Iron Curtain: Division of Europe

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What was the Iron Curtain?

- Political and ideological border that divided the USSR and other communist countries from the rest of the world.
- The Iron Curtain was first used in 1946 to symbolize the division between Eastern and Western Europe.
- Europe was divided into Eastern Europe and Western Europe.
  - The East was under the rule of the communists (Soviet Union).
  - The West was under the rule of a democracy.
The Warsaw Pact, who are the Soviet Red Army joined by other new Communist states, manned and defended the Iron Curtain.

Winston Churchill marks it as the beginning of the Cold War between the democratic west and the Soviet and communist east. He, along with other western countries, were scared of the Soviet Union taking them over.

Many people did not want to be to the east of the Iron Curtain so they tried to migrate west. In Germany, this is what caused the Berlin Wall to be built.
We do believe that the correct decisions were made because:

- The U.S got involved in the war for the right reasons. They were afraid of the spread of communism throughout the whole world.
  - We were afraid of what could happen to us and our freedom.
  - Also, we were afraid of the world's peace and freedom being taken away by the communism of the Soviet Union.
- The U.S and the Soviet Union were the only 2 rulers left after WWII, and so we had to take charge.

If the decision by the U.S was not made to go into the war to protect our rights then:

- There would not have been freedom throughout the countries.
- We would live in a communist world.
- More countries would have been ruled and forced into the Communist nation by the Soviet Union.
Bias?

- Iron Curtain ignores the devastating effect of the collapse of the socialist bloc had on the world at large.
  - By unleashing the free market from the 1980s on, inequality between the richest and poorest nations increased from 88:1 (1970) to 267:1 (2000).
- The US was henceforth able to invade countries everywhere at will, as indeed it has done, killing millions of innocent people and patriots now dismissed as the ‘enemy’.
Harry Truman invited Winston Churchill to make this speech:

1. The speech was for Churchill to express his concern of the Soviet Union's strong intention to expand.
2. The speech was to clarify his opinion that a “break out” of Soviet Union’s plans of expansion be taken for granted.
International Events

❖ On March 5th 1946, Winston Churchill made his ‘iron curtain’ speech at Fulton, Missouri.
❖ The speech was officially entitled “The Sinews of Peace” but became better known as the “Iron Curtain” speech.
❖ It set the tone for the early years of the Cold War.
➢ Some saw it as unnecessary warmongering while others believed it was another example of how well Churchill was able to grasp an international situation.
Citations


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