

Post WWII Soviet Union

1. Purges & The KGB
 - a. Stalin had multiple purges
 - i. Anyone who was a “threat” could be killed or sent to the gulag
 1. Artists, writers, intellectuals, military officers
 2. Showing up late for work, not hitting your quota for the day, not working hard enough
 - b. Show Trials
 - i. Trials used to show Russia was “under attack”
 - ii. Never a fair trial, always found guilty
 - iii. Everyone knew it was a sham, but the terror of Stalin and the KGB kept people quiet.
 - c. The NKVD assisted Stalin (precursor to KGB)
 - i. Created their own laws.
2. Stalin’s End
 - a. Stalin dies -> March 1953
 - b. Nikita Khrushchev took over
 - i. Denounced purges
 - ii. “Thaw” in policies
3. Nuclear Power
 - a. 1st test on August 29th, 1949
 - b. Happened sooner than US thought
 - c. 2 strongest world powers now have nuclear weapons.
4. Space Race
 - a. Fears of aerial spying and launching of long range nuclear missiles from space.
 - b. Russia beat us
 - i. Sputnik 1 launched October 4th, 1957,
 1. 1st man made object into orbit, went until January 1958
 - ii. Sputnik 2 on November 3rd, 1957
 1. Laika the dog was on board->died
 - iii. The US did not launch until January 31st, 1958.
 1. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) created shortly after.
 - c. US beats Russia to the moon with 2 men on Apollo 11, July of 1969 -> Ends the Space Race