

# Comparing Communist Societies: The Soviet Union and China

## Similarities:

- Both took place in rural agricultural countries subjected to heavy external pressure and repeated military defeats (by Europeans and Japanese)
- long established monarchies collapsed under the pressure (China's in 1911 and Russia's in 1917) (only after state-directed efforts at reform and modernization had failed)
- intellectuals in both had turned against the old regime
- widespread peasant revolts were part of the revolutionary process
- leadership for these revolutionary movements came from well-educated, modernist elites who found in European Marxism socialism an ideology to guide the revolution
- the revolutionaries destroyed the dominant class of landowners
- created state-controlled economies and societies dominated by Communist parties

## Differences:

- manner and timing..... Lenin and the Bolsheviks succeeded on the basis of growing urban support less than a year after the Tsarist regime collapsed.... while in China the Communist Party was not even formed until a decade after 1911.... then struggled for 28 years before it came to power on the backs of rural peasant movement
- land owning gentry.... in Russia most nobles were impoverished or in debt to the government, (they still had legal privileges and social status) When the state collapsed in 1917, the nobility had little independent source of power, wealth, or prestige and was extremely vulnerable to peasant uprisings
- ..... China.. land owning gentry were deeply rooted in their local areas and in fact performed many of the functions of local government for the imperial bureaucracy. By the mid 19th century they had increased their power relative to the imperial bureaucracy (by helping the regime against the Taiping rebels) The fall of the imperial government in 1911, then, made little difference at the local level to increase the power of the more prominent gentry and warlords.
- While China disintegrated politically, it remained socially intact. Almost the reverse was the case in Russia.

- In Russia, peasants made a spontaneous revolution in the rural area in 1917 largely without prodding. (tradition of autonomy and self government in peasant villages)

- In China, peasant villages were part of larger "market communities" directly controlled by local gentry. Peasants controlled none of the institutions of these communities-- temples, secret societies, militias, or water control projects. (lack of peasant autonomy)-

-Russia... urban and working class character, more advanced industrial development.... central to events in the Soviet Union. (since the late 19th century, the state had pushed industrialization)

-China... a conservative gentry, oriented toward the rural world of Confucian ideals. (smaller working class played only a modest role in the Chinese revolutionary process)

- Russia (role of war) World War I displayed the gross incompetence of the Tsarist regime and stimulated a widespread desire for peace to which the Bolsheviks responded by signing a separate peace with Germany in 1918.

- China ... the Communist party led the struggle against the Japanese invaders and in doing so gained greatly in mass support.

## **b. Comparing the Building of Socialism (once they came to power)**

- Both... building socialism meant first of all the modernization and industrialization of their backward societies

### **1. Starting points...**

the Soviet Union and China started from different places. In the Soviet Union, the Bolsheviks seizure of power was followed by a debilitating three-year civil war that the revolutionaries nearly lost

-the Chinese Communists had already won their civil war when they assumed power in 1949.

- In economic terms, China faced even more daunting prospects than the Soviet union. its massive backwardness and grinding poverty were joined to a dense population and scant opportunity to open new agricultural lands. (1949, industrial income was 3.5% of the national economy) (light industries) China's railroad had been developed by imperialists to export raw materials to the coast rather than to unify the country)

-Russia had invested in an industrial base, and in 1917, modern industry accounted for 16% of Russia's national economy. (base of heavy industry) By 1917 Russia had a complete railroad system that integrated the economy and made possible Bolshevik rule from a single city)

## 2. Agricultural Collectivization:

- both took landlords' estates and redistributed that land on a much more equitable basis to the peasantry
- they sought to end private property in land by collectivizing agriculture.
- Stalin singled out the "kulaks" or richer peasants for exclusion from the new collective farms and for mass deportation to remote areas of the country.
- China pushed the collectivization process further than in the Soviet Union, particularly in huge "people's communes" which the "Great Leap Forward" in the late 1950's briefly attempted
- Both attempts actually produced massive famine and millions of human casualties. Both... peasants fared poorly compared to their urban counterparts as the resources of the countryside were exploited to further the process of industrialization

## 3. Industrial Development:

- both defined industrialization as a fundamental task of their regimes. (China active industrialization in the early 1950's... followed the model pioneered by the Soviet Union in the late 1920's and 1930's and reaffirmed in the postwar reconstruction)
- that model involved state ownership of property, centralized planning embodied in successive Five-Year plans, priority to heavy industry, mass mobilization of their human and material resources, Communist party control of the entire process)
- both experienced major economic success (Soviet Union constructed the foundations of an industrial society in the 1930's which proved itself in the victory over Nazi Germany in W. W. II and which generated by the 1960's and 1970's improved standards of living.)  
(China achieved 11% annually between 1952-1976 and increasing life expectancy from 35 years in 1949 to 65 in 1976)
- both achieved massive improvements in literacy rates and educational opportunities
- both.... social outcomes.... rapid urbanization, exploitation of the countryside to provide for modern industry in the cities, growth of privileged bureaucratic and technological elite)
- chief difference... lies in the response of the leadership to the social outcomes.  
-Under Stalin and successors outcomes were largely accepted (see hand out)
- By the mid-1950's, Mao and some of his followers had become persuaded that the Soviet model of industrialization was leading China away from socialism and toward new forms of inequality.

- The Great Leap Forward of 1958-1960 marked Mao's response to these distortions of Chinese socialism (promoted small-scale industrialization, rural areas, fostered technological education, transition to communism in "people communes")

- Mid 1960's Mao launched the Great Cultural Revolution... to combat the "capitalist tendencies" (Red Guards (young people) spread across the country to attack capitalism or of traditional Chinese culture. .... new policies bring health care and education to the countryside and reinvigorate efforts at rural industrialization)

#### 4. The Search for Enemies

- both search for enemies who would obstruct or subvert the building of socialism

-both.. the word "enemy" included surviving members of the old classes, high ranking members and long time supporters of the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties who were allegedly corrupted by Bourgeois ideas, and anyone linked to foreign imperialists

-USSR the search came to a climax in a wave of arrests, trials, and executions during the Stalinist terror of 1936-1939.

-China... expressed in the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1969.

-both... executions, torture, deportations, arrests, imprisonment, public humiliations, bizarre confessions, wrecked careers, broken families...huge scale

-Differences.... degree and kind of popular participation

-Soviet Union... denunciation of alleged enemies delivered hundreds of thousands into the hands of the police. (then processed, tried, executed, or sent to the Gulag)

China... much further. besides the millions of Red Guards . (government officials, intellectuals, factory managers, teachers...became the targets)

\_death toll highest in Soviet Union

# THE END OF THE SOVIET UNION

by John Hergeshimer  
Editor, SUNBURST

## GORBACHEV'S PROGRAM

Mikhail Sergeivich Gorbachev was named General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party in March of 1985. He had already decided that the Soviet economic and political systems were working so badly that drastic reforms were needed. His first moves were to pack key Party organizations with his supporters so that he would be free to take bold steps toward reform.

Gorbachev believed that by allowing free speech and political freedoms, the power of the people would be unleashed to bring about reforms in the economy. He had definite ideas about how to make the necessary political reforms, but he seems to have had no such clear strategy to reform the Soviet economy.

He did realize, however, that he had to convince the western nations, especially the United States, to leave the USSR alone; he knew that a nation under heavy outside pressure could not succeed in making appropriate changes within itself. The new Soviet leader also knew that the Union's huge defense budget was one factor which handicapped the Soviet economy. As a result, Gorbachev began to make agreements with the western nations to solve various "cold war" problems around the globe.

Soviet troops were pulled out of Afghanistan and Angola. Gorbachev made some very generous treaties with the United States to reduce the numbers of weapons held by each side of the cold war. He withdrew much Soviet support from trouble-making communist governments in Cuba and Viet Nam. These steps sharply reduced the tensions of the cold war and made Gorbachev a popular leader with the rest of the world. For his actions, he won the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize.

## THE SUCCESS OF POLITICAL REFORMS

By 1988, Gorbachev's position seemed secure, and he used the Communist Party Congress to get the Party's support for creating a new parliament (the Congress of Peoples' Deputies), a new, stronger presidency, a market economy, and greater control by the republics of their own economic affairs.

Soviet television, newspapers and underground newspapers were largely freed from government control and from Party supervision, and the Soviet people gained real freedom of speech under Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost." It became safe to criticize the government, to debate with candidates for the new parliament, and to expose some of the brutal injustices and crimes of the earlier Soviet authorities. Stalin was the main victim, but by 1989, even Lenin was being criticized.

In the spring of 1989, the new parliament was elected in truly free elections. The main square of most cities was crowded every evening with citizens listening to and questioning the candidates. During the summer, the

people were glued to their television sets by the lively and sometimes angry debates in the new parliament. Gorbachev--along with many other people--was startled by the strength and ferocity of the nationalist feelings in the different republics. These attitudes could now be expressed for the first time since the Soviet Union was formed in 1922. As the people and many new, independent publications debated the policies of the present and of the past as well, the very basic ideas of communism and of the Soviet Union began to be questioned aloud for the first time.

Gorbachev realized that much of the opposition to any reforms came from the ranks of Communist Party members who were afraid of losing their power and privileges. He asked the new parliament to elect him to the new and stronger office of President of the Union so that he could have the necessary power to reduce the influence of the Party, which had formerly been his major source of strength. Soon after his election to the new presidency, he legalized competing political parties and began to remove Communist Party controls from many parts of the nation's life.

## NATIONALISMS--OUTSIDE AND INSIDE

By late 1989, the Soviet-supported Communist governments of Eastern European nations were under great pressure to make democratic reforms. Gorbachev himself encouraged these nations to begin their own "glasnost." Finally Gorbachev said publicly that the USSR would not use force to support those communist governments. In a matter of months the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Rumania had overthrown their Communist regimes and established democratic governments. Only in Rumania was there widespread violence. The "Soviet bloc" of Eastern Europe had ceased to exist. These changes, unfortunately, led to conflict between ethnic groups within some of these nations.

Within the Soviet Union, the nationalist movements in many republics found surprisingly strong support among their peoples, who were tired of taking orders from a Russian-dominated Union government. The Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which had been taken into the USSR by force in 1940, were quick to move for some kind of independence. Their nationalist campaigns were bold, yet non-violent, and they aroused much sympathy from other nations around the world.

The tragic squabble between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave (several large Armenian towns within Azerbaijan) did not remain peaceful as both groups claimed territory and resorted to violence to protect it. Gorbachev sent in Soviet troops to enforce law and order, but they were not very successful in stopping the fighting.

A small nationalist demonstration in Tbilisi in Georgia had only limited public support until Soviet troops brutally

crushed it with sharpened shovels, gas, and the loss of several dozen lives. This tragic event brought very strong support to the movement for Georgian independence.

Gorbachev realized that he was losing support of right-wingers and the military by letting the nations of Eastern Europe go their own way and by his inability to control the nationalist movements in the various parts of the USSR. The military and right-wing were also alarmed at the decline of Soviet military power brought about by reductions in the armed forces. The President tried to handle this by cracking down forcefully on the Baltic republics and by appointing some right-wingers to important positions. These moves, on the other hand, alarmed Gorbachev's liberal supporters and alienated many reformers.

One of the most surprising national developments was in the huge Russian republic. Many Russians felt that Russian culture had been ignored for seventy years in favor of building an artificial "international" Soviet culture. This Russian nationalist movement placed great emphasis on the Russian Orthodox Church, the Russian language, and even heroes of the tsarist days. Photos, medals of the two-headed eagle, and other symbols of imperial Russia began to be sold. Ominously, some Russian nationalists were outspokenly anti-Semitic. Some nationalists even called for Russia to leave the USSR.

At this time, not all the republics wanted independence. The five republics of Central Asia were not fond of Soviet rule, but were economically dependent on the Soviet Union and less in contact with political ideas from the west. On the other hand, they were very much in touch with the Islamic revival in the Middle East.

### TOWARD A LOOSER UNION

Gorbachev realized that the Soviet Union might come apart unless the republics were quickly given more authority over their own areas. He began to design a new "Union Treaty" which would give more power to the republics at the price of weakening the central Union power in Moscow. Many republics were interested in the new Union Treaty. However, the three Baltic republics were only interested in complete independence. Through 1990, their declarations of independence and other moves to control their own affairs were countered by Gorbachev's insistence that no republics could leave the Union without going through an elaborate five-year procedure.

The early economic reforms, although small, were underway across the Soviet Union. Many small private businesses, usually called "cooperatives," were started. More foreign companies were doing business in the USSR; these projects and firms were commonly called "joint ventures." Some government controls were loosened, but most were not. Many democratic reformers called for "privatization" or turning over state-owned property to private owners, but Gorbachev moved cautiously. The result was that the old state-controlled economy began to break down, but no new system was functioning to take its place. The value of the ruble went down and many Soviets

did whatever they could to obtain "hard currency" (foreign money like the dollar, pound, franc, mark, or yen).

Consumer goods had always been in short supply at the low-price state stores. Now it was worse. More farmers brought their goods to the cities to sell at high-priced "farmer's markets" which were no longer under government price controls. For goods where prices were still government controlled, the black market operated almost openly—illegally, but with very high prices. A few persons in business for themselves made handsome profits, but the average Soviet citizen saw prices double and triple while his salary remained the same.

The Russian Republic held free elections in May of 1990. The republic's presidency was won by Boris Yeltsin, an outspoken reformer and critic of Gorbachev. In July, Yeltsin and other radical reformers resigned from the unpopular and declining Communist Party.

By this time, Gorbachev had successfully ended the cold war and was widely supported by leaders of many western nations, but he was losing his popularity week by week in the USSR itself. To answer critics, he declared a referendum across the Soviet Union on the question of the Union staying together. When the vote was held in March of 1991, the majority favored a revised version of a Union government.

There were constant rumors of a coup by the right-wing, which consisted of some of the KGB, many Party officials, and some military officers. These people felt that Gorbachev had gone much too far and badly weakened the nation. Many reformers, on the other hand, felt that Gorbachev was much too cautious.

During the summer of 1991, the Baltic republics had won much international support for their independence and Boris Yeltsin had publicly supported it as well. Generally, Yeltsin favored giving more power to the republics. Most of the republics were ready to sign a new, looser Union Treaty at a ceremony to be held on August 20. The ceremony never took place.

### THE AUGUST COUP

On the evening of August 18, 1991, the world was startled by news that President Gorbachev had been replaced in office by the Vice President. The news bulletin from Tass (the Soviet news agency) said that Gorbachev was sick and could not perform the duties of his office.

It rapidly became obvious that a coup had taken place. No one believed that Gorbachev was really sick, or had willingly given up his office. The new "Committee for State Security" had, in fact, violated the Soviet constitution by seizing power from a legally elected president.

Clearly, the organizers of the coup were determined to prevent the signing of the new Union Treaty. On August 18, they demanded that Gorbachev, vacationing in the Crimea, hand over his power to the "Committee." He refused to do so, and found that he was a prisoner in his vacation home with all communications cut off.

At the same time, army units were moved into position around the Kremlin and the new "Committee" appeared to be in charge. This group included several of the right-wing

The nation was in the hands of a weak Council of Republics consisting of Union president Gorbachev and the twelve republic presidents. The large parliament did not meet for many weeks.

The Ukraine and then Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizia declared independence. The secession of the Ukraine, if ratified by a vote of its people, would be a serious blow to the Union because the Ukraine is large and rich in both agriculture and industry. Gorbachev had said earlier that the Union could be preserved only if Russia and the Ukraine would stay together. The new Union Treaty was again presented and discussed, but many republics no longer supported it.

As economic conditions worsened rapidly in all of the republics, Yeltsin and the Russian Republic gained control of the Soviet government funds and income. The Union was now broke and dependent on the Russian Republic for any funds it needed.

#### DECEMBER 1991: THE FINAL MONTH

December 1 brought one more defeat for Mikhail Gorbachev. This was the overwhelming vote for independence by the people of the Ukraine. One week later, the world was started to learn that the presidents of the three Slavic republics, Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus (formerly Byelorussia) had met in Minsk and had agreed to form a very loose "Commonwealth of Independent Slavic States." It was not, they insisted, to be a nation at all, but it would take the place of the Soviet Union, which they declared to be "dissolved."

Gorbachev was furious and declared (correctly) that the new Commonwealth had no power to dissolve the whole Union. There was, however, little that he could do. The whole concept of a Soviet Union was hopelessly tainted with the fallen power of Communism. Other republics asked about joining the new Commonwealth and were encouraged. Republic governments began to take over both the property and the powers of the Union government within their boundaries. Yeltsin asked for the United States to recognize the Russian Federation as a sovereign nation.

The United States did not know which government(s) to deal with in the dissolving USSR. There was much loyalty to President Gorbachev and reluctance to undermine his position, but his power was being diminished day by day. The United States had, since the coup, been very nervous about who was in control of the still-large Soviet arsenal of nuclear missiles, many of which might still be aimed at American targets.

With the formation of the Commonwealth, it was clear that the Soviet Union had no future. But many parts of Soviet society, including the national transportation systems, were highly centralized because they had been designed to be controlled from powerful Moscow. As different republics tried to take over and run their portions of these systems, the systems simply broke down. For several days in early December, most Soviet airliners were grounded for lack of fuel and parts; few of the old supply systems were working. On December 15, the United States began to fly medicine and other emergency supplies to cities in Russia, Belarus and Armenia.

On December 17, President Gorbachev reluctantly agreed to accept the idea of the new Commonwealth. He agreed that the Soviet Union would officially be out of existence on Dec. 31.

On December 21 in the city of Alma Ata, in Kazakhstan, eleven republics formally signed the organizing documents of the "Commonwealth of Independent States." They agreed to respect each other's boundaries, to place their nuclear weapons under a joint command, to use a common currency, to allow the Russian Federation to take over the Soviet Union's seat on the United Nations Security Council, and to allow the president of the Russian Federation to have the activating briefcase for the dangerous nuclear weapons.

Aside from the Baltic republics, whose independence was already achieved, the only republic not to join the Commonwealth was Georgia, ruled by an elected president-turned-dictator. On Dec. 22, armed rebellion broke out in Tbilisi and rebels laid siege to the Georgian parliament building where the president was defended by several hundred troops.

On Dec. 23, the United States announced that it would recognize "all twelve" Soviet republics as separate nations.

On December 25, 1991, President Gorbachev resigned at 7:12 p.m. with a speech in which he expressed pride in earlier achievements, bitterness about the formation of the Commonwealth, and some optimism about countrymen and supporters around the world. At 7:20 p.m., the Soviet flag was lowered from the dome of the old Senate building in the Kremlin and the white, blue, and red flag of old Russia run up in its place. President Bush went on television to thank Gorbachev for his contributions to world peace and freedom and to recognize six of the republics as independent nations.

On the next day a handful of the Supreme Soviet delegates met in the huge Hall of Congresses in the Kremlin and--although lacking a quorum--voted formally to dissolve the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

On Dec. 27, President Yeltsin announced that the Russian Federation had taken over the state television and other media formerly owned and operated by the Soviet government. On the next day he issued a decree permitting the private ownership of real property and a plan to return Russian collective farms to private ownership by spring.

Yeltsin removed all price controls on January 2, 1992, for the Russian Federation. As expected, this led to a tripling of prices in about two days, and loud complaints by Russian consumers. "The next eight months will be very hard," Yeltsin has said, "but we will see improvement by the end of 1992." ###

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leaders that Gorbachev had recently entrusted with high positions. But the coup leaders seemed nervous when they appeared on television, and Tass announced on August 20 that two of them were ill and had resigned.

In the meantime, Russian President Boris Yeltsin had rushed to the Russian Parliament Building a few blocks from the Kremlin and was making angry speeches about the coup being illegal. He demanded that President Gorbachev be released. Yeltsin's courageous stand brought thousands of his supporters to the Parliament building where they vowed to defend their leader and democracy at the same time. Military units ordered to attack the building refused to do so.

In Leningrad at the same time, reform mayor Sobchak telephoned the local army commander, demanding "Not even one tank in my city!" His order was obeyed. Sobchak then spoke to thousands of demonstrators for democracy in the huge Winter Palace Square.

By the next morning, the news was that the members of the Committee for State Security were fleeing Moscow, that Yeltsin had boldly ordered them arrested, and that crowds in the cities were cheering the collapse of the coup. For a while, no one knew for sure about Gorbachev's fate, but suddenly he arrived back in Moscow and set about taking over his office. Yeltsin, however, was the popular hero of the hour.

Why had the coup failed? One reason was that it was poorly planned and carried out. Another was that the armed forces were not willing to obey illegal orders or to fire on their fellow citizens. The biggest reason is that many Russian people, led by the feisty Yeltsin and the stubborn Sobchak, cared enough about their new freedoms to risk their lives for democracy.

### THE UNION UNRAVELS

The immediate results of the coup were many. The right-wingers were thoroughly discredited. Most of the leaders were arrested and lost their positions of power. In addition, they lost their reputations as law-abiding, patriotic citizens.

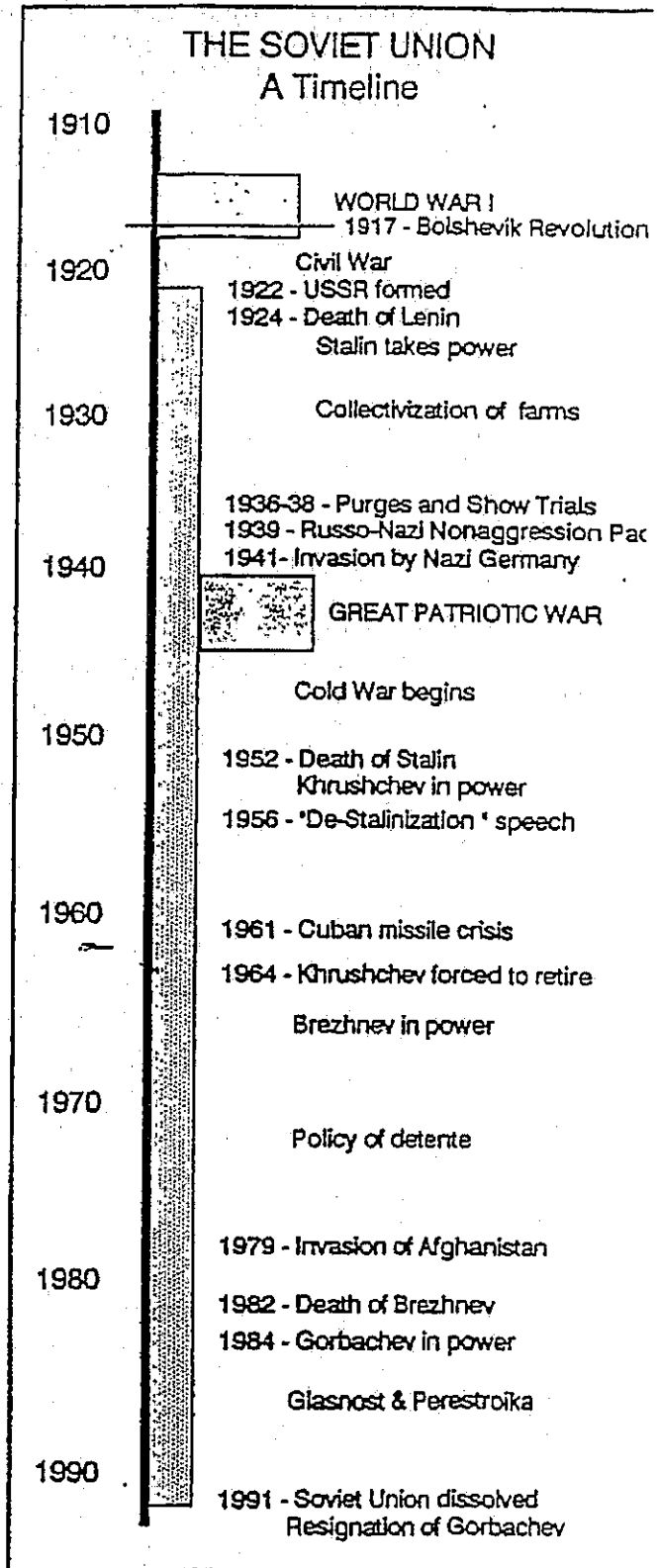
Yeltsin, in spite of some reckless and over-ambitious decrees and rude statements, became the popular hero of Russian democracy. Gorbachev, despite his courage during the coup, lost power rapidly. In spite of his dislike for Yeltsin, he was forced to work with him.

The people, who already disliked Communist leadership, reacted to the coup with fury toward the Party and its leaders.

Gorbachev moved quickly to take away most of the Party's property and give it to the Union government. Latvia declared the Communist Party illegal. Statues of Soviet heroes, including Lenin, were taken down all over the nation. The great city of Leningrad was renamed St. Petersburg, its former name in czarist days. Gorbachev and Yeltsin publicly stated that "Communism was a huge mistake for our country." The hated KGB was reorganized, its files made public, and the statue of its founder torn down.

Power moved quickly from the central-Union government to the republic governments. This was already

happening, but the coup speeded it up. Nationalists in many republics used the confusion of the coup as a chance to defy the authority of the Union government even more than before, and they were successful. Gorbachev had to grant complete independence to the three Baltic republics





## The Communist Revolution in China

AP World History

"The Rise and Fall of Communism"  
(1917 – Present)

### Review: Collapse of the Imperial System in China

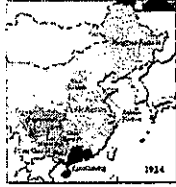


- 1911 = End of the last (Qing) dynasty
- 1912 = China became the Republic of China
- Republic of China ruled from 1912 until 1949
  - First president of the Republic of China = Sun Yat-sen

### Warlords in the 1920s



- 1916 – 1928 = China's central government fractured and various warlords ruled different sections of China
  - (Like Yuan Shi-kai)



China in 1924

### The Nationalist Party



- 1928 = The Nationalist Party gained control of China and reestablished a unified central government
- Under the leadership of Chian Kai-shek = a military officer
- He led the Nationalist Party until 1949

### The Nationalist Party



Chiang Kai-shek

- Promoted modern development
  - Railroads, banking, airline services, etc.
- Problem #1: Impacts of these achievements only in the cities
  - rural areas (where most of the population lived) were still impoverished
- Problem #2: Left the Nationalist Party with a limited base of support
  - Urban elites; rural landlords; Western powers

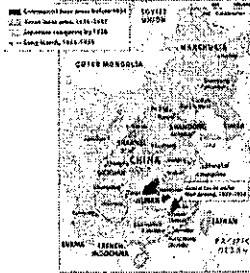
### The Nationalist Party



Mao Zedong as a young revolutionary

- Constantly faced opposition from the newly developed Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
  - Founded in 1921
  - Grew enormously over the next 28 years
  - Found a charismatic leader in Mao Zedong

## The Nationalist Party



- 1927 = Nationalist Party chased the CCP out of China's cities
  - CCP developed a new strategy = appeal to China's peasants for support

## Chinese Communist Party



Chinese Communist Guerrillas

- support of the peasants by:
- against the Nationalist Party
  - Experimenting with land reform in areas under communist control
  - Efforts to empower women
  - Creation of a communist military force to protect against Nationalist Party attacks

## Chinese Communist Party



Japanese Invasion of China, 1937

- CCP gained an enormous amount of support during Japan's brutal invasion of China
  - Nationalist Party lost control over most of China and was forced to retreat to the interior
  - Nationalist Party seemed more concerned with eliminating the CCP than fighting Japan

## Chinese Communist Party



The People's Liberation Army (late-1940s)

- CCP, with its communist-led People's Liberation Army, fought the Japanese vigorously
- Offered security to many Chinese faced with Japanese atrocities
- CCP membership grew from 40,000 in 1937 to 1.2 million in 1945

## Chinese Communist Party



- The CCP gained even more support by doing the following in areas it controlled:
  - Reduced rents, taxes, and interest rates for peasants
  - Taught literacy to adults
  - Mobilized women for the struggle
  - Encouraged peasants to fight back against their landlords

## Chinese Communist Party



- WWII, the CCP swept to victory over the Nationalist Party
  - Party's leaders fled to Taiwan
  - New leader of communist China = Mao Zedong

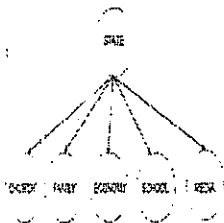
## Building Socialism in China and the Soviet Union

## Building Socialism



- st modernization and industrialization of their "backward societies"
- Simultaneously wanted to eliminate inequalities of class and gender, prevent the growth of new inequalities as they modernized, and promote values of selflessness and collectivism
- In order to do this, government had to be completely dominated by the Communist Party

## Building Socialism



China and the Soviet Union, therefore, became totalitarian:

- the entire economy
- Government ensured that the arts, education and media conformed to approved ways of thinking
- Organizations for women, workers, students, and professional groups operated under party control

## Communist Feminism



A man and woman working side-by-side as power plant operators in the Soviet Union

- Both communist regimes took steps to liberate and mobilize their women
- State-directed women's initiatives

## Communist Feminism in the USSR



Soviet women reading and studying

passed by the Soviet Union:

- political equality
- Divorce was legalized and made easier
- Abortions were legalized and made easier
- Marriage became a civil procedure among freely consenting adults
- Illegitimacy was abolished
- Women no longer had to take their husbands' last names
- Pregnancy leave for employed women was mandated
- Women were actively mobilized as industrial workers

## Communist Feminism in China



自由婚姻 美满幸福 (Free Marriage, Perfect Happiness)

- The Marriage Law of 1950 in China implemented:
  - 
  - 
  - marriages
  - Permission for widows to remarry
  - Equal property rights for men and women
- Chinese women also became more involved in industrial production

### Communist Feminism



- Problems for women:
  - Still expected to take care of the children and the housework → now had the double burden of that PLUS paid employment
  - Women appeared only very rarely in the top political leadership
  - Communist feminism did not continue and faded within a decade of its beginning in each country

### Socialism in the Countryside



- 1<sup>st</sup> stage of socialism in the countryside = involved taking over landlords' estates and redistributing that land equally among the peasants
- 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of socialism in the countryside = collectivization of agriculture
  - Designed to completely end private property

### Collectivization in China



Some communes had up to 2,000 households

- Peaceful process → close relationship between the CCP and the peasantry
- "Great Leap Forward" in the late-1950s = an effort to mobilize China's population for rapid development
  - fully communist society with more social equality and collective living
  - Massive famine caused by administrative chaos and bad weather killed 20 million Chinese between 1959 and 1962

### Collectivization in the Soviet Union



Victims of the Famine

- Much more violent process → Soviet communists did not have much support in the countryside
- Peasants were forced into collective farms
- A lot of resistance from the peasants → example: many of them slaughtered and consumed hundreds of thousands of animals because they didn't want to surrender them to the collectives
- Terrible famine ensued → caused about 5 million deaths

### Communism and Industrial Development



Poster highlighting industrialization in the Soviet Union

- China used the same model for industrial development that the Soviet Union had developed decades earlier:
  - A series of five-year plans = brought all agricultural and industrial production under government control
  - State ownership of property
  - Priority = heavy industry
  - Massive mobilization of the nation's human and material resources

### Pros & Cons of Industrial Development (In both China & the Soviet Union)

- | <u>Pros</u>                      | <u>Cons</u>   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| • Increased literacy rates       | • Rapid urbanization  |
| • More educational opportunities | • Exploitation of the countryside to provide resources for industries in the cities |
| • More social mobility           | • Growth of a bureaucratic and technological elite class with more privileges       |

### Responses to these Social Outcomes: Joseph Stalin



- Largely accepted these outcomes
- Stalin had created a conservative society that had abandoned much of its revolutionary legacy
- Commitment to full equality = abandoned
- Endorsed: Russian patriotism, traditional family values, individual competition, and differences in wages to stimulate production

### Responses to these Social Outcomes: Mao Zedong



大力支援农业

- Did not accept these outcomes → continuously strove to combat these inevitabilities of industrialization
- Tried to preserve the "revolutionary spirit" of China
- Mid-1960s = launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
  - Designed to combat the capitalist elements that had "infiltrated" China

### The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)



- A campaign against the "Four Olds" = old thoughts, old culture, old habits, and old customs
- Message = revolution and rebellion is good
- Wanted to put "intellectuals" in their place
  - Many schools were shut down
- Wanted to establish a more equitable society
  - Brought healthcare, education, and rural industrialization to the countryside

### The Search for Enemies



- Mao Zedong = convinced that many within the Communist Party had been "seduced" by capitalist values
  - Called for rebellion against Communist Party itself
  - Red Guards = students and other young people that responded
  - Red Guards attacked local party and government officials, teachers, intellectuals, factory managers, and others they defined as "enemies" that had embraced capitalism

### The Search for Enemies



Workers at a Soviet Labor Camp

- Stalin used secret police to find "enemies" within the Soviet Union and his own Communist Party
- Late 1930s = "The Terror" or "The Great Purges" → millions of people were arrested for treason/disloyalty (usually in the dead of night)
  - Tried and sentenced either to death or to long years in harsh and remote labor camps, known as the "gulag"

### The Search for Enemies



- Stalin had close to 1 million people executed between 1936 and 1941
- About 5 million were sent to the gulag, where they died in appalling numbers
- Throughout Stalin's entire dictatorship, approximately 20 million people died in the Soviet Union

## The End of Communism


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AP WORLD HISTORY

**"THE RISE AND FALL OF WORLD COMMUNISM"**  
1917 - PRESENT

### General Failures of Communism

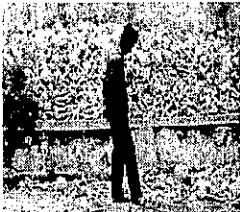
- Economic failures
  - By late 1970s = communist economies showed no signs of catching up to more advanced capitalist countries
  - Soviet economy = stagnant
    - × People had to wait in long lines for consumer goods, which were poor in quality and declining in availability



*Citizens waiting in line for goods in the Soviet Union*  
Photo = circa the late-1980s


### General Failures of Communism

- Moral Failures
  - Many incidents invalidated communist claims to moral superiority over capitalism
    - × Horrors of Stalin's "Terror" and the gulag
    - × Mao's Cultural Revolution
    - × Genocide in communist Cambodia
  - Simultaneously = overall global political culture was more widely embracing democracy and human rights as the intended legacy of humankind



*The site of one of Cambodia's "killing fields"*


### China: Abandoning Communism and Maintaining the Party



- 1976 = death of Mao Zedong
- Successor = Deng Xiaoping
- Committed to fostering political stability and economic growth
- Social and political reforms:
  - Previously banned plays, operas, films, and translations of Western classics = allowed again
  - "Literature of the wounded" released = exposed the suffering of the Cultural Revolution under Mao
  - About 100,000 political prisoners released

### China: Abandoning Communism and Maintaining the Party

- Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms:
  - Dismantled collectivized farms and returned to a system of small-scale private agriculture
  - Managers of state enterprises given more authority and were encouraged to act like private owners
  - Opened China to the world economy and welcomed foreign investment
  - Local governments and private entrepreneurs created thousands of "township and village enterprises" that produced food, clothing, building materials, and more



### China: Abandoning Communism and Maintaining the Party

<u>Positive Results of Economic Reforms</u>	<u>Negative Results of Economic Reforms</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid and sustained economic growth</li> <li>• Better diets</li> <li>• Lower mortality rates</li> <li>• Declining poverty</li> <li>• Massive urban construction</li> <li>• Surging exports</li> <li>• New prosperity and increased standard of living for millions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption among Chinese officials</li> <li>• Widening gap between the rich and the poor</li> <li>• Urban overcrowding</li> <li>• Pollution in the cities</li> <li>• Periodic inflation</li> <li>• Street crime</li> <li>• Prostitution</li> <li>• Gambling</li> <li>• Drug addiction</li> <li>• A criminal underworld</li> </ul>

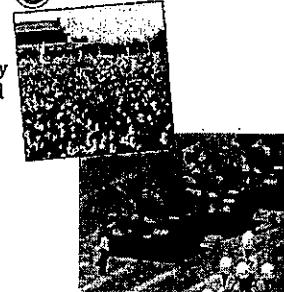
### China: Abandoning Communism and Maintaining the Party



- China had developed a capitalist economy, **but** Deng Xiaoping did **NOT** want to give up his political monopoly or promote democracy
- Deng Xiaoping declared that democracy would lead to chaos and anarchy

### Tiananmen Square

- 1980s = a democracy movement led by university and secondary school students surfaced
- Deng ordered the brutal crushing of this demonstration in Beijing's Tiananmen Square
  - Recorded by the media → brought to television sets around the world



### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country



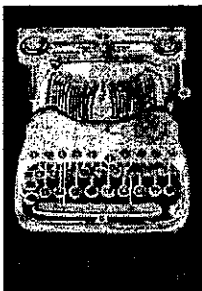
- 1985 = Mikhail Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Soviet Union
- Gorbachev committed to tackling the country's many problems
  - Economic stagnation
  - Growing black market
  - Public apathy
  - Cynicism about the Communist Party

### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country

- *Perestroika* (Restructuring) = Gorbachev's economic program launched in 1987
  - Freed state enterprises from government regulation
  - Permitted small-scale private businesses
  - Offered opportunities for private farming
  - Began to welcome foreign investment
- Resistance to these reforms led Gorbachev to seek allies outside of his official circles



### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country



- *Glasnost* (Openness) = Gorbachev's policy of permitting a much wider range of cultural and intellectual freedoms in Soviet life
- Goal = to overcome the distrust that had grown between society and the government
- The information that poured into the Soviet Union as a result of *glasnost* led to the mass movement towards democratization in the Soviet Union

### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country

- Democratization = involved the creation of a new parliament with real powers
  - Would be chosen in competitive elections
  - 1989 elections = dozens of leading communists were rejected at the polls



### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country





*President Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985*

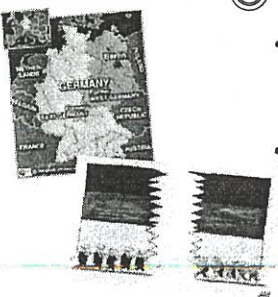
- In foreign affairs, Gorbachev moved to end the Cold War
  - Made cuts in Soviet military forces
  - Engaged in arms control negotiations with the U.S.
  - Refused to intervene as communist governments in Eastern Europe were overthrown

### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country

- Events in the Soviet Union influenced Eastern European nations → if the USSR could practice *glasnost* and hold competitive elections, why couldn't they?
- "Miracle Year" of 1989 = massive demonstrations, last-minute efforts at reforms, the breach of the Berlin Wall, and the surfacing of new political groups all overwhelmed the unpopular communist regimes of Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Romania
  - Communism was swept away in Eastern Europe
  - This success inspired nationalists and democrats in the Soviet Union → brought the communist regime in the USSR to its end in 1991

### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country



- 1991 = the Soviet Union disintegrated into 15 new and independent states
- 1990 = reunification of Germany

### The Soviet Union: The Collapse of Communism and Country



Map 21.4 The Collapse of the Soviet Union  
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