COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM

HOW DID THE COLD WAR END?
Both internal and external pressures caused the collapse of the Soviet Union.
The collapse of the Soviet Union brought an end to the Cold War that had dominated American foreign policy for forty years!
Role of Ronald Reagan:

- Reagan turned the Cold War into a moral issue for many Americans.
- During speeches, he called the Soviet Union the "Evil Empire".
- Reagan also increased economic pressure on the USSR.

“Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall” was his call to unite Germany.
Role of Ronald Reagan

- Reagan’s defense buildup forced the Soviet Union to try to compete, hastening (quickening) its internal collapse and the end of the Cold War.

Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative (dubbed “Star Wars”) was to protect against a nuclear attack. Satellites would “zap” missiles before they could hit us. This plan out-spent the Soviets!
Internal problems of the Soviet Union

Communism as an economic policy failed!
Reasons for Soviet Collapse

- **Political Dissidents** (those speaking out against the government) challenged authority of Moscow.
- **Nationalism of the Republics** as many sought to break from the Soviet Union to become independent.

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Internal Problems of the Soviet Union

- Economic inefficiency; there were too many layers of bureaucracy
- Government mismanagement; economic planners could not keep up with needs.
- Corruption at all levels of government
- End of the “Stalinites” (those loyal to Stalin died off)- and a birth of reformers
Policies of Mikhail Gorbachev

- **Demokratzia**: free elections between competing communists
- **Glasnost**: openness of government
- **Perestroika**: allowance of some capitalism (market economy)-economic restructuring
- Establishment of independent states

“Gorby” became the Soviet Premier in the mid-1980’s and brought sweeping reforms!
PARALLEL TRENDS/ EVENTS

- Soviets stopped influence in Eastern Europe - the Warsaw Pact dissolved
- Non-totalitarian governments were established in Eastern Europe
- Fall of **Berlin Wall** (1989) meant the Re-unification of Germany

The fall of the Berlin Wall, the symbol of Soviet tyranny, on November 9, 1989
As the Soviet Union split apart, the Commonwealth of Independent States was created.

The collapse of the Soviet Union opened the door for many more new problems!

Boris Yeltsin became the president of Russia after Gorbachev resigned. He continued the spirit of reform.
As the sole superpower, the U.S. struggles to establish a consistent policy in a rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent world.
Forces for global disunity

- Ethnic and religious factionalism...
- Economic disparity...
- Nuclear Proliferation...
- Terrorism...
What role should the U.S. play in this new world order?