

The Collapse of the Soviet Block 1950-1991

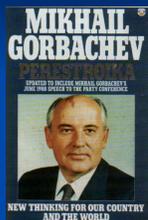


How did Gorbachev improve relations with the US?

- 1985, Gorbachev & Reagan met at Geneva to discuss arms reduction
- 1987, Gorbachev & Reagan signed Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty
- SALT developed into START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks)



How did Gorbachev reform the USSR?



- Identified key problems:
 - Communist bureaucracy
 - low industrial output
 - high inflation
 - human rights
- **Perestroika** – free market economics
- **Glasnost** – openness in govt
- Political prisoners released
 - (e.g. Andrei Sakharov)



Poland

- First to fall under direct control of USSR
 - "Free Elections" in 1947
- Polish Communists Protested after
 - "Khrushchev's Secret Speech" – De-Stalinization
- 1960s & 70s – Economic Conditions declined
- 80 – Spike in food prices – caused new resistance

Poland - "Solidarity & Lech Walesa"

- 1980 – Workers formed "**Solidarity**"
 - Labour Movement – Supported by **John Paul II**
 - United All Workers & Challenged Communist Authority
- Red Army Suppressed but Economics worsened
- **Glasnost** – Allowed a resurgent Solidarity Movement
- **Lech Walesa** elected - '89 – Free Elections
- Poland was an example for other Eastern Countries

East Germany

- 1950 -60 – The DDR became very oppressive.
- The **Stasi** (secret Police) was infamous
- **Berlin Wall – '61** – A physical barrier divided Berlin.
 - Soviets “Wall was to keep out Capitalist corruption”
- Kennedy’s Speech – “**Ich Bein ein Berliner**” - 1963
- Relations between BRD & DDR improved in 60s & 70s – **Ostpolitik**- Improved economic relationship.

East Germany & Fall of the Wall

- **Eric Honecker** – Oppressive Communist Leader '71-'89
- Demonstrations spurred by Gorbachev Visit
- Gorby told Honecker that it is his decision
- Honecker forced to agree to reforms
- Nov 1989, Berlin Wall pulled down



Czechoslovakia & Prague Spring

'68



- **Alexander Dubček** – Communist Leader
- “**Socialism with a human face.**”
 - Greater freedom of speech
 - Freedom to travel
 - More economic freedom
- Red Army Tanks roll in
- **Dubček** replaced by a “hardliner” from Moscow.

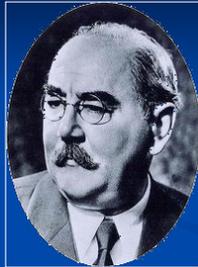
Czechoslovakia & Velvet Revolution



- 24 November 1989, massive anti-Communist demo in Prague
- **Vaclav Havel** (playwright) rallied support of crowds
- December 1989, Communist leader resigned & replaced by Havel
- 1990 - free elections held

Hungary - 1956

- Communist leader, Imre Nagy Tried to reform
- He promised Free Elections & withdrew from Warsaw Pact
- Red Army tanks rolled in
- Imre Nagy was Hung for treason.



Imre Nagy - Prime Minister

Hungary, 1989



Imre Pozsgay-Prime Minister

- Communist leader, Imre Pozsgay accepted need for reform
- Ban on opposition parties lifted
- Communist Party renamed Socialist Party
- 1990, free elections

Romania 1956-89



- Nicolae Ceausescu – Began as a moderate creating relationships with the west
- 1970's became an extreme Soviet "Hardliner"
- Developed Cult like behaviours
- Ousted in a Military Coup
- Ceausescu & wife Elena were shot after a 2 hr Televised Kangaroo Court.

Bulgaria, 1989

- November 1989 Communist leader resigned
- Legislative body moved to become more capitalistic and democratic
- 1990 free elections
- Peaceful transition



Independence Inside USSR? Baltic States, 1990

- 1990, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia declared independence from USSR
- Singing Revolution – 87-90
 - Several choirs and mass of peoples sang in the streets to protest Soviets
- Baltic Way – 23 Aug, 896 million people joined hands forming a chain 370 m long across the Baltics
- Aug 31 Baltic Leaders asked UN for help.
- Soviet leaders softened and backed down.



USSR - 1991

- Communists criticised Gorbys for allowing collapse of USSR
- Reformers wanted complete abolition of Communism
- Feb. 1990, anti-Communist demo in Moscow
- May Day 1990, Gorbys booted



USSR to CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)

- 1991-Gorbys was arrested by hard-line Communists
- Boris Yeltsin, an advocate of **market economy** & reform, gathered support from Russians to resist the **coup**
- Coup showed unpop. of Com & pop. reformers
- **Boris Yeltsin** new Russian president

