

The Cold War is defined foremost by what it was not: World War III. Nuclear devices were tested, creating ominous backdrops for troops in training. But the weapons were never used in the conflict. Instead, the Cold War unfurled over the frigid mountains of Korea and the steaming jungles of Vietnam. It stretched along European borders where NATO and Warsaw Pact tanks squared off. It flew a constant vigil in SAC airborne command posts. For 46 years, U.S. soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen devoted their lives to preventing nuclear war and lifting the Iron Curtain. Here is their story.