

English Martyrs GCSE History
Superpower relations and the Cold War 1943-
1991
Knowledge Organiser



1) Why were there ideological differences between East and West after WW2?

Capitalism

Britain and the USA were Capitalist.

Capitalists believe that everyone should be free to own property and business and make money. The USA's economic ideology was capitalist.

Key beliefs:

Politics: Several parties – voters may choose and change their government.

Economy: Most industry and businesses privately owned.

Beliefs: Some will be wealthier than others. Spread influence to other countries to encourage trade and investment. Very little censorship of media.

Tension before and during WW2

Stalin was annoyed that Britain and the USA had delayed opening a second front, which they did not do until D-Day in 1944. He was convinced that they were waiting until the Soviet Union had been seriously damaged by Germany.

Churchill was against the initial Russian Revolution in 1917 and supported the Communists' opponents in the Russian Civil War (1918-1921). As Prime Minister in WW2, he was suspicious of Stalin's motives in Eastern Europe. He was convinced that Soviet troops would remain in countries they freed from the Germans.

Britain had gone to war in 1939 to maintain the independence of Poland. However, Stalin believed that Soviet control of Poland was essential to prevent future invasions.

In April 1943 German troops discovered a mass grave in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk of 10,000 Polish officers murdered by the Soviets in 1939.

In August 1944 the Polish resistance had organised an uprising in Warsaw against the Germans occupying the city. The Soviet Army, which had reached the outskirts of the city, halted and stood by as the uprising was brutally crushed by the Germans. This defeat left the Poles defenceless against a Soviet occupation.

Communism

The USSR was Communist.

Communists believed that all property, including homes and businesses, should belong to the state, to ensure that every member of society has a fair share. Communism is based on the writings of Karl Marx and was the political ideology of the Soviet Union.

Key beliefs:

Politics: Only one political party – the Communist Party. No choice. People unable to change their government.

Economy: No private industry or businesses. No private profit. All industry and businesses owned by the state for the benefit of everyone.

Beliefs: Everyone equal. Belief in world revolution, and encouraging communism in other countries. Censorship of the media.

The Grand Alliance

The Soviet Union was allied with Britain and France during WW2. It initially consisted of Stalin (USSR), Churchill (Britain), and Roosevelt (USA)



2) The Wartime conferences

The Tehran Conference, 1943

Purpose: Meeting of the Grand Alliance to plan a strategy to end the war.

Agreements: The USA and Britain would open a 'second front' by launching an attack against Germany in Western Europe by invading France. This would ease the pressure on the USSR as the Germans would have to remove troops from the USSR to fight in the West.

The Soviet Union would declare war against Japan and send troops to support the USA once the war in Europe was over.

A United Nations organisation was to be set up which would settle disputes through discussion and negotiation, not war.

It was agreed in principle that the allies should work towards the unconditional surrender of Germany, and to keep it weak after the war.

An area of Eastern Poland should be added to the Soviet Union as it had been seized during the war. The borders of post-war Poland should be expanded into Germany along the Oder and Neisse rivers.

Tension: Stalin was pleased by the agreement to open up a Second Front in the West. However, Churchill wanted to open this up in the Balkans, not France. But Roosevelt supported Stalin. Roosevelt also seemed to be against British colonialism and sided more with Stalin.

The Yalta Conference, Feb 1945

Purpose: By now, the Allies were closing in on Berlin and met to discuss winning the war in Europe and to consider what to do with Europe and Germany after the war.

Agreements: To divide Germany into four zones, each controlled by a different power: Britain, the USA, France and the USSR. Berlin would be split the same way. Germany would pay \$20 billion in reparations, half of which would go to the Soviet Union. The Nazi Party would be banned and war criminals prosecuted.

A United Nations would be set up to maintain peace once the war was ended.

Eastern Europe should be a Soviet 'sphere of influence'. Countries in Eastern Europe that had been occupied by the Nazis should be allowed free elections to choose their own governments (The Declaration on a Liberated Europe). Stalin agreed to join the war in Japan three months after the war in Europe was ended.

Tension: Stalin wanted all 16 republics of the USSR to be able to join the UN after the war, but only Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus were admitted as the USA and France did not agree.

Stalin wanted the Polish / German border to be much further to the West than the western allies did. He also wanted a 'friendly' Polish government so that he would have some protection from Germany. It was agreed to return the borders to their 1921 position and have free elections. Stalin expected these to bring about a pro-Soviet government, whereas the British supported the non-Communist London Poles, who were a Polish government in exile in London.

The Potsdam Conference, July/Aug 1945

Purpose: The big 3 meet at Potsdam as the War in Europe is over. Their purpose was to plan for the future of Germany and Europe after the war. Changes: Churchill was replaced half way through the meeting in Britain by the new Prime Minister Clement Attlee, and Roosevelt has died to be replaced as President by the hardliner anti-Communist Harry S Truman. In the USA, scientists had developed and tested a new atomic bomb in July 1945, news of which Truman told Stalin at the start of the conference. Stalin was furious that this had been kept secret from him. Stalin had also liberated Eastern European countries during the war, but his troops remained occupying those countries. He had also set up a Communist government in Poland, ignoring the promises made at Yalta and the wishes of the Polish people. He refused to demilitarise like the West. Stalin now wants Eastern Europe to be in the USSR's sphere of influence as a defensive measure against future attacks..

Agreements: Divide Germany as previously agreed. USA, France and Britain to control the West, the Soviets the East. But the German economy would be run as a whole. Berlin to be divided similarly, even though it was in the Soviet zone.

Germany was to be demilitarised, Nazi war criminals to be put on trial and democracy to be re-established, restoring free elections and freedom of speech.

Disagreements: The USSR wanted heavy reparations due to the damage they had suffered in WW2 (20 million Soviet soldiers died). Truman disagreed as this would make it harder for the German economy to recover and did not want to punish Germany as it had been in the Treaty of Versailles. It was agreed that each country should take reparations from its own zone, but as the USSR controlled the poorest zone, it was allowed to take a quarter of the industrial equipment from the other zones. There was also tension over Eastern Europe. Stalin had broken his promise over free elections in Poland and Truman objected to the control of the USSR over the liberated countries of Eastern Europe. He wanted free elections in those countries. Stalin refused. Truman began a 'get tough' policy against the USSR.

3) Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe

The Long and Novikov Telegram, 1946

In 1946 both countries asked their embassies to report back on each other's countries.

The Long Telegram: George Kennan's was a US diplomat in Moscow. He reported that Stalin wanted the destruction of capitalism and felt that the rest of the world was hostile to the USSR. He believed that the USSR would back down if met with strong resistance. This began to form the policy of containment against the USSR to stop communism spreading.

The Novikov Telegram: Novikov was a Soviet diplomat working in Washington. His telegram said that the USA wanted to use their military power to dominate the world. He believed that under Truman the USA no longer wanted to co-operate with the USSR and that the American people would support a war against the Soviet Union. This hardened Stalin's attitude to the West and increased his determination to develop as much protection in Eastern Europe as possible.

The Iron Curtain speech, 1946

Winston Churchill, no longer British Prime Minister, undertakes a lecture tour of the USA.

In Fulton, Missouri he makes a speech announcing that an iron curtain has spread across Europe which separates East and West. He explains that the USSR are controlling these countries. He made it clear that the USSR was a threat to freedom and world peace. US President Truman is aware that the speech is being made beforehand. Stalin believed that the USA shared this idea. This speech therefore increased the suspicion and mistrust between both sides, and the USSR increased its anti-Western propaganda.



The USSR takeover of Eastern Europe begins using Salami tactics:-

Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia (The Baltic states) were conquered by the USSR in 1940 and became part of the Soviet Union.

Poland became Communist in 1947 after the Communists intimidated the electors. The London Poles were forced to flee or face imprisonment.

Romania saw mass demonstrations by the Communists to disrupt the government, which was encouraged by Stalin. The Soviet army intervened and forced the king to appoint a Communist government. In 1946 'free' elections were held which saw 80% of the votes going to the Communist Party. In 1947 the monarchy was abolished.

Bulgaria becomes Communist in 1946 when the monarchy was abolished. The voters were intimidated and 'free' elections were held. All other parties were then banned.

Hungary becomes Communist in 1947 with fixed elections and the banning of other parties. Voters were intimidated on a campaign supported by the Soviet leadership. As the Soviets controlled the police, they arrested the leaders of the main opposition party. By 1949 it became a one-party state.

Czechoslovakia becomes Communist in 1948 by controlling the media and arresting other political leaders following a Communist coup against the pre-war democratic leader, Benes. The elections were rigged and other political parties were later banned.

Albania becomes Communist in 1945 without USSR help.

4) The Policy of Containment

The Truman Doctrine

1947 – The Domino Effect of spreading Communism has reached Greece. Until 1947 the British were fighting the Communists in Greece. The British tell the USA that they can no longer afford to keep this fight going.

President Truman makes a speech to Congress called the **Truman Doctrine**. In the speech he warns of the need to support Europe financially in order to prevent freedom being lost in the form of Communism.

The Doctrine has two main ideas:-

Containment – The idea that from 1947 the USA would fight to prevent Communism spreading.

Co-existence – The USA would accept Communist countries existing in Eastern Europe. They would not fight to make them free again.

Truman also stated that the world faced a distinct choice between Democracy and Communism. Democracy offered majority rule and freedom from political oppression. Communism was the will of the minority being forced upon the majority. Truman said that choosing democracy over communism was like choosing good over evil.

Congress are impressed and \$400 million is given for the fight in Greece. The money helps the Communist forces to be defeated and halts the domino effect in Europe.

Before 1947 the USA had followed a policy of **isolationism**. This was now abandoned as the USA set itself up to be the leader of the fight against the spread of Communism. Containment replaced isolationism.



The Marshall Plan

Causes: US Secretary of State George Marshall setting up the **Marshall plan** (The European Recovery Plan) to fend off Communism, promote trade and improve US relations with Europe. Truman did not want to use the military against the spread of Communism, but believed that communism was generally supported in countries with economic problems, unemployment and poverty. Many European countries suffered badly as a result of WW2, with huge shortages. If these countries could be supported to recover economically, then Communism would lose its attraction. For Truman, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were two halves of the same walnut (The threat of Communism, which needed to be cracked).

What it did: \$12.7 billion is available to war-torn countries in Western Europe, along with the \$13 billion already given before the Marshall Plan. Britain, France and West Germany borrow the most money. The Marshall Plan ends the spread of Communism in Europe. The aid took the forms of money, equipment and goods to states willing to work together towards their economic recovery. In return, they would agree to buy US goods and allow US companies to invest capital in their industries.

Soviet reaction

Cominform, 1947: The Communist Information Bureau was a political organisation set up in Sept 1947 between the USSR and the satellite states of Eastern Europe, with the Communist parties of Yugoslavia, France and Italy too. It was introduced to ensure that states in eastern Europe followed Soviet aims in its foreign policies, and introduce Soviet style economic policies like collectivisation of agriculture and state control of industry. It ensured all members followed Communism and took orders from Moscow. Member states were encouraged to trade with other satellite states, but not non-Communist states. They rejected the Marshall Plan and compared the USA to Nazi Germany.

Comecon: Stalin would not allow satellite states to accept aid from the Marshall Plan as he believed this would allow the US to have too much influence in Eastern Europe. So he created the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance to provide aid in line with Communist principles. It was meant to provide financial support to these countries and encourage trade between them, but it ensured that the USSR could control the economies of these states through 5 Year Plans, nationalised industry and collectivised agriculture. Trade with the west was discouraged.

5) The 1948-9 Berlin Crisis

Causes of the Berlin Blockade

In 1947, there was disagreements between the four powers of USA, Britain, France and USSR who had divided Germany. The Soviets wanted to take as much material as possible back to the USSR to help rebuild the Soviet Union. The Western countries wanted to build up Germany's economy. When the Allied Control Commission (The body set up to administer the whole of Germany) talks collapsed, the Soviets stormed out.

Britain and the USA had already combined their zones in 1947 into Bizonia, and in 1948 the French joined to form Trizonia. This resulted in Germany being split between the West and the Soviet East.

In June 1948 the Allies create a new single currency, the Deutschmark, for the whole of Trizonia. This upset the USSR as it created a separate economic currency in the West, which was worth about 7x more than the eastern currency (the Ostmark), as they were recovering with the support of Marshall Aid. It also clearly divided Germany between East and West. Stalin saw the formation of the three zones as a deliberate attempt to force the Soviet zone into poverty and the spread of democratic, western ideas into the Soviet zone, undermining Soviet control. By 1947 3,500 skilled workers were leaving the Soviet sector of Berlin to work in the west.

The Berlin Blockade

Stalin believed that the Western occupied zones of Berlin were vulnerable, as they were surrounded by the Soviet territory in East Germany. There were just two land and air routes across the Soviet zone to the Western part of Berlin.

In June 1948 Stalin shut off the land routes, including road, rail and canal traffic, into Berlin. He wanted to show the Allies that a divided Germany would not work as Trizonia would no longer be able to communicate with their capital in Berlin and the people of Berlin would be starved into submission. If successful, this would be a propaganda success for Stalin and also would force the western powers to give up their control of the zones in Berlin, allowing the whole city to be controlled by the USSR.



Operation Vittles (the Berlin Airlift)

Truman was determined to stand up to Stalin and did not believe that Stalin would shoot down allied planes flying supplies into West Berlin. The Airlift lasted 10 months. Planes flew supplies into Berlin day and night and landed at 90-second intervals into the two Berlin airports of Berlin-Tegel and Berlin-Tempelhof. By September 1948 the planes were flying 4,600 tonnes a day, and by April 1949 landed nearly 13,000 tonnes in 24 hours.

The Airlift supplied West Berliners with supplies of food, clothing and building materials. On average, there was 4,000 tonnes of supplies delivered each day, and a total of 275,000 flights.

On 12 May 1949 Stalin called off the blockade as he had failed to starve the Allies out of Berlin. For Truman this was a great victory having stood up to the USSR. For Stalin it was a defeat and a humiliation.

Consequences

Divided Germany: In May 1949 the western allies announced the joining together of their zones to form the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Stalin responded by creating the German Democratic Republic in October 1949.

NATO: In April 1949 the USA and the Western Allies created the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. It was agreed that if any member was attacked, all members of NATO would come to its assistance. Although it was a defensive military alliance, its main purpose was to prevent Soviet expansion.

The Warsaw Pact: Stalin saw the formation of NATO as an aggressive alliance against the USSR. He was further worried when West Germany (the FRG) was allowed to join NATO in 1955 as there was a real fear of an armed, powerful Germany on the Soviet border. The Soviets formed their own military alliance in response, between the Soviet Union and the Satellite states (known as the Eastern bloc) to become the Warsaw Pact. This was firmly controlled by the Soviet Union.

6) The intensification of the Cold War in the 1950s

The Arms Race

Following the Potsdam Conference, Stalin instructed Soviet scientists to develop their own atomic bomb. By 1949 the Soviet Union had their own atom bomb. This shocked Truman and the USA, so Truman ordered a more powerful nuclear weapon to be built, the Hydrogen (or H) Bomb, built in 1952 as well as increasing defence spending. This was 1000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb and restored the American advantage. The USSR increased their own spending and in 1953 had their own H-Bomb. Both countries now continued to develop more powerful nuclear weapons. In 1957 the USA developed the ICBM (inter-continental ballistic missile) which could fire a nuclear warhead at a target more than 4,500 km away. Two months later the Soviets also tested its own ICBMs. The arms race increased rivalry and tension as each side felt threatened, so building more powerful weapons.



New leaders

USA: Dwight D Eisenhower became President in 1953 and was fiercely anti-Communist. He was determined to block any attempt at Communist expansion but also aware of the danger of nuclear missiles, so was open to talks to improve the relationship between the superpowers.

USSR: Stalin died in 1953. By 1956 Nikita Khrushchev emerged as the new Soviet leader. In his Secret Speech of 1955, he criticised Stalin's policies and suggested there should be peaceful co-operation with the West.

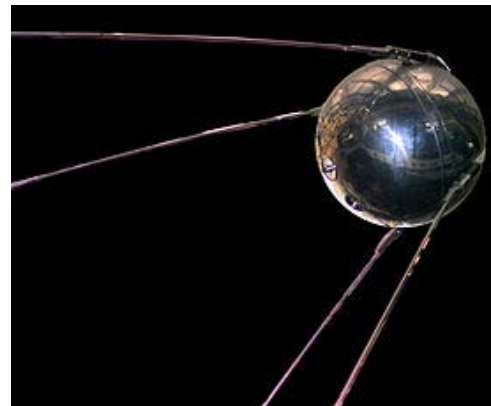


Reasons for reduction in tension in early 1950s

In 1950 there was a war in Korea between the Communist North and the USA backed South. By 1953 that war had ended, giving hope that tension could be reduced. Both the USA and USSR were spending large sums on their armed forces. Both sides wanted to improve their economies by reducing military spending.

There was a summit meeting in Geneva in 1955 over how Austria should be governed. While it failed to reach agreement over disarmament and the future of Germany, there was an atmosphere of co-operation at the meeting.

BUT the addition of West Germany to join NATO and the Soviet Response in creating the Warsaw Pact made any improvement in relations short-lived.



Sputnik, 1957

In 1957 a Soviet rocket launched Sputnik, a satellite which could orbit the earth. The USA saw this as a military threat. During the next two years, the USA increased its spending on missiles by 20% and also founded NASA. The USA was concerned that the Soviet Union was overtaking the USA in arms development. So it increased its training programme for engineers and scientists, as increased the number of B52 bombers and the US Navy equipped some of its submarines with nuclear weapons. The USA also placed missile bases in European countries, especially West Germany.

7) The Hungarian Uprising, 1956

Post WW2 Rakosi's rule

After 1947, the Communist Party ruled Hungary under the leadership of Matyas Rakosi, a brutal dictator and a follower of Stalin. Hungary became a member of Cominform and Rakosi took his orders from the USSR.

Rakosi used terror to keep control, killing an estimated 2000 people and imprisoning 200,000 political opponents.

The Hungarian economy suffered under Comecon, and Rakosi's Five Year Plans to transform the economy failed to make any progress. Living standards began to fall and Rakosi was unpopular.

The Hungarian Uprising

In 1955 the new Soviet leader Khrushchev issued his 'secret speech' and referred to a new policy of de-Stalinisation. He believed in peaceful co-existence between the superpowers and gave the impression that there would be more freedoms within the USSR.

During 1956 there were huge protests in Hungary about their lack of freedoms, fuel shortages and poor harvests. In October there were riots in the capital, Budapest, and clashes with the police. Soviet troops restored order, but Khrushchev decided to replace Rakosi with the former prime minister Imre Nagy, who believed that there should be more personal freedoms within the Communist regime.



Nagy's reforms

Nagy held talks with the Soviet Union, who agreed to remove Soviet tanks. The US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told Nagy that 'You can count on us', leading Hungarians to believe that the USA would support them in any action against the USSR. Nagy proposed to reorganise the Hungarian government to include members of non-Communist Parties, ending the one-party state. He also immediately released many political prisoners, and declared freedoms of speech and the press.

BUT on 1 Nov 1956 he announced that Hungary would leave the Warsaw Pact – Khrushchev could not allow this as other East European countries could follow.

Soviet invasion

Khrushchev could not accept Nagy's reforms and so ordered the Soviet invasion of Hungary and on 4th Nov sent 200,000 Soviet troops and 6000 tanks into Hungary. Up to 20,000 Hungarians were killed in the brutal Soviet response as they re-established control.

A new pro-Communist government was set up under Janos Kadar. Nagy had been hiding in the Yugoslav embassy and Kadar now promised him safe passage out of the country. When Nagy and his followers left the embassy, they were arrested. Nagy was executed by hanging in 1958 in Romania. Khrushchev described his death as 'a lesson to the leaders of the Socialist countries'.

International reaction

Nagy and his supporters had expected help from the USA. Radio Free Europe, a US backed radio station, regularly broadcast messages urging the Hungarian people to rise up against the Communist regime. Since the USA had offered financial support in the Marshall Plan, they believed the USA would help them here too.

But no military support was offered to Hungary. The US policy of containment meant that the USA was not prepared to interfere in the affairs of an existing communist state, but only prevent it spreading. A US attack on a Soviet satellite state could trigger nuclear war, potentially destroying both sides. Eisenhower was sympathetic therefore, but did nothing.

Impact on international relations

The Uprising strengthened Khrushchev's position in the USSR and in the Warsaw Pact. This sent a warning to any satellite state thinking of breaking away that they could not expect any military support from the USA. Khrushchev became more confident in dealing with the USA as he knew they were unlikely to risk military action. It was clear that the policy of De-Stalinisation would only go as far as Khrushchev wanted and no more. Poland and Hungary made only slow and gradual reforms after 1956, and remained firmly under Soviet control. The US and the West now looked bad. They had encouraged communist countries to stand up to the USSR, but were not prepared to back up their words with military support.

Relations between the USA and Soviet Union now soured as Eisenhower and the West strongly opposed the Soviet invasion. The friendly relations seen in the Geneva summit of 1955 proved to be short-lived.

8)THE COLD WAR IN THE 1950's

May 1949 – The Berlin Blockade fails. The reasons it fails are:-
The US/British airlift worked in supplying Berliners with essentials for 11 months.
Very few Berliners accepted the USSR's offer to live in the east and adopt a Communist way of life.
The Counter blockade against the USSR on tools and machinery damages the USSR's industrial output.
Stalin has no bargaining power since he does not possess an atomic bomb. The USA have them.
The consequences of the Berlin Blockade were:-
C – Cold War got worse
E – East and West Germany were now split permanently.
N – NATO and the Warsaw pact were formed as two opposing military alliances.
A – Arms Race got serious!
After the Berlin Blockade the USSR developed an atomic bomb. 12 months later the USA developed the hydrogen bomb which was 10,000 times more powerful.

1953 – Stalin dies and is replaced with Khrushchev. Khrushchev is determined to prove himself and accelerates the Russian space and arms programmes. In the same year Harry Truman is replaced by Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower is concerned at the cost of the arms race and wants to get more value for money. This shift leads to the USSR passing the USA in space and weapons development during the 1950's



1957 – The USSR put the first man in space. His name is Yuri Gagarin.
The USSR also launch the first successful satellite called Sputnik. The satellite will be used to direct ICBM's.
The USA and USSR develop ICBM's at the same time.
However, the initial tests of the US missile is unsuccessful.
The USA begins to fear that the USSR are leading the arms race.



1959 – Khrushchev is on holiday in the Black Sea when he notices US ICBM's on the opposite shore pointing at the USSR.
The missiles are on NATO bases in Turkey. Khrushchev realises that he will never be able to balance the arms race unless he can get USSR missiles closer to the USA. The problem is that there are no Communist countries in North or South America at this time.

1960 – Gary Powers, a US U2 spy plane pilot, is shot down spying on the USSR.
The USSR interrogates Powers until he reveals the information about his mission.
Eisenhower lies and says that Powers was flying a weather plane that ran into trouble and ended up in Russian airspace.
Khrushchev calls Eisenhower a liar and walks out of the Paris summit meeting they were using to improve their relationship.
Relations between the US and USSR are now at their worst.



9) The second Berlin crisis 1958-1963

The problem of Berlin

Germany was split into two in 1949, and so was Berlin. As time went on, people became disillusioned with the Soviet regime in East Germany. They lived in fear of the Stasi, and there was also large amounts of government corruption. The greatest cause of dissatisfaction was the low standard of living, in direct contrast to the living standards of West Germany in Berlin, which had been supported by Marshall Aid. In the 1950s East Germans could travel into West Berlin. Thousands did, but many defected and never came back. This was a propaganda gift to the USA. This came to be known as the Brain Drain, as it was largely skilled and educated workers who were able to leave, seeking better employment in the West. By 1958 over three million East Germans, a sixth of the population of East Germany, had crossed to the West. Khrushchev could not allow this – East Germany was losing valuable people, and communism was facing a propaganda disaster – the refugees made it clear they preferred the capitalist West over the Communist East.

Khrushchev's ultimatum

In November 1958 Khrushchev demanded that Western countries should officially recognise East Germany. They refused as they still wanted Germany to be reunited. In response, Khrushchev issued his ultimatum which demanded that Berlin should be demilitarised and Western troops withdrawn and Berlin should be made a free city (although under Soviet control). The western allies had six months to do so, or Khrushchev would hand over control of all routes into Berlin to the government of East Germany, which would force the Western powers to acknowledge East Germany as a legitimate country. The West was outraged, but did not wish this crisis to lead to war, so they held a series of talks to attempt to solve the 'Berlin problem'.



The Berlin summits 1959-61

Geneva, May 1959: Both sides proposed ideas for how to run Berlin, but no agreement was reached. Eisenhower invited Khrushchev to further talks in the USA.

Camp David, Sept 1959: Eisenhower and Khrushchev met face to face. There was no agreement about how to govern Berlin, but Khrushchev did agree to withdraw the Berlin ultimatum.

Paris, May 1960: Before the summit, on 1 May the Soviets had shot down an America U-2 spy plane flying over the USSR. The Americans tried to claim it was a weather plane, but the Soviets had captured the pilot Gary Powers who admitted being on a spy mission. Eisenhower was embarrassed, but refused to apologise. Khrushchev stormed out of the meeting.

Vienna, June 1961: In January 1961 a young new president, John F Kennedy was elected in the USA. He recognised the importance of Berlin. However, his presidency did not start well. In April 1961 he launched a disastrous attempt to invade Cuba and remove Castro in the Bay of Pigs. Khrushchev thought he was weak. Following the Bay of Pigs, Khrushchev called on JFK to remove US troops in Berlin. But Kennedy stood firm. The two leaders met in Vienna in July 1961, where Khrushchev repeated his demands. Kennedy refused, but he also ordered 150,000 US reservist troops to be called up for action in Germany and he increased funding to the US armed forces by over \$2 billion. It looked like he was preparing for war over Berlin.

10) The Berlin Wall

The Wall

As tension increased during the summits, more East Germans decided to cross the border to go to the West. On one day in August 1961, 40,000 East Germans fled. The East German leader Walter Ulbricht, urged Khrushchev to take action. On the night of 12 August 1961, East German troops built a barbed wire fence between East and West Berlin. Over the next few days, this was replaced by a concrete wall covering 27 miles, with guard towers, minefields, trip-wire machine guns, armed patrols and attack dogs. The West did nothing to stop it being built.



Stand off over the Wall

There was a serious standoff between the superpowers in Oct 1961. The USA disputed the right of Soviet patrols to patrol and guard the checkpoints, and to check the passports of American officials who crossed the checkpoints. The Americans stationed their own troops and tanks on the Western side of the checkpoints. The Soviets were provoked and did the same on their side. But JFK was able to convince Khrushchev that if the Soviets withdrew their forces, then the USA would do the same. This ended the stand-off.

Impact on Berlin

Some people tried to cross the wall. It is estimated that Soviet guards killed over 130 people trying to do so, including Peter Fechter, who was shot while trying to cross no-mans land and lay dying for 45 minutes.



Impact on US-Soviet relations

USSR: The Wall stopped the refugee crisis. However, the message that Communism would survive in Berlin was clear and any attempt to reunite it would fail. However, Khrushchev had not forced the West out of Berlin and showed that the Soviet Union could only keep people under Soviet control by locking them in – it seemed that if people had a choice, they preferred capitalism over communism.

USA: Kennedy said 'It's not a very nice solution, but a wall is a hell of a lot better than a war.' JFK's actions had forced Khrushchev to accept a Western presence in West Berlin and showed that JFK had stood up to the Soviet bullying. West Berlin became a symbol of freedom. But the USSR had closed the border without consulting the USA, and people could no longer escape from communism.

JFK visited Berlin in 1963 where he gave speeches to hundreds of thousands of people. He spoke to huge crowds in Berlin and praised the freedoms of the West and contrasted them with communism in which he said '*Ich bin ein Berliner*.' (I am a citizen of Berlin – as all members of the free world were, in solidarity with the people of West Berlin). This was a propaganda success for the West.



11) The causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Revolution, 1959,

In May 1959 Fidel Castro leads a Communist revolution in the Cuban capital, Havana. He replaces Fulgencio Batista, an American supported leader. The USA funded Batista who in return allowed US business and industries to thrive on the island of Cuba. Cuba became America's playground during this time. Castro executes 500 of Batista's supporters which leads to many Cubans fleeing Cuba for Florida, USA. These people become known as the Cuban exiles. Castro asks to meet President Eisenhower to get money. Eisenhower refuses. Castro meets Khrushchev and visits the USSR. They agree a trade deal to swap Cuban sugar and tobacco for farm machinery. The USA end diplomatic relations with Cuba. When Khrushchev sends oil to Castro the US refuse to allow their refineries on Cuba to get involved. Eisenhower now orders the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) in the USA to train the Cuban exiles to attack Cuba and remove Castro from power.

The Bay of Pigs, 1961

In April 1961 the new US President Kennedy orders the Cuban exiles to attack the Bay of Pigs in Cuba. The aim of the mission is to remove Castro from power. The attack is a disaster with the exiles being defeated very easily. Why did the Bay of Pigs invasion fail?

- 1) The exiles were outnumbered 1,400 to 20,000. The CIA had assumed that most Cubans would support the attack. They did not and many were happy with Castro.
- 2) The exiles were inexperienced and poorly trained for the difficult task of attacking a country.
- 3) President Kennedy reduced the air cover from several hours to 40 minutes. This left the exiles exposed and vulnerable. Kennedy did not the attack traced back to the USA.
- 4) Castro heard about the invasion beforehand as it was leaked by the Cubans living in the USA. With this information he fortified the area around the Bay of Pigs.

The result of the Bay of Pigs affair:-

The USSR used this to show that people in Cuba were happy under Communism and therefore that it was popular. Castro now declared himself to be a Communist and asked Khrushchev to help him defend Cuba against any future attack from the USA. Khrushchev publicly announced that he would provide arms to Cuba in Sept 1961, which greatly concerned JFK. Castro agreed to allow the USSR to place missiles on Cuba - within 90 miles of Florida.



Why did the USSR place missiles on Cuba?

- 1) To test JFK – he looked weak over the Bay of Pigs.
- 2) To make the arms race more equal by cutting down missile detonation time to US cities. In Europe, NATO had missile bases in Turkey, on the border of the USSR. Khrushchev wanted to intimidate the USA. But he may have wanted to strengthen his hand in negotiations and force the West to remove the missiles in Turkey.
- 3) The building of the Berlin wall was seen as a failure for Khrushchev by some Soviet critics. If he could outwit JFK, this would restore his prestige.
- 4) To support Communist Cuba and to provide Castro with better security after the Bay of Pigs affair. If the Americans overthrew Castro, this would be another defeat for communism.

12) The Cuban Missile Crisis

The events of the crisis, 'the 13 days'

14 Oct – Kennedy is handed U2 spy plane pictures which show the presence of nuclear missile bases on Cuba. They are 10 days from completion. Further pictures show USSR ships heading for Cuba with missiles on board.

16 Oct – Kennedy forms EX-COM (a group of chief advisers to discuss the problem). The main ideas at this stage revolve around bombing and invading Cuba. Eventually they decide on a blockade of Cuba using US warships.

22 Oct – Kennedy appears on US television to announce the crisis. He offers the USSR the chance to negotiate whilst threatening to use “full retaliatory power” if they attack the blockade line. Khrushchev denies the existence of the bases.

24 Oct – The USSR ships slow down or stop. It is the first sign that the USSR might back down. Dean Rusk, Secretary for State, makes the famous quote, “We’re eyeball to eyeball and the other guy just blinked.”

25 Oct – No word from the USSR. The public are expecting a nuclear war and begin to panic buy food.

26 Oct – Khrushchev sends a telegram to negotiate a solution with Robert Kennedy, JFK’s brother, offering to remove the missiles if the USA agree not to invade.

27 Oct – Another telegram arrives before JFK could respond saying that Khrushchev would only remove the missiles if the USA also removed its missiles from Turkey. The deal is nearly wrecked when a US U2 spy plane is shot down over Cuba and the ‘hawks’ in Excom demand retaliation. Behind the scenes Robert Kennedy met the Soviet ambassador in Washington agreeing to remove the Turkish missiles, but this part of the deal was kept secret.

28 Oct – JFK ignored the second telegram and agreed to Khrushchev’s proposal not to invade Cuba in return for the USSR dismantling the missile sites. Khrushchev agreed.

THE DEAL TO END THE CUBAN CRISIS:-

The USSR promised to dismantle nuclear bases on Cuba.

The USA promised to remove missile bases from Turkey and to not attack Cuba.

IMPORTANT – Please remember that the US part of the bargain was kept secret..

The consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis were:-

- 1) Both Khrushchev and JFK had pushed the policy of brinkmanship to the limit and saw how dangerous this could have been. This led to the policy of M.A.D. (Mutually Assured Destruction) which both leaders were keen to avoid.
- 1) In June 1963 the USA and USSR set up a telephone ‘hotline’ to ensure that they could speak about any crisis before it developed.
- 2) In 1963 they agreed the nuclear test ban treaty to prohibit the testing of nuclear weapons in outer space, underwater or in the atmosphere.
- 3) In 1967 the Outer Space Treaty was signed. The USA and USSR agreed not to use space for military purposes, specifically ruling out putting nuclear weapons into space.
- 4) In 1968 the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. Countries who signed up to it agreed not to share their nuclear technology with other countries.
- 5) Relations between the USA and USSR now improved. There was a determination never to get that close to war again.
- 6) In 1964 Khrushchev was retired from his position as Soviet leader. He emerged as the loser from the crisis.

WHO WON THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS?

The USA emerged as victors at the time because Kennedy’s agreement to remove missiles from Turkey was kept quiet. With fresh evidence coming to light it would now be fairer to consider it a draw. Some historians still believe Kennedy won because the missiles on Turkey were old and due to be removed anyway. They say that Kennedy knew this and cleverly used it to bargain with the USSR. Many historians think that Kennedy handled the crisis superbly. The blockade was clever because it put the ball in Khrushchev’s court and his speech to the US public was strong, but also offering a way out for the Russians.

The USSR looked weak at the time with the dismantling of bases on Cuba looking like a defeat. However, Khrushchev did get the missiles removed from Turkey and this was a long standing aim of his. Do give credit to the fact that Khrushchev negotiated a deal rather than fight a war when he was under extreme pressure. It can be argued that neither side really won. The public won because a nuclear war was averted and the world became marginally safer afterwards with the test ban treaty and reduction of missiles. Castro, of course, probably won since he remained the Communist leader of Cuba until 2010 – untouched by the USA.

13) The Prague Spring

Why was life difficult for the Czech people before 1968?

Czechoslovakia had been under a pro-Soviet government since 1948. It was ruled from 1957 by Antonin Novotny, but it was a satellite state effectively ruled by the USSR. Novotny had been slow to follow Khrushchev's policy of de-Stalinisation.

In the 1960s living standards were falling. Novotny used the secret police to keep control. The USSR forced Czechoslovakia to produce materials like steel for the Soviet economy, but they were needed for the Czech economy. Consumer goods were not allowed to be produced. There was no freedom of speech and radio, newspapers and television were censored. On Stalin's order the Czech government carried out purges between 1949 and 1954 against democratic politicians, Catholics, Jews, leaders connected to the West, and even communists. Protests against the low standards of living and lack of freedom grew over the 1960s against the unpopular government.

Dubcek becomes leader, 1968

Alexander Dubcek challenged Novotny's leadership at a Central Committee (Communist government) meeting in 1957 and invited Soviet leader Brezhnev to Czechoslovakia. Brezhnev was surprised at the opposition to Novotny and so replaced him with Dubcek, who became First Secretary of the Czech Communist Party in 1968, tasking him with making the government more effective and more less unpopular.

Dubcek was a devoted Communist and committed to the Warsaw Pact. But he believed that Communism should not make life miserable, and instead should offer 'Socialism with a human face'. His reforms came to be known as the Prague Spring.



Dubcek's reforms, 'the Prague Spring'

- Censorship was relaxed and criticism of government actions was allowed.
- Trade unions were given more powers and government control of industry was reduced.
- More power was given to the Czech regional governments.
- Trade with the West was increased.
- Czech people were given greater freedom to travel abroad.
- There was a 10 year programme for political change which would eventually bring about democratic elections, a multi-party state and create a new form of democratic socialism – to give the Czech people more of a say in running the country. But Dubcek was quick to say that this would not happen for many years.



14) Soviet reaction to the Prague Spring

Reasons why the USSR was concerned

Brezhnev was worried that Dubcek's reforms would lead to more radical changes and endanger Communism. He was worried that Czechoslovakia might leave the Warsaw Pact. This could split the Eastern bloc in two and allow the West in, coming closer to the USSR.

Brezhnev urged Dubcek not to endanger Communism in Czechoslovakia by pushing his reforms too far. He also ordered Warsaw Pact troops to carry out manoeuvres in Czechoslovakia to threaten Dubcek. Dubcek however invited Ceausescu or Romania and Tito of Yugoslavia to Prague for talks, both of these were under suspicion from the USSR – Yugoslavia under Tito was Communist, but had been expelled from Comintern in 1948 and openly criticised Stalin, refusing control from Moscow, while Romania was refusing to attend Warsaw Pact meetings.



The Brezhnev Doctrine

The USSR justified the invasion as necessary to protect the unity of the communist Eastern bloc. Brezhnev said that the actions of any individual country affected all communist countries. If the actions of one threatened the other countries, then it was their duty to stop those actions. This made it clear that communism was a one party system and ensured all member countries had to remain part of the Warsaw Pact – the USSR would stop any attempt to relax Communist control.

Impact on International relations

Czechoslovakia: The Prague Spring was ended and Dubcek was replaced. Soviet control was restored.

Communist countries: Yugoslavia and Romania condemned the invasion, distancing themselves from the USSR. The Communist Parties of Italy and France were outraged by the invasion and declared themselves independent from the USSR, creating their own form of Eurocommunism. But the governments of East Germany and Poland supported the invasion as it secured their own countries against reformers. The USSR had now greater control of members of the Warsaw Pact, which was re-emphasised by the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Soviet-US relations: The USA and Western governments were outraged and protested about the invasion. There was an attempt to create a UN resolution condemning the invasion, but this was vetoed by the Soviet Union. The USSR took no confidence from the fact that the USA took no direct action, and believed it would not take direct action to oppose the USSR in Europe. The USA was in the middle of a presidential election and also focusing on the Vietnam war. Brezhnev and the US President L.B. Johnson, had an unwritten deal that the USA would not intervene in Czechoslovakia as long as the USSR did not intervene in Vietnam. So while the USA condemned the invasion publicly, they offered to military support to Czechoslovakia.

Soviet invasion

On 20 August 1968, 500,000 Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia to end the Prague Spring. There was little opposition, Brezhnev ordered the Czech army to remain in its barracks and Dubcek had called on his people not to resist. However, there was massive hostility from the Czech people, who set buildings on fire, protested in Wenceslas Square and set up barricades in the streets. Some students tore down road signs and even climbed onto Soviet tanks and tried to argue with Soviet soldiers. One student, Jan Palach, set fire to himself in the protest. But generally this had little effect and less than 100 people were killed. Dubcek was arrested, sent to Moscow and ordered to reverse his reforms. In 1969 he was dismissed and replaced by a Communist hard-liner, Gustav Husak, who restored Soviet control.



15) Détente

Reasons for Détente

USA: Richard Nixon became President in 1969 and was committed to getting out of the Vietnam war, which had cost billions of dollars and caused the death of over 60,000 US soldiers. There had also been large-scale protests against the war. There was also an inequality between rich and poor, and white and black race relations, which led to massive urban riots triggered by the assassination of Martin Luther King. Détente would allow less money to be spent on weapons and more on solving the social problems.

Reasons for Détente

USSR: The Soviet Union was facing economic problems and wanted to cut spending on weapons and increase resources to improve living standards and improving the economy. The USSR now saw itself as equal to the USA in the arms race, whilst the USA was showing itself vulnerable to defeat in Vietnam – Détente was therefore a 'safe' policy. There was also pressure for improved relations in Europe. Willy Brandt had become Chancellor of West Germany whose policy of 'Ostpolitik', which involved building better relations between East and West Germany, improved relations with East European countries.

SALT I (1972)

The Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT I) was signed in May 1972. It agreed:

- The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) said that ABMs were allowed at only two sites, each should have a maximum of 100 missiles.
- The Interim Treaty put restrictions on the number of Inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and Submarine – launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), putting a 5 year freeze on the total number of them.
- The Basic Principles Agreement laid down rules for the conduct of nuclear war and set out steps for avoiding a war. Both sides would seek to avoid the risk of a nuclear war.

Limitations of SALT I

Critics argued that this agreement was hardly likely to avoid a war. It also did not cover the latest technological developments like MIRVs (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles) which carried multiple nuclear warheads on a single missile. There was also no limit on the number of strategic bombers and the number of bombs both sides could have.



Nixon's Moscow visit, 1974

Nixon visited Brezhnev in Moscow where they agreed:

- They would continue to work to remove the danger of nuclear war.
- To limit and eventually end the arms race, with an ultimate goal of complete disarmament.
- They would contribute to the elimination of sources of international tension and conflict.
- To relax tensions throughout the world.
- To develop broad co-operation in commercial, economic, scientific, technical and cultural areas and increase understanding between the two countries.



The Apollo-Soyuz Mission, 1975

On 17 July 1975 three US astronauts and 2 Soviet cosmonauts met in space when a US Apollo spacecraft docked with a Soviet Soyuz one. This was a symbol for the improving relationship.

16) Détente pt 2

The Helsinki Accords, 1975

These were agreements between the USA, USSR and 33 other countries about three key international issues, called baskets in the conference.

1. **Security:** There was recognition of the borders in Eastern Europe and the USSR accepted the existence of West Germany.
2. **Co-operation:** There was a commitment to work for closer economic, scientific and cultural links, including trade agreements, technological exchanges and a joint space mission.
3. **Human rights:** They would accept human rights and basic freedoms such as free speech, religion and free movement across Europe.

Brezhnev was pleased by the recognition of existing borders and an opportunity to boost the Soviet economy. Some American politicians however were unhappy with them, as they wanted an extension of human rights into Soviet-controlled territories, which would undermine Soviet authority. The USSR was concerned that organisations would be set up to monitor these policies in its satellite states.

SALT 2 (1979)

SALT II was agreed between US President Carter and Soviet leader Brezhnev in 1979. It agreed a limit of 2,400 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles for each side, a 1320 limit on MRV systems, a ban on construction of new land-based ICMB launchers and limits on deployment of new strategic offensive arms. However, it was never ratified by the US government when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in Dec 1979.



Why did Détente end?

There was a growing belief in the US government that the USSR could not be trusted. The USSR had increased support for communist groups in countries like El Salvador, Nicaragua and Angola. Making an agreement with the USSR was seen by some as a sign of weakness.

In Nov 1979 Islamic militants captured the US embassy in Tehran, Iran. Over 60 American diplomats and their families were held hostage for 444 days. Many Americans wanted to see an end to détente and for the US to restore its status as a powerful nation.

Advisors in Carter's own government, such as National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski called for a stronger stance against the USSR as it was violating the terms of the Helsinki Accords.

In December 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan

17) The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 1979

The Kabul Revolution, 1978

Pro-Soviet Afghan army officers led by Taraki overthrew the government and established a Communist regime. The new government wanted to modernize Afghanistan. It brought in new reforms to land ownership and introduced education and social reforms. These were opposed by Islamic leaders in the countryside, who saw communism as an affront to their faith. Powerful warlords opposed Taraki. But he reacted harshly, executing an estimated 27,000 political prisoners.

Why did the USSR invade?

In 1979 there was an Islamic Revolution in Iran, where the shah was replaced by militant Islamic clerics. Soviet leaders were concerned about their southern borders in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and did not want radical Islamic views to spread there from Iran and to the USSR itself. Iran gave support to the Afghan warlords who became known as 'mujahidin' or 'soldiers of God'. Moscow was determined not to let Islamic fundamentalism spread across its borders.

The USA helped the mujahidin against Taraki's government by secretly channelling funds and arms through Pakistan..



By March 1979 the Communist government in Afghanistan was in trouble. The USSR was divided about how to respond, but eventually sent advisors and equipment to help the Afghan government, along with helicopter gunships and paratroopers disguised as technicians. This had little effect. By September 1979 the situation was critical. Soviet military commanders did not want to send troops into Afghanistan, thinking it would be the equivalent of the Soviet Union's Vietnam. Taraki was then assassinated. The new Afghan leader Hafizullah Amin, began to lose patience with the USSR. There was a fear in the USSR that Amin would switch sides and ally with the USA, Pakistan and China to defeat his enemies.

By December 1979, even though intervention was risky and the military were against it, the danger of Afghanistan becoming pro-USA or militantly Islamic ensured that the Soviet Union felt forced to invade Afghanistan on 12 December 1979, depose Amin and set up their own pro-Soviet government. On 25 December, Soviet tanks rolled over the border into Afghanistan.

18) Reactions to the Afghan War, 1979-89

The US Reaction

The Carter Doctrine:

- Trade sanctions to the USSR.
- Economic and military aid and supplies to the mujahidin through Pakistan.
- Abandoned Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT II) and began increasing spending on weapons.
- Official boycott of Moscow Olympics in 1980.



Impact on International Relations

USA-USSR relations: Détente was already beginning to weaken by the time of the invasion. However, this finished it off completely. Some historians argue that the Americans deliberately over-reacted to the invasion because they were already looking for a way to get out of détente. Relations now became more confrontational, especially with the election in the US of President Reagan. The Second Cold War had begun.

USA: In the 1980 presidential elections, the Republican candidate Ronald Reagan criticised President Carter as weak, arguing that it was time for America to reclaim its position as a global power and stand up to Communism. He won with a landslide.

The Olympic boycotts

1980 Moscow Olympics: In protest against the invasion of Afghanistan, the USA led a boycott of the 1980 Olympic games, which was held in Moscow. Over 60 nations supported the boycott. This was a significant propaganda disaster for the Soviet Union, who were hoping to use the Olympics to promote views about Communism via television around the world. Some countries, including Britain, did not prevent their athletes from going, but encouraged them not to take part. American athletes were not allowed to take part. The boycott was very effective as some of the games now looked second-rate, and the USSR was not able to showcase communism to the world. Many critics of the USSR also mocked the Soviet mascot, the 'Misha bear', calling him the 'Gulag bear'. Relations with the USA deteriorated.

1984 LA Olympics: The Soviet Union retaliated by leading a boycott of the LA Olympics in 1984, along with 15 other communist countries. Instead, they held their own 'friendship games'. Relations between the USA and USSR continued to remain poor.

Consequences

A new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, took over in 1986 who was a radical reformer. He lightened the restrictions on the media so they reported more accurately about the war. Public pressure to end the war increased. So in 1987 the Soviets withdrew their last forces.

The cost had been terrible:

15,000 Soviet soldiers dead and around 35,000 wounded.

An estimated cost of \$20 billion to the USSR.

Over 1 million Afghans killed and around 5 million displaced as refugees.

Afghanistan was a humiliating defeat, damaging confidence in Soviet foreign policy and in the leadership. It also virtually bankrupted the USSR.

Gorbachev made it clear he would no longer use the military to prop up Communist regimes around the world, cutting the size of the USSR's armed forces and scrapping many of its nuclear missiles. These reforms had a dramatic effect on the relationship with the USA.



19) Ronald Reagan and the Second Cold War

Policies:

- Reagan was a new type of US leader. Simplistic but determined view of the politics – the USA were the good guys, the USSR were the bad guys. He described the USSR as an 'Evil Empire'. In a famous speech in 1983. The majority of his views were shaped by a think-tank of hard-line anti-Communist advisers called the Committee of the Present Danger.
- Reagan increased the US defence budget dramatically (by \$36 billion in the first two weeks in office!). He also introduced new weapons systems, such as the B1 nuclear bomber and Trident submarines.
- In 1982 he gave the go-ahead for the Strategic Defence Initiative (Star Wars). This was a multi-billion dollar project to create a system using satellites and lasers that could destroy missiles before they hit their targets. This was controversial. His supporters argued it would escalate the arms race in order to end it, as the USSR could not compete with US spending on nuclear technology and would have to admit defeat. His critics suggested his policies were simply about generating money for donors from the defence industry.

Impact:

Reagan's spending on weapons development left the USA \$4 trillion in debt.

Many of Europe's leaders supported his tough line against the USSR.

The USSR was in crisis. The leadership of the USSR was constantly replaced in the 1970s and 1980s by ageing politicians who had no real response to Reagan's policies, who thought of him as a warmonger. But Reagan was supported by the rest of the world. The Soviet economy was also suffering due to the war in Afghanistan and their support for allies in Cuba and Vietnam. They could not keep up in the Arms Race anymore.

The Reagan Doctrine

He announced the 'Reagan Doctrine', whereby the USA would support anti-communist governments, but also support anti-communist groups trying to overthrow communist governments. As a result, he supported forces in anti-communist in Afghanistan and Nicaragua and El Salvador. US forces invaded the Caribbean island of Grenada and toppled the Communist government there.



20) Gorbachev's New Thinking

Aims:

Gorbachev became the new Soviet leader in 1985. He had fresh ideas for the Cold War. He knew that the USSR was spending too much money on the arms race and was locked in a costly and unwinnable war in Afghanistan. He needed to revise the Soviet economy.

Gorbachev was also aware that the standard of living in the West was significantly better than in the USSR. This was humiliating because Communism was meant to make life for the people of the USSR better.

Gorbachev passionately believed in Communism and that it could work. He believed that a reformed Communist style of government could give people pride and belief in their country.



Policies:

Glasnost (openness): Reduced state control of the media and, for the first time, the Soviet people began to get realistic reporting about the issues such as the economy and the war in Afghanistan. This would allow toleration of opposition and criticisms of the governments.

Perestroika (restructuring): introduced economic reforms that allowed the people in the USSR to trade for profit – a massive challenge to one of the basic beliefs about Communism. This also reduced state spending on the arms race as he realised it was a huge drain on the economy and he could never match the US spending on nuclear weapons. He also began to withdraw Soviet forces from Afghanistan as a result of this.

The Sinatra Doctrine now replaced the policies of the Brezhnev Doctrine – the USSR would no longer dominate relations with its satellite states, it would no longer get involved in their domestic affairs and he would not use Soviet forces to prop up unpopular Communist governments in the Eastern bloc. In addition, Gorbachev launched a **campaign against corruption** in the USSR and began to attack the privileges that party and police officials had over ordinary citizens. Finally, he began **talks with the US President Ronald Reagan**, as there appeared to be an opportunity to end the Cold war, increase relations and stick to their overall aims.

Reagan – Gorbachev summits

Geneva 1985: Both leaders met and got on well. While there was no agreement, as Reagan would not back down over SDI (Star Wars), they agreed to a second meeting.

Reykjavik 1986: Both leaders met and came to the realisation that they both supported the 'Zero option' about nuclear weapons. In other words, both were willing to reduce and even stop the nuclear arms race. However, when pressed by Gorbachev, Reagan would still not back down about his plans for SDI. But both leaders now showed a willingness to halt the arms race.

Washington 1987: Gorbachev no longer pressed Reagan to stop his SDI policy as he could no longer afford to match the Arms Race spending, and perhaps because it was unrealistic. Significantly, they both signed the INF Treaty (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty), where both sides agreed to reduce and limit their missile stockpiles. Both sides agreed to co-operate fully with an inspection regime, which would ensure they kept to the terms of the Treaty.

Moscow 1988: This was mainly symbolic. It was the first time Reagan had been to the USSR. Reagan previously had called the USSR an 'evil empire'. He now gave a statement saying that this was no longer the case as the USSR was a very different country.

Malta, 1989: Gorbachev met the new US President George Bush. This was more of a symbolic meeting, where both leaders stated their desire to avoid a 'hot war', and seek to ensure peace and better relations between both sides. Reagan announced that under Gorbachev, the USSR was no longer an 'evil empire'.

21) The collapse of the Soviet Union

Gorbachev's new thinking

In 1985 Gorbachev called the leaders of the Warsaw Pact together. He announced that he was now committed to a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of other countries. He followed this in 1988 at the Warsaw Pact Summit, where he announced his intention to withdraw large numbers of Soviet troops, tanks and aircraft from other Communist states. Finally, in 1989 he made it clear that he would not prop up the regimes of the Warsaw Pact members with the Soviet army, and they would have to listen to their own people.



Consequences of 'new thinking' in Eastern Europe

May 1989: Hungarians begin dismantling the barbed-wire fence between Hungary and non-Communist Austria.

June 1989 In Poland, free elections are held for the first time since the Second World War. Solidarity, a trade union group seeking greater freedom, wins all the seats it contests. Eastern Europe gets its first non-Communist leader, President Lech Walesa.

September 1989 Thousands of East Germans on holiday in Hungary and Czechoslovakia refuse to go home. They escape through the border of Austria into West Germany.

October 1989 There are enormous demonstrations in East German cities when Gorbachev visits the country. He tells the East German leader Erich Honecker to reform. Honecker refuses and orders troops to fire on the protestors. They refuse.

November 1989 East Germans march in their thousands to the checkpoints at the Berlin Wall. The guards throw down their weapons and join the crowds. The Berlin Wall is dismantled. East and West Germany reunite in 1990.

November, 1989 There are huge demonstrations in Czechoslovakia. The Czech government opens its borders with the West, and allows the formation of other parties.

December 1989 In Romania there is a short but very bloody revolution that ends with the execution of the Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Hungary, 1989 The Communist Party in Hungary renames itself the Socialist Party and declares that free elections will be held in 1990. In Bulgaria, there are huge demonstrations against the Communist Government, the communist leader resigns on national tv and free elections are held the following year.

March 1990 Latvia leads the Baltic republic in declaring independence from the USSR.

The collapse of the USSR

October 1990 The Berlin Wall had been torn down and East and West Germany were reunited. The new Germany was even allowed to become part of NATO.

1990-1991 Many of the republics in the USSR demanded independence. Gorbachev did not want to break up the USSR, but in the end he had little choice.

July 1991 The Warsaw Pact is formally dissolved as the eastern bloc was removing Communist control.

August 1991

A group of hard-line Communists called the Gang of Eight tried to overthrow Gorbachev as they believed he was threatening Communism, but failed.

December 25th 1991 Gorbachev survived the coup, but his authority was weakened. In a televised speech, he announced his resignation and the end of the Soviet Union