

The End of the Soviet Union

Revolts in Eastern Europe

Communism was not as popular in Eastern Europe as it was in the Soviet Union.

The Soviets also exploited Eastern Europe economically and made living conditions worse.

After Stalin dies many Eastern European countries wanted to be independent - but the Soviet Union made it clear they would not allow it.

Revolts in Eastern Europe

Hungary was suffering from political and economic unrest so Imre Nagy, the Hungarian leader, declares Hungary a free country.

Free elections are also promised.

Revolts in Eastern Europe

The Soviet Union believed that this could be the end of communism in Hungary.

So 3 days after Nagy's declaration the Soviets attack Budapest & re-establish control over Hungary.

Nagy is executed by the Soviets two years later.

Revolts in Eastern Europe

In Czechoslovakia, Antonin Novotny (Little Stalin) had been placed in control by Stalin himself.

However, by 1960 Novotny had alienated many politicians and other important people.

Novotny was especially hated by the writers of Czechoslovakia

Revolts in Eastern Europe

The Writers led a revolt which encouraged people to take control of their own lives.

This led to Novotny's resignation in 1968.

He was replaced by Alexander Dubček who promised to gradually democratize Czechoslovakia, in addition to passing economic reforms and reinstating freedoms.

Revolts in Eastern Europe

The Soviet Union invades not long after and and crushes the revolt.

Dubček is replaced and all of his revoms are rolled back.

Détente

During the 1970's US - USSR relations enter a new phase, called Détente, or the easing of hostility or strained relations, between countries.

Grain and other goods are sold to the USSR, but the period does not last long.

USSR invades Afghanistan

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was a 10-year war which wreaked incredible destruction on Afghanistan.

The roots of the war lay in the overthrow of the Afghan government in April 1978 by two Marxist-Leninist political parties, who together had formed the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

USSR invades Afghanistan

Having little support among the people, the new government:

forged close ties with the Soviet Union,
launched ruthless purges of all opposition,
began extensive land and social reforms that
were bitterly resented by the population.

USSR invades Afghanistan

Muslim insurgencies arose against the communist government.

This insurgency prompted the invasion of the country by about 30,000 Soviet troops in December 1979

Leonid Brezhnev (leader of Russia) declared the Soviet Union had a right to come to the assistance of an endangered fellow socialist country.

This assertion of a right is now known as the Brezhnev Doctrine.

USSR invades Afghanistan

Regarded by many as an unprovoked invasion of one sovereign country by another.

The UN General Assembly passed a resolution on November 29, 1983, stating that the Soviet Union forces should withdraw from Afghanistan.

USSR invades Afghanistan

Why?

A desire to bring its forces closer to a strategic choke-point: the mouth of the Persian gulf, the route for most of the world's oil tankers.

Afghanistan is separated from the Arabian Sea by the sparsely populated Pakistani province of Baluchistan. Had there been a breakup of Pakistan or a favorable regime change, Soviet forces would have access to Baluchi or Pakistani ports.

Gorbachev & Perestroika

When Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Union in 1985, life in the Soviet Union began to change.

Gorbachev & Perestroika

Gorbachev wanted change.

He wanted to reform Soviet society.



Gorbachev & Perestroika

Gorbachev implemented a new policy known as Glasnost or “Openness”.

Under Glasnost, freedom of speech and press were encouraged. This was unheard of in Stalin’s time.

Gorbachev & Perestroika

Gorbachev also wanted to make the Soviet economy more efficient.

Under Gorbachev's Perestroika (restructuring), economic restructuring occurred.

Citizens were able to set up their own businesses.

Gorbachev & Perestroika

Greater efficiency was encouraged in factories as workers were rewarded for increased output.

Gorbachev also abandoned Brezhnev's, policy that the Soviet Union had the right to interfere in satellite countries.

The End of the USSR

Gorbachev's policies of Glasnost and Perestroika produced many changes. Poland, a former Soviet satellite, elected a non-communist government in 1989 led by Solidarity and Lech Walesa.

The End of the USSR

In 1990, the Berlin Wall was torn down.

Russia, Ukraine, and other republics declared independence.

With all of these changes, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Of course, without a Soviet Union, the Cold War ended.

3.9 ft.

This wall had
45,000 sections of
reinforced concrete.

12 ft.

Weight: 3 tons each