USA vs USSR Fight! The Cold War: Crash Course World History #39

1. So the Cold War was a rivalry between the USA and the USSR that played out __________________. Socialism, at least as Marx constructed it, wanted to ______________ and many Soviets saw themselves in a conflict with Bourgeois Capitalism itself. And the Soviets saw American rebuilding efforts in Europe and Japan as the US trying to ______________ its markets, which by the way is exactly what we were doing. So the US feared that the USSR wanted to ______________ democratic and capitalist institutions and the Soviets feared that the US wanted to use its ______________ and ______________ to dominate Europe and eventually destroy the Soviet system and both parties were right to be worried. It’s not paranoia if they really are out to get you.

2. We have seen a lot of geopolitical struggles between major world powers, but this time there was the added bonus that war could lead to the destruction of the human species. That was new for world history and it's worth remembering it's still new.

3. Immediately after WWII the Soviet Union created a sphere of influence in eastern Europe, 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.”

4. 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 WWII, ______________ distrust of the US 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 bomb on Japan was motivated in part by a desire to intimidate the Soviets.

5. From the beginning the _______ had the advantage, because it had more ______________ and power and could provide Europe with protection with its army and nuclear arsenal while Europe rebuilt. The USSR had to ______________ itself and also they had the significant disadvantage of being controlled by Joseph Stalin.

6. Silly putty, the thing that won the Cold War. This is exactly the kind of useless consumer good that never would have been produced in the Soviet Union and it is because we had so much more ______________ spending on stuff like silly putty that we won the war. Go team!!

7. Europe was the ______________________ of the Cold War, especially Germany which was divided into two parts with the former capital Berlin also divided into two parts and yes I know the western part was divided into smaller occupation zones, but I’m simplifying.

8. In 1948 the Soviets tried to cut off west berlin by ______________ that led into the city but the Berlin Airlift stopped them. And then in 1961 the soviets tried again and this time they were much more successful by ______________ around west Berlin.
9. The US response to the Soviets was a policy called _______________ t. It basically involved stopping the spread of _______________ by standing up to the Soviets wherever they seemed to want to expand.

10. In Europe this meant spending a lot of money. First the Marshall plan spent _______________ on rebuilding western europe with grants and credits that europeans would spend on American consumer goods and on construction. Capitalisms cheap food and plentiful stuff it was hoped would stop the spread of _______________. The US also tried to slow the spread of communism by founding NATO and with CIA interventions in elections where communists had a chance, as in Italy.

11. But despite all the spy novels, the Cold War never did heat up in Europe. Probably the most important part of the Cold War that people just don’t remember these days is the _______________. Both sides developed nuclear arsenals, the Soviets initially with the help of ___________ that stole American secrets. Eventually the nuclear arsenals were so big that the US and USSR agreed on a strategy appropriately called ___________ which stood for Mutually Assured Destruction. And yes nuclear weapons were and are capable of destroying humanity many times over.

12. But only twice did we get close to nuclear war: during the 1962 Cuban Missile crisis and then again in ________ when we forgot to give the Russians the heads up that we were doing some ________________ which made it look like we had launched the first strike. Our bad!

13. But even though MAD prevented direct conflict there was plenty of hot war in the Cold War. The Korean war saw lots of fighting between ____________ and ____________ as did the Vietnam war. These days we remember the _______________ effect as silly paranoia, but after Korea and especially China became communists, Vietnam's movement toward communism seemed very much a threat to Japan which the US had helped remake into a vibrant capitalist ally.

14. So the US got bogged down in one of its longest wars while the Soviets assisted the North Vietnamese army and the Viet Cong. But then we paid them back by supporting the anti-communist musha hadeen after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. So after 10 disastrous years the Soviets finally abandoned Afghanistan. Some of those musha hadeen later became member of the taliban so it's hard to say that anyone won that war.

15. But it wasn’t just Asia, in Nicaragua, the US supported rebels to _______________ the leftist government, in El Salvador the US bolstered authoritarian regimes that were threatened by left wing guerillas. The US ended up ______________ a lot of awful governments like the one in Guatemala which held onto power through the use of _______________. Frankly all our attempts to stabilize Latin America led to some very unstable Latin American governments and quite a lot of violence.

16. And then there were the lukewarm conflicts like the Suez Canal 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 to keep various countries from falling to
These included the famous CIA engineered coup to overthrow Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq after his government attempted to nationalize Iran’s _____ industry and the CIA helping Chile’s General Augusto Pinochet overthrow democratically elected Marxist President Salvador Eienday in 1973. And lest we think the Americans were the only bad guys in this, the Soviets used force to crush popular uprising in Hungary in _____ and Czechoslovakia in ________.

17. So you may have noticed our discussion of the Cold War has branched out from Europe to include _______ and the ___________________ and ____________________. And in fact almost every part of the Globe was involved in some way with the planet being divided into 3 worlds.

18. The _________ world was the US, western Europe and any place that embraced _______________ and a more or less __________________ form of government.

19. The _________ world was the Soviet Union and its Satellites, mostly the Warsaw pact nations, China and Cuba.

20. The __________ world was everyone else and we don’t use this term any more because it lumps together a hugely diverse range of countries. Neither the US nor the Soviets wanted any of these countries to remain __________. Every nation was supposed to pick sides, either ______________ or ______________. And while it seems like an easy choice now, in the 50s and 60s it wasn’t nearly so clear. For a while it looked like the Soviets might come out ahead, at least in the third world.

21. For a while ________________ and especially the US seemed to lose some of its luster. The US propped up ___________________, had a poor civil rights record, we sucked at women’s gymnastics. Plus the Soviets were the first to put a man, dog and satellite into space. But Soviet Socialism did not finally prove to be a viable alternative to industrial capitalism. Overtime ___________ run economies just don’t generally fair as well as ____________ enterprise and people like living in a world where they can have more stuff.

22. More importantly Soviet policies were just bad. Collectivized agriculture stymied production and led to famine, suppression of dissent and traditional cultures made people angry and nobody likes suffering the humiliation of driving a Yugo.

23. But why the Cold War ended when it did is one of the most ___________________ of the 20th century. It probably wasn’t Ronald Reagan bankrupting the Soviets. The USSR had more satellite states that it needed to spend more to prop up than the US had to invest in its allies and the Soviet system could never keep up with _______________ in the US.

24. But probably the individual most responsible for the end of the Cold War was Mikhail Gorbachev. His Glasnost and Perestroika opened up the Soviet political and economic systems with contested local elections, _____ restricted civil society groups, _______ censorship, ________ autonomy for the Soviet Republics, ________ non-state run businesses and more_______ autonomy for state run farms.___________ or openness led to more ______________ from the west and less __________ led to a flood of
criticism as people realized how much ________ the second world was than the first. 
And one by one, often quite suddenly, former communist states ________. In Germany 
the Berlin wall came down in 1989 and East and West Germany were reunited in 1990. 
In Poland the Gdansk Dock workers Union solidarity turned into a mass political 
movement and won 99 of the 100 seats it was allowed to contest in the 1989 election. 
Hungary held multiparty elections in 1990. The same year mass __________ led to 
elections in Czechoslovakia. In 1993 that country split up into Slovakia and the Czech 
republic. 
25. Of course sometimes the ______________ away from communism was violent and 
painful. In Romania the Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu held onto power until he 
was tried and put before a firing squad at the end 1989 and it took until 1996 for a non-
communist government to take power there. 
26. The past seems ______________ even when it's near and the future seems 
____________ even when it isn’t.