

The Arms Race

Definition: The struggle between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. to gain weapons superiority.

Deterrence: The policy of making the military power of the United States and its allies so strong that no enemy would dare attack for fear of retaliation. This policy was first developed by Truman and then continued by Eisenhower.

Throughout the 1950's the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. continued to develop and test more and more powerful bombs. These were hundreds of times more powerful than those used over Nagasaki or Hiroshima.

Brinkmanship: The art or ability to go to the very verge (brink) of war without actually getting into a war. If you cannot master it you ultimately get into a war. If you are afraid to go to the brink, you will be dominated by your opponent. Architect - John Foster Dulles. Critic - Adlai Stevenson (Democratic Leader)

New Weapons

- To carry these new powerful bombs the U.S. relied on long range bombers.
- The Soviets focused on rockets to deliver their bombs. These rockets were called ICBM's (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles).
- Americans attempted to develop the same technology, but we lagged behind the Soviets.

Technology Gap

- A technology gap became obvious between the U.S. and the Soviets in 1957 when the Soviet's successfully launched Sputnik.
- Sputnik was the first artificial satellite to orbit the earth. It was launched with a rocket.
- This resulted in a sense of shock and fear in the U.S. Could such a rocket be used to deliver a hydrogen bomb?
- In May of 1960 the Soviets used a guided missile to shoot down an American U-2 Spy Plane over the Soviet Union. The plane was piloted by Francis Gary Powers. Historically the event has been known as the U-2 Incident.
- The U-2 Incident was a blow to American confidence and made Americans become willing to spend tremendous resources to close the technology gap.

Eisenhower Warning

In his farewell address Eisenhower warned of the dangers of the Military Industrial Complex. He believed that with millions of Americans having a financial stake in the defense industry could become a threat to peace.