europe. At home, Americans began to suspect Communist infiltration of their own society and government.

## KEY TERMS

Marshall Plan  
 Berlin airlift  
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)  
 collective security  
 Warsaw Pact  
 House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)  
 Hollywood Ten  
 blacklist  
 McCarran-Walter Act

## TAKING NOTES

Copy the chart below. As you read, fill in details illustrating the effects of the Cold War on American foreign policy and on life at home.

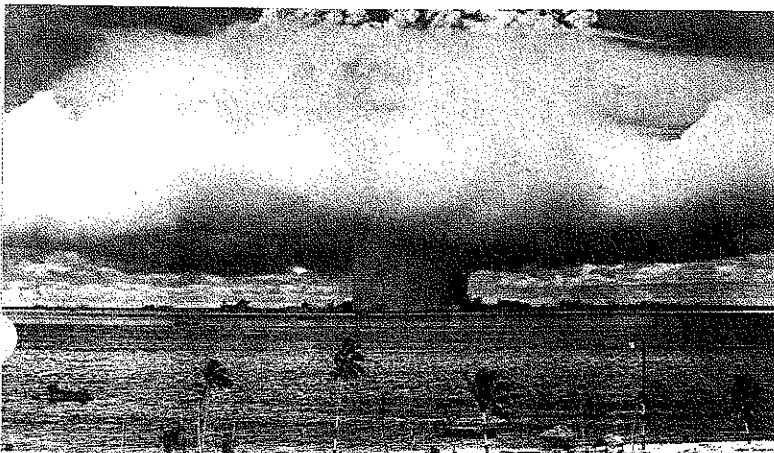
The U.S. Responds to the Cold War		
In Europe	Regarding Nuclear Weapons	At Home

**Setting the Scene** The end of World War II caused a profound change in the way world leaders and ordinary citizens thought about war. The devastation caused by the atomic bombs dropped on Japan and the efforts of the Soviet Union to acquire similar weapons instilled fear in both East and West. In his last State of the Union address, President Truman declared:

“ [W]e have entered the atomic age and war has undergone a technological change which makes it a very different thing from what it used to be. War today between the Soviet empire and the free nations might dig the grave not only of our Stalinist opponents, but of our own society, our world as well as theirs. . . . Such a war is not a possible policy for rational men.”

—President Harry S Truman

A 1946 American atomic bomb test creates the signature mushroom cloud over the Pacific Ocean.



Anxiety about a “hot” and catastrophic nuclear war became a backdrop to the Cold War policies of both the United States and the Soviet Union.

## The Marshall Plan

In addition to worrying about the new threat of nuclear war, American policymakers were determined not to repeat the mistakes of the post-World War I era. This time the United States would help restore the war-torn nations so that they might create stable democracies and achieve economic recovery. World War II had devastated Europe to a degree never seen before. About 21 million people had been made homeless. In Poland, some 20 percent of the population had died. Nearly 1 of every 5 houses in France and Belgium had been damaged or destroyed. Across

Europe, industries and transportation were in ruins. Agriculture suffered from the loss of livestock and equipment. In France alone, damage equaled three times the nation's annual income.

These conditions led to two fundamental shifts in American foreign policy that were designed to strengthen European democracies and their economies. The first was the Truman Doctrine. The other was the **Marshall Plan**, which called for the nations of Europe to draw up a program for economic recovery from the war. The United States would then support the program with financial aid.

The plan was unveiled by Secretary of State George C. Marshall in 1947. The Marshall Plan was a response to American concerns that Communist parties were growing stronger across Europe, and that the Soviet Union might intervene to support more of these Communist movements. The plan also reflected the belief that United States aid for European economic recovery would create strong democracies and open new markets for American goods.

Marshall described his plan in a speech at Harvard University in June 1947:

**KEY DOCUMENTS**

“It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.”

—Marshall Plan speech, George C. Marshall, June 5, 1947

The Soviet Union was invited to participate in the Marshall Plan, but it refused the help and pressured its satellite nations to do so too. Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov called the Marshall Plan a vicious American scheme for using dollars to “buy its way” into European affairs. In fact, Soviet leaders did not want outside scrutiny of their country's economy.

In 1948, Congress approved the Marshall Plan, which was formally known as the European Recovery Program. Seventeen Western European nations joined the plan: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and West Germany. Over the next four years, the United States allocated some \$13 billion in grants and loans to Western Europe. The region's economies were quickly restored, and the United States gained strong trading partners in the region.

**The Berlin Airlift**

One of the nations that benefited from the Marshall Plan was West Germany. By 1948, American, British, and French leaders had become convinced that Stalin was not going to allow the reunification of Germany. Therefore the



**Shipments Financed by the Marshall Plan, 1948–1951**

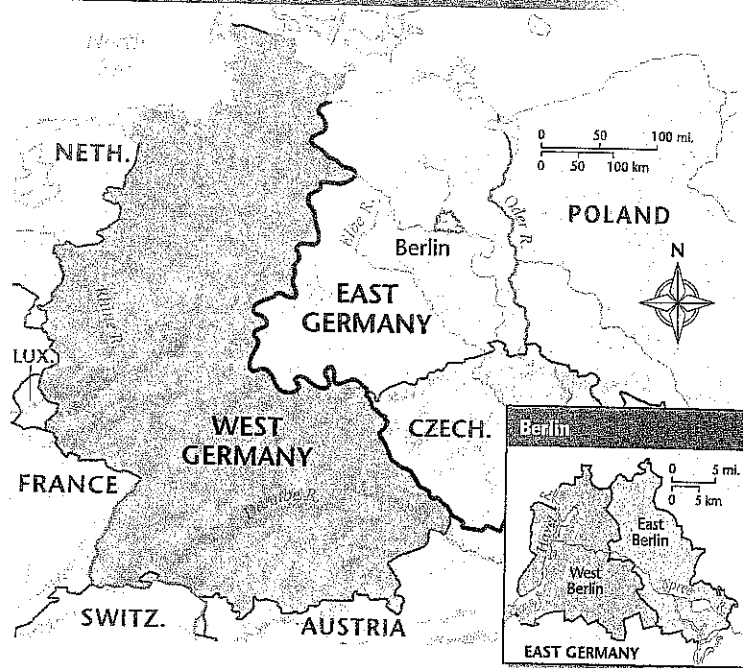
Shipment	Total Value (in millions of dollars)
Food, feed, fertilizer	3,209.5
Fuel	1,552.4
Cotton	1,397.8
Other raw materials	2,327.6
Machinery and vehicles	1,428.1
Other	88.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,004.3</b>

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of the United States*

**ANALYZING TABLES** The photo shows a parade in Athens, Greece, following the unloading of sacks of flour delivered by the Marshall Plan. The table identifies the kinds of goods the Marshall Plan provided.

**Drawing Conclusions** What made up the largest percentage of goods delivered? Why do you think this was so?

## Divided Germany and Berlin, 1949



**MAP SKILLS** The map shows the location of West Berlin within East Germany. In the photo below, German children wave to an American airplane during the Berlin airlift. Location How did Berlin's location make it difficult to supply?

Western Allies prepared to merge their three occupation zones to create a new nation, the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany. The western part of Berlin, which lay in the Soviet zone, would become part of West Germany. The Soviets responded in 1949 by forming a Communist state, the German Democratic Republic, or East Germany.

Capitalist West Berlin and Communist East Berlin became visible symbols of the developing Cold War struggle between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. Hundreds of thousands of Eastern Europeans left their homes in Communist-dominated nations, fled to East Berlin, and then crossed into West Berlin. From there they booked passage to freedom in the United States, Canada, or Western Europe.

Stalin decided to close this escape route by forcing the Western powers to abandon West Berlin. He found his excuse in June 1948, when a new German currency was introduced in West

Germany, including West Berlin. Stalin considered the new currency and the new nation it represented to be a threat. The city of West Berlin—located within East Germany—was a symbol of that threat. The Soviets used the dispute over the new currency as an excuse to block Allied access to West Berlin. All shipments to the city through East Germany were banned. The blockade threatened to create severe shortages of food and other supplies needed by the 2.5 million people in West Berlin.

Truman did not want to risk starting a war by using military force to open the transportation routes. Nor did he want to give up West Berlin to the Soviets. Instead, Truman decided on an airlift, moving supplies into West Berlin by plane. During the next 15 months, British and American military aircraft made



more than 200,000 flights to deliver food, fuel, and other supplies. At the height of the **Berlin airlift**, nearly 13,000 tons of goods arrived in West Berlin daily.

The Soviets finally gave up the blockade in May 1949, and the airlift ended the following September. By that time, the Marshall Plan had helped achieve economic stability in the capitalist nations of Western Europe, including West Germany. Berlin, however, remained a focal point of East-West conflict.

## NATO

In the early postwar period, the international community looked to the United Nations to protect nations from invasion or destabilization by foreign governments, and to maintain world peace. However, the Soviet Union's frequent use of its veto power in the Security Council prevented the UN from effectively dealing with a number of postwar problems. Thus it became clear that Western Europe would have to look beyond the UN for protection from Soviet aggression. In 1946, the Canadian foreign minister, Louis St. Laurent, proposed creating an "association of democratic peace-loving states" to defend Western Europe against attack by the Soviet Union.

American officials expressed great interest in St. Laurent's idea. Truman was determined to prevent the United States from returning to pre-World War II isolationism. The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan soon demonstrated his commitment to making America a leader in postwar world affairs. Yet Truman did not want the United States to be the only nation in the Western Hemisphere pledged to defend Western Europe from the Communists. For this reason, a Canadian role in any proposed organization became vital to American support.

Not all Americans agreed that such an organization was a good idea. Ohio Senator Robert Taft thought that the pact was "not a peace program; it is a war program." He continued, "We are undertaking to arm half the world against the other half. We are inevitably starting an armament race." On the other hand, Senator Tom Connally favored joining such an association:

*"From now on, no one will misread our motives or underestimate our determination to stand in defense of our freedom. . . . The greatest obstacle that stands in the way of complete recovery [from World War II] is the pervading and paralyzing sense of insecurity. The treaty is a powerful antidote to this poison. . . . With this protection afforded by the Atlantic Pact, Western Europe can breathe easier again."*

—Texas Senator Tom Connally, 1949

In April 1949, Canada and the United States joined Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal to form the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**. Member nations agreed that "an armed attack against one or more of them . . . shall be considered an attack against them all." This principle of mutual military assistance is called **collective security**. Having dropped its opposition to military treaties with Europe for the first time since the Monroe Doctrine, the United States now became actively involved in European affairs. In 1955,

## Focus on WORLD EVENTS

**Operation Little Vittles** The Berlin airlift was called "Operation Vittles," (*vittles* is slang for food) by American servicemen. It provided the necessities of life to Berliners. But one USAF pilot, Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen, felt that the children needed more than necessities, and he began dropping candy to the children of Berlin. Halvorsen rigged up tiny parachutes made of handkerchiefs and fabric scraps. As he flew over groups of children who had gathered to watch the planes, he wiggled the wings of his aircraft to signal that the parachuted candy was about to be dropped. German children began calling him "Uncle Wiggly Wings." Soon other pilots joined this Operation Little Vittles, and donations of handkerchiefs as well as thousands of pounds of candy began arriving at American air bases. Eventually, Operation Little Vittles dropped more than 250,000

miniature parachutes and some 23 tons of candy.



## Early Cold War Crises, 1944–1949

Year	Crisis	Significance
1944–1949	Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and East Germany become Soviet satellite nations.	Communist power grows with the Soviet Union's domination of Eastern Europe.
1948–1949	The Soviet Union blockades West Berlin. Truman initiates Berlin airlift to supply the city with food, fuel, and other necessities.	Tensions increase between the United States and the Soviet Union, with Berlin a focal point of East-West conflict.
1949	The Soviet Union develops nuclear weapons technology.  China falls to Communist dictator Mao Zedong.	The United States no longer has the upper hand in weapons technology.  Communism spreads to the most populous nation in Asia.

### INTERPRETING CHARTS

A series of crises stepped up demands on the American government to deal effectively with the spread of communism. **Making**

**Comparisons** (a) How are the two entries in the last row different from those that came before? (b) How did they affect American public opinion?

### READING CHECK

Describe how China fell to the Communists.

the Soviet Union responded to the formation of NATO by creating the **Warsaw Pact**, a military alliance with its satellite nations in Eastern Europe.

## Communist Advances

In 1949, two events heightened American concerns about the Cold War. The first was President Truman's terrifying announcement that the Soviet Union had successfully tested an atomic bomb. Then, just a few weeks later, Communist forces took control of China.

**The Soviet Atomic Threat** "We have evidence that within recent weeks an atomic explosion occurred in the USSR," Truman told reporters in September 1949. The news jolted Americans. New York, Los Angeles, and other American cities were now in danger of suffering the horrible fate of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Truman's response to the Soviet atomic threat was to forge ahead with a new weapon to maintain America's nuclear superiority. In early 1950, he gave approval

for the development of a hydrogen, or thermonuclear, bomb that would be many times more destructive than the atomic bomb. The first successful thermonuclear test occurred in 1952, reestablishing the United States as the world's leading nuclear power.

At about the same time, Truman organized the Federal Civil Defense Administration. The new agency flooded the nation with posters and other information about how to survive a nuclear attack. These materials included plans for building bomb shelters and instructions for holding air raid drills in schools. Privately, however, experts ridiculed these programs as almost totally ineffective. Not until the late 1950s did civil defense become a more important federal government priority.

**China Falls to the Communists** The Communist takeover of China also came as a shock to many Americans. However, in actuality the struggle between China's Nationalists and Communists had been going on since the 1920s. (See Section 3.) During World War II, the Communist leader Mao Zedong and the Nationalist leader Jiang Jieshi (also known as Chiang Kai-shek) grudgingly cooperated to resist the invading Japanese. But the war also enabled Mao to strengthen his forces and to launch popular political, social, and economic reforms in the regions of China that he controlled.

As World War II drew to a close, the fighting between the Communists and government forces resumed. The Truman administration at first provided economic and military assistance to Jiang. Despite this aid, by 1947 Mao's forces had occupied much of China's countryside and had begun to take control of the northern cities. When Jiang asked for more American help, Truman and his advisors concluded that Mao's takeover of China probably could not be prevented. While continuing to give some aid to Jiang, the United States decided to focus instead on saving Western Europe from Soviet domination.

In early 1949, China's capital of Peking (now Beijing) fell to the Communists. A few months later, Mao proclaimed the creation of a Communist state, the People's Republic of China. The defeated Jiang and his followers withdrew to the island of Taiwan, off the Chinese mainland. There they continued as the Republic of China, claiming to be the legitimate government of the entire

Chinese nation. With American support, the Republic of China also held on to China's seats in the UN's General Assembly and Security Council.

Many Americans viewed the "loss of China" as a stain on the record of the Truman administration. Members of Congress and others who held this view called for greater efforts to protect the rest of Asia from communism. Some Americans also began to suspect the loyalties of those involved in making military and foreign policy.

## The Cold War at Home

Throughout the Great Depression, tens of thousands of Americans had joined the Communist Party, which was a legal organization. Many were desperate people who had developed serious doubts about the American capitalist system, partly because of the economic collapse of the 1930s. Others were intellectuals who were attracted to Communist ideals. After World War II, however, improved economic times, as well as the increasing distrust of Stalin, caused many people to become disillusioned with communism. Most American Communists quit the party, although some remained members, whether active or not. Now, as a new red scare began to grip America, their pasts came back to haunt them.

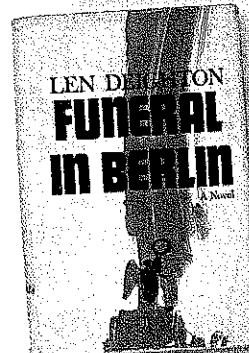
During the presidencies of Truman and his successor, Dwight D. Eisenhower, concern about the growth of world communism raised fears of a conspiracy to overthrow the government, particularly when a number of Communist spies were caught and put on trial. These fears launched an anti-Communist crusade that violated the civil liberties of many Americans. Anyone who had ever had Communist party ties and many who had never even been Communists were swept up in the wave of persecutions.

**The Loyalty Program** As the Truman administration pursued its containment policy abroad, government officials launched programs to root out any element of communism that might have infiltrated the United States. Exposure of a number of wartime spy rings in 1946 increased the anxiety of many Americans. (In recent years, new evidence of Soviet infiltration has come to light. It is known, for instance, that Soviet spies gathered information on the United States nuclear program that helped the Soviet Union advance its own atomic development.)

When Republicans made big gains in the 1946 congressional elections, Truman worried that his rivals would take political advantage of the loyalty issue. To head off this possibility, he began his own investigation, establishing a federal employee loyalty program in 1947. Under this program, all new employees hired by the federal government were to be investigated. In addition, the FBI checked its files for evidence of current government employees who might be engaged in suspicious activities. Those accused of disloyalty were brought before a Loyalty Review Board.

While civil rights were supposed to be safeguarded, in fact those accused of disloyalty to their country often had little chance to defend themselves. Rather than being considered innocent until proven guilty, they found that the accusation alone made it difficult to clear their names. The Truman program examined several million government employees, yet only a few hundred were actually removed from their jobs. Nonetheless, the loyalty program added to a climate of suspicion taking hold in the nation.

## Focus on CULTURE



**The Rise of the Spy Novel** The Cold War produced real spies, as well as the fear of spies where none existed. But perhaps the most famous Cold War spies were the fictional espionage agents in spy novels. James Bond, for example, is a post-war British Secret

Service agent whose exploits continue in countless movies. The author of the Bond novels, Ian Fleming, had served in British naval intelligence during the war. John Le Carré, who was in the British Foreign Service in West Germany, created another famous British intelligence agent, George Smiley, who battles the Soviet master spy Karla in a series of novels. In Le Carré's classic *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*, agents and double agents struggle to cross (and get doublecrossed!) at the Berlin Wall. Len Deighton's *Funeral in Berlin* also features a dangerous passage between East and West in the divided city of Berlin, where heroes and villains, secrets and spies, often slipped through the iron curtain on their shadowy missions.

**HUAC** As the Loyalty Review Board carried out its work, Congress pursued its own loyalty programs. The **House Un-American Activities Committee**, known as **HUAC**, had been established in 1938 to investigate disloyalty on the eve of World War II. Now it began a postwar probe of Communist infiltration of government agencies and, more spectacularly, a probe of the Hollywood movie industry.

Claiming that movies had tremendous power to influence the public, in 1947 HUAC charged that numerous Hollywood figures had Communist leanings that affected their filmmaking. In fact, some Hollywood personalities were or had been members of the Communist Party. Others in the industry had openly supported various causes and movements with philosophical similarities to communism (which, of course, did not make them Communists or disloyal in any way). With government encouragement, Hollywood had also produced some movies favorable to the Soviet Union and its people. These films had been made during the war, when the United States and the Soviet Union had been allies.

Many movie stars protested HUAC's attitude and procedures. Actor Frederic March asked Americans to consider where it all could lead: "Who's next? . . . Is it you, who will have to look around nervously before you can say what's on your mind? . . . This reaches into every American city and town."

**The Hollywood Ten** In September and October of 1947, HUAC called a number of Hollywood writers, directors, actors, and producers to testify. They were a distinguished group, responsible for some of Hollywood's best films of the previous decade. Facing the committee, celebrities who were accused of having radical political associations had little chance to defend themselves. The committee chairman, Republican Representative J. Parnell Thomas of New Jersey, first called witnesses who were allowed to make accusations based on rumors and other flimsy evidence. Then the accused were called.

Over and over the committee asked, "Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?"

When some of those called before HUAC attempted to make statements, they were denied permission. Invoking their Constitutional rights, ten of the accused declined to answer the committee's questions. The **Hollywood Ten** were cited for contempt of Congress and served jail terms ranging from six months to a year.

The HUAC investigations had a powerful impact on filmmaking. Nervous motion picture executives denounced the Hollywood Ten for having done a disservice to their industry. The studios compiled a **blacklist**, a list circulated among employers, containing the names of persons who should not be hired. Many other entertainment figures were added to the Hollywood blacklist simply because they seemed subversive or because they opposed *the idea* of a blacklist. The list included actors, screenwriters, directors, and broadcasters.

In the past, Hollywood had been willing to make movies on controversial subjects such as racism and anti-Semitism. Now studios resisted all films dealing with social problems and concentrated on pure entertainment.

**The McCarran-Walter Act** While HUAC carried out its work in the House, Democrat Pat McCarran led a Senate hunt for Communists in the movie industry, labor unions, the State Department, and the UN. Senator McCarran became convinced that most disloyal Americans were immigrants from Communist-dominated parts of the world.



**VIEWING HISTORY** Actor Humphrey Bogart protested HUAC's actions against other actors, and then ended up having to clear his own name. *Red Channels* was an index of blacklisted actors published in 1950. **Drawing Inferences** How do these two items demonstrate the climate of suspicion at that time?

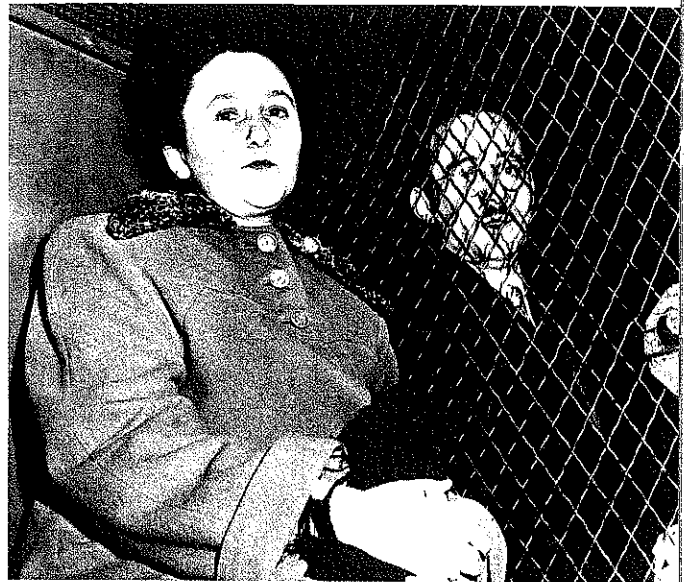
At his urging, Congress passed the **McCarran-Walter Act** in 1952. This law reaffirmed the quota system for each country that had been established in 1924. It discriminated against potential immigrants from Asia and from Southern and Central Europe. President Truman vetoed McCarran's bill, calling it "one of the most un-American acts I have ever witnessed in my public career." Congress, however, passed the bill over the President's veto.

**Spy Cases Inflamm the Nation** Two famous spy cases helped fuel the suspicion that a conspiracy within the United States was helping foreign Communists gain military and political successes overseas. In 1948, HUAC investigated Alger Hiss, who had been a high-ranking State Department official before he left government service. Whittaker Chambers, a former Communist who had become a successful *Time* magazine editor, accused Hiss of having been a Communist in the 1930s. Hiss denied the charge and sued Chambers for slander. Chambers then declared that Hiss had been a Soviet spy.

Too much time had passed for the spying charge to be pressed. After two trials, Hiss was convicted of lying to a federal grand jury investigating him for espionage, however. In 1950, he went to prison for four years. Not all Americans were convinced that he was guilty, and the case was debated for years. For most people, however, the case seemed to prove that there was a real Communist threat in the United States.

Several months after Hiss's conviction, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, a married couple who were members of the Communist Party, were accused of passing atomic secrets to the Soviets during World War II. After a highly controversial trial, the Rosenbergs were convicted of espionage and executed in 1953. The case was another event that inflamed anti-Communist passions and focused attention on a possible internal threat to the nation's security.

Like the Hiss case, the Rosenbergs' convictions were debated for years afterward. Careful work by historians in once-classified American records and in secret Soviet records opened at the end of the Cold War indicate that both Alger Hiss and Julius Rosenberg were guilty. While Ethel Rosenberg may have had some knowledge of her husband's activities, it now appears that she was not guilty of espionage.



**VIEWING HISTORY** Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were the first U.S. civilians to be executed for espionage. **Drawing Conclusions** How did spy cases affect Americans' perception of a Communist threat to society?

## Section

## 2

## Assessment

### READING COMPREHENSION

1. What was the **Marshall Plan**, and why was it instituted?
2. What was the importance of the **Berlin airlift**?
3. How did **NATO** demonstrate the principle of **collective security**?
4. What did the **HUAC** hearings and the **McCarran-Walter Act** show about American attitudes?

### CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

5. **Identifying Central Issues** What dangers to a free society are posed by the kind of tactics used by HUAC and by the creation of blacklists?
6. **Writing a Conclusion** How well did the United States respond to Cold War threats? Support your conclusion with three examples.



### Take It to the NET

#### Activity: Writing an Editorial

Read more about the Marshall Plan. Then write a newspaper editorial supporting or criticizing the plan. Use the links provided in the *America: Pathways to the Present* area of the following Web site for help in completing this activity.

[www.phschool.com](http://www.phschool.com)