**III. Russia Today**

1. Brief Russian History

* **Soviet Union –**
* **December 25, 1991 –**
* The largest of those 15 countries is Russia

B. Life after Communism

* Russia shifted from a command economy to a market economy following the breakup of the Soviet Union
* Brought a rise in crime, corruption, alcoholism, and violence
* **Vladimir Putin –**
* **Disposable Income –**
* Putin’s economic changed helped double disposable income
* However, Putin’s government also reduced democracy and failed to protect human rights
* **Censure –**

C. Russia’s Challenges

* Males living in Russia today have the lowest life expectancy in the world (59.1)
* Low life expectancy is mainly the result of alcoholism
* **Brain Drain –**
* Many skilled and educated Russians left Russia in search of a better life elsewhere

D. Russia and the World

* Russia remains an important player on the global stage
* **Nuclear Weapons –**
* Russia has also loaned money to Iran to help them build nuclear reactors
* **Superpower –**
* Russia is the second largest exporter of oil today
* Russia is the largest exporter of natural gas
* Have used profits from selling fossil fuels to increase their power