#39—Crash Course World History Video Notes

Cold War

1. The Cold War was a rivalry between the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that played out globally.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, at least as Marx constructed it, wanted to take over the world, and many Soviets saw themselves in a conflict with bourgeois capitalism itself. The Soviets saw American rebuilding efforts in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as the U.S. trying to expand its markets.
3. The U.S. feared that the USSR wanted to destroy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and capitalist institutions. And the Soviets feared that the US wanted to use its money and power to dominate Europe and eventually destroy the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ system. Both parties were right to be worried.
4. Of all the geopolitical struggles between major world powers this time there was the special added bonus that war could lead to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the human species.
5. Immediately after World War II, the Soviets created a sphere of influence in Eastern \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, dominating the countries where the Red Army had pushed back the Nazis, which is why Winston Churchill famously said in 1946 that an “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” had descended across Europe.
6. While the dates of the Cold War are usually given between 1945 and 1990, a number of historians will tell you that it actually started during World War II. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ distrust of the U.S. and Britain kept growing as they refused to invade Europe and open up a second front against the Nazis. And some even say that the decision to drop the first Atomic Bombs on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was motivated in part by a desire to intimidate the Soviets.
7. The Soviets would develop atomic bombs of their own—they successfully tested their first one in \_\_\_\_.
8. From the beginning, the U.S had the advantage because it had more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and could provide Europe protection what with its army and one of a kind nuclear arsenal while Europe rebuilt. The USSR had to rebuild itself.
9. Europe was the first battleground of the Cold War, especially \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which was divided into 2 parts with the former capital, Berlin, also divided into 2 parts. In 1948, the Soviets tried to cut off West Berlin, by closing the main road that led into the city, but the Berlin \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stopped them.
10. Then in 1961, the Soviets tried again and this time they were much more successful building a \_\_\_\_\_ around West Berlin, although it’s worth noting that the thing was up for less than 30 years.
11. The U.S. response to the Soviets was a policy called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In Europe this meant spending a lot of money. First the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Plan spent $13 billion on re-building Western Europe with grants and credits that Europeans would spend on American consumer goods and on construction.
12. The US also tried to slow the spread of communism by founding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
13. Probably the most important part of the Cold War that people just don’t remember these days is the nuclear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Both sides developed nuclear arsenals, the Soviets initially with the help of spies who stole American secrets. Eventually the nuclear arsenals were so big that the U.S. and USSR agreed on a strategy appropriately called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which stood for “mutually assured destruction.”
14. We were close to nuclear war during the 1962 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Missile Crisis.
15. There was plenty of hot war in the Cold War. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ War saw lots of fighting between communists and capitalists, as did the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ War. The USA feared “\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” after Korea and especially China became communist, Vietnam’s movement toward communism seemed very much a threat to Japan, which the U.S. had helped re-make into a vibrant capitalist ally.
16. But it wasn’t just Asia: The U. S. attempted to stabilize governments in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; which led to some very unstable Latin American governments, and quite a lot of violence.
17. And then there were the lukewarm conflicts, like The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Crisis where British and French paratroopers were sent in to try to stop Egypt from nationalizing the Suez Canal. Or all the American covert operations by the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to keep various countries from “falling” to communism.
18. The Soviets used force to crush popular uprisings in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.
19. Almost every part of the globe was involved in some way with the planet being divided into three “worlds.” The first world was the U.S., Western Europe and any place that embraced \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and a more or less democratic form of government. The second world was the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and its satellites, mostly the Warsaw Pact nations, China and Cuba. The Third World was everyone else.
20. During the Cold War, the Soviets were the first to put a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a man, and a dog into space.
21. Soviet socialism did not finally prove to be a viable alternative to industrial capitalism. Over time, \_\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_\_economies just generally don’t fare as well as private enterprise, and people like living in a world where they can have more stuff.
22. More importantly, Soviet policies were just bad: collectivized \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stymied production and led to famine; suppression of dissent and traditional \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ made people angry.
23. But why the Cold War ended when it did is one of the most interesting questions of the 20th century. It probably wasn’t Ronald Reagan bankrupting the Soviets, despite what some politicians believe. The USSR had more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ states that it needed to spend more to prop up than the U.S. had to invest in its Allies. And the Soviet system could never keep up with economic growth in the West.
24. Probably the individual most responsible for the end of the Cold War was Mikhail \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Perestroika and Glosnost opened up the Soviet political and economic systems with contested local elections, less restricted civil society groups, less censorship, more autonomy for the Soviet Republics, more non-state-run businesses and more autonomy for state-run farms.
25. Glasnost or “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” led to more information from the west and less censorship led to a flood of criticism as people realized how much poorer the second world was than the first.
26. One by one, often quite suddenly, former communist states collapsed. In Germany, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_came down in 1989 and East and West Germany were reunited in \_\_\_\_\_\_.
27. In Poland, the Gdansk dockworker’s union Solidarity turned into a mass political movement and won \_\_\_\_\_ of the 100 seats it was allowed to contest in the 1989 election.
28. Hungary held \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ elections in 1990. The same year, mass demonstrations led to elections in Czechoslovakia. In \_\_\_\_\_, that country split up into Slovakia and the Czech Republic.
29. Of course sometimes the transition away from communism was violent and painful. In \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, for instance, the communist dictator Ceaucescu held onto power until he was tried and put before a firing squad at the end of 1989. It took until 1996 for a non-communist government to take power there. In Yugoslavia, well, not so great… 1990-1997, Yugoslavia experienced civil war, ethnic cleansing, genocide, UN sanctions, war criminal trials…and would finally see the self determination on the Balkan Peninsula Woodrow Wilson dreamed of in his Fourteen Points.
30. Just twenty years later, it’s hard to believe that the world was once dominated by two \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ held in check mutually assured destruction.