



Theme I: The Development of the Cold War, 1945 - 2000 (8838)

End of the Cold War

Learning Outcome

Evaluate the causes of the end of the Cold War

CONTENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• US policy of renewed containment and confrontation<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ US role in arms control negotiations◦ Strategic Defense Initiative Programme◦ Reagan Doctrine• Decline of USSR and shifts in Soviet foreign policy:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Economic problems◦ Gorbachev 'New Thinking',◦ Sinatra Doctrine• Eastern European movements & revolutions in the 1980s:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Poland and East Germany• Historical interpretations of the end of the Cold War:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Western Triumphalist◦ Soviet Initiative◦ 'People Power' debates

THE END OF THE COLD WAR - HISTORICAL DEBATES

CONTENTS OUTLINE

1. Overview: When did the Cold War end?
2. Historical Debates - Why did the Cold War end?
 - a. The Western Triumphalist
- Centrist vs. Right Wing
 - b. Soviet Initiative
 - c. People Power

1. OVERVIEW - WHEN DID THE COLD WAR END?

OVERVIEW

- The Cold War, having dominated such a significant part of modern world history, is complicated whether we are studying its origins or ending.
- Akin to the examination of reasons that led to the origins of the cold war, the end of the Cold War has a wide range of interpretations, each with its own validity.
- The determination of **when** Cold War ended inevitably ties in with the take on **why** the Cold War ended.

WHEN did the Cold War End?

1985?

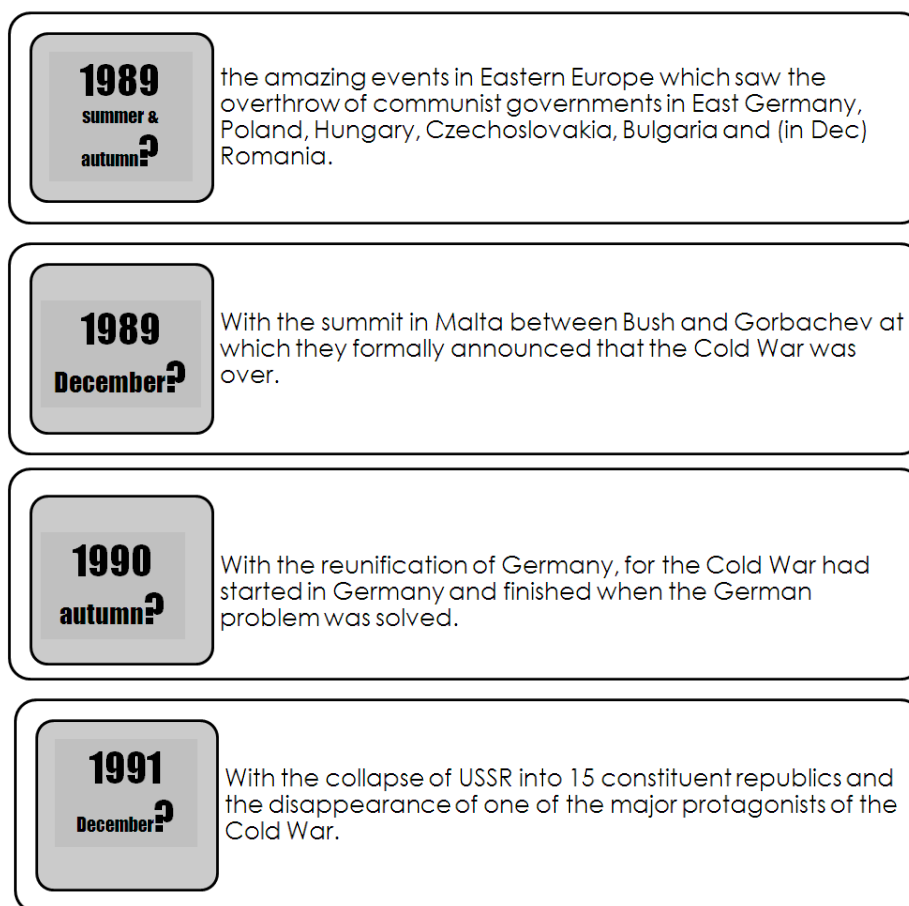
with the ascension to power in the USSR of Gorbachev & the implementation of his "New Political Thinking" which emphasized interdependence, mutual security, the unit of mankind and the irrationality of nuclear war

1987?

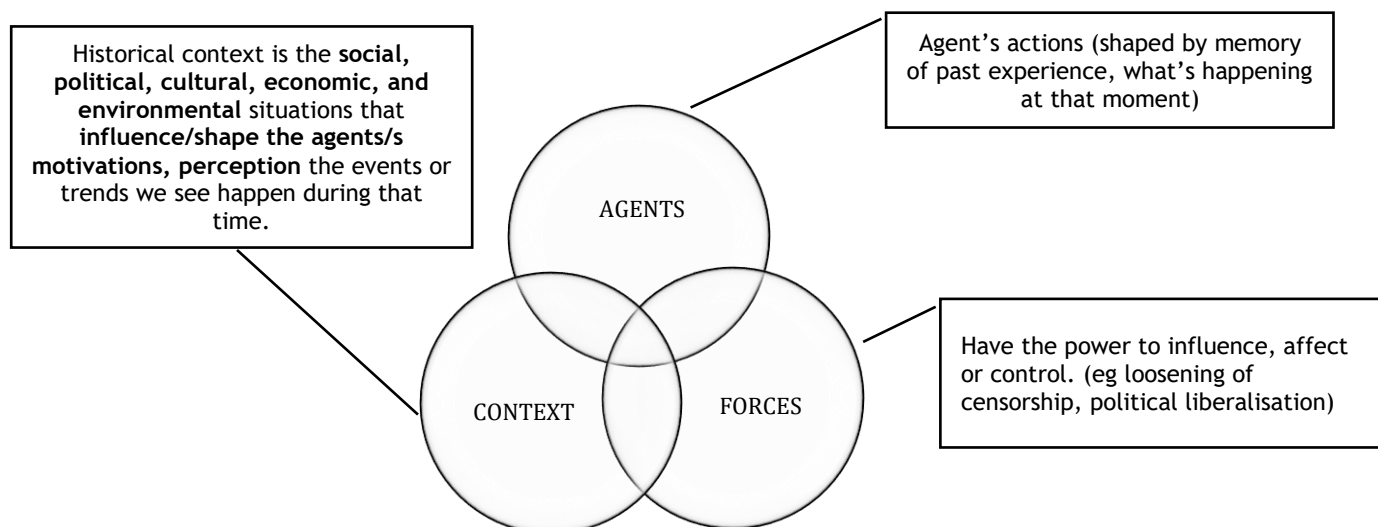
With the signing in the December of that year of the INF Treaty between the USA and the USSR, possibly the most significant arms control treaty of all time since it did not just limit the rate of expansion of the nuclear arsenals of the superpowers but, for the first time, eliminated a whole class of nuclear weapons. This treaty signified a whole new era of trust between the USA and the USSR.

1988?

with Gorbachev's UN speech in December of that year in which he announced huge unilateral cuts in military forces, especially in Eastern Europe and Western USSR. These cuts made it impossible for the USSR to intervene in Eastern Europe to crush dissent as it had done in 1956 and 1968



WHY did the Cold War End?

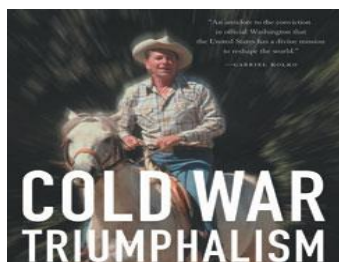


2. SCHOOL OF THOUGHT - HISTORICAL DEBATES

A. Western triumphalist

B. Soviet Initiative

C. People Power



A. The “Western Triumphalist” Interpretation

This interpretation emphasizes that the Soviet Union’s capitulation and the victory of the forces of freedom and democracy were due to the relentless application of the West’s military superiority and the dynamism of its economic system. These revealed communism’s moral illegitimacy and highlighted its economic stagnation.

There are two strands to this interpretation:

CENTRIST	RIGHT-WING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insists that it was the <u>unbending determination and persistent strategy of military vigilance exerted over the long haul</u> (starting with the <i>Truman Doctrine</i> and the policy of <i>Containment</i> which was carried on by subsequent presidents) that wore down the USSR, thwarting its expansion, straining its economy, and triggering the internal reforms of Gorbachev. Central to this success was the policy of nuclear deterrence and the resoluteness of the West’s stand throughout the period of the Cold War. 	<p>Peter Schweitzer – Concludes that the Reagan administration turned the tide of the Cold War, which had developed in the 1970s in favour of the Soviet Union, against Moscow, Reagan’s administration in its early years used all the means, short of actual warfare, to bring the Soviet Union down. Schweitzer argues that there were a number of secret policies between 1981 and 1987 – military, economic, political and psychological – that in his view, were responsible for the collapse of Soviet empire and ‘victory’ of the West.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stresses that it was the ideological offensive and military build-up of the Reagan era that forced an intrinsically doomed system of central planning into bankruptcy and submission Western superiority, especially in the field of weapons technology and productive capacity, paved the way for a peace “negotiated from strength”. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 1980s, the USSR was simply unable to match the West in military hardware and consumer goods. Reagan built up US’s military power to attain clear superiority over the USSR through the huge military budgets of his first administration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crucial to this was <u>SDI</u>, which had a decisive impact on Soviet policy because it threatened a major technological arms race in which the USSR could not hope to compete. Reagan abandoned SALT as a model of arms control and sabotaged the Geneva Talks of 1981 and 1983.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ He also weakened the USSR by denying it access to western technology and economic support, opposing co-operation on the Soviet natural gas pipeline which was to bring gas from Siberia to Europe. ○ The “Reagan Doctrine” aimed not at just ‘containing’ communism, but ‘<u>rolling it back</u>’, by means of assistance to the Contras and the Afghan rebels. ○ Reagan’s ideological offensive, calling the USSR “the evil empire” and the “focus of all evil in the world” enabled the West to seize the moral high ground. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These initiatives of his first administration enabled Reagan to shed his ‘cold war cowboy’ image and to emerge as ‘Reagan the peacemaker’ in his second administration. ▪ The initiatives by the Soviet government after 1985 could be a direct response to the first Reagan administration which forced the Soviet leadership to confront internal weaknesses and narrowed the options open to them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Though there is no convincing evidence that the Soviet military budget ↑ as a result of US military spending, the perceived cost of continuing the military confrontation after 1985 forced a drastic re-evaluation of Soviet foreign and military policies. <p>Alternative Perspective - There is actually another interpretation of the role of Reagan. This alternative interpretation argues that, if Reagan had any impact on the Cold War, it was entirely negative.</p> <p>Reaganism intensified the Cold War by exacerbating tensions. A proponent of this view would be the British scholar, Archie Brown, who argues that the Reagan administration slowed down changes by its obtuse policies and blind anti-communism. It was Gorbachev who deserves the credit.</p>
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B. The “Soviet Initiative” Interpretation

This interpretation emphasizes the long term weaknesses of the USSR and the vision and determination of a new generation of Soviet leaders to do something about it, both by “restructuring” the economy and by pursuing a new foreign policy more in line with the constraints facing the country.

- This interpretation asserts that it was not the military strength of the West nor its ideological offensive which moved the Cold War to a rapid conclusion, for these factors had been present for more than 40 years.
- Far more important was the emergence of a **new generation of Soviet leaders** determined to do something about their **country’s deteriorating productivity and economic position**.

It is important to note that this interpretation looks at two things

i. Long term weaknesses of USSR

State of Soviet Union by the 1970s/1980s

- The USSR was deemed as an “Upper Volta with missiles” - in some ways (not all) a Third World country with a vast nuclear arsenal which was the only factor which merited it the epithet ‘superpower’.
- In the 20 years prior to Gorbachev’s accession to power, the Soviet national income (apart from Vodka production) barely increased.
- The Stalinist model of economy was simply not appropriate for the late 20th Century global marketplace - one that demanded efficiency, productivity, improved quality control and improved infrastructure.
- One way to relieve pressure on the Soviet economy was thus to release Eastern Europe - hence the spectacular events of 1989.
- Another way was through arms control and arms reduction agreements, on which Gorbachev took the initiative at the Reykjavik Summit in 1986 and over INF in 1987.

ii. Vision and determination of a new generation of Soviet leaders, in particular Gorbachev

In this interpretation, most emphasize the role of GORBACHEV, in particular, amongst the Soviet leaders after Stalin.

- After 1985, Gorbachev began to re-evaluate the USSR’s military doctrine, introducing the concept of “reasonable sufficiency” (*meaning that smaller numbers of nuclear weapons would be required*) and moving towards “defensive defence” in conventional warfare in an attempt to quell Western concerns about a surprise attack.
 - At the Reykjavik Summit with Reagan in Oct 1986, he called for the eventual abolition of all nuclear weapons.
 - In Dec 1987, he signed (*with Reagan*) the INF Treaty, eliminating a whole category of nuclear weapons.

- In Dec 1988, in his famous speech at the UN, he announced significant unilateral reductions in military forces in Eastern Europe and the Western part of the USSR.
- Gorbachev signalled a change in the ideological content and declared goals of Soviet foreign policy.
 - Jettisoned the concept of international class war, and instead, stressed 'human values' and the role of the UN.
- Gorbachev began to withdraw Soviet military and political support from Marxist regimes in the 3rd World.
 - Applied to Angola, Vietnam and Afghanistan.
- Gorbachev altered Soviet policy towards Eastern Europe.
 - Speech to the UN General Assembly in Dec 1988 declared the death of Brezhnev Doctrine.
 - In the summer of 1989, his Press Secretary, Gennadi Gerasimov, uttered what later came to be popularly known as the 'Sinatra Doctrine', which emphasized the right of countries to "find their own way to Socialism".
 - This point was repeated by Gorbachev himself at a meeting of Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers in Oct 1989.

Cold War Historian Archie Brown -

Contents that the end of the Cold War had little or nothing to do with US strategies, pressures or engagements, but rather, with a **potential for reform and revolution inside** the Soviet Union.

Cold War Historian Jacques Levesque -

'**New Thinking**' and Gorbachev's personality played an outstanding, unique role in transforming the realities of power and in ending the Cold War. Gorbachev replaced the faded Stalinist imperial consensus with a new neo-Leninist utopia, based not on force and party monopoly, but on consensus and pluralism. This, more than anything else, led to the quick disappearance of the Soviet empire in 1989 as a major factor of the Cold War.

What were some of the possible reasons that motivated Gorbachev to make such drastic changes in Soviet policy?

- The USSR was approaching a crisis by the 1980s.
 - Its economy was in decline, a process exacerbated by the enormous demands of the military sector (40% of R&D, between 15% and 18% of GNP)
- Compared with the West, it was technologically backward and the gap was increasing year by year.
 - Faced severe social problems - alcoholism, absenteeism, ↑ infant mortality (almost 3rd World standards), ↓ life expectancy, crime, illegitimacy
- Maintaining its military power and global ambitions in these circumstances was seriously overstressing its resources.
It was this realization which led to Gorbachev's "**New Political Thinking**".
- Thence, this interpretation posits that the Cold War would not have ended the way it did if not for Gorbachev. He did more to end it than any other individual.
 - Inside the USSR, he introduced 'Perestroika' and 'Glasnost', which extended freedom of expression, political reform and economic change.
 - He renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine and allowed the Warsaw Pact countries to become independent.
 - He abandoned Marxism-Leninism as a doctrine.
 - Most importantly, he advocated an end to the arms race and the nuclear stand-off. It was he who said to Shevardnadze in Mar 1985, "We cannot go on like this."



C. The “People Power” Interpretation

This interpretation emphasizes the role of citizen activism and of the peace movements in ending the Cold War.

Cold War historian, Peter Schweitzer -

End of the Cold War to be viewed from down below - the citizens played a part.

The pressures ending the Cold War were peaceful and democratic in nature, not military:

- **Western peace movements** began the process of change in the early 1980s with a massive wave of opposition to nuclear weapons in general and to the deployment of new INF weapons in particular.
- This was followed in 1988 to 1989 by the stunning non-violent revolution of the **Eastern European democracy movement**.
 - Credit to the Cold War belongs to those in both East and West who struggled for peace and freedom, not those who brandished weapons of mass destruction.
- Peace was achieved in spite of, not because of, the arms build-up.
 - In fact, military pressure from the West only reinforced the Soviet system of repression and militarism.

Popular Movements in the West and the Eastern Bloc to end the Cold War

Anti-nuclear and anti-war movements in the West

- Aldermaston marches in the UN in the 1950s-1960s
- Linus Pauling’s anti-nuclear testing petition at the UN in 1958
- Women Strike for Peace protest march in the USA on 1 Nov 1961
- White House Peace Vigil on 3 Jun 1981
- Anti-nuclear and anti-war protests across the USA in the 1980s including International Day for Nuclear Disarmament protests held on June 20, 1983

Pro-democracy movements in Eastern European countries and collapse of communist governments

- Revolutions of 1989: Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania

WEST	EAST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Throughout the 1980s, opinions from surveys consistently found Americans strongly in support of the nuclear weapons freeze. ▪ In addition, there was widespread opposition to the deployment of the MX missile in the American West from a coalition that included such diverse groups as environmentalists, religious groups (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints), taxpayer groups, trade unions, Native Americans and farm organizations (including the 	<p>Late 1980s Estonian Singing Revolution Over 10,000 people a night packed the Tallinn Song Festival Grounds, where they sang patriotic and national songs forbidden by the Soviet regime in June 1987.</p> <p>This was followed by a gathering of 300,000 Estonians at the same place to continue their protest and make the first public demand for independence in September of 1988.</p> <p>August 23 1989 Baltic Way Approximately two million people joined their hands</p>

WEST	EAST
<p>ultra-conservative Nevada Cattleman's Association).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intense opposition to SDI developed scientists and Congress. <p>June 12, 1982 Central Park demonstration Demonstration of 750,000 people gathered in the Central Park to protest the arms race</p> <p>1980s Opinion surveys In 1981, only 1/3 of Americans favoured the worldwide eliminated of nuclear weapons.</p> <p>By 1983, the number had leaped to 4 out of every 5. Support for a nuclear-weapons freeze reached a peak of 86%.</p> <p>Low support for a "get tough" attitude towards Moscow, which dropped from 77% in 1980 to 44% in May 1982.</p>	<p>to form an over 600 kilometre (373 mi) long human chain across the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.</p> <p>The human chain symbolized the Baltic peoples' solidarity in their struggle for more autonomy and eventual independence.</p> <p>1989 Fall of the Berlin Wall Following the independence of the Baltic States, Hungary's Communist government also fell. With that, their borders were opened allow East Germans to cross from East to West and travel restrictions were eased.</p> <p>The Brandenburg gate was abandoned and the millions of people, armed with hammers, picks, cranes, and jackhammers, tore down the Berlin Wall amidst great celebration. The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the death throes of Soviet communism.</p>
IMPACT ON COLD WAR	
<p>The peace movement had a real impact on policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> forced the Reagan administration to negotiate with the USSR shaped the zero-option proposal staleminated-d the MX missile imposed limitations in SDI funding and testing And prevented overt military intervention to overthrow the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. 	<p>Coupled with his policy of glasnost, the combined effect together with events in Eastern Europe saw the Politburo increasingly lose control over governance of the country.</p> <p>This was arguably one of the reasons that led to a coup against Gorbachev, ending the Communist Party's monopoly of power and seeing the demise of the Communist system in Russia. Boris Yeltsin was thereafter installed as the first Russian President of the Russian Federation, i.e. the democratic leader of an independent Russia.</p> <p>The Cold War ended, not because of balance of power, not because of nuclear strength. It ended because the people's movements were able to bring down the twin syndromes of Stalinism and nuclearism.</p>

Excerpts of notable historians & school of thought:

Different Perspectives on Why the Cold War Ended:
Extracts and Speeches from Documents and Other Sources

Western Triumphalist / Centrist: Reagan's role

- **“Reagan advocated increased defence spending and advanced research projects,** including SDI. These programmes backed up his startling foreign goals such as rolling back Soviet style communism, negotiating the destruction of intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe and tearing down the Berlin Wall. The achievement of Reagan's goals demonstrated the undeniable wisdom of his policies.”—*Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee*
- **“The rapid military build-up by Reagan forced the Soviet Union** to respond by increased military spending. As a result, it encountered such extreme economic difficulties that it had to give up the arms race and make substantial arms control concessions.”—*Dan Quayle, US Vice-President (1989-93)*
- **“Mikhail Gorbachev succumbed to the pressures of Western military initiatives,** with the delegitimization of the Soviet system occurring when glasnost enabled the Soviet citizenry to make comparisons with the freedom and prosperity of the West. Containment, military strength and confrontation from the time of the Truman Doctrine onward secured eventual victory. Reagan's (and earlier, Jimmy Carter's) stepped up military and ideological response to Brezhnev's mockery of détente in Europe and the Third World brought confrontation to a head and resolved the struggle in the West's favour.”—*William Hyland, Editor of “Foreign Affairs” in his book The Cold War is Over*
- **“The Cold War eventually ended because the West succeeded in combining firm containment** with an active offensive on human rights and a strategic build-up of its own, while aiding the resistance in Afghanistan and Poland. Historical credit for putting this winning strategy in place belongs to Harry Truman. However, the final accolade goes to Carter and Reagan, who responded to, and aggravated, the crisis of communism with a multi-frontal assault. The final phase of the Cold War was marked by the West's gradual recapture of the ideological initiative, by the eruption of a philosophical and political crisis in the adversary's camp and by the final and decisive push by the USA in the arms race. When the USA countered the deployment of Soviet SS20s with an accelerated military programme of its own, it strengthened the resolve of its European allies and sent the Soviet leaders reeling. The massive US defence build-up of the early 1980s—including the decision to proceed with SDI—both shocked the Soviets and strained their resources. Kremlin leaders began to contemplate by 1983 that the USA might be bent on a military solution which they knew they could not match. Hence, when Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he eagerly seized the olive branch extended by the Reagan administration in the hope of gaining relief from the arms race.”— *Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Adviser to Carter, in “The Cold War and its Aftermath” in Foreign Affairs (1992)*

Soviet Initiative: Gorbachev's role & Long term economic weakness

- **“Victory in the Cold War does belong to America. But at this point in the debate, it is safer to say that the battle was not won by the United States as much as it was **lost by****

the Soviet Union.”—Eric F. Petersen, “The End of the Cold War: A Review of Recent Literature”, in *The History Teacher* 26:4 (Aug 1993)

- “What really defeated **communism was communism** itself—that in practice it proved to be a political, economic and moral disaster....Given communism’s inherent unworkability and the valiant resistance it engendered among its victims, the Soviet empire was doomed in the long run; but external pressure certainly speeded its demise.”—Arthur Schlesinger, historian
- “By the mid-1980s we [**Soviet leadership**] were **ready for changes in policy** toward the West, whether there was Reagan, Kennedy or someone even more liberal.”—Alexander Yakovlev, one of Gorbachev’s closest confidants, who felt that the Reagan-Bush hard line “played no role” in ending the Cold War
- “**Gorbachev is responding primarily to internal pressures, not external ones. The Soviet system has gone into meltdown** because of inadequacies and defects at its core, not because of anything the external world has done or not done. Gorbachev has been far more appalled by what he has seen out of his limousine window and in reports brought to him by long-faced ministers than by satellite photographs of American missiles aimed at Moscow. He has been discouraged and radicalised by what he has learned from his own constituents during his walkabouts in Krasnodar, Sverdlovsk and Leningrad—not by the exhortations, remonstrations or sanctions of foreigners.”—Strobe Talbott, US Assistant Secretary of State in *Time*, 1 Jan 1990
- “The claim...that the US...won the Cold War is intrinsically silly. The suggestion that any US administration had the power to influence decisively the course of a tremendous domestic political upheaval in another great country on another side of the globe is simply childish. **As early as the later 1940s**, some of us living in Russia saw that the **regime was becoming dangerously remote from the concerns and hopes of the Russian people**. The original ideological and emotional motivation of Russian communism had worn itself out and become lost in the exertions of the great war...We could not know when or how it would be changed; we knew only that change was inevitable and impending. The extreme militarization of American discussion and policy...consistently strengthened comparable hardliners in the Soviet Union. The more America’s political leaders were seen in Moscow as committed to an ultimate military rather than political resolution of Soviet-American tensions, the greater was the tendency in Moscow to tighten the controls...and the greater the braking effect on all liberalizing tendencies in the regime. Thus the general effect of Cold War extremism was to delay rather than hasten the great changes that overtook the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s...Nobody ‘won’ the Cold War. It was a long and costly political rivalry...[that] greatly overstrained the economic resources of both countries...It is a price to be paid by both sides...It is not a fit occasion for pretending that the end of it was a great triumph for anyone, and particularly not one for which any American political party could properly claim principal credit.” —**George Kennan**, the father of American containment, asserts that the Cold War had no victors, only victims of four decades of wasted material and psychological energy (1992)

US POLICY OF RENEWED CONTAINMENT AND CONFRONTATION: THE NEW COLD WAR

IMPACT OF AFGHANISTAN ON THE AMERICANS / SOVIETS

IMPACT OF THE WAR ON THE SOVIETS

- The Soviets thought they could achieve a quick and decisive military operation, followed by rapid withdrawal of Soviet forces.

BUT,

- The invasion and occupation of the neighbouring state lasted 9 years and cost the lives of at least 15,000 Soviet soldiers and left hundreds of thousands of Afghans dead or wounded.
 - The toll in casualties and economic resources led to internal criticism of the Soviet occupation policy in Afghanistan.
 - The US funded, armed and trained mujahedeen resistance fighters, contributing to the Soviets' high military costs in countering the US-supported forces
-
- For the USSR, the war in Afghanistan was one of the key factors leading to discontent with the Communist Party rule:
 - The war stirred religious, nationalist and ethnic strife among the predominately Islamic populace of the Soviet states in central Asia.
 - The rest of the Soviet population was also very unhappy about being involved in such a long and costly war.
 - Resulted in the destabilisation of the Soviet regime, that is one of the reasons leading to the collapse of the USSR
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- The Soviets received international condemnation:
 - Its use of scorched earth campaigns which destroyed civilian houses, villages, crops, livestock, etc. aroused international condemnation.
 - Foreign ministers of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference deplored the invasion and demanded Soviet withdrawal at a meeting in Islamabad in Jan 1980.
 - Jan 1980, the UN General Assembly "strongly deplored" Soviet armed intervention and called for the "total withdrawal of foreign troops".
 - No military retaliation by the UN unlike in Korea in 1950 because of the Soviet veto in the UN Security Council.
-
- the invasion of Afghanistan was the Soviet's Vietnam.
- They had tremendous difficulty trying to fight the anti-communist *mujahedeen* guerrilla forces in the mountainous terrain outside Kabul.
 - Not until Mikhail Gorbachev assumed leadership in March 1985 that the USSR began to find a face-saving way to withdraw from Afghanistan.

IMPACT OF THE WAR ON THE AMERICANS

→ Shocked by the invasion, seeing it as an aggressive move, being part of the Soviet masterplan to spread its influence undercover of détente.

- The US officials pondered over whether the invasion was the 1st stage in Brezhnev's plan to control the Persian Gulf.
 - The US was drawing parallels with Stalin's actions after 1945 and Hitler's during the 1930s.
 - Were fearful that once the Soviets consolidated their hold over Afghanistan, they would upset the balance of power, and would be tempted towards further aggression.

→ Thus, the US mostly saw the Soviet invasion into Afghanistan as indeed a move to dominate the Persian Gulf region and deny the West access to oil.

- Although Afghanistan's geographical position made it an unlikely route to the Persian Gulf, the Iranian Revolution and the ensuing hostage crisis, as well as the Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, had made the USA very sensitive.
- US prestige was also smarting from the Iranian Revolution where American position in the Gulf was weakened by the charge that it was an unreliable ally (*failed to protect the Shah from being deposed*)
- Moreover, 2/3 of the Soviet troops were located in southwest Afghanistan, where they were seen as a threat to Iran and the Persian Gulf.

→ Thus, to understand American fears, one needs to keep in mind developments in the region in recent years.

→ Carter knew that he had to be firm and act decisively to display American strength in the Afghanistan matter.

→ This therefore signalled a shift in American policy of containment from the détente days.

- The Carter Doctrine
 - Jan 1980, Carter declared,
"Let our position be clear - an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the US and such an assault will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force."
 - Actions undertaken by the Americans signified the abandonment of the policy of détente.
 - Progress on arms control was halted with the decision to withdraw the SALT II Treaty from Senate consideration
 - Embargo on American agricultural exports to the USSR
 - Carter's call for an international boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games in 1980.
 - Revival of military containment as seen in Carter's moves to strengthen US military power and increase US military spending
 - USA, along with the PRC, Pakistan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia channelled assistance to the mujahedeen
 - USA sought to put further pressure on the USSR by tightening its partnership with the PRC. Gave PRC access to advanced military equipment and technology and granted PRC trade privileges

4. CHECK POINT A

Judge & Langdon -

"The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan cut the ground from under American supporters of U.S. -Soviet rapprochement and drove a final nail into the coffin of détente."

Brzezinski, Carter's US National Security Advisor, who was keen to involve the USSR in a military and economic race which would increase political and social strains within the USSR was the one who first articulated the thinking behind the Second Cold War.

- Soviet's lack of restraint in Afghanistan provided the pre-text to announce the beginning of a new Cold War

→ Policy of détente thus ended.

- Carter began to use the language of **confrontation** to raise tensions between the two superpowers
- Carter's "forceful response to the Afghan affair was sufficient to dash any lingering hopes for détente".
 - Détente had been successful in facilitating cooperation between the superpowers for a while (*as seen from the arms control talks*), but clashes over the Third World highlighted the limitations of détente and ushered in the Second Cold War period.
- It was also **Carter's image as a weak President that paved the way for the election of Ronald Reagan, the Cold Warrior who was credited with the role of ending the Cold War.**
 - It was under Ronald Reagan that the second or new Cold War escalated.



**Rise of The
New/Second Cold War**

- The discontent with the rule of the Communist Party arising from the Afghanistan invasion is also important in understanding the collapse of the USSR thereafter, and hence of the reasons leading to the end of the Cold War.

Questions:

What had led to détente?

How had superpower relations changed since 1945?

RONALD REAGAN & GORBACHEV

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1. Overview - The Two Personalities
2. Ronald Reagan - An Introduction
3. 1981 - 1985 : Reagan's Four Offensives
4. 1985 onwards : Reagan's Shift from his Four Offensives
5. Check Point B

1. OVERVIEW - THE TWO PERSONALITIES

Much attention has been paid to the personalities of President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, and some people attribute the end of the Cold War

- to the actions by each leader respectively (leading to the other's collapse, or losing control of what was happening within the country and thus leading to country's own inability to compete any further) and/or
- The dialogue opened between the two men.

The 'Great Men theory' was popularized by Thomas Carlyle in the 19th century. It looks at highly influential individuals who, due to either their personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom, or political skill utilized their power in a way that had a decisive historical impact.

This theory focuses on agents, and in particular, the people at the top.

2. RONALD REAGAN

Much attention has been paid

- The early 1980s coincided with the coming to power of Margaret Thatcher and other equally hawkish Western politicians; US's new Cold War policy under Reagan enjoyed support in Western Europe.
- There was an explicit return to the familiar Cold War policy of negotiating with the Soviets from positions of strength (*i.e. the mode of the 1950s and early 1960s*):
 - Reagan's **new Cold War rhetoric** further led to the deterioration of US-Soviet relations.
 - Backing up Reaganite rhetoric was a near **doubling of US defence spending**.
 - Also, the implementation of **economic sanctions against the USSR** as punishment for acts of aggression (e.g. for war in Afghanistan and following the introduction of martial law in Poland) dealt a major blow to the stumbling Soviet economy.
- It is sometimes argued that Reagan escalated the Cold War in order to end it.
- Reagan's offensives on all fronts – ideological, political, military and economic – by the US in confronting Soviet communism drove the Soviets into a situation where they could no longer compete with the US-led capitalist system effectively and without great cost to the Soviet economy and politics.
- **HOWEVER**, although Reagan escalated and intensified the Cold War in his first term as President, he adopted a different tactic in his second term, engaging with the new leader Mikhail Gorbachev to bring about an end to the Cold War

2. 1981 - 1985 : REAGAN'S FOUR OFFENSIVES

A. Ideological Offensive

- Reagan was a staunch right-winger :
 - Very critical of détente and Carter's 'soft' foreign policy
 - Vowed to restore the shattered American prestige and position around the world
 - Championed US interventionism in the Third World, especially Central America
- New Cold War Rhetoric - **USSR AS THE EVIL EMPIRE:**
 - Alleged that the USSR was the source of most of the world's problems
 - Mar 1983, Reagan said, "*The Soviet Union is the focus of evil in the modern world*",
- Felt that talking tough to and acting tough with the Soviets was the only means of bringing about a mutually beneficial relationship
- Outside the US, only Western Europe and Japan supported such a tactic; the rest of the world felt that the major players of the world should instead focus more on addressing the problems arising from poverty, imperialism and racism.

B. Political Offensive

The Reagan Doctrine:

- In Oct 1983, Reagan proclaimed that
"the goal of the free world must no longer be stated in the negative, that is, resistance to Soviet expansionism. The goal of the free world must instead be stated in the affirmative. We must go on the offensive with a forward strategy for freedom."
- Involves the policy of giving American material aid and political support to anti-communist governments/movements/ insurgents/'freedom fighters' in various countries around the world
- Was to rollback Soviet influence in the Third World which was not a new trend

Aiding the Rebels in Afghanistan:

- Reagan continued with the Carter Administration's policy of supporting the mujahedeen resistance of Soviet occupation
- Received \$2 billion in US aid
- Pakistan was key to the US effort, providing both a base for the rebels and a conduit for US aid

Policy in Central America as a symbol of American reassertion

- Central America was "almost an obsession with Reagan"
- Took an anti-communist line in Central America, especially against the expansion of the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua
- There were critics who:
 - Charged that Reagan grossly exaggerated the extent of the communist infiltration in Central America;
 - Suggested that Reagan overestimated the extent of Cuban-Soviet support for the left-wing regimes and guerrilla fighters there.
 - In Congress and amongst the public, there were fears that Central America would become "another Vietnam"
 - Reagan was adamant about carrying out his policy in Central America despite domestic opposition
- Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador
- Iran-Contra Affair

Renewal of strategic cooperation with China

- After some initial hesitation, the US and the PRC renewed their strategic cooperation against the USSR.
- In the late 1970s, the PRC leaders began to implement a number of market reforms and desired access to US trade, technology and credits
- The US also needed PRC's help in supporting the Afghan insurgents and for putting pressure on the Vietnamese in Cambodia (*the Chinese were supporting the non-communist Khmer Rouge, which was battling the government installed by the Vietnamese in 1978*).
- In May 1983, the US granted the PRC greater access to US civilian technology
- In April 1984, Reagan visited the PRC.

C. Military Offensive

Unprecedented Military Spending:

- Increased defence expenditures for both conventional and nuclear forces within the US
 - In his first three years in office, Reagan increased defence spending by 40% - \$2 trillion budgeted for the build-up of nuclear and conventional forces
 - Expanded the navy from 450 to 600 ships
 - Revived the B-1 bomber developed the B-2 (Stealth) strategic bomber
 - Accelerated deployment of the MX ICBM and the Trident submarine SLBM missile system
 - Stepped up preparations for basing the Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe
 - Deployed the Cruise missiles in Britain and West Germany (Nov 1983)
 - CIA budget also went up due to increase in covert operations in the Third World
- Allowed US arms manufacturers to sell arms at a record level
 - US arms industry became the leading growth industry in the US
 - In many conflicts around the world, even though these had no connection with the Cold War, the US (and the USSR) was involved as supplier of arms
 - National debt rose from \$1 trillion in 1980 to \$2.5 trillion in 1988 to fund the defence spending

Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI):

- March 1983, Reagan announced the SDI, popularly known as the Star Wars Programme, a technologically ambitious and extremely expensive plan to develop a nationwide ballistic-missile defence system that would deploy weapons in outer space to destroy enemy missiles in flight
 - gave USA the capacity to launch a pre-emptive first strike
 - Proposed to spend \$17 billion
 - Threatened to violate several US-Soviet agreements, including the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the ABM Treaty of 1972
- Many analysts warned that SDI would accelerate the arms race as the most likely Soviet response would be to increase the number of their missiles in order to overwhelm US defences
- Reagan and his supporters claimed that apart from re-establishing US military superiority, SDI was meant to place great strain on the Soviet economy.
- Though there is no concrete evidence that the SDI directly caused the USSR to increase its military spending, it certainly **alarmed the Soviet leadership**.
 - The **widening technological gap with USA** and the **internal economic problems** which could no longer support massive military spending became a reality.
 - ❖ When he came into power, Gorbachev also realised that he needed to curb the power of the USSR's military which would threaten his plans to reform and revive the USSR, especially its economy.
 - ❖ He was also afraid that the USSR would turn into a Third World country as far as the quality of life was concerned - the Soviet economy has not been meeting the basic needs of the people and was not producing consumer goods.

Intensification of the Arms Race:

- Arsenal of both sides reached huge proportions and prospects for human existence was horrifying:
 - In strategic weapons, US had more than 9,000 nuclear warheads on bombers and missiles; the USSR had more than 7,000
 - In theatre nuclear weapons, NATO had 4,445 of all types (land- and sea-based) aimed at Eastern Europe and the western sections of the USSR, while the USSR had 3,580 directed at targets in Western Europe
 - Cost of nuclear and conventional forces was high, with the US spending \$300 billion a year by 1985 and the West Europeans spending nearly \$150 billion
 - The figures for the Warsaw Pact nations could not be confirmed but were somewhat less than the total for Western Europe
- The intensification of the Arms Race, especially the SDI, thus prompted Gorbachev to hasten his **adoption of a less confrontational foreign policy** that would allow him to decrease defence spending and allow USSR to devote more resources to internal economic reforms.
 - Focused on arms control talks with USA in 1985; signed the **INFT treaty in 1987**
 - Followed by **Soviet cuts in conventional forces and the withdrawal of troops from places like Eastern Europe**
- USSR's **new defence policy** was no longer to ensure that it would not lose a war with the West, but to **prevent a war with them in the first place**.
 - Hoped that this change in defence posture will allow them to improve relations with the West and decrease the need for defence spending
- USSR's new strategy had **important implications for Soviet policy towards its control over Eastern Europe**

In a nutshell, there are some who have argued that the defence initiatives of USA alarmed Gorbachev who decided to push forward with domestic economic reforms.

His willingness to negotiate with USA also caused him to lose the support of many hardliners in the CPSU

→ thus, leading to the weakening of the Communist Party.

D. Economic Offensive

Reaganomics

"Reaganomics" was the most serious attempt to change the course of U.S. economic policy of any administration since the New Deal. "Only by reducing the growth of government," said Ronald Reagan, "can we increase the growth of the economy." Reagan's 1981 Program for Economic Recovery had four major policy objectives: (1) reduce the growth of government spending, (2) reduce the marginal tax rates on income from both labour and capital, (3) reduce regulation, and (4) reduce inflation by controlling the growth of the money supply. These major policy changes, in turn, were expected to increase saving and investment, increase economic growth, balance the budget, restore healthy financial markets, and reduce inflation and interest rates.

<http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc1/Reaganomics.html>

- Restricted exports of a range of commodities including grain and advanced technology to the USSR to protest against Soviet invasion of Afghanistan
- Enforced economic sanctions on the USSR when it forced the Polish army to impose martial law in order to crush the pro-democratic Solidarity movement in Poland (1981)
- Also imposed additional trade sanctions on Poland, suspended Poland's most-favoured nation status and blocked International Monetary Fund loans to Poland
- Only lifted the sanctions in Aug 1984, after the Polish military released some of its hundreds of political prisoners
- By 1985 however, Reagan abandoned nearly all the restrictions and embargos instituted against the Soviets
 - US had balance of payments problems and surplus of grain
 - Change in Reagan's policy following the coming to power of Gorbachev

- ➔ Containment under Reagan had initially become one aimed at crippling the USSR to the point of economic collapse

3. 1985 onwards: Reagan's Shift from his Four Offensives

- In Reagan's second term of office, he stopped calling the Soviet Union an "*evil empire*" and began to indicate that he might be willing to sit down with the new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to discuss arms control.
 - Because Reagan had already established a reputation as a tough Cold Warrior, no one could accuse him of being soft on communism or of having neglected the nation's defences -> charisma and popularity
 - Arms control and improvement of relations with the Soviets would seem so natural, because Reagan made it so
 - The nuclear intensification in the 1980s had made more Americans concerned about the potential risks of nuclear capabilities. Also, federal deficits were also rising due to the military intensification.
 - The scandal from American government officials trading arms for American hostages that were being held in Iran, and then diverting profits from the arms sales to anti-communist guerrilla fighters in Nicaragua, nearly brought down the Reagan administration. The administration had become embroiled in the Iran-Contra crisis as a result of the renewed anti-communist policy.

- ➔ Adopted a more conciliatory approach during his second term in office, making great advancements in US-Soviet relations

Shultz:

Reagan was "willing to recognize an opportunity for a good deal and a changed situation when he saw one".

"Do you still regard the USSR as 'the Evil Empire', Mr President?" Reagan was asked during his visit to Moscow in 1988.

"No", he replied. "Well," the reporter said, "you've certainly changed".

To which Reagan replied, "I haven't changed; it's the Soviet Union that's changed."

4. Mikhail Gorbachev

Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Union in 1985.

In part, Gorbachev's personal background contributed to his decisions to reform his country. He belonged to a younger generation of communist leaders that realized as early as the late 1960s that the Stalinist model of government was not working effectively.

- aware of the country's cracks and vulnerabilities and he decided to act in unprecedented ways
- When Gorbachev took office, he instituted a number of new initiatives
 - transformed foreign policy by lessening Soviet control of Eastern Europe (New Political Thinking) and by setting up number of meetings with President Reagan,
 - implemented *glasnost* (or openness), which dismantled many of the repressive components of Soviet life,
 - and *perestroika* (or reform), which was an attempt to restructure the Soviet economy by introducing certain parts of capitalism like private ownership of property

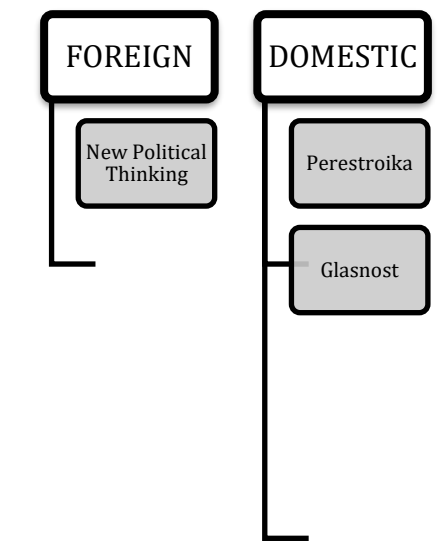
It has also been argued, that, under Gorbachev, the Soviets pursued policies aimed at improving relations with the US, which Reagan reciprocated

→ The New/Second Cold War proved 'short-lived'.

Judge & Langdon –

"The selection of Mikhail Gorbachev as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1985 marked a major turning point in Soviet politics and East-West relations."

5. GORBACHEV'S POLICIES



A. New Political Thinking

'New Political Thinking' (*Novoe Myshlenie*) refers to Gorbachev's rethinking of the traditional principles, concepts and goals of Soviet foreign policy.

- Represented a break with the 'old thinking' of the previous communist regimes

- Resumption of peaceful co-existence and détente with the West, just as Andropov and Chernenko before him did
- HOWEVER, Gorbachev differed from his predecessors in that he was willing to give up vital foreign policy interests in order to achieve that aim

Rationale for this new foreign policy

Gorbachev's foreign policy aims and methods cannot be separated from his attempts to reform the USSR's economy - a process known as *perestroika*.

- This aimed at rejuvenating the country, ending the "years of stagnation" which had prevailed under Brezhnev and at making the USSR "a strong and prosperous power".

To achieve this, he had to reduce the enormous spending on the military which was crippling the Soviet economy and therefore to seek to reduce Soviet commitments throughout the world.

- In other words, Gorbachev needed a **durable peace** abroad to ensure success with reforms at home:
 - His **first priority** was to accelerate Soviet economic growth; he was aware that the existing order was inefficient
 - Major goals of **reform**:
 - a) strengthen the Communist Party &
 - b) strengthen the country - aware that the military burden was too onerous and warned that if reform did not succeed, the Soviet Union might lose its superpower status by 2000.
 - In order to save money on defence, he needed:
 - a meeting with Reagan to wean him away from SDI and to initiate arms negotiations which would halt, and eventually reverse the arms race (i.e. reduce arms expenditure)
 - to pull out of the Third World (especially Afghanistan)
 - to reduce Eastern Europe's traditional military and economic reliance on the USSR

Soviet economy also needed an injection of technological and developmental resources and expertise that was only available from the West

Whereas Brezhnev and others emphasized the ideological basis of foreign policy and the "class" nature of international relations, Gorbachev saw the world as an "integrated whole" rather than as the setting for polarized confrontation.

- To Gorbachev, "contradictions" could be solved not by armed conflict, but through negotiation and compromise.
- Major problems (nuclear war, environmental degradation) could be solved only through cooperation.

New Political Thinking is therefore seen in the following:

- i. Withdrawal of Soviet troops from the war in Afghanistan, "a bleeding wound".
 - October 1985, Gorbachev proposed to the Politburo that Soviet troops should get out of Afghanistan → received approval in principle for this
 - July 1986: announced the withdrawal of 8,000 troops
 - Beginning of 1987: encouraged a process of reconciliation between the warring factions in Afghanistan
 - July 1987: declared in an interview with an Indonesian newspaper that "in principle, Soviet troop withdrawal has been agreed upon"

- September 1987: Shevardnadze told George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, “We will leave Afghanistan”
 - April 1988: Agreements signed in Geneva involving Pakistan and Afghanistan + USA & USSR on the total withdrawal of Soviet troops and on a pledge of mutual restraint in the supply of arms to the combatants.
 - May 1988 - Feb 1989: Soviet forces began to leave Afghanistan in substantial numbers; withdrawal completed by Feb 1989
- ii. Annual summit meetings with his American counterpart.
In all there were 9 such meetings - 5 with Reagan (1981-9) and 4 with George Bush (1989-1993). His meetings with Reagan were most important.
 - Gorbachev wanted to present himself as trustworthy, reasonable, open and peace-loving; Reagan was keen to project that same kind of image.
 - Both parties also had reasons to ease tension –
 - in the US, the federal deficit was mounting because of the arms race;
 - while in the USSR, expenditure for defence had made a mockery of the original communist promise to improve the lives of the people
 - Gorbachev could not simultaneously engage in an arms race and implement glasnost and perestroika, so he decided to give up on the arms race.
 - **The Geneva Summit, November 1985**
 - A summit was set up for Geneva in Nov 1985 and Reagan publicly said in a televised address on the eve of his departure to Geneva that the meeting “*can be a historic opportunity to set a steady, more constructive course in the twenty-first century*”
 - Reagan and Gorbachev succeeded in establishing a personal relationship at Geneva, 1986. Little else was achieved otherwise.
 - Reagan’s commitment to SDI, reiterated at Geneva, did not deter the Russians; in the months following the summit, the Russians launched proposal after proposal to end the arms race
 - **Reykjavik Summit, October 1986**
 - Came close to agreement on the elimination of a wide-range of weapons (even suggested the abolition of all nuclear weapons!)
 - Foundered on Reagan’s insistence on SDI

Even though the final press conference hinted at the total failure of a superpower summit which had raised such great hopes, relationships between Reagan and Gorbachev had been strengthened and the two men’s respect for each other had increased.

“Looking back, it’s clear,” Reagan said later, “that there was a chemistry between Gorbachev and me that produced something very close to a friendship. I liked Gorbachev even though he was a dedicated communist and I was a confirmed capitalist.”

- **INF Treaty and the Washington Summit Dec 1987**

Prior to the 2 remaining summits with Reagan – Washington in 1987 and Moscow in 1988 – Gorbachev’s thinking about the role of the SDI in arms agreements underwent a change and he no longer linked this to the removal of medium-range missiles in Europe. He realized that there was a limit to the progress that he could make with Reagan as long as he made SDI a sticking point. Furthermore, he had been exposed to the arguments of Soviet scientists about the costs and feasibility of SDI. Lastly, he felt that American public opinion, given sufficient improvement in East-West relations, would turn against SDI as being too expensive and irrelevant.

- Signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty which called for:

- The elimination of all superpower Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) in Europe (i.e. this is the first time an entire class of nuclear weapons have been eliminated!)
- Provisions for a system of independent, on-site verification and weapons inspection

Cuts were asymmetrical, involving the destruction of approximately 4 times as many warheads on the Soviet side as on the American - since the USSR had deployed more in the first place.

- Although the INF Treaty did not end the arms race –
- since strategic arsenals of both sides remained intact, the US continued with its SDI programme and the Soviets maintained world's largest ground forces and a huge navy – it did promise hope for more meaningful progress in the future
- It was a great breakthrough as the Soviets had refused to ever consider on-site inspection of their nuclear capabilities since 1955 and never before had anyone on both sides dared consider actual arms reduction.
- **Moscow Summit, May-June 1988**
 - The USSR had hoped that the Washington Summit would lead to agreement on an even more ambitious START Treaty in Moscow, 1988
 - Stalled by: Reagan's insistence on SDI; the Pentagon's discord over what "mix" of missile types (land-, air- and sea-borne) it should maintain; problems of verification
 - Instead, both leaders had to be content with the formal signing of the INF Treaty and a collection of minor confidence-building measures.

B. Perestroika

Context

- Despite its position as the 2nd superpower, USSR was facing severe economic problems
 - It was running on a budget deficit from 1978 onwards
 - In 1986, Soviet GNP had shrunk with growth rates remaining low and stagnant at 1.4%
- These problems did not suddenly develop in the 1980s, they were present even before that.
- While it rivalled the USA in military terms, it was in many ways a Third World country - *"Producing yesterday's goods using yesterday's methods"*
- When Gorbachev came into power, he needed to tackle the problems of the economy quickly.
 - Attacked inefficiency of economic management and pointed out the plunging growth rate
 - Attacked the Soviet economic section management (command economy)
 - No following of demand & supply; No flexibility or innovation
 - Lack of profit motive of peasants in state farms
 - agriculture became so inefficient that a lot of food had to be imported, placing great burden on the Soviet economy
 - Worried that the output of USSR's natural resources were declining as more investments were needed to extract remaining resources from the country
 - ↑ shortage of labour force due to ↓ birth-rate & poor health of workers
 - Alcoholism ↑, ↓ number of marriages
 - Most resources were focused too much on heavy industry
 - By 1977, about a quarter of the heavy industry production was in the military sector - about 4 to 5 times higher than in the West
 - limited supply of consumer goods & vital social services
- Led to the growth of an enormous black market, which amounted to as much as 25% of GNP by the time of Brezhnev's death in 1982

- Rapid economic development of China & Japan prompted Gorbachev to argue for modernization and reform in the economy.
 - Introduced his plans for economic reconstruction and reform - PERESTROIKA, in 1986

What Perestroika was -

Called it a “radical reform of the economy” because “we are going slowly, we are losing time, and this means we are losing the game.”

IN THEORY	IN PRACTICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fundamental reform of the Soviet economic system ▪ Aim was to introduce decentralization and market forces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was not as radical as he presented them to be. ▪ Changes were largely limited to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decentralizing the existing economic system & ○ Streamlining its management as well as building a better labour force. <p><i>E.g. Although factories & enterprises were given more autonomy in production, they must still work under the system of a planned economy.</i></p> <p><i>Another idea was that Gosplan would give general guidelines to decide on the details and set their own wages. Inefficient plans were allowed to go bankrupt. Strict state-dictating price systems were also eliminated.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Area most neglected was the rural economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a major problem and has been experiencing slow decline since Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's terms in office. ○ Although investment in the rural sector has increased over the years, the corresponding output was shockingly low. ○ Moreover, facilities & equipment available were poor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When the harvests were good, the poor storage & transportation facilities meant that the output that reached the shops for the consumers was very poor in quality & very low in amount. <p>→ This resulted in USSR having to import a lot of its foodstuffs from abroad, leading to the accumulation of debt for the country</p> <p>By neglecting the agricultural sector, Gorbachev's reform plans would not reform the entire Soviet economy - wrong priorities.</p>

Consequences of Perestroika

Gorbachev has been blamed for hastening the collapse of the Soviet economy with the policy of *perestroika*

- It has been argued that when he first came to power, the Soviet economy was not yet at the point of collapse, although admittedly, it did have serious structural deficiencies
 - Gorbachev had tried to reform the system to improve its efficiency, but failed
- However, one cannot/ should not blame him entirely because of the enormous difficulties he was facing.
- Alienated the vast majority of the population with the continuation of Andropov's strict anti-alcoholism drive
 - Soviet addiction to alcohol was difficult to overcome; hit the government's pockets as it lost revenue from taxation
- Efforts to decentralize the economic system and introduce free market enterprise had failed to produce the dramatic results needed to help turn the economy around

- Gorbachev's economic reforms appeared confusing, with elements of both communism and capitalism
 - Age-old habit of top-down approach made new initiatives hard to implement
 - Soviet system lacked the structure and institutions necessary to switch to market capitalism
 - Though western investment was encouraged, traditional bureaucratic inertia and corruption hindered progress
- Reform was also difficult as it meant removing millions of superfluous jobs, potentially creating unemployment for up to 15% of the workforce, a move that would most certainly encounter strong opposition
- Perestroika won very little support from the people who were more concerned with pragmatic "bread and butter" issues.
 - In fact, many sensed that these changes in the management & work norms might affect them adversely.
 - Also, according to Lockwood, The more Gorbachev tried to introduce radical measures, the greater the opposition from economic, administrative & Party bureaucracies, and from a section of the ruling class.
- ➔ Hence, despite the reforms, economic problems remained and consumer goods were in severe shortage.
- Chaos resulted with continuing and worsening food shortages and rampant inflation
 - Industrial and agricultural output declined rapidly
 - In 1989, basic necessities like milk, tea, coffee, soap and meat vanished from the stores
 - The rouble fell from 0.6 to a dollar in 1985 to 90 to a dollar in 1991
 - Soviet gold reserves were almost exhausted by 1991
 - Soviet GNP was estimated to have been declining between 2.4-5% in 1990
 - By 1991, inflation had reached 250%!

All these were exacerbated by the new openness in society - GLASNOST, which revealed the problems, saw the visible growth of consumer dissatisfaction and undermined the position of Gorbachev.

- With the introduction of glasnost or openness, the people in USSR started to become more vociferous in the criticism of the government in its inability to satisfy the basic needs.
- Furthermore, with the commencement of the process of prying the Party away from the economy - a necessary feature of market-oriented decision-making and decentralization, it was evident that the Party itself became an unsuitable instrument through which to carry out the reforms.
- ➔ Thus, in 1988, and 1989, a wave of economic strikes swept throughout the country, and the Party's power slowly began its decline.
- ➔ Coupled with other issues like ethnic discontent, Gorbachev found himself unable to control the forces that he had unleashed.

As MK Dziewanowski observed in A History of Soviet Russia, p. 401:

"Freedom without bread was meaningless for the broad masses of the frozen and starving crowd, condemned to wrangle for basic necessities, standing in increasingly long lines in front of half-empty food shops and closing stores. Admired abroad, Gorbachev was more and more hated at home."

C. GLASNOST

- Gorbachev realised that he would not be able to carry out his economic reforms without far-reaching political changes - entrenched hardliners would oppose his plans and sabotage them as they would be adversely affected by the reforms.
- To deal with this threat, Gorbachev resorted to another idea - **Glasnost, which means “openness” and “publicness”**.

IN THEORY	IN PRACTICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Glasnost was meant to invigorate the party and the moribund Soviet system by opening up more opportunities for debate ▪ Meant to create an avenue for new ideas from outside the party to flow in because he believed that Soviet society did possess creativity but it had been repressed by the state ▪ Was deemed necessary for the democratization of society so that social and economic changes could advance → help transform mind-sets and attitudes to make them more amenable to new policies and reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Glasnost</i> introduced free speech and political pluralism into the Soviet system → Gorbachev had to tread carefully here because he had to delegate power in a centralized system without it leading to disintegration ▪ By arguing for the need for political pluralism, political parties independent of the Communist Party were allowed to contest in elections → this effectively ended the single-party state which had existed for decades ▪ In March 1989, Gorbachev held open elections for the Soviet Congress of People’s Deputies - expanded political freedom was meant to appease the population that was faced with economic deprivation ▪ In Feb 1990, Gorbachev introduced a document - “Towards a Humane, Democratic Socialism” : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proposed to repeal Article 6 in the Constitution that gave the Communist Party the leading role in the state ○ The Communist Party had provided the framework for the state, and without anything to replace this, the Soviet state lost its <i>raison d’etre</i>, creating a mood of crisis ○ This was approved of in March 1990 and Gorbachev was elected the President of the USSR (as opposed to the General Secretary of the CPSU) ▪ <i>Glasnost</i> also targeted greater openness in the discussion of issues & the relaxation of censorship laws. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allowed the media & the intellectuals to debate on the shortcomings & ills of the Soviet society. ○ Intended for the Soviet society to be more aware and be more active in rooting out inefficiency and corruption in government & industry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critics pounded on this and started to ravage the civilian bureaucracy and the military which had enjoyed immense privileges through the decades.

Consequences of Glasnost

Glasnost was a **double-edged sword**

- While it allowed reformers to **introduce new ideas that were beneficial** to the old system, it also **gave opponents of the regime and opportunity to challenge the previously unquestioned rule of the CPSU**

By early 1990, a number of parties representing the whole political spectrum had sprung up to contest in the Republican & local elections

- At the Republican level, there were over 500 parties!
 - ➔ This new pluralism led to **political instability** as the new parties could not effectively replace the Communist Party in terms of governance while the CP itself was facing the crisis of disunity given the various factions that had emerged from within.

Glasnost also meant that censorship of information was relaxed and increasingly,

- the **ills of Soviet society and its political-economic system were exposed** and subjected to **domestic and international scrutiny and criticism**
 - ➔ In a sense, Gorbachev had **set into motion an openness from below without foreseeing its consequences and effectively setting its limits**

Basically, Gorbachev was trying to undermine the positions & influence of the high officials who would oppose him.

- However, the critics did not stop there. With Glasnost, they started to criticize the other areas of Soviet society too.
- Started to point out the deteriorating quality of life, poor economic conditions & the mismanagement of the economy.
 - ➔ Resulted in the clamouring for greater changes and reforms at a much faster rate.

As MK Dziewanowski observed,

“Gorbachev’s tinkering with democracy in a country with no democratic tradition produced meagre results and only introduced dangerous instability sliding towards chaos.”

Note:

- ◆ Openness in society would not necessarily lead to its collapse.

Question is: Was the timing good?

- ◆ When these ills have been present for a long time, sudden relaxation of control would release forces which would be very difficult to control?

Overall, thus,

- ◆ Gorbachev’s little qualms about overturning long-cherished policies and procedures as compared to any of his predecessors, introduced policies which would pave the way for both the implosion of the USSR as well as contribute to bringing about the end of the Cold War.

POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN THE WEST AND THE EASTERN BLOCS

CONTENTS OUTLINE

1. Overview
2. Anti-nuclear and anti-war movements in the West
3. Pro-democracy movements in Eastern European countries and the collapse of communist governments
4. Conclusion: Impact of these movements on the Cold War

1. OVERVIEW

As the apparent winner of the Cold War, the West has tended to regard its triumph as a vindication of Cold War policies or, more modestly, as a case of Soviet “exhaustion”.

However, neither of those views is satisfying because each discounts the **role played by the popular peace and antinuclear movements**.

- Evidence is mounting that their influence on events was more important than most historical accounts admit – perhaps even decisive.
- History demonstrates the ability of popular movements to effect change, challenge the conventional argument which generally give far more attention to the actions of elites.

By the early 1980s, the leftist view in **US** was invigorated by a mass movement that was a hybrid of many gradations of political sentiments.

- Its engine was exceptionally broad-based citizen activism, and the demise of the Cold War is seen mainly as a result of the loud and persistent demand for peace stirred by such activism.
- That included the efforts to stop and reverse the arms race, counteract the power of the military-industrial complex, condemn the US government’s comfort with apartheid and overturn the US imperialism conspicuous in Central America and the Caribbean.

Remarkably, as how the public demand for change in the West, the same was echoed in **Moscow** with tangible results.

- The steady parade to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe by ordinary citizen diplomats, lawyers, doctors, scientists and a variety of dissident politicians created an entirely different - and largely unanticipated - dynamic for détente.
- At one level, all this contact merely turned up the volume of popular clamour in Western capitals by broadcasting the peace agenda from different venues.
- These forays had one salient virtue: They raised the temperature on politicians in Europe, a constant reminder that a popular will was escalating.
 - When the local Rotary Club president visits Moscow, sees an apparent desire for better relations and returns to telephone the local newspaper editor and member of Congress, which is retail democracy at its most vigorous; repeated thousands of times - as it was - sending an unmistakable message.
 - This seemingly spontaneous outbreak of citizen diplomacy also touched **Eastern Europe**, particularly Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany.
 - Political dissent was rife in the other “captive” nations and was championed more and more by dissidents in the West. From an early stage of the antinuclear protests, efforts were mounted to connect to the human rights activists in the Warsaw Pact countries, and another unlikely alliance was forged, on that saw the nuclear madness and repression as part of the same loathsome superpower manipulation.

Read <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-we-ended-cold-war/>

2. ANTI-NUCLEAR AND ANTI-WAR MOVEMENTS IN THE WEST

By the 1970s and especially in the 1980s, there had been an explosion of anti-nuclear activists which brought about increased global attention on ending the Cold War arms race.

Many of these anti-nuclear groups attempted to affect the course of public opinion and government policies.

- These nuclear activists opposed establishments associated with nuclear development and institutions e.g. power plants, missile silos, army bases, research laboratories, radioactive waste dumps and assembly facilities.

Since the early 1950 and 1960s, there was already a coalitional effort to galvanize the maximum amount of public support for such movements.

- This was especially so after the start of the arms race as the US hydrogen bomb was successfully tested in 1954.
- As the cast destructiveness of a nuclear war increasingly became more obvious, various anti-nuclear movements equally increased in protest:-
 - In the 1950s and 1960s, the anti-nuclear weapons demonstrations called the Aldermaston marches took place. At their height in the early 1960s, they attracted tens of thousands of people and were the highlight of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) calendar.
 - In 1958, the chemist Linus Pauling released a petition at the UN, signed by 11,000 scientists from 49 nations (including 2,875 from the US), urging the signing of a nuclear ban treaty.
 - Students and women's groups also played a prominent role as well.
 - > In 1961, women's peace activists launched *Women Strike for Peace*, which organized picketing, petitions, lobbying and rallies to secure a test ban treaty and other multilateral measures towards nuclear disarmament.
 - The signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963 and the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968 by US, USSR and UK saw an agreement not to assist other states in obtaining or producing nuclear weapons.
- In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the nuclear protest movement flared up once again with the collapse of Soviet-American détente, the Soviet Union's deployment of SS-20s missiles in Eastern Europe and NATO's decision to deploy cruise and Pershing missiles in Western Europe.
 - In 1981, William Thomas started the White House Peace Vigil, an anti-nuclear weapons peace vigil. This was the longest running uninterrupted anti-war protest in U.S.



The White House Peace Vigil

Read: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3417913/Woman-maintained-longest-running-act-political-protest-U-S-history-30-year-anti-nuclear-vigil-outside-White-House-dies-aged-80.html>

- In June 1982, nearly a million Americans flocked to New York City to rally against nuclear weapons- the largest demonstration in US history.
 - In 1983, International Day of Nuclear Disarmament protests were held at 50 sites across the United States.
 - A nuclear freeze campaign emerged calling for the halt of the nuclear arms race through bilateral action, drawing on the backing of major churches, unions and the Democratic Party.
 - Despite the best efforts of the Reagan Administration to discredit the freeze movement, polls found that it garnered 70 percent or more of the American public.
 - By the second term of President Ronald Reagan, public policy began to shift noticeably, with the administration starting to pursue active negotiations suggesting arms control and disarmament proposals.
 - Gorbachev, partly due to the shift in Soviet policy, partly also influenced by Western disarmament groups, also started accepting them.
 - The result was the signing of the INF treaty (removing US and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear weapons from Central Europe) and a number of other nuclear disarmament measures.
- Thus, during the 1980s the focus of the anti-nuclear movement shifted to adjust to a large number of political and social changes.
 - This included cuts in funding for development of alternative energy sources and producing of plutonium for nuclear weapons.
 - Antinuclear activism was then largely directed to halting testing, deployment, and development of nuclear weapons; managing radioactive-waste disposal; and preparing emergency evacuation plans in the event of an accident at a nuclear power plant.
 - Ultimately, the anti-nuclear movement influenced arms-control agreements between Gorbachev and Reagan and positively contributed to nuclear disarmament and avoidance of nuclear war.

Read- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/anti-nuclear-movement>

3. PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS

Summary

6 The ending of the Cold War, 1985–91

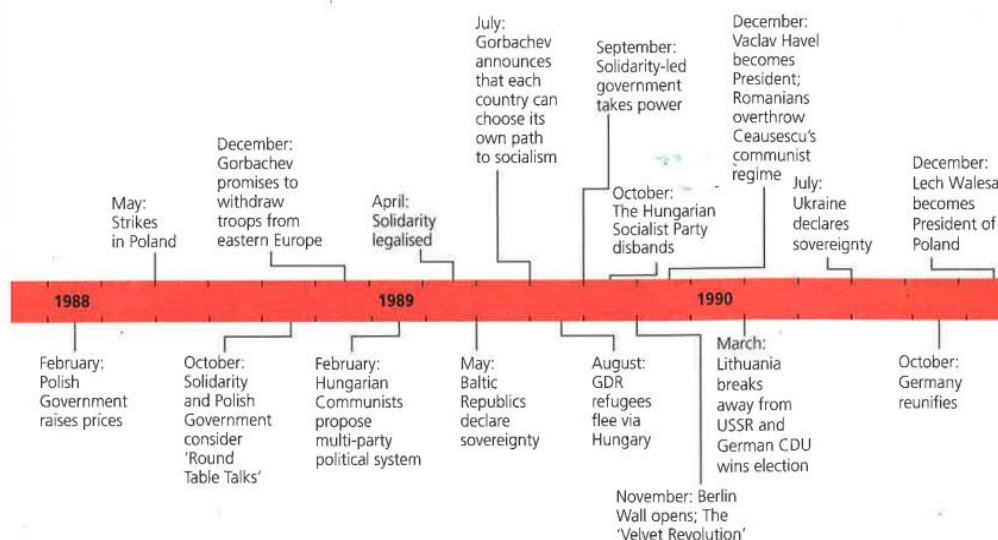
The collapse of communism in the eastern European Soviet satellite states

REVISED

The fall of communism in eastern Europe

Gorbachev's promises of reform and the rejection of the Brezhnev Doctrine undermined the control and authority of communists in eastern Europe and contributed to the final break-up of the Eastern bloc. The table and timeline below summarise what happened in each of the countries.

Country	Events
Poland ✓	With the abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine, the communist leader, Jaruzelski, had to agree to reforms. These included a percentage of seats to be decided by election, the legalisation of trade unions and the creation of a presidency. By the end of 1989 Poland had become a multi-party state with a coalition led by Solidarity.
Hungary	Economic struggles prompted Hungary to seek trade agreements with the West. Miklos Nemeth, the Secretary for Economic Policy, negotiated a loan from West Germany and was promoted to Prime Minister as a consequence. Nemeth brought in further reforms including civil rights and multi-party elections, which led to the election of a democratic government by 1990.
East Germany and the Berlin Wall ✓	The German leadership resisted Gorbachev's reforms but Hungary's decision to remove the fence that bordered East Germany led to an influx of East German refugees seeking asylum in Hungary and, ultimately, West Germany. Mounting protests for reforms forced Honecker, the leader of the GDR, to resign and Egon Kenez was appointed in his place. Kenez promised variants of Glasnost and Perestroika. The pace of Kenez's reforms and growing economic strife prompted popular protest, leading to the politburo resigning. In November 1989 there was a further lifting of travel restrictions. Foreign travel and free transit across the border with West Germany was permitted, making the Berlin Wall redundant. Protests continued and by December Kenez resigned and was replaced by a coalition. By October 1990 the two parts of Germany were reunified and East Germany ceased to exist.
Czechoslovakia and the Velvet Revolution	Support for the Czech dissident Vaclav Havel and the Civic Forum gained momentum after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Havel's goals included free elections, a clean environment, legal reforms, educational opportunities and prosperity. The Civic Forum rejected a coalition with the communists and the communist leadership resigned. Havel formed a new coalition and became president in December 1989. The country was now a multi-party democracy.



3. PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS

The years from 1985 to 1988 had seen a transformation in Soviet-American relations. The next three years brought Soviet-American relations to an end, because the Soviet Union itself disappeared.

It was a period of tumultuous change, in which events themselves seemed to take charge, with governments scrambling along in their wake, and peoples suddenly seized control of their own destinies, disregarding governments – whether their own or those of other countries.

- 1989 started quietly, as the new President of the United States, George Bush, took stock of the US-USSR situation; but it finished with a sudden deluge of changes which saw the end of six communist regimes in eastern Europe in less than six months.
- 1990 saw a precarious balance. The Soviet Union was in crisis, on a knife-edge between survival and death, while relations between the USSR and US governments worked with increasing smoothness.
- In 1991 the Soviet crisis was resolved: the state broke up. The last Soviet-American summit meeting took place in Moscow, and proved almost irrelevant; the decisive events were taking place elsewhere.

(a) PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE

Background of USSR's relations with Eastern European States

i. Political Relations

- Since the end of WWII, USSR had always governed over the Eastern European states with an iron-fist.
- USSR leaders were determined to ensure, at a minimum, Eastern Europe would be converted after the war into a protective zone against future invasions from Eastern European armies and a safeguard against the threat of revived German militarism.
 - Hence, when USSR liberated much of Eastern Europe, this gave it an opportunity to maintain its presence and protect its national interests by supporting budding Communist parties into governments.
- The communist ideology permeated citizen's lives and dominated all aspects of the society.
 - Those who did not comply were interrogated, intimidated and placed under surveillance. They were also subjected to house searches.
- USSR always saw the need to maintain the formation of staunchly pro-Soviet governments and would use any means necessary including the use of the Red Army to ensure that. For instance:
 - 1956: Soviet Union invaded Hungary in response to a national uprising led by PM Nagy, who had promised the Hungarian people independence and political freedom.
 - 1968: Soviet Union led Warsaw Pact troops in an invasion of Czechoslovakia to crack down reformist trends in Prague.
- Many of the Eastern Europe countries and thus engendered deep and lasting resentment towards Moscow.

ii. Economic relations

- As part of Comecon, USSR has been providing Eastern Europe with economic aid as part of maintaining the communist bloc.
- One of the most important and costly subsidies was Soviet sale of oil and natural gas to Eastern Europe at prices below world market levels.
 - Oil and gas exports were a key source of hard currency for the Soviet Union, especially after world prices skyrocketed in the 1980s due to turmoil in the Middle East.
 - As prices dropped sharply in the early 1980s, however, the Soviet Union cut back energy deliveries to Eastern Europe in order to maintain the level of its export earnings.

- This decision exacerbated the problems faced by Eastern Europe's economies, most of which owed large debts to Western creditors.
- When President Ronald Reagan launched his military build-up in the early 1980s, Soviet military and economic planners attempted to keep pace with the build-up, forcing their East European allies to do the same.
 - For example, productions in one of the largest tank factories in East Slovakia drained excessive resources. Yet, the tanks produced were sent entirely to Soviet Union.
 - The communist Czechoslovakian government experienced huge difficulties meeting its own industrial requirements. Yet the diversion of valuable resources towards Soviet military production only made the situation worse.
- The economic conditions, such as living standards, of Eastern Europeans compared to their Western counterparts were very revealing.
 - Those living east of the "Iron Curtain" had to stand in line for hours to purchase low quality food or consumer products. Their apartment buildings were often grime and sometimes poorly heated, while Western television broadcasts showed Americans and Western Europeans driving expensive cars and wearing expensive clothes.
- Thus it seemed only natural that one of the main reasons for the upsurge of popular discontent in late 1980s was due to the economic failings of the communist regimes.

(b) THE COLLAPSE OF SOVIET GOVERNMENTS

Revolutions of 1989

- In 1989, Gorbachev was faced with an increasingly difficult situation at home.
- During March 1989, elections were held to constitute a new Congress of People's Deputies.
 - In this election, 80% of the Communist Party candidates won - which meant that 20% lost, even though they faced no opposition. No fewer than 38 Provincial Secretaries of the Communist Party were defeated. These were unprecedented events in the history of Soviet elections.
- In January 1989 the Politburo decided to retain the system of central price controls; and in March the Central Committee of the Communist Party postponed a decision on the question of land ownership. The nationalities question grew more dangerous.
- On 23 August a vast number of people (est. a million in all) joined hands in a human chain across Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to protest against the German-Soviet Pact fifty years before, which had led to the absorption of the three countries into the USSR. This demonstration, extraordinary in its numbers and organization, signalled an ominous revolt against the Soviet state.

➤ Poland **

- Solidarity (though legally dissolved), formed in 1980 in Poland, was the first non-communist trade union in a communist country. It continued its activities underground; and in 1988 the government resigned after a hostile vote in the *Sejm* (the Polish parliament) - an unprecedented event in a communist country
- In February 1989, the Polish Communist Party agreed to 'round table' talks with other organizations, to discuss the legalization of Solidarity.
- In March the Polish government stated publicly that the Soviet Union had been responsible for the massacre of Polish officers at Katyn in 1940 - something which the Soviet government had long denied, and which was of intense symbolic importance.
- In April, the government lifted the ban on Solidarity, granted full legal recognition to the Catholic Church, and cancelled May Day parade - another matter of high symbolic significance.
- In June, elections were held, with half of the seats reserved for government candidates but the other half open to contest.
- Solidarity won nearly all the contest sets; in the reserved section, only a small minority of the candidates gained the 50 per cent vote necessary for election.
- It amounted to a total defeat for the Communist Party, and a victory for Solidarity.

- Hungary
 - In Hungary in 1988 two non-communist political organizations, the Hungarian Democratic Forum and the Alliance of Free Democrats, were founded.
 - The communist Party also used the device “round table” discussions with other organizations (July 1989), leading to rapid disintegration of communist authority.
 - On 7 October the Communist Party formally renounced the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, thus removing the justification for its own exclusive exercise of power, and opening the way to multi-party politics.
- Czechoslovakia
 - The small but influential Charter 77 group continued its demands that the governments should at least observe its own laws.
 - In 1988 some 400,000 signatures were attached to a petition for greater religious freedom.
- Romania
 - Stringent economic measures were enforced in 1987.
 - During 1989, a movement towards democracy culminated in a violent revolution which saw the collapse of the communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.
 - Ceausescu was thereafter executed while trying to flee, and a new democratic government came into power.
- Germany **
 - As part of the democratic opening in Hungary, the Hungarian government had opened its borders with the West.
 - This decision allowed East Germans to take advantage of Hungary’s border with Austria to flee the West without risk.
 - Growing numbers of refugees and massive demonstrations in Berlin and other cities put enormous pressure on the East German government.
 - After Gorbachev warned the East German communist leadership that he would not support repression, the East German government ended all restrictions on travel to the West.
 - Within hours, tens of thousands of jubilant East and Western Germans massed at the Berlin Wall, which symbolically, if not physically, came tumbling down that night.
 - As the wall disintegrated, so too did Europe’s East-West divide.
 - Calls for unification grew increasingly vociferous from the West Germans, the United States and even Gorbachev himself.
 - After months of negotiations between the two Germanys and Britain, France, US and the USSR, the Unification Treaty was signed in Berlin on 31 August 1990 and came into effect at midnight on 2-3 October 1990.
 - At the same time, the Soviets, albeit reluctantly, accepted the unified Germany’s membership in NATO.

4. IMPACT OF THESE MOVEMENTS ON THE COLD WAR

(a) End of Comecon and Warsaw Pact: Collapse of Soviet Union’s sphere of influence

- COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) had been founded in January 1949 as a counter to the Marshall Plan in Western Europe.
- Its main purpose was always to promote socialist economic integration, and when the east European states adopted market economies after the collapse of their communist regimes, Comecon lost its *raison d’être*. It was formally dissolved on 28 June 1991.
- THE WARSAW PACT, which dated from 1955, was wound up almost exactly the same time, on 1 July 1991, three days after its economic counterpart, Comecon.
- The Soviet government had hoped to preserve some of the political aspects of the Pact, though not its military structures which had subordinated the east European armies to Soviet command.
- But the new governments in Eastern Europe would have nothing to do with half-measures, and the only course was complete dissolution.

- On the other side, NATO remained in being, but a NATO Council meeting in Rome on 7-8 November 1991 adopted a new document on strategy declaring that the threat of a large-scale attack no longer existed.
- The NATO powers also invited the Soviet Union and eight other countries (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) to send their Foreign Ministers to a meeting in Brussels on 20 December, to formulate a declaration on partnership.
- Thus on the one side the structures of the Cold War (Comecon and Warsaw Pact) vanished, leaving a wrack behind; and on the other, NATO remained in existence but declared that peace had arrived and partnership with the east could begin.

(b) Impact on USSR internally: Soviet Republics e.g. Baltic States (1990-1991)

- When political crises erupted in Eastern Europe in the pre-Gorbachev era, Soviet leaders tried to ensure that the only information available to Soviet citizens about those events was the official version approved by the CPSU Politburo.
- During upheavals in Poland and Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1968, and Poland in 1980-1981, high-ranking Soviet officials exercised rigid control of the Soviet mass media and censored all coverage of external developments.
- By severely limiting the flow of information, they sought to minimize the spill over from Eastern Europe and to prevent the crises there from becoming a catalyst of unrest within the Soviet Union itself.
- By 1989, however, the top-down control of information had eroded a great deal. Glasnost by that point had taken firm root within the Soviet media, especially in the press. The negotiation process between the Solidarity and the Polish Communist leaders in Poland and the ferment in Hungary were covered extensively and often accurately by Soviet journalists.
- The unhindered coverage of events in Eastern Europe had enormous implications for political stability within the Soviet Union.
- The pattern of developments in East Germany, Eastern Europe, and the various restive Republics of Soviet Union was so similar because the Soviet media, particularly television, was spreading the vivid images of revolution and change, affecting the minds of both the Soviet elites and Soviet public in the various republics.
- The succession of crises in the neighbouring Warsaw Pact countries in 1989 provided an example to separatist groups within the USSR—and to leading officials in the Soviet Republic governments—of the political goals to which they themselves could aspire.
- The direct spill over effects of the Eastern European countries concerted effort to support breakaway Soviet Republics such as the Baltic States would subsequently lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union by 1991.

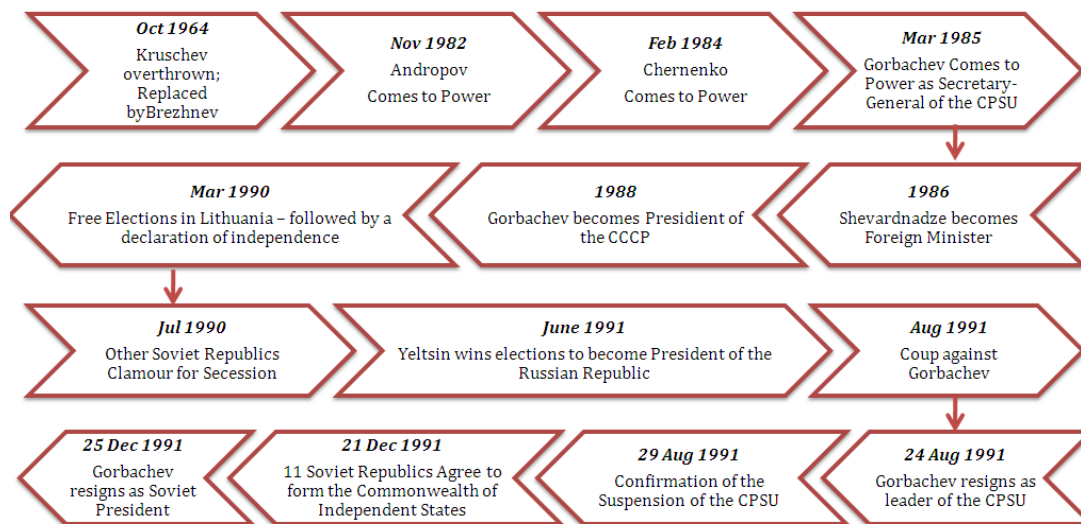
THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

CONTENTS OUTLINE

2. Overview
3. Internal Reasons
4. External Reasons
5. Check Point C

1. OVERVIEW

Chronology



- By the **late 1980s**, the Soviet Union was on the **verge of an implosion**,
 - facilitated by developments both internally and externally
- The **collapse of the Soviet superpower** was a **major turning point** in international history which is still generating a lot of scholarly debate.
 - USSR's demise was not pre-empted by many scholars and analysts.
 - While most agreed that USSR suffered from internal weaknesses, they did not expect such a development to take place by 1991.
- **1991** marks the conventional date for the official collapse of the USSR,
 - And this, coupled with other reasons, brought about an end to the Cold War.

* It is important to note that 'collapse of the USSR' and 'end of the Cold War' are not synonymous. I.e. **collapse of USSR ≠ end of Cold War**. Collapse of USSR is one of the contributing reasons for the end of the Cold War

- The collapse of the USSR had been very largely attributed to Gorbachev - is that valid?

Overview of reasons that led to the collapse of USSR -



2. INTERNAL REASONS



For the points,

- ❖ Economic Woes & Perestroika
- ❖ Glasnost / "Increased Openness"

You may refer to the earlier section under Gorbachev's policies of Perestroika and Glasnost respectively, p31 -36.

Decline of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)

- Within the Communist Party, there were many factions.
 - Gorbachev's reforms basically alienated many conservative factions who felt that there were threatened by the reforms
 - At the same time, the reformists felt that the reforms were not taking place fast enough
- With the atmosphere of tolerance & relaxation under Glasnost, it was quite natural that the next target of criticism would be the Communist Party.
- Critics also started to demand greater political changes.
 - Pressed by mounting protests, Gorbachev **removed Article 6** in the Soviet constitution, which ensured the monopoly and dominance of the Communist Party, which brought on a new wave of criticism of Gorbachev & his reforms.

- The freer environment also led to a **re-examination of the past and the Communist Party and its leaders were demystified and the mistakes made were brought up.**
 - Led to a loss of confidence in the Party & its leadership.
By allowing criticism of its past, the Communist Party lost confidence in its future & eventually lost control of the present as well.
- The threat to the CPSU's monopoly of power is compounded by Gorbachev trying to appease the critics with greater political changes in response to the CPSU's inability to satisfy the economy needs of the people & to impress them with foreign successes by
 - deciding to hold the **first ever popular elections to the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies** Mar 1989
 - Results showed **nationwide losses for the Communist Party** and senior officials,
-> threatening the Communist Party's monopoly of power.
- During this time, in the climate of change set into motion by Gorbachev himself, **Boris Yeltsin** was elected into the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies based on the campaign platform of denouncing the slowness of Gorbachev's reforms
 - Yeltsin was identified as the most radical reformer in the top Party leadership and a supporter of the more controversial aspects of Gorbachev's programme until his dismissal from the Moscow Gorkom in Nov 1987 and the Politburo in Feb 1988.
 - Yeltsin criticised the corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy, party privileges, the monopoly of the power of the Soviet President and the impotent top leadership
 - **Yeltsin became an alternative voice** for those disillusioned with the Communist Party.
- ➔ Gorbachev now faced a serious radical challenge to his own authority, in the form of the liberals who had just about managed to secure a majority in the legislature of the largest republic under Yeltsin's leadership.
- He even sanctioned the creation of a Russian Communist Party separate from the CPSU.
 - ➔ With the traditional power structures of the CPSU undermined, and with the republics moving to escape central control, Gorbachev needed now more than ever to keep on his side the Supreme Soviet of the USSR through which he now governed.

However, he came under constant attack. The resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze as Foreign Minister made matters worse.

Taking advantage of the new changes, Yeltsin demanded that free elections be held in all, and in 1991, he won 60% of the votes to be the President of Russia.

- This **undermined the authority of Gorbachev & the Communist Party** because Yeltsin could claim genuine political legitimacy as he was elected by popular vote.
 - Gave Yeltsin more political legitimacy than any Russian leader since the 17th century. Moreover, Yeltsin was largely playing the nationalist card.
 - Did not claim to be the President of USSR but of the Russian Republic - started to emphasize the uniqueness of a Russian (as opposed to a Soviet) identity.
 - Gorbachev had never submitted himself to a direct popular vote, and opinion polls showed that Yeltsin had surpassed him in popularity already in 1990.

IMPACT ON GORBACHEV	IMPACT ON SOVIET COMMUNISM & THUS USSR AS A WHOLE
<p>Meant that although Gorbachev was, in theory, in the stronger position, his base of support had evaporated: the CPSU was divided and weak, he had alienated both liberals and conservatives in the USSR Supreme Soviet.</p> <p>Any control he could exercise over the republics, following the public relations</p>	<p>Excluded from the power structures of the Soviet Union, Yeltsin sought to build up an alternative base in the only other structure available to him - the parliament of the Soviet Union.</p> <p>As a result of Yeltsin's quest for power, the last year and a half of the Soviet Union was dominated by an institutional struggle between the USSR and the republics, polarising politics, contributing to the</p>

disaster over Lithuania in Jan, was entirely dependent on Yeltsin's goodwill.	economic crisis, isolating Gorbachev, and leaving only two paths open for the future - the dismantling of communism or a conservative counter-reform.
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- This effectively **divided the strength of the party** since the party was disunited.
- Thus **hastened the breakdown in the central control of the Communist Party** and accelerated the breakup of the USSR.

How important was Yeltsin / Gorbachev-Yeltsin rivalry?

- The extent to which Yeltsin himself (or indeed, Gorbachev) was responsible for the final collapse of Soviet communism needs to be considered from the broader perspective of other larger forces at work in the Soviet Union from 1989 to 1991.
- As a prominent and popular leader and an astute politician, Yeltsin was unique and came to command a prominent place in 1989 to 1991. But he was not acting alone.
- The split between conservatives and liberals would have existed without him, and it is hard to see how his influence could have had much impact on the national movements in the Baltic republics, Ukraine and elsewhere, even if the actions of the Russian Federation were key to ultimate unravelling of the Soviet Union.
- Moreover, if one takes the view that the collapse of Communism and thereafter, the collapse of USSR was systematic and inevitable, then the role of these individuals was ultimately irrelevant.
- Yet, as far as the precise course of events goes, and why the USSR collapsed in 1991, not earlier nor later, there is a strong argument that Gorbachev and Yeltsin, both forceful personalities have left a mark on the history of Soviet communism.

Nationalistic Forces - Ethnic Unrest & Separatist Movements

The ethnic issue proved to be the USSR's most implosive internal problem.

- These problems must be seen in relation to other factors as they are linked.

Soviet Union was a **union of republics** -

- Made up of many ethnic groups - e.g. Slavs, Georgians, Armenians, Jews, etc.
 - Of USSR's 15 Republics, only 3 of them were largely Slavic (Russia itself, Ukraine & Belorussia) & the Slavs accounted for only slightly over ½ of the entire population of USSR.
 - Moreover, the Slavs were not very united.
 - The Slavs in Ukraine were not entirely loyal to the Russians.
- The other 12 republics all had grievances and displayed nationalistic & separatist tendencies (*i.e. wanted to be independent & break away from USSR*)
- The Constitution of USSR had stressed that it was a voluntary union of equal states & nations based on Soviet ideology.
 - In actual fact, the union was not entirely voluntary nor was it equal.

- Many **leaders from the various groups demanded that they be given equal rights** as promised by the Constitution but dissent was always brutally crushed.
- To worsen matters, the other ethnic groups were **resentful of Russian dominance**
 - When Stalin was in power, a so-called **policy of “Sovietisation”** was started to ensure that all the ethnic groups are reshaped according to Communist Soviet ideology.
 - In actual fact, this so-called “Sovietization” was ‘Russification’ - the imposition of Russian culture on the other non-Russian groups.
E.g. Stalin tried to impose the Russian language on all ethnic groups in USSR
 - Nationalist feelings were strongest in the **Baltic states**, where nationalist demonstrations against ‘Russification’ often broke out
 - Baltic states were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 but considered themselves European rather than Russian-Slavic; they also enjoyed a higher standard of living and resented Soviet immigration into their territories as well as economic exploitation by Moscow
- Moreover, there was also **resentment that the ruling elite was largely Russian or other Slavs**.
 - E.g. 1985 - 1986 - 19 out of 23 top leaders in the Politburo were Russians (Slavs), 3 were Slavs from Ukraine & Belorussia & only 1 was a Georgian!
- Due to a host of problems, the Russians were also **declining in terms of population numbers**.
 - A trend with the Slavic race in USSR but the decline was most dramatic among the Russians.
 - The other ethnic groups, particularly the Muslim republics in Central Asia, were growing rapidly & this could threaten the dominance of the Russian stock in the long run.
- **Religion** was also linked to the ethnic issue.
 - E.g. the Central Asian republics were also being influenced by the religious fervour & revival from neighbouring Iran.

One of the first areas to develop **popular separatist movements** was the **Baltic states of Lithuania, Estonia & Latvia**.

- In Lithuania, the San. Indis movement won the leadership elections in 1990 and immediately declared independence.
 - While Gorbachev was willing to relax control over the republics, he was not prepared to accept such an act which could set an example to the rest & destroy the Soviet Union, and hence, this was put down.
- Other areas which wanted to secede from USSR included Armenia, Azerbaijan, & Georgia.

The policy of openness as imbued in Glasnost basically **emboldened the different ethnic groups** which have been simmering in unhappiness.

- It is however, important to note that while such dissent aroused much interest abroad, dissidents achieved little within the USSR itself as the regime, with its monopoly of channels of information, generally succeeded in portraying dissidents as belonging to privileged, ungrateful factions
- However, it slowly eroded the communist base, thus tearing apart the ideological fabric of the Soviet Union
 - ➔ This, thus, ultimately, contributed to the collapse of the USSR.

Soviet Ideology

Some scholars (e.g. Applebaum) have argued that **Communism itself contained the seeds of its own destruction**.

- The linear view towards history where all countries will move to a communist utopia has been largely discredited by this point in time.
- The strict control imposed by the Soviet regime also stifled the creativity & innovation that was needed for progress.
 - As a result, USSR became lethargic & its people passive, rendering it unable to compete with the democratic, capitalist West.
 - In the long run, this discredited the Communist claims to be a model worthy of imitation.
- The Soviets rejected basic moral values & made their success dependent on the economic performance of the country & how it compared with the West.
 - Became a problem when the Soviet economy ran into difficulties & its weaknesses were exposed.

3. EXTERNAL REASONS



For the point,
❖ Reagan's 4 Offensives

You may refer to the earlier section under Reagan's Four Offensives, p22 -25.

It is crucial to note that external developments outside USSR also had a great impact on its eventual collapse, although its impact tends to be an **indirect** one.

However, **the external developments are closely related to the internal situation in USSR**, lending force to the already existent internal problems within USSR → compounded effect.

E.g. the introduction of glasnost would influence the decisions of the Soviet leadership in Eastern Europe.

Collapse of Soviet Hegemony in Eastern Europe

As part of his New Political Thinking, Gorbachev had allowed for reform initiatives in Eastern Europe.

- In Sept 1988, the Soviets **abolished the special Central Committee department for relations with the satellite countries** and had its functions taken over by the International Department
 - This was a tacit acknowledgement that Soviet relations with Eastern European countries was now a matter of foreign relations.

Why did Gorbachev take this step of revising Soviet relations with its Eastern European satellites?

- He was confident that Communism would still survive in those countries;
- Wanted to **cut back on the cost of supporting Eastern European communist regimes**, especially in the military sense;
- Wanted to **force anti-reform leaders of Romania, Bulgaria, East Germany and Czechoslovakia to reform along the lines of the Soviet model**;
- Needed to **give credence to his own reform efforts at home** by giving the East Europeans the same opportunities and freedom for change;

- Believed that **with improved relations with the USA and the signing of the INF Treaty, war could be prevented by political/ diplomatic means** and thus Europe was no longer critical to Soviet security concerns.
- Since the Soviets were not going to intervene in East European affairs nor prop up unpopular regimes, the **various communist regimes took steps to safeguard their power**
→ Some resorted to reform, others to reactionary measures, but most failed.
- Gorbachev **encouraged and supported radical political reform in Eastern Europe**, but there was **mixed response**:
 - In Poland in January 1989, Solidarity, which had been banned since the imposition of martial law in 1981, was legalized and political and economic reforms were introduced within a year.
 - In Hungary, the pace of political and economic reform accelerated with multi-party elections taking place in 1990.
 - **HOWEVER!** In Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Romania, substantial efforts were made to insulate the local population from the subversive ideas coming out of the USSR. But popular discontent simmered and finally erupted into major crises from the late 1989.

CONSEQUENCES of allowing for reform initiatives in Eastern Europe.

- **Unleashed revolutionary forces in Eastern Europe** and within the short span of one year in 1989, the communist regimes of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland and Rumania collapsed.
- It was **Gorbachev's political conviction** that people had the right to decide their own future that led to the willingness to relinquish Soviet grip over Eastern Europe that it possible for the rapid and relatively peaceful transition to post-communism in the region.
- *Gorbachev had redefined Soviet security needs and downgraded the importance of a political-military bloc in Europe.*
- Each Eastern European country had its own reasons for the fall of the communist regimes but there were common factors:
 - *Communism was undermined by the **contrast between East and West**, Especially from the 1970s onwards, when East European economies stagnated and the people's basic needs were not met*
→ *Led to growing resentment; this was compounded by news and images of Western European capitalist economies expanding and getting wealthier.*
 - *The **revolutionary potential** had always been present in Eastern Europe as communism and Soviet control was not popular with the masses, since these had been forcibly imposed after WWII by Stalin*
→ *Recall various efforts at resistance (East Germany, 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, Poland 1980) had been brutally suppressed;*
***BUT!** The spirit of rebellion lingered and festered amongst the East Europeans.*
- **The end of Soviet rule over Eastern Europe and the people's rejection of Marxist ideology was a blow to the USSR and Gorbachev**
- While Gorbachev did want to move with the times and give the former Soviet satellites their autonomy, he **had not expected the end of communism in Eastern Europe to happen so hastily and completely.**

→ *Developments in Eastern Europe added to the problems that Gorbachev was facing at home, and the collapse of Eastern Europe paved the way for the same to happen in the USSR itself.*

USSR's Involvement in the Third World

The USSR became **entangled indirectly/directly in the political struggles of many Third World countries**
E.g. Central America, Afghanistan, Vietnam

- These were very expensive as military, economic and financial aid had to be supplied when the USSR itself needed it
- The struggles tended to be long, thus draining/straining the USSR's economy -> 'imperial overstretch'
- USSR and the US often clashed via proxy - however, the USSR could not keep up with the U.S at all in the long run. E.g. Afghanistan.

➔ Resulted in **loss of international prestige which compounded internal economic problems.**

