Y9 History Knowledge Organiser – How do you fight a Cold War?

1. Glossary

Cold War	A period of tension between USA and USSR that didn't involve direct war
Superpower	A country with huge influence or strength
Ideology	A set of beliefs/ideas someone has
Containment	American policy to stop communism from spreading to other countries
Domino Theory	American idea that if one country fell to communism, others would follow
Propaganda	Information designed to persuade people to adopt a particular opinion
Arms race	Competition to build more and more powerful nuclear weapons
Space race	Competition to build the best technology to go to outer space and the moon
Atomic bomb	A very destructive bomb that gets power from the energy released when atoms are split
Nuclear warfare	Conflicts with nuclear weapons (atomic bombs)
Mutually Assured Destruction	(MAD) - Situation where America and Russia knew if they started a nuclear war it would destroy the world
Iron Curtain	Division in Europe between the communist East and capitalist West
Berlin Wall	Built in 1961 dividing the German capital to stop people leaving USSR

2. Key leaders

Winston Churchill	British Prime Minister, made famous 'iron curtain speech' in 1946.
Harry S. Truman	US President, named the Truman Doctrine to stop communism
Joseph Stalin	Soviet dictator until his death in 1953.
John F. Kennedy	US President at height of Cold War, assassinated in 1963
Mikhail Gorbachev	President of the USSR, started Soviet 'opening up' and détente

3. Contrasting ideologies

USA (United States of America)		USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)	
Capitalism	System with privately owned businesses and profit	**Communism**	A classless society where all property is owned publicly
White House	Official residence of the President of the US	**Kremlin**	Official residence of the President of Russia
Marshall plan	American plan to help Europe recover from WW2 and stop communism	**Molotov Plan**	Soviet plan to offer financial help to rebuild Eastern European countries
NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)	A military alliance of western powers for mutual protection in case of attack	**Warsaw Pact**	12 communist countries that agreed to defend each other if one of them was attacked
CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)	A US organisation used to gather information on the country's enemies	**KGB (Committee for State Security)**	State police of the USSR used for external espionage and counter-intelligence

4. Friends to enemies (1945)

Yalta conference (February)

- Aim: to decide what to do with Germany after WW2
- Outcome: divided Germany into 4 zones (controlled by Britain, USA, USSR and France)

Potsdam conference (July)

- Aim: act on agreements from Yalta
- Outcome: disagreements over how to handle Germany and about nuclear weapons

Atomic bombs in Japan (August)

- USA dropped nuclear bombs in **Hiroshima** and **Nagasaki** (Japan)
- USSR felt threat of nuclear war and started their own atomic programme

5. Conflicts by proxy

Proxy war	Conflict between groups that *represent* superpowers, while the superpowers themselves do not fight.

Korea (1950-53): Country split after WW2 along 38th parallel – communist north, capitalist south. US invaded to stop communists taking over. Success – but Korea remains divided.

Vietnam (1955-75): Country split – communist north; south controlled by US-backed group, but most people supported Vietcong (communists). USA sent troops to fight the Vietcong, but failed - all of Vietnam became (and remains) communist.

Cuba (16–29 Oct 1962): Cuba is a communist country 90 miles south of the USA. Americans discovered USSR installed missile bases in Cuba that could reach US cities. Resolved 2 weeks later with dialogue. Both sides agreed to stop nuclear testing.

Afghanistan (1979-89): USSR invaded after the Mujahideen, an anti-communist group, took power. It was a disaster for USSR as Mujahideen won. Afghanistan left vulnerable to terrorist groups.

6. The end of the Cold War

Détente	The easing of tensions between the East and West
Revolutions of 1989	Protests all over USSR against communist rule
Fall of the Berlin Wall	9th November 1989 Symbolises the end of the Cold War and the falling of the 'iron curtain'
End of USSR	Gorbachev resigned in 1991 and the USSR was dissolved