

# 5HD450 Chapters in History of the Cold War

## 5. Berlin Wall Crisis and Cuban Missile Crises.



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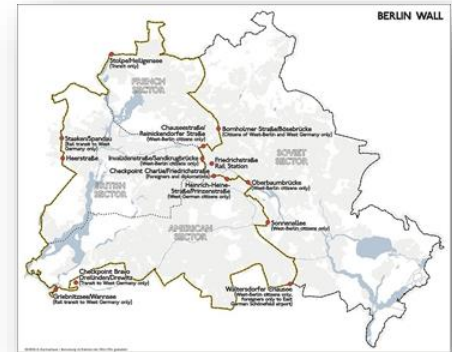
**MŠMT**  
MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,  
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

# American-Soviet relationship before the crises



- **1953 new political leadership in both countries**
  - Dwight D. Eisenhower
  - Nikita Khrushchev
- **De-Stalinization in Russia** – 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party – move away from Stalin’s policies
- 1956 Khrushchev: *“Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you.”*
- **New Look policy** in the US – greater reliance on nuclear weapons (more air-strike oriented than conventional military) + **doctrine of massive retaliation**
- **1956 Suez Crisis, Hungarian Revolution, Chinese–Soviet split**
- **1960 U-2 Incident** – deterioration in relationship
- 1957–1961 Repeated USSR nuclear threats to the West
- During the 1950s and early 1960s decolonization – space for the Cold War in the Third World, selling armaments to “friendly” countries
- **1961 Antarctic Treaty** – Antarctica as a scientific preserve for research without any military





# Berlin Wall Crisis

- **Brain Drain** – people fleeing from East to West Berlin (over 3 mil., 20 % of population by 1961)
- **November 1958** – Russian attempt to make whole Berlin “free, independent, demilitarized” city
- **Berlin Ultimatum** – 6 months to withdraw American, British, and France troops from West Berlin x not accepted x US military build-up
- Khrushchev: *“Berlin is the testicles of the West. Every time I want to make the West scream, I squeeze on Berlin.”*
- **June 1961** new ultimatum on withdrawing Allied forces from West Berlin x not accepted
- **June – November 1961 Berlin Wall Crisis (Second Berlin Crisis)**
- Ulbricht: *“Niemand hat die Absicht, eine Mauer zu errichten!”*  
*“No one has the intention to erect a wall!”*
- **August 1961** barbed-wire barrier (the Soviet Army present)
- **Building the Berlin Wall**
- Kennedy: *“It's not a very nice solution, but a wall is a hell of a lot better than a war.”*



# Cuban Revolution



- **January 1959** the July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro seized power
- Nixon met with Castro, Cuba began purchasing arms from the East
- January 1961 American–Cuban relationship worsened – change of regime in Cuba?
- **April 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion** – unsuccessful ship–born invasion orchestrated by CIA – public humiliation of the US
- **Castro publicly announced Cuba as a communist country – Soviets promised support**



# Cuban Missile Crisis

- **October – November 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis**
- **Cuban Project** – US continued in attempts at overthrowing Cuban government and Castro's assassination + missiles in Turkey and Italy
- **Soviet preparations to install nuclear missiles in Cuba**
- **US naval blockade of Cuba + ultimatum for the USSR**
- Khrushchev removed the missiles x US stopped to intervene in Cuba
- First efforts at nuclear disarmament and improving West–East relations



# Readings & videos

- Documentaries

BBC The Cold War – The Wall, Cuba

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FU2PQQXR5YQ&index=9&list=PLsPmJnlcm\\_ThTIBUL7FBKwII\\_Wtdkl6sY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FU2PQQXR5YQ&index=9&list=PLsPmJnlcm_ThTIBUL7FBKwII_Wtdkl6sY)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nTrQMO006M&list=PLsPmJnlcm\\_ThTIBUL7FBKwII\\_Wtdkl6sY&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nTrQMO006M&list=PLsPmJnlcm_ThTIBUL7FBKwII_Wtdkl6sY&index=10)

Cold War History Videos

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtDAQB1sA9k> in 5 minutes 😊
- <http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/cold-war-history/videos>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/coldwar/>

- Specialized Resources / Collections / Cold War Files

- <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project>
- <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collections>
- [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/themes/world\\_politics/cold\\_war/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/themes/world_politics/cold_war/default.stm)
- <https://web.archive.org/web/20080411004848/http://www.coldwarfiles.org/index.cfm?thisunit=0&fuseaction=events.list>
- <http://www.avclub.com/special/cold-war/timeline>



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