Impact of the Cold War
At Home
The fear of communism and the threat of nuclear war affected American life throughout the Cold War.
During the 1950s and 1960s, American schools regularly held drills to train children what to do in case of a nuclear attack.

These notions, though idiotic today, allowed people to feel they had some control over their situation.

“Bert the Turtle” taught Americans to avoid being killed in a nuclear attack by ducking and covering…
American citizens were urged by the government to build **bomb shelters** in their own basements.

This was their “safe place” in case of a nuclear attack.

People could live in a bomb shelter like this for several months after an attack...
The convictions of Alger Hiss, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for spying for the Soviet Union, and the construction of nuclear weapons by the Soviets using technical secrets obtained through spying heightened our fears!

Alger Hiss (above) was convicted of espionage in the State Department. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (below) were convicted of selling atomic secrets to the Soviets. They were put to death!
Senator Joseph McCarthy played on American fears of communism by recklessly accusing many American governmental officials and citizens of being communists based on flimsy or no evidence.
McCarthyism:

- The hunt for communists led to the coining of the term McCarthyism -- the making of false accusations based on rumor or guilt by association.

McCarthy, the feared “red” (communist) hunter, displaying the "distribution" of communists in different states. He was known for his phrase “I have a list of known communists”. No one ever saw “the list”.

Senator Joe McCarthy became a very powerful man. Those who criticized him were labeled as “soft on communism”.

He seemed to self-destruct as TV cameras showed the nation his “bully tactics”.

He was not re-elected and left office in relative obscurity.
The Cold War made foreign policy a major issue in every presidential election during the period.
Cold War and Virginia:

- The heavy military expenditures throughout the Cold War benefited Virginia’s economy proportionately more than any other state.
- Its impact was especially dramatic in Hampton Roads, home to several large naval and air bases.
- Northern Virginia, home to the Pentagon and numerous private companies that contract with the military, was also impacted significantly.

Naval Station Norfolk