

THE COLD WAR HEATS UP

TEXT SUMMARY

As the Cold War intensified, the United States focused on strengthening Western European democracies and economies. Through the **Marshall Plan**, named for Secretary of State George C. Marshall, the United States gave financial aid to Europe, gaining allies and trading partners.

Many European nations looked to the UN for protection. But the Soviet Union vetoed all UN attempts to solve postwar problems. Therefore, in order to strengthen European alliances and deal with postwar problems, the United States, Canada, and some Western European nations formed the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** of mutual military assistance. The Soviet Union responded with the **Warsaw Pact**, a military alliance with its satellite nations.

In 1949 the Soviet Union successfully tested an atomic bomb, and Communists finally took control of China under their leader Mao Zedong. These two events con-

vinced many Americans that communism was a serious domestic threat, and a new Red Scare threatened civil rights.

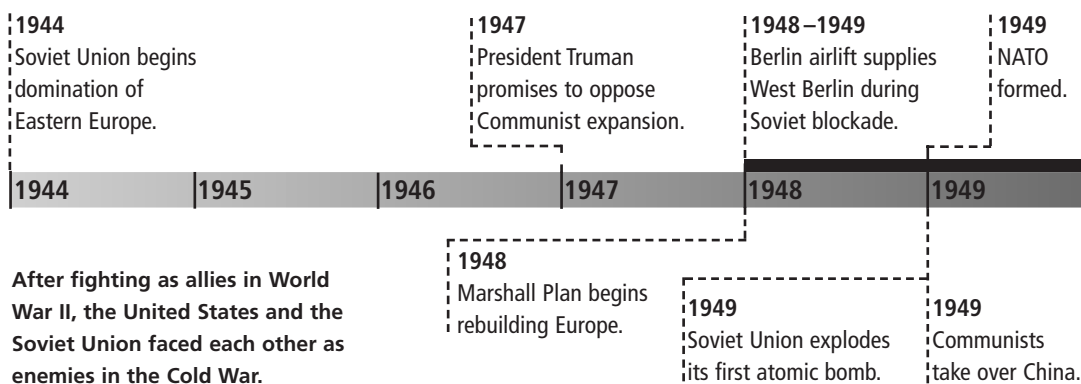
Congress hunted for Communists in government agencies and in the film industry through the **House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)**, which relentlessly pursued anyone it suspected of supporting Communist ideas. Hollywood studios circulated a **blacklist** of industry people who were denied work in films because they opposed HUAC and spoke out.

Adding to the anti-Communist campaigns were the trials of Alger Hiss, a former high-ranking State Department employee, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, all accused of spying. Following a controversial trial that is still debated, the Rosenbergs were executed for treason.

THE BIG IDEA

As the United States worked to rebuild Western Europe, Cold War tensions increased and the fear of communism grew.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: *Early Days of the Cold War*



REVIEW QUESTIONS

- How did the Cold War affect the American movie industry?
- Time Line Skills** What two events frightened many Americans in 1949?