

UNIT 1 - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 1943-1991

Key Topic 1: How did the Cold War develop? 1943-56

What was the 'wartime alliance'?

- Three major countries joined together in a 'wartime alliance' against Hitler.
- The 'Big Three' were the leaders - Churchill (Britain), Roosevelt (USA) and Stalin (USSR).
- Apart from hating Hitler the USSR and the other two had little in common.

What was decided at the Tehran Conference, 1943?

- The 'Big Three' met up to decide how they would finish the war against Nazi Germany.
- Britain and the USA agreed to open up a 'second front' against Hitler.
- This meant invading Nazi-controlled France to attack Germany, helping Russia.

What agreements were made about Germany at the Yalta Conference Feb 1945?

- Germany would be divided into four zones at the end of the war
- Berlin would also be divided into American, French, British and Soviet zones.
- Nazi war criminals were to be put on trial for their crimes.

What other agreements were made at the Yalta Conference Feb 1945?

- Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan once Germany had been defeated.
- Countries freed from Nazi rule could hold free elections to choose their government.
- The 'Big Three' agreed to join the new United Nations, to maintain the peace.

What disagreements were there at the Yalta Conference Feb 1945?

- Stalin wanted to control Poland after the war, but Churchill and Roosevelt didn't like this.
- Churchill was particularly worried about Stalin and how he was a threat for the future.
- For now, the 'Big Three' continued to work together.

What changed between the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences?

- Stalin's armies occupied Eastern Europe and he set up a Communist government in Poland.
- America had a new President, Truman, and Britain's new Prime Minister was Attlee.
- The Americans had tested an atomic bomb - Stalin found out about this at Potsdam.

What disagreements were there at the Potsdam Conference July-Aug 1945?

- Stalin wanted to punish Germany but Truman did not want to be too harsh
- Stalin wanted 'reparations' (fines) against Germany to pay for the war - Truman didn't.
- Stalin set up pro-Soviet governments in Eastern Europe - GB and USA weren't happy.

What was the 'Iron Curtain'?

- In 1946 Churchill said that "an iron curtain has descended" between East and West.
- It was an imaginary line between Soviet-controlled East European countries and the West.
- The West included: Britain, France, Italy, West Germany (and the USA);
- The East included: East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Romania.

What was Cominform?

- Stalin set up these organisations to tighten his control over Eastern Europe.
- Cominform was short for the Communist Information Bureau
- It controlled the Communist Party governments in Eastern Europe

What was Comecon?

- Stalin set up Comecon in 1949 as an organisation to help Communist countries trade.
- Communist countries traded mostly with each other
- It mostly benefitted Russia as other Communist countries had to sell goods cheaply to it.

What was the Cold War?

- A 'war' between the USA and the USSR that did not involve them actually fighting.
- After helping defeat Hitler, the USSR had nothing in common with the USA and Britain.
- There was so much distrust that both sides increased their number of weapons.

What was the difference between East and West?

- The East (mainly Eastern Europe) was dominated by the USSR (Soviet Union, Russia)
- The superpower in the West was the USA, allied with Britain and Western Europe.
- The East had a system called Communism; the West had a system called Capitalism.

What were the differences between Communism and Capitalism?

- Capitalism: democracy and free elections; Communism: one-party state, dictatorship.
- Capitalism: industry was privately owned by individuals; Communism: industry state owned.
- Capitalism: individual rights important; Communism: society as a whole more important.

What happened in Greece in 1944?

- After the Nazis retreated, the king's supporters (monarchists) and Communists fought.
- Fearing the Communists would win, Britain and America helped the monarchists take over.
- .Despite Stalin's complaints the UN did nothing, but he took no action himself.

What was the Truman Doctrine?

- The USA accepted that Eastern Europe was controlled by Communist USSR.
- Truman did not want Communist control to spread - this policy was called 'containment'.
- America was prepared to send money & equipment to countries threatened by Communists.

What was the Marshall Plan?

- Europe had been ruined by World War II, both physically and financially.
- Europe owed \$11.5bn to the USA, there were extreme shortages of goods.
- The USA agreed to grant \$17bn to help feed and rebuild European countries.

What happened to Germany after the war?

- At first Germany was divided into four, but then the US and GB zones merged as 'Bizonia'.
- The French zone joined to form 'Trizonia' then these 3 became West Germany in 1949.
- West Germany started to recover. East Germany remained under Soviet control.

What led to the Berlin Blockade and Airlift 1948-9?

- Berlin was also divided into East and West; but the city was deep in Eastern Germany.
- Because West Berlin was surrounded, Stalin thought that he could gain control of it.
- He did not dare attack but he could cut off the city and force it to surrender to him.

What happened in the Berlin Blockade 1948-9?

- Stalin blocked the roads, railways and canals that linked West Berlin to West Germany.
- The USA did not dare to break through this blockade as it might start a war.
- However, Truman did not want to give up and used planes to supply West Berlin.

What happened in the Berlin Airlift 1948-9?

- In June 1948 the Allies (USA, GB, France) flew planes over E Germany to W Berlin.
- A constant stream of planes sent food, clothing, oil and building materials.
- In May 1949 it was clear he hadn't succeeded, so Stalin re-opened communications.

What happened to Germany after the Berlin Blockade and Airlift 1948-9?

- Germany was now firmly divided into two nations - East and West.
- It remained divided for 41 years and was a symbol of the division of Europe.
- NOTE: Do not get the Blockade and Airlift confused with the Berlin Wall 1961.

Why was NATO set up?

- The Berlin Blockade and Airlift showed the Allies that war with the USSR was possible.
- In April 1949 they decided to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)
- NATO countries (USA, GB, France, Portugal, Italy) agreed to help each other militarily.

What happened to Eastern Europe under the control of Stalin?

- Stalin helped Communist governments take over Eastern European countries
- He did this using the excuse of helping these countries and making them safe and secure.
- He wanted more land to defend Russia - but America thought he was being aggressive.

What was life really like behind the 'Iron Curtain' in Eastern Europe?

- Communism was supposed to make people's lives fair and give them a good life.
- In reality, free speech was banned, people couldn't travel and there were many shortages.
- Any protests about shortages of food, clothes or consumer goods were treated harshly.

Who was Khrushchev?

- Stalin died in 1953. After a power struggle, Khrushchev became leader of the USSR.
- He seemed different to Stalin - he wanted to improve people's lives under Communism.
- People got the idea that he would allow Eastern European countries more independence.

What was de-Stalinisation?

- In 1956, Khrushchev made a speech attacking Stalin and said he was a wicked tyrant.
- He started a programme of 'de-Stalinisation', changing some of Stalin's decisions.
- He released political prisoners, ended Cominform and sacked one of Stalin's ministers.

What was the Warsaw Pact?

- The Warsaw Pact was a defensive group of Communist countries, similar to NATO.
- Khrushchev created in 1955 to create a 'buffer' against attack from the West.
- All Communist countries apart from Yugoslavia agreed to fight together if attacked.

What were the long-term causes of the Hungarian Uprising 1956?

- Hungary was run by the strict Matyas Rákosi, a Hungarian Communist liked by the USSR.
- Some Hungarians hated Communist control by Soviet troops and AVO secret police.
- The standard of living was falling in Hungary and freedom of speech was not allowed.

What were the short-term causes of the Hungarian Uprising 1956?

- As Khrushchev was nicer than Stalin, Hungarians thought he might give them freedom.
- Khrushchev had let Communist Yugoslavia not join the Warsaw Pact.
- Hungarians saw weakness in Khrushchev's Russia and saw their chance for independence.

What were the key features of the Hungarian Uprising 1956?

- Hungarians got Rákosi and his successor Ernő Gerö sacked after violent protests.
- New leader Imre Nagy got rid of Soviet troops; angry crowds killed hated AVO officers.
- Nagy planned to leave the Warsaw Pact, hold free elections, and leave Soviet control.

How did the Soviet Union respond to the Hungarian Uprising 1956?

- Khrushchev feared that losing control of Hungary would lead other countries rebellng.
- He sent in thousands of Soviet soldiers and tanks into Budapest, Hungary's capital.
- Thousands were killed, 200,000 Hungarians fled, and Nagy was executed in 1958.

What were the effects of the Hungarian Uprising 1956?

- Khrushchev made János Kádár new leader, and showed he would keep control of E Europe.
- Kádár arrested 30,000 anti-Communists and executed nearly 300 of them.
- No Western countries intervened, showing they accepted Russian control of the East.

What was 'peaceful co-existence'?

- In 1959 in America, Khrushchev spoke about 'peaceful co-existence' with the West.
- This meant that he wanted to trade with the West, and not fight with them.
- He met with two Presidents, Eisenhower and Kennedy to talk, though little was decided.

How did relations between the wartime allies change between 1943 and 1956?

- In 1943 the USSR and allies USA and America put aside their differences to fight Hitler.
- The USSR disagreed with GB and USA about control of Europe at Potsdam 1945.
- 1943-46 the USA became worried about Communist control of the East ('Iron Curtain').
- 1948: the confrontation over Berlin firmly showed the division between East and West.
- NATO (1949) and the Warsaw Pact (1955) showed both sides were afraid of each other.
- Hungary (1956) showed that the West accepted Russian control of the East.
- Also: Greece (1944); agreements at Yalta (1945); Truman Doctrine (1947); Marshall Plan (1948); Cominform (1947); Comecon (1949); 'peaceful co-existence' (1959).

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Key Topic 2: Three Cold War Crises: 1957-69

How did the USSR and the USA continue the Cold War in the 1950s?

- They regularly criticised each other's actions in the United Nations (UN)
- The USSR kept tight control of the 'satellite states' it controlled in Eastern Europe.
- The USA enforced its policy of 'containment' to stop other countries becoming Communist.

What were conditions in East Berlin in the 1950s?

- Life in Communist East Germany was tough, as in other Communist countries like Hungary.
- East Germans could see the good shops, freedom and wealth that West Germans enjoyed.
- People could travel freely between East and West Berlin, and from Berlin to W Germany.

Why did people start leaving East Germany and East Berlin in the 1950s?

- The crushing of the Hungarian Uprising showed it was impossible to fight the Communists.
- The only alternative left was to leave the East - thousands did this and never returned.
- Those who left were often highly-skilled workers or good managers.

How did Khrushchev react to the situation in East Germany and East Berlin?

- So many people leaving sent a message to the world that Communism wasn't working.
- Khrushchev also couldn't afford to have these people leave as the East would suffer.
- He challenged new US President Kennedy to pull out American troops, but he refused.

What was the Berlin Wall 1961?

- On 13 Aug 1961 East German soldiers put up a barbed wire fence between E and W Berlin.
- Soon, the barbed wire was replaced by a permanent concrete wall and guards were posted.
- Anyone trying to cross from East to West could be shot: thousands were killed doing so.

How did the USA react to the building of the Berlin Wall 1961?

- American diplomats had always been allowed to travel into East Berlin freely.
- In October, they were stopped from entering and tanks faced each other ready to fight.
- After 18 hours the tanks pulled back: the West preferred the wall to a war.

What was the significance of the Berlin Wall?

- The building of the Berlin Wall showed that life under Communism was very bad.
- It also showed that the Communists were ruthless in keeping their people under control.
- The Berlin Wall was a visible symbol of the hatred and division between East and West.

What was the arms race?

- Because both sides were afraid that the other would attack, they built up their weapons.
- When one side got more or better arms (weapons), the other side had to respond.
- The USA (in 1945) and the USSR (in 1949) both developed powerful nuclear weapons.

How and why were nuclear weapons first used?

- The USA dropped two atomic (nuclear) bombs on Japan in 1945 (Hiroshima and Nagasaki).
- 70,000 people were killed instantly and the cities half destroyed just with these 2 bombs.
- It was clear to both America and Russia that atomic bombs were weapons of the future.

What was the timeline of nuclear weapons after 1945?

- Trying to catch up with the USA, Russia dropped its first atomic bomb (A-Bomb) in 1949.
- USA then made a hydrogen bomb (H-Bomb), 1,000 times more powerful than the A-bomb.
- By 1961 both sides had hundreds of nuclear missiles pointed at each other.

What were ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles)?

- ICBMs were first developed in 1959 by the Soviet Union, quickly followed by the USA.
- They were long-range missiles that could carry nuclear weapons thousands of miles.
- Nuclear weapons could now be sent from one side of the world to the other in minutes.

What was MAD?

- MAD stands for Mutually Assured Destruction, also known as the 'nuclear deterrent'.
- If the USA or USSR sent nuclear missiles, the other side would fire back.
- Thus, neither side would start a nuclear war as if it did then it too would be destroyed.

What was Cuba like before Fidel Castro?

- Cuba is a large island just 160km from Florida, USA, and was allies (friends) with America.
- It was ruled by General Batista, who was given military and economic support by the USA.
- He was unpopular in Cuba, but liked by America because he hated Communism.

Who was Fidel Castro?

- After a three-year war against Batista, Fidel Castro became the new leader in 1959.
- Castro was charming, clever and ruthless - he killed or arrested many of his opponents.
- He took over American-run businesses and distributed land to his peasant supporters.

How did the USA react to Fidel's takeover of Cuba?

- American companies in Cuba started to refuse to work with Cuban businesses.
- The CIA provided support to the Cuban exiles (Batista supporters) who didn't like Castro.
- The American media (newspapers, radio) put out anti-Castro propaganda.

What were the causes of the Bay of Pigs invasion 1961?

- In 1960 Castro made an alliance with the Soviet Union: this scared Communist-hating USA.
- Khrushchev gave Cuba \$100 million in economic aid, and secretly also supplied weapons.
- The USA could not face having a Communist country in America's 'sphere of influence'.

What were the key features of the Bay of Pigs invasion 1961?

- President Kennedy supplied arms (weapons), transport and equipment to the Cuban exiles.
- 1,400 anti-Castro exiles sailed from Florida to the Bay of Pigs in Cuba to defeat Castro.
- 20,000 Cuban troops met them and the invasion failed: the exiles were killed or captured.

What were the effects of the Bay of Pigs invasion 1961?

- The USA had shown it did not want to get involved directly against Communism.
- It strengthened Castro's position in Cuba and made Castro very suspicious of America.
- Khrushchev thought that Kennedy was inexperienced, weak, and could be intimidated.

What led to the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962?

- The USSR increased its weapon supplies until Cuba had the best army in South America.
- America could accept this, but became very worried that Cuba would get nuclear weapons.
- On 14 October 1962 an American U-2 spy plane took photos of nuclear missile sites in Cuba.

What were these Cuban missile sites?

- Some sites had been built and supplied with missiles, with more on the way.
- Spy planes also reported that 20 Soviet ships were on the way to Cuba carrying missiles.
- Short-range missiles could hit the USA in 10 minutes from Cuba; long-range in 20 minutes.

What were the peaceful options of resolving the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962?

- Do nothing. The USA was still stronger than Russia - however, America would look weak.
- Diplomatic pressure - complain to the UN. This would avoid war, but would also look weak.
- Blockade. Send American ships to block the way of the Soviet ships with the missiles.

What were the non-peaceful options of resolving the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962?

- Surgical air strike. The US Air Force could bomb the Cuban missile sites to destroy them.
- Invasion. The well trained US Army could defeat Cuba, and Castro could be got rid of too.
- Both these options were likely to provoke a violent response from the Soviet Union.

What option did President Kennedy choose?

- On 20 Oct 1962 (4 days after hearing about the missiles) Kennedy chose the blockade.
- On 22 Oct 1962, Kennedy announced the blockade and called on Khrushchev to stop.
- On 23 Oct 1962, Khrushchev declared that Soviet ships would not obey the blockade.

How did Khrushchev react to the blockade?

- The Soviet ships with the missiles approached the 500-mile blockade zone and stopped.
- Khrushchev sent two letters: the first asks America to promise not to attack Cuba.
- The second said that he would withdraw missiles from Cuba if America did from Turkey.

How did Kennedy react to Khrushchev's letters?

- Despite an American pilot being shot down and killed over Cuba, Kennedy decides on peace.
- He promises not to invade Cuba and to lift the blockade, if the missile sites are removed.
- He ignores the second letter about US missiles in Turkey. Khrushchev accepts this.

What were the short-term effects of the Cuban Missile Crisis 1961?

- Cuba stayed Communist and highly armed, but there were no nuclear missiles on the island.
- Kennedy's standing improved: he had stood up to Khrushchev and made him back down.
- Khrushchev, too, was seen as a responsible peacemaker who was willing to compromise.

What were the long-term effects of the Cuban Missile Crisis 1961?

- Both the USA and the USSR had seen how close they had come to nuclear war.
- They made steps to reduce the risk of war, signing the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1961.
- A permanent 'hot line' telephone link between the US and Soviet leaders was set up.

What was the situation in Czechoslovakia in 1968?

- After 20 years of Communism, Czechs became unhappy and forced their leader to resign.
- Alexander Dubček, the new leader promised reforms and 'socialism with a human face'.
- There was less censorship, more freedom of speech and less control by the secret police.

What were the effects of Dubček's reforms?

- As censorship grew less strict, people started to openly criticise the government.
- Communist officials faced tough questions on live TV and radio about their failures.
- This period of discontent and openness was called the Prague Spring after the capital city.

How did other Communist countries react to this?

- Czechoslovakia was one of the most important Communist countries in Eastern Europe.
- The new Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev (who replaced Khrushchev in 1964) was worried.
- Communist leaders in this region wanted Dubček stopped because they felt threatened.

How did the Soviet Union deal with Dubček?

- The USSR argued with Dubček and did troop exercises near the border to frighten him.
- Dubček offered some reforms but not enough, and on 20 Aug 1968 Soviet tanks went in.
- There was little resistance but the Soviet troops were greatly resented by the Czechs.

What were the effects of the invasion of Czechoslovakia 1968?

- Dubček was not executed, but was removed from power - all his reforms were reversed.
- Czech Communists who had wanted small changes now hated their links with Soviet Russia.
- The USA protested about the invasion but did not risk war for this Communist country.

What was the 'Brezhnev Doctrine'?

- This episode led to the 'Brezhnev Doctrine' where Communism was defined in simple terms.
- Firstly, a Communist country had to be a one-party state - only Communist parties allowed.
- Secondly, it had to remain a member of the Warsaw Pact.

How did relations between the USA and the USSR change between 1957 and 1968?

- There were major crises of great tension, but neither side wanted to risk nuclear war.
- The building of the Berlin Wall 1961 was a symbol of the division between East and West.
- President Kennedy preferred the Berlin Wall to a nuclear war and unhappily accepted it.
- The Cuban Missile Crisis showed this fear and misunderstanding, both afraid of the other.
- After this crisis, however, they realised they had to work together to prevent a war.
- The installation of the telephone hotline showed new understanding and communication.
- During the Prague Spring and invasion of Czechoslovakia 1968 the USA did not act.
- It seemed that, despite distrust, the USA and USSR had learned to live with each other.

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Key Topic 3: Why did the Cold War end? 1970-91

What was détente?

- Détente means 'relaxing of tension' - when the USSR and the USA became more friendly.
- Brezhnev and President Nixon (USA) signed SALT I agreement, limited nuclear weapons.
- At the Helsinki Conference all countries recognised human rights (eg, freedom of speech).

What were the reasons for détente?

- Public dislike in the West against nuclear weapons, eg anti-nuclear protest in Spain 1976.
- 1970s America was in economic depression and needed more money for recovery, not arms.
- The USSR was also paid a lot for arms and wanted to spend more money on its own people.

What happened to cause the collapse of détente?

- US President Jimmy Carter (1977-81) criticised the Soviet Union's human rights record.
- The USSR placed medium-range nuclear missiles (SS20) in Eastern Europe.
- Carter asked the military to develop its own medium-range weapons, Pershing and Cruise.

How did a change in government in Iran change the situation 1970?

- The Shah (King) of Iran was deposed in 1970 by the Ayatollahs, Muslim religious leaders.
- The Shah was friends with America, but the Ayatollahs held US embassy staff hostage.
- The Ayatollahs hated atheist Communism too. Russia feared militant Islam would spread.

What happened in Afghanistan in 1978?

- Russian-trained Afghan army officers took over Afghanistan in 1978 and made reforms.
- A civil war broke out between these Communist-backed government and Islamic fighters.
- These Muslim 'Fighters of God' were called the mujahidin.

What happened in the invasion of Afghanistan 1979?

- On Christmas Day 1979, hundreds of Soviet tanks crossed the border into Afghanistan.
- They installed a new leader in Kabul (the capital); 125,000 Soviet troops arrived by 1980.
- President Carter was furious and sent money and weapons to the mujahidin to help them.

What were the Olympic Games boycotts 1980 and 1984?

- Carter pressured US competitors not to take part in the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow.
- The USA and allies (eg, Canada, Japan) boycotted the games in protest at the invasion.
- The USSR and Communist states boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics in retaliation.

What was President Ronald Reagan's attitude towards Communism in the 1980s?

- Ronald Reagan became US President in 1981 and was very hostile to Communism.
- He took an aggressive attitude and saw negotiation with Russia as a sign of weakness.
- He set out to defeat Communist Russia and Communism around the world.

How did the invasion of Afghanistan 1979 affect the arms race?

- The SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) had been signed by Carter and Brezhnev.
- However the US refused to formally approve this, because of the invasion of Afghanistan.
- Instead of reducing weapons it deployed more: 464 more Cruise missiles in Europe in 1983.

How did Reagan use the arms race to gain control?

- Reagan increased weapons spending by \$32.6 billion, spending 7% of US wealth by 1985.
- He told his military chiefs to get ready for a nuclear war, though this would be a last resort.
- His real intention was to make Russia bankrupt in a new arms race.

How did the CIA attack Communism around the world?

- The US intelligence (spy) agency the CIA helped anti-Communist forces around the world.
- In Nicaragua it spent \$197 million helping Contra-rebels fight the socialist government.
- It funded 'Death Squads' that killed and kidnapped Communist rebels in El Salvador.

What was 'Star Wars'?

- In 1983 Reagan announced the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), nicknamed 'Star Wars'.
- SDI was a plan to shoot down nuclear missiles in space before they could get to America.
- This would mean that the USA could attack Russia without fear of a nuclear response.

Who backed the mujahidin?

- The USA spent \$2 billion on the war through Pakistan (which took some for itself).
- Saudi Arabia also backed the mujahidin against the Soviets, giving \$600 million a year.
- Recruits joined the mujahidin from the Middle East, wanting to fight a jihād (holy war).

What problems did the Soviet army face in Afghanistan?

- The USSR's Red Army found the war in Afghanistan increasingly difficult in the 1980s.
- The weaker mujahidin did not directly confront US forces but made hit-and-run attacks.
- With local knowledge of the mountain passes, they killed 5,000 Soviet soldiers by 1982.

Why could the Soviet army not keep control of Afghanistan?

- Afghanistan was a country of deserts and mountains with few road or rail links.
- It was difficult for a large army to travel, and to supply it with food and weapons.
- Soviet tanks were vulnerable on narrow roads and planes could not locate enemy targets.

Why did the local people in Afghanistan dislike the Soviet troops?

- Local people had strong ties of family and tribe, refusing to co-operate with the Soviets.
- They disliked the anti-religious Communist foreigners who did not have traditional beliefs.
- Soviet troops often treated the local population badly, making them more unpopular.

What was the situation in Afghanistan in 1982?

- By the end of 1982, Russia had suffered great losses and wanted a peace deal.
- The USSR offered to end the war if the USA stopped supplying the mujahidin. It refused.
- The US gave them Stinger anti-aircraft missiles that could bring down Soviet helicopters.

What was the effect of the war in Afghanistan on the soldiers?

- Russian TV showed Soviet troops helping to give food and medicine to Afghan villagers.
- In reality, graveyards filled with young servicemen killed during the conflict.
- America's supply of better equipment to the mujahidin caused despair in the Soviet Army.

How did the changing mood in Russia lead to the withdrawal from Afghanistan 1987?

- As the USSR relaxed its controls (under Gorbachev), Russians found out the real story.
- Families of soldiers wrote to the government demanding a withdrawal from Afghanistan.
- Early in 1987, the Soviet Union started pulling out of Afghanistan in defeat.

What was the cost of the war in Afghanistan?

- 15,000 Soviet soldiers had died and around 37,000 had been wounded in the conflict.
- The Soviet Union had spent \$20 billion on the war, and 1 million Afghans had died.
- Though it was humiliating for Russia, it also showed how Russia's leadership was changing.

Who was Mikhail Gorbachev?

- Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union in 1985 with the country in crisis.
- He was a committed Communist and was determined to make the system work.
- He saw that the arms race caused huge problems and decided to try to end the Cold War.

What problems were there in Russian society in the 1980s?

- The USSR spent too much on the arms race and Afghanistan and not enough on its people.
- Despite all its fertile land and raw materials there were shortages of food and goods.
- Life expectancy of men fell from 67 in 1964 to 62 in 1980, largely due to alcoholism.

What were Gorbachev's two major reforms?

- Gorbachev wanted to improve the lives of ordinary Russians, and he introduced 2 reforms.
- Glasnost was his policy of openness, allowing more freedom of speech in the Soviet Union.
- Perestroika meant re-structuring, allowing more freedom for people to buy and sell.

What happened in the Geneva Summit 1985?

- The summit started badly: Reagan attacked Russia's record on human rights.
- Gorbachev responded by blaming Reagan and the USA for the arms race.
- However, during a private chat they found they got on well and agreed to meet again.

What happened at the Reykjavik Summit 1986?

- Gorbachev made a suggestion on cutting weapons if the USA stopped its SDI programme.
- He proposed removing all nuclear missiles from Europe and reducing long-range missiles.
- Reagan agreed on cutting weapons, but not on SDI. An agreement had almost been made.

What happened at the Washington Summit 1987?

- After Gorbachev removed his condition that America stop SDI, an agreement was made.
- The INF (Intermediate-range Nuclear Force) Treaty got rid of nuclear weapons in Europe.
- Gorbachev later suggested removing all troops from Europe in 1988, but Reagan refused.

Question?

- In 1989 Gorbachev told Communist leaders the Red Army would no longer protect them.
- Communism started collapsing in: Communists lost in Poland's first free elections.
- Hungary and Czechoslovakia open their borders; Romanian dictator Ceausescu is killed.

What were the key features of the fall of the Berlin Wall?

- East German leader Erich Honecker is told by Gorbachev to reform, but he doesn't listen.
- In October Honecker orders his troops to fire on demonstrators but they refuse.
- East Berliner march to the Wall in November, with guards joining them, and dismantle it.

How did Germany become re-united?

- West German leader Helmut Kohl wanted to re-unite East and West Germany.
- Germans from both sides wanted this and Gorbachev reluctantly agreed.
- It was tough to accept due to Russia's suffering in WWII. 3 Oct 1990 Germany re-united.

How did the states inside the USSR react?

- Lithuania wanted independence but Gorbachev said no. In March 1990 it did it anyway.
- Azerbaijan now demanding the same, and Soviet troops went to stop riots there.
- Ukraine declared independence in July 1990; Georgia in April 1991.

What were the key features of the attempted coup in August 1991?

- Some Communist hardliners had seen enough and held Gorbachev prisoner in Crimea.
- The military sent tanks to the streets of Moscow to try to take over the country.
- Boris Yeltsin, the leader of the Russian Republic, stood against this attempted takeover.

How did the USSR end?

- The coup failed and Gorbachev returned to the capital Moscow a few days later.
- Though he had survived as leader of the USSR, but it was clear that it was falling apart.
- On 25 December 1991 he went on TV to announce the end of the Soviet Union.

What last actions had Gorbachev taken to end the Cold War?

- He cut the Red Army in half, and agreed the CFE, withdrawing most troops from Europe.
- Under START the USA and USSR reduced nuclear weapons, dismantling thousands.
- Comecon and the Warsaw Pact were dissolved in 1991. The Cold War was over.

What were the reasons for the end of the Cold War?

- The invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 proved disastrous in the end for the Soviet Union.
- Not only did it spend billions on a war they lost, America started an arms race in response.
- The USSR diverted so much money to these that standards of living in Russia decreased.
- Tight controls did not provide incentives for people to work hard and improve things.
- People looked to the West and saw that capitalism gave people a far better life.
- When Gorbachev finally began his reforms, he moved far too slowly for ordinary people.
- As the strict controls were relaxed, Russians and Eastern Europeans demanded change.
- This force for change proved impossible to stop, and Communism collapsed in months.