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Abstract

The Cold War was one of the tensest periods in human history, and diplomacy was instrumental in ensuring nuclear war did not break out. One diplomatic method to try to thaw the Cold War was an exchange of athletic competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. These meets ran from 1958 to 1965, and the friendly but competitive spirit between the competing athletes helped to build camaraderie. The analysis of these track meets can be used to attempt to formulate new strategies of diplomacy in the 21st century. In this thesis, I analyze these track meets, their effects on diplomacy between the United States and the Soviet Union, and if these track meets met their goal of helping to thaw the Cold War.

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