What Does it Take?

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Thesis

This essay examines how fueled by international forces, America’s desire to project masculinity and military strength during the Cold War led to Civil Rights legislation.
International Forces

• Cold War - Ideological battle for hearts and minds (Capitalism v. Communism)

• U.S. and Soviet Union fought proxy wars in Asia, Africa and Latin America

• Soviet propaganda focused on America’s racism

• Popular propaganda piece (pictured left) states, “A u vas negrov linchuyut” which translated means, “and you are lynching Negros”

(Skrentny, 1998)
American Masculinity and Military Strength

- Soviet exploitation of American racism was extremely detrimental

- America promoted the image of the benevolent Savior and protector against communism

- America’s reliance on being the Savior of “vulnerable countries” stems from the White Man’s burden concept

- Soviet Union exposition of the hypocrisy of the “gentle warrior” lessened resistance to America’s Black civil rights movement
Domestic Influences

- Jim Crow laws in many states relegated African Americans to a subservient existence
- Violent treatment of peaceful protesters shocks the world
- Both U.S. Ambassador and Sec. of State call for racial discrimination to cease to secure allies abroad
Recommendations

• Today Black American’s still fight for fundamental rights
• The Black Lives Matter movement has sparked global attention
• BLM has garnered support in over 60 countries
• U.S. now has the opportunity lessen reliance on regime change and more empathetically lead by example