

# Fall of Eastern Europe and USSR

- I. Background
  - A. Origins of Communism
    1. Russia Revolution takes place
    2. Russian czar is killed and communist government established
      - a. State owns the land and resources
      - b. People work on collective farms
      - c. Manufacturing is for government
    3. USSR struggles to develop economy
      - a. Lenin has NEP (New Economic Policy) allowing some private ownership
      - b. Stalin begins 5 Year Plan (goals for industry and production)
  - B. World War II
    1. After war ends USSR wants buffer states to protect itself from Germany
    2. Satellite Nations established
      - a. Eastern European nations
      - b. Separate Governments but controlled by USSR
    3. Collective Security
      - a. NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) established to protect themselves against Communism
      - b. WARSAW PACT established in reaction to NATO and its perceived threat
    4. Cold War develops including competitions and conflicts
- B. Beginning of Decline of USSR
  1. DeStalinization of USSR by Krushchev
  2. 1958's problems with Hungary make Krushchev to lose power
  3. Lennoid Breshnev comes to power in USSR 1964
    - a. Repressive domestic policies
    - b. Those policies followed in other countries
3. USSR has change in leadership
  - a. 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of Communist Party
  - b. Gorbby wants change
  - c. Glasnost introduced ( openness to discuss how to improve their society)
  - d. Perestroika introduced (restructuring of the economy) allowed small businesses and more control by managers
  - e. Releases political prisoners and published books previously banned

f. Churches reopen

1. USSR concentrates more on home than satellites
2. individual countries begin reform

II. Fall of Eastern Europe

A. Poland

1. 1978 John Paul II, a Polish archbishop becomes pope
  - a. lends his support to anti communist movement
2. 1980 Shipyard Strike
  - a. workers demand government recognize their union (Solidarity)
  - b. Millions support it
  - c. Gov't gives in
  - d. Lech Walesa (union leader) becomes a national hero
3. 1981 Poland bans Solidarity and declares martial law
4. Economic problems grow
5. August 1988 workers walk of job
  - a. Demand legalization of Solidarity
  - b. Demand raises
6. April 1989 free elections allowed
  - a. Solidarity leaders chosen
  - b. Lech Walesa elected president

B. Hungary

1. communist nation set up after WWII
2. Oct 1956 Attempted overthrow of Communist gov't
  - a. Protestors and army try to overthrow
  - b. Imre Nagy (liberal leader) forms new government
    - i. Free elections promised
    - ii. Demand Soviet Troops leave Hungary
3. Nov 1956 Soviet troops come into Hungary
  - a. Thousands of Hungarians killed
  - b. Nagy executed
4. 1964 Breshnev takes over USSR
  - a. makes it clear he will not tolerate dissent in E. Europe
  - b. E. Europe must follow his harsh policies
5. Sweeping Economic reforms in the late 1980's
  - a. Encouraged private enterprise
  - b. Allowed small stock market
  - c. New constitution
  - d. Multiparty system and free elections
6. October 1989 Hungarian Communist Party is dissolved
7. Hungary opens its borders with East Germany

- a. Many East Germans leave to a more free Hungary
- 8. 1990 Communist government voted out of office
- 9. 1994 socialist party won majority of seats in parliament
  - a. coalition formed to rule

### C. East Germany

- 1. 1989 East Germans leave to visit Hungary and travel to West Germany
  - a. in response, EG close its borders
  - b. protests break out, Oct 1989
  - c. Erich Honecker (EG leader) orders protests broken up, police refuse
  - d. Resigns on Oct 19, 1989
- 2. new leader (Egon Krenz) allowed people to leave E. Germany (effort to save communism)
- 3. Nov 9, 1989 opens Berlin Wall
  - a. Massive celebration
  - b. Symbolic end to communist East Germany
- 4. Reunification of Germany called for
  - a. Many fear they will dominate again
  - b. Helmut Kohl (W. German leader) assures the world
  - c. October 3, 1990 Germany reunited
- 5. Germany had problems
  - a. EG had inferior goods and buildings
  - b. Kohl raises taxes to help
  - c. Unemployment a problem
  - d. Slow recovery for E. Germany

### D. Czechoslovakia

- 1. 1968 Prague Spring
  - a. Alexander Dubcek loosens control on censorship
  - b. New ideas and reform
  - c. August 20, 1968 armed forces invade
  - d. Prevent USSR satellites from rejecting communism
- 2. Milos Jakes conservative government 1989
- 3. October 1989 police arrest dissidents
  - a. Vaclav Havel (playwright and critic)
  - b. Hundreds arrested on Oct 28, 1989 protesting
  - c. Nov 1989 25,000 students protesting in Prague brutally beaten by gov't

4. Nov 24, 1989 500, 000 gather
  - a. Jakes resigned
  - b. Politburo resigned
5. Dec 1989 Democratic government
  - a. Vaclav Havel = president
  - b. New parliament

#### E. Romania

1. Nicolae Ceausecu in control
  - a. Brutal leader
  - b. Secret police
2. December 1989, army ordered to fire on demonstrators
  - a. Massacre
  - b. Army joined the people
3. Ceausecu and wife try to flee
  - a. Captured
  - b. Tried and executed on Christmas
  - c. Televised
4. Elections in 1990 and 1992
  - a. Economic reforms
  - b. Capitalism introduced

#### F. Yugoslavia

1. made up of 6 ethnic groups and 3 religions
2. began 1945
  - a. held together by Marshall Tito
  - b. strong central government
  - c. communist
3. 1980 Tito dies
  - a. 6 republics begin to dissolve
4. June 1991 Slovenia and Croatia declare independence of Yugoslavia
5. Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia opposed the independent republics of Slovenia and Croatia
6. Croatia enters war
  - a. War spread to Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - b. Ethnic cleansing
  - c. UN enters in 1995 to stop the war.
7. Milosevic put on trial for war crimes

### III. Fall of the USSR

#### A. Background

1. Cold War Tension over years
2. repressive government
3. Gorbachev offers reform
  - a. Glasnost

- b. Perestroika
- c. Free elections

B. Events leading up to Independence

1. effect from Eastern Europe unrest
2. area of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia
  - a. acquired by USSR from Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact 1939
3. Jan 1991 Gorbachev uses force to suppress Baltic Independence
4. Boris Yeltsin elected President June 1991
  - a. Critical of Gorbachev
5. Hard-line commies want Gorbachev out
  - a. Coup in August 1991
  - b. Tanks used in Moscow
  - c. Troops refuse to fire on government buildings
6. By December 1991 all 15 Soviet Republics declare independence
7. Gorbachev, head of communist party, resigns December 25, 1991
8. Formation of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)