**WEEK 10: The Cold War and the “American Way” in the 1950s**

The Cold War was a period of political tension between major military countries. America and their Allies decision to fight communism marked the “most memorable foreign policy initiative in the nation’s history (734).” The Cold War initially started through the differing of interests over Eastern Europe between Soviet Russia and the United States. The United States viewed the reconstruction of Italy and Japan as OK whereas they disagreed with the Soviets’ desire to reconstruct “countries defeated or liberated by the Red Army (713).” Soviet Russia condemned the United States for their hypocrisy as they gave statements of approval to some Latin American dictators but not to Russia. Winston Churchill denounced the Soviets saying, “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the continent.” Churchills' statement was viewed as an act of aggression, “a call to war against the USSR (714).” The U.S. had adopted the rationale of George F. Kennan by “downplaying the influence of Communist ideology in Soviet policy […] stress[ing] Soviet insecurity and Stalin’s need to maintain authority at home (714).” With Kennans' rationale in mind, it would be hard to say that the United States did not provoke the insecure USSR by downplaying the influence. A primary foundation of USSR political ideology is influence over others. The communist ideology, with a focus on influence over their citizens, took the global downplaying of the rare communist form of political structure personally.

In the years since the Cold War, Americans changed view of the rest of the world and how, as individuals and as a country, they react. The youth were bombarded with nuclear bombing drills, all were asked to keep vigilant of others as anti-communism became a part of daily life and a major shift in how media was presented. The constant injection of fear of others, fear of safety and the fear of imminent world demise add a considerable amount of stress to an individual. Innovation was in full force during the few decades prior to the Cold War and through the entire Cold War. Loren Baritz has a strong point, “Our marvelously clever technology did not help us to understand the war and, in fact, confused us even more because it created our unquestioning faith in our own power (295).” The invention, first use and expansion of funding in the Nuclear-related weaponry put the “world at risk, consumed resources that might have been used to improve living standards and skewed the economy toward dependence on military projects (734).”