

D- Eisenhower Tranquility and Crisis 1953 - 61

The USA and the Cold War

Superpower rivalry and conflict with the USSR

Eisenhower's policies:

1. He feared excessive defence expenditure would damage the United States. So he introduced his new Look defence policy full stop this relied more upon nuclear weapons and less conventional forces full stop.
2. when Joseph Stalin died in 1953 Eisenhower proposed conditions for a deal the Soviets rejected this.
3. the USA tested its first hydrogen bomb in 1952, the USSR tested their's in 1953. Eisenhower suggested talks to ease tensions. In Geneva in 1955 he suggested "Open Skies" to monitor each other's military build up but this was rejected.
4. The new leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, agreed that he didn't want war but they couldn't agree on anything else.
5. The American public and politicians pressed Eisenhower to keep stockpiling weapons, the number of warheads rose from 1500 to 6000 during his presidency.
6. The USSR launched a satellite (Sputnik) into space in 1957. Eisenhower responded by stating that ICBM's were more important. However, the first US satellite was launched early in 1958 and later that year, following a second Soviet launch (Sputnik 2) NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration).
7. Eisenhower carried out a number of covert warfare operations using the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) to overthrow foreign governments and spy on his enemies:
 - a. Iran (1953)
 - b. Guatemala (1954)
 - c. Cuba (planned 1960)
 - d. U-2 reconnaissance planes photographed the USSR until one of the planes was shot down. The pilot and plane were captured by the USSR and Khrushchev used it to make an anti-American rant.

Responses to developments in Western and Eastern Europe.

1. In 1954 Eisenhower strengthened Western Europe when he persuaded France to allow West Germany to rearm.
2. No aid was given to land locked Hungary despite them rebelling against the Soviets and Communism.
3. A new crisis in Berlin was narrowly avoided when Khrushchev threatened to hand over access routes to Berlin to East Germany. This would force the West to recognise East Germany. However, Eisenhower made it clear that the USA would always support West Berlin and the crisis passed.